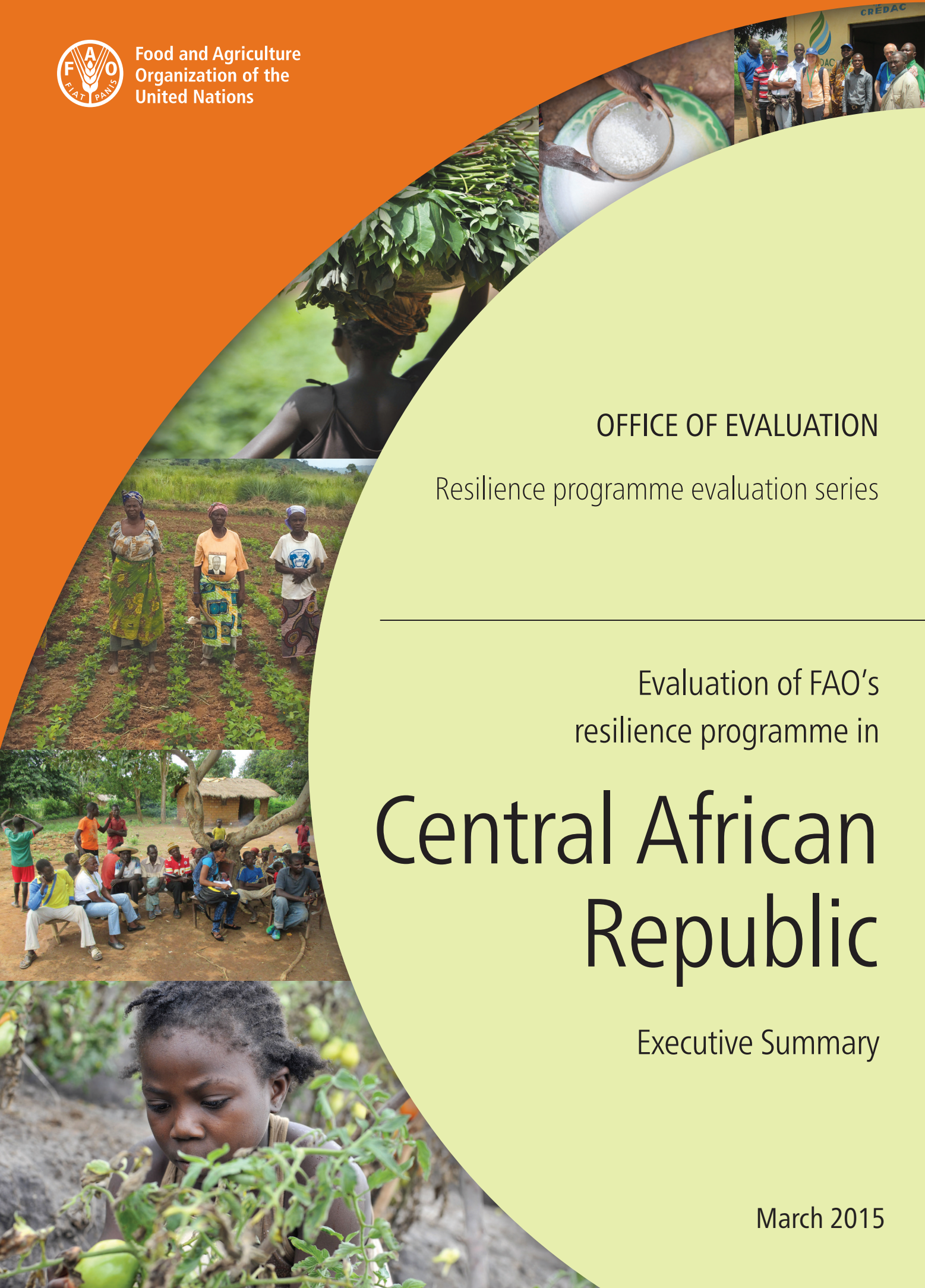




Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



OFFICE OF EVALUATION

Resilience programme evaluation series

Evaluation of FAO's  
resilience programme in

# Central African Republic

Executive Summary

March 2015



**RESILIENCE PROGRAMME EVALUATION SERIES**

**Evaluation of FAO's resilience programme  
in Central African Republic**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
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**March 2015**

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Office of Evaluation (OED)

