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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)

Sahelian West Africa – Humanitarian Emergency

Fact Sheet #8, Fiscal Year (FY) 2005

September 30, 2005

Note: The last fact sheet was dated September 16, 2005.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
Affected population – Niger	3,000,000	WFP ¹ , September 15, 2005
Affected population – Mali	1,000,000	WFP, August 5, 2005
Affected population – Mauritania	600,000	WFP, August 5, 2005
Affected population – Burkina Faso	500,000	WFP, August 5, 2005
Total Affected Population²	5,100,000	

Total FY 2005 USAID Assistance to Niger, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Sahel Regional Locust Response..... \$134,338,406

CURRENT SITUATION

Regional Update

- Rains continue to fall in the main crop-producing zones of the Sahel. According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), since the beginning of the growing season, soil moisture has been adequate to meet crop water requirements, and harvest prospects are favorable in Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Mauritania. Pastures have regenerated markedly, and livestock conditions are improved.
- According to the USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), millet and sorghum crops are expected to yield bumper to record harvests throughout most of the Sahel. Of concern, however, are Gao Region in Mali and Tahoua Region in Niger, both of which have received below-normal levels of rainfall this year.
- In September, the desert locust situation remained generally calm in the summer breeding areas in the Sahel. According to FAO, locust numbers increased slightly during this time period due to small-scale breeding in northwest Mauritania and in the western Air Mountains in Niger, where hopper and adult locust numbers remained below threatening levels. In addition, low numbers of adult locusts were present in northern Mali in September. Ground and aerial surveys to detect signs of increasing locust numbers are underway and will continue through the end of October.

Niger Update

- Following extensive assessments and subsequent programming of emergency activities, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) concluded its work in Niger on September 21. Humanitarian activities funded by USAID will continue, and USAID’s Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/DCHA) is targeting FY 2006 assistance through three national-scale assessments. The Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), FAO, FEWS NET, and WFP will begin a crop and food supply assessment mission on October 17. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF) are conducting a nutrition and mortality survey with funding from USAID. WFP is conducting an Emergency Food Security Assessment, which is expected to conclude in mid-October. USAID/DCHA staff based in Dakar will continue to monitor ongoing and emerging humanitarian needs.
- In Niger, the harvest has begun, and harvest prospects are favorable. Although the beginning of the harvest has ameliorated food insecurity in many areas, global acute malnutrition rates and mortality for children under five are still cause for response in some areas, and Niger remains vulnerable to repeated crises of food insecurity and malnutrition due to high household indebtedness and structural poverty. As the harvest is underway, Niger and its partners are preparing long-term responses to address the root causes of the emergency.
- The vast majority of Nigeriens rely on individual agricultural production not only for food security, but also as income for other household needs such as health care, education, shelter, clothing, and debt reimbursement. During the recent hungry season, many Nigeriens borrowed larger amounts of cereals and money against this year’s harvest than is normal. Because of high levels of household indebtedness, a significant portion of the crops harvested during the current growing season by these households will be used to repay household debt.

¹ U.N. World Food Program

² Affected populations may have varying levels of need, from complete food distributions to little or no assistance.

- During the first round of general food distributions in August and September, the Government of Niger (GON), WFP, WFP's implementing partners, Plan International, and Catholic Relief Services distributed food aid to 3 million people. WFP's second round of distributions will target 1.7 million people in the most food insecure households. WFP has set October 10 as the end date for the second round of distributions. After October 10, WFP will continue activities targeting malnourished children and mothers, and expand food for work (FFW) and school feeding programs.
- In addition to food insecurity, both malnutrition and deteriorating livestock conditions contributed to the crisis. Malnutrition is at or near emergency levels every year in Niger, but admissions to nutritional clinics rose sharply in early 2005. Poor pasture growth in 2004 led to deteriorating conditions for livestock, resulting in plummeting livestock prices and animal deaths in some areas, particularly those regions most dependent on animal production as a primary source of income. These conditions, combined with the rising price of cereals, hampered the ability of pastoralists to feed their families.

