

WFP Central Sahel Situation Report

4 December 2020



In Numbers

13.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in Burkina Faso (2.9 m), Mali (6.8 m), and Niger (3.7 m). [\(OCHA\)](#)

6.2 million people targeted by WFP in Burkina Faso (1.2 m), Mali (2.5 m), and Niger (2.5 m) until end December 2020.

1.6 million people internally displaced (IDPs) in Burkina Faso (1 m), Mali (287,500), and Niger (257,100).

296,600 refugees in Burkina Faso (20,000), Mali (47,000), and Niger (229,600).

1.2 million people assisted so far by WFP and partners in October 2020 across Burkina Faso (604,633) and Mali (581,152). WFP in Niger targeted 1.5 million people in October and provided food and nutritious assistance to 643,704 vulnerable people in September 2020.

WFP SAYS NO to GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Highlights

The preliminary results of the November 2020 CH indicate that **3.7 million people are currently food insecure in the Central Sahel countries**, which represents a slight 11 percent increase compared to the results of the November 2019 CH. According to the preliminary figures, the food security situation remains worrying in Burkina Faso with a 66 percent increase in the number of people experiencing food insecurity (compared to the November 2019 CH results). From June to August 2021, (lean season), 5.41 million people are projected to be food insecure in the three Central Sahel countries.

On the occasion of the [World AIDS Day on 1 December](#), the WFP Regional Bureau of Dakar recalled that in 2019 alone, **21 percent of all AIDS-related deaths worldwide took place in West and Central Africa**. WFP supports efforts for achieving zero new HIV infections, discrimination and AIDS-related deaths, through emergency response, social protection and supply chain to deliver food and nutrition services and assistance to vulnerable people living with or affected by HIV.

On 20 November, during the [World Children's Day](#), the United Nations warned that there is **some three million refugees, internally displaced people and returnees in the Sahel, "with a large proportion under the age of 18; many not getting a proper education"**.

On 20 October, a [high-level humanitarian event on the Central Sahel](#) was held under the co-chairmanship of the Government of Denmark, the Government of Germany, the European Union and the United Nations. Participants, including WFP pledged to consider protection as a central element of the response and to step up joint efforts for an **effective humanitarian, development and peace nexus**, respecting the objectives of each component.

WFP urgently requires USD 182 million from December 2020 to May 2021 to carry out its planned lifesaving operations in the Central Sahel.

"We know that to end AIDS and defeat COVID-19 we must eliminate stigma and discrimination. Putting people at the centre and grounding our responses in human rights and gender-responsive approaches are key to ending the colliding pandemics of HIV and COVID-19. Leaving people behind is not an option if we are to succeed."

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General—[World AIDS Day](#), 1 December 2020

Situation Update

Situation update:

- The security situation remained volatile in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, with attacks targeting both security forces and civilians, leading to the displacement of already vulnerable populations
- In **Burkina Faso**, President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré was re-elected in the 22 November presidential and legislative elections with over 50 percent of the vote. The new Government is expected to be formed by January 2021.
- The precarious security situation in Burkina Faso had a direct impact on the electoral process forcing over 800 localities were unable to open polling stations due to the security situation.
- In **Mali**, following the government's call to support 105,000 flood-affected people, WFP is working closely with the Food Security Cluster and the Ministry of Social Development to provide a coordinated response targeting 54,000 vulnerable people in Ménaka, Gao, Mopti, Kidal, Koulikoro and Ségou.
- In **Niger**, WFP plans to reach over 670,000 beneficiaries through the Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) COVID-19 response in 2020. Despite the restriction of movement of UN staff, preparations for the extension of the ASP response in rural areas are underway and are expected to be completed by the mid-December 2020.

WFP Net Funding Requirements (December 2020 – May 2021)
As of 27 November 2020.