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## Executive summary

### Introduction

- ES1 Interethnic violence and the loss of government control caused a humanitarian crisis in Central Africa Republic (CAR), culminating in the displacement of some 902 000 people. The crisis triggered a level 3 (L3) humanitarian response declared on 11 December 2013 by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and the following day by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The L3 declaration enabled FAO to provide more rapid support to the CAR country office and rapidly scale up operations.
- ES2 This evaluation assessed the entire FAO intervention since the L3 was declared. It also considered FAO's strategic framework, particularly with regard to Strategic Objective 5 (SO5): Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises. The main purpose of this evaluation was to understand the impact of the L3 protocols on FAO's capacity to respond to such emergencies; guide future actions undertaken in similar contexts; and increase the impact of FAO's efforts to improve the resilience of affected populations.
- ES3 The purpose of the evaluation was to evaluate the following three areas:
- The nature and success of FAO's overall response, with a particular focus on the impact of the L3 protocol within this response.
  - How the response was coordinated, the quality of collaboration with partners, and the functions of the Food Security Cluster.
  - The impact of FAO's response on populations affected by the crisis, including aspects related to improving resilience and linking short-term actions with long-term results.

### A. L3 Protocol

*Institutional leadership implemented and recognised from the start of the response*

- ES4 FAO has declared a total of three L3 responses. The L3 declared in CAR occurred one month after the first of these declarations, Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. The Country Office therefore implemented a wide-scale emergency response at a time when the L3 protocol was relatively new and untested.
- ES5 Prior to the L3 response, FAO's influence among humanitarian actors was low. This emergency enabled FAO to demonstrate strong leadership from the outset, a change of position recognised by partners at both the national and international level. The leadership shown can be attributed mainly to the dynamic approach and complementarity of the two managers who led the response, as well as strong management support from headquarters. Although this dual management team was dismantled early in the response, it provided the means to develop an extensive programme and demonstrated the added value and operational capacity provided by FAO in major crisis situations.
- ES6 FAO's responsiveness and leadership improved the organization's credibility with donors. The expertise with which headquarters and the Country Office mobilised funds increased the country budget considerably, from USD 3 million prior to the crisis to almost USD 35 million by July 2015. This funding increase significantly extended the scope of the programme and reinforced FAO's capacities to fully carry out its role in a crisis situation. As a result, the organization received institutional recognition within the sector.

*Strong support was provided by headquarters, but the procedures as well as administrative and operational capacity were not always appropriate for emergency situations*

- ES7 A key internal success factor that made this level of response possible was the excellent responsiveness of the TCE division: the Acting FAO Representative/ Designated Responsible

Official visited the Country Office the day of the L3 declaration, the Emergency Response Manager (ERM) joined the following week and the International Procurement Officer (IPO) a month later. During the months following the declaration, the ongoing support provided by TCE from headquarters was recognised as crucial to creating the required capacities to implement operations. An additional key factor was TCE's success in quickly releasing the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) funds, which enabled the quick reinforcement of those operational capacities needed to provide an immediate emergency response. A total of USD 3 487 000 was released in 2014.<sup>1</sup>

- ES8 Several teams were formed at headquarters to support the Country Office: an Emergency Response Team (ERT) deployed from the outset; a Surge Support Team (SST) was set up within TCE; and an extended Technical Support Team (TST) within the technical divisions (Rome, RAF and SFC). In addition, numerous support missions<sup>2</sup> and trainings were provided to reinforce the capacities of the national team. The role of the regional and subregional offices within the framework of the L3 response, however, was largely unclear. Moreover, the dissolution of the ERT before the end of the first agricultural campaign resulted in a discontinuity of the response. An internal skills repository or roster (currently being formalized) would further help to quickly identify new required skills.
- ES9 Within the framework of an L3 response, a preliminary assessment of the context is typically developed. However, when such complex crises occur, it is recommended that a multi-agency consortium conduct an in-depth analysis of the origins of the conflict. This would help to base the response on a thorough understanding of the local and historical context, while considering preventive factors and risk reduction strategies as formulated in FAO's SO5, under pillar 3.<sup>3</sup> In addition to politico-religious factors, a more detailed analysis of the following issues could have contributed to a more effective response: poverty, youth underemployment, poor governance, declining agricultural production<sup>4</sup> and the situation of pastoral farmers.
- ES10 The additional personnel brought in to reinforce the Country Office were integrated into the country team. The decision to merge the emergency team with the country programme team was recognised as beneficial. In this regard, the evaluation recommends consolidating future emergency responses around the existing country team. However, the organizational charts failed to provide a basis for understanding the specific roles of each person. One solution would be to clarify the distribution of responsibilities, based on individual expertise, between the Programme Officer and the ERM from the start of the response.
- ES11 Although four field level offices were set-up over the course of the response, this was done too late with respect to the needs on the ground, as well as in comparison with other agencies' field deployments.<sup>5</sup> The field offices suffered from a severe lack of human resources, which hindered FAO's capacity to monitor projects and partners. Furthermore, the field offices were given limited autonomy from Bangui, and experienced communication problems.<sup>6</sup> In order to fulfil their responsibilities effectively, FAO's field offices need further clarification of their mandates, as well as improved and timely information.
- ES12 Despite the additional support received, the Country Office lacked the logistical competencies to successfully carry out emergency operations. This field of expertise is underdeveloped at headquarters despite FAO's engagement in various crisis situations. First the World Food Programme (WFP) and then an international coordinator were contracted to fill this gap; neither, however, was able to meet FAO's needs in CAR. As a result, the national logistics officers were left to manage a volume of activity that exceeded their capacities. The lack of logistics resources was considered one of the factors that most negatively impacted FAO's intervention in CAR.

