

# Pathways to Resilience in the Sahel

## Escaping the Hunger Cycle



## Draft Report V 1.0

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## Preface

A Hausa proverb says: **if the drumbeat changes, the dance must also change**. In the Sahel, the number of people suffering from chronic food insecurity, high levels of poverty and vulnerability due to drought is increasing. Acute food crises, such as occurred in 2005, and again in 2010, are short term peaks triggered by drought and magnified by other factors of a larger trend. In 2010, severe food insecurity impacted more than 10 million people across the region. Niger – the world’s least developed country – was at the centre of the most recent food crisis, affecting over 7 million people, almost 50% of its population. Two million people in Chad did not have enough to eat. An estimated million other people in Mali (600,000) Mauritania (approx 300,000), Burkina Faso (100,000) were affected, as well as unknown numbers in northern Cameroon and northern Nigeria.

This is irrefutable evidence, if more were needed, that the drumbeat in the Sahel has changed. Food crises can no longer be treated as limited events, caused by occasional hazards like droughts or floods. Food and nutrition insecurity have become long term, chronic problems. The growing level of poverty and inequality in the Sahel mean that there is no buffer when things go wrong. It only takes a small shock to send the system into disequilibrium. A perturbation in market prices, rainfall pattern or production figures that may not appear very serious, (and which could be missed by an imperfect early warning system) can set in motion a chain of events with outcomes that appear all out of proportion with the initial trigger.<sup>1</sup>

Food insecurity and poverty are so endemic, that one of their most visible manifestations, the appallingly high levels of global severe malnutrition of children under 5, is often considered as “normal for the Sahel<sup>2</sup>”. The cause of high levels of malnutrition is often attributed to ‘cultural factors’ – including weaning practices, poor diet and lack of exclusive breast feeding for children less than 6 months. These factors are clearly important. But this fails to explain why during the food crisis of 2010, there was a huge surge in the rate of malnutrition. In Niger alone, between January and December, 313,000 children under five with severe acute malnutrition were treated through public health facilities supported by UNICEF and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). *These numbers represent one-fifth of all children treated for this condition in the world in 2010.*<sup>3</sup>

Even in good years, many people in the Sahel struggle to survive. A third of the population of Chad is chronically undernourished - regardless of the rains or the size of the harvest. A World Bank study on food security in Niger in 2009 found that more than 50 % of the population suffer from chronic food insecurity, with 22 % of the population extremely food insecure. An unacceptable number of the most vulnerable group, children under 5, actually don't survive. According to the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 300,000 under-five children in the Sahel die of malnutrition related causes each year<sup>4</sup>. A study by Save the Children on the causes of malnutrition in the Tessaoua district of Niger indicates that 85% of malnourished children admitted for treatment came from poor households, and 50% from the poorest households.<sup>5</sup> The causes of malnutrition are complex, but poverty clearly is a major and growing factor.

Despite the much greater scale of the food crisis in 2010, the overall humanitarian response was significantly better than in 2005. As this report documents, many lessons had been learned. Major improvements in the approach, tools, funding mechanisms, and coordination between agencies were apparent in the humanitarian response, particularly in Niger, (but much less so in Chad).

Despite these changes, the inescapable reality is that the international community failed to respond early enough, and at the scale required. "We managed to avoid the worst..." said the coordinator of Niger's early warning system, Harouna Hamani." Even though the population is suffering and rates of

malnutrition are very high, it could have been catastrophic without early interventions<sup>6</sup>." While the worst was averted, tragically, the late response caused hundreds of thousands of households to lose their livelihoods, fall deeper into the hunger cycle, and made future food crises much more likely.

In a similar vein are statements of the Secretary-General of CILSS<sup>a</sup>, Prof. Alhousseini Bretaudeau, made in December 2009, just as the new food crisis was starting to affect households across the Sahel: "The CILSS plays a key role within the RPCA network... In the past fifteen years, there have been no major food crises in West Africa. Why is that? I believe that one of the reasons is the quality and reliability of the information produced within the network.... ***Today, food security in West Africa is very high. As the network has matured, we no longer see the type of famine epidemic that used to be common over thirty years ago.***"<sup>7</sup>

CILSS is an influential institution in the Sahel for preventing and managing food crises. CILSS has come to recognise that food security does not depend solely on agricultural production, but also on markets, and that even in years of adequate rainfall, vulnerable populations cannot produce enough and are excluded from the market because of their low purchasing power. CILSS is slowly promoting important reforms to strengthen the capacity at the regional and national level to address structural vulnerability. Yet the remarks of Prof. Bretaudeau, made after CILSS and the RPCA had already assessed the early warning signs of the drought in 2009, suggest that CILSS and its partners should consider a different standard of how to assess a high level of food security in the Sahel, as well as more effective ways to prevent the immense damage to livelihoods and the loss of productive assets by vulnerable households when an acute food crisis occurs.

There are signs that other organisations at the national, regional and also international levels also need to consider setting a higher and different standard for food security. Chronic food insecurity and emergency levels of child malnutrition in the Sahel are definitely a concern to many, but in face of what appears to be an intractable problem with no clear or easy solutions, the current situation seems to be treated almost as "normal", with a mix of tolerance and resignation.

*"Times of crisis can be creative times, times when new visions and new possibilities emerge...as the very dangers we face stimulate us to look deeper, seek alternatives, and take advantage of opportunities<sup>8</sup>."* As this report documents, many actors within civil society, governments, international NGOs, the United Nations and aid agencies are already working creatively and strategically to generate a different vision, to change the paradigm that divides humanitarian and development aid. They are striving to overcome obstacles to the transformations required to enable the people of the Sahel to move forward on the path to resilience. These efforts are having noteworthy results. The dance is starting to change.

If international donor agencies could be convinced that investing in resilience would significantly reduce the growing huge costs of emergency relief, this change could be accelerated. The purpose of this research report is to support these actors, provide evidence in support of a new vision, and of an adapted aid approach that enables the people of the Sahel, escape the hunger cycle, regain their dignity, and seize new possibilities leading them down the "path to resilience".

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<sup>a</sup> CILSS is the Permanent Inter-State Committee for the Fight against Drought in the Sahel. Its mandate is to promote food security and combat desertification. CILSS has developed a strategic framework for "creating the conditions for sustainable regional food security and reducing structurally poverty and inequalities in the Sahel".

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## List of Abbreviations

ACF	Action Against Hunger
AFD	French Development Agency
AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
AU	African Union
BRDC	Building Disaster Resilient Communities
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program
CALP	Cash Learning Program
CASAGC	Action Committee for Food Security and Disaster Management (Chad)
CCA	Food Crisis Coordination (Chad)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EC	European Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EWS	Early Warning System
CILSS	Permanent Inter-State Committee for the Fight against Drought in the Sahel
CMAM	Community Management of Acute Malnutrition
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DNPGCA	Agency for the Prevention and Management of Food Crises
ECB	Emergency Capacity Building: Network
ECHO	European Commission for Humanitarian Aid
ECOWAP	ECOWAS Agricultural Policy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FMAFS	Farmer Managed Agroforestry System
FMNR	Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
HEA	Household Economy Analysis
IPC	Integrated food security and humanitarian Phase Classification
ICRC	International Committee of Red Cross
JEMED	Youth with a Mission for Aid and Development
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
MSF	Doctors Without Borders
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
ONASA	National Office for Food Security (Chad)

OSV	Observatories for Monitoring Vulnerability
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PVCA	Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
RBM	Billital Maroobé Network
RPCA	Food Crisis Prevention Network (West Africa)
RUTF	Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods
SCAP-UK	Community Early Warning System, Emergency Response
SCUK	Save the Children (UK)
SMART	Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transition
SONAGESS	National Agency for Food Security Stocks (Burkina Faso)
SWAC	Sahel and West Africa Club
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

## Executive Summary

This report is a detailed analysis of changes in policies and programmes in the Sahel. It assesses to what extent lessons of the 2005 food crisis were put into place, or applied, during the crisis of 2010. Commissioned by the Sahel Working Group as a follow up to an earlier study “*Beyond Any Drought*”, the initial central question guiding this study was “what lessons have been learned since 2005 about what has to change in the Sahel, so that every drought does not result in a new humanitarian crisis?” *Beyond Any Drought* assessed the root causes of chronic vulnerability in the Sahel. The concern expressed in the Terms of Reference for this study was that unless aid becomes more effective to reduce vulnerability “...it is inevitable that the frequent shocks in the Sahel will result in another crisis”. What can be learned from recent experience to guide decision making and improve the effectiveness of aid to prevent future crises?

The report is divided into 5 sections. The first describes how the 2010 crisis evolved in the distinct contexts of Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad. The second analyses the most promising changes since 2005 in addressing the root causes of vulnerability. The third highlights the failures of the response in 2010, the structural obstacles to change, and challenges for ending the chronic crisis of food and nutrition insecurity. The fourth section describes a conceptual framework “the pathways to resilience” which, if followed, will arrest and reverse the alarming trend of deepening vulnerability in the Sahel. Drawing on evidence of positive changes already started, and new lessons learned, this framework is designed to guide major groups of actors (governments, CILSS, donors, UN agencies, international NGOs, and civil society) in decision-making, and setting priorities for ending the still largely neglected chronic dimensions of the food and nutrition crisis. This is followed by conclusions and detailed recommendations.

The study draws from a review of the relevant literature, reports and documents, interviews with over 70 people from all major groups of actors, and extensive field visits to Niger and Chad. During the course of the research, it became clear that an underlying problem contributing to the hunger cycle was manifest in the central research question itself. It is framed by the concept of a “relief to development” continuum, which places “crisis” at one end, and “normality” at the other. Although it is changing, this paradigm still dominates thinking and action of many actors in the Sahel. “Crisis” is still strongly associated with short, sharp, disasters such as drought. When good rains restore crop production and pastures, many consider the crisis to have passed, and things to have returned to normal.

If words and actions may be judged, many high level decision makers in the Sahel, within CILSS, national governments and donor agencies, (ECHO, the European agency responsible for humanitarian assistance, is the exception) do not seem to consider the current high level of food and nutrition insecurity as a “crisis”. The statement of the Director General of CILSS, cited in the preface, is an example. This widespread attitude undermines efforts for urgent, vigorous action, and must be changed.

The brutal, unpalatable reality is that a pervasive, on-going, structural food crisis exists in the Sahel. The appallingly high level of severe acute child malnutrition (SAM), far above the emergency threshold in many parts of the Sahel, is the most telling evidence. (As an example, see the multi-year nutritional data below for the greater Kanem region of Chad, compiled by ACF). UNICEF estimates that over 300,000 children die in the Sahel, every year, from malnutrition related causes. Evidence from Household Economy Assessments (HEA) across the Sahel, and “Cost of Diet” studies, indicate that income poverty is a major cause. The poorest households, who constitute up to a third of the population in vulnerable rural areas, purchase roughly 60% of their food from the market.

Data presented in this report shows a striking correlation between increased food prices and a rise of acute malnutrition.

Figure 1: Severe Acute Malnutrition in Greater Kanem



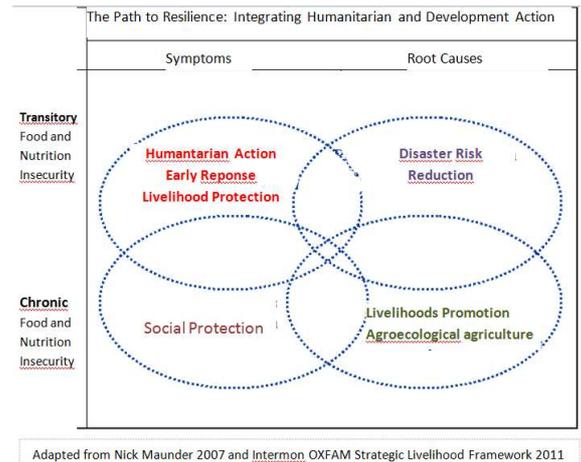
In face of this, there can be no complacency, no sense of normalcy, no lessening of the sense of urgency, once the rains have returned. A major step in overcoming the root causes of vulnerability in the Sahel, and starting down the path to resiliency, is for the CILSS, governments, donors, the UN agencies and international agencies to unequivocally acknowledge that a chronic food and nutrition crisis exists, and that vigorous steps are required to prevent it from getting worse.

Since 2005, there is evidence that attitudes are starting to shift, and that the architecture of aid is changing to more effectively address the crisis. In October 2010, for example, during her visit to the Sahel, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos noted “Over the years, we have become very good at responding to immediate needs (sic). We now need to become good at building bridges between emergency relief and development.” Much more concretely, learning from the 2005 crisis, ECHO developed a comprehensive “Sahel strategy”. Its fundamental objective is the efficient articulation of short and long term aid instruments to achieve the goal of a sustainable reduction in malnutrition rates. Strategies include support for DRR, and advocacy to give higher priority in integrating food and nutrition security into public policies. The European Union, one of the largest donors in the Sahel, created the “Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development” funding mechanism which favours short and long term action, and harmonised responses based on joint analysis of chronic situations. The British aid agency, DFID, has been a leader in supporting Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), to respond to the chronic situation. Until very recently, DFID also had the West African Humanitarian Relief Fund (WAHRF) in place to ensure a rapid response.

The interviews with staff of international NGOs at the headquarters, regional and national levels indicate that since 2005, they have undertaken significant steps to better integrate their humanitarian and development strategies, improve their analysis of root causes of food and nutrition insecurity, and engage in inter-agency learning and advocacy. This study documents successful initiatives undertaken by NGOs to improve the effectiveness of their work in the Sahel: application of the HEA and Cost of Diet studies, operational research on how to treat and prevent moderate acute malnutrition, promotion of agro-ecological agriculture to improve the resiliency of farm families, mainstreaming DRR in their operations, promotion of community based Early Warning Systems, and the use of innovative cash based transfer instruments for both relief and development.

Building on evidence documented by NGOs of the impact of cash based transfer programmes, the World Bank has supported, (and is now expanding) a pilot social protection programme in Niger. This is creating a possible model in the Sahel for institutionalising a permanent government led approach. Since 2005, these positive changes point the way ahead. Scaled up national programmes to reduce and eliminate child malnutrition, mainstream DRR/Climate change adaptation, and promote agro-ecological agriculture and livestock production by pastoralists, all with a focus on the gender dimensions of poverty are essential to placing the Sahel firmly on the path to resiliency.

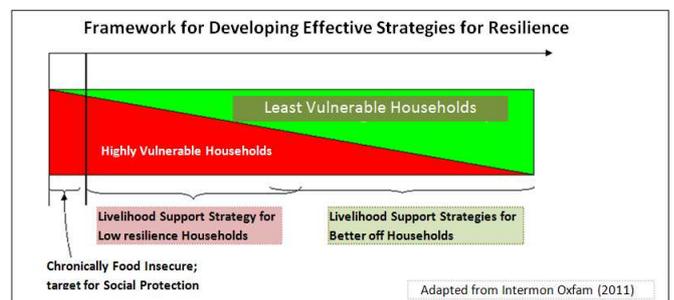
Implementing these initiatives require significant changes to further integrate the humanitarian and development approaches to aid. An overly simple but useful visual representation of how this can be conceived and operationalised is shown across. It illustrates how to shift from the acute to chronic dimensions of the crisis, and from addressing symptoms to root causes.



However, as the drought induced food crisis of 2010 indicated, these initiatives, while essential, even if scaled up, are not sufficient. Other, more fundamental changes in the architecture of aid in the Sahel are also required to address major challenges. The most important of these is to radically improve the ability of governments, UN agencies and donors to provide an early collective response, at an adequate scale, to protect the livelihoods of millions of vulnerable households, immediately after early warning. The response in 2010 was better than in 2005. It saved lives. However, it failed to prevent massive loss of assets by poor households. A huge and costly effort is now required, over many years, to enable recovery. It is not certain the current aid system, despite the positive changes noted above, will provide sufficient, long term, flexible funding for such a recovery. Even more uncertain is whether full recovery could be accomplished before yet another crisis hits.

If the fundamental problem of achieving an early, adequate humanitarian response to prevent irreversible loss of assets and livelihoods after an early alert is not solved, all other strategies and investments to end the chronic food and nutrition crisis are in serious jeopardy. This study has found that DRR activities alone are not sufficient to protect assets and ensure resiliency. The HEA studies in particular reveal that the poorest farming households may not benefit significantly from DRR or agro-ecological techniques, enabling them to escape the hunger cycle. Without well designed, and targeted social protection programs, providing regular, predictable support, these households will not be able to overcome the structural roots of their chronic food insecurity.

The existing national Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) in the Sahel show little change since they were reviewed in *Beyond Any Drought*. There is a clearer indication of categories of vulnerable people, but still a lack of direct strategies to address vulnerability. The PRS are still essentially oriented to neo-liberal principles of competitive advantage, and modernising production in favoured areas, to generate 6% annual economic growth. Such growth, even if it occurs in the agricultural sectors, clearly would not be a “rising tide that lifts all boats”. The poorest households lack the means to engage. They are being marginalised. Droughts are primarily a trigger accelerating long term structural shifts. Within rural communities, the gap between the richest and poorest households is wide and growing. In light of this, that path to resiliency requires a “dual track” intervention strategy, within an integrated humanitarian/ development approach.



One track must be specifically designed for the special needs and conditions of highly vulnerable households. In addition, social protection programmes focused on livelihood promotion for the very poorest households, focused on women who bear the main brunt of poverty, must become an essential complementary strategy if the chronic food and nutrition crisis is to be overcome.

Even if the poorest households could depend on a regular and predictable cash transfer, and related livelihood support, it will mean little, if the local price of food doubles, or triples, as it did in many

parts of the Sahel in 2010. Price volatility for basic grains, exacerbated by seasonal factors and regional market forces, and the failure of markets to distribute food to food deficit areas, are a fundamental problem. Significantly increasing food reserves and buffer stocks, at the regional and national level, coupled with an agreed regulatory framework to control market prices and overcome major market failures, is another essential part of the solution.

These major initiatives in nutrition, DRR, promoting agro-ecology, and social protection will require significant increases in aid assistance. It is tempting to propose, as Frederick Mousseau does in his influential work *“Sahel: A Prisoner of Starvation?”* for a “Marshall Plan” for the poorest, least developed countries in the Sahel. However, discussions in the field made clear the huge challenges of governance, and weak institutional capacity at both national and decentralised levels of the state. There is a limited capacity to absorb significantly more aid while also engendering a true sense of national ownership of initiatives, in accordance to the Paris declaration of aid effectiveness. These are not trivial issues, particularly in fragile states such as Chad. They cannot be brushed aside, even in the face of urgent need. Nor is the long-term solution to by-pass government.

However, these challenges cannot become a reason for doing nothing, or very little. These fundamental problems, also, have to be tackled. This will require determined, extraordinary leadership, coordination and advocacy within the donor and UN community, as well as within CILSS, based on lessons learned and agreed principles of working with fragile states. This must be accompanied strengthening civil society and social movements within the Sahel to increase public pressure for action. In the meantime, no credible government plan to overcome child malnutrition, or undertake social protection, or mainstream DRR, should go unfunded by the donor community.

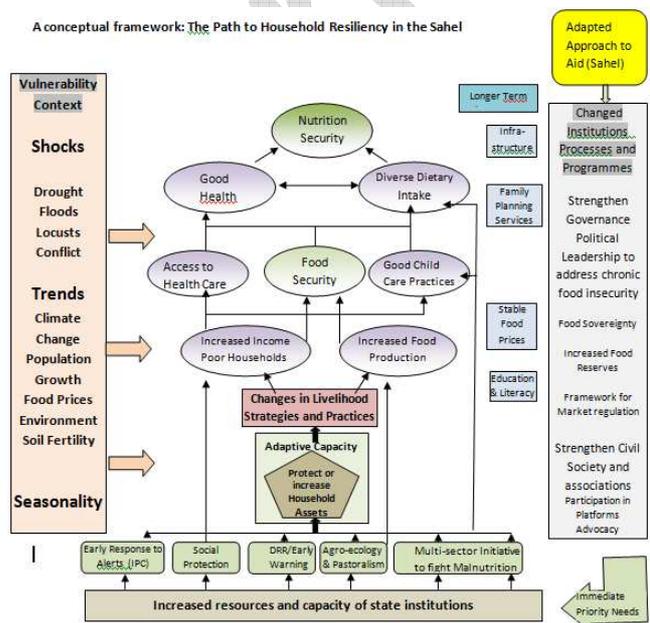
Finally this study asked the question “Where to start?” What are the most realistic ways to move things forward along the path to resilience in the Sahel? What are the strategic entry points to achieve the greatest momentum for change? While this depends on the context of each country, this study proposes **five** immediate priorities for action, at the national and regional levels:

1. **Strengthen Preparedness and Early Response:** Apply the Cadre Harmonisé Bonifié (IPC) in the Sahel. Define specific early alert triggers, which if reached, will generate an immediate strategic response, coordinated by OCHA, starting with multi-actor operational contingency planning, and mobilisation of resources. *The standard of performance is to prevent or mitigate a livelihood crisis and loss of assets through early action.*
2. **Design national policies and implement programmes for social protection that meet the needs of most vulnerable and poorest people.** Social protection measures can not only meet urgent humanitarian needs but play a part in strengthening resilience, by enabling the very poor to acquire assets.
3. **Boost rural livelihoods in marginal or degraded agricultural areas through sustainable intensification of food production using agro-ecological techniques, and in pastoral areas, through support for animal health, production, and marketing:** New public investments in agro-ecological approaches and livestock production in pastoral areas are essential to reducing chronic food insecurity, and helping vulnerable households adapt to climate change, and to regenerate the natural resource base.
4. **Develop and apply a regional DRR strategy in the Sahel:** Given the risk that climate change, repeated drought, and other hazards in the Sahel pose to long term development programmes, food and nutrition security, DRR needs to be better integrated into all relevant policies and programmes, in accordance with 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action and to achieve the MDGs.

5. **Achieve sustainable reduction in level of acute malnutrition:** This is the most compelling goal that could mobilise change across many institutional fronts. Of all the major initiatives required, child malnutrition is likely most conducive to generate political will within governments and compassion within the donor community. It is the problem with the most potential to further change the aid paradigm in favour of longer term flexible funding that bridges the humanitarian and development divide. The multi-dimensional aspects of malnutrition will require cross sectoral, coordinated investments in livelihood promotion, sustainable food production, social protection, DRR, health, and water, hygiene and sanitation.

These recommendations are the “immediate priority” actions and strategic entry points for changes that could have an immediate impact in addressing the chronic dimensions of food insecurity in the Sahel. They are presented in the graphic (see below) “Pathways to Resilience”, which is a more comprehensive conceptual framework of what is required, in the short term and long term, to address the structural roots of vulnerability, and move toward resilience.

This framework places “nutrition security” at the apex of the pathways to resilience. Certainly, other indicators of resilience at the community and household level will also need to be determined, for different livelihood zones, in particular for pastoral areas. However, at the national level, it is proposed that, **no better single** indicator of resilience and resolving the chronic dimensions of the food insecurity crisis could be found than the level of child malnutrition, as assessed using the widely used SMART survey. This report argues that the most vulnerable households will have a strong level of **resilience if a sustainable reduction in acute malnutrition is achieved, which would remain relatively unchanged, even in the face of future droughts.**



Using the level of malnutrition as a key indicator of resilience (reduced vulnerability) is proposed firstly because it is already part of the “Cadre Harmonisé Bonifié” being adopted by CILSS, which is based on the IPC (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification). Secondly, using malnutrition levels as a way to assess resilience will help **keep resources focused on the poorest, most vulnerable households**, because the levels of severe acute malnutrition are highest for this population. This will overcome the inherent tendency of livelihood promotion and DRR programmes to benefit the better off households. It would also help facilitate a “dual strategy” approach, bridging humanitarian and development work, in the programme design. Finally, the advantage of malnutrition as a key indicator of resilience is that it will promote a stronger focus on addressing **gender issues**. The economic position and access to resources for women are vital to overcoming child malnutrition.

Much more detailed recommendations, based on this conceptual framework, outlining longer term action to address structural roots of vulnerability, the critical issue of controlling food prices and dealing with market failures, and the implications for institutional and policies changes, and the architecture of aid are presented at the end of this report.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background to this study

The Sahel region experienced another severe food and nutritional crisis in 2010, with Niger, Chad, and parts of Mali and Burkina Faso among the most affected. It is estimated that 10 million people have been affected, whether through loss of livelihoods, or increasing levels of vulnerability and debt. This situation greatly aggravated the already alarming level of malnutrition of young children. The underlying and root causes of chronic vulnerability were explored by the Sahel Working Group's report "Beyond Any Drought" stimulated by the food crisis in Niger in 2004/05. This report assessed why, after all the efforts and investments made since the catastrophic droughts in the 1970s, people of the Sahel were still found to be so vulnerable.

This follow up report is to assess what lessons learned since 2005 were put into place prior to or during the 2010 crisis. To what extent did they mitigate the crisis? What failed during the humanitarian response? To what extent were key recommendations from the "Beyond Any Drought" report (i.e., planning for drought as a normal condition, integration of humanitarian and development work, and developing longer term, flexible programmes) been implemented? Based on this detailed analysis of programmes and policies in the Sahel, study proposes a conceptual framework which takes into account the specific vulnerabilities of the Sahel context, and the structural obstacles facing key players, which must be overcome to enable an approach to aid better adapted to the context of the Sahel.

This study took place in February and March of 2011. This report is based on 70 interviews with humanitarian and development practitioners, researchers, donor representatives, government officials, members of research institutes, and UN staff, based in Dakar, Ouagadougou, Niamey, Bamako and N'Djaména, Brussels and London. Workshops designed to facilitate joint analysis on these issues by different actors were held in both Niamey and N'Djaména. Other workshops were held in rural areas directly affected by the food crisis. Over sixty rural people, including 20 women, representing 20 camps/villages in the Diffa region of Niger, and Guéra region in Chad, participated. This study also draws from a review of the existing documentation: academic analyses, assessments, reports, strategic documents, policy and programme reviews, media reports, articles, and press releases.

## 1.2 Structure of this report

There are four key sections to this report:

- i. **Successes since 2005:** What worked better? Which lessons learnt from 2005 have been applied into longer term development programming and in the humanitarian response of 2009/10? To what extent did these lessons strengthen resilience of vulnerable groups?
- ii. **What aspects of the approach to aid, (humanitarian action in 2010, et development practice since 2006) failed or were ineffective?** Why? What aspects were inconsistent with the recommendations of the report "Beyond Any Drought"? What are the structural obstacles to change for different actors?
- iii. **Description of a conceptual framework "the pathway to resilience":** Based the lessons learned, how can the approach to aid be adapted to better integrate humanitarian and development practice, and address the root causes of vulnerability in the Sahel context?
- iv. **A set of conclusions and recommendations**

### 1.3 Overview of the 2009-10 food crisis in the Sahel

In 2010, more than 10 million people in the Sahel suffered from an acute food crisis in the Sahel. To survive, the poorest families were forced to reduce their number of daily meals, and sell off their livestock, jewellery, tools, pots and pans, and other meagre possessions at derisory prices in order to buy grain at highly inflated prices.

In large parts of Niger and Chad, hundreds of thousands of men left their homes in a desperate search for food or income, leaving women to fend for themselves, their children and the elderly. When their food stocks were exhausted, women were reduced to scavenging the country side, eating only wild berries and leaves, leaving them weak and malnourished. In the sahelian regions of Chad, thousands of women spent weeks digging out anthills searching for seeds and grains which to cook, until there were no anthills left.

Women interviewed in Chad and Niger for this study indicated they eventually abandoned their villages and moved to towns with their children. Staff of international NGOs reported finding many completed abandoned villages. Many of the more vulnerable households went deeper into debt, at very high interest rates, or mortgaged part of their land to get food. Aid workers and members of pastoral communities in Niger and Chad spoke of the carcasses of thousands of cattle littering the main routes of transhumance. For pastoralists, livestock prices fell dramatically, reducing their purchasing power. Studies indicated an early and massive migration of women and children to urban centres. It is reported this drove down the cost of labour.

The food crisis struck people all across the Sahel. However, contextual factors (including differing policies, capacities and conditions) caused the impact and the response to differ significantly from one country to another. To assess the lessons learned, and better identify the pathways to resilience in the Sahel, the evolution of the 2010 crisis is outlined in 4 countries: Niger, Chad, Mali and Burkina Faso.

### 1.3.1 Niger

On July 31, 2009, the Prime Minister announced a « pre-alert » based on data showing that in certain zones, 85% of the arable land had not been planted, and that in other zones, cereal crops were very late in their development. In the pastoral areas, the pre-alert cited a lack of pasture, unusual patterns of migration, increases in the sale and slaughter of animals, and reduced weight of animals. The Niger government undertook some sales of subsidized grain, but little other action. However, it was clear that the Nigerien authorities were aware of the imminence of a food crisis.

Members of the Emergency Capacity building (ECB) network in Niger confirmed that in October 2009, their field presence had made them well aware of an impending food crisis. Some of the ECB agencies initiated a localized response as early as December 2009 with cash for work and cash transfer projects. The scale of these interventions, while reported to have a positive impact, however, were insufficient to avert an acute crisis. Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and excess migration started to occur.

In December FEWS NET, a USAID sponsored Early Warning agency, declared an alert (and once again in March 2010). In December 2009, sooner than usual, the government undertook a simplified food security vulnerability assessment. The results, published in January 2010 indicate that 58% of the population (7.8 million people) are judged to be either severely (2.7 million) or moderately vulnerable (5.5 million) to food insecurity.

In January 2010, donors like USAID/OFDA and UN agencies began to have their first meetings with the government to address the looming food crisis. It is reported that in planning, the Niger government proposed extremely low targets for a humanitarian response. Plans are made to treat only 37,000 severely malnourished children in the hunger season of 2010. This figure is far below the number considered, unfortunately as “normal” in Niger in an ordinary year. A similarly low figure is proposed in terms of providing feed for 10% of all pregnant animals. For a mix of reasons, the government of Niger seemed, by its actions, to deny there is an imminent food crisis, and reluctant to publicise its own data that over 7 million people were at risk.

The planning never resulted in an agreement. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2010 a “coup d’état” ends the reign of the President Tandja and his regime. In March, the new government, in a dramatic change of policy, launches an international appeal for assistance. This is followed in early April by a UN flash Appeal.

In April, the UN requested the government to re-do the vulnerability assessment, and also undertake a nutritional survey. Completed in June 2010, the new vulnerability study revises the total number of people at risk to food insecurity downwards to 46% of the population (7.1 million people). This assessment showed high levels of vulnerability in urban areas, particularly among new migrants from the rural areas, as well as a higher rate of severe food insecurity among women. The nutritional study indicated a Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) of 16.7%. In light of these shocking nutrition results, the overall strategy is abruptly shifted from household food security to a nutrition focus.

Based on these new figures, on July 16, 2010, the UN makes a renewed flash appeal. In mid July, close to the peak of the crisis, the UN revised Emergency Humanitarian Action Plan for Niger, budgeted at \$381 million, was still only 38% funded. By the end of December, it was 73% funded. In August, floods affecting over 200,000 people greatly exacerbated the food security and humanitarian crisis.

It is important to note the limitations of a comparative analysis of 2005 and 2010, even within the same country. Each food crisis unfolds in a different way. In Niger, it became clear the immediate negative effects on crops and pasture were far greater in 2009. In 2004, poor rains and locust attacks resulted in an 11% reduction of staple cereal production compared to Niger's five-year average. The poor rains of 2009 led to a 30 per cent decline in cereal production in Niger compared with 2008. Forage production was 62 per cent below requirements. In June 2005, an estimated 2.4 million Nigeriens were affected by severe food shortages, compared to 7.1 million in June 2010.

The greater severity of the 2009 drought was confirmed by the agropastoralists visited in Diffa region. On a scale of 1 to 10, different groups rated the 2009 drought as a "9" just one point less than the great 1983-84 drought, placed at 10. By comparison, the drought of 2004 was rated at 5.

In 2005, food was reported as not being easily available because Niger continued to export cereals, while imports from Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria stopped or declined. In 2010, despite a larger food deficit, food was available in many markets because a good regional food production facilitated imports, although food prices remain high, (despite a decline from their peaks in 2008.)

The most dramatic change was the new Niger government's openness to accepting outside assistance. The declaration of an emergency in March was a great help in mobilising international assistance. Finally, more international and national NGOs were present on the ground in Niger, because of 2005 and prepared to intervene.

Given these major differences in scale and severity of the drought, as well as the situation in Niger, care must be taken in assessing whether observed improvements in the humanitarian response reflected mostly the lessons learned, or the changes in the context.

### 1.3.2 Chad

Hampered by regional instability and internal conflicts, Chad is one of the world's least developed countries with 54 per cent of its ten million inhabitants living below the poverty line of a dollar a day. Remote, arid and isolated, Chad faced massive arrivals of people fleeing violence in Darfur since 2004. There has also been internal displacement due to conflicts between opposing political armed groups and ethnic clashes.

When the 2009-10 drought affected the western sahelian regions of Chad, the response was complicated by long term existence of emergency programmes meeting needs of 253,479 refugees from Sudan's Darfur region, 67,709 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR), and 168,467 displaced Chadians<sup>9</sup>. Many humanitarian agencies generally had less awareness of what was happening in other parts of Chad, particularly in the western Sahel regions.

As early as September 2009, however, FEWS NET signalled the likelihood of a major food crisis in the western Sahelian belt. A few months later, in December, FEWS NET issued a food security alert stating "The traditional social safety net, usually activated in July, will not be sufficient to mitigate high food insecurity, which is likely to occur as early as April"<sup>10</sup>. From the 9<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> of December, the government of Chad undertook a joint mission with its technical partners (FAO/CILSS and FEWS NET)<sup>b</sup> to identify the geographical zones and populations at risk of food insecurity. The initial findings of this pre-assessment of the 2009/10 agricultural season showed a decline in gross

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<sup>b</sup> This assessment was financed by the European Commission, la Cooperation Française and the WFP.

production of grain by 34 percent compared to the five-year average and a net cereal deficit of 637,000 tons<sup>11</sup>. The Red Cross indicated yield reductions of between 45 and 60%. The assessment indicated that two million people, mostly in the country's Sahelian belt, would become food-insecure between January and September of 2010<sup>12</sup>.

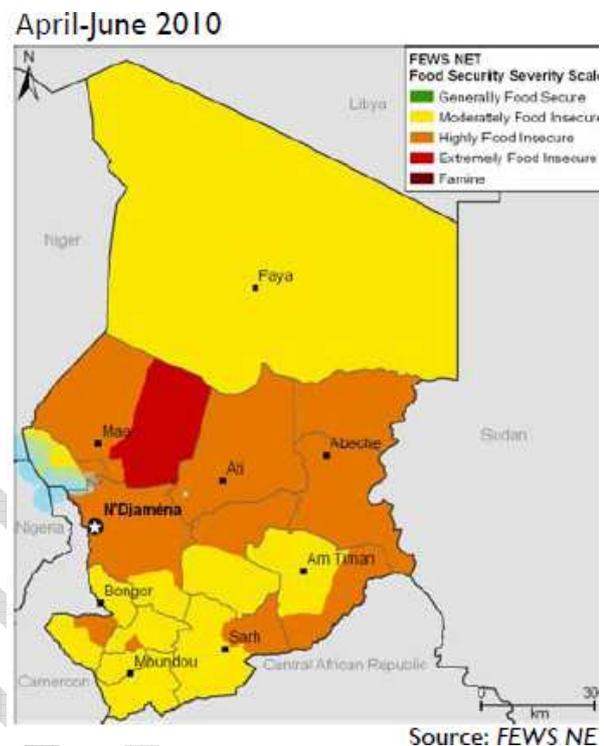
As noted in the assessment, the severity of the food crisis in the Sahelian regions of Chad was driven not only by a below-average 2009 cereal harvest, but also a second consecutive year of poor pasture and water conditions in the pastoral areas of Chad. This led to reduced pasture and water availability for animals as well as poor crop harvests. According to government field technicians, in some pastoral areas,<sup>13</sup> poor conditions the previous year led to livestock losses of approximately 30 percent by May/June 2009<sup>14</sup>.

To protect their remaining livestock, pastoralists responded aggressively to the drought of 2009, starting transhumance as early as October, instead of March, moving with more animals than normal and farther south than normal. The concentrated number of livestock in the south remaining much longer than usual contributed to overgrazing. Poor conditions caused declining animal body conditions, above-normal animal mortality, reduced animal births, and poor milk availability, resulting in lower household income.

Poor and middle-income pastoralists and sedentary agro-pastoralists who were unable to migrate south with livestock were most affected by the poor local pastoral conditions and the high prices for cereals and animal feed. The forage deficit and high cost of maintaining animals led to above-normal sales of livestock holdings. This led to a dramatic drop in livestock prices, particularly for small ruminants, and unfavourable livestock-to-cereal terms of trade. The cereal equivalent of the average goat sold in one major district market (Am Dam) was only one quarter of the price in June 2010, compared to the same period the previous year. The price of cows fell to half the level of recent years, whereas prices for millet were approximately 30-50 percent above the five-year average in most of the western Sahel zone<sup>15</sup>. Prices of livestock declined also because exchange rates were unfavourable for traders from Nigeria.

Before the rains began in 2010, pasture lands had become completely bare, offering animals virtually nothing to graze on. An extreme water shortage affected both the human and the animal population. The deterioration in the physical condition of sedentary animals remaining in the western Sahel regions became acutely severe, especially in the case of cattle. In the north of Guéra, the cadavers of large animals could be seen all along grazing corridors<sup>16</sup>. The FAO reported a death rate of about 31% of cattle in the western and central areas of Chad.

Many poorer households did not own enough livestock for sales to fill their food gap, particularly at such low prices. Given very poor 2009 harvests, many more people than usual from these households sought work with middle and wealthy households between June and September 2010 in order to earn income for food purchases. The consequence for such persons seeking to increase



their labour wages was less time planting and maintaining their own fields when the rains returned. Also, with the labour supply in surplus, poor pastoralists received less grain than usual as payment for their labour.

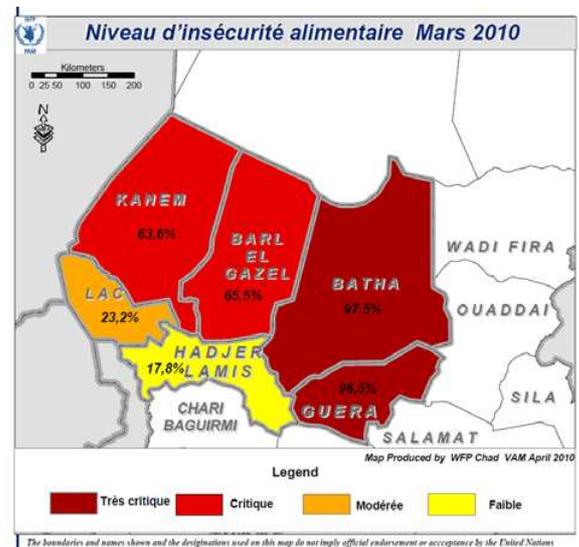
The much lowered water table in rivers, ouadis, water reserves (*mares*) also limited cultivation of off season crops such as bérébééré (a type of sorghum) and vegetables. Poor households in especially hard hit areas stepped up their market gardening activities as a strategy designed to cover any food shortages, but the drop in the level of the water table in some districts by more than twice the usual amount prematurely cut off the flow of income from these activities<sup>17</sup>.

In addition to the increase in labour migration, there was an unusual level of migration to the city by entire households<sup>18</sup>. Depending on the village, anywhere from 30 to 60 percent of destitute households left their food-short agropastoral villages (in northern agropastoral areas as well as pastoral areas) for the cities such as Mongo, N'Djaména, and Am-Timan in search of work. There were no able-bodied workers to be found in any of the villages visited by the FEWS NET mission in late February. The few remaining old people and young children were basically dependent on migrant remittances and community assistance. The labour surplus in urban areas is estimated to have cut wages by roughly 30 percent which dramatically weakened food security conditions in both rural and urban areas in face of persistent high prices for food<sup>19</sup>.

Other coping strategies of very poor households to buy the high-priced grain included selling of jewellery, pots and pans, furniture, and borrowing at usurious interest rates<sup>20</sup>. Women turned to digging for wild grain in ant hills, which became a widespread practice in affected areas<sup>c</sup>. Monitoring missions conducted by FEWS NET in mid May of 2010 in pastoral, agro-pastoral, and rain fed farming livelihood zones reported cuts in food intake to, at most, two daily meals and a 40 to 50 percent reduction in grain consumption as part of the normal daily household diet<sup>21</sup>. This was due to the decline in earnings of labour and lower prices of small ruminants, the two main sources of income in the lean season.

Rising prices were another factor aggravating the severe food crisis in Chad. Because poor households relied on purchased foods earlier than usual, there was an abnormal rise in cereal prices that started after March 2010. In spite of selling grain at subsidized prices by the government of Chad in these areas, prices for pearl millet and sorghum on the Abéché market, the main grain market in an affected area visited by FEWS NET in May of 2010, were 58 percent and 61 percent, respectively, above the nominal five-year average and 39 and 41 percent higher than the previous year 2008/09<sup>22</sup>.

The supply in areas with shortages remained average to low given the wholesalers' lack of enthusiasm for selling cereals and weak purchasing power in shortage areas, especially in rural locations. In the Bahr el Gazel region's main market, Moussoro, for example, the grain market was not being supplied normally by traders



<sup>c</sup> As time progressed, women's radius of exploration for ant hills increased to several kilometers from the villages, at a time of acute water shortage. A FEWS NET team interview with a local authority indicated that during the second half of April, in the northeastern part of the Guéra region, six women who had become lost while looking for wild seeds were found dead of thirst. Source: FEWS NET (May 2010) Food Security Outlook Update p.3

given the population's limited purchasing power. Grain trade flows from surplus to deficit areas were observed as more sluggish than usual.

This severe food crisis occurred in context where malnutrition rates for children under 5 have been persistent in remaining at an appalling level, even in better production years. A national study undertaken by the government of Chad on the structural factors influencing food security and vulnerability in 2009 indicated that the Sahelian strip was most affected by global acute malnutrition (GAM). The levels of GAM, collected in April-June, the peak of the hunger season were: Batha (25.3%), Kanem (23.8%), Guéra (22.4), Ouaddaï (20.4%), du Lac (19.9%)<sup>23</sup>.

These levels are far above the emergency threshold of 15% of the World Health Organisation. In November/December 2009, Action Contre la Faim (ACF) conducted a nutrition survey in Bahr el Gazel utilising the SMART methodology. The results indicated that the prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM), was 26.9 percent while the prevalence of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), was 4.5 percent. These catastrophically high levels of malnutrition were particularly alarming since households are typically better off during November/December, following crop harvests and given relatively good milk availability. FEWS NET predicted that as food security deteriorated between January and June, further increases in child malnutrition and mortality.

In light of growing evidence of a crisis, on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010, the Chadian government, prodded by several donors, finally made a low key appeal for assistance, and authorized emergency interventions within the framework of the Action Committee for Food Security and Disaster Management (CASAGC) for the mobilization of food aid for distribution to close to 18 percent of the population facing extremely serious food shortages.

