

HIGHLIGHTS

- Humanitarian situation is rapidly worsening in Central African Republic
- Despite good harvest in 2012, high prices reduce access to food for most vulnerable households
- 10.3 million people remain food insecure across the Sahel
- While Côte d'Ivoire transitions to development, pocket of humanitarian needs must be addressed

KEY FIGURES FOR THE SAHEL

Nb. of children <5 admitted in MAM facilities between January and February 579,000

Nb. of people who received food assistance in February 1,237,011

Nb. of people who received agriculture in February 879,980

FUNDING OF THE SAHEL STRATEGY

US\$1.7 billion
Requested

US\$420 million
Received*

*CAP and not earmarked contributions



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Crisis in Central African Republic worsens

The humanitarian situation in Central African Republic (CAR) continues to deteriorate following the takeover of Bangui and overthrow of the Government by the Séléka rebel alliance on 24 March, after three months of unrest.

OCHA and most aid organizations have reduced their presence in CAR to critical staff based in Bangui and operate both from there and remotely from Yaounde (Cameroon) with staff evacuated from CAR. The Séléka advance was accompanied by extensive looting, including of humanitarian offices and warehouses. Isolated incidents continue to be reported¹.

Timeline of events

10 December 2012	The Séléka, an alliance of several CAR rebel groups, launches an offensive and seize 2/3 of the territory
11 January 2013	Peace Agreements are signed in Libreville
24 March 2013	Resumption of hostilities and takeover of Bangui, the capital, by the Séléka.

New influx of CAR refugees in Chad

Before the seizure of Bangui, an estimated 173,000 people had been displaced within the country. Around 37,500 Central Africans have fled abroad since December 2012, most of them to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (30,800) and the others to Cameroon (1,000) and Chad (5,600). In Chad, the newly arrived refugees add up to an estimated 58,000 already in the country at the end of last year². Of concern, Chad, which also has to accommodate more than 288,000 refugees from Sudan, has received less than 1.6 per cent of its funding needs for refugees.

¹ See latest available CAR SITREP, issue 11, 12 April: <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/central-african-republic-situation-report-no-11-12-april-2013>

² UNHCR, 5 April 2013

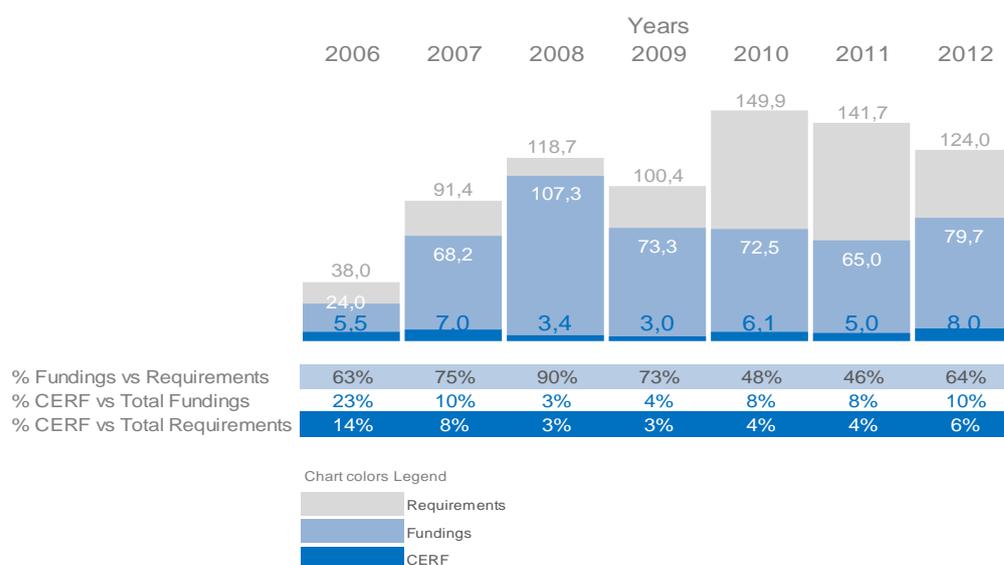
Additional funding urgently needed for CAR

Renewed violence in CAR comes at a time when it is estimated that more than 80,000 people will be affected by severe food shortages during the lean season from May to September, while 13,500 children under the age of 5 are at risk of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). These figures are likely to increase following the recent wave of fighting. Humanitarian assessments are on-going in Bangui to determine the number of people affected, the extent of damage caused to social infrastructures and priority needs, and assessments will be carried out in the rest of CAR as soon as access is restored. Assessments carried out in January and February under the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) indicate that the main needs are protection, food security, health, WASH and Education. With schools closed or occupied and teachers absent, at least 656,000 children are not able to go to school.

