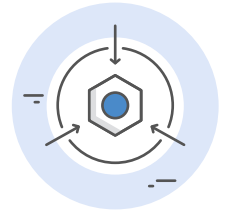


CHAD - HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

DECEMBER 2023 - JANUARY 2024



OCHA

Over 2.9 million people predicted to be severely food insecure in Chad in 2024

In December 2023, the results of the Cadre Harmonisé (harmonized framework for Food and Nutrition Security) in Chad were released forecasting that over 2.9 million people (about 16 per cent of the Chadian population) will be severely food insecure (phase 3-5) during the

next lean season from June to August 2024. This is an increase of one million people from the 1.8 million affected in 2023 and almost double since November 2022. Over 8.2 million people in total will be food insecure in Chad this year.



Low harvest potential has a negative impact on food production, increasing food insecurity.

Photo : © OCHA/Fragkiska Megaloudi

The provinces most affected include Lac, Kanem, Barh-el-Gazel, Hadjer Lamis, Guéra, Batha, Sila, Ouaddaï and Wadi-Fira (in the Sahel), Tibesti, Borkou and Ennedi Est (in the Sahara) and Salamat in the south-east.

By the end of December 2023, there were more than 6.5 million people food insecure, including 2 million in the severe phase. At the same time in 2022, around 3.2 million people were food insecure, including more than 800,000 in the severe phase, demonstrating how much the food security situation has worsened.

There is serious cause for concern that the food situation in the country is getting worse for

several reasons and requires concerted efforts by the Government and its humanitarian partners, especially during the lean season.

First, according to the forecast results for the 2023/24 agricultural season, production will be lower than in the 2022/23 season and the average of the last five years. The cereals balance sheet shows a deficit of around 364,000 tonnes. This large discrepancy can be explained by the poor temporal and spatial distribution of rainfall, with long periods of drought, as well as pest infestations affecting 582,581 ha. The poor potential harvest is having a negative impact on food production which is making more people food insecure.

Nutritional situation also getting worse

Nearly 360,000 cases of severe acute malnutrition were expected in the country's nutritional treatment facilities by end of 2023. The nutritional situation has worsened significantly with 319,114 cases recorded between January and October 2023, almost double the total number expected. Given the very worrying food security situation, the nutritional situation could deteriorate further in 2024.

According to data from the November 2022 SMART nutrition survey (there was no nutrition survey in 2023), the national prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) is 8.6% and that of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) is 2%. This rate masks disparities at the provincial and departmental levels, with areas such as Wadi-Fira having a GAM prevalence above the emergency threshold of 15%. Malnutrition has a serious impact on children's learning capacity and overall cognitive development and remains a major cause of child mortality.

The food and nutrition situation has been made more difficult because of the lack of funding

which has reduced the amount of assistance going to people in need. The World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations' lead agency for emergency food assistance, is facing a serious funding problem that could have a serious impact on the provision of food and nutrition assistance to affected people in Chad.

As part of the response to the food crisis, WFP has assisted over 577,000 refugees and returnees from Sudan and over 238,000 vulnerable people among host communities in eastern Chad. In addition, WFP is working with the government and UNHCR to implement a large-scale integrated resilience programme for refugee and host communities, rehabilitating 250,000 ha of land to support 500,000 farmers and herders in being self-sufficient.

After releasing the results of the analysis of the Cadre Harmonisé, in November 2023, the Food Security and Early Warning Information System (SISAAP), in collaboration with government partners, presented the results at the Prime Minister's Office on 11 December. A Government

Displacement continues in the Lac province

Recent analysis by the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) consortium (an active member of the Population Movement Committee), reveals a significant movement of people in the Lac province in 2023.

Between October and December 2023, the consortium recorded 58 displacement alerts involving 56,234 people. Of these alerts, 12 were confirmed, affecting 16,676 individuals, while 8 were not confirmed. The remaining 38 alerts, involving 39,618 people, are still being verified by RRM partners.

