



IGAs beneficiaries in Zemio

EZINGO FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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Context

The Central African Republic, like all countries in the world, has been confronted with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Following the declaration of the first case in March, the number of cases has risen to 4,971 cumulative confirmed cases (1,311 female and 3,660 male), of which 4,885 patients have been cured, 63 have died, 4,400 cases have been confirmed as locally transmitted and 571 cases have been imported as at 31 December 2020. To curb the spread of the disease, the government has taken several measures, including closing land, air and river borders, closing pre-schools, schools and universities, and restricting the movement of people between Bangui and the provinces. The year 2020 was also marked by conflict linked to the electoral process, with the creation of a new coalition of armed groups in December. The level of representation of Central African women in political decision-making bodies remained very low (7.5% of parliamentarians and 11% of mayors are women) and evidence suggested that sexual violence increased. The threat of sexual, as well as other, violence threatened to impact the participation of women in presidential and legislative elections in 2020 as well as the 2021-2022 municipal elections.

The combined effects of these external factors limited the movement of project teams and make several locations where projects are being implemented inaccessible. Despite this difficult context, four (4) projects were nevertheless implemented: (1) City and HIV by IOM and UNAIDS, (2) MICS by UNICEF, (3) Support to COVID-19 response by UNDP, IOM, UNAIDS and UN Women and (4) Joint Youth Project by UNDP.

The impact study of the pandemic showed a drop in the purchasing power of the population due to the loss of at least 11,600 direct and indirect jobs, mainly in the informal sector, and a drop in per capita income of 1.3%. Overall, more than 2 million people have been negatively affected, particularly the most vulnerable groups (children, women, unemployed youth, old people, internally displaced persons, refugees, people in prison, people living with chronic diseases and/or disabilities). In addition, the resurgence of armed conflict led to human rights violations and population displacements, which highlights the need to strengthen ongoing stabilization initiatives (electoral process, strengthening of the justice and security sector, fight against gender-based violence (GBV), durable solutions for internally displaced persons and refugees, strengthening of the health system, etc.) and to support programmes initiated following the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2019.

In view of the country's needs, the programmatic areas of the Ezingo Fund, namely (1) Restoration of State Authority and Functions, (2) Early Recovery and (3) Reconciliation and



Mediation, remain relevant. The Ezingo Fund therefore remains a relevant financial mechanism to support the Government's efforts for the well-being of the populations.

1. Fund Governance

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Steering Committee meets at least twice a year. The Committee defines the strategic direction of the Fund; reviews and approves funding proposals after validation by the Technical Secretariat; reviews and approves the narrative reports consolidated by the Technical Secretariat from the progress reports submitted by the recipient UN organisations and approves the direct costs related to the operation of the Fund that have been incurred by the Technical Secretariat.

1.1. Steering Committee meeting of 19 June 2020

The meeting was chaired by the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Cooperation (MEPC) and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office with the participation of staffs from MEPC, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), UNDP, IOM and the Ezingo Fund Technical Secretariat. On the agenda: (1) Presentation of the 2019 projects results (Justice and Human Rights, Special Criminal Court, City and HIV, MICS and Joint Youth project), (2) No-cost extension requests, (3) Technical Secretariat's operating budget and (4) Presentation of the results of internal review.

- **No-cost extensions requests**

The joint Youth Project was been extended at no cost to allow UNDP to use the remaining available resources (USD 23,408) as of 31 December 2019 to fund Income Generating Activities (IGAs) for youth living with disabilities. Part of these resources will also be used to fund the mid-term evaluation of the joint youth programme. The Steering Committee approved the extension of the project from 31 December 2019 to 31 December 2020.

The City and HIV project has been extended due to delays linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to this pandemic, the project team planned to redirect some of the available resources to produce 7,500 masks and soaps for distribution to People Living with HIV. The Steering Committee approved the extension of the project from 30 September 2020 to 31 March 2021.

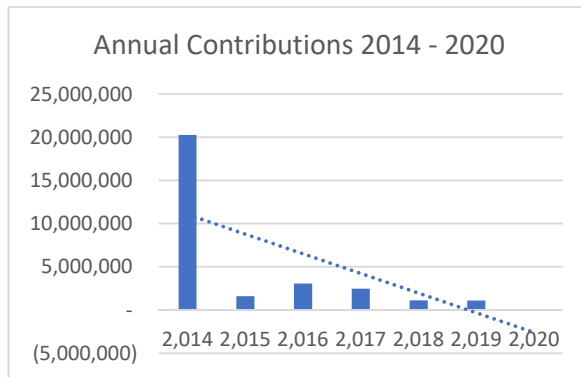
The MICS project was extended due to the delay in starting the Maternal Mortality and Biomarker Survey (MMBS). This delay is mainly due to the estimated funding gap of USD 775,006. The Steering Committee approved the extension of the project from 31 October 2020 to 30 September 2021 to enable UNICEF to mobilize additional resources.



- **Operating budget of the Technical Secretariat**

The committee approved the Technical Secretariat budget of USD 391,734.49 for the period July 2020 to June 2021. This budget covers administrative costs and resource mobilization missions.

- **Results of the Fund's internal review**



1: Evolution of contributions from 2014 to 2020

The Ezingo Fund was established in 2014 for a period of ten (10) years (2014 - 2024). Donor contributions have declined over the years from USD 20,256,720 in 2014 to USD 1,113,437 in 2019. In 2018 and 2019, only Norway contributed. In 2020, no contribution was recorded.

The objectives of the internal review of the fund were to document the results at mid-term (2014 - 2019), to discuss with stakeholders in order to improve the fund's

performance, to ensure the relevance of its programmatic areas in the current context of CAR and to define the priority areas for the period 2020 - 2024 with a view to mobilizing additional resources. The review consisted of a literature review, site visits and interviews/meetings with beneficiaries, implementing agencies, donors and the Government (sectoral ministries).

At the end of the review, the following results were obtained:

- The Fund's programmatic areas remain relevant due to their alignment with the national strategic documents (see Annex 1).
- The joint UN/Government management of the Steering Committee ensures national ownership and supports the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Cooperation to ensure aid coordination.
- The Fund's flexibility in resource allocation (local decision-making) and streamlined reporting (one report for all donors) ensures effective implementation and accountability.
- The funding of joint UN agency projects supports the implementation of the “delivering as one” approach, which ensures complementarity of interventions whilst building on the respective comparative advantages of the agencies.



As recommendations, the Fund should focus on under-funded areas (social protection, durable solutions, mental health etc.) as well as on local development at the community level. Resource mobilisation remains a priority, focusing on donors at sub-regional level and the private sector as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

1.2. Steering Committee of 1 September 2020

This meeting was chaired by the MEPC and the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office and attended by staffs from MEPC, PBF, UNAIDS, IOM, UNDP and the Ezingo Technical Secretariat. The project "Support to the COVID – 19 response" implemented jointly by UN Women, UNDP, IOM and UNAIDS was presented. The Steering Committee approved this project for a total amount of USD 800,160

Table 1: Project Description

Title	
Support to COVID – 19 Response in CAR	
Implementation period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 2020 – September 2021 (12 months)
Coverage areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bangui – Mbaïki – Carnot – Obo – Bimbo – Begoua - Bouar - Berberati
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 800,160 USD (IOM: USD 300,000 / UNAIDS: USD 150,009 / UNDP: USD 100,002 / UNWOMEN: USD 250,149)
Description	<p>The project will contribute to the efforts of CAR and its partners to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 (Good health and well-being), 5 (Gender equality), 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and 10 (Reduction of inequalities). It will provide multi-dimensional support to the national fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in three aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevention of COVID-19 and GBV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitisation of populations in border areas with Cameroon, people living with disabilities, People Living with HIV (PLHIV), women and girls, sex workers (SW), men having sex with men (MSM)... Socio-economic support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of protective masks Production of ecological handwashing kits using clay Training and Income Generating Activities (IGAs) for people living with a disability (blind, hearing impaired...) and for several economic groups.



