



Families receive primary health services at a UNICEF-supported mobile clinic for conflict-affected populations in the remote community of Gbakaba village in southern Central African Republic in September 2024.

unicef 
for every child

Humanitarian Action for Children

Central African Republic

HIGHLIGHTS

- In the Central African Republic, 2.4 million people require urgent humanitarian assistance due to armed conflict and persistent flooding, which have increased food insecurity and damaged WASH infrastructure and health services.¹ Children are particularly vulnerable to grave rights violations, as well as wasting, which affects 5.5 per cent of children under 5.² Child mortality rates remain among the highest in the world.³
- UNICEF's multisectoral emergency response will reach 307,559 children, restoring essential services through WASH, health, nutrition, education and child protection interventions. UNICEF will prioritize life-saving activities⁴ and cash assistance and work to enhance community resilience.
- UNICEF is appealing for \$39.1 million to reach 405,311 people, 75 per cent of them children.⁵ This requirement has decreased by 41 per cent since last year, due to a rigorous prioritization of regions experiencing multiple and complex risks.⁶ Despite the decreased funding requirement, children in the Central African Republic continue to face significant humanitarian needs.

KEY PLANNED TARGETS



178,236

children and women
accessing primary health
care



85,000

children/caregivers
accessing community-
based mental health and
psychosocial support



80,000

children accessing formal
or non-formal education,
including early learning



130,000

people accessing a
sufficient quantity and
quality of water

IN NEED

2.4 million people⁷ **1.1** million children⁸

2021 2025

TO BE REACHED

405,311 people⁹ **307,559** children^{10,11}

2021 2025

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

US\$39.1
million

2021 2025

Figures are aligned with the reprioritized Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan for the Central African Republic for 2025.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

Twelve years of conflict in the Central African Republic have worsened pre-existing structural vulnerabilities, and pushed 2.4 million people (38 per cent of the population), including 1.1 million children, into a crisis situation.¹²

In 2024, the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) reported 219,273 people affected by 110 shocks¹³ (mainly violence and natural disasters). Forced displacement (the country is home to 465,499 internally displaced people and 53,394 refugees¹⁴) puts pressure on already fragile communities. The RRM was forced to suspend its activities in April 2025 due to funding cuts. Humanitarian actors, under the leadership of UNOCHA, are currently developing a new programme to assist people affected by shocks.

A weak healthcare system in CAR has resulted in some of the world's highest mortality rates, affecting one in ten children under age 5 as well as maternal mortality.¹⁵ Malnutrition affects up to 50 per cent of children under age 5 in some regions, resulting in a wasting prevalence of 5.5 per cent nationally.¹⁶

Poor WASH infrastructure and services hinder responses to health emergencies. Sixty-eight per cent of the population lacks proper sanitation and 72 per cent lacks handwashing facilities. At the same time, 38 per cent of schools lack access to safe drinking water, and 39 per cent of health centres lack WASH services, including waste management.¹⁷ With these conditions, people remain extremely vulnerable to disease outbreaks like cholera, mpox, COVID-19 and Ebola.¹⁸

While 843,829 children require education assistance,¹⁹ 40.6 per cent will not have access to school in 2025. Acute gender inequalities in education are reflected in illiteracy rates of 75.1 per cent for women against 52.6 per cent for men. Only 46 per cent of girls attend secondary education due to barriers including child marriage (56.9 per cent of girls in the Central African Republic marry before age 18) and early pregnancy (31.5 per cent).²⁰

Protracted internal conflict and an ongoing influx of refugees from Sudan have created protection needs among 590,000 children.²¹ The UN recorded 414 grave violations against 230 children in 2023.²² Twenty-five per cent of households identified sexual violence as the main threat to children, especially girls.²³ Rising risks of killing, food insecurity, poverty and explosive devices threaten children, heighten child exploitation and hinder humanitarian access.

Gender dynamics also exacerbate needs, rendering women/girls more vulnerable to some shocks. Power dynamics can also limit the access of women and girls to some WASH, health care and nutrition services.

SECTOR NEEDS



1.5 million
people in need of
emergency health
assistance²⁴



775,000
people in need of
nutrition assistance²⁵



590,000
children in need of
protection services



844,000
children in need of
education support²⁶



1.6 million
people lack access to
safe water²⁷

STORY FROM THE FIELD



Chantal (right), mother of five, receives essential household supplies in Ngoukpbe village, Damara subprefecture, through the UNICEF RRM for conflict-affected families, in January 2024.

