EXECUTIVE BRIEF

The Sahel crisis

2012

21 June 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

- A **new food and nutrition crisis** is affecting millions of people across the Sahel Region of Western Africa this year, due to a combination of drought, high grain prices, decrease in remittances, environmental degradation and population displacement coupled with chronic poverty and vulnerability.
- **18.7 million people** are facing food insecurity (including 1.6 million in northern Mali) and more than **1 million children under the age of five** are at risk of severe acute malnutrition.
- The Food Crisis Prevention Network Meeting held in Paris (RPCA, April 2012) has confirmed that **Sahel cereal production is 26 percent lower than last year**.
- The **humanitarian situation**, in particular for pastoralists, **is a matter of deep concern as insecurity worsens in Mali and the food supply is disrupted. Extreme food insecurity hit Gao Region and cannot be excluded** in Kidal and Timbuktu Regions.
- Early warning (launched by FAO in October 2011) was not followed by early funding and response. **Only rapid action will prevent further deterioration of the food security situation and avoid a full-scale crisis**.
- In late March 2012, FAO launched an alert on the risk of **locust** swarms in Niger and Mali. Groups of immature locust adults have arrived in northern Niger and probably northern Mali during early June.
- The **timing of livelihood support interventions in agriculture and livestock sectors is essential. The lean season is starting and we are at the peak of the crisis.** The planting period of the main agricultural campaign is ongoing in most of the countries but much more can be done until the end of 2012. **Funds are needed now** to support herders through fodder, veterinary services and destocking activities before the rainy season. It is also crucial to support **the preparation of the off-season** through market gardening activities and the **restocking** of affected herders.
- **Alarming lack of funds**: FAO is requesting **USD 112 million for action in 2012 to support almost 8 million people**. A **funding gap of USD 83 million** remains.

Background: Food insecurity and malnutrition are recurrent and severe in the Sahel. Acute food crises occurred in 2005 and 2010. In 2012, several countries in the subregion are again facing a food security and livelihood crisis. Agricultural production was sharply reduced due to late and irregular rains, and prolonged dry spells in 2011. Even though only three per cent lower than the average of the past five years, cereal production is 26 percent lower than last year. The most seriously affected countries include the Gambia (decline of 56 percent in relation to 2010-2011 and 40 percent in relation to 2006-2010), Chad (49 percent/22 percent), Senegal (36 percent/21 percent), Niger (31percent/14percent), Mauritania (34percent/10percent) and Burkina Faso (20 percent/5percent). For the households living in affected areas, the lean season is beginning earlier than usual. Hence, the pastoral situation remains very difficult in many regions because of poor biomass production and low water filling rates resulting in overgrazing and early transhumance. However, livestock mobility, limited by the impact of the conflict in Mali and insecurity in Northern Nigeria, exacerbates this precarious situation, particularly for cattle in Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

This situation, compounded by sustained high food prices of imported and locally produced products, has placed millions at risk of food insecurity. Nearly **19 million people are at affected or at risk of food insecurity**. This includes 6.4 million people in the Niger (42 percent of the population), 4.6 million in Mali (32 percent of the population), around 2 million people in Burkina Faso (15 percent of the population), 3.6 million in Chad (32 percent of the population), 241 000 in the Gambia (18 percent of the population), 700 000 people in Mauritania (22 percent of the population), 739 000 in Senegal (6 percent of the population) and 350 000 in Cameroun (23 percent of the population).

A decrease in remittances, due to the global economic crisis and the return of migrants from Libya, is exacerbating the situation. The return of migrants has also increased pressure on communities' scarce resources and caused tension over access to public services, such as water, health and education. Growing insecurity, owing to the dissemination of Libyan weapons and spreading terrorism, is jeopardizing development and humanitarian interventions.

