



**Despite enormous agricultural potential, the food security situation remains precarious.**

# CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

## Background

The unstable political climate in the Central African Republic continues to impact negatively on security. The national election, initially scheduled for April 2010, has been repeatedly postponed and is now foreseen for early 2011. The peace process remains challenging, with some rebel groups yet to sign the peace agreement and the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration process proceeding at a slow pace.

During 2010, rebel groups both within and outside of the peace process have launched a number of attacks resulting in displacement in the northeastern areas of the country. The Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), initially present in the southeast region, has extended its area of interest in the north and northeast. Persistent attacks in the rural areas have forced villagers to flee their homes and take refuge in the bush and towns near the national forces.

In this context, humanitarian access is subject to restrictions. In the LRA-affected areas, security measures have been reinforced for humanitarian operators to be able to deliver assistance to 25 000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, especially in the southeast prefectures. On the other hand, in the northeast, the withdrawal of the United Nations Missions in the Central African Republic and Chad may have negative consequences on humanitarian access.

Moreover, the country remains one of the poorest in the world, increasingly caught up in the conflicts affecting neighbouring countries. Upcoming 2011 political events, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo's election and Southern Sudan's referendum, may also affect the Central African Republic's security situation, resulting in serious humanitarian consequences in the border areas.

## Challenges facing food security and livelihoods

Despite enormous agricultural potential, the food security situation in the Central African Republic remains precarious. The volatile political context, widespread poverty, high food prices and low agricultural production have had a serious impact on malnutrition levels. The number of vulnerable people is estimated at 700 000, which includes 192 000 IDPs and 24 690 refugees.

Owing to the continuous conflicts and the insecurity prevailing in the northern and southeastern areas, farmers have limited access to productive capital. HIV/AIDS is spreading from the towns to rural areas, and as a result, the workforce has declined sharply, reducing agricultural production and household incomes. This has left many, particularly the most vulnerable groups, at risk of malnutrition and food insecurity.

The livestock sector is crucial for local livelihoods, but with increased insecurity, it will continue to be severely penalized throughout 2011. Many animals have been stolen, and conflicts between farmers and herders are a



recurring problem, with many herders fleeing the country. In addition, herds have been decimated by diseases, jeopardizing the livelihoods of many farming families.

The effects of the global economic crisis have also crippled the purchasing power of entire communities, leaving them with limited access to foodstuff. The diversity of food available in the markets is limited and the price of food and agricultural inputs remains high. As part of the 2011 CAP, the Food Security Cluster aims to ameliorate these problems through better access to food and markets, increased agricultural production and capacity building.

### **FAO response**

The agriculture and livestock sector plays an important role in the income, food security and nutrition of vulnerable households. Given the vast amounts of unused cultivable land, there is strong potential to grow food and produce seed to mitigate the effects of the country's protracted crisis, even in the zones where insecurity is still high. In order to support families affected by ongoing insecurity, FAO plans to strengthen the capacity of 5 000 households to grow vegetables and provide safe and quality food to the urban markets. With donor support, FAO will also distribute agricultural tools and seeds to over 4 000 households, and goats and poultry to over 1 000 households. The beneficiaries will also receive training in agricultural production, veterinary support and basic materials to build shelters for animals. In addition, FAO plans to bolster farming-capacity growth through support to local government counterparts.

As the lead agency for the food security sector, FAO will continue its efforts to promote the Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC) tool in 2011 to enable the humanitarian community to improve planning and response. Support will also be provided for the collection and analysis of food security data, publication of information for partners, reinforcing the national IPC working group and creating IPC subregional working groups.



**PROPOSALS: FAO EMERGENCY AND REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE****Total funding requested: USD 1 117 860**

<b>Improving food security and household income through small animal breeding</b>	
Objectives:	To improve food security through small animal breeding.
Activities:	Provide ten goats (eight females and two males) and ten poultry units for a total of 1 000 goats and 1 000 poultry units to households; procure and distribute veterinary supplies; carry out vaccination and veterinary follow-up; train beneficiaries in herd management and local fodder production/conservation by Government veterinarians covering the target areas; provide basic materials to build shelters; and reinforce the institutional and technical capacity of Government counterparts.
Beneficiaries:	1 000 vulnerable households in remote areas.
Implementing partners:	ANDE, NGOs.
Duration:	January 2011 – December 2011.
Funds requested:	USD 233 750.

### Food security monitoring system

Objectives:	To consolidate the national food security monitoring system and implement the IPC tool.
Activities:	Collect and analyse primary data from the entire country and publish information for partners; reinforce the national IPC working group and create IPC subregional working groups; and continue analysis based on food security data and information from other sectors.
Beneficiaries:	Humanitarian actors.
Implementing partners:	The Government, humanitarian community.
Duration:	January – December 2011.
Funds requested:	USD 213 814.

### Improving livelihoods through support to vegetable and staple food crop production

Objectives:	To provide assistance to households in order to allow them to produce food for consumption by the family members and have access to the market by growing market-oriented food.
Activities:	Acquire quality agricultural inputs for staple foods and vegetables; identification of vulnerable households; distribution of tools and seeds; and follow-up and training of beneficiary households.
Beneficiaries:	4 000 households (including 4 000 women and 8 000 children).
Implementing partners:	ADA, NGOs.
Duration:	January – December 2011.
Funds requested:	USD 180 411.

**Improve suburban families' capacity to grow high quality vegetables in order to improve household income and provide safe and quality food to the urban markets**

Objectives:	To improve suburban families' capacity to grow high quality vegetables in order to improve household income and provide safe and quality food to the urban markets.
Activities:	Identify vulnerable households and associations, and agricultural perimeters in Bangui; procure vegetable seeds, gardening tools, agricultural inputs and distribute inputs to households and associations; provide training in best agricultural practices; promote adoption of a sustainable policy to support urban and peri-urban agriculture by municipal authorities; and monitoring and evaluation.
Beneficiaries:	5 000 households (including 10 000 children, 5 000 women).
Implementing partners:	ACDA, NGOs.
Duration:	January – December 2011.
Funds requested:	USD 489 885.