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for every child

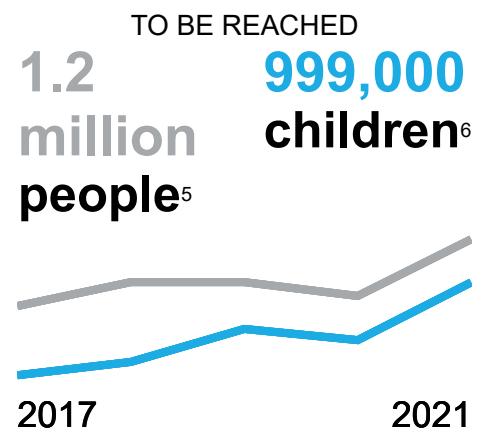
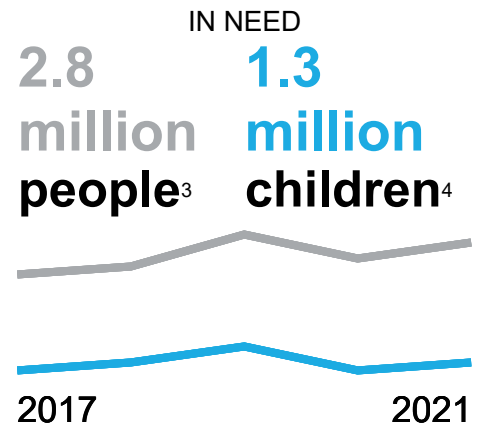
Humanitarian Action for Children

Students Octavie and Geraldine, both 17, are photographed at a UNICEF-supported primary school in the conflict-affected town of Paoua.


Central African Republic

HIGHLIGHTS

- Given the combined effects of enduring violence and the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2021 is expected to rise from 2.6 to 2.8 million¹ (57% of the population), including 1.3 million children.²
- The Rapid Response Mechanism will spearhead UNICEF's response in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and essential household items. Complementary interventions in nutrition, health and child protection will ensure a holistic first response to new emergencies. UNICEF will focus on COVID-19, supporting the safe return of over 480,000 students to 800 schools, expanding access to clean water in underserved areas, and tackling the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic on children, including through expanded treatment for severe acute malnutrition (SAM).
- UNICEF requires US\$66.5 million to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children in the Central African Republic in 2021.




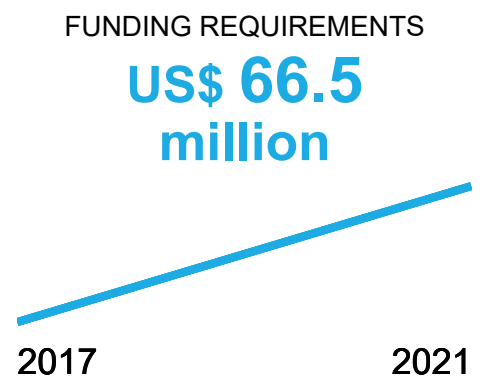
KEY PLANNED TARGETS

 **300,000** people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water

 **2,000** children released from armed forces/groups reintegrated or provided with services

 **130,000** children accessing educational services

 **3 million** people reached through messaging on access to services



HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

The Central African Republic remains one of the worst places to be a child⁷, and the humanitarian situation is deteriorating. Despite the February 2019 peace agreement signed between the Government and 14 armed groups, the security situation remains precarious. Fueled by significant outbursts of violence in several regions, internal displacement is close to its highest level in three years,⁸ with 658,000 people uprooted from their homes.⁹ Adding the 624,000 refugees in neighboring countries,¹⁰ one in five Central Africans is still displaced by conflict.

While the Central African Republic has registered relatively few COVID-19 cases, thanks among others to early prevention and response measures as well as to the country's relative isolation, the pandemic is still active and its socio-economic impact has been severe. The country's 3,679 schools closed at the end of March, resulting in an estimated 1,416,969 students¹¹ from pre-primary to secondary levels having their learning disrupted, and reopening has been very partial, especially in areas affected by violence. Economic slowdown and rising food prices, which 81 per cent of households report as having negatively affected them,¹² are likely to further aggravate the situation of children. The number of children under 5 years in need of treatment for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) is expected to rise by 25 per cent to 62,300.¹³

Other epidemics continue to affect children in the Central African Republic, including measles and polio, and Ebola virus disease affecting neighboring DR Congo remains a threat. The prevalence and impact of natural disasters, in particular floods is likely to increase.¹⁴

Due to the combined effects of violence, COVID-19 and structural fragility,¹⁵ the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in the Central African Republic in 2021 is expected to rise to 2.8 million, representing 57 per cent of the population and including 1.3 million children as well as 430,000 people with disabilities.¹⁶

