



UNITED NATIONS EZINGO FUND FOR THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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COUNTRY CONTEXT

The Central African Republic (CAR) continued to face multiple challenges in 2022. Despite progress in peacebuilding, the presence of armed groups and ongoing intercommunal conflicts negatively impacted the country's security and stability. The political context also remains tense due to the persistent lack of trust between the government and the opposition.

In 2022, the President of the Republic convened a Republican Dialogue to revitalize the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation signed in 2019 (APPR-RCA). This dialogue was an important step to strengthen the participation of all stakeholders in peacebuilding in the country. The political situation was also marked by an initiative to reform the Constitution, contributing to further polarization in the country. Local elections, originally scheduled for September 2022, were postponed mainly due to a lack of financial resources and a delay in the adoption of the law on the delimitation of administrative regions. In September, the government confirmed that local elections would be held in 2023. In 2022, the first-ever trial of the Special Criminal Court was held on the May 2019 attack in Koundjili and Lemouna (Ouham-Pendé prefecture). The verdict was handed down on 31 October 2022, and the court found three combatants of the 3R group guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity. This verdict represents an important step in the fight against impunity in the Central African Republic.

The Central African economy, weakened by the COVID-19 pandemic has shown signs of recovery, but the unstable security situation and the impact of the crisis in Ukraine causing, among other things, shortages of basic necessities and rising inflation (6.5% according to the IMF) have impacted economic growth in 2022: 1.5% instead of 4% initially forecast by the IMF. The crisis in Ukraine has particularly affected imports of basic necessities into the country, leading to an average increase of 30% in the price of wheat flour, 20% in the price of rice and 56.1% in the price of vegetable oil.

Major fuel shortages and supply shortages, which began in March, led to illegal fuel sales and an average price increase of 38 percent on the black market (with pump prices remaining fixed). This situation, coupled with an increase of about 33% in transportation costs in Bangui, has exacerbated the already precarious living conditions of the Central African population. In addition, the non-renewal of the "Extended Credit Facility" program with the IMF, as well as the suspension and successive postponements of budgetary support from certain technical and financial partners, have made it difficult for the government to ensure its own operations and to provide basic social services to the population.

FUND OVERVIEW

The Ezingo Fund is a multi-donor trust fund established in 2014 for a period of ten years (2014 - 2024) to support peacebuilding and development efforts in the Central African Republic (CAR). The fund is managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and is designed to provide a flexible and coordinated approach to addressing the country's challenges.

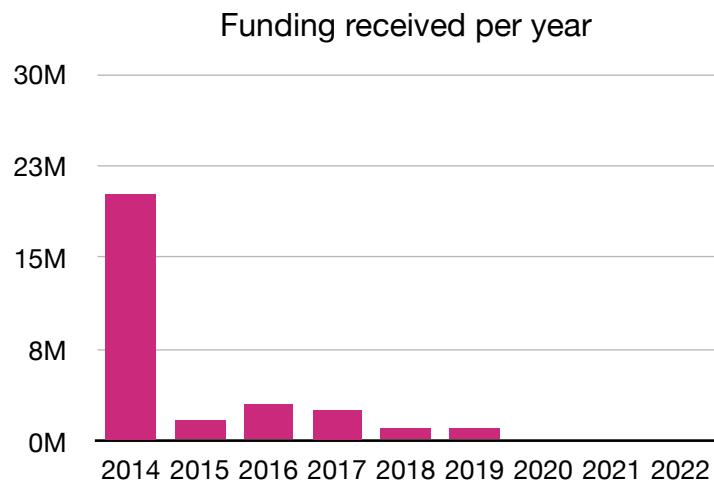
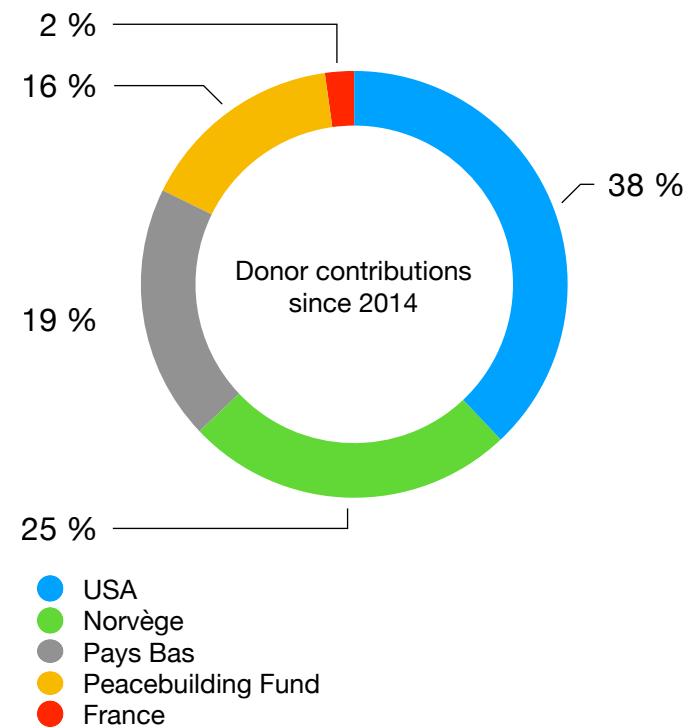
The Ezingo Fund was created in response to the humanitarian crisis and political instability in the country, which has been ongoing since 2013 and aims to support efforts to promote stability, reduce poverty, and improve the living conditions of the CAR's population. It focused on three main areas: restoration of State authority (RESA), reconciliation and mediation, and early recovery.