Since mid-January, the fighting between government forces and separatist rebels in Mali has forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee their homes. As of 12 June, the total number of Internally Displaced People (IDP) within Mali is estimated at 167,257. The number of Malian refugees registered in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger is now 172,647. Unregistered Malians are living in Nouakchott, Mauritania, and Niamey, Niger, and probably other locations. Data on refugees remain incomplete, particularly for those arriving with livestock or transferred into camps. According to a statement of the Algerian government in March, at least 30,000 more Malians are in Algeria. UNHCR also registered 2,375 Nigeriens who returned from Mali because of the conflict (12 June 2012, OCHA Sitrep).

Furthermore, a desert locust outbreak, which developed early February along the Algerian-Libyan border, is still ongoing. FAO alerts that the swarms are likely to move southwards and pose a serious threat to agricultural production in the northern Sahel, particularly in Niger, Mali and Chad, with the onset of seasonal rains in June. Locusts have already been reported in northern Niger and near Timetrine (northern Mali) in late May. Such risk is increased by the prevailing insecurity in Mali, which does not allow proper monitoring and control operations.

The **frequency and intensity of repeated crises have eroded the recovery capacity of vulnerable household, weakening their resilience and survival strategies**. Immediate action is needed to prevent further deterioration of the food security situation and avoid a full-scale food and nutrition crisis.

ONGOING PROGRAMME

In December 2011, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported the launch of the Interagency Consolidated Appeals (CAP) 2012 for Chad (under revision) and the Niger (revised) and, in May 2012, the launching of the CAPs Mauritania and Burkina Faso. In June, the CAP Mali was also approved. At the end of 2011/early in 2012, FAO participated in the joint Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought control in the Sahel (CILSS)-FAO-Famine Early Warning System (FEWS NET)-World Food Programme (WFP)-Government assessments carried in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal. Given the lack of a regional CAP, FAO has co-led, together with Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), WFP, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Action Against Hunger (ACF), the preparation of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Strategy for the Sahel "Preparation for a food and nutrition crisis in the Sahel and neighbouring countries", launched on 15 December 2011 and updated on 6 February 2012.

Within this broader IASC strategic framework, FAO has prepared a Regional Response Programme to the Food and Nutrition Security Crisis in the Sahel to define FAO's priority response interventions in the subregion, linking action in a continuum from emergency to recovery and development, focusing on protecting, restoring and building resilient livelihoods of vulnerable farmers and herders. Advocacy and communication are geared to reinforce efforts to mobilize funds at all levels.

FAO's emergency and rehabilitation projects in the Sahel before the crisis amounted to USD 25.4 million. Additional 112 million are required to support more than 7 million people. While almost USD 29 million have been mobilized, a **funding gap of USD 83 million remains**. The donors that are or have been providing assistance in the region include Austria, Belgium, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the European Union and its Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), Finland, France, Luxemburg, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) is also contributing to address immediate needs.

Funding needs: the table below illustrates the requirements to cover the outlined emergency/rehabilitation priorities in 2012. To be noted that requirements evolve according to country updated assessments.

Countries	Priorities	Targeted beneficiaries	Funding requirements for 2012 response (USD)	Funding received (USD)	Unmet requirements (USD)
BURKINA FASO	Assistance to farmers (gardening, grain production, market) and to pastoralists (veterinary and livestock breeding inputs, fodder)	933 800	17 835 000	4 308 472	13 526 528
CAMEROON	Assistance to vulnerable farmers and pastoralists	191 037	1 711 000	611 011	1,099,989
CHAD	Assistance to drought affected farmers and pastoralists, reduction of malnutrition, support information and coordination system	993 798	17 377 080	5 635 013	11 742 067
GAMBIA	Assistance to vulnerable farmers	241 000	5 076 945	1 926 171	3 150 774
MALI	Assistance to farmers, pastoralists and foresters and nutrition (agriculture, livestock, forestry)	380 825	10 050 000	2 741 720	7 308 280
MAURITANIA	Assistance to vulnerable farmers and pastoralists (fodder crops, animal feed) and nutrition	497 500	9 000 000	2 271 554	6,728,446
NIGER	Assistance to vulnerable pastoralists and farmers	4 180 000	42 073 553	7 420 609	34 652 944
SENEGAL	Assistance to vulnerable farmers	420 000	6 850 000	2 793 002	4 056 998
REGIONAL PROGRAMMES	Support to countries and region with food security coordination and needs assessments and analysis	-	2 127 500	1 113 027	1 014 473
TOTAL		**7 837 960**	**112 101 078**	**28 820 579**	**83 0280 499**

