

Policy Brief

Complex Crisis – Broken Childhoods: The Grave Situation for Children Affected by Conflict and Fragility in the Central Sahel

October 2020

The complex crisis spanning Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso is one of the fastest growing, most rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situations in the world.¹ Alarming levels of conflict, violence and food insecurity, along with natural disasters, public health crises, climate shocks, and extreme poverty now exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic are exposing children, families and communities to grave protection risks that jeopardise their immediate survival and their long-term well-being and future.

Nearly 5 million children are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.² Intensifying violence has forcibly displaced more than 900,000 children.³ Hundreds of thousands have had their schools closed and education disrupted due to the ongoing insecurity. Many more are living without adequate access to food or critical health and nutrition services. World Vision has been on the ground, responding to the immediate and long-term needs of children, families and communities in Mali and Niger since 1982 and 1995 respectively. As a humanitarian, development and advocacy agency, World Vision provides critical humanitarian assistance to meet immediate life-saving needs and

supports children and families to adapt, overcome hardships, and build more peaceful, resilient communities in both countries. In our daily work, we are witnessing the immense risk this crisis poses for the future of an entire generation of children.

The time to act to protect the children of the Central Sahel is now. As global leaders and national decision makers meet at the High-Level Humanitarian Event on the Central Sahel on 20 October 2020, World Vision calls for the following urgent actions to address the grave situation for girls and boys:

- Urgently scale up funding to meet the immediate needs of children by fully funding the humanitarian response plans (HRPs) for Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso;
- Support the Governments of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso to strengthen, fund and implement multi-year strategies to collectively improve governance, protection, food security and livelihood recovery, and provide essential services to children and civilians, including those in conflict-affected and displaced communities;

- Protect and enhance humanitarian space to ensure responding aid agencies have full access to all populations in need, without restrictions and in accordance with core humanitarian principles; and
- Enhance coordination across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actions, informed by shared context analysis and taking a conflict-sensitive approach to address both humanitarian needs and the root causes of poverty, fragility and crises in the region.

Protection Crisis in the Central Sahel

Children, families and communities in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso have long endured hardships and simultaneous crises, testing their resilience and putting their health, safety and long-term well-being in jeopardy. Across the region, fragile communities suffer chronic poverty and food insecurity, climate change and natural disasters, political instability, protracted armed conflict and violence, displacement, and now the additional health and socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. National governments struggle to provide for their citizens and address the most pressing issues and crises of the day, leading to public dissatisfaction, a broken social contract with their governments, increased tensions and even violence. As a result, Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso have some of the lowest development indicators in the world.⁴ Now with the intensifying violence, spreading insecurity and the threat of COVID-19, a record 13.4 million people, including nearly 5 million children, are in dire need of humanitarian assistance across the region.⁵

The situation in the Central Sahel has deteriorated considerably over the last three years due to persistent conflict and violence involving armed insurgent groups, community militias and state security forces.⁶ Sub-regional insurgency originating in northern Mali has since spread south and across borders. Simultaneously, competition over dwindling natural resources (land and water)⁷ and accusations of support for armed groups have contributed to eruptions of inter-communal and ethnic violence between farmers and pastoralists increasing in frequency. State security forces and international militaries, including Operation Barkhane, the Group of 5 Sahel Joint Force and the UN's Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), have rapidly increased their presence in recent years, but have largely been unable to stabilise the region. Armed groups in turn have sought to exploit tensions and communities' grievances with government to position themselves as protectors and service providers in areas impacted by inter-communal conflict or with low presence and function of state-provided basic services.

Civilians, especially children, are bearing the brunt of this insecurity. Growing and intensifying violence and resultant record displacement across the region have created a protection crisis, with armed groups, community militias and state security forces alike attacking and violating the rights of civilians, including children. More than 4,660 civilians have lost their lives in the first half of 2020,⁸ up from 4,300 deaths recorded in the entirety of 2019, with casualties due to inter-communal violence on the rise.² Children are increasingly being forced or recruited and used by all armed groups, women and children are increasingly targets of sexual and gender-based violence, and a staggering 1.5 million people are currently internally displaced, up from 70,000 in 2018.¹⁰ Roughly 122,000 refugees are seeking safety across borders in Mali, western Niger and Burkina Faso.¹¹ Many of the forcibly displaced have fled multiple times, upending their livelihoods, increasing their dependence on humanitarian assistance, and exposing them to heightened risks of exploitation and abuse.

