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HIGHLIGHTS

- Humanitarian partners seek US\$2 billion for Sahel response in 2016.
- 4.5 million people displaced in the Sahel, a threefold increase in two years.
- Around 4.4 million people in Lake Chad Basins need emergency food assistance
- Almost 50,000 people have been displaced by recent violence in CAR, human rights violation continues.
- Ebola resurfaces in Liberia. One dead and two recovered

Humanitarian partners seek US\$2 billion for Sahel

UN agencies and other humanitarian partners on 9 December launched the 2016 Sahel humanitarian appeal in Dakar, requesting US\$1.98 billion to provide vital assistance to millions of people affected by crises in nine countries across the Sahel region. This represents a tenth of the humanitarian response globally for 2016.

“In the Sahel, the combined effects of climate change, abject poverty, fast population growth and a tormenting rise in violence and insecurity dangerously undermine the lives, assets and future prospects of some of the most vulnerable communities in the world,” said Toby Lanzer, Assistant Secretary-General and Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel, speaking at the launch.

KEY FIGURES

Food insecure people in 2016 in Sahel	23.5 million
No. of Ebola cases in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone since 20 November	0
People at risk of epidemics targeted for assistance in the Sahel	6.8 million
Children at risk of malnutrition in 2016	5.9 million

FUNDING OF THE SAHEL STRATEGY

US\$1.976 billion requested in 2015
\$820 million received (in SRP)



Mounting humanitarian need is the most visible symptom of the triple crisis of poverty, insecurity and climate change that plagues the Sahel region

Food insecurity and malnutrition remains high

In the coming year, it is projected that acute malnutrition will threaten the lives and development of 5.9 million under 5 children, of whom 1.9 million will require urgent treatment for severe acute malnutrition. Despite better harvests this year, an estimated 23.5 million people are expected to be food insecure, among them at least six million will need urgent food assistance (Phase 3 and above of the Cadre Harmonisé).

While the levels of food insecurity have significantly decreased in Senegal and The Gambia, positive harvest projections can only partly offset the levels of chronic food insecurity. Chad, Mauritania, Mali and Niger will see levels of food insecurity similar to the past year. Across the Lake Chad Basin, violence insecurity and displacements are taking a toll on communities' livelihoods and led to a dramatic increase of the number of food insecure people, with more than 4.4 million people face severe food insecurity.

"While we cannot prevent droughts or floods occurring, we can certainly be prepared and mitigate their impacts. Prevention and early action does not only limit human suffering and protect livelihoods, but also reduces the cost of humanitarian operations overtime," said Vincent Martin, head of the sub-regional resilience and emergency office for West Africa and FAO representative for Senegal.

"One dollar invested in timely emergency agricultural support, between 10 and 20 dollars can be saved in food assistance later in the year," he pointed out.

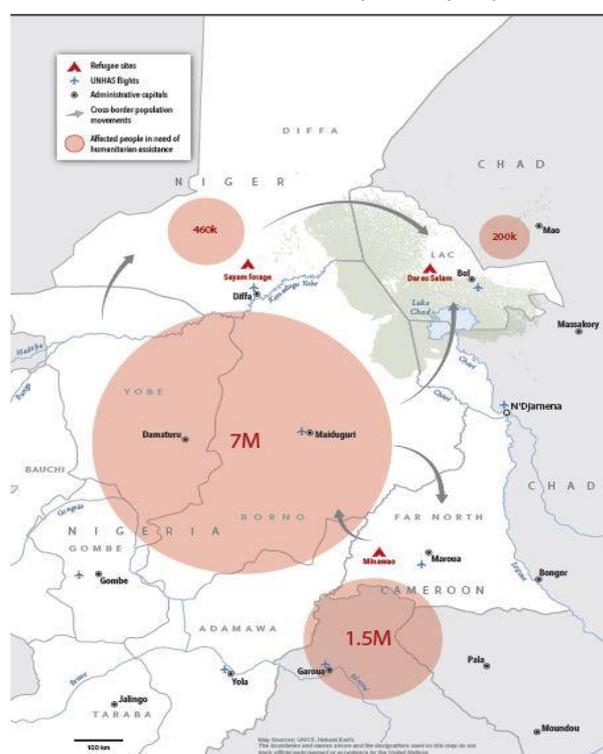
Surge in insecurity and displacement compound existing vulnerabilities

A spike in violence has worsened the already dire situation in the region and led to new peaks of displacement. Today, 4.5 million people have been forced from their homes, representing a threefold increase in less than two years. Armed attacks and insecurity in Mali continue to prevent some 200,000 people from returning home, while the violence across the Lake Chad Basin accounts for more than half of the displaced people in the Sahel.