The appeal for food aid mobilized the government and its donors. However, the level of preparedness was very low. Much had to be done to assemble the required volume of aid. National food reserves were at a very low level. The government and its partners faced the task of building food reserves required for the social safety net, mainly through imports. At the end of February, only a third of its initial target level (approximately 10,000 metric tons) was available, not nearly large enough to slow the deterioration in food security conditions.<sup>24</sup> Given logistical difficulties, subsidized sales by the government were slow to start. ONASA (National Office for Food Security) did not have logistical means or budget to transport food from storage facilities in major towns and undertake distribution in rural villages where most of the people with acute food insecurity lived.<sup>25</sup>

The World Food Programme undertook a Vulnerability Analysis Mapping (VAM) in March 2010 to confirm the food security areas most at risk identified in the joint assessment undertaken in December, and to assist in targeting its support (see VAM map above). WFP's emergency operations to aid some 750,000 people in the Sahelian strip encountered difficulties delivering and transporting food in a timely manner, even though half the necessary funds had been raised. Emergency needs were met by borrowing the eastern zone's pipeline for refugees and internally displaced persons, and by diverting ships with food for other destinations to Chad<sup>26</sup>. As the food crisis grew, needs assessments of food aid were adjusted upwards by the Chadian government, rising to more than 80,000 and 100,000 metric tons.<sup>27</sup>

FEWS NET judged the overall impact of subsidized grain sales, and emergency distribution of food assistance by humanitarian agencies before the rains in the Sahelian zone as "mixed". Migrant workers returning before the rains enabled certain households in agropastoral areas to purchase a sack of grain at subsidized prices, but this barely covered their food needs for a period of one month. The delay in bringing in food aid and the weakness of many implementing agencies did not permit

complete coverage of all affected areas. There were reports of many poor households continuing cutbacks in food intake into September.

### 1.4.3 Mali

Parts of Mali were experiencing severe food shortages in 2008, even before the drought of 2009. In Bamba, a rural commune of about 30,000 people in the Bourem district of the Gao region of Mali, the deputy mayor said in 2008 “Eighty percent of the families can’t eat twice a day. No grains are available, or very scarce and average families cannot buy imported food.”<sup>28</sup> Although the government had provided grain at low prices many of the poorest households could still not afford to buy. The reality was that this situation was considered “normal”, part of everyday life in Bamba. It was not deemed a ‘crisis’ situation.

In the drought of 2009, the Bourem area received only half of its normal rainfall. This combined with increasing prices for imported food, created a crisis throughout the north, most acutely in Menaka, the district neighboring with Niger. Rains in 2009 in this part of Mali were bad for a second consecutive season. Despite Mali’s overall national cereal production surplus, the hunger season started early for poor and very poor pastoral and agropastoral households in these areas, who became highly food insecure starting in February 2010.

Agropastoral households suffered crop losses of up to 75 percent in 2009, particularly in Ansongo district, the breadbasket of the region<sup>29</sup>. Herders had moved from neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger into this part of Mali hoping to find better pasture, putting even more pressure on already scarce pasture. Livestock, the mainstay of many people’s income in northern Mali, died in great numbers. The value of individual animals plummeted as households rushed to get rid of livestock they were unable to feed. At the same time, the price of basic grains skyrocketed. In remote areas of Gao region, the cost of a 50 kg bag of millet increased to up to almost 40,000 CFA (over \$100 US)<sup>30</sup>. As a result, terms of trade (amount of grain for one animal) dropped by 56% from February to the end of March<sup>31</sup>.

This constituted a huge shock for the very poor and poor groups of the pastoralist and agropastoralist communities of Gao region, who are already in difficulties in a normal year. They depend on the market for 70% of their food supplies. Since the wealthier households also suffered from asset depletion, this put the poorest socio-economic groups into a very difficult food security situation because they depended on richer households for employment. However, those richer households could not employ them anymore. Nor could they provide traditional forms of solidarity. So the poorest households lost a major source of income to buy food. Poorest households also could not rely on their usual hunger gap strategy (collecting bourgou and other wild foods) as such plants had been eaten<sup>32</sup>. Moreover, there was little economic incentive for the local market traders to bring grain into places where people cannot afford to buy, because their animals have lost most of their value. Traders had no incentive to sell on credit.

This acute crisis in northern Mali was identified early. Mali’s early warning system (Système d’Alerte Précoce or SAP) is noted in the Sahel as one of the more technically sophisticated<sup>d</sup>. In 2009-10, the early warning system provided information about crisis level food insecurity for highly vulnerable population groups<sup>33</sup>. Despite this timely information about the impact of poor rains on grazing lands

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<sup>d</sup> One example is SAP’s use of software to take satellite photographs that identify different types of biomass, enabling people to see how much and what type of vegetation is growing in specific areas. In partnership with the NGO Action Against Hunger (ACF) SAP is taking steps to generate pictures that will also look at the presence of water, which will enable agencies to advise pastoralists of the optimal routes for grazing

and water availability, particularly in the northern pastoral regions of Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu, the early warning did not generate swift and effective action by the government or the international community<sup>34</sup>. Another problem was that the information provided by SAP did not include data that was usable for adequate targeting<sup>35</sup>.

For a number of political reasons, Mali was reluctant to recognise the crisis, and did not launch an appeal for the northern regions<sup>36</sup>. The final assessment by the Malian government of the food situation was perceived as flawed by NGOs because of highly improbable production numbers. The governor of the region informed NGOs that the Malian government did not want to declare a food crisis in Northern Mali particularly in Gao region because it had sufficient capacity to respond to communes identified to be in food difficulties. However, the selection of these communes was seen as politically driven by the International NGOs working in Mali. The criteria for the choice of selected communes were not provided by the government<sup>37</sup>.

The lack of a declaration of an emergency led to significant delays in food aid. There were also major gaps in coordination and response in the pastoral areas. In Gao, because of the security situation, there were only a handful INGOs, CICR, the WFP and decentralised state services working in the region<sup>38</sup>. OXFAM<sup>e</sup>, ACF, CRS and Save the Children US all undertook emergency assistance programs with the onset of the crisis.

The Malian government eventually did launch a response to help the populations in the north. For example the Gao region received 5,078 tons of millet and sorghum for subsidised distributions. However, this was not easily accessible by the very poor and poor who were barely able to afford the cost to go to the sale areas, much less buy the grain. Overall, the message sent by the Malian government to humanitarian agencies and the media did not create a sense of alarm. Although 258,000 people were estimated to be affected by food insecurity<sup>39</sup>, the donors did not respond quickly or on an adequate scale. Most donors, while aware of the situation, followed the government line. For example, because of an evaluation carried out by WFP (with CIRAD) in northern Mali, the WFP recognised that there was an emergency situation in January 2010. However, in the absence of a government appeal, the WFP did not have additional resources to respond. Regionally, WFP was more concerned with the situation in Niger, where the scale of need was far greater.

This created a situation in which on one side of the border, the government of Niger and its partners were undertaking a full scale humanitarian effort, while just a few kilometres away, in Mali, where highly vulnerable pastoralists and agropastoralist communities faced the same severe livelihood problems, there was only a limited response. Significantly, in April of 2010, at the CILSS regional meeting held in Lomé, CILSS rejected Mali's data for the food security situation. This gives further credence to the perspective that political factors influenced decision making about addressing needs that were clearly reflected in the technical data.

According to OCHA, the emergency appeal for 2010 for Mali consisted of \$6,120,037. Of this, 68% or \$4,182,493 was eventually contributed. The World Food Programme and UNICEF used most of this for food aid and nutrition interventions, although some funds were also used for animal feed, seeds, and destocking sick animals. A number of humanitarian aid groups would have liked to scale up their aid projects in northern Mali, but were not given the mandate and resources to do so. In contrast, in Niger, the humanitarian assistance in the same general area was far larger and included much greater support for animal feed, and the protection of livelihoods.

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<sup>e</sup> Most NGO international staff relocated in November 2009 and for except Oxfam-GB, local capacity was not in place

Good rains into September of 2010 in northern Mali have regenerated pastures. The surviving animals had started to recover. The price of goats and sheep rose to pre-crisis levels - up to US\$50 from just \$10 per animal in the peak of the crisis, thus easing the acute situation for pastoralists.

However, vulnerability to food insecurity was highly variable among different livelihood groups in the north. Semi-sedentary agro-pastoralist populations who settle along the Niger river for several months a year were starting to recover. However, extreme vulnerability persisted for the poorest households of the sedentary farming communities in Gao, including the Sonraï and Bella, who exhausted most of their coping mechanisms as they faced the 2010 lean season<sup>40</sup>. Hit by repeated shocks, and increasing debt, the sedentary, non-pastoralist communities in the Niger river basin had great difficulty in recovering their livelihoods. These farming communities in Gao continued to live in a situation of extreme livelihood stress. They lacked the option of leaving for greener pastures. At the end of harvest, they had to repay debts, leaving them with little. According to ACF's June 2010 nutrition report, in Ansongo district within the Niger river basin, global acute malnutrition remained far above crisis levels, at 18.5%<sup>41</sup>.

In response, across the north, the government subsidizing grain prices. Aid agencies, including the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Committee of the Red Cross, ACF, Oxfam, Save the Children and CARE, supported the government's efforts to treat malnourished children, provide supplementary nutrition products, provide animal feed and veterinary care for animals, and help improve animal husbandry. ACF provided therapeutic feeding clinics through 17 regional health centres, and undertook wider food security interventions to all under fives to prevent malnutrition.

ACF estimated that towards the end of 2010, 40 percent of households in the river valley in Ansongo, in Gao region, were in debt and had no means to pay back creditors<sup>42</sup>. However, in 2011, there was no official appeal for aid to assist the most vulnerable groups in the north with longer term recovery, rebuilding livelihoods, and strengthening long term resiliency.

#### 1.4.4 Burkina Faso

A FEWS NET report in April 2010 indicated that food security indicators showed all parts of Burkina Faso as generally food-secure, with the exception of the eastern agro-pastoral and northern pastoral areas (livelihood areas 7 and 8 respectively on the map). Poor temporal distribution of rainfall in these areas created significant shortfalls in crop and pasture production. The FEWS Net report stated that poor and very poor households in these areas were at risk for food insecurity between April and September.



Source: FEWS Net: **BURKINA FASO Food Security Outlook Update May**

In livelihood zone 8, predominantly pastoral, pasture production was down by roughly 40% from the previous year, and 20 percent below-normal. Related problems faced by households were the drying up of most small and medium-size surface water sources, the high price of millet, and the high price of animal feed. The physical condition of livestock deteriorated sharply. Milk production was reduced by an estimated 30 to 40 percent. With 10 to 15 percent of the income earned by poor and very poor households in an average year paid in

the form of milk, the smaller quantities of milk received as payment for tending the animals of average and wealthy households was a serious reduction of income. Sales of (small) animals by certain poor and very poor households started in March and had already started to include female and, in some cases, pregnant female animals. Poor households started to cut back their number of daily meals and the quantity of food prepared. It is reported that a significant number of pastoralists from northern Burkina moved with their animals into Mali hoping to obtain better pasture and water, in vain. Their herds were too weak to return, and many perished in Mali<sup>f</sup>.

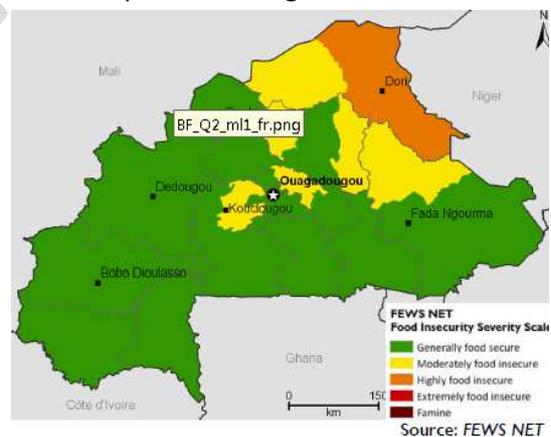
For the agro-pastoralists in livelihood zone 7, crop production shortfalls and problems obtaining forage and water for their animals, led many households to sell more animals than usual as a coping mechanism. The poor physical condition of the livestock and increased market supply drove prices down further than usual, while grain prices remained high. As a result, terms of trade for small animals in kilograms of grain were below normal.

In both livelihood zones, poor and very poor households normally rely on the market for the purchasing of 50 to 70 percent of their food between February and August. Normal sources of income for such households at this time of year include gold washing, the selling of wood, labour migration/ migrant remittances, and the selling of chickens and small animals.

In March 2010, several months earlier than usual, the Burkina government took emergency measures setting up a safety net program mostly in its northern and eastern agro-pastoral areas, This consisted of selling locally grown grain at subsidized prices, support for off-season farming, and speeding up efforts to reconstitute the food security reserves administered by the National Society of Food Security Stocks (SONAGESS). The budget for these measures was 16 billion CFA francs. Prices in Burkina during this time remained stable, but above the five-year average and higher from the same period in 2009<sup>43</sup>.

In region 7, it is likely that many poor and very poor households, despite increasing their income from employment or by gathering of wood, were unable to afford the subsidized food aid. Some households likely resorted to taking out in-kind loans to enable them to buy grain from social marketing programs. Other vulnerable households pooled their resources to buy and split a sack of grain.

FEWS NET predicted that such households would not be unable to meet their food needs during this period unless the scale of the humanitarian assistance was increased. However, aside the activities by the World Food Program (WFP) and certain local NGOs, the Burkina government did not undertake any large-scale programs (beyond the sale of subsidised grain and provision of feed for livestock).



<sup>f</sup> There is a high potential use to extend the satellite information system being developed in Mali with by ACF to provide accurate information to pastoralists not just in Mali but in bordering Burkina and Niger about where to find pasture and water. This system could also prevent over concentration of animals in zones not so hard hit by drought, and help establish corridors for the passage of animals, but requires establishing effective communication with organised representatives of pastoral communities. ACF in Mali mentioned plans to possibly extend this system (personal communication)

A spike in animal sales, emergency slaughtering and higher than usual animal mortality rates (particularly for cattle and sheep) occurred in May and July. FEWS Net estimated that five to 10 percent of sedentary animals (the equivalent of two to five percent of the national herd) could be lost, representing a significant loss of assets for the households in the Sahel zones<sup>44</sup>.

According to FEWS NET, the effort to reduce mortality of animals “seems to be less taken into account in regard to the low level of resources allocated by the state”<sup>45</sup>.

Food reserves of poorer households virtually nonexistent or at abnormally low levels by May. However, purchasing food on the local market was difficult. Food availability on provincial markets between July and September was poor, due to the bad condition of local roads.

With most of their seed grain likely consumed, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) provided quality seeds to 100,000 vulnerable farmers before the rainy season<sup>46</sup>.

## 2 Progress on the path to resilience since 2005

Instead of asking only “what went wrong”, it is also important also to identify and learn from positive changes. Specifically, how has the approach to aid in the Sahel evolved since 2005 in terms of new or improved services, processes, or a different paradigm for achieving resiliency?<sup>47</sup> Generative forms of learning identify new attitudes, capacities and institutional changes that contribute to a potential new vision. What creative and inventive solutions to the problematic of food security in the Sahel have emerged since 2005?

### 2.1 Overcoming “Shallow Analyses”

Many aid initiatives in the Sahel are ineffective because they are based on shallow analyses<sup>48</sup>. Since 2005, a number of key analytical tools have had a significant impact for understanding, monitoring and assessing food and nutrition insecurity.

#### 2.1.1 Household Economy Analysis

Household Economy Analysis (HEA) is a form of livelihoods analysis which takes access to sufficient food as a basic reference point. It is relevant, therefore, to assessing food security. But HEA offers a more detailed understanding of the household economy because its analytical framework<sup>49</sup> is based on three pillars<sup>50</sup>

- where and how households obtain their food
- the sources and amounts of household cash income
- the proportion of household expenditure on different items

“The 2005 food crisis in Niger came as a surprise to many. Warning signs were often incomplete and given late, full of contradictions. The classic food security beliefs that dominated the information missed the point that rural livelihoods have been changing. This important study [on HEA] will help all concerned understand who is most at risk of food insecurity and malnutrition in Niger today, and why. It will help decision-makers to avoid a repeat of what happened in 2005, and to respond faster and more effectively in times of crisis.” **Jan Eijkenaer, ECHO’s Adviser for the Sahel region of West Africa**

This wider base of economic analysis is relevant to issues beyond food security<sup>g</sup>. HEA offers a clear picture of the scope, constraints and internal differentials of **poverty** as well as the *detail* of the many different things poorer people must do to survive. HEA does not just look at the livelihoods of poorer households in different agro-ecological zones. It also assesses the livelihoods of wealthier households (those classed as 'middle-income' or 'better-off'), because it is often impossible to understand what makes poor households poor without understanding what makes wealthier households wealthy. HEA provides a disaggregated analysis of the different socio-economic groups<sup>h</sup>, as well as a complete image of the social and economic interactions, often quite strong, between wealthier and poorer households.

HEA was originally developed within SCUK in the mid-1990s in response to the need to improve early warning and the geographical targeting of emergency aid. Although the focus since shifted, HEA still offers a strong, livelihoods-based approach to judging which people are vulnerable in what degree to shocks - especially to the long-onset event of drought. From 1995 to 2005, the HEA method was applied progressively in south Sudan, Somalia, Malawi and Ethiopia. In 2000, FEWS NET integrated HEA into its basic methodology for assessing vulnerability.

In the Sahel, however, HEA was introduced only in 2007. Incited by ECHO, the first HEA was undertaken in 2007 by Save the Children UK, in one department of Niger. Since then, 19 additional HEA case studies have been conducted across the Sahel<sup>51</sup>: 11 in agricultural zones, 4 in agro-pastoral zones, 3 in pastoral zones, and 1 in a peri-urban context. Most of assessments were financed by ECHO, and carried out by SCUK, but also involved OXFAM GB and ACF<sup>52</sup>. The objectives for these HEA surveys included:

- To obtain detailed information on the household economy of the selected zones, in order to get baseline information on food security, and to understand the key elements of risk for different population groups as a contribution to early warning systems
- contribute to the development of a poverty reduction strategy and to inform the policy debate at national level,
- explore local opportunities and constraints, notably for the most vulnerable households
- analyse the essential needs of vulnerable households, including the risks they are exposed to

The HEA analyses have provided highly relevant insights into a profound shift in the livelihoods that have significant consequences for ensuring food security in the Sahel, as outlined in the box below, taken from one study in Niger<sup>53</sup>.

**The vulnerability of households to food insecurity is highly variable even within the same communities**

In agricultural zones, there is growing inequality in the distribution of productive assets (land, animals etc.) Wealthier households generate 9 to 15 times the amount of revenue compared to the poorer households. Wealthier households compose about 25% of the population (compared to 30% of the very poor), but possess 50% of the cultivated land, 65% of the sheep and goats, and more than 75% of the cattle. A similar process of growing inequality of income and wealth also exists in the pastoral and agro-pastoral zones, but these systems of social solidarity mitigate the ill effects.

<sup>g</sup> As noted by Julius Holt, a major proponent of HEA, the growing necessity of cash earnings for poorer households in the Sahel to access to sufficient food means that there is little difference between food security analysis and overall livelihoods security analysis

<sup>h</sup> Julius Holt, remarks that HEA identifies groups by wealth, not by vulnerability. Because analysis of vulnerability has an implied reference to disasters, Holt notes this "does not fit comfortably with the main intention behind the present HEA surveys" which is to contribute to a *post crisis*, long term hunger reduction strategy for SCUK. Holt goes on to question the usefulness of weighted indicators in many vulnerability assessments, which he describes as a disappointingly 'black box' approach, lacking a proper explanatory or analytical model. While recognizing that the vulnerability concept has become fundamental to livelihood analysis in the Sahel, Holt notes its drawbacks and suggests a poverty analysis of the HEA offers better insight for developing long term development strategies, in **Holt, J., LeJeune, S (Sept 2007) Report on the Household Economy Survey of Two Livelihood Zones of Tessaoua District, Save the Children**

**The poorest households have great difficulty in meeting the basic food needs even in normal years**

In most agricultural areas, the agricultural production of the poorest households contributes less than a third to meeting their food needs. Food deficits during the lean season are becoming increasingly acute. Diets are increasingly composed of cereal grain. Animal products such as milk and meat are almost absent in the diet, posing an important risk for adequate nutrition. In almost all study areas, poor households, even if they own land, are obliged to neglect their fields to work for wealthier families, or migrate to other areas, to earn enough income to survive. This greatly reduces their agricultural production. In bad or crisis years, this problem becomes worse. Over generations, the poorest families lose part of their land to wealthier households, a process which is exacerbated in every new crisis.

**Poor households, even in rural areas, buy most of their food on the local markets**

For most poor households, food purchases take up more than half of their household expenses. This creates a high level of risk to price increases or volatile markets, because poorer households have little or no flexibility in their budgets to cope with higher prices. Any significant increase in food prices, therefore, often leads to a drastic decrease in the quantity and quality of food purchased, as well as reduction in other essential expenses in health and education.

**Animal husbandry is the most profitable economic activity in rural areas**

In pastoral, agro-pastoral and agricultural zones across the Sahel, sale of animals constitutes, by far, the principal source of revenue for the wealthier households. With increasing market integration occurring in West Africa the Sahel, there is strong market demand for animal products. Animal production is a promising sector because it is suited to the agro-ecological conditions of the Sahel. Households keeping animals have more nutritious diets because milk is often available for children. However, for poorer households, particularly in agricultural zones, animal sales are a very marginal source of income.

**Understanding (and regulating) the labour market is key to address food security in peri-urban areas**

A single study in a peri-urban area (part of Nouakchott, Mauritania) revealed that the household economy is highly monetised, even more so than in the rural areas, up to 90%. The poorest households depend on their labor to earn money to buy food, but are less affected by seasonality. As in the rural areas, the poorest households spend about 50% of their total income on food, but have other expenses such as purchase of water and firewood.

**The determining factor affecting the ability of poor households to survive, and access sufficient, nutritious food is their purchasing power**

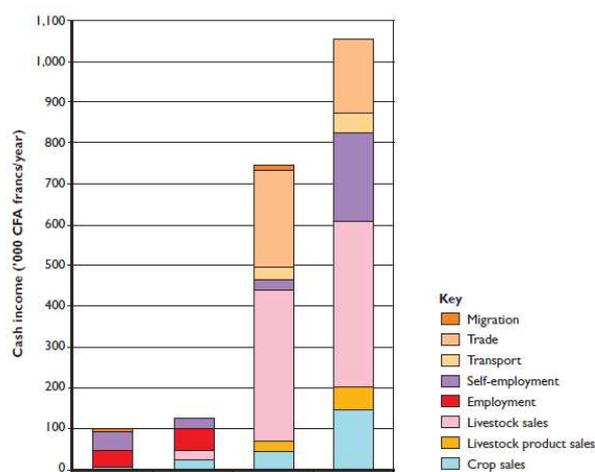
Obtaining agricultural production data to understand the food security situation in the Sahel is not adequate. This indicator is best suited to the situation of the better off, not poorer households. Wealthy rural households in the agricultural and agro-pastoral areas obtain most of their food from their own agricultural production. Poor households depend primarily on the local market to buy their food. Food crises in the Sahel, therefore are more and more crises of purchasing power and livelihoods, rather than availability of food. Increased food prices in the Sahel are no longer uniquely dependent on local or regional levels of production. Within increased regional and global market integration, food prices increasingly depend on wider market dynamics. A significant change in the demand for cereal grain in Nigeria, for example, could affect prices across the Sahel

Regarding household food insecurity, and reducing the poverty, do these lessons provide new insights for adapting the approach to aid in the Sahel? In 2007, Julius Holt<sup>54</sup> asserted that much still needs to be done to get across three related messages, each which had major ramifications, to donors and decision-makers:

- the rural economy in the Sahel has become highly cash-oriented;
- food security for the poor is highly market-dependent;
- food security and livelihood security are all but indistinguishable.

Sources and Amounts of cash revenue for typical households  
South-central livelihood zone: Tessaoua department Niger 2007

The HEA has helped shift the focus from food availability (and food aid), towards household access, through livelihoods analysis. HEA data has a direct bearing on the short term, seasonal concerns, particularly for Early Warning Systems (EWS). The HEA provides insights in judging how shocks such as a harvest failure, or an increase in food prices, may affect a given population: what will be the difference in response and resilience between poorer and wealthier people? How many are in either group? How many people may need assistance? What type of support would best support livelihoods of the poorest households? Current vulnerability assessments and other data instruments used by EWS do not yet provide adequate answers to these questions.



Source : Holt, J et al (2009). Understanding Household Economy in Rural Niger SCUK p.36

The household economy studies show that because of the accumulation of productive assets, wealthier families are very resilient to shocks, and indeed, may benefit from crises when poor households are obliged to turn to them for loans. Local mechanisms of social solidarity between the rich and poor do exist, particularly in pastoral areas, but are relatively limited, and not at all adequate to prevent major asset loss.

Because of their high dependence on the market for food, an external event affecting prices can have a greater negative impact on the food security of poorer households, than localised food deficits caused by poor rains. Because poor households already produce so little of their own food, a poor local harvest does not generally produce a major food crisis. Understanding the characteristics of the labour market, migration, and the dynamics of market prices are much more fundamental to assessing the food security situation of the poorest households<sup>55</sup>.

HEA highlights important differences within the poorer half of the population. The “Poor households” are shown to have a stake in primary production, both crop cultivation and their own livestock, where the “Very Poor” hardly have such a stake at all. Government and agencies still have some tendency to assume that the solution to food insecurity must be in increasing people’s food production for direct consumption. Given the livelihood trends in the agricultural zones of Niger, no investment is likely to help the poorest people, comprising almost 30% of the population, become self-sufficient in food.

In summary, the application of the HEA framework in the Sahel is a major potential contribution to developing more effective analysis of how to strengthen livelihoods, food security and resilience.

## 2.1.2 The Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC)

IPC is a system for defining the severity of a situation which integrates food security, nutrition and livelihoods information into a clear statement with practical implications for a strategic, timely response that match local needs. IPC uses 5 phase categories:

- 1) Generally food secure
- 2) Chronically food insecure
- 3) Acute Food and livelihood crisis
- 4) Humanitarian Emergency and
- 5) Famine/ Humanitarian catastrophe.

Each phase category is based upon a wide range of indicators of the impact of a hazard event on human health and welfare. These include: crude mortality rate, acute malnutrition, stunting, food access/availability, dietary diversity, water availability/access, destitution/displacement, civil security, coping strategies, livelihood assets, structural factors. These are cited as current or imminent outcomes on live and livelihoods, which directly measure the impact of a hazard event. For each outcome, cut-offs are proposed to define the phase.

For each phase category, IPC also presents a specific set of strategic responses to mitigate immediate outcomes, support livelihoods and address underlying causes. Phases 1 and 2 of the IPC reference table presented below for illustration<sup>56</sup>.

**Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification Reference Table**

Phase Classification	Key Reference Outcomes <i>(current or imminent outcomes on lives and livelihoods; based on convergence of evidence)</i>	Strategic Response Framework <i>(mitigate immediate outcomes, support livelihoods, and address underlying/structural causes)</i>
1 <b>Generally Food Secure</b>	<i>Crude Mortality Rate</i> < 0.5 / 10,000 / day <i>Acute Malnutrition</i> <3 % (w/ <-2 z-scores) <i>Stunting</i> <20% (h/age <-2 z-scores) <i>Food Access/ Availability</i> usually adequate (> 2,100 kcal ppp day), stable <i>Dietary Diversity</i> consistent quality and quantity of diversity <i>Water Access/Avail.</i> usually adequate (> 15 litres ppp day), stable <i>Hazards</i> moderate to low probability and vulnerability <i>Civil Security</i> prevailing and structural peace <i>Livelihood Assets</i> generally sustainable utilization (of 5 capitals)	Strategic assistance to pockets of food insecure groups Investment in food and economic production systems Enable development of livelihood systems based on principles of sustainability, justice, and equity Prevent emergence of structural hindrances to food security Advocacy
2 <b>Chronically Food Insecure</b>	<i>Crude Mortality Rate</i> <0.5/10,000/day; U5MR<1/10,000/day <i>Acute Malnutrition</i> >3% but <10 % (w/ <-2 z-score), usual range, stable <i>Stunting</i> >20% (w/age <-2 z-scores) <i>Food Access/ Availability</i> borderline adequate (2,100 kcal ppp day); unstable <i>Dietary Diversity</i> chronic dietary diversity deficit <i>Water Access/Avail.</i> borderline adequate (15 litres ppp day); unstable <i>Hazards</i> recurrent, with high livelihood vulnerability <i>Civil Security</i> Unstable; disruptive tension <i>Coping</i> 'insurance strategies' <i>Livelihood Assets</i> stressed and unsustainable utilization (of 5 capitals) <b>Structural</b> Pronounced underlying hindrances to food security	Design & implement strategies to increase stability, resistance and resilience of livelihood systems, thus reducing risk Provision of 'safety nets' to high risk groups Interventions for optimal and sustainable use of livelihood assets Create contingency plan Redress structural hindrances to food security Close monitoring of relevant outcome and process indicators Advocacy

The Livelihood Zone is the IPC's core unit for spatial analysis. An analysis each zone provides an understanding of how people within a given livelihood system typically source their food and income and what their expenditure patterns and coping strategies are. The Household Economy Approach (HEA) is especially pertinent for this analysis.

IPC seeks to:

- Broaden the scope of analysis beyond the traditional food availability-food access axis to include other causes of malnutrition and mortality, such as disease, access to water and conflict.
- Broaden the range of possible interventions that are considered, through a strategic response framework.
- Introduce greater comparability, increased rigour and greater transparency into the analysis

The two main elements of the IPC consist of a **situation analysis** and a **response analysis**.

- **Situation analysis** is a critical yet often overlooked stage of the food security analysis response continuum. Situational analysis is the basis for identifying fundamental aspects of a situation (severity, causes, magnitude, etc.). Ideally, the analysis is backed by a broad-based consensus among key stakeholders including governments, UN and NGO agencies, donors, the media and target communities.
- **Response analysis** explicitly links situation analysis to the design of appropriate strategic food security interventions that address both immediate needs, and a medium and longer term response. The response analysis seeks to meet three objectives:
  - mitigate immediate outcomes
  - support livelihoods; and
  - address underlying and structural causes of food insecurity

The response framework embraces the “**twin track**” approach of broader based, long term efforts to promote resilience while also providing direct access to food for the most needy. In Phase 3, “Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis, IPC explicitly proposes to use ‘crisis as opportunity’ to redress underlying structural causes, and undertake advocacy.

IPC is a global effort to develop a common approach for food security analysis and response. This initiative is led by a seven-agency multi-agency partnership<sup>57</sup>. The IPC development has been financially supported by several Programmes and Donors including the EC/FAO Food Security Information for Action Program, ECHO, CIDA and DFID.

The IPC project is a “work in progress” in many countries and is under constant review and development. The second phase of IPC was evaluated in early 2011<sup>58</sup>. A second version is due to be released for testing with significant improvements<sup>59</sup>.

For the Sahel, the IPC initiative is overseen by a Regional technical working group. This team is supporting CILSS (Permanent Inter-State Committee for the fight against Drought in the Sahel) to update and upgrade the ‘Cadre Harmonisé Bonifié’, the standardized framework for food security analysis in the Sahel, using key elements from the IPC analytical approach.

This revised framework developed with CILSS was tested with real data from 3 countries (Niger, Mauritania and Senegal) in 2009. Based on this experience, an updated “Methodological Note for the Cadre Harmonisé Bonifié” (integrating IPC elements) has recently been finalized by the Regional technical working group.

According to the IPC World Map, only a few countries in the Sahel have entered into the “introduction stage”. These are countries where significant awareness raising as well as institutional set-up activities are being led, but without yet subsequent adoption of the IPC process.

The proponents of the IPC framework believe that its effective application has significant potential benefits for the prevention and management of food and other types of crises in the Sahel, as the box below outlines:

## The rationale and potential benefits of IPC for the Sahel

**Linking analysis to Strategic Response:** The IPC supports more effective response strategies by linking information with a strategic response framework. The IPC not only references criteria for defining the severity of a given crisis, but also explicitly links a statement to appropriate responses for addressing both immediate priorities and medium to longer term requirements. This allows for a consideration of what responses are most appropriate and feasible in different scenarios in the light of, for example, local capacity and ongoing interventions. The response options are a departure from “deficit driven” modes of assessment, where ‘humanitarian needs’ are seen as deficits requiring immediate goods and services, which may potentially undermine the resilience of the food economy.

**A clearer definition of a crisis and a common currency for reporting which has many advantages:**

- makes meaningful comparisons possible between countries and over time. The same phase should always mean the same severity of crisis.
- Facilitates technical consensus between analysts, implementing agencies and donors, leading to more effective and timely response, with better coordination of appeals and responses between agencies.
- harmonises the way a crisis situation is classified which generates consistency not only in the form of response, but also the source and scale of funding, the planning timeframe and the organisational roles of different stakeholders
- promotes accountability among implementing agencies, who must then show that their responses are appropriate given the prevailing phase.

**The explicit inclusion of an ‘acute food and livelihoods crisis’ phase.** At this level the problem may not be one of acute hunger, but one of livelihoods crisis characterised by the unsustainable use of local livelihoods assets and unacceptable coping strategies. The aim of having such a definition of this phase will encourage earlier intervention to protect livelihoods and not just lives.

**A more rigorous and transparent analysis process,** making clear the evidence upon which the analysis is based. This makes analysts more accountable for their conclusions. The quality of individual data sources is evaluated and reflected in an overall level of confidence in the analysis.

**Improved early warning,** resulting from a combination of the strengths outlined above. The framework promotes timely and meaningful analysis to ensure that early warning information influences decision making and does not go unheeded. Hazard and vulnerability are accounted for and incorporated into risk statements. Three levels of risk are operationalised i.e., *alert, moderate* and *high*.

**Adds value to existing information systems,** by promoting better use of available data and analysis. The IPC is methodologically neutral, i.e. it does not specify the methods that should be used to analyse data. Rather it seeks to establish minimum standards for the analytical process and for the reporting of results.

**A collaborative analysis.** The IPC has been successful in bringing together analysts from different sectors (food security, nutrition, health, etc.) and getting them to integrate their data to reach shared conclusions about the situation and the priorities for action. It provides a common “platform” for discussion among analysts with diverse expertise and agency backgrounds.

**Better communication of results,** through standard mapping protocols to illustrate severity and population tables to provide information on magnitude of the problem.

### Sources:

- FAO (June 2006) Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC) Framework Policy Brief Issue 3.
- RHVP May 2007 The Integrated Food Security and Phase Classification (IPC): A review version 1

Although progress is slow, the adaptation of IPC to the Sahel started after 2007. It has the potential, in technical terms, for more effective linkage of early warning to address chronic food and nutrition insecurity in the Sahel. However there are major political issues and implications for donors, national governments, international agencies.

### 2.1.3 SMART Methodology

The Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transition (SMART) program is an interagency<sup>60</sup> initiative to harmonize needs assessments, and improve monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian assistance interventions

SMART provides the basis for understanding the magnitude and severity of a humanitarian crisis through a basic, integrated method for assessing nutritional status and mortality rate. It draws from core elements of several existing methods and current best practices to assess Crude Death Rate (CDR) and Nutritional Status of Children Under-Five. These are the most vital, basic public health indicators of the severity of a humanitarian crisis. They monitor the extent to which the relief system is meeting the needs of the population and the overall impact and performance of the humanitarian response.

An optional food security component, which uses a simplified version of HEA, provides the context for nutrition and mortality data analysis. The Household Economy Approach (Livelihood Method) has worked well in predicting quantitatively how an event, such as crop failure or price change, is likely to affect people's ability to get food. It gives an estimate of who will be affected, how severely they will be affected, and when they will be affected. Other methods do not give this quality of information<sup>61</sup>.

The SMART Methodology Version 1, with a Windows-based analytical software program and standardized reporting format, was developed and pilot-tested by partners in the Sahel<sup>62</sup>:

- Chad (Action Against Hunger USA – nutrition/mortality/software)
- Mali (Action Against Hunger Spain – nutrition/mortality/software)
- Niger (Action Against Hunger Spain – nutrition/mortality/software)

Since 2005, it has been increasingly used by international agencies in the Sahel. Strongly supported by donors such as ECHO, SMART has helped to place the often neglected crisis of chronic and acute child nutrition, and child mortality into the means of assessing and responding to food crises.

#### **Why is SMART needed?**

- The use of various methodologies and measures for determining nutritional status, mortality rates and food security does not *enable comparisons or coherent understanding* of needs.
- *Poor quality data is often used* for making decisions or reporting.
- *Implementing partners and host countries lack technical capacity* to collect reliable data.
- The lack of comprehensive technical support does not facilitate the *strategic and sustained capacity building needed at all levels* to ensure quick access to reliable, standardized data.
- SMART addresses the question: how do we accurately determine needs or report on performance with various methodologies and unreliable data?

#### **What does SMART seek to provide?**

- A standardized methodology for assessing needs that will provide comparable data between countries and emergencies to prioritize resource allocations.
- Technical support to build capacity for real time, standardized and reliable data for decision making. This will facilitate timely, appropriate assistance to those in need.
- Reliable data for performance and results reporting, and trend analysis of humanitarian situations using mortality rate and nutritional status. This will improve understanding of the effects of our assistance.
- A basis to institutionalize evidence-based policy making and reporting on humanitarian crises.

**Source: SMART: (April 2006) Measuring Mortality, Nutritional Status, and Food Security in Crisis**

### 2.1.4 The Cost of Diet

There has been much debate in the Sahel about the root causes of shockingly high levels of child malnutrition, and the interaction between transitory and chronic acute malnutrition, and the most effective ways to address it.

To partially analyse this issue, Save the Children UK, in a complementary study to its HEA work, calculated the cost of the cheapest healthy diet in Tessaoua district in Niger, on the basis of the foods available in the market, in the wider natural environment, and produced by households.

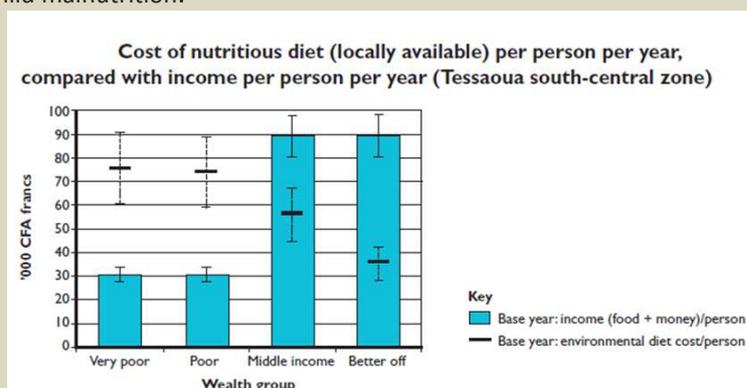
The 'Cost of the Diet' is a method developed to calculate the minimum amount of money a family will have to spend to meet their energy, protein, fat and micronutrient requirements using locally available foods<sup>63</sup>.

This is an innovative tool that can:

- Calculate the minimum cost of a diet for an individual child *and* the whole family.
- Take into account seasonal variations in food price and availability when costing the diet.
- Provide region-specific data on dietary costs and food availability.

#### Conclusions of "Cost of the Diet" study by Save the Children:

- Local availability of food in Tessaoua district does allow the consumption of a healthy diet at all times of the year – if people can afford it. A balanced diet is possible using foods available locally.
- In Tessaoua district, two-thirds of all households – representing about half of the population – cannot afford a balanced diet, even when sufficient food is available locally. This is one of the main reasons why more than half of all children in these two livelihood zones are chronically malnourished. The situation is particularly extreme in the south-central zone, where the poorest households' total income (cash + in kind) would need to at least double to enable them to afford a healthy diet.
- Access to free milk through livestock ownership significantly contributes to a healthy diet and reduces the risk of child malnutrition.



Source : Holt, J et al (2009). *Understanding the Household Economy in Rural Niger*. Save the Children UK. p95

The Save the Children Study indicates that lack of cash and access to milk are important determinants of child malnutrition, but these factors are not always addressed by interventions and strategies. HEA studies in the Sahel indicate that where poorer households have very limited and fragile purchasing power not enabling them to meet their basic food needs at certain times of the year, and this is combined with poor public health and sub-optimal childcare practices, acute malnutrition is more likely.

These findings challenge current policies on malnutrition, which often do not sufficiently take into consideration the economic constraints facing poorer households. The main focus in the community is often in improving childcare and infant feeding practices such as early and exclusive breastfeeding using methodologies such as “positive deviance” (PD Hearth). Although improving people’s awareness about childcare and weaning practices, as well as improved hygiene and sanitation, are important to prevent and reduce malnutrition, they can only be effective strategies if the poorest households can afford to put what they learn into practice.

In the Sahel, this type of household livelihood/economic analysis, coupled with cost of health diet studies, have the potential to improve strategies to prevent malnutrition, especially if social protection measures are taken to improve nutrition as part of a broader multi-sectoral approach. The Cost of the Diet work is particularly relevant given recent concerns about rising food prices.

## 2.2 Fighting Undernutrition<sup>64</sup>

UNICEF estimates that 300,000 children below five years of age die of undernutrition in the Sahel every year<sup>65</sup>. Acute malnutrition remains an emergency issue in the Sahel sub-region of West Africa (See box below). Food shortages and high rates of malnutrition have long been a reality in the Sahel, but the understanding of, and approach to malnutrition has started to change drastically. Before, the distinction between hunger and malnutrition was unclear. It was thought that malnutrition could be cured by providing enough food. Food and nutrition used to be seen as one. The response to malnutrition in many Sahelian countries was to improve food security and health services.

The nutrition crisis in Niger in 2005, amplified by the media, drew attention to the reality of a hitherto forgotten if not ignored, nutrition crisis in the Sahel. The first huge change was a massive mobilisation of the humanitarian community in Niger to establish nutrition centres for treating severely acute malnutrition using ready to use therapeutic food (RUTF), like Plumpy'nut<sup>66</sup>. This enabled children without medical complications to be treated for severe acute malnutrition as outpatients, within their communities.

The 2005 Niger crisis also caused the humanitarian community in the Sahel to rethink strategies to address malnutrition. The reactive response in 2005 was considered insufficient in tackling the fundamental causes of acute malnutrition and infant mortality. It responded to the humanitarian mandate. It saved lives. But it did not deal with the root causes of acute malnutrition. Because levels of acute malnutrition were consistently above the emergency threshold level even in good years, a reactive response meant being locked into a long-term operation with no clear exit.

Faced with this reality, humanitarian and development workers and donor agencies initiated intensive discussions about how they could work better together to assist governments and civil society in the Sahel deal with malnutrition and reduce infant mortality. It was determined that a coordinated approach which articulated short-term, medium and long term aid instruments<sup>67</sup> was needed as well as operational research on how to treat and prevent moderate acute malnutrition.