Mali Update

- In close collaboration with USAID/Mali and the U.S. Embassy, the USAID/DART conducted assessments of food security, nutrition, livelihoods, markets, water, health, and agriculture. The team interviewed residents of approximately 20 villages and 20 pastoral camps. The team also met with local and national government leaders, national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and U.N. agencies.
- Malians in the northern regions of Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu reported that cereal prices were extraordinarily high this year, and animal losses were heavy due to poor pastures that were ravaged by locusts and drought. Remaining animals were in a weakened state and thus not as valuable in the markets, skewing the terms of trade. There was also an overall lack of cereal seeds in some areas. Consequently, many households reported high levels of debt. Severity differed from one area to another, sometimes within the same district, but many told the USAID/DART that the past year was equal to or nearly equal to the droughts of 1973 and 1984 to 1985.
- Pastoralists in Mali suffered high animal losses in 2004 and 2005. Even with good rainfall in the coming years, recovery of livestock populations can take three to five years. The USAID/DART observed that due to the loss of livestock, many households' assets are depleted and that these populations have limited sources of alternative income.
- The last USAID/DART members departed from Mali on September 21.

Burkina Faso Update

- Following assessments in Burkina Faso, the USAID/DART concluded that the country is not experiencing a generalized food security crisis, although localized food shortages due to problems with food availability and access do exist. In the Sahel Region, the harvest has begun, and the crop outlook is promising. In the Northern Region, the harvest will begin in early- to mid-October and is expected to be heavily compromised by gaps in rainfall during July and August.
- The USAID/DART concluded assessments of Burkina Faso in early September, noting that water retention structures, better management of available water, and cereal banks would improve communities' resilience to future food security shocks.
- The last USAID/DART member departed from Burkina Faso on September 8.

Mauritania Update

- Assessments conducted by the USAID/DART indicate that Mauritania is not currently experiencing a food insecurity emergency. The USAID/DART observed evidence of chronic malnutrition and stunting, attributable to long-term developmental issues due to widespread poverty, poor feeding and health practices, and inadequate quantity and quality of water. In light of chronic poverty and reports of high levels of indebtedness, well-targeted and properly implemented emergency and non-emergency assistance is still required.
- According to FEWS NET, an effective emergency response in Mauritania, which included general food distributions, helped avert a disaster. The recent rainy season was good, and conditions in agro-pastoral areas have improved. However, pockets of extreme food insecurity remain in southwest Mauritania.
- The USAID/DART recommended that USAID continue to monitor the food security situation in close collaboration with other major players such as the Commission for Food Security (CSA), WFP, FAO, FEWS NET, and NGOs. USAID/DART recommendations also included intensified USAID monitoring of ongoing food programs in Mauritania to strengthen the implementation and accountability of these activities.
- On September 11, the USAID/DART concluded activities in Mauritania. USAID will continue to monitor food security in Mauritania.

USAID ASSISTANCE

Regional Response

- The USAID-supported West Africa Regional Program (WARP) handles West African development challenges that are most effectively addressed at a regional level. WARP works closely with USAID missions in the region, including USAID's bilateral missions in Mali and Senegal, and U.S. embassies in countries where USAID does not have a mission. WARP supports activities in 19 West African countries, including Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania,

Senegal, and Niger. WARP representatives are currently working in the region to develop strategies to control market fluctuation and implement near-term market interventions.

- In response to the 2004/2005 locust infestation, USAID provided nearly \$14 million to support locust control efforts throughout Sahelian West Africa in FY 2005. Through a grant to FAO, USAID supported agricultural relief and recovery programs in Niger, including the provision of livestock feed support and agricultural inputs for dry season gardening activities. USAID provided support to the Government of Mali for combating the locust infestation, providing pesticides, and funding related control activities. In Mauritania and Senegal, USAID supported locust prevention and response activities, including an aerial spraying campaign.

Niger

- USAID provided more than \$19 million in assistance to Niger in FY 2005 in support of food security and agriculture projects, emergency and development food assistance, and airlifts of fortified food for emergency nutrition programs. USAID funded programs that focused on community-based development, child survival and health, youth, and human rights. USAID also provided 12,230 metric tons (MT) of development food assistance and 7,860 MT of emergency food assistance to Niger in FY 2005.

Mali

- In FY 2005, USAID provided nearly \$40 million in assistance to Mali. USAID provided 1,710 MT of development food commodities and 1,000 MT of emergency food commodities. USAID's development program in Mali worked to expand economic opportunities, particularly for the rural poor; provided high impact health services to improve the health and welfare of women and children; mitigated the spread of HIV/AIDS; improved the quality of basic education; consolidated democracy through support of decentralization; supported human rights; and accelerated overall development by making information more widely accessible through radio programs.

Mauritania

- In FY 2005, USAID provided more than \$16 million to various programs in Mauritania. USAID activities in Mauritania focused primarily on improving food security. USAID provided 19,330 MT of development food assistance and 16,940 MT of emergency food assistance to Mauritania in FY 2005. USAID also funded human rights and community-based development programs.

