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Central African Republic: An evaluation of WFP's Portfolio (2012-mid 2017)

Evaluation Report: Volume I

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Table of Contents

Fact Sheet: WFP's Country Portfolio in the Central African Republic	i
Executive Summary	ii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Evaluation Features	1
1.2 Country context.....	2
1.3 WFP's Portfolio in the Central African Republic	6
2 Evaluation Findings	1
2.1 Portfolio Alignment and Strategic Positioning	1
2.2 Factors and Quality of Strategic Decision Making	6
2.3 Portfolio Performance and Results.....	11
3 Conclusions and Recommendations	39
3.1 Overall Assessment.....	39
3.2 Recommendations	42
Acronyms	46

List of Tables

Table 1: Trends in the Central African Republic socio economic indicators, 2012 – mid-2017	3
Table 2: Official development assistance to the Central African Republic versus gross national income (2012-2015)	5
Table 3: Chronology of key events in the Central African Republic, 2012-mid 2017	7
Table 4: Turnover of key international staff at the Central African Republic Country Office, 2013–mid 2017	9
Table 5: Number of temporary assignments	10
Table 6: Actual numbers of beneficiaries per type of activity and year, 2012-2017	12
Table 7: Total of actual beneficiaries per year and by age, as percentage of numbers planned.....	13
Table 8: Overview of food-aid and cash based transfers to the beneficiaries.....	14
Table 9: Summary overview of operations with food component	14
Table 10: Planned and actual numbers of general food distribution beneficiaries per year /operation.....	16
Table 11: Number of cash based transfer beneficiaries for general food distribution and food assistance for assets activities in 2016.....	17
Table 12: Output indicators for school meals	18
Table 13: Output indicators for nutrition	20
Table 14: Coping Strategy Index 2014-2016	24
Table 15: Outcome indicators in primary schools assisted by WFP school feeding	27
Table 16: Performance indicators for severe and moderate acute malnutrition case management in 2016.....	29
Table 17: Cost-effectiveness of voucher modality compared to in-kind general food distribution, 2016	34

List of Figures

Figure 1: Size of operations by type and funding levels	9
Figure 2: Top donors of WFP in the Central African Republic, 2012–December 2017	12
Figure 3: Size of operations by type and funding levels	9
Figure 4: Importance of food assistance for assets and training in portfolio	22
Figure 5: Trends in anthropometric results	28

List of Annexes

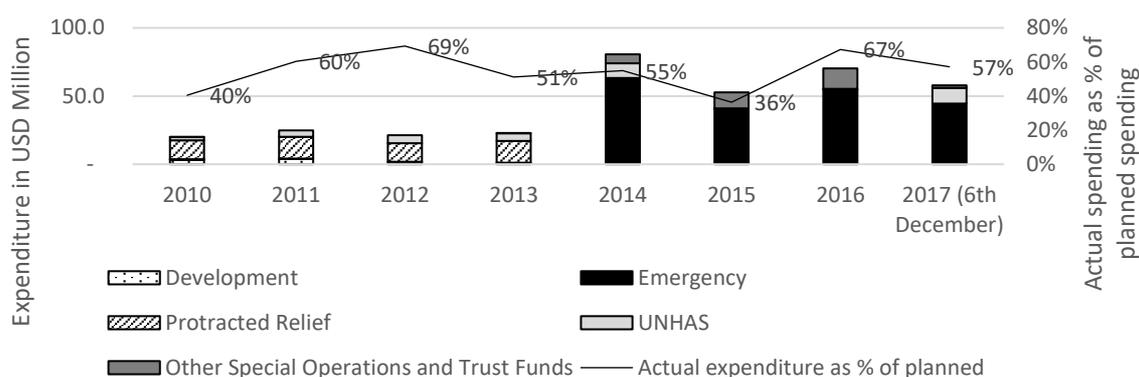
(in separate Volume II)

- Annex A: Terms of Reference
- Annex B: List of Operations in WFP Portfolio in the Central African Republic
- Annex C: Evaluation Matrix
- Annex D: List of People Consulted During the Evaluation
- Annex E: Evaluation Methodology
- Annex F: Bibliography
- Annex G: Evaluation Process and Timetable
- Annex H: Assessment of Special Operations in the Central African Republic
- Annex I: Assessment of the Interim Country Strategic Plan
- Annex J: Strategic Alignment of the Portfolio
- Annex K: Case Study on the Impact of Funding Shortfalls on Regional EMOP 200799
- Annex L: Analysis of Logistical Constraints for the Central African Republic
- Annex M: Nutrition Beneficiaries
- Annex N: Analysis of Cost-Effectiveness
- Annex O: Outcome Indicators Used for School Meals
- Annex P: Mapping of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Fact Sheet:

WFP's Country Portfolio in the Central African Republic

Value of programmes by type and overall funding received

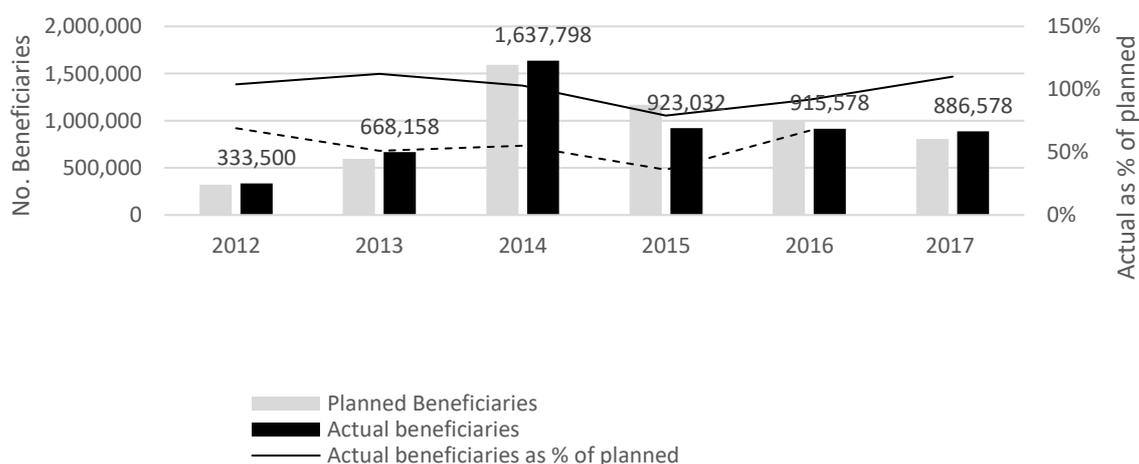


Source: WFP management systems. Figures do not include indirect support costs and some accounting adjustments.

Type of activities

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Type of WFP operation	-	WFP Corporate Emergency from November 2013 (L3) to June 2015		WFP Regional Emergency from June 2015 (L2)- ongoing		
Key projects by size of expenditure	Mainly PRRO and some DEV		Mainly EMOPs and SOs			
Type of activities						
GDF - in kind	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GDF - via vouchers				✓	✓	✓
School meals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
P4P					✓	✓
FFA/FFT	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Nutrition	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HIV/TB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Beneficiaries	Include IDPs, refugees and from 2016, also returnees					

Planned versus actual numbers of beneficiaries, 2012-2017



Sources: Standard project reports for 2012-2017. Figures exclude double counting of beneficiaries receiving assistance through more than one modality.

Top three donors to WFP for the Central African Republic (2012-2017): US (43 percent), UN CERF (14 percent), EU (10 percent)

Sources: Various WFP sources

Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1.1.1 Evaluation features

1. This country portfolio evaluation covered all of WFP's operations in the Central African Republic between 2012 and mid-2017.¹ It assessed WFP's strategic positioning, the quality of and factors influencing decision making, and the performance and results of portfolio activities as a whole. The relevance of the interim country strategic plan (ICSP) for 2018–2020 was assessed. The evaluation also provides evidence to inform preparation of the country strategic plan.

2. This was the first evaluation of WFP's work in the Central African Republic for more than a decade. It was conducted by WFP's Office of Evaluation (OEV) and an external evaluation team, with field work in July 2017. The team augmented the available data and document reviews with interviews with stakeholders including WFP staff, donors, beneficiaries and partners. The main limitations on the evaluation were insecurity in the field, which limited the availability of data and the number and locations of sites visited by the evaluation team – and a lack of institutional memory of events and conditions in 2012 and 2013.

1.1.1.2 Context

3. The Central African Republic is a landlocked country bordering Cameroon, Chad, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and the Sudan (figure 1) and affected by political and economic events in those countries. Its population is estimated to be between 4.6 and 4.9 million. Despite having substantial natural resources, the country was ranked last of the 188 countries in the United Nations Development Programme 2016 Human Development Index.

4. More than three quarters of the population relies on agriculture, but output remains low. Continuous insecurity and population displacements have deprived many farmers of their livelihoods. The current humanitarian crisis is both one of the worst in the world – proportional to population – and one of the least well known.

¹ The evaluation did not cover WFP's assistance to Central African refugees in neighbouring countries because they are assisted by WFP country offices in those countries.

Indicator (source)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Population in need of humanitarian aid (OCHA)*		2.3 million	2.5 million	2.7 million	2.3 million	2.4 million
Refugees abroad (OCHA)		235 067	423 717	456 714	461 652	481 600
Internally displaced persons (OCHA)		601 746	825 000	469 307	420 681	592 300
Food-insecure households – moderate/severe – (EFSA Sept. 2015; national food security assessment Oct. 2016)		28%	28%	50%	48%	
Global acute malnutrition (national survey; nutrition cluster)	7.8%		6.6%		16.7%	
Primary net school enrolment (UNICEF 2012; WFP standard project report 2015)	Global: 78.4% of boys 59.5% of girls			WFP-assisted schools:** 96.6% of boys 76.2% girls		
Gross national income per capita (World Bank Atlas method)	USD 500	USD 330	USD 340	USD 360	USD 370	
Under-5 mortality rate/1 000 live births (WHO)	141.3	137.7	133.6	128.8	123.6	
Life expectancy at birth (World Bank; WHO)	49.1 years	49.8 years	50.7 years	50.9 years for boys 54.1 years for girls	51 years for boys 54 years for girls	

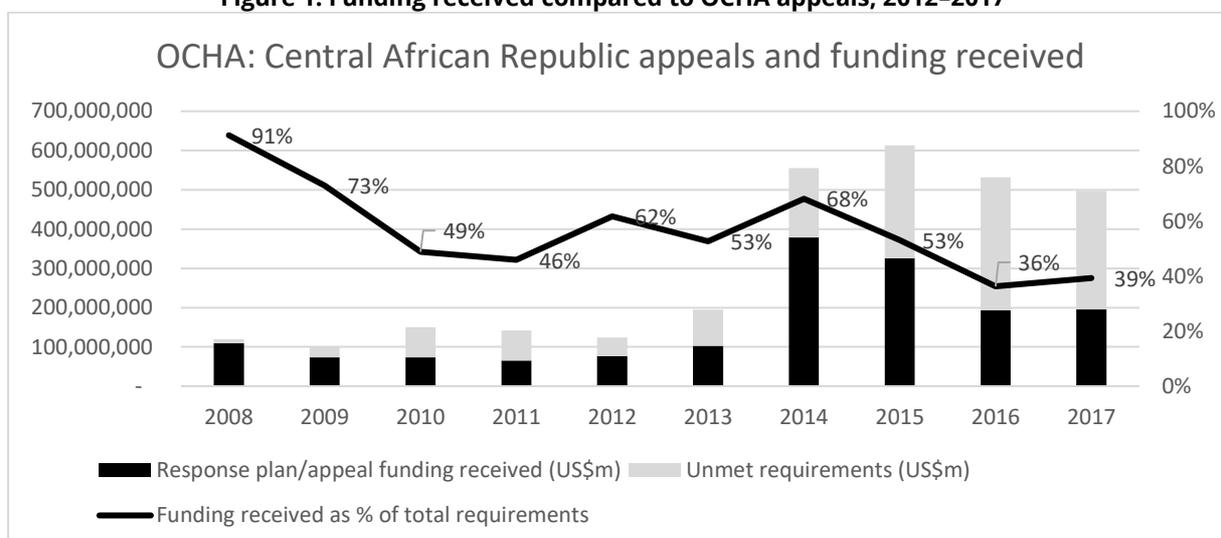
* According to UNDP, 76 percent of the population lives on less than USD 1.90/capita/day.

** No data on other schools are available.

EFSA = emergency food security assessment; OCHA = United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; UNDP = United Nations Development Programme; UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund; WHO = World Health Organization.

7. Despite the high levels of humanitarian need, operations in the country have suffered from chronic underfunding. Figure 1 shows the decreasing levels of funding for OCHA appeals over time. In 2017, the humanitarian appeal was only 39 percent funded.

Figure 1: Funding received compared to OCHA appeals, 2012-2017



Source: OCHA March 2018: <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/651/summary>.

1.2 WFP portfolio

8. In 2017, the country office had a total of approximately 170 staff members, of whom more than half were based in the capital, Bangui, with the remainder in five sub-offices² mainly in central and western parts of the country.

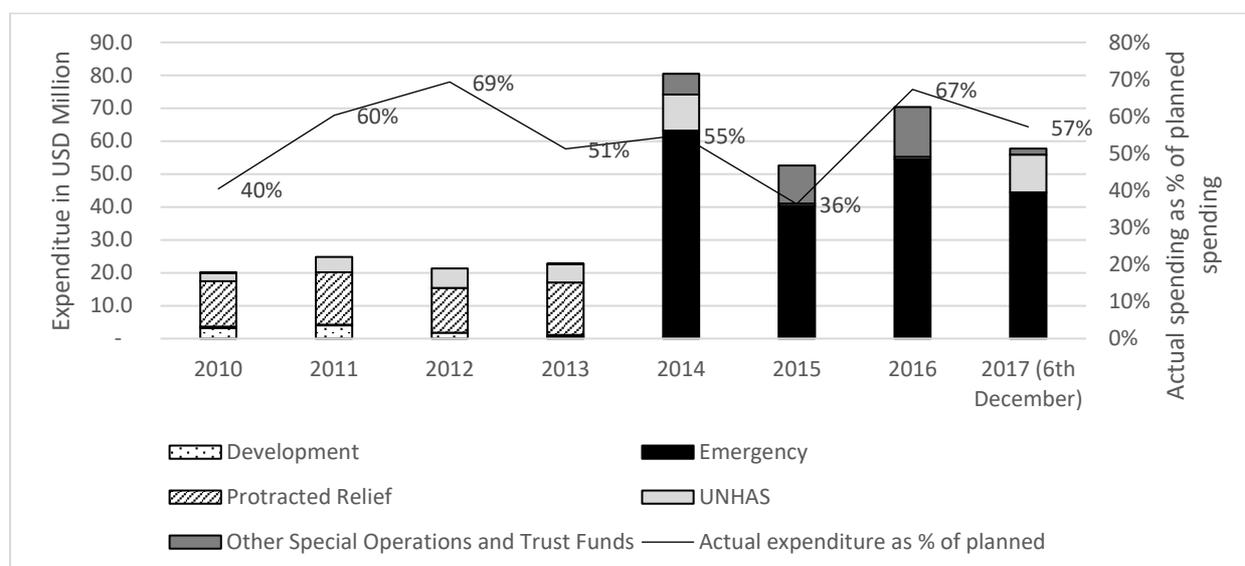
9. Figure 2 shows that until 2013, the budget for WFP's planned operations in the Central African Republic was stable at approximately USD 20 million per year. As a result of the political events unfolding at the end of 2013, however, operation budgets increased to more than USD 80 million in 2014 and have oscillated between USD 50 million and USD 70 million per year since then.³ The evaluation period can be divided into three sub-periods: "development with growing tensions" from 2012 to December 2013; "emergency" from January 2014 to May 2015; and "attempts at recovery" since May 2015.

10. Although WFP was implementing Level 3 and Level 2 emergency responses throughout the evaluation period, its operations in the Central African Republic were chronically underfunded, as shown in figure 2.

² Bambari, Bossangoa, Bouar, Kanga Bandoro and Paoua.

³ According to data from WFP management systems. These figures do not include indirect support costs or certain accounting adjustments.

Figure 2: Levels of expenditure, by programme category, 2012-2017



Source: WFP management systems. Figures do not include indirect support costs and some accounting adjustments.

1.2.1.1 Components of the portfolio and operations

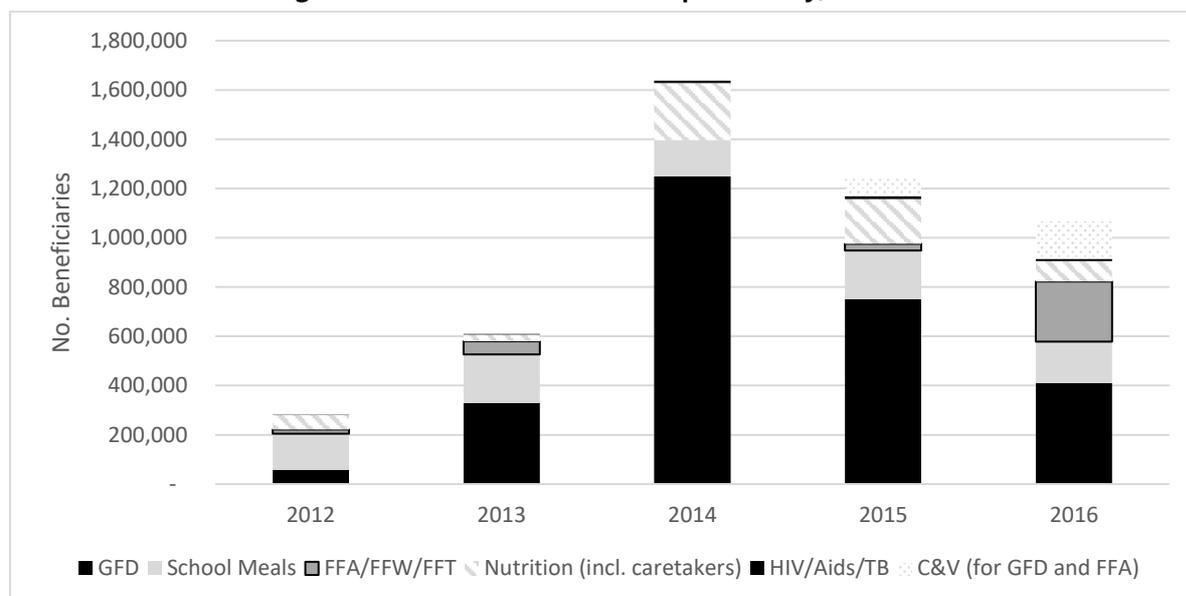
11. From January 2012 to June 2017, the country portfolio included 18 operations: one country programme, one protracted relief and recovery operation, one single-country emergency operation (EMOP), three immediate-response EMOPs, one regional EMOP, nine special operations, one project funded from WFP's immediate response account and one trust fund project addressing HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. The total funding required was slightly more than USD 869 million (2012-2016), of which WFP received USD 555.3 million – 64 percent⁴.

12. WFP's beneficiaries included people in need of assistance in their normal places of residence, internally displaced persons, refugees and, from 2016, returnees.

13. As figure 3 shows, WFP implemented several activities during the evaluation period: general food distributions via in-kind and cash-based transfers; school meals; nutrition activities; food assistance for assets (FFA) activities; and Purchase for Progress (P4P) activities. In addition, 11 special operations were implemented at a total cost of USD 76 million, providing humanitarian air services and logistics and emergency telecommunications support.

⁴ This figures includes the entire value of the EMOP 200799 for the "Critical support to populations affected by the ongoing crisis in Central African Republic and its regional impact" and not just the value of operations within the Central African Republic.

Figure 3: Number of beneficiaries per activity, 2012–2016



Sources: Standard project reports for 2012–2016. Figures include double counting of beneficiaries receiving assistance through more than one modality.

C&V = cash and vouchers; FFA = Food Assistance for Assets activities; FFT = Food Assistance for Training activities; FFW = Food Assistance for Work activities; GFD = general food distribution.

14. As well as cooperating with ministries and United Nations agencies, WFP also worked with international and local non-governmental organizations as cooperating partners, some of which have since left the areas where WFP operates – or even the country – after repeated looting of assets and security threats.

15. The United States of America has consistently been the main donor, accounting for 43 percent of contributions, followed by the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund and the European Union.

Evaluation findings

WFP's strategic alignment and positioning

16. The country office did not have a formal country strategy during the period evaluated, but WFP succeeded in aligning its operations with the shifts in country needs and with core national policies.

17. Memorandums of understanding were signed in early 2017 with most of the relevant government ministries – those responsible for the economy, planning and international cooperation, agriculture, education and health. No formal agreement has yet been signed with the Ministry of Social Affairs and National Reconciliation, which coordinates responses to the current crises, including assistance to internally displaced persons.

18. WFP was much appreciated by all stakeholders: it played a proactive role in the United Nations country team and the clusters, leading the logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters and co-leading the food security cluster. WFP was found to respond well to needs and played an important role with other United Nations partners and the Government in defining national strategies such as those included in the interim strategic frameworks for 2014–2017, the national recovery and peacebuilding plan for 2017–2021, the United Nations development assistance framework plus for 2018–2021 (UNDAF+) and the humanitarian response plan for 2017–2019.

19. WFP's core comparative advantage was considered to be its unique capacity to ensure road transport of food assistance and to provide air transport to members of the international community through its operation of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS). Where conditions allowed, WFP also provided crucial assistance for early recovery through school meals, FFA and P4P activities.

20. Overall, cooperation with other United Nations agencies, donors, national authorities and partners was adequate. WFP was generally perceived as neutral. Some weaknesses were noted in the coordination of nutrition activities with UNICEF, which resulted from the different strategic approaches of the two agencies. The evaluation identified additional opportunities for cooperating with the civil affairs department of MINUSCA on working with communities, the World Bank on scaling up the use of vouchers and the European Union's Bekou Trust Fund on P4P activities.

21. The strategic objectives of the ICSP for 2018–2020 were found to be consistent with projected needs in the country. The objectives include providing emergency humanitarian assistance, which represents 56.9 percent of the ICSP budget; supporting the national zero hunger strategy – Strategic Development Goal (SDG) 2; enhancing partnerships – SDG 17; and strengthening the Government's capacities with a view to the establishment of a social protection system and a system for managing food security and nutrition. The strategic objectives are also in line with the objectives of WFP's strategic plan for 2017–2021 and of the national recovery and peacebuilding plan. The pace of transferring responsibilities to the Government will depend on coordination arrangements, the Government's capacities and the security situation.

22. Recently, through the UNDAF+, all United Nations entities operating in the Central African Republic have formally recognized the importance of the triple nexus of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding work. Re-establishing the rule of law and state authority throughout the country is a core priority of the Government, as security and an end to the sense of impunity of criminals and armed bands are key conditions for enabling comprehensive, effective and efficient humanitarian and development interventions. The nexus is not explicitly embedded in the vision articulated in the ICSP, however.

1.2.1.2 Factors influencing WFP's decision making

23. The drivers of programming decisions were mostly related to the overwhelming need for urgent assistance, exacerbated by severe operational constraints: the volatile situation; frequent population displacements; lack of security for staff and partners; poor roads and infrastructure; difficult and expensive logistics, resulting in delays and shortages; lack of access to all but about a third of the country's territory, mainly in the south and some other enclaves, and the frequent need for military escorts even in accessible areas;⁵ the rapid turnover of qualified international staff; and the limited capacity of the Government and partners.

24. Decision making was also affected by consistent funding shortages, which forced the country team to prioritize emergency assistance over other interventions. The evaluation found that WFP acted appropriately in deciding to reach as many people as possible even though it meant reducing rations and/or the frequency or duration of distributions, according to local conditions.

25. In the absence of a formal strategy, programming decisions were made for each operation based on analysis of the situation, the policies of United Nations entities and/or the Government, WFP's strategic objectives, the SDGs, the capacities of the Government and other major actors, the risks and the lessons learned.

⁵ Military escorts were mandatory in southeastern and northeastern parts of the country.

26. Consistently good relations with national authorities and partners were seen as a positive factor that enhanced cooperation as a key component of decision making, even in difficult circumstances.

27. To the extent feasible in the Central African Republic, major programming and operational decisions were supported by data collection and analysis, but these were of limited scope and reliability. WFP is a major actor in providing food security information, for which there is great demand from humanitarian and development partners. Despite annual crop and food security assessment missions with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government, emergency food security assessments when required, and Integrated Food Security Phase Classification analysis led by FAO in 2014 and 2016, data collection was fragmented, undermining data accuracy and completeness. Aggregation of data collected at the local level may be misleading as many displaced persons took refuge in accessible cities where they could easily be identified – and registered and prioritized – while many rural areas were inaccessible, making it more difficult to obtain information.

28. Mobile vulnerability analysis and mapping was introduced in 2016 and may strengthen data collection, but because of staffing and security constraints post-distribution monitoring by sub-offices often did not meet planning targets.

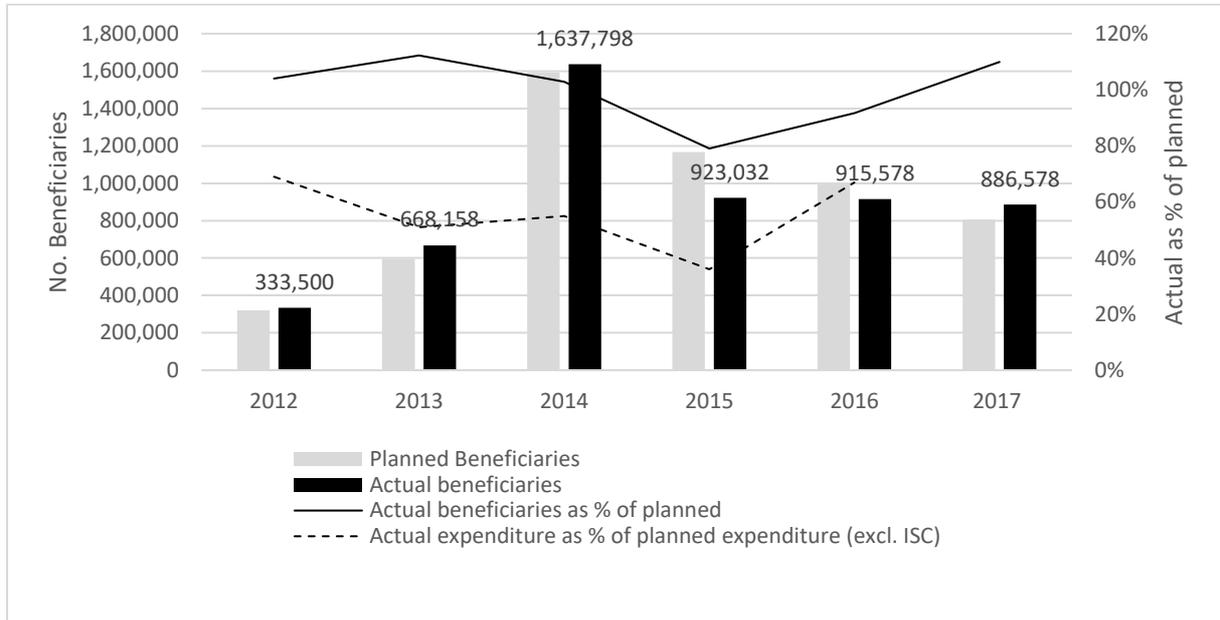
29. On the other hand, risk management, which in the Central African Republic was below WFP's corporate standards until 2013, was significantly improved with assistance from the regional bureau and now includes a regularly updated risk register.

Portfolio performance and results

30. Between 2012 and mid-2017, WFP delivered assistance – through in-kind food distributions, food vouchers, school meals and nutrition interventions – to a large proportion of the identified vulnerable people in the Central African Republic. In 2014, at the peak of the emergency, WFP provided food assistance to 1.6 million people – more than one third of the country's total population of 4.6 million. The scale up in the size of operations from the end of 2013 onwards was remarkable.

31. The number of actual beneficiaries as a proportion of the number planned was never less than 80 percent during the period evaluated; in four of the six years analysed, the number of beneficiaries reached was higher than the number planned. Figure 4 shows the high levels of actual versus planned beneficiaries, which were achieved despite chronic underfunding and made possible only by reductions in the size of rations and the frequency and duration of assistance.

