



ECHO FACTSHEET

MALI CRISES - 2012

Facts & Figures

Conflict in northern Mali has forced 400,000 people to flee their homes. Half are displaced within the country, half live as refugees in neighbouring countries.

Mali has the second highest infant mortality rate in the world, after Somalia.

560,000 Malian children under five are expected to suffer from acute malnutrition in 2012.

2012 EU humanitarian funding to Mali

- €51 million from the European Commission
- €30 million from Member States

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Malian refugees living in the harsh environment of a Mauritanian camp fetch water at one of the newly installed water points. © EU/ECHO/Cyprien Fabre

Humanitarian situation and needs

Key messages

- As well as forcing **an estimated 400,000 people** from their homes since the beginning of 2012, **conflict in northern Mali has compounded the on-going food crisis**, exposing 560.000 Malian children under five to acute malnutrition in 2012.
- **Achieving safe and secure access to get humanitarian assistance to people in need in the north of Mali and neighbouring countries remains complex and very challenging.** To safeguard humanitarian space it is vital to ensure that aid is delivered according to the humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence.
- Even if a reasonably good harvest is expected to be completed between in the coming weeks, **prices of many staple foods remain high, making them inaccessible to the poorest.** Nutritional needs are therefore not expected to subside in 2013.
- Early and substantial EU funding has enabled partners to address needs resulting from both the nutritional and political crises in 2012, **the amount and reach of assistance needs to be reinforced.**

Humanitarian needs in Mali

The 2012 Sahel food and nutrition crisis put an estimated 18 million people at risk of hunger across the region, including 560,000 Malian children under five

suffering from acute malnutrition. This crisis has been further exacerbated by political turmoil and conflict in the north since the beginning of the year.

A 90% price increase for millet on sale in Bamako (compared to the same time last year) illustrates the continued **high cost of staple foods** despite prospects of a relatively good harvest over the coming months. This prolonged lack of access to food is causing **high malnutrition** rates especially among the poorest. Nutritional surveys suggest the number of Malian children requiring treatment for acute malnutrition in 2013 will be similar to 2012.

In the north assessments indicate that up to 420,000 people could face **food insecurity** despite some improvement due to the delivery of aid and the resumption of market activity. The effect of high prices is however magnified by many people's loss of livelihood due to the conflict. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and Commission on Population Movements are monitoring **population movements**, which is critical to ensure aid is targeted at the most vulnerable.

Humanitarian needs in neighbouring countries

In **Mauritania**, an estimated 100,000 refugees have settled in Mbéra camp, just inside the border. UNHCR is conducting an in-depth registration at household level to provide accurate data on refugee numbers, their situation and needs. A nutritional survey carried out in July 2012 found alarmingly high rates of global acute malnutrition (20%) and severe acute malnutrition (5.9%) among infants. These rates far exceed emergency thresholds of 15% and 2% respectively.

In **Niger**, half of the estimated 57,000 registered refugees are spread over 3 UNHCR assisted camps. Others are spread over different sites close to the border.

In **Burkina Faso**, most of the 36,000 refugees are staying in 7 official sites in the north.

The situation of refugees, and that of their already vulnerable host communities, remains precarious. Contingency plans are being implemented by partners in case of a possible second influx of refugees.

The European Union's Humanitarian Response

The EU's early and substantial response to the Sahel food and nutrition crisis and to the political crisis, has guaranteed access to basic health and nutrition services, clean water, shelter and food for some of the most affected and vulnerable people, both inside Mali and in neighbouring countries. However, the operational context in which humanitarian organisations are working is extremely challenging and the aid provided fails to meet all basic needs.

EU Humanitarian response in Mali

In partnership with UN agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and international NGOs, the European Commission's response to the **Sahel food and nutrition crisis** included **crisis mitigation and preparedness** (Nov 2011 – Feb 2012) and **emergency response** (March – Oct 2012). In Mali 120,000 people received **cash or vouchers** which they could exchange for food while general food distributions were provided at household level when and where food was not available in markets. More than 45,000 children in the south have so far been treated for severe acute malnutrition in 2012, efforts are underway to reach many more before the end of the year.

Despite a challenging humanitarian context in the **north of Mali**, ECHO partners, adhering to humanitarian principles, have obtained increased **access** to the victims of the crisis in the regions of Kidal, Gao and Tombouctou, delivering food assistance to 300,000 people.

ECHO funds are also supporting primary and secondary **health care** and **nutritional support** in more than 40 health centres, hospitals and mobile clinics as well as measles and polio vaccination campaigns. **Cholera** cases in Gao have been treated and hygiene kits covering some 350,000 people have been distributed in high risk areas alongside hygiene and health promotion at community level.

Humanitarian response in neighbouring countries (Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso, Algeria)

UNHCR and other ECHO partners are working together in the refugee camps and arrival sites to cover the most immediate needs in terms of **shelter, food, nutrition, health, vaccination, water and sanitation, hygiene, non-food items and education**. For example in Mauritania's Mbéra camp, more than 1,000 severely malnourished children were admitted for treatment.

Outreach and coordination with humanitarian partners

ECHO opened an office in Mali in July 2012. It receives back up from the Regional Support Office (RSO) in Dakar which ensures regional coordination and coherence. ECHO experts in Mali coordinate closely with partners delivering aid in difficult circumstances and at considerable risk.

In efforts to help Mali, and the rest of the Sahel, cope better with future nutritional crises the European Commission is leading the AGIR-Sahel initiative to bring together West-African regional organizations, governments, humanitarian and development donors and agencies around the common aim of improving the food security and resilience to crisis over vulnerable households in the Sahel.

Examples of humanitarian projects assisting Malians



In western Mali the European Commission is funding an unconditional cash transfer programmes where people have been particularly affected by the drought and high cereal prices.

One such pilot programme will reach close to 30,000 people and has been designed to include the poorest households. The cash provided enables them to buy their own food on the local markets and eat two meals per day.

As essential services have been disrupted in northern Mali, the European Commission is funding the handful of partners that manage to be operational, to ensure water supply, medical care and food rations for the residents and displaced people in Gao, Tombouctou and Kidal regions.



100,000 or so people who fled the conflict in northern Mali have settled in the refugee camp of Mbéra amidst the arid plains of eastern **Mauritania**. UNHCR and its European Commission funded partners are working in a very harsh environment to help these refugees meet their most basic needs. In a heat that rarely drops below 35° at night, shelter is a priority. Food, water and primary health care are also being provided. Given the isolated location of this camp, the European Commission is also supporting a UN Humanitarian Air Service operation to transport humanitarian workers safely in an area where there are serious security concerns.

EU Humanitarian funding for Mali in 2012

The European Commission has committed a total of €337 million in response to the Sahel food crisis and conflict in Mali. This includes **€51 million** for needs for those affected by the food crises and conflict in Mali, and the spill-over effects caused by the conflict in neighbouring countries.

EU Member States have committed over €94 million in response to the Sahel food crisis, including **€30 million** for victims of the conflict in Mali.