To date, the Ezingo Fund funded 13 projects. In the area of RESA, the fund supports efforts to strengthen the justice system and promote human rights while strengthening the security sector. In the area of reconciliation and mediation, the fund supports efforts to promote dialogue and reconciliation between communities in CAR. In the area of early recovery, the Ezingo Fund supports efforts to promote sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty.

The fund is funded by the United States of America, Norway, the Netherlands, France and the Peacebuilding Fund.

These donors have committed since the fund's inception a total of USD 29 million. Donor contributions have nevertheless declined from USD 20.2 million in 2014 to USD 1.1 million in 2019. The fund has not received any contributions since 2020.

This document reports outputs delivered in 2022 under three projects which were granted a no-cost extensions.





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FUND GOVERNANCE

The fund is managed by a multi-stakeholder committee: the Steering Committee co-chaired by the Ministry of Economy, Planning and International Cooperation and the Deputy Representative of the United Nations Secretary General, Resident Coordinator /Humanitarian Coordinator (DSRSG/RC/HC) and includes donor representatives. The Steering Committee is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the fund's activities and ensuring that they are aligned with the CAR government's priorities as well as laying out the fund's strategic orientation. The Steering Committee should meet at least twice a year.

In 2022, the Steering Committee didn't meet and due to lack of funding since 2021, the contract of the fund manager could not be renewed and ended in December 2021. The Technical Secretariat of the fund is currently handle by a member of the UN Resident Coordinator's Office until a decision from the Steering Committee regarding the future of the fund.

In 2021, during a meeting of the Steering Committee, the closure or revamp of the Ezingo Fund was discussed due to the lack of financial resources and the difficulty to mobilize the necessary financial resources. The Co-presidents of the Steering Committee recommended that the Ezingo Technical Secretariat, in collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, conduct a mapping of the donors in CAR and suggest a new strategic orientation for the fund. The Steering Committee granted additional months to three projects in order to finalize their activities in 202

EZINGO FUND PORTFOLIO

13 Projects

9 UN entities involved

SDG



\$ 29 million committed

3 Priorities



Restauration of State authority



Early recovery



Reconciliation & mediation

2022 PORTFOLIO RESULTS

SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROUND 6 MULTIPLE INDICATOR CLUSTER SURVEY (MICS)



Expenditure : \$ 1,050,483

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is designed to collect estimates on key indicators that are used to assess the situation of children and women. In addition to being a data collection tool for generating data to monitor progress toward national goals and global commitments to promote the well-being of children, MICS was a critical source of data for the UN Secretary-General's final report on progress toward the SDGs.

By explicitly taking into account the SDG indicators, this survey is a unique opportunity to provide CAR with baseline data to then measure progress towards achieving the SDGs.

The project benefited from a no-cost extension and a new end date postpone to 31 March 2022. The post-election events didn't allow to conduct dissemination workshop in Bangui and the regions as initially planned. Activities were planned to be done by 31 December 2021, but the extended deadline allowed to take into account unforeseen events.

2022 Results

- One National Dissemination Workshop on the results of the Sixth Edition of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS6) conducted in 2018-2019.
- Five National Dissemination Workshops about the results of the Sixth Edition of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS6), in 5 of the 7 regions due to security constraints : R1 - chef lieu : Boali, R2 - chef lieu : Berberati, R3 - chef lieu : Bossangoa, R4 - chef lieu : Bambari, R6 - chef lieu : Bangassou. Sessions were not organized in R5 : Ndele and R7 Bangui.
- One panel discussion to inform the local population of MICS in April 2022, in Bangui. Participants were composed of UN agencies, youth and civil society organizations.

