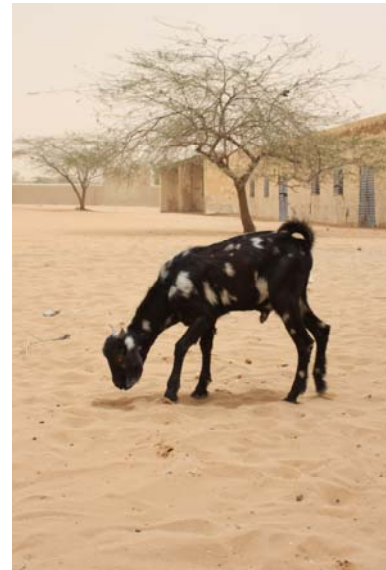


Emergency Food Security Assessments of Drought-affected Population in Western Sahelian Chad



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sahelian belt of Chad is the most exposed to climatic shocks (irregular and below average rainfall) that contribute to increase the population's vulnerability to food insecurity. According to the results of the Joint Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission, cereal production deficit in 2009/2010 was about 34% and lower than the last five years' average. The nutrition status of children under five is very preoccupying with malnutrition rates well above emergency thresholds (26.9% in the Bahr El Ghazal and 19.4% in Nokou Kanem). To respond to this crisis, WFP prepared an emergency operation to assist vulnerable populations affected by this cereal deficit in the Kanem, Bahr El Ghazal, Batha, Guéra, and Hadjer Lamis regions through general food distribution, nutrition supplementation as well as disaster prevention and mitigation activities. An Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) was implemented from 10 to 27 March 2010 in these six regions to allow WFP and its partners to have precise information for the geographical targeting of the most affected areas and propose criteria for the targeting of beneficiaries. The results of the survey will also be used to monitor food security during the implementation of the operation and to measure results at outcome and impact level.

The below average and poor spatial-temporal rainfall distribution during the 2009/2010 agricultural campaign in the Chadian Sahelian belt disrupted the agricultural calendar. The short duration of rains in this region prevented most food crops from normally completing their vegetative cycles. These were further aggravated by the devastating effects of phyto-sanitary diseases, infestations and destruction of crops by birds. Water insufficiency and poor quality grazing conditions provoked enormous livestock losses and equally triggered the early departure of transhumant population by the month of October 2009, toward the abundant grazing zones.

The results of the survey show that there is a marked deficit when the 2009 / 2010 agricultural production is compared to that of the previous year. Even though one notes a certain quasi-stability on the main cereal prices in the rest of the country at the time of the survey, the prices of the cereals in the Sahelian zone increased whereas those of the livestock generally decreased. This deterioration of terms of trade is due to zoo-sanitary diseases, lack of grazing land and massive mortality of the livestock in 2009. This deterioration in the terms of trade and the skyrocketing prices is already limiting household access to food in the Sahelian region.

How many people or households suffer from food insecurity?

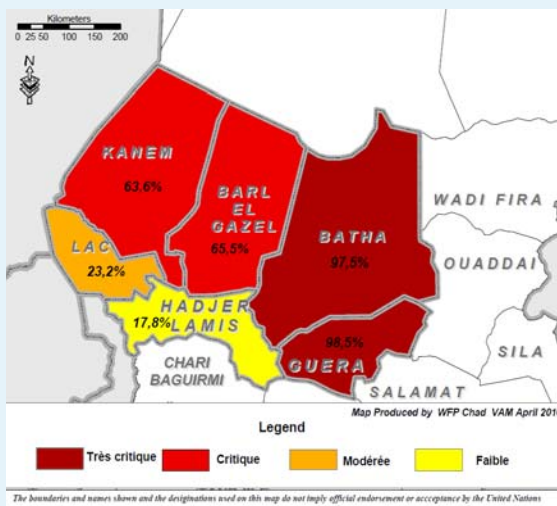
The assessment results show a very critical food security situation. Globally, 42.3% of the households are in severe food insecurity (about 1,102,000 people); 18.5% are moderately food insecure (about 482,000 people) and 39.2% are in food security (1,000,000). It appears therefore that 6 households out of 10 are in food insecurity. The situation is very catastrophic in the administrative regions of Nord Guera and Batha, and very preoccupying in Barh-el-Ghazal and Kanem. The levels of food insecurity have increased between April/May 2009 and March/April 2010 in Nord Guera, Batha, Bah-el- Ghazal, and Kanem. However, even if the overall food security situation has improved in Lac and Hadjer Lamis over the same period, pockets of food insecurity zones still exist.

Kanem and Bahr El Gaza regions have recorded high rates of Global Acute Malnutrition of children aged 6 to 59 months. In all the six regions surveyed, most health centers have observed an increasing number of the children presenting signs of odema, conjunctivitis and kwashiorkor, which are all signs and symptoms of malnutrition. The retrospective (six months) death rate of the children less than five years of the sampled population stands at 2.3/10.000/day against 2.0/10.000/day in March 2009. This rate is far above the SPHERE norms.