Total Net Funding Requirements	USD 182 million
Burkina Faso	USD 80.1 million
Mali	USD 25.4 million
Niger	USD 76.1 million

Response design

- **COVID-19 response:** As of 1 December 2020, a total of 9,144 confirmed cases were recorded in Mali (4,710), Burkina Faso (2,886), and Niger (1,548). So far 296 people in the three Central Sahel countries lost their lives due to the pandemic. In response to the needs caused or aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP is assisting food insecure vulnerable people directly or indirectly affected by the pandemic and related restrictions in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, while sensitizing communities in food distribution sites on COVID-19 preventive measures including handwashing, physical distancing and use of facemasks. In **Burkina Faso**, as part of the United Nations COVID-19 response and in coordination with UNICEF, WFP is distributing 800,000 soaps to 16,000 displaced households, along with its November general food distributions. In **Mali**, WFP continues to use its food distribution sites to sensitize communities on COVID-19 preventive measures. In **Niger**, WFP switched to a remote monitoring system in the context of the COVID-19 prevention to ensure the continuous availability of beneficiary data. WFP plans to reach over 670,000 beneficiaries through the ASP COVID-19 response in 2020.
- **Conflict-sensitivity, political and peacebuilding:** In **Burkina Faso**, the elections took place in a relatively peaceful context although some security incidents and irregularities were reported. With regard to WFP operations, the humanitarian access constraints remain strict in the Oudalan and Soum provinces of the Sahel region as well as in several localities of the Centre-Nord region. In **Niger**, although WFP operations were not suspended further to the government's *Note Verbale* imposing armed escort, this measure continues to prevent WFP from accessing its project sites, including development and resilience sites, as well as from ensuring adequate coordination and supervision of ongoing activities. WFP made additional operational adjustments through remote monitoring, expanding third-party partners to cover additional activities and regions, and using the government's technical services to continue delivering assistance.

Capacity strengthening & Assessments

- In **Burkina Faso**, WFP provided technical support to strengthen the National Society for Food Security Stock Management (SONAGESS) capacity to undertake efficient data collection and treatment for market analysis to cover 64 markets throughout the country. A workshop was held on 19 November, training more than 70 enumerators from all market points. WFP handed over 60 smartphones to the SONAGESS.
- In **Mali**, WFP and the World Bank are finalizing the design and operational plan for an Impact Evaluation of the integrated resilience programme. An exhaustive households' census and baseline survey will be conducted before end of 2020. The census will list all households residing in the communes where social protection and resilience interventions will be rolled out. This exercise will support the baseline sampling protocols to ensure that sampling is done in a systematic way across all impact evaluation sites.
- In **Niger**, according to the results of the 2020 SMART nutrition survey, the prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) among children aged 6-59 months at the national level is 12.7 percent. This prevalence is above the serious threshold according to the WHO classification (10 percent) and is higher than the prevalence in 2019 (10.7 percent). The prevalence of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) at the national level is 2.6 percent versus 2.7 percent. Children aged 6-23 months are the most affected by acute malnutrition (18.9 percent for GAM; and 4.7 percent for SAM, compared to those aged 24 to 59 months (9.5 percent GAM and 1.5 percent SAM).

WFP Response

Food and nutrition security response: In October, under crisis response, nutrition, resilience and school feeding activities, WFP provided assistance to 1.2 million vulnerable people, including 604,633 in Burkina Faso and 581,152 in Mali, reaching 97 percent of the beneficiaries prioritised in both countries. The three Central Sahel countries provided food and nutrition assistance to some 3 million people in September (606,719 in Burkina Faso; 1,543,537 in Mali; and 643,704 in Niger) when the lean season response was ongoing.

Crisis Response

Under Crisis Response, in October, WFP provided lifesaving assistance to 1,053,046 vulnerable people, including 589,262 in Burkina Faso and 463,784 in Mali, reaching 82 percent of the crisis affected people prioritised for emergency assistance. Niger reached 778,121 crisis affected people in September (over 100 percent of the beneficiaries prioritised).

