



World Food Programme

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES

# Scaling-up Resilience in the Sahel: A Story of People, Partnerships and Practice

An integrated approach to tackle hunger  
from the source and build peaceful communities

July 2021



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## Foreword

The Sahel is a region which presents a complex and diverse context. It is affected by recurrent, rapid onset and long-lasting crises: chronic poverty, pervasive food and nutrition insecurity, fast depletion of natural resources, climate change and extreme climate events such as droughts and episodes of floods, fuelling negative coping mechanisms (e.g. early marriages, unsafe migration), social tensions, conflict and displacement. The G5 Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger) are home to some 80 million people, a mostly young population (under 30 years) that is expected to double within only two decades.

Together, multi-dimensional crisis patterns and population growth put pressure on existing natural resources, limited and stretched basic services, local safety nets and on existing capacities of communities and systems to cope with and adapt to uncertainty. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the hardships experienced by communities, placing additional strain on health and food systems and on already precarious livelihoods.

However, many communities find creative ways to face the hardships and they demonstrate amazing levels of coping mechanisms, showing not only their capacity to optimise the use of their environments and livelihood systems but also their aspiration at building a better future for the young generation.

To respond to these challenges and strengthen communities in their endeavour to become resilient towards crises, since 2018 WFP has embarked on a journey by scaling up an Integrated Resilience Programme in the G5 Sahel countries. WFP promotes a package of different activities in the same communities over a period of 5 years addressing the various stresses they have to face – combining Food Assistance for Assets (FFA), school feeding, nutrition, capacity strengthening and seasonal support. The package is implemented across the region, at scale and nuanced to context.

*The story of the Sahel would not be complete without shedding light on the enormous potential that lies within the very young population and the resilience of the Sahelian communities.*

Over 2 million beneficiaries in 800 communities are planned to benefit from the integrated package of activities that aims to strengthen the resilience of individuals, households, communities and systems with a particular focus on participation and empowerment of vulnerable groups, such as women and youth, as key protagonists of change.

Since the beginning of the WFP resilience scale-up, communities have rehabilitated and/or restored 85,000 ha of degraded lands. Formerly arid areas have been transformed into green belts of pastures and trees, and agricultural fields allowing communities to increase their harvest, feeding their families and even gaining some income. Through a research-action model, 145 students have conducted their master's theses at WFP resilience sites thereby training a talent pool of educated young people about the socio-ecological and economic dynamics of the region. Moreover, at least, 355 community-based participatory planning (CBPP) exercises clustering over thousand villages have been completed involving local authorities, technical services and representatives of the communities. The CBPP aims to truly put the communities at the centre of planning and their transformative change!

Certainly, working towards resilient and inclusive communities is a joint project that cannot be achieved without partners. It involves first and foremost national governments, that are in the driver's seat of the programme spearheading planning, implementation and monitoring of the activities. It furthermore involves communities and partners from academia. That is why we are actively partnering with other UN agencies, including the

Rome Based Agencies (RBAs) and UNICEF, as well as with NGOs, and other institutions such as the World Bank, GIZ, the G5 Sahel Permanent Secretariat, and universities in the Sahel.

Against the background of increasing security incidents in countries like Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso and in the light of Covid-19, joint efforts across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and a massive scale-up of resilience and social cohesion activities in the G5 Sahel countries are more important than ever. The integrated resilience programme is already showing a remarkable return on investment: After only the first year of the programme, evidence across the integrated resilience sites shows that in terms of food security, beneficiary households were able to cope better during the Covid-19 crisis than non-beneficiaries. This gives us hope. And it is just the beginning of our journey.

I take this opportunity to thank the G5 Sahel Government institutions engaged and leading this endeavour and the donors that are so generously supporting this initiative and are actively engaged in promoting resilience. We are encouraged and will continue to advocate and pursue investments in integrated efforts through actionable partnerships for a resilient Sahel – as the saying goes in the region “On est ensemble!” (“we are in this together!”).

Chris Nikoi  
Regional Director WFP Regional Bureau  
for West and Central Africa





# SAHEL CONTEXT



## Sahel Context

The Sahelian countries commonly known as the G5 Sahel countries – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger – form a vast geographic belt of territories that are affected by complex and protracted crises.

With all its possible nuances, the region is first and foremost characterized by climate variabilities that include recurrent episodes of drought and flooding as well as erratic rainfall pattern. Most people live in rural contexts and are dependent on two main livelihood systems that intersect and are mutually dependent: agriculture and pastoralism.

Taking a closer look, the areas most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition are those where livelihoods systems correlate with largely degraded environments, poor density of market infrastructure, limited and unequal access to basic services, high rates of school drop outs, early marriages of adolescent girls, unsafe outmigration and unemployment. Adding to the complexity, escalating conflict and social tensions, particularly in the Central Sahel, force millions of people to flee

their homes, and the ever scarcer availability of key livelihood resources endangers the delicate balance between farmers and herders sharing food and water resources. Since early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic fallout place additional strain on already precarious livelihoods.

Despite these challenges, the Sahel is far from being defeated: the region holds great potential for ecosystem restoration, including a wealth of untapped groundwater and renewable energy sources, and the demographic dividends could be enormous if the very young population is provided with the necessary resources and opportunities to thrive.

**53% OF POPULATION DEPENDS ON FARMING AND PASTORALISM; APPROX. 13% OF LAND DEGRADED<sup>1</sup>**

**28% OF CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL<sup>2</sup>**

**MORE THAN 4.6 MILLION DISPLACED PEOPLE, OF WHICH MORE THAN 2.3 INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE**

**POPULATION OF 80 MILLION EXPECTED TO DOUBLE IN THE NEXT DECADE**

**4.6 MILLION CHILDREN (6–59 MONTHS) EXPECTED TO SUFFER ACUTE MALNUTRITION IN 2021 AND 1.2 MILLION SEVERE ACUTE MALNUTRITION**

