MALI
Floods

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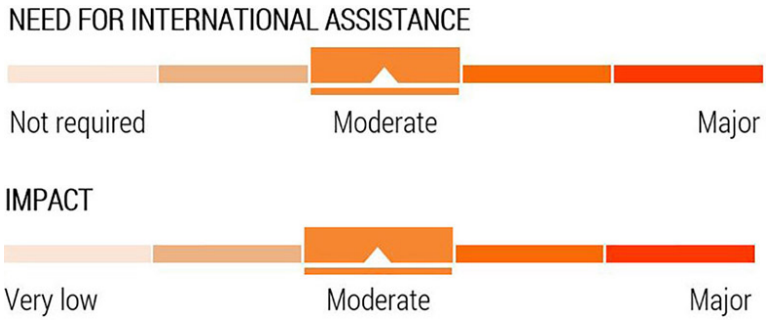
Briefing note – 06 September 2018

Heavy rain that began in late July 2018 has caused flooding in several parts of the country. As of late August, more than 18,000 people were affected, 3,200 houses destroyed, and some 1,800 head of cattle killed. The affected populations are in need of shelter, NFI, and WASH assistance. Longer-term livelihoods assistance is highly likely to be needed in the aftermath of the floods.



Source: UNICEF 05/10/2014

Anticipated scope and scale

The rainy season in Mali is expected to continue until October, which will probably cause further flooding.

Flooding will have a longer-term impact on already vulnerable populations affected by conflict, displacement, and drought. Crop and cattle damage is likely to negatively impact both food security and livelihoods, and long-term assistance will be needed to counteract the effects of the floods.

Key priorities

+18,000
people affected

3,200
houses destroyed

1,800 cattle killed

Livelihoods
impacted in the long term

Humanitarian constraints

Flooding of roads may delay the response. The recrudescence of acts of banditry, looting, kidnappings, and violence committed against humanitarian actors is hindering the response.

Limitations

The lack of disaggregated data (both geographic and demographic) limits the evaluation of needs and the identification of specific vulnerabilities.

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Crisis impact

The rainy season in Mali runs from mid-May until October, causing infrastructural damage and impacting thousands of people every year. In 2018, over 18,800 people have been affected by flooding caused by heavy rains, including three deaths. 3,200 houses have been destroyed and 1,800 head of cattle have been lost. This is already more damage than during the past two rainy seasons. (OCHA 27/08/2018)

In Timbuktu region, heavy rains have been falling since late July, leading to flooding in several areas. (Malijet 27/08/2018) It was reported that rains came earlier than usual this rainy season. (Bamada 18/08/2018) Due to the lack of data, it is challenging to assess the exact impact of floods in Diré and Goundam. In both cities, the rains started on 17 August and 50mm of water were collected in Diré and 99mm in Goundam. As of 21 August, Goundam had recorded 297mm of rain, the most in seven years. Without giving a precise number, local sources report that "several houses collapsed and hundreds of people were affected". (Mali Web 18/08/2018, Bamada 18/08/2018, Malijet 27/08/2018, Bamada 28/08/2018) The situation in Goundam was reportedly not as bad. (Malijet 27/08/2018)

The rainy season is supposed to run until October; therefore, further adverse weather can be expected.

Shelter: The flooding has led to significant shelter destruction, with 3,200 houses destroyed across the country. Populations affected are in urgent need of shelter assistance. (OCHA 27/08/2018).

Food & Agriculture: Across the country, 1,800 head of cattle were lost due to the floods. (OCHA 27/08/2018) Beyond the immediate destruction caused, floods are also likely to have long-term negative effects on agriculture and rural livelihoods. An overwhelming majority (almost 80%) of people in Timbuktu region live in rural environments and depend on rural livelihoods. (OECD 22/10/2015)

In addition, an estimated 318,657 people (36% of the population) in Timbuktu region are food insecure. The whole region was in Crisis (IPC 3) between June and August 2018. (OCHA 23/02/2018, WFP 22/08/2018) The food-security situation is expected to improve in August-September (IPC 2) and October 2018 to January 2019 (IPC 1). (FEWSNET accessed 05/09/2018) However, in Diré and Goundam, higher rice prices at local markets were observed in late August. In Timbuktu region, 56.6% of the population relies on markets for their food consumption. This is likely to worsen the food-security situation. (Bamada 29/08/2018, WFP 27/08/2018)

