



# Responding to COVID-19 through Social Protection Systems in the Sahel

Annual Report  
August 2021 - July 2022

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## Project Summary Information

The project, 'Responding to COVID-19 through Social Protection Systems in the Sahel', is funded by BMZ through KfW.

<b>Countries</b>	Mali, Mauritania, Niger
<b>Project Title</b>	Responding to COVID-19 through Social Protection Systems in the Sahel
<b>WFP Grant References</b>	Grant 10038974 & 10042537 (Mali) Grant 10038946 & 10042536 (Mauritania) Grant 10038957 & 10042538 (Niger) Grant 70001450 & 70001872 (RBD)
<b>UNICEF Grant Reference</b>	Grant SC 200554
<b>Total Grant Amount (EUR)</b>	€94 million (€47m UNICEF / €47m WFP)
<b>Grant duration</b>	36 months: 1 August 2020 - 31 July 2023
<b>Type of report</b>	Annual progress report
<b>Reporting period</b>	August 2021 – July 2022

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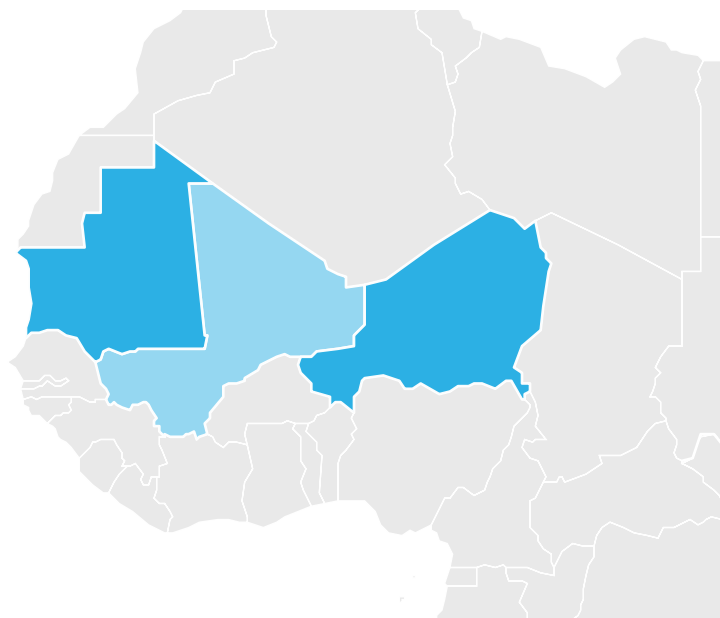
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# Executive Summary

This joint project implemented by UNICEF and WFP supports the Governments of Mali, Mauritania and Niger to respond to the immediate massive needs generated by the COVID-19 pandemic and helps strengthen overall national capacities to adapt and build more shock-responsive, nutrition- and child-sensitive social protection systems moving forward.

The project initially had an 18-month duration up to January 2022 (Phase I) and was extended to July 2023 (Phase II) to provide additional support, given the continued socioeconomic impact of the pandemic combined with other shocks - including drought, conflict and rising prices. This annual report covers the last six months of Phase I and the first six months of Phase II (August 2021 - July 2022).



## Three Outcomes

1. Delivery of cash transfers and complementary services
2. Systems Strengthening
3. Knowledge, Evidence and Learning

## Delivery of Cash Transfers and Complementary Services

Cash transfers and complementary services are delivered to vulnerable people to absorb the social and economic impacts of multiple shocks. WFP and UNICEF take a two-track approach to deliver cash, in support of national social protection response plans.

### Track 1

Cash transfers are provided via government social protection programmes

**69%**

110,372 households reached (700,000 individuals)



**31%**

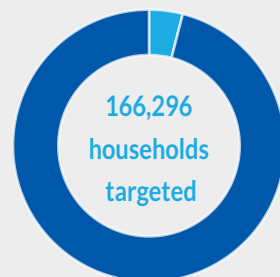
49,012 households remaining

### Track 2

Cash transfers are delivered directly where national capacities are saturated, in line with national social protection response plans.

**89%**

148,155 households reached (1 million individuals)




**11%**

18,141 households remaining

By 31 July 2022, the joint project had reached over 1.7 million vulnerable people with cash assistance, 80 percent of the planned number of people to reach by the end of the project (July 2023). During the reporting period 658,242 people were reached (101,393 households).

Post-distribution monitoring surveys during Phase I have shown that cash has had a significant positive impact on the well-being of families by enabling them to meet basic household needs and improve their livelihoods. For instance, in Niger recipients of emergency COVID-19 cash transfers were nearly unanimous in stating that the transfers helped mitigate the effects of the pandemic, particularly through the purchase of food (97 percent) and the provision of other household food needs (45 percent). In Mauritania, monitoring surveys showed a 16 percent increase in the acceptable food consumption score among beneficiaries during the 2021 lean season.

### Complementary Services

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Blanket supplementary feeding                                      |  Life and digital skills training for women and young people |
|  Nutrition sensitisation (infant and young child feeding practices) |  Income generating activities                                |
|  Child protection interventions                                     |  COVID-19 prevention messages                                |
|  Psychosocial support   |   |

Complementary services are provided alongside cash, to maximise its impact on nutrition, ensure child protection, promote economic recovery and prevent the spread of COVID-19. During the reporting period, social workers, community nutrition officers, community health workers and women leaders were trained on promoting Infant and Young Child Feeding/Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition practices in communities with the project's cash beneficiaries. Households were also reached with information on key family practices, child protection messages, referrals, and psychosocial support provided by trained social workers. **So far, over 2.1 million people have been reached with messages on nutrition, health, and child protection.**

The project also worked with the governments of all three countries to design interventions, and select beneficiaries for the productive inclusion component of this project. This component targets households that already receive cash assistance and aims to create productive and economic inclusion opportunities for specific groups, such as women or persons living with a disability.

## Systems Strengthening

Alongside delivery, the project provides technical assistance to governments to enhance the shock-responsiveness, nutrition- and child sensitiveness of national social protection systems. The project comprehensively supports all dimensions of national social protection systems and enhances their ability to address food security and nutrition challenges, sustainably scale up routine social protection programmes and assist existing or additional beneficiaries affected by COVID-19 or other shocks.

## Snapshot of Achievements per Building Block



### Delivery Systems

- Improved government delivery systems based on lessons from the project, e.g., for targeting and delivery modalities, feedback mechanisms and monitoring., drawing on learning from capitalisation workshops (e.g. in Niger) and findings from the near-complete analysis on the use of social registries for shock responses.
- Expanded and strengthened social protection . information systems, notably social registries, in the three countries. In Mauritania, the social registry has been extended to Nouakchott (covering vulnerable urban groups) and to include Malian refugees.



### Programmes

- Identified lessons learned with Niger's Government on using the twin-track approach and implications for strengthening shock-response capacity
- Ongoing and scheduled reviews of complementary service packages across the three countries
- Completed preparations and launch of new drought-response initiative in Niger, as well as design of the cash plus approach under the productive cash component.



### Policy

- Mauritania: provided technical support to launch the national social protection strategy revision process
- Mali: supported elaboration of the national social protection action plan



### Finance



### Coordination

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[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_32004](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_32004)