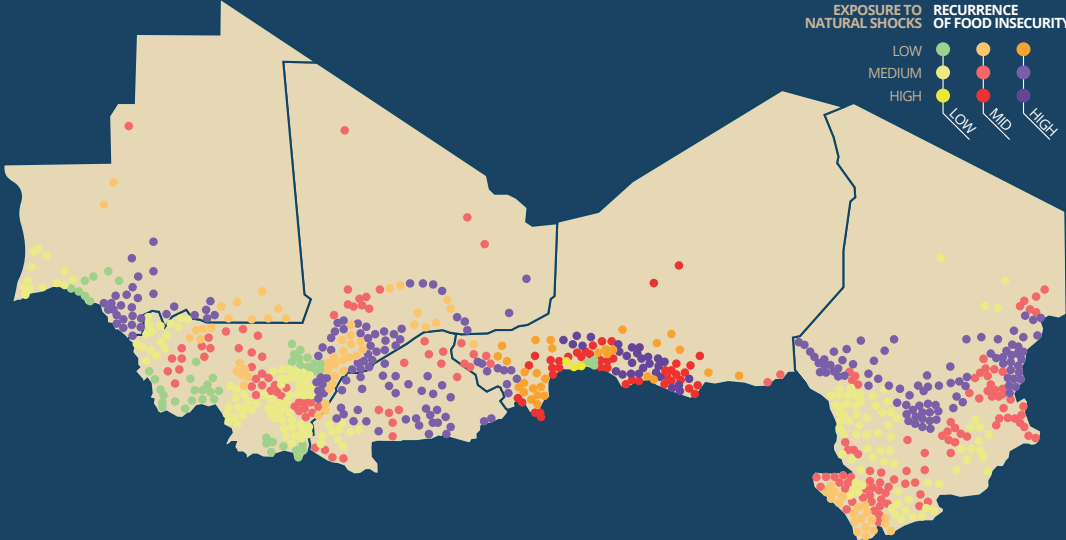
**8.7 MILLION PEOPLE ESTIMATED TO BE FOOD INSECURE IN 2021<sup>3</sup>**



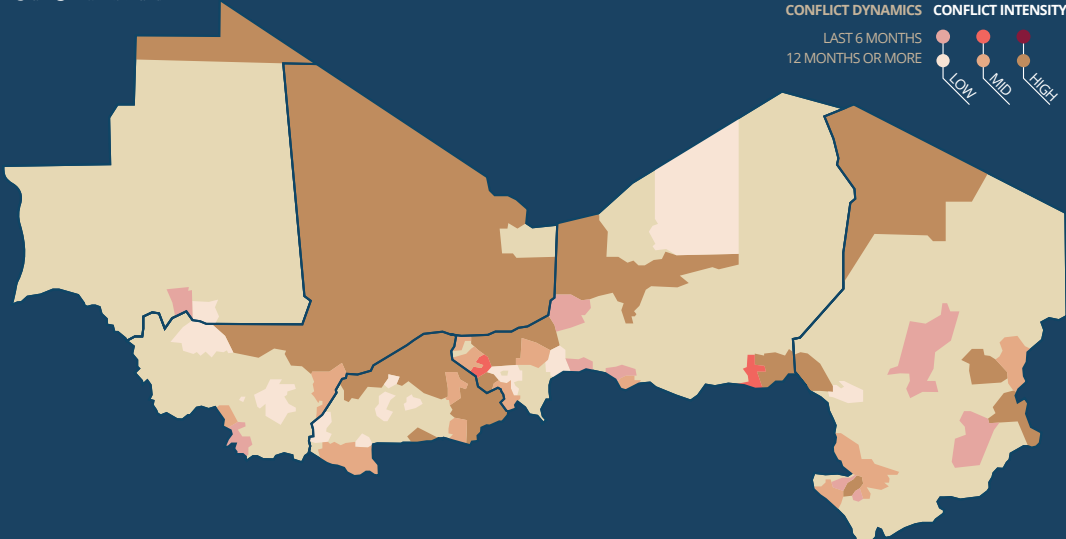


# OPERATING WHERE VULNERABILITIES ARE HIGHEST<sup>4</sup>

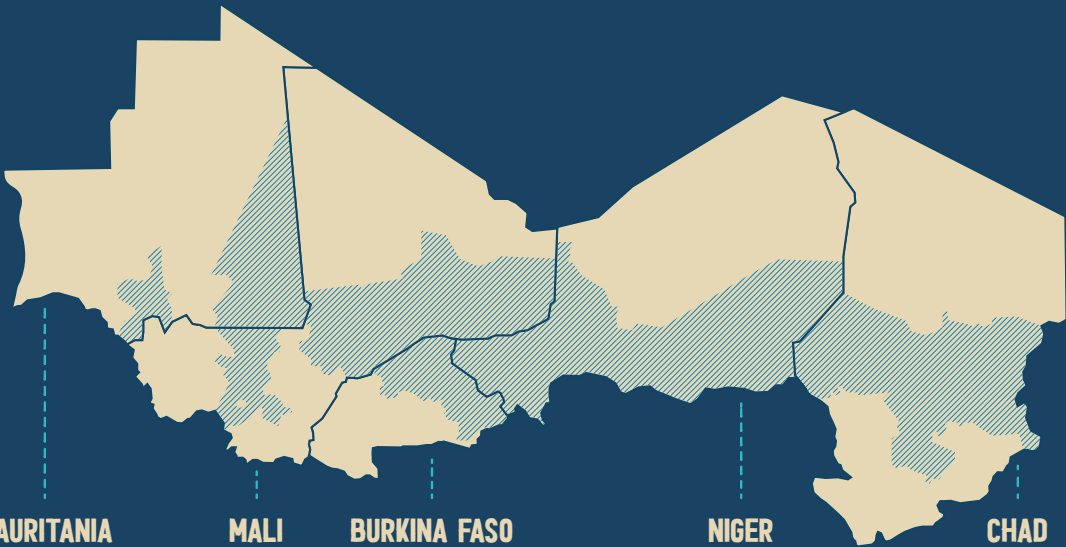
## FOOD INSECURITY & NATURAL SHOCKS (ICA)



## CONFLICT SEVERITY



## WFP INTEGRATED RESILIENCE PROJECT REGIONS





# THE SAHEL INTEGRATED RESILIENCE PROGRAMME



# The Sahel Integrated Resilience Programme

In a region where humanitarian, development and peace agendas increasingly intersect and crises are protracted, sustainable and long-term programmes are crucial to complement, and, over time, reduce the need for humanitarian assistance.

Transformative change requires a government-led, community-owned, integrated multi-year response targeted to vulnerable areas hit year after year, decade after decade, by climate shocks.

In 2018, the World Food Programme launched an innovative programme to boost resilience across the G5 Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger).

For the first time, an integrated package of activities – combining Food Assistance for Assets (FFA), school feeding, nutrition, capacity strengthening and seasonal support – is implemented across the region and at scale.