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1 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4562e.pdf>

2 Security, technical, communications, programme, logistics, finance, administration and operations

3 Pillar 3: Apply prevention and mitigation measures. Promotion and diversification of livelihoods with risk reducing technologies, approaches and practices across all agricultural sectors.

4 National priority given to mineral mines.

5 Deployment in March 2014, May 2014, December 2014 and April 2015 respectively.

6 One person per field-level office until mid-2015

ES13 In addition, the evaluation found the Country Office lacking capacity for report writing. Following the departure of a consultant in charge of communications and reporting in December 2014, the team had difficulties meeting report writing requirements. The reports submitted were widely variable in quality, especially regarding the level of English, and consistently failed to meet donor deadlines. It is necessary that the country office adopts a decisive solution to this longstanding problem, as it is likely to damage successful relationships at both the country and organizational level.

ES14 Although Standing Operating Procedures for FAO emergencies are currently being formalised, FAO's directives and internal procedures specific to L3 responses have not been thoroughly developed. For instance, there are no specific L3 procedures to minimize the lengthy procedures necessary to complete Letters of Agreement (LoA). A majority of partners complained about the LoA formalisation process and tardy payments, which considerably delayed operations. Indeed, a majority of FAO's implementing partner are local NGOs, and do not have sufficient funds to start implementing before receiving their first payment. Lastly, the turnaround times of FAO's Budapest office in charge of human resources are often considered too long in the context of emergency situations, and have slowed down the organization's response times.

*L3 protocols are not specific to conflict situations*

ES15 An L3 response can be declared in the case of a natural disaster, protracted crisis or conflict. The related protocols set down by FAO are universal despite the contexts having specific characteristics which require different intervention modalities. It would be useful to differentiate an L3 response for a natural disaster (L3N) from an L3 response for a conflict situation or a protracted crisis (L3P).

ES16 An emergency response following a natural disaster is often a short-term operation, while a conflict situation, typically more complex with the risk of being drawn out, would require longer term assistance. FAO's L3 response in the Philippines took six months, as compared with 22 months in CAR. The support given by headquarters to CAR was intensified during the first six months, and subsequently reduced in light of other priorities. The L3 activates a system-wide mobilisation of capacity to enable accelerated and scaled-up delivery of assistance; it is declared following an analysis of five criteria: scale, complexity, urgency, capacity and reputational risk. In this sense, an L3 response defines a high level of priority and requires a level of monitoring that is difficult to maintain over a long period of time. This level of attention is easier to maintain following a natural disaster, but is problematic during conflict situations, particularly protracted crises. FAO must therefore determine the specific characteristics of an L3 response and formalize them in its directives.

ES17 The decision to extend the L3 response in CAR was justified by a desire to benefit from the SST and the in-country presence of the ERM until the end of the second agricultural campaign. The concern that donor funding would be cut if the L3 label was taken away was also a factor. It is important to avoid any confusion between the extension of the L3 response, the specific characteristics of a protracted crisis, and funding opportunities. The fear of funds being cut does not constitute a valid argument to extend an L3 response, since this might undermine the overall mechanism in place to address this level of emergency. FAO (with the IASC) must make donors aware of the need to earmark funds to support stabilisation operations in situations of conflict, as a complement to an L3 response.

ES18 A further problem consisted of the difficulty in recruiting experienced national and international staff to work in conflict situations in CAR. Despite the efforts of headquarters and the country offices, several donors criticised the lack of staff deployed by FAO to fill the funded positions. The staff shortage inevitably had an adverse effect on the response in terms of programme monitoring and agreement protocols.

