

and in Bossangoa. Of great concern is the sectarian dimension that the fighting and communal violence has taken, with Muslim and Christian communities partaking in violent acts once confined to ex-Seleka and anti-Balaka groups.

More than 200,000 new IDPs in Bangui

As of 24 December, humanitarian partners are reporting that, in total, around 639,000 people in the Central African Republic are internally displaced. Since the escalation on 5 December, 214,000 people have been newly displaced in Bangui alone. Most are congregating in some 40 sites, mostly hospitals, religious centres, and schools. 232,000 Central Africans live as refugees in neighbouring countries, more than 70,000 having fled in 2013. With a population of 4.6 million, one out of five Central Africans had to flee their homes.

Two million in need of humanitarian assistance

The recent violence compounds the acute vulnerabilities that Central Africans have had to endure in the past year. Two million people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance, and some 1.1 million to be food insecure. IDPs are the most affected, half of them suffering from moderate or severe food insecurity. IDPs require protection assistance, particularly psychosocial support and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV). Many protection abuses have been reported, including GBV, arbitrary executions and the recruitment of child soldiers. Security remains a serious concern. On-going conflict and high tension in the capital make the provision of services and assistance challenging. The most urgent needs of the newly displaced in Bangui include security and basic access to food, water, WASH services, medical assistance, and shelter.

System-wide response

On 11 December, the heads of the member agencies of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) declared the humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic a Level III emergency and activated a system-wide response for three months. The Emergency Response Coordinator, Valerie Amos, has released a USD\$10 million CERF for immediate life-saving assistance in the crisis in CAR.

80,000 IDPs in Bangui receive food assistance

UN and NGO partners have begun to distribute food. Since 5 December, WFP has provided food to more than 80,000 IDPs located in various sites in Bangui. On 14 December, IRC, CRS and Caritas started to provide 10-day food rations to IDPs in several smaller sites. On 13 and 14 December, WFP provided food assistance to more than 3,500 IDPs in Bossangoa. Protection Cluster partners have dispatched teams of Protection Monitors to circulate known IDP sites and alert partners to Protection violations. A telephone hotline for information on protection issues has been established. Health partners provide medical assistance to over 30 IDP sites, and UNICEF has provided supplies and medicine to cover the needs of around 10,000 people. In Bangui, an agreement with the national water agency provides water free of charge to affected people. On 10 December, ECHO launched a humanitarian air bridge from Cameroon's capital Douala to Bangui.

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ECOWAS Emergency Response Team deployed to Mali

At the end of November, ECOWAS has deployed a 20-member ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT) to Bamako to support the Malian government in providing much-needed assistance to populations affected by the country's conflict. The EERT is comprised of trained humanitarian specialist from 14 ECOWAS member states. The Team's deployment follows a joint training by ECOWAS the UN (OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP), and the Red Cross on Coordinated Rapid Needs Assessments (the MIRA approach) and International Disaster Response System held in September in Ouagadougou.

Worrisome situation in northeast Nigeria

Violence and its consequences affect up to six million people

The humanitarian situation in northeast Nigeria has been increasingly worrisome over the course of 2013 due to violent attacks and ongoing counter-insurgency operations in the region. Since May 2013, the Government of Nigeria has imposed a State of Emergency (SOE) in the three northeast states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa. In November, the SOE was extended for another six months. A Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) conducted in September by national authorities, the UN and the Nigerian Red Cross, reported that of the 11 million Nigerians living in the SOE states, up to six million have been affected by the insecurity, four million of whom live in Borno State.

Internally displaced persons and refugees

The scope of displacements in the northeast states remains hard to gauge due to limited access and difficult communication. The last available figures on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are 5,432 IDPs, as reported by UNHCR in August 2013. With regard to refugees, UNHCR reported in October that some 10,000 Nigerians fled the northeast to neighbouring countries Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. National authorities in Niger reported that 8,385 Nigerians had sought refuge in the Diffa region in Niger along with 28,947 Nigeriens also fleeing the violence. To address increasing security challenges attributed to insurgency and counter-insurgency activities, Nigeria and Niger agreed to establish a Joint Border Patrol Command. In October, Cameroonian authorities reportedly attempted the refoulement of 111 Nigerian refugees from Northern Cameroon. In response, UNHCR issued a statement urging countries in the region against forced returns to Nigeria.

