

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## **BURKINA-FASO, CHAD, MALI, MAURITANIA AND NIGER: FOOD SECURITY (DROUGHT)**

20 April, 2001

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*This Information Bulletin is:*

- *being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal. On-line funding: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org).*

### ***The Situation***

The countries of the Sahel region are regularly subject to fluctuations in rainfall, with a substantial effect on crop production and the standard of living. After two years of normal rainfall and normal food production with a reduced reliance on external assistance, several of the Sahelian countries faced lower rainfall during 2000. The most-affected areas are within Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Responding to the needs, donors are providing food aid to meet most food deficits in the target countries (please see table 1 below for current estimated food aid needs), but Red Cross and Crescent National Societies reports indicate that vulnerable groups who are not currently benefiting from subsidized food or food-for-work schemes established by governmental and inter-governmental agencies, and localized crop failure has led to severe food shortages in some mainly semi-desert areas, resulting in migration out of rural areas towards the more populated areas in search of jobs. Working in full coordination with other agencies, Red Cross and Red Crescent efforts are underway to assess the need to distribute food to complement existing assistance during the lean season (July-September) to 23,000 acutely vulnerable persons identified by the five National Societies -- beneficiaries who are not receiving supplementary food from other sources.

Current food aid needs in MT<sup>1</sup>

Burkina Faso	65,000
Chad	15,000
Mali	10,000
Mauritania	25,000
Niger	27,000

1. Wheat, rice and coarse grains combined

Source : FAO/GIEWS - April 2001

(<http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/>)

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

- **Burkina Faso:** The Burkina Faso Red Cross has initiated food distributions to vulnerable populations in the central plateau region. An assessment of the overall food security situation had been conducted by the National Society and a specific assessment of returnees from the Ivory Coast is currently underway in the southern regions in cooperation with the ICRC.
- **Chad:** The National Society in Chad has conducted a comprehensive food security assessment and has produced a detailed plan of action, coordinating extensively with the National Committee for Disaster Assistance (CONASI), Secours Catholique pour le Development (SECADEV) and the World Food Program.
- **Mali:** The Red Cross of Mali recently finalized a Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) which indicates a “significant deficit of cereal”, a high level of livestock mortality, and a decreasing amount of area useable as pasture in the Gao region.
- **Mauritania:** The Mauritanian Red Crescent, a member of the National Food Security Committee, has carried out an evaluation mission in the Assaba, Brakna, Gorgol, Tagant, Nouckchott, Inchiri and Adrar regions. The vulnerability and capacity assessment carried out by the National Society in 2000 had already identified these areas as being at risk of food insecurity, and the Mauritania Red Crescent has been requested by the Government to provide assistance to 17,361 vulnerable persons.
- **Niger:** The National Society in Niger conducted a VCA in October 1999 in two villages within the Filingue district which indicated soil deterioration increasing food insecurity provoking a rural exodus. With the support of the Federation’s Regional Disaster Preparedness Delegate a specific food security assessment was conducted in the same district in March 2001 and a National Society plan of action was formulated.

For a full description of National Society profiles, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

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*All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

*For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

*For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation’s Annual Appeal.*

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