



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Food  
Programme

**Sahel**

# Early action and scale-up of emergency response 2018

Joint position paper





# Introduction

The latest *Cadre Harmonisé* food security analysis (November 2017) has indicated that 4.25 million people will require food assistance during the lean season (May–August 2018) in pastoral areas across the Sahel (Burkina Faso, Chad, the Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal).<sup>1</sup>

## Situation analysis



**60 percent** increase in the estimated number of people at risk of food insecurity – from 4.2 to about **6.8 million** people



**1.6 million** cases of children with severe acute malnutrition – **46 percent** increase from 2017 estimates in worst-case scenario



**2.5 million** pastoralists and agropastoralists require urgent livelihoods assistance

Drought, high food prices, conflict and market distortions have further aggravated the food security and nutrition situation in the Sahel since the end of 2017. Various assessments from United Nations agencies, governments and clusters suggest that the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance could increase in the coming months, reaching up to 6.8 million people.

Severe rainfall deficits in many parts of the Sahelian belt in 2017 have affected pasture availability in major pastoral and agropastoral areas of the region and have led to an early onset of the lean season. This has had a significant impact on livestock conditions and movements.

Up to 40 and 95 percent of the pastoral areas were negatively affected in Chad and Mauritania, respectively,<sup>2</sup> while about 2.5 million pastoralists and agropastoralists require urgent livelihood assistance.

In late 2017, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimated that well over 1 million children under the age of five may be affected by severe acute malnutrition in 2018. However, based on economic, security and climate events from December 2017 to February 2018, UNICEF expects an additional 520 000 children to be affected – a 46 percent increase.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) have therefore developed an early action and scale-up plan to jointly address the immediate needs of the most vulnerable people, including those of pastoralists and agropastoralists, as well as longer-term structural challenges.

The joint position paper puts forward the three United Nations agencies' analysis and integrated programmatic strategy to address the needs and strengthen the livelihoods of women, men and children in the Sahel in 2018, outlining the latest key developments and factors influencing the food security and nutrition situation in the six most affected Sahelian countries.

<sup>1</sup> *Dispositif régional de prévention et de gestion des crises* (PREGEC), November 2017

<sup>2</sup> PREGEC, November 2017



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## Additional risk factors worsening the already fragile situation

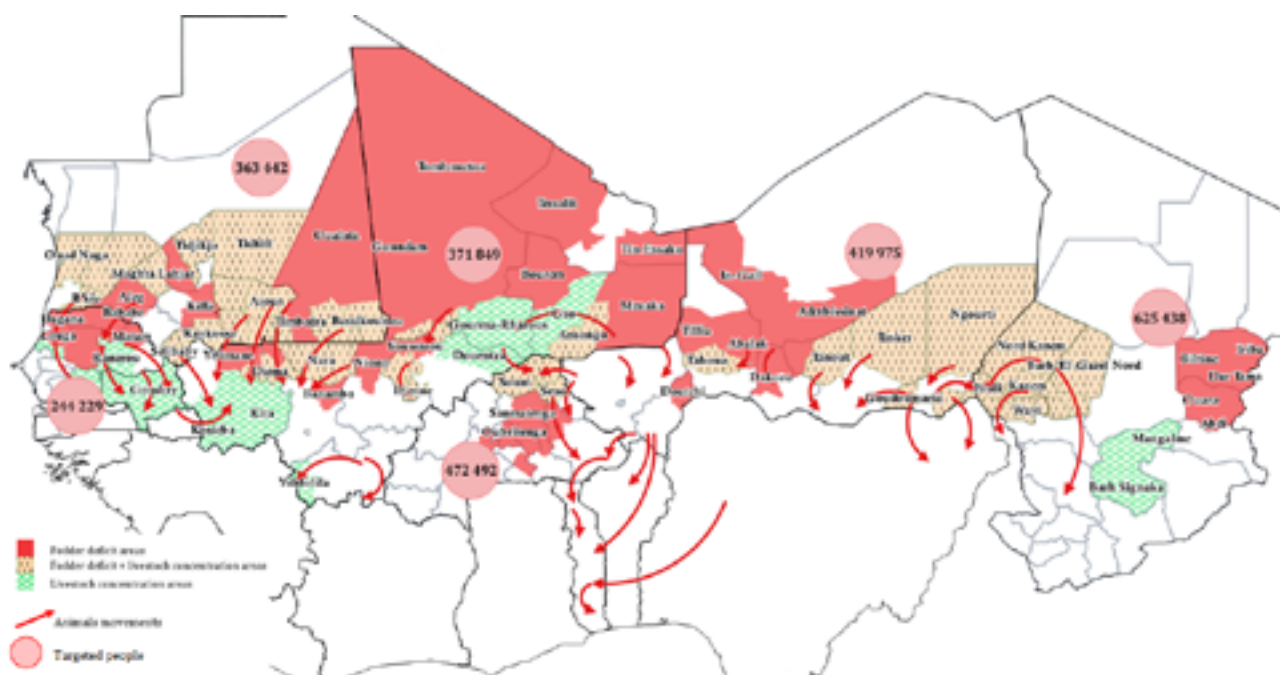
The Sahel is recurrently affected by a cycle of mutually reinforcing factors of vulnerability and instability. The latest major drought (2011–2012) left more than 18 million people facing hunger and 1 million children at risk of dying from malnutrition (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs). Historical trends show that the region faces drought approximately every three years, and a major drought every 5 to 10 years.