Access increasingly difficult

Most international partners have withdrawn from the northeast due to security threats. Information on the situation is scarce. In some areas (i.e. Borno state), access to mobile phone and radio communications is limited. Only few programs are continuing, with ICRC currently implementing a cash transfer program in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state, and *Action Contre le Faim* (ACF) providing emergency nutrition in Yobe. UNHCR is monitoring the situation from Diffa in Niger.

In November, the State of Emergency was extended for an additional six months. The same month, the United States government formally designated Boko Haram a foreign terrorist organization and the ICC categorized the conflict in the northeast as a civil war. Given the insurgent and counter-insurgent operations that marked the first six months of the SOE, on-going insecurity is likely to continue through next year at a high human cost. Protection, malnutrition and food insecurity will remain humanitarian priorities, especially for the northeast.

Floods: Overview 2013

Since the last reporting in September 2013, heavy rains/floods have affected an additional 217,450 persons in ten countries in West and Central Africa, bringing the year-end total of affected populations to 540,846. 113 people have been killed, and 48,000 displaced.

Adding to the human toll, 56,946 homes have been damaged or destroyed, and 32,498 hectares of land flooded, in addition to 2,217 farmlands in Nigeria. Damage to the population and property have all shown an upwards trend since the September reporting.

Sahel - Food security and nutrition in 2013

In 2013, the food security situation in the Sahel remained critical, due to recurrent droughts and erratic rainfalls over the last years that weakened and destroyed the livelihoods of vulnerable people. Aggravating factors such as high food prices, population displacements and floods have further affected the coping capacities of food insecure households, creating an increased need of assistance in the affected communities.

Humanitarian actors working on a three-year response plan for the Sahel

From 28 – 29 November, the UN Assistant Secretary-General and Regional Humanitarian Coordinator in the Sahel, Robert Piper convened a workshop on the Sahel. During two days, humanitarian actors, donors and Government representatives from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and The Gambia discussed and consolidated the anticipated needs of the Sahel countries and defined strategic objectives for the humanitarian response.

Based on the regional humanitarian needs overview which includes projections for 2014, humanitarian actors will develop a three-year Strategic Response Plan for the Sahel. The Plan will be launched in February, covering all nine Sahel countries and replacing the national Consolidated Appeal Processes (CAP) used in previous years. It aims at supporting governments and humanitarians in the planning, coordination and implementation of their humanitarian work. This includes the improved identification and targeting of vulnerable populations in the Sahel, ensuring early response to emergencies and life-saving assistance for people in need, and building communities' capacity to cope with future crises.

Building populations' resilience to break hunger cycle

In 2013, WFP has put the emphasis on a more integrated approach to building resilience that goes beyond food security and nutrition to break the inter-generational cycle of hunger and malnutrition among the poorest and most vulnerable in West Africa. This approach therefore requires partners to build programmes together. Using its deep field presence and ability to partner with a broad set of government institutions, NGOs and UN agencies, the resilience agenda puts WFP in a unique position and juncture to execute well integrated responses. The interventions are grouped into two mutually reinforcing and inter-related pillars: A) development of human capital; and B) strengthening access to food. WFP has thus sought to increase livelihood opportunities for vulnerable households/communities and enhance the capacity to cope with new shocks through a range of activities focusing on productive assets, improving/supporting local food production and activities geared towards improving degraded environments.

Conflict in Mali complicates food relief

In Mali, the conflict in the North has complicated efforts to bring food relief and build resilience. The consequences of the 2012 conflict are still being felt and the security situation in the North of the country remains volatile. The conflict has also forced thousands of families to flee their homes, increasing the numbers of people needing food assistance. But humanitarian partners are managing to assist many of these families, both inside Mali and in neighboring countries.

