

BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Early Recovery, Risk Reduction, and Resilience

West Africa

Fiscal Year (FY) 2021



Many countries across West Africa face complex emergencies; food security crises; and recurrent climatic shocks, such as floods and dry spells. In FY 2021, USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) supported programs to address the root causes of chronic food insecurity; improve emergency preparedness and response capacity at the local, national, and regional levels; and support vulnerable communities to build assets, livelihoods, and resilience to future disasters.

- In FY 2021, USAID/BHA provided nearly \$70 million to partner organizations conducting early recovery, risk reduction, and resilience (ER4) activities in nine countries across West Africa.
- In FY 2021, USAID/BHA partners in West Africa continued to implement multi-year resilience food security activities (RFSAs) to bolster food security and local resilience through multi-sector interventions such as agriculture, early warning and disaster preparedness, natural resource management, nutrition, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance, as well as local capacity building. RFSA activities in Burkina Faso and Niger constitute an integral part of the Resilience in Sahel Enhanced (RISE) II program—a joint project of USAID/BHA and 29 implementing partners, government stakeholders, and civil society partners—which aims to improve access to water and other natural resources, promote economic development, improve health outcomes, foster more effective governance, and empower women and young people to be a force for positive change in their communities.

USAID/BHA ER4 FUNDING FOR WEST AFRICA IN FY 2021

Standalone ER4	\$67,089,352
Integrated ER4	\$2,843,966

Total: \$69,933,318

- USAID/BHA-funded ER4 programming across West Africa also aimed to enhance effective treatment of malnutrition, improve cash transfer programming efficiency, support early action through a regional rapid response mechanism, and develop regional capacities for anticipatory analysis and humanitarian response coordination during FY 2021.
- USAID/BHA integrates ER4 programming into responses when appropriate and ensures strong linkages with development and humanitarian actors, giving USAID/BHA flexibility in the design and development of programming.

In West Africa in FY 2021, USAID/BHA supported standalone and integrated ER4 activities in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Strengthening Information Management to Treat Wasting Throughout West Africa

USAID/BHA continued to support The Alliance for International Medical Action's (ALIMA's) Optimizing Treatment for Acute Malnutrition (OptiMA) program to reduce malnutrition-related mortality in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger during FY 2021. OptiMA aimed to increase access to health care services for children suffering from severe wasting—a life-threatening form of malnutrition—by simplifying the admission criteria for treatment programs. ALIMA also provided training for caregivers and parents to detect malnutrition at its earliest stages. In addition, by creating a database to document and track large caseloads of children suffering from wasting, ALIMA monitored wasting prevalence and treatment coverage among at-risk children. The data collected through the OptiMA platform not only helps track trends in wasting, but also informs funding and programming efforts to combat malnutrition in areas of greatest need across the region.

Separately, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported regional information management and emergency nutrition assistance coordination across West Africa during the fiscal year. With USAID/BHA support, the UN agency's activities streamlined methods for the detection and treatment of wasting at the community level and strengthened supply chains to reduce treatment time in targeted areas. The UN agency also disseminated information and best practices on the treatment of malnutrition among relevant stakeholders in the region to further implement the adoption of simplified detection and treatment approaches within at-risk communities.

Bolstering Agricultural Production, Food Security, and Gender Equality in Burkina Faso

USAID/BHA provided more than \$15 million in FY 2021 to support ACIDI/VOCA's Victory Against Malnutrition Plus (ViMPlus) initiative—a five-year RFSA program launched in 2018 targeting more than 400,000 vulnerable individuals in Burkina Faso's Centre-Nord Region—that aims to improve food and nutrition security and enhance community resilience to recurrent shocks through a combination of stabilization interventions, such as the distribution of agricultural inputs and cash transfers, as well as strengthening the adaptive capacities of community structures. With USAID/BHA support, ViMPlus delivered land management trainings on topics such as anti-erosion planting methods, ravine treatments, and water redirection systems to community development committees (CVDs) throughout FY 2021. ViMPlus also enabled CVD members to restore nearly 35 square miles of degraded land for agricultural use. Additionally, CVDs organized village assemblies to analyze, diagnose, and plan priority actions for disaster risk prevention and management of natural hazards. These plans, developed in FY 2021, will be integrated into municipal contingency plans throughout the coming months.

As part of the RISE II program, which supports vulnerable communities in Burkina Faso and Niger to effectively prepare for and manage recurrent crises, as well as to pursue sustainable pathways out of poverty, ViMPlus facilitates women and youth empowerment in climate risk management and food security. With USAID/BHA support, ViMPlus created youth clubs that provide safe spaces for 2,400 young people—approximately half of whom are girls—to build critical life skills, enhance access to education, and embrace self-expression during FY 2021. The clubs also mobilized religious leaders to promote women's leadership and safety at the community and household levels through discussions on women's rights. Despite insecurity challenges during FY 2021, ViMPlus interventions were critical in scaling up the adoption of good agricultural practices through farmer-to-farmer training; improving social cohesion activities, including accountability, community dialogue, and transparency; and increasing households' consumption of nutritious foods.