Health: Contaminated water sources and stagnating floodwater increase the risk of waterborne disease outbreaks. In the past, floods in Mali have resulted in outbreaks of waterborne diseases such as cholera and diarrhoea. Malaria cases and deaths usually peak during the rainy season (between May and October). The damage caused by flooding is increasing the risk of malaria. (WHO 01/05/2018, Government of Mali 11/06/2017)

WASH: Access to safe drinking water and WASH facilities is poor in Timbuktu region, where 39% of the population lack adequate access to clean water. (OCHA 20/02/2018) The destruction of shelters and potential contamination of water sources mean WASH needs can be expected. It was reported that additional resources are required to supply water, sanitation infrastructures, and hygiene service to affected populations. (OCHA 27/08/2018)

Education: Information about damage caused to infrastructures is limited, but it is possible that some schools were flooded. With the school year in Mali starting in mid-September, some children could be unable to attend school.

Vulnerable groups affected

Flooding is more likely to impact people whose livelihoods depend on agriculture, with cattle dying and fields destroyed by floods. The extent of the damage caused to agriculture in Diré and Goundam is currently unknown, however.

Floods disproportionately affect the poor, who generally live in more vulnerable areas and in housing that is susceptible to damage by floods. (ACAPS 01/2012) The poverty incidence in Timbuktu region is 47%, and 45% for the whole of Mali. (OECD 22/10/2015)

Humanitarian and operational constraints

There is a risk that a significant part of the Malian road system, which is extensive and old, could be cut off due to flooding. During past floods, the pre-existing poor road conditions made it difficult to reach certain areas. High levels of stagnant water in the streets of Diré and Goundam are making displacements difficult, potentially delaying the delivery of aid. (Malijet 27/08/2018)

In 2018, humanitarian actors face increasing insecurity in Timbuktu region. In Goundam specifically, a sudden reduction of the humanitarian space has been observed. Humanitarian actors are frequently forced to suspend their activities for a few days due to intercommunal clashes, banditry, or threats in intervention zones. (OCHA 23/02/2018).

Aggravating factors

Past floods in Mali

This rainy season in Mali has been more severe than during the past two years.

2017: 11,362 people affected across the country, 1,245 houses damaged and 536 destroyed. The main needs reported were shelter, WASH, and NFIs. Food security and

the livelihoods of the pastoral communities were impacted (over 26,238 head of cattle died or were lost because of the floods). Timbuktu, Segou, and Gao were the most affected.

2016: About 9,500 people (including 13 deaths) were affected by the floods in 2016, with Sikasso, Kolikoro, Segou, Mopti, Gao, Kidal, and Menaka being the most severely affected regions. (OCHA 22/08/2018)

Displacement

The displacement context in Mali is extremely complex and fluid. As of August 2018, movements of people being displaced because of insecurity and conflict continue to be reported. Timbuktu region hosts more than 40% of the total IDPs in the country. The number of IPDs has dramatically increased over the last few months due to renewed intercommunal tensions in the eastern and central parts of the country. As of July, there were over 31,300 IDPs in the region, roughly a 40% increase from June, when there were some 19,500 displaced. In addition, there are some 273,984 returnees in Timbuktu region. 804 IDPs and 23,628 IDPs returnees are hosted in Diré, 4,130 IDPs and 32,081 IDPs returnees in Goundam. (IOM 09/08/2018) The presence of IDPs is an added vulnerability.

Drought

The northern and central regions of Mali face reduced agropastoral production and income due to a longer-than-usual lean season. During the 2016-2017 agricultural campaign, lack of rainfall caused the loss of up to 85% of the crops. (RFI 15/07/2018) In 2018, the pastoral lean season, which usually runs from early April to the end of June, started in March. An unreliable pattern of rainfall has led to pockets of decreased crop production and high food prices, making it difficult for poor households to buy food from markets. The drought also impacts livestock. In some localities, more than 80% of the watering points have been depleted. (FAO 03/07/2018) These existing vulnerabilities are likely to be exacerbated by the long-term effects caused by floods on agriculture and livelihoods.

Location and type of housing/infrastructure

Many houses in Mali are reportedly made of rammed earth, vulnerable to floods. (BFMTV 08/09/2016)

In Diré and Goundam, houses were built in an 'anarchic' way and without a proper urbanisation plan, which made it easier for floodwater to infiltrate them. In addition, despite the region being prone to flooding during the rainy season, neither city has a proper drainage system or wastewater disposal system capable of handling the excess water. (Maliweb 03/08/2018, Bamada 18/08/2018; 19/08/2018; 25/08/2018)

The impact of floods on poor WASH infrastructures is likely to lead to other problems, such as disease outbreaks.

