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Ménaka, Mali

Situation Report #1
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Highlights

- Clashes between armed groups have led to 38,800 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the region of Ménaka, including 22,100 children (representing 57 per cent of the total number of IDPs)¹.
- The nutritional situation continues to deteriorate, with alarming rates of malnutrition especially in the displacement sites, with a Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) prevalence of 8.2 per cent².
- Since the beginning of the crisis:
 - UNICEF has provided Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) assistance to 37,985 people including 9,116 women and 21,132 children (displaced and host community)
 - 69,491 children have been received vitamin A supplementation
 - 10,840 children (4,111 girls) have received school materials
 - 2,867 children have received psychosocial support in child-friendly spaces.
- UNICEF has so far mobilised US\$ 4.3 million (out of the US \$ 11 million required for the response) to scale up its interventions to address the increasing humanitarian needs in the region of Ménaka. UNICEF urgently needs a further US\$ 6.7 million.

Situation Overview

Humanitarian needs in the region of Ménaka continue to increase in relation to the deterioration of the security situation. Since March 2022, clashes between armed groups have caused the displacement of 38,800 people³. More than 10,700 newly displaced persons were reported in Ménaka region between April and May 2023⁴ and they are in urgent need of lifesaving and life-sustaining interventions, including protection, adequate shelter, water, health and nutrition.

In the border area with Burkina Faso and Niger, insecurity following armed clashes and attacks on humanitarian workers and assets has resulted in a considerable reduction of humanitarian space. Except for Ménaka town, Tidermène and Inékar, all other localities in the region face major access constraints.

¹ National Directorate for Social Development, Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), April 2023

² Standardised Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART), March 2023

³ Ibid

⁴ OCHA Mali, 'Rapport spécial de situation Ménaka du 24 Avril au 07 Mai', May 2023

As a result of the insecurity prevailing in the region, the protection situation is constantly deteriorating, with frequent violations affecting people and property. Women and girls, including boys, are at serious risk of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, abduction and forced marriage. Internal population displacements increase the risk of children being separated from their families, as do the risks of recruitment and use of children by armed groups.

The nutritional situation is of major concern in the region of Ménaka. In 2022, the results of the SMART survey revealed a prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) of 14 per cent of children under five (with 3.6 per cent SAM), a slight decrease from 2021 (GAM: 17.9 per cent, SAM: 3.9 per cent in 2021). A rapid SMART survey was conducted in March 2023 in the IDP sites in Ménaka, which revealed a significant deterioration in the nutritional situation with prevalence of GAM of 26.9 per cent, SAM of 8.2 per cent, and MAM of 18.7 per cent. A joint mission UNICEF/OCHA/WFP was conducted from 16 to 24 May 2023 to perform an indepth evaluation of the situation in Ménaka. A response plan is being elaborated and key immediate actions decided together with humanitarian key actors and local authorities.

Access to water remains an absolute priority for both displaced persons and for host communities. Given the climate in the Sahel, water availability is scarce, and it is challenging to drill boreholes. Immediate solutions to providing access to safe water include water trucking, while exploring the feasibility of drilling deep boreholes equipped with environmentally friendly technology. Also, as diarrhea is one of the main causes of mortality in children under the age of five⁵, it is essential to ensure adequate coverage of 'nutrition-sensitive WASH' interventions to significantly reduce malnutrition.

The crisis in the region is also affecting the education sector. Since 2022, 67 per cent of schools have been partially closed at least once. More than 42,600 children (41 per cent girls) have had their schooling disrupted because of school closure and their involvement in revenue generating or subsistence activities. A total of 142 schools remain closed in the Education Academies of Ménaka, Anderboukan, Inekar and Tidermen, while some schools have been occupied by displaced people in the town of Ménaka. At least 48 per cent of the schools in Ménaka have received displaced pupils; and since these schools already had very limited capacity, this influx presents an additional challenge to delivering quality education.