ES19 Lastly, there are few publications specifically dedicated to conflicts in comparison to the number of publications addressing natural catastrophes. While the CAR team did receive manuals from headquarters, most were more appropriate for dealing with

natural disaster situations or were published in English. There is a lack of documented learning and tools within the aid sector with regard to providing responses to conflict situations, and unfortunately FAO is no exception. This kind of manual would save time in emergency situations and be particularly beneficial in the context of an L3 response.

*An inadequately planned exit strategy*

ES20 The exit strategy was yet to be finalised at the time of the evaluation (i.e. two months before the end of the L3 response), although actions were being undertaken in this direction (e.g. reinforcement of the country team's skills to plan ahead for the SST's exit). An exit strategy needs to be defined from the start of the response once the underlying causes of the crisis have been analysed (cf. paragraph 9), and regularly adjusted as the context evolves in order to provide a reliable long-term strategy. The directives for the exit strategy should be defined in FAO's L3 protocols.

ES21 At the time the evaluation was carried out, the regional and subregional offices had still not given due consideration to post-L3 preparations. As resilience was central to discussions on the CAR response, the specialist regional teams in particular would have had a role to play in this matter.

ES22 On completion of an L3 response in situations of conflict, it is important to maintain a capacity for rapid intervention given the instability that may persist, while deploying operations with longer term vision and integrating conflict risk prevention objectives.

## **B. Coordination**

*The effectiveness and impact of the Food Security Cluster have been widely recognised*

ES23 The performance and dynamic approach of the Food Security Cluster (FSC) have been widely recognised by its members. The Cluster was tasked with coordinating operational interventions as well as collecting and managing information. Its success can largely be attributed to the deployment of a data coordinator and data manager from the moment the L3 response was declared. More might have been done if adequate funding had been available from the beginning of the response.

ES24 The effectiveness of the Cluster was reinforced by the support of a co-facilitator and a person dedicated to food security surveillance. These two posts were seconded from partner NGOs (ACF and ACTED), an innovative practice that should be promoted in the future to encourage NGO involvement in the management of the Cluster and its strategic decision-making process.

ES25 The establishment of sub-clusters within the field level offices in four provincial capitals, as well as the formation of working groups on topics including transhumance, also contributed to the positive impact and relevance of the FSC's activities. However, the extent to which information is shared between the national cluster and sub-clusters, and the involvement of government agencies in rural areas, remains unsatisfactory.

ES26 The FSC provided considerable support to reinforce the skills of its members, in particular national NGOs, which was very much appreciated. However, more qualitative interventions would have been possible if directives had been established and the implementation and monitoring of distributions was more rigorously overseen. Likewise, efforts need to be made to improve accountability to beneficiaries since, although mentioned in the APs, no significant initiatives have been undertaken in this area.

ES27 FAO and the FSC have successfully maintained a strong focus on food security on the humanitarian agenda. Both entities have also supported advocacy operations highlighting the link between agricultural support and social cohesion.

*The lack of reliable national data resulted in ineffective information management*

ES28 The FSC facilitated the participation of its members in several evaluations.<sup>7</sup> The Cluster also formulated strategic directions and an action plan; developed documentation and workshops; and published a regular newsletter on the food security situation which contributed to keeping donors informed. However, getting access to data in CAR is not easy, especially in rural areas. Efforts are underway to implement a national early warning system that will incorporate the funding of ACDA<sup>8</sup> agents with the aim of facilitating information sharing on markets and food security.

ES29 The FSC participated in the organization and assessment of IPC reports. However, these reports lacked detailed information and the data that was included was at a macro level only. As many areas are difficult to access – either because they are remote or due to security problems – they cannot be integrated into the IPC. To improve the quality of the IPC, NGOs could collect data from the implementation sites, which would then be used to create a reliable database for IPC analysis.

*There are still areas for improvement regarding coordination between FAO and WFP*

ES30 FAO and WFP worked as co-managers of the FSC until September 2014 (after which time it was essentially administered and funded by FAO). FAO and WFP also worked together to coordinate the distribution of seed protection rations; however, due to timing differences, the results of this cooperation were not positive. In 2014, FAO and WFP shared the same international partners in each region, and therefore the coordination and distribution of inputs was satisfactory. In 2015, however, FAO opened up its partnerships to include national NGOs, which required greater coordination between FAO and WFP. The results were not satisfactory, aggravated by pipeline breaks within WFP. This caused 2-3 week delays to distributions and increased the risk of seeds being consumed for food.