Building Food Security and Resilience in Mali Through Natural Resource Management

In October 2020, Save the Children Federation (SCF) launched Albarka, a five-year USAID/BHA-funded RFSA that seeks to improve food security and community resilience in conflict-affected areas of Mali. Albarka focuses on strengthening local systems and participation throughout Mali's Gao, Mopti, and Timbuktu regions. In FY 2021, SCF conducted community consultations in the three regions to select five priority natural resource

management projects for support through cash-for-work interventions, such as constructing pastoral wells, filling and stocking fish ponds, recovering degraded agricultural land, and rehabilitating gardening areas. With USAID/BHA support, SCF planned to employ approximately 600 vulnerable households in cash-for-work natural resource management projects during FY 2022.

Enhancing Livelihood Opportunities and Strengthening Food and Nutrition Resilience in Niger

During FY 2021, USAID/BHA partner CARE continued to implement the Hamzari project, a multi-sector program that focuses on enhancing livelihood opportunities, nutrition, and access to WASH services while promoting gender equality in Niger. With USAID/BHA support, Hamzari supported adolescent girls through its Safe Spaces program, which educated young women in critical topics, such as financial literacy and reproductive health, and provided skill development opportunities for participants that indirectly contributed to a break in the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition and food insecurity. To increase livelihood opportunities for female beneficiaries, CARE provided cash assistance to women's groups for the purchase of cereals and livestock to build income-generating assets. Direct involvement by women's groups created conditions for sustainable stewardship of livelihood assets and generated more accountability among program participants. CARE also led trainings on sanitation-related business practices that integrated marketing with improved WASH practices, emphasizing a market-based approach to distribute latrines and other sanitation services at affordable prices.

USAID/BHA also continued to support Catholic Relief Services' (CRS') Girma project, a five-year initiative to sustainably improve food and nutrition resilience among vulnerable households in more than 600 villages across Niger's Zinder Region. In FY 2021, CRS trained nearly 2,500 women and community health workers in household gardening techniques; these beneficiaries trained additional members of their communities in the same techniques, amplifying the reach of CRS activities. CRS also trained nearly 2,200 farmers in improved agricultural practices, pest management, and soil conservation techniques, enabling approximately 1,500 farmers to plant high-quality cowpea, millet, and sorghum seeds during the fiscal year. Additionally, CRS trained more than 300 beneficiaries on improved food storage practices and provided approximately 3,000 women with technical support on small enterprise management. These activities, combined with Girma's financial management and vocational trainings, created nearly 1,900 local jobs—employing more than 1,000 women—in the agricultural sector across Zinder. Notably, Girma programming delivered gender-related trainings to key stakeholders—including community and religious leaders—as well as literacy and leadership training for women that supported nearly 290 women to reach leadership positions in community-based structures during FY 2021.

FY 2021 marked the beginning of SCF's Wadata project, a five-year, USAID/BHA-funded RFSA aimed at improving food security for nearly 200,000 people in Zinder through agricultural training, financial management instruction, and gender and youth programs. In FY 2021, SCF delivered agricultural, financial, and literacy trainings to approximately 40,000 women, nearly 29,000 men, and more than 17,000 youth. The NGO also trained more than 3,300 farmers in conservation farming techniques to promote soil moisture retention and to reduce the negative effects of repeated droughts in the region. Through its food assistance for assets programming, SCF supported communities to rehabilitate nearly 1,800 acres of pastoral land, which enabled the harvest and storage of seeds produced from the land for use in FY 2022 activities. In addition, SCF supported nearly 650 Women's Savings Groups—which provide financial services such as credit transactions and loans—to help nearly 18,000 community members engage in income-generating activities. SCF also initiated functional literacy activities in 20 villages, which reached an additional 1,200 participants by applying knowledge gained in mathematics, reading, and writing to livelihood activities and financial management skills.

USAID/BHA ER4 ASSISTANCE FOR WEST AFRICA IN FY 2021¹

LOCATION	ACTIVITY	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	AMOUNT
Standalone ER4			
West Africa Regional	Humanitarian Policy, Studies, Analysis, or Applications	ALIMA	\$300,000
	Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA)	Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	\$146,517
	HCIMA	UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	\$300,000
Burkina Faso	RFSA	ACDI/VOCA	\$15,040,186
Mali	RFSA	SCF	\$14,000,000
Niger	RFSA	CARE	\$10,105,583
	RFSA	CRS	\$14,000,000
	RFSA	SCF	\$13,197,066
TOTAL STANDALONE ER4 FUNDING			\$67,089,352
Integrated ER4 With Response			
West Africa Regional	Multipurpose Cash Assistance, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	CRS	\$1,544,558
	HCIMA	Action Against Hunger	\$600,000
	Nutrition	UNICEF	\$699,408
TOTAL INTEGRATED ER4 WITH RESPONSE FUNDING			\$2,843,966
TOTAL ER4 FUNDING IN FY 2021			\$69,933,318

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of September 30, 2021.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)