



# WFP Central Sahel Situation Report

7 September 2020



## Highlights

As of 7 September 2020, [WHO](#) reported 2,833 cumulative cases of COVID-19 in Mali (2,833), Burkina Faso (1,408) and Niger (1,177). So far 249 people in the three Central Sahel countries lost their lives due to the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the situation in the Central Sahel countries and on 21 August, [WFP and FAO](#) issued a press release on the worrying situation in Burkina Faso where over [3.3 million people face food insecurity](#) (IPC phase 3-5), which marks an over 50 percent increase with respect to the forecasted situation during [March 2020 Cadre Harmonisé](#) exercise. There is an urgent need for humanitarian assistance to address immediate needs while being committed in longer-term investments.

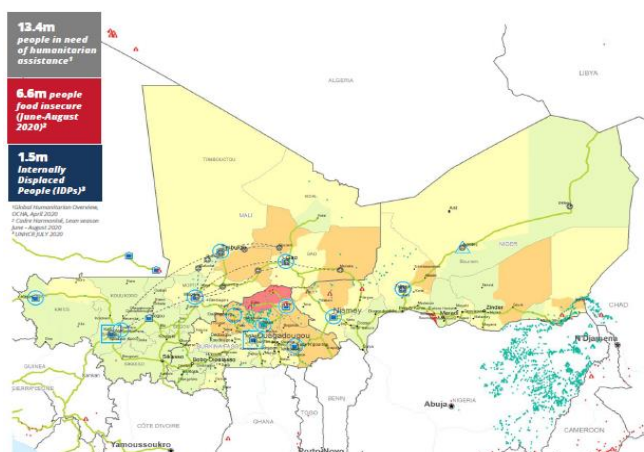
In Niger, 281,000 people were affected by floods according to [OCHA](#). Since June, rainfall destroyed 26,000 houses and killed 51 people. Floods were reported in all seven regions in Niger with over 70 percent of affected people registered in Maradi, Tahoua, Dosso and Zinder regions.

In Mali, following the resignation of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita on 18 August due to a military coup, the imposed ECOWAS restrictions including closure of borders and suspension of financial, commercial and economic transactions will likely affect WFP cash-based transfers and nutrition response that targets 12,800 beneficiaries.

**WFP urgently requires USD 140 million from September 2020 to February 2021 to carry out its planned lifesaving operations in the Central Sahel.**

WFP Net Funding Requirements (September 2020-February 2021)	
<b>Total Net Funding Requirements</b>	<b>USD 140 million</b>
<i>Burkina Faso</i>	<i>USD 76 million</i>
<i>Mali</i>	<i>USD 26 million</i>
<i>Niger</i>	<i>USD 38 million</i>

WFP operations in the Central Sahel by food security classification



## 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](#))

**7.4 million** people in severe food insecurity\* (2020 lean season). Includes Burkina Faso July CH Update and Niger analysis of COVID-19 impact

**5 million** people targeted in 2020 by WFP under the Country Strategic Plans in Burkina Faso (1.2 m), Mali (1.3 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 (265,500).

**291,000** refugees in Burkina Faso (19,900), Mali (42,800), and Niger (229,000).

**3.58 million** people were assisted so far by WFP and partners in July 2020 across Burkina Faso (1,245,457) and Mali (982,982) and Niger 1,357,123 vulnerable.

## Situation Update

- The security situation continues to remain extremely volatile in **Burkina Faso**, especially in the Centre-Nord, Est, Nord, and Sahel regions. In the Sahel region, access constraints to Djibo remain due to insecurity and non-state armed groups (NSAGs) check points installed by who occasionally prohibit entry and exit of public transport and freight trucks in Djibo. On 21 August, a vehicle from an international NGO was diverted by NSAGs between Namsiguiya – Mentao and a stock of medicine and other materials were stolen. In the North and Boucle du Mouhoun regions, NSAGs presence continues to be reported in certain localities and along the border with Mali.
- In **Mali**, the security situation remains volatile in northern and central Mali due to the presence and continued activity of NSAGs. In addition, heavy rains registered in Mali over the last few weeks caused flooding affecting 4,000 households (26,700 men, women and children) in Gao, Kayes, Kidal, Menaka, Ségou and Timbuktu. Projection from the national contingency plan indicates that 121,000 people in the country would be affected by floods during the ongoing rainy season.
- In **Niger**, the deterioration of the security situation in the Tillabéri region led to the review of the Security Risk Management (SRM), particularly in Niamey and Tillabéri. The security level will be raised from moderate (level 3) to substantial (level 4) for the region of Niamey. NSAGs activities continue with attacks against the local population including kidnapping and harassment leading to considerable population displacements in the regions of Tillabéri (north west near Burkina and Mali) and Diffa (Lake Chad Basin). In addition, heavy rainfalls are causing flooding in Tillabéri, Tahoua and Agadez regions. As of 17 August, 16 communes in Tahoua and five Departments were affected (86 villages comprising of 29,775 people. Six people lost their lives, 2,352 houses collapsed, and 5,269 animals were lost). In Agadez, 27 localities in five communes were affected (73 houses collapsed, 9,828 people affected, and 245.3 ha of irrigated cultivated land destroyed).