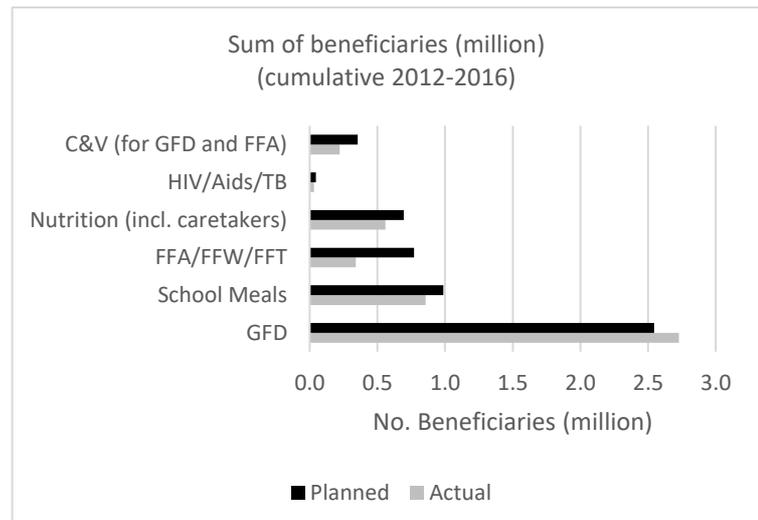
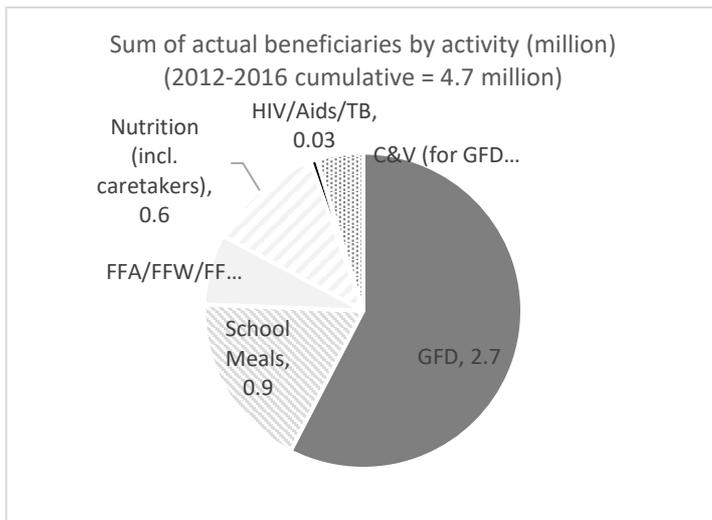
Figure 4: Planned versus actual numbers of beneficiaries, 2012-2017



Sources: Standard project reports for 2012-2017. Figures exclude double counting of beneficiaries receiving assistance through more than one modality.

32. The evaluation team was not able to draw conclusions on the outcomes of interventions. The following paragraphs report on outputs by activity, summarized in figure 5, and on overall efficiency.

Figure 5: Total beneficiaries per year, by activity, 2012-2016 (millions)



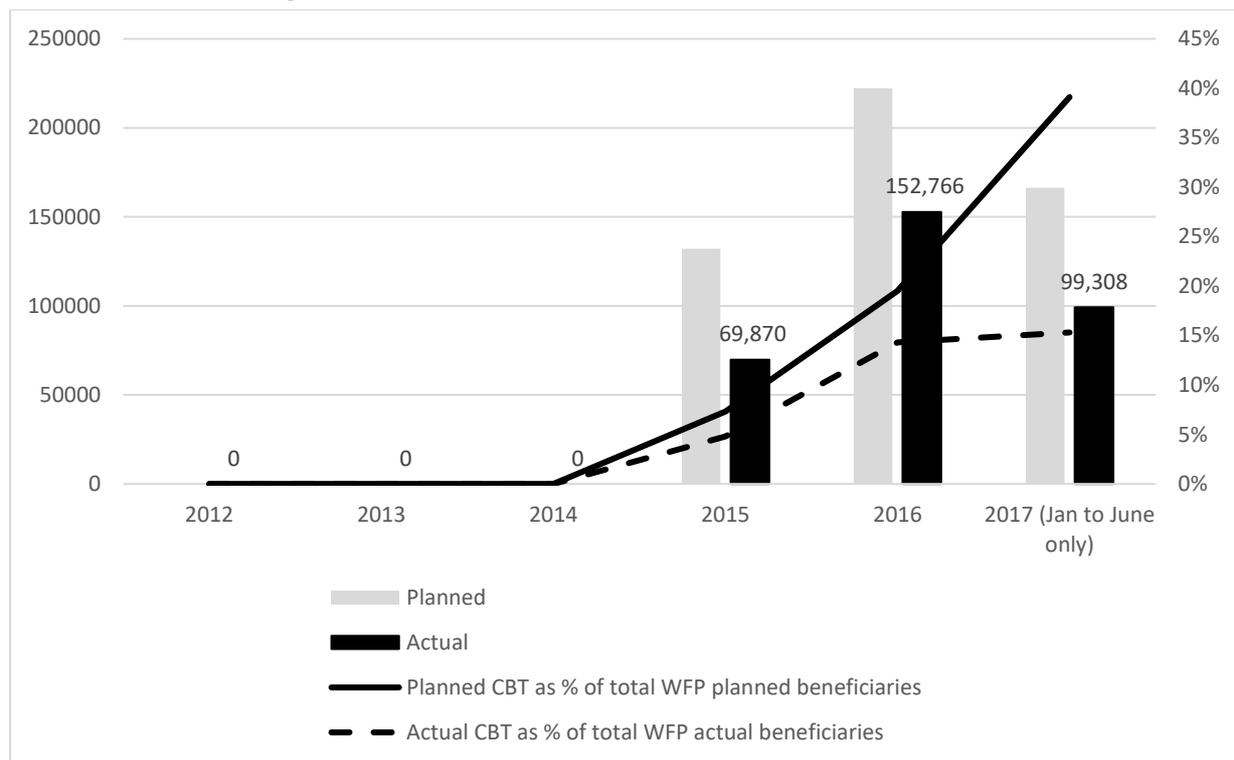
Source: Standard project reports for 2012-2016. Figures include double counting of beneficiaries receiving assistance through more than one modality.

C&V = cash and vouchers; GFD = general food distributions; FFA = Food Assistance for Assets activities; FFT = Food Assistance for Training activities; FFW = Food Assistance for Work activities;

33. *General food assistance – in-kind and vouchers:* During the evaluation period, 144,052 mt of food assistance was distributed to beneficiaries. Vouchers were introduced in 2015 through a pilot project, and their use was gradually scaled up in areas where market functioning and the capacity of cooperating partners allowed. The total transfer value of vouchers reached USD 3.2 million in

2016; figure 6 gives an overview of the overall historical trend. Partners and beneficiaries were generally favourable to the use of vouchers in these areas because of their flexibility. Assessment of cost effectiveness was limited, however. Comparisons between in-kind and cash-based transfers gave different results depending on the location, and analysis was not performed systematically or sufficiently frequently.

Figure 6: Cash-based transfer beneficiaries, 2012–mid-2017



Sources: Standard project reports for 2012–2016 and the monitoring and evaluation report of June 2017.

34. *Other modalities*: In 2016, nearly half of all households in the Central African Republic were food-insecure. FFA and P4P activities, which aimed to foster agricultural recovery, were limited and negatively affected by continuing violence. There were only 50,457 FFA participants in 2016, and only 1,100 mt of food was purchased through P4P activities in the first half of 2017.

35. *School meals* contributed to some return to normalcy and to reconciliation and social cohesion, which are core national policies. The quality of education was affected by looting, overpopulated classes and the lack of teachers. In 2012 and 2017, 20–25 percent of school pupils were receiving WFP school meals, but targeting was driven by the accessibility of schools rather than by needs.

36. *Nutrition*: WFP provided blanket supplementary feeding – especially in 2014 at the peak of the emergency – targeted supplementary feeding, complementary feeding and food by prescription. Interventions focused on treating moderate acute malnutrition and preventing acute malnutrition and were adapted to changing needs over time. Interventions did not, however, tackle the much more widespread chronic malnutrition in a country where according to UNICEF figures stunting reached 40.7 percent in 2012. The number, duration and quality of nutrition interventions were negatively affected by volatile security conditions, chronic underfunding, delays, and low capacity on the part of local health facilities. Planned coverage was modest compared with the estimated numbers of malnutrition, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis cases.

37. The evaluation found a need for improved collaboration on nutrition between WFP and UNICEF in order to address the differences in strategy between the two agencies.

38. Important synergies were achieved between general food distributions and supplementary feeding activities and between FFA activities related to seed protection and P4P activities through which purchases from local partners were used for WFP school meals.

39. *Gender*: Figures from standard project reports show that women and girls accounted for at least 50 percent of total beneficiaries during the evaluation period. This finding was quite positive and may lead to WFP's activities having a positive impact on the lives of women and girls. Nonetheless, neither WFP nor its partners performed in-depth analyses of gender issues and their impact on the design and implementation of activities on the ground, making it impossible to assess the portfolio's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment.

40. *Humanitarian principles, protection and accountability to affected populations*: Given the security conditions in the country, risks relating to the breach of humanitarian principles and protection are high. The evaluation noted that dialogue on protection issues with the Ministry of Social Affairs and National Reconciliation, which is officially responsible for assistance to internally displaced persons, was limited. The EMOP through which all WFP activities have been implemented since 2015 includes two cross-cutting indicators for protection and accountability to affected populations. In 2016 – the last year for which data were available at the time of the evaluation – the indicator for protection⁶ exceeded 80 percent target, but the indicator for accountability to affected populations⁷ reached 68.9 percent, just below the target of 70 percent.

41. Regarding *efficiency*, logistics constituted the dominant cost driver: WFP brought an average of 35,000 mt of food per year into the Central African Republic despite security issues – MINUSCA military escorts were often mandatory – poor infrastructure and administrative hurdles. These challenges were reflected in high land transport, handling and storage and operational costs, which represented between 30 and 50 percent of total food and related costs, against a corporate average of 18–22 percent. The complexity of operating the 1,400 km-long Douala to Bangui corridor also resulted in costly delays. New corporate tools such as the Logistics Execution Support System and the Global Commodity Management Facility helped to reduce lead times and pipeline breaks and generally improve management of the supply chain, but logistics challenges remained. WFP owns a fleet of trucks in the Central African Republic, but truck maintenance facilities and utilization rates require improvement.

42. *UNHAS*: Flights operated by WFP were crucial for the humanitarian community in the country. Between 2013 and 2017, UNHAS carried a total of 87,588 passengers and was involved in 125 medical evacuations and 883 security evacuations.

43. *Logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters*: A wide range of services were provided to the humanitarian community, but the overall approach was at times piecemeal and the decision process slow because of high staff turnover and chronic underfunding. For example, the emergency telecommunications cluster was without a coordinator for many months because of a lack of funding.

44. *Partnerships*: Partnerships with FAO on seed protection and surveys, UNHCR on assistance to refugees, and UNICEF on the “back to school” initiative particularly strong. WFP was also found to have strong partnerships with the Government. Little evidence was available regarding the impact

⁶ “Proportion of assisted people who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programme sites”.

⁷ “Proportion of assisted people informed about the programme”.

of capacity strengthening activities, most of which focused on short-term training, with limited longer-term initiatives.

45. *Staffing and capacity:* Just over half of WFP staff in the Central African Republic were working at the main office in Bangui. The rest were in sub-offices, where living conditions are difficult and the level of responsibility in terms of area covered and number of beneficiaries assisted is high. During the evaluation period, the country office had difficulties in attracting and retaining skilled personnel, especially experienced staff for managerial positions. Relatively low staff numbers outside Bangui also affected the levels of monitoring that could be performed and the capacity strengthening activities with local government, partners and civil society. Staff turnover was high, especially during the initial period of the emergency that started at the end of 2013.

46. *Sustainability:* The situation in the Central African Republic worsened again after 2016 and the country is highly dependent on funding from the international community to provide assistance and basic services to the population. The current food security situation and poor access to basic social services are unlikely to change until peace is restored and state presence substantially reinforced. The ICSP outlines the importance of FFA and P4P activities for recovery, but planned funding levels appear optimistic given that average annual expenditures between 2014 and 2016 were only 70 percent of those planned.

Conclusions

47. In the Central African Republic, a complex, multi-year and unpredictable emergency with low international visibility creates an extremely challenging operational setting for WFP. During the evaluation period, the country office did not have a formal strategy until the development of the ICSP, which was approved in 2017. The reactive approach employed, focusing mainly on responding to emergency needs through food distributions and school feeding, was appropriate. WFP's decision to reach as many people as possible, albeit with reductions in rations and/or the frequency or duration of distributions, was rational.

48. WFP operated in a manner that was consistent with government policies and priorities and collaborated well with other actors under the UNDAF+ as part of the United Nations country team. WFP's main comparative advantages were its unique capacities in transport and distribution.

49. From 2015, WFP began to expand the range of activities and modalities beyond traditional in-kind assistance, using cash-based transfers whenever market and security conditions allowed.

50. In 2017, the ICSP constituted an important step in recalibrating the balance between emergency response and support for early national recovery, fostering greater effectiveness in under circumstances that remain volatile. Under the ICSP, FFA and P4P activities were strengthened, but funding levels remained low. While implicitly recognizing the nexus of humanitarian and development work, the ICSP did not explore the indirect role that WFP could also have in supporting the re-establishment of peace by working at the triple nexus of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding work, which is at the centre of the UNDAF+.

51. Conditions in the country seriously impeded systematic data collection. To the extent feasible, major decisions were supported by data and analysis, but the data and analysis were of limited scope and reliability. In addition to high levels of need and funding shortfalls, security and access were major decision drivers.

52. Despite limited access to sites outside the main cities and a shortage of reliable data, improved and more systematic data gathering and analysis and monitoring are essential to

strengthening the quality of WFP's strategy and operations, especially in newer areas of work such as cash-based-transfers, capacity strengthening and nutrition.

53. A lack of analysis of gender dynamics resulted in missed opportunities to address the high levels of gender-based violence.

54. Despite the challenges, WFP's overall output was high, especially in general food distribution, which reached over one third of the population at the peak of the emergency in 2014. The scale of activities was highly dependent on security levels, local capacities – health systems, education, governance bodies, the police, and others – and funding.

55. Outcomes were difficult to measure, however, because of data limitations. Vouchers, which were gradually introduced from 2015, appeared to offer an effective alternative when market and security conditions allowed. Emergency school meals were perceived as contributing to a sense of normalcy and social cohesion, but coverage was limited and the quality of education hindered by many factors. Other activities – nutrition, FFA and P4P – were valued by stakeholders but were implemented on too small a scale to have meaningful effects.

56. Logistics costs and security issues are main determinants of efficiency in the Central African Republic. WFP's logistics services were highly commended, but efficiency gains could be made by reducing delays along the main transport corridor into the country and improving the management of WFP's truck fleet. Efficiency and effectiveness could also be improved by addressing the high turnover in and low capacities of staff, especially in sub-offices.

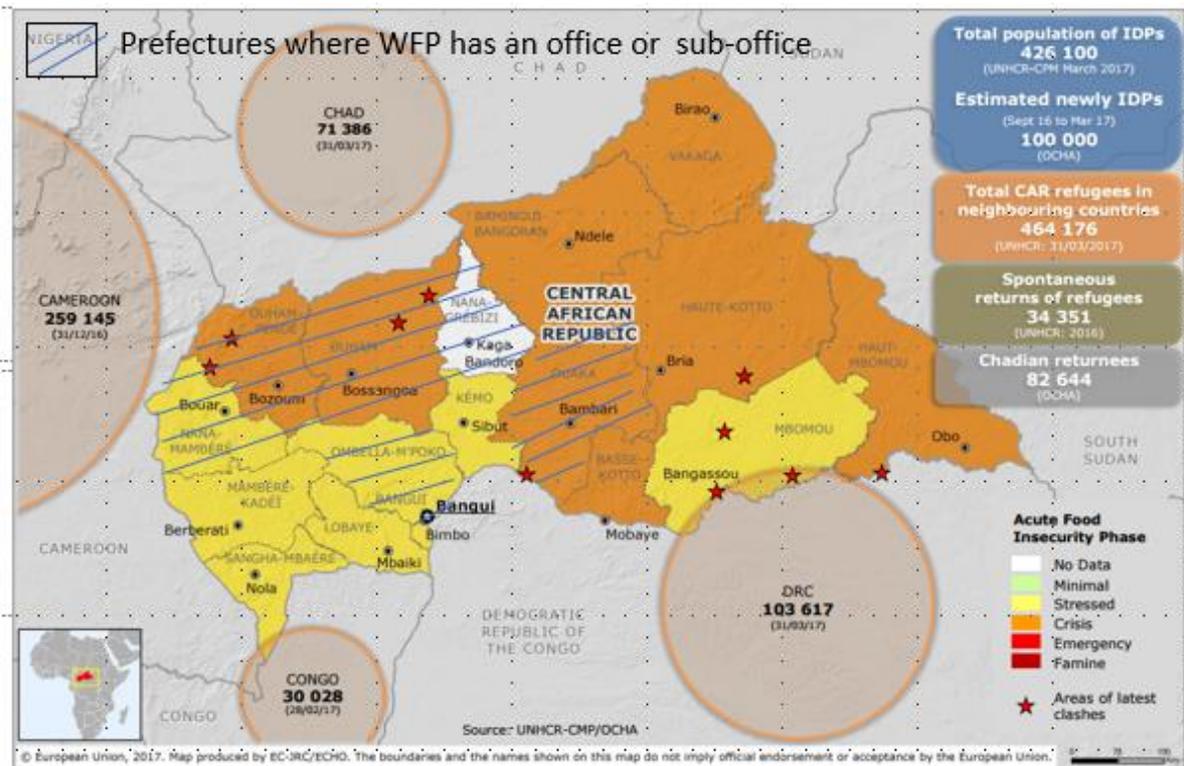
Recommendations

No.	Rationale	Recommendation	Responsibility and timing
Strategic thrust 1: Supporting the conditions for peace			
1	WFP's timely delivery of humanitarian assistance is significantly affected by the lack of peace, with security issues in the country affecting the transport and delivery of assistance. Security is also one of the main factors limiting opportunities for agriculture and contributing to the high proportion of people in need throughout the country. The UNDAF+ explicitly recognizes the importance of the triple nexus of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding work, but the indirect role of WFP in supporting the re-establishment of peace through its assistance activities has not yet been formally explored.	WFP should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) support, particularly through FFA activities and/or the vouchers modality, the work of partners directly involved in the re-establishment of peace – UNICEF, United Nations Development Programme, the civil affairs department of MINUSCA, etc.); b) contribute to the mapping of national institutional capacities in order to improve the focus and effectiveness of its own capacity strengthening activities, leveraging the experience and knowledge available from headquarters and the regional bureau; c) ensure the systematic involvement of line ministries and national actors in the design and monitoring of its projects; d) enhance synergies with relevant civil society and other actors, including in education; e) ensure that its partners are fully aware and regularly reminded of the importance of adhering to the humanitarian principles that underpin all humanitarian assistance; and f) whenever possible, work with FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development on institutionalizing partnerships for both programming and fundraising, particularly in the areas of agricultural resilience and gender equality. 	Country office, supported by regional bureau and headquarters. Timing: 2018–2020
Strategic thrust 2: Responding to the zero hunger challenge			
Funding			
2	The country office has experienced recurring funding shortfalls, particularly for recovery-related activities, which are included under strategic outcome 3 of the ICSP and are part of the Government's strategy for assisting the sustainable reintegration of internally displaced persons and refugees.	WFP should examine the donor landscape with a view to assessing the range of donors and donors' appetite for funding WFP's recovery activities in the Central African Republic. WFP should also review its articulation of linkages between the triple nexus and its FFA and P4P activities in order to ensure that existing and potential donors are able to make informed decisions on funding allocations.	Country office, supported by regional bureau and headquarters. Timing: 2018–2020
Food security information and monitoring			
3	There is a lack of systematic evidence on which to base food security programming.	WFP should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) optimize its strategic role in food security by enhancing the use of existing tools and taking the lead in assisting the Government in developing a national food security information strategy and ensuring government ownership of a "sentinel surveillance" network of sites to be used to gather relevant information; 	Country office, supported by regional bureau. Timing: 2018–2020

No.	Rationale	Recommendation	Responsibility and timing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) continue to strengthen monitoring systems, centrally in the country office and in sub-offices; c) prepare a formal strategic monitoring plan with clear coverage targets, systematically taking into account the various levels of security and access limitations that exist in the country by planning various frequencies and modalities of monitoring, such as the use of third-party monitoring and remote monitoring via telephones and tablets; and d) use the strategic monitoring plan to track and monitor accountability to affected populations effectively. 	
Gender			
4	There is a lack of analysis of the role and impact of gender dynamics in the design and implementation of WFP's assistance activities. Such analysis is particularly important in a country with high levels of gender-based violence.	<p>WFP should develop an evidence-based operational strategy for integrating gender into programming. In particular it should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ensure that programming is based on specific gender analysis; b) improve and monitor the protection of women, girls and other vulnerable groups; c) prioritize women's access to productive assets and financial services and their control over property; and d) strengthen partnerships with the Government, international agencies and entities led by women. 	<p>Country office.</p> <p>Timing: 2018–2020</p>
Nutrition			
5	Except in 2013, the actual number of nutrition beneficiaries was relatively close to the number originally planned. The overall number of beneficiaries is declining, however, despite very high levels of need throughout the country.	<p>WFP should strengthen nutrition approaches. In particular, it should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) enhance coherence between WFP and UNICEF MAM and SAM targeting respectively, to ensure maximum synergies between the two programmes; b) identify an appropriate strategy for working with the Ministry of Health and Population; c) consider a developmental approach to addressing chronic malnutrition, when feasible. 	<p>Country office, supported by regional bureau and headquarters.</p> <p>Timing: 2018–2020</p>
Vouchers			
6	Vouchers were introduced in 2015 and were identified as a viable and valuable alternative to in-kind modalities in some contexts. Despite ambitious planning regarding the number of cash-based transfer beneficiaries, however, implementation was slow and context and market analyses were not always carried out either at the start or during the implementation of activities.	<p>WFP should expand its programming capacity and scale up the voucher modality by carrying out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) more systematic market studies; b) more comparative analyses of the various modalities used in interventions; and c) better analysis of the factors affecting people's choices and preferences. 	<p>Country office, supported by regional bureau.</p> <p>Timing: 2018–2020</p>
Strategic thrust 3: Efficient and effective delivery			
Human resources			

No.	Rationale	Recommendation	Responsibility and timing
7	The country office experienced high staff turnover, especially during the emergency period, and had difficulties in staffing its sub-offices to a level that would enable it to deliver efficiently and effectively.	WFP should: a) commission and publish a staffing review based on the staff needed to deliver results under the new ICSP; and b) widen efforts to improve living conditions, security and incentives at sub-offices in order to help attract good-quality staff to the field offices closer to beneficiaries.	Country office, supported by regional bureau. Timing: 2018-2019
Logistics			
8	Transport into and within the Central African Republic was found to be difficult, slow and expensive, despite WFP having its own fleet of trucks.	WFP should: a) work to improve management of the Douala-Bangui corridor, which is under the responsibility of the Cameroon country office, with the regional bureau playing a technical advisory role; b) advocate with national authorities, through senior management, for problem-free transit; c) allocate adequate funding to truck maintenance facilities; and d) optimize the use of its fleet of trucks.	Regional bureau for management of the Douala-Bangui corridor; country office, supported by regional bureau, for the other points. Timing: 2018-2019

Map



Sources: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), European Union, and WFP for prefectures with WFP offices or sub-offices. May 2017

1 Introduction

1.1 Evaluation Features

Rationale

1. Country portfolio evaluations (CPEs) encompass all WFP activities during a specific period in a country. They evaluate the performance and results of the portfolio and provide evaluative insights to guide future strategic and operational decision-making. Country portfolio evaluations aim to provide answers to three key evaluation questions:
 - Question 1: What are the alignment and strategic positioning of the WFP portfolio of activities?
 - Question 2: What affects the factors and quality of strategic decision-making?
 - Question 3: How were the performance and results of the WFP portfolio?
2. The Central African Republic (CAR) was selected for an independent evaluation conducted by the WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV) together with an external evaluation team as part of its ongoing series of country portfolio evaluations. The series of evaluations seeks to provide systematic evaluation coverage of the country presence of WFP. There has been no previous evaluation of the WFP portfolio in the Central African Republic.
3. The evaluation is an opportunity for the country office to benefit from an independent assessment of its portfolio of operations during 2012-mid 2017⁸ and to generate corporate lesson-learning around the adaptation of WFP to the Central African Republic complex emergency context.⁹ It is expected that the evaluation findings will provide additional evidence on the underlying assumptions and base lines used by WFP to prepare its interim country strategic plan (ICSP) approved by the Board in November 2017, and that the evaluation findings will inform the country office in the design of operations and strategic orientation during the preparation of its country strategic plan, in line with the WFP Integrated Road Map (IRM),¹⁰ the Sustainable Development Goal targets, Zero Hunger, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Objectives

4. The scope of this country portfolio evaluation has been defined as the entirety of WFP interventions in the Central African Republic covering the period from 2012 to mid-2017. The interventions account for a total of 18 projects, which are listed in Annex B.
5. The terms of reference (ToR) for the country portfolio evaluation are attached in Annex A and they state that evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning. As such, this country portfolio evaluation will:
 - i) Assess and report on the performance and results of the country portfolio in line with the WFP mandate and in response to humanitarian and development challenges in the Central African Republic (**accountability**)
 - ii) Determine the reasons for success or failure and draw lessons from experience to produce evidence-based findings that allow the country office to make informed strategic

⁸ The terms of reference of the assignment originally limited time coverage until end of 2016; the time horizon was extended during the inception phase of the evaluation.

⁹ The CPE did not assess the impact of the the Central African Republic crisis outside the country.

¹⁰ The WFP Interim Country Strategic Plan approved by the Board covers the period 2018-2020

decisions about positioning itself in the Central African Republic, form strategic partnerships, and improve operations, design, and implementation (**learning**).

6. The intended users of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations include the WFP Country Office, the Regional Bureau of Dakar, Headquarters Divisions, Senior Management and the Executive Board; the Government of the Central African Republic, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donors and the United Nations Country Team.

Methodology and limitations

7. The evaluation was undertaken by the independent Office of Evaluation together with an external evaluation team. It involved inception visits to Rome and Bangui in July 2017, which then fed into the inception report. The main evaluation mission took place over three weeks in September 2017 and included a visit to the Regional Bureau in Dakar, one to WFP Cameroon Doula Office (one of the logistics corridors into the Central African Republic), and meetings and field visits in Bangui, Bambari, Bouar, Kaga-Bandoro and Paoua. Preliminary findings were shared with the country office team, followed by a headquarters and regional bureau briefing by teleconference. An in-country stakeholders' workshop was held in February 2018 to present and discuss draft conclusions and recommendations.

8. The methodology for the evaluation is set out in the inception report and summarized in Annex E, while the evaluation matrix is presented as Annex C. The evaluation process is described in Annex G, and interviewees are listed in Annex D. An extensive bibliography is provided at Annex F. The Office of Evaluation provided support on quality assurance and management of the evaluation and the team benefited from full support from the country office staff in Bangui and in the sub-offices, and from all stakeholders.

9. The main limitations experienced were: restricted access to some field locations and activities due to security constraints, limitations of data availability - especially regarding monitoring - and a bias towards the recent years due to staff rotation. However, telephone interviews were held with some of the key staff who worked in the office during the evaluation period but who are no longer there.

1.2 Country context

10. This section provides an overview of significant political, economic and social contextual factors that have affected the WFP country portfolio in the Central African Republic and that are relevant to the evaluation. It also notes trends in WFP corporate strategies and policies that have shaped the context for WFP in the Central African Republic. An overview of the portfolio is presented in Annex B.

1.2.1 Historical, governance, economic and social trends

11. The Central African Republic is a land-locked country bordering Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Republic of the Congo, Sudan and South Sudan. It has a surface area of 622,984 km² and a relatively small population, currently estimated at 4.7 million in the ICSP.¹¹ Areas in the north east are particularly sparsely populated. Despite being endowed with large natural resources (diamonds, uranium, timber, gold, oil, hydropower and 15 million hectares of arable land), in 2016, the Central African Republic was ranked number 188 out of 188 countries included in the UNDP Human Development Index. The current humanitarian crisis is both one of the worst in the world (proportionally to its population), and one of the least well-known.

¹¹ The last population census in the Central African Republic took place in 2003, when population was found to be 3,895,139 individuals. Since then, the population is having to be estimated, and figures range from between 4.6 million (OCHA) to 5.6 million (CIA Factbook).

12. The political, economic and social situation of the Central African Republic has been steadily deteriorating since the early 1990s. While agriculture is still the main economic sector, supporting more than three quarters of the population (in addition to forestry and mining), agricultural output remains low as a result of only 4 percent of arable land being cultivated each year, the use of mainly rudimentary agricultural techniques,¹² and the high level of internal displacement caused by the continued insecurity.

