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Regional response framework

Food crisis in the Sahel



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



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1. Summary

The food insecurity situation in the Sahel is based on a number of causes. It builds on structural factors, such as poverty, poor education levels, lack of access to basic services, political instability and conflicts in the region, poor governance, weak economies dependent on international markets, high population growth, increased urbanisation and rural exodus. This affects the already chronic status of many lowland farmers and pastoralists, who live in poor conditions and usually suffer from food shortages during lean season. In most of the countries in the region, there have been recurrent crises with increasing regularity over the last decade. The cumulative effects of repeated drought and food insecurity have reduced the coping strategies of the most vulnerable, giving them no time or chance to recover.

Numbers affected (*source: FAO*)

Country	Population at risk ¹	% population food insecure	RCRC targeted population (persons)
Burkina Faso	2.8 million	16%	120,000
Chad	3.6 million	28%	123,000
Mali	3.5 million	23%	10,640 (initial response)
Mauritania	700,000	22%	42,000
Niger	6.4 million	41%	350,000
Senegal	739,000	5.6%	258,000
The Gambia	601,850	35%	51,000
Total	18,340,850		954,640

2. Red Cross and Red Crescent Actions

Burkina Faso is providing support to 120,000 people through food vouchers, animal feed, and emergency health services. Farming households will receive seeds, volunteers will screen infants and pregnant women for malnutrition. Communal gardens will be created. Good experience in long term food security programmes, supported by ongoing projects with Belgian Red Cross and Andorra Red Cross.

Chad has already distributed food and supplementary feeding products to 25,000 people. Emergency appeal was launched to target 123,000 people and focus on emergency health (malnutrition), food assistance, seeds and tools distribution and long term projects increasing access to cultivable land. Continued support by French Red Cross.

In Mali, relief distributions to 10,640 people and nutrition education took place January to March. An appeal focused on distribution of seeds, tools and fodder was launched in early June to assist 142,740 persons. The situation has become complicated with internal unrest and political uncertainty, but activities will remain focused on reaching the most vulnerable households with immediate and long term assistance.

The Mauritania appeal was launched in December and revised in April to support 42,000 people in malnutrition screening, referral and care; food, seeds and tools distributions; water and sanitation and long term projects to build community resilience. French Red Cross continues to support and has helped to build good food security knowledge.

¹ FAO: Executive Brief, The Sahel Crisis 2012. 11 May 2012

The Niger appeal targets 350,000 people through interventions including food distribution, cash distribution, cash for work, cereal banks, distributing seeds, environmental protection, and malnutrition services. Niger Red Cross has extensive experience in food security work and is supported by the Red Cross societies of Ireland, France and Qatar.

In Senegal, food, cash, seeds and tools have been distributed to 7,600 people as an initial response; an emergency appeal has been launched in April to support 258,000 beneficiaries through food and cash distribution, seeds and tools distribution, and screening and referral of acute malnutrition. The national society has good experience of food security programmes and is supported by the French Red Cross.

In The Gambia, an appeal has been launched in April for 51,000 persons to provide food assistance and support to farmers in the form of seeds. It also includes screening, referral and hygiene promotion. The appeal is currently under revision.

3. Implementation strategy for a twin track approach

In order to address root causes that lead to cyclical emergencies, the Movement's strategy is developed along approaches based on short term and long-term solutions, as well as country and regional support and activities.

Short term and long-term solutions

A twin track approach that provides emergency, life-saving interventions and also focuses on long term resilience building solutions underpins the proposed activities. These interventions will be implemented simultaneously to ensure sustainability and maximise synergies between emergency response efforts and long-term activities. These combined efforts contribute to building community resilience and minimizing the impact of future droughts through sustainable solutions and behavioural change. The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement has a wealth of experience in food security operations in the Sahel, from volunteers in most communities to national and international experts managing ongoing programmes. This response builds on that experience and pulls in expertise from our broad network. The strength of the Red Cross Movement is in its volunteers and presence in most remote areas in all Sahel countries.

4. Rationale for a regional framework

The Sahel National Societies have extensive experience in programming and support for food security interventions. The IFRC Sahel Regional Office provides technical support and programming including disaster risk reduction, emergency response, preparedness, health in emergencies, water and sanitation, communications and organizational development.

During the implementation of the operation, emphasis will be placed on enhancing National Societies' capacity in terms of planning, communications, budgeting and reporting. A core team in the IFRC Sahel Regional Office is assisting and reinforcing the National Societies in planning and organizing the emergency response on the ground.

The National Societies will have the operational lead of the interventions and in country capacities will also be reinforced with the deployment of the required resources and capacities as described in the IFRC Food Security Emergency Appeals of the respective countries. The Regional Framework will aim to provide dedicated support for the various country appeals. The Regional Task Force of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement holds regular coordination meetings and comprises of the IFRC programme managers and the PNS based in Senegal. The dense network of the National Societies in each country facilitates constant monitoring of the situation down to the affected communities. At a country level, activities are as described in the framework document. They focus

on delivery of actions by the National Societies in both food assistance and community resilience. National Societies manage relations with their governments and liaise with partners in country. The Regional Framework and its activities may be adapted to changing realities in the field in case of need. The Regional Framework will have a clear focus on the quality of the responses and lesson learning.