- In **Burkina Faso**, in October, WFP provided emergency food assistance to 580,096 IDPs and 9,166 refugees and managed to deliver assistance to refugees from both Goudébou and Mentao camps. WFP is scaling up CBT assistance to target more than 360,000 IDPs, refugees and host population. Moreover, under the emergency nutrition assistance, specialized nutrition food was provided to 43,441 children aged 6-23 months and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) for the prevention of acute malnutrition.
- Through malnutrition screening at health facilities and at community levels, 12,965 children aged 6-59 months and 2,129 PLW suffering from moderate acute malnutrition were treated over the month of October.

- **Burkina Faso (Cont'd):** In support to the government's response to floods, WFP purchased 200 tablets, five computers, and three Mobile Storage Units (MSU) to be erected in strategic locations as part of an emergency preparedness strategy. Joint assessment trainings are being organised with the National Council for Emergency Relief (CONASUR).
- In **Mali**, WFP provided 33,000 flood-affected people with emergency food assistance. In addition, WFP provided technical support to strengthen the National Society for Food Security Stock Management (SONAGESS) capacity to undertake efficient data collection and treatment for market analysis to cover 64 markets throughout the country. Over 70 enumerators from all market points were trained and WFP handed over 60 smartphones to the SONAGESS.
- In **Niger**, the third distribution of the 2020 lean season response in the framework of the Government's *Plan de Soutien* was completed on 9 September, reaching 855,935 beneficiaries. WFP continued residual lean season assistance in targeted areas in the Tillabéri region in early October. WFP finalized its emergency response strategy to assist flood affected people in all regions of the country in close collaboration with the Government and partners. WFP planned to target 260,000 beneficiaries with three months of assistance through unconditional food and cash assistance and started providing the first round of emergency distributions to the flood-affected beneficiaries. As of 2 December, WFP reached some 240,000 flood affected people through food and cash distributions in Diffa, Tahoua, Zinder, Maradi, Agadez and Tillabéri regions in the first round of planned distributions. Preparations for the second round of distributions are underway.

WFP Response (end)

Nutrition Response

- As part of the non-emergency nutrition response, WFP reached 36,067 children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) for the prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition activities in Burkina Faso (15,094) and Mali, (20,973). Niger reached 93,757 children and PLW in September.
- In Mali, food assistance for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition is ongoing in targeted health centres in Gao, Mopti, Segou and Timbuktu regions, as well as support to caretakers along with cooking demonstrations and community sensitization on best feeding practices.
- In Niger WFP is providing assistance for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition in targeted health facilities in Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillabéri and Zinder regions, in addition to support to caretakers of severe acute malnourished children admitted in stabilization centres. Sensitization and cooking demonstration sessions are ongoing at the community nutrition rehabilitation centres in 807 villages in the five regions for the prevention and treatment of moderate wasting in children where 2,078 children 24-59 months with moderate wasting have been rehabilitated using locally enriched products between January and September.

School feeding

- In Burkina Faso, the dispatch of food items started in early November. WFP opted for a delivery of full rations to schools and a shortage in pulses delayed the dispatch in October. Nonetheless, WFP undertook all COVID-19 prevention preparedness actions to reduce the propagation of the disease in school sites.
- In Mali, WFP supported 86,189 schoolchildren in October. On 12 November, WFP in collaboration with the National Centre for School Canteens (CNCS) launched a pilot initiative, "Nutrition in School" in Mali to improve students' nutritional status through enhanced access to nutrition information and promotion of best feeding and essential family practices at school. Formal integration of the initiative into the national education curricular will be considered towards end of 2021 based on the assessment of pilot phase.
- In Niger, since the school year started in mid-October, WFP resumed school canteens in 922 schools targeting 155,000 beneficiaries including cash grant for adolescent girls and direct cash transfer in some of the schools. WFP and the Minister of Education ensured that all COVID-19 preventives measures were in place, coupled with active communication and sensitization.