*Coordination between FAO and the government must be reinforced*

ES31 Given the insecure climate that prevailed in CAR from 2013 to 2014, government institutions were ill equipped for proactivity. This adversely affected coordination between FAO and its governmental partners. At the peak of the crisis, international aid organizations had even easier access to information than governmental actors. Moreover, at the time of the evaluation, the governmental organizations were still having difficulty deploying personnel in the field<sup>9</sup> due to a lack of funding and logistical resources, as well as employees leaving to work for other actors in the sector.

ES32 Although some coordination with the government has taken place, it has not all gone well. For example, with respect to the purchase of seeds in 2015 when, on the Ministère du Développement Rural (Ministry of Rural Development) request, the Institut Centrafricain de Recherche Agronomique (Central Agronomic Research Institute) (ICRA) compiled an inventory of national capacities and seed availability, and presented the report to FAO within the framework of an operational partnership. ICRA and FAO were in strong disagreement over seed quality, and germination tests yielded poor results. On a more positive note, although during the crisis the activities of the Agence Nationale de Développement de l'Élevage (National Livestock Development Agency) (ANDE) were curbed significantly, the organization was involved in the FSC and the working groups on livestock and transhumance.

ES33 Efforts were underway at the time of the evaluation to replace the FAO/WFP team within the FSC with competent governmental agencies. Governmental counterparts of FAO have requested additional resources. Such demands are not always easy to meet due to problems of integrity and improper use of vehicles that have occurred in the past.

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7 Examples include the MIRA, CFSAM and EFSA, undertaken in December 2013, October 2014 and October 2014 respectively.

8 Agence Centrafricaine de Développement Agricole (Central Agency for Agricultural Development)

9 The ACDA has 20 agricultural technicians spread out across the country compared to the 180 needed

## C. Programme

### (i) Emergency programme

#### *Pertinence/coherence*

ES34 Emergency programmes were in line with both FAO's Strategic Objective 5 (Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises) and the National Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition Investment Plan approved by the government for actions within the farming sector.

ES35 Assistance with farming inputs (tools and seeds) from FAO in 2014 and 2015 was essential for supporting the reinforcement of production capacities, as identified<sup>10</sup> by the Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA), published in January 2014. It was essential to join the distribution of seeds with the distribution of food supplies in light of the low food reserves of households. Distributions contributing to the recapitalisation of farms aimed to reinforce the self-sufficiency of households and reinvigorate the local economy. It was noted that some seeds distributed were not traditionally grown in the target zones.

ES36 FAO supported 200 seed production groups in an effort to raise national availability and satisfy the seed shortfall,<sup>11</sup> which was drastically reducing agricultural production in CAR. However its deployment from 2014 was rushed and it was not possible to track programme implementation in a satisfactory manner.

ES37 The emergency programmes respected the "do no harm" policy by not offering assistance with animal traction despite a huge problem of decapitalisation (in order to prevent the fuelling of tensions among different groups) nor distributing hoes (*dada*), which are sometimes used as weapons.

#### *Efficiency*

ES38 The food producing seeds distributed were essentially grains for sowing, of mediocre quality, supplied from CAR and Cameroon (distributions in 2014) and CAR (distributions in 2015). Furthermore, the storage and packaging conditions were not satisfactory, which had an adverse effect on their germination potential.

ES39 Distribution of a significant proportion of the seeds was delayed by one or two months. For the 2014 farming campaign, this is justified by the insecure climate in the country. Regarding other distributions (the crop cycle in 2014 and livelihood cycle in 2015), this can be explained by unsatisfactory internal mechanisms (e.g. the protracted formalisation of APs, lack of internal coordination, lack of forward planning, inadequate logistical expertise) and delayed provision of funding from donors. Moreover, the agricultural calendar used by FAO as a reference point was based on expert analysis and not local farmers' practices.

ES40 Support to seed production groups faced not only delayed distributions, but also a lack of proper technical guidance and oversight. No contracts were established to ensure that a proportion of the seeds produced were sold back to FAO, which resulted in a problem of seed availability. As a result, FAO had to find other supply solutions to support its 2015 agricultural campaign.

#### *Effectiveness*

ES41 According to the beneficiaries, distributions helped to increase the amount of cultivated land due to the supply of inputs, but the delays lowered expected yields. Partners' lack

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10 94% of rural communities questioned lost their food-producing seeds and 76% their farming equipment

11 FAO/WFP Markets and food security assessment mission to the Central African Republic, April 2014/Central African Republic: Violence, displacement and food insecurity, December 2013

of effectiveness with regard to monitoring plots of land means the agronomic results are quite unreliable. The quantity of inputs received by each beneficiary vary and do not always match the quantities planned.

