U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

SAHELIAN AFRICA – Locust Emergency

Situation Report #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 October 8, 2004

Note: This report updates the last Situation Report dated September 21, 2004.

BACKGROUND

During July and August of 2003, favorable climatic conditions resulted in increased locust breeding levels throughout Sahelian West Africa. The density of the swarms increased during October and November in Mauritania, Mali, and Niger, and the locusts became gregarious. With an average life span of four months, the gregarious females can lay up to 200 eggs per insect. The locusts matured from July to October in Mali and Niger, and then moved on to Northwest Africa for a second breeding cycle from December 2003 to March 2004. In June, the first swarms of desert locusts moved from the spring breeding grounds in Morocco and Algeria to the Sahel. With intensive control operations, the situation in Northwest Africa has improved, and only residual locust populations remain in Morocco and Algeria, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). However, in late June, the swarms that had moved southward laid eggs in Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, and Niger. These swarms are highly mobile and are difficult to spray before maturation. The current rainy season is providing the locusts with ideal survival and breeding conditions, and an even greater number of swarms are expected to arrive from the north and west. The current locust outbreak is the worst since 1987-89, which required an international donor outlay of approximately $300 million.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
Area at Risk	3.5 million hectares* [crop and pasture land]	FAO – September 27, 2004
Pesticide Treated Area	875,000 hectares	FAO –October 4, 2004

* one hectare = 2.5 acres

Total FY 2004 USAID/OFDA Assistance (To Date)…….$4,720,000
Total FY 2004 USG Humanitarian Assistance (To Date)……...….$7,471,000

CURRENT SITUATION

General situation. Swarms of locusts continue to lay eggs in southern Mauritania, indicating a possible second generation of breeding in the Sahel. New swarms are forming in southern Mauritania, northern Senegal, Mali, Niger, and the north of Burkina Faso, according to FAO. As vegetation starts to dries out with the end of the rainy season in the Sahel, large swarms are expected to start moving northwards towards northern Mauritania, southern Morocco, and Algeria. Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, and Niger remain the most affected countries, but Burkina Faso and Cape Verde are also reporting locusts. Of the infested area, 25 percent has been treated in the region as of October 4, based on estimates by FAO.

Impact on harvest. In 2004, the Sahel was predicted to experience a second year of above average harvest, due to favorable climatic conditions. In 2003, grain harvest in the Sahel reached 14 million metric tons (MT). According to the Inter-state Committee to Fight Drought in the Sahel (CILSS), in the absence of a locust infestation, an even better harvest was expected in 2004.

Impact on lives and livelihoods. The potential ramifications of a large-scale locust infestation on lives and livelihoods in the affected countries and the region as a whole are grave. FAO has warned of severe food insecurity if control operations are not increased to combat the swarms. According to the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), agriculture employs 80 percent of the working population in the affected countries, with the exception of Niger and Senegal. In some countries, the combined loss of employment and food insecurity has resulted in rural migration to urban centers. Although the impact of the present locust situation on malnutrition levels cannot be determined at present, many children in the region are already suffering from malnutrition, making the potential impact life-threatening, according to UNICEF.

Mauritania. Locusts have reportedly affected approximately 1.6 million hectares in Mauritania causing national agricultural experts to warn of a major food crisis due to the extensive crop damage. The U.N. World Food Program

(WFP) has already warned of a potential food crisis in the country, since under normal conditions Mauritania manages to grow only enough food to meet a third of national requirements. As of October 4, a total of 240,703 of the 1.6 million hectares infested (15 percent) had been treated with pesticides, according to FAO.

UNICEF/Mauritania is preparing for a nutritional emergency as a result of the impact of the locust infestation. The Food Security Commission plans to complete a national vulnerability survey by the end of October, the results of which will be used to identify areas to be targeted by response efforts. UNICEF is monitoring the potential nutritional impact on children throughout the region as a result of the locusts.

Mali. According to Mali's Locust Control Operations Center in the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the locust infestation is worsening in central and eastern areas of the country, and large swarms have returned in western Mali around Kayes, Yelimane, and the Mauritanian border. The most concentrated swarms are reported in Mopti, Tombouctou, and the Goa triangle. According to the MOA, critical air and ground support are currently insufficient in Mali to support the intensive crop protection spraying and surveillance activities needed to save portions of what could be a bumper harvest. In prior years, Mali has been an exporter of surplus harvests to neighboring countries. Thus, a decrease in Mali's harvest could have negative implications for food security in the region. According to FAO, Mali accounts for almost 25 percent of the total Sahel cereal production.

As of October 7, a total of 211,913 of the 871,418 hectares infested had been treated with pesticides, according to the MOA. The Government of Mali estimates current crop losses at 440,000 MT. Despite pledges of equipment to assist in the locust eradication effort, unless resources arrive immediately, it may be too late to save segments of this year's harvest affected by the locust infestation, according to the MOA.

Senegal. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 46 treatment teams are on the ground in Senegal and control efforts have succeeded in containing the spread of the locusts. As of October 4, a total of 276,293 of the 307,316 hectares infested (65 percent) had been treated with pesticides, according to FAO. To date, locust damage has not affected the main agricultural land in the southwest.

Niger. According to reports from the October 1 locust control meeting in Niger, swarms are increasing in size. As of October 4, a total of 106,631 hectares had been treated with pesticides in Niger. The Government of Niger estimates that 750,000 hectares will be affected by the locusts, but to date no significant locust infestations have been reported in the southern agricultural zone, which produces 50 percent of the country's harvests. Swarms have been reported in the Air Mountains and in the Tenere, possibly indicating that the locusts have begun to migrate north to the Maghreb.