Humanitarian partners are currently revising the humanitarian response plan to take into account additional needs fuelled by the current crisis in the country. The Humanitarian Country Team launched an Emergency Response Plan on 18 March calling for \$42 million in additional funds to support the response to the crisis. This amount is expected to rise further in light of the current crisis, which has triggered massive unrest, displacement and human rights abuses across CAR.

As of 15 April, \$28.3 million have been received (22 per cent), while an additional \$18 million are available for humanitarian activities outside the CAP project. Over the last few years, the protracted crisis in CAR has faced severe funding challenges, with successive CAPs remaining underfunded, particularly in 2010 and 2011. Repeated allocations by the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) as part of the Underfunded Emergencies (UFE) Window have been made (see chart).

Funding requirements and allocations for CAR since 2006



Mali humanitarian needs on the rise

Humanitarian actors in Mali prioritize projects valued at \$152 million

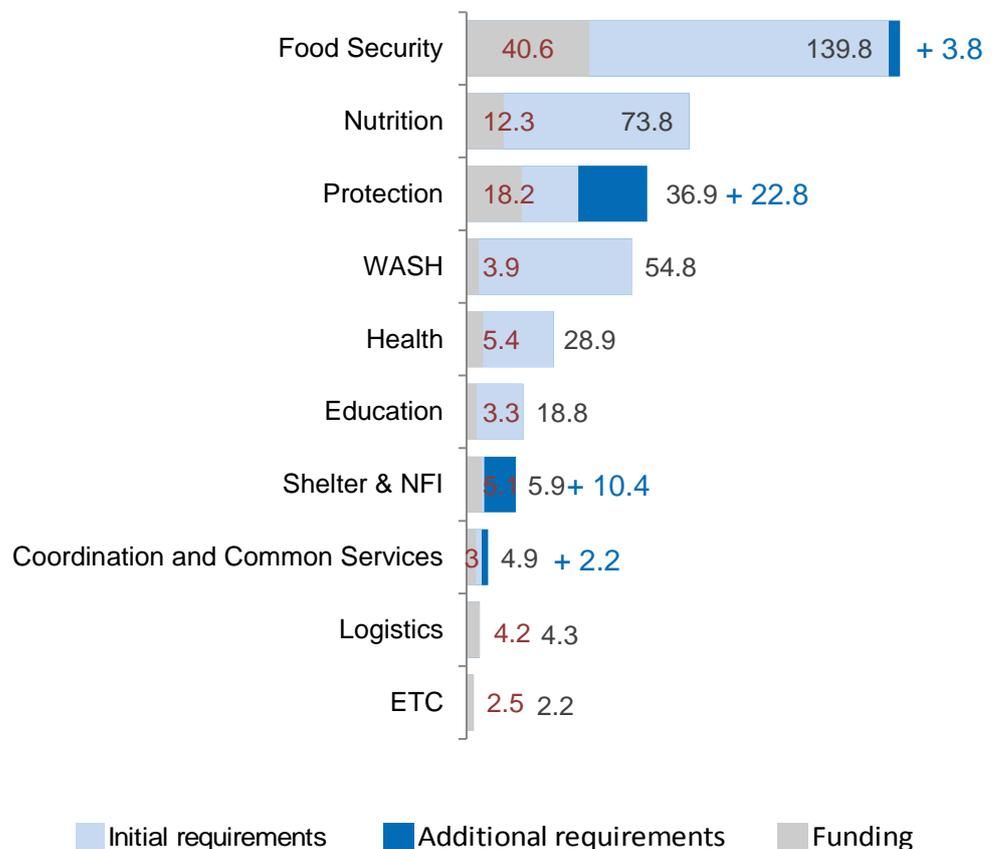
Humanitarian actors in Mali have agreed on a series of priority actions by sector for the period January-April 2013 and revised their funding requirements accordingly. The plan³ defines the priority projects for each sector, for a total cost of US\$ 152 million.

³ "Actions prioritaires et analyse des besoins humanitaires suite à l'escalade du conflit en janvier 2013 au centre et au nord du Mali », 11 mars 2013

Funding requirements for Mali have now increased from an initial 370 to \$409.5 million.