Among these 2.8 million people, 1.9 million (93 per cent of the population)¹⁷ will experience acute vulnerabilities threatening their survival, especially in heavily conflict-affected areas. Gender-based violence has increased during COVID-19, even doubling in Bangui,¹⁸ 900,000 children will need protection in 2021. The country has the second highest mortality rate related to the use of unsafe water in Africa, and 51% of the population will be in critical need of access to water.¹⁹

SECTOR NEEDS



Nutrition

62,327 children under 5 years are acutely malnourished²⁰



Water, sanitation and hygiene

2.5 million people lack access to safe water²¹



Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

920,000 children need protection services^{22,23}



Education

1.3 million children are out of school²⁴

STORY FROM THE FIELD



Sosthène, a student at the UNICEF-supported Accelerated Learning Centre in Paoua.

Sosthène is one of the thousands of Central African children who had to drop out of school because of the conflict.

Through the Paoua Accelerated Learning Centre, which is supported by UNICEF, Sosthène has had a second chance to access education. The centre can accommodate 160 learners in three classrooms and has four qualified teachers. It targets children who have dropped out of school or have never enrolled. According to Rémy, who runs the centre, of the 60,000 children in Paoua and the surrounding villages, more than 30 per cent did not attend school at all last year.

[Read more about this story here](#)

HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY

Working with partners based in the country's most troubled areas, using prepositioned supplies and based on its network of four field offices, UNICEF will prioritize child-centered life-saving interventions and risk reduction for displaced, returning and host communities affected by the enduring crisis, recurring epidemics and increasingly significant natural disasters in the Central African Republic, while maintaining a strong, specific focus on COVID-19.

The Rapid Response Mechanism led by UNICEF will carry out multi-sector assessments on new crises, share the information with the humanitarian community, and provide essential household items as well as access to critical WASH services to vulnerable children and their families newly affected by shocks. Maintaining strong coordination with external actors, the Rapid Response Mechanism will continue to expand its role of entry point for complementary UNICEF responses, including the use of mobile teams in child protection, health and nutrition, with the aim of delivering a more comprehensive, higher impact first response while striving to ensure that needs are met in the longer term.

In support of the Government, COVID-19 response will remain a major feature of UNICEF's action. It will prioritize the safe return to school of children, particularly in crisis-affected areas, the mobilization of communities for prevention, the development of sustainable WASH infrastructure in underserved areas, and the mitigation of the pandemic's impact on the most vulnerable children through the prevention of COVID-19-related child protection risks, the expansion of SAM programming and multi-purpose cash, in support of the Grand Bargain commitments. The mainstreaming of COVID-19 prevention measures into UNICEF's programming will be furthered.

UNICEF will continue to focus on the protection needs of children, including their release from armed groups and reunification with their families when separated or unaccompanied, and provide the appropriate psychosocial support to children affected by the conflict. Gender based violence risk mitigation, prevention and survivor's assistance interventions will also be prioritized. UNICEF will mobilize partners to address preventable childhood illnesses, malaria, HIV and malnutrition, and will contribute to providing out of school children with access to safe learning spaces and quality education, including through radio programs.

Finally, UNICEF will work with line ministries to reinforce the Government's capacity in humanitarian coordination and response, and will continue to lead the Child protection Working Group, the Nutrition, WASH and Education Clusters, while supporting the mainstreaming of the principles of accountability to affected populations into humanitarian assistance in CAR.

Progress against the 2020 programme targets is available in the humanitarian situation reports: <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/car/situation-reports>

2021 PROGRAMME TARGETS



Nutrition

- **49,862** children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment
- **164,828** primary caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling
- **647,226** children aged 6 to 59 months receiving vitamin A supplementation every six months



Health

- **638,981** children aged 6 to 59 months vaccinated against polio
- **107,028** children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities
- **1,980** health care facility staff and community health workers trained on infection prevention and control
- **399,853** children under 10 years vaccinated against measles



Water, sanitation and hygiene

- **300,000** people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene
- **150,000** people accessing appropriately designed and managed latrines
- **300,000** people reached with handwashing behaviour change programmes



Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

- **120,000** children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support
- **6,000** women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions
- **2,000** children released from armed forces and groups reintegrated with their families/communities or provided with adequate care and services



Education

- **130,000** children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning
- **360,000** children receiving individual learning materials
- **800** schools implementing safe school protocols (infection prevention and control)



Social protection and cash transfers²⁵

- **9,000** households reached with humanitarian cash transfers across sectors



C4D, community engagement and AAP

- **3,000,000** people reached with messages on access to services²⁶
- **700,000** people participating in engagement actions for social and behavioural change



HIV and AIDS

- **10,725** adolescent girls and boys tested for HIV who received the result of last test