"The world has sadly not yet woken up to the scale of the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin. 30 million people live in areas affected by Boko Haram's senseless acts of terrorism. Their random targeting leaves entire populations in fear and 2.5 million have so far had to flee from their homes," noted Jan Egeland, secretary-general of the Norwegian Refugee Council, speaking in Oslo.

The combined effect of the pervasive insecurity and the underlying severe vulnerability is translating into record numbers of people in need of emergency relief. As of December 2015, an estimated 9.1 million people – almost one in three – need humanitarian assistance and protection.

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Partnerships to tackle the root causes of the recurring crises

“Mounting humanitarian need is the most visible symptom of the triple crisis of poverty, insecurity and climate change that plagues the Sahel region,” said Mr. Lanzer. “As humanitarians, we will do our part, delivering essential food, health care, safe water and sanitation to families; treating children from malnutrition and striving so they can stay in schools despite the odds. We also pledge to work with countries and organisations engaged in development and stabilization programmes, without which humanitarian aid will be required indefinitely.”

The 2016 appeal forms part of Sahel Strategic Response Plan 2014 - 2016, a regional multi-year strategy which emphasizes early response and closer partnerships with Governments and development organizations. It includes plans for each of the nine countries and involves more than 100 organizations - national and international - to save lives and protect the assets of the most vulnerable.

Humanitarian action in 2016

For 2016, humanitarian agencies in the Sahel are appealing for USD\$1.98 billion to assist 7.7 million food-insecure people, 4.5 million displaced persons, 7 million people at risk of epidemics, treat 3.1 million acutely malnourished children and support 8.1 million people currently lacking adequate access to water and hygiene across nine countries.

Responding to the regional impact of the crises in Mali and the Lake Chad basin represents just less than half of the funding requirements for the region in 2016.

An online version of the Sahel Humanitarian Response Plan 2016, is available both in French and English at <http://bit.ly/1U1CjSJ>

Conflict ups food insecurity in Lake Chad Basin

Harvests in the current season are slightly lower than the five-year average in Chad due to the late start of the rainy season



*Conflict has disrupted agriculture and other livelihood activities
OCHA/Ivo Brandau*

Boko Haram’s near-daily attacks on remote villages around Lake Chad and towns in north-eastern Nigeria continue to claim lives, cause displacement and deprivation. The suicide bombings, raids and security measures such as border closures and halted trade have also heightened food insecurity among households in the conflict-hit areas.

Around 4.4 million people in areas affected by the conflict in Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria require urgent food assistance. Eighty per cent of them live in north-eastern Nigerian states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe, according to an assessment by the Cadre Harmonisé. An estimated 54,000 people in Borno State have reached the highest threshold of food insecurity, and face a looming threat of famine.

Nearly 250,000 children under 5 years suffer from severe acute malnutrition and could die if no assistance is provided urgently. In Cameroon, the number of severely acute malnourished children has, for the first time in several years, surpassed the emergency 2 per cent threshold in the conflict-affected areas.

Violence by Boko Haram combined with military operations by the armies of the four Lake Chad countries against the armed group has displaced around 2.5 million people, of

In Cameroon, the number of severely food insecure people in need of immediate assistance increased by more than 400 per cent in the past six months, from 53,000 to over 200,000 people affected

whom an estimated 1.4 million are children. Over 80 per cent of the displaced have sought refuge with host communities, placing an unsustainable strain on their already meagre resources.

Low harvest

Although ongoing harvests between October and December are expected improve food availability and access, the season's overall production is expected to once again be well below average in northeast Nigeria, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET). Parts of western Yobe, northern Adamawa, much of Borno as well as informal settlement areas hosting internally displaced persons (IDP) in greater Maiduguri will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) between now and March 2016, FEWSNET warned.