UNICEF's Response

UNICEF's response focuses on lifesaving and life-sustaining interventions to address the immediate needs of displaced people and also vulnerable people from host communities, through an integrated package of services spanning Child Protection, WASH, Health, Nutrition, and Education.

Child Protection



UNICEF child protection interventions focus on:

- the provision psychosocial support to children affected by the crisis
- the establishment of child-friendly spaces, including safe spaces for girls and adolescents and listening points
- identification, care, tracing and family reunification of unaccompanied children and
- identification and care of child victims of violence.

These interventions are implemented through direct implementation as well as in partnership with local Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) including GARDL and ATDED, and the Regional Directorate for the Promotion of Women, Children and Family.

Results achieved as of April 2023 include:

- 2,867 children (40 per cent of the target of 7,000 children) - including 1,856 girls - provided with psychosocial support including in 20 established child-friendly spaces
- 217 transitional host families benefited from monthly cash transfers of US\$ 56 (to last 6 months in total) to support children with specific needs (orphans, unaccompanied/separated children etc.)
- 154 children (16 per cent of the target of 1,000) - including 98 children associated with armed and forced groups, 46 children unaccompanied or separated children, and 42 girls - benefited from socio-economic reintegration measures such as school reintegration (23 children), professional training (42 children) and Income Generating Activities (89 children).

⁵ It is estimated that 50% of undernutrition is due to repeated crises of diarrhea (WASH cluster Mali, 2023)

In addition UNICEF is supporting the strengthening of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) of the six grave violations committed against children⁶, especially through capacity building of Monitors.

WASH

To respond to the urgent needs of displaced people in Ménaka, UNICEF continued to leverage its partnerships with Government line ministries, private construction companies and national NGOs (GARDL and ATDED) to deliver WASH services to affected communities. Community engagement to prevent the spread of water related disease and other epidemics is paramount throughout the implementation of the emergency response.

Since the onset of the crisis, UNICEF has reinforced its immediate life-saving WASH response to increase the coverage of drinking water, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities in Ménaka and its outskirts, reaching a total of 37,985 people with WASH services (out of a target of 57,000 people). Interventions include:

- The construction of 10 boreholes, equipped with solar powered technology and 40 tap-stands ensuring the distribution of water to 37,985 people, including 9,116 women and 21,132 children
- The distribution of 4,039 non-food items (NFIs) and 444 WASH dignity kits to improve hygiene practices and collection and handling of water at household level, reaching 26,898 people including 6,456 women and 14,256 children
- The construction of 452 emergency toilets and 452 bathrooms at IDPs sites and in host communities benefiting to 11,907 people, including 2,858 women and 6,311 children
- The rehabilitation of 64 toilet cabins in six schools, benefiting 2,302 students, including 940 girls
- The organisation of hygiene awareness and promotion sensitisation activities, reaching 35,925 people in the city of Ménaka and its surroundings.

Health and Nutrition



UNICEF and partners have been providing life-saving high-impact nutrition interventions for women and child IDPs, refugees and for host communities. These interventions include the management of SAM and the promotion of Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) in emergency situations. To ensure effective implementation of these interventions, there is a need for capacity building of nutritionists, health care providers and caregivers as well as community actors.

Health interventions focus on supporting the continuation of existing essential health services for displaced persons, refugees and host communities, with an emphasis on i) the availability of essential drugs, materials and equipment in maternity wards, as well as other child, women and newborn care services and ii) capacity building of health and nutrition care service providers.

UNICEF has prepositioned therapeutic food and essential medicines including 2,500 cartons of RUTF in Ménaka to respond to the increasing number of SAM cases. Four mobile clinics were established to cover hard to reach areas including IDP sites in Ménaka and Tidermene health districts. From January to May 2023, 588 children aged 0-59 months were treated for SAM; 4,123 children aged 6-59 months received vitamin A supplementation; and 1,112 accompanying children and pregnant and breastfeeding women benefited from preventive nutrition services and IYCF counselling. All these interventions were implemented in partnership with the Regional Directorate of Health and the NGOs IEDA and Médecins du Monde.