Burkina Faso

- USAID's funding level for Burkina Faso for FY 2005 was approximately \$18 million, most of which was focused on improving food security. In FY 2005, USAID provided 24,240 MT of development food commodities and funded programs that support local human rights, community-based development activities, political party development, and technical assistance for elections.

Senegal

- In Senegal in FY 2005, USAID provided more than \$31 million. USAID activities in Senegal focused largely on health, economic growth, agriculture, and education. USAID provided 4,390 MT of development food assistance to Senegal in FY 2005.

BACKGROUND

- In 2004, an early end to the rains and desert locust damage to crops and pasture lands adversely affected pasture availability and cereal production in Sahelian West Africa. These events exacerbated existing poverty and vulnerability and resulted in elevated food insecurity in agro-pastoral and pastoral zones in Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Mauritania. The situation in Niger was considered an emergency, with more than 3 million people affected. In Burkina Faso, Mali, and Mauritania, more than 2 million people were affected, and the situation in these countries warranted close monitoring.
- Regional assessments have used the word "affected" to impart that this population was impacted in some way by either locust infestation or the early cessation of rains. Affected populations have varying levels of humanitarian needs. Some may require food distributions, while others may require little or no assistance of any kind. USAID recognizes that endemic poverty and underdevelopment are critical factors contributing to the current humanitarian emergency and is committed to addressing these factors through an appropriate combination of USAID development and humanitarian assistance.
- FEWS NET assessments continue to show consistent rainfall and good crop and pasture conditions in most of Niger and almost all of the rest of Sahelian West Africa. Prospects for crop harvests in most of the Sahel are generally good to excellent, although some places will remain drought-affected. Loss of assets or livestock over the past year will likely result in continued vulnerability for some families beyond the current harvest.
- In response to the humanitarian emergency, USAID deployed a USAID/DART to Sahelian West Africa on August 3, 2005. USAID/DART staff included public health and nutrition specialists, water and sanitation specialists, food aid officers, program officers, and information officers. Additional USAID/DART members already in the region included regional advisors for North and West Africa, development officers, and a FEWS NET representative. On August 11, USAID activated a Response Management Team (RMT) in Washington, D.C. to backstop the USAID/DART.

- USAID/DCHA Assistant Administrator Michael E. Hess traveled to Niger and Mali from August 19 to 28 to visit USAID-funded projects in affected areas and conduct humanitarian assessments with USAID/DART representatives. Assistant Administrator Hess and delegation reported that many fields were green and crops appear abundant and healthy in some areas Mali, but also reported that some crops appeared ruined or stunted due to lack of rain. Assistant Administrator Hess expressed concern with household debt levels throughout the region due to household borrowing to survive the current lean season and carry-over debt from the lean season in 2004.

USAID ASSISTANCE TO NIGER

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE³			
CRS	Food Security, Agriculture	Tillaberi and Zinder	\$494,513
FAO	Food Security, Agriculture	Countrywide	\$50,000
UNICEF	Airlift of 251 MT of fortified food for emergency nutrition programs	Countrywide	\$543,826
World Vision	Nutrition	Maradi and Zinder	\$1,087,711
Helen Keller International	Nutrition	Diffa	\$1,091,471
CDC	Nutritional Survey	Countrywide	\$97,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$3,364,521
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE			
Consortium including Africare, Catholic Relief Services, CARE, and Helen Keller International	12,230 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Development Food Assistance	Agadez, Dosso, Tahoua, and Zinder	\$7,390,000
WFP	7,860 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$5,800,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$13,190,000
USAID/AFR ASSISTANCE			
	Youth Programs		\$500,000
	Democracy and Human Rights Fund		\$92,000
	Special Self-Help		\$74,000
	Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative		\$1,050,000
	WARP Support		\$732,000
TOTAL USAID/AFR			\$2,448,000
TOTAL USAID ASSISTANCE TO NIGER IN FY 2005			\$19,002,521

³ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 30, 2005.

USAID ASSISTANCE TO MALI

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE⁴			
Africare	1,710 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Development Food Assistance	Timbuktu Region	\$930,000
WFP	1,000 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$667,200
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$1,597,200
USAID/AFR ASSISTANCE			
	Economic Growth ⁵		\$1,723,000
	Education		\$5,755,000

⁴ For Reporting purposes, USAID/Mali's P.L. 480 Title II program is combined with the P.L. 480 Title II program in Chad. The implementing partner is responsible for reporting on both Mali and Chad. The referenced figures are therefore not reflected in Mali's Congressional Budget Justification (CBJ).

