

# WEST AFRICA

## KEY FACTS

- Countries covered by the appeal: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo
- Total population: 250 million
- Chronic malnutrition in children under five, total: 13 million

(Source: UN; World Bank)



“approximately 550 000 children under five die each year”

## FAO IN WEST AFRICA

In the Sahel region, the majority of households who experience food insecurity are poor farmers with limited access to land and seeds. WFP and FAO will continue to collaborate through joint planning of food and seed distributions in support of agricultural livelihoods.

## BACKGROUND

While the overall humanitarian situation has improved in the past year, the 250 million citizens of the West African sub-region are continually subject to high levels of vulnerability and a wide range of natural and man-made disasters. Cross-border issues tax the region, such as civil unrest, malfunctioning political systems, forced displacement, under-nutrition, agro-ecological degradation, pest invasions, erosion of traditional livelihoods and epidemics, among others. As many threats in the region easily replicate from country to country, a coordinated response with a region-based perspective is essential to properly address the complex, diverse yet trans-national nature of the issues at hand.

Interdependent conflicts and humanitarian crises continue to surface, causing movements of populations in need of refuge, assistance and protection. Fifty-five percent of child deaths in West Africa are attributable to malnutrition. The Sahel holds the highest child mortality and malnutrition rates in the world – approximately 550 000 children under five die each year, 56 percent of which from causes related to under-nutrition.

Communicable diseases, such as cholera, meningitis and yellow fever risk high outbreaks and rapid spreading, worsened by undernourishment. Where situations have improved, such as Liberia, Togo and the Niger, owing to increased response capacities, unacceptable levels of human suffering remain. However, 2007 marks the first time in 11 years where individual consolidated humanitarian appeals will not be issued for Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

## CHALLENGES FACING FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

Continued coordination of rural interventions is necessary to ensure well-targeted, focused and non-duplicated activities. External shocks, which would elsewhere be considered as smaller ones, such as floods, locust invasions and low rain levels, can significantly impact livelihoods, particularly in the Sahel, and increase vulnerability for years to come.

Many localized crises in West Africa are borne from underlying structural weaknesses and lack of development as opposed to ‘extra-ordinary’ external shocks. Despite positive outlooks for the 2006-2007 harvest in countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger, many issues will take years to resolve. Burkina Faso, for example, is among the priority countries in this regard given the high levels of under-nutrition, the scarcity of surveillance and evaluations and the inadequacy of programmed responses.

A sound agricultural and rural development investment strategy is much needed in the region. In pursuit of a coordinated approach to regional

stability, humanitarian priorities lie in enhancing common assessment tools, monitoring, early warning and early action capacities for sharper analysis and rapid response.

### **FAO RESPONSE**

Devoting resources and time to promote a system-wide and coordinated response with a region-based perspective has become the humanitarian community's modus operandi in West Africa. As the UN specialized agency for food and agriculture, FAO plays a central role in ensuring a well-informed, coherent response in the food security sector.

The FAO established a food security monitoring unit for West Africa in Dakar, Senegal (2006), which plans to play an instrumental role in bringing timely assistance to Sahelian farmers unable to resume their livelihoods. Additional units have been set up in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania and the Niger. Moreover, FAO together with the WFP and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are developing a new partnership – the Sahel Agricultural and Rural Development Initiative, taking into account the need for alternative livelihood options in rural and urban areas where agriculture cannot supply sufficient opportunities.

FAO's proposals for the regional 2007 appeal include improved information sharing and consensus building for identification and coherence of emergency actions and better coordinated intervention strategies, as well as establishing a rapid response fund to assist farmers and stockbreeders affected by natural and man-made disasters. Several proposals supporting agropastoral livelihoods have been tailored for Mauritania and the Niger given specific requirements in each country.

### **PROPOSALS: FAO EMERGENCY AND REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE**

**Funding required: US\$23 035 210**

#### **Emergency assistance to vulnerable stockbreeding populations affected by the 2006 drought outbreak in Mauritania**

**Objectives:** Provide necessary inputs to increase the revenue of stockbreeders vulnerable to food insecurity.

**Activities:** Provide assistance to livestock owners who suffered critical losses from rainfall deficits, resulting in livestock food and nutritional shortages; provide sanitary coverage to vulnerable animals; identify livestock owners with reduced livestock populations and lack of access to sustainable sanitary coverage; and provide mineral complements, multi-vitamins, anti-parasitics (internal, external and sanguine) and compound feed to vulnerable stockbreeders.

**Beneficiaries:** 10 000 stockbreeder families.

**Implementing partners:** Ministry of Rural Development.

**Duration:** January – December 2007.

**Funds requested:** US\$522 500.

### Rapid Response Fund to assist farmers affected by natural and human-made disasters

**Objectives:** Restore the food production capacity of the most vulnerable agricultural households affected by food insecurity.

**Activities:** Supply 40 g of vegetable seeds to 100 000 households to cultivate a 400 square metre vegetable garden; provide 5 to 20 kg of millet, sorghum or maize seeds to enable 270 000 farming families to cultivate 0.3 to 1 hectare (the production of which should cover household needs for 4 months); supply 2.5 kg of cowpea seeds allowing the cultivation of 0.125 hectare to cover household protein needs and produce a marketable surplus; distribute seed and tool kits to set up vegetable gardens in 100 supplementary feeding centres and/or schools supported by UNICEF; and implement a voucher-based cash-for-work scheme to set up quality seed production at the community level.

**Beneficiaries:** 270 000 families (ca. 2 000 000 individuals).

**Implementing partners:** International and local NGOs.

**Duration:** January – December 2007.

**Funds requested:** US\$7 876 000.

### Rapid Response Fund to assist stockbreeders affected by natural and human-made disasters

**Objectives:** Protect, save and restore livelihood assets of the most food insecure pastoral households.

**Activities:** Supply cotton grain, wheat bran, oilcake and mineral blocks for 40 000 cattle, 200 000 small ruminants and 15 000 dromedaries belonging to 70 000 stockbreeders in deficit areas; supply deworming pills and external anti-parasite medication for 40 000 cattle, 200 000 small ruminants and 15 000 dromedaries weakened by parasite infestation; provide information, training and awareness on disease and animal health; and enable livestock reconstitution with small ruminants for 20 000 vulnerable households.

**Beneficiaries:** 90 000 stockbreeder families (ca. 630 000 individuals).

**Implementing partners:** Ministries of Animal Resources, and international and local NGOs.

**Duration:** January – December 2007.

**Funds requested:** US\$5 720 000.

### Rehabilitation and reinforcement of livelihoods for agropastoral households affected by food insecurity in the Niger

**Objectives:** Secure agricultural production against environmental and economic risks and consolidate household safety nets.

**Activities:** Poultry restocking for 5 000 households in Zinder and Maradi Regions; sanitary protection (vaccination/deworming of 2 million birds) in Zinder and Maradi Regions; diversification towards rearing small ruminants for 5 000 very vulnerable households, especially those identified for free distributions and affected by malnutrition; training in livestock rearing techniques for 5 000 households restocked in 2006 to improve the productivity of household livestock rearing; supply of 500 tonnes of zootechnical inputs to ensure the food security of 20 000 cattle and 100 000 small ruminants; and protection of 500 000 cattle, 1 500 000 small ruminants and 100 000 dromedaries against principal endemic livestock diseases.

**Beneficiaries:** 45 000 vulnerable households (50 percent women).

**Implementing partners:** Ministry of Animal Resources, and international and local NGOs (AFRICARE, ACF, VSF-Belgium, AREN).

**Duration:** January – December 2007.

**Funds requested:** US\$2 668 600.

### Emergency assistance to vulnerable agricultural populations affected by the 2006 drought in Mauritania

**Objectives:** Provide the necessary inputs to increase the agricultural production and income of vulnerable rural populations.

**Activities:** Supply 20 tonnes of cowpea and 150 tonnes of sorghum seed to 20 000 vulnerable households for the 2007 agricultural campaign; supply seeds, fertilizers, small horticulture material and fences to 2 000 of the most vulnerable households to establish approximately 140 market garden perimeters (0.25 hectares each); and fund 30 cereal seed banks through the purchase of 5 tonnes of seeds per bank in the most seriously affected and enclosed areas.

**Beneficiaries:** 22 000 stockbreeder households.

**Implementing partners:** Ministry of Rural Development, and international and local NGOs.

**Duration:** January – December 2007.

**Funds requested:** US\$495 000.

## Sustainable livelihoods recovery for food insecure agricultural populations in the Niger

**Objectives:** Reinforce the agricultural production capacity and livelihoods of vulnerable populations to address food insecurity and poverty.

**Activities:** Supply 350 tonnes of improved seeds to 35 000 vulnerable households selected by WFP's free distribution activities and/or families whose children were malnourished in 2006; quality seed production on 1 000 hectares (500 hectares of millet, 200 hectares of sorghum, 150 hectares of cowpea and 150 hectares of groundnut); rehabilitate flood-affected vegetable gardens in the region of Agadez (Tabelot); provide seed, fertilizer and phytosanitary products to 65 000 households to produce off-season crops; develop 200 hectares of vegetable production benefiting 20 000 households; set up 50 vegetable gardens in schools or nutritional centres; and capacity building (farmer field schools, training, etc.) for extension workers and producers.

**Beneficiaries:** Total: 90 000 vulnerable households (540 000 individuals). Children: 7 500 (school children); women: 52 percent.

**Implementing partners:** Ministry of Agricultural Development, WFP, UNICEF, international and local NGOs (AMURT International, ACF, CRS, AFRICARE, Solidarités, etc.) and farmers' associations.

**Duration:** January – December 2007.

**Funds requested:** US\$4 914 360.

## Strengthening the capacity of humanitarian actors to respond to food insecurity in West Africa, in particular in the Sahel (joint project with FAO and WFP)

**Objectives:** Improve food security and vulnerability analysis, information sharing and consensus building for identification and coherence of emergency actions and better coordinated intervention strategies.

**Activities:** Establish a set of indicative criteria to enable regional and national institutions to track the food security, nutrition and vulnerability situation in the identified countries; collect, analyze and validate information on food security and related issues; ensure broader participation and consensus in the regional FSNWG and support the formation or expansion of such groups at the national level; identify actions for rapid response to severe food insecurity of vulnerable groups; provide technical support to national Early Warning Systems within the framework of Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), including the implementation of CILSS's regional market monitoring system.

**Beneficiaries:** Vulnerable rural households including those affected by drought or flood, IDPs, returnees, refugees and host communities; governments, donors, UN partners and NGOs.

**Implementing partners:** Concerned governments, and national and regional institutions.

**Duration:** January – December 2007.

**Funds requested:** US\$988 750 (FAO: US\$838 750; WFP: US\$150 000).