Through its long term Sahel Strategy, approved in 2007, the European Commission for Humanitarian Aid (ECHO), has become a leading donor agency addressing acute malnutrition and mortality of the most vulnerable populations<sup>68</sup>.

### The Case for Long Term Emergency Action to Address Child Malnutrition in the Sahel

In the Sahel, for over the past ten years, Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates have systematically exceeded the international World Health Organisation (WHO) and SPHERE emergency threshold of 10%. It is currently estimated that of a population of around 50 million people in the western Sahel belt, 1,300,000 (14%) of the children below 5 years of age are in an acutely malnourished state and out of these 300,000 suffer from severe acute malnutrition. They are therefore in a life-threatening situation. Reports indicate that “structural” levels of global acute malnutrition have been increasing since the 1990, and remain persistently over the emergency threshold.

Country	Total population <sup>15</sup>	Population under 5 years of age	(%) GAM <sup>16</sup>	(%) SAM <sup>17</sup>	Children suffering from GAM	Children suffering from SAM
Burkina Faso (DHS <sup>18</sup> 2003)	13,002,000	2,560,000	18.7	5.0	478,720	128,000
Chad (DHS 2004)	8,598,000	1,646,600	13.5	3.1	222,291	51,045
Mali (DHS 2006)	13,007,000	2,581,000	13.3	3.0	343,273	77,430
Mauritania (MICS 2007)	2,893,000	499,000	11.9	1.6	59,381	7,984
Niger <sup>19</sup> (MICS <sup>20</sup> 2006)	11,972,000	2,549,000	10.3	1.5	262,547	38,235
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,472,000</b>	<b>9,835,600</b>			<b>1,366,212</b>	<b>302,694</b>

If children are malnourished before the age of two and receive no nutritional treatment, they can suffer irreversible physical and cognitive damage which will affect their future health and well-being. As adults, they risk suffering from physical and intellectual complications affecting their ability to earn their livelihoods, escape poverty, and support their own children<sup>a</sup>. This malnutrition accounts for 60% of mortality among children under-five years. The Sahel has one of the world's highest infant mortality rates.

These factors provide a compelling argument in favour of taking effective long term emergency action in the Sahel. The Global Acute Malnutrition rate of children under 5 years of age is one of the most important indicators in identifying and assessing a humanitarian crisis. Acute malnutrition is linked to an increased risk of disease. It provides information on the general condition of the most vulnerable populations, and therefore relevant information on access to food, on coping mechanisms, the functioning of the public health system, and the state of water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) and overall resiliency.

**Source:** ECHO (2007) Humanitarian Aid for vulnerable populations at risk in the Sahel Region of West Africa GLOBAL PLAN

*Aid strategies for treating and preventing moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) in the Sahel which have remained virtually unchanged for 30 years are starting to change.*<sup>69</sup> Across the Sahel, MAM strikes an estimated six million children each year (see box below). Such children are highly prone to illness and vulnerable to the slightest shocks, and can easily slide in Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). With the support of ECHO and other agencies, the humanitarian community is undertaking an intensive, coordinated initiative to develop effective strategies to reach these children. Some of the most salient components are:

Treatment of MAM with RUTF: Niger provided a test bed for some innovative approaches. Emphasis was given treating moderately malnourished children before they slipped into the severely malnourished category. Survival rates are 10 times higher when treating MAM. The extensive use of an adapted supplementary version of Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) and blanket feeding have shown some initial promising result. Further testing and evaluation of the results is needed<sup>70</sup>. In Mali, UNICEF and aid agencies are examining the efficacy of several products and strategies in randomized, community-based studies. One product being evaluated in Mali is CSB++, a more nutrient-rich version of the corn-soya blend long used by the UN World Food Programme (WFP) for children with moderate acute malnutrition. Nutrition experts say the original CSB does not contain the nutrients to stem MAM. The Mali study, supported also by the University of Bamako and University of California-Davis, and funded by Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), is also evaluating Supplementary Plumpy (a nutrient-rich peanut paste), Misola and local foods plus a nutrient powder<sup>71</sup>.

Development of National Protocols for Treatment of Acute Malnutrition: Across the Sahel, much inter-agency has been work done to revise and improve National Protocols for the treatment of Acute Malnutrition, and to strengthen the capacity of national health service staff to apply it.<sup>72</sup> For example, in Niger, a revised protocol was developed and validated in June 2009, using the new growth norms of the World Health Organisation, and the use of RUTF.<sup>73</sup>

Exemption of user fees (through third party payment) for basic healthcare services for children under 5 years and lactating and pregnant women. Ensuring access to health care, particularly for poorer households, is a major factor in the fight against malnutrition. After more than 20 years of promoting cost recovery through direct user fees by patients at health facilities (part of the Bamako Initiative), the World Bank and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have changed their **minds**.<sup>i</sup> In Burkina Faso, where the use of health facilities is dramatically low, ECHO, three Regional Health Directorates, the NGOs Terre des Hommes and HELP<sup>74</sup> collaborated on a pilot research project exempting payments for children under 5 and pregnant women in 4 health districts. This change in policy generated an immediate, dramatic increase in the number of consultations at all sites, compared to control groups. In Niger, ECHO and its partners supported similar pilot projects. The very positive results and the intensive advocacy by humanitarian agencies resulted in the government of Niger decreeing free access for children to basic health care. In Niger, early estimates of the cost to the health budget indicate it will be modest compared to the enormous benefits of better health surveillance and early warning of health problems including malnutrition.

Use of direct cash transfer to prevent malnutrition: In the department of Tahoua, Niger, during the food crisis of 2010, CONCERN Worldwide assessed the impact of a cash transfer programme on the nutritional status, health and survival of children from 6 to 59 months, and on the food security of households<sup>75</sup>. In an effort to identify ways to *prevent* acute malnutrition, rather than react when it occurred, Concern Worldwide tested a various support activities targeting different categories of people, according to their degree of vulnerability. Toward the end of the lean season, 3

Impact of Cash Transfers on evolution of nutritional status :			
Tahoua, Niger 2010			
Indicators	Cash transfer	Mix of seed and cash	No cash (control group)
<b>Global Acute Malnutrition</b>	<b>8,7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>20%</b>
[95% IC]	[4,1 ; 13,2]	[5,1 ; 14,7]	[14,7 ; 25,4]
<b>Moderate acute malnutrition</b>	<b>7,7%</b>	<b>8,4%</b>	<b>16,8%</b>
[95% IC]	[3,4 ; 11,9]	[4,1 ; 12,6]	[9,2 ; 24,4]
<b>Severe acute malnutrition</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1,6%</b>	<b>3,3%</b>
[95% IC]	[0 ; 2,3]	[0 ; 3,3]	[0 ; 7,6]

<sup>i</sup> In June 2007, the head of WHO stated "If you wish to reduce poverty, it seems to me necessary to help governments abolish direct payments". According to the British researcher Chris James, ending the policy of direct user fees for health care in 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa for children less than 5 years, could save 150,000 to 300,000 lives a year

groups were established: 9,500 households received monthly cash transfers; 3,500 households received improved seeds and fertilizer, in addition to monthly cash, and a third group served as a control. All three groups, however, were among the 32,000 households receiving blanket feeding rations, and access to Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM). After 5 months, the level of malnutrition was assessed in the households of all three groups, using the SMART survey. The table below shows a significantly lower level of malnutrition in the cash beneficiaries.

Similarly, UNICEF undertook its first ever emergency cash experience in Niger in June 2010, working through CARE and Save the Children UK. UNICEF was concerned that blanket feeding rations were being used to feed older children and indeed all household members. The aim of the cash transfers of 20,000 CFA francs per month per household was to “protect” the rations. A final evaluation indicated that the cash did improve the resilience of benefiting households, improved their food security and increased exclusive use of blanket feeding rations to targeted children<sup>76</sup>.

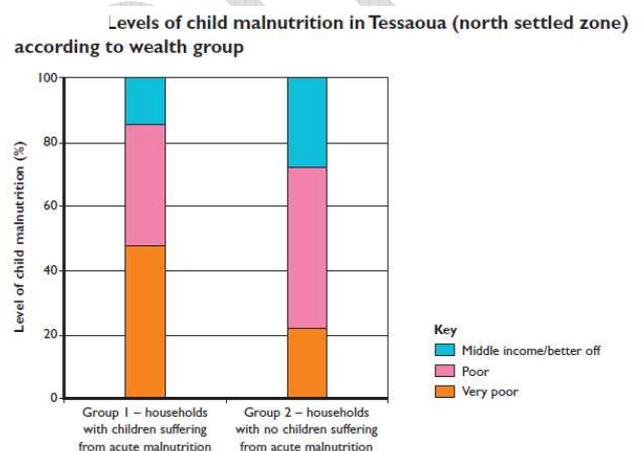
Because malnutrition has a complex nature, it is difficult in both of these studies to isolate the impact of cash in relation to many other factors, unless a much more detailed research design would be undertaken. However, there seems to be a strong indication of positive impact on nutrition with cash.

Growing Awareness of the Link between Poverty and Malnutrition: Experience in the Sahel since 2005 indicates that nutrition behaviours of primary caregivers are not only due to a lack of awareness of proper practices, but to local constraints in applying such practices, in particular poverty<sup>77</sup>. There are many causes of malnutrition in the Sahel. They include inadequate sanitation, poor public health and hygiene, and poor childcare practices, such as delaying breastfeeding, the early introduction of water and semi-solid foods, and weaning with a nutritionally poor millet-based gruel.

These factors affect children from better-off families as well as the poorest families. However, malnutrition is not evenly spread across all wealth groups (see figure above). The *Survey on the Causes of Malnutrition, North Tessaoua*, where Save the Children ran community therapeutic care (CTC) programmes, highlighted that 85% of children admitted to treatment centres were from poor or very poor households. Fifty percent were from the very poor households. The income of households that were most affected by malnutrition was much lower than in the control group of households where there was no malnutrition<sup>78</sup>.

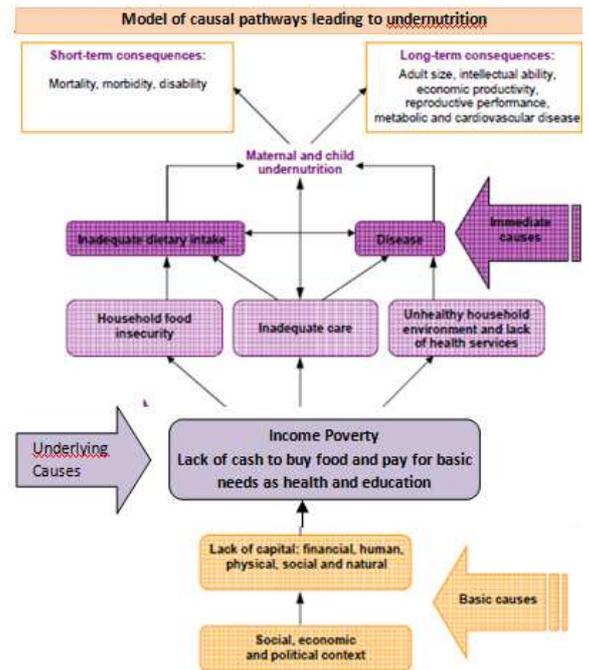
An increasing number of households across the Sahel simply cannot afford to provide young children with nutritious food—particularly animal source foods such as milk, meat, and eggs—needed for them to grow and thrive. The HEA and Cost of Diet studies, indicate that poverty appears a strong causal factor for undernutrition in the Sahel. This must be addressed directly in any sustainable effort to reduce it.

An integrated, coordinated approach to preventing acute malnutrition: The current response to addressing moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) is mostly focused mostly on curative actions rather than a more comprehensive approach. As put by a FAO staff member in West Africa, “most of the research is on therapeutic food, vitamin A, and other pills, while very little focus is placed on the relationship of nutrition with livelihoods, food production, or trade. Therapeutic products are



Holt, J et al (2009). Understanding Household Economy in Rural Niger. Save the Children UK p.93

important but insufficient to deal with malnutrition.”<sup>79</sup> Different factors tend to keep nutrition initiatives primarily in the hands of nutritionists. However, in the Sahel, there is growing understanding that the complexity of managing MAM requires addressing many different sectors at once, including water, hygiene and sanitation, malaria etc.) Donors are becoming aware that MAM is a cross cutting theme that needs to be integrated into all programmes, not just health, including: food security, agriculture, DRR, social protection, education and gender.<sup>80</sup> In the Sahel, inter-agency coordination across the humanitarian and development fields is starting to occur to address undernutrition, including joint efforts to change policies. This is based on the growing recognition that there is no one single solution for preventing and treating MAM.



Source: Adapted from EuropeAid (Jan 2011) *Addressing Undernutrition in External Assistance Reference Document DRAFT 0. An integrated approach through sectors and aid modalities*

While the perspectives and priorities may vary across agencies, there is consensus that no one agency can resolve it, and that raising the political priority of addressing undernutrition is essential for change. Some donors recognize that progress for managing MAM requires a strategic approach that addresses a combination of the immediate causes (disease and inadequate diet), the underlying causes (including food insecurity, inadequate feeding practices, poor access to potable water, hygiene and health care services, poverty), and the basic causes related to livelihoods/resilience affected by wider forces such as prices of food, population, trade.

This growing vision of an integrated and coordinated inter-agency approach has, in practice, been hard to operationalise in the Sahel. There has been some progress in integrating nutrition indicators into early warning systems, ending health user fees, and revising national level policies and structures for nutrition, but there is much more to be achieved. Many international NGOs, (including CONCERN Worldwide, ACF<sup>81</sup> and Save the Children<sup>l</sup>) are undertaking vigorous advocacy for this vision, and finding ways to enable better inter-sectoral work in their own programmes. However, there is still more to be done to bridge the divide, in principles and objectives between humanitarian and development action<sup>k</sup>.

Among many donors, the integrated approach to MAM programmes does not yet fit easily into traditional funding mechanisms. Different priorities and funding criteria still prevail during ‘emergencies’ compared to ‘development’ contexts. Within governments in the Sahel, malnutrition reduction is still primarily seen as solely the job of the ministry of health, rather requiring a coordinated effort across line ministries.

Many lessons have been learned since the nutrition crisis in 2005. Social protection, including the regular provision of cash transfers, in particular, appear to have considerable potential to improve

<sup>j</sup> See in particular the Save the Children UK (2009) *Hungry For Change an Eight-Step, Costed Plan of Action to Tackle Global Child Hunger*

<sup>k</sup> Humanitarian actors are guided by the imperative to save lives and to respond to suffering without discrimination of any kind. Major development actors tend to be guided more by the need to maximise growth and development by building national capacities, cooperating closely with national governments and assisting people who have viable potential as opposed to people who are most vulnerable and most in need.

the diets of pregnant women and young children, while long term structural issues are addressed. While social protection has considerable costs, it can be a good investment. According to the former UN Humanitarian Coordinator Jan Egeland, it would have cost \$1 a day per child to prevent acute malnutrition among children in October 2004, if early warning information had been followed up. By July 2005, the cost of saving a malnourished child's life in an emergency response operation was \$80.10.<sup>82</sup>

While the problem is huge and potentially growing, the broad outline of a solution to reduce MAM (and reach the Millennium Development Goal No 1) in the Sahel has become clearer. The key challenge now, is to identify strategic opportunities to make nutrition a top national and political priority. This entails overcoming the administrative and bureaucratic hurdles within government structures and policies (and within the aid system). It also requires changing the attitude of complacency within top political leadership, as well as in civil society, so that high rates of malnutrition will no longer be considered "normal".

### 2.3 Agro-ecology, re-greening and the link to food and nutrition security

In light of the food crises of 2004-5, 2007-8<sup>l</sup> and 2009-10, what lessons can be learned about the role of agriculture in the Sahel, to improve food security and strengthen community resilience?

Agriculture plays a vital role in the economies of the Sahel. The majority of producers are small scale farmers and pastoralists. The common view is that improvements in agricultural productivity hold great potential for poverty alleviation and improved food security. Yields in the Sahel are generally low, particularly in Niger. For example, the average yields of Niger's two principal grain crops, millet and sorghum, are by far the lowest, compared to its neighbouring countries<sup>83</sup>.

Average 2003 to 2007	Yields in Kg/ha	
	Millet	Sorghum
Niger	445	335
Mali	723	849
Chad	583	730
Burkina	865	1041

Beyond low productivity, the food crisis of 2007 and the first half of 2008 (triggered by steep rise in global food prices, not drought) exposed the structural weaknesses of agricultural, trade and social protection policies in the Sahel. When violent protests occurred in capitals of some Sahelian countries<sup>84</sup>, concern about food security put agriculture back onto the development agenda in the Sahel, after years of neglect<sup>m</sup>.

There is still great controversy, however, about the **model of agricultural development** to follow for increased aid and investment. In the Sahel, economic restructuring and liberalization in the 1980's drastically decreased government support for small scale agriculture, and reoriented limited investments to export commodities in favourable production areas. Many analysts and even the World Bank's own Independent Evaluation Group, link the growing food crisis in the Sahel to the dismantling of government controls and support mechanisms for small scale farmers<sup>85</sup>.

Through its current lending and investments in the Sahel, the World Bank continues to give priority to larger scale, commercial, export-oriented agriculture<sup>86</sup>, for example, large scale irrigation

<sup>l</sup> This refers to the global food price crisis which also affected the Sahel

<sup>m</sup> For example, Niger is in the process of implementing *the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)* agenda and the Common Agricultural Policy of (ECOWAS), to promote agricultural development and economic growth to six percent a year, based on a national budget expenditure of 10% a year. The aim is to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty. This is taking place in the context of the implementation of the Rural Development Strategy and the *National programme for agricultural investment* is under development.

schemes<sup>n</sup>. The influential proponents of AGRA (Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa)<sup>87</sup> are funding a conventional, high external input model for improving agriculture, based mostly on increased fertiliser use, high tech seeds, and use of pesticides in highly favoured agricultural areas.

The vision of the World Bank, and implicitly of AGRA, for small-scale agriculture in the Sahel was reflected in an early draft the *World Development Report on Agriculture* (2008): "...the priority is to secure [economic] growth through a focus on the favourable regions and the most entrepreneurial smallholders, and spread the benefits via employment generation and lower food prices' and that 'those with poor assets or remoteness...cannot connect to the growth process [through farming their land]'<sup>88</sup>. In short, the World Bank paradigm for African agriculture is based on contract and corporate farming, One advocate of this approach bluntly suggests to stop romanticising peasant agriculture, because it is largely non competitive<sup>89</sup>.

Another equally direct expression of this paradigm is the 2009 policy document of the British government which calls for a necessary adjustment of small-farmers: "if the agricultural sector doesn't adjust, and if marginal farmers do not leave the agricultural sector sufficiently quickly then it is more difficult for more successful farmers to expand and for new entrants to get into farming"<sup>90</sup>.

Despite repeated commitments by key donors and governments in the Sahel to support small-scale farmers<sup>o</sup>, policies and practices in the agricultural sector in the Sahel are still highly biased to export oriented commercial farming in more favourable areas. Smallholder farmers who often live on less than \$1 or \$2 per day, cannot afford industrial inputs like hybrid or genetically engineered seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, or irrigation. Because of much higher risks, and declining soil fertility, distance from markets, small scale farmers in more marginal areas are seen as incapable of improving production. If a crisis occurs, the neo-liberal paradigm "solution" is to provide occasional emergency food aid until they earn a sufficient income from off-farm economic activities or employment on more successful small farms or large commercial farming enterprises, or in towns and cities<sup>91</sup>.

One major lesson from the 2009-10 food crisis in the Sahel is that the number of people in the rural areas, (and increasingly in the urban areas) affected by severe food insecurity are far too large (almost half the population in the case of Niger) to be supported indefinitely through (very imperfect) safety net interventions. Each new crisis increases the number pushed deeper into chronic poverty. Only a very few could be realistically obtain employment from agricultural growth in high-potential areas<sup>92</sup>. Massive migration to other countries is the alternative. It generates substantial remittances, but low literacy levels and limited skills of rural migrants drastically limit their opportunities.

There is an alternative paradigm being promoted for agriculture, and its role in addressing food security. This is the sustainable intensification of small farming systems, using low external inputs, agro-ecological methods and crop diversification. This paradigm is called agro-ecological agriculture.

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<sup>n</sup> In September 2005, Nigerien Prime Minister Hama Amadou declared that Nigerien farmers had to open themselves to modernity in order to avoid similar food crises in the future: "the rural world must change mentality; we need to stop depending on rain fall. [...] We must modernize agriculture and develop irrigable land." Cited in Mousseau (2006) p30. In May 2011, the new government of Niger announced a major irrigation project that will cost millions of dollars and displace many villages. (Source: BBC broadcast).

<sup>o</sup> In April 2008, by 58 governments in Johannesburg approved the *Summary for Decision Makers of the Global Report* by The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), which advocated support of small scale farmers and agroecological approaches, as the best way to improve the resilience and sustainability of food systems. It was approved. The United States refused to ratify it.

### **What is Agroecological Agriculture?**

Agroecology is both a science and a set of practices. It was created by the convergence of two scientific disciplines: agronomy and ecology. The core principles of agroecology include recycling nutrients and energy on the farm, rather than introducing external inputs; integrating crops and livestock; diversifying species and genetic resources in agro-ecosystems over time and space; and focusing on interactions and productivity across the agricultural system, rather than focusing on individual species. Agroecology is highly knowledge-intensive, based on techniques that are not delivered top-down but developed on the basis of farmers' knowledge and experimentation.

The most recent champion<sup>93</sup> of agro-ecology is the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter. Drawing on an extensive review of the scientific literature published in since 2005, the Special Rapporteur identified agro-ecology as the preferred mode of agricultural development to concretize the right to food, particularly for vulnerable groups.

### **An Alternative Paradigm: The Role of Agro-ecology in the Right to Food**

*"Today's scientific evidence demonstrates that agro-ecological methods outperform the use of chemical fertilizers in boosting food production where the hungry live -- especially in unfavourable environments... Recent projects conducted in 20 African countries demonstrated a doubling of crop yields over a period of 3-10 years... We won't solve hunger and stop climate change with industrial farming on large plantations. The solution lies in supporting small-scale farmers' knowledge and experimentation, and in raising incomes of smallholders so as to contribute to rural development....If key stakeholders support the measures identified in the report, we can see a doubling of food production within 5 to 10 years in some regions where the hungry live".* The Report recognizes that *"Food availability is, first and foremost, an issue at the household level, and hunger today is mostly attributable not to stocks that are too low or to global supplies unable to meet demand, but to poverty; increasing the incomes of the poorest is the best way to combat it."*

**Source:** de Schutter, Olivier (Dec 2010) Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food.

***International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD)***, concluded that improving access of the rural low-income groups, namely landless labourers and smallholders, to food, land, water, seeds and improved technologies was essential to ensuring sustainable food security. The report also found that investments in agricultural knowledge, science and technology were needed to maintain productivity in ways that protect the natural resource base and ecological provisioning of agricultural systems. These two conclusions both point towards the need for increased investment in small-scale agriculture, small-scale irrigation, food processing and other strategies that empower poor subsistence farmers and encourage environmental stewardship

**Source:** (IAASTD, 2009)

The proponents of agro-ecological agriculture<sup>94</sup> advocate it as a way to empower vulnerable small-scale farmers, offering them both greater control over their lives and an accessible means of improving their food security, while decreasing their risk of crop failure or livestock death due to climate shocks. Agro-ecological practices can help build "resilient farms"<sup>95</sup> that improve livelihoods, and achieving multiple benefits at once: increase productivity, reduce rural poverty, improve food security; adapt to a changing climate, and contribute to improved nutrition. Achieving farm resilience for sustainable food production, while also regenerating the natural resource base, requires enabling small scale farmers to develop their skills, expertise and voice, while supporting their use of agro-ecological farming practices.

In the Sahel, there are already many well documented examples of successes in developing diversified and productive agro-ecological farming systems, which integrate food production, trees and livestock. The best documented techniques in the Sahel include zaï planting pits, rock bunds on the contour, half moons water catchments, farmer managed natural regeneration of trees (agro-forestry).

With the 2009-10 food crisis, what can be learned about the potential and limits of agro-ecology in meeting the multiple objectives cited above? To what extent did the practice of agro-ecological systems, where practiced, mitigate severe food insecurity, and child malnutrition?

### **Case Study: Agro-ecology in the context of Niger**

In Niger, desertification and soil degradation, low soil fertility, unreliable and erratic rainfall patterns, high levels of crop and livestock disease and pest attack make agricultural activities very risky. Despite this risk, most small scale farmers and herders, who make up the great majority of the population, rely on annual crops and grasses for meeting their basic food needs. All too often, crop and grass growth is inadequate. For example, in many parts of Niger, even in good years, many poorer farm families do not produce enough food to meet their family's nutritional needs for more than three to six months<sup>96</sup>.

In some zones of Niger, up to 50% of the landmass is totally unproductive because land degradation and erosion has resulted in hardpan formation<sup>97</sup>. When it does rain, the water cannot infiltrate the hard soil. Extensive water runoff and flooding occur, destroying crops and increasing erosion. With only limited tree cover, young sorghum and millet plants, particularly in sandy areas, are often blasted and buried by strong winds that also cause extreme evaporation and loss of moisture. Few farmer families have sufficient organic matter to maintain soil fertility and fewer can afford artificial fertilizers.

Promoting resilience and food security through agriculture in such conditions is not feasible unless the productive resource base – the land and soil fertility can be restored. Many of technical solutions<sup>98</sup> require labour, which is constrained because much of the workforce is physically absent for 65% of the year, in search of income in the off-season.

***Despite these problems, according to World Vision Niger, on farm research has shown that it is possible to enable farm families regenerate their resource base, produce enough to eat, or to trade, in order to meet basic needs, even under the harsh environmental conditions in the Niger.*** The key is to diversify production away from annual crops, particularly the monoculture of millet.

One particularly vibrant example is the spread of agro-forestry in the Maradi region of Niger. This agro-ecological system is being touted as the cornerstone to farmer led efforts to increase agricultural productivity and improve food security<sup>99</sup>. A “re-greening” of much of southern Niger and many other parts of the West African Sahel has been well documented<sup>p</sup>. In just over two decades, the age old and destructive practice of clearing all trees and bushes from farmland has

#### **Reliance on millet monoculture**

Reliance on a single annual crop under Niger's environmental conditions is extremely risky. Conditions for growing millet have changed, so farming practices and crops also need to change. Yet the average Nigerien farmer is almost totally reliant on the success of the annual millet crop. According to the director of the Maradi Regional Agriculture Department, millet produces poor yields in two out of three growing seasons in Niger's agricultural zone. Food security will not be attained as long as annual crops such as millet remain the mainstay of agricultural production.

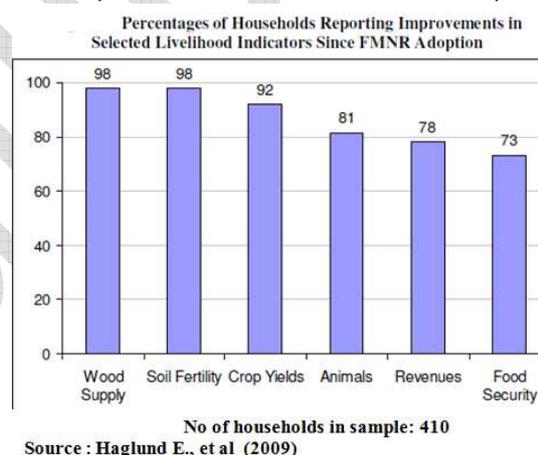
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<sup>p</sup> In addition to the sources such as the World Bank, and independent researchers cited in the endnotes, see also United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, World Bank, World Resources Institute. (2008). ***Turning back the desert. How farmers have transformed Niger's landscapes and livelihoods.*** (In World resources 2008: Roots of resilience - growing the wealth of the poor (pp. 142-150). Washington DC: World Resources Institute.) Retrieved September 25, 2008, from <http://www.wri.org/publication/world-resources-2008-roots-of-resilience>; and Chris Reij, Gray Tappan, and Melinda Smale . ***Millions Fed. Proven successes in agricultural development.*** Chapter 7 - Re-Greening the Sahel: Farmer-led innovation Burkina Faso and Niger <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/millions-fed>

been replaced agro-forestry, promoted by a farmer led movement called **Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR)**. In Niger, farmers in several densely populated regions protect and manage natural regeneration of trees and bushes on their farms<sup>100</sup>. The process began in 1985 and has led to on-farm re-greening of about 5 million hectares: the largest scale environmental transformation to date in the Sahel, and possibly in Africa. An informed writer on the environment, Mark Hertsgaard calls it "one of the great success stories in the field of climate change and agriculture" and "**the single largest environmental transformation in Africa**"<sup>101</sup>. Fifty percent of Niger's once treeless farmland has experienced reforestation rates unprecedented elsewhere in Africa.

Because of the practice of FMNR (protecting and growing trees on their own land), small scale farmers in Niger are producing an estimated additional 500,000 tons of cereals a year which helps feed about 2.5 million people<sup>102</sup>. The World Bank estimates the annual production value of the new trees is at least \$US 260 million, which flows directly back to farm families, either as cash or as produce<sup>103</sup>. In the region of Maradi in Niger alone, in 2008, a very conservative estimate is that 62,000 farm families practicing a full version of FMNR have generated an additional gross income of US\$17 - 23 million per year, contributing 900,000 to 1,000,000 new trees to the local environment<sup>104</sup>.

Many assessments indicate that in regions where FMNR has been practiced, degraded land has been restored, crop yields have increased and resilience to shocks has strengthened. Financial benefits through sale of tree products and increased grain and livestock production are estimated to be up to \$250 per hectare<sup>105</sup>. FMNR adoption appears to increase household gross income by between 22,805 and 27,950 FCFA (or about 46 and 56 USD) per capita, or by between 18 and 24 percent<sup>106</sup>. These results are consistent with the impressions of farmers themselves, strong majorities of whom report improvements, since FMNR adoption, in the availability of wood, soil fertility, crop yields, numbers of livestock, household revenues, and food security<sup>107</sup> (see graphic across).



According to advocates of FMNR, trees better withstand climatic variability than annual crops, and can be grown as an economically valuable 'crop' species. Once established, trees produce valuable products year after year, require minimal maintenance, and withstand drought. Having reliable income from sales of wood and other tree products enables farmers to buy food from other areas where rainfall is more reliable. The widespread adoption of FMNR is attributed to the fact that its benefits are obtainable at minimal costs to the farmer. There are no expenditures beyond additional labour<sup>108</sup>. For these reasons FMNR is considered by its proponents as a cost effective, easily adopted means of enhancing food security, and increasing resilience.

In addition to FMNR, World Vision Niger<sup>109</sup> has promoted a number of other agro-ecological innovations in its Area Development Programs (ADPs) to reduce risk and improve production. One is the Farmer Managed Agroforestry Farming System (FMAFS). World Vision describes this is an affordable, replicable approach to agricultural production which gives small holder farmers a framework for assembling a range of plants and animals to minimize risks and optimize production under adverse environmental conditions. FMAFS represents an "incremental gradation" of the FMNR technique described above into a more complex and diversified farming system, making multiple and integrated use of trees, crops and animals to enhance food security.

Complementary methods to reduce risk include: village Grain Banks, improved cowpea storage, dry season gardening, microcredit for women, and provision of improved seed. In the perspective of World Vision, this integrated approach has produced a striking example of the potential of a farmer led agro-ecological approach as described in the case study below.

### **World Vision Case Study<sup>110</sup> - Dan Saga in Aguié department of Niger**

Small scale farmers located in the Aguié Department of Niger recalled that their once heavily forested region had become nearly treeless by the 1980s. Sand dunes were beginning to form and crop productivity declined.

Through the adoption of Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) and with formation of 53 village committees, some 170 villages now sustainably manage their natural resource base. Over 130,000 hectares of farmland are now being managed under FMNR and once treeless fields are covered with 103 to 122 trees per hectare. A number of stakeholders including farmers, herders, men and women, researchers and Aguié Departmental and government services and International Fund for Agricultural Development project staff collaborate on these activities.

Starting in three pilot villages in 2001, the field work supported by World Vision focussed on local capacity building to enable communities, groups and individuals initiate and lead research and development activities. Various committees, inclusive of women, men and youth, village residents and sedentary Fulani herders, were formed to deal with specific tasks. Rules for management of FMNR have been established by environment sub committees in consultation with all stakeholders. The Land Tenure Commission, researchers, traditional chiefs and the new governance structures formed a partnership, supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development, for participatory research that takes needs identified by farmers themselves into account.

Increased productivity of the trees is reflected in an increase in both domestic consumption and sale of tree products. One bundle of firewood sells for around US\$ 6 and the annual per capita income to villagers from wood sales alone ranges between US\$ 46 and US\$ 92. This is a significant contribution to household budgets given that the average annual income in Niger is less than US\$ 200 per person. In 2005 when over one third of Niger's population suffered from severe hunger, the sale of firewood and non-timber tree products meant that many farm families avoided reliance on emergency relief.

With increased confidence in their committees and the dramatic increase in wood available for home use and sale, villagers established rural wood markets, to increase local control and reduce exploitation by middlemen. Illegal tree cutting, which was an enormous challenge and threatened the success of the project initially, has practically ceased in the whole area. As knowledge and confidence have grown, community members have progressively adopted new practices, and engaged in experimentation especially with early maturing new annual crops.

The establishment of firm rules and regulations on natural resource management (particularly trees) along with collaboration with the forestry department and a community based control system has resulted in enhanced and sustainable use of resources. Establishment of wood markets requiring membership and adherence to community endorsed regulations for wood harvesting has increased local incomes and helped reduce vulnerability to environmental shocks. This market helps people meet basic needs during the hunger months by providing income.

Source: World Vision (2008) Annexe 5 p.23-24

### **Assessing contribution of agro-ecological agriculture to food and nutrition security**

Rigorous analyses and peer reviewed articles document that FMNR has been widely adopted by small scale farmers in Maradi region of Niger. Impressive benefits, in terms of increased income, soil fertility, availability of wood products, food security have been documented. Yet in 2010, Maradi was the epicentre of a severe food and malnutrition crisis. Of the total of 330, 448 children treated for severe acute malnutrition in Niger, an astonishing 135,163 came from the Maradi Region.<sup>111</sup> As noted earlier in this report, HEA studies in the Tessaoua district, in Maradi, indicated that acute

malnutrition rates were much higher in poorer households that comprise about 30% of the population.

How can this information be interpreted? What are the tentative lessons to be drawn about the role of agro-ecology in mitigating food and nutrition insecurity in the Sahel?

No data is available to disaggregate household adoption of FMNR by wealth group in Maradi, or to assess to what extent the poorest and poor households have adopted FMNR. Even if these adoption rates were known, a second task would be to assess the magnitude of benefits (particularly in terms of income and food production). Were they sufficient to have a significant impact for the poorest households in reducing food insecurity and child malnutrition?

There are two hypotheses that can be suggested. The first is that few of poorest 30% of households were adopting and benefiting from FMNR. The second is that if there was wide scale adoption by the poorest households, the benefits were not significant enough to prevent severe coping strategies, and acute child malnutrition, during the 2010 food crisis. In either case, one lesson to be drawn, is that for programs whose primary objective is to improve food security, the promotion of agro-ecological agriculture with small scale farmers as a key strategy should systematically assess to what extent the most vulnerable (i.e. the poorest) households are adopting the methods, and if the benefits are adequate to help them escape from the vicious hunger cycle. Monitoring the impact of the agro-ecological system across wealth groups, and how it affects different types of household economies, and the relations between poorer and wealthier households would be essential.

Without such monitoring, there is a risk that agro-ecology may have the effect of helping mostly the middle and better off households, who are already relatively food secure, to become better off, widening the gap with poorer households. In the absence of accompanying measures to reduce barriers to adoption, agro-ecology may leave the poorer households as vulnerable as ever to hunger, (and their children to acute malnutrition), when the next shock comes.

Proponents of agro-ecological agriculture also note the potential benefits for improve nutrition. For example, in Niger, World Vision Australia highlights the great potential for the seeds of Australian acacia and leaves of moringa trees to transform agricultural systems build resilience and combat child malnutrition.<sup>112</sup> Research is being conducted on how to improve the nutrition in local diets at the village level by consumption of leaves or seeds of locally produced, drought resistant tree crops, and also by sale nutritional supplement products<sup>113</sup>. Here as well, if the aim is to reduce acute malnutrition, it would also be important to monitor if the poorest 30% of the households, where the risk is greatest, either adopt these new tree growing and nutritional practices or would have the purchasing power to buy the nutritional supplement packets.

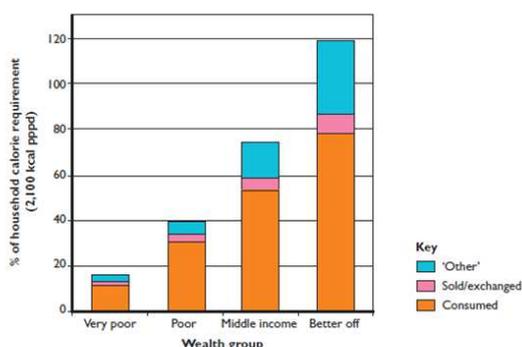
Agro-ecology is clearly the appropriate paradigm for agricultural production in Niger and for the Sahel. It is essential to increase farm production among small holder farmers while regenerating the natural resource base. However, more analysis is required to determine if agro-ecology can generate significant benefits, particularly in terms of income and production, for the poorest and most vulnerable households, and its role in preventing a future food crisis.

There is a tendency within the agro-ecology movement to consider all small scale farmers in a village as homogenous, and not give sufficient attention to major socio-economic differences and varied needs of households, social groups, and for gender. The graphic from the HEA studies in Maradi, below show how far the food crops produced by typical households in each wealth group meet their basic food requirements. Very poor households (about 30% of the population) produce on average

only 17% of their basic food needs. They must sell some of this food to repay debts and meet other obligations.

So even if agro-ecology enabled them to double, or triple their food production for their own consumption, they would still have to purchase at least 40% of their food from the market, from labour earnings. Governments and many international development agencies often still assume that the solution to food insecurity is to increase people’s food production for direct consumption. This reduces exposure to volatile market prices, and the need for poor households to purchase grain when prices rise in the lean season.

Production and use of cereals (millet, sorghum) and pulses (cowpea)

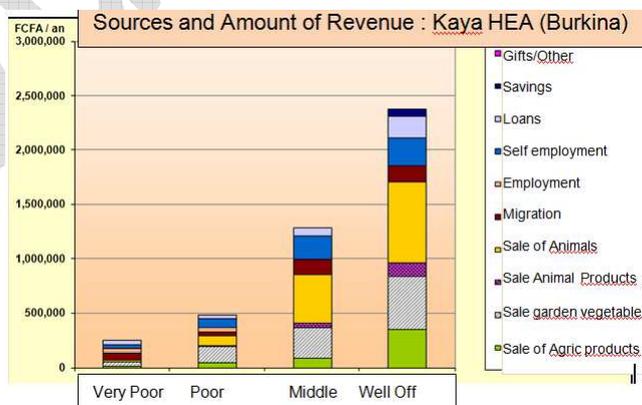


Source: Holt et al. (2009) Save the Children p.30

According to Julius Holt, and Sonya LeJeune (consultants to Save the Children who analysed the HEA data in Maradi), this focus on food self sufficiency needs to be challenged. On the basis of current average land-holdings of the very poor, which are less than 1 hectare in Maradi, and which are likely to reduce per capita in the medium term with continued population growth, ***no investment in agriculture is likely to help the poorest households become self-sufficient in food.***

Instead, if development assistance is targeted at primary production, the main aim should be to increase the cash income poor households– in other words, to increase the **cash value** of their labour on their own land. The World Vision case study above indicates that a shift away from millet monoculture, and the use of intensive agro-forestry systems, including sale of tree products, has potential to do this. However, given the clear limitations, helping poorer households achieve sustained increase in their wealth and livelihood security must also be directed to increase earnings for what they do off-farm.

The magnitude of the gap between better off and poorer households in Maradi, Niger may be unusual compared to other parts of the Sahel. However, HEA studies across the Sahel show the same trends. See across similar HEA from Kaya, Burkina Faso<sup>114</sup>. In Kaya, the very poor households, who are the majority, have far less income than the better off households, and produce less than 40% of their annual food requirements.



In summary, the evidence in Niger suggests that agro-ecological techniques such as agro-forestry, integration of livestock, soil and water conservation have potential as a way to strengthen resilience, increase income and improve food security, but significant limits for poorer households, (who often constitute a third of the population, depending on the context).

Agro-ecological agriculture, as a set of technical practices, is not sufficient to significantly reduce food and nutrition insecurity of the poorest households. It must be accompanied by complementary strategies to improve incomes, reduce risk, and prevent acute malnutrition, appropriate for each context. In addition, there is a need for policies of public support, including social protection, to address the basic structural causes of food insecurity, including price volatility in the markets.

## 2.4 Supporting Pastoralism

Pastoral areas where animal husbandry is the main source of both food and income were severely affected in 2010. Many animals became weak due to lack of adequate pastures and water. This considerably reduced milk availability, a major contributor to pastoralist households' diet. Due to the poor physical state of animals, the increase in distress sales drove down the price of livestock even as cereal prices were sharply rising. The drastic erosion in purchasing power increased food insecurity and malnutrition, and to severe coping strategies.

Réseau Billital Maroobé (RBM- a Network of Herders and Pastoralists in Africa) undertook an in-depth review of the response to the food crisis in the pastoral areas. The review team conducted extensive interviews with pastoral communities in Chad, Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso, and organised a synthetic workshop in January 2011. This report outlines the effects of the food crisis on livelihoods, the various coping strategies used, and the effectiveness of the response.<sup>115</sup>

RBM concludes that, as in 2005, not enough attention was paid to the pastoral dimension of the crisis by national structures response for preventing and managing food crises. The indicators of vulnerability for pastoral areas were poor. There were no coherent criteria for targeting assistance. The response in pastoral areas involved a small proportion of donor assistance. The response came too late. In pastoral areas, even households who anticipated the crisis by selling off their animals in time only benefited from a few additional weeks' worth of food. Lack of available information, refusal to declare an emergency, the greater complexity of intervention in pastoral areas, security constraints for international staff, and lower priority given to the pastoral zones, all were factors that contributed to a lack of a timely effective response in affected pastoral zones. Little was being done to restore livelihoods, through re-stocking programs. In short, many of the lessons of 2005 were not learned.

The result has been a further undermining the pastoral way of life in the Sahel. In western Chad, for example, recurrent drought and widespread animal mortality has made pastoralism decreasingly accessible for the rural poor. Prolonged droughts and underinvestment in the pastoral economy during the 1980s and 1990s have forced many to give up livestock breeding. Many poorer pastoralists increasingly rely on cultivation to compensate for a lack of income from herding. Agricultural production in the sahelian zone of Chad, however, is even more vulnerable to dry spells than pastoralism, since the option of mobility to access areas with more favourable rain fall is lost<sup>116</sup>.

Major reform of the aid system in support of pastoralism still needs to take place. However, since 2005, there is evidence of important changes that have started to strengthen the basis for progress.