In close coordination with governments and partners and working closely with communities, the programme changes lives for the better by strengthening resilience at the 1) individual and household, 2) community and ecosystem, as well as 3) national systems level, catalysing change across the Sahel. Planned over 5 years, more than 2 million beneficiaries in 800 communities across the 5 countries will benefit from an integrated package of activities, adapted, layered and sequenced to suit different contexts and to meet the particular local needs.

In practice, this means bringing degraded land back to life, getting children back to school, investing in healthy diets for mothers and children, creating jobs for the youth and building social cohesion throughout entire communities. Crucially, this occurs in the same communities, targeting the same vulnerable people over a period of at least five years. This brings the necessary investments at scale to boost the resilience of Sahelian communities.

**1.9 MILLION PEOPLE  
HAVE BENEFITED  
SO FAR FROM THE  
WFP INTEGRATED  
RESILIENCE PACKAGE**

**IN MORE THAN 1,900  
VILLAGES IN THE FIVE  
COUNTRIES**

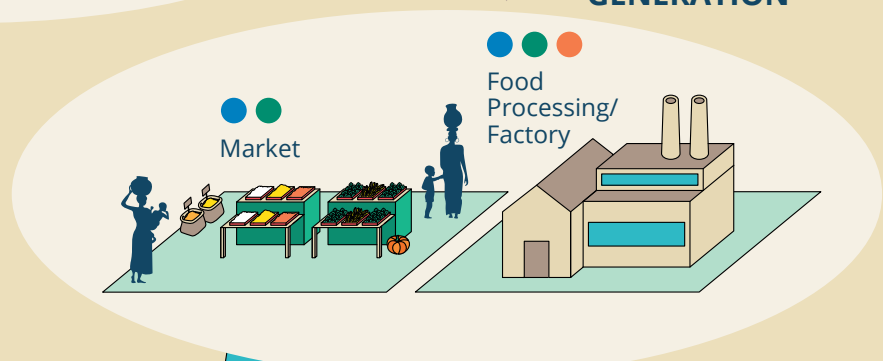
**WORKING WITH 90  
IMPLEMENTING/  
COOPERATING PARTNERS**

# MODEL FOR INTEGRATED ACTION AND PARTNERSHIP

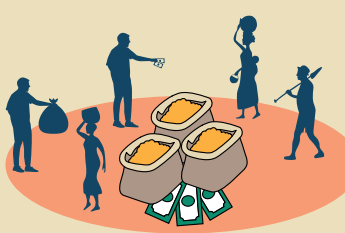
## LAND RESTORATION & GREENING



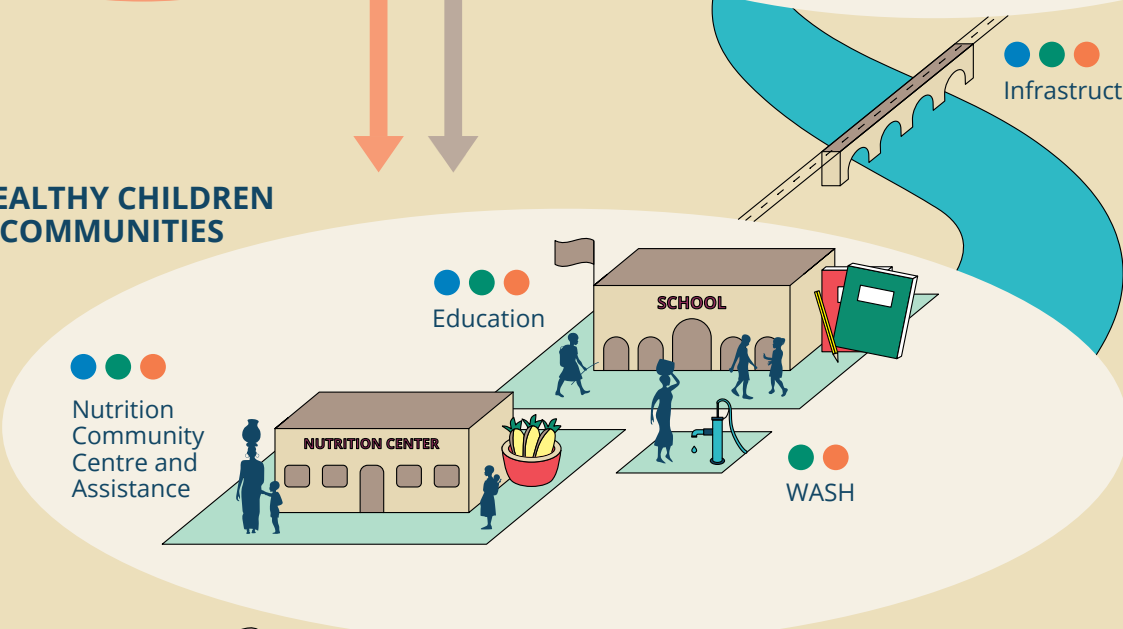
## INCOME GENERATION



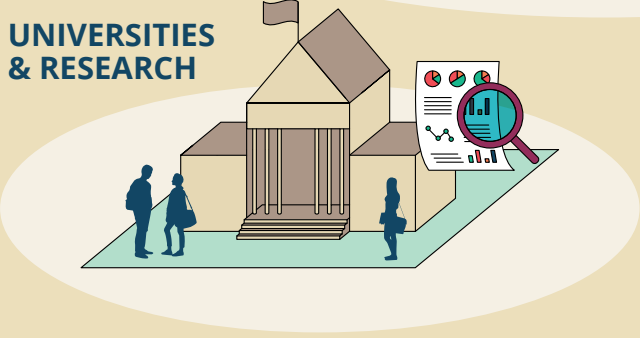
## Lean Season Assistance



## HEALTHY CHILDREN & COMMUNITIES



## UNIVERSITIES & RESEARCH



- WFP
- UN & NGO
- GOVERNMENT & OTHER PARTNERS



# THE INTEGRATED PACKAGE IN ACTION



# Greening the Sahel - Resilience through Asset Building

Through Food Assistance For Assets (FFA) activities WFP supports communities in bringing their landscapes back to life, enhancing their natural resource base and developing community infrastructure. Through complementary cash, voucher or food transfers they are able to address their immediate food needs. At the same time, the assets built will improve food security, livelihoods and resilience to natural disasters of communities in the long-term.

