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<b>Project title</b>	<b>Emergency support to the production of vegetables in the Sahel countries affected by the desert locusts.</b>
<b>Sector</b>	Agriculture
<b>Objectives</b>	Improve the availability of sufficient quantities of nutritious food, and generate income, by promoting vegetable production through the distribution of seeds, fertilizer and hand tools.
<b>Targeted countries</b>	Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal
<b>Targeted populations</b>	Households severely affected by damage caused by the desert locusts and unfavourable climatic conditions during 2004, in particular women and chronically vulnerable groups.
<b>Partners</b>	Non Governmental Organizations – NGOs (World Vision, Oxfam, Catholic Relief Services) and respective Ministries of Agriculture
<b>Amount</b>	<b>US\$1 893 900</b>
<b>Contribution FAO</b>	US\$200 000

## Background

In 2004, the agricultural regions of the Sahel were affected by a Desert Locust upsurge. The swarm invasion from Maghreb countries began in June and continued into July. The swarms matured rapidly and laid eggs. Hopper bands were found over vast areas of the Sahel in August and September 2004 and swarms of this summer generation started to form from the end of August. The immature swarms were extremely mobile and moved from east to west and then from south to north. Countries most affected were Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Niger and to a lesser extent Burkina Faso and the islands of Cape Verde. In spite of this widespread infestation and the drought observed in certain areas, the cereal stocks at national level are expected to be around the average for the last five years in most countries.

However, the combination of the locust infestation and the drought has caused very significant damage to both the pasture and the main food crops in specific locations. Mauritania is by far the worse affected country as the locust invasion occurred in its prime agricultural zones, in the vegetable producing areas and on pastureland. In the other countries, the locust infestation and the most widespread damage are observed in the sahelian zone between the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> parallel where are concentrated the pastoral activities and the production of millet, sorghum and cowpea.

The first signs of a severe impact that could degenerate into a humanitarian crisis are already obvious on the rural economy as the price of cereals is rising while the price of livestock is falling. Some population movements are also observed in the most affected regions as the most food insecure families leave the villages to settle around the urban centres while the young and able bodied migrate to the major cities of the West Africa region. The number of vulnerable households has thus significantly increased and the risk of a humanitarian disaster and of a depopulation of the rural areas in the longer run is a real one.

## Project objectives

The objective of the project is to improve the food security of the populations severely affected by the locust infestation through the provision of essential agricultural inputs for the production of vegetables.

### **Specific objectives**

- Supply farmers with the most needed and appreciated vegetable seeds (tomato, onions, aubergine, pepper, carrot, lettuce, cabbage, watermelon, green beans), hand tools and fertilizer, to allow them to take advantage of the vegetable crop season from December to February;
- Provide logistical and technical assistance to the villagers through the NGOs already implanted in the areas most affected by the locusts;
- Establish systems for monitoring the food security and the coping mechanisms of the rural populations through the network of partner NGOs.

### **Implementation modalities**

- The most immediate challenge in the current context (November 2004) is to ensure that the beginning of the vegetable crop season in December is not missed.
- The usual procedures for proposing emergency activities and mobilizing funds through the UN appeal mechanism are too slow to ensure timely funding for the vegetable production. The present proposal is therefore being presented in advance of the forthcoming appeal document that will be launched to address the overall humanitarian needs caused by the locust invasion.
- In order to strengthen its ability to implement activities as soon as funding is obtained, FAO has already established contacts with the most important NGOs (Catholic Relief Services, World Vision and Oxfam) to identify the associations of vegetable growers and other households whose vegetable production has been negatively affected by locusts and drought with a view to providing them with the necessary support to increase their production in the coming season. This activity will allow for an increased availability of nutritious food and will generate additional income to purchase other foodstuffs and some basic necessities.
- FAO will contribute to this initiative through the mobilization of some funding allocated to the emergency activities handled by its regional emergency coordination unit in Nairobi which will enable FAO to initiate the procurement of the necessary vegetable seeds immediately.

### **Target beneficiaries**

- The beneficiaries will be identified according to vulnerability criteria established in close collaboration with the partner NGOs and the services of the Ministries of Agriculture and will be selected among the households in the villages already supported by these organizations in the areas having faced the locust invasion in 2004.
- The project will also focus on the households in urban and peri-urban areas. Indeed, in order for vegetable production to be financially viable, the producer must have access to a market to allow for easy sale of the part of the production that is not consumed by the family. Women and associations will be particularly targeted by the project.

### Activities to be undertaken

- Supply of essential vegetable seeds and other agricultural inputs (hand tools, fertilizer);
- Provision of technical and pedagogical assistance concerning vegetable production;
- Cooperation and coordination with NGOs and the technical services of the concerned governments.

### Expected results

- The project will contribute to allow the people affected by the locust invasion and the unfavourable weather conditions to mitigate food-shortages caused by the insufficient cereal harvest and to fulfil their other basic needs by producing vegetables for consumption and sale. This will contribute to stabilising the population on the land and avoid displacements that are likely to lead to increased vulnerability of households and social tensions.
- The monitoring aspect of the project will allow for the creation of a better understanding of the coping mechanisms of the rural population in the context of the locust invasion and the drought which will inform the targeting and the choice of humanitarian interventions to be envisaged for the rest of 2004 and in preparation for a probable re-infestation in these at-risk areas.

Budget summary	US\$
<b>Agricultural inputs</b> 5 500 kg vegetable seeds, 600 tonnes fertilizer (10-10-20), 60 000 watering cans (3US\$ each), 60 000 hoes (3US\$ each)	<b>705 000</b>
<b>Personnel costs:</b> 5 national consultants (agronomists) (1 per country for 6 months each) 2 international consultants (6 months/each)	<b>240 000</b> 60 000 180 000
<b>Letters of agreement</b> with partners for the implementation (distribution of inputs and monitoring)	<b>300 000</b>
<b>Training</b> (Workshop with beneficiary farmers according to the Farmer Field School model)	<b>200 000</b>
<b>Equipment</b> for field work and office	<b>150 000</b>
<b>Operating costs</b> (storage, transport and contributions to the UN security system)	<b>150 000</b>
<b>Administrative support</b>	<b>25 000</b>
Sub-total	1 770 000
<b>Direct operating costs (6.5%)</b>	<b>123 900</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 893 900</b>