13. Over the evaluation period, the country has almost continuously undergone civil conflicts. The country, and ultimately the capital Bangui, were gradually taken over by rebels from late 2012 to 2013. As a result, the already weak health system virtually collapsed; health facilities were looted and medical staff fled their posts. Most schools were also looted – furniture was used as firewood by armed groups – and many remained closed for one or even two years (2014-2016); many children have lost these years of education. Education statistics by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) stopped in 2012. Where schools have re-opened, they are crowded (up to 180 children in one classroom visited by the evaluation team) and lack equipment and teachers.¹³

14. The authority of the Government, which lacks resources, is still essentially limited to an area around the capital Bangui, and some pockets in the country. After a brief period of hope for recovery in 2016, the situation again deteriorated in 2017.¹⁴ Various armed rebel groups - fragmented along religious and political lines¹⁵ and living by means of trafficking and looting-control more than half of the territory, despite the presence of 12,000 soldiers of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Central Africa (MINUSCA). Armed groups are still fighting across 80 percent of the territory. Armed MINUSCA escort is mandatory for all road transport outside the capital and are available only weekly or fortnightly – as it the case on the main road from Cameroon. Roads to the east have almost disappeared due to lack of maintenance and the destruction of bridges. With 215 incidents against humanitarian workers recorded in the first half of 2017, the Central African Republic is also the most dangerous place in the world for them.¹⁶

15. Economic, social and health indicators, which are not always available for recent years, show a difficult situation that is getting worse over time, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Trends in the Central African Republic socio economic indicators, 2012–mid 2017

Indicator	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Source
Human Development Index (HDI)	0.370 (180th of 186 countries)	0.345 (185th of 187 countries)	0.347 (187th of 188 countries)	0.352 (188th of 188 countries)			UNDP
Gender Inequality Index (GII)	0.654 (142 nd of 152 countries)	0.654 (144 th of 152 countries)	0.655 (147 th of 155 countries).	0.648 (149 th of 159 countries)			UNDP
Extreme poverty (- USD 1.90/day)					76% of the population		UNDP
Population in need of humanitarian aid		2.3 million	2.5 million	2.7 million	2.3 million	2.4 million	OCHA
Refugees abroad		235,067	423,717	456,714	461,652	481,600	OCHA
Internally displaced		601,746	825,000	469,307	420,681	592,300	OCHA
Food insecure (moderate/severe)		28% of households	28% of households	50% of households	48% of households		EFSA, Sep 2015; ENSA, Oct 2016 ¹⁷
Global acute malnutrition (GAM)	7.8%		6.6%		16.7%		National surveys 2012 and 2014 ¹⁸ Nutrition Cluster: 2016-2017 Mapping Surveys

¹² Source: FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission, Oct 2014

¹³ Current needs are estimated at some 14,000 teachers. Source: BBC “The Central African Republic: The country with no teachers” - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-42279395>

¹⁴ New presidential and legislative elections took place in December 2015 and March 2016, and prospects seemed to improve temporarily. In late 2016, the Government adopted the national plan for recovery and peacebuilding (Plan National de Relèvement et de Consolidation de la Paix pour la République Centrafricaine – RCPCA) to chart the post-conflict recovery and development roadmap from 2017 through 2021.

¹⁵ Christian and Animists represent 75-85% of the population centred in the south west, while 15-25% of Muslims live mostly in the north and east.

¹⁶ Source: OCHA Humanitarian Response Plan 2017-2019

¹⁷ Emergency Food Security Assessment; National Food Security Assessment

¹⁸ Enquête Nationale sur la Situation Nutritionnelle et Mortalité Rétrospective: June 2012 and 2014, published in April 2015

Indicator	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Source
Primary net enrolment rate at school (percent)	Global 78.4 (boys) 59.5 (girls)			In WFP-assisted schools ¹⁹ 96.6 (boys) 76.2 (girls)			UNICEF 2012; SPRs EMOP 200799
HIV/AIDS	4.9 percent of the population is HIV-positive (130,000 persons infected)						WHO Note: Only 13.75% of HIV-positive people are treated.
Gross national Income (GNI) per capita	USD 500	USD 330	USD 340	USD 360	USD 370		World Bank (Atlas method) Note: Lowest GNI after Burundi.
Under-five mortality rate/1,000 live births	141.3	137.7	133.6	128.8	123.6		WHO
Life expectancy at birth	49.1 years	49.8 years	50.7 years	50.9 years (Men) 54.1 years (Women)	51 years (Men) 54 years (Women)		World Bank; WHO

1.2.2 Food and Nutrition Security

16. Agriculture supports more than three quarters of the population, but output remains low with only 4 percent of arable land cultivated each year through rudimentary subsistence techniques, and half of the households are still food insecure. Most of the one million people displaced (August 2017) have been deprived of their agricultural-based livelihoods. According to the 2014 national Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transition survey, the rate of stunting among children under five reached 40.8 percent.

1.2.2 Gender

17. There is consensus that gender equality and the empowerment of women in the Central African Republic has been negatively affected by the several decades of protracted conflicts.²⁰ These conflicts also led to there being little statistical evidence,²¹ limiting efficient and effective gender-sensitive programming for both humanitarian and development activities. The country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1991 without any reservations. Since then though, little has happened and the country has only submitted one national report to CEDAW in 2012.²² In 2014, the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) was 0.3285²³, placing the Central African Republic below the average in Sub-Saharan Africa with regard to gender equality in formal and informal laws, attitudes, and practices that restrict women and girls' access to rights, justice, and empowerment opportunities. The high SIGI, furthermore, reflects worrying statistics, including 24 percent of girls who are married before they turn 15, and 41 percent of women experiencing domestic violence.²⁴

18. With the intensification of general violence in the Central African Republic over the last five years, gender-based violence has increased. According to the 2017 mapping of serious human rights violence in the Central African Republic (period 2003-2015) prepared by United Nations agencies, conflict-related sexual and gender based violence is widespread but "systematically under-reported and under-investigated, if investigated at all."²⁵ Conflict-related gender based violence is met with a culture of impunity.²⁶ The gender based violence sub-cluster under the Humanitarian Country Team established a gender based violence information management

¹⁹ There is no overall data for other schools not assisted by WFP

²⁰ See, for instance, OCHA (2014) "Gender Briefing Note on the Central African Republic – June 2014."

²¹ World Bank (2016) "The Little Data Book on Gender."

²² <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G13/414/10/PDF/G1341410.pdf?OpenElement>. The report describes that while the national legislation comprises legal acts promoting equal rights and opportunities among women and men, these are generally not applied because of lack of awareness and traditional social cultural norms. The report also highlights discrimination, for instance the family code under which the husband is automatically head of the family.

²³ OECD Development <http://www.genderindex.org/ranking/>. SIGI was developed by OECD as a measure for discrimination against women in social institutions.

²⁴ African Union (2015) "R.C.A. – Monitoring 2015 des violences basées sur le genre et des violences sexuelles"

²⁵ MINUSCA, UNDP, United Nations Human Rights (2017) "Report of the mapping project documenting serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Central African Republic, Jan 2003 to Dec 2015"

²⁶ The shame and stigma related to being a victim of gender based violence follow the women for the rest of their lives; they will often be abandoned by their partners and excluded from normal social relations.

system in 2014. From January to November 2015, 60,208 gender based violence cases were recorded and victims were provided with medical and/or psychosocial care.²⁷

1.2.3 Humanitarian Needs and International Assistance

19. As at the end of June 2017, the Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs (OCHA) estimated the total number of people in need to be 2.5 million, of which 534,000 are internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 480,951 are refugees outside the country.²⁸ Despite the needs, funding is low: the United Nations Humanitarian Response Plan 2017-2019 includes a budget for 2017 of USD 497.3 million. However, as of December 2017, only one third of the people in need had received assistance.²⁹

20. The Central African Republic is heavily dependent on donors, most of whom are no longer based in the country due to the security situation.³⁰ The recurrent conflicts have disrupted the revenue streams that the Government used to collect from the mining sector and from the production and export of cash crops such as coffee and cotton. Data from the World Bank’s database on official development assistance shows a sharp increase in humanitarian aid in 2014, followed by a new decrease (-26.5 percent) in 2015, as donors shifted their resources to other regional crises, such as Ebola.

Table 2: Official development assistance (ODA) to the Central African Republic (2012-2015)

Year	GDP	Net ODA received	ODA per capita
2012	USD 2.184 billion	USD 228,020,000	USD 50.8
2013	USD 1.519 billion	USD 202,820,000	USD 45.1
2014	USD 1.703 billion	USD 611,010,000	USD 135.3
2015	USD 1.584 billion	USD 486,940,000	USD 107.1

Source: World Bank, data.worldbank.org/indicator/DY.ODA.ODAT.PC.ZS, 2015

21. In parallel to the still under-funded United Nations Humanitarian Response Plan referred to above,³¹ pledges worth USD 2.261 billion were made in November 2016 at a donors’ conference organized in Brussels by the European Union, to respond to development and investment needs – not humanitarian ones – identified in the national recovery plan (RCPCA 2017-2021). By April 2017, twenty donors, including the European Union, United States of America, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and African Development Bank, had pledged and confirmed a total of USD 2,234 billion.³² However, disbursement and absorption capacity by the Government appears to challenge prompt use of such funds.³³

²⁷ UNFPA (2015) “Fighting against Gender Based Violence in the Central African Republic, Need for Inter Organizational Mobilization”
²⁸ Source: OCHA Humanitarian Response Plan revised June 2017
²⁹ Source OCHA and Financial Tracking System, Dec 2017
³⁰ Donors with a permanent presence in the Central African Republic are: EU, ECHO, World Bank, France, Italy and China. USAID covers the Central African Republic from Nairobi and DRC, and Sweden, Japan and Switzerland) cover it from Cameroon.
³¹ Cross-information between humanitarian aid and development does not appear effective. The RCPCA Cell stated for example that it was not informed about humanitarian funding, and OCHA similarly stated that they did not know about RCPCA planning.
³² Source: Ministry of Economy, Planning and Cooperation, RCPCA Cell, report of April 2017
³³ In April 2017, only 54 percent of these commitments (USD 1,217 billion) were planned for disbursement. RCPCA must handle 20 different disbursement procedures: the donors had not agreed on streamlining this issue. In December 2017, the President complained that only USD 250 million had really been disbursed. Other key challenges are likely to be found in the absorption capacity of the Central African Republic Government for such massive public structural investments, the duration of the implementation of some of the projects (building infrastructure takes a long time), the reimbursement of credits (not all commitments are in grants), and the need to pay salaries of the Government’s civil servants in the meantime. In 2018, the total foreseen budget of the Central African Republic is only CFA 108 billion (USD 196 million). Sources: UNDP; RCPCA Management Cell; Jeune Afrique, Dec 2017

1.3 WFP's Portfolio in the Central African Republic

1.3.1 Timeline of Key Events

22. The evaluation period can be split in three sub-periods.

1. Development with growing tensions (2012-November 2013)
2. Emergency (December 2013-May 2015)
3. Attempts at recovery (June 2015-current)

23. After relative stability in most of 2012 with a focus on development and recovery, the political and social situation worsened throughout 2013, leading to widespread violence in December and the declaration at the end of the year of a United Nations system-wide Level 3 humanitarian emergency. The second sub-period lasted until 2 June 2015, when the emergency was downgraded and when for WFP it became a Level 2 Regional Emergency. The third sub-period, which is ongoing, started with an institutional recovery July 2015, followed by a new deterioration in 2017. As at the end of June 2017, the Central African Republic was still a Level 2 Regional Emergency for WFP. The key events, inside and outside WFP, for each of these periods, are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Chronology of key events in the Central African Republic, 2012-mid 2017

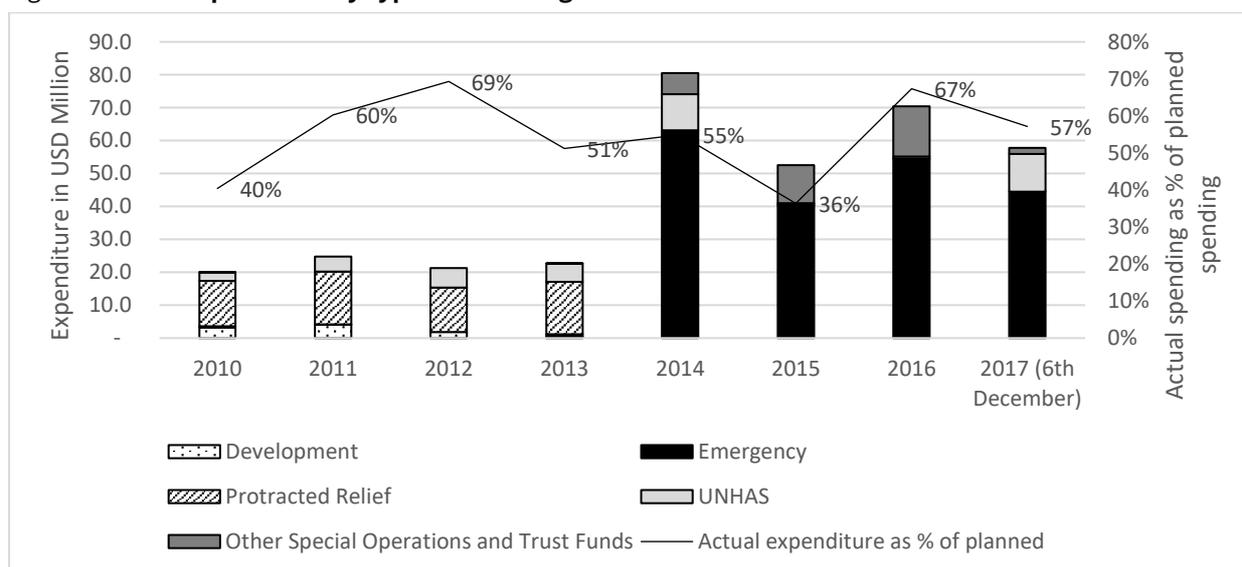
	2012	2013	11 Dec 2013	2014	2015	Dec 15-Mar 16	2016	June 2017
	PHASE I: Development with growing tensions		PHASE II: Emergency (CAR WFP L3 Corporate Emergency - Dec. 2013 to May 2015)			PHASE III: Attempts at recovery (CAR WFP L2 Regional Emergency June 2015 – current)		
The Central African Republic relevant events	December 2012 Seleka rebels rapidly overrun the north and centre of the country. Some displacements in rural areas	Seleka rule (March 2013-January 2014). Rebels overrun the capital and suspend constitution. Chaos ensues. International staff are evacuated and programmes are suspended. Violence leads to mass displacements	United Nations Security Council approves deployment of a peace-keeping force; an African Union mission is established	September 2014: transfer of authority from African Union to MINUSCA. Seleka alliance fractures into several groups. Various factions continue to attack civilians	Transitional Government struggles to establish security. Little progress on reconciliation, disarmament, and reassertion of state control	Referendum and first round of presidential elections. A national recovery and peacebuilding plan (RCPCA) is launched	March 30, 2016: former Prime Minister Touadéra sworn in as president. Sectarian violence, attacks on civilians continue in central and western regions	Security situation again deteriorating. Violence against MINUSCA increases
Overall humanitarian context	Little humanitarian focus: United Nations Country Team prepares development assistance framework (UNDAF+ 2012-2016) to support the Government in providing social services	OCHA estimates the number of displaced at 614,000 (end of 2013)	United Nations declares emergency; strategic response plan for USD 243 million, plus OCHA appeal of USD 152,2 million. Clusters are strengthened	Peak of crisis; Cameroon, Chad, DRC and the Republic of the Congo host over 400,000 Central African Republic refugees	End of L3 emergency and launch of L2 WFP emergency in June 2015. March 2015: 436,000 internally displaced; 2.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance		467,800 refugees in neighbouring countries; 384,300 internally displaced	In June, OCHA estimates 984,950 people are displaced. 2.4 million still need humanitarian assistance. Violence against humanitarian workers increases

	2012	2013	11 Dec 2013	2014	2015	Dec 15-Mar 16	2016	June 2017
Food security	1.1 million people are estimated as severely or moderately food insecure. Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM) 2012: general acute malnutrition at 7.8%, 40% of children under 5 years found malnourished; entire country food insecure		Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSAM) 2013: 72% of people borderline food insecure, 28% of moderate or severely food insecure, 20% of households sold productive assets, CFSAM 2013: 600,000 severely food insecure	Food production still 58% below normal. EFSAM: 28% of people moderate or severely food insecure	IPC December 2015: 50 per cent of the population classified as food insecure. CFSAM: widespread dietary deterioration		National Food Security Assessment (ENSA): reduction in severe (6%), and moderate (42%) food insecurity	3 consecutive years of reduced harvests and disrupted markets negatively affects food security
WFP	Country programme 200331 focused on development through school feeding and nutrition. WFP also provides relief to the displaced from previous violence (PRRO 200315)	In January, IR-EMOP 200565 to cope with newly displaced	EMOP 200650, supported by new Special Operations. Large numbers of short term international staff deployed to support country office	Multiple simultaneous emergencies worldwide	In January 2015, regional EMOP 200799 is launched to cope with consequences of the Central African Republic crisis in neighbouring countries	Deteriorating security situation becomes a challenge for preparedness and rapid response		ICSP is prepared and aligned with RCPCA 2017-2021 and UNDAF+ 2018-2021

1.3.2 WFP Country Strategy

24. From January 2012 to June 2017, the country portfolio covered 18 operations: one country programme (CP), one protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO), one single-country emergency operation (EMOP), three immediate response emergency operations (IR-EMOPs), one regional EMOP, nine special operations (SOs), one immediate response account (IRA) and one trust fund (TF) for HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. A more detailed description of these operations can be found in Annex B, whilst the figure below gives a general overview of the change in the size of WFP funded operations over time.

Figure 1: **Size of operations by type and funding levels**



Source: WFP management systems. Figures do not include indirect support costs and some accounting adjustments.

25. The total requirements of these operations over the 5.5 years of the evaluation period were USD 869 million, of which only 64 percent was ultimately funded by donors (USD 555.3 million).³⁴

26. Until November 2017 when the ICSP was approved, WFP did not have a formal strategy bringing together all these different programmes under one single umbrella. The ICSP covers a period of 3 years (2018 to 2020) with an overall budget of USD 289 million (an average of approximately USD 96 million per annum) and it is expected to contribute to WFP Strategic Results 1 (access to food), 2 (end malnutrition), 3 (smallholders productivity and incomes), 5 (capacity strengthening) and 8 (enhance global partnership). The ICSP is based on the following strategic outcomes:

1. Crisis-affected households and communities in targeted areas can meet their basic food and nutrition needs both during and in the aftermath of crises.
2. Vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, children, pregnant and lactating women and girls, and malnourished anti-retroviral treatment patients living in target regions, have an improved nutritional status in line with national targets by 2020.
3. Food-insecure women and men living in targeted areas have enhanced livelihoods to support the food security and nutrition needs of their households and communities by 2020.

³⁴ This figure includes the entire value of the EMOP 200799 for the "critical support to populations affected by the ongoing crisis in the Central African Republic and its regional impact" and not just the value of operations within the Central African Republic.

4. National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities to establish an adequate social protection system and manage food security and nutrition policies and programmes by 2020.
5. The humanitarian community (partners and donors) has enhanced capacity to reach and operate in areas of humanitarian crisis all year-round.

1.3.1 Thematic Components of the Portfolio³⁵

27. Emergency and relief support through general food distributions and cash and vouchers in response to emergencies: PRRO 200315 (January 2012–December 2013) aimed to cover the immediate food needs of populations affected by previous violence mainly through general food distribution in northern and eastern parts of the country (33,245 internally displaced persons, returnees and vulnerable people were planned for in the project document). When the new crisis erupted, IR-EMOP 200565 (June–August 2013) planned at first to provide general food distribution to 17,800 displaced people around Bangui (and some refugees from Sudan) – although this number grew rapidly. To better respond to the developing crisis, EMOP 200650 (January–December 2014) supported the L-3 Emergency by targeting 1,112,000 internally displaced persons, residents and refugees, but this number also grew during implementation. As the Central African Republic civil conflict was spilling over into neighbouring countries, the Regional Bureau in Dakar launched the regional EMOP 200799 (January 2015–December 2017), which replaced the Central African Republic EMOP 200650.³⁶ EMOP 200799 had planned to assist a total of 708,500 beneficiaries with general food distribution. Throughout the country portfolio evaluation period, general food distribution has been the largest component of the WFP portfolio for the Central African Republic, with a cumulated total of more than 3.36 million beneficiaries (62.1 percent of the total) assisted until mid-2017.³⁷ In the aftermath of the L3 emergency, WFP introduced – where local conditions allowed – the option of cash based transfers (CBT) through paper vouchers instead of in-kind food distribution for food assistance for assets (FFA), general food distribution and nutrition activities. The distribution of vouchers gradually increased, reaching 222,636 beneficiaries over 2015 and 2016.

28. School meals (including emergency school feeding): These were implemented throughout the evaluation period. These activities are a high priority for the Government and within the evaluation period, the average annual number of children benefiting from school meals was in the region of 170,000 per year.

29. Nutrition: Nutritional interventions included: general supplementary feeding for children aged 6-23 months for the prevention of malnutrition in high-risk areas (conflict, displacement, high overall acute malnutrition); targeted supplementary feeding for the management of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) for children under five years; and supplementary feeding for malnourished pregnant and lactating women in health facilities. Rations for accompanying parents of severely malnourished children were provided in therapeutic units. CP 200331 aimed to improve the nutrition status of 225,000 pregnant and lactating women and acutely malnourished children under five years; PRRO 200315 had a large nutrition component, planned to reach 63,275 crisis-affected people. EMOP 200650 considerably increased the targeting of those affected by the crisis, aiming at 205,500 people. This number was slightly scaled down in the regional EMOP 200799, with

³⁵ Details on number of beneficiaries by year, activity and project can be found in Tables 6, 9, 10, 12 and 13

³⁶ The EMOP included also the restructuring of WFP sub-offices and supply chain management, and the introduction of mobile vulnerability analysis and mapping (mVAM).

³⁷ In the first half of 2017, IR-EMOP 201078 (17 May–17 August) had a limited scope aiming to bring GFD to 39,000 people in specific communities severely affected by escalating conflicts in areas of south eastern Central African Republic not covered by EMOP 200799.

163,500 planned beneficiaries of nutrition activities. Nutrition is the third largest portfolio component, with a cumulated total of 633,264 beneficiaries reached (11.7 percent of the total).

30. Support to HIV and tuberculosis patients: The country office assisted an increasing number of moderately malnourished HIV/AIDS patients under antiretroviral treatment in health centres: from less than 1000 patients in 2012 to an average of 10,000 patients per year from 2014 to 2016. Under Trust Fund 200933, in partnership with the Government and the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), WFP also implemented a capacity building and nutritional programme in favour of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis patients. These activities fell far short of the actual country needs; in total 31,846 people were assisted from all projects.

31. Several new activities were started during the evaluation period, including seed protection/food assistance for assets (FFA), food assistance for training (FFT) and Purchase for Progress (P4P):

- Under PRRO 200315, food assistance for assets and training activities were initially planned to support 90,631 returnees, food-insecure households and former combatants to recover through the rehabilitation of farmland, the sustainable management of natural resources, and agricultural skills training. In the end, three-quarters of the planned beneficiaries were reached. Food assistance for asset activities were conducted under the PRRO, and again under the regional EMOP 200799: WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (with the Ministry of Agriculture and NGOs) jointly undertook a seed protection campaign in accessible areas with food rations ahead of the planting season, thereby preventing consumption of seeds; 330,000 beneficiaries were targeted. Overall, this component reached 397,902 people.
- From 2015 in the more peaceful north-western areas, WFP gradually introduced the P4P local purchase scheme to catalyse development in local agriculture and create supplies for school feeding. Implementation of P4P was limited, primarily due to security challenges and a lack of sufficient support structures, which led to production levels being unpredictable. In 2017, 60,000 farmers benefited from P4P.

32. During the evaluation period, WFP was also involved in 11 special operations, with a total cost exceeding USD 76 million. Four of these operations covered the provision of United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) passenger and air cargo services, and two others mainly focused on providing services through logistics and emergency telecommunication clusters.³⁸

33. EMOP 200799 was designed to be the stepping stone between fragmented and emergency-driven responses, and the strategic vision of the ICSP 2018-2020. The ICSP is planning to pursue all the above activities – in addition to capacity strengthening – although with different proportions in the numbers of planned beneficiaries per component. It aims to support the recovery of the Central African Republic in coherence with the national RCPCA plan. General food distribution through in-kind and cash based transfers is still the largest component (726,881 planned beneficiaries or 51.8 percent of the total), but this is much lower than the 67.5 percent reached over the period 2012-2016. Food assistance, both for assets and for training, is the second largest component, with 19.8 percent of the planned beneficiaries (compared to 11 percent previously). Emergency school meals is third, but its percentage nevertheless rose from 12.7 to 17.3 percent. Nutrition is stable at 11 percent of the ICSP budget (8.3 percent over the country portfolio evaluation period).

³⁸ The remaining five operations were aimed at strengthening the services and organizational structure within WFP, such as rapid food security assessment, emergency preparedness training, provision of airlift to and from Douala, the evaluation of alternative corridors, staff access to a secure communication system, the re-opening of destroyed sub-offices, the strengthening of the food cluster, and the contracting of an emergency preparedness and response expert. See Annex H for additional information on Special Operations.

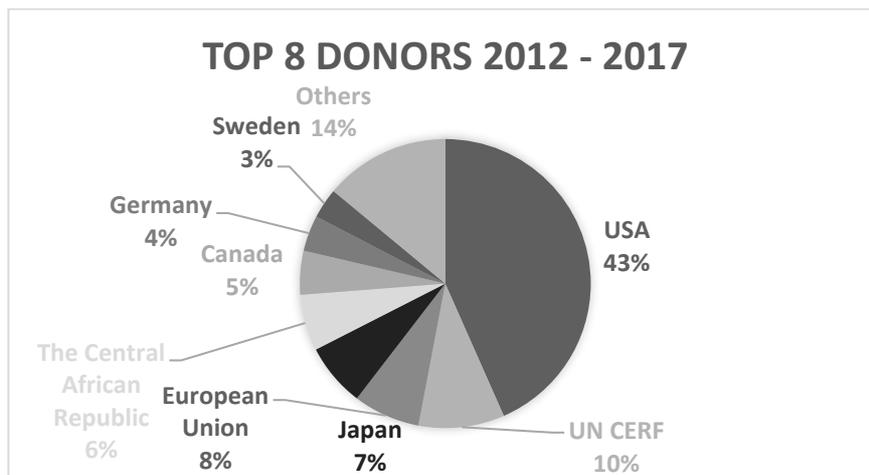
1.3.3 Partners and Donors

34. In addition to partnering with ministries, other government bodies and United Nations agencies, WFP worked with international and local NGO partners, the number of which increased over time as a result of the emergency. At the time of the CP 200331 in 2012, WFP only had one partner, Cordaid; by the time PRRO 200315 started in 2013, the number of partners had increased to include Caritas, Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement (ACTED), Action Contre la Faim (ACF), Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI) and Medical Relief International (Merlin). Under EMOP 200650 in 2014, WFP started to work with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to reach vulnerable people isolated in enclaves, such as Bangui airport. Under EMOP 200799 in 2015, WFP partnered with even more international NGOs, for general food distributions and cash based transfers (World Vision, ACTED, Plan International, International Rescue Committee (IRC), ACF, Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), COOPI, Oxfam GB). For P4P and nutrition it had 15 partners (including International Medical Corps (IMC) and ICRC).

35. However, the number of partners decreased again for two reasons: i) in September 2016, the country office reviewed the performance of its partners and retained 16 NGOs (5 nationals and 11 internationals) of the original 30, in order to align the number of partners to the level of operation anticipated for 2017 and in order to improve capacity building and strengthen WFP supervision; ii) more recently, some international partners have either left or are in the process of leaving the country due to security concerns, including threats to their staff and looting of their assets.

36. The main donors for WFP in the Central African Republic from 2012 to mid 2017 are shown in Figure 2 below. The United States of America has consistently been the main donor (USD 81.2 million or 43 percent of contributions), followed by the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) with 10 percent and the European Union. CERF was in fact set-up to provide critical support for poorly funded humanitarian response operations like those in the Central African Republic.

Figure 2: Top donors of WFP in the Central African Republic, 2012–December 2017



Source: PGG Donor Information hub -WFP Internal Database, December 2017

2 Evaluation Findings

2.1 Portfolio Alignment and Strategic Positioning

2.1.1 Coherence with National Policies from 2012 to mid 2017

37. Throughout the evaluation period, WFP was committed to providing support – as funding allowed – to respond to development objectives (until 2013) and to humanitarian needs. The operations were aligned with the following main policy documents, for each of the three sub-periods:

Period I: Development with growing tensions (2012-November 2013)

- Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2011-2015 (PRSP II)
- United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2012-2016 (UNDAF+).