Across the Sahel, through FFA activities communities are empowered to:

- restore degraded landscapes and restore agricultural, pastoral and fisheries potential (e.g. half-moons, zai pits, soil and stone-faced bunds, sand dunes fixation, forestry and agroforestry)
- improve water harvesting for multiple uses (e.g. water ponds, well, boreholes, trenches, underground storage)
- reverse negative environmental trends to reduce the risk of environmental disasters (e.g. flood protection, natural resources regeneration, stabilisation)

- develop community infrastructure (community access roads, grain stores, etc)

In areas that are highly degraded, this requires a major overhaul of ecosystems.

Beyond the environmental and socio-economic benefits of the assets created, FFA also provides an important avenue to contribute towards multiple objectives if activities are programmed in a way that is nutrition-sensitive (promoting diversification of production), conflict-sensitive (rehabilitating water points along pastoral migration corridors to mitigate conflict), gender-sensitive (addressing hardships for women and girls by bringing water closer and increasing biomass production for cooking thereby decreasing time for fetching firewood), and inclusive (bringing together refugee, IDP, and host communities).

Since the beginning of the programme, more than 85,000 hectares of land have been rehabilitated or treated, using different techniques to improve soil quality, to enable vegetation regrowth and groundwater recharge and to increase productivity. 1 million people have benefited from asset creation activities in the past year.



## HALF-MOONS GREENING THE SAHEL

Through a combination of dike, soil bunds and half-moon techniques, the community of Bougherba (Mauritania) recuperated 51 ha of land. The impressive changes have created new hope in the village: “We want to do better and bigger next year. We will produce more millet, sell our harvest on the market and create a long-term business”, notes the president of the village committee, Zein Ould Moahmed Ahmoud. Zai and half-moons are traditional techniques used to restore degraded lands by increasing water infiltration and improve food and fodder production. The cash distributed at the end of the work enables the beneficiaries to acquire sufficient quality inputs such as improved seed and fertilizers.





Before interventions, the soil in Bourgerba (Mauritania) was completely barren.



Rehabilitation techniques, such as dikes, half-moons and soil bunds, have rendered 51 ha of the land productive and fertile.

## FROM DESERT TO FARMING IN BOUGHERBA

Zein Ould Mahmoud, 54 years old, was born and raised in Bougherba. He organises the work on the half-moons allocating each family an equal plot:

*“Today, no one in the world can live without the land, especially us Mauritanian farmers or herders. We usually cultivate the land by producing millet, vegetables and all other things necessary for our daily life. In conclusion, we cannot live without the land and for this reason we insist on the importance of protecting our land.” On the impact of half-moons Zein adds: “We started working on this land which was desert in previous years and not suitable for farming. Today the land has become accessible for farming and there are plants and trees.”*





By linking school feeding programmes with local smallholder farmers, children receive food that is safe, diverse, nutritious, and above all local. The schools provide local farmers with a predictable outlet for their products, leading to a stable income, more investments and higher productivity.

### **HOME-GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING IN BANDARO, CHAD**

The community garden in Bandaro in the Chadian region of Guera links local food production to school meals and nutrition. From the production in the 2 ha-community garden and field, the community contributes fresh vegetables, cereals and pulses. The garden is set to yield some 20 tons of vegetables this year, enabled by three shallow wells, and boosted by part of the 350 m<sup>3</sup> of compost prepared. Women working in the community garden also participate in the preparation of school meals, and produce fresh pasta.

## School Feeding - Empowering Children and Communities

Every day in the Sahel, children go to school on an empty stomach, affecting their concentration and ability to learn. Many children, particularly girls, do not have the chance to go to school at all because their families need them to help in the fields or perform domestic duties or because they are forced into early marriage.

Nutritious school meals improve the children's overall health and nutrition and allow them to learn and perform better at school. School feeding empowers girls by dissuading parents from marrying them off early and they act as an incentive for families to enrol and keep their children in school. By linking school meals with farmers, local food value chains can be strengthened, and livelihoods improved.

School feeding can be linked to complementary activities, such as building school gardens, installing

grain mills or women's groups managing herds. All together, this contributes to the production and consumption of more diversified food. At the same time school feeding activities present an entry point to sensitize about gardening, nutrition and the environment.

WFP works with governments and partners to ensure that school meals are accompanied by a broader package of health and nutrition services, such as deworming, health screenings, vaccinations and WASH (water, hygiene and sanitation) training.

In the past year, more than 380,000 children benefited from nutritious school meals as part of the integrated resilience programme. 1,500 schools were supported under the school meals programme.

**OVER THE PAST YEAR,  
380,000 CHILDREN RECEIVED  
NUTRITIOUS SCHOOL MEALS**

**1,500 SCHOOLS SUPPORTED  
UNDER THE SCHOOL MEALS  
PROGRAMME**

*"Since I attend school, I've always received school meals. At the canteen, they give us rice, vegetables, beans, spaghetti, boule and porridge. My favourite is rice, it's really good." Nafissa Ahmad Adoum, 12 years, studies at the public school in Dougoul, Chad.*

*Her mother adds: "I'm very happy to see my daughter go back to school (after school closures due to Covid-19). This morning, she resumed classes and that's a good thing. (...) They receive a meal at school, so when they come back they don't need to eat. We have been working on a school garden. The harvest was good and we're using it to feed children at school. With an empty stomach and when there's no food home, it is very hard to focus on lessons. Thanks to the school garden, more girls can eat at school. I hope we can scale it up, so that more children, especially girls, can finish their studies."*



## Strengthening Rural Livelihoods and Income

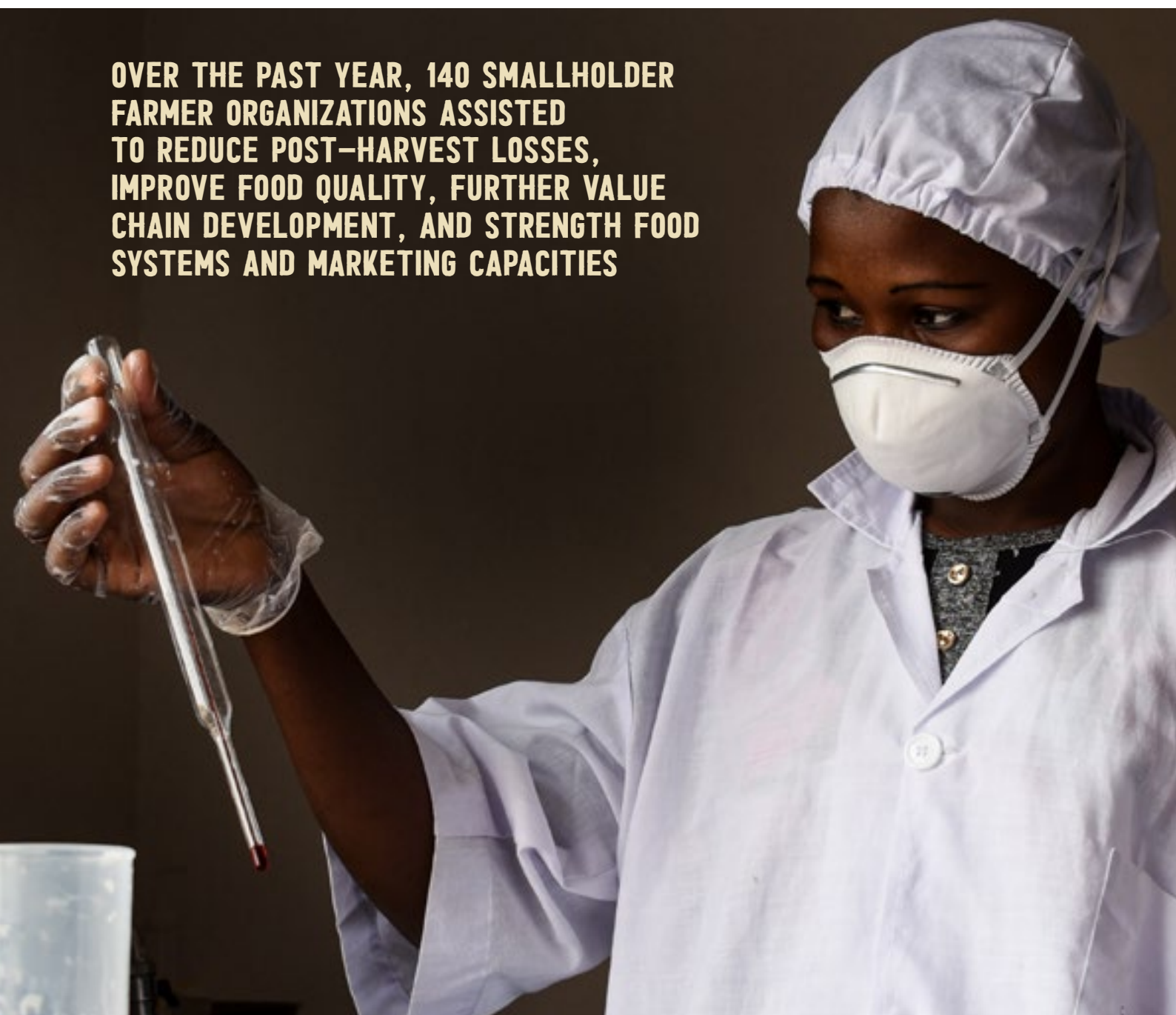
Smallholder farmers produce most of the Sahel's food. Yet, they tend to be food insecure themselves resulting from a number of challenges, such as postharvest losses and market access constraints.

WFP supports smallholders to increase their incomes and livelihoods by developing value chains and access to markets. With assistance from WFP and partners, smallholders optimize the use of

assets and produce generated from gardens and rehabilitated sites, focusing on the creation of (agri-)businesses and linking farmers with markets. Encouraged to form associations, they are able to negotiate better, sell more, lower their transaction costs and extend their customer base.

This represents a solid basis to strengthen food systems and ensure sustainability.

**OVER THE PAST YEAR, 140 SMALLHOLDER FARMER ORGANIZATIONS ASSISTED TO REDUCE POST-HARVEST LOSSES, IMPROVE FOOD QUALITY, FURTHER VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT, AND STRENGTH FOOD SYSTEMS AND MARKETING CAPACITIES**



## DAIRY PROCESSING IN SIO, MALI

As part of the development of nutrition-sensitive value chains, a milk processing unit in Sio, Mopti region (Mali) was built. "It's very interesting to master the whole process of dairy transformation". Fanta Kamian works at the dairy processing unit in Soufouroulaye, where the community is able to produce 1,000 liters per day thanks to improved transformation capacities supported by WFP. In total, 9 cooperatives, comprising 128 households, benefit from this transformation unit supported by WFP.

## SUPPORTING INCOME GENERATION THROUGH COMPOST PRODUCTION

In Burkina Faso, WFP developed and set up three innovative business-oriented compost production units. The use of semi-automatic shredders along with enhanced compost activators allows to significantly reduce the time and labour needed for preparation of the biomass and accelerates the transformation process from 6 to 2 months. This way, the quantities produced are sufficient to allow for a marketable surplus – with the envisaged production amounting to 150 mt per production unit and year –, thus covering the needs not only of participating beneficiaries, but also the broader community. 75 people were already trained, with significant participation of youth and women.

This sub-activity ensures the continued supply of quality organic manure for agricultural production and contributes to sustainable soil fertilisation, significant reduction of hardship, job creation for young people, and diversification of economic activities especially for youth and women.

*"Compost production was a very tedious work for women. We went very far carrying the biomass on our heads and looking for water with our kitchen items. Production was very low and the process took too much of our time. But thanks to WFP's support, we could benefit from work material: a cart that eases the transport of biomass and water, and mills. Our work is now less tedious. Also, this technology that we are benefitting from, allows us to intensify compost production to fertilize our fields and to increase our revenues."*

Sore Balkissa



## Providing Healthy and Nutritious Food to Women and Children

To change lives, quality and affordable nutritious foods is needed at the right time. This in turn will help break the cycle of poverty and help build more resilient communities. In the Sahel, WFP works to treat and prevent the direct causes of malnutrition, while simultaneously addressing the underlying factors, such as poor knowledge of feeding practices or limited access to basic social services. Efforts are concentrated on the most vulnerable, targeting young children, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and people in adverse health conditions. WFP is also working from farm-to-fork in the Central Sahel to improve affordability and availability of nutritious foods, by not only addressing immediate acute food and nutrition insecurity, but also by transforming food systems to build resilience against future shocks.

One way to sensitize and inform about healthy nutrition practices is through community nutrition learning and exchange groups. In these groups women and children gather with trained educators from the community and learn about nutrition, health, child and maternal feeding practices and the preparation of healthy foods based on local products.

Nutrition-sensitiveness as objective is also cross-cutting in all WFP activities. E.g. in agricultural and gardening activities, diversified production is promoted by prioritizing the quality and type of seeds, which improve yield and nutritive value, as well as by supporting conservation, processing and fortification to increase the year-round availability of micronutrient-rich foods. Nutritive seeds and plants that are cultivated include red sorghum, pearl millet, beans, peanuts, okra, onions, squash, sickle senna, moringa, baobab, etc.