In Chad, harvests are slightly lower than the five-year average due to the late start of the rainy season and fewer fields cultivated as the rains ended earlier in certain areas, FEWSNET said. Cereal stocks and dairy output in the Lake region, notably in Kanem, Bahr El Ghazel, Bartha, Nord Guerra and Wadi Fira are expected to drop earlier than usual, and as early as from January 2016. Poor families will therefore rely on markets and will therefore face stress levels of food insecurity (IPC 2).

Rising food insecurity

In Cameroon's Far North region, food insecurity has increased dramatically over the past three months particularly in Logone et Chari, Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga departments most affected by Boko Haram violence. Results of the Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) conducted in September 2015 confirm signals of a spike in food insecurity. Compared to the June EFSA, the number of food insecure has more than doubled from around 570,000 to 1.4 million people affected. The number of severely food insecure people who require immediate assistance increased by more than 400 per cent from 53,000 to over 200,000 in six months.

Prospects for the upcoming agricultural season looks bleak, with a projected 200,000 MT cereal deficit compared to 130,000 MT recorded last year. As a result, vulnerable communities such IDPs and those returning from displacement will struggle to feed themselves and will be forced to reduce meals or adopt other negative coping mechanisms due to lack of income and means to restart farming.

Food insecurity in Lake Chad Basin

	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 2 - 5	Phase 3 - 5
Cameroon	1,215,263	202,544	0	0	1,417,807	202,544
Chad	166,826	116,932	0	0	283,758	116,932
Niger	0	143,108	4,455	0	147,563	147,563
Nigeria	4,340,370	3,092,203	820,365	54,242	8,307,180	3,966,810
Total	5,722,459	3,554,787	824,820	54,242	10,156,308	4,433,849

Source: Cadre Harmonisé, EFSA
Cameroon

CAR grappling with recurrent violence

Protection of civilians remains a major concern despite the efforts of international forces, the national police and gendarmerie to restore peace and security in the country

Since the outbreak of violence in the capital Bangui on 26 September that left at least 90 people dead and more than 40,000 displaced, the Central African Republic (CAR) has been hit by waves of attacks targeting civilians, including displaced populations and humanitarian organizations as well.



Due to the worsening insecurity and increasing intercommunal violence, almost 50,000 people have been newly displaced recently, adding to the existing 400,000 IDPs living in camps and host communities
OCHA/Gemma Cortes

In November, at least 10 people were killed and several wounded when armed assailants attacked a camp for the displaced in the central Batangafo area. Around the same time, another group of attackers raided a camp hosting internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Bambari, killing at least three people, including a child. They also burned down more than 30 shelters. These incidents illustrate the fragile and volatile security situation that prevails in the country.

Violent attacks are regular and humanitarian organizations have also been targeted. Since the start of 2015, more than 200 attacks have been perpetrated against humanitarian organizations.

The latest surge of violence comes as the country prepares to hold general elections on 27 December. The polls were initially set for October, but were postponed due to the recent clashes. The elections are hoped to restore democratic order and help the country rebuild from the current crisis that was triggered by the March 2013 ouster of then president François Bozizé.

Protection of civilians

The protection of civilians remains a major concern despite the efforts of international forces, the national police and gendarmerie to restore peace and security in the country. The humanitarian community continues to implement activities to foster social cohesion and peaceful coexistence among all Central Africans amid significant security challenges.

Recurrent attacks on civilians are characterized by serious human rights violations such as sexual violence against women and children, recruitment of children, separation of families, property damage and looting and loss of livelihoods. The breakdown of law and order particularly affects women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. These acts are committed within an atmosphere of total impunity since the judicial system is not functioning in most regions outside of Bangui.

In its human rights report published on 11 December, MINUSCA detailed 775 cases of human rights violations affecting at least 785 victims, including 88 women as well as 43 children, of which 18 boys and 25 girls, according to the report that covers the period between 15 September 2014 and 31 May 2015. Civilians bear the brunt of the majority of human rights violations and abuses committed by armed groups, including killings,

The breakdown of law and order particularly affects women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. These acts are committed within an atmosphere of total impunity.

hostage-taking, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, sexual and gender-based violence, or restrictions of freedom of movement

Ebola re-emerges in Liberia

Almost three months after Liberia was declared free of Ebola, the country recorded its first death from the virus on 23 November. It was also the first such fatality since July. The patient was a 15-year-old boy who died four days after testing positive. His father and brother, who were also infected, were treated and discharged on 3 December.