In addition to the projected number of people in need of food assistance according to the *Cadre Harmonisé*, recent analyses point to several aggravating factors that are already exacerbating the food security and nutrition situation of specific livelihood groups (e.g. pastoralists) before the 2018 lean season and during the lean season for all livelihood groups. These aggravating factors will also increase vulnerability in subsequent years and are as follows:

- **Irregular rainfall and local deficits in agricultural production and pasture.** Across the Sahel, the 2017 rainy season was characterized by erratic distribution of rainfall, resulting in decreased pasture for large grazing areas and limited agricultural production in certain areas. This has also triggered an earlier onset of the 2018 lean season (March instead of May) and its extended duration (until September instead of August). The outcome of fodder production in most affected areas is expected to be insufficient to meet the needs as in a regular year. The lack of pasture and water has led to early transhumance (internal and cross-border), with pastoralists moving up to two months earlier than usual in search of water and fodder for their animals, causing high concentrations of animals in certain areas (Map 1).

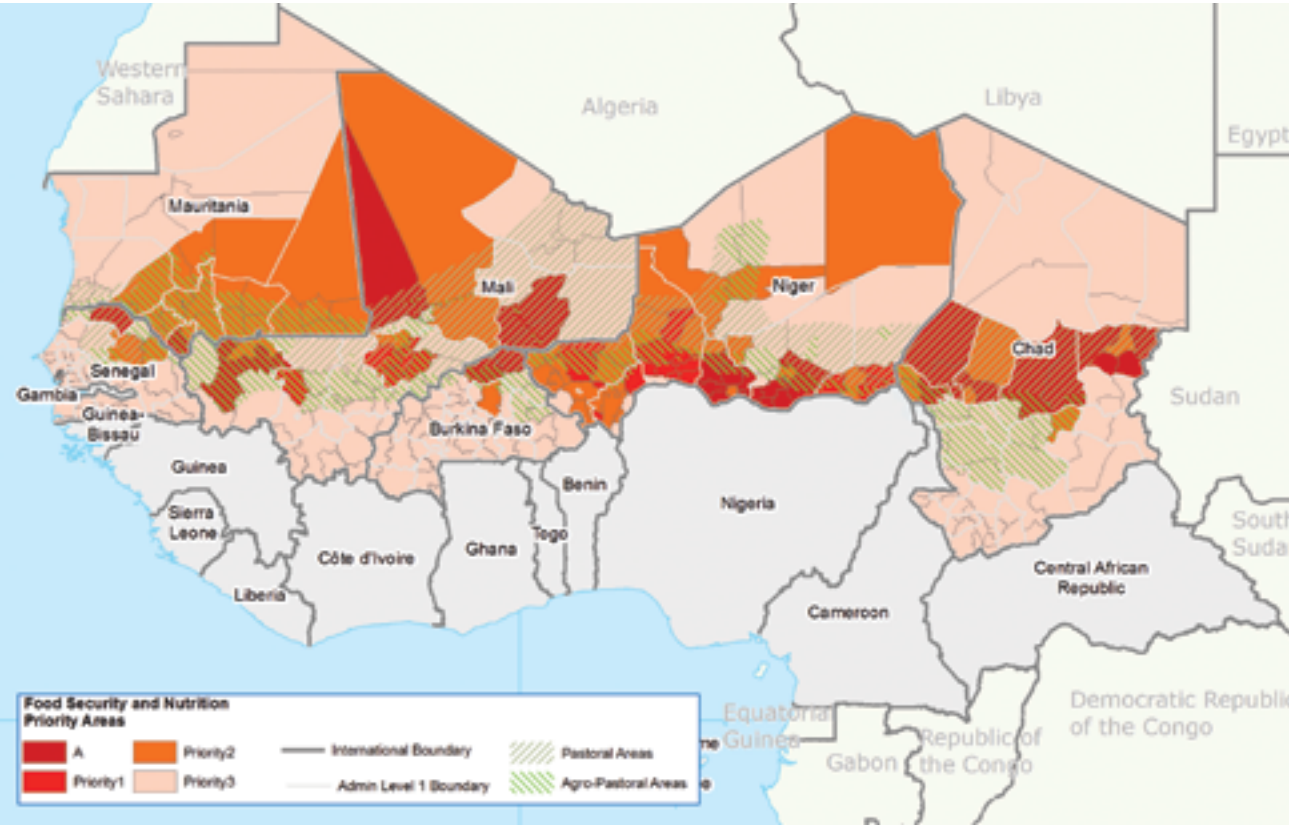
- Border crossing restrictions and adverse regulations constraining pastoralists' movement.