Each year, Sida conducts a humanitarian allocation exercise in which a large part of its humanitarian budget is allocated to emergencies worldwide. This allocation takes place in the beginning of the year as to ensure predictability for humanitarian organisations and to allow for best possible operational planning. In an effort to truly adhere to the humanitarian principles, Sida bases its allocation decisions on a number of objective indicators and parameters of which the most important are related to the number of affected people, vulnerability of affected people and level of funding in previous years. One of the indicators is also related to forgotten crises in order to ensure sufficient funding to low profile crises. Besides this initial allocation, another part of the humanitarian budget is set aside as an emergency reserve for sudden onset emergencies and deteriorating humanitarian situations. This reserve allows Sida to quickly allocate funding to any humanitarian situation throughout the year, including additional funding to Mali and the Sahel countries.

For 2018, the Mali crisis, including neighbouring countries affected by the Mali crisis by influx of refugees and with a perspective on the greater Sahel crisis and West Africa is allocated an initial 45 Million Swedish Kronor (MSEK). Close monitoring of the situation in Mali, the Sahel and West Africa will continue throughout the year for potential additional funding or amendments.

### 1. CRISIS OVERVIEW

#### 1.1. Type of Crisis/ Disaster

**Conflict**

- **Background/Underlying cause:** The armed conflict in Mali started in 2012 with a separatist movement aiming to establish an independent Islamic kalifate in northern Mali. The uproar was quickly defeated by the intervention of French troops, but left behind a fragmented conflict area where a status quo of “no peace-not war” like conditions is maintained. Several micro-conflicts are prevailing and the peace treaty of 2015 only include some of the parties to the conflict. A UN led protection of civilian’s military security operation (MINUSMA) was set in place by the invitation of the Malian regime. The security situation is precarious despite the continuous presence of national Malian army, MINUSMA, the French Sahel operation Barkhane, the G5 joint forces and the platform of government allied independent armed groups.

- **Main stakeholders in the conflict:** The Mali conflict sees some implications of proxy-war, but is mostly an internal conflict between national stakeholders about resources (water, land, natural resources) and control of trans Sahara transit-routes for arms, migrants and illicit drugs.

- **Cross border implications:** Neighbouring countries (Niger, Mauretania, Burkina Faso) are currently hosting 142,000 Malian refugees, and an additional 59,000 are internally displaced within the borders of Mali. Tripartite agreements have been concluded between Mali, UNHCR and the hosting countries on voluntary safe and assisted returns, but the security situation in Mali is still a hindrance for many refugees to return.

- **Trends:** Security has deteriorated in the last year. A fragmentation of armed groups as well as a gradual transformation of armed groups with political ambitions and agendas to become delinquents and bandits makes the negotiations for peace and security less likely to succeed. Moreover, the virtual absence of the Malian state in the conflict and banditry affected areas makes it into much like lawless land.

**Natural Disaster**

- **Nature of disaster:** West Africa, the Sahel and Mali have a climatic and geological specificity of being particularly prone to droughts and floods. Heavy rains in the tropical parts of the region results in...
farming in the desert areas where rivers from the tropics run, such as the Senegal river, the Volta River and the Niger river. Farming is also heavily dependent on the seasonal rains ranging from 4 months of the year in the southern parts of the Sahel to 1 month of rain per year in the northern most inhabited areas of the Sahel. The nature of the rains, being too heavy, erratic over the rainy season or being late or early affects the harvests of the two main cultivated grains in the region, Millet and Sorghum. In the areas where the rainfalls are generally higher, rice and maize are also important crops but very sensitive to rainfall variations. The agricultural land is often along river basins so harvests are at risk to be destroyed by flooding, even if the local rainfall is normal, heavy rains in the tropical areas where the rivers have their sources can cause floods. Other natural hazards include locust invasions, and invasions of large flocks of granivorous birds may ruin the harvest. There is also a competition for land and water resources between pastoralist and agriculturalist populations that in the time of the seasonal migrations generate conflicts. In the tropical parts of West Africa landsides are a problem, often because of deforestation. Overall poverty and lack of resources and services is the main underlying cause to vulnerability of the people in Mali, the Sahel and West Africa.

