



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



RRM-USAID/BHA – Beneficiaries in Dogofry – Credit photo: Salif Dembele/CRS

Mali Farabougou Crisis – CRS Mali & USAID on the front line providing first lifesaving assistance to 1,615 displaced individuals

Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) funded by USAID/BHA

Context

The villages of Kourouma Koubé and Farabougou are affected both by intercommunity clashes and non-state armed actor attacks, both of which increased in severity and frequency starting in October 2020, including the abduction of women and children by unidentified non-state actors, and the discovery of three bodies of people coming from these villages. On October 6, an intercommunal clash between Bambara hunters and Peulh rendered these villages, located in the Segou Region located 290km from Bamako, even more vulnerable. With the bridges destroyed (connecting the village of Farabougou to Dogofry and Touba Coura K06 village) by non-state armed actors the village has been rendered inaccessible by road for any humanitarian assistance. Rice fields and other crops have been burned, and the current situation also blocks people from reaching their fields for further agricultural activity.¹ Following this set of incidents, the Malian army intervened by dropping troops into the besieged villages, and since October 22 have also provided over 50 T of food via air drops which has reached Farabougou village but not the displaced HH (households).

As of November 20, armed groups are still controlling access to the village of Farabougou, where about 4,000 residents remain under siege.² The challenge for humanitarian actors is how to access the HH remaining in Farabougou because safe access is not guaranteed, nor is a safe path out for the affected HH

¹ Situation a Farabougou et dans les communes environnantes, Note d'information #2. OCHA Bamako. 5 Novembre 2020

² Situation a Farabougou et dans les communes environnantes, Note d'information #2. OCHA Bamako. 5 Novembre 2020

to seek refuge elsewhere. The population who was previously able to leave has moved towards more secure areas, particularly towards the town of Niono (Segou Region), while another 380 HH have gone to the commune of Lere (Timbuktu Region).³ Mediations towards secure humanitarian access to the affected villages continue with advocacy from community leaders and OCHA. This advocacy is taking place via the community acceptance approach as well as civil-military coordination mechanisms with the Malian armed forces and other armed actors.⁴

RRM/USAID (Kisili Project) and CRS Response

Following the onset of the crisis, the Government of Mali, accompanied by several humanitarian actors and local NGOs including CRS' local partner, ALPHALOG, initiated a rapid assessment at IDP sites to identify priority actions to assist the displaced HH. This rapid assessment indicated that 1,280 HH (7,693 individuals) were displaced in the villages of Sokolo, Marico, Dogofry and Siribala (Segou Region). This assessment was unable to reach approximately 480 HH⁵ in Sokolo, Dogofry and Siribala Communes.

After this exercise, an integrated CRS team including programs, operations, and security staff worked closely with OCHA to organize a follow-on mission. From October 30 to November 3, with funding from RRM/USAID CRS, the Social Development Service (SLDSES) of Niono Cercle, and ALPHALOG conducted a complementary rapid assessment of HH not yet reached by the initial assessment. Priority needs were identified as food (90% of HH), NFI (5%) and shelter (2%). To respond to these urgent needs, RRM/USAID provided assistance in the form of food (cash for food), WASH, kitchen sets, and shelter & settlement NFIs (blankets and mats) covering 1,615 individuals (202 HH, including 4 host HH), which were distributed between November 11-14. Thanks to this support from the RRM/USAID, CRS was the very first humanitarian NGO to have been able to provide this lifesaving assistance.

Safe and successful achievement of both the additional assessment and the distribution was made possible as a result of close collaboration between the project team and CRS Mali's Operations unit, most notably with security, procurement, and administration. In addition to ensuring the usual measures for a transparent and timely distribution of quality goods to the intended recipients, the team overcame the additional challenge of navigating assessment and response activities in a context where attacks in the zone were still ongoing. CRS included the country program's Security Manager as a core team member for this intervention which permitted ongoing analysis of the situation as it evolved. CRS notes that cautious communications management is crucial to intervene in this sort of situation.

In addition to activities in the Segou Region, due the additional displacement of some Farabougou residents to Lere, CRS and local NGO partner Association Subaahi Gumo (ASG) conducted a rapid needs assessment in Lere Commune with 388 HH (2344 individuals). During the assessment, HH expressed priority needs in food (40% of HH), shelter (47%) and NFIs (11%). RRM/USAID will provide lifesaving assistance to the identified HH, with a response set for early December 2020.

CRS and partners remain dedicated both to providing lifesaving humanitarian assistance when and where it is needed, and to exploring options to help affected HH and communities bounce back better following a crisis.

³ Situation a Farabougou et dans les communes environnantes, Note d'information #2. OCHA Bamako. 5 Novembre 2020

⁴ Situation a Farabougou et dans les communes environnantes, Note d'information #2. OCHA Bamako. 5 Novembre 2020

⁵ Number of HH raised by the alert. This can be different from those reached by the assessment conducted in the field.