** In 2018, coastal countries witnessed the early arrival of transhumant pastoralists due to the above-mentioned pasture deficits. Some countries have put in place restrictions to control the influx of livestock. Tensions between farmers and herders have increased, as in certain cases herders have arrived before the end of harvest. Banditry attributed to pastoralists in Benin has aggravated the perception of transhumance in coastal countries. This has resulted in severe regulations against pastoralist movements, including border closures in Guinea. Such measures have increased the concentration of animals along these borders and will further deteriorate quantity and quality of pastureland in concentration areas.
- High staple food and animal feed prices, and disrupted markets.** While cereal prices are typically at their lowest during the post-harvest period thanks to increased supply, those of millet and sorghum remain significantly high as already observed in 2017, despite mitigation measures were implemented for vulnerable populations (e.g. free food distribution or food available at a lower price by governments). In Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania, more than half of the markets show alarming millet and sorghum prices trends. Animal feed prices are also reported to be higher than normal. A cart of fodder usually costs XOF 2 000 (USD 3.74), while in parts of Burkina Faso the price has increased to XOF 7 500 (USD 14.03). The terms of trade between cereals and livestock are unfavourable to herders. In Mali, Mauritania and the Niger for instance, these dropped by 15-50 percent compared with December 2016. In Chad, particularly around the Lake Chad Basin, in addition to the ongoing economic crisis, trade flows remain disrupted due to armed conflict.

