

# Central African Republic

## Food Security and Markets Update: September 2016

### Highlights

- Latest IPC (July 2016) shows that approximately 2 million people are in phase 3 and 4, representing 40 percent of the population. (see latest IPC results)
- 2015/16 cotton and coffee outputs are estimated at 10 000 and 8 500 tons, respectively, 42 and 28 percent below their pre-crisis levels.
- Preliminary results of markets assessments shows that market activities are increasing ionly in urban areas of the country.

### FOOD SECURITY TRENDS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

For over two decades C.A.R. faces a tumultuous socio-political situation which worsened in 2012. It is characterized by inter-community tensions and widespread insecurity that disrupt the access to primary needs and the loss of means subsistence. As of August 2016 more than 380,000 of the 4.6 million Central African population are displaced within the country (Source: CAR Food Security Cluster). It is estimated that 2 million people are food insecure (Phase 3 and 4). This represents 40% of the total population, including 1,8 million people in rural areas - 37% of the rural population and 130,000 people in Bangui or 15% of the population of Bangui. (Source: IPC, August 2016) (see also figure 1)

Among this population, female headed households are particularly affected by food insecurity. Before the conflict, these households accounted for 21.8% of the Central African households, but this proportion increased during the conflict, as more men took up arms, died or fled. Households headed by females often have less means to protect themselves as well as to ensure adequate food needs.

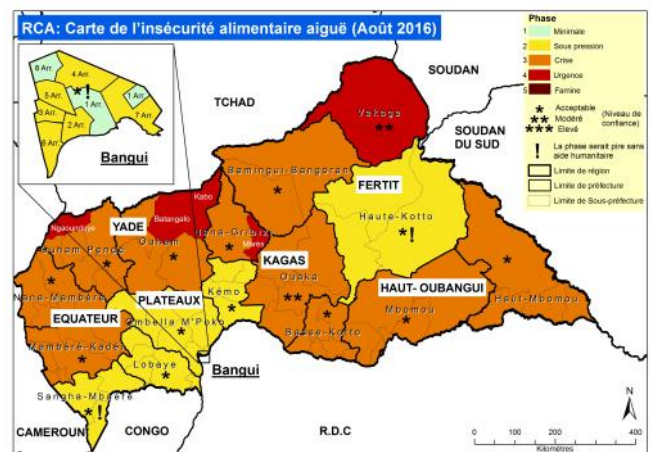
According to 2015 EFSA, the share of households headed by women in moderate and severe food insecurity is higher than that of households headed by men (difference of almost 10%). These households are only able to access one meal a day and must often utilize crisis and emergency coping strategies (CAR FS Cluster)

### CROP PRODUCTION TRENDS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Crop production in 2015, estimated at 838,000 tons, increased by 10 percent compared to 2014 as a result of an increase in cassava production. By contrast, cereal production declined by 4 percent in 2015 compared to 2014 (Source: CFSAM 2015).

Persisting insecurity continues to disrupt agricultural activities, and the 2015 harvest, despite the increase compared to 2014, is still 54 per cent below the pre-crisis average. Notably, cereal production declined for the third consecutive year, and in 2015 was 70 percent lower than the pre-crisis average. Production of coffee and cotton, the main cash crops grown in the country, has been heavily affected by the crisis, mainly through the abandonment of fields and the destruction of infrastructures.

Figure 1 : IPC (July 2016)



In 2015/16 cotton and coffee outputs are estimated at 10,500 and 8,500 tons, respectively, 42 and 28 percent below their pre-crisis levels. Compared to last year, coffee production further declined by 6 percent, while cotton production increased by 11 percent.

The breakdown in market and trade activities has resulted in severe scarcity of commodities including essential food items, leading to price increases and volatility in Bangui, where inflation rose from 3.5 percent in January 2014 to 18.2 in January 2015, and subsequently declined in the following months to 3.1 percent in October 2015. (Source: CFSAM 2016)

As of August 2016, rainfall shows a trend in line with the average of the last thirty years. Some exceptions are found in the districts north and south of the country, where a slight water deficit is observed. The exact impact cannot be estimated at this stage. (Source: Food Security Cluster, August 2016)

## MARKET TRENDS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

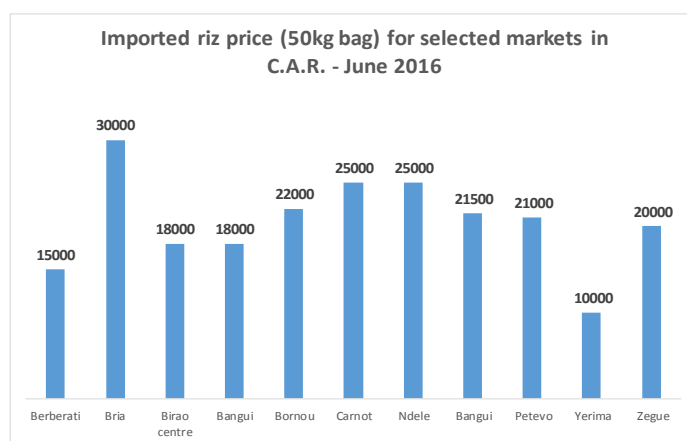
In June 2016, WFP conducted a market assessment targeting 215 traders. Preliminary results are as follows:

In 2016 only large urban markets regain functionality and competitiveness, driven by a significant increase of number of retail traders, wholesalers and semi-wholesalers and collectors. Markets are physically accessible and open to all ethnic groups and even traders from other regions. Key products (cassava and rice) are available. Improved availability was sustained by better harvest in 2015. Cassava supply is mainly from producers and traders within the prefectures. No significant change in sources of supply is to be expected in the near future (the next 6 months), which indicates a relative stability of supplies.

The lack of own capital, limited access to credit and insecurity are the main constraints in trade activities. However, the majority of traders say they have the ability to access more credit when needed and quickly replenish their stocks (usually in less than 2 weeks). In addition, the majority of traders say they have the capacity to absorb additional demand of 10 to 50%.

Figure 2 provides an overview of imported rice prices (50kg bag) in selected markets for the month of June 2016. The highest price (XAF 30,000 per 50kg bag) was observed in Bria. The lowest price was found in Yerima (10,000 per 50kg bag).

**Figure 2 : Imported rice prices (XAF/50kg bag) June 2016**



Source: WFP



For further information please contact:

Head of VAM C.A.R.

[Souleika.Abdillahi@wfp.org](mailto:Souleika.Abdillahi@wfp.org)

RBD VAM Market Analysis Unit:

[RBD.vam@wfp.org](mailto:RBD.vam@wfp.org)