Political stability and security

In late August, people took to the streets of Goundam and Diré to protest electoral fraud. (Bamada 27/08/2018)

Between 2012 and 2017, Goundam went through a spiral of insecurity. Although a lull has been observed since the beginning of 2018, the region still bears the marks of past violence and isolation (Malizine 21/03/2018).

Key characteristics

- Demographic profile: Timbuktu: There are 876,661 inhabitants in Timbuktu region, 109,661 in Diré 151,329 in Goundam. The overwhelming majority of the population lives in rural areas (81.4% in Diré, 91% in Goundam) (OCHA 23/02/2018, INSTAT Mali 2009).
- Food-security figures. 318,657 people (36% of the population) in Timbuktu region are food insecure (WFP 22/08/2018).
- Agriculture: In Timbuktu region, 12% of lands are cultivated, a total of 33,997 hectares (OECD 22/10/2015).
- Nutrition levels: As a result of ongoing insecurity, displacement, and disrupted social services, Timbuktu region has one of the highest malnutrition rates of the country. 33,461 children under five suffer from GAM (15.7%, above the emergency threshold) (OCHA 23/02/2018).
- WASH statistics: In Timbuktu region, about 342,391 people (39% of the population) has no access to a drinking water point. The functionality of water points is 80%. (OCHA 23/02/2018).
- Lighting and cooking sources. Only 10% of the population in Timbuktu region has access to electricity (20% countrywide) (OECD 22/10/2015).

- Displacement:

	IDPs	IDP returnees	Repatriated
Mali	75,351	526,505	67,420
Timbuktu region	31,326	273,984	30,793
Diré	804	23,628	2,473
Goundam	4,130	32,081	3,895

(IOM 09/08/2018)

- Education: In Goundam, 13% of schools are closed, including three that are occupied by armed groups. (OCHA 23/02/2018). Only 25% of children are attending primary school (countrywide: 48%). (OECD 22/10/2015)

Response capacity

Local and national response capacity

The Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique (DNH), within the Ministry of Energy and Water, is the governmental department in charge of monitoring water levels in Mali. (Ministry of Energy and Water accessed 05/09/2018) The Civil Protection Directorate is in charge of coordinating direct emergency preparedness and response; however, its director general has reported insufficient personnel. (World Meteorological Organization 07/05/2018, Maliactu 05/03/2016) The Direction Nationale du Développement Social (DNDS), within the Ministere de l'action humanitaire, de la Solidarité et des Personnes Agées (MAHSPA) is in charge of elaborating, monitoring, and coordinating emergency aid in some areas in Mali, notably displacements. (MAHSPA, accessed 05/09/2018)

A monitoring committee was established in Diré in the aftermath of the flood. This committee is composed of representatives from the local administration, the municipality, technical services, and civil society, as well as local leaders and religious leaders. (Bamada 23/08/2018) The Timbuktu governorate chief of staff visited Diré on 20 August, and a distribution of NFIs (tarpaulins, soap, mats, and mosquito nets, among other items) was organised. (Bamada 21/08/2018)

International response capacity

Many international organisations and INGOs are present in Mali. 69 humanitarian partners are currently implementing projects in Timbuktu region, most of which focus on protection (29 partners) and health (19 partners). (OCHA 30/08/2018; 20/08/2018) The volatile security situation in the north makes it difficult for aid actors to access the area and provide an adequate response.

During past floods, MINUSMA provided emergency relief, undertook water and sanitation projects to mitigate the impact of floods, and escorted humanitarian actors in insecure areas. (Malinet 10/2017, MINUSMA 11/08/2015)

Population coping mechanisms

Researchers have previously concluded that the traditional livelihood strategies in Mali are diversified and well-suited for historical meteorological conditions, but lack adaptability options in the case of extreme weather hazards (A. Kodio et al. 2012).

