As conflict remains the main driver of food insecurity in the Sahel, the outcome of the 2019 rainy season was negative in several countries along the Atlantic coast of West Africa, particularly in Mauritania and Senegal. This is likely to affect agropastoral livelihoods, leading to increased food insecurity and malnutrition in 2020.

While the first half of the rainy season was marked by the delayed start of rains, long dry spells and severe rainfall deficits, heavy rainfall occurred in late August–early September in several areas of Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal, damaging crop production.

Unfavourable forage production was recorded in parts of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and the Niger. Some areas of Mauritania and Senegal experienced forage deficits for the third consecutive year. Insecurity also still hinders access to pastures in areas of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and the Niger, affecting households’ livelihoods and leading to early transhumance movements.

The security crisis across the region along with recurrent climate shocks continue to adversely affect households’ agriculture-based livelihoods, with the disruption of markets and basic social services.

**In numbers**

- **9.7 million** people projected to be severely food insecure in June–August 2019 across West Africa and the Sahel region
- **2 million** children are at risk of acute malnutrition in the Lake Chad Basin, Burkina Faso, Mali and western Niger
- **USD 166.8 million** required by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) under its three-year programme (2018–2021)

**Planned response until December 2019**

- 153 780 people targeted
- Establish feed banks through which 1 243 tonnes will be available to vulnerable agro/pastoralists | distribute 13 400 small ruminants, poultry and cattle | destock 1 800 animals | distribute 1 489 veterinary kits and 1 189 multinutrient blocks | vaccinate 513 090 small ruminants against *peste des petits ruminants*
- Rehabilitate 6 600 ha of pasturage through cash for work
- Distribute 1 300 agricultural kits, 85 tonnes of crop seeds and 70 tonnes of fertilizer
- Establish 20 pastoral water points, benefiting 36 000 households
- Establish 88 milk collection, processing and conservation units

**Response to date since 2018**

- 2 539 447 people assisted
- Repurchased 1 500 animals benefiting 5 567 households | distributed 30 675 animals to 6 300 households | distributed 14 955 tonnes of animal feed (grain and multinutrient blocks) | produced 18.4 tonnes of dried meat benefiting 4 333 households | vaccinated 5 469 712 animals reaching 181 603 households | distributed 31 500 veterinary kits reaching 31 500 households
- Distributed 601 tonnes of seeds to 57 425 households | distributed 9 150 agricultural kits reaching 8 785 households | trained 33 002 people
- Rehabilitated five wells reaching 7 700 households
- Distributed USD 3 603 520 through cash-based transfers and cash+ activities, benefiting 36 526 households
Challenges facing food security and agriculture

High levels of insecurity and intercommunal conflict persist in various areas across the Sahel, particularly in parts of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger. Population displacements are thus significantly increasing, with over 800,000 refugees and nearly 1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the region, of whom 486,360 IDPs in Burkina Faso alone—a sharp increase in the country compared with the 80,000 at the beginning of the year.

Insecurity has affected market functioning, and has hampered access to fields and agricultural inputs. Although the agricultural campaign has been progressing normally in areas not affected by insecurity, crop production has been hampered by the delayed start of rains, long dry spells, severe rainfall deficits, as well as heavy rainfall in late August–early September in several areas of Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal that often led to floods. Furthermore, unfavourable forage production was recorded in parts of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and the Niger, and some areas of Mauritania and Senegal experienced forage deficits for the third consecutive year.

Overall access to pastures and water sources varies depending on the security situation. This has made it particularly difficult for the increasing number of displaced people to keep their small ruminants alive or cultivate land during the rainy season, and has led to early transhumance movements. Regarding plant protection, the situation is still marked by fall armyworm to varying degrees in all countries of the region except for Mauritania. In addition, the threat of seed-eating birds on cereal crops persists in Burkina Faso, the Niger, Mali, Senegal, Mauritania and Chad.

Providing immediate agricultural support is crucial to support the livelihoods of vulnerable displaced and host families to improve their food security and nutrition, as well as to reduce the risk of tensions over already limited natural resources.