Chantal and thousands like her returned home after fleeing brutal armed attacks to find everything destroyed. Left without shelter, clothes or even cooking pots, their survival seemed impossible. Through UNICEF's Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), families received life-saving support – basic household items, hygiene kits and clean water containers. These essential supplies helped restore dignity and hope. Hygiene promotion sessions also protected communities from disease. "These gifts brought us joy," Chantal says. "At least now we can start a normal life again."

The RRM, a response to violent shocks, continues to be a vital lifeline offering urgent help and humanity to those in the gravest need.

[Read more about this story here](#)

HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY

Sharp funding cuts and the systemic reforms initiated under the Humanitarian Reset²⁸ have led the Humanitarian Country Team in CAR to reprioritize the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP). The reprioritized plan focuses on prefectures with the most severe needs, and responses centred on the multi-sectoral assistance under the HNRP's first strategic objective: new shocks and life-saving interventions targeting 1.2 million people, prioritizing cash interventions and community engagement.

Due to drastic underfunding, UNICEF's Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) was discontinued at the end of April 2025 after 10 years of operation. As OCHA considers alternative RRM mechanisms, UNICEF will pilot a smaller-scale, fully localized shock response programme in the most fragile prefectures. In line with its resilience and nexus approach, UNICEF will address health-related humanitarian needs by supporting local health institutions and non-governmental organizations to deliver mobile services. Mobile clinics, which are a critical entry point for other essential services, will provide an integrated health-nutrition-child protection intervention.

UNICEF will expand screening and treatment for wasting through these mobile clinics as part of delivering integrated services – including vaccination, infant and young child feeding counselling, maternal care and treatment for severe wasting – for displaced and hard-to-reach populations. UNICEF will also support stabilization centres and enhance referral systems.

UNICEF will deliver an integrated assistance package including education, WASH and child protection in critical areas with government partners and non-governmental organizations. Children affected by shocks will benefit from education-in-emergencies support, teacher training and the development of safe learning environments.

Additionally, UNICEF will carry out urgent WASH infrastructure rehabilitation, water treatment, hygiene promotion and kit distribution. In protracted crises, UNICEF will strengthen access to services, local capacity-building, preparedness and innovation.

Child protection efforts will centre on support to community-based structures to improve identification and referral to services for vulnerable children; reduce risks of injury from explosive ordnance; and enhance mental health support. UNICEF will support case management for survivors of sexual violence, unaccompanied and separated children and children associated with armed groups. Safety audits will help identify existing risks of gender-based violence.

UNICEF will reinforce accountability and community engagement for greater resilience and ownership of aid delivery, jointly planning and monitoring interventions with affected communities.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse will remain a priority, and UNICEF will ensure confidential reporting mechanisms using a survivor-centred approach.

UNICEF will continue to lead coordination mechanisms for nutrition, WASH, education and child protection, along with inter-agency efforts on accountability to affected populations.

Progress against the latest programme targets is available in the humanitarian situation reports: <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/car/situation-reports>

2025 PROGRAMME TARGETS



Health and HIV/AIDS

- 178,236 children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities
- 79,188 children aged 6 to 59 months vaccinated against measles
- 35,647 adolescent girls and young women tested for HIV/AIDS
- 1,090 adolescent girls and young women living with HIV receiving antiretroviral therapy.



Nutrition

- 111,000 children 6-59 months screened for wasting
- 38,149 children 6-59 months with severe wasting admitted for treatment



Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

- 85,000 children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support
- 276,000 women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions
- 360,000 people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel who provide assistance to affected populations
- 7,120 children who have received individual case management
- 40,000 children provided with landmine or other explosive weapons prevention and/or survivor assistance interventions



Education

- 80,000 children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning
- 30,000 children receiving individual learning materials
- 800 teachers and facilitators trained in basic pedagogy and/or mental health and psychosocial support



Water, sanitation and hygiene

- 130,000 people accessing a sufficient quantity and quality of water for drinking and domestic needs
- 10,000 women and girls accessing menstrual hygiene management services
- 100,000 people reached with handwashing behaviour-change programmes
- 2,850 children benefiting from a WASH-Nutrition package



Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)

- 4,000 households reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers (including for social protection and other sectors)
- 1,200,000 people reached with timely and life-saving information on how and where to access available services
- 4,000 people engaged in reflective dialogue through community platforms
- 57,500 people engaged in reflective dialogue through social media and digital platforms
- 5,000 people sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms



Emergency response

- 86 Health institutions prepared to continue delivering services in case of shocks.
- 5,000 Households affected by shocks having access to health, nutrition and WASH services.
- 60,000 People affected by shocks benefiting from life-saving multi-sectoral interventions through the RRM.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2025

In 2025, UNICEF is requesting \$39.1 million to respond to the most urgent humanitarian needs of 405,311 people in CAR, 75 per cent of whom are children. Following a sharp reduction in humanitarian funding globally, the funding requirement in the 2025 appeal is 41 per cent lower than the 2024 appeal.

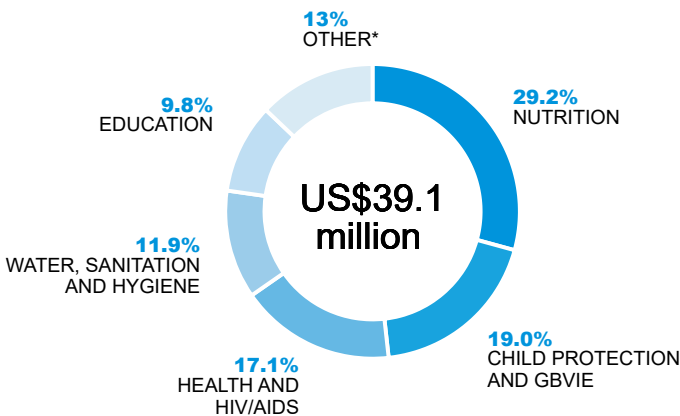
In alignment with the Humanitarian Country Team’s reprioritization exercise, which was undertaken to ensure that relief efforts prioritize reaching the most vulnerable people in the most crisis-affected regions across the country, UNICEF has focused its 2025 appeal on addressing only the first strategic objective: responding to new shocks from armed violence, natural disasters and displacement in zones with the highest intersectoral severity of needs.

As a cluster lead agency, UNICEF stands ready to serve as a provider of last resort in WASH, nutrition, education, and child protection when no other actors are able to respond.

UNICEF will provide life-saving, multisectoral assistance to the most vulnerable children and their caregivers through health, nutrition, WASH, education and child protection interventions. The organization’s extensive field presence and partnerships with local communities and civil society organizations will ensure a timely and effective response even in the most remote and difficult-to-access areas.

More than 46 per cent of the requested funding will support emergency health and nutrition interventions, including the provision of ready-to-use therapeutic food for children suffering from severe wasting. UNICEF will prioritize cash-based interventions when possible to strengthen household resilience.

To continue to respond to ongoing displacement and the volatile security situation following the suspension of the RRM, the 2025 appeal includes a specific budget line of \$648,000 to coordinate a localized pilot shock response programme during the second half of 2025. This initiative will enable real-time monitoring of shocks, rapid needs assessments and immediate life-saving interventions in three of the most critically affected prefectures.



**This includes costs from other sectors/interventions : Rapid Response Mechanism (5.9%), Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP) (4.2%), Emergency preparedness and response coordination (1.7%), Cluster coordination (1.2%).*

Sector	2025 requirements (US\$)
Health and HIV/AIDS	6,685,393
Nutrition	11,447,944
Child protection and GBVIE	7,437,744 ²⁹
Education	3,849,120
Water, sanitation and hygiene	4,668,269
Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)	1,649,646 ³⁰
Rapid Response Mechanism	2,300,186 ³¹
Cluster coordination	452,120
Emergency preparedness and response coordination	648,000 ³²
Total	39,138,422

Who to contact for further information:

Abdoulaye Seye
Deputy Representative, Central African Republic
T +19172654619
aseye@unicef.org

Lucia Elmi
Director, Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS)
T +12123267448
lelmi@unicef.org

Mandeep O'Brien
Director, Public Partnerships Division (PPD)
T +1 2123267118
mobrien@unicef.org