Targeting of social service infrastructure, humanitarian operations and staff have left highly vulnerable and conflict-affected communities without adequate access to life-saving care and assistance. During a pandemic and in a region already plagued by public health crises (e.g., recent epidemics of cholera in Niger, yellow fever in Mali, measles in Burkina Faso¹²), threats and attacks by armed groups have resulted in the closure or damage of more than 150 health facilities, denying millions critical health services.¹³ Threats and direct attacks on schools and personnel or the use of facilities for military purposes have left roughly 3,500 educational facilities closed or non-operational.¹⁴ Armed groups have also stepped up attacks on humanitarian workers and operations, diverting aid and killing, injuring or kidnapping aid workers. Ongoing insecurity, particularly in areas outside the control of state forces, has created significant access challenges for humanitarian and development organisations seeking to deliver aid and fill gaps in basic service delivery as the needs of vulnerable and conflict-affected communities continue to grow to a life-threatening scale.

Government COVID-19 response efforts have amplified existing tensions. At the onset of the pandemic, state authorities in all three countries established movement restrictions and limitations on public gatherings to prevent the virus's spread, but faced enforcement challenges and ultimately eased measures after public resistance and sometimes violent demonstrations over the measures' negative impacts on livelihoods and income in already extremely poor and vulnerable communities.¹⁵ While reported cases and deaths in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso have remained comparatively low to date,¹⁶ the authorities will likely struggle to implement preventative measures or provide necessary response services should the virus begin to spread more extensively, as the three countries have some of the weakest health systems in the world.¹⁷ These inadequate health services, coupled with severely limited access to safe water sources and adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities, expose the population, especially children, to preventable diseases and increase the risk of malnutrition.

“[...] Make enough soap and water available to our communities.”

*Habibatou (15, female, Niger), June 2020
Consultation with Children on COVID-19*

Food insecurity and hunger are at alarming levels and continuing to rise, driven by conflict and violence, displacement, the effects of climate change and now the COVID-19 pandemic. This is underpinned by high levels of chronic underdevelopment. Highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, 80% of people in the Central Sahel—largely farmers and pastoralists—rely on natural resources for their livelihood.¹⁸

Climate-related shocks such as the ongoing floods and recurrent, cyclical drought deeply affect communities' food security and ability to meet their basic needs. Across the region, 5.5 million people are food insecure, with the UN estimating the number of people facing acute hunger in Burkina Faso has risen 514%, in Mali has risen 130%, and in Niger has risen 144%, compared with the average over the last five years.¹⁹ In Burkina Faso, 3.3 million people are facing critical food shortages—twice the amount the same time last year.²⁰ Most alarming, an estimated 11,000 people are already facing famine levels of food insecurity.²¹ These figures are expected to grow by the end of the year unless urgent humanitarian action is taken now,²² raising significant concerns for a rapid spike in malnutrition and increased use of negative coping strategies such as reducing the quality and quantity of meals or forcing children into harmful labour or early marriage, particularly in conflict-affected and displaced communities.

Underlying these life-threatening challenges and driving the region's fragility and political instability is weak governance. Authorities in the three countries have long struggled to control and provide for the entirety of their territories. Weak social services, real or perceived biases in policies related to land and other natural resources and issues, and the engagement and accountability of state security forces in counter-insurgency and other operations all contribute to public grievances, and are critical to address in efforts to stabilise the region.

“[...] I want the authorities to open our schools, I want them to pay our teachers to reduce strikes.”

