Protection impact

A record 13.4 million people need humanitarian assistance across the border areas of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger—the area known as Central Sahel.

In Mali, the number of people who needed humanitarian assistance between January and August 2020 rose from 4.3 million to 6.8 million, meaning one in three people in Mali needs emergency aid.

In Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, the number of reported fatalities has risen sharply over the last year; more than 6,600 people were killed over the last 12 months.

Last year 81 aid workers were wounded, kidnapped or killed in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, according to the Aid Worker Security Database. In 2019 the number of attacks on aid workers in Mali was double the number in 2018.

Human rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence and attacks against children, have spiked over the past year. For example, Mali recorded 571 grave violations against children during the first three quarters of 2019, compared to 544 in 2018 and 386 in 2017, according to OHCHR.
Humanitarian needs

This year, more than 7 million children in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger need humanitarian assistance, up from 4.3 million children.

An estimated 7.4 million\(^1\) people are struggling with crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity during the current lean season. That is three times more acutely food insecure people than one year ago.

Compared to the average of the last five years, acute food insecurity has increased by a staggering 514 per cent in Burkina Faso, 130 per cent in Mali and 144 per cent in Niger.

More than 150 health centres in Central Sahel are closed or not fully functioning, leaving millions of people without access to adequate services.

More than 4,000 schools\(^2\) are closed because of direct attacks on education infrastructure and personnel. In Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, over 8 million children aged between 6 and 14 are out of school, which represents almost 55 per cent of children in this age group.

Displacement

Between 2018 and 2020 the number of internally displaced people increased more than twentyfold, from 70,000 to almost 1.6 million. In addition, there are currently 122,000 refugees.

In Burkina Faso, armed violence has forced more than 1 million people to flee their homes since the crisis escalated two years ago. This includes 400,000 people who were newly displaced in 2020.

Funding

As of 7 October 2020, the humanitarian response plans for assistance to Central Sahel this year were only 39 per cent funded. A further US$2.4 billion\(^3\) is urgently needed to save and protect the lives of the most vulnerable people in the region this year and next.

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\(^1\) This figure refers to food insecurity levels in Burkina Faso, Mali and all of Niger. If counting only western Niger, the total figure is 5.5 million people.

\(^2\) As of October 2020.

\(^3\) $1.4 billion is needed for humanitarian response plans in 2020, of which $550 million has been received. A further estimated $1.56 billion is required to finance humanitarian response plans in 2021. Those plans will be finalized in the coming weeks.