



Humanitarian Action for Children

unicef 

Central African Republic

The Central African Republic is experiencing a protracted and complex humanitarian crisis. Over 580,000 people are internally displaced and 606,000 are living as refugees outside of the country.¹ While 350,000 people returned in 2019² – often to devastated villages – one in five Central Africans has fled conflict. Despite the signing of a peace agreement in early 2019, 2.6 million people, including 1.2 million children,³ will need humanitarian assistance in 2020, representing 59 per cent of the country's population. Acute needs are expected to increase during the year, from 1.6 million to 1.7 million people, due to continuing violence and destruction, diminishing capacities for resilience, limited access to basic services, underfunding, access constraints and insecurity.⁴ In 2020, over 49,000 children under 5 years will need treatment for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) – a 14 per cent increase from 2019 – and over 1 million children will lack access to safe water.⁵ Fifteen per cent of schools remain closed due to conflict, and one in five or half a million children will be out of school as a result.⁶ Low levels of immunization may lead to new epidemic outbreaks. Almost 800,000 children (one third) will need protection, including from gender-based violence.⁷

Humanitarian strategy

Working with partners in the country's most troubled areas, and using pre-positioned supplies, UNICEF will prioritize child-centered life-saving interventions and risk reduction for crisis-affected, displaced and returning people in the Central African Republic. Working through the Rapid Response Mechanism, UNICEF will conduct assessments on new crises and provide essential household items and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) support to vulnerable people newly affected by shocks. In coordination with partners, UNICEF will provide complementary responses in child protection, health and/or education, as well as follow-up WASH interventions and SAM treatment, using mobile approaches when relevant. Child protection support will include psychosocial support and services addressing gender-based violence and children's release from armed groups and reunification with their families. Out-of-school and other vulnerable children will be supported to access safe learning spaces and quality education. UNICEF will continue to lead the nutrition, WASH and education clusters and the child protection sub-cluster, and work with line ministries to reinforce the Government's capacity in humanitarian coordination and response, while increasing its focus on accountability to affected populations and cash-based interventions.⁸ As much as possible, UNICEF will ensure that humanitarian assistance is followed up on with recovery and development-oriented community-based programming.

Results from 2019

As of 31 August 2019, UNICEF had US\$32.3 million available against the US\$59 million appeal (55 per cent funded).⁹ In 2019, UNICEF and partners delivered critical emergency assistance to conflict-affected populations across the country, including in the most hard-to-reach and insecure areas. The UNICEF response has been increasingly multi-sectoral, with 70 per cent of Rapid Response Mechanism interventions for essential household items and WASH complemented by at least one other sector.¹⁰ By August, the Rapid Response Mechanism had assisted 161,000 people with non-food items and 56,600 people with WASH support. UNICEF co-led the response to the polio epidemic, reaching 650,000 children with vaccination, and ensured SAM treatment for over 18,000 acutely malnourished children. UNICEF and partners released 955 children from armed groups and assisted nearly 1,200 women and girls who were victims of gender-based violence – in both cases surpassing 2018 results. UNICEF reached 76,000 crisis-affected children with education and supported the Ministry of Education to set up and deploy an Emergency Response Team. Despite dedicated fundraising efforts and consistent support from an increasing number of donors, UNICEF is unlikely to reach its 2019 targets in some sectors – particularly sanitation and education – due to underfunding.

Total people in need

2.6 million¹¹

Total children (<18) in need

1.2 million¹²

Total people to be reached

948,000¹³

Total children to be reached

782,000¹⁴

2020 programme targets

Nutrition

- 39,418 children aged 6 to 59 months with SAM admitted for treatment
- 165,659 caregivers of children reached with infant and young child feeding counselling

Health

- 472,722 children under 5 years vaccinated against polio
- 85,335 children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities
- 328,922 children under 10 years vaccinated against measles¹⁵

WASH

- 306,000 crisis-affected people accessing safe water
- 103,500 people accessing appropriate sanitation facilities

Child protection

- 100,000 children reached with psychosocial support, including access to child-friendly spaces
- 3,000 women and children accessing gender-based violence response interventions
- 3,200 children released from armed groups accessing reintegration support

Education

- 120,000 children accessing formal or non-formal education
- 360,000 children receiving individual learning materials

Rapid Response Mechanism

- 225,000 vulnerable people newly affected by the crisis rapidly provided with essential household items
- 100,000 people benefiting from WASH interventions
- 5,000 households (25,000 people) receiving cash transfers

Communication for development

- 850,000 people reached with key life-saving/behaviour change messages on epidemic-prone diseases through radio programming
- 125,000 people accessing mechanisms to voice their needs/concerns/feedback

	Sector 2019 targets	Sector total results	UNICEF 2019 targets	UNICEF total results ⁱ
NUTRITION				
Children aged 6 to 59 months suffering from SAM admitted for treatment	30,570	18,840	30,570	18,840
Caregivers of children reached with infant and young child feeding counselling	71,975	50,252	57,580	26,673
HEALTH				
Children under 5 years vaccinated against polio			750,957	650,549
Children under 5 years vaccinated against measles			700,000	30,953 ⁱⁱ
Children under 5 years and women accessing primary health care in crisis-affected areas			82,068	70,350
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE				
Crisis-affected people with access to safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene	771,224	573,477	400,000	209,473
Crisis-affected people accessing appropriate sanitation facilities	428,900	205,453	150,000	13,160
Crisis-affected girls/women accessing menstrual hygiene management services	210,000	2,794	45,000	554
CHILD PROTECTION				
Children reached with psychosocial support through child-friendly spaces	145,000	110,369	110,000	52,874
Children released from armed forces/groups reached with reintegration support	5,550	1,032 ⁱⁱⁱ	3,000	955
Women and children reached with gender-based violence prevention and response interventions			1,500	1,157
EDUCATION				
Children in crisis-affected areas accessing education	160,000	96,744	120,000	76,100
Children who received learning materials	590,000	277,879	442,500	29,110 ^{iv}
RAPID RESPONSE MECHANISM				
Acutely vulnerable people rapidly provided with non-food items after a shock			250,000	161,025
People who received rapid WASH assistance after a shock			150,000	56,620 ^v

* Results are as of 31 August 2019.

ⁱ Due to funding constraints, UNICEF used some of its core and partner resources to support the emergency response, notably for health and education.

ⁱⁱ The national measles campaign was delayed due to the polio outbreak and response and should take place in 2020.

ⁱⁱⁱ Underachievement for this indicator is linked to difficulties engaging with some of the armed groups. The commitment in August 2019 by one of the main armed groups to release children in their ranks, achieved with involvement from UNICEF, is expected to contribute to improving this situation. The same applies to UNICEF results.

^{iv} Underachievement as of August is due to the fact that school supply distributions by UNICEF partners are planned for September and October with the start of the new academic year.

^v Underachievement for this indicator is due to the higher than expected availability of other WASH actors in Rapid Response Mechanism areas of intervention in the first half of 2019.

Funding requirements

UNICEF is requesting US\$57 million to meet the humanitarian needs of children in the Central African Republic in 2020. In line with the Humanitarian Response Plan, this amounts to a slight decrease compared with 2019, but includes a significant increase for the nutrition component due to the deteriorating situation, which will require treating more acutely malnourished children and expanding prevention and counselling efforts. Without sufficient and timely funding, UNICEF will be unable to support the national response to the country's continuing crisis and provide critical life-saving assistance to conflict-affected displaced people, returnees and host communities.

Sector	2020 requirements (US\$)
Nutrition	11,700,000
Health and HIV and AIDS	4,200,000
Water, sanitation and hygiene	6,800,000
Child protection	8,500,000
Education	10,000,000
Rapid Response Mechanism	13,100,000
Communication for development	1,200,000
Cluster/sector coordination	1,500,000
Total	57,000,000

¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), July 2019; and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), August 2019.

² OCHA, July 2019.

³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Central African Republic: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview', OCHA, 2019.

⁴ Ibid. Three humanitarian workers were killed in 2019 and 28 were wounded.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Including through UNICEF's participation in the inter-agency Common Cash Systems pilot initiative.

⁹ Available funds include US\$20.4 million received against the 2019 appeal and US\$11.9 million carried forward from the previous year.

¹⁰ This includes food distributions by World Food Programme (WFP) partners.

¹¹ 'Central African Republic: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview'.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ This figure is the rounded sum of the number of children to be reached (see endnote 14) and the number of adults to be provided with safe water (54 per cent of 306,000 = 165,240). This includes 475,200 women/girls and 472,800 men/boys. Government of the Central African Republic and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹⁴ This figure is the rounded sum of the number of children under 5 years targeted by the national polio campaign in the regions where UNICEF will lead (472,722); and the number of children aged 5 to 17 years targeted to receive individual learning materials (86 per cent of 360,000 = 309,600). This includes an estimated 391,000 girls and 391,000 boys. Government of the Central African Republic.

¹⁵ Measles vaccination was already part of the humanitarian appeal, but with a much lower target, which is why it was not initially highlighted. The proposed target is based on the latest discussions with the Ministry of Public Health and Population and other partners, though planning is not yet final.

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