The on-going conflict in Mali has exacerbated pre-existing humanitarian issues and highlighted protection needs. It also revealed the extent of the humanitarian crisis in the northern regions, including a significant risk of food insecurity as a consequence of the disruption of supply roads and markets and subsequent price increases. The northern regions of Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu are facing a phase 3 “crisis” as per IPC classifications, where at least one out of five households faces severe food shortages, and malnutrition rates are higher than average. The situation in some districts of Kidal have reached emergency phase 4 (extreme food vulnerability, where at least one household out five faces extreme food shortages resulting in very high malnutrition and increasing mortality rates). If current trends continue, the entire north of Mali could fall into “emergency” phase.⁴

Mali: Initial and additional requirements requested against funding per sector (in \$ million)



Refugee flow to Niger accelerates

Population movements within Mali and across borders remain fluid. As of 20 March, there were more than 175,000 Malian refugees in neighbouring countries, including more than 37,000 who fled since the resumption of fighting in January, while an estimated 282,000 were internally displaced⁵.

⁴ See OCHA Mali SITREP N°30, 10 April 2013: <http://reliefweb.int/report/mali/mali-complex-emergency-situation-report-no-30-10-april-2013>

⁵ 175,211 refugees as of 15 March according to UNHCR, and 282,548 IDPs as of 20 March according to the “Commission nationale Mouvement de Populations (CMP)»

Since 28 March some 5,600 Malian refugees, mainly women and children, have crossed into Niger in the Tassarat district (Tahoua) region, according to UNHCR⁶. They are staying in Mentés and Midal, in remote desert areas where living conditions are very precarious due to the absence of safe drinkable water and health facilities. Needs assessments and surveys are being organized to ascertain other needs. Refugees say they fled because of continuing conflict in the Agar des Ifoghas (Kidal region), or for fear of possible reprisals by the Malian army. They added that more people are on their way.

According to IOM, more than 8,400 people have moved from the southern parts of Mali to the northern parts of the country formerly occupied by armed group between 12 January and 10 March⁷. However, the flow of returns decreased significantly from the last week of March to the first of April (924 to 694). At the same time, the number of people moving from northern areas southwards increased during the same period (94 to 234). Newly displaced persons explain their move by dire economic conditions, insecurity, the fear of possible reprisals and the lack of access to basic social services. In addition to the limited number of returns, it remains difficult to assess whether they are final or simply “go and see” visits. Further south, as the security situation gradually improves in the region of Mopti, State employees are beginning to return to cities such as Douentza, Konna and Yourarou.

**Malian Refugees in neighbouring countries
as of 8 April (source UNHCR⁸)**

Mauritania	74,148
Niger	50,000*
Burkina Faso	49,585

**Estimates pending the end of the Phase 2 registration process*

Donors resume development funding, a UN transition plan aims at building resilience

Several donors resumed their Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Mali, which had been suspended in the wake of the March 22, 2012 military coup⁹. In late February, the EU unblocked €250 million (\$325 million) in frozen development aid to Mali while France announced that some €150 million (\$195 million) will be disbursed. On 25 March, the German economic and development cooperation minister said that his country will give Mali 17 million euros (\$22) to support decentralization program and health sectors. Sweden announced in April that it would resume and increase its bilateral assistance to €30 million in 2013, instead of €18 million planned in 2012. The EU will hold an international aid conference on Mali on 15 May in Brussels to reinforce efforts to stabilize the country. In the meantime, United Nations agencies have adopted a joint framework (Cadre conjoint des Nations Unies d'appui à la transition - CCAT) to support the transition process and help the Government of Mali respond to the challenges of the political transition. The CCAT is based on the principles of resilience-building to increase the capacities of households and communities to cope with shocks by addressing the structural causes of vulnerability. It aims at guaranteeing synergies between humanitarian and development actors.

⁶ UNHCR, 5 April : Environ 5 600 nouveaux réfugiés maliens sont arrivés dans le nord du Niger : <http://reliefweb.int/report/niger/environ-5-600-nouveaux-r%C3%A9fugi%C3%A9s-maliens-sont-arriv%C3%A9s-dans-le-nord-du-niger>

⁷ IOM report published 29 March

⁸ UNCHR, Operation Mali Web portal: <http://data.unhcr.org/MaliSituation/regional.php>

Good harvest in West Africa, but food security and nutrition status need close monitoring

Flooding and insecurity drive Nigeria's production down

The latest regional consultation on the food and nutrition situation in the Sahel and West Africa (PREGEC)¹⁰ held from 12-14 March confirmed the good results of the 2012/2013 growing season in the Sahel and West Africa. Gross cereal production in the Sahel and West Africa is up by 16 per cent compared to 2011/2012 and 1 per cent compared to the last five-year average. Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad have recorded cereal surpluses while Senegal and Mauritania saw a 50 per cent increase in cereal productions compared to last year.