## WFP Response

- **COVID-19 response:** 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 disease in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. In Burkina Faso, targeting is being based on relevant household economic assessments, including those specific to the impacts of COVID-19. The dispatch of tents donated by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) to WFP sub offices and partners is ongoing and a total of 14 tents will be allocated to the Ministry of Health. Seven of these tents will be set up at land borders in view of COVID-19 screenings. In Mali, in line with the government COVID-19 recommendations, WFP and its cooperating partners provided food assistance for assets (FFA) participants with face masks and handwashing kits while ensuring physical distancing on project sites. In Niger, COVID-19 specific distributions of cash to support persons living with HIV across Niger were completed before the 31 July deadline agreed with ONUSIDA. WFP continues also collaborating with UNICEF, the World Bank and the Government *Dispositif National de Gestion et Prévention des Crises Alimentaires* (DNP-GCA) to strengthen the existing social protection system in Niger, and in particular scale up the Adaptive Social Protection programme (ASP) to provide a timely response to the socio-economic impact of COVID-19.

**Food and nutrition security response:** In July, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to over 3.58 million vulnerable people in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, reaching 100 percent of the beneficiaries prioritised. Over 3.3 m people were prioritised for food and nutrition assistance in August in Burkina Faso (1,188,524), Mali (1,014,505) and Niger (1,129,849) under crisis response, nutrition, resilience and school feeding activities.

### Crisis Response

- Under Crisis response, in July, WFP provided lifesaving assistance to 2,592,443 **vulnerable** people in Central Sahel countries (1,195,785 in Burkina Faso, 900,913 in Mali, and 540,735 in Niger), reaching 100 percent of the crisis affected people targeted for emergency assistance.
- In Burkina Faso, under the crisis response WFP provides general food distribution to IDPs and refugees, emergency school feeding activities and nutrition in **emergency**. WFP reached an unprecedented number of over 1.2 million vulnerable people in Burkina Faso in July. In August, distributions are ongoing for IDPs and people vulnerable to food insecurity during the lean season. Distributions discontinued in the Mentao refugee camp since July due to insecurity that hampered the delivery of food items. Discussions are ongoing between WFP and UNHCR to explore the use of alternative assistance modalities with regards to the challenging security context.
- Cash-based transfers were provided to: (i) 90,489 IDPs in the Centre-Nord region; (ii) 93,679 food insecure people for the lean season response in the Centre-Nord, Est, and Nord regions; (iii) 25,753 household members who took part in resilience building activities in the Est, Centre-Nord, Nord, and Sahel regions; (iv) and 1,000 households affected by HIV/AIDS in the framework of the joint WFP-UNAIDS project.
- For the prevention of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) targeting IDP children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW), 32,739 children aged 6-23 months and 12,928 PLW benefitted from assistance to prevent them from falling into moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) in July. Screening and treatment of MAM were enabled for 10,184 children aged 6-59 months and 2,613 PLW. Prevention of moderate acute malnutrition activities among children and PLW of households vulnerable to food insecurity during the lean season are also

underway and WFP assisted a total of 17,471 children aged 6-23 months and 14,015 PLW. Screening and treatment of MAM were enabled for 10,184 children aged 6-59 months and 2,613 PLW. Emergency school feeding activities will resume at the start of the new school year, planned for the month of October.

- In Mali, the crisis response includes general food distribution and a package of nutrition intervention (prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition and caretakers). WFP provided lifesaving assistance to 900,913 vulnerable people in July. On 6 July, WFP launched a large-scale food and nutrition intervention to assist nearly one million people in the northern and central regions of Mali including Gao, Kidal, Ménaka, Mopti, Ségou, Taoudénit and Timbuktu. Assistance provided in support of the Government National Response Plan targets IDPs, refugees, returnees, and vulnerable families from July to September (lean season period). In August, WFP and its cooperating partners continue to run a large-scale food and nutrition intervention targeting one million people in the northern and central regions of Mali including Gao, Kidal, Ménaka, Mopti, Ségou, Taoudénit and Timbuktu. Beneficiaries include IDPs, refugees, returnees, and vulnerable families affected by conflict, population displacement and the effects of COVID-19 and climate change.
- In Niger, crisis response activities include the provision of an integrated food/cash unconditional and nutrition assistance package for crisis affected people (refugees, internally displaced persons, host communities and returnees) in areas recurrently affected by insecurity (including through the rapid response mechanism (RRM) and during the lean season months targeting over 1 million people. Under crisis response in July, WFP reached 540,735 vulnerable people with emergency assistance, although distributions were affected by access restrictions due to insecurity and the rainy season, suspension of distributions and delay in the availability of certain food items.