Burkina Faso. On October 1, FAO reported that immature swarms are forming in Burkina Faso. As of October 4, a total of 5,456 of the 19,426 hectares infested had been treated with pesticides, according to FAO. On September 29, the country's Minister of Agriculture urged farmers to harvest crops as early as possible to avoid losing them to the locusts.

Cape Verde. Several swarms, and related crop damage, have been reported in Cape Verde. On October 1, FAO reported that 10 swarms had reached 5 of the Cape Verde islands. Although no figure of locust damage is available, the country only produces 20 percent of national consumption requirements under normal conditions, so damage from the locusts may exacerbate an already acute food security situation. Cape Verde lost almost the entire 2004 maize harvest due to drought conditions in July and August. As of October 4, a total of 500 hectares had been treated with pesticides, according to FAO.

Response Efforts. FAO is the U.N. designated lead on emergency transboundry pest outbreaks. As of October 1, FAO had received $14.7 million, and pledges for an additional $40 million, in response to the appeal for $100 million to combat the locust invasion. FAO has contributed approximately $6 million from its own resources to the appeal. Donor contributions to FAO's appeal include the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, France, and Italy. Additionally, the United States, France, Italy, and Belgium have provided aircraft and funds to FAO to meet aerial spraying requirements.

Countries in northern and northwestern Africa, notably Morocco, Algeria, and Libya, continue to make significant contributions, including pesticides, vehicles, technical assistance, and communication and spray equipment to combat the regional locust threat. Many of governments in the Sahel have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding to allow control teams to conduct cross-border operations.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

In response to the current locust upsurge affecting the Sahel, major donors including USAID have adopted a regional strategy to channel funding for the locust emergency through FAO's appeal. FAO also coordinates closely with USAID/OFDA's Assistance for Emergency Locust/Grasshopper Abatement (AELGA) project to identify appropriate activities that USG funding can support.

To date, USAID/OFDA has provided more than $4.7 million to support locust control efforts throughout the Sahel. A USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART), comprised of locust emergency personnel, is currently on the ground. The USAID/DART has deployed throughout the region to provide technical assistance to national governments and help coordinate the USG response to the locust emergency. USAID/OFDA has also provided six crop-dusting planes, capable of spraying a total average of 7,500 hectares per day, for regional control efforts. The planes will initially target areas in Mauritania and Senegal using the

pesticide Malathion. USAID/OFDA is procuring 200,000 liters of Malathion, sufficient to treat 200,000 hectares, for this operation.

To date in FY 2004, USAID's Bureau for Africa (USAID/AFR) has provided $800,000 to FAO for emergency locust operations. In addition, USAID/AFR has provided $651,000 to the USAID Mission in Senegal for response activities in Senegal and Mauritania. USAID/Mali has also provided $1 million through FAO to support regional locust control efforts and $100,000 to the Government of Mali.

USAID's Bureau of Asia and the Near East (USAID/ANE) has provided $200,000 to the Moroccan Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) to purchase protection, spraying, and communications equipment.

On April 14, 2004, U.S. Ambassador LeBaron issued a disaster declaration for the locust outbreak in Mauritania, which affected the regions of Adrar, Dakhlet Nouadhibou, Tiris Zemmour, and Inchiri. On April 15, 2004, U.S. Ambassador Riley issued a disaster declaration due to the locust outbreak in Morocco. In response to both, USAID/OFDA providing $500,000 to FAO for continued locust prevention and response activities region-wide.
On September 2, 2004, Ambassador Huddleston issued a disaster declaration due to the locust emergency affecting Mali. In response, USAID/OFDA provided $50,000 through USAID/Mali to support the Government of Mali's special account for combating the locust infestation.

On September 23, 2004, Ambassador Roth declared a disaster in Senegal due to the magnitude of the locust infestation. In lieu of the Ambassador's authority of $50,000, USAID/OFDA has provided more than $2.6 million to date for emergency operations for locust mitigation and response activities in Mauritania and Senegal.

On September 21, 2004, Ambassador Stafford determined that the impending threat of a locust infestation was beyond the capacity of the local and national authorities in The Gambia. In response, on September 24, USAID/OFDA provided $50,000 to FAO to support the relief and prevention efforts in The Gambia.

U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO COMBAT LOCUSTS

Implementing Partner	*Activity*	*Location*	*Amount*
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE[1]			
FAO	Locust Response	Regional	$1,500,000
FAO	Locust Response	The Gambia	$50,000
USAID/Mali	Pesticides and related control activities	Mali	$550,000
USAID/Senegal	Aerial spraying campaign	Senegal and Mauritania	$2,620,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			**$4,720,000**
USAID/AFR ASSISTANCE			
FAO	Locust Response	Regional	$800,000
USAID/Senegal	Locust Response	Senegal and Mauritania	$651,000
TOTAL USAID/AFR			**$1,451,000**
USAID/ANE ASSISTANCE			
Morocco MOA	Locust Response	Morocco	$200,000
TOTAL USAID/ANE			**$200,000**
USAID/Mali ASSISTANCE			
FAO	Locust Response	Regional	$1,000,000
Government of Mali	Locust Response	Mali	$100,000
TOTAL USAID/Mali			**$1,100,000**
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO COMBAT LOCUSTS IN FY 2004			**$7,471,000**

[1] USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amount as of October 8, 2004.

Ken Issacs
Director
Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance