

**HUMANITARIAN
COALITION** 



Save the Children

Together saving more lives

West Africa Drought Appeal 2012

Research Study:

Defining best humanitarian practice for supporting long-term food security during acute drought and food crises.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Introduction / Background

In 2012, the Sahel region of West Africa experienced a major drought and food crisis. According to UN reports an estimated 18 million people were severely affected across the region, including over 1 million children at risk of severe acute malnutrition. A combination of factors, including high food prices, low agricultural production, as well as the inability of affected households to recover from the 2010 food and nutrition crisis, exacerbated the Sahel region's vulnerability in 2012. Recent analyses point to a persistent region-wide and multi-dimensional 'resilience deficit'.

Food security and nutrition in the Sahel have improved somewhat since the acute crisis earlier in 2012, following better rains and harvests in the last few months. However, the effects of the recent crisis are not so quickly erased: for example many households did not have the ability to cultivate to the full extent and so did not benefit from the rains. The effects of negative coping measures and loss of assets will persist unless remedied. Supporting communities to get back on their feet at the earliest time possible is vital for communities to rebuild their lives, and withstand future droughts. The on-going situation in northern Mali will also have profound effects in 2013 in both Mali and on its neighbours.

In response to the 2012 crisis, the Humanitarian Coalition¹ launched an appeal to the Canadian public for funds to enable its member agencies to scale up the humanitarian response. The total raised by the appeal stands at \$3 million. All 5 Humanitarian Coalition Member Agencies had existing programs in the region and responded in this appeal. Member agencies used funds provided by the HC in Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad.

Linking Humanitarian Responses and Long-Term Food Security

The response to this crisis, coming on the heels of the East Africa drought and famine in 2011, raised many important considerations about how humanitarian responses can best complement long-term food security objectives. Humanitarian responses are designed with short term objectives defined within established humanitarian practice and principles. On occasion, these can potentially undermine long-term food security efforts.

Despite the repetitive nature of slow onset crises, the global aid system has failed time after time to address these disasters before they reach critical proportions. While the global humanitarian system is presently designed for responses to rapid onset crises, the more predictable and preventable chronic humanitarian disasters continue to test the capacity of non-governmental organisations to align short and long term program approaches.

Practitioners have increasingly sought to link humanitarian and development programs, invested in DRR activities, resilience building interventions and advocated for improved policies with national governments and other stakeholders. Yet many challenges remain and progress is uneven.

Though much valuable work has already taken place to identify ways to ensure development programming can adapt to changing contexts and address looming crises. Similar work is needed to ensure that, when called upon, humanitarian programs will complement and strengthen development and resiliency programs already underway.

This research study seeks to define recommendations for humanitarian practitioners which are to be used during the planning and implementation of short-term humanitarian responses to acute phases of chronic food-insecurity crises. Addressed at humanitarian managers, this study should contribute to ensuring humanitarian responses can complement existing long-term food security programmes.

¹ HUMANITARIAN COALITION membership is composed of five NGOs: CARE Canada, Oxfam Canada, Oxfam-Québec, Plan International Canada and Save the Children Canada.

2. Objectives of the Study

2.1. Contribute to defining best practice in linking short-term humanitarian responses with long-term food security objectives and programs.

2.2. Identify actionable recommendations which may be implemented by NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure humanitarian programs complement and support existing long term food security objectives and programs.

2.3. Produce a high-level analysis and discussion paper contributing to improving humanitarian program performance in acute phases of chronic food insecurity.

Note: Study is expected to take cross-cutting issues into consideration at all stages, including gender, humanitarian principles (RCRCNGO Code of Conduct), program quality (Sphere standards) and beneficiary accountability (HAP).

3. Methodology and Timing

This research study will be composed of three phases.

Phase 1 – Desk review, methodology development and planning

- Collect and analyse any studies, research or evaluations contributing to the objectives of this study. Review documentation for HC member humanitarian projects in response to the 2012 drought, from all funding sources (HC, CIDA, other Canadian sources).
- Obtain and consult members' national disaster response strategies for Niger, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Chad.
- Develop questionnaires for Key Informant interviews
- Develop materials and data collection process for focus group discussions to be conducted by partners in the field.
- Collect names and contact details within HC member agencies and for selected key informants.

Phase 2 – Data collection

- Conduct Key Informant interviews with humanitarian and development practitioners in Canada and globally. Interviews will be conducted over phone or skype. Emphasis will be on individuals with humanitarian and food security expertise, with a large proportion to be sourced from HC members, their affiliates and partners in the Sahel.
- Coordinate with HC members travelling to the Sahel and equip them to conduct focus group discussions, follow-up to collect and compile the data.
- Conduct interviews and workshops with development and humanitarian practitioners in country. Meet with HC members and other actors (UN, local CSOs, local authorities).
- Request and compile case studies (one for each HC member). Select target projects which can illustrate successful linkages between humanitarian response and existing development programs.

Phase 3 – Drafting and final editing

- Draft report circulated to HC members for input
- Final report translated into French and designed for distribution

4. Resources

- This study will be led by the HC Secretariat in direct consultation with the members of the HC Program Committee.

- Consultant will be provided access to HC member resources and staff persons.
- This project does not call for any travel by the consultant. All work may be conducted from home. However, if located in Ottawa (Canada), the consultant is welcome to work out of the HC office on an as-needed basis.