In line with FAO new corporate framework on Disaster Risk Reduction for Food and Nutrition Security, the Sahel response Programme is structured around the following five main pillars:

- ***"Protect and build resilience"*:** protect and rebuild the livelihoods and resilience of vulnerable households (through supply of inputs, cash transfer, cash for work and capacity building) by:
  - increasing off-season irrigated crop production and sustaining the upcoming main planting season (starting in May/June 2012);
  - strengthening the resilience of herders by providing animal feed and veterinary services and, if necessary, supporting destocking;
  - supporting the management and conservation of natural resources such as water, trees and soil;
  - providing integrated emergency nutrition assistance to most vulnerable families, and especially women;
- ***"Enable the environment"*:** provide government and other key players with technical and coordination support and reinforce disaster risk reduction and management at local, national and regional levels;
- **"*Watch to safeguard*":** strengthen food security information management (evaluation and regular monitoring of needs) and early warning systems;
- **"*Prepare to respond*":** support contingency planning and preparedness measures in terms of strategic stocks (seeds, fodder, other agriculture inputs);
- Promote knowledge management and **dissemination of good practices**.

In addition to emergency and rehabilitation action, medium and longer term interventions linking with the early action are essential to reverse the cycle of food shortages and crises in the Sahel. Ongoing development interventions are the backbone of the recovery and sustainable development in the region.

In this regard, FAO's on-going regional activities include the following: (i) Spanish-funded Water Management and Food Security Initiative for five West African countries, including four in the Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali, the Niger, Senegal), for a total of USD 20 million; (ii) Italy-funded Food Security through Commercialization programme, focused on value addition in seven West African countries, with a total budget of USD 21 million, including Mali (USD 4.2 million) and Senegal (USD 3.3 million); and (iii) South-South Cooperation support from China to Mali and Senegal, from Vietnam to Chad, and from Morocco to the Niger.

National Programmes for Food Security (NPFS) have been prepared by all concerned countries, with Mauritania as the most recent to be completed. Two NPFS (Chad and Mali) are under implementation. Within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)/Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) process, FAO is also supporting the formulation of National Agricultural and Food Security Investment programmes. The NPFS for countries of the Sahel requires an investment of about USD 1.89 billion, of which only 20 percent has been mobilized.

Under the NEPAD/CAADP process, in November 2010 the Niger was awarded USD 33 million of the World Bank Global Agricultural and Food Security Program (GAFSP), to contribute to poverty alleviation by boosting rural crop production and enhancing food security in the vulnerable areas of Maradi, Zinder and Tahoua. GAFSP will build, *inter alia*, water harnessing infrastructure for small scale irrigation, access roads to production areas, short feeder tracks, spillways, buildings, etc.

Moreover, FAO has supported the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the development of the CAADP Regional Agricultural Investment Programme (PRIA). A thematic programme from PRIA focuses on the reduction of vulnerability to food crises and the promotion of stable and sustainable access to food, estimated at USD 176 million. This programme aims to establish a system of regional emergency humanitarian food reserves. It includes the review and adoption of the Charter for the Prevention and Management of Food Crises, covering West African countries (beyond the Sahel) and actors (beyond states, to include regional organizations and non-state actors). The charter stresses the importance at regional level, to avoid and tackle food crises. FAO also supports ECOWAS, through the IASC Emergency Preparedness and Response Working Group (Dakar based), to develop its strategy, mechanism and Plan of Action to intervene in humanitarian crises.

COUNTRIES OVERVIEW

REGIONAL PROGRAMME

Regional Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme

The FAO Subregional Emergency and Rehabilitation Office (REOWA) leads emergency and rehabilitation action in West Africa. It ensures regional coordination, facilitates the sharing of lessons learned and best practices throughout the subregion, and contributes with key partners to food security information analysis. A team of eight people (four international and four national) has been deployed to support the programme implementation. This team is in charge of regional activities on the one hand, and of emergency operations in Senegal on the other hand.