Map 1. Priority areas for pastoralist and agropastoralist interventions



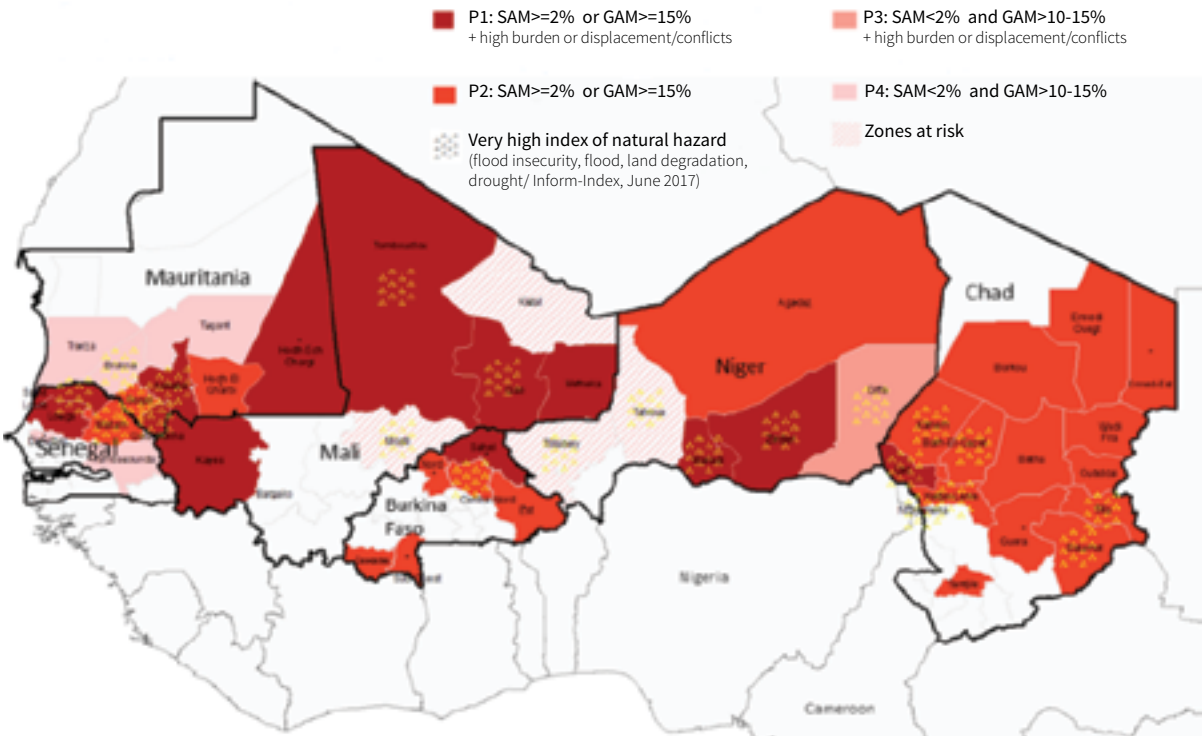
Source: FAO, February 2018.

Map 2. Sahel 2018 food security priority areas



Source: WFP, March 2018.

Map 3. Sahel 2018 acute malnutrition priority areas



Source: UNICEF, January 2018.

- **Increasing displacement and armed conflict.** The Sahel has experienced an expansion and intensification of armed conflict in certain areas, disrupting basic social services and livelihoods, hindering access and delivery of assistance, negatively impacting trade flows and triggering displacement, as well as economic and pastoral migration – there are more than 760 000 internally displaced persons and refugees in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger. In cross-border areas, security measures and new legislations have negatively affected trade and transboundary movement of people and livestock, particularly in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, northeastern Niger and northern Senegal. The ban on the use of motorcycles in the affected areas of both the Niger and Mali, has significantly affected livelihoods, as it impacts economic activities and markets by slowing down trade flows. The restricted access to islands in Lake Chad is also severely affecting pastoralists, agropastoralists and fishers.





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## Identified priority areas

### Priority areas for pastoralist and agropastoralist interventions (Map 1)

Fodder deficit leads to increased market prices (food, animal feed, livestock products), worsening of nutritional and health status of livestock, deterioration of the terms of trade (animals/cereals) and overgrazing; livestock concentration increases pressure on natural resources (water, pasture), risk of conflict and health risks for livestock (Map 1).