The rapid SMART survey conducted in March 2023 revealed significant deterioration in the nutritional situation in Ménaka, particularly in IDP sites. The Nutrition cluster has issued an appeal to provide emergency nutritional assistance to 33,679 people, including 11,742 children aged 6 to 59 months.

⁶ The purpose of the MRM is to provide for the systematic gathering of accurate, timely, objective and reliable information on six grave violations committed against children in situations of armed conflict. The six grave violations are: i) Killing and maiming of children, ii) Recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups, iii) Attacks against schools and hospitals, iv) Abduction of children, v) Denial of humanitarian access for children.

Education



The strategy of the Education cluster is to ensure access to quality education in a protective learning environment through:

- the establishment of temporary learning spaces and the construction and rehabilitation of classrooms
- the provision of essential learning materials and supplies
- the support to the organisation of end year exams
- capacity building for School management committees
- community engagement and training on Psychosocial support (PSS) and Disaster Risk reduction (DRR).

As of April 2023, 10,840 children (4,769 girls) in Menaka region have been reached with education interventions (out of a target of 26,000):

- 10,840 children (4,111 girls) benefitted from the distribution of school kits⁷
- 5,180 children (2,056 girls) – both IDPs and in host communities - enrolled in catch-up classes
- 30 temporary learning spaces built with semi-durable materials benefitting to 2,500 children (900 girls)
- 10 classrooms were constructed, and 15 classrooms rehabilitated for 1,500 children (500 girls).

All interventions were conducted in partnership with the Regional Academy for Education and the NGOs ATDED, GARDL and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

Funding Requirements

UNICEF requires US\$ 11 million to provide a lifesaving and life-sustaining humanitarian response to children affected by the crisis in Ménaka. This emergency response aims to alleviate the immediate needs and consist of urgent interventions related to WASH, Health, Nutrition, Child Protection and Education.

So far, UNICEF has mobilised US\$ 4.3 million (39 per cent of the total requirements) and urgently needs US\$ 6.7 million to scale up its interventions.

Sector Appeal	Cluster				UNICEF			
	Requirement	Funding received (US \$)	Gap	%	Requirement	Funding received (US \$)	Gap	%
WASH	3,200,000	1,750,000	1,450,000	45%	2,350,000	1,460,000	890,000	38%
Health & Nutrition	8,650,000	1,080,000	7,570,000	88%	3,100,000	780,000	2,320,000	75%
Child Protection	3,700,000	1,135,000	2,565,000	69%	2,960,000	1,025,000	1,935,000	65%
Education	5,500,000	3,700,000	1,800,000	33%	2,620,000	1,062,000	1,558,000	59%
Total	21,050,000	7,665,000	13,385,000	64%	11,030,000	4,327,000	6,703,000	61%

Without additional funding:

- more than 500 children associated with armed forces and groups will not have access to transitional care and sustainable socioeconomic reintegration measures.
- at least 500 unaccompanied or separated children will not be reunited with their families
- more than 4,000 children affected by the crisis and facing psychosocial challenges will not have access to appropriate responses through community mechanisms.

⁷ A kit contains 2 pens, 4 notebooks, 2 pencils, and 1 geometric set

If the response is not sufficiently sustained, the nutrition cluster estimates that the nutritional situation will continue to deteriorate in Ménaka region, especially in IDP sites, during the lean season. This will result in a profound deterioration of the situation, leading to an increase in nutritional needs between now and the end of September 2023, and consequently to an increase in mortality and morbidity among children under the age of five. 20,000 people, including approximately 11,000 children, will not have access to water and hygiene and sanitation services, with the risk of water-related diseases and even epidemics, the worsening of the nutritional situation of children.

UNICEF Contacts in Mali

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