38. These two documents were oriented towards development and did not include humanitarian assistance for the most vulnerable categories; they were suspended at the end of 2013, when the crisis erupted. The portfolio was aligned with Pillar III of both policy documents (“human capital and social services”). WFP was also active in supporting the remaining victims of previous bouts of violence through PRRO 200315, and the newly displaced people through IR-EMOP 200565.

Period II: Emergency (December 2013-May 2015)

- Emergency Strategic Response Plan; emergency appeal of USD 243 million
- OCHA 100-day Emergency Plan for USD 152.2 million
- United Nations Interim Strategic Frameworks (ISFs) for 2014-2015 and 2016-2017.

39. The two, successive interim strategic frameworks were published once the peak of the emergency was over, and in the absence of a fully functional Central African Republic Government. The interim strategic frameworks were structured according to three pillars, which were later adopted by the restored Central African Republic Government in its national RCPCA plan(. WFP responded to these successive plans in 2014 with the national EMOP 200650, and in January 2015 with the regional EMOP 200799, which is still ongoing.

Period III: Attempts at recovery (June 2015-2017 and ongoing)

- The Humanitarian Response Plan 2017-2019 - first drafted in 2016 under the leadership of OCHA and updated in June 2017 to increase its appeal from USD 399.5 million to USD 497.3 million in order to cover new displacements in the East.
- The National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA³⁹) 2017-2021, drafted in close cooperation with United Nations and donor counterparts.⁴⁰
- UNDAF+ 2018-2021 is aligned on the three pillars of RCPCA.

40. Strengthening national capacities is both a cross-cutting issue and a specific objective of RCPCA.⁴¹ A gradual transfer of responsibilities, capacities and resources to the Government, to implement coordination and leadership of crisis response and resilience, is also a key focus of the

³⁹ Plan National de relèvement et consolidation de la paix

⁴⁰ The plan is based on three pillars: (i) Peace, security and reconciliation; (ii) Renewing the social contract between the state and its citizens; (iii) Ensuring economic recovery and the revitalization of the Central African Republic's productive sectors. It should be stressed that RCPCA is still an overall plan rather than a detailed strategy.

⁴¹ Strengthening capacities in Government, public administration and the civil society is one of the six cross-cutting objectives of the plan, outlined throughout the three pillars. In particular, the 4th objective of Pillar III aims at “general capacity building and implementation support.”

new ICSP (approved by the Executive Board in November 2017), in particular, Strategic Outcome 4. This approach is aligned with the WFP Integrated Road Map's objective of "promoting national ownership by Governments". In this respect, the ICSP also acknowledges the constraints created by: the current lack of government capacities, short ICSP timeline, worsening political and social situation in 2017, and continued funding shortages. It should be noted that the ICSP does not address the new Government's paradigm of restoring state authority and presence as a prerequisite for effective humanitarian and development (RCPCA) operations. The ICSP is described in more detail in Annex I.

41. In 2017, for the first time, WFP signed formal memoranda of understanding with the Ministries of National Education, Higher Education and Research (signed in April), Agriculture and Rural Development (in May) and Public Health (in May).⁴² A letter of understanding was also signed in February with the Ministry of Economy, Planning and International Cooperation (MINEPC) – which is in charge of overall coordination between the Government and aid agencies through CEGAL ("Cellule de Gestion Alimentaire"), the inter-ministerial body in charge of relations with WFP . The memoranda of understanding were valid until the end of 2017. All concerned ministries were globally satisfied with their cooperation with WFP but were lacking resources – which made smooth communication and programme implementation a particular challenge, and outlined the multiple needs for capacity strengthening.

42. The main counterpart for emergencies was the Ministry of Social Welfare and National Reconciliation,⁴³ which is officially in charge of coordinating response to victims of national or man-made crises, including internally displaced people, with which no memorandum of understanding has yet been signed. The Ministry,

43. The consistency of the "longitudinal" alignment of WFP responses to the successive plans (PRSP, interim strategic plan, Humanitarian Response Plan, UNDAF+, RCPCA) throughout the country portfolio evaluation period is summarized in Annex J. Nevertheless, the implementation of the policy documents themselves has been significantly limited due to recurrent constraints across the period. These constraints included: a lack of capacity and presence by the Government, corruption,⁴⁴ a lack of funding by international actors, and a lack of security and infrastructure leading to delays in the implementation of programmes, additional costs, and difficulties in reaching all the population in need.

2.1.2 Contribution of WFP to defining policies and strategies in the Central African Republic

44. The team found limited evidence of a contribution from WFP to placing food security and nutrition issues on the Government's agenda before the 2012/2013 crisis. WFP contributed – together with UNICEF – to the National Nutrition Policy validated in August 2012, and to the Programming Guidelines for Nutritional Assessment, Counselling and Support for people living with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis patients.⁴⁵ The two components of CP 200331 were aligned with Pillar III of PRSP, but their scope was rather limited (89,800 school children and 225,000 beneficiaries of nutrition) and funding reached only 22 percent of the requirements.

45. From March 2013 and during the beginning of the corporate emergency period, the functioning of the Central African Republic government was severely disrupted, and the United Nations Country Team, of which WFP was an active member, took charge (with support from the reinforced clusters) of defining the first interim strategic framework (2014-2015). The lack of

⁴² These ministries will be referred to as "Education", "Agriculture" and "Health" in this report.

⁴³ This ministry will be referred to as "Social Affairs" in this report

⁴⁴ In 2016, the Central African Republic still ranked 159 out of 176 countries in the Corruption Perception Index published by Transparency International

⁴⁵ The country programme merely states (§24) that "Discussions (with Government partners, United Nations Country Team and NGOs) concluded that nutrition and education are the priorities for WFP future development interventions".

institutional memory (both within and outside WFP) does not provide detailed triangulated evidence about the specific role of WFP during that period.⁴⁶

46. Towards the end of 2014 to mid 2015, the new Government of the Central African Republic was able to start working on governance and economic recovery. Strategic plans were adopted for education, agriculture, transparency and corruption. Health was another focus: WFP was involved in the revision of the national protocol for “Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition” (IMAM), which was validated by the Government in December 2014. More recently, in collaboration with UNICEF and other partners, WFP also contributed to three policy documents on nutrition.⁴⁷

47. At the overall policy level, in 2015 the United Nations Country Team and the Government started a common country assessment, which was used as a basis for the second interim strategic framework (2016-2017). The interim strategic framework has in turn informed the RCPCA, together with vulnerability analyses and a national forum in Bangui – but with little information on the country situation outside the capital. The specific role of WFP in the preparation of this policy is not highlighted in the documents, but acknowledged by key stakeholders, such as the Humanitarian Coordinator to the Central African Republic.⁴⁸ As a member of United Nations Country Team, WFP assisted the Government in piloting the RCPCA (together with MINUSCA, the World Bank and the European Union), and took part in the RCPCA working groups on food security and social services.

48. Stakeholders also outlined the proactive role that WFP played in the design of UNDAF+. The UNDAF+ process followed the “Delivering as One” approach, which required that all the United Nations organizations concerned (United Nations Country Team, MINUSCA and UNDAF team) develop and propose a joint assistance package to the Government for the implementation of RCPCA.⁴⁹

49. The needs and responses detailed in the Humanitarian Response Plan of OCHA have been designed together with the clusters. WFP contributed to this process through the clusters of food security, logistics and emergency telecommunications.

50. With support from WFP and other agencies, the Central African Republic is currently preparing a Zero Hunger Strategic Review (ZHSR) under the leadership of a former Minister of Agriculture, with a team of four senior national development experts in the areas of economy, agriculture, rural development, gender, social protection and nutrition. For the preparation of the ZHSR, consultative processes have been organized during 2017 in six out of seven regions. The final report is likely to be approved in the first half of 2018, and it will include: an analysis of food security in the country, including nutrition; policies and food security responses; and identification of areas to be developed to ensure Zero Hunger is achieved by 2030. Donors and the Government expect that the ZHSR will become a strategic cornerstone for the country; it will inform future food security and nutrition policies in the Central African Republic as well as ICSP revisions.

2.1.3 Alignment with WFP Strategic Objectives

51. From a strategic perspective, over the period 2012-mid 2017 the country office, along with the regional bureau for the regional EMOP 200799, designed activities in line with the strategic objectives of the WFP Strategic Plans for 2008-2013 and 2014-2017, as these corresponded most

⁴⁶ An anecdotal statement from the FAO representative (who was already present in 2014) outlined that WFP had been instrumental – along with FAO – in designing the first version of the ISF in 2014.

⁴⁷ (i) the National Food Security and Nutrition Policy (validation is ongoing), (ii) the Child Nutrition and Feeding Directive (validated), and (iii) Guideline of nutritional care and support for the use of the people living with HIV (validated).

⁴⁸ The Humanitarian Coordinator to the Central African Republic, who is also head of the UNCT, UNDP Resident Representative and United Nations Development coordinator, confirms that WFP is a very important member of the UNCT, very active and committed, with a much appreciated country office management team, well supported by the regional bureau in Dakar.

⁴⁹ Under an overall Orientation Council and a Joint Management Council (Government, UN, World Bank, EU), UN-headed working groups will be in charge of each of the three pillars; clusters will also provide technical and programmatic coordination support: this approach should ensure optimum coordination with the new UNDAF+ 2018-2021. On the Government's side, the work was performed by an UNDAF Technical Committee from the MINEPC, with consultations of the Council of Ministers, Parliament and the Presidency.

appropriately to the evolving situation prevailing in the country. This coherence is shown in Annex J. The approach was also aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals 2 (Zero Hunger) and 17 (Partnerships). The country office had no formal country strategic plan until the ICSP for 2018-2021 completed. The ICSP was designed to support the RCPCA and new UNDAF+.⁵⁰

2.1.4 Coherence with Partners

52. All 11 standard clusters⁵¹ were operating in the Central African Republic over the evaluation period; most of them were active from 2006, except the emergency and telecommunications cluster, which was active in 2013, but was subsequently deactivated. In this framework, WFP assumed its role of leader in logistics and emergency telecommunications, and of co-leader (with FAO) of the food security cluster. It also took part in the protection, education and nutrition clusters. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 17 on partnerships, WFP was an active member of the Humanitarian Country Team and United Nations Country Team, which ensured coordination with MINUSCA.

53. Decentralized (regional) clusters have been established under OCHA supervision in three locations within the Central African Republic, where WFP already had sub-offices.⁵² They were meant to cover the almost the whole country (west, centre and east, with the south being covered from Bangui directly), but in practice only slightly more than 50 percent of the territory was accessible, subject to security. Whilst the main United Nations agencies (WFP, OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, IOM, UNFPA, UNDP, FAO) and MINUSCA were present in these decentralized clusters, they were often constrained by the lack of implementing partners and funding. There were few international NGOs in the “hot spots” (many had been repeatedly looted and left for security reasons), and few local NGOs with sufficient capacities with which to partner.

54. Partners were generally satisfied with the level of cooperation with WFP in the cluster system, although for the logistics cluster the support provided by the country office from 2013 to early 2014 was apparently not always adequate. Further, the nutrition cluster seemed unable to address weaknesses in general acute malnutrition relating to programmatic coordination between UNICEF and WFP,⁵³ which developed at the end of 2015. As further discussed in chapter 2.3, each of the two agencies had its own strategic approach, selection criteria, operational procedures, funding, procurement procedures, and partners. The intervention criteria were not harmonized in terms of areas and health centres to be targeted – other than by ad hoc field level agreements. The issue remains unresolved.⁵⁴

55. Lack of resources was a challenge for joint activities with most other partners. Cooperation with FAO was regular, consisting mostly of seed protection, food security surveys and information sharing⁵⁵. With UNHCR, cooperation applied essentially to the 11,000 remaining refugees from Sudan (Darfur), Chad and South Sudan, but regional coordination had to be carried out from Geneva, as UNHCR closed its regional office in 2016.

56. The ICSP envisages a wider collaboration with Rome-based agencies in line with WFP corporate strategic plans, particularly in policy and programme. Rome based agency collaboration is specifically envisaged for food security mapping and planning exercises as well as resilience and

⁵⁰ A formal country strategic plan was not mandatory before the Integrated Road Map was approved by the Board

⁵¹ In alphabetical order: CCCM (Camp Coordination - Camp Management), Early Recovery, Education, Emergency Telecommunication, Food Security, Health, Logistics, Nutrition, Protection, Shelter, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene)

⁵² Kaga-Bandoro, Bambari and Bouar.

⁵³ A corporate agreement between WFP and UNICEF guided the strategic decision to share general acute malnutrition case management. Challenging this agreement is beyond the scope of this assessment, but in a context such as the Central African Republic, where the situation persists over time, a lack of adequate arrangement for short-term emergency and strong deployment of resources can create problems as capacity building and integration of response become a priority.

⁵⁴ The CO's limited technical resources in nutrition were mentioned as one of the obstacles to strengthening programmatic coordination, although an effort was probably made to support local institutions in areas of emergency response.

⁵⁵ The joint FAO/WFP seed protection initiative in Paoua, launched in 2014 under the PRRO, was discontinued in 2017 as Paoua was not identified as a focus area for FAO.

resettlement interventions. Moreover, the ICSP envisages future cooperation with FAO, including for: integrated school feeding packages and other safety nets; food assistance for assets; seed protection; development of nutritious local value chains; agro-pastoral recovery based on the three-pronged-approach; and policy review and preparation of the ZHSR. When it comes to IFAD, no specific collaboration is planned, which reflects the limited engagement of IFAD in the Central African Republic.⁵⁶

57. With some other agencies, potential cooperation can be envisaged in the future, such as MINUSCA Civil Affairs in supporting community dialogue for reconciliation,⁵⁷ European Union 'Bekou' Trust Fund to fund more P4P,⁵⁸ or World Bank for cash based transfers.⁵⁹

2.1.5. Strategic use of WFP Comparative Advantages

58. The position of WFP in the Central African Republic was unique. Core activities of WFP such as logistics, general food assistance, nutrition, emergency school feeding and food security monitoring proved to be crucial in such a landlocked and impoverished country. As some stakeholders interviewed by the evaluation team said, "le PAM est incontournable". WFP had by far the largest civilian truck fleet based in the Central African Republic: until early 2017, there were only 37 private local transporters in the country, each with one or two trucks, and these were used by all actors. In June 2017, the regional EMOP targeted 694,500 internally displaced, residents and foreign refugees in the Central African Republic – a figure that was meant to cover the full caseload of 503,000 internally displaced persons identified by OCHA, as well as 290,500 refugees from the Central African Republic in Cameroon, Chad and DRC (out of 481,000 registered).⁶⁰ According to the humanitarian coordinator – and despite severe shortages – WFP was the "best-funded" United Nations agency in the country,⁶¹ and the only one with a large trucking capacity that benefits the whole humanitarian community. UNHAS allowed staff from all humanitarian agencies⁶² to travel in-country in safe conditions and to be evacuated in case of need. Only WFP could operate the required massive food pipeline (or volume of vouchers) for the displaced and other vulnerable people.

59. Furthermore, beyond emergency response in terms of general food distribution and logistics, WFP also provided contributions to resilience and early recovery through food assistance for assets and P4P, which were very relevant in the Central African Republic, where the population is more stable, including areas with returnees.

60. Emergency school meals, which WFP plans to expand wherever feasible in close coordination with the Ministry of Education, were a particularly powerful pull factor to attract children back to schools and contribute to a sense of return to normality. The activity was also supported directly by the President, who has outlined its potential, when combined with P4P, to help kick-start agricultural production and contribute to a "virtuous circle" of normalization.

⁵⁶ IFAD recently developed a strategic country note for cooperation 2018-2019, which is limited to continuation of one existing project "Revival of food crops and small livestock in the savannahs" in the western part of the country.

⁵⁷ MINUSCA Civil Affairs aims at: 1) supporting protection of communities; 2) supporting the civil administration – with a national strategy for restoring state authority – and 3) supporting community dialogue for reconciliation. Activities such as WFP FFA/seed protection, P4P, school feeding and FFT could be included under this third thematic area.

⁵⁸ The EU 'Bekou' Trust Fund is interested in collaborating with WFP for a pilot P4P project (EUR 1 million).

⁵⁹ The World Bank works mainly through the Government, which may then decide whom to partner with; there were no opportunities to collaborate so far. Still, the World Bank is considering a cash transfer project in Bambari with the Ministry of Social Affairs via UNOPS. This needs to be coordinated with WFP if CBT is also activated in parallel in Bambari.

⁶⁰ WFP situation report n°35, 30 June 2017 ; OCHA Humanitarian Response Plan, revised in June 2017.

⁶¹ This is confirmed by the Financial Tracking System: in Nov 2017, WFP had received 32.4% of all humanitarian aid contributions to the Central African Republic (the 2nd best was UNHCR with only 6.8%); in 2015 and 2016, the logistics cluster had by far the best funding coverage of its requirements: 88.6% and 85.9% respectively.

⁶² MINUSCA flights are less flexible and are used primarily for their own personnel; ICRC and MSF have their own aircraft.

2.2 Factors and Quality of Strategic Decision Making

2.2.1 Analytical Work, and Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring

61. In every programme document (CP, PRRO, EMOP, SO), there was evidence that the country office performed analytical work on the political situation, economic context, food security, health and nutrition, education, policies and capacities of government and major actors, coordination and lesson learning. Standard corporate reports have also been regularly published by the country office (internal executive briefs, dashboards, operational briefs) and by the regional bureau (internal and external situation reports for the region, executive briefs, situation updates and WFP response by focus areas: food and nutrition assistance, cash based transfers, clusters and common services). However, the evaluation did not see any formal assessment or mapping of government structures and local authorities, with evidence-based information on capacity levels of each government counterpart by location.

62. A key programming challenge in the Central African Republic has been the fragmented collection of information on food security and nutrition: insecurity and funding constraints have limited standard surveys. For instance, the profile of acute malnutrition appeared to be known, but not systematically across all locations and not always accurately. The nutritional surveys carried out since 2010 gave only a rough idea of the size of the problem, and the way to assess the number of moderate acute malnutrition cases had implications for policy choices.⁶³ These interventions required a good prevalence assessment (which did not exist in the Central African Republic), accurate population estimates (which were unavailable), and a better understanding of the incidence cycle. WFP programming and decision-making has been affected by these imprecise analyses of the nutritional situation and the calculation of people in need of nutritional assistance, in particular, outside the capital Bangui. This created big issues of equity, as nearly 60 percent of the population lives outside the Bangui, where they they are much more difficult to reach and to be accounted for.⁶⁴

63. Nonetheless, as far as possible, WFP played a key role in the production of reliable and timely food security information in the Central African Republic. During the country portfolio evaluation, partners confirmed the importance of food security information for humanitarian programming from WFP. This has included use of results from emergency food security assessments (EFSAs) for design of new operations as well as budget revisions.⁶⁵ During the Level 3 emergency, when security put severe limits to data collection, WFP was still able to carry out a rapid food security assessment in February 2013, facilitated by the IRA 200544 operation. Recently, WFP launched monthly mobile vulnerability analysis and mapping (mVAM) exercises, to collect and share market and food security information from areas with limited humanitarian access. Overall, WFP food security information products included regular and ad-hoc national food security assessments and EFSAs, market analyses, and food security monitoring. Nevertheless, countrywide surveys could not be carried out in recent years. The latest WFP full baseline in the Central African Republic – the Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) – was prepared in 2009.

64. As part of the implementation of the regional EMOP, WFP has been preparing monthly monitoring plans that are carried out by the sub-offices and validated by the country office.⁶⁶ While

⁶³ This was based on estimated population counts, extrapolating the number of children under 5 and applying provincial prevalence rates obtained through the MICS 2011 and partial later surveys.

⁶⁴ In 2016, the World Bank estimated the Central African Republic urban population (essentially Bangui) to be 40.3 percent. The cluster coverage targeted 100% of the case calculations, whilst WFP coverage target was 65% in 2014 and 2015. But with the change in WFP strategy in 2016, when malnutrition prevention had to be implemented quickly, the coverage target of moderate acute malnutrition dropped to 40% (2016), with only 16% expected in 2017.

⁶⁵ For instance, budget revision 3 of the regional EMOP, based on EFSAs results, showed a critical increase in the number of food-insecure people from September 2014 to 2015.

⁶⁶ SPRs EMOP 200799.

the plans were designed based on capacities and required minimum information,⁶⁷ some of the sub-offices perceived the monitoring workload as “too heavy” given the resources available outside Bangui.⁶⁸ Narrative reports and post-distribution monitoring missions (PDM) were prepared regularly, although not at the originally planned quarterly frequency. The post-distribution monitoring process was launched with the introduction of cash based transfers in 2015, and some initial challenges in their frequency and consistency can be observed. So far, two post-distribution monitoring processes were carried out in 2016, and one in the first half of 2017. The country portfolio evaluation was informed by WFP staff members that the processes had to be delayed mainly due to clarifications and reconciliation with plans.

65. Strategic decisions including programming were also informed by inter-agency food security, nutrition and health surveys in which WFP participates, such as annual Crop and Food Security Assessment Missions (CFSAMs)⁶⁹ with FAO and the Government, multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS) with UNICEF, and Standardized Monitoring and Assessments of Relief and Transitions (SMART) surveys. Constraints are similar: the last MICS was prepared in 2010 and the last full SMART took place in 2014. A rapid SMART was carried out in a single region in 2015. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) was introduced in the Central African Republic in 2008 but has only functioned irregularly since, partly because of insufficient funding, and partly because of insufficient compatible and good quality data. The 2014 IPC for example was withdrawn because of quality issues; however, the 2016 IPC was approved by most members.

2.2.2 Drivers of WFP Country Strategy

66. The factors that influenced choices in the WFP strategy in the Central African Republic over the country portfolio evaluation period were mostly “limiting” rather than enabling.

Lack of security throughout the country portfolio evaluation period

67. The volatile and largely unpredictable situation entailed frequent and large population displacements, a lack of security for WFP staff and partners, difficult and expensive logistics, and regular delays in transport and implementation of assistance. At the end of 2012, as the civil conflict was spreading in the country, WFP sub-offices had to be evacuated and were looted. Some remained closed for over one year, which severely affected operations in those areas.⁷⁰ When the conflict reached Bangui in March 2013, the main WFP office was also looted and most of the international staff were evacuated from the Central African Republic from March to June 2013, which further disrupted operations. While security and access improved with the deployment of MINUSCA in March 2014, the security situation started deteriorating again in the second half of 2016.

68. Throughout the period there was a prevailing sense of impunity among criminals, which impacted aid projects. Due to the lack of police and judicial services outside of Bangui, road bandits and looters arrested by MINUSCA were generally released. A highly detrimental impact of the recurrent violence was the fact that frequent attacks pushed away those already displaced – as well as settled populations – from the areas of fighting. For WFP, these regular displacements resulted in the loss of their accumulated work of the long and tedious process of registration for

⁶⁷ For example, in Kaga-Bandoro, there was a minimum of 10 sites to be visited, which could be extended to 12-15. The monitoring focused on checking the staff presence of the partners, timing of distributions, rations and measures, numbers of beneficiaries at distributions, and the element of dignity (that beneficiaries can wait under shade, length of queues, etc.).

⁶⁸ In Kaga-Bandoro, there were three monitors (there was only one from 2014 to 2016) for 17 distribution sites, 21 schools and 8 MAM health centres. To reach the sites, monitors often needed MINUSCA escorts and WFP drivers. The June 2017 monitoring report that only 113 monitoring sites out of 746 planned (15%) could physically be visited.

⁶⁹ Also referred to as Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions.

⁷⁰ In Bambari, the staff had to be evacuated in a hurry in light cars (truck and stocks were left behind) on 19/12/2012. The office and warehouses were looted on 22/12/2012. International staff were relocated from December 2012 to January 2013, but the sub-office reopened only in 1st April 2014.

food or vouchers distribution. Registration had to start from scratch, which amounted to launching an entirely new operation every time.

Low visibility crisis and funding shortfalls

69. Throughout the country portfolio evaluation period (and before), in a region that was prone to higher visibility disasters, the Central African Republic has consistently been a forgotten crisis – and a recurrent focus for complementary CERF funding since 2012. After being side-lined by the civil war in Mali in 2012-2013, the country obtained the full attention of the media at the end of 2013 with the start of the major crisis until early 2014. However, after that, the humanitarian and political focus shifted rapidly to the influx of displaced people in Nigeria and Cameroon from the Boko Haram attacks, to the Ebola pandemic in West Africa and to the other ongoing crisis in the Middle East. A direct consequence of this lack of visibility was the low level of funding of the OCHA Humanitarian Response Plan.

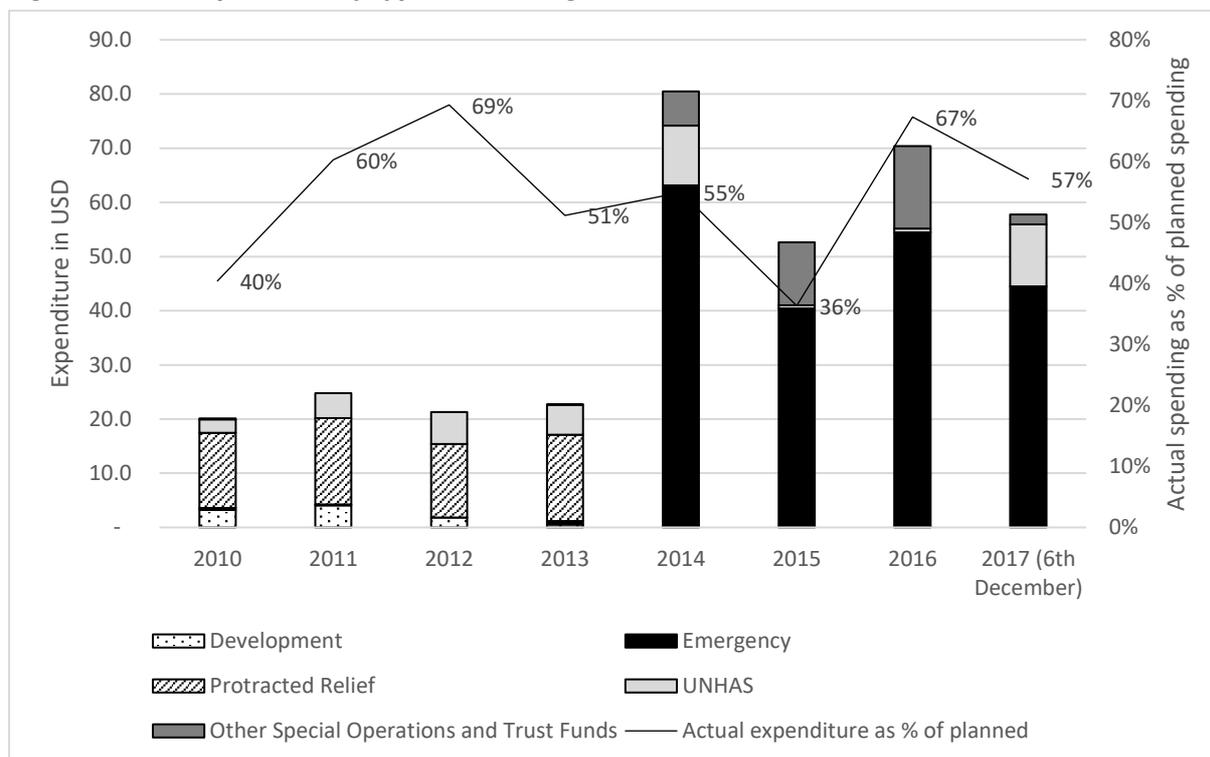
70. Although efforts to contact donors were shared with the regional bureau (though there were no regional donors based in Dakar) and headquarters, the Country Director had the main responsibility for fund raising. The fact that there are few donor representatives still physically present in the Central African Republic (European Union, France and China) was not conducive to this task, even though some other donors were managing their funding from abroad and showed consistent interest. The largest of them, the United States, is based in Nairobi and Kinshasa⁷¹, and funds essentially emergency activities rather than recovery ones. Others (Canada, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland) are located in Cameroon or Chad and travel to the Central African Republic only occasionally. DFID also left the Central African Republic in 2015 and suspended its funding to WFP in the country, but it still has an active aid programme⁷² and remains a major funder of the OCHA Humanitarian Response Plan.

71. Figure 3 shows the funding shortfalls over time. Annex B, which includes the list of operations, also shows detailed percentages of shortfalls for each operation and Annex K includes a review of the impact of funding shortfalls for the for regional EMOP 200799.

⁷¹ However, there is no information about the funds that may be available from USAID in 2018. Emergency school feeding may be impacted; the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, managed by the Department of Agriculture, may be cut; USAID is still funding emergency school feeding, but not development-oriented school feeding.

⁷² Central African Republic Humanitarian Recovery Programme (CHURP), 2016-2019

Figure 3: Size of operations by type and funding levels



Source: WFP management systems. Figures do not include indirect support costs and some accounting adjustments.