### Food security priority areas (Map 2)

Food security priority areas identified based on the latest *Cadre Harmonisé* (November 2017) and WFP's latest food security information from Mali and the Niger<sup>3</sup> (Map 2).

### Acute malnutrition priority areas (Map 3)

Priority areas for child malnutrition have been identified based on the prevalence of severe and moderate acute malnutrition, and on aggravating factors including armed conflict and displacement. Map 3 also takes into account areas with high risk of natural hazards.

<sup>3</sup> WFP. *Note plaidoyer soudure agropastorale et agricole*. Mali, January 2018, and *Enquête nationale sur la vulnérabilité à l'insécurité alimentaire des ménages en milieu rural au Niger*, February 2018.



UNICEF/UN0126758 Dicko

## Assessment of potential impact

### Food security

The food security situation is alarming in many areas. Based on the latest *Cadre Harmonisé* and figures from the Niger – where about 2.6 million people are food insecure – and Mali – where about 1.5 million people will be affected during the lean season if no assistance reaches the most vulnerable – there will be a significant increase in immediate and long-term needs in the region if no action is taken. In particular, pastoralists and agropastoralists in areas of origin and of concentration, as well as herders and farmers along transhumance routes face increased needs. The latest WFP analysis suggests that approximately 6.8 million people could become food insecure during the 2018 lean season (expected to last from May to September), of which approximately 0.9 million will be severely food insecure. Map 2 shows the highest concentration areas of food-insecure people. As of 15 March 2018, WFP's response planning in the region is based on general food distribution in-kind (53 percent) and cash-based transfers (47 percent) during the pre-lean<sup>4</sup> (Chad and the Niger included) and lean seasons<sup>5</sup>. Overall, about 82 percent of the response focuses on general food distribution, 16 percent on nutrition activities and 2 percent on Food for Assets.

<sup>4</sup> February/March-May depending on the country.

<sup>5</sup> Usually from May to August, but this year it has started in March and is expected to last until September 2018.

**Table 1. Estimated severe acute malnutrition caseload in 2018\***

Country	2018 severe acute malnutrition caseload	2018 severe acute malnutrition caseload – worst-case scenario
Burkina Faso	187 177	276 734
Chad	205 902	347 069
Mali	162 993	274 145
Mauritania	32 244	67 896
Niger	380 166	387 944
Senegal	89 946	219 560
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 058 428</b>	<b>1 573 348</b>

\* Calculated based on population of 6–59 months multiplied by prevalence based on weight for height and agreed incidence rates (per methodology agreed with stakeholders at regional level).

**Table 2. Estimated moderate acute malnutrition caseload in 2018**

Country	2018 moderate acute malnutrition caseload	2018 moderate acute malnutrition caseload – worst-case scenario
Burkina Faso	390 785	431 662
Chad	543 167	560 760
Mali	473 194	582 238
Mauritania	86 503	97 118
Niger	922 656	1 216 908
Senegal	345 000	499 087
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 761 305</b>	<b>3 387 773</b>

## Acute malnutrition

The nutrition situation, already characterized by high levels of malnutrition, with acute levels in certain areas, is expected to continue to deteriorate if early and sustained action is not taken. Based on the worsening conditions, UNICEF is using the upper confidence interval figures of the projections made in 2017 to estimate a 2018 worst-case scenario, to be updated as new information becomes available (see Table 1). WFP has also calculated potential increases in moderate acute malnutrition in the region to adjust treatment and prevention actions as necessary. Given the issues with coverage and access to treatment in the region, a significant increase in acute malnutrition cases would be difficult to mitigate through treatment if not prevented (see Table 2).