ENDNOTES

1. Of the 2.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, 51 per cent are women; 46 per cent are children; 5 per cent are elderly people; and 15 per cent are people with disabilities.
2. Wasting affects 5.5 per cent of children under age 5, of whom 51 per cent are girls and 15 per cent are children with disabilities. Malnutrition figures are extracted from the Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) 2022.
3. See UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, child mortality, stillbirth and causes of death estimates, online data, available at <<https://childmortality.org/>>.
4. Life-saving activities will target institutions, communities and households through access to health/nutrition and WASH services. At the institutional level, UNICEF's intervention will focus on preparedness of health facilities to become more resilient and capable to respond to shocks. This will include pre-positioning health kits, training medical staff on emergency preparedness and response and rehabilitating WASH facilities. At the community level, UNICEF will focus on mobile health clinics to be deployed in areas affected by shocks, and on the rehabilitation of water points and latrines. At the household level, emphasis will be on the distribution of multi-purpose cash, when feasible, or family kits to households affected by severe shocks.
5. UNICEF targets 405,311 people, representing 34 per cent of the total targeted population in the 2025 Central African Republic Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan.
6. UNICEF's 2025 appeal is 41 per cent lower than the 2024 appeal, in alignment with the reprioritized targets of the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan.
7. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2025 Central African Republic Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan.
8. OCHA, 2025 Central African Republic Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan.
9. In line with the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, the UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children appeal has a geographic focus based on the reprioritization criteria for 2025. The total number of people and children to be reached by UNICEF is 405,311 corresponding to the sum of the highest targets among all the sections in each of 59 sub-prefectures.
10. In line with the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, the UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children appeal has a geographic focus based on the reprioritization criteria for 2025. The total Children targeted are 307,559 children which correspond to the sum of (i) the highest target per sub-prefecture between Child protection indicators related to activities at school and Education (189,439); (ii) full target for nutrition (111,000) and (iii) the target of child protection for case management (OOSC) (7,120).
11. Fifty-one per cent of the total children to be reached are girls (156,855); 15 per cent of total children to be reached are children with disabilities (46,134).
12. 2025 Central African Republic Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan.
13. UNICEF, Mécanisme de Réponse Rapide: République centrafricaine – Bilan annuel, 01 janvier – 31 décembre 2024, 14 March 2025.
14. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, République centrafricaine: Réfugiés et demandeurs d'asile – Dashboard 31 décembre 2024, 22 January 2025.
15. United Nations Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group.
16. Acute malnutrition affects 5.5 per cent of children under age 5, 51 per cent girls and 15 per cent children with disabilities. Malnutrition figures are extracted from the Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) survey 2022.
17. Joint Education and Child Protection Needs Assessment 2023: Central African Republic, 2023.
18. This is particularly the case in areas with high population density, including sites for internally displaced persons and refugees.
19. Joint Education and Child Protection Needs Assessment 2023: Central African Republic, 2023.
20. Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2018-2019. Early pregnancy in this context refers to women and girls between the ages of 15 and 19.
21. 2025 Central African republic Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan.
22. United Nations, Children and armed conflict, Report of the Secretary-General, A/78/842–S/2024/384, United Nations, New York, 3 June 2024.
23. United Nations, Children and armed conflict, Report of the Secretary-General, A/78/842–S/2024/384, United Nations, New York, 3 June 2024.
24. This figure is comprised of 25 per cent women, 24 per cent men, 23 per cent girls, 23 per cent boys, 3 per cent elderly women and 2 per cent elderly men.
25. This figure is comprised of 36 per cent women, 33 per cent girls and 31 per cent boys.
26. This figure is comprised of 51 per cent girls and 49 per cent boys.
27. This figure is comprised of 25 per cent women, 24 per cent men, 23 per cent girls, 23 per cent boys, 3 per cent elderly women and 2 per cent elderly men.
28. OCHA is conducting a humanitarian reset to address evolving challenges in the global humanitarian landscape, including in the Central African Republic. This reset aims to redefine and enhance humanitarian coordination, ensuring that aid is more effective, flexible and responsive to the complex needs of affected populations.
29. This line item includes \$5,898,096 for child protection interventions and \$1,539,648 for interventions for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.
30. This line item includes \$720,576 for social policy/cash assistance and \$929,070 for social and behaviour change interventions.
31. This line item only covers the Rapid Response Mechanism intervention from January to April 2025 because the RRM programme was discontinued at the end of April 2025.
32. The line item for emergency preparedness and response coordination includes coordination and follow up on field response only.