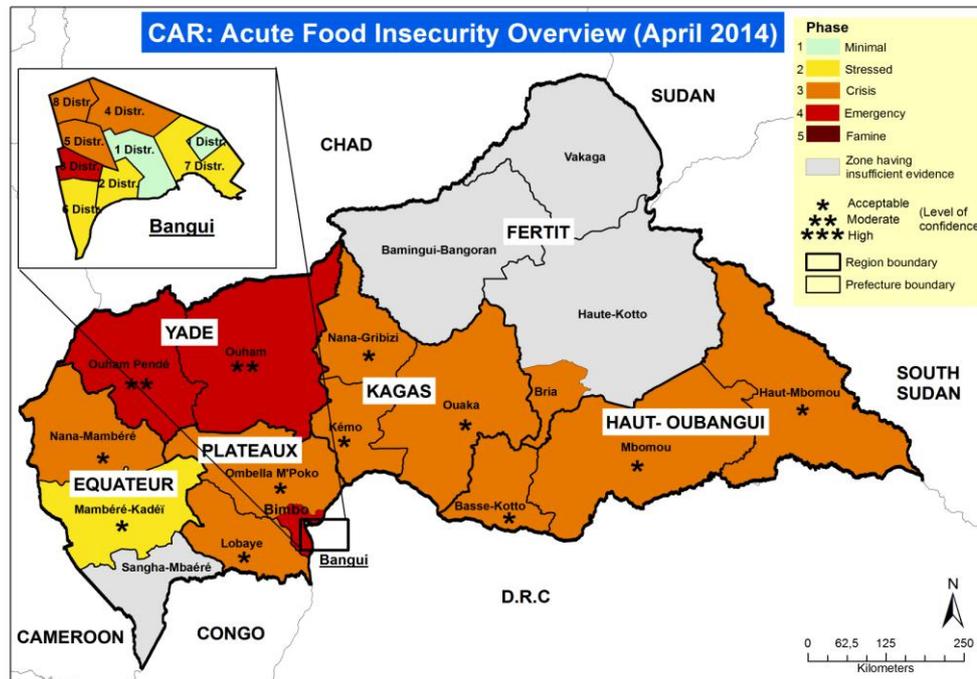




16 October 2014

HIGHLIGHTS



2.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance

387 000 people currently internally displaced (out of a population of 4.6 million)

1.7 million people (45 percent of the rural population) food insecure (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC], April 2014), of which 26 percent in IPC phase 3 (Crisis) and 19 percent in IPC phase 4 (Emergency)



To date, FAO has provided crop production support to 111 750 farming families. With funds received, FAO is also able to assist 24 300 households through resilience activities, as well as 30 000 farming families with off-season agricultural activities that do not depend on the rainy season (vegetable production, fishery, livestock, etc.).



Of USD 45 million requested under the Strategic Response Plan (SRP) to support 300 000 farming families, FAO has received USD 31.2 million¹; USD 13.8 million is URGENTLY needed to meet the SRP objectives and implement the activities of the *caisses de résilience* approach before the first harvest (April 2015); this will help them build their financial capacities, agriculture techniques and social protection to improve food and nutrition security. An additional USD 6 million is needed for the transhumance programme.

CHALLENGES FACING AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

- ❖ The ongoing crisis seriously affected the agriculture sector – the backbone of the country’s economy. The April 2014 FAO/World Food Programme (WFP) Markets and Food Security Assessment indicated a 38 percent decline in agricultural production.
- ❖ Despite efforts from FAO and partners, many farmers lacked adequate agricultural inputs to secure enough food and income.
- ❖ Insecurity and bad road access disrupted market linkages and presented serious constraints for humanitarian operations, increasing logistics costs.
- ❖ Despite the signing of the ceasefire agreement (Brazzaville, 23 July 2014), ongoing disarmament operations and continued clashes between armed factions are resulting in increased tensions across the country; this is impeding input distributions for the agricultural campaign in some areas, affecting FAO’s response in the country since 8 October.

FAO’S RESPONSE

A major food crisis has been contained thanks to timely donor support that has allowed emergency crop production support, saving families from a domino effect of continued losses, as well as preventing farmers from adopting negative coping strategies with long-term effects.

¹ USD 3 million are committed for activities that are not covered by the SRP: aquaculture, cluster coordination, training, rice irrigation, etc.