Response to the current crisis

Priorities: REOWA is seeking USD 2.1 million to:

- strengthen and support food security analysis, coordination, preparedness for and emergency response to food and nutrition insecurity throughout the region, and
- strengthen vulnerable households' resilience through incorporating lessons learned and best practices on nutrition, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRR/M) and food security analysis drawn from FAO programmes in the region.

Ongoing response activities: a contribution from South Africa (USD 194 027), funds allocated to regional coordination as part of the Swedish contribution to CAP 2011 (USD 100 000) and of a regional Belgium project (USD 74 000) are enabling support to and participation in coordination activities with regional partners in response to the crisis, including assessment, as well as the production of related information and advocacy materials. A Sweden contribution (USD 744 000 as first installment for 2012) was recently confirmed to support local capacity building for Disaster Risk Management.

Coordination mechanisms: At the regional level, FAO is actively participating in the Food Security and Nutrition Working Group, the Regional Platform for Preparedness to Natural Disasters, the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) and the Emergency Preparedness and Response Working Group. For DRM activities, FAO is collaborating closely with ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), CADRI (Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative) and UNISDR (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction). For activities related to the monitoring of agriculture, markets and food security FAO institutional partners are CILSS, FEWS NET, WFP and the countries' governments. FAO is part of the Analysis Unit of the *Cadre Harmonisé* (CILSS, FEWS NET, FAO, IPC-GSU, JRC, PAM, ACF, OXFAM, Save the Children).

BURKINA FASO

Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme

Six projects are currently being implemented in the country for an overall amount of USD 10.8 million. The main focus of emergency and rehabilitation interventions is to improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable population, though provision of inputs and training, promotion of income generating activities and development of the quality seed sector. A team of 17 technicians (6 international and 11 national) has been deployed to support the programme implementation.

Response to the current crisis

Priorities: FAO plans to support 933 800 individual beneficiaries including Malian refugees, seeking USD 17.8 million to:

- provide livestock breeding and veterinary inputs to vulnerable herder households;
- implement restocking of herds for vulnerable households affected by the food and nutrition crisis;
- support fodder production and rehabilitate good quality fodder reserves for vulnerable households;
- support vegetable production to help vulnerable households affected by the food and nutrition crisis recover; and
- support and rehabilitate the cereal production capacity of vulnerable households for the 2012 agricultural campaign.

Ongoing response activities: a Belgium project (USD 300 000) supports 1 000 vulnerable households with animal feed and veterinary supplies In the framework of the ongoing follow up project to the EU Food Facility, some activities of seeds distribution have been redirected to populations affected by the production shortage (USD 500 000). Two CERF projects are ongoing: one (USD 300 000) to support livestock activities for Malian refugees and host communities and another (USD 2 878 472) to assist 43 000 vulnerable households through the provision of cereals and forage seeds, animal feed, veterinary supplies and short cycle reproductive animals. Early in the crisis, a US project (USD 330 000) enabled supporting food security monitoring and emergency assistance to vulnerable farming households in urban areas.

Coordination mechanisms: 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, the European Union, 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.

CAMEROON

Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme

There is no emergency programme in Cameroon. Emergency and rehabilitation operations are supported by the team of the FAO country office and by project personnel recruited ad hoc.

Response to the current crisis

Priorities: In response to the current crisis, FAO is seeking USD 1.1 million to assist around 191 000 individual beneficiaries (vulnerable farmers and agro-pastoralists) in the Northern region of the country with:

- distribution of improved seeds (maize, sorghum and millet) and other agricultural inputs, and
- supply of animal feed.

Ongoing response activities: One CERF projects is currently being implemented for an overall amount of USD 611 000 to improve the food security of vulnerable population groups through the supply of improved seeds, animal feed and vaccines in the 6 districts of the Logone-and-Chari division of the Far North Region, affected by drought and floods in the past years.