### Nutrition Response

- As part of the non-emergency nutrition response, WFP reached 122,425 children and PLW for the prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition activities in Burkina Faso (19,797), Mali, (12,861) and Niger (89,767) children and PLW.
- In Burkina Faso, WFP carried out nutrition activities under the crisis response to provide emergency assistance to vulnerable children and PLW. Community sensitization activities are being pursued and in July, 97,306 persons, including 26,359 men received messages on good hygiene and feeding practices for the health of infants and PLW.
- In Mali, food assistance to children has been prioritized and assistance to PLW will be limited to the areas where the global acute malnutrition rate is beyond the emergency threshold of 15 percent or above 10 percent with aggravating factors such as food insecurity, and in regions classified IPC phase 3 and above. In Gao, Menaka, Mopti and Timbuktu regions, the seasonal food assistance is complemented with nutrition services including supplementary feeding and advice on best feeding practices.
- In Niger, 89,767 children and pregnant and lactating women received nutrition support in July. However, community-based sensitization activities were suspended to avoid large people gathering at community level.

### Resilience response

- As part of its resilience activities, WFP supported 876,674 people for food assistance for assets (FFA) creation activities across Burkina Faso (25,753) and Mali (115,322), and Niger, 735,599. In Mali, for the lean season (June-September), WFP is supporting 142,000 people to create productive assets such as land rehabilitation, feeder roads, water pond, erosion control, tree-planting, construction of agricultural infrastructure, borehole, rehabilitation of irrigation schemes for paddy rice. During the lean season period in Niger (June to August), beneficiaries are provided with an unconditional food distribution to protect their assets and livelihoods.

*Niger (Resilience Cont'd):* In addition, WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock signed a partnership agreement in August 2020 to improve and invigorate the resilience of the most vulnerable people in Niger living in fragile ecosystems in rural areas. Employment opportunities are planned to be created for more than 30,000 young people by strengthening activities already underway in 268 integrated sites comprising 965 villages.

#### **School feeding**

- WFP provided nutritious meals to a total of 9,091 schoolchildren in Burkina Faso and Niger (4,122 in Burkina Faso and 4,969 in Niger). In Burkina Faso, schools reopened from 1 June to mid-July and students in the last grade of primary school (CM2) benefited from school feeding activities until the closure of schools in mid-July. Remaining food stocks for the 2019/2020 school year were fully distributed to children of all grades as dry take-home rations. In Niger, schools reopened from 2 June to 15 July to allow all schoolchildren to finish the school year. WFP provided take-home rations to schoolchildren for 15 days.
- However, schools were also affected by insecurity in the Est region of Burkina Faso where a total of 16 schools were burned down in less than a month, which is likely to compromise the resumption of classes for the 2020-2021 school year in schools benefiting from the WFP school feeding programme activities.
- In Mali, no food distribution was carried out from mid-July to the end of September due to school vacation except to some schoolchildren living in areas most affected by food insecurity where a two-month take-home ration in the form of cash is being distributed (excluding in Kidal). This operation targets 98,000 schoolchildren in 434 primary schools.

- *Mali (School feeding Cont'd):* On 31 August, the teachers' unions in Mali announced a boycott for the reopening of schools originally scheduled for 1 September after the National Committee for the Salvation of the People (CNSP) informed that their demands regarding salaries could not be met before November.
- In Niger, no food distribution was carried out from mid-July to the end of September due to school vacation. In October, three months delivery will be made for the first term of the school year.

## **Challenges**

- WFP will be facing funding shortfalls during the month of September in **Burkina Faso**, with a complete halt expected by October 2020.
- In **Mali**, a critical lack of resources is expected from October affecting 580,000 beneficiaries including 270,000 IDPs. To cope with the funding constraints *and* stretch available resources, WFP is distributing 60 percent full ration during the lean season, under general food distribution for all beneficiaries except new IDPs, host families and COVID-19-affected people.
- In **Niger**, starting September, WFP is facing lack of resources for unconditional assistance to crisis-affected populations. This includes most of the food items part of the unconditional food ration, prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition for children and CBT transfer. For school feeding activities a deficit in iodized salt, Super Cereals with sugar and cash transfers is expected from October, with the beginning of the school year.