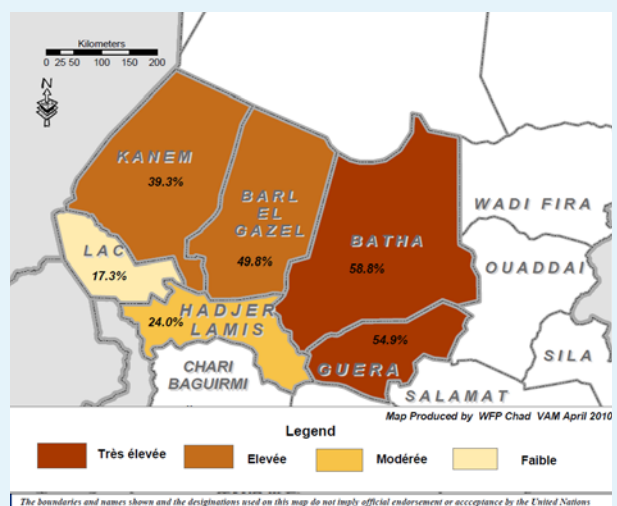
Where do the food insecure household live?

Food insecure households are concentrated mostly in the regions of North Guera, Batha, Bar El Ghazal and Kanem. They are also more vulnerable to food insecurity as compared to Lac and Hadjer Lamis regions.

Spatial distribution of the households in food insecurity



Distribution of households in the poorest and poor wealth quintiles



Which are the households that face food insecurity?

The most affected households are those practicing agriculture (62.0%), livestock (7.8%), fishing (68.8%) petty traders of non food products (98.4%), hunting/harvesting of wild food (56.3%), market gardening (57.9%) and daily wage workers (63.8%). Survey results indicate that the prevalence of food insecure is very high in households headed by elderly people (above 60 years), in those who don't know how to read and write; and in those that fall within the poor and very poor wealth index quintile.

The vulnerability of household to food insecurity increases also with the number of dependents (below 15 and above 60 years). The practice of livestock also positively influences the food security status of household. However, within one year, the number of animals possessed have drastically decreased in eight out of ten households, thus a deterioration in their food security status. Other indicators such as the death of children less than five years in the last six months before the survey, debts and expenditure on food, surface area cultivated and the self-provisioning capacity of 2009/2010 agricultural harvest also influence household food security status.



What are the causes of the food insecurity and vulnerability?

Why are some households in food insecurity and others not? The analysis of socioeconomic data and the classes of food security enabled us to identify several variables that are associated with the current household food security status. The current food insecurity is directly linked to the household cereal production deficit, poverty, the sources of food consumed, its geographical location, the type of income generating or livelihood activities, household wealth and the coping strategy indices. These conclusions are credible and globally describe structural or transitory factors or causes of the food insecurity in the region.

What are the recommendations and response options?

The results of the household survey and focus group discussions indicate that, the current main priority of the population is food (94.9% of the households). The second and third priorities are drinking water (38.3%) and credit to start income generating activities (31.7%). The fourth priority is health care and medicines (27.8%) and finally agricultural tools (18.6%).

The food insecurity situation that is currently prevailing in the Chadian sahelian belt is very preoccupying and the management of the crisis requires concerted efforts. To this effect, some urgent actions must be taken immediately to avoid famine. The following response options and recommendations are therefore proposed:

Food security and agricultural production

- Implement general food distribution, from the month of May 2010 to the target vulnerable rural population groups of the concerned regions. (Priority should be given to all of Batha, North Guéra, Kanem, Barh -El- Gazal, and Ngouri Sub-division in the Lac region).
- Carry out subsidized sales of cereals by the National Cereal Board (ONASA) in the major towns (regional, Divisional and Sub-divisional headquarters).
- Put at the disposal of the farmers improved high yielding variety seeds with short vegetative cycles for 2010/2011 agricultural campaign.
- Provide training to farmers practicing market gardening and assistance with agricultural tools and, farm inputs for market gardening in valleys.
- Strengthen food security monitoring during the upcoming 2010/2011 agricultural campaign with particular attention paid to the sahelian belt.

Livestock

- Increase the construction of boreholes and wells in the lowland and valleys to increase the number of water points for livestock consumption.
- Carryout the distribution of animal feed to sedentary and transhumant livestock breeders.
- Provide material and augment veterinary and human resources support for a good zoo-sanitary coverage

Water, Health and nutrition

- Provide nutrition support through supplementary and therapeutic feeding centers to moderately and severely malnourished children less than five years and blanket supplementary feeding to children six to 23 months, pregnant and breast feeding women in all regions.
- Reinforce existing supplementary and therapeutic feeding Centers and creation of new ones for the implementation of nutrition interventions and surveillance.
- Increase medicine and health equipments supply to health centers in all health districts in the region.
- Rehabilitate existing and non functional wells and improve population's access to drinking water.

Some of the response options proposed above are already being implemented in most domains. The results attained by the different partners are often diluted in the absence of an integrated coordination framework. It is therefore necessary to reinforce the interaction between the food security and nutrition clusters and promote a good coordination of food security activities.

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