



SAHEL – FOOD INSECURITY

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- Due to erratic rainfall, high food prices, and localized dry spells in 2011, areas of West Africa’s Sahel region will likely experience acute food insecurity in 2012. According to the USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), localized areas are expected to reach Acute Food Insecurity and Livelihood Crisis—Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) 3¹—in 2012, particularly from April to September.
- Acute food insecurity is likely to be most severe in agro-pastoral and rain-fed agricultural areas of western Mali, northern Burkina Faso, western Niger, and central Chad, in addition to southern Mauritania, where vulnerable populations have already begun to face crisis-level food insecurity.
- Between 7 million and 12 million people in the Sahel are at risk of needing additional assistance in 2012 due to food insecurity, according to a consensus of humanitarian agencies, including the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) and the U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF), as well as national governments.
- The situation in Mali is being exacerbated by violence that resumed in late January between Tuareg rebels—many of whom returned from the conflict in Libya in possession of weapons—and Government of Mali armed forces. Approximately 36,000 people have reportedly fled to neighboring countries as a result of renewed insecurity, the U.N. reports. Of the total, more than 13,000 people have fled to already food-insecure areas in southern Mauritania, 8,000 to Burkina Faso, 5,000 to Algeria, and more than 10,000 to Niger’s Tillabéri Region, one of the most chronically food-insecure areas in the region. In addition, more than 30,000 Malians are internally displaced, primarily in the eastern regions of Kidal and Gao, according to the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
- To date in FY 2012, USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) have provided more than \$42.7 million in humanitarian assistance to support more than 2.5 million people in need across the Sahel region. This support is in addition to \$197 million provided in FY 2011 to support humanitarian programs—many of which are still ongoing—and complements USAID’s long-term efforts to alleviate poverty and promote health and economic growth in the region.
- USAID has announced plans to provide an additional \$33 million in humanitarian funding in the coming weeks to meet food needs across the region, support programs that protect vulnerable populations’ assets and livelihoods, and provide critical nutrition support. In total, including the \$42.7 million already committed to date in FY 2012, USAID has pledged more than \$75 million in humanitarian assistance for the Sahel food insecurity crisis.

HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED IN FY 2012 ²	
USAID/OFDA Assistance to the Sahel	\$6,366,811
USAID/FFP Assistance to the Sahel	\$36,391,300
Total USAID Assistance to the Sahel	\$42,758,111

HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED IN FY 2011	
USAID/OFDA Assistance to the Sahel	\$26,344,639
USAID/FFP Assistance to the Sahel	\$170,820,800
Total USAID Assistance to the Sahel	\$197,165,439

¹ IPC 3: Crisis level food insecurity is reached when households experience short-term instability and significant food consumption gaps with above-average acute malnutrition rates. IPC 3 can also occur when families meet minimum food requirements by using negative coping mechanisms, such as selling livestock and diverting money typically used for essential basic items toward the purchase of food.

² Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds.

Context

- The causes of hunger and malnutrition in the Sahel are deeply rooted and multifaceted. Chronic under-development and multiple droughts in recent years have left the population fragile and vulnerable, even to small shocks. Below-average rainfall and crop production shortages in 2011 have resulted in reduced food and livestock fodder availability in parts of Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Chad, and elsewhere in the Sahel region of West Africa, where many vulnerable families are still recovering from the 2009–2010 food crisis.
- Global acute malnutrition rates are consistently between 10 and 15 percent in the region, with some localized areas exceeding the U.N. World Health Organization’s emergency threshold level of 15 percent. Average acute malnutrition rates peak between July and September—the height of the lean season for agriculturalist and agro-pastoralists, who compose the majority of the Sahelian population—according to FEWS NET.
- On December 8, 2011, U.S. Ambassador Jo Ellen Powell declared a disaster due to the effects of food insecurity in Mauritania. On December 20, 2011, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires, a.i., Lucy K. Abbott issued a disaster declaration due to the effects of food insecurity in Niger. In addition, U.S. Ambassador Mary Beth Leonard declared a disaster due to the effects of food insecurity in Mali on January 26, 2012.
- On October 17, 2011, U.S. Ambassador Mark M. Boulware redeclared a disaster due to the ongoing complex emergency in Chad, which includes food insecurity among its contributing factors.

Agriculture and Food Security

- Across the Sahel, cereal production has decreased two percent compared to the five-year average, with Mauritania and Chad most affected. However, continuing population growth means that this year’s per-capita production is 17 percent below-average. Regional surpluses in coastal countries could make up much of this difference if normal trade flows persist and prices remain stable.
- Below-average agricultural yields and livestock deficits have led to high levels of food insecurity in parts of Mauritania, particularly in the central, south, and southeastern regions. Many residents in these areas lack positive coping strategies and must rely on selling off their livestock and migrating to other areas in search of labor opportunities, according to FEWS NET. Mauritania is dependent on imported cereals, so increased prices of primary staples, such as imported wheat, could further exacerbate food insecurity.
- Vulnerable populations residing in the Sahelian band of Chad are also at risk of severe food insecurity, FEWS NET reports. National cereal production during Chad’s 2011/2012 harvest was 15 percent below-average, while cross-border trade with Nigeria, Sudan, and Libya remains limited due to recent insecurity and decreased food production.
- Since FY 2011, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$7 million to support agriculture and food security programs in the Sahel, including nearly \$2.7 million in Chad to improve agricultural production. In FY 2011 and to date in FY 2012, USAID/FFP has provided more than \$207 million to support emergency food assistance, agriculture and food security activities, cash-based programs, and the pre-positioning of commodities that can be quickly moved to the most vulnerable people in the areas most in need.