*Machatou (12, female, Mali), June 2020
Consultation with Children on COVID-19*



The Devastating Impacts on Children

Protracted violence and insecurity in the Central Sahel are disrupting all aspects of children's lives, violating their rights and threatening their health, well-being and futures.²³ Across the region, 2.3 million children are in need of protection—an 80% increase in just one year.²⁴ In 2019, the UN recorded 745 grave violations of children's rights in Mali alone, the highest number recorded since 2017.²⁵ This included an unprecedented number of child casualties (296 girls and boys killed or maimed).²⁶ Child recruitment and use by armed groups in Mali doubled from 2018 to 2019, with 215 girls and boys affected.²⁷ This alarming trend is continuing, with 228 incidents of grave violations preliminarily recorded in Mali in the first three months of 2020 alone.²⁸ Displaced children are at particular risk of violence, exploitation, recruitment, and negative coping mechanisms (e.g., child labour, early/forced marriage).²⁹ These experiences and this exposure to insecurity and violence have a profound impact on children's psychosocial well-being and long-term mental health, can cause deep psychosocial distress including trauma, depression and anxiety, and have extremely detrimental consequences for their long-term cognitive and emotional development. In the face of significant protection concerns for girls and boys, child protection remains one of the least funded sectors within the HRP for the countries of the Central Sahel.³⁰

Conflict and COVID-19 have compromised children's access to education and triggered a learning crisis across the region. According to the Global Campaign to Protect Education from Attack, there were more than 430 attacks on schools, school personnel and students across the Central Sahel between 2015 and 2019, and more than 90 attacks from January to July 2020.³¹ As of October 2020, persistent insecurity and threats have closed or rendered roughly 3,500 schools non-operational.³² Many displaced children are without accessible schools or learning alternatives, including distance solutions. Temporary COVID-19 related nationwide school closures imposed at the onset of the pandemic further disrupted all children's studies.

Hunger and child malnutrition are on the rise, with devastating effects on children's long-term growth and development. Across the region, more than 8 million children aged 6-14 are out of school,³³ robbing girls and boys not only of educational and development opportunities, but critically, access to school feeding programmes that are one of the key strategies for tackling childhood hunger. Malnutrition is extremely prevalent among children under five across the region, with severe effects on their immune systems and cognitive development. Half a million children are severely malnourished,³⁴ and with the rapid spike in hunger projected by the UN in 2020, these children will suffer the greatest impact.

Violence, displacement, the effects of climate change, competition over natural resources and COVID-19 related restrictions have significantly impacted families' livelihoods and income, making it increasingly difficult to meet their children's most basic needs, with the displaced hardest hit. Reduced family income is contributing to a reliance on dangerous coping strategies for both girls and boys.³⁵ There has been a spike in early and forced marriages of girls in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso - countries already ranked 1st, 5th and 6th globally in terms of child marriage.³⁶ Similarly, there has been an increase in children engaged in harmful labour, largely affecting boys, in countries with a history of children experiencing the worst forms of child labour, including for purposes of trafficking and recruitment and use by armed groups.³⁷

“[...] Provide food support and offer employment opportunities to our parents who have lost their jobs.”

Mahamadou's (12, male, Niger) request to government, June 2020 Consultation with Children on COVID-19

Much more must be done to protect the health, safety, rights and futures of children in the Central Sahel. Current child protection services and funding fall far short of meeting the needs and rights of child survivors. Scarcity of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), safe spaces and services for child survivors of sexual violence and recruitment into armed groups are denying children the help they need to overcome these traumatic experiences, reintegrate into society and enjoy their rights. Government efforts to protect children's rights to education and protection

are too limited. Budget and aid spending on the social sectors has been low for decades, and frail education and food systems are now being pushed to their limits, with the critical social safety nets/ protection measures to address these vulnerabilities largely non-existent or under-resourced. While needs continue to grow, humanitarian agencies face mounting security threats and challenges to reaching the most vulnerable children, and donors have contributed just 39% to the overall response as of early October 2020.³⁸

World Vision's Response

Since launching operations in Mali in 1982 and in Niger in 1995, World Vision has been on the ground providing critical humanitarian assistance to meet immediate child protection, education, health, nutrition, WASH, food security and livelihoods needs during emergencies, while also supporting children and families with longer-term development programming to adapt, overcome hardships, and build more peaceful, resilient communities.