⁵ This total includes funding for the locust response.

	Democracy and Governance		\$1,447,000
	Health		\$15,705,000
	Agriculture, Environment ⁵		\$11,044,000
	Democracy and Human Rights Fund		\$70,000
	Special Self-Help Fund		\$77,000
	Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative		\$725,000
	WARP Support		\$1,389,000
TOTAL USAID/AFR			\$37,935,000
TOTAL USAID ASSISTANCE TO MALI IN FY 2005			\$39,532,200

USAID ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE⁶			
DFS	Locust Response		\$177,777
World Vision	Supplementary Feeding Program		\$50,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$227,777
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE			
World Vision and the Doulos Community	19,330 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Development Food Assistance	Nouakchott	\$6,579,600
WFP	16,940 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Brakna, Gorgol, Tagant, Assaba, and Hodh El Gharbi	\$8,811,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$15,390,600
USAID/AFR ASSISTANCE			
	Democracy and Human Rights Fund		\$80,000
	Special Self-Help Fund		\$87,000
	Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative		\$250,000
	WARP Support		\$459,000
TOTAL USAID/AFR			\$876,000
TOTAL USAID ASSISTANCE TO MAURITANIA IN FY 2005			\$16,494,377

⁶USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 30, 2005.

USAID ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE			
Africare, Catholic Relief Services	24,240 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Development Food Assistance	Zondoma province (Africare); all 45 provinces (CRS)	\$15,570,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$15,570,000
USAID/AFR ASSISTANCE			
	Democracy and Human Rights Fund		\$69,500
	Special Self-Help fund		\$104,000
	WARP Support		\$1,628,000
	Economic Support Fund		\$463,000
TOTAL USAID/AFR			\$2,264,500
TOTAL USAID ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO IN FY 2005			\$17,834,500

USAID ASSISTANCE TO SENEGAL

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE			
Counterpart International	4,390 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Development Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$2,268,700
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$2,268,700
USAID/AFR ASSISTANCE			
	Economic Growth ⁷		\$2,474,810
	Basic Education		\$3,153,000
	Democracy and Governance		\$1,655,000
	Health		\$14,775,000
	Agriculture/Environment ⁷		\$5,188,000
	Human Rights		\$500,000
	Democracy and Human Rights Fund		\$70,500
	Special Self-Help Fund		\$80,000
	Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative		\$175,000
	WARP Support		\$803,000
TOTAL USAID/AFR			\$28,874,310
TOTAL USAID ASSISTANCE TO SENEGAL IN FY 2005			\$31,143,010

⁷ This total includes funding for the locust response.

USAID REGIONAL ASSISTANCE TO LOCUST RESPONSE

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE⁸			
FAO	Locust Response	Chad	\$50,000
AFCAP	Locust Response	Mauritania and Senegal	\$2,555,761
DFS	Locust Response	Mauritania and Senegal	\$3,101,735
Admin	Locust Response	Mauritania and Senegal	\$74,302
USAID/Senegal	Locust Response	Mauritania and Senegal	\$50,000
Gov. of Morocco	Locust Response	Morocco	\$1,500,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$7,331,798
USAID/AFR ASSISTANCE⁹			
USAID/WARP	Locust Response	Regional	\$1,500,000
TOTAL USAID/AFR			\$1,500,000
USAID/ANE ASSISTANCE			
Gov. of Morocco	Locust Response	Morocco	\$1,500,000
TOTAL USAID/ANE			\$1,500,000
TOTAL USAID REGIONAL ASSISTANCE TO LOCUST RESPONSE IN FY 2005			\$10,331,798

⁸ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 30, 2005.

⁹ In addition, USAID/AFR provided \$1 million to Mali and \$2.5 million to Senegal for locust response, which is reflected in the “USAID Assistance to Mali” and “USAID Assistance to Senegal” charts.

TOTAL USAID ASSISTANCE TO BURKINA FASO, MALI, MAURITANIA, NIGER, AND SAHEL LOCUST RESPONSE IN FY 2005	\$134,338,406
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PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. Information on identifying such organizations is available in the “How Can I Help” section of www.USAID.gov – Keyword: Sahel, or by calling The Center for International Disaster Information (CIDI) at 703-276-1914.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they: allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, warehouse space, etc); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID: www.USAID.gov – Keyword: Donations
 - The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or (703) 276-1914
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int.