Coordination mechanisms: In Cameroon FAO collaborates with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries, the National Programme for Food Security (NPFS), WFP, UNICEF, WHO the Nutrition Cluster, the organizations of civil society, international NGOs and local associations who support FAO in assisting beneficiaries with the distribution of inputs.

CHAD

Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme

Nine projects are currently being implemented for an overall amount of USD 11 million. They aim to strengthen the livelihoods of those most vulnerable to pastoral, nutritional and food crises in eastern and western Chad. Main activities consist in distributing seeds and tools; providing food for work and cash for work programmes, as well as training to improve access to food, in cooperation with WFP and other partners; assisting vulnerable pastoralists and agropastoralists to access supplementary feed for livestock to support and help rebuild their herds; strengthening coordination systems, early warning and analysis of food and nutrition security. The programme is supported by the following donors: Belgium, CERF, ECHO, the European Union and the United States and Sweden.

Response to the current crisis

Priorities: Chad launched a CAP document for 2012 (which is currently going through its Mid Term Review), including a component on agriculture and livelihoods, which will be implemented in part by FAO. In response to the current food and livelihoods crisis, FAO presented three project profiles that plan to support 470 500 individual beneficiaries for a total of USD 10.4 million, and aim to:

- provide emergency agriculture-horticulture assistance to populations affected by the drought in Chad;
- support small scale irrigation infrastructure for vulnerable agro-pastoralists;
- support IDP, returnees, and host families with food processing, small infrastructure and restocking in small ruminants in the Ouaddai and Sila;
- support the national Information System and the Coordination Unit for emergency agricultural activities and assessments.

Ongoing response activities: two projects were approved with CERF funding (USD 2 010 513), aimed at providing, one, emergency supply of animal feed to vulnerable pastoralist and agropastoralist households affected by the drought in the Sahelian zone of Chad and, the other, emergency supply of rainy season seeds to IDPs and drought affected households. A US project (USD 500 000) supplies farming inputs to conflicts affected households in Eastern Chad, and a Belgium project (USD 300 000) supports pastoralists and agro-pastoralists food security and resilience in the region of Bahr El Gazal. An ECHO project (USD 1 324 650) assists in food insecure security population affected by drought in the West Sahel of Chad. A Sweden contribution (USD 1 500 000) was just confirmed to assist stabilizing vulnerable returnee households in Eastern Chad.

Coordination mechanisms: 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 took part 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-MAP-Government vulnerability assessment and targeting evaluations.

THE GAMBIA

Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme

There was no emergency programme in the Gambia at the time the crisis came to surface. Emergencies interventions for rehabilitating the productive capacities and increasing the resilience of vulnerable households were carried out in 2008, 2009 and 2010 in response to the soaring food prices crisis, crop failures and food losses and floods.

Response to the current crisis

Priorities: In response to the current crisis, FAO is seeking USD 5 million to assist around 241 000 individual beneficiaries (vulnerable farmers and agropastoralists) with:

- provision of selected seeds and fertilizers for the rainy seasons and for vegetable production in the dry seasons;
- provision of animal feed supplement, vaccines and veterinary supplies to herders;
- strengthening of technical capacities in agricultural production and pest management;
- capacity development in disaster preparedness and risk management of institutional partner at all levels and communities.

Ongoing response activities: FAO has supported the country in completing the agricultural damage and needs assessment and preparing a proposal for submission to the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and CERF, both approved for an overall amount of USD 1.9 million.

Coordination mechanisms: In The Gambia FAO collaborates with the Ministry of Agriculture and its regional offices, the National Research Institute, Department of Agriculture regional offices, the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), WFP, Farmers Organizations and Territorial Administrations.