As a multi-mandated organisation, World Vision has committed to aligning its work across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and deepening its impact for children in fragile contexts. As part of this commitment, World Vision developed a fragile contexts programme approach (FCPA) to enhance its adaptive programming ability, tapping into the organisation's expertise in humanitarian, development and peacebuilding action to support a management approach to meeting immediate survival needs while also addressing the systemic root causes and drivers of conflict, fragility and vulnerability in evolving contexts. Underpinned by scenario planning, joint context analysis and monitoring, the FCPA allows World Vision to prioritise agility and flexibility in the use of digital technology, accelerated data collection, real time analysis, and remote programme management. World Vision Mali launched an FCPA pilot in early 2020 focused on peacebuilding and child protection in Djenne, a commune in the Mopti region, implemented together with local NGO partner the Association for Support to Integrated Development.

In addition to this FCPA pilot, World Vision is responding to the ongoing humanitarian situation in north and central Mali with child protection, education, WASH, cash-based programmes, food assistance, health, nutrition and peacebuilding programmes, taking an adaptive management approach. World Vision is also implementing a COVID-19 response in Mali which includes support for preventative measures (e.g. awareness raising, provision of hygiene and personal protective items), training and support for health workers and facilities (e.g. construction of WASH facilities), cash assistance and vouchers for displaced families, and child protection interventions. Similarly, in the Maradi, Tillaberi and Tahoua regions of Niger, World Vision is working to address ongoing child protection, WASH and food assistance needs, as well as to support peacebuilding and social cohesion, informed by regular context analysis and scenario planning similar to that of the FCPA. In response to COVID-19, World Vision Niger is also supporting communities with preventative measures, providing educational support for students and training for teachers, training and supporting health workers and health facilities, organising savings groups, and implementing child protection trainings for front-line workers. World Vision has recently completed an assessment and plans to expand its operational presence to Burkina Faso, working through and supporting local partners. World Vision is also operational in Senegal, Mauritania and Chad.

World Vision's Recommendations

Children are paying a heavy price for the ongoing, rapidly deteriorating crisis in the Central Sahel, but it is not too late for all stakeholders to take action to protect them, their rights and their futures. Based on extensive experience responding to the immediate and long-term needs of children, families and communities in Mali and Niger, World Vision calls for the following urgent actions to address the grave situation for children across the Central Sahel:

All parties to the conflict should:

- Abide by International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law.
- Cease all attacks on health and education facilities, recruitment of children into armed groups, and the use of schools for military purposes.
- Provide unhindered humanitarian access to all populations in need, without restrictions and in accordance with core humanitarian principles.

Governments of Mali, Niger & Burkina Faso should:

- Prioritise the protection of civilians and respect International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law.
- Strengthen, fund and implement multi-year strategies to improve food security, livelihoods recovery and resilience, and provide health, nutrition, education, WASH, child protection and child-sensitive, gender-responsive social protection services to all children, with a focus on conflict-affected and displaced communities.
- Implement commitments as endorsed through the Safe Schools Declaration to prevent and reduce attacks on education.
- Strengthen health systems, and train and equip frontline health workers to prevent and respond to COVID-19, while also ensuring continuity of existing essential primary health care and nutrition services to mitigate the risk of mortality and morbidity. This should include age and gender-sensitive specialised MHPSS and gender-based violence prevention and response services, and strengthen the referral and complaints mechanisms between health, nutrition, food security and child protection actors.

Regional institutions should:

- Support the Governments of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso with strengthening, financing and implementing strategies and plans to improve social service delivery and governance, strengthen systems, and adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- Balance investment in security and political objectives with investment in humanitarian and development assistance intended to address the root causes of fragility in the region.
- Regularly revisit the situation in Mali ensuring that all parties are respecting the transitional road map such that violence does not erupt.
- Strengthen regional food crisis prevention and response mechanisms including investing in strategies that promote sustainable climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Advocate for governments to invest more of their national budgets in education, food security and climate smart agriculture initiatives according to the African Union's Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme.