FAO and NGO partners have provided crop production support to a total of 111 750 vulnerable families across the country. For the main planting season, 83 950 families received 25 kg of crop seeds (groundnut, maize and rice) and two hoes each to plant in time and produce their own food. Preliminary results from post-distribution assessments indicate that, despite insecurity, farmers planted a total area of 55 000 ha with an estimated production of 55 000 tonnes, which will contribute to feed each assisted family for up to four months. For the short cycle input distribution, FAO assisted 27 800 families with seeds (beans, maize, millet, niébé, sesame and sorghum) and tools.

Furthermore, strategic stocks (vegetable seeds) are being prepositioned in FAO's field offices for rapid response capacity to support 30 000 IDPs and affected populations with vegetable seeds and tools following the planting season. This is part of the Rapid Response Mechanism implemented by UNICEF in coordination with NGOs through the Food Security Cluster.

In response to the deterioration of the situation in CAR, FAO provided vegetable producers with immediate assistance before the start and during the crop season. Over 450 farmers' groups, including women's associations and 880 households received vegetable seeds and tools.

While providing relief and rehabilitation assistance, FAO has forcefully promoted its dual resilience agenda. For instance, FAO developed a comprehensive approach called *caisses de résilience* that will help families to accumulate, diversify and protect assets by building their capacities in terms of agriculture techniques, financial capacities and governance structures at community level. This approach has been successfully implemented in crisis and post crisis contexts in several countries in the region. Participating families will be engaged in contractual production of quality seeds and food, support to school gardening and feeding, nutrition surveillance and cash transfer initiatives to boost their community. These activities will be completed with the distribution of small processing machines and the constitution of food and seed reserves. As they are not dependent on the rainy season, resilience measures provide opportunities for households to diversify and accumulate assets on a regular basis year round.

Training has been provided to 250 young professionals, including ministry officials, on the *caisses de résilience* approach, specifically on Saving and Loans schemes and Farmer Fields School techniques. Among the trainees, 25 of them will become trainers of facilitators (150 members of national NGOs).

Food Security Cluster: the Cluster, co-led by FAO and WFP, provided coordination support to implementing partners and the Government from the early stage of the crisis (December 2013). The Cluster was instrumental during the planting season by promoting joint interventions between FAO, WFP and NGO partners. FAO provided agricultural inputs, WFP provided food protection rations, while NGO partners were in charge of distributing both food and seed commodities to the same households to limit the risk of planting material consumption. The Cluster carried out a vulnerability assessment (September 2014) in the Muslim-majority enclave of PK5 in Bangui where humanitarian assistance has been limited due to security constraints. This assessment allowed to count the number of people in this area for the first time since December 2013, and establish the vulnerability criteria to identify the appropriate food security assistance in response to their needs.



FOOD SECURITY MONITORING, ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTS

A Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM) as well as an Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) in collaboration with the World Food Programme and food security partners have been conducted to assess the outcome of the 2014 cropping season and evaluate the food security situation in the country. The CFSAM report should be finalized in the coming days, and the EFSA report should be available by the end of October 2014.

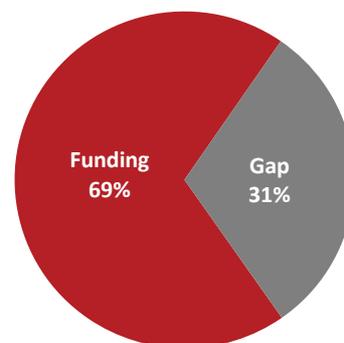
The latest IPC analysis was carried out at the end of April 2014; the next IPC analysis will be carried out in October 2014, should the security situation allow it.

As a platform on transhumance has been set up at the national level, FAO and partners will carry out a comprehensive assessment on transhumance corridors in order to develop a long-term strategy to support the Government in its effort to restore the livestock sector and cohesion between the communities, as well as build national reconciliation.

Funds received from: the Governments of Belgium, Canada, Italy, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America; Africa Solidarity Trust Fund, the European Commission, FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, the Common Humanitarian Fund for the Central African Republic, the United Nations Peace Building Fund and the World Bank.

TOTAL FUNDING (2014)

FAO total funding needs (SRP):
USD 45 million
Funding gap: USD 13.8 million (SRP) +
USD 6 million (transhumance programme)



PLANNED BENEFICIARIES
300 000 FAMILIES

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