January – December 2009

The following bulletin highlights key humanitarian developments and responses between 1 January and 31 December 2009.

### Highlights

- Over 770,000 affected by floods in West Africa
- More than 21,000 suspected cases of Dengue fever in Cape Verde
- First regional conference on human rights and climate change in West Africa
- More than 4.5 million children under five affected by acute malnutrition in West Africa
- More than 115 billions FCFA received under the CAP 2009
- 1.4 billion FCFA allocated to eight countries through the CERF
- International commission of enquiry investigates deadly crackdown in Guinea

### I. Background

2009 was a challenging year for West Africa as it experienced emergencies related to health with the spread of epidemics such as meningitis, dengue fever and cholera; natural disasters and security issues with sociopolitical crises, notably in Guinea and Niger. All these crises occurred within a context of poverty and vulnerability that increase the impact of these situations. They shed light on the low response capacities of populations and governments.

2009 began with a meningitis outbreak that affected nearly 75,000 people. Niger, Burkina Faso and Nigeria were among the most affected countries with over 3,000 casualties.

An epidemic of Dengue fever occurred in Cape Verde, the first in the country. Since October 2009, this tropical disease transmitted by a mosquito affected more than 21,000 people including six deaths. Some 60 cases were also reported in Senegal.

With more than 770,000 victims and losses in terms of human life, agricultural production, housing and socio-economic infrastructures, flooding also caused damages throughout West Africa. Senegal, Burkina Faso, Niger and Benin were the most affected countries.

These floods underscored the issue of climate change in Africa. According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the effects of climate change threaten the effective enjoyment of human rights. Many other organizations have also sounded the alarm. It is in this context that the Regional Office of OCHA worked with partners to ensure that the issue of climate change remains a priority in the development programs of the member states of the Economic Community of West African States.

In preparation of the African position at the 15th UN summit on climate change held in Copenhagen from 7 to 18 December 2009, OCHA, OHCHR, the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), ECOWAS and the Government of Togo held on 15 and 16 September 2009, a regional conference on climate change and protection of civilians. The conference noted a number of challenges caused by climate change on the
enjoyment of human rights and adopted an ECOWAS joint declaration that was transmitted to the African Union.

Socio-political crises, notably the one in Guinea, also marked 2009. A severe repression of an opposition rally by the junta on 28 September 2009 caused 150 dead and some 1500 wounded people. Following these events, the UN Secretary General ordered an international investigation into the killings. A three-person team traveled to Conakry from November 25 to December 04 during which it interviewed several hundreds of witnesses and victims, including members of the ruling junta. The social instability and political situation in Guinea could have negative impacts on its six neighboring countries, especially Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire which still have a fragile stability. Humanitarian actors have increased collaboration and developed contingency plans. On 16 December, UNICEF hosted a regional meeting to produce a consolidated regional contingency plan.

Faced with these emergencies and humanitarian crises, the United Nations provided effective financial responses through the different financing tools such as the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and technical assistance through the deployment of experts. Estimated at $404 million (182 billion FCFA), the 2009 CAP was financed at 64%.

II. Humanitarian Situation

Floods

Between June and October 2009, heavy rains caused devastating floods in several countries of West Africa killing 193 and affecting over 770,000 others. Sierra Leone registered the largest number of deaths with 103 victims. The United Nations, governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) provided assistance to affected populations through various response activities.

Like Benin in July, a United Nations Disaster And Coordination (UNDAC) team was sent from 4 to 28 September 2009 in Burkina Faso to assist the authorities in dealing with the aftermath of flash floods that killed eight people and affected some 150,000 others in the capital Ouagadougou on September 1 2009. Many public facilities were destroyed including the Yalgado Ouedraogo hospital. Among other destructions, some 540 hectares of farmland were destroyed, affecting nearly 1,400 households, according to FAO. By 31 December Burkina Faso had received assistance from the international community amounting to $15.3 million (7 billion CFA) including over $4 million (1.8 billion FCFA) granted by the CERF in addition to the 20 tons of emergency equipment (tents, tanks, water purifier, kitchen kits and generators)from the Brindisi humanitarian stockpile. The government also collected more than 9 billion FCFA after the launching of a national solidarity campaign, while. The United Nations launched an $18.2 million (8 billion FCFA) flash appeal for Burkina Faso.

A final relocation plan of victims was initiated by the government. The plan which consists in allocating land to affected families began on 30 November with the distribution of building materials up to $650 (280 000 FCFA) to families who owned property and $110 (50 000 FCFA) to families renting property. This will cost 8.6 billion FCFA to the government. Furthermore, in order to refine the estimates of damages and losses incurred, a joint post disaster needs assessment was conducted in October 2009. The UN, European Union and World Bank participated in this mission.

La mission du Bureau de la coordination des affaires humanitaires (OCHA) des Nations Unies est de mobiliser et de coordonner une action humanitaire efficace qui repose sur des principes en partenariat avec les acteurs nationaux et internationaux.
In Senegal, following a government request, a similar post-flood needs assessment was also conducted. The preliminary results revealed that 61.94% of the 264,000 people affected are in the capital Dakar and the main causes of flooding are the inadequate sanitation facilities and drainage and the groundwater saturation mainly in the Dakar suburbs. At the year’s end, Senegal had received over $687,000 (309 million FCFA) assistance including emergency supplies from Brindisi.