From January to September, data from the CCCM (Camp Coordination and Camp Management) sub-cluster reported that 74,122 people had

moved, demonstrating the seriousness of the continued displacement problem in this province. Since the beginning of the year, many displacement alerts were recorded by the humanitarian community some of which remained unconfirmed. While some displacement has been the result of ongoing attacks by armed groups there has also been the secondary movement of those people already displaced who have moved in search of assistance.

Round 20 of the IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, released in June 2023, estimated at 215,928 the number of Internally Displaced Persons in Lac Province.



The decrease of humanitarian funding in the Lac province has sent many IDPs out of their original sites, in search of foods and other response to their most urgent needs.

Photo : © OCHA/Fragkiska Megaloudi

The complex situation in the Lac is rendered difficult by the many causes of displacement and the reliability of the information collected. The reports are often contested by the different actors involved, posing the need for serious data processing after information gathering.

Not all those displacements were new, as the decrease of humanitarian funding in the Lac province has sent many IDPs out of their original sites, in search of foods and other response to their most urgent needs.

Faced with this situation, the CCCM sub-cluster, in collaboration with the CNARR (*Commission nationale d'accueil et de réinsertion des réfugiés*

et rapatriés) and other stakeholders, are working to find solutions to improve the alert system and the validation of information about displacement. These solutions will be proposed using tools that are currently being finalized including Standing Operating Procedures for the validation of alerts.

To tackle the problem of data reliability, the RRM partners also plan to organise exploratory field visits to check the veracity of the alerts sent to the sub-cluster and the Population Movement Committee. These initiatives aim to improve understanding of the situation and ensure that interventions are based on reliable and accurate information to better respond to the needs of displaced populations.

Humanitarian access in Chad: a key challenge for agencies

Humanitarian partners in Chad experienced several constraints on humanitarian access in 2023. These constraints are linked to the physical environment and lack of infrastructure, restrictions on the movement of humanitarian actors, and military operations and hostilities. Below are the key access constraints in Chad.

Physical environment and lack of infrastructure

The state of the road infrastructure in the country makes it difficult to transport humanitarian supplies in several locations. In the south, for example, the rainy season has led to the collapse

of certain bridges and the deterioration of roads (for example the Dieuh bridge on the Békan-Goré road, the Koumra-Bétboro-Moissala road, and the Koumaga bridge in the Mandoul province), restricting the movement of humanitarian workers and supplies. In the east, the rainy season causes the flooding of the wadis with water between July and August that leads to the closure of some roads periodically that humanitarian agencies use to move people and supplies. In the Lac province, rising water levels of Lake Chad in late 2022 and early 2023 has caused the collapse of bridges between Fourkoulom and Ngouboua and other roads.



An example of access constraint in the Lac province.

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Administrative constraints

Humanitarian access can also be hampered by administrative procedures that slow down operations. There are often long delays in processing permit applications that international humanitarian staff require to deploy to eastern Chad. Humanitarian partners are working with the Chadian authorities to seek ways to speed up the process.

In Lac Province, local authorities in the departments of Kaya and Fouli have at times imposed restrictions limiting humanitarian access to island areas following the incursion of non-state armed groups (NSAG) and the attack and abduction of civilians. The authorities have said that they cannot guarantee the safety of humanitarian workers in these areas. It is essential to maintain a constant flow of communication with the authorities and to carry out regular security assessments to ensure that humanitarians have access to the most vulnerable people and vice versa which is done through the CMCoord coordination mechanisms.

Military operations and hostilities

A secure operating environment is essential for humanitarian access in Chad. In 2023 there were

pockets of insecurity throughout the country, particularly attacks and incursions by NSAG in Lac Province. Between July and September, 56 major security incidents were reported, including 40 attacks and 16 cases of crime and armed conflict.

Inter- and intra-communal violence, particularly in the south, has also temporarily disrupted humanitarian activities including between April and May 2023 which led to the suspension of humanitarian activities in Logone Oriental province.

Humanitarian access working group established

In order to address these access constraints, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) agreed in December to establish a Humanitarian Access Working Group chaired by OCHA and a NGO co-lead. The group convenes all relevant actors to analyse access constraints in different parts of the country and try to identify solutions. This new group will establish access monitoring systems in 2024 and develop a strategy to address these.

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