**Change in Attitude:** For many years, policies and aid mechanisms for the pastoralist communities were based on an attitude that pastoralism was irrational and outdated. Pastoralism was seen to be environmentally damaging, backward, and unproductive. Efforts were made to "modernise" land tenure, privatize pasture land, establish ranches and settle pastoralists. In many pastoral settings, these interventions undermined traditional systems for managing water, pasture, and conflict, and weakened the central pillar of pastoralism: mobility<sup>117</sup>.

A considerable body of evidence make clear that pastoral livelihoods are superior in productivity to ranching<sup>118</sup> and are well-designed risk-management and adaptation strategies. This evidence has

started to shift this attitude. Data from Mali indicates that mobile herding obtains three times as much protein per hectare at a lower cost than modern ranching methods. In Niger, similar studies prove that sedentary forms of animal production are 20% less productive than mobile herding. Transhumant<sup>9</sup> or nomadic herding generates six times more total revenue than agriculture practiced in the same zones. Other evidence shows, compared to ranching, mobile forms of livestock raising also reduce risk, and have a better impact on the environment, since livestock are not concentrated for too long in one area.

Governments in the Sahel and donors are increasingly aware of the importance of livestock to the Gross National Production. Evidence the vital importance of mobility to increasing the productivity of the livestock production has shifted attitudes, and this is starting to be reflected in policies, laws, and the approach to aid.

One major manifestation to the acceptance of mobility is the increased attention given to pastoral wells. Since 2000, CARE has made long term investments in the Diffa region of Niger in pastoral wells as a means to contribute to consolidating a fragile peace (caused by conflict over resources), strengthen resilience, and improve food security through its GRN-PAIX (Natural Resource Management-Peace) program. Through its experience CARE has developed an effective model, including detailed guidelines of a highly consultative and deliberative process for establishing the site and management of new water sources, in conflict prone pastoral zones. The government of Niger is adapting this experience for creating national guidelines.<sup>119</sup>

#### **Pastoral Wells and Passages for Transhumance (experience of AFD-Chad)**

Mobility is the core of the pastoral livelihood system, and crucial to managing risk in a harsh and unpredictable environment. The movement of livestock according to water and pasture availability allows pastoral communities to utilise large areas of rangeland which lack permanent sources of water. Recognizing this, in Chad, the l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD) since the 1990's has invested 50 million Euros in Chad to strengthen the traditional mobile system of pastoralists, reduce their risk. This investment has contributed to the rehabilitation or construction of over 1000 water access points, and 500 kilometres of passage ways for transhumance. By creating or improving water points, pastoralists were able to make use of huge areas of under-utilised pasture areas, where the limiting factor was water. Learning from the lessons of past, AFD developed a very complex, strategic and consultative process to identify sites for water points. All stakeholders in an area, particularly traditional structures for managing water resources, and clan leaders, were involved. The role of local government authorities was to "officialise" locally made decisions. The programs involved far more than physical construction. Local structures were enabled to take responsibility for maintaining and managing the water points, and to arbitrate local conflicts. Unlike most aid projects, the funding and support cycle to ensure sustainability and long term impact was often 15 years (through renewal of 5 year programs). Evaluations indicate a significant increase in overall production and income for pastoralists, and lessening of risks (including that of sedentarisation and conflict).

**Source:** Jullien François (2006), « Nomadisme et transhumance, chronique d'une mort annoncée ou voie d'un développement porteur ? » Enjeux, défis et enseignements tirés de l'expérience des projets d'hydraulique pastorale au Tchad, *Afrique contemporaine*, 2006/1 no 217, p. 55-75. DOI : 10.3917/afco.217.75

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<sup>9</sup> Transhumance can be defined as "a system of animal production characterised by seasonal and cyclical migration of varying degrees between complementary ecological areas and supervised by a few people, with most of the group remaining sedentary". Transhumant herds usually move from areas that are difficult, unbalanced and changeable, such as the Sahel and agro-ecologically vulnerable zones. Transhumance is a way of adapting to these conditions and making use of ecological complementarities between the Sahel and Sudan regions. SWAC/OECD "The Future of Livestock in the Sahel and West Africa: Potentials and Challenges for Strengthening the Regional Market", available on [www.oecd.org/sah](http://www.oecd.org/sah)

Pastoral Codes (National Legislation): Another sign of a shift in thinking and attitude is the formulation of pastoral codes (laws or charters) passed in several countries that formally recognise pastoralism and provide a better institutional framework for the management of the rangelands. Many of these laws recognise the fundamental importance of mobility to the pastoral way of life. For example, Mali's pastoral charter devotes a whole chapter to it.<sup>120</sup>

#### **Revision of Niger's Pastoral Code**

The original code of 1993 sets a northern limit above which farming is not allowed, recognition of priority use rights for pastoralists and water points, and recognition of customary tenure. This text was prepared after a long participatory process involving all the pastoralist associations through a process of hundreds of workshops. The legislation passed with Ordinance 2010-029 on May 20, 2010. Fundamental points marking significant progress for pastoralists include:

Article 3: **Mobility** is a fundamental right of pastoralists, guaranteed by the State. Mobility is recognized as a rational and sustainable use of resources.

Article 5: The **appropriation of property for private use** within communal pastoral territory is forbidden if it restricts the mobility of pastoralists and their herds as well as their access to pasture and water resources.

Articles 17, 55 and 59: Gives **authority to local elected government (communes) for the management of public wells** and water sources used for animals, salt sites, and other local natural resources

Article 60: **Regulates the previously uncontrolled commercial harvesting of hay**, to the local government through its Land Commission. Export of hay is forbidden.

Article 25: **Ensures access of animals to surface water** (ponds, "mares") in cropping areas. Access paths become public property and obstructing them (i.e. with crops) is illegal.

Article 30: Ensures the **right of free movement of animals** in pasture areas and passage corridors during the rainy season

Article 34: Institutes a regulated decision making system for **opening or closing agricultural fields**, in order to enable integration of agriculture and livestock keeping through local consultation with farmers and land commission

Article 52: Provides **pastoralists rights over their fixed settlement sites** (terroirs d'attache"), and establishes due process for compensation if expropriated for public use (i.e. mining)

**Source:** Réseau National des Chambres d'Agriculture du Niger (RECA) Bulletin No 9, September 2010

While an important milestone, the main challenges are raising awareness and the application of the pastoral code. The previous code was not enforced. Herders are often required to compensate farmers for crop damage caused by their herds even beyond the set northern limit.<sup>121</sup>

**Increased attention given disaster risk-reduction approaches in pastoral areas:** A number of local NGOs and pastoral associations have done long term work with pastoral communities in disaster risk reduction. A good example is JEMED (*Jeunesse En Mission Entraide et Développement*) is a local a local organisation that supports pastoralists in the Abalak region in Niger. In June 2009, at the UN/ISDR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, JEMED was awarded the United National Sasakawa Prize for its DRR work.<sup>122</sup>

## Experience of JEMED in Niger

In its long term work, supported by Tearfund, JEMED has undertaken the following activities to help pastoral communities reduce risks caused by climate change, the spread of the desert, and increased population. These activities have been proven to increase resilience significantly.

**Fixation sites** : In danger of losing their whole way of life if they did nothing, JEMED has helped the Tuareg people decide on making changes and adjustments to their traditions in order to reduce risk and now and lose only some of their traditions, rather than do nothing and lose their whole way of life. Upon request, JEMED has been helping communities to establish 22 'fixation sites'. These fixation sites do not settle people permanently. Instead, they build upon a tradition that the Tuareg would spend part of each year camped in a particular place. They also enable communities to develop a social infrastructure and education, training, health and pasture management projects, while still keeping hold of their traditional pastoral ways.

**Wells**: Wells are very important to the fixation sites. JEMED has helped repair or dig over 30 wells so far. Once wells have water, a number of families are likely to take up residence at a fixation site.

**Grain Banks**: Food security has been improved at 18 sites by establishing grain banks. These reduce the cost of grain and make it more easily available. In some fixation sites, small shops have been established which sell basic household items (tea, sugar, matches).

**Rainwater dykes** : In 14 sites, JEMED has helped communities to conserve rainwater by building a low bank, bund or dyke of stones across a valley, usually about 120 metres in length. When the rains come, the stones slow the flowing streams, causing water to sink deeper into the soil. Behind the dykes, the water is retained.

**Fodder Banks**: Fodder is of huge importance to nomadic people whose livestock is often their only source of income. Nine enclosures have been built behind dykes to protect and improve pasture for livestock. Pasture management associations have been created at all sites. Loans to buy animals are available to both men and women at some sites along with a livestock vaccination programme.

**Early De-stocking when early warning signals increased risk**: In 2008, a flux of grazers came into the area from outside with their livestock, and pastures were quickly being used up. JEMED staff noted the warning signs and advised people to sell their livestock, keeping only the best breeding stock. This was unheard of for nomadic people – they had never done this in the past. However, many people did sell their animals in time. The men took the remaining livestock to other areas and managed to keep their animals alive. As a result, people in the fixation sites lost a third less livestock during the drought than others in neighbouring areas. An evaluation of the Emergency Fodder Response conducted by JEMED in 2009 provided further evidence that pastoralists who had been part of the DRR programme were significantly more able to withstand the pressure of another drought.

### Sources:

Woodke, Jeff. *The impact of climate change on nomadic people*

Niger DRR Consortium: (Aug 2010) *Niger Coordinated Disaster Risk Reduction Programme Phase2 Program Summary*, p4

Niger DRR Consortium (April 2009) *Atelier sur l'Apprentissage en matière de Résilience Avant-projet de Rapport de l'Atelier du 20-25 April p25-27*

In summary, despite the continued poor record of emergency response for pastoralism in 2010, there is evidence that an important shift in policies, and aid approach, to support pastoralism is occurring. Particularly in Niger, Burkina and Mali, this is buttressed, at community level, with the development of local associations, which provide services to local communities as well as advocating for greater responsibility from the state. At the national and sub-regional levels, membership-based pastoral associations, including AREN, and the network Bilitaal, have many thousands of subscribing members. They have growing potential to combining representative legitimacy with increased political clout to overcome the marginalization which has for so long affected pastoral communities in the Sahel.

## 2.5 Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction into Humanitarian Response and Development

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is the broad range of humanitarian and development action to reduce the risk posed by disasters to individuals and communities. It is *humanitarian* in that it helps to save lives, and *developmental* in increasing communities' resilience to hazards and shocks, as a prerequisite for sustainable development. In the Sahel, it is more sustainable and respects dignity if vulnerable groups can be enabled to identify and tackle the *risk* of a disaster rather than simply waiting for disaster to strike.

Food insecurity triggered by drought tends to be a slow onset, recurrent crisis in the Sahel, in urgent need of DRR strategies. Opportunities for action exist as the first early warning signs of widespread deteriorating livelihoods and nutrition become evident. Where food insecurity is linked to a recurrent hazard, such as drought, early action to mitigate the effects can be a highly cost effective investment for governments and donors to safeguard nutrition, livelihoods and assets of vulnerable households, by reducing the costs of emergency relief and recovery.

In the Sahel, a paradigm shift in disaster management theory and practice has started to gain momentum. An increasing number of international NGOs, with the support of key donors such as DFID, have started to “mainstream<sup>123</sup>” DRR into their operations. This has included integrating DRR in the project cycle, supporting preparedness, undertaking vulnerability analysis, enhancing disaster management capacity, and closer integration with the ongoing development processes. Food crises in the Sahel are now less seen as an extreme event created entirely by drought, and more as due to unresolved, but preventable problems of development and chronic vulnerability.

Since 2005, international NGOs working in the Sahel interviewed for this study made significant changes, related to strategy, structure, staffing, policies, funding, advocacy and coordination, in support of DRR. Progress in “planning for drought” and mainstreaming DRR, however, varied considerably, influenced by funding sources, size and structure of the organisation, and other factors. Changes made by two organisations in the Sahel can illustrate how mainstreaming DRR is taking place within the international NGO community.

Tearfund was an early leader in developing closer links between its humanitarian and development programming with its partners in the Sahel, through the adoption of DRR. Tearfund's strategy to reduce vulnerability involves increasing the capacity of local communities and organisations to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the effects of disasters. This strategy combines changes at community level with advocacy for changes in national and international policies and practices. In 2007, Tearfund and its Sahelian civil society partners (in Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali) commissioned the research report “*Prepare to Live*”<sup>124</sup> to better understand how communities achieve food security and to identify practical disaster risk reduction (DRR) approaches, (see figure 1 below).

Tearfund also commissioned a cost benefit analysis of its DFID funded DRR program (in an area with a high incidence of food insecurity and drought in Malawi) to analyse the benefits of resilience-building activities, and estimate the value of integrating a resilience-strengthening approach into development and humanitarian programmes. This study indicated that for every US\$1 invested, the project activities delivered US\$24 of net benefits for the communities to help them overcome food insecurity, while building their resilience to drought and erratic weather<sup>125</sup>.

FIGURE 1  
Possible interventions in the food insecurity cycle  
Adapted for the Sahel from *The Drought Cycle* (IIRR, Cordaid and Acacia Consultants)

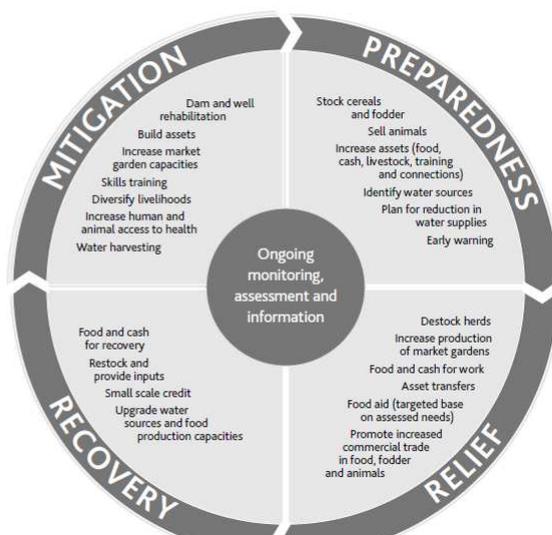


Figure 1 shows examples of activities to:

- mitigate against food insecurity by reinforcing capacities, assets and livelihoods
- prepare people for drought or flood with reserves, assets and coping mechanisms
- ensure that people survive a food crisis without losing too many assets
- ensure that people recover sufficiently from the food crisis so that they are less vulnerable to future hazards.

Source : Kelly C, Khinmaung J., (2007) *Prepare to live*, page 3

Christian Aid is another international NGO that made considerable progress in mainstreaming DRR in the Sahel after 2005. In the risk prone Sahel, Christian Aid considers that the benefits of its development programmes would be unsustainable without a disaster risk reduction component. Disasters can wipe out years of development work, waste resources, and keep people trapped in poverty. Christian Aid estimates that every £1 spent on disaster risk reduction can save £4 in emergency response costs<sup>126</sup>. In this perspective, from 2005 to 2010, Christian Aid undertook the “Building Disaster Resilient Communities (BRDC)” program with five local partners in Mali and Burkina Faso. Supported by DFID, the BRDC programme combined mitigation, livelihoods, policy and advocacy. It operated at three levels of intervention:

- community (awareness raising, pilot projects, community strengthening)
- partners (capacity-building plan, advocacy strategy)
- Christian Aid (links with climate change adaptation, accountability)

The initial needs assessments consisted of community analysis of their own vulnerabilities through Participatory Vulnerability Capacity Assessments (PVCAs). This focused on communities’ exposure to disaster and risk, and identified their available assets and capacities to mitigate them. PVCAs were effective not only in determining the choice of actions to take, but perhaps even more importantly of engendering local ownership by key stakeholders. Pilot projects selected through PVCAs were undertaken in each of the pilot villages.

Christian Aid gradually broadened the scope of DRR by placing a greater focus on governance, advocacy, climate change adaptation and livelihoods. DRR has become integral to Christian Aid’s livelihood frameworks (i.e. with a greater focus on strengthening local capacities) rather than emergency response and preparedness. Christian Aid has systematically undertaken capacity building of its own and partner staff to integrate DRR and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) into development programmes, as reflected in their country strategic plans.

Both Christian Aid and Tearfund were part of the DFID Disaster Risk Reduction inter-agency coordination group<sup>r</sup> which developed ‘*Characteristics of a Disaster Resilient Community*’- a resource

<sup>r</sup> Other members were Plan UK, Practical Action, ActionAid and British Red Cross/ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

guide<sup>127</sup>. This guide identifies what successful implementation of the Hyogo Framework of Action would look like at the community level, and developed key characteristics to enable tracking changes in the level of community resilience. Tearfund was influential in persuading DFID to provide multi-year funding on DRR for a consortium of NGO's in Niger<sup>5</sup>:

#### **Coordinated Disaster Risk Reduction Responses in Niger:**

In the aftermath of the 2005 food crisis, a group of NGOs in London applied to the Department for International Development (DFID) to support a collective approach to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) programming in Niger. This eventually led to the creation of the “Niger DRR Consortium<sup>a</sup>” of international and national NGOs to reduce chronic vulnerability. Phase 1 of the consortium programme aimed to sustainably improve the resilience of 14,000 vulnerable households in the Maradi and Tahoua regions to recurrent shocks, through introducing and strengthening of disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies. The programme also aimed at joint learning, identifying good practice, and building a solid evidence base upon which advocacy for a broader DRR initiatives could be built. In various communities, DRR strategies undertaken between 2007 and 2010 included:

- **distribution of seeds and fertiliser** direct to households or through seed fairs
- promotion of **Market gardening**, including improved water supply, to enable off-season production
- **rehabilitation and drilling of wells**
- **training and cash support** for women to undertake income generating activities
- **social reconstitution of Livestock** for more vulnerable families
- tree planting and **agro forestry**
- support of **Warrantage** (or inventory credit) to help producers to manage the risk of fluctuating cereal prices, to be able to sell at more favourable prices and receive credit during lean periods.
- establishment of **cereal banks** (similar to warrantage) to create community buffer stocks used so that collective grain can be sold at the best price and as insurance against lean periods
- provision of **cash transfers to extremely vulnerable households**
- **“Cash for Work”** for activities such as the construction of cereal banks, rehabilitation of degraded land, aimed to benefit the wider community
- Establishment of **Livestock Fodder Banks**
- **Land protection for small-scale pasture:** establishment of land committees to support efficient and sustainable communal management of land
- creation of **vaccination parks** to promote and improve animal health

Some activities were unique to one partner agency or another, while others – namely reconstitution of livestock and cereal banks – were common to three or four. Partners focused on the long-term reinforcement of fragile livelihoods and protection of vital productive assets, as well as better early warning and response to crises. In addition to working directly with pastoralist and agro-pastoralist households, the programme strengthened local community structures as well as links with local, regional and national government authorities.

Throughout the programme's intervention zone, particularly in pastoral areas, cereal banks were particularly well received. One herder in an area where MASNAT is working reported: *“Before cereal banks were set up, we had to travel 100 kilometres to the nearest market to buy cereals and food. Now we can collect provisions daily or weekly, depending on our need, and we pay a much better price. This means that we sell fewer animals to buy our cereals”*. The social reconstitution of livestock had a marked impact in improving the health, economic and social status of the poorest households. Cash transfer schemes enabled people, particularly women, to launch income generating activities and invest in natural capital (livestock) as insurance against future shocks. Many of the other activities listed above were linked to village savings and loans associations and to improved, decentralised technical and financial services.

Source: **DRR Consortium Niger (2010) FINAL REPORT Coordinated Disaster Risk Reduction Responses in Niger July 2007 to March 2010, submitted to DFID**

<sup>5</sup> The other members of the DRR-Niger consortium are CARE International (Consortium Lead), Action Against Hunger, Concern Worldwide, JEMED (supported by Tearfund) and MASNAT (supported by Relief International).

The reports of all these DRR related initiatives in the Sahel have several common elements:<sup>128</sup>

- **clear impact in enabling vulnerable people become more productive**, diversify, protect their assets, strengthen support networks, and reinforce local coping mechanisms.
- **evidence of strengthened resilience of targeted individuals, households and communities** to recurrent shocks. (A separate evaluation of the Emergency Fodder Response conducted by JEMED and MASNAT in 2009 provided evidence that pastoralists who had been part of the DRR programme were significantly more able to withstand the pressure of another drought) particularly due to a greater willingness for early destocking
- **higher level of community awareness** of the key principles and concepts of DRR, and strengthened collective capacity to take action
- **strengthened capacity of local partners for DRR** through learning new practical concepts, skills and tools in applying disaster reduction principles

Despite these positive benefits on individual families, **overall levels of vulnerability remained high; most vulnerable families were not yet at a point of surplus** and would not be able to face a significant drought in the without further support. A significant reduction in the impact of extreme hazards would take much longer than the project periods to build capacities and establish workable local systems in each context.

The **ability to resist another crisis was felt to be low** over most projects because in three or four years, people had not been able to build up physical assets, knowledge, skills and networks. (In the Tearfund evaluation, beneficiaries asked in early 2009 if they were in a position to face another crisis like 2005 without outside help, declared that they were not.

For some DRR strategies, it was **not clear that participating households and communities could sustain DRR activities** and benefits without continuing external support. In one evaluation, grain banks, while popular, were the most at risk of not being sustainable in part due to unpredictable market conditions but also management problems. Low repayment rates for credit schemes for women was another concern

**Advocacy efforts had limited impact to influence governments** at the national level to make DRR a stronger priority in preventing food crises; in Niger, the consortium had little or no engagement with the National DRR platform. Some partners undertook their own advocacy initiatives. However, by 2010, the Consortium had not yet developed a strong collective voice at national level, and made no progress in achieving the first priority of the Hyogo Framework for Action<sup>a</sup>, which is to establish DRR as an institutional priority at local and national levels.

For at least two initiatives, **a strong focus on individual DRR activities inhibited development of coherent indicators to track and assess overall impact in terms of reduction of risk**, and an increase of resilience for vulnerable households and the wider community.

The reviews of DRR programmes in Mali, Burkina and Niger strongly indicate that success in strengthening sustainable livelihoods required a longer-term engagement with communities to achieve the goal of significantly increased resilience, far beyond a normal three or even 5 year project cycle<sup>129</sup>. One report proposed that a ten year time frame is required to build social and physical capital, as well as organisational capacity in communities, to effectively resist hazards.

NGO experience since 2005 demonstrated that humanitarian and development programmes with a DRR perspective can deliver significant benefits for vulnerable households. However, progress towards reducing risk of food insecurity, requires strong DRR policy frameworks at a national level, coordinated across government ministries, coupled with decentralisation of budgets and decision-making to district and local levels, as well as more effective partnerships between the government and civil society.

Finally, it is not clear that the poorest households, who are most vulnerable have benefited from DRR related initiatives. Few DRR reports indicate specific targeting or monitoring of results in terms of increased resilience by wealth groups at the local level. Economic or other barriers could be preventing the involvement of poorer households in activities such as cereal banks. Complementary initiatives to DRR, perhaps involving cash transfers, may be necessary to ensure resilience is strengthened for the poorest households.

## 2.6 Community based Early Warning and Response System

A fundamental weakness of most EWS in the Sahel is the lack of involvement of communities, and local governments. The national level EWS generally obtain much of their data from the various technical services based in the districts, which is transmitted to the national level. Very little or none of the information (for example about probable weather conditions, prices, likely food shortages) is transmitted back to communities for them to act on. Aside their own local coping strategies, villages are often only the passive recipients of food aid when a crisis occurs.

Another major problem with the national EWS is that its data does not take into account the village level in determining the level of vulnerability. Data collection for assessing vulnerability is conducted through a sampling of villages selected in the various districts in the country. The average vulnerability score given to that group of villages in each district is then used for all of the villages in that district. This methodology masked great disparities in the food security situation that often occur between villages within the same district, commune, or agro-ecological zone.

After the 2005 food crisis, CARE-Niger, recognizing these weaknesses in the Early Warning System (EWS) undertook the “APCAN” project, with support of the European Union. The aim of APCAN was to improve and decentralise the operation of the DNP-GCA (National Prevention and Management of Food Crisis) by creating a capacity for EWS at the community and district levels.

### a) Community Level (Community based Early Warning and Response- SCAP-RU)

Building on an earlier pilot project, APCAN was an operational research project in three districts that lasted from 2006 to 2009. With the support of CRESA (a research institute at the Niamey University) and AGRHYMET (a CILSS related agency), the APCAN tested and adapted an approach to create community based structures called SCAP-RU with the capacity to prevent and manage disasters which might affect all, or some of the households in the village. Relying on their endogenous knowledge, villagers decided what their local indicators for early warning would be (i.e. animal migrations, drying of water sources, etc.), and collected this information themselves. The local EWS information often proved just as reliable as more sophisticated systems.

CARE Niger learned that 6 key conditions often determine the degree of effectiveness of a SCAP-RU/community's local response to a crisis or a disaster alert<sup>130</sup>. These conditions are:

1. The community's access to information and its ability to produce information itself (awareness of the necessity of such a system, identification of the indicators, defining the different warning levels and various types of responses, regular data collection and analysis, adequate use of information so as to inform the response and to minimize or mitigate the expected impact of the crisis)
2. Defining a range of actions to be implemented, depending on the type of potential crisis and the warning level.
3. Establishing institutional alliances and relationships at every possible level – village-level, departmental, regional, national and international.

4. Building the necessary capacities at the community level (internally) and at external levels for optimal implementation of the response.
5. Developing a strong linkage with the actors in the government's formal EWS through information exchanges.
6. Identifying as many types of potential crises as possible and taking appropriate and timely measures at the community level.

To be effective the SCAP-RU facilitates intra-community discussion for analyzing the data collected and for making decisions on mitigation measures. Representatives of several villages may also come together for Inter-community coordination and to link with field agents and district level structures. CARE Niger and its partners have developed a guide in 2009 that describes the many steps to establishing a SCAP-RU, its objectives and mandate, the training of its members, information management, tools for developing local indicators for Early Warning, and operations.<sup>131</sup>

#### **b) Local Level: (Observatories for Monitoring Vulnerability OSV)**

At the local (commune) level, APCAN strengthens the capacity of the mayor and his council to implement a methodology for monitoring vulnerability including information from the village level SCAP-RU. To achieve this, APCAN have helped establish OSV (Observatories for Monitoring Vulnerability) in each commune of the program area, managed by the mayor and the council. These are new structures, and are designed to further decentralise the DNP-GCA from the regional and district levels to the community level. The role of the OSV is to:<sup>132</sup>

- gather, analyse and share local information about food and nutrition insecurity
- undertake research to understand the root causes of vulnerability in the local context
- identify the villages at high risk
- identify the most vulnerable groups in the district, and target the households most affected by food insecurity in the villages.
- Communicate relevant data, including from the SCAP-RU, up to the national levels
- Identify appropriate and effective actions suitable for the local context to mitigate the effects of food insecurity
- strengthen the capacity of local actors, particularly within the villages, in taking action to prevent and manage food crises, (rather than waiting assistance from the national level).
- Develop over the medium and long term a reference data base and systems to guide food security programs
- Analyse the impact of emergency actions and food security programs
- Manage commune level grain buffer stocks.

Finally, through APCAN, CARE strengthened not only the capacities not only of the SCAP-RUs and OSVs, but also of the relevant government technical services in the area and local NGO partners, in order to ensure the sustainability of the SCAP-RUs and OSVs, and the linkage with the national EWS. This capacity strengthening involved setting up community-based early warning and emergency response committees; identifying, analysing and reporting on data obtained by the OSVs and SCAP-RUs; methods for supporting various local initiatives (cereal banks, buffer stocks) to mitigate risks, and addressing the crucial issue of accountability of commune-level structures.

The SCAP-RU represents an innovative approach of valorising a very neglected resource in the efforts to prevent and manage food crises and other disasters: the knowledge, capacity and creativity of the rural communities themselves. While an end of project evaluation indicated the need for continued capacity building at all levels, and issues with sustainability, the APCAN project was seen by all stakeholders as a significant success. The DNP-GCA is taking steps to extend the SCAP-RU and OSV concepts to other communes.<sup>133</sup>

## 2.7 Cash Transfer Programming

There is a growing recognition in the humanitarian sector that cash and voucher transfers can be an appropriate and effective tool to support populations affected by disasters in a way that maintains dignity and choice for beneficiaries while stimulating local economies and markets. Cash is increasingly being used as a complement or alternative to a range of in-kind assistance. Transfers are often targeted at the poorest households and the most vulnerable groups of the population. The field of cash transfers encompasses a diversity of transfer types (e.g. conditional and unconditional cash transfers); development objectives; design and implementation choices; and financing options.

Since 2004, the perception of cash-based transfers in humanitarian relief shifted dramatically – from ‘radical and risky’ to a mainstream programming approach<sup>134</sup>. Cash-based programming was not new. However, despite longstanding theory and positive field evidence, its application was limited for many years. A convergence of factors caused the potential role of cash based programming to become freshly articulated within the framework of humanitarian assistance. One factor was the longstanding and widespread dissatisfaction and critique of the large-scale distribution of food – and in-kind goods in general – as a default response during humanitarian crises. While it doubtless saves many lives, it is also perceived to have been over-used, irrespective of need and context<sup>135</sup>. In the Sahel, after 2005, another factor was the growing awareness that food insecurity was caused not so much by inadequate food supply but by inadequate purchasing power.

Cash transfers quickly became one of the more thoroughly researched forms of humanitarian and development intervention. There is now a well developed base of evidence indicates that individuals and households can be trusted and empowered to make effective use of cash transfers to enable them to improve their livelihoods<sup>136</sup>. Modest, but regular and reliable flows of income from cash transfers have been shown to help households sustain spending on food in lean periods, without the need to sell assets or take on debt.

The information needed to decide whether cash transfer or in-kind assistance is the best approach is increasingly included in standard needs assessments for humanitarian assistance. According to Paul Harvey, two broad sets of information are needed in order to determine the appropriateness of cash or vouchers compared to in-kind alternatives. The first relates to the need to understand people’s livelihoods and how local economies and markets work. This includes the question of whether goods and services that people need are available locally, and if markets are able to respond to an increased demand for commodities. The second set relates to whether a cash or voucher response can be practically implemented. This includes questions about delivery mechanisms, security, agency capacity, beneficiary preferences, host government policies and the gender specific risks associated with different transfer modalities<sup>137</sup>.

### Why did cash based programming take so long to become mainstream practice?

- Pilot experiences had not been documented extensively before 2004-05, and NGOs or other agencies were then reluctant to implement something unfamiliar to them.
- Cash has long been believed to be associated with higher risks than in-kind distributions.
- Victims of shocks or vulnerable households were considered unable to spend cash wisely. Agencies feared the loss of control implied by distributing cash rather than in-kind items.
- Cash interventions have not always been supported by donors or by governments. In-kind distributions were also a way to dispose of the Western food surpluses, which are now much less sizeable.
- Food insecurity has long been associated with a lack of availability of food rather than accessibility (inadequate purchasing power).
- Giving food and/or other items is the normal reaction to a sudden-onset disaster and such ways of thinking and working have been carried over into other situations (e.g. protracted crises).

Source: ACF 2007? Implementing Cash-based

The use of cash, as opposed to ‘in kind’ assistance, however, remains a relatively new approach. Many aid agencies are at the early stages of developing guidelines,<sup>138</sup> policies and organisational capacity to implement cash projects. In Niger, to facilitate and accelerate this process, a number of NGOs have formed a Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP), which promotes knowledge-sharing, learning and capacity building.

#### **Cash Learning Partnership CaLP in Niger**

CaLP, aims to improve the quality of cash and voucher transfer programming across the humanitarian sector by influencing and interacting with key stakeholders through capacity building, evidence based research and communication of good practices and lessons learned. It is supported by ECHO (European Commission - Humanitarian Aid)

- The total number of families served with cash or vouchers in Niger in 2010 exceeds 165,000, or over 1 million people (7% of the population).
- Cash and voucher programming in response to the evolving crisis was made possible by sustained functioning of regional markets and commercial importation of surplus food from non-drought affected regions elsewhere in West Africa.
- Approximately 15 different agencies used cash/ vouchers in response to the food and nutrition crisis which represents a rapid and exponential growth in cash operations.

**Source:** CaLP website

In addition to the international NGOs, several UN agencies are also expanding cash based programming as an option in their work. By including cash based programming in its strategic plan for 2008–2011, World Food Programme (WFP) noted that it was making “a historical shift from WFP as a food aid agency to WFP as a food assistance agency”<sup>139</sup>. In June 2010, UNICEF launched its first ever emergency cash transfer activity in Niger, to protect its blanket feeding programme.<sup>140</sup>

To support its emergency response in Niger in 2010, Concern Worldwide decided to pilot the use of mobile phones to transfer cash. This built on its earlier experience in Kenya, when Concern Worldwide used mobile phones to provide emergency support to all affected households in Eldoret, Kenya, during the post election violence.<sup>141</sup>

#### **Concern Worldwide: Mobile technologies for cash distribution**

During the 2010 food crisis in Niger, Concern World Wide decided to transfer cash using mobile telephones to 9,000 women in 116 separate remote villages, as part of a wider scale emergency response. There were formidable challenges. Most of the targeted women were illiterate, with no numeracy skills. There was limited access to electricity. Signal coverage was sporadic. Concern purchased phones, sourcing new, very low-cost models. They also produced visual picture-based teaching tools and mobilised education teams to over a hundred villages. These teams taught women to recognise letters and numbers, to send and receive text messages, and learn the codes the need to receive for cash. Concern also gave groups of women solar-powered chargers.

To participate in the programme, each woman needed a photo identification card to sign a phone contract. This would decrease fraud, increase accountability and allow third parties to verify recipients’ identity. To produce these identification cards, Concern’s education teams, each with a laptop and a webcam went to each of villages. Once having their cards, the women were able to to get their cash at authorised points. Using the mobile technology, Concern tracked the participants across not only their cash programmes, but also their nutrition programmes. This facilitated Concern’s research into the effectiveness of cash interventions in food crises and their impact on malnutrition rates.

#### **Sources:**

CONCERN Worldwide (July 2010) Setting up a mobile phone programme in [Concern Blog](#) Posted by [Naoise Kavanagh](#)

Save the Children UK undertook a well documented and influential study of its cash transfer programme in Niger:

#### **Save the Children UK: Evaluation of a cash transfer program in Niger in 2008**

In 2008, global food price rises and economic problems in neighbouring northern Nigeria (leading to price rises of staple foods) put great pressure on the purchasing power of the poorest households in southern Niger. The price of millet was about 20% higher than the average for the last five years. SCUK was concerned this was contributing to the rising number of malnourished children in the area.

In response, SCUK, together with local partners, undertook a pilot project to give cash transfers to 1,500 of the poorest households in Tessaoua district, Maradi region, Niger, a region declared as highly vulnerable by the government. (The project was funded ECHO). A total of 60,000 CFA francs (about \$120), split into three distributions, was given women in each of the targeted household during the 'hunger gap'. Households benefiting from the project were required to take part in awareness sessions on malnutrition and other public health activities. To assess the impact, 100 households were monitored using the HEA methodology at three key points: before the project started (baseline), a month after the first cash distribution (at the peak of the hunger gap), and a month after the third distribution (evaluation). Monitoring included assessing nutritional status of children under five, before the project and after each distribution.

**Results:** Generally, the cash was spent on buying food: millet (the staple), and also other products available locally. During the hunger gap, nutritious food items (mainly milk, cowpeas, groundnut oil, cowpeas and meat) were the second biggest item of expenditure for beneficiary households. After receiving the cash transfer, many beneficiary households gave up or reduced their reliance on certain sources of income. These tended to be sources of income obtained from coping mechanisms – such as credit, migration, or sale of animals, hiring themselves out to wealthier families. Households also chose to spend more time in their own fields. This, combined with good rainfall, resulted in a significant increase in their agricultural production (as declared by the participating households themselves). Compared with what they would produce in a typical year, participating households produced the equivalent of two more months' worth of millet – i.e., 50% more than they produced before.

The cash transfers considerably decreased, and even removed, the need for households to resort to these damaging distress strategies. For instance, 10% of households had to mortgage their land, and 7% had to sell their land in the three months prior to the project. Only 1% of households mortgaged their land, and none had to sell land, during the timeframe of the cash transfer programme. Similarly, households' levels of debt decreased. The cash transfer also enabled 21% of beneficiary households to restart income-generating activities such as small-scale trade, selling cooked meals, butchery, and making and selling oil. These were activities beneficiary households did before, but stopped because of a lack of capital.

Since benefiting households were less desperate to earn money – and worked their own fields, there was a drop in competition for paid work. This pushed up the local wage rate. As a result, other poor people in the community, who did not receive cash transfers, benefited from higher daily wages, which sometimes rose from 650 to 1,000 CFA francs a day. Although the diet and initial nutritional status improved, during the rainy season, their health deteriorated as the prevalence of malaria and diarrhoeal diseases increased. These data suggest that the cash transfers led to a decrease in the number of children who were acutely malnourished, but only to a certain extent. The evidence suggest that in this context, cash transfers need to be complemented by interventions such as disease prevention and micronutrient supplements, to achieve better protection of children's nutritional status.

This pilot project provided further evidence that targeted cash transfers can be an efficient response to food insecurity by prevention a deterioration of their livelihoods status in the event of price rises and a food crisis, as long as food is available at local markets. Their ability to use the cash transfer to diversify the family diet, and intensify their own livelihoods was a major advantage of cash over food aid, and over cash for work, which provides some employment and income, but might actually prevent poorer households from investing in rebuilding their own livelihoods. The pilot programme further suggests that lack of income may be the major bottleneck to economic development for the poorest groups, in the same way that lack of cash restricts access to a more diverse diet. However, all these gains could be reversed when the next food crisis occurs.

**Source :** Save the Children UK (2009) How cash transfers can improve the nutrition of the poorest children Evaluation of a pilot safety net project in southern Niger

This growing evidence on how cash transfers can be an effective tool in responding to food crises, and also address the structural factors underlying vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity, has generated considerable interest by both development and humanitarian actors in the Sahel.

The emerging lessons are that ***for the poorest populations to build a long term and sustainable resilience to face shocks, and to lift themselves out of the hunger cycle, regular and predictable cash transfer support can play a vital role.*** At the same time, the evidence shows that cash transfers clearly are not a panacea. They require complementary measures (such as appropriate agricultural and rural development policies, malaria and diarrhoea control, control of high levels of price volatility) to be in place, and appropriately funded.

Research by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) indicate that issues such as affordability, sustainability of funding, administrative capacity, targeting and conditionality, preconditions and sequences, and political will by governments to institutionalise cash transfers are major challenges.<sup>142</sup> Overall, however, it has become clear that cash transfer programming has a major potential role in helping bridge the divide between humanitarian and development action in the context of the Sahel.

## 2.8 Social Protection

Social protection in the Sahel has conventionally been dominated by humanitarian relief and food based “safety nets”. Safety nets are put in place to prevent individuals from falling below a given standard of living, and are usually short-term emergency measures. Typically in the Sahel, safety nets consist of public action taken by government, supported by donors and NGOs, in response to a level of deprivation deemed socially unacceptable.<sup>143</sup> It often takes the form of providing assistance (primarily food aid) to support people that fall chronically or temporarily below a threshold of food insecurity, or who are affected by other shocks. Safety nets were also advocated as responses to financial crises and adjustment.<sup>144</sup>

Social protection thinking developed mostly as a result of the poor record of safety nets to fully reach intended target groups, and to be set in place fast enough to prevent a crisis. Social protection is long term support for households to reduce, prevent and overcome hazards which adversely affect livelihoods. This represents progress in terms of growing recognition that everyone should be entitled to some form of assistance to help meet basic needs, including the “Right to Food”. Social protection implies the ***right*** to be protected and the responsibility of the State to fulfil this right.

A broad concept of social protection includes a range of measures (not just cash, but insurance etc.) that can be taken to protect people and their livelihoods. It has been seen primarily as a way in which individuals’ or households’ ***resilience*** to adverse events can be strengthened by reducing vulnerability. On the other hand, pro-poor economic growth is considered the long term, sustainable approach to ***reducing poverty***.

There is growing evidence that social protection measures can do both: be livelihood promoting /poverty reducing, and help reduce risk and vulnerability. Given the very close linkages between structural and transitory food insecurity in the Sahel, there is increasing interest in exploring public interventions that can achieve positive synergy between social protection and pro-poor economic growth, by supporting people through short term crises while also reducing their long term vulnerability in a comprehensive and systematic way.<sup>145</sup>

Social protection has moved rapidly up the policy agenda in Africa in recent years, driven by a combination of deepening food insecurity and vulnerability. The driving force is the recognition that a growing proportion of households are chronically food insecure, and becoming increasingly vulnerable for structural reasons. Such households are unable to get out of a vicious downward spiral of debt and loss of assets. Interest has developed because of a growing sense that conventional 'development' interventions are not succeeding in reducing poverty.

Some donors and governments have also become impatient with decades of recurrent humanitarian crises and appeals for aid which have not reduced levels of food and nutrition insecurity. This has helped foster a growing shift away from 'emergency food aid' towards 'predictable cash transfers', which has become the main instrument of the rising social protection agenda.

The social protection debate has been much slower to start in the Sahel than elsewhere. There still seems to be little political will to engage seriously with social protection at this time.<sup>146</sup> Most governments in the Sahel continue to have strong reservations about introducing social protection mechanisms, fearing their cost, the administrative complexity of delivery, and possible negative impacts on beneficiaries ('dependency' on grants rather than self-reliance, and the erosion of informal community support mechanisms).

In addition, the cash transfer agenda is often perceived as donor driven. Governments often argue it is better to invest their very limited budgets in productive, growth promoting sectors (agriculture, industry, infrastructure, trade), and also in health, water supply and education, rather than social assistance. Social cash transfers, especially to economically inactive population groups has been, until quite recently, regarded as unaffordable, given existing budgetary commitments of governments, and not the best use of resources.<sup>147</sup>

**These perceptions are starting to change.** There is growing evidence that social protection interventions, if managed well, can make a link between social assistance and development objectives such as pro-poor economic growth and poverty reduction and other MDG goals. There is evidence that a social protection approach can make a strong contribution, (alongside other approaches), both towards preventing the slide into poverty after a food crisis, and supporting long-term efforts to assist chronically poor people and their children to escape poverty.<sup>148</sup>

Social protection can also be an effective tool to enable vulnerable households to recover from shocks, and increase resilience. The effort required to help poor people recover from a food crisis, or another shock, has often been underestimated. Poor people have great difficulty to recover largely through their own efforts, especially when shocks occur with increasing frequency. There is often a presumption that risk prevention, mitigation and coping strategies will be enough to enable poor households to 'bounce back' quickly, to where they were before, or even a better place.<sup>149</sup>

This is not often the case. In the Sahel, recurrent food crises are increasing the number of chronically vulnerable households, and are sinking already food insecure households deeper into poverty. Recovery and new opportunities often require access to scarce resources. In the Sahel, the recent work of the Household Economy Assessments<sup>150</sup> indicates that process of recovery needs to be carefully scrutinized for the poorest households, rather than assumed to have been achieved with by returning rains and conventional development activities that may not be accessible. There is a substantial *risk of non-recovery of key assets* for the poorest households. This risk must be addressed.