- **Frequency:** The Sahel climate pattern has historically been shifting, wherein periods of rains have been reliable far north in the climatic region, to other periods shift to a more southern rainfall, leaving the northern part of the Sahel in drought. The effects of the shifting climate and desertification is exacerbated by a very rapid demographic increase, and paired with an increase herds of livestock and areas cultivated making the region more and more vulnerable to change in climate conditions.

- **Resilience and coping mechanisms:** The populations of the Sahel are resilient by culture and adaptation. Local knowledge, diversification and migration strategies like the yearly transhumance make people survive in conditions that are very harsh. The challenge to these traditional resilience mechanisms are conflicts, that are often about resources, and linked to an increased population or the control of natural resources, mainly oil, uranium and gold. Remittances from family members working in other countries of the West Africa (ECOWAS) region or in Europe, USA or Gulf States is an important resilience mechanism for many households.

### 1.2. Geographical areas and affected population

- The general Sahel chronic crisis has been phased out as an emergency food crisis response as of 31 December 2017. The remaining larger crisis affecting the area are the Mali crisis, the Lake Chad Basin crisis and the CAR crisis. The Darfur crisis still affects western Chad with over 300,000 Sudanese refugees hosted in the area. Local droughts still have severe effects on household and local community level. For 2018, the biomass growth index is showing that Senegal and Mauretania as well as northern Mali have deficit of rainfall and low biomass growth. The same goes for eastern Chad. The rest of the Sahel has an average biomass growth index for 2017, making the harvest of 2018 calculated to be a normal to below normal one.

- The vulnerability of the population of Mali, The Sahel and West Africa is generally high and encompass crises affected women and men, girls and boys. A pattern is that in the early stages of the conflict, men are most vulnerable to direct and deadly violence, but as conflict matures and become more structural, women become more vulnerable. Low coverage of social services, school attendance and health services contribute to children’s vulnerability and is very high in Mali in general and particularly in conflict affected areas of the country.

- Failure to provide life-saving aid and support resilience could perpetuate inter-community violence, further destabilizing Mali. Millions of Malians will continue to suffer from food insecurity, malnutrition and epidemics. With nearly half of its inhabitants now under age 18 and a population expected to double within two decades, failure to meet humanitarian needs now will worsen the crisis’ impact in Mali and the region, fuelling migration towards Europe and exposing youth to higher risk of recruitment by non-State armed actors and criminal groups.
1.3. Critical Assumptions, risks and threats

- The Mali crisis is a parallel chronic development and chronic conflict crisis exacerbated by natural disasters. Seeing the conflict scenario and future perspectives the most likely is that Mali will fall into the same category of low-intensity “not war-not peace” situations that is seen in for example Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Casamance (Senegal) and Burundi. Population growth and reduced possibilities for migrant work opportunities in Europe and USA will also increase the caseload of unemployed under-occupied men. Financial opportunities will increasingly be in the illicit sectors such as money laundering, arms and illicit drugs trade, trafficking and recruitment ground as mercenaries in proxy wars.

- Mali has the unique opportunity to put in practice the nexus between development and humanitarian agendas. The above stated risks could be reduced by development initiatives looking at human security beyond arms and guns. For humanitarian operations, if security continues to deteriorate it is likely that programmes will be either reduced or suspended, with possible new refugee and IDP situations.

1.4. Strategic Objectives and Priorities of the Country Humanitarian Response Plan

- The HRP focus on the main challenges Mali is facing, including food security, nutrition, water, epidemics, natural disasters and conflict related protection needs. The humanitarian response is concentrated to the north of Mali. The targets are Timbuctoo, Gao, Mopti, Kidal and Menaka areas.

- For 2018 the Mali HCT is calculating that 3.8 million people have humanitarian needs, of these 1.6 million are targeted by humanitarian interventions. The 2017 HRP was under funded with less than 40% funding. The total requirement of funding for the 2018 HRP of Mali is USD256 million.

2. IN COUNTRY HUMANITARIAN CAPACITIES

2.1. National and local capacities and constraints

- Government: Government capacity to respond to humanitarian needs is very low. In conflict affected areas of northern Mali government structures are either very weak, or non-existent. Basic social services such as health, water, schools have low coverage and are in decline.

- Civil Society: Prior to the conflict civil society had a role in development and increasingly national and local NGOs are shifting to be able to cooperate with international humanitarian agencies including INGOs.

