



GIEWS Country Brief The Central African Republic

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Reduced production for 2017 crops due to generalized decline in planted area as consequence of persisting civil insecurity
- Food access continues to be severely constrained by disrupted livelihoods, reduced production and sharply-curtailed market activity
- Food prices have risen sharply in conflict-ridden areas
- Dire food security situation for large segments of population, strong livelihood support required

Reduced production for 2017 crops

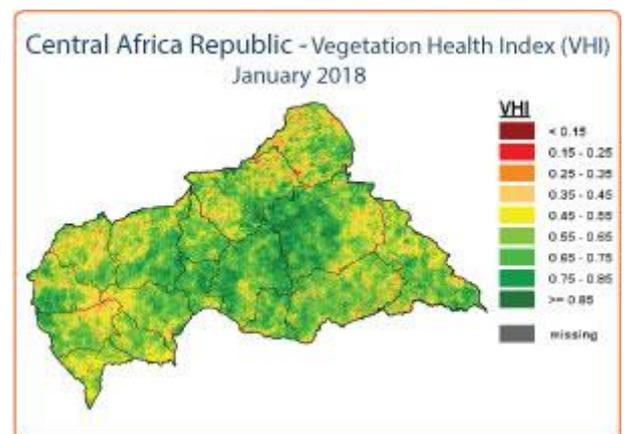
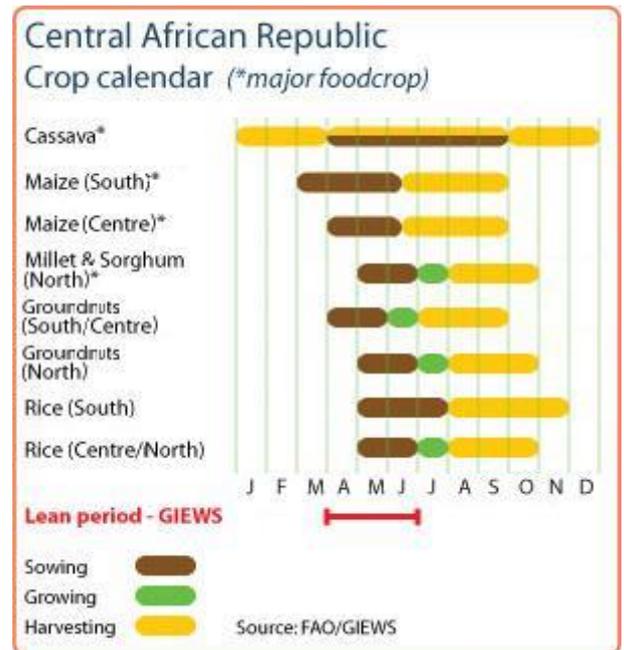
Harvesting of the main 2017 cereal crops was completed in December 2017, while the harvest of the secondary crops is still underway in some southern bi-modal rainfall areas.

According to satellite-based information, vegetation conditions during the cropping season were generally favourable. Average to below-average rainfall prevailed from March until the first dekad of June 2017 in both the southern maize-producing areas and in northern millet/sorghum-growing areas. However, persisting civil insecurity continued to disrupt agricultural activities and limited the available crop-growing areas thus having a negative impact on the final outcome of the cropping season. In fact, it is reported that smaller areas were planted particularly in conflict areas due to the limited access to cropland and seeds. In 2017, a slightly reduced aggregate output was recorded for the fifth consecutive year.

In conflict-affected areas, food prices increased sharply in recent months

Food prices have increased sharply in recent months in the northwest, southeast and central conflict-affected areas mostly due to below-average market supplies, sharply-curtailed market activity as well as the degraded state of roads and road harassment (illegal check-points, ambushes).

The average annual inflation rate declined in recent years and fell to 3.7 percent in 2017 compared to 4.6 percent in 2016. The general decline in prices was mostly demand-driven as disrupted livelihoods, reduced employment opportunities and limited availability have severely curtailed households' purchasing power. In 2018, the average annual inflation rate is expected to remain similar to the 2017 levels.



Food security situation remains dire, strong livelihood support continues to be required

Violent clashes and inter-communal tensions have continuously increased since 2017 resulting in widespread disruption of agricultural and marketing activities as well as exacerbated the massive displacements, with a severe negative impact on both food availability and access. According to UNHCR, as of end-December 2017, the IDP caseload was estimated at about 689 000 people, with a nearly 15 percent increase since the end of October 2017 in the Ouham-Pendé and Haute-Kotto regions. The conflicts that led to the displacement of the populations is also restricting humanitarian access and disrupting agricultural activities.

Five consecutive years of reduced harvests, compounded by access constraints due to market disruptions and declining purchasing power, result in an alarming food security situation across the country. The 2017 lean season (from April to July) was particularly harsh and extended with most households facing serious food constraints. In addition, not only the quantity of food in-take was reduced but the dietary diversity was also drastically diminished by the substitution of more nutritious cereal and vegetable staples with cassava and the sharp reduction of animal proteins intake. This widespread dietary deterioration raises serious concerns of having a dire effect in terms of nutrition and health. According to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), valid for the period from February to May 2017, about 1.1 million people (30 percent of the total population) were in need of urgent assistance (IPC Phase 3: "Crisis" and IPC Phase 4: "Emergency") of which more than 315 000 people who faced IPC Phase 4: "Emergency". Eight out of the 15 prefectures were in IPC Phase 3: "Crisis". A timely and effective support to the agricultural sector is required to mitigate the extent of the impact of the protracted and widespread insecurity on the agricultural sector.

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