Nigeria is the only country in the region that did not record an increase in production compared to the average. An assessment carried in January by FEWS NET, OCHA, WFP, CILSS and NEMA shows that widespread flooding affecting Nigeria from July to October was more severe than anticipated with total cereal and tuber harvests being six per cent below average. With Nigeria accounting for about 50 per cent of the regional production, there may be significant consequences on supply and prices in neighbouring countries. The consultations also highlighted the significant challenges resulting from the impact of last year's food and nutrition crisis and the disruption of main cereal trade flows in northern Mali and northern Nigeria due to insecurity. As a consequence, food insecurity will continue to affect 10.3 million people in the Sahel region.

Food prices on the rise again

Market supply has improved since the end of the harvest, leading to significant price decline until January 2013. However, price levels have remained higher than the last five-year average and have been again on a seasonal rise since February. This is the case in some production areas of Niger and Nigeria as well as in structurally deficit production areas of northern Mali and the Sahel region of Burkina Faso. According to FEWS NET Nigeria' decline in production is affecting both local and regional markets. According to PREGEC, social and political unrest in Mali and Nigeria are also likely to exert strong pressure on the regional market and push prices further up.

Malnutrition rates above emergency thresholds in some areas of Sahel and West Africa

Malnutrition is reaching critical levels in many countries of the Sahel region and West Africa. Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) regularly exceeds the critical threshold of 15 per cent in some parts of Niger, Chad, Senegal, Mauritania, Nigeria and Guinea while chronic malnutrition rates surpass the emergency threshold 40 per cent in some regions of Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso and Chad. In the Sahel countries alone, 1.4 million children are at risk of dying from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) - up from one million in 2012. The rise in the number of children at risk of SAM is partly due to governments and agencies increased ability to conduct nutrition surveys in areas that were not covered recently, such as northern Nigeria, and to develop more thorough analysis in Senegal, Burkina Faso and Mauritania. Lower figures shown in recent surveys should not be misinterpreted: they confirm the cyclical character of malnutrition. A SMART Survey conducted nationwide in Mauritania in January, after the harvest, shows a GAM rate of 5.6 per cent, down from the 12.0 per cent in July 2012, during the lean season. In the Mbera refugee camp,

*“The social and political unrest in Mali and Nigeria are likely to exert strong pressure on the regional market and push prices further up. Access to food, which is already compromised for the most vulnerable households in the region, may worsen at the beginning of the lean period.”
(PREGEC, March 2013)*

¹⁰ PREGEC : Joint opinion on the food and nutrition situation in the Sahel and West Africa : “Confirmation of good harvests in the Sahel and West Africa, but nutrition surveillance is still required”, 14 March 2013. <http://www.agrhymet.ne/PDF/Avis-PREGEC-2013.pdf>

GAM remains at 13.1 per cent while the SAM rate remains at 3.1 per cent (vs. 20 per cent and 6 per cent respectively in July 2012).¹¹

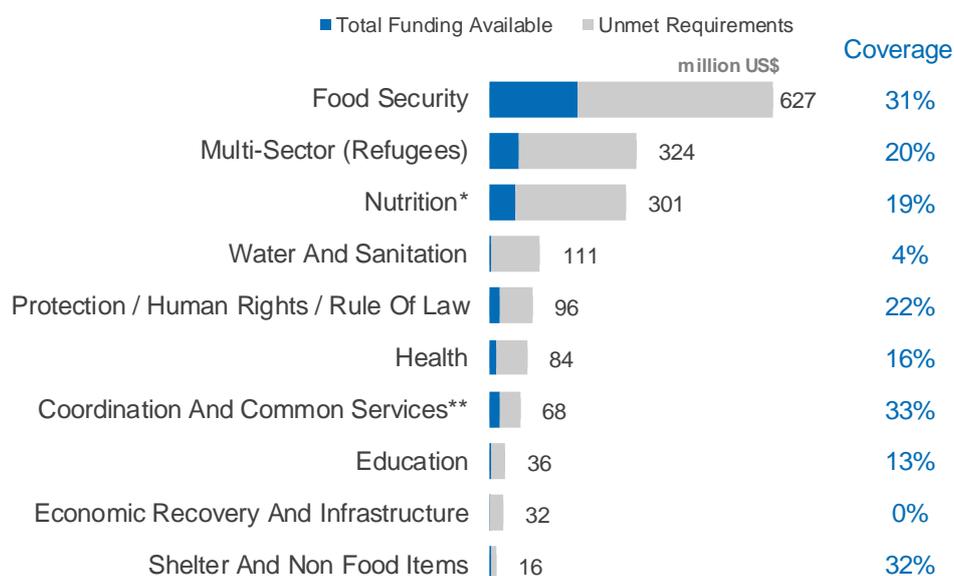
Human development in the Sahel amongst the lowest in the World