5. Deliverables

1. Final Report

The final report for this Study will meet the following expectations:

- Directly respond to the objectives listed in the study ToRs
 - Addressed to an audience of humanitarian practitioners (NGOs)
 - High quality of writing, with clear articulation of findings and recommendations
 - Be between 12 and 15 pages, excluding any annexes.
 - Executive summary should be self-contained, so that it may be used independently of the report.
- 2. Case studies of best practice**
- 3-4 simple case studies that describe the actual (or potential) impact of humanitarian responses on long term food security.
 - Include a description of project approach, focus on one or more recommendations included in the report, picture(s) of beneficiaries

All content should aim to meet high expectations for quality. It is intended that the report and case studies will be made available on the HC and ALNAP websites and shared widely within the sector.

6. Timeline and Scope of Work

Under the direct supervision of the HC Office Manager, and in collaboration with HC member agencies, the chosen consultant will:

- Establish an appropriate workplan for carrying out the necessary research as outlined in these Terms of Reference.
- Undertake the necessary research identified in these Terms of Reference, with the support of the HC and member agencies, as outlined in the agreed workplan.
- Ensure full accuracy of the information presented.
- Meet with the HC in developing the directions of the discussion paper.
- Submit (1) a workplan (“plan de travail”) for the discussion paper.
- Submit (2) the report Table of Contents (outline) for feedback from HC
- Submit (3) a draft paper of no longer than 15 pages for comments by HC member agencies, no later than *August 30th, 2013*.
- Submit (4) a final paper based on feedback from the HC, by *September 27, 2013*.

7. Consultant Profile

The following are the ideal characteristics of a consultant to conduct this research. It is acknowledged that applicants may not have all characteristics and applicants will be considered for the relative skills they offer compared to other applicants.

- Knowledge of humanitarian practice and policy.
- Knowledge of food security practice and policy.
- Field experience in either food security or humanitarian programming.

- Experience in conducting research, interviews, focus group discussions and compiling and analysing data.
- High level of fluency and writing skills in English.
- Fluency in French preferred.
- Familiarity with the HC and humanitarian NGOs in Canada.
- Knowledge of mandates and *modus operandi* of humanitarian actors (donor government, NGOs, UN agencies, Red Cross Agencies, etc.).

8. Proposal Submissions

Deadline for proposals: May 24, 2013

Interested consultants should direct any questions and proposal submissions to Ginette Gautreau at ginette.gautreau@humanitariancoalition.ca or 1-855-461-2154.

Proposals will meet the following specifications:

- Letter of interest: to include relevant experience, availability, proposed timeline and level of effort, and daily per diem rate.
- Updated CV
- Two writing samples.

Annex 1 – Key Questions to be addressed in this study

**** not interview questionnaire ****

1 – Understanding the issues (ie. background)

- *Desk review* – What are the proven strategies implemented by NGOs and CSOs for the promotion of long-term FS in chronically food insecure communities? Scan and summarise best practice in food security at the community level.
- *Desk Review* – How are long-term FS objectives presently/historically addressed or integrated in humanitarian programming? What humanitarian programs/approaches directly or indirectly address FS? Summarise.
- *Desk Review* – What is the role of governments in promoting long term FS? What strategies have been used by governments in Sub-Saharan Africa to promote long term FS? What contingency mechanisms have been developed for acute phases of food insecurity? Summarise and provide basic assessment of success of different approaches.
- *Desk Review* – Explore the links between chronic food insecurity and malnutrition. How do humanitarian and development programs differ in addressing chronic malnutrition? How do these strategies overlap or diverge? Summarise.
- *Desk Review* – Explore the links between chronic food insecurity and livelihoods. How do humanitarian and development programs differ in supporting livelihoods? How do these strategies overlap or diverge? Summarise.
- How do humanitarian responses impact long-term FS objectives?
- What differences exist between humanitarian and development “thinking” and “working” with regards to food security? (Question to be broken down for different categories of interviewees)
- What are the constraints faced by humanitarian actors in the development and implementation of short term responses in situations of chronic food insecurity?
 - ~ Are there basic conflicts between humanitarian principles (ex. impartiality, targeting most vulnerable, etc.) and the strategies required to promote long-term FS objectives?
 - ~ How much do donor funding restrictions impact opportunity for adaptation of humanitarian programs to promote long-term FS?
 - ~ To what extent are humanitarian program managers aware of long-term FS priorities and able to successfully integrate these into their project designs? Related: are development staff involved in planning/designing/implementing humanitarian programs?
 - ~ Are there structural (organisational, staffing, logistical, etc.) obstacles that limit the adaptation of humanitarian programs to long-term FS objectives?

2 – How can short-term humanitarian responses better contribute to long-term FS?

- Can humanitarian actors improve the linkages between their actions in the field, and the programs, policies and institutional requirements for sustainable, long-term improvements in food security?² How?

² Question raised on p.27 of “Maxwell D, Webb P, Coates J, Wirth J. 2008. *Rethinking Food Security in Humanitarian Response*. Paper presented to the Food Security Forum; April 16-18, Rome.

- What best practice is identified by development practitioners in terms of short humanitarian responses successfully promoting long-term FS?
- What has been learned to date about integrating short-term assistance with efforts to build sustainable food security? List best practice and document examples wherever possible.
- What specific and actionable recommendations can be applied to humanitarian programming which would allow to better complement, support or at least not hinder ongoing long-term food security objectives in situations of chronic food insecurity?
 - ~ How can humanitarian programs better complement FS programs already in place?
 - ~ What steps should be taken to better integrate existing FS program priorities and resources in the planning and implementation of humanitarian programming? What challenges might prevent this from happening?
- What actions, activities or strategies should humanitarian programs avoid in order not to hinder or set-back long-term FS program priorities and gains?
- Questions to consider for focus group discussions:
 - ~ What actions or strategies are most preferred by drought affected households and why?
 - ~ Do people who live in chronically food insecure areas acknowledge the need for different types of interventions that are used primarily in years with bad droughts vs. times when the rains are normal?