An important role for social protection measures, therefore, is to enable a more complete recovery by extending and systematising humanitarian approaches to recovery, and by linking protection with risk reduction and livelihood promotion, so that assets can be more safely accumulated over time and vulnerability reduced.<sup>151</sup>

Social protection also has potential to help vulnerable households both withstand short-term livelihood threats, and facilitate long-term adaptation to climate change. Vulnerable households do not have sufficient capacities and resources in order to adapt to or cope with climate change on their own. Droughts in the Sahel frequently force poor families to sell off productive assets such as livestock, reduce food intake, and depend on less expensive but less nutritious foods. Each of these actions has immediate and long term effects on the physical and mental development of children. Such considerations are increasingly being included in the design of more climate resilient forms<sup>t</sup> of social protection in terms of response (e.g. cash transfers), compensation (e.g. crop insurance) and adaptation (e.g. crop diversification).

Members of the African Union have taken note of rapidly accumulating evidence of the positive impact of social protection, in the form of cash transfers. Evaluations in Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, South Africa and Zambia all confirmed that cash transfers are used mainly for meeting basic needs (food, groceries, health) but also for investment (education, agriculture, business), as well as asset protection and, to a limited extent, asset accumulation. In contrast to food aid, cash transfers stimulate production, trade and markets.

In March 2006, the Government of the Republic of Zambia co-hosted with African Union an intergovernmental conference on social protection from 21 – 23rd March 2006 in Livingstone<sup>152</sup>. The event brought together ministers and senior representatives from 13 African countries together with Brazil, development partners, UN agencies and NGOs. The conference discussed measures for protecting the poorest in Africa, in line with the social policy of the African Union.

The World Bank, for its own reasons, has also been a strong promoter of social protection approach. It has developed its Social Risk Management (SRM) framework, which focuses on preventing, mitigating and coping with risks and shocks, but which also aspires to provide pathways out of poverty<sup>153</sup>. The world food price crisis of 2007-08 convinced the World Bank that social protection belongs to a broader reform agenda. The World Bank favours safety nets, and in particular cash transfers, as the priority option to respond to high food prices because it minimizes market distortion and other methods of public intervention.<sup>154</sup>

**Social Protection: A Transformative Agenda  
The Livingstone Call for Action**

The conference delegates noted that “Considerable evidence exists that social transfers have played a key role in reducing poverty and promoting growth... when complemented with other social services... Addressing generalised insecurity and inequality through social protection is proven to be an integral part of the growth agenda...The provision of cash directly to poor people enhances economic growth. Transfers are used for both investment and consumption...The provision of transfers increases human capital by helping people to keep healthy, to educate their children, and supports HIV/AIDS affected families...Transfers can stimulate local markets, benefiting the whole communities.

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<sup>t</sup> Researchers at the Institute of Development Studies have developed an 'adaptive social protection' framework to help identify opportunities for social protection to enhance adaptation, and for social protection programmes to be made more climate-resilient.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has done extensive modelling to demonstrate that social protection and social security schemes do not retard economic growth but are actually associated with higher rates of growth over time in Africa, and help promote access to education, health care, and even enhancing gender equality<sup>155</sup>.

In light of this growing evidence, a growing number of African countries have undertaken social transfer pilot projects to provide social assistance to poor and vulnerable families. Most of these projects are financed by bilateral or multilateral donor agencies, and are implemented by international NGOs, sometimes with government involvement, but often 'off budget' – outside of government structures and programmes. Social protection in Africa is strongly characterised by 'social cash transfers', delivered unconditionally but sometimes with a labour requirement (cash-for-work).<sup>156</sup>

Within the Sahel, Niger is one of the first to undertake such a pilot social transfer project. Niger decided to establish this programme because it had realised, in the wake of 2005 food crisis, the limits and costs of a succession of humanitarian response. It is important to improve prevention by attacking the root causes of vulnerability and to promote the livelihoods of poorer households. In this framework, the Niger government approached the World Bank to finance four studies to assess the feasibility and modalities for institutionalising a permanent cash transfer programme of 10.000 CFA a month directly to chronically poor households.<sup>157</sup>

It is relevant to note that this innovative program was designed to build on the lessons and successes of WFP, CARE International, Save the Children, Concern Worldwide and the Red Cross in undertaking small scale programmes to transfer cash "most often during the lean season" in many regions of the country "with interesting results". A key aspect of this initiative in Niger is that it is government managed, and includes a strong learning component, to develop and adapt a model of social transfer based on the national context.

This is significant because this approach may show how to effect the transition from initially donor-funded, NGO-implemented delivery model to an institutionalised, permanent, government-run programme. A major limitation to cash based (as opposed to other mechanisms social protection programmes is that they are highly susceptible to price inflation, which often is a key factor in food crises. This greatly undermines the purchasing power of recipients of the cash. The very high cereal prices in Niger in 2010, and the recent surge in global grain prices demonstrate this risk. ***The lesson to be learned is that social protection must also be accompanied by appropriate measures to regulate markets and control food prices.***

**Government of Niger (Social Protection Pilot Project)  
Projet Pilote des Filets Sociaux par le Cash Transfert  
(PPFS-CT)**

Pilot project for social protection by cash transfer and accompanying measures supporting food security of 2,500 vulnerable households for 18 months at 10.000 a month in 8 communes of the regions of Tillabéry and Tahoua.

**Aims and Objectives:**

- improve in a significant way the well being and food consumption of chronically poor households using non conditional cash transfer.
- facilitate investment in productive and human development by cash transfer and accompanying support to benefiting households
- test, document and learn from a programme of non conditional cash transfer, particularly in terms of developing a transparent and consultative methodology for targeting the poorest households, and to effectively ensure distribution of cash to 2500 households.

For follow up support, the programme is providing awareness raising and education on nutrition, hygiene, diversification of income generation activities, tailored to each context.

**Specific indicators for success include:**

- Improved food consumption and nutrition
- Reduced vulnerability to shocks through strengthened livelihoods
- Investment in productive assets, diversify income sources, and in human development (health, education and nutrition)

Because donor-supported cash transfer pilot projects attract substantial amounts of financial resources, and because their small scale allows for intensive interactions with recipient households and communities, evaluations are often positive. There is still strong debate about how such projects can eventually become sustainable, and how to scale up coverage from the local (e.g. district) to the national level – given the magnitude of the need in Sahelian countries.

Despite these challenges, the pathway to resilience<sup>u</sup> in the Sahel requires social protection. International NGOs, donors, and one government in the Sahel have started adapting this as a means to better attack the root causes of chronic food and nutrition insecurity.

## 2.9 Multi-stakeholder Overview of Lessons Learned/Positive Changes since 2005

Most of the main changes and lessons learned since 2005 selected for in-depth analysis in this report emerged from numerous interviews, as well as the perspectives obtained at workshops held in Niamey and N’Djaména. The participants at these workshops represented a cross section of actors from international and national NGOs, University, UN agencies and the government. The tables below summarise the discussions in each country.

Lessons Learned/Positive Changes since 2005		
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
Better integration of humanitarian assistance and social protection with long term development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening of <b>staff capacity in humanitarian</b> norms and procedures</li> <li>• Pilot projects on <b>cash based social protection</b>; Inclusion of a cash based social protection capacity in the National Agency for Prevention and Management of Food Crises (DNP-GCA)</li> <li>• Establishment of <b>community based Early Warning and Emergency response</b> structures (SCAP-RU) linked with national system</li> <li>• Establishment of Commune (district) level structures “ <b>Observatories for Monitoring Vulnerability</b>, with capacity to identify villages and groups at highest risk of food insecurity</li> <li>• <b>Improvements in the national Early Warning System</b> (livelihoods, nutrition)</li> <li>• <b>Improved targeting of vulnerable groups</b> of food and cash</li> <li>• <b>Greater emphasis on Disaster Risk Reduction</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Establishment of a National Contingency Plan</li> <li>ii. National Strategy for Cereal Banks</li> <li>iii. Work of DRR Consortium of NGOs</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	Not directly addressed by Chad workshop participants, but agreement there has been only very modest and recent progress, particularly in follow up to the 2010 humanitarian efforts with vulnerable populations.

<sup>u</sup> Sen’s entitlement framework identifies four sources of food: production, employment, trade and transfers. All four sources, including cash transfers, can be supported under the rubric of social protection.

Lessons Learned/Positive Changes since 2005		
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
<b>Reducing the Vulnerability of Pastoralists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of the new <b>Pastoral Code</b></li> <li>• Information system for <b>assessing vulnerability for Early Warning for pastoral areas</b> improved</li> <li>• Community based Early Warning and Disaster Response (<b>SCAP-RU</b>) operational in certain pastoral areas</li> <li>• <b>RBM (Réseau Billital Maroobé (a Network of Herders and Pastoralists in Africa</b> functions and does good advocacy work for their members</li> <li>• Positive <b>experimentation with methods of de-stocking</b> (drying meat)</li> <li>• Major <b>growth in awareness</b> by pastoralists about need for adaptation to reduce risk and safeguard their way of life</li> <li>• Establishment of <b>Cereal Banks</b> in pastoral areas has reduced risk</li> <li>• Certain techniques to improve water retention, and <b>other land improvements in pastoral areas</b> show how pastoral communities can reduce risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning of an increase in awareness of the importance and need to address the issues facing the well being of pastoral communities by humanitarian agencies</li> <li>• Ministry of Animal Husbandry is more aware of the rising vulnerability of pastoralists</li> <li>• Strengthening of mechanisms to reduce conflicts between pastoralists and farmers, and also between pastoralists and agro-pastoralists.</li> <li>• There has been a census of the animal population</li> </ul>
Lessons Learned/Positive Changes since 2005		
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
<b>Reducing vulnerability of children under 5 years by treating and preventing moderate acute malnutrition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Directorate for Nutrition created</li> <li>• National Protocol for Treatment of Malnutrition and P.E.C has been established</li> <li>• National system for monitoring nutrition: Surveys conducted twice a year</li> <li>• Nutrition Cluster organised by OCHA: permanent working group established and effective</li> <li>• Process of integration launched by the Nutrition Cluster and the Ministry of Health</li> <li>• During lean season, general Blanket Feeding undertaken</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus on the diagnostic procedure</li> <li>• Use of Community based Therapeutic Care (CTC) for treating SAM, as well as Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM)</li> <li>• Better integration of health and nutrition</li> <li>• Increase in preventive activities</li> <li>• Development and Extension of monitoring and treatment of acute malnutrition through training staff</li> <li>• Update of the Nutritional Protocole for treatment</li> </ul>

Lessons Learned/Positive Changes since 2005		
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
<p><b>Contribution of action research and learning initiatives (including use of new tools or methods, to create an evidence base for advocating the use of innovative models for humanitarian or development work</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cash Transfer Pilot</b> impact on food security and malnutrition by Save the Children UK in 2008 was widely disseminated and highly influential</li> <li>• Use of various <b>forms of Cash Transfers increased greatly by NGOs</b> in 2010</li> <li>• <b>Re-greening of the Sahel</b> at an extensive scale; a campaign of communication and advocacy has contributed to this</li> <li>• Action Research on Pastoral Wells (CARE-EU) ; the model has been accepted by the responsible Ministry (MEELCD)</li> <li>• CESAO; a study center piloted techniques <b>for drying meat</b> and hygiene for de-stocking programs in 2010</li> <li>• CARE-Niger's <b>APCAN program piloted and developed an effective model of Community based EWS (SCAP-RU</b> and the commune level Observatory for Monitoring Vulnerability (OSV) that engaged the government EWS (SAP), the University, and AGRYMET</li> <li>• <b>Household Economy Assessments (HEA)</b> supported mostly by Save the Children, throughout the Sahel involved ECHO, Universities, government EWS</li> <li>• CARE/UNDP/PANA initiated pilot projects to develop <b>climate change adaptation models</b></li> <li>• <b>Supplementary RUTF</b>: Studies by MSF on the use, acceptability and impact of the (Ready to Use Supplementary Food) on nutritional level of children to treat MAM</li> <li>• <b>Use of SMART/SQUEAC</b> nutritional surveys</li> <li>• Use of <b>Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment method (CVCA)</b></li> </ul>	<p>Not addressed directly at the Chad workshop. However there is much less being done in Chad in terms of operational research, joint learning initiatives, developing and adapting innovative approaches, compared to Niger</p>
Lessons Learned/Positive Changes since 2005		
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
<p>Contribution of the Early Warning System (EWS) and response to address vulnerability (by preventing and managing a food crisis and other disasters )</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmonisation of different indicators for vulnerability (EWS of Niger, FEWS NET, CILSS)</li> <li>• Surveys conducted to assess vulnerability</li> <li>• Development of Community based EWS and Response (SCAP-RU) which enables communities to take direct action and responsibility</li> <li>• Identification of geographic zones and groups of vulnerability by the OSV (Observatories for Monitoring Vulnerability) at the village and commune level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement in the information about vulnerability both transitory and structural</li> <li>• Development and use of improved methodological tools (i.e., continuous monitoring of market prices)</li> <li>• Growing awareness of the EWS agents of the wider global nature of food security (beyond food availability, to livelihoods, accessibility, nutrition)</li> <li>• Joint evaluation mission of government and partners</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APCAN project has strengthened local structures for early warning (SCAP-RU and OSV) and produced a methodological guide for doing this</li> <li>• Improved system of monitoring market prices</li> </ul>	<p>conducted to assess and target most vulnerable in 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of a Food Security and Nutrition cluster</li> <li>• Creation of a Restricted Committee to strengthen coordination between CASAGC and partners</li> <li>• Capacity for response increased because more actors in the field compared to 2005</li> <li>• Existence of coordinated, multi-sectoral responses with wide coverage</li> </ul>
<p><b>Contribution of DRR and Climate Change Adaptation and Water/Sanitation/Hygiene programmes to reduce vulnerability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a growing awareness among politicians and government about the issues such as climate, DRR</li> <li>• Niger has participated effectively in international fora on Climate Change, and has signed the Hyogo DRR Common Framework for Action</li> <li>• Niger government has organised meeting to reflect on how to establish a DRR platform</li> <li>• Niger has developed a coherent institutional framework to address various major risks (i.e. PANA –Program of action National Adaptation to Climate change; CNEDD = National Committee for the Environment and Sustainable Development etc.</li> <li>• In 2010, Niger obtained a \$50million grant and \$60 million in concessional loans from the PPCR (Pilot Program for Climate Resilience) for its climate adaptation program</li> <li>• A national strategy for water exists. The Niger agency responsible (PANGIRE) is preparing to implement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sectorial policies related to water, food security, livestock development, have been developed</li> <li>• There has been some improvement of infrastructure such as roads and markets in Chad, which affect risk</li> </ul>

	Lessons Learned/Positive Changes since 2005	
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
<b>Inter-agency collaboration and coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Niger DRR Consortium was created after 2005 as a working/learning and advocacy group for DRR</li> <li>• Within Niger, there has been major improvements in the attitude of organisations towards the need for coordination and harmonisation of program interventions (hearing different points of view, working on a joint plan of support)</li> <li>• The operationalisation of the UN/OCHA system of clusters (nutrition, food security, logistics, communications and Humanitarian Action Plan, despite faults, is significant progress</li> <li>• NGOs are working much closer together in joint advocacy through media and other means to influence Ministries to change policies</li> <li>• NGOs have been admitted to participate at meetings of the CRC (Comité Restreint de Concertation), a high level decision making body presided over by the Prime Minister</li> <li>• Establishment of a framework of operational coordination between NGOs, the UN agencies and the Red Cross “Qui fait quoi” (Who does what)</li> <li>• Existence of an Emergency Capacity Building network in Niger, which conducted a joint in-depth review of the humanitarian response</li> <li>• Creation of HASA (Haute Autorité à la Sécurité Alimentaire, with the mandate to create the conditions for new orientations in food and nutrition security</li> </ul>	

## 3 Challenges to Overcome on the path to resilience

### 3.1 Political Leadership/Governance

The 2010 food crisis in the Sahel illustrated, as if that were still needed, the supreme importance of the crisis being recognised by national authorities to enable a robust, early response that protects livelihoods and productive assets key for resilience. There are many changes the international development and humanitarian aid community can make to improve their operational effectiveness. A larger issue, however, in developing an adapted aid approach in the Sahel, is to assess to what extent the donor community has succeeded in strengthening governance, particularly relating to prevention and management of humanitarian crises<sup>v</sup>.

#### **The Importance of Good Governance**

‘Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development.’

*UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, 1998*

‘The issue of good governance and capacity-building is what we believe lies at the core of all of Africa’s problems.’

*Commission for Africa, 2005*

Without progress in governance, all other reforms will have limited impact.’

*Commission for Africa, 2005*

There are many different breakdowns of the concept of governance, but succinctly, it relates to “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”<sup>158</sup> and to ensure delivery of core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor. The governance agenda also includes the fight against corruption and the corresponding need to enhance accountability and strengthen transparency in public policy-making.<sup>159</sup>

Another key dimension is facilitating effective participation in public policy making. Participation, particularly the involvement of civil society, helps to build coalitions supporting policy reforms and improve responsiveness to the needs of the poor. Finally another major thread of promoting good governance is support for the devolution of power, resources and capacity to lower levels of government through decentralization.<sup>160</sup>

While many donors recognise the fundamental importance to strengthening good governance, particularly in order to prevent humanitarian crises, there is no strong consensus about how aid can more effectively bring about needed changes<sup>161</sup>.

In the context of the Sahel, however, **improving governance is probably one of the most important challenges to address in order to strengthen resilience**, and overcome the chronic dimensions of the on-going food and nutrition crisis.

The most striking example of poor governance is the lack of high level political engagement – and even in some cases acknowledgement – of recurrent food crises, and recognition of the growing chronic level of severe food insecurity and malnutrition.

In 2010, this lack of political engagement resulted both in an inadequate overall scale of aid and in a lack of genuine urgency in rapid delivery of effective and appropriate assistance in all 4 countries reviewed for this report. Though early warning systems showed in 2009, with months of lead time, that a crisis was imminent, this technical data and indicators did not produce adequate action because politicians were not fully engaged when early warning systems raised the alarm. **The absence of political leadership inhibited an urgent and sufficiently large scale response.** The Sahel food crisis was below the political radar in the countries in the region (with the exception of Niger after the coup). Instead the emergency was principally dealt with at a technical level by governments, and by many international agencies and bodies.

Following the military coup in February 2010, the new Niger government was the notable positive example of political response through publicly calling for international aid and facilitating humanitarian activities on the ground. In other affected countries however, internal political concerns meant that governments were reluctant to create real public awareness (nationally and internationally) of the scale of the crisis and take the actions necessary.

These internal political concerns likely vary from one Sahelian country to another. In Niger, before the coup however, President Tandja had decided to systematically deny the existence of any type of serious food crisis, or any type of child nutrition crisis in his country, He opposed launching an international appeal for assistance. Similarly, in Chad, prodding by ECHO and the EU was required before the government recognized the crisis and made an appeal for assistance.

Why should high level politicians like Tandja, and other leaders in the Sahel, feel reluctant to recognize an emergency? What are the underlying political factors for such egregious lack of concern for the acute distress of millions of fellow citizens? More importantly, how can external donors (who are a major stakeholder in terms of the costs of humanitarian assistance), improve governance?

In the case of Niger, a critical observer of society, de Sardin<sup>162</sup> suggests the regime's denial was grounded in a sense of national pride, a sort of radical expression of sovereignty, and a wish to avoid sinking the country deeper into dependency on food aid, that did nothing to resolve the fundamental causes. De Sardin suggests the elite wished to avoid yet another humiliating rolling coverage by the world's media of the famine. That such a view existed in elite circles in Niger is buttressed by Prime Minister Hama Amadou, who declared (in November 2005), in his address to the opening of the World Food Programme/ Government of Niger (*Revue Après Action (Review after Action)*) that he was not prepared to sell cheaply the dignity of the Nigerien people ....'vendre la dignité du Peuple Nigérien à bon marché... cela, nous ne sommes pas prêt à l'accepter'<sup>163</sup>. The Prime Minister also accused NGO's of providing short-term solutions and that humanitarian interventions leave populations dependent '...dans un cadre d'assistance sans fin qui, à terme, ne peut que nuire à leur sens de responsabilités de Citoyens'<sup>164</sup>.

Governments in the Sahel may also find it embarrassing to declare a food and nutrition crisis because it tacitly admits that long term policies of economic growth, poverty reduction, adapting to climate change and food security are failing. A government may view the declaration of a crisis as a threat to its long-term, and much more lucrative, development commitments from the World Bank. Regardless of the reasons underlying these political factors, not responding adequately violates the responsibility of governments in the Sahel to ensure its citizens' right to food<sup>165</sup>.

The underlying political factors influencing a government's decision to declare a crisis, and to allocate sufficient resources to support effective EWS, disaster risk reduction, and social protection programs varies in each Sahelian country. Donors who seek to promote good governance need to analyse the political context, not just policies, and engage in long term advocacy and strategies for change. Some key lessons of how donors can do this are presented below.

### Lessons Learned on how aid can contribute to good governance

Aid conditionality has not proven an appropriate approach to strengthen good governance when used as an incentive by donors for sustained policy reforms. **Conditionality cannot substitute or circumvent domestic ownership of and commitment to reform.** The use of financial leverage is not a substitute for weak domestic institutions or feeble political will<sup>1</sup>.

A cohesive framework for analysing and addressing governance must recognise the inherent **political** character of activities in the governance realm<sup>2</sup>. It is not effective to separate public policy-making and technical issues from the politics. Technical solutions (including evidence from pilot projects) cannot easily overcome political problems. A fundamental lesson is that *"if donors wish to make a real difference, they will need to focus more explicitly and more rigorously on issues of power, politics and interest groups, [than] they have tried to do in the past – messy and difficult though these things often are"*<sup>3</sup>

Sustaining development requires reforming not only the policies but also **strengthening the institutional framework**<sup>4</sup> in which policies are formulated and implemented. Effective reform of policies requires building the institutional capacity to apply it at the national but also decentralised levels. Aid efforts to improve governance have often disregarded the analysis of institutions and failed to assess how state institutions can be reformed effectively to make public policies more responsive to people's needs.

Donors need to be realistic about the **length time that it takes for governance constraints to be overcome.** Recent **arguments to increase aid dramatically seem to assume that governance can be improved quickly** enabling effective use of a dramatic boost in the quantity of aid. However, there is usually no shortcut to building sound institutions in the Sahelian countries.

**Shifting from conditionality to "selectivity" is not the answer**<sup>5</sup>. Selecting states that already have a strong level of governance is difficult to implement in practice, as high levels of poverty and food insecurity are often associated with weak governance. Selecting to work in Sahelian countries that already have relatively better governance performance to ensure the effectiveness of aid means that the needs of many highly food insecure households in more fragile states will be neglected. Appropriate long term approaches to strengthening governance in fragile states is essential in the Sahel to prevent recurrent humanitarian crises.

Governance can only have limited impact unless the country's society and particularly its leaders **have a genuine political commitment to democracy.** While democracy tends to refer to the *legitimacy* of government, good governance refers to the *effectiveness* of government. Neither democracy nor good governance is sustainable without the other<sup>6</sup>.

#### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Santiso, C. 2001 *Good Governance and Aid Effectiveness: The World Bank and Conditionality.* Paul H Nitze School of Advanced International Studies Johns Hopkins University The Georgetown Public Policy Review Volume 7 Number 1 Fall 2001, p8

<sup>2</sup> ODI, March 2006. Governance, Development and Aid Effectiveness: A quick guide to complex relationships Briefing Paper

<sup>3</sup> Riddell 1999, 333, cited in Santiso, op. cit. p.19

<sup>4</sup> Santiso, op. cit. p15

Good governance in addressing severe food insecurity extends far beyond the need for responding early and decisively when the first alert of a looming crisis is sounded. However, when a the national government fails to recognise the crisis (as was the case in 2010, particularly in Mali and Chad), the UN and donor approach needs to be far more pro-active in order to ensure access to humanitarian assistance for the people and communities affected. Strong diplomacy and advocacy by donors urging national authorities to recognize the crisis, as part of good governance, is essential.

A cynical analyst, after reviewing the 2005 crisis in Niger, wrote that donors and international aid agencies, if they were honest, would admit that the ‘good-governance debate’ is sometimes used just a way of not having to confront the lack of sustained engagement in overcoming poverty and severe malnutrition in the Sahel by the outside world. The aim appears limited to removing the symptoms of the crisis from the television screens, not addressing the causes, including poor governance<sup>166</sup>. Whether or not this observation has merit, the reality is that the media spotlight, once applied to a crisis, can have a tremendous impact in galvanising institutional and financial resources and public support in the West. However, when media coverage wanes, the commitment to a long term, sustained and strategic aid effort to promote good governance, as outlined above, tends to diminish, particularly in fragile states.

There has been some progress made, and notable efforts to address governance issues related to chronic food insecurity and vulnerability in the Sahel. The Sahel strategy of ECHO to address child malnutrition, tailored to each specific country context is a sterling example.

More generally, the EU has developed a new discourse on good governance combines that includes some forms of conditionality (rather than selectivity) but with a strong emphasis on ownership<sup>167</sup>. It prescribes that donors and recipient countries negotiate aid and reforms by engaging in policy dialogue, jointly agreeing on actions and targets. This is a more ‘collaborative approach’, based on persuasion rather than coercion. Decisions are to be made on a country-specific basis and be based on dialogue and capacity building. This includes underlining the multidimensionality and holistic nature of governance and the principles of ownership, shared analyse, joint assessment tools, harmonised dialogues and common programming frameworks. Specifically for Africa, another strand of EC governance policy is the support to the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

An initial review of the effectiveness in practice of these tools and principles to improve governance indicates disappointing results<sup>168</sup>. There is still a huge task to adapt the architecture of aid to address good governance, particularly for the Sahel. As noted in the lessons above, increased volumes of aid are not likely to have a sustainable effect without changes in governance. A review of aid effective to fragile states, suggests that the existing aid architecture – with rigid compartments for “humanitarian” and “development” aid that are governed by different principles and regulations. These forms of aid are often managed by different departments of the same donor agency. Such a system is still not adequately configured to address the needs of the Sahel, including promoting good governance<sup>169</sup>.

### 3.2 Promoting Resilience in Fragile States: The Special Case of Chad

State fragility is a significant challenge to prevent and manage food crises, and address the root causes of vulnerability in the Sahel. DFID defines a fragile state as one that “cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor”<sup>170</sup>. Core functions include reducing poverty as well as providing public services. Such states often face multiple challenges, including a limited capacity to absorb external funding. Violence, conflict, corruption, exclusion or discrimination of certain groups, and gender inequalities are also common characteristics<sup>171</sup>.

Another definition by OECD emphasizes the “lack of political commitment and insufficient capacity to develop and implement pro-poor policies”<sup>172</sup>.

Within the donor community, there is growing consensus that principles of effective aid need to be complemented by others to guide good international engagement in fragile states<sup>173</sup>. This was the impetus for the development of the 10 principles for ‘Good International Engagement In Fragile States & Situations’<sup>174</sup> and various declarations relating to aid effectiveness<sup>175</sup> in fragile states.

### Selected Guidelines for Effective Aid in Fragile States

Particular attention is required to:

- support **state-building and delivery of basic services** in contexts of weak governance and capacity
- undertake a **“whole of government” approach** involving those responsible for security, political and economic affairs, development aid and humanitarian assistance to ensure policy coherence and joined-up strategies
- **Align with local priorities** in different ways in different contexts
- Take **context as the starting point; undertake sound political analysis**; avoid blueprints
- identify national reformers and functioning systems within existing local institutions, and strengthen their effectiveness, legitimacy and resilience
- provide **longer-duration assistance** of at least ten years to enable capacity development in core institutions, given low capacity and the extent of the challenges
- **avoid pockets of exclusion: “aid orphans”** – in states where only a few international actors are engaged, or aid volumes are low, or where geographical regions or groups are neglected within a country

Within the Sahel, Chad is considered a fragile state in respect to humanitarian and development cooperation because of major problems linked to the Darfur crisis, internal conflicts, chronic food crises, and a general unstable political and security situation. A large and complicated country, Chad is composed of a patchwork of over 150 different ethnic groups, extending across many different regions and climatic zones. It is a fractured state because of its cultural, religious and social divisions. Chad is characterised by the presence of armed groups, who often resort to violence in settling disputes.

A major feature of Chadian politics is factionalism. The political process is dominated by constantly shifting alliances. The President – Idris Deby – is from the Zagawa ethnic group from the east of the country, which comprises only 2 percent of the population.<sup>176</sup> Governance requires maintaining a broader coalition of support which is often achieved by bringing leaders of armed groups into government and political structures<sup>w</sup>. When supporters of different armed groups change sides, which occur quite frequently, new coalitions are required.

This repeated process has been described as ‘rebellion, reintegration and defection.’<sup>177</sup> Constant ministerial takeover (due to political volatility) has contributed to a lack of continuity in government policy. High level Chadian politicians gain office often not because of their capacity for good administration, but as a result of patronage in this system. The government’s own National Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy baldly states that “corruption remains a major problem of governance in Chad”<sup>178</sup>. This is confirmed by Transparency International which ranks Chad 171 out of 178 in its international corruption ranking.

Chad is enjoying an oil boom. The country became an oil-producing nation in 2003 and is estimated to have reserves of up to one billion barrels. Changes to rules governing how revenues can be spent have been controversial. The agreement to allocate a higher proportion of the revenues on anti-poverty projects has still not met by the government.

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<sup>w</sup> A most serious event indicating the fragility of state is described in the governance section of the current Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy. In February 2008, an armed rebel group fought their way into the capital of N’Djaména, and were repulsed after heavy fighting. This event provoked significant economic damage, and shook the confidence in the ability of the state to ensure stability and peace.

In such a volatile atmosphere, the Chadian state is very weak as a developmental force. The poorly developed infrastructure of roads, markets and basic services means that the Chadian state has a minimal presence on the ground – in terms of geographical reach and administrative capacity. There are relatively few development actors in Chad. The numbers of NGOs working in Chad increased in response to the Darfur crisis in 2004, but are still well below the numbers active in other Sahelian countries<sup>179</sup>.

#### **The Situation of the western sahel belt of Chad**

Evidence of the minimal development presence of the state is evident in the western sahel regions. In the region of Kanem, for example, there are no paved roads. This impacts heavily on food prices and creates market barriers, which limit alternative earning opportunities. The lack of a functioning electrical grid anywhere in the region inhibits economic growth. Water availability, which directly impacts nutrition, health and production, is not reliable, with over 50% of the pumps installed not operational. Education opportunities are rare, offering young people few alternatives to migration or agriculture. This is particularly pronounced for women, who face social barriers in addition to the sheer lack of educational opportunities.

All these factors feed into weak state capacity. A lack of technical staff, and poor financing means that government is often unable to fully manage relief and development initiatives. For nutrition, for example, this means that the quantity, quality (or in many cases, functionality) of health centres cannot be sustained without donor support. This capacity weakness is likewise visible in agriculture. In the Bahr el Ghazal region, for example, four part-time extension workers are responsible for supporting an agricultural population of over 200,000.

**Source:** ACF (Nov 2010) Briefing Paper: Chad A call to end Decades of Hunger

The enormous challenge in developing an effective aid approach in a fragile state like Chad is illustrated by an evaluation of the national structure responsible for food security<sup>x</sup>, published in February 2010<sup>180</sup>, just as a new food crisis was emerging.

#### **Conclusions from an Evaluation of the operation of Chad's national structure for Food Security from 2005 to 2009:**

- Structures for collecting food security related data at the regional, district and local levels were unable to perform their functions due to an almost complete lack of financial support
- Data that was collected often took months to pass up through the multiple departmental and ministerial hierarchies to reach CASAGC, because of a low priority given to this function
- The reliability and completeness of the food security data was highly questionable, leading food security decisions to assist the most vulnerable to be generally poorly informed
- ONASA, the sole organ within the national food security apparatus to implement decisions (i.e., distribution of cereals from the national food reserve) did not have a budget to transport or distribution of food to the most vulnerable households in remote rural areas.
- The main beneficiaries of subsidized food were often salaried government workers based in the towns
- Interest groups at the regional or local levels biased decisions about targeting and distribution, not respecting analyses of need. Political interference in decision making was very strong
- There was an absence of a capacity within the institutional structure to move from emergency to rehabilitation work, grounded on a sound information base

This was the situation of national food security system that the UN and international agencies worked with during the food crisis. The evaluation also concluded that the underlying conception

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<sup>x</sup> This structure is composed of CASAGC (Action Committee for Food Security and the Management of Crises), SISA-SAP (System of Information for Food Security/Early Warning System) and ONASA (National Office for Food Security, in charge of food reserves).

of food security within the higher levels of government was focused strongly on **food availability**, and a sole response to address a crisis being food aid. Other key concepts of food security (accessibility, utilisation and stability) and the need for information on livelihoods, nutrition, accessibility, was not fully recognised.

A later evaluation in August 2010, focused only on the Early Warning System (SISA-SAP) financed by the European Union<sup>181</sup>, concluded that the government of Chad did not consider establishing its own EWS a priority.

#### **Evolution of Chad's Early Warning System from 1986 to 2011**

A first food security EWS was established in Chad in 1986 with the support of AEDS (European agency for development and health). At this time, one of the indicators included nutritional surveillance in almost 200 districts. This revealed alarmingly high malnutrition rates already in the 1980s<sup>a</sup>. From 1988 to 1999, the EWS continued within the CILSS framework. In 1999, the EC stopped funding the EWS because of a lack of national counterparts. Activities were discontinued although the annual costs of operating the EWS were relatively modest.

In 2000, a new EWS was launched with support of the UNDP, FAO, and French Cooperation. The new EWS had difficulties ensuring the collection of information at the decentralised levels. The information in monthly bulletins was not considered reliable. Most activities ceased once more when external funding ended in 2004. Re-launched in 2007 with funding from the EU, the new SISA-SAP was to have been part of PNSA (National Programme for Food Security, a structure reporting to the Presidency).

However it was perceived from the outset as a project of the FAO, its technical partner. Based on many interviews, the evaluation noted that within government, there was no sense of "ownership". One informant even stated "Do not encumber us with your information and warning system". The government did not meet its commitment for budgetary support or to attach SISA-SAP to the PNSA.

At the end of the funding cycle in 2010, the evaluation recommended that the international community should desist from naively insisting on a national EWS, until there was a shift in attitude within government about the role of EWS within the strategy for the prevention and management of food crises. This would depend on identifying a charismatic, highly placed "champion" within government to ensure budgetary support to promote and sustain this function, and could strengthen the capacity at the regional and local levels for regularly collecting reliable information across multiple sectors.

The EU accordingly decided to end its funding. After almost 25 years of efforts and funding, Chad currently lacks an effective, reliable EWS in Chad, an indispensable function to prevent and mitigate food crises and other disasters.

#### **Sources:**

Boulanger, P. De Jaegher C., Michiels D. (2004) *Systèmes d'information pour la sécurité alimentaire: L'expérience AEDS en Afrique*, L'Harmattan

Morinière, Lezlie C. (Août 2010) Rapport d'Évaluation Finale, externe et indépendante, du projet SISA—SAP

The EU has decided to adapt its strategy for developing Chad's capacity for early warning in several ways. First the EU is financing a pilot program to develop, with the support of NGOs, an effective model for decentralised EWS data collection and analysis at the local and regional level<sup>182</sup>. Another is to provide more support to the regional EWS activities of CILSS. Finally, the EU is taking progressive steps to shift attitudes and priorities, and generate a true sense of ownership by the Chad government, in whatever time is required. Initiatives are being considered such as sending Chadian officials to learn from the experiences of other countries in the Sahel.

This experience in Chad highlights the difficult challenges for donors in fragile states. It is not easy to avoid dependency on constant external funding. There is a need to generate political will, strong state institutions, and good governance, which takes time, but there are immediate need to address the chronic vulnerability of much of the population, which is increasing precisely because of the lack of effective risk management and good governance.

Beyond the deficiencies of the national EWS, the 2009-10 food crisis in Chad also highlighted other long term policy failures, including adapting to climate change and controlling volatile prices of food in the markets. The crisis made visible the deep structural food and nutrition security problems that have persisted for decades. Most strikingly, the severe food deficit situation of households, combined with structural factors such as gender inequality and poor access to healthcare, **have been generating catastrophic rates of child undernutrition in the sahelian zone of Chad for many years.**

Long-term trends contributing to this structural food and nutrition crisis are also related to changes in livelihoods of people living in the western sahel zones. Traditional pastoral lifestyles have been in decline for several decades leading to sedentarisation, the selling off of livestock and resulting reliance on cereals (mostly millet). This trend has in part been blamed on more extended periods of drought related to long-term climate change. However, lack of infrastructure and employment opportunities have also led to massive migration from the region. Remittance payments back to the region from migrants now form a crucial element in the economy.

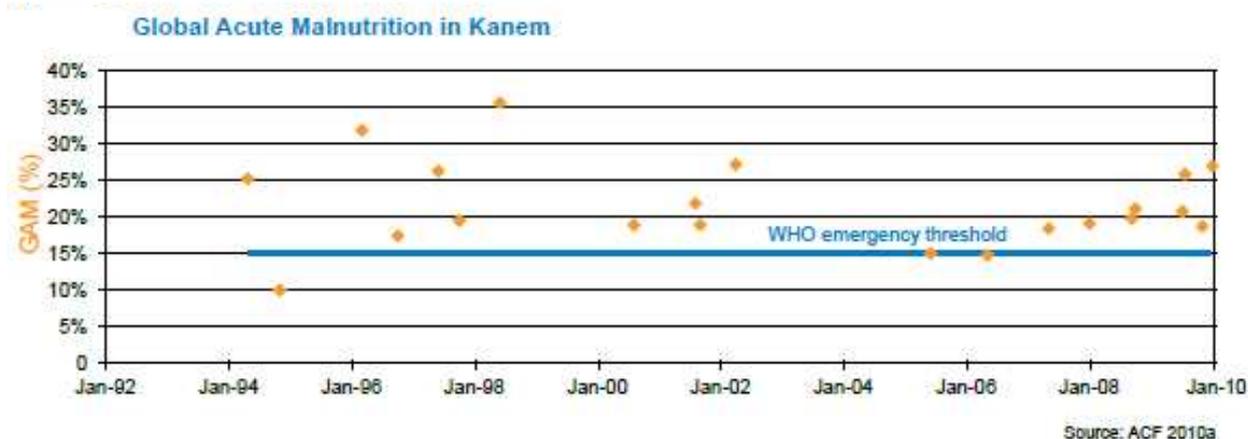
The lack of healthcare is also a crucial factor. Crucially, healthcare facilities appear to be actually getting worse – or people have less capacity to pay for them<sup>183</sup>.

#### **The Neglected Chronic Crisis of Undernutrition in the western sahel zones of Chad**

In western Chad, (Kanem and Bar el Ghazal regions) in August 2010, the prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) was 25.9% and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) reached nearly 5%. (ACF 2010). This figures are appalling, double the WHO threshold of alert. However, these crisis levels did not appear only in 2010. ACF assembled nutritional surveys dating back to 1994 indicating that both global and severe acute malnutrition rates have consistently been above the WHO emergency threshold levels (Figures 1 and 2)<sup>a</sup>.

This demonstrates that in the fragile state of Chad, not only was crisis level of undernutrition predictable, but it is chronic and has been allowed to persist for decades. This alarming situation is reflected in other health indicators. For instance, in western Chad, under-five mortality rates are at a staggering 200 per 1,000 live births. These rates, having remained relatively stagnant since the 1980s, are well in excess of the WHO African regional average of 167 and much higher than the Millennium Development Goal of 75 per 1,000 live births.

**Source:** ACF (Nov 2010) Briefing Paper: Chad A call to end Decades of Hunger



Source: drawn from ACF (Nov 2010) Briefing Paper: Chad A call to end Decades of Hunger

What does the evidence presented in the boxes above reflect about the effectiveness of aid and strengthening of resilience in the fragile state of Chad? In 2005, the EU in particular declared that it would improve its response to fragile states through support for governance reforms, rule of law, anti-corruption measures and the building of viable state institutions that are effective in meeting basic needs, in accordance to the principles for engaging with fragile states.

However, in the specific case of Chad, the chronic food crisis situation in the sahel band of western Chad is a clear example of an “aid orphan”, This is a geographical area where only a few international actors are engaged, aid volumes are low, and where pastoralists and agro-pastoralists have been neglected for decades.

Little progress seems to have been made in strengthening of government institutions and providing basic services in the western sahel. International agencies do not seem to have developed a comprehensive “whole government” approach to reducing state fragility. Efforts over 20 years to strengthen the early warning system, and the institutional capacity to prevent and manage disasters have not yet had a lasting impact<sup>184</sup>.

Many international agencies were not prepared for the onset of food crisis. Despite the early warning signs, international agencies such as the WFP did not begin to mobilise its resources until late February. However, importing of food aid takes at least 4 months, arriving far too late to prevent extreme coping mechanisms and loss of assets of a huge number of food insecure households.

ACF, one of the few international organisations working in the western Sahel, criticises the superficial ‘band-aid’ response, which they suggest is largely how the crisis in Western Chad has been tackled. Spending on food aid in 2010 greatly increased, but this has not been matched by increases in funding for long-term nutrition and health. Whilst food aid was effective in keeping people alive in the short-term, it has not addressed the structural problems which combined to form the crisis of 2010.

ACF notes that the Chadian state itself does not have an effective strategy to tackle structural food insecurity. Echoing perspectives of other key informants consulted for this report, ACF notes that the food security is simply not a priority of the Chadian government. Any plans that do develop are often lost in the political process. Although the Chadian state *does* have the resources to put in place

livelihood support, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation programs with its large oil revenues, little has been done. One informant within the UN system stated that the government of Chad considers that emergency response to food crises “ is the work of the international humanitarian agencies”<sup>185</sup>.

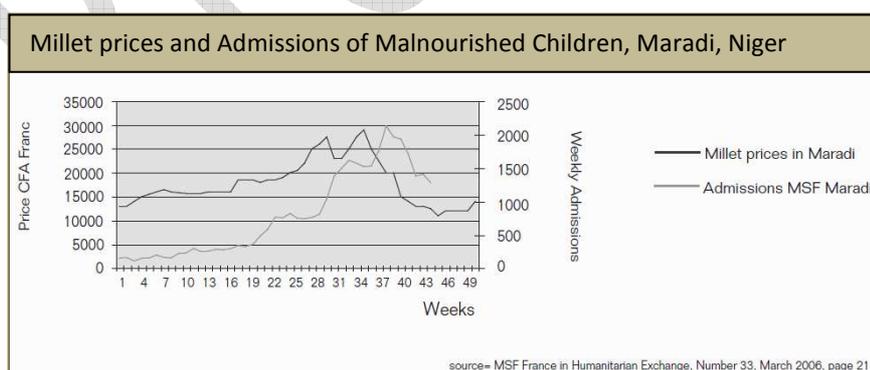
The international community has accepted the ‘twin track’ approach, in which relief efforts are to be integrated with long-term development goals. This approach was mandated by the UN by the 2008 Comprehensive Framework for Action, a high-level policy guidebook for food security, which requires that immediate needs be handled while also building long-term resilience against hunger<sup>186</sup>.