According to the latest annual UNDP Human Development Report¹², published in March, four Sahel countries – Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso and Mali- are amongst the six countries with the lowest Human development index (HDI) in the world. The Sahel country with the highest HDI, Cameroon, is ranked 150th. In Senegal, the Gambia and Mali, the HDI has decreased compared to 2011.

Funding for emergency needs in the Sahel falls short

As of 12 April, funding for the Sahel crisis reached 25 per cent of the \$1.698 billion requirements. At \$420 million, contributions to respond to the food and nutrition crisis in nine countries fall short of the amount requested to cover emergency needs estimated at \$716.5 million (or 77 per cent of the Food security and nutrition funding requirements of the 2013 Sahel Strategy). In anticipation of the high level meeting held in Rome on 20 February, the West Africa Regional Food Security and Nutrition Working Group sent a Donor Alert. Of the \$716.5 million requested urgently, \$99.2 million were requested by early April for agriculture interventions ahead of the rainy season (from June through September). An additional \$408.9 million were also identified for immediate food assistance, and \$208.5 million for nutrition.

Funding for the Sahel, by sectors, as of 12 April 2013



** For Senegal, the requirements and funding in this section include both health and nutrition. In Gambia, the breakdown is: Health \$3,132,861 and Nutrition \$3,355,000. In Cameroon: Health \$6,622,929 and Nutrition \$9,069,959. In Nigeria, Nutrition \$ 17,951,321 and in Senegal, Health \$17,570,520.

** For ease of presentation, Coordination, Logistics, and Emergency Telecommunications have been combined in this section. For details on projects in these clusters, please see the individual appeal pages at: <http://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=emerg-emergencies§ion=CE&year=2013>

¹¹ See UNICEF Mauritania Monthly Situation Report February 2013

¹² UNDP 2013 Human Development Report, 14 March 2013:

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/fr/home/librarypage/hdr/human-development-report-2013/>

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<http://sahelnow.blogspot.com>

Ivory Coast: coverage of residual humanitarian needs key to a successful transition to development

Renewed incidents in Western Côte d'Ivoire highlight land conflicts, hinder further returns

After a lull of several months, in March, two deadly attacks by unidentified armed men in Zilebly and Petit Guiglo in Western Côte d'Ivoire left at least 15 dead including 8 civilians. In both cases, the local population fled to the nearby main village of Bolequin, where they received assistance from authorities and humanitarian partners working in the region. Some of the displaced have since returned but the resumption of such incidents is a reminder of the fragility of the peace in a context of unsolved land ownership conflicts. It also contributes to a sense of insecurity that prevents further returns from refugees and hinders the capacity of resilience of those who have returned.

Humanitarian and national actors in Cote d'Ivoire have launched an \$82 million plan¹³ to respond to "residual humanitarian needs". As of 11 March, \$15.4 million were allocated

Since the end of post electoral crisis of 2010-2011, the country has been enjoying relative socioeconomic stability. However, despite all efforts by humanitarian actors, there are still residual humanitarian needs and pockets of vulnerability across the country, most of them in the West, the North and the South-East, as well as the highly populated district of Abidjan, which hosts a high number of returnees and IDPs. While more than 90 per cent of the IDPs and 60 per cent of the refugees have returned, more efforts must be made to address their needs and those of the remaining IDPs and refugees (86,000), in Liberia and Ghana.

"An adequate response to the residual needs identified is essential, otherwise the most vulnerable populations may fall in a situation of humanitarian crisis" - Ndolamb Ngokwey, RC/HC in Cote d'Ivoire

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OCHA humanitarian bulletins are available at unocha.org/rowca or www.reliefweb.int.**

¹³ « Côte d'Ivoire 2013 : Besoins humanitaire en phase de transition »