Donors should:

- Urgently scale up funding to meet the immediate needs of children by fully funding the HRPs, in particular expanding budgets and investments aimed at protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse, and improving access to age and gender-sensitive education, health and nutrition services. Align this funding with early recovery and development plans to assist the Governments of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso with renewing their social contracts, restoring peace and reviving the economy.

- Provide flexible, multi-year humanitarian and development funding, aligned with the OECD-DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and Grand Bargain commitments, adhering to the Common Donor Approach and strengthening humanitarian donor coordination.
- Ensure at the institutional level that funding decisions for humanitarian action have no other objective than the provision of assistance based on humanitarian principles.
- Support the Governments of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso to finance and implement strategies to strengthen systems, equitably deliver social services, and mitigate the risks or harms of climate change. As a condition of budget support, require national governments to maintain allocations for public services in national budgets.

UN agencies should:

- Facilitate humanitarian access and strengthen civil coordination to ensure humanitarian assistance can reach conflict-affected populations.
- Ensure child protection is prioritised and mainstreamed in all response efforts, and that interventions align with the 2019 Child Protection Minimum Standards for ending and preventing all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of girls and boys.
- Support the Governments of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso to strengthen and implement age and gender-sensitive strategies for delivery of social services, including in conflict-affected and displaced communities, in collaboration with NGOs.
- Enhance coordination across the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors, informed by shared context analysis and taking a conflict-sensitive approach to address immediate humanitarian needs as well as the root causes of fragility and crises in the region.

Humanitarian, development & peacebuilding NGOs and civil society should:

- Support the Governments of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso to strengthen and implement strategies for reaching all children, including those in conflict-affected and displaced communities, with critical health, education, WASH, child protection and child-sensitive, gender-responsive social protection services.
- Actively participate in and strengthen coordination mechanisms across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus by supporting the development and achievement of collective outcomes, and establishing more coordinated ways of working, underpinned by international law and reinforcing norms, with formal and informal actors at all levels behaving in line with child rights-based approaches.
- Conduct regular, impact-focused and people-centred joint analysis with actors across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to establish and maintain a shared understanding of the context that informs principled, evidence-based decisions and helps ensure conflict-sensitive, context-specific action. Engage women, children and key community stakeholders, including faith leaders, in these efforts.
- Invest in capacity building and empowerment of affected girls, boys and communities as agents of change, peace and development in their own right, and involve and give them voice in the issues affecting them, including recovery from crisis and development.
- Strengthen protective systems for children and reinforce a protective environment by supporting the capacity building of community-based/kinship systems, local government structures and national systems, and investing in the bolstering of civil society, community-based structures, and local institutions to provide adequate protection for all citizens.