Nutrition

- This year, UNICEF has forecast increased levels of severe acute malnutrition (SAM), compared to 2011, in Chad’s Sahelian band, Niger, and Mali, estimating that more than one million children in the Sahel may experience SAM. According to FEWS NET, nearly 900,000 children experienced SAM in 2011, despite the above-average harvest. UNICEF has forecast decreased SAM levels in Burkina Faso, and similar levels in Mauritania, compared to last year.
- In response to consistently high levels of malnutrition in the region, USAID/OFDA is helping to strengthen regional acute malnutrition monitoring, increase the number of malnourished children screened and admitted to acute malnutrition treatment programs, and teach positive nutritional activities in affected communities, including infant feeding practices. USAID/OFDA also supports U.N. and non-governmental organization partners to conduct Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) nutrition surveys throughout the region, which enable the humanitarian community to identify and target the most vulnerable populations.

Security and Population Movement

- Increased activity by the Boko Haram militant group in northern Nigeria, which has resulted in more than 285 deaths to date, has led the Government of Nigeria to declare a state of emergency in four states and temporarily close sections of the borders shared with Niger and Chad, according to international media. USAID continues to monitor the insecurity and cross-border trade disruptions, which could potentially impact food exports from Nigeria to northern nations.

- In response to the displacement of approximately 30,000 people within Mali and more than 36,000 to neighboring countries, humanitarian agencies in the region, including UNHCR, ICRC, and UNICEF, are providing food, health care, emergency relief supplies, and shelter to displaced populations, the majority of whom are residing with host families, in government-established transit sites, or in makeshift camps outside villages.

Other Humanitarian Assistance

- To date, international donors have pledged more than \$235.3 million to address food insecurity and malnutrition on the Sahel. On February 8, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) announced additional funding for the Sahel, bringing its total funding to €123.5 million, or approximately \$164 million. The U.K. Department for International Development and the Government of France have each announced approximately \$10 million—or £6.3 million and €7.6 million, respectively—in planned funding for the Sahel, while the Government of Germany pledged €12 million in emergency assistance to the Sahel. In addition, the U.N. Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has released \$16 million in emergency funding, according to international media.

FY 2012 USAID AND ASSISTANCE TO THE SAHEL¹

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO²			
UNICEF	Nutrition	Burkina Faso	\$500,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO IN FY 2012			\$500,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO IN FY 2012			\$500,000

USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO CHAD			
UNICEF	Nutrition	Chad	\$700,000
OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Chad	\$300,000
WFP	Humanitarian Air Service	Chad	\$500,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO CHAD IN FY 2012			\$1,500,000
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO CHAD			
WFP	Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Chad	\$18,000,000
Africare	Title II Agriculture and Food Security; Nutrition	Chad	\$4,890,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO CHAD IN FY 2012			\$22,890,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO CHAD IN FY 2012			\$24,390,000

USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO MALI			
U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Agriculture and Food Security	Mali	\$400,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO MALI IN FY 2012			\$400,000
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO MALI			
CRS	Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Mali	\$2,200,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO MALI IN FY 2012			\$2,200,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO MALI IN FY 2012			\$2,600,000

USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA			
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security; Nutrition	Mauritania	\$400,000
UNICEF	Nutrition	Mauritania	\$500,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA IN FY 2012			\$900,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA IN FY 2012			\$900,000

USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO NIGER			
OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Niger	\$350,000
UNICEF	Nutrition	Niger	\$1,000,000
WFP	Humanitarian Air Service	Niger	\$500,000
Vétérinaires Sans Frontières/Belgium (VSF)	Agriculture and Food Security, ERMS	Niger	\$716,811
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO NIGER IN FY 2012			\$2,566,811
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO NIGER			
CPI	Title II Agriculture and Food Security; Nutrition	Niger	\$3,801,300
WFP	Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Niger	\$7,500,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO NIGER IN FY 2012			\$11,301,300
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO NIGER IN FY 2012			\$13,868,111

WEST AFRICA REGIONAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE²			
WFP	Market Analysis and Vulnerability Studies	West Africa	\$200,000
WFP	Nutrition	West Africa	\$300,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO WEST AFRICA REGIONAL IN FY 2012			\$500,000

TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE SAHEL IN 2012	
TOTAL USAID/OFDA FUNDING	\$6,366,811
TOTAL USAID/FFP FUNDING	\$36,391,300
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE SAHEL IN 2012	\$42,758,111