Title	
Support to COVID – 19 Response in CAR	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mental health and psychosocial support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Psychosocial and mental health support for populations in distress, in particular people directly affected by COVID-19 and victims/survivors of violence.

1.3. Steering Committee of 26 November 2020

This meeting was chaired by the MEPC and the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office in the presence of staff from MEPC, PBF, UNFPA, IOM, UNDP and the Ezingo Technical Secretariat. On the agenda was the presentation of the "Situation Room" project implemented jointly by UN Women, UNFPA and MINUSCA. The Steering Committee approved this project for a total amount of USD 174,410.

Table 2: Project Description

Title	
Joint project to support the establishment of women's situation rooms for inclusive and peaceful elections in the Central African Republic	
Implementation period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 15 December 2020 – 15 April 2022 (17 months)
Coverage areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● National coverage (16 prefectures)
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 174,410 USD (UNWOMEN: 110,210 / UNFPA: 64,200)
Description	<p>The project will contribute to the promotion of the massive inclusion of women in local governance, and to the identification and response to violence against women in CAR. This will be achieved through the promotion of a democratic and civic culture among women and girls and the establishment of a prevention and early warning mechanism for gender-based violence, including sexual violence. The project has two (2) results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Result 1: Women's participation in the 2020/2021 and 2022 elections as voters, candidates and major actors in the organisation and observation of elections in CAR is increased <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organisation of advocacy meetings with sectoral decision-makers, development partners and leaders of armed groups for peaceful and inclusive elections ○ Organisation of national civic education campaigns for massive participation of women in the elections and change of harmful behaviours to female leadership in CAR



Title	Joint project to support the establishment of women's situation rooms for inclusive and peaceful elections in the Central African Republic
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organisation of coaching and mentoring sessions for potential women candidates for local elections. ● Result 2: Gender-based violence, including sexual violence, is recorded and survivors receive appropriate care ○ Organisation of training sessions for monitors responsible for collecting and analysing gender-based violence, including sexual violence ○ Organisation of awareness-raising sessions for women candidates and communities on the risks and prevention of violence against women during the electoral and post-electoral periods. ○ Organisation of psychological and medical care for gender-based violence survivors

2. Results of the 2020 Portfolio

2.1. Joint Youth Project (October 2017 – December 2020)



Sewing workshop managed by hearing - impaired people - Joint Youth Project

This project is a joint initiative of UNICEF, FAO, UNDP and UNFPA. As of 31 December 2019, FAO, UNICEF and UNFPA had completed their respective activities. UNDP obtained an extension from the Steering Committee in June 2020 to use the available resources (USD 23,408) to finalize the planned activities for people living with disabilities.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the adverse security situation, the rehabilitation of a literacy centre for person living with visual and aural disabilities was delayed.



2.2. Support to COVID – 19 response (October 2020 – September 2021)



Ecological handwashing kit - UNWOMEN

This project, jointly implemented by UNDP, IOM, UNAIDS and UN Women, effectively started in November 2020. Some project areas were inaccessible due to insecurity related to the electoral process. Preliminary results achieved are as follows:

- 50 eco-friendly handwashing kits (clay-based) were produced as a pilot initiative with the involvement of a local NGO (Groupement des femmes "Wali ti Kodé (Femme Technique)").
- Two awareness-raising workshops with the most vulnerable households, female-headed households, displaced girls and local authorities and community leaders were organised on COVID-19 prevention measures. 500 People (350 most vulnerable women

and 150 male community leaders) committed to contribute to the scaling up of prevention in their communities.

2.3. MICS Project (July 2018 – September 2021)



Interview in the community - UNICEF

The MICS survey has three objectives: (1) To have recent data to be used for the mid-term review of the main indicators of the RCPCA, (2) To fill the data gap to guide sectoral planning and (3) To have reliable data at national and regional level for strategic decision-making.