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Agriculture assistance provided to 2.5 million people in 2013

As of end October 2013, more than 2.5 million individuals have been assisted by FAO and other partners from the agriculture sector in Burkina Faso, Mali,



Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Chad thanks to funds received through the 2013 humanitarian appeals (CAPs) and national response plans. The support provided has enabled smallholder farmers and pastoralists, many of whom have lost part, or all, of their productive assets during the 2012 crisis, to grow their own food and rebuild their livelihoods as quickly as possible.

Grow food and rebuild livelihoods

The interventions were based on (i) the protection and early recovery of productive assets through the distribution of agricultural inputs to farmers (cereals and vegetable seeds, fertilizers, tools, fencing material, etc.) and support to pastoralists in protecting livestock and increasing animal production through animal health campaigns, restocking, distribution of animal feed and food supplements. These interventions were complemented by (ii) capacity building activities on Disaster Risk Reduction and trainings on good practices in agriculture and livestock management.

Furthermore, initiatives were implemented to (iii) rehabilitate and create an enabling environment for livelihoods through the support for soil and water conservation and restoration of degraded lands, as well as strengthening of the food chain and marketing sector and integrated food nutrition activities. Partners from the agricultural sector also supported early warning and preparedness activities focused on the strengthening of national early warning systems, support to food security analysis (including to the “Cadre Harmonisé”) as well as national crop and market assessments.

Agriculture and pastoral activities underfunded

While the assistance has been crucial in responding to the immediate needs of the assisted beneficiaries, agriculture and pastoral activities have been underfunded (46 per cent as of 06 December 2013). An adequate funding of the main cropping season would have enabled a larger number of farmers to benefit from the average harvests of 2013-14 contributing to reduce their vulnerability for 2014. In order to reduce the food insecurity burden in the Sahel, FAO and its partners consider that additional and timely efforts need to be done in 2014 to strengthen the livelihoods and enhance the resilience of poor and very poor households in the region.

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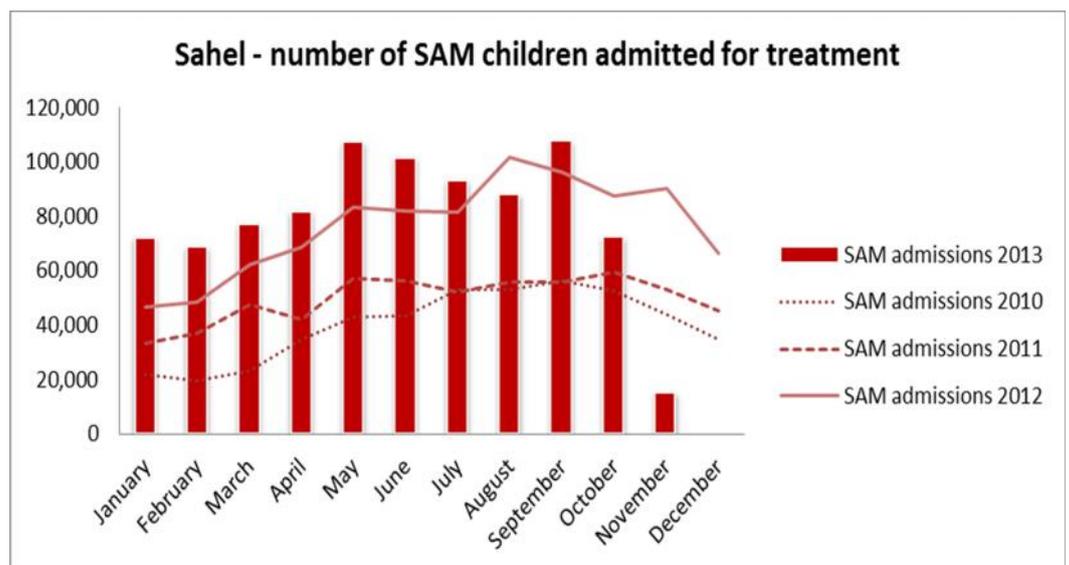
1.4 million severely acute malnourished children

The nutritional status of children in the Sahel is precarious. Malnutrition prevalence remains alarming among children under five years of age in the Sahel region not only at the peak of the lean season, but also in post-harvest periods. It is well established that under-nutrition compromises the health, survival and development of children and is associated with 45% of all child deaths (Lancet 2013). The causes of this appalling situation are diverse, complex, and linked to both chronic poverty and shocks.