The objectives of the IFRC Regional Office in Dakar are to:

- **Provide Surge capacity:** The IFRC Regional Office in Dakar supports the National Societies through technical advice on their programming and responses to crisis, technical support in preparing and reporting on emergency appeals, as well as supply of non food items and logistical assistance at the onset of various emergency and crisis situations.
- **Strengthen Co-ordination:** A key aspect of ensuring an efficient and effective response comes from good coordination. The task force in Dakar will oversee emergency appeal operations to ensure proper and effective coordination with PNS and ICRC to prepare an effective response to the affected countries, ensure an effective communication flow Sahel, support NS with assessments, learning and information sharing and to participate in regional and country humanitarian networks with host NS, including cluster or other coordination bodies
- **Strengthen Communications & advocacy:** To ensure a consistent and audible voice, our messages and advocacy will be driven from our Dakar hub, bringing together the views and information from country level and consolidating it for maximum impact. A stakeholder forum in April has been convened to discuss approaches, joint working and co-ordinated advocacy.
- **Promote Partnerships and diplomacy:** Our humanitarian diplomacy activities will be driven from a regional level, allowing the Movement to engage with stakeholders at a regional and continental level with the African Union, UN agencies, Regional Economic Commissions etc. We will also work with partners in the corporate sector and welcome their skills and expertise in the coordinated efforts against food insecurity in the Sahel. Information flow: regular operational data and analysis will be gathered by the IFRC Regional Office and disseminated to all stakeholders. Furthermore, knowledge exchange between National Societies; best practices will be collated and shared to contribute to a stronger knowledge base.
- **Ensure Accountability and quality assurance:** to ensure good co-ordination and a holistic view, reporting and accountability will be overseen from the IFRC Regional Office in Dakar. This will also ensure a simple approach for donors and stakeholders

Sahel regional framework

Purpose

The IFRC Sahel Regional Office, in cooperation with its Zone Office and the headquarters in Geneva, will provide surge capacity support, technical support, resource mobilization, representation, coordination, communications and advocacy to the Sahel National Societies to strengthen the humanitarian response to the food security crisis. The strategies will be carried out in close partnership with the national societies of the Sahel

Outcome: Effective support provided by the IFRC Sahel Regional Office to National Societies to strengthen human resources capacities, resource mobilization, coordination, communications and advocacy.	
Outputs	Activities planned
Surge capacity to support IFRC country offices and National Societies to effectively implement actions to address the food crisis is provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify needs and provide tailored surge capacity support to the National Society of Burkina Faso, Chad, The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal and the country Sahel office • Recruit, brief and support the deployments of RDRT (regional disaster response team), Delegates and other resource persons to support IFRC country offices and National Societies
Technical Support, monitoring, evaluation and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical support from the regional and country offices to the National Societies in thematic areas such as – health, nutrition, water and sanitation and in cross-cutting support areas such as logistics, finance, IT and HR. • Support National Societies in conducting needs assessments, detailed country analyses, appeal/proposal writing, evaluations, monitoring, evaluation and reporting • Develop and share database and mapping of Red Cross Red Crescent planned interventions in the region • Promoting a culture of operational research into issues and root causes around food insecurity related vulnerability and support options, in order to keep learning, innovating and positioning National Societies as leaders in drought issues and responses.
Capacity of National Societies regarding representation, resource mobilisation and implementation is strengthened.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting National Societies to design and mobilise resources for IFRC appeals • Supporting National Societies to manage donor relations within the Movement and process contributions and earmarking • Maintain close relations with embassies, consulates, the private sector, international and national organisations, governments, intergovernmental organisations and other donor communities to mobilise resources and keep them closely informed of Red Cross and Red Crescent actions to address the food crisis • Ensure representation of National Societies and the IFRC with major back donors, media and public forums, the humanitarian community including the UN/IASC • Supporting National Societies to access external resources outside of the Movement through representation and partnering in proposal writing. • Recruit an information delegate for six months to support communications activities • Organise a high level forum to engage major stakeholders in a dialogue to reach a coherent approach, agreements and integrated stakeholder actions in implementing ‘twin-track’ response to current food security crisis in the Sahel. • Organise regular Conference calls with the Sahel National Societies, PNS and other stakeholders to ensure coordination in resource mobilisation.
Effective external	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and maintain international interest in the food security

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Outputs	Activities planned
communications/advocacy both internationally and within Sahel region is ensured.	<p>crisis through creative and innovative work with national and international media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the work of the IFRC and national societies through regular news stories. • Further position National Societies as key actors in the emergency response nationally and internationally. • Disseminate findings of evaluations, operational research, case studies and experiences to promote learning and positioning of National Societies. • Provide analytical pieces on food security that encourage support for livelihood resilience in the long term. • Provide Movement partners with fresh and updated information and communications materials (including films, photos, stories, case studies etc) needed to support their advocacy efforts and to help them generate financial support for the Sahel operation.
Structured coordination within and outside the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is ensured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure proper and effective coordination with PNS, National Societies, ICRC to prepare an effective response to the affected countries. • Promoting a culture of participation with PNS in supporting National Societies with assessments, learning and information sharing. • Participation in regional and country humanitarian networks with host National Societies, including cluster or other coordination bodies.
Disaster management staff for the IFRC Regional Sahel Office is recruited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise and recruit DM and Food security staff for the Sahel office to ensure structured and long term support to disaster risk management.

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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Saving, changing minds.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises
2. Enable healthy and safe living
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace