FAO's Sub-regional Emergency and Rehabilitation Office - West Africa/Sahel

SAHEL CRISIS 2012: ENSURING FOOD SECURITY AND PROTECTING LIVELIHOODS

INFORMATION NOTE N°1

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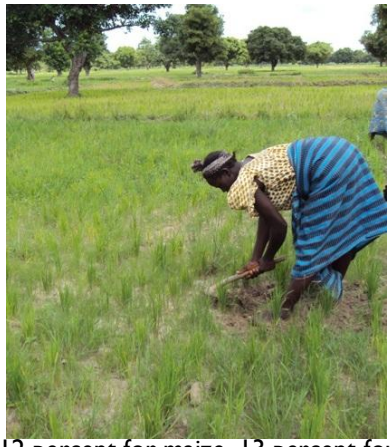
Objective: This Information Note summarizes key issues regarding the 2012 food and livelihoods crisis in some localized areas of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and other neighbouring countries. It analyses the impact of the agricultural and pastoral situation on food security and household vulnerability, and provides an overview of FAO's emergency response.

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1. In a context of high food prices, the localized but significant decline in agropastoral production in some areas of the Sahel may lead to severe food access crises.
2. On 15 December 2011, humanitarian actors launched the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Regional Strategy for Preparedness and Response to a Food, Nutrition and Livelihood Crisis in the Sahel, in addition to Consolidated Appeals Processes (CAPs) already launched in Chad and Niger.
3. FAO is mobilizing its expertise to address the crisis by preparing interventions to protect and restore the livelihoods of pastoralists and agropastoralists, within the IASC Regional Strategy and the FAO Regional Programme for Emergency, Rehabilitation and Recovery in the Sahel.

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1. Humanitarian context



Agricultural campaign. The twenty-seventh meeting of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) in the Sahel and West Africa, held in Praia (Cape Verde) from 8 to 10 December 2011, confirmed that owing to the rainfall and hydrological deficit registered during the rainy season, 2011/12 cereal production was forecast at 55.4 million tonnes in the Sahel and West Africa. This production has increased by 4 percent as compared with the average of the last five years, and decreased by 8 percent as compared with last year, which was considered a good year. The Sahel region, with 16.6 million tonnes of cereal, recorded a 2 percent decrease as compared with the previous five years, and 25 percent decrease as compared with last year, which was a record year in the region. **Chad**[1], **Mauritania and Senegal** show sharp declines of 23 percent, 38 percent and 15 percent respectively, as compared with the five-year average and of 50 percent, 52 percent and 31 percent respectively as compared with the 2010/11 campaign. In **Burkina Faso**, the decline compared with 2010/11 was: 12 percent for maize, 13 percent for *fonio*, 18 percent for sorghum and 21 percent for millet. Areas of poor agropastoral and fisheries production affect the entire Sahelian belt in **Chad**, the agropastoral zone of **Mauritania**, the northern part of Kayes and Koulikoro regions and the Delta of the Niger River in **Mali**. This amounts to 162 rural communities in 29 provinces and 10 regions in **Burkina Faso** (Nord, Centre-Nord, Centre-Ouest, Centre-Sud, Boucle de Mouhoun, Plateau-Central, Sahel, Centre-Est, Centre and Est regions), the regions of Niamey, Tillabery and the southeast of Zinder in **Niger** as well as some localized areas of **Senegal** and **Gambia**.

Grain markets. According to the joint FAO-Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), World Food Programme (WFP)-government food security and market assessments held from 9 to 21 January 2012 in the Sahel countries, increases in coarse grain prices in the **Western Basin** range between 25 and 33 percent. However, the price of imported rice remains stable. Flows of imported products are increasing, particularly those of rice and wheat. Given the recent calm in international cereal markets, and the successful integration of imported sectors in Mauritania, imported products

[1] The revised data in January 2012 for Chad were: at the national level: -19 percent compared with the five-year average and -39 percent compared with 2010; in the Sahel region: -28 percent compared with the five year average and – 54 percent compared with last year.

should, to some extent, reduce food shortages caused by the decline in national production. Consumers who buy rice and maize instead of coarse grains will still face higher prices. In the **Central Basin,** there are significant increases – between 50 and 60 percent – as compared with the average for the price of coarse grains. There is an extension of supply flows towards the north of Côte d'Ivoire. Ghana, subject to sharp increases in maize prices, is not able to export significant quantities of cereals to the Sahel. In Mali and Burkina Faso, the governments have taken steps to restrict the export of coarse grains, which may exacerbate supply difficulties and price increases in deficit areas of neighbouring countries. In the **Eastern Basin**, prices have increased from 30 to 40 percent as compared with the average (lower than in the Central Basin) and show a local downward trend in Niger, following an improvement in flows from Nigeria and Benin. Merchant stocks are appropriate in northern Nigeria, which will enhance the market's capacity to compensate for deficits if cross-border trade continues. However, the political and economic situation in Nigeria and its impact on trade and fuel costs could adversely affect cross-border flows in neighbouring countries and lead to a return of rising food prices. Remote areas of the Chadian Sahel (Kanem, Bahr el Ghazal) will then experience localized problems of availability.