However, a review of OCHA’s data for expenditure by cluster for the crisis in 2010 indicates the continued dominance of food aid compared with longer-term agricultural/ livelihood assistance. A key lesson of how to make aid more effective in addressing the root causes of vulnerability is not being applied in Chad.

In conclusion, in the conditions of a fragile state, in Chad many donors, international NGOs and UN agencies were not adequately prepared for the 2010 food crisis. They were not able to apply lessons learned in other countries such as Niger. Donor and UN strategies and their institutional capacity were not sufficiently robust to address the long term and difficult challenge of addressing governance issues. The 10 principles, and the EU’s own guidelines of how to engage with fragile states, have not been well applied in Chad.

### 3.3 The High Cost of High Prices and unregulated Markets

The HEA data presented earlier in this report indicated a much higher level of malnutrition in poorer compared to better off households. Since many poorer households buy 60% or more of their food on the market, food prices are likely a factor influencing malnutrition levels. Data from MSF from Niger show a startling correlation between millet prices and number of admissions of children with acute malnutrition. High food prices clearly reduce people’s access to food, and directly trigger malnutrition, leading children to die<sup>187</sup>.



In light of this brutal insight, what are the policy solutions for addressing the volatility of prices, particularly in the lean season in the Sahel?

In March 2005, at the opening session of the regional conference on the food and agricultural situation in the Sahel, the Executive Secretary of CILSS<sup>y</sup> noted that, “one must admit that the capacity of our States is limited. Apart from emergency measures, the State must let market forces, based on the law of supply and demand, deal with the situation”.<sup>188</sup> In the last few years, this perspective is starting to shift. The food crisis of 2010 revealed the continuing ineffectiveness of “emergency measures” to meet the needs of a growing number of severely food insecure households throughout the Sahel. The global food crisis sparked by high prices in 2008 also exposed the major limitations of the market in “dealing with the situation”, as proposed by CILSS. The more recent experience of Chad provides revealing insights into the high risks of reliance on markets.

### **Price volatility and markets during the 2010 food crisis in Chad**

Markets and volatile prices are a major factors contributing to structural vulnerability for poor households in Chad. The EVST (National Study on Structural Causes of Vulnerability in Chad) of May 2009 indicates that poor rural households spend about 70% of their income for food purchased on local markets<sup>189</sup>. The reliance on the market is particularly acute in the sahelian band of Chad. For example, in 2009/2010, a survey by ACF and FAO indicated that most households in the region of Bahr el Ghazal (in the west sahel region) generally do not produce enough grain to cover more than three months of their annual needs<sup>190</sup>.

Such households are highly vulnerable to price increases. During the lean season of 2010, grain prices in the central and eastern regions of the sahel zone experienced extreme price increases. Although millet prices were quite stable in the south of the country, in the sahel zone, they had increased from 80% to 93% over the five year average for July<sup>191</sup>.

A study of the performance of Chad’s market system indicated three major reasons for the huge price increase.<sup>192</sup> First, market infrastructure in terms of price information, access to credit, storage, and above all, transport facilities is very poorly developed in Chad. These factors prevented the market in Chad from functioning as a unified system. Instead, the market is highly fragmented, and influenced by external forces in neighbouring countries, as much as by internal factors.

In 2010, the very fragmented market system was not able to adequately shift food from surplus areas (in the south) to deficit areas (in the sahel), to prevent the huge upward spike in prices<sup>2</sup>. In addition, the low number of commercial traders in the sahel regions of Chad reduce competition. Traders have a dominant position in setting local prices, first for buying grain after harvest. At this time, many households are obliged to sell to raise money for migration, to repay debts and cover other expenses). Secondly, traders also have a strong position for selling grain back to households in the lean season. The lack of credit facilities and poorly developed transport system inhibits more traders from entering into the grain transport market.

Another feature of the Chad market is that the eastern production zone is commercially closely linked to Sudan, and the western production areas to Cameroon (and Nigeria). Shortages in both these neighbouring countries generated attractive grain prices, which led to significant cross border flows of grain out of Chad, into Sudan and Cameroon. This further limited grain flows from the south of Chad to the north, to reach villages in the sahelian belt. This increased local prices and made food access for vulnerable households even more limited.<sup>193</sup>

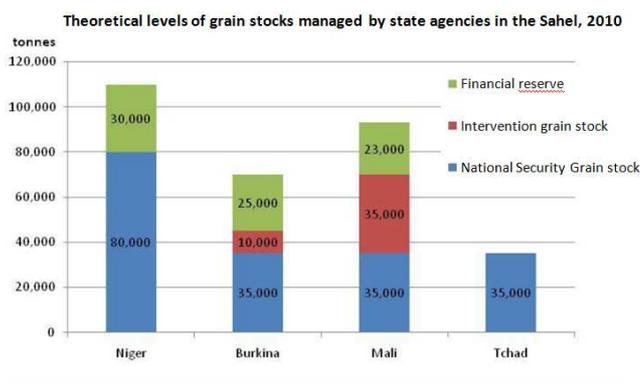
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<sup>y</sup> CILSS is the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (an intergovernmental organization composed of nine Sahelian member countries (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Chad)

<sup>z</sup> Landlocked Chad is characterized by large distances between production areas and consumption areas. In 2008, CILSS estimated that Chad had only 1,000 km of paved roads. Transport costs on non paved roads increases from 60 to 75% between as the rainy season begins.

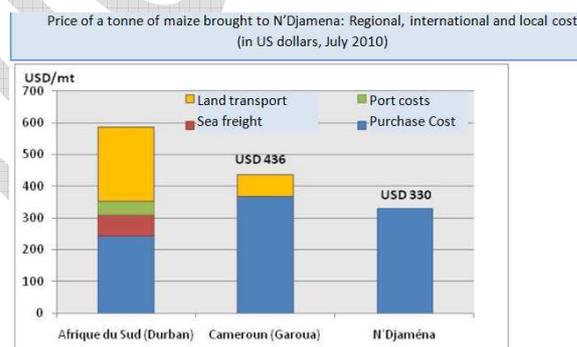
In response, the government of Chad attempted to impose price ceilings on grain and basic commodities, and ban the export of certain products, including pregnant animals. These policies could not be enforced, and reduced the activities of market traders. Grain prices remained high, and indeed appeared to increase because of increased transaction costs to evade the controls. Animal prices dropped lower, because of weakened demand with the barriers to export.

ONASA (the agency in charge of emergency food stocks, (with 22 warehouses across the country) sold less than 30,000 tonnes of grain at subsidised prices. This intervention did stop the rise of local prices- but only temporarily because ONASA's volume of grain was far too small to have a long term effect on market prices. Despite its very poor market infrastructure and persistent recurrence of food crises, Chad's official quantity of emergency food reserves is the lowest of any country in the Sahel.<sup>194</sup>



Source : PAM, Afrique Verte (2010)

A joint market assessment by the FAO, WFP and FEW NET noted that the intervention of ONASA, however imperfect it was in terms of targeting, and reaching the most vulnerable, was the only measure that succeeded in dampening prices. The study proposed that if ONASA were "given a mandate to regulate markets, it could be a tool to limit excessive price changes, up or down. With sufficient resources, ONASA could increase the volume of its intervention, and position itself as a buyer of last resort (in the Sudanian zone in the south, and as a supplier (in the sahel zone) and could also stimulate private sector participation in the grain trade".<sup>195</sup>



Source : PAM (2010)

The study also noted that the failure of local markets to shift surplus to areas of deficit within Chad increased the costs for food aid. Imported food is highly uncompetitive, because of the high cost of land transport. It is much more economical to buy locally than to import-including during the lean season. According to the regional WFP purchasing department, "to by local maize costs 40% less than an international procurement to be sent to Chad."<sup>196</sup> However ONASA and the WFP were unprepared, having low reserves when the food crisis began.

According to the joint study, local purchases of grain by ONASA, WFP and international NGOs could develop the national capacity to regulate prices, if complemented by improvements in the market information system. In addition, they proposed that a decentralised national system of grain reserves could support village level cereal banks. Many women's groups in Chad undertake small scale grain storage, which could be supported.<sup>197</sup>

For improved resilience against future shocks, the joint study also recommended another type of local grain storage system at the village level, called "warrantage".<sup>198</sup>

**Warrantage: a promising system for village based food reserves in the Sahel**

Warrantage is a credit transaction in which foodstuffs brought into a local storage facility serves as collateral for a loan requested by a farmer. The system allows small scale farmers to defer the sale of its agricultural production at harvest time, when prices are often very low, while obtaining the necessary credit for income generating activities, including the cost of migration, during the dry season. The price differential between harvest time and the lean season is often sufficient to pay for the interest and storage charges, while giving the farmer a higher price for his production.

Because of market fluctuations, the price differential does not always cover the cost of the borrowing every agricultural season. A survey by Afrique Verte indicates that between 2001 and 2010, warrantage was not profitable for farmers in 29% of cases. Warrantage also has the potential to link farmers' organizations with microfinance institutions. Warrantage has grown significantly throughout the Sahel in the last decade, especially in Niger.

**Source** Afrique Verte (2010)

This review of the market dimensions of the 2010 food crisis in Chad make starkly clear that highly vulnerable households cannot depend on markets to ensure availability of food, or to prevent extremely high prices. Beyond food aid, other forms of public intervention are essential to control highly volatile prices and regulate markets. While there are significant questions of cost, distribution, targeting, and governance to consider, a national system of food reserves, used not for emergency, but to ensure distribution and regulate prices, is an important instrument to address severe market failures.

**Markets respond to demand, not to need**

The example of Chad starkly demonstrates that markets, when they work, respond to demand- not to needs. Beyond Chad, the lessons of 2010 show that dependence on market forces increases vulnerability and insecurity throughout the Sahel.

This vulnerability is affected by the regional integration of sixteen West African countries through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Since 1975, as members of ECOWAS, countries in the Sahel abandoned the idea of national food self-sufficiency. Instead, they opened up their borders and markets to international trade, assuming market forces would ensure an adequate food supply. ECOWAS is working toward the creation of a common market, by eliminating all trade barriers between member states, adoption of a common external tariff, and a common trade policy vis-à-vis other countries. The rationale was that it would be more logical and cost-effective to develop North-South trade between sahelian and coastal countries, rather than create centralized structures to manage agricultural trade within each nation. Market integration has progressed significantly. Sahelian countries can no longer be considered distinct national markets.<sup>199</sup>

This has had a direct impact on food availability in any given country, as supply is no longer determined by domestic production but rather by the regional food situation and by trade flows. However, these two elements are subject to high fluctuations due to volatility in regional harvests, exchange rates, government policies, international commodity prices, and regional conflicts. The removal of state intervention has also resulted in a trend of food trade being dominated by groups of large traders, whose interest is profit, not the needs of households in remote, food insecure areas that lack purchasing power.<sup>200</sup> All these factors make cereal markets and prices in the Sahel unstable. ECOWAS has not yet developed a regulatory mechanism that would ensure the stability of food prices and adequate distribution of food in the region.

As Frederick Mousseau points out, there is actually no reason for regional trade to ensure an adequate supply in a country like Niger. If there are imbalances in the regional market, Niger, as the poorest country in the region may not be able to compete with coastal countries that have higher purchasing power. Niger is a very large, landlocked country. As in Chad, there would be limited incentive for food traders to import food if most people can't afford to pay for it, especially given the higher price due to transport costs.

Another factor undermining food security is that certain countries in the Sahel have increased specialisation in certain agricultural products and use exports earnings to import the food they need. Burkina Faso and Mali, for example, have specialized in cotton and other non food cash crops. This affects the regional cereal market by reducing land availability for cereals and increasing their cereal import needs of these countries. Cash crop specialization also reduces cereal-trading opportunities between neighbours, and result in an increased dependence on the international market for imports to meet domestic needs<sup>201</sup>.

This dependence on the international markets exacerbates the risk of price volatility. For example, the international prices of maize and wheat have almost doubled between June 2010 and mid-March 2011. Global prices of dairy products have also risen. In a recent report, IPRFI projects that recent rising oil prices, the expansion of biofuel production, particularly maize ethanol, and other factors will significant increase the risk of even higher global food prices<sup>202</sup>.

### **The role of food reserves**

Food reserves can be a valuable tool for improving access to, and distribution of food and for stabilising prices. They can support small scale farmers by helping them to predict their markets, and by countering concentrated market power over grain sales and distribution. They can contribute to improved operation of local, national and regional markets, where resources in the private sector are lacking. Reserve stocks can compensate for shortfalls in foreign currency (that makes imports difficult), offset supply shocks or spikes in demand, and facilitate humanitarian response to food emergencies. Reserves can also help countries cope with climate change and its impact on food production and supply<sup>203</sup>.

In the Sahel, **food security reserves** are already in place to increase availability and access to food to vulnerable households during food crises triggered by drought or other disasters. Many of these reserves are insufficient in size even for emergencies, (particularly in Chad) in light of significant population growth since volume limits were established, and because of increased poverty. What is lacking is an additional **"price stabilization reserve"** to buy foodstuffs when prices are low to reduce supply and sell when prices are high to keep prices in check<sup>204</sup>. This can help protect farmers' incomes and mitigate the effect of steep price rises on consumers. However, as this type of storage involves regulating prices it is politically less acceptable than security reserves.

### **Shifting Attitudes**

Since the food price crisis of 2008, there has been a major shift in the debate on food security and the role of food reserves. Initially, the debate focussed on ideological standpoints (being « for » or « against » regulation). Now, the discourse recognises the need, and is concentrating on the technical, political and institutional feasibility of market regulation instruments, primarily food reserves<sup>205</sup>.

During the High-level Conference on World Food Security in 2008, then again in 2009 at the G-8 Summit in L'Aquila, Italy and at the World Food Summit in Rome, governments recognized the potential of food reserves to deal with humanitarian food emergencies and to limit price volatility. They called for a review of this issue as part of coordinated response to the global food crisis.<sup>206</sup>

Unfortunately, identifying potential models, as well as allocating appropriate resources and setting a firm deadline for implementation, has yet to occur.

Much of what needs to be done is quite controversial. It involves Sahelian governments thinking again about a more public role in managing food stocks and grain reserves.

#### **Why were food reserves abandoned in the Sahel?**

Over the past 20 years, Sahelian governments, under pressure from western donors, have abandoned food reserve programs, except for emergency response. The main challenges to address in current reflection of the potential role of food reserves are:

**1. Economic orthodoxy is against market interventions.** The profound shift in global economic policy starting in the early 1980s emphasizes keeping government intervention in markets to an absolute minimum. A public grain reserve falls squarely in the territory of “bad ideas” for those who do not trust the government to get economic management right.

**2. Building a resilient and effective grain reserve is not easy.** Reserves, storage facilities, vehicles, staff all cost money. They also (by definition) distort markets and involve guesswork that does not self-correct, as a market might. If a reserve is poorly managed, it can exacerbate food security problems.

**3. Reserves have to operate in varied social, political, geographical and economic contexts.** The condition of the country’s transportation and storage infrastructure, as well as how a country is connected to its neighbours and world markets, are all directly relevant to how best to structure a reserve and in determining where it might be most effective. There is no simple blueprint for a generic food reserve.

**4. Reserves depend on transparent and accountable governance.** A reserve needs to be both well designed and well governed, and not subject to political manipulation. Well trained and paid staff, strong oversight, clear rules and a well-functioning independent review system are essential. It takes time and money to establish this oversight.

**Source:** Adapted from Sampson, Kristin (October 2010) Stabilizing Agriculture Markets Why We Need Food Reserves. Institute For Agriculture And Trade Policy (IATP)

Within the Sahel, there is increasing recognition that strategic food reserves could play an important role to regulate the market,<sup>207</sup> in order to improve food security.<sup>aa</sup> What is lacking is a vision of how such a system could be structured, particularly in light of WTO rules.<sup>208</sup>

***A major lesson of 2010 is that as long as no mechanism for market regulation and control of price volatility is in place, the current national systems of prevention and mitigation of food crises in the Sahel will remain undersized and ineffective.*** In face of high prices and market failures, investments in DRR, and potential use of social protection mechanisms, will also be limited.

The potential and limitations of food reserves to address price volatility in the Sahel need to be further analysed and tested at the regional, national and local levels. In the short term, capacity to promote food security could be greatly enhanced if national stocks could simply by maintaining adequate quantities of food in reserve for when the next food crisis occurs.

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<sup>aa</sup> The Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) has started discussions on security reserves, and organised a forum at the end of 2010 in West Africa on this subject. CILSS has established a food reserves information system for CILSS and ECOWAS states. The German Aid agency, GTZ organised a seminar in Africa in September on mechanisms to control price volatility, including regional, food reserves and insurance schemes. See Flament J. (June 2010)

### 3.4 What needs fixing with Early Warning Systems

Although various Early Warning Systems (EWS) in the Sahel provided a timely warning in late 2009 of a potential food crisis, the system did not generate a quick response. Beyond this critical failing, other significant issues need “fixing”, for EWS to be a more effective mechanism for reducing vulnerability.

#### **An outdated model for prediction**

A central function of the EWS is to predict if a food crisis will occur. However, it is impossible to predict a food crisis without an accurate model of what causes it. The vulnerability surveys of various EWS in the Sahel, for different livelihoods zones, are often heavily weighted in terms of amounts of cereals available per capita, as a way to estimate national food security. This bias in equating food security with cereal production fails to consider food access, or purchasing power of poor households, who buy 60% or more of their food on the market. Though total food availability is important to know, extrapolating the findings to the level of the individual assumes that a food crisis can be predicted on the basis of a deficit in food availability. HEA data strongly show that purchasing power (i.e. access) is a more reliable model for prediction.

#### **Weaknesses in the Assessment of Vulnerability**

National EWS have developed composite vulnerability indices for targeting geographic zones at risk. The data collection tools and variables assessed are very broad (rainfall, results of the agricultural season, income, markets, health/nutrition, etc.) Each of these data elements are scored as part of an index, whose total gives the level of vulnerability in a given area. Weighing up the relative importance of the variables is not a precise process. It is often heavily weighted by the more easily measured level of cereal production. Most EWS have yet to incorporate indicators of purchasing power that relate to the poorest households (i.e., terms of trade for: daily wages for a cereal grain; firewood bundles for grain; a chicken for grain). Many agencies, including donors have limited confidence in the national systems assessment of vulnerability.

#### **Inadequate differentiation between transitory crises and chronic food insecurity situations**

In the Sahel, the typical response to a food crisis remains an emergency relief intervention. Still little is done to deal with the underlying causes. Existing EWS have yet to develop a more diversified set of responses to address both transitory and structural aspects of food insecurity, and clearly identify the households most at risk. Monitoring of vulnerability often does not extend below the level of districts. The vulnerable “zones” therefore provides very little information on the situation at the local level (villages and nomad encampments). HEA show that there is an enormous disparity between the households at the village level (within a given village). The EWS data often does not make crucial distinctions in terms of the varying levels of vulnerability within a department, much less within a village. The lack such data on the situation of chronically vulnerable is a major failing. Crisis response based mostly on food deficit information can miss whole categories of people, the poorest, in great need in areas, where there is surplus production.

#### **Inadequate monitoring and feedback system**

EWS in many countries in the Sahel lack a monitoring and feedback process to strengthen accountability, transparency, and enable key actors along with communities served and decision-makers, to learn from experiences in order to improve the performance of the system. There is little knowledge of the impact of the interventions on the food security of target groups, whether the coverage of the response met the full need, and what happened with groups that were not targeted and did not benefit from a response.

## **Multiple EWS may create ambiguous overall results that fail to build consensus, credibility and a timely response**

One test of the Early Warning System's efficacy is its ability to predict things. However there are at least 3 different early warning systems in place in most countries (FEWS NET, WFP, FAO CILSS, and that of the national government). There is also often a difficult political environment in which EWS results are to be communicated, and concerns about the reliability of data. The weighting of the variables can be done differently by each system so that a whole range of different outcomes can result. An appeal for pre-emptive action may emerge, but without the kind of strong conviction that would persuade the donors to react. Instead a 'wait-and-see' attitude tends to prevail, for donors to become "more certain" about the scope and depth of need. By the time things are clear, it is often too late for pre-emptive action. In the scenario where the early-warning indicators are showing ambiguous trends, it would be better to have "triggers". These are indicators agreed to in advance, that, if met, will put into action a rapid response before it gets left too late.

### **Assessing vulnerability for marginalised categories of people on the move**

As a food crisis evolves, migration increases, starting often with pastoralists with their herds, then migrants seeking employment. If the situation becomes severe, women will leave their villages and move to the urban areas. The EWS in the Sahel have not yet developed effective methods for assessing vulnerability, and estimating needs that take into account highly mobile parts of the population

### **Promoting a community based EWS dimension within the context of decentralization**

Many sahelian countries have initiated a process of transferring political, administrative, and fiscal responsibilities from the national level to sub-national structures. However, there is still a need to enable EWS operations to be integrated into decentralized structures. It is easier and more effective to identify accurately the incidence and causes of food insecurity at the local level, working within a livelihoods framework. Working at the local level also enables identification and targeting of more diverse responses matched to community needs and capacities, both for short-term transitory interventions or longer-term actions for resilience.

### **Strengthening community level capacity and preparedness to act**

For early warning to be effective, communities should receive early warning information and know how to react to warnings. This requires systematic education and preparedness programmes. Few EWS actors appear to be supporting such programmes at the community level. Currently, local leaders and communities threatened by hazards have not been enabled to act in sufficient time and in an appropriate manner so as to reduce the possibility loss of their livelihoods and assets.

## 3.5 Doing Aid Better

### 3.5.1 Positive Changes in the approach to aid since 2005

Sahel Strategy of ECHO: The most striking positive change within the aid system in the Sahel is the development of a comprehensive “Sahel strategy” by ECHO in 2007. Learning the lessons from the 2005 crisis, ECHO’s fundamental objective is the efficient articulation of short and long term aid instruments to achieve the goal of a sustainable reduction in malnutrition rates. The Sahel strategy is based on the 3 pillars of;

- 1) Improving the knowledge base,
- 2) Support to pilot, innovative and replicable action to reduce under-nutrition,
- 3) Advocacy to raise awareness in government and development partners on nutrition issues.

ECHO’s funding is flexible enough to include support for post-crisis recovery, Water-Hygiene and Sanitation, cash transfer programming to the most vulnerable and DRR. ECHO has succeeded in convincing government and development partners in the region giving increased importance given to food and nutrition security<sup>209</sup>.

LRRD: The European Commission, one of the largest donors in the Sahel, created the “Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development” funding mechanism. This favours short and long term action, and harmonised responses based on joint analysis of chronic situations. While a welcome development, LRRD funds are quite limited.

WAHRF The British aid agency, DFID, has been a leader in supporting Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), as a response to chronic situations. It has supported limited DRR pilot programmes in the Sahel. Until very recently, DFID also had the West African Humanitarian Relief Fund (WAHRF) in place to ensure a rapid response.

CERF (United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund) was established to provide resources rapidly to assist people affected by natural disasters and conflicts. In 2010, CERF released funds for both Chad and Niger.

Cash transfer programming by UNICEF: UNICEF undertook its first ever cash transfer project in selected departments in Niger in 2010 as an alternative to the protection ration distributions.

Shift in thinking by OCHA: On a visit to the region in April 2010, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes spoke of the importance of tackling the root causes of the recurring food crisis in the area. *“The current food crisis, five years after the last emergency, shows that without joint action between development and humanitarian actors in support of responsible governments to deal with the structural issues, it will become increasingly difficult to contain these recurrent crises, which do so much to undermine economic and social progress in the Sahel<sup>210</sup>.”* This same perspective was echoed by his successor, Valerie Amos, who visited the Sahel in October 2010 and stated *“We now need to become good at building bridges between emergency relief and development<sup>211</sup>.”* While welcome, OCHA has yet much to do to systematically apply these ideas into practice.

### 3.5.2 Crisis Response in 2010: Too little, too late

Despite these encouraging changes, the overall response in the Sahel in 2010 was too little, too late. It failed to meet the standard of protecting livelihoods and assets of vulnerable households.

In his article in the *Lancet*, Sam Loewenburg quoted aid officials who said that widespread human suffering and loss of assets could have been reduced, if international donors had heeded early

warnings about the imminent crisis and sent more money earlier. The distributions of cash and supplementary food could have supported subsistence farmers and pastoralists to help them through the poor rains and high food prices that precipitated the crisis. Loewenburg quotes Guido Cornale, the head of the UNICEF mission to Niger: “Donors could have given early and in larger amounts, and the crisis would not have reached such a severe level as it has reached now”<sup>212</sup>.

According to Loewenburg, many of the same dynamics of 2005 were in play again. Just as in 2005, in its early stages, the hunger crisis in 2010 received almost no media coverage. There was one article in *The New York Times* focused on the coup in Niger, one report in *The Independent* on the UN's expanded appeal, and a 96-word mention in *The Guardian*. Loewenburg noted that aid agencies see the lack of media attention as directly affecting the amount of focus, and funds, that rich governments put towards a crisis. “Donors have reacted too slowly. Donors don't give to prevent. Donors wait to give until the disaster is already evident”, stated Cornale of UNICEF<sup>213</sup>.

However, Loewenburg notes that donors, while late, did respond earlier than in 2005. One example was the European Commission started early to raise awareness and mobilise support and in late 2009, made a first allocation of EUR 10 million to assist partners in mitigation and preparedness action. ECHO funding helped to ensure the large scale availability and distribution of special Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods, (RUTF) and facilitated large-scale use of direct cash transfers to the most vulnerable. In total the European Commission allocated EUR 108.9 million in humanitarian assistance to address the crisis<sup>214</sup>. The UK's DFID gave about \$24 million in assistance for Niger and the other Sahel countries. However, other major institutional donors such as Australia, Denmark, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden allocated relatively little, in light of their “fair share”.

While donors such as DFID, ECHO, OFDA and Spain all eventually provided significant funding for the Sahel, mainly for Niger, mobilising funds for western Chad and northern Mali was much more difficult. Overall, in mid-July, the UN revised Emergency Humanitarian Action Plan for Niger, amounting to USD 371 million, was only 38% funded<sup>215</sup>. Also in July, Mali had only received 23% of the funds requested<sup>216</sup>. This prevented aid agencies from engaging in the widespread preventive actions that could have helped prevent the crisis from getting worse. Loewenburg estimates that the funding needed to contain the catastrophe in its later stages was nearly double of what it was when the crisis started.

There were also significant delays in getting food aid to many affected areas particularly in Chad. Some problems lie in technical and logistical delays. In particular, although the USA has authorised \$50 million in food aid for Niger, this was purchased from its own domestic markets, and took 3 to 5 months to arrive. Over one third of the food aid had not yet arrived by August. Across the region, WFP distributions were delayed by several months. Distributions that took place were often inadequate in terms of covering rising needs. In Chad, requests for additional food stocks were only placed in March. This meant that much of it only arrived by the end of July or the start of August, too late for many. This slow response has also meant that rations had to be cut.

In summary, despite information available from early warning systems, the international community repeated mistakes made in previous food crises where a slow response resulted in deterioration of the situation, unnecessary suffering, a loss of assets by poor households in both agricultural and pastoral areas, a huge increase in the level of need and a significant rise in costs.

### 3.5.3 Quality of Aid

Reliance on in-kind food assistance: There was a continued over-reliance on in-kind food aid by the WFP and other donors in the Sahel. In 2010, food aid was still seen as the natural and automatic response to severe food insecurity in the Sahel. Despite the upsurge of cash-based programming, many officials at both national and regional levels appeared unfamiliar with the concept of protecting livelihoods assets. In-kind food aid deliveries, whether shipped from abroad or purchased within the region, still resulted in considerable delays for the people in need, including as a result of poor infrastructure and logistical problems.

Lack of attention to needs of Pastoralists: As in 2005, not enough attention was paid to the pastoral dimension of the crisis. The response in pastoral areas only involved a small proportion of donor assistance, and the response came too late. This can be explained by the difference in timing (the crisis in pastoral areas starts and finishes earlier), lack of available information, greater complexity of intervention in these areas and an inadequate level of interest and priority by governments and donors.

Targeting Emergency Aid: The amount of information and quality of analysis (such as gender disaggregated data and good market surveys) were not adequate to ensure resources were well targeted and sufficient to meet actual needs on the ground.

Weak Coordination of Aid delivery: The view of NGO staff consulted for this study was that coordination of aid delivery in the Sahel did not operate effectively enough to ensure the most rapid and appropriate distribution of aid. In particular, OCHA was responsible for identifying gaps and needs and coordinating government, UN and NGO efforts, but their staff capacity was considered inadequate in most of the affected countries, especially in Mali. In Niger, OCHA was present, but needed to reinforce its capacity in view of the crisis, to play a full and effective coordination role. In Chad, coordination mechanisms and resources were overwhelmingly concentrated in the east of the country. There was not sufficient *additional* capacity for addressing needs in western and central Chad to respond effectively to the food crisis.

Continued difficulties to integrate humanitarian and development work: In 2010, there was a lack of co-ordination between the government structures responsible for agricultural and pastoral policies and those responsible for emergency interventions. A mechanism did not exist to enable these actors to work together toward same goals, in a context of structural, recurring crisis. Often, the same institutions participated in both long-term development and emergency coordination bodies but not necessarily with the same representatives.

Linking long, medium and short term responses: The international humanitarian community has not reformed its aid approach sufficiently to respond to acute food needs in the context of chronic and long-term vulnerability. The linkages between short-term response and medium and longer-term measures to strengthen resilience to future shocks, while starting to change, remain inadequate. Currently, the aid system in the Sahel remains narrowly designed to only focus on immediate needs, not long-term risk reduction. Key instruments such as Early Warning Systems, National Grain Reserves and the Food Aid Charter, are all geared primarily toward emergency responses. The aid structure continues to support governments with post-crisis interventions that help people *to cope* after disaster, rather than prevention and mitigation measures to help people *build resilience* to a future crisis. There is still insufficient integration to bridge the humanitarian-development divide and makes safety net (social protection) programming more developmental rather than only just humanitarian.

Insufficient focus on DRR: A major example of this inadequate linkage is that the EU, the world's largest aid donor, until 2009 lacked a strategic framework, and a common voice, to guide its DRR aid support to the Sahel. Until recently, EU action on DRR was assessed as non-strategic as it mainly followed an *ad hoc* project/programme approach and was often uncoordinated and inadequate. While the Hyogo Framework provides harmonised DRR guidance, it is not readily usable for development cooperation purposes. EU's approach also insufficiently *linked DRR and climate change*. The benefits and synergies of linking DRR and adaptation were not systematically identified and capitalised upon<sup>217</sup>. While the EU now has a DRR policy, much must be done to apply it.

Generating a sense of ownership of aid supported programmes: A number of programs have been proposed by funders, but lack a true commitment by government. This causes difficulties in effective implementation. The challenge for improving the quality of aid is how to integrate the current short term project approach to longer term 5 year programmes within the budget support mechanism, and ensure accountability for results by better monitoring and tracking what is given to budget support. There is a need to better identify and support "champions" within the government structure with the political clout to take forward innovative approaches.

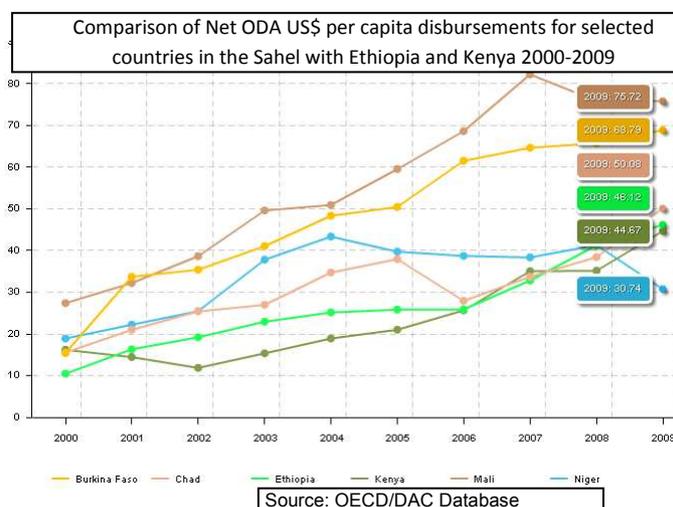
Inadequate support for strengthening the administrative and institutional capacity of government: Lack of support for decentralisation affects the quality and sustainability of aid programs.

Continued focus of aid for Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) on general economic growth: The existing national Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) in the Sahel, are heavily influenced by the neo-liberal development aid paradigm. They show little change since they were reviewed in *Beyond Any Drought*. The PRS policies in Niger failed to achieve its aims. Poverty levels had increased. In the new 2008-2012 PRS of Niger, there are some significant changes. These are: inclusion national goals to reduce malnutrition; reduce risk through climate change adaptation; reduce the gap between the rich and poor for more equitable development; an improved identification of most vulnerable population categories; social protection for the most vulnerable families, and getting population growth under control. However, the PRS still is weak in providing concrete and comprehensive strategies for how to address vulnerability and achieve these goals<sup>218</sup>. The PRS is still essentially oriented to neo-liberal principles of competitive advantage, and modernising production in favoured areas, generating exports, in order to generate 6% annual economic growth.

### 5.3.4 Volume or Quantity of Aid in the Sahel

The table below shows the trends in Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) per capita for Niger, Mali, Burkina and Chad. It also enables comparison with the per capita assistance to Ethiopia (which has a major social protection program) and Kenya.

The overall trend is one of increasing per capital aid to all countries, except for a significant reduction in Niger after 2008. Mali and Burkina have the highest rates of per capita aid, at \$77.72 and \$68.70 respectively. Chad has significantly less per capital aid at \$50.08, which is a major concern, because most of this aid is being used to finance the major crisis in the Eastern part of Chad. Aid flow data is often complex because of emergencies, debt relief etc. This data



has not been assessed in depth but shows the major trends.

Despite modest increases in ODA per capita, Martin Leach, Head of Africa Conflict and Humanitarian Unit at DFID, acknowledges that long-term development and agricultural assistance to the Sahel region is still paltry<sup>219</sup>. In addition, funding for DRR and nutrition is also inadequate.

Lack of Dedicated funding for DRR: This inadequacy of aid funding is particularly evident for DRR. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), just 0.14 per cent of total overseas aid globally went specifically to DRR in 2007. DRR remains small scale in the Sahel. There is as yet no coordinated support for contingency planning to reduce risk, and prevent disasters, in long-term policies and programmes. Existing programmes demonstrate the value of DRR, but these generally remain pilot schemes, supported by NGOs, not matching the scale of the challenge. Generally, donor support in the Sahel is split between two 'pots'. The first is for emergency funding which is short-term in implementation and impact. The second pot is longer-term development. This often is used for government services such as education, health, and infrastructure development. DRR falls between the two. This is a problem not unique to the Sahel. Worldwide, 7.5 per cent of all aid goes to humanitarian relief. Of this, less than 2 per cent goes to DRR. Without dedicated funding for DRR, the money has to be squeezed out of emergency pots. This has a number of consequences. Firstly, disaster response and DRR are too often not linked with development projects, even when humanitarian needs and chronic poverty are intertwined. Secondly, agencies are reluctant to invest in DRR with only the short-term funding that humanitarian donors provide.

Underfunding for Nutrition: A similar problem exists for nutrition. Conventionally, funding treatment for acute malnutrition during crises comes out of the humanitarian pot, which tends to be short term. Development funding related to nutrition often goes only to the Ministry of Health, where nutrition is often a low priority. There is often no dedicated funding in national budgets for addressing malnutrition. With ECHO's Sahel strategy, this is starting to change, but the fundamental issue of how to fund a multi-sectoral, comprehensive integrated approach to nutrition is a major flaw in the current architecture of aid in the Sahel.

Agro-ecological agriculture, is yet another underfunded theme. Only 14 per cent of the projects supported by the EU's €1bn commitment on food security projects for vulnerable farmers in 2009, included an agro-ecological component, while 51 per cent included agro-chemicals<sup>220</sup>. Donors currently spend twice as much on emergency response efforts as they do on agriculture. However, preventing crop failure via proactive agricultural investment is estimated to cost about one-fifteenth as much per person as sending food aid to hungry people, once local farm production collapses<sup>221</sup>. Farmers living on marginal lands have been largely neglected, as have sustainable agriculture strategies.

Finally, according to many people interviewed for this study, another challenge relates to the absorptive capacity of national governments, and how to engendering a true sense of national ownership of major new initiatives, in accordance to the Paris declaration of aid effectiveness. This is coupled with the issues of effective governance, and weak institutional capacity at both national and decentralised levels of government. While it is tempting to propose, as Frederick Mousseau does in "*Sahel: A Prisoner of Starvation?*" for a "Marshall Plan" for the Sahel, the issues related to governance, ownership and absorptive capacity cannot be put aside, despite the urgent need.

### 3.6 Multi-stakeholder Perspectives: Challenges to Overcome

In the same workshops organised in Niamey and N’Djaména, a cross section of actors from international and national NGOs, University, UN agencies and the government identified the failures of aid and the major challenges to overcome to ensure food and nutrition security. The themes selected for deeper analysis above emerged from these workshops and responses of interviews with over 70 people. The tables below summarize the key points for each major issue:

ISSUES	Failures of aid and Major Challenges to Overcome	
	Niger	Chad
<b>Integration of humanitarian assistance and social protection with long term development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donor agencies and funders policies still do not facilitate effective integration of humanitarian response and long term development.</li> <li>• There is still too much of a “sectorial” approach rather than a integrated approach to overcoming the challenges of ensuring food security and preventing food crises</li> <li>• Inadequate synergy and coherence of actions and policies among actors</li> <li>• Lack of a national policy for social protection in the rural areas</li> <li>• National policy of Food Security focused too much on emergency (food aid) and not enough on prevention, and risk reduction</li> <li>• Targeting of emergency assistance based on social groups (i.e. all children under 5 and pregnant mothers) of UNICEF is not economical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low number of donors present in Chad (EU, AFD-France, US-AID, World Bank, Bank of African Development Bank, IFAD, Banque Islamique de Developpement, UN agencies</li> <li>• Lack of a policy and strategy for social protection</li> <li>• Volume of aid is not adequate considering huge need in Chad</li> <li>• Aid instruments and protocols are not not sufficiently flexible to address livelihood security and long term reduction of risk as well as emergency response</li> <li>• Lack of long term, continuous funding available for DRR and longer term development</li> <li>• Insufficient coordination between the different funding strategies (emergency and longer term recovery/development</li> </ul>

Failures of aid and Major Challenges to Overcome		
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
Reducing the Vulnerability of Pastoralists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is <b>no livestock policy in the strategy for Rural Development (SDR)</b> in Niger to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. ways to create positive synergy between agriculture/livestock systems of production</li> <li>ii. marketing system for animals and animal products</li> <li>iii. application of land tenure code in pastoral areas</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Lack of sufficient action research and studies</b> to better understand pastoral systems, the structural causes of vulnerability, and how poorer households are affected, in the pastoral areas.</li> <li>• The <b>relevance and effectiveness of many existing programmes is poor</b></li> <li>• <b>Insufficient systems to reduce risk</b> and help make livestock production system sustainable; production and conservation of fodder; fodder banks</li> <li>• Program <b>work with pastoralists is not sufficiently integrated</b> (inter-sectorial) and does not sufficiently consider gender issues</li> <li>• <b>Inadequate financial services</b> (savings and credit) available to pastoralists</li> <li>• More work required to <b>change attitudes and behaviours for livestock management</b> (i.e. destocking)</li> <li>• <b>Improve basic social services</b> (health and education) in pastoral areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Poor integration of the data of vulnerability of pastoralists</b> households into information systems; Vulnerability surveys are weak</li> <li>• <b>Lack of effective livelihood analytical tools</b> to determine underlying problems</li> <li>• Strengthen analytical tools for targeting in restocking program</li> <li>• Lack of a <b>strategy to strengthen marketing</b> of livestock in regional markets</li> <li>• <b>Need to improve the awareness of major actors on the problematic of pastoralism;</b> way of life, effective intervention strategies, prioritisation of needs</li> <li>• <b>Need to strengthen advocacy capacity of pastoralists</b> to raise awareness and influence decisions relating to problems</li> <li>• Insufficient consideration to address basic needs (health and education)</li> <li>• Insufficient measures to <b>reinforce the mobility of pastoral communities</b> as a way to reduce risk in public policies (also as a way to address population pressure, conflicts, management of material resources)</li> <li>• Increase <b>length and amount of program financing (beyond 5 years)</b></li> <li>• Accept a <b>learning process, rather than rigid blueprint</b> approach to project design for initiatives such as re-stocking of herds</li> <li>• Need to <b>strengthen the tools for quick prevention and humanitarian response</b></li> </ul>

Failures of aid and Major Challenges to Overcome		
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
Contribution of the Early Warning System (EWS) and response to address vulnerability (by preventing and managing a food crisis and other disasters )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence of politics affects correct application of technical EWS data</li> <li>• SCAP-RU and OSV are not yet established across all of Niger</li> <li>• The articulation between SCAP-RU/OSV with the national level EWS is weak</li> <li>• Continued need to improve capacity to improve reliability of statistics and analysis for EWS</li> <li>• Niger EWS has key gaps in its approach to identifying vulnerability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Livelihoods in pastoral zones; mobility of transhumance</li> <li>ii. Urban and peri-urban areas</li> <li>iii. Nutritional dimension</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Integrate access, not availability to food</li> <li>• Need to harmonise targeting criteria</li> <li>• EWS data is still not early enough, and does not generate an early response and support plan</li> <li>• Inadequate communication of EWS data and support to communities to take local action (i.e. related to cereal banks)</li> <li>• Inadequate food stocks and reserves at national and community level to address food crises</li> <li>• Inadequate food security data base, reference to a baseline year, to enable scientific targeting</li> <li>• Information produced by the EWS does not respond to the specific needs of major actors</li> <li>• EWS still has difficulty articulating its agricultural deficit (availability) information with vulnerability which more affected by purchasing power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of medium and long term financing for agencies working with vulnerable populations as the immediate crisis ends</li> <li>• Lack of consensus on a systematic methodology to undertake targeting of assistance (except for nutrition, developed by UNICEF)</li> <li>• Lack of diversity of the response interventions (type- i.e. beyond food aid) and modality of intervention</li> <li>• Problems with administrative boundaries; there are both old and new cantons, which overlap</li> <li>• Lack of food security and early warning mechanisms at the local and commune levels</li> <li>• Lack of a strategy for DRR</li> <li>• Lack of a national contingency strategy which guides and strengthens mechanisms for collaboration between partners</li> <li>• Poor coordination to achieve synergy and complementarity of interventions of government and partners</li> </ul>

Failures of aid and Major Challenges to Overcome		
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
<p><b>Contribution of action research and learning initiatives , to create an evidence base for advocacy to promote innovations for humanitarian or development work</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many initiatives remain at the pilot stage and do not have sufficient funding and supportive policies to be scaled up</li> <li>• There is a need to give more emphasis on an academic or scientific approach in order to make pilot programmes more relevant to policy persuasive and useful for advocacy</li> <li>• It is difficult to harmonise the needs for research with the need for practical operation of programmes, and managing the risks to the population</li> </ul>	<p>Weak overall activity and support for action research and joint learning activities in the context of Chad</p>
Failures of aid and Major Challenges to Overcome		
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
<p><b>Contribution of DRR and Climate Change Adaptation and Water/Sanitation/ Hygiene programmes to reduce vulnerability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DRR has not yet become a national priority. The DRR platform is not functional and there is no DRR national strategy or funding in place</li> <li>• Lack of a federal structure responsible for managing all types of risk, not only food security</li> <li>• Niger government is waiting for funding before taking action on DRR and climate change</li> <li>• The Ministry of Environment and Forestry is not the appropriate institution to address the many aspects of climate change adaptation</li> <li>• There is a lack of experience and knowledge of how to systematically integrate DRR into existing policies, programmes of development across sectors</li> <li>• Achieving institutional coordination across ministries and with sectors for DRR and Climate Change adaptation is a major challenge</li> <li>• Long term funding (10 years) required to achieve optimal resilience against disasters at the national and household levels is very difficult to mobilise.</li> <li>• More operational research is required to develop the evidence base for how to effectively strengthen resilience and do effective DRR (for advocacy)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great difficulty in implementing existing sectorial priorities related to DRR, and Climate change</li> <li>• Lack of a national strategy on DRR</li> <li>• Water Hygiene and Sanitation sector does not sufficiently address the needs of most vulnerable zone where food and nutrition insecurity is high</li> </ul>

	Failures of aid and Major Challenges to Overcome	
ISSUES	Niger	Chad
<b>Inter-agency collaboration and coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was insufficient official communication during the crisis. The responsible structure, the CIC was not effective</li> <li>• There was insufficient coordination between:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the various actors using cash</li> <li>ii. members within the Emergency Capacity building network</li> <li>iii. the government SAP (Early Warning System) and the CCA (<i>Coordination de Crise Alimentaire</i>, the decision making body for managing the food crisis</li> <li>iv. national and regional/local levels</li> <li>v. the CCA/SAP and the Direction for Nutrition and Ministry of Health (lack of health/nutrition expertise</li> </ol> </li> <li>• NGOs did not all give information to the CCA for coordination and targeting.</li> <li>• continued tendency for parallel systems and confused roles between the government and the UN agencies, instead of complementarity</li> <li>• Tension/misunderstanding between the WFP and the CCA</li> <li>• Internal tensions within the UN agencies contributed to problems</li> <li>• There are too many tools and methods used sectorially and without clear strategic direction; there is not often a holistic analysis of problems (i.e with pastoralism)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of turnover in Ministries</li> <li>• Low level of government infrastructure</li> <li>• Low level of transparency in government in elaborating and implementing policies</li> <li>• Decentralisation and devolution of services to regions and districts, and local level capacity often very inadequate to permit coordination at local level</li> </ul>

## 4 Pathways to Resilience: An adapted approach to aid for the Sahel

The review of the positive changes and continuing challenges in the Sahel, since 2005, in overcoming chronic food and nutrition insecurity show the pathways to “resilience” in the Sahel. But what precisely is resilience and how is it relevant to a conceptual framework for overcoming the roots causes of vulnerability?