September and October rains that hit Niger affected over 80,000 people and caused numerous human and material damages especially in the city of Agadez and the towns of Dabaga, Tabelot, and Tchirozerine Tchintabaraden. Niger received international aid totaling $664,242 (299 million) which allowed to respond to the needs of affected populations in terms of food, water, shelter and non food products. The CERF allocated about $3.6 million (1.6 billion FCFA) to provide emergency assistance to victims. Four projects from the World Food Program (WFP), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF) have been funded. These projects helped to cover food needs of 1 391 affected households, support an emergency shelters program for more than 5 500 households, to provide primary healthcare to 79,130 affected people and to support an emergency assistance project for farms affected by floods in the affected villages.

Health

Over 21,000 people suffer from dengue fever in Cape Verde

Since October 2009 an outbreak of Dengue fever has spread in the islands of Cape Verde. On December 6 2009, more than 20,500 dengue fever cases including 6 deaths were recorded. The capital Praia, the islands of S. Felipe, Santa Cruz, Santiago and Maio were the most affected. Because of its magnitude, this epidemic is the worst that the region has experienced in recent decades. International response came both from humanitarian organizations and from countries.

Assistance valued at over $1.3 million (614 million FCFA) was delivered to Cape Verde to fight against this epidemic with a $474,338 (216 million FCFA) contribution from the CERF given to WHO and UNICEF. In Senegal, the authorities reported the presence of dengue fever with nearly 60 cases recorded. To counter the spread of the disease, the Ministry of Health initiated extensive information and spraying campaigns to eliminate mosquito breeding sites.

Meningitis, measles and cholera are widespread

West Africa also faced outbreaks of meningitis, measles and cholera. The epidemic of meningitis was the largest with nearly 75,000 affected people and over 3,000 deaths. In consultation with the different governments, humanitarian agencies conducted vaccination and awareness campaigns to stop these diseases. For example, in Burkina Faso, the International Federation of Red Cross mobilized considerable financial and technical resources estimated at over $85,000 (38.3 million FCFA) to help three million people cope with epidemics of measles and meningitis.
The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.

### Nutrition and Food Safety

The food situation in West Africa remains precarious and worrisome despite the efforts undertaken by states, regional organizations and humanitarian actors. Studies show severe malnutrition, with rates of over 15% in Niger, Nigeria and Mauritania. Over 4.5 million children under five are affected by acute malnutrition while 16.9 million adults live in conditions of food insecurity in West Africa, according to UNICEF estimates. It is also estimated that some 250,000 children die each year from malnutrition in the Sahel. The importance of this issue is reflected in the large percentage that food/malnutrition receives in humanitarian funding, such as the CERF and the CAP.

The recent floods and the variability of rains could have a negative impact on 2009 agricultural production and worsen the situation of millions of vulnerable people. The joint assessment missions CILSS, FEWS NET, WFP and FAO confirmed that a deficit rainfall in the central part of Chad, northern Niger and northern Nigeria has caused a decline in grain production. This situation could jeopardize the food security of small producers who need supplies sooner than expected on the markets. This situation could fuel a rise of prices from January 2010.

### IV. Humanitarian Funding

For 2009, the Consolidated Appeal (CAP) of over $404 million (181 billion FCFA) received a funding of around $256 million (115 billion FCFA), representing 64% funding rate. These funds have helped to assist vulnerable populations in West Africa particularly in the food sector which was funded at 80%.

On December 4, 2009, humanitarian actors from West Africa launched the Consolidated Humanitarian Appeal for 2010 seeking $368 million (165 billion FCFA) to meet the needs of millions of poor people in the region. The CAP 2010 includes 129 projects that would improve the food security of the survival of more than 290,000 children suffering from acute malnutrition, and provide water and sanitation assistance to more than one million people.

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### Meningitis (As of 06/12/2009)

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<tr>
<th>Affected countries</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>4,501</td>
<td>589</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cote d’Ivoire</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>13,405</td>
<td>555</td>
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<td>Nigeria</td>
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<td>Togo</td>
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<td>29</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>74,815</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,724</strong></td>
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### Measles (As of 06/12/2009)

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<th>Cases</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
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<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>53,645</td>
<td>339</td>
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<td>Guinea</td>
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<td>Niger</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>3,345</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>1,255</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>70,231</strong></td>
<td><strong>408</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: World Health Organization
More than 1.4 billion from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)
In 2009, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mauritania, Nigeria, Cape Verde and Gambia have benefited from CERF for a total of nearly 1.4 billion CFA francs (30 million $) mainly to meet the needs in health and nutrition. Niger is the largest recipient of funds in 2009 while Nigeria, Gambia and Cape Verde received their first ever CERF allocation since the mechanism was created in 2006.

In 2009, eight West African countries have benefited from CERF contributions for a total of $29.6 million (Source:www.cerf.un.org)

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