## Livelihoods

Because of the severe biomass deficit in many pastoral and agropastoral areas, there is a higher risk of animal mortality. In Burkina Faso, an increase from 2 to 8 percent is expected this year. Many herders have already begun to decapitalize their livestock. The nutritional status of pastoral households might severely deteriorate due to decreased access to animal protein for women and children. Lack of pastures can lead to overgrazing and severe pasture degradation, with a risk of limited to no fodder production, in 2018 and during the coming years. Early and abnormal livestock movements are increasing risks of conflict over the use of natural resources and negatively impact agriculture. There is a risk of emergence of transboundary epidemics. Vulnerable agropastoralist communities require a scale-up of emergency livelihoods assistance. FAO estimates at 2.5 million the number of vulnerable pastoralists and agropastoralists in need of urgent livelihood assistance.



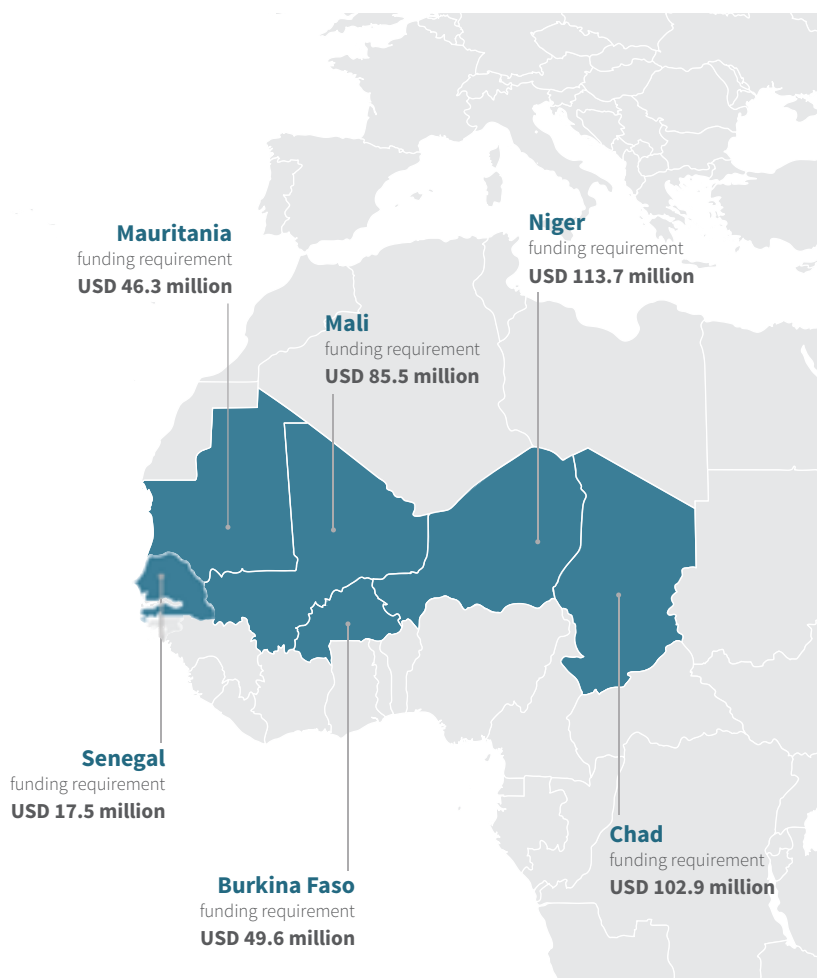
# Joint early action and scale-up of emergency response in the Sahel in 2018



Funding requirement  
**USD 415.5 million**



Targeted beneficiaries  
**6.8 million** affected  
farmers, pastoralists, food-  
insecure people, pregnant and  
lactating women and girls, and  
children (6–59 months)<sup>6</sup>



## Immediate joint actions

Urgently finalize the pre-lean and lean season Response Plans and Contingency Plans at country level by:

- Conducting joint food security and nutrition assessments in support of the ongoing *Cadre Harmonisé* analysis on joint market analyses, the pastoral situation and livestock crisis monitoring.
- Implementing the UNICEF/WFP approach for integrated management and prevention of acute malnutrition among children of 6–59 months, and pregnant and lactating women and girls.
- Providing support to governments and regional structures and political advocacy for urgent action in defining policy actions at national and regional levels.
- Coordinating joint activities (focus area, geographical area, type of activity, partners) at country level through active clusters or technical working groups.