Resilience building

- In Burkina Faso, resilience activities for the last trimester of the year started end October/early November due to delays in the signing of field level agreements. Community-based participatory planning exercises have been/ are being finalised in the Nord, Centre-Nord, Est and Sahel regions. This will guide the implementation of resilience activities, based on the needs of the communities.
- In Mali, as part of its resilience activities, WFP supported 57,265 people for food assistance for assets (FFA) creation activities in October. Also, support was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture for a workshop that took place from 10 to 13 November to review and adopt a methodological approach to Cost Benefit Analysis of asset creation activities under the resilience programming.
- In Niger, distributions for resilience activities were carried out in the context of the ASP programme. WFP is resuming community FFA for 237,000 beneficiaries in the resilience sites, including new sites in Diffa region for 25,000 beneficiaries under the joint WFP-UNICEF resilience and social cohesion project funded by BMZ.

Food Security Cluster

- In **Burkina Faso**, the FSC held a series of members coordination meetings focused on the response in the Oudalan (Sahel region). The meetings allowed to: (i) increase the coordination on the coverage of the caseload and the GAP for food assistance and protection of livelihood; and (ii) put in place a mechanism for checking the lists and avoiding duplication.
- In **Niger**, the FSC is leading coordination efforts among partners in the finalization of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2021, taking into account the preliminary results of the Cadre Harmonisé (November 2020).

Logistics Cluster

- The Logistics cluster was officially activated on 9 October 2020. With its activation, the Logistics Cluster aims to optimize logistical resources to enhance the response by deploying shared storage areas, logistical coordination, pooling of transporters, as well as enhance information sharing and management among NGOs and UN Agencies on logistics related issues. To this end, WFP adjusted its operational programming with the approval of a fifth budget revision.
- Following a WFP mission in Kaya, **Burkina Faso**, a 320 m² MSU is now available for the storage needs of the Logistics Cluster's partners operating in the area. Several partners have already submitted requests for storage capacity in the MSU, located on the premises of the SONAGESS compound.

UN Humanitarian Air Service

- In **Burkina Faso**, regular flights have been introduced connecting two rotations from Ouagadougou: (1) Dori/Gorom-Gorom/Arbinda; (2) Djibo/Titao/Ouahigouya. On 16 November, UNHAS transported 338 kg medical kits to Gorom-Gorom (Oudalan province, Sahel region), on behalf of UNICEF. On 17 November, the Steering Committee (SC) approved a third regular flight to the Est region (scheduled on Thursdays, with the route Ouagadougou/Fada N'Gourma/Gayéri).
- In **Mali**, as of 20 November, UNHAS transported 6,990 kg of freight and 1,002 passengers from 97 organizations to five destinations within the country. UNHAS is also managing an ECHO-flight aircraft based in Mopti and serving six destinations. Through ECHO-flight, 114 passengers and 1,174 kg of light cargo were transported for 16 organizations up to 20 November 2020.
- In **Niger**, both UNHAS aircrafts are operational. Since September 2020 UNHAS returned to the same level of passengers and cargo transported as at the beginning of 2020 (January/February), before the COVID-19 period. Additionally, the number of passengers (1,496) and cargo (3,692 kg) transported during the month of November 2020 has significantly increased due to the availability of our both aircrafts, with no technical failures over this period.

Coordination and partnerships

- On 19 November, WFP in **Burkina Faso** met with UNICEF for a common understanding of the new partnership framework between the two agencies for a better coverage of interventions and collaboration on acute malnutrition. On a later stage, potential joint actions and complementary activities will be explored.
- To enhance UNICEF/WFP partnership in **Mali**, a workshop was organized on 17 November 2020 to review and validate a joint theory of change. This constitutes an important step to developing a full implementation strategy for the strengthened partnership.
- WFP in **Niger** is making good progress with the implementation of its component of the joint WFP/UNICEF Adaptive Social Protection project, funded by BMZ/KfW, in close collaboration with the World Bank and other ASP donors in support to the scale up of the national ASP programme in response to the economic impact of COVID-19. WFP's cash assistance will start in November as soon as the household targeting phase is completed.



WFP's school feeding assistance in Mali – WFP/ Laura Morris, Sébastien Rieussec, Youssouph Barry



WFP food distribution in Niger – A woman and her baby waiting for their food ration.
Photo: WFP/Simon-Pierre Diouf

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- For further information, visit the WFP [Sahel Emergency](#) page