Although people intuitively know that resilience has to do with resisting or coming back from harm, the term is quite abstract. It is applied in different ways. An early use of the resilience concept appears is within the field of ecology, where it often meant “a return to a previous state”.

More recently, in the literature on ecosystems and societies (and increasingly at the household and community levels), resilience indicates the potential, and often the desirability, of successfully adapting to changed circumstances by developing a *new* state. Thus, a more robust concept of resilience, when applied to social systems, includes resistance to a shock, recovery, but also an element of adaptation and transformational change. In this sense, resilience is a composite concept. It incorporates environmental, social, economic, political, demographic, cultural, and gender factors, in describing the capacity to recover, adapt and grow in the wake of periodic shocks<sup>222</sup>.

Resilience serves as an umbrella concept for those factors that mediate between changing climatic, environmental, political or economic conditions, on the one hand, and human capabilities and assets to cope with, take advantage of, or adapt to, those conditions, on the other hand<sup>223</sup>. The concept of resilience is already used within the humanitarian, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and development literature. Most often, resilience is expressed as the opposite side of the coin to vulnerability. “Increasing resilience” indicates people have become “less vulnerable” to shocks.

However, both analytically and pragmatically, resilience is becoming a more useful focus than vulnerability. Vulnerability refers to the *inability* of people to avoid, cope with or recover from the harmful impacts of hazards that disrupt their lives and that are beyond their immediate control. Vulnerability is a deficit concept<sup>224</sup>. Analysis is focused on what is not working. It arises from a hazards/risk paradigm which tends to focus on the outcomes of extreme events. Vulnerability is understood as a function of exposure and susceptibility to a hazard.

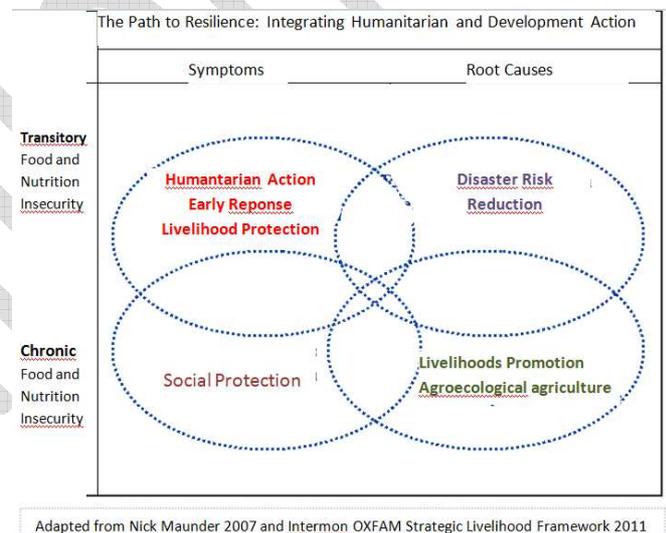
In practice, hazards are short term events, such as a flood, a locust invasion, or a drought. In the Sahel, hazards are primarily a trigger that accelerates an existing structural shift. They reveal (and exacerbate) inherent chronic vulnerability, but tend to obscure the long-term structural changes (i.e., economy, trade, environment, population, the market, and governance) that cause it. The hazards paradigm, to which vulnerability is closely linked, subtly tends to strengthen the public perception that human suffering is caused by the hazard itself, rather than on complex underlying social and political conditions.

In contrast, resilience is a positive concept. More effectively than vulnerability, resilience accommodates the concept of people’s positive adaptive capacity. It can facilitate analysis and better prescribe action on how to address the root causes of vulnerability. Resilience, as described here, is conducive to the “entitlements” approach, based on the work of Amartya Sen<sup>225</sup>, which focuses on the different resources that humans can command in a society, using all the rights and opportunities they have to improve their livelihoods. According to Sen, entitlements are composed of what a person or household *owns*, and that which can be obtained by *exchanging* some of what is owned, for other commodities or services.

**Resilience is decreased** when an individual's or household's entitlements are diminished. This can occur in several ways: a) reduction in what is owned (i.e. crops fail, livestock die) b) an adverse shift in terms of exchange (food prices increase, wages fall, asset prices fall) c) a reduction in transfer of resources (remittances, gifts, social transfers). As resilience declines, a progressively smaller external event can cause a crisis. Low resilience households may seem to maintain an ability to generate resources required for food security but a very minor shock will often cause the livelihood system to exceed a critical threshold and fall into food insecurity. **Resilience can be increased** by adaptive livelihood strategies that strengthen or diversify "entitlements" through expansion of the range of productive assets, or by improving the terms of exchange, or by increasing the transfer of resources.

Linking the concept of resilience with the entitlements approach at the household level is particularly pertinent in the analysis of food security. It helps illuminate key issues such as how to improve access to food (i.e. purchasing power) by poorer households, how to reduce risk, and the role of transfer of resources (including humanitarian aid, social transfers) in an integrated system. This requires developing an understanding of where resilience resides in the system, and when and how it can be lost or gained, which means identifying the points in the household food system where interventions can increase the resilience to future hazards<sup>226</sup>.

In summary, early warning seeks to predict the occurrence of a crisis, and vulnerability seeks only to identify which households are least able to cope with adverse effects. This limits the focus only to susceptibility to harm. Resilience, on the other hand, seeks to assess the capacity and mechanisms that vulnerable households use to adapt to the new conditions generated by a crisis, in order to maintain food security<sup>227</sup>. Assessing resilience and adaptive capacity provides better guidance on where to direct resources to build on existing strengths, or open new areas of support, for prevention and mitigation of shocks, and to sustain improved well being. Resilience, therefore, makes safety net programming more developmental than only just humanitarian<sup>228</sup>. (graphic)



The lessons of 2005 and 2010 indicate that effective action to achieve resilience requires addressing both acute dimensions of a food crisis, (through early humanitarian action, preparedness and disaster risk reduction), while also attacking the longer term chronic aspects, through social protection and livelihoods promotion. DRR actions focus on early warning, and preventing or mitigating shocks. The aim is to protect livelihoods. This is not sufficient to address the longer term, structural causes of chronic food and nutrition insecurity. This requires investing in social protection measures and appropriate forms of livelihood promotion. As indicated in the evidence base, social protection measures can also contribute to increasing the assets of poor households, by indirect effects that promote livelihoods.

Adopting a resilience-based approach to the management of food systems requires developing a framework for analysing resilience<sup>229</sup>. It requires enabling people to discover how their livelihood/food access system might be made more resilient to shocks, and how to renew or reorganize their system, should such shocks occur. In summary, a holistic conception of resilience provides the framework to guide a progressive, long term, multi-sectoral intervention process which integrates the work the humanitarian, risk reduction, climate change adaptation and development fields, addressing both acute and chronic dimensions of food insecurity.

## 5 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusions

#### 5.1.1 Change is happening but outdated paradigms continue to influence action

Many high level decision makers in the Sahel, within CILSS, governments and some donor agencies (ECHO is the striking exception), still consider chronic high levels of food and nutrition insecurity in the Sahel as “normal” and somehow acceptable. If judged by actions, there is an implicit lack of recognition that the Sahel is in the throes of a chronic, (but silent emergency). This undermines the vigorous steps needed to address it.

The conceptual framework of the “relief to development” continuum, which places “crisis” at one end and “normality” at the other, while changing, still dominates in the Sahel. This artificially separates the acute/temporary dimensions of food crises from the chronic structural dimensions. The tools and actions of humanitarian assistance are still heavily influenced by rapid onset types of disasters. There is progress, but changes in developing flexible, fully resourced, integrated funding instruments (similar to the LRRD funds of the EU) to address chronic food and nutrition is inadequate.

#### 5.1.2 Early Warning Systems still focused mostly on food availability

Early Warning Systems in the Sahel, despite major limitations and weaknesses, did sound the alarm late in 2009 in all countries. For various reasons, linked to both political factors and concern about the reliability of the data, the alerts did not mobilise an early response. There is still much to be done to engage communities directly in a decentralised version of the early warning system, shift the dominant focus of food availability of EWS to fully integrate purchasing power of vulnerable households, particularly for pastoralists and urban migrants.

#### 5.1.3 Failure to protect livelihoods and assets

The response from governments, most donors, UN agencies and NGOs in 2010, while improved, was collectively too late and inadequate to deal with the scale of the crisis. A notable exemption was ECHO who mobilised significant resources in late 2009, and ensured the large scale availability and distribution of special Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods to support a campaign, unprecedented in scope, of effective treatment of severe acute malnutrition, which saved tens of thousands of lives. However, there is no escape from the sombre conclusion that the collective humanitarian effort, by not acting earlier with greater resources, failed to prevent enormous human suffering. Many vulnerable households, men and women lost most of their productive assets, went into debt, and slipped further down into the downward spiral of chronic hunger. An enormous, long term (and expensive) aid effort is now essential for recovery, and to address the needs of the greater numbers of people who have become chronically food insecure. The level of preparedness for the crisis of 2009-10 was inadequate, particularly in Chad.

#### 5.1.4 Waiting for certainty

There is a continued major failing within the humanitarian system in the Sahel for a “fail safe” mechanism to link early warning with a clear, strategic response, leading to immediate multi-actor contingency planning and mobilisation of resources. The concern on the part of both government, the UN and many donors to “be more certain” about the scope and depth of a looming food crisis, based on perhaps unreliable “probable” early warning data, before taking responsibility for mobilising significant resources, is a major flaw in the system. This clearly shifts the risks and consequences of inaction on millions of the poorest people in the Sahel, who can ill afford more risk. The calculus of “certainty” must change. A clear early warning should trigger an immediate

response. Growing clarity and certainty, over time, would play a role not in deciding whether to act, but in adjusting the response, as more information becomes available. The need to get an early response mechanism working properly is one of the most urgent changes that required. Failing this, most of the investment made in recovery and longer term development efforts to strengthen livelihoods, and reduce risk will be lost when the next major shock occurs.

### 5.1.5 Shift to cash based programming gathering momentum, but still insufficient

Despite significant progress, cash transfers and vouchers were under-utilised. In kind food aid deliveries, whether shipped from abroad or purchased within the region, resulted in considerable delays for the people in need, because of poor infrastructure and logistical problems. The many examples of cash transfer programming provide evidence of the potential in the Sahel to be an effective tool in responding to food crises. This method can also address the structural factors underlying poverty and vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity. For the poorest households, regular and predictable cash transfers have been shown to play a vital role in building a long term and sustainable level of resilience to face shocks, and to escape the hunger and poverty trap. Yet, the humanitarian response, particularly the WFP and governments, relied mostly on in-kind food aid.

### 5.1.6 Agro-ecological agriculture the key to resilience for small scale farming in marginal areas

Agro-ecology is clearly the appropriate paradigm for small scale agricultural production in risk prone areas of the Sahel. There is extensively documented evidence in the Sahel, that agro-ecological techniques such as agro-forestry (FMNR), integration of livestock, soil and water conservation, if judiciously combined, and applied in a way that supports women, including control over productive assets, can achieving multiple benefits. These include strengthened resilience of livelihoods, sustainable increases in yields, regeneration of the natural resource base, increased income and improved household food security. Complementary techniques that also reduce risk are improved storage, dry season gardening, microcredit (for women), and provision of improved short cycle seeds.

### 5.1.7 Limits of agriculture to address food insecurity of poorer households

The evidence in Niger suggests that agro-ecological techniques may be limited in enabling the poorest households, (who may constitute a third of the population, depending on the context) to improve their food and nutrition security. A well designed needs assessment that takes into account significant differences in livelihoods strategies and productive assets between different socioeconomic categories of households is essential to determine to what extent agro-ecological agriculture can benefit poorer households, or if alternative, targeted support for livelihood strategies of the poorest is indicated.

### 5.1.8 Dual track strategies essential to support livelihoods and resilience

The Household Economy Assessments across the Sahel indicate a striking and growing difference in productive assets and wealth between the poorer households, on the one hand, and the better off households on the other. This has enormous implications both for targeting during humanitarian responses and for design of DRR and livelihood promotion (development) programmes, (whether through agroecology or other initiatives) and for strengthening overall resilience. This can be presented visually:



Differential livelihood support strategies are needed to support households with lower resilience. Social protection programmes will likely be needed for the most chronically food insecure households. In the absence of a much more informed analysis, and a differentiated process of supporting livelihoods, there is a high risk of benefitting the better off households only, and leaving the poorest households as chronically food insecure as before.

#### **5.1.9 Progress in promoting DRR but challenge to mainstream nationally**

Considerable progress has been made in developing disaster risk reduction programming in the Sahel since 2005, most initiated by international agencies, at the community level. The evidence suggests that DRR can generate considerable benefits enabling vulnerable households to become more resilient, diversify and protect their assets, strengthen their support networks, reinforce local coping mechanisms, and avoid the need to resort to negative coping strategies such as debt and early sale of grain to get cash. Despite these positive benefits, most vulnerable families were not yet at a point of sufficient resilience to face the 2010 crisis without external support. There had not been time to build up sufficient physical assets, knowledge, skills and networks. The conclusion is that DRR, if limited at the community level, is insufficient to reduce high levels of vulnerability. Overcoming chronic food insecurity, requires strong DRR policy frameworks at a national level, coordinated across government ministries, coupled with decentralisation to district and local levels, as well as more effective partnerships between the government and civil society. Above all, DRR must help ensure early effective response at all levels to protect livelihoods and assets if there is a crisis alert.

#### **5.1.10 Social Protection essential for Overcoming Chronic Food Insecurity**

Since 2005, there is increasing interest in social protection in the Sahel. This is reflected in the existence of a number of pilot schemes involving mostly cash transfers, to targeted households. A growing proportion of chronically food insecure households are trapped in a downward spiral of debt and loss of assets. The existing growth oriented development policies, reflected in the national Poverty Reduction strategies completely by-pass them. Large scale development interventions are not “a rising tide that lifts all boats”. Instead, the numbers of chronically food insecure households is increasing, their noses barely above water, and vulnerable to the slightest ripple. The small scale cash transfer schemes by NGOs during the lean season provide strong evidence that national wide social protection schemes enable vulnerable households to recover from shocks, and increase resilience. In addition, it appears social protection can also promote livelihoods and reduce poverty. Without social protection, highly vulnerable households cannot escape the hunger trap. The chronic food insecurity crisis will continue.

#### **5.1.11 RUTF to the Rescue, but enormous challenges to end the crisis of child malnutrition**

A brutal indicator of the chronic food insecurity crisis in the Sahel is the appallingly high levels of acute child malnutrition. Over 300,000 children die in the Sahel, every year, from malnutrition related causes. In face of this, there can be no complacency, no sense of normalcy, as the acute phase of a crisis ends with the return of the rains. Instead, a continued drive, consisting of a major integrated humanitarian/development response, is essential to build on existing efforts to confront the chronic underpinnings of the nutritional crisis. It is difficult to imagine the scale of human tragedy if the use of RUTF had not become accepted and widely available after 2004. It enabled the treatment of children with severe acute malnutrition in 2005, as well as the 313,000 children (in Niger alone) in 2010, as well as an average of 300,000 children in Burkina, Mali, Niger and Chad, affected with SAM every year. Operational research is finding ways to prevent and treat Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and stunting. However, the technical knowledge of what is necessary to end child undernutrition is already clear. What is most needed is strengthened strategic leadership, and determination, to make nutrition an inter-ministerial, high level national priority throughout the Sahel. The HEA and Cost of Diet studies show the high correlation between poverty and child

malnutrition. If a campaign to end the nutrition crisis could succeed, it is likely that the chronic food insecurity would largely be resolved also.

#### **5.1.13 The approach to aid in the Sahel:**

The aid architecture and funding mechanisms in the Sahel have improved since 2005. Despite this progress, the reforms and innovations in the aid approach in 2010 proved inadequate to prevent or mitigate the food crisis. All across the Sahel, millions of vulnerable households lost productive assets, and fell deeper into debt. The livelihoods of many have been irretrievably damaged. Recovery will be an immense challenge, requiring long term, flexible funding. But this investment, even if made, will largely be lost if a new food crisis, perhaps this time sparked by high prices, hits the Sahel before significant recovery is achieved. The overarching priority (aside from nutrition) is to dramatically increase the capacity and mechanisms for early, adequate response, for when the next crisis hits. Without this, other efforts will be wasted or ineffective, and the hunger cycle will continue.

#### **5.1.14 Good governance and absorptive capacity for increased aid**

Staff members of donor and UN agencies interviewed for this report were highly committed and informed individuals. They face major challenges, particularly in fragile states such as Chad, where major governance issues constrain the capacity of the state to absorb much higher levels of funding effectively. And yet, resolving the current food insecurity crisis in the Sahel requires major new funding for nutrition, DRR, Social Protection, Agroecological agriculture, food reserves, and strengthening state institutions. To meet this challenge, the donor and UN agencies themselves need additional staff and leadership capacity. This is particularly true for OCHA, which has a pivotal coordination role to play, but is understaffed within the region, and not even fully present in Mali. Realistically, it will take time to negotiate changes in policies and priorities, in keeping with the Paris declaration on aid effectiveness, while ensuring a sense of ownership by government. In the short term, the priority for donors is to ensure that credible government proposals to reduce malnutrition, mainstream DRR, or initiate social protection should receive funding.

#### **5.1.15 Market Failures and Price Volatility**

The review of the 2010 food crisis, particularly in Chad, but also in Mali and Niger indicated that cashed based safety nets and food aid were not sufficient to address highly escalating food prices, particularly in remote areas. The lack of infrastructure, minimum purchasing power and other factors impeded markets from ensuring food is available. In Chad, national level of food reserves was highly inadequate even to meet the emergency needs. The poorest households did not have access to subsidized food. Until donors, the UN agencies, CILSS and governments in the Sahel are able to define a new, acceptable regulatory mechanism to control price volatility, address major market failures, it is difficult to envisage an end to the chronic crisis of food insecurity in the Sahel.

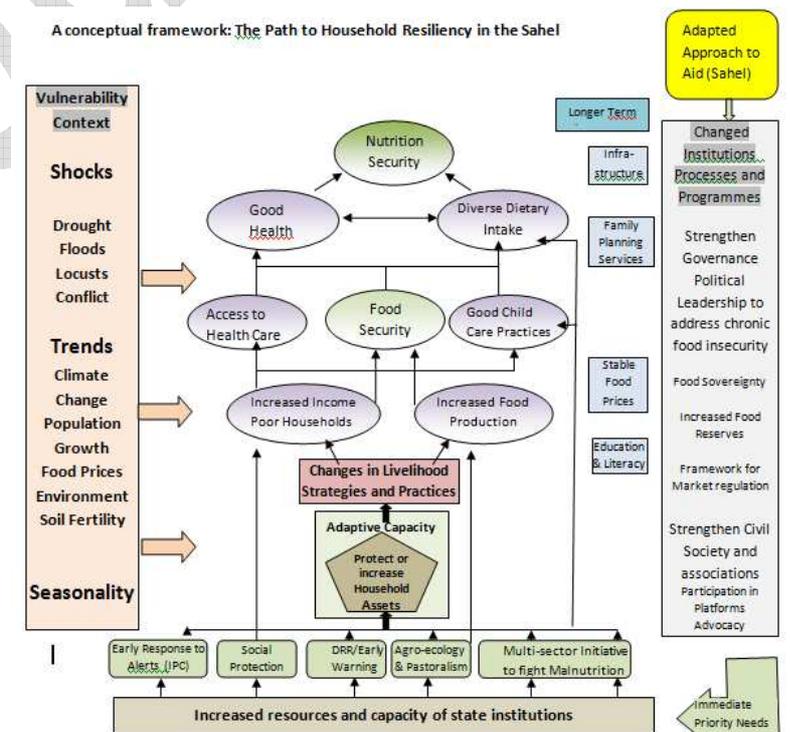
## **5.2 Five Priority Recommendations for starting down the path to resilience**

In light of these conclusions, what are the strategic “entry points” or pathways to resiliency in the Sahel? While this depends on the context of each country, this study proposes the five priorities for immediate action at the national and regional levels:

1. **Strengthen Preparedness and Early Response:** Apply the Cadre Harmonisé Bonifié (IPC) in the Sahel. Define specific early alert triggers, which if reached, will generate an immediate strategic response, coordinated by OCHA for multi-actor operational contingency planning, and mobilisation of resources. The standard of performance is to prevent or mitigate a livelihood crisis and loss of assets through early actions such as increasing reserves of cereal or fodder banks, de-stocking, cash transfer programming.

2. **Design national policies and implement programmes for social protection that meet the needs of most vulnerable people, especially those of poorer households.** Social protection measures can not only meet urgent humanitarian needs but play a part in strengthening resilience, by enabling the very poor to acquire assets.
3. **Boost rural livelihoods in marginal or degraded agricultural areas through sustainable intensification of food production using agro-ecological techniques, and in pastoral areas, through support for animal health, production, and marketing:** New public investments in agriculture emphasizing agro-ecological approaches and livestock production in pastoral areas are essential to reducing chronic food insecurity, and help vulnerable households adapt to climate change, and regenerate the natural resource base.
4. **Develop and apply a regional DRR strategy in the Sahel:** Given the risk that climate change, repeated drought, and other hazards in the Sahel pose to long term development programmes, food and nutrition security, DRR needs to be better integrated into all relevant policies and programmes, in accordance with 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action and to better achieve the MDGs.
5. **Achieve sustainable reduction in level of acute malnutrition:** This is probably the most compelling goal that could mobilise change across many institutional fronts. Of all the major initiatives required, child malnutrition is likely most conducive to generate political will within governments and compassion within the donor community. It is the problem with the most potential to further change the aid paradigm in favour of longer term flexible funding that bridges the humanitarian and development divide. The multi-dimensional aspects of malnutrition will require cross sectoral, coordinated investments in livelihood promotion, sustainable food production, social protection, DRR, health, and water, hygiene and sanitation.

These recommendations are the “immediate priority” actions that will have an immediate impact in addressing the chronic dimensions of food insecurity in the Sahel. They are presented in the graphic (see below) “Pathways to Resilience”. This is a more comprehensive conceptual framework of what is required to address the structural roots of vulnerability. The focus is on the household level and on the various assets (physical, natural resources, social, financial, human) used in developing livelihoods strategies. **The twin track** to resilience is to provide direct support through social protection measures to ensure adequate income to meet basic needs, while providing support for DRR and development of the productive sectors such as agriculture and pastoralism for livelihood promotion. The more diversified and greater the assets, the stronger becomes the adaptive capacity (and resilience) of the household.



This framework places “nutrition security” at the apex of the pathways to resilience. As the graphic illustrates, reducing malnutrition requires positive changes in livelihoods, assets, production, income, women’s access to productive resources, health services, social protection, reduction of risk, and water/sanitation /hygiene.

Certainly, other indicators of resilience at the community and household level will also need to be determined, for different livelihood zones, particular for pastoral areas. However, at the national level, it is proposed that, **no better single indicator of resilience and resolving the chronic dimensions of the hunger crisis** could be found than the level of child malnutrition, if objectively assessed using the widely used SMART survey. It is argued that vulnerable households will have become resilient if a **sustainable** reduction of acute malnutrition is achieved, which would remain relatively unchanged, even in the face of future droughts or other hazards.

However, to achieve resilience, longer term actions are also required, particularly to find ways to control price volatility of food, correct market failures, provide public support for agriculture, and improve education. All of these initiatives have major implications for architecture of aid, funding mechanisms, institutional capacity, policies, governance, and the role of civil society.

A much more detailed set of recommendations describing these required changes is presented below.

### 5.3 Detailed Recommendations

The root causes of food and nutrition insecurity in the Sahel are structural. The pathways to resilience require changing attitudes, and a different vision of what is best to do, how to effectively prioritize, allocate and use resources. This is a prerequisite for enabling poor and vulnerable households to escape from the vicious hunger cycle in which they are trapped. The attitude that shockingly high levels of child malnutrition, chronic food insecurity is “normal” in the context of the Sahel has to change. This is a path that leads to increasing poverty, aid dependency, and a widening gap between rich and poor. It is a path that leads to repeated emergency assistance with its high human and financial costs. The experience of 2010 starkly reveals that the current paradigm is not the right pathway for achieving food and nutrition security.

However, a new vision is taking shape. The paths leading to resilience are becoming clear. Important changes have started, as documented in this report. All actors and their respective institutions need to take bold, decisive action and provide political leadership, in order to build on, improve and apply at a larger scale what is known to work.

#### Change the concept and vision of what is “normal” and what is an “emergency crisis” in the Sahel

##### 1 Recognize *chronically food-insecure populations and malnourished children* in the Sahel as vulnerable groups needing priority political consideration at the national and international levels

Chronic food insecurity (chronic hunger) is “*a long-term or persistent inability to meet minimum food consumption requirements*”. The chronically food insecure do not die in massive numbers. They do not benefit from media attention or an outpouring of compassion. However, the chronically food insecure do not have the means or cannot engage in full scale productive livelihood activities required for resilience, without prolonged external assistance. The common conception of “crisis” remains overly associated with “saving lives”, neglecting the chronic dimensions. This contributes to the people who are chronically food insecure continuing to suffer and remaining highly vulnerable to even greater peril when the next shock comes.

- Help all actors understand that it is no longer appropriate in the Sahel to equate humanitarian emergencies with short, sharp disasters such as drought. Instead promote the concept that a “chronic” food and nutrition emergency, (according to most agreed indicators of human suffering) exists in the Sahel
- Provide long term humanitarian assistance to address the on-going livelihoods crisis while preparing for early response to scale up interventions at the first sign of a new shock, to prevent escalation of the chronic crisis into a full blown crisis

## **2 Stop the tendency to use an uncritical conception of a relief-development continuum with “crisis” at one end and “normality” at the other. This artificially separates poverty, increasing vulnerability and chronic hunger.**

When the livelihoods of the most vulnerable households repeatedly fail to regain full resilience after repeated drought, smaller and smaller shocks can quickly push them back into an acute level of humanitarian crisis, not just because of the recent event, but because of the cumulative impacts, as well as ongoing structural factors. This results in a vicious downward spiral into chronic food insecurity. In this context, distinguishing between acute (emergency) and chronic needs becomes artificial and counter-productive. Both need to be addressed in a coordinated way. However, the concepts and tools of humanitarian operations are still highly shaped to rapid onset disasters, and not to the needs of chronic, long term emergencies.

- Recognize that *chronic food insecurity* cannot be addressed with ‘quick fixes’ provided by conventional humanitarian institutional and funding arrangements; neither can it be addressed solely by development programmes.
- Replace the concept of a linear sequential progression from relief to recovery to development with an alternative concept in which activities of each type occur simultaneously working in an integrated, coherent and mutually reinforcing way, and address the specific needs of different categories of households

## **Prevent, Prepare and Plan for Crises Better**

### **3. Improve Early Warning Systems at the regional CILSS and national levels**

Early warning systems (EWS) in 2009-10 succeeded in providing an alert of an impending crisis. Vulnerability analysis systems exist in some form in many countries. However, the EWS are not effective in communicating the right types of information and in the right way to achieve action. Key improvements required to address this challenge are:

- Adapt the “Cadre Harmonisé” adapted from the Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC) across the Sahel in order to harmonise the analysis and greatly improve the linkage to a quick, well defined strategic response
- Integrate the comprehensive use of Household Economy Approach (HEA) to identify better targeted and tailored emergency and long-term interventions for vulnerable households in each livelihood zone
- Integrate and prioritize indicators of purchasing power to better analyse and prevent food and nutrition insecurity of poor households
- Adapt EWS to better assess the vulnerability to food insecurity in pastoral and for migrants in urban contexts
- Improve needs assessment and targeting (using the IPC framework)

### **4. Strengthen Preparedness**

Initiate operational contingency planning for drought or other shocks that can trigger a food crisis immediately after there are clear early warning signs, to ensure a rapid, coordinated response. The standard is to prevent or mitigate a livelihood crisis and loss of assets through actions such as increasing reserves of cereal or fodder banks, de-stocking, cash transfer programming etc

- Strengthen preparedness for early response through multi-actor contingency planning, including communications and information management, at the national and district levels for emerging or anticipated crises (OCHA).
- Pre-position food stocks in isolated areas known to be highly vulnerable to food insecurity, where roads and markets infrastructure are poorly developed (WFP)
- Develop a humanitarian “surge” capacity for large scale effective action including needs assessment, logistics, funding, communications, and coordination with other actors. (OCHA)
- In the contingency planning, apply the IPC principle of using the 'crisis as opportunity' to redress underlying structural causes, and the UN 2008 policy which mandates a twin-track approach where immediate needs are handled while building long-term resilience against hunger.

## **5 Develop unambiguous, clearly defined triggers specific to distinct livelihood systems (including pastoralism) that if reached, will cause contingency planning for early response to be launched**

A major reason response to slow onset emergencies is delayed is the difficulty of determining if and when an emerging situation may become a crisis. To initiate contingency planning at the right time, specific triggers need to be developed and agreed upon, in advance, by all stakeholders.

- Undertake a process with relevant government structures, Ministries, UN agencies, NGOs and civil society actors to analyse and define specific triggers
- Ensure information relating to the triggers is reliable and precise enough to reduce the risk of undue political influence over the decision to initiate contingency planning

### **Rapidly speed up, and improve Humanitarian Responses**

## **6. Develop multi-stakeholder strategy of strong diplomacy and advocacy, led by UN, CILSS, and donors, in case national authorities are reluctant to recognize and act upon an emergency alert**

- Ensure a transparent, multi-stakeholder process to apply the Cadre Harmonisé/IPC system and identified triggers, to prevent political influence over the statement of results and linked strategic response

## **7. Develop a more diversified approach (beyond food aid), to ensure more rapid, relevant and appropriate types of support for managing chronic and seasonal food insecurity**

Despite its growing adoption, cash transfers and vouchers remain under-utilised, particularly by national agencies for preventing and managing food crises and by the WFP. Food aid remains firmly-rooted as the main response. Cash gives poor people access to food while also supporting local producers.

- When food is availability in the markets, make greater use of cash transfers and vouchers and other innovative instruments. They are less costly, and more speedy means to protect against malnutrition, food insecurity and vulnerability and can structured to be in alignment with the medium- and long-term policies and programmes
- Ensure the transfer various types of assets and support to targeted individuals, families and communities to protect livelihoods before conditions become critical, and after crises to facilitate recovery (i.e. seeds, cash, livestock, training, etc)

## **8. Improve targeting, monitoring and assessment of humanitarian assistance**

- Base humanitarian response to food insecurity on detailed studies of the need and source of food for different wealth categories of households, rather than a homogenous response for all households in a zone.

- Improve coordination and modalities of targeting and distribution during contingency planning, as well as monitoring adherence to the key SPHERE (2004) standard of protecting livelihoods and preserving productive assets. **(Food Security cluster)**
- More systematically assess impact of interventions on livelihoods and resilience **(Food Security cluster)**

#### **10. Apply the new Charter for food security developed by CILSS (Permanent Inter-States Committee to Fight Drought in Sahel) and the Sahel and West Africa club (SWAC)**

This revised charter which provides a code of conduct for food crisis prevention, coordination and management that shifts from food availability to a much strong livelihoods/nutrition perspective

#### **Strengthen Resilience and Incomes**

#### **11. Increase investment in agriculture to reach the 10% level of national budgets (Maputo Declaration) in alignment with the Regional Compact for the implementation of ECOWAS Agricultural Policy of 2009**

Agriculture and the rural economy are key sectors for supporting livelihoods in the Sahel. Despite improvements in 2008, the share of food and agriculture in national budgets as well as in international aid is still low.

- Increase the pace of implementation of ECOWAP and the National Agricultural Investment Programmes (NAIPs) to improve the incomes of the rural population, and reduce food dependency of the ECOWAS Member States, within a perspective of food sovereignty.
- Undertake policy reforms to adjust the Common External Tariff (CET) to ensure an appropriate level of protection of agriculture at the borders
- Target public investments in food security and agriculture to fill the gaps left by the private sector. Focus investments in food security and adaptation to climate change in marginal areas where investors find few profitable opportunities, yet where most vulnerable rural households (farmers and pastoralists) are concentrated.
- Significantly increase support to the livestock sector through improved veterinary services, provision of feed supplements, management of movement of herds among countries, prevention/regulation of conflicts in the use of natural resources; and improved marketing of animal products

#### **11. Boost household food production and livelihoods through sustainable intensification using agro-ecological techniques**

New public investments in agriculture emphasizing agro-ecological approaches are essential to improving food security, help vulnerable farmers adapt to climate change, and regenerate the natural resource base.

- Invest more and more wisely in agriculture to accomplish **multiple goals**, rather the single focus on maximizing production using agro-industrial techniques requiring high levels of external inputs that small scale farmers cannot afford and which increase risk
- Prioritize public investment to small scale farmers working on marginal and degraded agricultural land
- Adapt the implementation of agricultural support to the poorest rural households, and to women farmers, taking into account the difficulties they face in accessing productive assets, land, credit, technical services, appropriate seeds, tools, and inputs
- Promote agro-ecological agriculture by intensive support for farmer-to-farmer learning and exchange.

## 12 Develop and apply a regional DRR strategy in the Sahel

Given the risk that climate change, repeated drought, and other hazards in the Sahel pose to long term development programmes, food and nutrition security, DRR needs to be better integrated into all relevant policies and programmes, in accordance with 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action and to better achieve the MDGs. To date, very limited progress has been made.

- CILSS should bring together all relevant actors, including national governments, civil society and donors, to lead a co-ordinated, ambitious approach to disasters risk reduction, including climate change that targets the households who are most vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity
- Systematically integrate DRR and climate change at the core of relevant policy debates (such as agricultural policy, development strategies, public health etc.), across governments
- Promote awareness and political commitment to make DRR a priority at the regional, national and local levels by increasing its visibility and demonstrating its benefits

## 13. Take steps to actively implement the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)

The primary responsibility for the implementation of DRR policies and practices and the HFA lies with national governments. However, the key to increasing disaster resilience is a coordinated and coherent approach to DRR by all actors – from the community to the national level, and across all relevant ministries.

- Use the vehicle of a National Platform for DRR, engaging all relevant stakeholders, to facilitate integration of DRR into institutional frameworks for food security as well as policies and programmes of all relevant sectoral, poverty reduction, rural development and national climate change adaptation agencies
- Develop a DRR capacity in all relevant ministries and systematically include contingency planning in development of medium to long-term programmes to reduce both the risk of a disaster occurring and its effects if it does occur
- Better integrate DRR into development cooperation, humanitarian response and recovery programming, planning and policies
- Ensure DRR programmes are based on thorough analysis and understanding of the priority risks, including structural factors (not just droughts and pests) affecting the most vulnerable households, and builds on existing coping strategies

## 14. Design national policies and implement programmes for social protection that meet the needs of most vulnerable people, especially those of poorer households (Governments in the Sahel, funders)

Social protection is increasingly recognised by international donors and national governments as an appropriate response to address long-term poverty and to reduce vulnerabilities of the poorest households and communities. This reflects the Livingstone Call for Action, and provisions within ECOWAP for targeted safety nets. Social protection measures can not only meet urgent humanitarian needs but play a part in strengthening resilience, by enabling the very poor to acquire assets.

- Develop test and apply national social protection strategies to support the livelihood strategies of the most vulnerable households trapped in chronic food and nutrition insecurity
- Use short-term emergency or seasonal safety nets in rural areas to ensure household food security and prevent the sale of vital livelihood assets.

## Scale -up and Broaden the Scope of Nutrition Work

### **15 Governments in the Sahel must seize the child malnutrition agenda, design more effective national strategies, assign top political leaders to oversee implementation and ensure that a coordinated effort across line ministries is achieved.**

Child Malnutrition rates far above the WHO emergency thresholds are the most urgent and visible indication of a chronic humanitarian crisis in the Sahel. Malnutrition reduction will never be achieved if it is seen solely as the job of the ministry of health. A comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach, including livelihoods, education, water hygiene and sanitation, health and social protection is required. For this reason, malnutrition rates can be an objective measure of progress not just in development, but an indicator whether the situation of the poorest households is being improved.

- Develop advocacy initiatives to build national political momentum in the fight against hunger and malnutrition in children, in order to create an environment in which institutional change and resource mobilisation is possible.
- Address malnutrition in a more integrated manner in development programmes, DRR, and social protection programmes and policies
- Undertake SMART surveys and related studies to understand the principal causes of malnutrition in different contexts, and to monitor changes in nutritional status
- Given the need for an integrated, multi-sectoral approach to achieve impact, use the rate of acute malnutrition as a key indicator to assess programmes not just in health, but also: food security, agriculture, water sanitation and hygiene, poverty reduction, and as a way to assess good governance

### **16 Prevent and treat severe acute malnutrition**

- Give priority to treatment of acute malnutrition within public policy, facilitating access to ready to use fortified foods
- Improve quality and access to health facilities. Exempt children and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding from paying user fees
- Promote improved practices affecting child nutrition: exclusive breastfeeding, correct weaning practices, potable water, sanitation and hygiene, micronutrient supplementation and deworming
- Integrate prevention and risk-reduction into treatment programs, guaranteeing that so that underlying causes, including malaria and diarrhoea are addressed.
- Use appropriate social protection measures, including livelihoods protection, cash transfers to prevent income poverty-related causes of malnutrition, focused on women

## Adapt Donor Policies and Practices to the Sahel

### **18 International and national agencies and donors must: improve the quality, speed and appropriateness of emergency aid to support vulnerable households. “Preventing the significant loss of livelihood assets” a SPHERE standard of practice, must become a reality.**

- The international response to humanitarian crises should be determined by need, not influenced by level of media coverage or other factors
- Donors should expand existing pre-allocated funding mechanisms, such as DFIDs former West Africa Humanitarian Response Fund (WAHRF) and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund- CERF, to ensure funds reach humanitarian agencies in the field quickly
- Donors should create additional innovative financial mechanisms, such as pooled and direct channels), or ‘catastrophe (CAT) bonds’ or insurance contracts that provide predictable and pre-allocated funds when early warning indicators are triggered
- OCHA to urgently advocate for donor support for a funding mechanism (such as a relatively small pooled fund developed on a national or Sahel wide basis) for early response based on contingency plans
- OCHA must help bridge the gap between long-term disaster risk reduction and short-term emergency response through improved coordination between all stakeholders

## **18. Bilateral and multilateral donors must prioritise and scale up funding for a number of linked key initiatives to address the “silent” humanitarian crisis of chronic food insecurity and malnutrition in the Sahel**

- Ensure that no credible government plans to reduce malnutrition, address chronic food insecurity, intensify food production of small scale households through agro-ecology, promote disaster risk reduction, and provide appropriate forms of social protection fails through lack of funds.
- Undertake joint initiatives to make both child nutrition and DRR regional and national political priorities, as well as indicators of good governance
- The EU, as the largest donor in the Sahel, urgently needs to develop a common voice on DRR, (guided by a strategic framework and policy) to effectively engage in political dialogue with CILSS or individual Sahelian countries, in order to promote the integration of DRR into national policies including relevant sector policies and strategies
- EU should scale up funding for DRR and nutrition using the full range of funding instruments within the existing financial framework for 2007-2013, and within the context of the EU target of raising Official Development Assistance (ODA) to 0.56% of GNP
- Invest in mechanisms to further expand the evidence base on strategies to tackle moderate acute malnutrition, chronic food insecurity, and DRR

## **19 Continue to reform the existing paradigm and architecture shaping aid flows in the Sahel**

- Donors need to modify the current aid architecture to better address both immediate needs and the structural causes of the chronic food insecurity crisis with flexible, predictable, long-term funding. Important areas of intervention (including social protection, provision of essential services, nutrition and risk reduction) are often underfunded.
- The EU should significantly strengthen the funding, conception and operation of the LRRD (Linking relief, rehabilitation and development) policy framework. While useful, it does not adequately address chronic food insecurity and malnutrition. By seeking to create a “link” across the continuing divide between humanitarian relief and development, it tends to impede change (i.e. integration and funding of DRR and nutrition) into the mainstream operations of both relief and development work, including within government.
- Donors, particularly the World Bank and US-AID must recognize the need for Sahelian governments to strengthen public intervention and regulation of the food and agriculture sector as reflected in ECOWAP (i.e. food sovereignty, support of small-scale, sustainable agriculture, controlling price volatility)
- Donors must support reform of the Food Aid Convention so that it shifts from being “resource-based” (i.e., driven by aid budgets and food surpluses) to being needs-based (i.e., driven by the level of humanitarian need). The focus should not be on the amount of food given, but on the number of people it needs to reach.