Rapid Response Mechanism

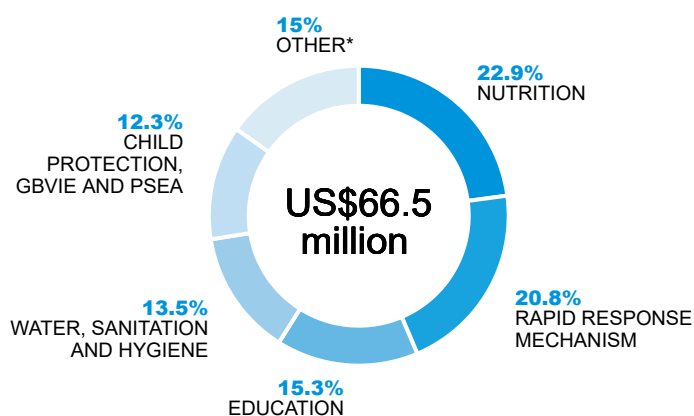
- **235,000** vulnerable people newly affected by the crisis rapidly provided with essential household items
- **130,000** people benefiting from water, hygiene and sanitation interventions

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2021

UNICEF is requesting US\$ 66.5 million²² to meet the humanitarian needs of children in the Central African Republic in 2021. This increase in funding needs from 2020 is due to the integration of the COVID-19 response requirements for 2021 - which will remain a major focus.

In line with interagency planning trends, UNICEF's targets and budget requirements for Education and WASH increased significantly compared to the 2020 appeal. This reflects a strong focus on these sectors as part of the COVID-19 response, particularly to support the safe return of more than 480,000 students to 800 schools, to expand access to clean water in underserved areas and to intensify community engagement. Likewise, the negative consequences of insecurity and COVID-19 socio-economic impact on food security will result in a significantly bigger SAM caseload, and humanitarian cash transfers targets will also increase.

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.



*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions : Health and HIV and AIDS (5.7%), C4D, community engagement and AAP (3.6%), Social protection and cash transfers (3.6%), Cluster coordination (2.3%).

Sector	2021 requirements (US\$)
Nutrition	15,200,000
Health and HIV and AIDS	3,800,000
Water, sanitation and hygiene	9,000,000
Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA	8,200,000
Education	10,200,000
Social protection and cash transfers	2,400,000
C4D, community engagement and AAP	2,400,000
Rapid Response Mechanism	13,800,000
Cluster coordination	1,500,000
Total	66,500,000

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ENDNOTES

1. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Central African Republic Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021, October 2020.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. This figure is the sum of the total number of children to be reached (999,000 - see next note) and 54% of the access to water target (162,000), corresponding to the estimated number of adult beneficiaries of the activity with the largest target. This includes an estimated 489,510 boys, 509,490 girls, 79,380 men and 82,620 women. Of these, 174,150 are estimated to live with disabilities. Based on OCHA's age, gender and disabilities disaggregation of the estimated number of people in need of humanitarian assistance for 2021.
6. This figure is the rounded sum of two of the highest-coverage program targets: 638,981 children under 5 years targeted by the national polio campaign in the regions where UNICEF will be lead, and 360,000 children to be provided with individual learning materials in crisis-affected areas. As the latter activity usually does not concern pre-school age children in crisis-affected areas, the two targets are not expected to overlap. This includes an estimated 489,510 boys, 509,490 girls and 159,850 children with disabilities (15 per cent). Gender and disability figures based on OCHA, Central African Republic 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview.
7. 12% of the Central African Republic's children die before the age of 5; source: The World Bank, The Human Capital Index 2020 Update : Human Capital in the Time of COVID-19, September 2020.
8. Since reaching 688,000 in Dec. 2017; source: OCHA.
9. OCHA, July 2020.
10. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), August 2020.
11. Central African Republic Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Statistical yearbook, 2019.
12. REACH, Central African Republic Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA), September 2020.
13. OCHA, Central African Republic Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021, October 2020
14. Ibid.
15. The Central African Republic ranks 188th out of 189 countries on the United Development Program (UNDP)'s 2019 Human Development Index.
16. OCHA, Central African Republic Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021, October 2020.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid; 2.5 million people.
20. OCHA, Central African Republic Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021, October 2020.
21. Ibid.
22. Due to space constraints, the following acronyms appear in the appeal: GBViE (gender-based violence in emergencies); PSEA (prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse); C4D (communication for development); and AAP (accountability to affected populations).
23. 'Central African Republic: 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview'.
24. Ibid.
25. This includes 3,000 households to be reached by the Rapid Response Mechanism + 4,000 by dedicated humanitarian cash transfers projects + 2,000 from Cash in Nutrition projects.
26. The population targeted is higher than the total number of people/children to be reached because the target includes mass media outreach.