## OVER THE PAST MONTHS, 550,000 CHILDREN AND WOMEN RECEIVED MALNUTRITION TREATMENT/PREVENTION SUPPORT



Nutrition-specific interventions often go hand in hand with FFA and other activities. Like in Mauritania, where concerted action includes activities on water and soil management, education, WASH, women's nutrition learning groups, malnutrition prevention, school feeding and seasonal assistance. In community nutrition centres, pregnant women and mothers gather in community awareness and learning groups, called GASPA. In monthly sessions, they learn about good feeding practices, hygiene, health and nutrition.

### **WOMEN COOPERATIVES IN ERGUI PRODUCE MORE AND MORE DIVERSE FOOD**

One example of how soil rehabilitation, nutrition, health and livelihood outcomes are directly linked are women cooperatives, like in Ergui in the Guidimmakha region in Mauritania, that aim to empower women, so that they can have vegetables for their own consumption and also a part for sale, allowing them to have a small income. The 75 women are organised in several groups growing vegetables, including aubergine, cabbage, onions, carrot, okra and

groundnuts. Each group takes care of the vegetable garden in order to maintain it, water it, sow it and harvest it. Ergui is a village in an arid area, and until recently it was very difficult for villagers to grow anything. WFP installed a hydraulic solar pump to enable the women to start the vegetable garden. In the future, the cooperative aims to produce more and to open a shop to sell vegetables and other basic products. Until now, there is no shop in the village, and the villagers have to walk a few kilometres for basic products.

Aicha Mint Muraba is 63 years old and has 18 children, for whom she is the sole carer since her husband died years ago. She lives in Ergui. Today she is the president of the women's cooperative. She explains: *"Our soils have become very fertile and our children are increasingly healthy thanks to the basic products and the vegetable. This year we remarked a decrease in illness. Before we mainly consumed beans and few aliments (...) but now this has changed. (...) We have developed, and we are not hungry anymore. We eat a lot of food that we haven't consumed before. We earn money and with that money, we buy meat (...), our crops are really profitable with their diversity of vegetables."*



CASH FOR ASSET 2020  
Cash for asset

Name	U.S. BIKETI
Phone Number	
Address	
Signature	
Date	



## Supporting People through Times of Hardship

The lean season period between two harvests, when food stocks are depleted (June to September), often causes vulnerable communities to resort to negative coping mechanisms such as selling productive assets, reducing the number of meals or accumulating debt, undermining their resilience in the long-term.

Lean season assistance during this time includes the provision of food, cash or vouchers to overcome seasonal constraints and protect resilience gains for the most vulnerable people in targeted communities. Lean season assistance enables communities to secure their daily expenses for food and other basic commodities, to access and stock food items, to procure seeds and tools required for the impending agricultural season, to consolidate achievements from the assets previously created, and to create individual- and household-owned assets.

In a year of shock, cash and food assistance can be upscaled, frontloaded, disbursed unconditionally or the modality of assistance can move from cash transfers (or vouchers) to in-kind food assistance when markets are disrupted.

WFP's cash and food assistance in hardship situations is part of a wider engagement of different partners (such as World Bank and UNICEF) to strengthen national adaptive social protection (ASP) systems in the Sahel. Resilience and social protection approaches are highly interlinked. Together, multi-year integrated resilience activities and agile safety-net schemes, that provide punctual protective assistance in times of shocks, contribute to resilient development and decreased needs over time.

Since May 2020, WFP and partners scaled up their support to ASP to address the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 as part of the national response to the pandemic.

## LAST YEAR, WFP ASSISTED 470,000 PEOPLE DURING LEAN SEASON WITH CASH TRANSFERS, VOUCHERS OR FOOD

### CASH ASSISTANCE DURING DRY SEASON IN MARADI

Poor rains have affected crops and reduced fodder and water for livestock, making life more difficult for some people in recent years. On average, annual cereal production in Niger is only sufficient to meet seven months of food needs. The lean season, which runs from at least June to September, therefore regularly results in a structural food crisis. Additionally, Niger has to face several security challenges. As a result, many localities in Niger have been cut off from their traditional means of subsistence. Faced with these challenges, WFP has provided food and nutritional assistance to the village of Hardo Hirro in the Maradi region and other localities in Niger.



## Delivering in Times of COVID-19 – Protecting and Safeguarding People

With the spread of the Covid-19 virus, communities in the Sahel have encountered severe challenges in accessing food, basic social services and in maintaining their livelihoods and incomes. To protect communities and safeguard resilience gains at this critical time, WFP has adapted and reinforced interventions, including through reinforcing WASH and integrating health and hygiene measures, providing awareness-raising sessions, refocusing activities from the community to individual and household level, combining food

distributions, and providing alternative forms of support for schoolchildren where possible.

Moreover, WFP developed and/or adapted guidelines for safe operations as well as innovative guidance for training and FFA activities under COVID-19 circumstances. This allowed us to fully resume trainings as well as community assets building (FFA) after the rainy season, while keeping beneficiaries and staff safe.

**DISPATCH OF SOME 350,000 HYGIENE KITS**

**INSTALLATION OF MORE THAN 10,000 HAND WASHING FACILITIES**



## TABO VILLAGE, CHAD



### INVESTING IN HOMESTEADS FOR RESILIENT HOUSEHOLDS

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, homestead activities proved to be a particularly valuable component of the integrated package: As they do not require large community gatherings, homestead activities could be easily adapted to the new operating environment and scaled up in a number of countries.

In the village of Tabo, in Chad's Guera region, homestead activities have been implemented since July 2019. Following the onset of the pandemic, health and hygiene measures like handwashing facilities and family-based or remote sensitization sessions on COVID-19 were put in place to continue implementation while keeping beneficiaries and staff safe. Households were incentivized to add assets to their homesteads, such as improved stoves, latrines, vegetable gardens and composting pits, as well as fruit or forest tree plantation in and around their homesteads.

Across the Sahel, first trends indicate the intervention's positive effect on community

resilience and food security. With COVID-19 and its socio-economic impact, communities' resilience, i.e. their capacity to absorb and adapt to shocks, was tested for the first time since the beginning of the programme. After only one year of intervention, evidence shows that beneficiary households were able to cope better during the crisis than non-beneficiaries.