ES42 Distributions targeted over 230 000 households. However, targeting was not always satisfactory, as many partners selected members from production groups and not vulnerable households.

ES43 FAO made the decision to work with numerous national NGOs, which favoured their emergence and reinforced their capacities, but also affected operational capacities owing to their lack of experience. The poor performance of the partners<sup>12</sup> with regard to the training provided and the monitoring of beneficiaries hampered the anticipated results. The teams working at FAO's field level offices did not have the operational capacity to carry out an inspection of the actions conducted by the partners.

### *Impact*

ES44 One effect of the distributions was to encourage some farmers to leave the jungle in order to cultivate land, which offered a beacon of hope and the chance to lead a normal life again. Some beneficiaries surveyed spoke of people they knew who had stopped fighting in the conflicts because of the distributions.

ES45 FAO centralised its seed and equipment purchases in 2014 and 2015, resulting in greater equity at the national level and reduced destabilisation of local markets.

ES46 However, the lack of transparency in the way distributions were managed occasionally caused tensions between villages. Poorly managed coordination between the distributions of seeds and food supplies (intended to protect seed supplies) increased the risk of seeds being consumed. The poor quality of the groundnut seeds, delayed distributions and disease outbreaks meant it was difficult to build up the required stocks.

## **(ii) Rehabilitation programme**

### *Caisses de résilience*

ES47 The Caisses de Résilience (CdR) programme is an initiative of the resilience agenda established by FAO and defined by SO5. The actions undertaken within the framework of the L3 response in CAR encompass each of the four constituent pillars. Reinforcing the resilience of populations is an integral component of an emergency response within an intervention framework that can evolve as needs change. It is worth noting that several documents presenting the CdR as FAO's flagship resilience programme<sup>13</sup> could create confusion, and risk reducing this concept to a standardised programme. While the CdR certainly has a valid place in the resilience agenda, it offers no operational guarantees.

ES48 Although the CdR is recognized as a valuable initiative, it is important to further assess its specific added value in the context of CAR. In order to fully understand its relevance in this post-crisis context, we need to incorporate the factors of conflict risk prevention and vulnerability reduction specific to the context (e.g. youth employment, good governance rules, facilitation of dialogue between communities, and access to education). Promotion of this integrative approach should be encouraged, provided that it is redefined each time in relation to the specific context, as well as the proposals and assessments carried out by the communities concerned.

ES49 The CdR requires implementation by operational actors with expert proficiency in the relative standards defined by FAO. The deployment in two stages was appropriate, but

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12 National and international partners

13 "The resilience component of the FAO's programme for the Central African Republic" - communications document; Building Resilience in the Central African Republic, published in July 2014

faced a lack of partners with experience in the various areas of responsibility. The training time required and the high turnover of expatriates made it difficult to appropriate the related methodologies. Furthermore, the methodology specific to the social part is still in need of guidelines and instruments defined by FAO.

ES50 The methods for selecting beneficiaries for the CdR differ from one organization to the next. The projects visited during the evaluation were not properly monitored.

ES51 School gardens offer an excellent resource for teaching farming techniques, introducing young people to the practical aspects of farming, and motivating them to pursue agro-pastoral activities.

ES52 Several partners mentioned the delay in signing agreement protocols (AP) with FAO, which resulted in a delay to the CdR programme in relation to the crop calendar.

#### *Transhumance/livestock*

ES53 FAO's initiative in the area of transhumance is paramount for the country, considering the importance of cattle to addressing the challenges of national cohesion, economic recovery and regional integration.

ES54 The FSC's working group defined eight areas where action is needed: restocking; animal feed; social cohesion; destocking; rehabilitation of infrastructure; reinforcement of capacities; animal health; and safeguarding of pastoral activities.

ES55 At the time of the evaluation, FAO was preparing a national vaccination campaign to run in September 2015.

### **(iii) Cross-cutting issues**

ES56 According to the document "Our priorities - FAO's Strategic Objectives",<sup>14</sup> the two cross-cutting issues of most concern to FAO are gender equality and governance. Support to women in CAR was included as a selection criterion for beneficiaries; however partners seldom apply these same criteria. Women will benefit more from the CdR programme, through which they were targeted via groups of already established tontines. Lastly, good governance must be promoted in public institutions and among NGOs, in unison with other actors in the sector.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

ES57 FAO has an essential role to play in CAR's future, considering that agricultural and livestock development (particularly pastoralism) are vital to the country's long-term economic growth and conflict resolution efforts. According to the assessment of the FAO Representative in Bangui, CAR has the potential to become a showcase for FAO interventions in other crises and contexts. "If we're saying that peace is an essential prerequisite for the establishment of sustainable food security, then it's just as true that the swift recovery of a productive farming system for the masses is itself an essential condition for return to peace."<sup>15</sup>

### **D. L3 Protocol**

ES58 Since the L3 response was declared in CAR in December 2013, FAO has reacted responsively and appropriately: experienced personnel were rapidly deployed; local personnel were recruited; support missions were dispatched from headquarters; and significant SFERA funding was released, while large amounts of external funding were also mobilised. This

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14 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/mi317f/mi317f.pdf> page 15.

15 CAR mission report - Agricultural Reconstruction and Food Security - Marc Dufumier - March 2015

resulted in a large-scale response comprising wide national coverage and a large number of beneficiaries, as well as improved institutional recognition from actors in the sector, especially donors.

ES59 This success was achieved due to the efforts of dedicated personnel who responded swiftly to the country's needs. Although existing L3 protocols and procedures have mostly been followed, they are still underdeveloped in terms of content. The role of regional and subregional offices still lacks the clarity needed to define the responsibilities and commitments of each office.

ES60 FAO needs to be more specific in terms of its methods for intervention in the context of protracted crisis or conflict. In this respect, the experience acquired in CAR through the application of the L3 protocol requires analysis and lessons drawn in the interests of improving future L3 operations.

ES61 Donors should be made more aware of the necessity to allocate funding in good time. FAO should establish prior agreements with donors to ensure that the period in which funds are made available tallies with the crop calendar.

## Key recommendations

1. It would be beneficial for FAO to make a distinction between an L3 response for a natural disaster (L3N) and an L3 response during a conflict situation or a protracted crisis (L3P). It is also necessary to clarify within the L3 protocols the specific roles of headquarters, regional offices, subregional offices and the Country Office during such responses.
2. It is recommended that purchasing, recruitment and field level agreement formalisation procedures be simplified with partners during L3 responses. Furthermore, a «toolbox» should be formalised at the institutional level to facilitate staff deployments, as well as the quantitative and qualitative monitoring of programmes.
3. It is important that FAO establish predefined funding agreements with key donors in order to facilitate the swift release of funds in the wake of emergency situations. At the same time, donors must be made aware of the necessity to time donations with the agriculture calendar.
4. In the future, at the beginning of a response FAO should perform an in-depth analysis of the context and the underlying causes of the crisis, in order to reduce the risk that these factors may affect the proposed programmes. Any intervention should also have an exit strategy defined from the start and reassessed at regular intervals.

## E. Coordination

ES62 The performance of the FSC, primarily coordinated by FAO, was one of the most positive components of this response. The Cluster successfully coordinated activities while supporting and mobilising its members. Moreover, it helped push FAO to the forefront of the sector.

ES63 The cluster communicated effectively with its members and facilitated an even distribution of programmatic support. The sharing of reliable information and mapping data was particularly appreciated in a country where access to data is difficult. The partnership with ACTED and ACF<sup>16</sup> in running the FSC was a distinction that helped shrink the often perceived gap between UN agencies and NGOs.

ES64 This success would not have been possible if a coordinator and a person in charge of data management within the cluster had not already been in place at the time the L3 response was declared. The lessons drawn from the coordination aspect must be documented and applied to future emergency interventions.

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16 ACTED: Agence d'aide à la coopération technique et au développement (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development)/ACF: Action Contre la Faim

- ES65 Although the response was commensurate with the government's plans and ambitions, and a certain number of areas for collaboration were identified, coordination with any government needs to be reinforced as early as possible following the launch of an emergency response. Moreover, this process should continue throughout the response, particularly to support FAO's exit strategy and identify the government body that will handle the future coordination for the Cluster.
- ES66 The Cluster initiated a new approach with development donors through the introduction of CdR. The Cluster could play an important role in attracting donors, not only to FAO but also other member organizations. It should increase its efforts to coordinate with the other clusters which, despite being managed by UNOCHA, need assistance from all HCT members.