MALI

Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme

In 2010/2011, emergency and rehabilitation activities have reached 10 890 household beneficiaries or 76 230 individuals, most of whom women (70 percent). Currently, six projects are under implementation for an overall amount of USD 2 741 720. Key interventions include:

- distribution of agricultural inputs (locally adapted seeds, fertilizers and farming tools) enabling the improvement of small-scale farmers' production and productivity and re-establishment of household resilience;
- provision of small livestock, animal veterinary supplies (de-worming and vitamins) and animal feed to reinforce agro-pastoralist livelihoods, provide protein and promote alternative income generating activities;
- organization of nutrition education sessions for women and men in order to increase the nutritional status of affected households with children and pregnant women facing high malnutrition rates;
- training on good practices for farming and livestock including vegetable processing and marketing (use of fertilizers, plant protection, harvesting, etc.) and strengthening linkages between farmers and national technical services, and
- rehabilitating water points for irrigation and to increase access to clean water for human and livestock populations.

A small team, comprising of two international and six national staff (technical experts and administrative support), is supporting the implementation of the emergency and rehabilitation programme and the activities of the Food Security Cluster.

Response to the current crisis

Priorities: FAO Mali is seeking at least USD 10 050 000 million to respond to immediate needs of 380 825 individual beneficiaries to:

- strengthen the livelihoods of vulnerable populations, including IDPs, by supporting the pastoral and agricultural production capacities of affected households;
- strengthen the capacities of vegetable farmers and small ruminant herders to increase their resilience to climatic shocks;
- improve household access to a highly nutritional and diversified diet, and good nutritional practices; and
- increase beneficiaries' income through developing the livestock and farm forestry sectors, promoting sustainable management of the ecosystem and reducing greenhouse emissions.

Currently, most of the activities have been suspended due to the prevailing insecurity situation. As soon as the security situation is improved and access to the North is opened, priority should be given to rapid response for IDPs and to the preparation of the next planting season (starting in June).

Ongoing response activities: USD 2 741 720 have been received for the immediate response to the current crisis from Belgium (USD 706 600), FAO Technical cooperation programme (USD 500 000), Austria (USD 335 120), CERF (USD 800 000) and recently from USAID (USD 400 000). They support farmers, pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and displaced people in the activities listed above.

Coordination mechanisms: 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. The Food Security cluster was recently activated co-led by WFP and FAO.

MAURITANIA

Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme

Six projects are currently being implemented for a total amount of USD 2.3 million. The main focus of emergency and rehabilitation interventions in the country is to improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable pastoral and agro-pastoral populations in southern regions, as well as to reinforce coordination mechanisms and food and nutrition security assessments. A team of 5 people (3 international and 2 national) is supporting the programme implementation.

Response to the current crisis

Priorities: FAO Mauritania is seeking USD 9 million to support 497 500 individual beneficiaries to:

- provide income to severely affected herders and reduce pressure on the ecosystem through destocking;
- 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;
- improve fodder production by introducing varieties that are adapted to the ecosystem;
- provide animal feed and veterinary inputs; and
- strengthen women's capacity to address child malnutrition through nutrition education.

Ongoing response activities: a Belgium project (USD 300 000) is providing assistance to 8 000 vulnerable households through the distribution of agricultural inputs (seeds and tools), establishment of vegetable gardens and training on the use of nutritious foods. Two projects are funded by CERF: a first one (USD 600 336) supports 9 500 vulnerable agro-pastoral households, through destocking, veterinary supplies and inputs for fodder production, and a second one (USD 121 218) that assists 6 000 households, Malian refugees and host communities, though veterinary supplies and livestock vaccins. A US project (USD 400 000) support agriculture and food security coordination and the strengthening vulnerable populations livelihoods in Southern Mauritania, in addition to an earlier one (USD 500 000) targeting the same area. An FAO Technical Cooperation Programme was also recently approved to support pastoral and agro-pastoral households..

Coordination mechanisms: 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. The preparation of a Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) in support of the government' response plan is undergoing and should be completed by the end of April 2012.

NIGER

Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme

A total of ten projects is currently being implemented for an amount of USD 15 632 374. The emergency and rehabilitation programme in the country focuses on: (i) the production and distribution of rainfed improved short-cycle seeds; (ii) the promotion of gardening during the lean season through vegetable seed distribution, nutritional education, and construction and/or rehabilitation of irrigated areas; (iii) the distribution of small ruminants and animal feed to vulnerable small herders in disaster affected areas; and (iv) the protection of cattle against the most recurrent diseases through the distribution of vaccines and deworming products. The programme is supported by the following donors: Belgium, Sweden, Austria, Finland, USA, CERF and FAO Technical Cooperation Programme. A team of 21 people (7 international and 14 national) has been deployed to support the programme implementation.