In 2013 an estimated five million children from 6 to 59 months of age suffered from acute malnutrition across the Sahel region, of which over 1.4 million severely acute malnourished children facing higher risk of dying. This enormous caseload calls for a comprehensive response in life-saving treatment and prevention.

As of October 2013, UNICEF, WHO and Nutrition partners (international and national NGOs) were able to give support to national health systems and facilities to offer adequate treatment to 883,000 severely acute malnourished children (SAM). As of November 2013, WFP and partners delivered target supplementary feeding (TSF) activities to treat over one million of moderately acute malnourished children aged 6-59 months (MAM) and 500,000 malnourished pregnant and lactating women across the Sahel. WFP also implemented blanket supplementary feeding (BSF) during the lean season to prevent acute malnutrition among children aged 6-23 months and pregnant and nursing mothers in Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger, Mali, Mauritania, and The Gambia. According to the most recent figures available, over 500,000 children aged 6-23 months and 100,000 pregnant and lactating women have been assisted.



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GAM prevalence above 15 per cent in several regions

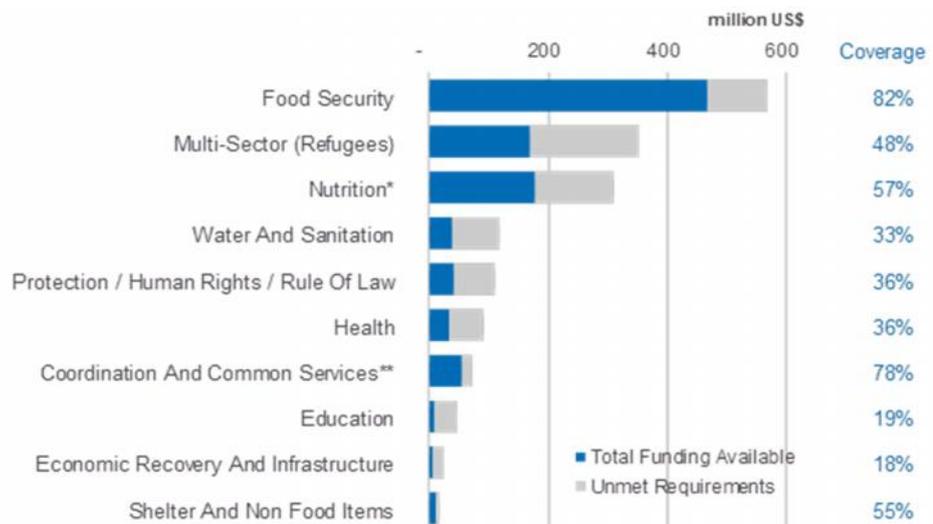
At the end of 2013, the nutrition situation is still considered serious in the Sahel and particularly in Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal where the prevalence of GAM among children under five years ranges between 10-14 per cent and above 15 per cent in several regions. This situation is aggravated by seasonal stress, epidemics, structural vulnerabilities, displacement of population, high food prices, and limited access to basic services.

4.8 million children expected to suffer from GAM in 2014

Such prevalence and stresses translates to a burden of 4.8 million children affected by acute malnutrition in 2014 including 1.5 million children suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition, with a ten times higher risk of dying as compared to non-acutely malnourished children. While the principal aim of the response is to prevent excess mortality and morbidity resulting from acute malnutrition, the 2014 response will put stronger emphasis to prevention of all forms of under-nutrition in children (both boys and girls, in all regions) through improved family care and nutrition practice aiming to reduce the burden of children affected as much as possible and, with a long term vision, to protect cognitive and productive capacity of the next active generation.

Funding Status Overview

Funding at 59 per cent towards the end of 2013



To date, the Sahel has received 59 per cent (\$1.04 billion) of the USD\$1.71 billion requested, a nearly eight per cent increase as compared to November. Very slight increases are noted in different sectors, such as Food Security and Nutrition. However, WASH, Agriculture and Education remain seriously underfunded. Additional and more balanced funding is needed to address the pressing needs of the Sahel and to move people out of the crisis.

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