Pastoral situation. The RPCA meeting concluded that poor biomass production was recorded in the entire pastoral Sahel belt, except in the Gourma (**Mali**), Dakoro area (Maradi, **Niger**) and the islands of Lake **Chad**, as well as low filling rates of surface water sources. Currently, there is early transhumance in **Mauritania** and **Chad**, and changing of usual corridors from **Mali** to **Burkina Faso**. The January 2012 joint market monitoring exercise stated that the prices of livestock in Mauritania, Mali and Chad had experienced declines owing to destocking caused by pasture shortages, scarcity of water points and the interruption of livestock flows to Nigeria. The reopening of the Côte d'Ivoire corridor has helped stabilize prices in areas of southern Mali. In the Western Basin, the livestock market (small ruminants) is saturated and slow.



Locust situation. Despite the decrease in locust numbers in the northwest of **Mauritania** in December 2011, some isolated locusts are likely to persist in January 2011. In **Niger**, good rains have fallen in the Aïr Mountains, where small-scale reproduction was in progress and is likely to proceed in January. It is expected that locust numbers will remain below critical levels.

2. Impacts on populations and needs

Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, **Mauritania**, **Niger** and **Senegal** are affected by reduced agropastoral production. Food access is expected to decline by the next lean season, owing to decreased income and purchasing power of agricultural and pastoral populations. This decrease is coupled with dwindling household food reserves, which will affect the quality and quantity of populations' diets. During the last quarter of 2011, the number of vulnerable populations identified by the National Early Warning Systems and partners was: 1.6 million in Burkina Faso; 3 million in Mali; 5.5 million in Niger; and 0.8 million[2] in Senegal; resulting in approximately **11 million vulnerable people** (excluding Chad).

Therefore, it is possible there may be an increase in malnutrition above average. During the post-harvest situation (November-December 2011) in **Senegal**, global acute malnutrition rates ranged between 5 and 10 percent in the regions of Kedougou, Kolda, Louga, Saint Louis and Thies, remaining above the emergency threshold in Diourbel (10 to 10.3 percent) and Matam (14.1 percent). The prevalence of severe acute malnutrition among 6-59 month-old children reached the emergency threshold of 2 percent in Matam region. Morbidity is high in all regions surveyed, and will likely contribute to the deterioration of children's nutritional status.

Decreases in fodder production will diminish income opportunities for the poorest segments of affected areas, as there will be reduced animal sales, livestock keeping and employment opportunities in agriculture and livestock. Terms of trade behave differently in the region. In **Mauritania**, the deterioration in the terms of trade is mainly due to the sharp rise in wheat prices and increased supply of livestock.

Population movements owing to the crisis in Libya have caused the mass return of migrants to **Chad,** Ghana, **Mali** and **Niger** – on 15 December 2011, there were 209 030 returnees, including 95 760 in Niger, 82 433 in Chad, 11 230 in Ghana and 11 230 in Mali (movements have since been significantly reduced). Such large returns have led to an abrupt halt in remittances to home communities, and reduced food resources available to host families. The situation is acute in countries that are potentially at food risk, such as Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Niger. Migrants and most vulnerable host communities need income-generating activities and support to implement activities that will enhance their livelihoods.

[2] Number being validated.

3. Coordination – Response plans – Humanitarian access

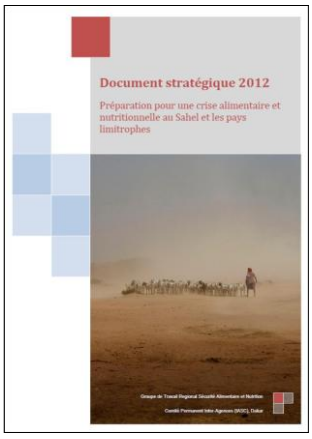
Burkina Faso, **Mali**, **Mauritania** and **Niger** have developed national food security response plans focusing on support to livestock, sales at subsidized prices, restoration of security stocks, free food distributions, provision of agricultural inputs and income-generating activities, etc. (Burkina Faso: CFA 6 billion = USD 12 million; Mali: CFA 77 billion = USD 159 million; Mauritania: MRO 44 billion = USD 157 million; Niger: CFA 160 billion = USD 331 million). Gambia is currently considering whether to launch an appeal for partners' assistance.