The year 2020 was mainly dedicated to data processing/validation (data verification and errors correction) and to the preparation of the report on the main results (17 chapters) in collaboration with the National Institute of Statistics ICASEES,

the consultants and the UNICEF regional offices. The databases are accessible, since January 2021, on the MICS website: <https://mics.unicef.org/surveys>



2.4. City and HIV project (August 2019 – March 2021)



Project's beneficiaries - IOM and UNAIDS

With an estimated prevalence of 3.5 [2.7 - 4.7]¹ in 2019, CAR is the second most affected country in Central Africa. The main targets of this project, displaced people living with HIV, are in an extremely vulnerable situation due to difficulties in accessing treatment and adequate care, food shortages and the risk of violence and sexual abuse. In view of their increased vulnerability to COVID, the project obtained the agreement of the Steering Committee to redirect part of the available resources to

manufacture and distribute protective masks to PLHIV and host populations. The following results can be noted:

- 293 people (161 women and 132 men) were trained on HIV/AIDS and COVID-19. The target population of the training sessions are local authorities, members of local associations and representatives of PLHIV, IDPs and host populations. The training activities in Bangui, Bimbo, Bégoua and Obo were carried out by the NGO SOPADI and the training session in Bambari was carried out by IOM
- Seven (7) focal points from the organizations (IMC, CCU, ACAMS, MDA, IRC, ALIMA and SOPADI) were trained on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse. They were trained on the different types of sexual misconduct: sexual exploitation, sexual abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment; the vulnerability of the affected population to SEA; the reporting obligations of humanitarians and the mechanism and modalities of reporting in the country through the task force.
- 30 people living with HIV from RECAPEV, AVEC +, Ndoye Dia-nan, ACADVS were paid (cash-for-work) to manufacture 6,000 masks in Bangui. In Bambari, 1,000 masks were made by young people exposed to violence, identified as part of a project to reduce community violence.
- Sixteen (16) awareness campaigns on the theme "How to reduce the vulnerability of IDPs and host populations to HIV/AIDS" were carried out in Bambari, Bimbo, Bégoua and Obo. 677 people including 323 women and 354 men were sensitized. Key awareness messages included: HIV/AIDS transmission, prevention measures,

¹ <https://www.unaids.org/fr/regionscountries/countries/centralafricanrepublic>



importance of antiretroviral treatment and the importance of fighting stigma at community level. Handmade masks were distributed to participants to protect themselves from COVID-19. 50 bottles of hydro-alcohol gel and 1,000 masks were given to the partner SOPADI for distribution during its training and awareness sessions.

- In collaboration with Bambari Hospital, MSF, RECAPEV, CNLS and UNHCR, 150 beneficiaries of income generating activities (IGA) were trained. They were identified on the basis of specific vulnerability criteria: (1) People living with HIV/AIDS; (2) Internally displaced persons; (3) Women heads of household in charge of an HIV-positive person; (4) People suffering from a chronic illness and (5) people who are members of families of children living with HIV/AIDS.
- 200 PLHIV and IDPs (155 women and 45 men) benefited from cash transfers at a rate of FCFA 19,500 per person. In collaboration with other partners, it was determined that 29,000 FCFA/month can cover the monthly food needs of a household.
- The survey on the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of IDPs on HIV infection in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic was conducted in the project areas in September 2020. 308 people (169 IDPs, 84 PLHIV and 55 leaders) participated. The survey showed that the level of knowledge of HIV transmission routes and prevention methods in all groups is still not satisfactory, especially when it comes to mother-to-child transmission. In addition, the proportion of practices that would favour HIV transmission is high, including the practice of commercial sex, the systematic non-use of condoms with extramarital partners (see annex 3)
- 2,000 displaced people have been voluntarily tested in Bangui, Bimbo and Begoua.

3. Perspectives

The UN Country Team has identified the following priority areas for 2021:

- **Socio-economic response to COVID - 19:** Implement the socio-economic response plan developed in August 2020. Its total budget is USD 159,647,038 of which USD 8,472,901 is available and USD 159,647,038 to be mobilised.
- **Strengthening the culture of peace through social dialogue:** Prepare the ground for the most peaceful and inclusive municipal elections since 1988. Social mobilization and massive participation of the population in municipal elections is important to ensure the representativeness and legitimacy of local authorities.



