Facts & Figures:

• Intense fighting since the beginning of 2013 has increased humanitarian needs and restricted access to people in need.
• New population displacements are expected adding to those already internally displaced (240,000) and refugees (160,000) resulting from the 2012 fighting.
• 4.2 million people are at risk of food insecurity with 510,000 persons in need of immediate food assistance in the North.
• Mali has the second highest infant mortality rate in the world, after Somalia.
• EU humanitarian funding to Mali in 2012-13:
  ➢ C78 million from ECHO
  ➢ C42 million from Member States

Key messages

• Intense fighting followed by military intervention has resulted in a volatile humanitarian situation involving population displacements and restricted access for humanitarian organisations in certain areas.
• The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and several NGOs have called on all parties to the conflict to respect the safety of civilians as prescribed by International Humanitarian Law and to allow humanitarian organisations unrestricted access to people in need.
• In July 2012, humanitarian organisations working in Mali agreed on a Code of Conduct providing guidance on how to try to maintain secure access to beneficiaries and prevent the diversion of humanitarian aid.
• The intensification of the conflict is aggravating the on-going food and nutritional crisis with millions of Malians at risk of food insecurity in 2013. Despite a good harvest, prices of staple foods remain high, making them inaccessible to the poorest. Severe malnutrition rates remain above emergency thresholds in certain areas in the south while surveys could not be carried out in the north.
• The European Commission’s humanitarian aid of €78 million since last year has enabled UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and international NGOs to react rapidly to the growing humanitarian needs. Despite a challenging security situation in the north and centre of Mali, emergency organisations have continued to provide health care, medical supplies, nutrition services, food assistance, water and sanitation support, prevention and treatment of epidemics in Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu regions.
Humanitarian needs in Mali
The humanitarian community is faced with a complex emergency in Mali. The intensification and expansion of the conflict now involves numerous armies and affects both the north and the more populated centre of the country. Civilians are at risk of finding themselves between the hammer and the anvil, caught up in conflict or reprisal actions. As more people flee their homes, Malians previously displaced by last year's fighting – 160,000 refugees and 240,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) registered as of January 2013 – are joined by newcomers in camps set up in Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger and in villages and towns of southern Mali. This situation is adding even more pressure to host communities who are already suffering from a major nutrition crisis which continues to affect the Sahel. In all an estimated 10.8 million people will be at risk of hunger in the Sahel region in 2013, including 4.2 million Malians. In northern Mali, 510,000 people are estimated to be in need of immediate food assistance.

A large-scale emergency response is needed on two fronts, to address additional needs arising from the conflict and to limit the death toll as a result of food insecurity and malnutrition. Mali’s health system is in dire straits. Less than a third of children under five who suffered from severe acute malnutrition in 2012 received treatment whereas health facilities in the north lacked malaria drugs to treat numerous and severe cases. Tens of thousands of children's lives were most probably lost due to the combination of acute malnutrition and malaria. In 2013, the priority will be to provide life-saving treatment to as many severely malnourished children as possible despite extremely challenging conditions.

Humanitarian needs of Malian refugees in neighbouring countries
In Mauritania, a new wave of refugees has now joined the 54,000 refugees registered in M’bera camp since 2012. Many newcomers fled insecurity, fighting and raids in the centre of Mali. A nutritional survey has shown an alarming nutritional situation with malnutrition rates far above emergency levels. The delivery and type of food assistance to refugees in the camp requires urgent attention.
In Niger, half of the estimated 50,000 registered refugees are spread over 3 UNHCR assisted camps whereas others are spread over different sites closer to the border.
In Burkina Faso, the majority of the 38,000 refugees are staying in official sites some of which were recently moved further inland for security reasons.
In both Niger and Burkina Faso, ECHO partners are preparing for a possible new influx of refugees.

The European Union's Humanitarian Response
The EU’s substantial response to the crises in Mali has enabled partners to guarantee access to basic health and nutrition services, clean water, shelter and food for some of the most affected and vulnerable people, both inside Mali and in neighbouring countries. However, the operational context in which humanitarian organisations are working is extremely challenging and the aid provided fails to meet all basic needs.