- Community and household level: Northern Mali like the rest of the Sahel and West Africa has largely similar both positive and negative coping strategies. Diversification of household activities and seasonal migration being examples of the positive ones, and asset liquidation, early marriage of girls, petty crimes and non-consensual transactional sex being examples of negative coping strategies.

2.2. International operational capacities and constraints

- Leadership and Coordination: The humanitarian response is coordinated by OCHA under the leadership of the RC/HC who is also deputy head of MINUSMA. A humanitarian country team (HCT) is in place and provides overall coordination and leadership. The concept of the one UN is also extensively developed in Mali. The cluster sectoral response is activated, and new for 2018 is that early recovery is integrated in all cluster work. However, the clusters need capacity strengthening and in particular a better organisation concerning the yearly needs assessments process. Sub-national coordination is also functional and the response is well localised to meet beneficiaries’ needs in the areas where they are. Sweden has commended the joint approach as well as the humanitarian and development nexus, but highlighted the necessity to keep a functional separation between security, development and humanitarian goals and interventions, as to not create further
conflicts or disadvantage for certain groups of people or certain geographic areas of the country. The nexus dialogue with development actors also needs to continue and strengthened.

- **Humanitarian Agencies**: Mali is an underfunded crisis, and is part of the long list of forgotten crises in the world. Humanitarian funding is on the decrease, and development funding or national economic growth is not enough to alleviate the loss when humanitarian interventions are not being implemented due to lack of funding. Mali has had several payments from the CERF under their underfunded and forgotten crises funding window, and needs as well as potential capacity both with UN partners INGOs and national NGOs is higher than the available resources.

- **Implementing partners**: The Mali crisis is a mature crisis and the participation and needs assessments are being conducted in a systematic and participatory way. The main constraint in the response system is the mixing of mandates where MINUSMA is conducting humanitarian like interventions in the form of QIPs (Quick Impact Projects) under the winning “hearts and minds” initiative. This is highly undesirable to humanitarian actors.

### 2.3. International and Regional assistance

- **Donors**: The main donors to Mali according to OCHA FTS is USA, followed by EU and WFP. Germany and Sweden are the other two donors that meet the level to be separated in the FTS, where other donors account for 25% of the funding. The appeal for 2017 is funded to 42.4%.

- **Regional Organisations**: Several regional structures for development, security and humanitarian action are including Mali. All major UN agencies have regional programmes both in development and humanitarian response. Many INGOs are also present. Mali is part of ECOWAS, G5 and AU. Regional resilience programmes that include Mali are for example AGIR and CILSS.

### 2.4. Access Situation

- Access is difficult to the areas where most humanitarian needs are recorded, which are in the north of Mali. Security is an issue and the humanitarian principles seem to carry some respect, but the surge of banditry is severely affecting how humanitarian interventions can be planned. Long distances and lack of road infrastructure makes the humanitarian air services UNHAS paramount to reach beneficiaries.

### 3. SIDAs HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN

#### 3.1. The role of Sida

- **Earlier assistance and results**: Sida has had a humanitarian portfolio that has been directed to partners intervening in the north of the country. Response has been looking mostly at filling gaps in service delivery to beneficiaries in need, with a clear direction towards protection priorities. Funding has remained stable in amount, but has shifted from mostly acute needs towards more durable solutions.

- **Lessons learnt**: According to experience from field follow-up, there has been an expression of satisfaction among partners with Sida’s funding approach being both flexible and reliable. Humanitarian multiyear funding has made way to open for more development funding directed towards the north of Mali, as development was earlier mostly directed towards the south. Participation in the HCT by the Swedish embassy focal point has been pivotal to an in-depth analysis and follow-up of partners and to take part in the dialogue issues around the development/humanitarian/security nexus issues.

#### 3.2. Response Priorities 2018

- **Humanitarian Focus**: In West Africa and Sahel, Mali is the focus of the Sida HCA, still recognising that there are humanitarian needs in other countries, but that will be covered through core funding to
UN agencies and CERF. In the event of a rapid onset crisis, RRM (Rapid Response Mechanism) resources will be availed, as well as surge capacity humanitarian experts to the UN through MSB. The focus on protection and returnees’ needs as well as the need to address child protection on a systematic level and involve local actors will result in a shift towards a more UN oriented support for 2018. Cash based interventions are the preferred mode for all partners when possible. Access and coordination will continue to be central to the Sida allocation to Mali. The WASH sector has been severely underfunded and this will be an area of interest for Sida to follow-up on how to improve support in this area. All Sida funded interventions must include gender integration and environmental consequence descriptions leading towards conservation of nature and plans for effective use of resources included in the proposals. Conflict analysis and a “do no harm” analysis is also required.