In December 2011, humanitarian partners in **Niger** and **Chad** launched their national CAPs. Niger is currently undertaking the revision of its CAP. Humanitarian agencies in Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania are discussing opportunities for launching their own national appeals.

Within the framework of the IASC, on 15 December 2011 regional humanitarian actors in Dakar launched the IASC Regional Strategy for Preparedness and Response to a Food, Nutrition and Livelihood Crisis. The purpose of this strategy is to reduce excessive mortality and morbidity, and strengthen the livelihoods of vulnerable households in areas affected by food, pastoral and nutritional crises. An update of this document is being prepared to include estimated requirements.

4. Plan of Action and FAO response

FAO continues to monitor the food, pastoral and nutritional situation in the subregion, and participated in joint missions in collaboration with CILSS, FEWS NET, WFP-FAO-Governments regarding crop assessments and in food security and market monitoring in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Mauritania, Chad and Senegal. The Organization co-chairs and contributes to the activities of the Regional Food Security and Nutrition Working Group based in Dakar. Within this framework, FAO has actively supported the preparation of the Regional Inter-Agency Strategy Paper for the Sahel launched on 15 December 2011, and in collaboration with Action Against Hunger, WFP, UNICEF and OCHA.



FAO is currently developing its Regional Programme for the Sahel, which integrates its emergency response and rehabilitation operations to longer-term recovery approaches that are necessary to break the cycle of vulnerability and increase resilience among populations. FAO provides governments in the subregion with support to identify areas and populations at risk, and develop national response plans.

In the subregion, FAO supports the development of the "*Cadre Harmonisé*", a tool and approach aimed at achieving consensus among stakeholders regarding the severity of food insecurity prevailing in the subregion.

Requirements for FAO's emergency response

Since 2010, a total of USD 25.4 million has been contributed to the Sahel. Some of these funds will be redirected for FAO's response plan to the 2012 crisis in the Sahel. The main donors include the European Union, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, United States Agency for International Development and the Government of Belgium. FAO's response plan requires an additional USD 73.8 million. To-date, USD 4.4 million has been received, as presented in **Table 1** on page 6.

Regional programmes

The Subregional Emergency and Rehabilitation Office, based in Dakar, has planned activities that amount to USD 1.1 million to strengthen and support food security analysis, as well as coordination, preparedness and emergency response to food insecurity in the Sahel region and neighbouring countries.

Niger 2012



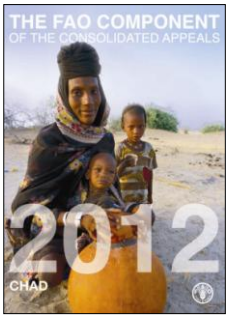
Niger launched a CAP, including a component on food security, which will be implemented in part by FAO. In response to the forthcoming food and livelihoods crisis, FAO presents two project profiles that amount to USD 23.3 million, and aim to:

1. rapidly assist the livelihoods of vulnerable pastoralists affected by the pasture deficit in Niger; and
2. provide emergency assistance to agricultural households affected by the 2011 food crisis.

Regarding coordination, FAO has signed the framework agreement for cooperation

Governments-donors and participates in national meetings on the prevention and management of food crises. FAO co-leads the Food Security Cluster with WFP, which is chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture. FAO, in collaboration with CILSS, FEWS NET, WFP and the Government of Niger participated in crop assessment missions in September and October 2011, and food security and market monitoring missions in January 2012.

Chad 2012



Chad launched a CAP, including a component on agriculture and livelihoods, which will be implemented in part by FAO. In response to the forthcoming food and livelihoods crisis resulting from climatic shocks, FAO presents three project profiles that plan to support 149 100 beneficiaries for a total of USD 10.4 million, and aim to:

1. reduce malnutrition in the western region of the Chadian Sahel;
2. support the Information System and the Coordination Unit for emergency agricultural activities and assessments; and
3. provide emergency assistance to populations affected by the drought in Chad.

Regarding coordination, FAO participates in the Food Security Cluster meetings in Abéché and N'Djamena. In collaboration with CILSS, FEWS NET, WFP and the Government of Chad, FAO participated in crop assessment missions in September and October 2011, and food security and market monitoring missions in January 2012. FAO financially supports and participates in the joint FAO-FEWS NET-WFP-Government vulnerability assessment and targeting evaluations.