Turnover of management and other staff

72. Over the evaluation period, the country office experienced a high turnover of international staff, including those holding managerial positions. As Table 4 shows, the average stay of some key management was significantly shorter than the standard two-year term for non-family duty stations. Moreover, some management positions remained vacant for significant periods of time.⁷³ From 2014 to 2016, the country office often relied on staff or consultants on short-term assignments; recruitment of international staff was a continuing challenge. Not only did this have an impact on the management of projects, but it also affected coordination with partners – who also suffered similar discontinuities. The reasons most frequently evoked were lack of security, stress, and, in some cases, threats from local traffickers. On the other hand, a few international staff stayed for exceptionally long periods.⁷⁴

Table 4: Turnover of key international staff at the Central African Republic country office, 2013–mid 2017

Position	N° of different staff over the period	Average duration on post
Country Director	5	9 months
Deputy Country Director	2	26.5 months
Head of Logistics	4	13.5 months
Head of Finance	3	18 months
Head of Administration	5	10 months
Head of Programme	4	16.5 months

⁷³ The regional emergency coordinator was also acting Country Director for most of 2014; there was no head of administration during the first six months of 2017.

⁷⁴ The Deputy Country Director for 42 months, the heads of logistics and finance for 30 and 31 months respectively.

Source: CO HR statistics

73. Meanwhile, the number of United Nations Volunteers (UNV), temporary duty positions (TDY) and staff on short-term missions increased significantly during the peak of the crisis, from 2014 to 2016.⁷⁵ The temporary duty positions and short-term missions were part of the surge effort to fill in positions.

Table 5: Number of temporary assignments

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
TDY/missions	3	3	14	5	26	3
UNVs	5	4	5	13	8	6

Source: CO HR statistics

A positive driver: the good relations with authorities

74. Conversely, a positive factor could be found in the solid relations between WFP and the authorities. Due to its long presence in the Central African Republic over the past three decades, its size, experience and the consistent support to food and nutrition security – despite political upheavals – WFP has been able to maintain good working relations with key ministries, such as MINEPC, Education, Agriculture, Health and Social Affairs, and with the president's office, as demonstrated by the following facts:

- School Feeding linked with local procurement of agricultural production is directly supported by the President; the programme was launched in an official ceremony with WFP, FAO and UNICEF.
- The President came in person to launch the Zero Hunger Strategic Review – hosted by WFP – in July 2017, together with most ministers, United Nations agencies, etc. This gave a very high visibility to the event.
- When there were severe pipeline shortfalls in early 2017, the President countersigned the letters sent by WFP to the donors requesting additional funding.

75. This privileged position is expected to be maintained after the country portfolio evaluation period, unless the situation worsens dramatically. A National Crisis Committee was set up in mid-2017, which is led by the Prime Minister and includes the key line ministers, WFP, UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR and OCHA.

2.2.3 Management of Risks and Emergency Preparedness

76. Statements from some “institutional memories” of people who were present when the crisis started at the end of 2012 in the regional bureau, country office and in one sub-office, suggested that the use of corporate emergency preparedness tools was quite limited in the Central African Republic at the time. The minimum preparedness actions, in place since 2005, were not in use. This would suggest that the country office was not adequately prepared for the eruption of the civil conflict. The regional emergency coordinator himself had to move to CAR during September and October 2013 to support the operations. The coordinator also had to assume the role of acting country director from December 2013 to August 2014.

77. An improved risk assessment is now carried out by the country office within the overall exercise of the annual performance plan for the whole country, through twice-yearly workshops in Bangui, with staff from each sub-office. The performance plan includes planning tables,⁷⁶ as well

⁷⁵ The surge effort faced difficulties due to the season (Christmas) at the end of 2013, the language (French), the violence (some surge experts were affected by the shootings), and the lack of funding, which prevented pre-positioning of stocks.

⁷⁶ Performance overview (review of achievements of the previous year, key objectives and risks for the new year); “All dimensions” global table regarding (1) people, (2) partnerships, (3) process and systems, (4) programmes (indicators for evidence, alignment with the Government, lessons learned and innovation, and (5) accountability and funding; specific performance tables for each unit (human resources, administration, security, ICT, budget & programming, program, logistics,

as the risk register which is updated twice a year, and checked by the regional compliance officer. Among other things, this register covers: types of activities that raise concern and descriptions of risk, causes, effects, levels of potential impact, likelihood and seriousness, response and mitigation actions, as well as focal points and time schedules for responses.⁷⁷ The analysis of the latest risk register shows, however, that some types of risks (riots, perceived neutrality) do not appear to be considered at their real level of seriousness in a country facing dire challenges such as the Central African Republic in 2017.⁷⁸

78. One of the key risks during the period was the size of the programmes with a food-aid component, which were constrained by the capacity of the main Douala–Bangui corridor and more specifically by the limited capacity of the road transporters, the custom procedures and the stringent security requirements. Even today, the monthly volume of food-aid which can transit through that corridor cannot exceed 4,000 metric tons (Annex L).⁷⁹

79. Emergency interventions are at the core of the new ICSP, under Strategic Outcome 1 (general food distribution, cash based transfers and school meals) and 2 (nutrition), which together total two thirds of the foreseen budget (USD 191,470 million out of 288,799 million). However, WFP is not a member of the UNICEF-led and ECHO-funded rapid response mechanism (RRM)⁸⁰ for the Central African Republic. This mechanism is focused on emergency, non-food item distributions and water, sanitation and hygiene interventions when there is no capacity on site. The rapid response mechanism is also designed to monitor humanitarian action and conduct multisector assessments. WFP cooperated with the rapid response mechanism actors in 2014 and early 2016, by responding to identified food needs and using rapid response mechanism reports to prioritize distributions.

80. In the context of the preparedness and response enhancement programme at the regional bureau, the security officer produces daily bulletins, weekly reports and weekly forecasts, based on its own analysis, information from MINUSCA, and from the NGO consortium. The country's logical frameworks and the risk analysis were also reviewed by the regional bureau.⁸¹ Anecdotal statements at the regional bureau suggested that, so far as security was concerned, the Central African Republic was regarded as the third most risky country in the region, after Lake Chad (Boko Haram) and Sahel (Al Qaeda in Mali).

2.3 Portfolio Performance and Results

2.3.1. Targeting

81. As discussed in chapter 2.2, after 2012 WFP had to rely on a rather fragmented assessment of needs, and partial monitoring. The various project documents provided a list of the surveys used for targeting, in particular: CP 200331 (Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis of 2009; multiple indicator cluster surveys of 2006; UNICEF 'Tableau de bord de l'éducation 2008-2009'); PRRO 200315 (CFSVA 2009; MICS 2010; Rapid Food Security Assessment of August 2011); EMOP 200650 (Emergency Food Security Assessment in 2013; 'Bulletin surveillance

UNHAS, report communications and donor relations, and procurement); a planning for office performance analysis (mid-year and end-year analyses on project performance and management results), a work plan per unit.

⁷⁷ The seriousness (risk level) in particular, is highlighted in colours ("heat map"), from green (negligible/minor) to red (severe/critical), with intermediary levels.

⁷⁸ Risks no. 7 "Troubles civils - grèves, émeutes, soulèvement populaire etc." and 13 "Mission de maintien de la paix affecte la perception du PAM par la population" are only coloured in green. The very closely related (so closely that it might be advisable to merge them) risks of community violence (8) and criminality (9) are coloured in orange, which is still mild for the current situation, as well as risk no. 16 "Difficulté de financement pour les opérations du PAM".

⁷⁹ Special logistic capacity augmentation measures would be required if the annual volume of food-aid transiting through this corridor is envisaged to exceed 50,000 MT on an annual basis, such as additional corridors in the east and south-east.

⁸⁰ This instrument is also sometimes called "emergency response mechanism" by the donor ECHO and others. The rapid response mechanism is led by UNICEF and implemented with the NGOs ACF, Solidarités, ACTED and Espérance.

⁸¹ Regional risk analysts use three tools: minimum preparedness actions (MPA); the more advanced emergency response actions (ERA), and the risk register. The data is compiled in the "tracker", to be updated every three months. There was an EMOP simulation exercise in the country in September 2016.

multisectorielle' by ACF in October 2013); EMOP 200799 (WFP/FAO, Economic Analysis, April 2014; WFP/FAO Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission of October 2014); Emergency Food Security Assessment of November 2014; Integrated Phase Classification, October 2014; and SMART in November 2014. The evaluation team could not make an independent verification of the degree of coherence between the figures of these surveys.

82. On the above basis, the geographical focus of the portfolio was mainly concentrated in the west and south of the country (approximately one third of the whole territory), which was most heavily populated and – being primarily inhabited by Christians and Animists – more affected by the Muslim-led rebellion of 2013. This trend could be found in CP 200331 (northwest, centre-south, southeast) and EMOP 200650 (west, northwest, centre-south, southeast). The regional EMOP 200799, which started in 2015, introduced a more flexible geographic targeting. In addition to Bangui, food security interventions were meant to focus on prefectures that had been particularly affected by the conflict, with above-average food insecurity levels, high numbers of displaced people, low economic activities and little access to basic services. In practice, this meant the focus was again on the west, south, centre and south-east. Security and access to northern and eastern prefectures were quite limited, population was sparse, and – in the absence of effective surveys and monitoring – needs were not detailed. An exception to this trend was found in the PRRO 200315, which targeted in 2012–2013 six prefectures with returnees and host communities in the northwest, northeast, and southeast.

2.3.2. Outputs

83. As detailed in Table 6, from 2012 to mid 2017 WFP delivered assistance for all types of activities to 5,482,554 people in need in the Central African Republic. This is a cumulated total, as in many cases the same persons were assisted each year. Figures of beneficiaries per year (these figures also include some overlap between activities) ranged from 280,988 in 2012 to a peak of 1,637,798 during the L3 emergency in 2014. This last figure corresponded to more than one third of the estimated population, and to 65 percent of the 2.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance indicated by OCHA for that year.⁸² Figures of WFP beneficiaries also reached 56 and 55 percent respectively of the people in need in 2015 and 2016. This high level of effectiveness was because many displaced people took refuge in accessible towns, while less populated, rural areas remained out of reach due to violence. It can be safely assumed therefore, that WFP assistance to the Central African Republic has been vital for the most vulnerable segments of the population.

Table 6: Actual numbers of beneficiaries per type of activity and year, 2012-2017

Thematic activities	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	June 2017
GFD	57,493	329,864	1,249,136	751,657	409,647	418,220
IDPs	42,988	275,304	788,519	206,209	216,882	n.a.
Refugees	14,505	10,813	14,036	4,198	14,557	n.a.
Returnees	-	-	-	-	6,446	n.a.
School Meals	146,577	196,030	147,185	196,967	169,141	223,214
Nutrition	59,195	27,605	232,444	181,741	83,337	48,942
Children (IDPs or resident)	41,094	17,989	197,015	108,642	78,706	n.a.
Residents (adults)	18,101	9,616	35,429	73,099	4,631	n.a.
FFA/FFT	17,031	53,567	-	27,060	243,952*	51,695

⁸² OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin, Dec. 2014

Thematic activities	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	June 2017
Children (IDPs or resident)	15,817	573	-	n.a	n.a*	n.a
Residents (adults)	1,214	52,994	-	27,060	n.a*	n.a
(CBT for GFD and FFA)**	-	-	-	(69,870)	(152,766)	(99,308)
Residents (adults)				(69,870)	(152,766)	n.a
HIV/AIDS/tuberculosis	692	2,156	9,033	11,303	8,622	2,337
Residents (adults)	692	2,156	9,033	11,303	8,622	n.a
Total ***	280,988	609,222	1,637,798	1,238,598	1,067,505	648,443

*This very high figure reflects the change in SPR format in 2016, with slightly modified indicators: for 243,952 "beneficiaries" of FFA, there were 50,457 "participants".

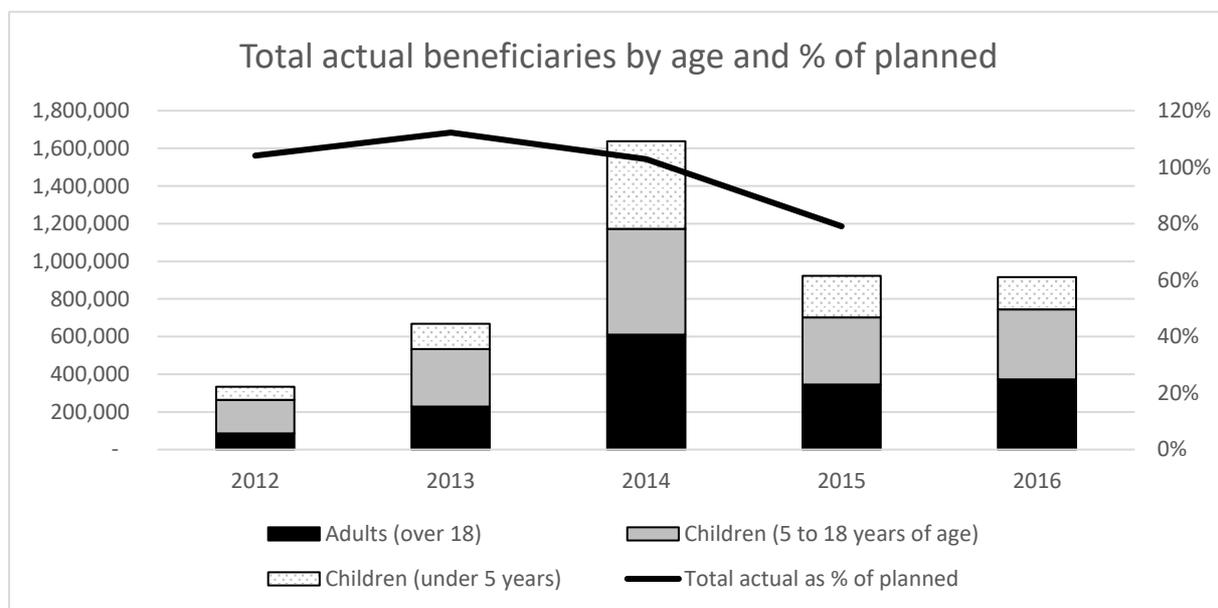
**CBT is a modality of distribution, not an activity; figures are indicated for reference only, in brackets

*** people receiving assistance through more than one modality are counted more than once

Source: SPRs for 2012-2016 and WFP "Rapport semestriel suivi et evaluation" for the period January-July 2017

84. The figures per year also confirmed that the extent of the assistance adapted with flexibility to respond to the varying levels of crisis of the political and humanitarian situation. Table 7 shows that in 2012 and 2013 the country office had not anticipated the scale of the crisis and had to provide assistance to many more than the planned numbers of beneficiaries, although with reduced rations or duration. In 2014 planning globally matched actual numbers, while in 2015 funding shortfalls decreased the numbers served under the planning threshold.

Table 7: Total of actual beneficiaries per year and by age, as percentage of numbers planned



Source: SPRs

85. The numbers of actual beneficiaries multiplied by a factor of six from 2012 to 2014. Decreasing numbers in 2016 reflect the temporary improvement of the emergency situation, whilst numbers grew again in 2017: the 'Rapport semestriel suivi et évaluation n°1' of June 2017 – developed for EMOP 200799 – included 648,443 beneficiaries (not cumulated between activities), a higher level than 2015 on an annual basis.

86. Adaptation to situations was also apparent in distributions. From January 2012 to December 2016, 144,052 metric tons of food assistance for all activities, and vouchers with a total net value of USD 6,838,943 were distributed to beneficiaries as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Overview of food aid and cash based transfers to beneficiaries

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	mid-2017	Total
In-kind food assistance delivered - MT ⁸³	9,682	12,667	39,601	37,729	31,753	12,620	144,052
Net value CBT distributed, USD				1,208,096	3,203,746	2,427,101	6,838,943

Source: SPRs and Funds Consumption Reports

87. Table 8 shows the introduction and rapid increase of cash based transfer (through vouchers) from 2015. Vouchers had several advantages compared to in-kind transfers. However, the evaluation team found that the formal analysis underlying the choice of this modality, which was based on forecasts rather than results, was not always available or kept up-to-date.

88. Whilst cash and voucher distributions increased, in-kind distributions still accounted for the bulk of the assistance, and delivery was impacted by the multiple challenges faced in bringing goods into the land-locked Central African Republic through the 1,400 km road corridor from the port of Douala in Cameroon to Bangui: long transit times, tedious customs and poor security, which obliged all trucks to join strictly regulated convoys under MINUSCA military escort. These constraints were compounded by the lack of an integrated WFP management (by a single unit or a high-ranking WFP focal point with enough authority) for monitoring the overall transit flow of goods. The gradual introduction of the "Global Commodity Management Facility" (GCMF)⁸⁴ in the supply chain could in principle have helped to reduce transit times by enabling pre-positioning of the food in the region. In 2015 and 2016, 44 percent of the food-aid destined for the Central African Republic benefited from GCMF. However, four to six weeks was still accepted as the normal transit time and was used for planning and implementation purposes. Annex L gives a detailed assessment of the procedures and constraints along this corridor.

89. The number of beneficiaries, the metric tonnage, the value of vouchers, plus a number of output indicators for school feeding, nutrition and HIV/tuberculosis were consistently measured in PRRO 200315, IR-EMOP 200565 and EMOP 200650. However, this was not the case for the following indicators: the number of feeding days in school feeding; the number of beneficiaries/caregivers who received training in nutrition; the energy content of rations in general food distribution; the number of days of rations provided in general food distribution; the number of timely food distributions and the number of internally displaced person sites assisted.

General food distribution

90. The table below summarizes the timelines, disaggregated beneficiaries, tonnage and costs of the six main operations that have provided in-kind food aid through various types of activities (general food distribution, nutrition, school meals).⁸⁵

Table 9: Summary overview of operations with food component

Operations	Period	Beneficiaries		Commodities tonnage MT		Total Cost - USD	
	Start/end date	Planned (project doc.)	Actual (max n° in SPRs)	Planned	Actual	Approved budget	Actual expenditure*
DEV 200331	01/01/12-31/12/13	Men (M): 136,095	M: 57,182 W: 62,741	5,100	2,385	23,354,243	4,871,287

⁸³ The two figures are not entirely comparable, as in-kind tonnage was delivered to partners for onwards distribution (some quantities may still be lost) whilst CBT vouchers were handed over directly to beneficiaries.

⁸⁴ The GCMF replaces the former "forward purchasing facility" (FPS).

⁸⁵ In addition, the trust fund (TF) 200933 operation provided for the distribution of some 252 MT of food aid over a ten-month period (May 2016–Mar. 2017) at a total cost of USD 562,782.

Operations	Period	Beneficiaries		Commodities tonnage MT		Total Cost - USD	
	Start/end date	Planned (project doc.)	Actual (max n° in SPRs)	Planned	Actual	Approved budget	Actual expenditure*
		Women (W): 178,705					
PRRO 200315	01/01/12- 31/12/13	M: 125,641 W: 132,728	M: 281,548 W: 269,182	25,681	19,342	48,281,696	32,186,331
IR-EMOP 200565	01/06-31/08/13	M: 10,036 W: 10,014	M: 19,526 W: 24,221	965	622	1,498,159	402,363
EMOP 200650	01/01-31/12/14	1,250,000 (not disaggregated)	M: 773,990 W: 863,808	85,906	39,601	127,100,000	67,040,392
Reg. EMOP 200799	01/01/15- 31/12/17	1,221,400 (not disaggregated)	M: 430,090 W: 485,488	48,702	31,753	137,175,183	106,122,334
IR-EMOP 201078	18/05-17/08/17	39,000 (not disaggregated)	n.a.	1,009	n.a.	1,500,000	n/a.

Source: Latest standard project reports and funds consumption reports available; Total project costs / actual expenditures with DSC and ISC included

91. As shown in Table 9 and discussed under the portfolio assessment, the country portfolio comprised six operations with a food component. General food distributions were carried out under the PRRO and the various EMOPs through collaboration with different partners, including with the International Organization for Migration for food assistance to internally displaced persons under the PRRO. Synergies with FAO were also achieved in EMOP 200650 where rations for seed protection were combined with FAO distribution of agricultural input packages to relaunch agriculture. Overall, general food distribution targeted all regions identified on the basis of levels of food insecurity, and was prioritized over non-lifesaving nutrition and food by prescription activities. The main distribution modality has been in-kind while cash based transfer was introduced as a new approach to the portfolio in 2015 within the regional EMOP. As shown in Table 10, the number of actual general food distribution beneficiaries was substantially higher than planned throughout the period.

92. When the number of beneficiaries exceeded planning and funding levels did not allow distribution of the planned rations to all, the country portfolio evaluation team concluded that the country office appropriately chose (except for CP 200331) to reach as many targeted beneficiaries as possible, but either reduce the number of days covered for all, or reduce the rations of some beneficiaries, according to specific needs and contexts. Under IR-EMOP 200565 for instance, general food distribution was provided to nearly 44,000 people for 60 days of consumption instead of 90 days. When an operation covered both newly and previously displaced persons, the unwritten policy was to keep giving 100 percent of the food basket of 2100 kcal to the newly displaced (who have not yet established any coping strategy), while reducing the food basket (for example, by 50 percent) for the displaced persons already settled. Despite the recurrent difficulties along the Douala corridor, the country office generally succeeded in keeping the food stock at a minimum satisfactory level. A severe break of the pipeline occurred, however, from December 2016 to March 2017 (due to both a reform of customs procedures in Cameroon and a tightening of duty exemptions in the Central African Republic), combined with increased displacements.⁸⁶ Such breaks had severe consequences on quantities distributed, as outlined in Annex L.

⁸⁶ The shortages were anticipated by the CO, which had warned the implementing partners by letter in October 2016 and organized a workshop in November 2016, during which the CO outlined the need to prepare beneficiaries through sensitization.

93. Overall, the standard project reports reported that general food distribution – even when reduced – was distributed on time. The standard rations consisted of cereals, pulses, oil, salt and Supercereal with sugar. Interviews by the evaluation team showed partners’ general satisfaction with general food distribution during the humanitarian crisis, as well as beneficiaries’ overall appreciation of general food distribution as a continuous lifeline – with some exceptions.⁸⁷ Despite the assistance of camp committees, mistakes were reported in the distribution lists, mainly due to continuous displacements and a lack of birth certificates. Local distribution partners also experienced limitations in following distribution procedures or involving local authorities. In addition, methods for monthly food distributions were not found to be consistent in all sites visited, as some partners used “groupings” of ten households and others used more precise registration lists.⁸⁸ Table 10 summarizes gender-disaggregated planned and actual numbers of general food distribution beneficiaries over the period.

Table 10: Planned and actual numbers of general food distribution beneficiaries per year /operation

Number of GFD beneficiaries	2012-2013			2014	2015-2016	
	CP 200331	PRRO 200315*	IR-EMOP 200565	EMOP 200650	EMOP 200799	
Planned (project document)	-	Men (M): 17,144 Women (W): 16,101	M: 10,036 W: 10,014	1,112,000 (not disaggr.)	708,500 (not disaggregated)	
Planned (last SPR)	-	M: 109,922 W: 105,980	M: 10,036 W: 10,014	M: 547,266 W: 564,734	M: 207,816 W: 209,484	CBT: 122,380 (Monitoring report June 2017, not disaggregated)
Actual (last SPR)	-	M: 142,731 W: 143,386	M: 19,526 W: 24,221	M: 595,702 W: 653,434	M: 258,202 W: 298,376	CBT: 87,338 (Monitoring report June 2017, not disaggregated)

* IR-EMOP activities were absorbed in the PRRO, explaining part of the number increase.

Source: Project documents, SPRs and June 2017 monitoring report

94. Logistic Execution Support System (LESS), the corporate tool introduced to improve stock management and tracking across WFP, became operational in the Central African Republic in January 2017. It superseded the COMPAS WINGS software system to address a corporate need to integrate the entire WFP supply chain into one system.⁸⁹ The local staff were satisfied with the training and support they received and appeared to be fully conversant with this new application and its many possibilities.

Cash based transfers

95. In line with the development of the WFP corporate cash based transfer policy, the country office started investigating options for its application in the Central African Republic portfolio a few

⁸⁷ While targeted supplementary feeding is meant for malnourished children, beneficiaries confirmed during interviews that Supercereal was consumed by all children. Likewise, beneficiaries and cooperating partners expressed concern about the food basket being distributed not being adapted to local traditions. As such, beneficiaries will often sell rice to buy manioc.

⁸⁸ Some partners use “groupings” of ten families and a single size of rations for (e.g. five persons) for every family, whatever the family size; in case of shortfalls like in early-mid 2017, the size of rations was reduced, sometimes to one person for an entire family. Other partners were using the exact numbers of registered family members in their calculations (precise counting with number of children and women per household and profiling: ages, sex, vulnerability, widows, non-accompanied children); on that basis, they provided food rations for a lower number of days (e.g. 22 days instead of 30) in case of shortfalls. Whilst groupings arguably simplify the distribution task and may be justified in emergency circumstances, it could not be assessed whether the method evolves towards exact registration once the situation is stable. Field level agreements are not sufficiently precise about these issues (Annex 1 of the field level agreement, bullet point 6 – distribution plan), and there is a need for clearer instructions and more control.

⁸⁹ LESS integrates programming, procurement, pipeline monitoring, logistics, funds management and finance functions within a single online resource, replacing paper-based transactions, and synchronizing physical and financial tracking.

years ago. However, the general insecurity and poorly functioning markets were not conducive for the modality's application before 2015. Based on feasibility studies carried out by the regional bureau in April and September/October 2014, cash based transfers were introduced as part of the regional EMOP in 2015. The studies analysed cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness, partner capacity, market functionality, government priorities, and carried out a general financial analysis. They recommended applying cash based transfers on a pilot basis, with close market monitoring and using the voucher option, based on a diet of 2,190 calories per person. It should be noted that many cooperating partners have been using cash based transfers in the Central African Republic for many years in both development and emergency contexts, but in smaller projects. Among United Nations agencies, UNICEF, UNHCR, as well as the World Bank apply cash based transfers on limited scales.

Table 11: Number of cash based transfer beneficiaries for general food distribution and food assistance for assets activities in 2016

	Planned in-kind	Planned CBT	Planned CBT as % of total GFD beneficiaries	Actual in-kind	Actual CBT	Actual CBT as % of total GFD beneficiaries	% Actual v. planned in-kind	% Actual v. planned CBT
GFD	250,000	167,300	40%	409,647	146,931	26%	163.9%	87.8%
FFA	351,500	55,000	14%	243,952	5,835	3%	69.4%	10.6%

Source: SPR 2016

96. A budget revision of the regional EMOP further justified the introduction of cash based transfers, based on arguments of insecurity with increasing numbers of looting incidences and violence against United Nations staff. However, the evaluation team was not able to obtain evidence on the particular impact of cash based transfers on protection; it should also be noted that most distributions (voucher or in-kind) take place in sites protected by MINUSCA. The first cash based transfer pilot was launched in the western town of Yaloké in March 2015 with World Vision as cooperating partner.⁹⁰ Later that year, cash based transfer was used to support 5,400 internally displaced persons returning from the Bangui airport site to their neighbourhoods. The programme was then expanded to 9,400 internally displaced persons, local vulnerable people, and returnee households in cooperation with ACF, ACTED, Oxfam, and World Vision, all of which had previous cash based transfer experience. The cash based transfer initiatives included support to retailers at local markets. Targeting criteria for cash based transfer beneficiaries within the EMOP were defined as vulnerable households with low monthly income and households headed by women with elderly dependents and children. In terms of beneficiaries, there was almost equal distribution among women and men in 2015 and 2016.

97. Since 2016, WFP has carried out market assessments in all regions identifying areas where market functionality would allow cash based transfer implementation. A mini financial sector study was carried out in 2016, and standard operating procedures were developed for vouchers. If market functionality was deemed appropriate, other factors were analysed before cash based transfer initiatives were designed and implemented, in line with WFP corporate cash based transfer policy.⁹¹ This justified further expansion of cash based transfers to cover 26 percent of all general food distribution and 3 percent of all food assistance for assets in 2016. As a principle, cash based transfers continued to prioritize households headed by women among internally displaced persons as well as returnees and vulnerable host populations. In 2017, the cash based transfer initiative was further expanded to 2,666 beneficiaries to cover Zemio with UNHCR and later the International Medical Corps (IMC). With the start-up of cash based transfer activities, a working

⁹⁰ The pilot provided vouchers with a value equivalent to USD 10 to 110 IDP households to complement distributions of rice, pulses, and oil.

⁹¹ The 2016 market study in Bambari, for instance, showed good market functionality but the general insecurity in the area led to continuation of in-kind distribution rather than CBT.

group was established under the food security cluster, to harmonize targeting and modality criteria. Still, it was noticed during the country portfolio evaluation and by donors, that different cooperating partners applied different criteria. The implementation of the cash based transfer initiative was evaluated by a headquarter mission in 2016,⁹² which confirmed the appropriateness of the voucher options in specific locations, based on specific conditions relating to market functioning and security.