- **Strengthening the prevention and management of communicable and non-communicable diseases** including HIV, tuberculosis, malaria and resilience to COVID-19.
- **Promoting durable solutions:** Help communities to develop their local economies in areas that allow it and to put in place the necessary socio-economic infrastructures to create stability.
- **Promoting Human Rights and preventing hate speech:** Strengthen human rights instruments to support peace at the national and community level.
- **Promoting Gender Equality in all areas:** Strengthen prevention and response to gender-based violence and promote women's political voice and economic empowerment.
- **Risk and disaster management and environment & transhumance:** Significantly scale up current initiatives and significantly expand partnerships.

The Ezingo Fund was included as a possible channel for donors in the CAR Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Plan and has been identified as a suitable funding financing mechanism for local level recovery and development, specifically in the context of Durable Solutions, and gender-related activities.

The Ezingo Fund financial mechanism has the following advantages for donors:

Table 3: Ezingo Added Value

Added value of the Fund	
Rapid allocation of resources (local decision making and national ownership)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions on the allocation of non-earmarked resources are taken locally by the Steering Committee co-led by the United Nations and the Government • Funds are allocated to priority needs identified jointly with the national side (alignment with national strategic documents) • Collegial management allows the Government to ensure aid coordination. • Disbursements are made within 10 days of signing project documents.
Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The allocation of resources is based on changing priorities and needs on the ground.

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Added value of the Fund	
Transparency and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programmatic and financial data are made available to stakeholders (government, donors and populations) in real time on the fund's website (http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/4CF00)
Low management fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1% of contributions paid to the Administrative Agent (Multi Partner Trust Fund Office)• 7% management fee collected by the implementing agencies

4. Annexes

Annex 1: Relevance of programme areas (literature review)

National Strategic Documents	Strategic areas / Objectives	Alignment with Ezingo programme areas		
		Restoration State Authority	Recovery	Reconciliation and mediation
National Reconciliation and Recovery Plan (2017-2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace, Security and Reconciliation • Social contract between the state and the population • Economic recovery and revival of productive sectors 	X	X	X
Combating GBV in CAR 2018 - 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of GBV • Promotion of a legal environment • Rehabilitation of survivors • Zero tolerance of GBV 	X	X	
Restoration of State Authority Strategy (2017-2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive restoration of security • Redefinition of the role of public services • Improvement of local governance 	X	X	
Sustainable Solutions Strategy (2017-2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return / Resettlement / Integration of IDPs and Central African refugees 		X	



Annex 2: Results of the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey

Table 4: Distribution of respondents who cite the three modes of HIV transmission, avoid giving incorrect answers and have good knowledge

Questions	PDI (n= 169)	PVVIH (n= 84)	Leaders (n= 55)
Bangui			
Name the 3 modes of transmission	67,5%	59,9%	68,1%
Avoid misconceptions	46,5%	24,7%	58,0%
Good knowledge	28,6%	43,7%	40,7%
Bimbo			
Name the 3 modes of transmission	58,3%	61,6%	69,2%
Avoid misconceptions	45,8%	40,8%	62,2%
Good knowledge	18,2%	38,0%	52,2%
Bambari			
Name the 3 modes of transmission	24,7%	25,5%	46,2%
Avoid misconceptions	28,3%	36,7%	52,0%
Good knowledge	17,0%	28,3%	50,4%
Obo			
Name the 3 modes of transmission	14,8%	24,6%	44,9%
Avoid misconceptions	23,1%	36,7%	54,0%
Good knowledge	15,0%	26,4%	51,9%
Overall			

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Questions	PDI (n= 169)	PVVIH (n= 84)	Leaders (n= 55)
Name the 3 modes of transmission	20,8%	41,0%	52,7%
Avoid misconceptions	20,8%	25,5%	53,8%
Good knowledge	26,3%	47,4%	56,2%