Burkina Faso

Within the framework of the Sahel Strategy 2012, FAO plans to support 118 000 beneficiaries in Burkina Faso, seeking funding of USD 14.9 million in order to:

1. provide livestock breeding and veterinary inputs to vulnerable herder households in response to the food and nutrition crisis of 2012 in Burkina Faso;
2. implement restocking of herds for vulnerable households affected by the food and nutrition crisis;
3. support fodder production and rehabilitate good quality fodder reserves for vulnerable households;
4. support vegetable production to help vulnerable households affected by the food and nutrition crisis recover; and
5. support and rehabilitate the cereal production capacity of vulnerable households for the 2012 agricultural campaign in Burkina Faso.

Regarding coordination, FAO actively participates in meetings organized by the Resident Coordinator of the UN system, which brings together UN agencies, technical and financial partners as well as NGOs. The Organization also participates in the small group that supported the preparation of the response plan for the Government crisis (FAO, WFP, EU, ECHO, representatives of the Ministries of Agriculture and Livestock), and in monthly humanitarian coordination meetings.

In collaboration with CILSS, FEWS NET, WFP and the Government of Burkina Faso, FAO participated in crop assessment missions in September and October 2011, and food security and market monitoring missions in January 2012.

Mauritania

In response to the crisis affecting some 700 000 people, FAO in Mauritania is seeking USD 9 million to:

1. provide income to severely affected herders and reduce pressure on the ecosystem through destocking;
2. improve the nutrition of vulnerable people through gardening activities, deepening wells and ponds, rehabilitating small dams (in collaboration with WFP, within food-for-work schemes) and distributing meat, from destocking;
3. improve fodder production by introducing varieties that are adapted to the ecosystem;
4. provide animal feed and veterinary inputs; and
5. strengthen women's capacity to address child malnutrition through nutrition education.

Regarding coordination, FAO actively participates in the Food Security and Livestock Cluster meetings, and the emergency coordination forum, which brings together UN agencies, NGOs and donors.

In collaboration with CILSS, FEWS NET, WFP and the Government of Mauritania, FAO participated in crop assessment missions in September and October 2011, as well as food security and market monitoring missions in January 2012.

Mali

In response to the crisis, FAO Mali is seeking USD 10 million to:

1. strengthen sustainable livelihoods of vulnerable populations, by supporting the pastoral and agricultural production capacities of affected households;
2. strengthen the capacities of vegetable farmers and small ruminant herders to increase their resilience to climatic shocks;
3. improve household access to a highly nutritional and diversified diet, and good nutritional practices; and

4. increase beneficiaries' income through developing the livestock and farm forestry sectors, promoting sustainable management of the ecosystem and reducing greenhouse emissions.

Regarding coordination, FAO participates in the technical and financial partner meetings on food security, head of agency meetings (UNCT) and meetings organized by the Office for Food Security.

In collaboration with CILSS, FEWS NET, WFP and the Government of Mali, FAO participated in crop assessment missions in September and October 2011, as well as food security and market monitoring missions in January 2012.

Senegal

In response to the crisis, FAO Senegal is seeking USD 5.1 million to:

1. strengthen the agricultural production capacity of vulnerable households through the distribution of food crop and vegetable seed; and
2. strengthen vulnerable households' resilience through training on production techniques, awareness of disaster risk management (DRM) and dissemination of agro-meteorological information.

FAO coordinates its crisis response with partners participating in coordination meetings on food security.

In Senegal, FAO participated in the follow-up survey of at-risk areas in collaboration with WFP and the Executive Secretariat of National Food Security, and continues to support the Early Warning System.

Gambia

FAO Gambia is preparing an emergency response Plan of Action for the affected areas.

Table 1 : Unmet requirements for FAO's emergency response in the Sahel

Countries	Activities	Number of household beneficiaries	Funding (USD)	Unmet requirements (USD)
BURKINA FASO	Veterinary and livestock breeding inputs, fodder crops, restocking, market gardening, grain production	118 000	300 000	14 573 000
GAMBIA	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined
MALI	Agriculture and nutrition, livestock farming, forestry	68 660	706 600	9 343 400
MAURITANIA	Assistance to vulnerable farmers, nutrition, fodder crops, animal feed	To be determined	900 000	8 100 000
NIGER	Assistance to vulnerable pastoralist and agricultural households	318 170	1 370 000	21 980 000
CHAD	Reduction of malnutrition, emergency assistance (drought), information and coordination system	150 000	817 000	9 540 000
SENEGAL	Emergency agriculture programme	50 000	228 000	4 872 000
REGIONAL PROGRAMMES	Support to countries, Food security coordination and analysis	Partner organizations, governments, vulnerable	154 000	973 500

5. Contact

FAO's Subregional Emergency and Rehabilitation Office - West Africa/Sahel
Mr. José Luis FERNANDEZ
Coordinator, Dakar
Email: Joseluis.Fernandez@fao.org
Tel: +221 33 889 16 22