SUPPORT TO COVID-19 RESPONSE IN CAR



Expenditure : \$ 581,969



The project aimed at providing multidimensional support to the national fight against COVID-19 in three aspects: prevention of COVID-19, socio-economic support to the affected population, and mental health and psychosocial support through the following three outcomes: outcome 1: The local population has a better understanding of COVID-19 and preventive measures; outcome 2: The socio-economic resilience of the affected population is strengthened; outcome 3: The local population is referred to mental health and psychosocial support services to reduce the negative impact of violence and crises, including COVID-19.

Due to security-related impacts in the project zones, the project benefited from a no-cost extension until 31 May 2022.

2022 Results

- 20 awareness sessions organized in Bouar and Berberati for a total of 9,110 people on a variety of topics related to COVID-19, including: how COVID-19 spreads; the symptoms of COVID-19; and measures to prevent COVID-19.
- 1 capacity building workshop for 60 women from four ministries: Ministry of Territorial Administration; Ministry of National Education; Ministry of Trade and Industry and Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises on the theme: "Women in the dynamics of accident and disaster risk prevention" from 31st March to 1st April in Bangui.
- 1 capacity building session on entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship development and business skills was held for the benefit of 25 members representing the 10 associations of PLHIV (People living with HIV). Beneficiaries of the project included 20 women and 5 men for a duration of 3 days.

WOMEN'S WATCH PLATFORMS FOR INCLUSIVE AND PEACEFUL ELECTIONS



Expenditure : \$ 353,330



The aim of the project is to tackle the issue of women's underrepresentation in decision-making roles in CAR. During the preparations for the 2020/2021 legislative election in the country, the project introduced a program that established a women's watch platform. This platform aims to enhance the electoral processes in CAR by promoting a democratic and civic culture among women and girls. The project has two main objectives: (i) to increase women's involvement in the 2020/2021 elections as voters, candidates, and key players in the organization and observation of elections in CAR; and (ii) to identify instances of gender-based violence (GBV), including sexual violence, and provide appropriate care to survivors.

A no-cost extension was requested to adapt the project to the context including the preparation of local elections.

2022 Results

- One awareness raising session on preventing gender based violence during the electoral period, the promotion of sexual and reproductive rights, the socio-economic empowerment of women as a means of their access to decision-making and their well-being;
- Psychological and medical care for 90 survivors of gender-based violence;
- 663 cases were registered in 2022 within the framework of the project through AFJC's (*Association des Femmes Juristes Centrafricaines*) listening centers.

LOOKING FORWARD

In CAR, 2022 was characterized by progress in promoting the rule of law and improving access to justice thanks to the support from the UN to the Government and local population. The coordinated efforts led by the government in revitalizing the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (APPR-RCA) through the joint road map for peace in the Central African Republic of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, also known as the Luanda roadmap in 2023 will re-create the enabling environment needed for economic recovery programs and provision of basic services. Equally, the dissolution of four armed groups signatory to the APPR, which remain committed to the Political Agreement show significant progress in the implementation of the Peace agreement pave the way for the restoration of peace and security and the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Additionally, the signature and endorsement of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), succeeding to the UNDAF+ by the UN Country Team and the Government, the 12 December 2022 opens a new development and cooperation area. The UNSDCF is the main instrument of the UN for planning and carrying out development activities to support the implementation of the 2030 SDGs in CAR. Although significant progress was observed particularly in the area of stabilization and capacity building of republican institutions, peacebuilding, community reconciliation as well as access to basic social services, these achievements are still precarious and fall short of the population's expectations.

The Ezingo Fund was designed as a privileged financial mechanism used by the UN system in CAR to support the government efforts in the area of development. With the roll-out of the new UN cooperation framework, the fund could play a catalytic role, acting as a strategic development financing tool, build synergies between UN agencies, improve coordination, and maximize funding for the SDGs. Additionally, the fund has an important role to play in the framework of the Humanitarian, Peace and Development Nexus.

As recommended by the Steering Committee on 30 June 2021, the Ezingo Fund needs to be revamped with a new strategic orientation. The fund could be the optimal mechanism to support the implementation of the UNSDCF including its collective outcomes: durable solutions to internal displacement and the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants. In 2023, the UN Country Team will focus on strengthening the country's governance and security sectors, promoting social cohesion and reconciliation, and access to basic social services. will also be a priority, as well as strengthening the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.