- ¹ UN OCHA, “Daily Noon Briefing-Central Sahel Update,” 15 September 2020. <https://www.unocha.org/story/daily-noon-briefing-highlights-central-sahel-syria>
- ² UN OCHA, “Central Sahel Crisis – Key Figures 2020,” as of 8 October 2020, p2. https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/facts_figures_20201008.pdf
- ³ UNICEF, “2.3 million children in need of protection in the Central Sahel region in 2020, a more than 80% increase in one year,” 21 May 2020. <https://www.unicef.org/wca/press-releases/23-million-children-need-protection-central-sahel-region-2020-more-80-cent-increase> Includes displaced internally and cross border.
- ⁴ UNDP, “2019 Human Development Index Ranking,” accessed 1 October 2020. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/2019-human-development-index-ranking> Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso ranked 189th, 184th and 182nd respectively out of 189 countries evaluated for the UN’s 2019 Human Development Index, based on average life expectancy, educational attainment and gross national income.
- ⁵ UN OCHA, “Central Sahel Crisis – Key Figures 2020,” as of 8 October 2020, p1 & 2. https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/facts_figures_20201008.pdf
- ⁶ In ACLED’s “Ten Crises to Worry about in 2019” publication, they identified the Sahel as “most likely to be the geopolitical dilemma of 2019.” <https://acleddata.com/2019/02/01/ten-conflicts-to-worry-about-in-2019/#unique-identifier> ACLED, “Ten Crises to Worry about in 2020,” 23 January 2020. <https://acleddata.com/2020/01/23/ten-conflicts-to-worry-about-in-2020/#Sahel> & ACLED, “Mid-Year Update: 10 Crisis to Worry About in 2020,” 18 August 2020. <https://acleddata.com/2020/08/18/mid-year-update-10-conflicts-to-worry-about-in-2020/#1597759395479-dd34f4e9-c05f>
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- ⁸ ICRC, “Central Sahel – Spike in violence leads to higher deaths, more than 1 million fleeing homes,” 14 September 2020. https://www.icrc.org/en/document/central-sahel-spike-violence-leads-higher-deaths-more-1-million-fleeing-homes#_ftn1
- ⁹ UN OCHA, “Overview of Humanitarian Needs & Requirements – Sahel Crisis,” May 2020, p8. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/HNRO%20Sahel%20May%202020.pdf>
- ¹⁰ UN OCHA, “Central Sahel Revised Needs and Requirements Overview,” October 2020, p4. https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/RNRO%20CentralSahel%20Oct%202020_EN%20Web.pdf
- ¹¹ UN OCHA, “Central Sahel Crisis – Key Figures 2020,” as of 8 October 2020, p2. https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/facts_figures_20201008.pdf
- ¹² UN OCHA, “Overview of Humanitarian Needs & Requirements – Sahel Crisis,” May 2020, p12. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/HNRO%20Sahel%20May%202020.pdf>
- ¹³ UN OCHA, “Saving Lives in the Central Sahel – Core Script, Ministerial Conference 20 October 2020,” as of 8 October 2020, p1. https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/script_20201009.pdf
- ¹⁴ Ibid
- ¹⁵ Clingendael – Netherlands Institute of International Relations, “The Politics of COVID-19 in the Sahel,” May 2020, p2-3. https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Alert_Politics_of_COVID19_in_the_Sahel.pdf
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- ¹⁸ UN OCHA, “Overview of Humanitarian Needs & Requirements – Sahel Crisis,” May 2020, p8-9. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/HNRO%20Sahel%20May%202020.pdf>
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- ²¹ Ibid, p4.
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- ³⁵ UN OCHA, “Track 2 Protection Discussion Paper for SOM,” p3. <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Track%20%20Protection%20EN.pdf> & “Report on Thematic Track 1 Discussion 8 September 2020,” p2-3. https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Central_Sahel_SOM_Track_2_Protection_Summary.pdf
- ³⁶ Girls Not Brides, “Child Marriage Dashboard – Where does it happen?” accessed 2 October 2020. <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/where-does-it-happen/atlas/> According to UNICEF, Niger has the highest rate of child marriage in the world (76% of girls married before age 18, 28% before age 15), Burkina Faso has the 5th highest rate (52% by 18, 10% by 15), and Mali has the 6th (52% by 18, 17% by 15).
- ³⁷ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of International Labor Rights, “2019 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour,” accessed 1 October 2020. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/findings>
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Fatoumata, 24, with eight month old Khadija, and her other children who were raised in Bankass village before they were attacked by armed groups and fled to Soukoura Internally Displaced Persons camp in central Mali.

Photo by: World Vision



World Vision is undertaking the largest humanitarian response in its 70-year history to limit the spread of COVID-19 and reduce its impact on vulnerable children and their families, aiming to reach 72 million people, half of them children and raising US \$350 million to do so. Response efforts will cover 70 countries where World Vision has a field presence, prioritising scale up of preventative measures to limit the spread of the disease; strengthening health systems and workers; supporting children impacted by COVID-19 through education, child protection, food security, and livelihoods; and advocating to ensure vulnerable children are protected. For more information, read World Vision's [COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan](#).

World Vision

www.wvi.org

World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities to reach their full potential by tackling the root causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.

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