3.3. Partners

ACF: The ACF project aims at providing humanitarian services in terms of Health, Nutrition, and WASH. ACF are primarily targeting children under the age of five, but also women of reproductive age. The intervention will take place in the district of Timbuktu.

IRC: IRC has a longstanding presence in the Gao and Menaka regions in eastern Mali, assuming a multisectoral approach. Working simultaneously with Child Protection, GBV, and Economic Recovery, IRC aims at improving gender equality and to strengthen the resilience among the younger population to protection risks.

UNICEF: Support to Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) for child protection, education and WASH.

NRC: NRC have submitted a multisector project proposal in the Timbuktu and Mopti Regions. NRC will target vulnerable IDPs, host communities, and returnees in the sectors of Food Security/Livelihoods, ICLA, and Shelter.

WFP/UNHAS: WFP/UNHAS are supported for their unique role as a provider of humanitarian air services.

ICRC: The country office budget support to ICRC is to support protection and monitoring of IHL.

OCHA: OCHA’s office in Mali is supported for the overall coordination of humanitarian operations.

UNHCR: The support is directed to the UNHCR Mali operation with a focus on returnees and protection.

3.4. Strategic Funding in Protracted Crises

FAO is supported with a three-year durable solutions project where 2018 is the second year with 6 MSEK per year.

3.5. Synergies with Long-term Development Aid

The Swedish development cooperation in Mali aims to contribute to a strengthened social contract and reduced vulnerability to relapse into conflict. The contributions fall within the following major result areas: (1) strengthened democracy and gender equality, and greater respect for human rights, (2) human security and freedom from violence and (3) better environment, limited climate impact and greater resilience to environmental impact, climate change and natural disasters. For 2018, the preliminary development aid budget amounts to 300 MSEK out of which a significant amount is allocated to natural resource management and contributions related to resilience which is considered to be closely linked to conflict sensitivity in Mali.

Mali is a Sida priority country for resilience and the Embassy has elaborated a work plan for further integration of resilience in the portfolio and how to ensure strong linkages between humanitarian and development interventions. The support to ACF and the UNICEF WASH-component are examples of areas in which Sweden supports actors with both development and humanitarian aid. The flexibility of the Swedish support reinforces the interplay between the two types of assistance. The support to UNICEF for Social Policy and Inclusion and the Wetlands programme also contribute to strengthening resilience and decreasing the need for humanitarian assistance.
The Embassy will continue to make a strong effort to further develop the link between humanitarian assistance and long-term development by carrying out a portfolio review in 2018. The contributions to ACF and UNICEF will be evaluated in 2018 and field visits will be carried out (joint with humanitarian and development support if possible) which also provides for further opportunities to adjust and improve the interventions in relation to the humanitarian-development nexus. In addition, the Embassy will request support from HQ for a training on conflict sensitivity integration for staff in order to strengthen this aspect during 2018. These are opportunities to increase collaboration and synergies between the humanitarian and development support.

In addition, the nexus-dialogue is on-going at country level in Mali, which provides an opportunity for Sweden to influence the agenda and future strategies. Sweden can implement and encourage flexible financing mechanisms, programmatic support and using resilience as an entry point to bridge the gap. Additionally, analysis of root causes, risk and vulnerability as a means to define joint outcomes should be promoted. Decentralisation and capacity building on local and national NGOs are also key aspects for both humanitarian and development support and should be highlighted as much of the support goes through UN agencies.

### SIDA’s HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO Mali in 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Sida support</th>
<th>Partner for Sida support</th>
<th>Sector/focus of work (incl. integrated or multi sectorial programming)</th>
<th>Proposed amount by Sida (MSEK)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Coordination</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>Child Protection, Education, WASH</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR Mali</td>
<td>Returnees, Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRC</td>
<td>Shelter, Protection, Recovery</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRC</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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