



A green wall against hunger: Partnerships for resilience building to decrease humanitarian needs

Exhibit on the margins of the first regular session of the Executive Board 2024

Launch: Tuesday, 27 February 2024, 8:45–9:30

Red Foyer, WFP headquarters

Multimedia exhibit
23 February–8 March

Context

Healthy ecosystems are the foundation of food security. The Sahel, a region where most people depend on farming and herding to make a living, is affected by recurrent climate extremes, such as erratic rainfalls and prolonged droughts. The region anticipates temperature increases 1.5 times higher than the global average, intensifying land degradation and desertification and impacting the livelihoods of millions. These factors, coupled with rapid population growth, political unrest and conflict, contribute to rising food insecurity, malnutrition, and displacement.

WFP is dedicated to people and food systems in fragile contexts. In a region affected by complex and protracted crises, we urgently need to tackle the root causes of hunger alongside responding to immediate needs. With this vision, WFP joined forces with governments and partners to implement an integrated resilience programme across Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and the Niger. The approach combines a variety of land rehabilitation and livelihood activities, soil and water conservation, support to smallholder farmers, school feeding, nutrition interventions and institutional capacity strengthening. The intervention also includes activities aimed at promoting climate-resilient and nutritious crops for local consumption; reducing post-harvest losses; leveraging institutional procurement for development gains; anticipatory action systems, access to early warning information and transferring climate risk away from vulnerable smallholders; and strengthening food value chains – each of these putting women and young people at the center.

National governments and regional organizations like the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States play a vital role in supporting agricultural sectors, humanitarian actions, and food systems through analysis, technical assistance, and resource mobilization.

Five years into implementation, the resilience programmes in the Sahel region have demonstrated positive outcomes in terms of food security and nutrition, as well as in decreasing pastoralist–farmer conflicts, strengthening social cohesion offering sustainable solutions for displaced populations, natural land regeneration, access to social services and education, and youth and women's empowerment. Evidence from several countries shows that the assets constructed by and for communities are cost-efficient over time. Evidence from social protection and resilience-building interventions demonstrates their ability to contribute to reducing humanitarian needs.

The programme has important co-benefits for ecosystem restoration, climate action and biodiversity. Some of the integrated resilience activities in the Sahel are making major contributions to the climate mitigation agenda by restoring soil functions and services of previously degraded land.

Now is the time to increase community resilience further, decrease humanitarian needs, reflect on lessons learned, and pave the way towards climate-resilient food systems to improve food and nutrition security.

The programme's second phase will be implemented over the next five years. The way forward aims to: i) consolidate resilience gains and evolve support packages in existing sites; ii) expand activities to new sites; iii) further programme integration by leveraging linkages with social protection; and iv) reinforce complementarity with operational partners, particularly on social cohesion, energy and water.

Objectives

The presentation will be accompanied by a multimedia exhibition that will make the results achieved so far accessible through high-quality photo and video material telling captivating life stories, drone shots, satellite imagery showing large-scale land transformation, and a virtual reality video allowing participants of the event to step into a WFP resilience site. Together, the exhibition will tell the story of WFP's resilience work in areas that are difficult to access and are largely underreported.

More specifically, the event aims to:

- Reflect on the need for longer-term programmes embedded in national policies to complement and, over time, **reduce the need for humanitarian assistance** in a context of multidimensional crises and unprecedented needs.
- Deepen **the understanding of WFP's resilience-building approach** and initiatives by showcasing one of the organization's flagship programmes.
- Take stock of the challenges, achievements and lessons learned since the scale-up of resilience programming in the Sahel.
- Present the next phase of the Sahel Integrated Resilience Programme and highlight the strategic partnerships and alliances to further expand in the next phase of the programme (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification–Great Green Wall).
- Call for other partners to join this effort in the Sahel.

Agenda

1. Opening–

- Mr Martin Frick, Head, Berlin Office, WFP

2. **Resilience in times of unprecedented needs: how to safeguard development achievements and bring down humanitarian needs**

- Ms Cindy McCain, Executive Director, WFP

3. **Long-term partnerships for long-term solutions**

- Dr. Elke Löbel, Commissioner for Refugee Policy, Director for displacement and migration, crisis prevention, and management, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

4. **Climate-resilient food systems providing what Sahelian communities need**

- H.E. Ms Santa Ndem Ngoidi, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Economy, Development Planning and International Cooperation, Republic of Chad

5. **Coordinated and sequenced resilience programming to scale up development response in the Sahel**

- Ms Andrea Meza Murillo, Deputy Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

6. **Tour of the exhibition**