<sup>6</sup> The sum of targeted beneficiaries for each agency is higher than 6.8 million as some beneficiaries will benefit from the assistance provided by two or all three agencies.

## Coordinated activities

FAO, UNICEF and WFP have adopted a joint programmatic approach to address the immediate needs and strengthen the livelihoods of women, men and children.

### FAO



Funding required  
**USD 44.6 million**



Targeted beneficiaries  
**2.5 million** affected  
farmers and pastoralists

#### Activities

- Animal feed distribution
- Rehabilitation of water points for human and animal use
- Destocking/meat distribution/nutritional education
- Pasture regeneration/cash for work
- Milk production/transformation/distribution
- Animal health (vaccination and deworming)
- Restocking
- Transhumance management through cross-border conflict dialogue

### UNICEF



Funding required  
**USD 86.6 million\***



Targeted beneficiaries  
**989 000** children  
affected by severe acute  
malnutrition

#### Activities

- Prevention of severe acute malnutrition through malaria chemotherapeutic treatment and insecticide-treated net
- Distribution of vaccination against measles
- Accelerated Infant and Young Child Feeding (supporting exclusive breastfeeding, appropriate complementary foods)
- WASH interventions to prevent diarrheal diseases
- Treatment and integrated management of severe acute malnutrition in children of 6-59 months and pregnant and lactating women and girls

\* In the worst-case scenario, an additional USD 27.5 million is needed to assist an additional 511 000 children in the six identified countries.

### WFP



Funding required  
**USD 284.3 million**



Targeted beneficiaries  
**3.6 million** food-  
insecure people, pregnant  
and lactating women and  
girls, and children  
(6-59 months)

#### Activities

- Household food assistance (cash or in-kind) for families with malnourished children
- Scale-up of general food distributions (cash or in-kind) during the pre-lean and lean seasons in Priority area 1
- Treatment and prevention of moderate acute malnutrition in children (6-59 months) and pregnant and lactating women and girls
- Rebuilding the resilience of vulnerable communities and prepare for future shocks, including through Food-for-Asset programmes, school meals, nutritional support and lean season safety nets

**Table 3. Breakdown per country and agency**

Country	Priority requirements	FAO	UNICEF	WFP
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	Funding required	USD 6.5 million	USD 11 million	USD 32.1 million
• Number of people food insecure: 620 400				
• Estimated moderate acute malnutrition caseload: 390 785	Targeted beneficiaries	472 492	187 000	587 300
<b>Chad</b>	Funding required	USD 14.1 million	USD 27.9 million	USD 60.9 million
• Number of people food insecure: 889 400				
• Estimated moderate acute malnutrition caseload: 543 167				
• Number of women and children in need of preventive and curative nutrition support: 1.7 million	Targeted beneficiaries	625 438	199 000	641 400
<b>Mali</b>	Funding required	USD 8.1 million	USD 11.9 million	USD 65.5 million
• Number of people food insecure: 795 000				
• Estimated moderate acute malnutrition caseload: 473 194	Targeted beneficiaries	371 849	130 000	676 500
<b>Mauritania</b>	Funding required	USD 6.5 million	USD 7.7 million	USD 32.1 million
• Number of people food insecure: 602 200				
• Estimated moderate acute malnutrition caseload: 86 503	Targeted beneficiaries	363 442	32 000	427 700
<b>Niger</b>	Funding required	USD 6.1 million	USD 20.4 million	USD 87.2 million
• Number of people food insecure: 796 500				
• Estimated moderate acute malnutrition caseload: 922 656	Targeted beneficiaries	419 975	380 000	1 137 700
<b>Senegal</b>	Funding required	USD 3.3 million	USD 7.7 million	USD 6.5 million
• Number of people food insecure: 548 200				
• Estimated moderate acute malnutrition caseload: 345 000	Targeted beneficiaries	244 299	61 000	139 500



## Contacts

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