

**AID MUST BE STEPPED UP TO MEET UNPRECEDENTED EMERGENCY IN
BURKINA FASO**

Ouagadougou, 5 March 2019 - An unprecedented humanitarian emergency is unfolding in Burkina Faso where armed violence and insecurity have sparked massive population displacement and heightened adversity among some of the country's most vulnerable communities. To save lives and reduce suffering, humanitarian assistance must be ramped up immediately.

“Thousands of families continue to flee due to persistent insecurity. We must be by their side, providing shelter, water, food and healthcare timely and sufficiently,” said UN Assistant-Secretary General and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ursula Mueller. “Burkina Faso authorities and humanitarian actors have quickly provided assistance, however, more has to be done to meet growing needs of the affected people wherever they may be. I urge all actors to respect the neutrality of aid workers and do their utmost to ensure the protection of communities.”

Ms. Mueller, who visited Burkina Faso on 2 – 5 March, met with displaced families and other affected communities. She also held talks with President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré and top Government officials on ways to enhance humanitarian assistance.

The violence has displaced over 100,000 people, more than half of them in the first two months of 2019. Some 150,000 children are deprived of education, and around 120,000 people have no access to medical care in the violence-affected regions. Around 670,000 people are at risk of food insecurity, and 130,000 children are threatened by severe acute malnutrition this year.

“Our common goal is to safeguard the dignity and the protection of the affected population, and we are determined and committed to see this through. I urge all technical and financial partners, the private sector and the civil society to support us in implementing the emergency relief plan,” said Héléne Marie Laurence Ilboudo/Marchal, Minister in charge of humanitarian action.

In February, the Government and the aid community launched an emergency plan, appealing for US\$100 million to assist some 900,000 people hardest-hit by the crisis. On 4 March, the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocated US\$4 million available within 72 hours to boost urgent assistance to 25,000 internally displaced persons, and 5,000 people in host communities in Centre-Nord and Sahel regions, as well as services for 15,500 women and girls.

“As we strive to alleviate suffering, we are also seeking ways to reduce and end recurrent humanitarian needs. Our efforts must look beyond the current humanitarian emergency and sustainably address the causes of the crisis,” said Metsi Makhetha, the UN Resident Coordinator for Burkina Faso. “The affected communities must not only be able to regain their livelihoods, but be given the opportunity to prosper and build a better future for themselves and their children.”

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