

## USAID Senegal The Sahel Regional Office

### Who are we?

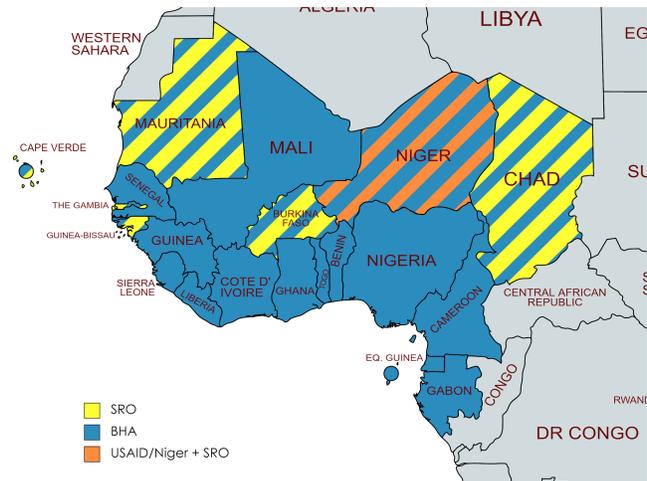
The Sahel Regional Office (SRO) based in Dakar is part of the USAID mission to Senegal and houses the regional Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs office. Together, its team of 39 staff supports the implementation of more than 110 activities in the Sahel.

### Where do we work?

We work in 21 countries in the region, mostly to carry out humanitarian assistance activities. For long-term development work, we support Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Chad, The Gambia, Mauritania, and Niger.

### Why are we here?

The Sahel is home to some of the poorest people and countries in the world. It is a vast and arid area where rapid climate changes are causing natural disasters to occur with increasing frequency and severity.



Over the past decade or so, the region has also experienced increasingly violent armed conflicts with the rapid emergence of extremist groups such as Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and Boko Haram. This has led to intercommunal violence that has killed thousands and resulted in the displacement of millions.

People living in the Sahel are overwhelmingly young, for example in Niger more than 50 percent of the population is below the age of 15, and because they are also extremely poor, they are vulnerable to violent extremists' recruitment efforts.

### What Are We Doing?

We work with our colleagues in each country, at headquarters in Washington D.C., and those in the USAID's West Africa Regional Mission in Ghana to implement activities.

Although our activities cover health, agriculture, environment, water and sanitation, private sector, education, democracy, human rights, and governance, they are implemented with a view to contributing to five broad goals.

The first is to increase the ability of people and communities to prepare for, go through, and bounce back from hardship - what we refer to as **resilience**. Hardships can include, for example, natural disasters, armed conflicts, climate changes, or failed harvests.

The second is to **prevent and counter violent extremism**. We promote security by helping communities to peacefully resolve local grievances, improve accountable governance, and offer economic opportunities to youth vulnerable to extremist recruitment.

The third is to provide life-saving **humanitarian assistance** to populations affected by disasters. During the 2020 financial year, USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), provided over \$746 million worth of humanitarian assistance to people affected by conflict, floods, drought, and other types of disasters.

The fourth is helping the people of the Sahel to adapt to rapid **climate change events and forces** that contribute to desertification and other natural phenomena such as more frequent and intense floods or droughts.

The last is to help people and countries in the region to fight the ongoing **Covid-19 pandemic**.

### **What Is Our Budget?**

The SRO's budget is approximately \$840 million per year. Most of it, just over 80 percent, is allocated to humanitarian assistance.

### **What Are We Achieving?**

USAID's work in the region is saving and transforming lives. It allows people to escape chronic poverty, earn a living, and increase their chances to live a peaceful life in their communities. Our work also reduces armed and extremist group's ability to recruit, especially among youth.

- More than **20,000** people farming over nearly **90,000** hectares were trained on improved agricultural practices between 2015-2020. This contributed to a **\$1.8 million** increase in sales from 2015 to 2017. A quarter of this land area was owned by women.
- People are becoming more **resilient**. Between 2018 and 2019, a number of disasters unfolded in the region. These included droughts, floods, violent conflicts, rapid food price increases, and an armyworm infestation that ravaged farms. Our research shows that **60 percent** of impacted households were able to recover their food security after these events, up from only around 14 percent in 2015.
- USAID is successfully **lifting people out of extreme poverty**. Participants in agricultural activities in Burkina Faso and Niger increased their incomes by an average of **37 percent**. Those involved in raising poultry activities saw their incomes increase by an average of **50 percent**. There was also an average increase of **87 percent** for people who participated in small ruminant activities (goats, sheep, etc.). USAID's overall return on agriculture investments in the region is just over **27 percent**.

### **How Can I Learn More?**

Visit our pages on USAID's website at <https://www.usaid.gov/sahel-regional>. You can also email us at [sahelregional@usaid.gov](mailto:sahelregional@usaid.gov) and our communication team based in Senegal will get right back to you. If you are in the U.S. you can contact the communication team of the USAID Africa Bureau at [afrcomms@usaid.gov](mailto:afrcomms@usaid.gov).