

UK announces nearly £40 million to provide vital food and water to West Africa

- £37.65 million of urgent UK humanitarian funding will deliver life-saving assistance across Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Nigeria and Niger.
- 20 million are projected to be in need of urgent aid across the region by the end of 2022.
- The money will help fund two projects for the next year focused on the most vulnerable, including malnourished women and children.

The UK will support around 1 million of the most vulnerable people across the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin with food, water and sanitation.

Growing instability and violent extremism across the region and the war on Ukraine have exacerbated existing issues with food insecurity and malnutrition. As things stand, there will be close to 20 million people across the region in need of humanitarian aid by the end of the year.

And the Sahel faces further vulnerabilities due to climate change and extreme weather shocks, putting unimaginable stress on communities, meaning urgent intervention by the international community is now a necessity.

The UK is providing £37.65 million in urgent humanitarian assistance, focused on these areas where conflict, climate change and extreme hunger is causing the most suffering.

Minister for Africa, Vicky Ford said:

Millions of people across the Sahel and West Africa are unimaginably suffering with hunger and malnutrition.

That's why the UK will step up with an urgent £38 million of humanitarian funding, reaching those most vulnerable and saving lives across the region.

The number of people facing starvation are at their worst for a decade. Whilst this UK funding is a necessity, it has to be part of a bigger international effort. We're calling on international partners to enhance our collective support and scale-up intervention to halt this humanitarian catastrophe.

£19.9 million will support The Sahel Humanitarian Assistance and Protection Programme (SHAPP), a programme which has been responding to the most acute needs, including those of displaced and malnourished women and children, and enables safer access for humanitarian aid workers to reach them.

The funding ensures delivery partners including the International Committee of the Red Cross and the INGO-run Sahel Regional Fund can continue their heroic, life-saving work in the region. The funding also supports the work of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) and the International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO).

Their work between 2019-2022 under the Sahel Humanitarian Emergency Response Programme (SHERP) supported 2.7 million people with food assistance, provided treatment to nearly 900,000 severely malnourished children and ensured over 1.5 million mothers could detect malnutrition among their children, enabling early intervention.

In addition, £15 million of emergency humanitarian funding has been made available for North-East Nigeria over the next few months, when food is most scarce and humanitarian needs are highest. Violence, displacement, poverty and climate shocks are just some of the many reasons why 8.4 million people need life-saving humanitarian assistance there. This emergency funding supports the UK's work alongside the Nigerian government to build security in the face of growing instability in the north of the country.

In North-East Nigeria, the UK is proud to be supporting the work of our delivery partners – the World Food Programme and UNICEF – whose aid workers put themselves at great risk in order to reach those suffering most.

This food assistance funding is part of the UK's wider commitment to prioritise life-saving humanitarian aid to communities around the world who are most vulnerable due to the ongoing combination of crises.

Background

- The funding will be used to provide emergency shelter, food assistance, nutrition, water and sanitation for the most vulnerable in geographic hotspots of need
- The humanitarian assistance will be delivered through implementing partners such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International NGO Safety Organisation
- £19.9 million is for 2022 SHAPP activity alone with an additional £1.8 million for multi-year SHAPP activity.