When WFP asked households about the contribution of different types of assistance to mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, most households rated WFP assistance, including cash/food transfers and assets created at community or household level, as the most important support received during the crisis.

*"We are 10 at home. There have been difficult times. Last year we depended on food assistance during the lean season. This year we've got some goats, small animals and some chickens. My wife has built a new stove which uses less wood. We have many things to improve. Together, we will decide what is better for our village, but this is already a good start".* Haroun, 40 years, on homestead activities in Tabo village.

## Coalition Building for Resilience

WFP is not working alone. That is why coalition building is a key element of the programme, i.e. leveraging linkages and complementarities with partners based on operational footprint, expertise and capacities to assist the same targeted communities.

### GOVERNMENTS

Governments are in the driver's seat to own and lead the WFP integrated resilience programme. Hence, the resilience approach engages government ministries and technical units at department and commune level in planning, implementation, and monitoring.

At a regional level, WFP actively engages with regional institutions (e.g. G5 Sahel Executive Secretary and the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel CILSS) to improve food and nutrition security analysis and to support coalitions building to operationalize resilience at scale.

### OPERATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Seeking operational complementarities and leveraging synergies, the programme is working in partnership with UN agencies, NGOs, technical and financial partners. Particularly noteworthy is the partnership between WFP, FAO and IFAD who

joined forces to support the G5 Sahel Investment Plan's Resilience pillar under the coordination of the Executive Secretariat. To this end, the latter organizations formalized their partnership in a Memorandum of Understanding.

WFP furthermore engages in a number of partnerships under the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko-Haram affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region (LCBC-RSS) as well as under the Sahel Alliance.

The partnership with UNICEF has gained new momentum with the WFP-UNICEF Enhanced Partnership, which in the region of West and Central Africa is focusing on the three Sahel countries of Chad, Mali, and Niger. Feeding into this partnership, WFP and UNICEF have started joint and complementary programming for resilience building in Mali, Mauritania and Niger. In the course of the scale-up of the resilience programme, the two agencies have ensured a strong geographical convergence, set up joint planning and coordination mechanisms, and developed joint strategies for resilience programming.



## UNIVERSITIES

Since 2017, WFP has been actively promoting its partnership with local universities in the Sahel and the integrated resilience programme has been instrumental in formally setting up the Sahel University Network for Resilience (REUNIR). This partnership provides a unique opportunity for research and knowledge-sharing on resilience building across the region, advance the institutionalization of resilience tools, and help build the future generation of resilience experts. Research areas through this partnership

include, amongst others, integrated water and soil management, climate-smart agriculture, rural value chain development, agrarian systems and environmental management, and women's empowerment.

Agreements have been signed with ten universities in six countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal) to strengthen the technical capacity of WFP staff, partners, communities, government technical services, teachers and students, and improve the technical quality of interventions.

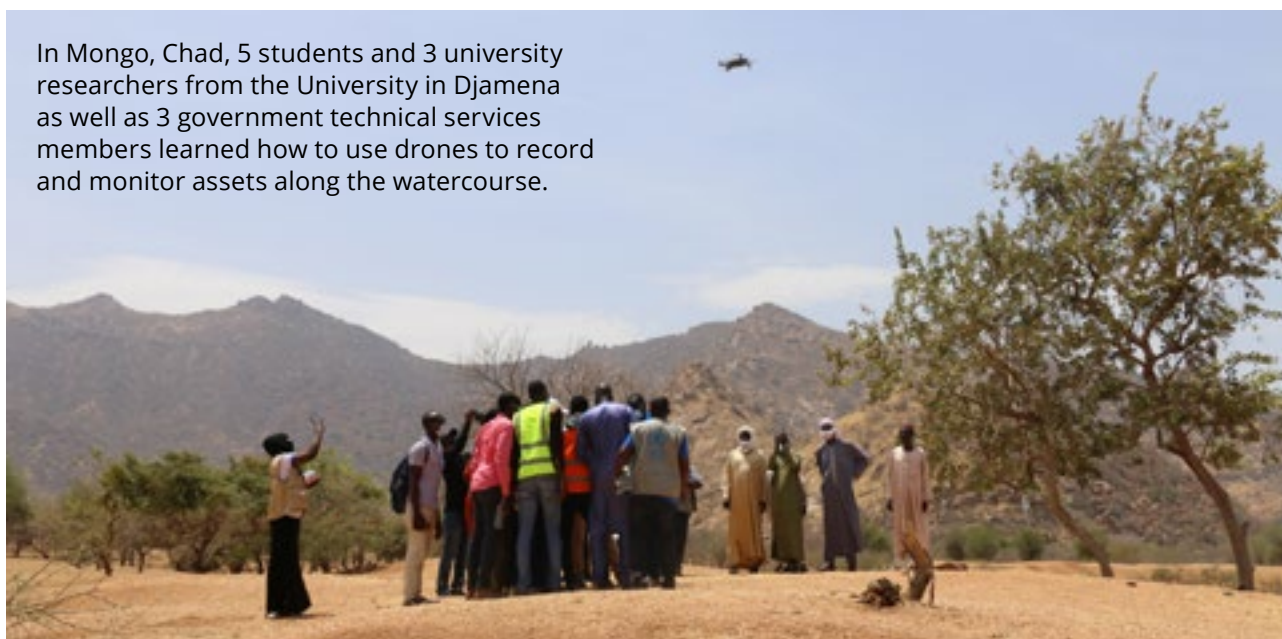
## WFP IS WORKING WITH 90 IMPLEMENTING/COOPERATING PARTNERS

## AGREEMENTS WITH 10 UNIVERSITIES TO STRENGTHEN TECHNICAL CAPACITIES

## RESEARCH FOR 145 MASTER THESES CONDUCTED ON WFP RESILIENCE SITES

## WFP AND UNICEF TOGETHER TARGET 3.5 MILLION VULNERABLE PEOPLE

In Mongo, Chad, 5 students and 3 university researchers from the University in Djamena as well as 3 government technical services members learned how to use drones to record and monitor assets along the watercourse.



## RAKIATOU ISSOUFOU ADAMOU

The master student of the University of Niamey (Niger) conducted her research internship in Sahiya (Tahoua region) from July to October 2017. In her Master thesis, she analysed the relevance of participatory planning methods and community participation for the successful creation and management of productive assets, with the overall objective to contribute to the improvement of tools for community development.