98. According to cooperating partners, the use of cash based transfers in the Central African Republic was positive when applied in closely monitored environments, and beneficiaries were generally satisfied with the voucher distributions as preferable to in-kind distribution. Likewise, the country portfolio evaluation's visits to cash based transfer distribution sites confirmed the functioning of the modality and its contribution to re-establishing the local economy. Partners interviewed for the country portfolio evaluation were encouraged by the increasing use by WFP of cash based transfers. According to the standard project reports, cash based transfers had been provided to 70,000 beneficiaries since its launch in 2015 to the end of 2016. This was lower than planned, partly due to market supply challenges and financial constraints. It is expected that the 2017 coverage will be substantially larger. During the country portfolio evaluation's visits to sub-offices, discussions with WFP staff revealed that, while there is interest and apparent market functionality to support cash based transfers in other areas, the cooperating partner capacity is still considered insufficient for a full scale-up to all regions.

School meals

99. The country office approach to school meals (in CP 200331 only) and later emergency school feeding has varied significantly over the country portfolio evaluation period, as it had to reflect the drastic changes in the overall political situation in the Central African Republic. Emergency meals were implemented in three operations; output numbers (beneficiaries and schools) can be found in Table 12, disaggregated by gender. Numbers of emergency rations for schools were usually confirmed in October (beginning of school year). They were based on planned figures from the previous year (June), and were updated in December. Rations were foreseen for 18 school feeding days in the month and 165 school feeding days in the year. School management staff and parents that were interviewed were satisfied with the quality, quantities and timeliness of deliveries.

Table 12: Output indicators for school meals

Number of beneficiaries of school meals /ESF	2012-2013			2014	2015-mid 2017
	CP 200331	PRRO 200315	IR-EMOP 200565	EMOP 200650	EMOP 200799
Planned (project document)	Boys: 51,933 Girls: 37,867	Boys: 39,983 Girls: 28,835	No school meals	197,000 (not disaggregated)	250,000 (not disaggregated)
Planned (last SPR)	Boys: 47,527 Girls: 34,931	Boys: 63,020 Girls: 45,448		Boys (B): 97,842 Girls (G): 99,158	B 2016: 129,000 G 2016: 86,000 Jun 2017: 194,250 (not disaggregated)
Actual (last SPR)	Boys: 38,157 Girls: 28,201	Boys: 66,522 Girls: 63,150		Boys: 80,951 Girls: 66,234	B 2016: 93,280 G 2016: 75,861 Jun 2017: 223,214 (not disaggregated)

⁹² WFP mission report (2016) "Rapport Mission Bangui". The evaluation made a series of recommendations for streamlining the CBT use in the Central African Republic, including calculation of cost efficiency and cost effectiveness based on the market price value of a local food basket. Moreover, the evaluation suggested that the CO establish a multi-functional CBT working group and apply corporate policy. The CPE evaluation took note of the CO's follow-up to the recommendations, including general strengthening of CBT capacity and recruitment of a CBT expert.

Number of beneficiaries of school meals /ESF	2012-2013			2014	2015-mid 2017
	CP 200331	PRRO 200315	IR-EMOP 200565	EMOP 200650	EMOP 200799
Number of schools assisted by WFP					
Planned (last SPR)	374	200		500	-
Actual (last SPR)	278	212		302	401

Source: Project documents, SPRs and June 2017 monitoring report

100. In 2012 and early 2013, school feeding was one of the two components (with nutrition) of CP 200331 that aimed at supporting education through school meals in a development context and followed earlier development programmes (DEV 53870 and 103610). Secondary objectives included assisting the Ministry of Education in developing a national school feeding policy and promoting home-grown school feeding.⁹³ Due to the civil conflict, no distributions took place between April and November 2013, as most schools were closed. The country office noted a very strong impact of suspending school meals: as from the first week without food at school, attendance dropped dramatically and, if the meals were suspended for more than one month, half of the children no longer attend school.

101. PRRO 200315 assisted displaced people or recent returnees from a series of internal conflicts. The recovery component of the PRRO aimed at encouraging primary school children to return to school through daily school meals, thereby supporting the UNICEF back-to-school campaign (which provided infrastructure, equipment and training). In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the operation targeted sub-prefectures most affected by conflict, with the highest levels of food insecurity and internally displaced persons, and where NGO partners were present. Results largely exceeded planning in 2012 (66,377 children instead of 55,000 planned), at the cost of reducing the school feeding days from 165 to 125. The trend worsened in 2013 with the arrival of numerous newly displaced people: 129,672 children received school meals against 108,468 planned. The school feeding days were reduced to 80 and then 50, until the operation was suspended.

102. The emergency school meals activity was gradually resumed in 2015 under the regional EMOP. In coordination again with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and available NGO partners on the ground, the new operation had a very wide coverage to reach all accessible areas, in a context of global L3 emergency. Eleven prefectures (including Bangui) out of 17 were targeted based on the following criteria: overlap of food insecurity (based on the national food security survey), poor education indicators, and high concentration of displaced people.

103. In the first year, 196,267 children were reached in 405 schools (objective: 458). However, in 2016 – as soon as the L3 emergency was over and the Central African Republic became a low-visibility crisis again – the programme was undermined by under-funding. Sporadic outbreaks of violence also prevented WFP from implementing school meal distributions in all planned areas. School feeding days were reduced in November and December from 18 to 15 days per month. Critical shortage of food stocks even forced WFP to suspend school meals in Bangui as of October 2016. In some visited schools, school meals' support re-started only at the end of the school year 2016/2017, to accompany new displacements.

104. It was hoped that coverage would increase to 401 schools and 223,214 children in June 2017 (the end of the school year). This would amount to 23.5 percent of the 1,704 officially opened schools, and 24 percent of all children enrolled in primary schools, although many of these schools

⁹³ The school feeding objective was in line with the National Action Plan 2004-2015 which promoted education for all, and with pillar 3 of the PRSP ('promoting human capital and basic social services').

had to close again at some point, due to fighting. In 2012, the 490 schools and 196,030 children assisted by the CP and PRRO represented respectively 21 percent of the 2,323 primary schools operating at national level before the L3 emergency, and 22.2 percent of the 883,000 enrolled children.

105. In ICSP for 2018-2020, Activity 2 of Strategic Outcome 1 plans to distribute emergency school meals to 200,772 primary school children (106,410 girls and 94,362 boys) from crisis-affected families in targeted localities. Strategic Outcome 2, Activity 6 furthermore envisages providing 60 targeted schools (30,228 children) with 'nutritious' home-grown (P4P) school meals. In both cases, meals should be distributed 18 days per month, provided funding allows it.

Nutrition, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis

106. In the project documents, the targeting of vulnerable groups requiring nutritional intervention was coherent with the identified and accessible emergency needs of acute malnutrition, but not with the much more widespread chronic malnutrition.⁹⁴ However, these findings are limited by scattered data collection. Targeted categories of children under 5, caregivers, pregnant and breastfeeding women – as well as people living with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis patients– all suffered from acute and chronic malnutrition. The portfolio included activities to combat acute malnutrition, but interaction with partners did not identify any action against chronic malnutrition, even though it is a serious problem. Actual coverage was severely impacted by the volatility of the security situation in the country, and by funding shortages. Overall output figures per type of nutrition activity and related beneficiaries are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Output indicators for nutrition

Number of beneficiaries from nutrition activities	2012-2013			2014	2015-2016
	CP 200331	PRRO 200315	IR-EMOP 200565	EMOP 200650	EMOP 200799
Planned (project document)			No nutrition activities		
-Blanket/targeted supplementary feeding (BSF/TSF) for pregnant /lactating women (PLW)	51,000			10,000	51,847
- BSF for children 6-23 months (also 6-59 months)	101,500	12,600		157,000	54,600
- TSF for children 6-59 months	67,500	45,275		33,500	47,000
- Caregivers ration	5,000	5,400		5,000	10,000
Planned (SPR)	(2013)	(2013)		(2014)	(2015)
- TSF for PLW	10,200	10,800		10,000	51,847
- BSF 6-59 months	20,300	66,000		220,000	54,600
- TSF 6-59 months	13,500	26,458		33,332	47,000
- Caregivers	0	0		5,000	10,000
Actual (SPR)	(2013)	(2013)		(2014)	(2015)
- TSF for PLW	620	8,996		25,248	62,013
- BSF 6-59 months	0	0		162,846	35,314
- TSF 6-59 months	6,702	11,287		34,169	73,328
- Caregivers	0	0		10,181	11,086

Source: SPRs

107. Over the whole country portfolio evaluation period, the planned percentages of coverage were modest compared to the predicted number of cases; tables with numbers of beneficiaries can be found in Annex M.

⁹⁴ Over the period 2008-2012, the number of children who were underweight (moderate and severe) was estimated at 23.5%, and stunting (moderate and severe) at 40.7%. Source: UNICEF Statistics.

108. The monitoring of nutrition activities was based on the information system of the national nutrition programme and the health information system, which had problems in terms of data quality. As already discussed, effective monitoring was a general weakness in the Central African Republic. Based on project documents and standard reporting, the effectiveness of operations, measured against planning, was overall rather satisfactory, except for the much-disturbed year 2013.

109. It must be outlined that support to community activities was not sufficiently developed for nutrition and general health purposes in the Central African Republic. The importance of community-based management of severe malnutrition was generally recognized, and both WFP and UNICEF have experienced its effectiveness. WFP has formulated the goal of institutionalized provision of services, consistent with the national protocol, but this makes the community component secondary to the health system. As a result of this approach, , which is focused on the prevention of moderate acute malnutrition,⁹⁵ WFP chose to partner with institutions that did not greatly support community-based management – at least until the increased importance of this was proposed in the ICSP. This resulted in a gradual decrease in the number of beneficiaries of moderate acute malnutrition treatment since 2015. The programme helped to increase attendance at accessible health centres by pregnant and lactating women, but improvements in malnutrition rates and other outcomes have been reported as low. For example, the quality of targeted supplementary feeding to treat MAM among children 6-59 months is often affected by the sharing of rations with other children of the family.⁹⁶

110. The use of blanket feeding for prevention remained very limited. It was difficult to determine its effectiveness in terms of limiting the deterioration of the nutritional situation. The modality required a timely and targeted response in order to distribute the food at the right time – normally during the lean season – and WFP had difficulties delivering on time, due to fund shortages. It should be emphasized that experimental evidence for this type of intervention is rare, although WFP reports positive results in other countries.

111. The planned numbers for the mother and child health component were also modest in light of needs. Less than 10 percent of the estimated malnourished pregnant and breastfeeding mothers were targeted. WFP-assisted health facilities were more focused on the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition than on the implementation of a mother and child programme.

112. HIV/AIDS prevalence in the Central African Republic is the highest in French-speaking Sub-Saharan Africa, and people living with HIV were estimated at 130,000 (110,000-160,000) in 2016. Only 15,000 of these actually received antiretroviral (ARV) therapy, but the number of patients receiving WFP food by prescription to support their treatment was much lower (2,337 in June 2017) than the registered cases, due to a funding shortage.⁹⁷ This impacted on their chances of recovering: a study of the vulnerability of people living with HIV carried out with the assistance of WFP⁹⁸ has shown.⁹⁹ That 43.4 percent of patients entering antiretroviral treatment were malnourished. Also, due to funding shortages, tuberculosis patients have not received WFP support since 2012.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ As MAM is not considered a disease, cases will not reach the health centres unless they are actively detected or accompanied by complications.

⁹⁶ Source: Semi-Quantitative Evaluation of Access and Coverage (SQUAEC) studies – carried out in only two prefectures of 16.

⁹⁷ For example, 20 ARV patients out of 350 were found to receive food by prescription in Kaga-Bandoro, and 100 out of 600 in Bambari.

⁹⁸ Etude du Profil de vulnérabilité à l'insécurité alimentaire des personnes vivant avec le VIH et Orphelins et autres Enfants rendus vulnérables en République centrafricaine-WFP & UNICEF -Nov. 2012

⁹⁹ For those who receive food by prescription, the data from partners and the National AIDS Control Programme confirm the effectiveness of the nutritional care provided. The intervention was effective in contributing to adherence and reversal of the nutritional status of the targeted population, but the results cannot be directly attributed to WFP action, because other factors (infection control, improvement in clinical condition) also contribute to a better body mass index.

¹⁰⁰ In the provincial hospital of Bambari, 171 TB cases were not supported.

113. Nutritional support to people living with HIV is most effective when funded in a development perspective; this cohort of chronic patients cannot be left to the uncertainty of short-term financing. WFP has already made progress in this area and provided support to the Ministry of Health to include nutrition support in national response protocols, and for nutrition support to the government to be included in the activities funded by the Global Fund for the response to AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

Purchase for Progress (P4P)

114. The P4P initiative was launched in the Central African Republic in 2014 in line with the corporate policy of “leaving no-one behind” and using the purchasing capacity of WFP to support local production and thereby the local economy. As such, P4P was well aligned with WFP Strategic Plan (2014-2017) calling for the use of WFP purchasing power to strengthen local markets (Strategic Objective 3). In the Central African Republic, the modality was “P4P-like”, as competitive procurement was not applied; there was also a “business to business” approach to promote partnerships between farmers and related service providers.

115. The P4P activity followed WFP overall policy for local procurement as defined originally through the corporate P4P pilot (2008-2013):¹⁰¹ supporting value chains, targeting women producers organized in small farmer cooperatives, supporting market development through helping with storage facilities and transportation, and ensuring purchase. According to the country office, P4P benefited 60,000 people in 2017. When implementing P4P in the Central African Republic, targeting has prioritized women food producers.

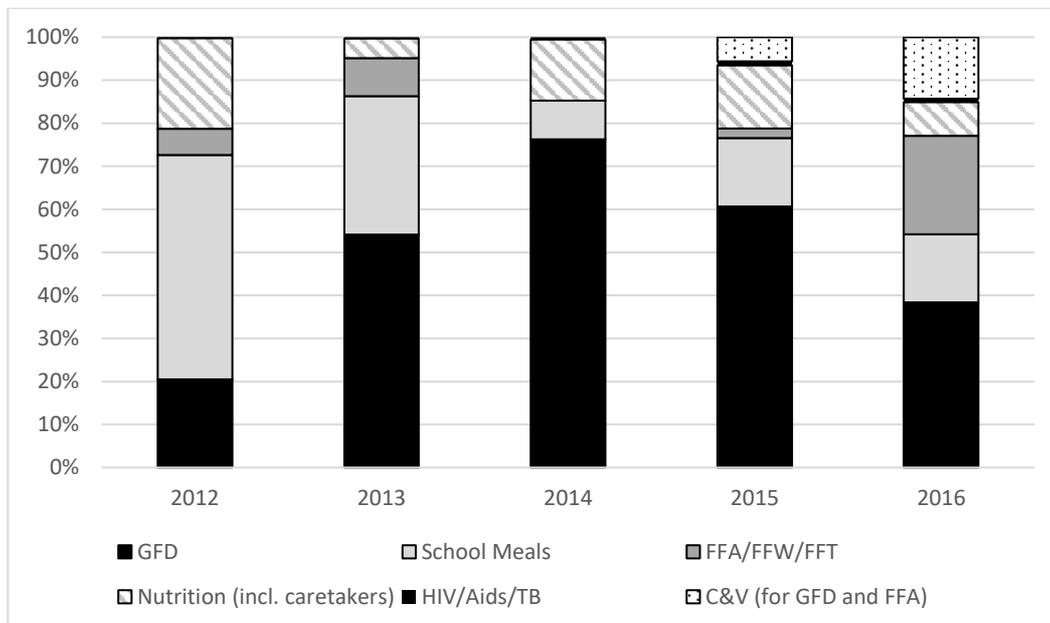
116. P4P was used for the supply of WFP school meals activities, and outputs have rapidly increased above planning: from 160 metric tons procured in 2016 (400 metric tons had been planned), P4P has already reached 1,100 metric tons in the first 6-7 months of 2017 whilst 1,800 metric tons have been planned for WFP procurement for “home-grown school meals”, that is school meals produced locally. The overall objective of the country office is that 10 percent of the resources will ultimately be used for P4P, in line with WFP local and regional purchase guidance to country offices.¹⁰² So far, all P4P outputs are being purchased by WFP.

FFA / FFT (Food Assistance for Assets / for Training)

Figure 4: Importance of food assistance for assets and food assistance for training in the portfolio

¹⁰¹ WFP (2013) “Strategic Evaluation: WFP 2008-2013 Purchase for Progress Pilot Initiative” OEVI/2013/024

¹⁰² WFP (2012) “P4P Purchase for Progress • A Primer”



Source: SPR

117. Food assistance for assets provided support to more than 700,000 beneficiaries from 2012 to 2016, or around 20 percent of the total number. It was first applied in the PRRO, where the assets were mainly in the form of early agricultural recovery through seed protection collaboration with FAO. The activity responded to communities, which reported not having enough seed to plant for the next agricultural season (March and May).¹⁰³ Through the seed protection cooperation, WFP provided food rations to vulnerable households while FAO provided seeds and tools to protect their productive assets during the lean season.¹⁰⁴ The seed protection cooperation was expanded under regional EMOP 200799, where WFP provided seed protection rations to 50,000 vulnerable households in 6 high-priority prefectures out of 17 where FAO distributed seeds and tools, and with seed protection rations, this corresponded to around half of the full general food distribution ration. However, as seed protection was built on cooperation with FAO, it was dependent on the activities of FAO. For instance, the cooperation was discontinued in 2017 in Paoua, as FAO did not identify that region for their support that year.

118. Interviews during the country portfolio evaluation confirmed that seed protection was highly appreciated by partners and beneficiaries. According to the standard project reports, the food assistance for assets activities under the PRRO had 324 percent more beneficiaries than planned. This extremely high number, though, was a result of absorption of beneficiaries from IR-EMOP 200565 and thereby an expansion of the PRRO's area of intervention. For the regional EMOP, the number of beneficiaries compared to planned ones for food assistance for assets activities was very low in 2015 (8 percent) while it increased to 61 percent in 2016. The main reasons for the underperformance in 2015 and low implementation in 2016 were linked to the level of insecurity and overall priorities of WFP which focused on lifesaving activities.

119. Other food assistance for assets activities have included different community assets, such as road and bridge rehabilitation¹⁰⁵ and, under the regional EMOP, improvement of draining systems in internally displaced person camps and rehabilitation of a vocational youth centre in

¹⁰³ République Centrafricaine: Violences, déplacements et insécurité alimentaire. Evaluation de la sécurité alimentaire des ménages - Décembre 2013

¹⁰⁴ The geographical targeting was based on a combination of WFP intervention areas identified through EFSAs and FAO intervention zones, which were based on results from IPC analysis. The beneficiary targeting was based on vulnerability of small farm households with displacement history. Households headed by women were prioritized.

¹⁰⁵ In cooperation with Caritas in Bouar and MINUSCA under the PRRO.

Bangui.¹⁰⁶ It should be noted, though, that under EMOP 200799, funding constraints led to reduced food rations and overall, the number of community assets developed in the portfolio is relatively limited.

120. Food assistance for training activities have only been implemented under the PRRO and have been even more limited, both in scale and numbers, than food assistance for assets activities. The implemented food assistance for training activities included vocational or literacy training of women, as well as training in income generation activities, including some livelihood-focused training for returnees and ex-combatants. Opportunities exist for more of such training support.

2.3.3. Outcomes

121. Based on the interviews with various stakeholder groups, the evaluation found that general food distribution provided critical input to severely conflict-affected food insecure households. Beneficiaries and cooperating partners confirmed that general food distribution provides a lifeline for households deprived of income generation activities or other livelihood means. The standard project reports furthermore showed that general food distribution helped displaced families to return to their homesteads, particularly when it was combined with school feeding activities.

122. Standard project reports for EMOPs 20650 and 200799 have used one outcome indicator which relates directly to general food distribution: “Proportion of target population who participate in an adequate number of distributions”. In both cases, results were high (80 percent and 86 percent). Other standard project report outcome indicators were linked to food security; they measured the levels (acceptable, poor, borderline) of food consumption scores. They showed that WFP food assistance generally contributed to significantly improving food and nutrition security of beneficiary households with the large L3 emergency, except in five prefectures in the north and southeast. Post distribution monitoring also outlined the fact that households receiving in-kind assistance had worse food consumption scores than those receiving food assistance through the cash based transfer modality. Beneficiaries under the cash based transfer modality had a better dietary diversity, but they also received full rations, while those receiving in-kind assistance had their rations reduced sometimes by half or more for all food commodities. There were no specific outcome indicators in the standard project reports for food assistance for assets, training or P4P. The Coping Strategy Index (CSI), an overall outcome indicator which is related to all food assistance and early recovery activities, was found in standard project reports from 2014 to 2016. As Table 14 shows, the Coping Strategy Index significantly dropped in 2014, followed by a limited recovery in 2015. The new standard project report format applied in 2016 did not provide figures that could be used for consistent trend monitoring.

Table 14: Coping Strategy Index 2014-2016

Coping Strategy Index (CSI)		2014	2015	2016
		EMOP 200650	Reg. EMOP 200799	Reg. EMOP 200799
% of households headed by women with reduced/stabilized CSI	End project target	32.1	13	>80.00
	Base value	32.1	13	28.98
	Previous follow-up			66.59
	Latest follow-up	13	23.24	76.97
% of households headed by men with reduced/stabilized CSI	End project target	36.4	14	>80.00
	Base value	36.4	14	31.09
	Previous follow-up			74.34
	Latest follow-up	14	20.68	89.06

¹⁰⁶ Implemented in collaboration with UNDP and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

123. The country portfolio evaluation's review of the standard project reports and post-distribution monitoring, though, highlighted the difficulties in assessing outcomes among conflict-affected populations where there are no food security monitoring systems. Other countries perform these assessments with sentinel sites. The standard project report for EMOP 200799 in 2015, for instance, reported that general food distribution beneficiaries showed slightly improved food consumption scores, while negative coping strategies continued in extremely unstable environments where conflicts repeatedly flared up. Post-distribution monitoring from April and August 2016 confirmed the overall outcome results from 2015 but provided more insight into the numbers, including some differences in the food consumption score based on target groups such as internally displaced persons and host families (food consumption scores improved from 56 to 67 percent, showing adequate food consumption) or refugees, among whom the food consumption score decreased from 95 percent in April to 65 percent in August: the real impact of five months of general food distribution on refugees cannot be assessed based on the available data.

124. Furthermore, despite the new mobile vulnerability analysis and mapping (mVAM) electronic collection tool, post-distribution monitoring was still difficult to carry out, as access was at times disrupted by violence.¹⁰⁷ Monitors for WFP and their partners also needed to organize separate focus groups for men and women among beneficiaries (there were no panel studies), to collect valid feedback. The feedback generated by the post-distribution monitoring (probably depending on the questions asked or limited by mVAM check box answers) did not appear to reflect certain field findings from the country portfolio evaluation: for example, women members of a beneficiary committee complained strongly to the evaluator that whilst they were the ones going to the food distribution, once back home the men often felt entitled to 'own' the food and sold some of it to buy cigarettes or alcohol. The partner concerned acknowledged the information, stating that it had attempted to sensitize households around issues such as this, but had only achieved "some results".

125. The August 2016 post-distribution monitoring provided a comparison of vouchers, in-kind assistance, and general food distribution (see Annex N). According to the results, the general food distribution beneficiaries receiving vouchers, either as the only transfer modality or in combination with in-kind assistance, had better food consumption scores (at 85 percent and 82 percent respectively) than beneficiaries receiving only in-kind assistance (74 percent) and were able to buy preferred traditional food items. According to the post-distribution monitoring analysis, this advantage of vouchers should also be assessed taking into account the fact that the rations were cut and that vouchers therefore offered more stable options.

126. During the country portfolio evaluation interviews with cooperating partners and beneficiaries, many referred to their preference for vouchers – even over cash – because of security and assurance for reasonable exchange at the markets. While the post-distribution monitoring referred to some tendency on the part of retailers to increase prices as a result of the vouchers, the country portfolio evaluation discussions with beneficiaries, implementing partners, and retailers in Bangui could not confirm this. Likewise, the current market assessments did not provide information to back-up claims of price hikes.

127. WFP support through the voucher option of cash based transfer also had positive impacts on local markets and the empowerment of women through training of women retailers. Moreover,

¹⁰⁷ Monitors from WFP and the Department of Anthropology from Bangui university managed to visit only 113 final distribution points out of 733 (561 points had been planned for the PDM visits). While 82 percent of the GFD distribution points could be covered, the PDM results are not likely to be statistically significant for the other activities: 11 percent of the nutrition points were visited, 4 percent of the schools, and none of the FFA sites.

during distribution, support staff from the cooperating partners were always available for the retailers, allowing good hands-on capacity development and contributing to re-establishing local markets.

128. It should be noted, however, that in the Central African Republic, the cash based transfer system was likely to be affected by sudden violence in fragmented communities, even with a “do-no-harm” approach. As traders were mostly Muslims, displaced Christians did not have access to their shops, and WFP sometimes needed to revert rapidly to in-kind distribution.¹⁰⁸ In such cases, with every attack there were renewed large movements of population: displaced and settled populations fled to new places that were deemed safer, and as a result, weeks of registration work had to be resumed from scratch for both cash based transfers and general food distribution beneficiaries.

129. Expectations regarding outcomes of school meals by institutional actors (Ministry of Education and the President) were rather high in terms of contributing to a sense of return to normal life for crisis-affected communities and synergy with P4P. It was hoped that this could further strengthen recovery and resilience dynamics, in a potentially “virtuous circle” that included guaranteed incomes from the procurement of agricultural production, and renewed opportunities of education. Such expectations were mostly in line with the revised WFP school feeding policy of 2013, which also stressed the role of school feeding as a safety net, and promoted linkages with local agricultural production and government’s ownership of the scheme.

130. School meals were completely interrupted by the crisis in 2014, and emergency school feeding was still faced with many challenges: it could only be deployed in areas with sufficient security to allow delivery, storage and monitoring; sub-offices reported that the number of schools represented a significant workload for the limited numbers of WFP field monitors; there was a lack of joint targeting with UNICEF;¹⁰⁹ school meals acted as a significant pull factor¹¹⁰ and induced a strong increase in the number of pupils by classroom (up to 180 in Kaga-Bandoro) which, combined with the lack of teachers and equipment, further undermined the quality of education; and, despite presidential support, school feeding was still regularly perceived as a “WFP programme”.

131. Outcomes indicators in standard project reports included gender-disaggregated enrolment and retention rates in WFP-supported primary schools; attendance and drop-out rates were only recorded in 2012. Table 15 shows that enrolment rates improved slowly in 2012 and, after a drop in 2013, much more markedly with the consistent L3 emergency and recovery efforts from 2014 to 2015, although figures for boys remained significantly higher than for girls. The standard project report for 2016 used indications which could not be reconciled with previous figures. Even though the contribution of school feeding could not be quantified, in an evaluation conducted by WFP in August 2013 in collaboration with UNICEF, 80 percent of respondents answered that the provision of school meals was the main factor that would motivate children (and teachers) to return to school. Retention rates were above 80 percent in all cases. A complete table of all outcome indicators by operation and year can be found in Annex O.

¹⁰⁸ In Kaga-Bandoro, for instance, there were 20,000 CBT beneficiaries in May 2017, and only 7,000 were left after the attacks in July.

¹⁰⁹ Even if the support of UNICEF is limited to the time needed to refurbish infrastructures and distribute school material – whereas school meals are provided throughout the school year, combined activities appear particularly important in the Central African Republic context, where most schools supported by WFP have been completely looted by armed groups: paper files and wooden tables burned for heating food, NFIs for school feeding like kettles and plates repeatedly stolen.

¹¹⁰ An increase of 22 percent of pupils (from 15,261 to 18,588) was, for instance, recorded over the academic year 2016/2017 in 27 schools newly provided with school meals. Source: Rapport de mission d'évaluation des écoles à cantine au titre de l'année académique 2016-17, PAM/Ministère de l'Education nationale, Juillet 2017

Table 15: Outcome indicators in primary schools assisted by WFP

	2012		2014		2015
	Base value	Latest value	Base value	Latest value	Latest value
Enrolment (boys)	55.45	75.79	52.79	92.4	96.6
Enrolment (girls)	50.64	54.64	47.21	74.8	76.2

Source: SPRs

132. In the Central African Republic, an additional benefit of school feeding (not measured in standard project reports) is the promotion of national reconciliation and social cohesion. The Ministry of Education used the fact that the proposed supported schools gathered children from mixed Christian-Muslim populations as a key selection criterion. School feeding should furthermore be seen as a means to support the “Associations des Parents d’Elèves” (APE), which had a crucial role to play in the general recovery process by contributing to refurbishing the looted premises, and complementing – partially – the available official teachers with “maîtres-parents”.¹¹¹ This initiative was supported by UNICEF and some NGOs: 8,000 maîtres-parents were recruited and required training. Other policy objectives regarding improving health and nutrition status were still being considered (nutrition will be conducted as a pilot under ICSP).

133. As for nutrition outcomes, the nutritional situation at the national level did not seem to have changed significantly in the Central African Republic from 2010 to 2014, both for acute malnutrition and for chronic malnutrition, despite interventions by partners (Figure 5).¹¹² Worse, the rapid SMART surveys carried out in late 2016 and January 2017 seemed to reveal a deterioration in the nutritional situation.¹¹³ In 62 zones of surveys, the severe acute malnutrition rate varied from 2.8 to 11.6 percent, which exceeds the 2 percent threshold considered critical by the World Health Organization (WHO); the global acute malnutrition rate was 16.7 percent and also exceeded the threshold of WHO.¹¹⁴

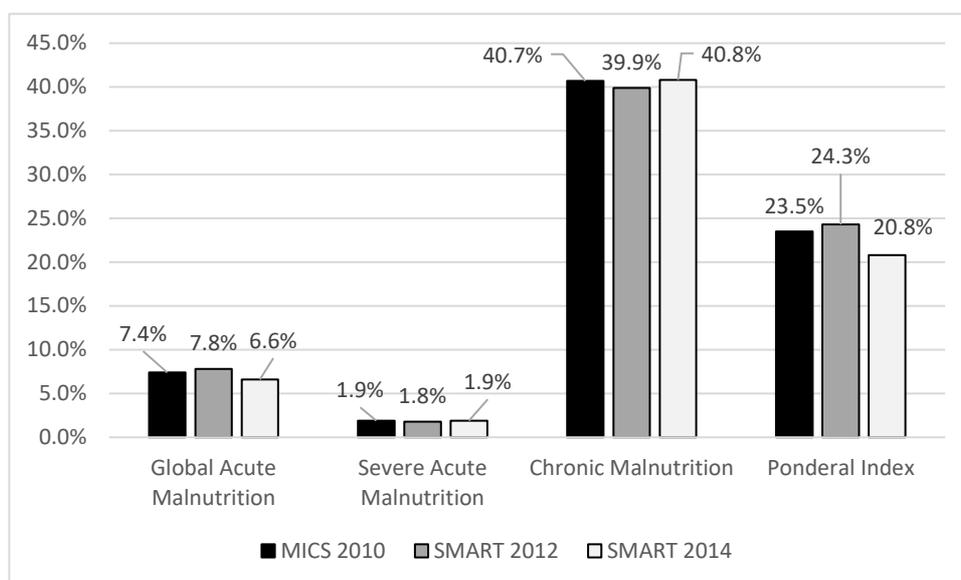
¹¹¹ Active APE with a positive spirit is a key criterion of the CO for selecting schools. WFP started funding a partner (Finn Church Aid) in 2017 which supports the auxiliary “maître-parent” approach. These unofficial teachers (although the Ministry of Education agrees with the idea) are drawn from the most educated members of the APes to assist official teachers and help subdivide classrooms. Some other NGOs (PLAN) are following the same approach. Maîtres-parents are paid by the community and may receive some incentives from UNICEF. The scheme has been running since 2015, but has not yet been evaluated.

¹¹² WFP worked with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF and nine NGO partners to provide nutrition assistance to malnourished and highly vulnerable children aged 6-23 months. By working with partners, WFP was able to somewhat reinforce the screening and referral to the treatment of MAM program, and strengthened the Government’s staff capacities in nutritional program management, notwithstanding the discrepancies in strategies already mentioned with UNICEF.

¹¹³ Nutrition cluster: Nutritional situation in the Central African Republic (as of 6 July 2017)

¹¹⁴ Nutrition cluster : 2016-2017 the Central African Republic Mapping Surveys/Evaluations et Enquêtes Nutritionnelles

Figure 5: Trends in anthropometric results



134. Improved rates of malnutrition in targeted areas have not been consistently documented. The absence of an adequate information system, limited monitoring capacity and the lack of agreement between the definition of the number of cases and prevalence have made this measure difficult if not impossible. Better security, better access, improved availability of surveys, a monitoring system that works, and improved monitoring capacity of WFP are all needed to improve this situation. Nutritional activities did not take into account either growth retardation or micronutrient deficiencies during the period 2012-June 2017.¹¹⁵

135. Within these parameters, the information available from the partners and the nutrition cluster (as reflected in the standard project reports and verified at the sites visited) confirmed that the implementation of the treatment programme conformed to performance indicators (cure rate, abandonment, mortality, etc.). In some cases, a direct relationship was established between high drop-out rates and stock-outs: the availability of food determined the beneficiary's compliance with the programme and his or her attendance at the health facility.¹¹⁶ Interviewed health workers, partners and patients indicated, for instance, that participation in health centres that provided additional food for mother and child health was affected by stock availability. Defaulting by patients caused by stock-outs were simply registered as normal "drop-outs" from the programme and not recorded separately.

136. Without reliable data on the epidemiological situation (prevalence and incidence of acute malnutrition), the country portfolio evaluation was not in a position to conclude on the ratio between real needs and actual coverage. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of operations appeared satisfactory for the relatively small number of 45,000 cases that could be reached and treated per year for moderate acute malnutrition by WFP and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) by UNICEF and other actors in the Central African Republic (Table 16). According to the nutrition cluster report¹¹⁷ and the standard project report for the regional EMOP 200799 on the overall performance of the management of malnutrition cases in 2016, for this limited cohort, the outcome significantly

¹¹⁵ The pilot project in CP 200331 was relevant in a development context, given the high rates of stunting in some provinces.

¹¹⁶ Nutrition activities were based on CSB (corn-soybean/wheat), oil and sugar rations. This ration is not in line with current WFP recommendations for the types of products to be used for both prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition of children, but is adequate for the treatment and prevention of malnutrition in pregnant and lactating women and for nutritional support to HIV and TB patients undergoing treatment. The PRRO included rations that met international and general WFP standards, primarily ready-to-use supplementary food (RUSF) and Supercereal with sugar.

¹¹⁷ Nutrition cluster dashboard on 31 December 2016, published in April 2017

exceeded the thresholds planned in the IMAM national protocol, which shares similar targets with the WFP project end targets.

Table 16: Performance indicators for severe and moderate acute malnutrition case management in 2016

SAM admissions (UNICEF, others)	SAM cured rate¹¹⁸	SAM death rate	SAM default
25,458	Planned: >75%	<10%	<15%
	Actual: 88.10%	2.07%	9.84%
MAM admissions (WFP)	MAM cured rate	MAM death rate	MAM default rate
20,246	Planned: (end target): >75%	<3%	<15%
	Base value Dec 2015: 92.00%	0.10%	7.00%
	Latest follow-up Dec 2016: 85.90%	0.10%	8.80%

Source: Nutrition cluster dashboard, Dec 2016, published in Apr 2017, and SPR 2016

137. It should also be noted that UNICEF did not provide severe acute malnutrition treatment in several provincial hospitals visited (Paoua, Bambari). Instead it was replaced by Médecins sans Frontières. Although the quality of treatment by Médecins sans Frontières was probably also adequate (this was not checked), this NGO is generally focused on emergency interventions rather than longer-term perspectives and institutional sustainability.¹¹⁹

138. Regarding P4P, FFA and FFT, there were no indicators of outcomes in the standard project reports that could be specifically related to either P4P, food assistance for assets or food assistance for training. During the country portfolio evaluation, it was noted that the P4P initiative was highly appreciated by beneficiaries and partners, in particular, for the assurance of selling products. Moreover, as a local procurement modality, it was seen as an important support to early recovery. Some stakeholders referred to the security challenges of transporting food over longer distances in the Central African Republic; a challenge considered to be partly mitigated by local procurement.

139. However, partners also noted that the initiative had limited support activities that are normally considered critical for a successful P4P, including training in revenue management and increasing the involvement of local and national authorities through capacity development. Price setting has been a regular concern in the P4P implementation, and the challenge was raised during a joint field visit in June 2017 with the Ministry of Agriculture and WFP.¹²⁰ The visit outlined the fact that, while the principles of P4P contracts corresponded to needs, WFP faced several problems with farmers who wanted to renegotiate when the market price rose, irrespective of former contractual agreements. Other challenges were raised during the joint visit including delays in payment. Recommendations were made for more transparency through greater involvement of all partners. Nevertheless, interviews during the country portfolio evaluation with P4P cooperative in Paoua indicated that the women farmers were happy with the assurance of selling their products, which is what the contracts with WFP offered. The P4P initiative in Paoua, which is

¹¹⁸ Performance indicators: Healing rate acceptable >75%; death rate <3% for MAM and < 10% for SAM; dropout rate <15%

¹¹⁹ MSF provides emergency relief only and does not build its interventions on the longer term. MSF may apply its strategies without always considering protocols with the Ministry of Health and other actors, as the NGO follows its own principles and has ensured financial independence, with a budget for 2017 of 60 million Euros for the Central African Republic and ±4,000 staff.

¹²⁰ Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development/Agricultural Extension Service 'Rapport to Mission du 8 au 14 Juin 2017 a Paoua'.

estimated to constitute 80 percent of the portfolio's P4P activities,¹²¹ has largely contributed to the strategic positioning of WFP in supporting local rural economies.

140. The country portfolio evaluation did not visit any of the community assets improved under the food assistance for assets scheme, but noticed, from review of documents and interviews with key stakeholders, that they were locally adapted and served an immediate early recovery purpose. Furthermore, the partnership arrangements ensured that all food assistance for assets activities supported connectivity and general alignment with other partners.

141. The country portfolio evaluation did not find any evidence that the lessons-learned exercise, carried out by WFP through evaluation of food assistance for assets in six different country portfolios from 2002 to 2011, was applied in the design of the food assistance for assets activities in the Central African Republic portfolio.¹²² In a follow-up to the food assistance for assets learning exercise, WFP developed a comprehensive guidance manual for food assistance for assets implementation in 2016. The guidance is very relevant for the operationalization of both food assistance for assets and training activities in the ICSP.

2.3.4 Portfolio's contribution to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

142. The WFP portfolio design has particularly promoted support to women and girls; gender-disaggregated indicators collected in the standard project reports can be found in Tables 9, 10, 12 and 14. This was justified by the available information on dire gender inequalities among the targeted populations and geographical areas. As such, EFSA's have typically shown that households headed by women were more food-insecure than households headed by men. This has led to a prioritization of households headed by women in both food assistance for assets and general food distribution, but without any clear targets or gender transformative objectives. In principle, though, the country portfolio evaluation considered that by targeting households headed by women for seed protection, for instance, there would be more equity among households headed by men and women in terms of food security. Likewise, the food assistance for training activities under the PRRO, which provided literacy and vocational training as well as income-generation activities, were considered to empower women and potentially contributed to gender equality. Women and girls are also defined as the main beneficiaries of nutrition (mainly due to physical features¹²³) and school feeding programmes – even if enrolment rates for girls remained lower than for boys (Table 15).

143. While the country portfolio evaluation found that most data in operation documents were gender-disaggregated following the WFP gender policy, the country portfolio evaluation did not identify any gender analysis as such. In order to design and monitor gender-responsive operations, context-specific gender analyses for the design and monitoring of the different operations and activities are necessary. While the importance of proper gender analysis has been highlighted in the corporate gender policy of WFP, the application of such analysis has been limited on a global level.¹²⁴ The new corporate WFP Gender Policy (2015-2020) is therefore also very specific, stating that gender analysis is a minimum for gender mainstreaming. The unified outcome indicators show that the activities informed beneficiaries about gender equality issues.¹²⁵

¹²¹ The other locations for P4P are Bozoum and Bouar.

¹²² To ensure that food assistance for assets is applied optimally, WFP carried out a lessons-learned exercise, through the evaluation of food assistance for assets in six different country portfolios from 2002 to 2011. WFP (2014) "Synthesis Report of the Evaluation Series on the Impact of Food for Assets (2002-2011) – And Lessons for Building Livelihoods Resilience"

¹²³ For instance, nutrition support to pregnant and lactating women.

¹²⁴ WFP (2014) "Evaluation of WFP's 2009 Gender Policy – This Time Around?" OEV/2013/008

¹²⁵ An example of this is 'the number of women on food distribution committees' presented in the SPRs as the individual operations' contribution to promote gender equality. While this might say something about women's engagement in different activities, it does not allow conclusions about women's empowerment through the activities as such, and much less about gender equality. For instance, there is no information about women's role in decision-making as such on the committees.

144. The country portfolio evaluation, however, questions the focus on women's participation in all activities based on equal numbers of men and women, rather than a focus on the relationship between gender equality and women's empowerment and women's participation as well as the specific challenges in different contexts or locations. For instance, while an equal number of men and women on all survey teams might be justified, it does not automatically lead to gender balance. As such, while all field level agreements include clauses on equal numbers of men and women on all committees, the standard project reports note that women are seldom presidents or treasurers of the food assistance management committees.¹²⁶ Likewise, the country portfolio evaluation saw no attempt to identify different gender needs based on age groups or different socio-cultural backgrounds.¹²⁷

145. Overall, the outcome indicators available for the operations only provided some elements of the contribution to gender equality. For instance, the fact that an almost equal number of women and men make decisions regarding the use of cash, vouchers, and food – as shown as an outcome of the EMOPs – is only relevant to gender equality and women's empowerment if supplemented by information about the number of households headed by men where women make decisions. Still, the country portfolio evaluation considers that the insistence of promoting women and girls through different activities has the potential to promote the general perception of why gender equality is important. Moreover, the country portfolio evaluation has taken note of the positive development at the country office with the recent recruitment of a gender advisor. Likewise, the country portfolio evaluation has noticed the focus of ICSP on programming and monitoring analysis of the differentiated needs of girls and boys, women and men, wealth groups, age groups, location and household status,¹²⁸ and traditional cultural norms.

2.3.5 Humanitarian Principles and Protection

146. In the troubled context of the Central African Republic, protection and respect for humanitarian principles (humanity, neutrality, impartiality, operational independence) were crucial, but all unarmed international actors felt rather powerless in providing effective protection to the beneficiaries, considering the general violence in many regions of the Central African Republic. If there were no MINUSCA military positions nearby humanitarian actors often struggled to protect themselves.

147. WFP was generally seen as a neutral provider of food assistance by the main parties to the conflict. This did not prevent violence or looting by the many uncontrolled elements. However, food is one of the "bargaining chips of war" or "nerfs de la guerre" : it is sometimes exploited by rival armed groups who try to monopolize food and pay only lip service to humanitarian principles. In the WFP Protection Policy, the practical application of protection is closely related to the principle of humanity. Integrating protection into programmes involves ensuring that WFP "take into consideration the safety, dignity and respect for the rights of beneficiaries". WFP must also combine with this integrated programming, the "do-no-harm" principle and accountability to affected populations (AAP). Food and vouchers for vulnerable and displaced people, treatment of malnutrition, food assistance for assets and school feeding were all considered by WFP as key instruments for protection, and this was applied by the country office where feasible. Yet, the Ministry of Social Affairs, which is officially in charge of assistance to displaced people, has only had limited communication so far with WFP about protection.

148. In the EMOPs, two corporate cross-cutting indicators – for protection and accountability to affected populations - were integrated into the logical frameworks and measured in the standard

¹²⁶ See, for instance, SPRs for PRRO 200315.

¹²⁷ For instance, is there any GEEW impact of the displacements on different segments of the target populations?

¹²⁸ For instance, IDPs, settled, pastoral, rural, urban.

project reports: “proportion of assisted people who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programme sites” and “proportion of assisted people informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)”. Results for protection were above the target of 80 percent, but accountability under the regional EMOP was lower in 2016: 68.9 percent against a target of 70 percent. The results were not disaggregated by gender in the standard project reports.

149. The ability to verify compliance of field activities with core principles and codes was hampered by security restrictions enforced by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security, which apply to WFP staff, and the limited capacity for field monitoring by the cooperating partners of WFP, due to lack of staff and security. This is despite the fact that the memorandum of understanding with partners included a clause on compliance with such standards. According to the post-distribution monitoring, around two thirds of the beneficiary households indicated that they understood the targeting principles and distribution procedures. However, a joint WFP/ECHO field mission in 2015 concluded that the different cooperating partners had different procedures and principles. The evaluation team could not verify whether principles and procedures were complied with in areas which WFP could not access or which had limited humanitarian access. The country office has a hot line to report instances of corruption and other breaches of corporate policies, but the evaluation team was not able to assess its effectiveness.

2.3.6 Capacity Strengthening

150. Interviews carried out during the field visit suggest that the capacity of the Government to provide basic social services and safety nets such as health care has decreased further with the declining security and economic situation. Displacement due to insecurity has caused a severe shortage of skilled human resources to respond to all basic needs. The line ministries, whose roles would be gradually enhanced as envisaged in the ICSP, reportedly do not have far-reaching institutional capacities at the current stage (although there was no overall mapping or assessment to ascertain this). This may change with the very recent policy of restoring state presence in the country, which during the period of the field visits, led to the appointment of 16 new prefects with military authority, and of 71 sous-préfets. The pilot “Plan Opérationnel de Stabilisation Immédiate de Bambari” is another example of this trend, but elsewhere national administration is still generally limited to health and education staff in hospitals and schools, and some scattered agriculture specialists.

151. Implementing measures of capacity strengthening was a related challenge, as there were few ministry staff members in Bangui who could be integrated into these efforts. Furthermore, the technicians or administrators who were already present across the country were not necessarily highly visible and could be overlooked in programme implementation.¹²⁹

152. At the Ministry of Health, for instance, the institutional support for nutrition was still weak, despite the efforts of WFP and other actors to raise the sector profile. Normative documents, when validated,¹³⁰ had a very limited implementation budget and during the field visits, there were only two nutrition specialists at the Ministry, one of them assigned to a service unrelated to nutrition. This situation did not advance a sense of ownership for any achievements gained by the nutritional programmes set up by the partners. During the country portfolio evaluation period, WFP funded and organized training for moderate acute malnutrition case management,¹³¹ implementation of

¹²⁹ For example, Agence Centrafricaine de Développement Agricole (ACDA), which is the operational branch of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, is present in only 10 sous-préfectures out of 80. Their few field agro-technicians should nevertheless be better involved in the design and monitoring of food security projects.

¹³⁰ The National Multi-Sector Nutrition Strategy is still being finalised.

¹³¹ In 2013, 50 nurses and midwives, in 2015, 28 staff of public health facilities, and in 2017, 19 staff.

blanket supplementary feeding,¹³² and nutritional support of people living with HIV,¹³³ but the impact of such training was not measured.

153. The Ministry of Agriculture at central and local levels, including its development and agricultural extension, “Agence Centrafricaine de Développement Agricole” (ACDA), suffered from limited capacity. The capacity limitations were already recognized by the Government at the outset of the December 2013 conflict.¹³⁴ WFP collaborated with the Ministry and provided hands-on capacity building. Nevertheless, the impact was relatively limited due to understaffed departments and high turnover.¹³⁵ The Ministry also worked closely with FAO and, to a certain degree, with IFAD. Emergency school feeding also included a component of capacity strengthening with the Ministry of Education, although this was still done on a very limited scale due to lack of government resources.¹³⁶

154. Over the country portfolio evaluation period, WFP provided capacity strengthening internally and to partners in many instances, such as in 2013 for emergency preparedness,¹³⁷ in 2014 and 2015 for emergency telecommunications,¹³⁸ and generally for contracted drivers and mechanics. In the absence of resources by the ministries to retain valuable staff, WFP contributed to national capacity development by hiring some high-quality national staff. FAO also hired many national managers, who may, after their experience, consider serving in the public sector. The country portfolio evaluation did not identify any specific institutional agreement with the Government on such career plans.

155. It is expected that the ICSP will allow greater focus on Rome based agency collaboration, including harmonized and complementary programming for national capacity development, although implementation modalities are not specified. Concrete capacity strengthening activities still often need to be defined in the ICSP. Some are expected to build on cooperation with United Nations agencies such as UNICEF and FAO to do a mapping in the ZHSR framework (“establishing the leadership, roles and responsibilities of line ministries to develop and deliver national zero hunger food and nutrition policies and programmes”), and establishing objectives (expanding social safety nets, cash based transfers, school meals, food assistance for assets and P4P). The country portfolio evaluation did not find evidence of a systematic collection of good practices – shared among agencies by a dedicated specialist – in this field. Proposed actions in the ICSP are listed in Annex I.

2.3.7 Factors of efficiency

Cash based transfer vs in-kind transfers

156. WFP headquarters and the regional bureau of Dakar’s continuous support for the implementation of the corporate cash based transfer policy in the Central African Republic has included training and support in cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness calculations. This included training and support in the Omega value calculations, which is a cost-effectiveness measure developed by WFP based on the nutritional value of a standard food basket and the associated costs of getting it to beneficiaries. WFP developed standard nutrition values for different food items

¹³² Training in 2016 of 3 staff of UNICEF, 4 of WHO, 1 for FAO, 49 from NGOs, and 13 from government public facilities. In 2017, 17 ONG staff were trained.

¹³³ In 2014, 66 government staff trained and 33 from NGOs. In 2015, 48 government staff trained, and 56 in 2016.

¹³⁴ PNIASAN Programme National d’Investissement Agricole, de Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle, October 2013. The programme highlighted the need for strengthening national food security capacity on a long-term basis

¹³⁵ Many national food security experts either work abroad or for international organizations rather than the Government. ACDA has only staff in 17 prefectures out of 60, and participation of the Ministry in the food security cluster has been very limited – opportunities for using this platform for capacity development cannot be exploited, including for food security monitoring systems.

¹³⁶ A team of two school feeding monitors and one coordinator from the Ministry are trained and supported with some equipment, to carry out regular controls in 12 pilot schools in and around Bangui.¹³⁶ The sustainability of this scheme will be evaluated after three years.

¹³⁷ In March 2013, after the first round of civil conflict, the regional emergency preparedness officer of the regional bureau of Dakar reinforced CO security (SO 200605) in the context of visiting all WFP offices. Training was provided for the safekeeping of data, valuable equipment and personal belongings, and setting up of an evacuation plan for international staff.

¹³⁸ Trainings for United Nations and NGOs in terms of good practice and use of radio communication. One hundred people were trained in 2014, and 330 in 2015.

that were part of standard WFP calculation used by the country office. The challenge for calculating the Omega value was the market prices, which were highly volatile in the Central African Republic. As an illustration, the Omega value has been calculated, based on actual results, for 2016 for distributions in three locations (Table 17). Complementary comparison between food baskets (staples, pulses, oil, cereals, proteins, vegetables, condiments) for in-kind and voucher-based general food distribution in the same three locations, can be found in detail in Table A15 in Annex N.

Table 17: Cost-effectiveness of voucher modality compared to in-kind general food distribution, 2016

	Bangui - urban		Yaloké - semi-urban		Bouar - semi-urban	
	In-kind	Voucher	In-kind	Voucher	In-kind	Voucher
Cost/beneficiary/month	USD 13.18	USD 13.20	USD 64.66	USD 39.50	n/a	n/a
Nutrition Value	7.76	6.68	7.78	4.40	7.76	4.70
Omega value voucher compared with in-kind	1.16 (in-kind more cost-effective)		1.01		0.95 (voucher more cost-effective)	

Source: Calculations by WFP country office, Bangui

157. The associated costs included local staff, distribution costs, commercial transaction costs, meeting facilitators, facilities and supplies, travel, equipment, supplies, IT equipment, transportation and other support costs for staff. It should be noted that associated costs for beneficiaries, such as transportation to and from the market, were not included.

158. As can be seen in Table 17, in 2016 in Bangui and Yaloké, the cost-effectiveness measured through the Omega value of the voucher modality compared to the in-kind modality was higher than 1, indicating that in-kind distribution was more cost-effective than the voucher modality. On the other hand, in Bouar it was below 1, showing a relative cost-effectiveness of vouchers compared to in-kind. It should be noted that the interpretation is complicated by the fact that the nutritional value of the in-kind ratio is theoretical and does not reflect beneficiaries’ actual use of the ration as, for example, beneficiaries may sell part of the produce. Likewise, other factors have to be taken into account when choosing the transfer modality, including impact of market recovery, inflation, and beneficiaries’ choices and preferences, as well as security and access considerations. The evaluation team was unable to conclude whether voucher values were properly adjusted to reflect inflation and ensure alignment with the rations of the in-kind modality.

159. A detailed analysis of the cost-effectiveness factors to be considered for the transportation of food commodities in the Central African Republic over the country portfolio evaluation period can also be found in Annex N. Overall, the food commodity indices have followed a downward trend, while “land transport, handling and storage” costs remained two or three times higher than the average recorded in the region – which used up a substantial part of the limited resources available.

Staffing and organization

160. As discussed in chapter 2.2, there has been a detrimental turnover of international management staff over the period, leading to vacant positions often filled by staff on temporary postings. During the country portfolio evaluation field visit, there were 184 staff at the country office: : 41 of them (22 percent) were international staff,¹³⁹ and 148 (78 percent) were local staff¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Eleven international professionals, 1 short-term professional, 15 consultants, 6 UNVs, 3 TDYs (temporary deployments) and missions, and 5 construction partners from the Swedish Civil Contingency Agency MSB

¹⁴⁰ Among these, there were only 23 fixed-terms, 2 national continuing contracts, 10 special service agreements (SSA) of max. 11 months; all others (113 people) were short-term service contracts (SC).

– the majority of whom (113) were under short-term service contracts. Almost two thirds of staff (123 staff or 65 percent) were based in Bangui. According to the organograms provided, the five sub-offices were each operated by staff numbers varying between 15 (Bouar, Kaga-Bandoro) and 11 (Bossangoa).

161. The quality of work and dedication by all sections of the country office (finance, administration, programming, logistics and UNHAS) were appreciated by all stakeholders interviewed. Support received from the regional bureau was mainly in the form of advice given remotely, in support missions and in support for the recruitment of international staff.¹⁴¹ Regarding overall management of human resources, the following efficiency problems were identified:

- It was difficult to attract and retain quality staff in the sub-offices, due to the lack of security and difficult living conditions. To alleviate this, the country office subcontracted the building of new accommodation. This work is ongoing and the impact could not be assessed by the country portfolio evaluation.
- The sub-offices visited by the evaluation team appeared under-staffed compared to the workload. In Kaga-Bandoro, for instance, the sub-office with 15 staff (including 3 internationals) was in charge of an area equal to the surface of Belgium, with a total population of 500,000, of which 25 percent were identified as WFP beneficiaries.¹⁴²
- Other United Nations agencies were “poaching” WFP staff by offering fixed-term contracts, which entitled them to a pension, health insurance and support for their children and/or the possibility to work in Bangui. The framework of the new ICSP may improve the situation, as it provides a three-year horizon, whilst previous local contracts were often tied to the implementation of shorter term PRRO and EMOPs. 33 local fixed-term positions were being recruited; the effort should be pursued into 2018 and 2019 – if funding allows.

Special operations

162. The 11 special operations provided the necessary leverage to allow WFP, the other United Nations agencies and the many international and national NGOs to deliver their specialized assistance in a country deprived of essential services. The standard project reports for most special operations included output indicators (numbers of passengers, vehicles, meetings), but performance was only described in the narrative (“planned results were achieved/exceeded”). A detailed assessment can be found in Annex H; logistical constraints are also detailed in Annex L.

163. Four of the special operations were UNHAS operations, which provided air transport services since 2006 and during the entire country portfolio evaluation period. UNHAS has consistently ensured crucial field access to most destinations of humanitarian interest – security permitting – and evacuations in case of emergency. In 2016, UNHAS carried 35,747 passengers and 399 metric tons of cargo; 217 humanitarian personnel were evacuated or relocated for security reasons. UNHAS has managed to adapt services to the customers’ requests.¹⁴³ No exit strategy could be envisaged in the foreseeable future, but the mobilization of financial resources is a regular and strong concern.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ In the EMOP 200799, there is a small regional budget component managed by the regional bureau of Dakar for such missions and support.

¹⁴² The organogram for the sub-office of Bambari, which is the hub for the extensive and much troubled eastern part of the Central African Republic and distributed more than one third of all food commodities during the first half of 2017, shows 13 staff positions. At the time of the field visit there was only one international (the Head of Sub Office). There are very few roads, all in very bad conditions, regarded as either ‘orange’ or ‘red’ i.e. requiring a military escort from MINUSCA. The situation has, however, improved: there were, for instance, only two staff in Kaga-Bandoro in February 2014, but three in August 2014, and four in 2015.

¹⁴³ UNHAS has shown suitable flexibility adapting its fleet size and schedules to the needs of the humanitarian community: 24 destinations were covered in 2015, and 33 in 2017 (21 regular and 12 ad hoc) with a fleet of three to four versatile aircraft, supplemented as and when necessary with an aircraft from MSF. UNHAS has also liaised very closely with MINUSCA, MSF and UNDSS on airport security and runway conditions.

¹⁴⁴ UNHAS requires from USD 10 to USD 13 million annually to operate efficiently. UNHAS projects are 82% funded, which translates a widespread satisfaction on the part of the donors.

164. Special operations have also supported road transport capacities. Given the limited spare inland trucking capacity available, WFP has positioned, since 2014, a fleet of 56 trucks.¹⁴⁵ This fleet was mainly engaged in the secondary transport leg from the WFP warehouses to the partners' warehouses or directly to the forward delivery points. The truck drivers and mechanics were supplied by a labour service provider¹⁴⁶ contracted by the country office. Although justified by freeing WFP from the difficulties of managing a large workforce, this approach was not always conducive to a strong commitment between the parties.¹⁴⁷ Maintenance facilities and repairs of trucks were basic and often conducted in the open. Based on the review of utilization reports, it can be concluded that 25 percent of the theoretical working days were lost for maintenance or repair of the trucks, which may be acceptable considering the severe operating conditions. Yet, with a utilization ratio of only 23 percent of the available truck days, the fleet seemed to be rather underutilized, and there was still ample spare trucking capacity available. If no increase of utilization is envisaged in the short term, then downsizing and the return of part of the fleet to the Accra Humanitarian Response Depot should be considered. More pressing, though, is the situation in the garage and maintenance facilities, which would benefit from a general upgrade.

165. It should also be noted that, until the end of 2017, the regional special operation 200934 aimed to complement the regional EMOP by improving the overall supply chain from neighbouring countries to the landlocked Central African Republic and therefore reduce overall costs and transit times. Final results have not yet been evaluated.

166. Since July 2013, WFP has supplemented its support to the humanitarian community with logistic and emergency telecommunications cluster services under the umbrella of two special operations, which were funded at 45 and 62 percent respectively. Throughout the period, the logistics cluster acted foremost as an information and coordination platform for the humanitarian community.¹⁴⁸ It provided, directly or through participating NGOs: assistance in road transport facility to third parties, rehabilitation of infrastructure (bridges, culverts, drainage works), mobile storage units, maintenance of airfield strips and training.

167. From the minutes of the logistics cluster meetings, it appeared nonetheless that the overall approach was rather piecemeal, and the decision process slow at times. The objectives were not always well defined or understood. A lack of continuity seemed to have prevailed, which may be explained by a high turnover of staff.¹⁴⁹ Chronic underfunding compelled the cluster to leave the management of some projects to the initiative of willing NGOs.¹⁵⁰ The Global Logistic Cluster in Rome, aware of the difficulties in the Central African Republic, conducted a "lesson learning exercise" in October 2015 and released a well-balanced report in February 2016.

168. The emergency telecommunications cluster was re-activated in the Central African Republic in 2013. At the time of the evaluation, it offered facilities and services in eight sites¹⁵¹ serving as many as 55 organizations with shared internet, security telecommunications, and training of local staff. It is unfortunate that the emergency telecommunications cluster was left for many months without a coordinator, forcing the IT senior officer of the country office to step in. The emergency

¹⁴⁵ The WFP fleet comprises 56 trucks: 4 DAF trucks (built in 1984) and 52 KAMAZ trucks (built in 2011 and 2014) with a load capacity ranging from 10 MT to 14 MT; they were positioned as follows: 39 trucks in Bangui, 11 trucks in Bouar and 6 trucks in Kaga-Bandoro.

¹⁴⁶ Contractor – Labour service provider IDL in Bangui.

¹⁴⁷ Late payment of monthly wages by the service provider is not uncommon; drivers are complaining about recurrent mechanical deficiencies, and WFP has observed careless driving. Too often, mechanics are expected to "think outside the box" and to resort to cannibalizing trucks to obtain missing parts.

¹⁴⁸ The number of agencies and NGOs making regular use of the cluster facilities oscillated between 40 and 70, with some 25 users in attendance at the regular fortnightly cluster meetings.

¹⁴⁹ From July 2013 to July 2017 the logistics cluster meetings were chaired by 13 different senior officers or stand-ins.

¹⁵⁰ For example: road transport (Handicap International), common storage facilities provided/operated by Première Urgence Internationale PUI (Bangui), Solidarités Internationales (Kaga Bandoro), ACF (Bossangoa), HI (Bambari), OXFAM (Bria); bridge repairs (Acted), shunting barge (Fondation Suisse de Déminage)

¹⁵¹ ETC sites are: Bouar, Bossangoa (managed by UNICEF), Paoua, Ndélé (managed by IOM), Bangassou, Kaga Bandoro (managed by UNICEF), Zemio (managed by UNHCR) and Bangui

telecommunications cluster could also do with more visibility, although the NGOs were making good use of the provided internet connectivity (see also annex H).

2.3.8 Synergies within the WFP Portfolio

169. In the context of the Central African Republic, consistent internal synergies among operational activities were found in three instances. For the single country and regional EMOPs, supplementary feeding for children of 6-59 months and pregnant and lactating women was combined with general food distribution to increase efficiency and effectiveness. A second synergy was found in the provision of seed protection rations (food assistance for assets), which contributed to the expansion of P4P. Finally, the – still incipient in the Central African Republic – synergy between P4P and school feeding grew and benefited from the President's support. It should be noted that, whilst these activities were complementary, no elements were found, for internal or external synergies, that supported an approach of cost-effectiveness and economies of scale between programme management costs.

170. Although more of a support than an operational nature, a strong synergy was also found between UNHAS flights and the staff presence in remote field locations. Without UNHAS, most operations – as they are currently implemented by sub-offices out of the Bangui area – would simply not have been possible.

2.3.9 External Synergies with Partners

171. Partnerships were implemented in the Central African Republic with a large number of organizations: the Government (overall cooperation with the CEGAL cell within MINEPC, line Ministries of Agriculture, Education, Health and Social Affairs), United Nations agencies (FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR and WHO), international bodies, such as IOM and the World Bank, and national and international NGOs. These settings and clusters provided multiple opportunities for synergies, which were, however, often limited by a lack of resources.¹⁵²

172. Synergies (and gaps) with UNICEF in terms of the back-to-school initiative and the treatment of acute malnutrition for children have already been discussed. Cooperation with FAO concerned seed protection in the context of food assistance for assets and food security surveys, but all partners (FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture and its operational branch ACDA) have limited resources and field presence. Synergies with UNHCR were quite positive, as refugees were a key priority for WFP distribution, although this also created disparities and tensions with some less-well served internally displaced persons based close to refugee communities. In 2014, WFP and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) signed an agreement for food transfer arrangements, as ICRC had the resources for distribution in several locations.

173. The ICSP identified future synergies within the portfolio, on top of pursuing the ones mentioned above: partnerships are envisaged with UNICEF to help the Central African Republic strengthen its participation in the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, and WFP will partner with UNHCR and UNICEF to strengthen vulnerability based targeting through regular joint food security and nutrition gender analyses and monitoring. External synergies foreseen in the ICSP are described in more detail in Annex I.

2.3.10 Sustainability

174. In view of the 2017 developments, the overall situation in the Central African Republic, in terms of political stability and food security, is not likely to change substantially over the ICSP period. It will still call for a broad range of emergency humanitarian responses, which do not focus

¹⁵² The country-wide post-distribution monitoring carried out in the first half of 2017 benefited from the cooperation with the Anthropology Department of the University of Bangui, which carried out the surveys in 35 of the 113 final distribution points.

specifically at sustainability. On the other hand, early recovery activities, such as P4P and seed protection, have shown a potential for sustainability. Most partners agree that they can be expanded, with local support. The cash based transfer modality has also shown capacity to contribute to future social protection schemes.

175. Overall, the sustainability of current operations is not ensured. Despite presidential support, the scope of the school meals programme depends on the unpredictable security conditions and new displacements of populations. Malnutrition in the Central African Republic is currently treated – and even there to a very limited extent – in the main hospitals where international actors have access. The network of local health centres, which are closer to the daily needs of the population in terms of sensitization and prevention, is either inaccessible or poorly supported. The current approach of integrating moderate acute malnutrition management into the IMAM protocol is an opportunity to address aspects of sustainability, as it may strengthen the delivery of health services and include IMAM in basic health care in an effective manner. This is not addressed in the current approach, which is based on short-term support for supplementary feeding in emergencies or according to certain criteria.

176. Capacity strengthening of institutions and national actors, which has been correctly assessed in the ICSP as a key element to ensure ownership and sustainability, is constrained by lack of capacities in Bangui and limited outreach throughout the country. Any hope of sustainability is conditional on the achievements of the initiatives to restore state presence – with support from all actors and RCPCA funding, which alone can ensure a return to normality.

177. Considering the limited donor base and the low visibility of the crisis, the financial sustainability of ICSP projections is subject to concerns. The ICSP requires a budget of USD 288.8 million, with an average annual budget of USD 96.2 million. The country office has a stable group of donors for funding emergency/early recovery, nutrition, school meals and common service activities under Strategic Outcomes 1, 2 and 5 (82 percent of the total budget). Yet, the average expenditures for the three years after the 2014 L3 emergency, amounted to USD 67.2 million per year,¹⁵³ equivalent to 70 percent of the planned annual ICSP budget. Moreover, the food assistance for assets and P4P activities under Strategic Outcome 3, which account for 14.8 percent of the budget, are expected to grow significantly in the coming years, whilst, during the evaluation period, these activities did not receive sufficient funding. The evaluation noted that the ICSP budget has also been developed based on a close dialogue with donors.

¹⁵³ USD 81,513,356 in 2015; USD 51,612,760 in 2016; USD 69,439,736 in 2017.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1 Overall Assessment

Alignment and strategic positioning

178. Overall, the strategic positioning of WFP in the Central African Republic appeared to be adequate, considering the political and operational constraints of operating in one of the worst and least publicized humanitarian environments in the world. Relevance was found in the unique capability of WFP among humanitarian and development actors in the Central African Republic to provide road transport for the whole international community, to carry personnel of aid agencies by UNHAS flights to different locations in the country (or evacuate them in case of emergency) and to deliver food assistance on a massive scale to the most vulnerable. WFP also provided crucial assistance for return to normality and early recovery where the situation allowed, in the form of school meals, food assistance for assets and P4P. As such, WFP was perceived as a neutral actor, although regular sensitization about humanitarian principles was necessary. This positioning and these capabilities need to be maintained.

179. As agriculture is still the main source of livelihood for the majority of the Central African Republic population, and the best opportunity in the short term to reintegrate violence-prone youths into everyday life, it can be concluded that any sustainable security (not only food security) must be based on the recovery of agriculture. This is consistent with SDG 2 and the Zero Hunger strategy. Food assistance for assets and P4P fit closely with some of the needs identified for recovery in the RCPCA.

180. Key focuses of the new ICSP also correspond to identified needs, in particular, emergency humanitarian assistance in the form of general food distribution, cash based transfers and nutrition. SDG 2 will be operationalized pending finalization of ZHSR; enhanced partnerships (SDG 17) will be implemented as a cross-cutting theme. Furthermore, the ICSP has adequately defined that the pace of transfer of food security and nutrition management will depend on achievements, taking in to account: current institutional weaknesses, the short timeline of the ICSP, worsening political and social situations in 2017, and continued funding shortages. The ICSP is a relevant framework for the next three years and needs to be supported.

181. Throughout the three distinct sub-periods, the country office has been well positioned to ensure coherence with the successive key country policies for development, humanitarian aid and recovery. The country office has consistently played a proactive role in UNCT and clusters and has contributed to defining national strategies since 2014, from interim strategic frameworks to RCPCA, UNDAF+, and the Humanitarian Response Plan. Overall, coherence has also been good with other United Nations agencies, donors, authorities and partners. Some weaknesses were noted in the synergy with UNICEF on programmatic coordination for nutrition, as each agency had its own strategic approach. There is room for increased cooperation with UNICEF, as well as with Civil Affairs of MINUSCA, the World Bank and the European Union "Bekou" Trust Fund.

182. Alignment is, however, bound to remain theoretical if policies cannot be implemented on the ground due to recurrent constraints. In mid 2017 the Government correctly acknowledged that a prerequisite for recovery – and effective humanitarian aid – lay in the (re-)establishment of state presence across the country, which alone would have the mandate to legally combat crimes and looting, and put an end to the pervading sense of impunity. Coordinated support by all international actors is needed to strengthen involvement of institutions in the project cycle management and contribute gradually to reducing the unsustainable level of international

assistance in the Central African Republic. As this new paradigm is not part of ICSP, linkages need to be established.

Quality of strategic decision making

183. From a strategic perspective, the effectiveness of decision making has been mixed. After the short-lived country programme of 2012 and pending the approval of the ICSP, decisions were mainly aimed at responding to new crisis developments to the best of the country office's resources, rather than defining proactive strategies. Drivers for programming decisions were therefore mostly found among the overwhelming needs for urgent assistance, mitigated by many severely detrimental operational constraints, including limitations in data availability and monitoring.

184. There was no formal country strategic plan in the Central African Republic over the country portfolio evaluation period. Programming decisions were nevertheless made with relevance for each operation based on available situation analysis, Government and United Nations policies, WFP Strategic Objectives, capacities, risks and lessons learned. WFP was repeatedly faced with extremely detrimental and often interconnected constraints, which impacted strongly on decision making: a volatile situation, frequent population displacements, lack of security for staff and partners, poor roads and infrastructure, difficult and expensive logistics (resulting in delays and shortages), access to only half of the country, quick turnover of qualified international staff, and limited capacities of Government and implementing partners.

185. These constraints, together with the consistently low visibility of the crisis in the Central African Republic and corresponding low levels of funding, have led the country office to make difficult decisions in terms of coverage, although no consistent strategy was published regarding, for example, the very limited coverage of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis victims.

186. As for positioning, coherence resulting from consistently good relations with authorities and partners appeared as a very positive factor, which allowed for cooperation as a key component of decision making. Corporate agreements between Rome based agencies could, however, be better used for recovery and resilience.

187. Efficiency of risk management was below corporate standards until 2013, but has been significantly upgraded with the assistance of the regional bureau, and integrated into the decision-making process. Efficiency of data collection and analysis to support decisions was also mixed. WFP is seen as a crucial actor for providing food security information, which is in high demand by all partners. Nonetheless, this has been a fragmented process. Various food security surveys have been carried out, mostly in partnership (CFSAM, EFSA, IPC) and generally in response to eruptions of violence and massive displacement. However, there still cannot be any systematic collection of food security and nutrition data in the Central African Republic, as many areas are not accessible; locally collected data can be misleading if used for trends or comparative analysis. Furthermore, measurement of progress has been constrained by the lack of proper baseline studies, which could not be carried out as a result of the security situation. The roll-out of mVAM in 2016, is a good opportunity to strengthen the data collection and analysis process.

Portfolio performance and results

188. WFP responded well to the varying levels of political and humanitarian crises, despite coverage being regularly disrupted by violence and lack of resources. Over the period from 2012 to mid 2017, WFP delivered various types of assistance to a cumulated total of 5.4 million people in need in the Central African Republic (population 4.7 million). It can be concluded that WFP assistance to the Central African Republic has been vital for many among the most vulnerable segments of the population especially as the displaced often took refuge in accessible towns.

However, half of the country is almost deserted and an estimated 2.5 million people in need remain inaccessible. Measuring outcomes through post-distribution monitoring is difficult and piecemeal.

189. At the output level, effectiveness was generally high. The numbers of beneficiaries was multiplied by a factor of six from 2012 to the peak of the L3 emergency in 2014, although often with reduced rations or reduced duration of the intervention. Despite recurring problems of logistics and shortfalls, more than 144,000 metric tons of food-aid were delivered from January 2012 to mid 2017. Vouchers have been an effective alternative to in-kind rations when market and security conditions were adequate; they have been favourably assessed by partners and beneficiaries. Their distribution is being rapidly expanded, but needs to be subject to more systematic surveys. The corresponding decrease in the volume of transported food, however, did little to alleviate logistic constraints. Considering the prevailing violence and poor road infrastructure, the humanitarian activity in the country would arguably come to a halt if UNHAS could no longer provide its services to the humanitarian community.

190. Targeting of vulnerable groups requiring nutritional intervention appears coherent, but the planned percentages of coverage are modest compared to the estimated number of malnutrition, HIV and tuberculosis cases. Availability, quality of moderate acute malnutrition case management, and prevention of malnutrition in general have been severely limited by volatile security, chronic underfunding, delays, and the poorly capacitated network of local health facilities. In this respect, WFP and UNICEF have had diverging strategies, an issue which may be solved under the new ICSP, which devotes increased focus to local partners and community outreach. For severe acute malnutrition treatment, the under-resourced UNICEF was substituted in some hospitals by the emergency-focused Médecins sans Frontières, a situation which may create issues of institutional sustainability. In terms of outcomes, available (often partial) surveys indicate that the nutritional situation at the national level for both acute and chronic malnutrition, which had not changed significantly in the Central African Republic from 2010 to 2014, seemed to have deteriorated since late 2016. This calls for increased support.

191. As a very strong pulling factor, emergency school meals contributed to a return to normal life for crisis-affected children. It also contributed to reconciliation and social cohesion, which are key policies of the Government and the President. Yet, the quality of education has been much affected by looting, over-populated classes, and the lack of teachers. Synergies with P4P could further strengthen recovery dynamics. Overall, school assistance (20-25 percent of schools in both 2012 and 2017) only reached those in accessible areas.

192. The WFP portfolio focused on targeting high numbers of women and girls in most operations. This has the potential of contributing to women's empowerment. However, the lack of proper and context-specific gender analysis in the Central African Republic, combined with a general approach to gender equality and women's empowerment with a focus on promoting the number of women beneficiaries, rather than addressing context-specific gender imbalances, made it impossible to assess the portfolio's concrete contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment.

193. Capacity strengthening of national actors, which has been correctly assessed in the ICSP as a key element to ensure ownership and sustainability, was constrained by lack of capacities in Bangui and limited outreach throughout the country. Displacements have caused a severe shortage of skilled human resources to respond to basic needs. Many examples of short-term training could be found, but longer-term efforts were few and limited. Good practices surrounding capacity development and effective cooperation with other agencies were lacking; the overall approach needs to be strengthened.

194. Overall cost-effectiveness was made difficult by high transport costs in a landlocked country with poor roads. Transit and other direct costs represented from 30 percent to 50 percent of the total of food and related costs, against a corporate average of 18 to 22 percent. The truck fleet appeared under-utilized, partly due to the lack of maintenance facilities: this needs to be addressed.

195. Where market functionality and the capacity of partners allowed the distribution of vouchers, cost-effectiveness calculations based on the Omega value seemed to indicate that, at the time of the calculation, the cash based transfer system was less cost-effective than in-kind distribution in some areas, while other areas showed the opposite. Still, high market price volatility, the impact of early recovery, security and access also needed to be taken into account to properly compare the two approaches: as stated, surveys need to be improved and expanded.

196. Efficiency was limited by a number of factors. Almost two-thirds of WFP staff in the Central African Republic were working at the country office in Bangui, where living conditions were (relatively) better. In contrast, the sub-offices, which had to cover very large territories and beneficiary populations, experienced difficulties attracting skilled personnel, in particular international staff for managerial positions. The country office was working to improve conditions in sub-offices, but more incentives may be needed.

197. Responsibility for supervising the flow of goods along the transport corridor from Douala to Bangui appeared fragmented and relied overly on forwarding agents, although the new LESS software has made possible state-of-the-art monitoring of the food-aid pipeline. Pipeline breaks were anticipated and remained manageable. GCMF was also efficient at reducing lead times, although gains were partly cancelled by regular losses of two to four weeks along the corridor.

198. There was a steady demand for the wide range of services that the logistics cluster could provide to the benefit of the humanitarian community. However, the overall approach was at times rather piecemeal and the decision process slow, due to high staff turnover and chronic underfunding. The emergency telecommunications cluster facility deserved better visibility and greater human resources support.

199. Recovery was incipient, but some connectedness could be found in synergies between general food distribution and nutrition activities, food assistance for assets (seed protection) and P4P, and – still developing – between P4P and emergency school meals. In this context, external coherence of partnerships was particularly strong with FAO (seed protection), UNHCR (refugees) and UNICEF (back to school).

200. The sustainability of current operations is not ensured under the worsening situation of the Central African Republic. Overall, continuation depends mostly on the support of the international community, at a level that is hardly sustainable in the long term. Poor access to basic social services and food security is not likely to change during the ICSP, unless state presence is substantially reinforced. The ICSP budget might appear optimistic, as average annual expenditures from 2014 to 2016 were only at 70 percent of ICSP planning. Furthermore, the donors' base for supporting food assistance for assets and P4P during the country portfolio evaluation was not commensurate with new projections and needs to be reinforced in line with the generally very positive stance of donors towards resilience.

3.2 Recommendations

201. This section presents the overall recommendations arising from this evaluation for the work of WFP. Recommendations are directed at the country office, with support from the regional bureau, except where otherwise stated. These recommendations are generally consistent with the country interim country strategic plan approved by the Executive Board in November 2017.

202. Recommendations fall into three major categories (i) Support to the re-establishment of state presence (ii) Support to the Zero Hunger objectives; and (iii) improved efficiency. A matrix linking these recommendations to the findings included in the report can be found in Annex P.

3.2.1. Strategic thrust 1: Supporting the conditions for peace

Recommendation 1: Supporting the conditions for peace (timing: 2018-2020)

203. The timely delivery of WFP humanitarian assistance is significantly affected by the lack of peace, with security issues in the country affecting the transport and delivery of assistance. Security is also one of the main factors limiting opportunities for agriculture and contributing to the high proportion of people in need throughout the country.

204. The UNDAF+ explicitly recognizes the importance of the triple nexus of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding work, but the indirect role of WFP in supporting the re-establishment of peace through its assistance activities has not yet been formally explored.

205. It is recommended that WFP should:

- a) Support, particularly through food assistance for assets activities and/or the vouchers modality, the work of partners directly involved in the re-establishment of peace – UNICEF, United Nations Development Programme, the civil affairs department of MINUSCA, etc.)
- b) Contribute to the mapping of national institutional capacities in order to improve the focus and effectiveness of its own capacity-strengthening activities, leveraging the experience and knowledge available from headquarters and the regional bureau
- c) Ensure the systematic involvement of line ministries and national actors in the design and monitoring of its projects
- d) Enhance synergies with relevant civil society and other actors, including in education
- e) Ensure that its partners are fully aware and regularly reminded of the importance of adhering to the humanitarian principles that underpin all humanitarian assistance
- f) Whenever possible, work with FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development on institutionalizing partnerships for both programming and fundraising, particularly in the areas of agricultural resilience and gender equality.

3.2.2. Strategic thrust 2: Responding to the Zero Hunger challenge

Recommendation 2: Funding (timing: 2018-2020)

206. The country office has experienced recurring funding shortfalls, particularly for recovery-related activities, which are included under Strategic Outcome 3 of the ICSP and are part of the Government's strategy for assisting the sustainable reintegration of internally displaced persons and refugees.

207. WFP should examine the donor landscape with a view to assessing the range of donors and donors' appetite for funding WFP recovery activities in the Central African Republic. WFP should also review its articulation of linkages between the triple nexus and its food assistance for assets and P4P activities in order to ensure that existing and potential donors are able to make informed decisions on funding allocations. WFP should strengthen its donors' base for funding food assistance for assets and P4P activities.

Recommendation 3: Food security information and monitoring (timing: 2018-2020).

208. There is a lack of systematic evidence on which to base food security programming.

209. WFP should:

- a) Optimize its strategic role in food security by enhancing the use of existing tools and taking the lead in assisting the Government in developing a national food security information strategy and ensuring government ownership of a “sentinel surveillance” network of sites to be used to gather relevant information
- b) Continue to strengthen monitoring systems, centrally in the country office and in sub-offices
- c) Prepare a formal strategic monitoring plan with clear coverage targets, systematically taking into account the various levels of security and access limitations that exist in the country by planning various frequencies and modalities of monitoring, such as the use of third-party monitoring and remote monitoring via telephones and tablets
- d) Use the strategic monitoring plan to track and monitor accountability to affected populations effectively.

Recommendation 4: Gender (timing: 2018-2020).

210. There is a lack of analysis of the role and impact of gender dynamics in the design and implementation of WFP assistance activities. Such analysis is particularly important in a country with high levels of gender based violence.

211. WFP should develop an evidence-based operational strategy for integrating gender into programming. In particular, it should:

- a) Ensure that programming is based on specific gender analysis
- b) Improve and monitor the protection of women, girls and other vulnerable groups
- c) Prioritize women’s access to productive assets and financial services and their control over property
- d) Strengthen partnerships with the Government, international agencies and entities led by women.

Recommendation 5: Nutrition (timing: 2018-2020).

212. Except in 2013, the actual number of nutrition beneficiaries was relatively close to the number originally planned. The overall number of beneficiaries is declining, however, despite very high levels of need throughout the country.

213. WFP should strengthen nutrition approaches. In particular, it should:

- a) Enhance coherence between WFP and UNICEF with regard to targeting for moderate acute malnutrition and severe acute malnutrition, respectively, to ensure maximum synergies between the two programmes
- b) Identify an appropriate strategy for working with the Ministry of Health and Population
- c) Consider a developmental approach to addressing chronic malnutrition, when feasible.

Recommendation 6: Vouchers (timing 2018-2020)

214. Vouchers were introduced in 2015 and were identified as a viable and valuable alternative to in-kind modalities in some contexts. Despite ambitious planning regarding the number of cash based transfer beneficiaries, however, implementation was slow and context and market analyses were not always carried out either at the start or during the implementation of activities.

215. WFP should expand its programming capacity and scale up the voucher modality by carrying out:

- a) More systematic market studies
- b) More comparative analyses of the various modalities used in interventions
- c) Better analysis of the factors affecting people's choices and preferences.

3.2.3. Strategic thrust 3: Efficient and effective delivery

Recommendation 7: Human resources (timing 2018-2020).

216. The country office experienced high staff turnover, especially during the emergency period, and had difficulties in staffing its sub-offices to a level that would enable it to deliver efficiently and effectively.

217. WFP should:

- a) Commission and publish a staffing review based on the staff needed to deliver results under the new ICSP
- b) Widen efforts to improve living conditions, security and incentives at sub-offices in order to help attract good-quality staff to the field offices closer to beneficiaries.

Recommendation 8: Logistics (timing 2018-2020).

218. Transport into and within the Central African Republic was found to be difficult, slow and expensive, despite WFP having its own fleet of trucks.

219. WFP should:

- a) Work to improve management of the Douala-Bangui corridor, which is under the responsibility of the Cameroon country office, with the regional bureau playing a technical advisory role
- b) Advocate with national authorities, through senior management, for problem-free transit
- c) Allocate adequate funding to truck maintenance facilities
- d) Optimize the use of its fleet of trucks.

Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ACDA	Agence Centrafricaine de Développement Agricole
ACF	Action Contre la Faim
ACTED	Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APE	Association des Parents d'Elèves
ARV	Anti-RetroViral
BSF(P)	Blanket Supplementary Feeding (Programme)
CAR	The Central African Republic
CBT	Cash Based Transfer
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEGAL	Cellule de Gestion de L'Aide Alimentaire
CERF	United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund
CFA	Central African Franc
CFSAM	Crop and Food Security Assessment Missions
CFSVA	Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis
CO	Country Office
COMET	Country Office Monitoring and Evaluation Tool
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
CPE	Country Portfolio Evaluation
CP	Country Programme
CSI	Coping Strategy Index
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	The Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
EFSA	Emergency Food Security Assessment
EMOP	Emergency Operation
ENSA	Enquête Nationale de Sécurité Alimentaire
ETC	Emergency Telecommunication
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FFA	Food Assistance for Assets
FFT	Food Assistance for Training
FLA	Field Level Agreements
GCMF	Global Commodity Management Facility
GDP	Gross Domestic Product

GFD	General Food Distribution
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IMAM	Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition
ICSP	Interim Country Strategic Plan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent
IMAM	Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition
IMC	International Medical Corps
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
IRA	Immediate Response Account
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IR-EMOP	Immediate Response Emergency Operation
IRM	Integrated Road Map
ISF	Interim Strategy Framework
IT	Information Technology
LESS	Logistics Execution Support System
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MINEPC	Ministry of Economy, Planning and International Cooperation
MINUSCA	Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSF	Médecins sans Frontières
MT	Metric Ton
mVAM	Mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PLW	Pregnant and Lactating Women
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RBA	Rome Based Agencies

RCPCA	National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan
RRM	Rapid Response Mechanism
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Index
SMART	Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions
SO	Special Operation
SPR	Standard Project Report
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TDY	Temporary Duty Assignment
TF	Trust Fund
ToR	Terms of Reference
TSF(P)	Targeted Supplementary Feeding (Programme)
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
WFP	(United Nations) World Food Programme
US	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization
ZHSR	Zero Hunger Strategic Review

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