## **Assessments and monitoring**

### **Assessments**

- In **Burkina Faso**, the results of the updated Cadre Harmonisé (CH) of July 2020, which focused on updating household food security indicators following the occurrence of COVID-19, outlined that 3.28 million people are projected to be food security phase 3- 5 across the country. A total of 16 provinces are in phase 3 (crisis) and two provinces in the Sahel region (Soum and Oudalan provinces), are in an emergency situation (phase 4) and need rapid assistance. Pockets of populations in phase 5 (catastrophe) are being reported in both phase 4 provinces (over 5,000 people in Soum and about 6,000 in Oudalan). In order to assess the extent of the situation in the Oudalan province, WFP, in collaboration with a local partner, undertook a [rapid assessment](#) of household food security in Oudalan. This assessment corroborated the analysis of the CH by highlighting the severely deteriorated food conditions experienced by people in this area.
- WFP launched an [analysis report](#) about food insecurity in the Liptako – Gourma area, located across the common borders of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. Persistent conflicts and subsequent loss of agricultural land affected the food security situation in Liptako – Gourma, a region where one household out of ten depend on food assistance for survival.

### **Monitoring**

- In **Burkina Faso**, the analysis of livelihood-based coping strategies revealed that most households resorted to strategies that reduced their capacity to cope with future shocks due to a reduction in their resources. Preliminary results also show that: (i) 50 percent of households have limited food consumption and 31 percent have poor food consumption, which reflects the high vulnerability to food insecurity of these households; (ii) The dietary situation of children aged 6-59 months is alarming with a poor dietary diversity. This suggests a fairly high risk of malnutrition in this category of the population; and (iii) Measures enacted by the Government to counter the spread of COVID-19 had an additional impact on the household food situation. Results indicated that 92 percent of households reported difficulty in accessing markets, 82 percent have difficulty feeding themselves, and 70 percent lost their jobs.
- In Mopti and Kidal regions in **Mali**, WFP monitored take-home rations as part of the school feeding programme ensuring that distributions took place in a transparent manner and all parents received the correct amount of food according to the number of students in their households.



## Clusters and Common services

### Food Security Clusters (FSC)

- In **Burkina Faso**, the FSC actors are planning support in Oudalan. In **Mali**, the Food security cluster is conducting missions in the regions in collaboration with OCHA to prepare the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) 2021 workshops. In **Niger**, the FSC, the Government and partners worked together to update the analysis of the COVID-19 impact on food and nutrition security in the country. In the run-up to the Niger Humanitarian Needs Overview and Humanitarian Response Plan 2021 (HNO/HRP) process, a matrix on lessons learned from the HPC 2020 process was shared among the different agencies and clusters for their inputs. The results of this compilation and the detailed chronogram of the HPC 2021 process will be presented at the next inter-cluster meeting on 25 August.

### Logistics Sector

- In **Burkina Faso**, a mission to Kaya took place to pre-identify shared storage space and to meet with local logistics partners. An agreement of principle was established with several INGOs in view of potential funds for Logistics country strategy deployment, namely with Humanity & Inclusion – Handicap International, *Action contre la Faim*, ACTED, IMMAPP, and REACH.

### Emergency Telecommunication Cluster (ETC)

- In **Burkina Faso**, two trainings on the use of the UN common VHF radio security communication system were held in Ouagadougou for UNDP staff and in Ouahigouya for the WFP sub office staff.



## UN Humanitarian Air Service

- In **Burkina Faso**, WFP Aviation passenger flights were discontinued on 15 August as commercial companies resumed their flights to the same destinations as the ones served from and to Ouagadougou. The reopening of air borders was effective since 1 August 2020; however, land borders remain closed. Meanwhile, the Chief Aviation officer arrived in country on 13 August. The helicopter and crew arrived in country on 25 August, and the Air Transport Officer (ATO) arrived on 28 August. The first UNHAS flight is planned for September.
- In **Mali**, UNHAS continues to support health and humanitarian responses to COVID-19 through transportation of humanitarian staff and supplies across the country and the provision of medical evacuations. In July, five destinations were served and UNHAS services were used by 86 organizations. A total of 905 passengers and 3,730 kg of freight were transported.
- In **Niger**, UNHAS flights resumed as of 20 July, following authorization from the Ministry of Health and Civil aviation authorities to continue supporting humanitarian actors efforts in the country. Only one out of the two UNHAS aircrafts was active during the reporting period (regular maintenance of the other). UNHAS had to cancel 10 flights due to the heavy rains.



Photo: WFP's assistance to IDPs in Sevaré, Mopti region, Mali  
WFP/Benoît Lognoné

## WFP Funding Partners

**Burkina Faso:** Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, Norway, Private Donors, Switzerland, United Kingdom, UN Other Funds and the United States of America.

**Mali:** Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mali, Monaco, Norway, Private Donors, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Peacebuilding Funds, United Kingdom, USA, World Bank.

**Niger:** Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, Private Donors, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, UN CERF, UN Other Funds and Agencies, UK, USA.

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