Information gaps and needs

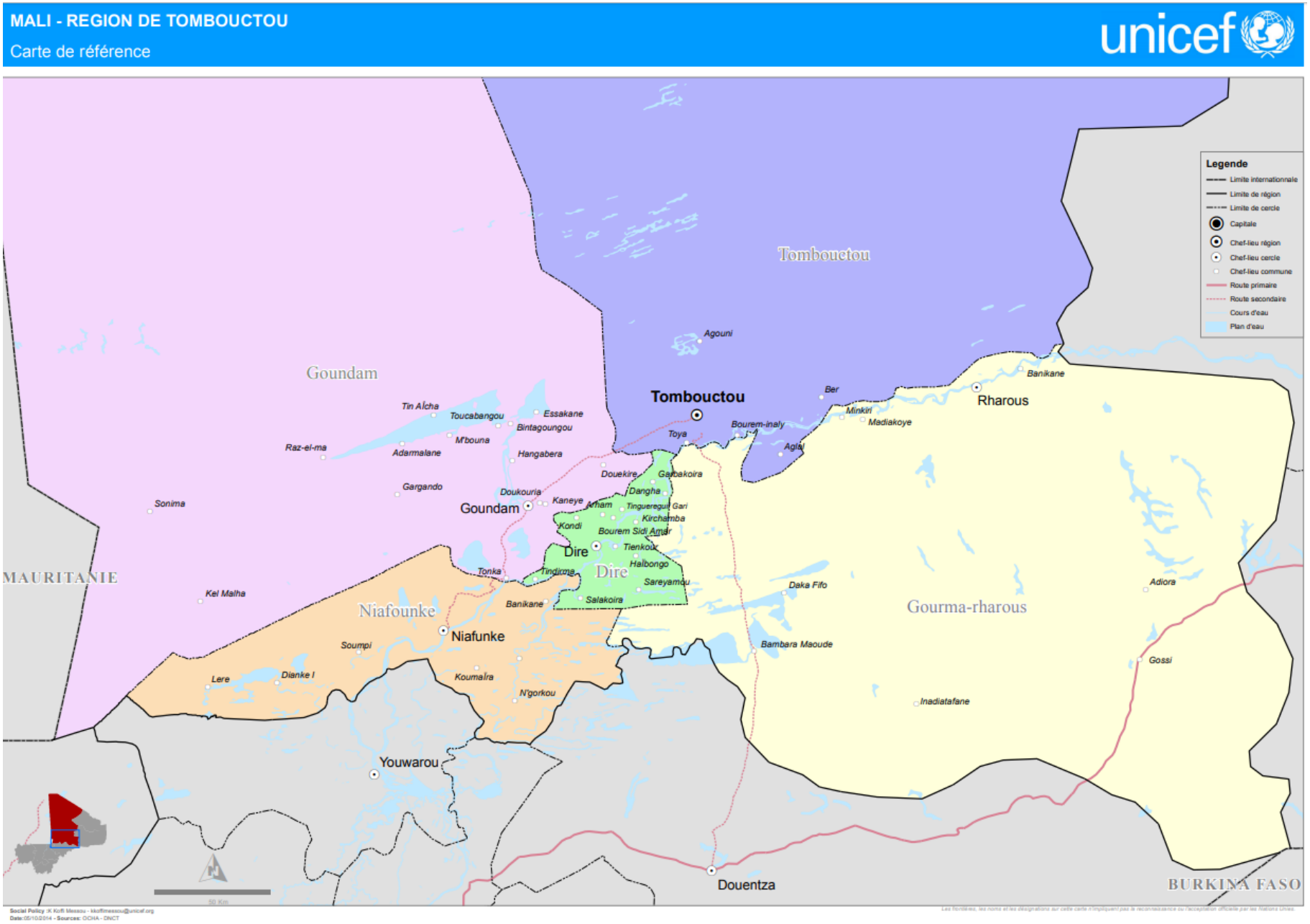
Most available data summarises the impact for the whole of Mali, and does not give a geographical breakdown of affected populations and infrastructure damage.

There is no information about potential displacement caused by the floods.

There is no information on critical infrastructures affected.

Lessons learned

- Crisis follow-up is important, including the conduct of a post-distribution beneficiary satisfaction survey and lessons learned workshop with flood-affected people and responders alike, to improve subsequent response. (IFRC 05/08/2016)
- To promote improved sanitation, carry out monthly cleaning and disinfection campaigns for latrines (bleach) and conduct hygiene promotion as well as monthly cleaning and disinfection campaigns. (IFRC 05/08/2016)
- Immediate and efficient WASH interventions will be crucial in the coming months once flooding increases.



Source: UNICEF 05/10/2014