### **Key recommendations**

1. Regarding future crisis situations, it is important to guarantee and institutionalise the availability of the positions of cluster coordinator and data manager from the very outset of the crisis.
2. An exit strategy addressing the replacement of the FAO/WFP team within the FSC by qualified government agencies must be formulated and rendered operational in the near future.
3. FAO should support a government-led 'good governance' programme to improve accountability, transparency, funding management and governmental performance.
4. The FSC should draw lessons from its experience in CAR for the benefit of the humanitarian sector. The partnership between the cluster's coordination team and NGOs should be repeated in future responses.
5. The FSC must reinforce the sharing of information between the national FSC and the sub-clusters.
6. Coordination between FAO and WFP needs to be reinforced to provide for the simultaneous distribution of livelihoods kits and seed protection rations.

### **(i) Emergency programmes**

- ES67 The response carried out was clearly pertinent. The distribution of inputs to a great many families across the country galvanised the farming sector in the assisted areas and contributed to providing means of subsistence to the beneficiary families. The extent of the impact of the intervention, however, needs to be reassessed more objectively when some time has passed.
- ES68 The programme conducted by FAO is in line with the organization's strategic objectives, in particular SO5 which seeks to increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises. Resilience reinforcement actions were an integral component of the emergency response from the outset, and were adjusted in accordance with the context and needs in line with the four defined pillars.
- ES69 The cumulative effects of some weaknesses observed need to be factored in, such as frequently delayed distributions, inconsistent seed quality, inexperienced partners, lack of accountability to beneficiaries, insufficient monitoring and delayed funding. Even if FAO's standing in CAR has been significantly strengthened, its reputation as an institution capable of carrying out efficient and effective emergency interventions remains questionable.
- ES70 In the future, emergency interventions should pay more attention to results and impact, with greater importance shown to monitoring the programme and partners. To this end, the organization needs to reinforce the capacities of its field level offices and the central monitoring and evaluation unit in Bangui.

## **(ii) Rehabilitation programme**

- ES71 The “Caisses de Résilience” (CdR) programme is wholly pertinent, although its impact could be reinforced by integrating specific aspects of the local context and a greater appropriation of relevant methodologies by the partners. The school gardens offer an important opportunity to involve young people in farming activities and encourage school attendance.
- ES72 FAO has initiated the transition to a long-term perspective through implementation of the CdR programmes, which provide a source of good ideas in the field of livestock/transhumance, and support village seed production and the involvement of young people. It is important to inform and involve the government and donors on the benefit of promoting these issues.
- ES73 FAO's support for agricultural production is central to CAR's transition to stability. This includes various activities such as the reinforcement of practical farming skills; assistance with draft animal techniques and agriculture/livestock integration on farms; and support with seed production at the community level throughout the country.
- ES74 Through the three key programmes, namely the CdR, livestock/transhumance and agricultural and seed production support, FAO has set in motion a longer term initiative in partnership with development actors that already have much experience in the country. Support to women and young people, the promotion of agro-ecological techniques and the need for good governance must be integrated in each aspect of these programmes.
- ES75 It is also important to integrate climate change considerations into the programme, particularly with regard to pastoralism and its impact on bordering countries, and to integrate nutrition into food security interventions. At the onset of future crises, FAO should analyse the underlying causes in order to develop an effective, context-specific response.

## **Key recommendations**

1. FAO in CAR needs to further emphasize the results of its interventions. The Organization needs to increase its capacity to monitor actions in the field, and to handle logistics and improve its editorial skills.
2. FAO needs to assess the reasons for the delayed distribution of some seeds in order to identify constructive lessons for future interventions, and to inform donors of the necessity to time delivery of funding with the crop calendar.
3. The capacity of partners in terms of targeting, training and monitoring needs to be strengthened. The skills of partners must also be reinforced in terms of accountability to beneficiaries, which should include the implementation of a complaints mechanism within its operations.
4. FAO, in partnership with ICRA and ACDA, must support the national seed production programme (through support to seed production groups (GAM)) and the development of associated markets to assure seed availability and quality. Furthermore, procedures regarding the supply and inspection of seeds to be distributed at possible future interventions need to be planned now as part of a later contingency plan.
5. FAO must also further its commitment to the important transhumance sector, as well as its cooperation with the relevant governmental organizations, in order to stimulate rehabilitation and development at the regional and national levels.
6. FAO should pursue the deployment of CdR programmes by ensuring i) that they are deployed in parallel with the crop calendar; ii) the quality of targeting, training, distribution and monitoring; and iii) the systematic integration of a coherent and methodical social dimension.
7. For each of these areas of intervention, FAO must prioritise the integration of young people, promote family agriculture and income derived from agro-ecological techniques, and promote adherence to good governance principles among its partners.
8. FAO must show stronger commitment to cross-cutting issues regarding the involvement of young people and the promotion of good governance.



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