FY 2011 USAID AND ASSISTANCE TO THE SAHEL¹

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO²			
Action Contre La Faim (ACF)	Nutrition	Burkina Faso	\$495,755
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Burkina Faso	\$330,000
Helen Keller International	Health	Burkina Faso	\$654,330
UNICEF	Nutrition	Burkina Faso	\$1,600,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO IN FY 2011			\$3,080,085
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO³			
ACDI/VOCA	Agriculture and Food Security; Health; Nutrition	Burkina Faso	\$9,338,400
CRS	Agriculture and Food Security; Health; Nutrition	Burkina Faso	\$2,313,300
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO IN FY 2011			\$11,651,700
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO IN FY 2011			\$14,731,785

USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO CHAD			
ACF	Nutrition	Chad	\$945,000
Air Serv International (ASI)	Humanitarian Air Service	Chad	\$850,000
CRS	Agriculture and Food Security	Chad	\$804,659

FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Chad	\$500,000
Première Urgence	Agriculture and Food Security	Chad	\$505,000
OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Chad	\$500,000
UNICEF	Nutrition	Chad	\$750,000
World Concern Development Organization (WCDO)	Agriculture and Food Security	Chad	\$736,238
WFP	Humanitarian Air Service	Chad	\$750,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO CHAD IN FY 2011			\$6,340,897
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO CHAD			
WFP	32,130 metric tons (MT) of Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Chad	\$46,975,000
WFP	24,900 MT of Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Chad	\$36,519,400
Africare	Agriculture and Food Security; Health; Nutrition	Chad	\$6,069,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO CHAD IN FY 2011			\$89,563,400
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO CHAD IN FY 2011			\$95,904,297

USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO MALI			
Action Against Hunger/U.S. (AAH/US)	Economic Recovery and Market Systems (ERMS)	Mali	\$508,244
HKI	Nutrition	Mali	\$399,267
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO MALI IN FY 2011			\$907,511
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO MALI			
Africare	Agriculture and Food Security; Health; Nutrition	Mali	\$2,544,800
CRS	Agriculture and Food Security; Health; Nutrition	Mali	\$7,524,600
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO MALI IN FY 2011			\$10,069,400
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO MALI IN FY 2011			\$10,976,911

USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA			
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security; Nutrition	Mauritania	\$500,000
World Vision/U.S.	Nutrition	Mauritania	\$436,203
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA IN FY 2011			\$936,203
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA			
CPI	Agriculture and Food Security; Health; Nutrition	Mauritania	\$5,057,600
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA IN FY 2011			\$5,057,600
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA IN FY 2011			\$5,993,803

USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO NIGER			
AAH/US	Agriculture and Food Security; Nutrition	Niger	\$662,547
Concern	ERMS	Niger	\$940,001
CRS	Agriculture and Food Security	Niger	\$1,391,643
FAO	Agriculture and Food Security	Niger	\$400,000
HKI	Nutrition	Niger	\$1,078,818

Humedica	Nutrition	Niger	\$493,208
Mercy Corps	ERMS	Niger	\$1,100,852
OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination Activities	Niger	\$300,000
Oxfam/Great Britain (Oxfam/GB)	Agriculture and Food Security	Niger	\$2,021,515
Save the Children/U.K. (SC/UK)	Nutrition	Niger	\$1,970,359
UNICEF	Nutrition	Niger	\$2,000,000
WFP	Humanitarian Air Service	Niger	\$500,000
World Vision	Nutrition	Niger	\$800,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO NIGER IN FY 2011			\$13,658,943
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO NIGER			
Africare, CPI, CRS	Agriculture and Food Security; ERMS; Natural and Technological Risks; Nutrition	Niger	\$15,696,100
CPI	3,420 MT of Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Niger	\$5,486,700
UNICEF	Nutrition	Niger	\$2,000,000
WFP	23,060 MT of Title II Emergency Food Assistance for Nutrition through Blanket Feeding	Niger	\$28,295,900
WFP	Nutrition	Niger	\$3,000,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO NIGER IN FY 2011			\$54,478,700
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO NIGER IN FY 2011			\$68,137,643

WEST AFRICA REGIONAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE²			
FAO	Nutrition	West Africa	\$250,000
UNICEF	Nutrition	West Africa	\$850,000
WFP	Food Security and Market Analysis	West Africa	\$321,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO WEST AFRICA REGIONAL IN FY 2011			\$1,421,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO WEST AFRICA REGIONAL IN FY 2011			\$1,421,000

TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE SAHEL IN 2011	
TOTAL USAID/OFDA FUNDING	\$26,344,639
TOTAL USAID/FFP FUNDING	\$170,820,800
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE SAHEL IN 2011	\$197,165,439

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds.

² USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of February 17, 2012.

³ Estimated value of food assistance.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for response efforts in the Sahel can be found at www.interaction.org.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or +1.202.821.1999.
Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int.
USAID/OFDA bulletins appear on the USAID website at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/