*"My work involved evaluating the level of engagement of all actors involved in the Community-based Participatory Planning (CBPP). This internship allowed me to see the reality on the ground because we spent months on the site together with the communities. In addition, it allowed me to see what we learned throughout the course and experiment it in the field. I have learned a lot from the local population who master many techniques that we were not aware of before. The community has definitely trained us."*



## Communities at the Centre of Planning and Implementation

Above all, the programme works with the communities, who take ownership of their own transformative journey. This is why the WFP's approach is grounded in the principle of inclusive community ownership and leadership – at all stages: in design, planning and implementation; in tracking progress and changes against their community-plans; in leveraging their community-plans to attract other resources; in combining WFP's and partner's inputs with communities' own contributions (e.g. to sustain and manage assets); in strengthening communities' self-help capacities (e.g. using community-level cereal banks); in accountability particularly towards the most vulnerable in their community; in engaging as "storytellers" to promote coalitions within and across their communities; and in strengthening community-based organizations, such as smallholder farmer groups, women's groups, parent-teacher associations and school management committees, environmental resource management committees, and customary/traditional networks.

One important tool to work with communities and to take into account their needs and expertise for project planning is through the Community-based participatory planning (CBPP) process: Participatory planning is a critical contribution WFP provides with partners and governments to communities, creating a platform for inclusive community engagement, where the most vulnerable, marginalized, and disempowered have a voice in community discussions on needs and solutions. Participatory planning facilitates agreements for access to land and water resources for women's groups, youth,

refugees/IDPs/returnees, and the very poor – a critical contribution to durable resilience in the Sahel.

### **BUILDING RESILIENCE AND STRENGTHENING SOCIAL COHESION IN FRAGILE AND CONFLICT PRONE SETTINGS**

Disrupting livelihoods and markets as well as heightening the pressure on ecosystems and natural resources, conflict and displacement often have a dire impact on food security. That is why WFP has made a commitment to apply a conflict-sensitive lens to programming – in other words minimising the negative effect of its operations on tensions within society and parties to a conflict, while maximising the positive effects on social cohesion, mutual-help and peace where possible.

For WFP's integrated resilience programme, participatory planning processes are at the centre of this effort, fostering dialogue and trust within communities as well as ensuring social inclusion, so that the most vulnerable and systematically marginalized, including displaced populations, have a voice in discussions affecting their lives.

Moreover, the activities of WFP's integrated resilience package speak to both tackling vulnerabilities of affected populations as well as contributing to the reduction of some of the root causes of social tensions and conflict: i.e. (1) asset creation centred on degraded lands rehabilitation and livelihood activities that reduce pressure and competition on depleted environmental resources and restore the production potential of degraded lands for pastures and crops, generating opportunities for income generation and

jobs; (2) school meals and nutrition interventions that improve equitable and inclusive access to quality social services; and (3) capacity strengthening of institutions and local actors aiming at enhancing the delivery of equitable services and building trust between citizens and state authorities. Some activities when brought to scale can directly and indirectly address typical lines of tensions that can generate conflict, e.g., between farmers and herders.

Coalition-building and fostering operational partnerships is a key element of the integrated resilience programme to strengthen collaboration, coherence and complementarity with partners, including humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors.

Finally, WFP is engaging in a number of efforts to better understand, strengthen as well as measure its contribution to improving social cohesion and the prospects for peace. This includes a research partnership with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) launched in 2018 and now entering its second phase, the introduction of conflict-specific indicators, as well as dedicated case studies to thoroughly investigate the impact of food assistance and resilience interventions on power structures and societal tensions.

## 355 COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY PLANNING (CBPP) EXERCISES COMPLETED



## MARKET GARDEN FOR IMPROVED NUTRITION, SOURCE OF INCOME AND SOCIAL COHESION.

In Louda, Centre-Nord in Burkina Faso, the market garden is part of WFP's resilience activity, aiming to go beyond food assistance. There are 1.3 million internally displaced people in Burkina Faso, displaced due to armed conflict. WFP provides life-saving assistance to 920,000 IDPs and members of host families. Many of these displaced people rely on food assistance for more than two years. The market garden project aims to promote social cohesion and to reduce the strain IDPs put on the hosting communities' scarce resources (such as access to food, water etc.). In this market garden, both IDPs and the hosting community members' work side by side to grow vegetables for home consumption and for sale. This resilience project allows people to acquire new agricultural skills, generate an income and have access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

*"In this market garden, I grow onions and onion leaves. I use the leaves for cooking, and I earn money by selling the leaves at the market."*

Bamogo Rasmata, 30 years old, housewife and mother of 7 children

## MAURITANIAN WOMEN TELLING THEIR STORIES IN PICTURES

In Assaba region, Mauritania, 20 women from the communities of the resilience project were trained to tell their stories through photography. The women took pictures around the topics of nutrition, school canteen and FFA. For all participants it was the first time they had held a camera. After a graduation ceremony the best photos will become part of an exhibition and some trainees will continue their engagement as storytellers of the resilience project.

*"I really liked the course, we learned a lot, and it was the first time I used a camera. Now, thanks to photography, you can keep all your history."*

Hawa, student

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## Notes

1. All percentages are on average and based on country-specific data
2. No data available on out of school rate for Chad
3. All estimated numbers on food insecurity draw on the expected figures for the lean season period (JUN-AUG.)
4. Integrated Context Analysis (ICA): <https://geonode.wfp.org/imaps/ica/>  
Conflict severity analysis uses data on conflict events collected by ACLED between April 2020 and March 2021.  
The **conflict dynamics** refer to the timeframe in which the majority of events occurred within this period.  
The **conflict intensity** has been determined based on the total number of conflict-related fatalities over the last 5 years (2016-2021) taking into account the population of the areas where the events occurred.

## Acronyms

<b>ASP</b>	Adaptive Social Protection
<b>CBPP</b>	Community-based Participatory Planning
<b>CILSS</b>	Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel
<b>GIZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FFA</b>	Food Assistance for Assets
<b>GAM</b>	Global Acute Malnutrition
<b>GASPA</b>	Le Groupe d'Apprentissage et de Suivi des Pratiques Optimales (Infant and Young Child Feeding Support Group)
<b>ICA</b>	Integrated Context Analysis
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced People
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>LCBC-RSS</b>	Lake Chad Basin Commission Regional Stability Facility
<b>REUNIR</b>	Réseau des Universités du Sahel pour la Résilience
<b>RBA</b>	Rome-based Agencies
<b>SAM</b>	Severe Acute Malnutrition
<b>SAMS</b>	Small-holder Agricultural Market Support
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation, Hygiene

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