Groups of immature Desert Locust adults, including a few swarms, have arrived in northern Niger. Locust teams have been mobilized in the north and so far 25 ha have been treated. Nevertheless, all efforts are required to treat the locust infestation to protect agricultural crops.

Response to the current crisis

Priorities: The 2012 CAP for the Niger has been revised, including the component on food security, which will be partly implemented by FAO. The Organization has developed two project profiles in response to the current food and livelihood crisis in the country - amounting to USD 42 million - with the goal of assisting 4.2 million people in addition to 41 667 Refugees from Mali, to:

- rapidly support the livelihoods of vulnerable pastoralists affected by the pasture deficit in the Niger; and
- provide emergency assistance to agricultural households affected by the food and nutrition crisis.

Ongoing response activities: The funds mobilized to support the response to the crisis in the Niger amount to USD 6.4 million and consist of (i) two CERF projects for USD 3 112 869, providing emergency assistance to vulnerable herders and farmers affected by the 2011 fodder and cereal deficit; (ii) a contribution from Sweden for USD 1 445 296, corresponding to a budgetary increase of an ongoing project to address the current crisis by assisting 82 600 pastoralists with animal feed and vaccines for small ruminants, (iii) a Belgium funded project, contributing USD 300 000 to support the resiliency of pastoralists affected by fodder deficits through the provision animal feed, (iv) a contribution from Finland for USD 1 062 417 and (v) a FAO Technical Cooperation Programme support for USD 500 000 for seeds distribution during the main planting season. A Sweden contribution of USD 1 000 000 was approved to strengthen farmers resilience during the rainy season.

Coordination mechanisms: FAO 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 the Niger participated in crop assessment missions in September and October 2011, and food security and market monitoring missions in January 2012.

SENEGAL

Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme

Three projects are currently being implemented for an overall amount of USD 3 153 000. The main focus of emergency and rehabilitation programme in the country is to improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable households through provision of agricultural inputs, animal feed and training. A team of eight people (four international and four national) is supporting the country programme implementation as well as the emergency and rehabilitation regional activities.

Response to the current crisis

Priorities: In response to the crisis, FAO Senegal is seeking USD 6.8 million to support 420 000 individual beneficiaries:

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

Ongoing response activities: Early in the crisis, funds from a Swedish contribution for the CAP 2011 (USD 228 000) have been used to restore the livelihoods of vulnerable populations affected by the current crisis though provision of agricultural inputs for vegetable and cereal production to vulnerable households and women associations. A CERF project was also approved (USD 2 125 002) to provide emergency assistance to vulnerable farmers in five regions affected by the crisis through the distribution of cereal seeds and fertilizers as well as a TCP project (USD 440 000) to support the main planting season in Kaffrine region.

Coordination mechanisms: FAO coordinates its crisis response with partners participating in coordination meetings on food safety. FAO co-leads and actively participates in the Food Security Group coordination meetings. 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.

LINKS

- FAO website on the Sahel crisis: *http://www.fao.org/crisis/sahel/the-sahel-crisis/en/*
- FAO and emergencies: *http://www.fao.org/emergencies/*
- DRM Regional strategy for West Africa and Sahel, 2011-2013 (FAO 2011): *http://www.fao.org/emergencies/home/news/emergency-news/emergency-detail/en/item/120920/icode/?uidf=1345*
- FAO DRR corporate framework: "Resilient livelihoods: Disaster Risk reduction for food and nutrition" security : *http://www.fao.org/docrep/015/i2540e/i2540e00.pdf*
- Interagency (IASC) Strategy for the Sahel "Preparation for a food and nutrition crisis in the Sahel and neighbouring countries: *http://ochaonline.un.org/UrgencesEmergencies/Sahel2012/tabid/7773/language/fr-FR/Default.aspx*

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