EU Humanitarian response in Mali
The European Commission's humanitarian aid has enabled UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and international NGOs to react rapidly to the growing humanitarian needs. Despite a challenging security situation in the north and centre of Mali, emergency organisations have continued to provide health care, medical supplies, nutrition services, food assistance, water and sanitation support, prevention and treatment of epidemics in Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu regions. Some have had to temporarily evacuate or reduce teams, halt mobile clinics, but continue their operations nonetheless. The ICRC provided 400,000 people with food assistance in the north at the end of 2012 and the World Food Programme (WFP) plans more food assistance to 565,000 people. The ICRC’s support to the water supply system in Gao and Kidal ensured access to safe water for 60,000 people while UNICEF provided NGOs with hygiene kits and mosquito nets for 250,000 people. Several reference hospitals and more than 40 health centres continue to be supported. IDPs in Bamako and other areas in the south are also benefiting from EU aid in the form of food assistance and contributions for rent.

The response to the food and nutrition crisis included crisis mitigation and preparedness (Nov 2011 – Feb 2012) and was followed by an emergency response (March – Oct 2012). The planned transition to a recovery phase is not expected in 2013 given the extent of the crisis and the ensuing
impoverishment of the population. In 2012, a large scale 6-month operation implemented by the ICRC reached over 400,000 people affected by the food crises. 142,000 infants and breastfeeding mothers received additional feeding to prevent moderate acute malnutrition. 50,000 severely malnourished children received treatment, and the goal is to at least double that number in 2013, if the situation permits.

**Humanitarian response in neighbouring countries (Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso)**

UNHCR and other ECHO partners are working together in the refugee camps and arrival sites to cover refugees’ basic needs in terms of *shelter, food, nutrition, health, vaccination, water and sanitation, hygiene, non-food items and education*. Contingency plans are being rolled out to deal with a new influx of refugees caused by the latest developments in the conflict. Preparations include the identification of a new transit site just inside the Mauritanian border or the set up of new camps further from the Burkinabe and Nigerien borders.

**Outreach and coordination with humanitarian partners**

ECHO opened an office in Bamako in July 2012 and receives back up from ECHO's Regional Support Office (RSO) in Dakar. ECHO experts in Mali coordinate closely with partners and the humanitarian country team which is led by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Additional capacity to improve information management and inter-cluster coordination has been deployed. ECHO takes part in a Taskforce set up by OCHA to roll out contingency plans.

With regard to the nutrition crisis, the European Commission has been instrumental in launching the AGIR-Sahel initiative which attempts to help Mali and other countries of the Sahel, as well as West-African organizations and development partners, in building the resilience of people most vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition ([http://ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/resilience/resilience_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/resilience/resilience_en.htm)).

**Examples of humanitarian projects assisting Malians**

In western Mali ECHO is funding unconditional cash transfer programmes where people have been particularly affected by the drought and high cereal prices. One such pilot programme will reach close to 30,000 people and has been designed to include the poorest households. The cash provided enables them to buy their own food on the local markets and eat two meals per day.

As essential services have been disrupted in northern Mali, ECHO is funding the handful of partners that are managing to remain operational, to ensure water supply, medical care and food rations for the residents and displaced people in Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal regions.

Malnutrition continues to be rife among the 54,000 or so refugees in M’bera camp amidst the arid plains of eastern *Mauritania*. ECHO partners are working in a very harsh environment to meet refugees’ most basic needs. Shelter, food, water and primary health care are being provided. Given the isolated location of this camp, the European Commission is supporting a UN Humanitarian Air Service to transport humanitarian workers in an unsafe region.

**EU Humanitarian funding for Mali in 2012/13**

Since the beginning of 2012, the European Commission's humanitarian department (*ECHO*) has mobilised a total of **€78 million** in humanitarian aid for Mali, including an allocation of **€20 million** in early 2013 to assist victims of the conflict in northern Mali.

In addition to the Commission's assistance, **EU Member States committed **€42 million** of humanitarian aid to Malians since the beginning of 2012.

In 2012, the European Commission allocated a total of **€337 million** to the Sahel food crises, Mali included. Of this **€337 million**, **€173 million** were devoted to the immediate humanitarian response while **€164 million** were dedicated to development projects contributing to the emergency response to the food crises.