Liberia is carrying out an experimental Ebola vaccination on a voluntary basis to some 900 people who may have been exposed to the virus during the recent flare up

Liberia has now started the 42-day countdown to being declared free of the virus for a third time. The source of the infection is still being investigated. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health began offering an experimental Ebola vaccine on a voluntary basis to some 900 people who may have been exposed to the virus in the outbreak.

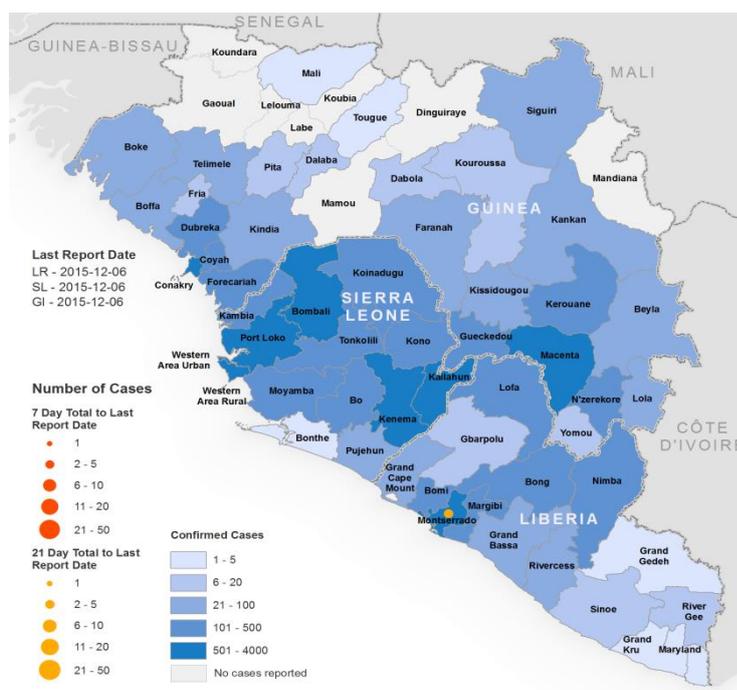
Sierra Leone declared free of Ebola

In neighbouring Sierra Leone, World Health Organization (WHO) declared the end of the outbreak on 7 November. The country has started a 90-day phase of enhanced surveillance that ends on 6 February 2016. WHO reaffirmed that it will maintain an enhanced presence in Sierra Leone as the response transitions from outbreak control to supporting vigilance and the recovery of essential health services.

No cases in Guinea since October

The last Ebola patient in Guinea tested negative for the second time on 16 November. Guinea has now started the 42-day countdown to declaring the end of Ebola transmission. If no new cases emerge, the end of such transmission will be declared on 28 December.

Separately, the Guinean Government, supported by WHO and UNICEF, held a workshop on 27 November on accelerated access to vaccines against viral haemorrhagic fevers and other emerging epidemics with the aim of easing access to affordable, easily available and quality vaccines to prevent emerging diseases with an epidemic potential. The meeting also assessed current research efforts, constraints in the production and marketing of vaccines and approval and certification procedures of medicines or vaccines in case of an epidemiological emergency.



WHO, 9 December 2015

Sahel Funding Status Overview

2015 Sahel Appeal Funded at 42 percent



For 2015, the US\$1.976 billion Sahel Humanitarian Strategic Response Plan had received \$820 million, representing 42 per cent of the year's requirements. In addition, funding to humanitarian activities recorded outside the joint Strategic Response Plan was at \$318 million. In 2015, donors contributed a total of \$1.1 billion to humanitarian operations in the Sahel. The United States, the European Union and Japan are the top three donors.

Nigeria and Mauritania were best funded appeals in 2015, receiving over 50 per cent of their requirements. The Gambia and Senegal count among the least funded country appeals, receiving less than a third of their requirements. Funding levels remained largely uneven across sectors of the response with the sectors of education, health, WASH and agriculture receiving all less than 20 per cent of their requirements this year.

The new Sahel humanitarian appeal for 2016 was launched on 9 December 2015 and calls for \$1.98 billion to provide vital assistance to millions of people affected by crises in nine countries across Africa's Sahel region.