## **20 Strengthen the capacity, resources required for donor and UN agencies to work more effectively in fragile States such as Chad, to overcome chronic food and nutrition insecurity**

Countries such as Chad that are in a protracted complex emergency require donors and UN agencies to have strong leadership, institutional capacity, and long term coordinated strategies.

- Apply the 10 principles for ‘Good International Engagement In Fragile States & Situations’ to Chad
- Monitor the humanitarian situation across the entire country, particularly in highly vulnerable zones where there is severe chronic malnutrition.
- Ensure sufficient capacity for “coverage” and future intervention in neglected geographical zones by attracting qualified international and national NGOs with appropriate long term funding

## **21. Address Market Failures and Price Volatility**

Safety nets and food aid are hardly sufficient to cope with increase in food prices in situations such as in 2007-2008. Measures to prevent price volatility in domestic markets, including food reserves, are critical to protect livelihoods and prevent hunger and malnutrition.

- Recognise the government obligation to take public action to realize the right to food, including appropriate regulation of markets, if food security is thereby enhanced
- Lead efforts to establish a regional commission on food reserves, (led by CILSS, perhaps including the FAO and WFP). Its mandate is to make recommendations on a) the establishment of a coordinated regional food reserve system, and b) the suitability of increasing stocks in existing national food reserves
- Amend international and regional agricultural trade rules to acknowledge the inherent weaknesses of the private sector in the Sahel, and to enable mechanisms for public food reserves designed for market regulation
- Assist member states to define a regulatory framework for the development of a regional system of “buffer stocks” or “food security stocks” as provided for in the Regional Compact for Implementation of ECOWAP/CAADP
- The EU should consider use of its “facility for rapid responses to food price volatility” to finance the establishment of food reserves (both physical and virtual) at regional level to balance out situations where surpluses and shortages co-exist within the same region, and to act when the market fails, or a fragile state does not respond
- Renegotiate the food aid convention, to ensure contributions towards food security reserves in the Sahel are eligible to be counted towards meeting commitments under the convention.
- Support the expansion of existing mechanisms for food security stocks at the village or local level, particularly in geographical areas prone to chronic food insecurity.

### **Strengthen the capacity of regional and national institutions**

#### **22 Develop a strong institutional basis for integration of DRR and nutrition across line ministries through: capacity building of state institutions at the national and decentralised levels; good governance, promotion of appropriate policies and legislation; ensuring adequate resources and technical support**

It is a fundamental rule of both humanitarian and development assistance that every intervention must have an exit strategy. This is a particular challenge in many countries of the Sahel. Supporting institutions is key to addressing chronic food insecurity and nutrition crisis. Local institutions at the decentralised level, in particular, are essential for sustainability but are often ignored by external actors.

- Assess institutional capacity needs in order to identify the modalities and strategies for integrating of DRR, social protection, nutrition or other priority interventions into mainstream government and community actions to enable their sustainability and effectiveness
- Strengthening the technical, management and financial capacity at the appropriate administrative levels, as needed

### **Strengthen the capacity of Civil Society, local NGOs, local government and communities for action at their level to reduce risk, and strengthen resilience**

#### **23. Strengthen capacity and resources at the local and community level for early Warning, contingency planning, and emergency local response**

- Decentralise capacities, resources and responsibilities for early warning and response systems to the local government level
- Build on the lessons learned in building disaster resilient communities, DRR work, community based EWS, and the commune level Observatories for Monitoring Vulnerability
- Ensure a strong linkages between community based and national systems of early warning and response, including 2 way communication that provides communities with relevant early warning information and for local action

## **24 Support civil society organizations and associations of different marginalised groups directly affected by hunger, food insecurity and price volatility to engage in national, and regional processes for change**

In the absence of strong pressure by local NGOs and civil society organisations representing marginalised groups, efforts to create the “political will” for change, will have limited effect. Effective advocacy is required to push for faster, evidence-based action. Civil society organisations and local associations must engage in collective national, and regional campaigns to eradicate hunger and malnutrition and to hold governments to account. International NGOs and donors must fund this work where needed.

- NGOs and wider civil society must increase the capacity of women’s associations, pastoral associations, small scale farmer organizations and other local organisations to engage in wider movements for change and advocacy.
- Raise awareness about the right to food, and government policies and programmes for ensuring food security, in order to strengthen accountability down to the community level
- Create systematic mechanisms for communities to provide feedback on humanitarian and development initiatives, ensuring that the voices of women, and the poorest households are heard

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Harragin, S (June 2006) *The Cost of being Poor: Markets, mistrust and malnutrition in southern Niger 2005-2006*. Save the Children (UK) p.6
- <sup>2</sup> In some regions, even in normal years, the rate of child malnutrition is consistently higher than alert threshold of 15% specified by the World Health Organisation
- <sup>3</sup> Personal communication Jan Jan Eijkenaar, ECHO Dakar
- <sup>4</sup> Source: <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=90347>
- <sup>5</sup> Holt, J et al (2009). *Understanding Household Economy in Rural Niger*. Save the Children UK p.103
- <sup>6</sup> IRIN (Dec 2010) Child nutrition situation in Niger remains alarming, UN-backed survey warns. Available <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37169&Cr=niger+&Cr1=>
- <sup>7</sup> RPCA (Dec 2009) *Interview with Prof. Alhousseini Bretaudeau, CILSS Secretary-General* Bamako, 11 December 2009 available at [http://www.oecd.org/document/38/0,3746,en\\_38233741\\_38242551\\_44516882\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/38/0,3746,en_38233741_38242551_44516882_1_1_1_1,00.html)
- <sup>8</sup> Mark Hathaway, *The Tao of Liberation: Exploring the Ecology of Transformation*
- <sup>9</sup> CSAO-OCDE / CILSS, (2009) *Profil sécurité alimentaire Tchad. Financé par le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères de la France et sa diffusion soutenue par l'Union Européenne*
- <sup>10</sup> FEWS NET (Dec 2009) *Chad Food Security Alert Decrease in cereal production and poor pastoral conditions in Chad 2010*
- <sup>11</sup> République de Tchad (Jan 2010) *Rapport de la Mission Conjointe Gouvernement - Partenaires pour L'Identification des Zones à Risque, le Ciblage et l'Évaluation des Besoins des Populations Affectées par la Mauvaise Campagne Agricole 2009/2010*
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid p.2
- <sup>13</sup> In the pastoral areas of Chari Baguirmi and Hadjer Lamis regions
- <sup>14</sup> FEWS NET (July 2010) *Food Security Executive Brief*
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid
- <sup>16</sup> Personal communication, ACORD in Guéra; also FEWS NET (June 2010) *Food Security Outlook Update*
- <sup>17</sup> FEWS NET (June 2010) *Food Security Outlook Update*
- <sup>18</sup> Personal communication, key informants of agropastoral communities in Guéra; FEWS NET (May 2010) *Food Security Outlook Brief*
- <sup>19</sup> FEWS NET (March 2010) *Food Security Outlook Update*
- <sup>20</sup> Personal communication, key informants of agropastoral communities in Guéra
- <sup>21</sup> FEWS NET (June 2010) *Food Security Outlook Update*
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid
- <sup>23</sup> Republic of Chad (2009) *Enquête de Sécurité Alimentaire et de Vulnérabilité Structurelle : Rapport Général* p.15
- <sup>24</sup> FEWS NET (Feb 2010) *Food Security Outlook Update* p.2
- <sup>25</sup> Personal communication with WFP Chad; FEWS NET (May 2010) *Food Security Outlook Update* p.2
- <sup>26</sup> Government of Chad, FAO, European Commission and Coopération Française (February 2010) *Rapport de l'Étude sur le Dispositif National de Sécurité Alimentaire* p.13
- <sup>27</sup> FEWS NET (March 2010) *Food Security Outlook Update* p.1
- <sup>28</sup> Hannah Durant (June 2010) OXFAM <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/applications/blogs/pressoffice/2010/06/25/there-is-a-delay-animals-die-then-people-a-month-later/?v=newsblog>
- <sup>29</sup> FEWS NET Feb 2010 [http://www.fews.net/docs/Publications/Mali\\_alert\\_23\\_fevrier\\_2010\\_en.pdf](http://www.fews.net/docs/Publications/Mali_alert_23_fevrier_2010_en.pdf)
- <sup>30</sup> Hannah Durant (June 2010) OXFAM op cit.
- <sup>31</sup> Oxfam International (April 2010) *Concept Note Food Security Emergency Response (Mali, 2010)* – Gao Region, p.6
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid p.4
- <sup>33</sup> IRIN September 2010 <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportID=90845>; see also *Action Contre la Faim Espagne au Mali (Mars 2010) Analyse de la situation pastorale dans les régions Nord du Mali*
- <sup>34</sup> IRIN September 2010 <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportID=90845>
- <sup>35</sup> Oxfam International (April 2010) op cit.
- <sup>36</sup> IRIN October 2010: <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthID=81&ReportID=90522>; also personal communication from several NGO sources interviewed from within Mali
- <sup>37</sup> Oxfam International (April 2010) *Concept Note Food Security Emergency Response (Mali, 2010)* – Gao Region., p.3
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid The security situation in northern Mali was likely also a factor inhibiting action. .
- <sup>39</sup> FEWS NET (Feb 2010) op. cit
- <sup>40</sup> IRIN: October 2010 <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthID=81&ReportID=90522>
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid
- <sup>42</sup> Ibid; see also *Action Contre la Faim Espagne au Mali (Mars 2010) Analyse du contexte et suivi évaluation de la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle au Nord de Mali*
- <sup>43</sup> This was in contrast to what occurred in 2005, when similar size production deficits in this same area caused grain prices to rise sharply from February to April. In 2010, market competition was not as strong and grain prices behaved differently. Good early rains in May in the south of Burkina led traders and farmers to sell off their stocks quicker than usual, thereby preventing the expected price increases in the lean season.

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- <sup>44</sup> FEWS NET BURKINA FASO Food Security Outlook Update May 2010
- <sup>45</sup> FEWS NET Burkina Faso Food Security Outlook Update March 2010
- <sup>46</sup> This was funded by the European Union's Food Facility, Europe's one billion euro response to the global food crisis.
- <sup>47</sup> ALNAP outlines these four components as main dimensions of innovation. The *position* of an organisation and its work in relation to key stakeholders can be explained as a change in an organisation's public profile or by changing attitudes to an area of work such as food aid. A change in *paradigm relates to change in* combined attitudes and beliefs determining the fundamental approach (i.e. shifts in towards beneficiary participation, local ownership and capacity development).
- <sup>48</sup> Pippa Trench, P., et al. (June 2007) *Beyond Any Drought Root Causes of Chronic Vulnerability in the Sahel*, SWG p.37
- <sup>49</sup> The household economy approach is primarily an *analytical framework*, i.e. it defines the data to be collected (for a specified purpose) and sets out how that data will be analysed and used. It is *not a particular method of data collection*
- <sup>50</sup> Holt, J et al (2009). *Understanding Household Economy in Rural Niger*. Save the Children UK p.3
- <sup>51</sup> The countries included Mauritania, Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso. A brief summary of the HEA methodology applied in Niger is presented In Holt, J et al (2009). *Understanding Household Economy in Rural Niger*. Save the Children UK p.9-12
- <sup>52</sup> Save the Children UK (Juin 2010) *Compte rendu de l'atelier Faim de Changement : Atelier sur la Gestion et Prévention des crises alimentaires et la lutte contre la malnutrition : Enseignements tirés des études HEA réalisées au Sahel Dakar, Sénégal*. p.3
- <sup>53</sup> Seidou, B, Hélène Berton, H et Delphine Valette, D (Juin 2010) *Les nouveaux enjeux de la sécurité alimentaire au Sahel Note de Synthèse* Save the Children UK
- <sup>54</sup> Holt, J., Lejeune, S (Sept 2007) *Report on the Household Economy Survey of Two Livelihood Zones of Tessaoua District, SCUJ*
- <sup>55</sup> Holt, J et al (2009). *Understanding Household Economy in Rural Niger*. Save the Children UK p. 98
- <sup>56</sup> FAO (June 2006) *Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC) Framework Policy Brief Issue 3*. This document contains version 1.1 of the full IPC table. A new version, 2.0 is being developed, and is scheduled for release in July 2011.
- <sup>57</sup> The agencies are: CARE International, European Commission Joint Research Centre, FAO, FEWS NET, Oxfam GB, Save the Children UK/US, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)
- <sup>58</sup> Frankenberger, T, Verduijn. (April 2011) *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) End of Project Evaluation*
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid. Most of the outcome indicators are trailing indicators with little predictive power. Data for determining current phase (the outcome indicators) and for early warning (the process indicators) are mixed together on the same template. Outcome and process indicators typically relate to two separate timeframes (e.g. malnutrition indicates the consequence of a past hazard/livelihood interaction; crop production is a potential hazard that will lead to a future consequence). The solution for version 2.0 is to separate the analysis of current phase from early warning of future phase with an additional analysis template for early warning. Version 2.0 will also split the acute and chronic food insecurity situation analysis and classification and demonstrate how they are linked.
- <sup>60</sup> SMART is a voluntary, collaborative network of organizations and humanitarian practitioners that includes donors, policymakers, and leading experts in emergency epidemiology and nutrition, food security, early warning systems, and demography. It includes all humanitarian organizations: donors, international and UN agencies, NGOs, universities, research institutes and governments.
- <sup>61</sup> SMART: (April 2006) *Measuring Mortality, Nutritional Status, and Food Security in Crisis Situations: SMART METHODOLOGY* Version 1
- <sup>62</sup> Funding for SMART pilot testing was provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Action Against Hunger, MSF, and FAO provided their own funds for pilot-testing.
- <sup>63</sup> For an overview of this tool see, [http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/Cost\\_of\\_the\\_Diet\\_overview.pdf](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/Cost_of_the_Diet_overview.pdf)
- <sup>64</sup> Undernutrition is defined by UNICEF as the outcome of insufficient food intake and repeated infectious diseases. Undernutrition describes a range of conditions: it includes being underweight for one's age, too short for one's age (stunted), dangerously thin (wasted), and deficient in vitamins and/or minerals (micronutrient malnutrition) 'Malnutrition' encompasses both undernutrition and over-nutrition (obesity), but in this report is equivalent to undernutrition
- <sup>65</sup> Cited in : ECHO (2009) *Humanitarian Aid from the budget of the European Communities for vulnerable populations at risk in the Sahel Region of West Africa* GLOBAL PLAN
- <sup>66</sup> RUTF was a major humanitarian innovation. The treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in emergencies traditionally took place through specially constructed therapeutic feeding centres (TFCs), built 'in the field' by agencies. The treatment offered by TFCs was good but the centres were expensive, difficult to establish, required extensive and sustained external support. The highly medicalised and self-contained structure of TFCs offered little scope for patient involvement and sometimes disrupted fragile local health structures. Sparsely dispersed, the TFC's offered poor coverage with mothers or whole families often having to walk long distances to receive treatment for one child, which for many was not feasible.
- <sup>67</sup> Within the EU a "road map" for inter-service cooperation in Niger and Mali was drawn up in February 2006 between the Commission aid services. This laid out the role and scope of short-term humanitarian aid (12 M€ allocated in 2006 for Niger, medium-term (an extra 12 M€ was allocated to "B" envelope food security operations) and long-term (commitment to include food security as a sector of concentration in the 10th EDF. See ECHO (2009).
- <sup>68</sup> The main specific objective of ECHO's Sahel strategy is to contribute to the reduction of acute malnutrition and mortality of the most vulnerable population and in particular of children under 5 years and lactating and pregnant women. ECHO 2007 p.15
- <sup>69</sup> IRIN (2010) *SAHEL: After 30 years, nutrition strategy revamp at hand*  
<http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthID=81&ReportID=90440>
- <sup>70</sup> Isanaka S, Nombela N, Diibo A, Poupard M, Van Beckhoven D, Gaboulaud V, Guerin PJ, Grais RE. (2009) *Effect of preventive supplementation with ready-to-use therapeutic food on the nutritional status, mortality, and morbidity of children aged 6 to 60 months in Niger: a cluster randomized trial*. JAMA 2009 Jan 21;301(3):277-85.

- <sup>71</sup> IRIN (2010) SAHEL: *After 30 years, nutrition strategy revamp at hand*
- <sup>72</sup> ECHO. *Vers la réduction de la malnutrition au Burkina Faso. Des acteurs humanitaires engagés témoignent*, p. 10-11
- <sup>73</sup> République du Niger (2009) : *Protocole National de Prise en Charge de la Malnutrition*. Ministère de la Santé Publique
- <sup>74</sup> ECHO (2010) *L'Exemption du Paiement: Un Pas vers l'Accès Universel aux Soins de Santé*. Expériences Pilotes au Burkina Faso.
- <sup>75</sup> CONCERN Worldwide (2010) *Étude sur l'impact comparatif nutritionnel sur des enfants de <5 dans les ménages recevant des transferts en espèces, ou espèces et semences ou blanketfeeding avec accès au CMAM/CRENAM dans le district de Tahoua*, septembre/oct 2010
- <sup>76</sup> Poulsen, L., Fabre D., (March 2011) UNICEF Emergency Project Niger. Cash Transfer for Protection of Blanket Feeding. Maradi and Tahoua regions of Niger.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid
- <sup>78</sup> Holt J et al. 2009 op cit. p.93
- <sup>79</sup> Mousseau, F. (2010). *The High Food Price Challenge: A Review of Responses to Combat Hunger*. Oakland, CA: The Oakland Institute. p.22
- <sup>80</sup> EuropeAid (Jan 2011) *Addressing Undernutrition in External Assistance Reference Document DRAFT 0 An integrated approach through sectors and aid modalities*
- <sup>81</sup> ACF (November 2010) *A Call to End Decades of Hunger*, Briefing Paper
- <sup>82</sup> Cited in Mousseau, F. *Sahel: A Prisoner of Starvation? A Case Study of the 2005 Food Crisis in Niger* p13. A slightly different version in Save the Children UK (2009) *Hungry For Change an Eight-Step, Costed Plan of Action to Tackle Global Child Hunger*, p.23
- <sup>83</sup> Haglund E. Ndjeunga J., Snook, L., Pasternak, D. (2009) *Assessing the Impacts of Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration in the Sahel: A Case Study of Maradi Region, Niger* (draft) p.1
- <sup>84</sup> For example there were major protests in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and in the capital of Mauritania.
- <sup>85</sup> See the chapter "Destroying African Agriculture" in Bello, W. (2009) *The Food Wars* for a cogent analysis. Also Mousseau, F. with Anuradha Mittal (2009) *Sahel: A Prisoner of Starvation? A Case Study of the 2005 Food Crisis in Niger*. In its 2008 "*World Development Report*", the World Bank admits that "structural adjustment in the 1980's disbanded the elaborate system of public agencies that provided farmers with access to credit, insurance inputs, and cooperative organisation. The expectation was...the market for private actors to take over these functions....too often, this did not happen....the private sector emerged only slowly and partially, serving commercial farmers but leaving smallholders exposed to extensive market failures, high transaction costs and risks, and service gaps" Cited in Bello op cit p.82
- <sup>86</sup> Mousseau, F. With Anuradha Mittal (2009) *Sahel: A Prisoner of Starvation? A Case Study of the 2005 Food Crisis in Niger* p,30
- <sup>87</sup> This include the Bill and Melinda Gates, and the Rockefeller Foundations
- <sup>88</sup> Cited in Christian Aid (June 2007) *Farmers left behind How markets, governments and donors have failed Africa's greatest resource*. This quotation, which appeared in the first draft was subsequently been removed, but remains implicit in the document
- <sup>89</sup> Bello, W. (2009) op. cit. p82
- <sup>90</sup> Mousseau, F. (2010). *The High Food Price Challenge: A Review of Responses to Combat Hunger*. Oakland, CA: The Oakland Institute, p.34
- <sup>91</sup> Christian Aid (June 2007) op.cit. p.7; See also Bello, W (2009) p.83
- <sup>92</sup> Christian Aid (June 2007) op.cit. p.7
- <sup>93</sup> OXFAM GB, Christian Aid, World Vision, ACF are among the many international agencies that have all published documents advocating agroecology.
- <sup>94</sup> See also Wardle, C. (Nov 2008) *Community Area Based Development Approach (CABDA) Programme: An alternative way to address the current African food crisis?* ODI. Natural Resources Perspective 119, for experiences similar to the World Vision case study in Ethiopia Uganda and Malawi
- <sup>95</sup> OXFAM (2009) *People-Centred Resilience Working with vulnerable farmers towards climate change adaptation and food security* Briefing Paper 135 p.2
- <sup>96</sup> Rinaudo, T., Yaou, S. (2009) *Agricultural Task Force Report: World Vision Niger Agricultural Development* World Vision p.4; See also Holt J, et al. (2009) *Understanding Household Economy in Rural Niger* Save the Children
- <sup>97</sup> Rinaudo, T and Yaou,S. World Vision op.cit. p.4
- <sup>98</sup> There is considerable evidence, particularly in Burkina Faso, that small scale farmers supported by long term development programs are able to regenerate degraded land through use of simple soil and water conservation techniques, such as stone bunds along the contour, *zaï's* (small pits dug by farmers for planting that improve water and nutrient retention), "half-moons" and other small-scale anti-erosion techniques.
- <sup>99</sup> Rinaudo, T and Yaou,S. World Vision op.cit. p.4
- <sup>100</sup> Trees in the Sahelian context are critical for a) enhancing soil fertility while combating soil erosion b) reducing damaging winds c) providing for the fodder requirements of livestock d) income generation through sale of wood and non wood products, and d) human food, medicines, honey and other tree products
- <sup>101</sup> Cited in Rinaudo, T and Yaou,S. World Vision op.cit p.9
- <sup>102</sup> Rinaudo,T and Yaou,S World Vision op cit. p10
- <sup>103</sup> World Bank (Oct 2010) *Niger Strategic Program For Climate Resilience* p11-12. See also Botoni, E. et Reij, C. (2009) *Silent transformation of environment and production systems in the Sahel: impacts of public and private investments in natural resource management*. (CILSS et Université libre d'Amsterdam)
- <sup>104</sup> Haglund E. Ndjeunga J., Snook, L., Pasternak, D. (2009) *Assessing the Impacts of Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration in the Sahel: A Case Study of Maradi Region, Niger* (draft) p.27
- <sup>105</sup> Rinaudo,T and Yaou,S World Vision op cit. p.10
- <sup>106</sup> Haglund E et al. Op cit. piii

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- <sup>107</sup> Ibid p.26
- <sup>108</sup> Ibid p 27
- <sup>109</sup> In response to the 2008 food price crisis, Rein Paulsen the Humanitarian Emergency Assistance Director of Strategy and Humanitarian Policy at World Vision commissioned the Agricultural Task Force (ATF) to work with review and improve the agricultural component of their food security work of selected national offices, including Niger. The aims included to identify the root causes of hunger, refine the approach to addressing the problems, and progressively main stream the key findings.
- <sup>110</sup> Adapted from Annex 5 of Rinaudo T. and Yaou, S 2009 op. cit. p23-24
- <sup>111</sup> UNICEF Report « *Scaling Up* » *Suivi des admissions 6 à 59 mois dans les centres de prise en charge de la malnutrition aigue sévère*. Date from January to December 2010 by Region.
- <sup>112</sup> World Vision Australia, Yates, P. (Oct 2010) *Acacias The potential to combat child malnutrition, build agricultural resilience and support adaptation*
- <sup>113</sup> Ibid. p5 The potential for commercial production of nutrition supplements from acacia and moringa, including emergency food aid products is also being explored.
- <sup>114</sup> Cited in ECHO (Feb 2011) *L'insécurité alimentaire et la malnutrition au Sahel: le défi du ciblage* Powerpoint presentation. Data found in [Analyse de l'économie des ménages \(HEA\) et zones de moyens d'existence: http://www.feg-consulting.com/hea](http://www.feg-consulting.com/hea)
- <sup>115</sup> Réseau Billital Maroobé (2011) *La crise pastorale de 2009/2010 au Sahel. Témoignages de pasteurs et d'acteurs confrontés à la crise au Niger, au Tchad, au Mali et au Burkina Faso* (financed by OXFAM International and IRAM)
- <sup>116</sup> ACF (Nov 2010) *Chad: A Call to End Decades of Hunger. Briefing Paper* p.7
- <sup>117</sup> Grahn, R. (2008) *The Paradox of Pastoral Vulnerability: OXFAM (From Poverty to Power Background Paper)* [www.fp2p.org](http://www.fp2p.org)
- <sup>118</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>119</sup> Personal communication, CARE Diffa head of project responsible for GRN-PAIX..Also see Project document *Problématique Générale de la Gestion des Ressources Naturelles en Région de Diffa et Justification de la Composante GRN/PAIX*
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- <sup>121</sup> Rass, N. (2006) *Policies and Strategies to Address the Vulnerability of Pastoralists in Sub-Saharan Africa* p.56 Table 11
- <sup>122</sup> DDR Niger Consortium (2010) FINAL REPORT *Coordinated Disaster Risk Reduction Responses in Niger* (July 2007 to March 2010) p.10
- <sup>123</sup> In 2005, Tearfund developed a practical tool to help development organisations mainstream disaster risk reduction into their humanitarian and development planning and programming. See La Trobe, S., Davis, I., (2005) *Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction a tool for development organisations*. Tear Fund
- <sup>124</sup> Kelly C, Khinmaung J (2007) *Prepare to live: strengthening the resilience of communities to manage food insecurity in the Sahel region*. London: Tearfund
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid, p.24
- <sup>126</sup> Christian Aid (2009) *Christian Aid's Approach To Building Disaster- Resilient Communities*
- <sup>127</sup> Twigg, J. (2007) *Characteristics of a Disaster-resilient Community: A Guidance Note Version 1 (for field testing)* or the DFID Disaster Risk Reduction Interagency Coordination Group
- <sup>128</sup> Synthesized from (Tearfund's 2005-08 response in Niger, reports of Christian Aid's BDRC programme in Mali and Burkina from 2005 to 2010, and the Niger DRR Consortium programme reports for 2007-10)
- <sup>129</sup> DRR Consortium Niger (2010) *Niger Disaster Risk Reduction Programme Phase II Interim Report On Drr li Programme (May 2010 To October 2010)*
- <sup>130</sup> DRR Niger Consortium (2007) *Coordinated Disaster Risk Reduction Responses in Niger* Submitted to DFID Africa Conflict & Humanitarian Unit p30-31
- <sup>131</sup> CARE-Niger (Oct 2009) *Système Communautaire d'Alerte Précoce et de Réponse aux Urgences (SCAP-RU) Mode Operatoire, Version 1*
- <sup>132</sup> Baoua, I., Abdourahamane, B., Alhassane, A. (Oct 2009) *Observatoire de Suivi de la Vulnérabilité. Capitalisation de Quatre Années de Recherche Action*. APCAN
- <sup>133</sup> Personal communication. Coordinator of SAP Niger, H. Harouna
- <sup>134</sup> Ramalingam, B., Kim Scriven K., Conor Foley, C., *Innovations in international humanitarian action, Chapter 3 ALNAP Review of Humanitarian Action*. p.49-50
- <sup>135</sup> Ibid
- <sup>136</sup> DFID (April 2011) *Cash Transfers Evidence Paper*
- <sup>137</sup> Harvey, P. (2007) *Cash-based responses in emergencies*. Briefing Paper 25 Humanitarian Policy Group ; Personal communication Paul Harvey
- <sup>138</sup> See Harvey, Paul, Katherine Haver, K., Hoffmann, J., Brenda Murphy, B., (2010) *Delivering Money Cash Transfer Mechanisms in Emergencies*. Save the Children UK; Paul Harvey is also completing an extensively researched 'Good Practice Review: Cash Transfer Programming in Emergencies' which should be published in 2011 (personal communication); See also ACF (2007?) *Implementing Cash-based Interventions A guideline for aid workers*
- <sup>139</sup> World Food Programme (WFP) (2008) *WFP Strategic Plan (2009–2011)*. Rome: p.3 Available at: [www.wfp.org/policies/Strategies/index.asp?section=6&sub\\_section=2](http://www.wfp.org/policies/Strategies/index.asp?section=6&sub_section=2)
- <sup>140</sup> Poulsen, L., Fabre, D., (March 2011) *Final Report UNICEF Emergency Project Niger Cash Transfer for Protection of Blanket Feeding. Maradi and Tahoua Regions. Implementation* Sept 2010 to Jan 2011

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- <sup>141</sup> Concern realised that carrying and distributing food in this remote area would have been both costly and insecure. Local markets were still functioning. So Concern decided to establish a program using mobile phone technology to transfer cash to recipients together with a private-sector partner, M-PESA which is a nationwide electronic cash service in Kenya.
- <sup>142</sup> McCord, Anna (2009) *Cash transfers: affordability and sustainability*. ODI Briefing Paper 30; see also McCord, Anna (Nov 2009) *Cash transfers and political economy in sub-Saharan Africa* ODI Briefing Paper 31
- <sup>143</sup> This concept of social protection is taken from Norton, Conway and Foster 2002:543)
- <sup>144</sup> Shepherd, A., Marcus R., Barrientos, A., (Sept 2004) *Policy Paper on Social Protection* ODI DFID paper on social protection p 12
- <sup>145</sup> Devereux, S., (Sept 2003) Policy Options for Increasing the Contribution of Social Protection to Food Security. Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex; also John Farrington, J., Slater, R., Holmes, R., (April 2004) *The Search for Synergies between Social Protection and Livelihood Promotion: The Agriculture Case*. ODI Working Paper 232
- <sup>146</sup> Devereaux, S., Cipryk, R., (July 2009) Social Protection in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Regional Review Institute of Development Studies Prepared as part of a Social Protection Scoping Study funded by the Ford Foundation p 24; McCord, A., 2009 op cit
- <sup>147</sup> Devereaux, S., Cipryk (2009), op cit p 20
- <sup>148</sup> Shepherd et al. (2004) op cit p.2
- <sup>149</sup> Shepherd et al. (2004) op cit
- <sup>150</sup> See the work HEA Save the Children in this report
- <sup>151</sup> Shepherd et al. (2004) op cit
- <sup>152</sup> African Union (2006)
- <sup>153</sup> World Bank (2001)
- <sup>154</sup> Mousseau, F (2010) op cit. p.18
- <sup>155</sup> Devereaux S, Cipryk (2009) op cit, p 24
- <sup>156</sup> Ibid
- <sup>157</sup> Republique du Niger (2010) *Projet pilote des filets sociaux par le cash transfert (PPFS-CT) Note conceptuelle du projet*
- <sup>158</sup> (World Bank 1992, 1). Devesh cited in Santiso, C. 2001 *Good Governance and Aid Effectiveness: The World Bank and Conditionality*. Paul H Nitze School of Advanced International Studies Johns Hopkins University The Georgetown Public Policy Review Volume 7 Number 1 Fall 2001, pp.1-22
- <sup>159</sup> Daniel Kauffman, D. (February 2009) *Aid Effectiveness and Governance The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. Development Outreach, World Bank Institute.
- <sup>160</sup> Santiso 2001, op cit. p.18
- <sup>161</sup> In the past decade, there has been a major shift away from conditionality to "selectivity" (i.e. targeting aid to poor countries with sound policies and effective institutions). The aim is to increase aid effectiveness by concentrating it in countries showing genuine commitment to improving governance. This involves a shift from inducing governments to promote good governance into requiring good governance as a condition for receiving aid, and therefore does not confront governance directly. This approach still influences the approach of the US and the World Bank.
- <sup>162</sup> de Sardan, Jean-Pierre Olivier (janvier 2011), *Au Niger, le cycle des crises alimentaires*  
<http://blog.mondediplo.net/2011-01-07-Au-Niger-le-cycle-des-crisis-alimentaires>
- <sup>163</sup> Cited in Harragin, S (June 2006) *The Cost of being Poor: Markets, mistrust and malnutrition in southern Niger 2005-2006*. Save the Children (UK)
- <sup>164</sup> Ibid
- <sup>165</sup> Since 1986, Niger has been a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which enshrines the right to food and the right to be free from hunger in Article 11. This means that the Nigerien government committed itself to respect, protect, and fulfill the right to food for its population; including a commitment to call for the necessary assistance to fight hunger and malnutrition.
- <sup>166</sup> Harragin, S (June 2006) op.cit. p.64
- <sup>167</sup> Carbone M, (2009?) *The European Union, good governance and aid effectiveness*: pp.9-13
- <sup>168</sup> Ibid pp. 10-11
- <sup>169</sup> OECD DAC (Feb 2010) *Ensuring Fragile States are not left Behind: Summary Report*
- <sup>170</sup> DFID, *Why We Need to Work More Effectively in Fragile States* (London: UK Department for International Development, 2005).
- <sup>171</sup> OECD, *Service Delivery in Fragile Situations* (Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008)
- <sup>172</sup> The African Capacity Building Foundation (2011) *Capacity Development in Fragile States , Africa Capacity Indicators 2011* p.42
- <sup>173</sup> States are fragile when their structures lack political will and/or capacity to provide the basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development and to safeguard the security and human rights of their populations. Many fragile states confront particularly severe development challenges such as weak governance, limited administrative capacity, chronic humanitarian crisis, persistent social tensions, and armed conflict. Both Chad and Niger are considered fragile states by OECD and other classification systems.
- <sup>174</sup> OECD (April 2007) *Principles For Good International Engagement In Fragile States & Situations*
- <sup>175</sup> References and statements about fragile states are made in all of the following:  
United Nations (September 2008) Accra Agenda for Action: 3rd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness;  
European Union (2005) Brussels: The European Consensus on Development;  
OECD (2005) Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability
- <sup>176</sup> ACF report [Chad: a call to end decades of hunger](#)

- <sup>177</sup> Ibid
- <sup>178</sup> République de Tchad (Mars 2008) Document de Stratégie de Croissance et de Réduction de la Pauvreté au Tchad
- <sup>179</sup> Poulsen, L., Michael, M, Pearson, N.(Feb 2007) *Drought and Vulnerability. A Review of Context, Capacity and Appropriate Interventions with respect to drought and acute malnutrition in the Sahel Region of West Africa. Concept Paper* p55. In September 2006, the number of registered and active NGOs in Chad was 69 international and 74 national. In the same month, the active number of national NGOs in Niger was 286 and in Burkina 290
- <sup>180</sup> FAO, Coopération Française, Délégation de la Union Européenne (Février 2010): *Rapport de l'Étude sur Le Dispositif National de Sécurité Alimentaire*
- <sup>181</sup> Morinière, Lezlie C. (Août 2010) *Rapport d'Évaluation Finale, externe et indépendante, du projet SISA—SAP : Relance du Système d'alerte précoce pour la sécurité alimentaire* » (Draft) (GCP/CHD/028/EC) orchestré par la FAO et le Gouvernement du Tchad
- <sup>182</sup> personal communication EC in N'Djaména; Intermon OXFAM staff in Guéra
- <sup>183</sup> ACF (Nov 2010) Briefing Paper: *Chad A call to end Decades of Hunger*
- <sup>184</sup> See the European Consensus of December 2005; cited in Poulsen, L. Op. Cit. p.10-11
- <sup>185</sup> Personal communication; from an interview with the FAO
- <sup>186</sup> HLTf (2008) Comprehensive Framework for Action ,United Nations High Level Task Force on Hunger, New York
- <sup>187</sup> Mousseau, F., Mittal, A.,(October 2006) Sahel: A Prisoner of Starvation? A Case Study of the 2005 Food Crisis in Niger. The Oakland Institute, [www.oaklandinstitute.org](http://www.oaklandinstitute.org) p.24
- <sup>188</sup> Cited in Mousseau, F., Mittal, A.,(October 2006) Sahel: A Prisoner of Starvation? A Case Study of the 2005 Food Crisis in Niger. The Oakland Institute, [www.oaklandinstitute.org](http://www.oaklandinstitute.org), p.18
- <sup>189</sup> Tchad, (2009) Enquête sur la Vulnérabilité Structurelle à l'insécurité alimentaire au Tchad.
- <sup>190</sup> Action Contre la Faim, Food and Agriculture Organisation (2010) Economie des ménages et sécurité alimentaire Départements de Kanem et de Wadi Bissam. Juillet-Août.
- <sup>191</sup> Bauer, J., Foye, M., Ibrahim, L., Tessandier, C., *Marchés et Sécurité alimentaire au Tchad* Published jointly by FAO, FEWS NET, FAO
- <sup>192</sup> Ibid
- <sup>193</sup> Ibid p.47
- <sup>194</sup> Ibid
- <sup>195</sup> Ibid p.49
- <sup>196</sup> PAM (2010) *Rapport Mission Achats Locaux*. Novembre
- <sup>197</sup> Bauer, J., Foye, M., Ibrahim, L., Tessandier, C, op cit. p. 48
- <sup>198</sup> Afrique Verte (2010) *Renforcer les capacités des réseaux d'organisations agricoles par l'analyse de l'évolution du prix des céréales locales au Burkina, Mali et Niger durant la période 2001-2010*. Décembre.
- <sup>199</sup> Mousseau, F. Et al. (October 2006) op cit.19
- <sup>200</sup> Ibid .p21
- <sup>201</sup> Ibid
- <sup>202</sup> Shenggen Fan, Maximo Torero, and Derek Headey (March 2011)*Urgent Actions Needed to Prevent Recurring Food Crises* IFPRI Policy Brief 16
- <sup>203</sup> Sampson, Kristin (October 2010) *Stabilizing Agriculture Markets Why We Need Food Reserves* Institute For Agriculture And Trade Policy IATP
- <sup>204</sup> Flament, J., (June 2010) Food reserves as a means of stabilising markets, increasing producers' market power and guaranteeing food security Report of the international agricultural seminar organised by the Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires (CSA), the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) and Oxfam-Solidarity p4.
- <sup>205</sup> Sampson, Kristin (October 2010) *Stabilizing Agriculture Markets What Next On Food Reserves?* Institute For Agriculture And Trade Policy IATP
- <sup>206</sup> Sampson, Kristin (October 2010) *Stabilizing Agriculture Markets What Next On Food Reserves?* Institute For Agriculture And Trade Policy IATP
- <sup>207</sup> Flament, J (June 2010) op cit.
- <sup>208</sup> Murphy, S., (October 2010) *Stabilizing Agriculture Markets WTO Rules And Food Reserves* Institute For Agriculture And Trade Policy IATP. Murphy analyses the WTO rules and determines that there are specific exemptions in the Agreement on Agriculture that would give room to manoeuvre for Sahelian governments to use food reserves as a way to affect prices. According to Murphy, "World Trade Organization (WTO) rules governing agriculture do not actually make the operation of a grain reserve impossible, but they do create uncertainties".
- <sup>209</sup> ECHO (2010) Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) Sahel Region Of West Africa Echo/Wwd/-Wf/2011/01 1
- <sup>210</sup> IRIN: (June 2010) Niger: UN relief chief urges donors to respond quickly to food crisis.  
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=35117&Cr=niger+&Cr1=>
- <sup>211</sup> IRIN (December 2010) Child nutrition situation in Niger remains alarming, UN-backed survey warns  
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37169&Cr=niger+&Cr1=>
- <sup>212</sup> [Loewenberg, S. \(2010\)](#) Niger's hunger crisis: a legacy of lessons unlearned

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid

<sup>214</sup> Brian O'Neill, personal communication

<sup>215</sup> Source : Niger Emergency Humanitarian Action Plan (EHAP) revised, 16th July 2010

<sup>216</sup> Source: Financial Tracking Service (FTS) : <http://www.reliefweb.int/fts>

<sup>217</sup> European Commission (2009) *EU Strategy for Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction In Developing Countries*. Communication From The Commission To The Council And The European Parliament

<sup>218</sup> République de Niger : Stratégie de Développement accéléré et de réduction de la Pauvreté 2008 – 2012

<sup>219</sup> Loewenberg, S op cit.

<sup>220</sup> OXFAM (November 2009). *People-Centred Resilience Working with vulnerable farmers towards climate change adaptation and food security*. Oxfam Briefing Paper 135 – Summary p.4

<sup>221</sup> Ibid, p3-4

<sup>222</sup> EL Malone (Aug 2009) *Vulnerability and Resilience in the Face of Climate Change: Current Research and Needs for Population Information*. Battelle. Washington. Prepared for Population Action International p.12

<sup>223</sup> Ibid p.12

<sup>224</sup> Ibid p.6

<sup>225</sup> Sen, Amartya. (1981) *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

<sup>226</sup> Alinovi, L., Mane, E., (January 2009) *Measuring Household Resilience To Food Insecurity: Application To Palestinian Households* (Working Paper) EC-FAO Food Security Programme p.5

<sup>227</sup> Ibid p.v

<sup>228</sup> Intermon Oxfam, (Avril 2010) *Définition du Cadre d'orientation stratégique de moyens d'existence (COSME) en Afrique de l'Ouest (Sahel)*

<sup>229</sup> A system to assess resilience, and the impact of interventions on the level of household resiliency, is beyond the scope of this report. This system would require an understanding of where resilience resides in the livelihood system of poor households, and when and how it can be lost or gained, and identifying the points in the system where interventions can increase the resilience. The analysis of resilience would focus at the household level because this is where most risk management and coping strategies are implemented, especially the informal strategies that are most readily available to poor households. Measuring household resilience to food insecurity would require data on household assets (physical, human and social capital) and on formal safety nets, the functioning of markets, seasonality, and economic policies that determine a household's opportunities and the range of activities it can pursue to manage risk. Much of this information could be obtained through HEA data. Such a framework would combine both short and long term actions to increase resilience. Short term actions would be aimed at supporting households' own coping strategies during the acute phase of the crisis through cash transfers or social protection measures. Longer term actions would consist of investment in health and education, and DRR actions, which build resilience over time. Assessment of resilience takes a systems approach. This is relevant because the resilience of poorer households cannot be analysed without understanding how they interact with better off households within the local "social system". Also, at the local level, while the focus must be on the poorest households, who are most vulnerable, strengthening resilience often requires community collective action, sharing of risks, pooling of resources, and advocacy for the right to food, and essential public services (i.e. social transfers, provision of health and education). Researchers at the FAO who have applied the concept of resilience to food security have combined and weighted such factors into an index, that provides an overall quantitative "**resilience score**". The score indicates where investments need to be made to further build resilience. See Alinovi and Mane, op cit. p8-18.