



To understand communities' expectations for the 2017-2018 harvest and the impact on their families, CRS and Caritas Mali conducted a rapid assessment in five of Mali's regions, including Kayes as seen above. *Photo by CRS, 2017.*

2017 MALI HARVEST: RAPID ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

BACKGROUND

After a 2016-2017 agricultural season marked by strong yields in many areas of Mali but pockets of poor production, the Government of Mali (GOM) and non-governmental actors are again anticipating zones of low production in 2017-2018 against the backdrop of average to above-average yields nationwide.

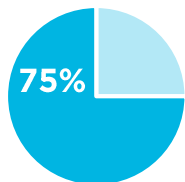
Due largely to [insufficient rainfall](#) in 2017, particularly in the critical months of September and October, the Système d'Alerte Précoce (SAP) of the GOM's Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire expects that cereal production, while average overall in Mali, will be [poor to very poor](#) in areas of Kayes (Nioro, Kayes, Yelimane, Diema), Koulikoro (Banamba, Kolokani, Kati, Nara), Ségou (Niono), Mopti (Bandagara, Djenné, Douentza), Tombouctou (Goundam) and Gao (Asongo).¹ The Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) also predicts [low agricultural production](#) in the regions of Ségou, Koulikoro and Kayes, and in eastern Tombouctou and Gao.²

With many areas of the county expecting low agricultural output, the Cadre Harmonisé tentatively predicts that the number of households in Phase 3 or higher food insecurity will rise from 1.4 percent of the population at present to 4.2 percent in July-August 2018 at the height of the lean season.³

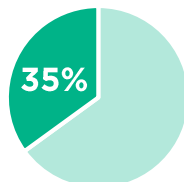
In November 2017, CRS and Caritas Mali conducted a rapid assessment in the five southern and central regions of Mali (Kayes, Koulikoro, Mopti, Ségou and Sikasso) to understand farmers' expectations for the 2017-2018 harvest and to assess current levels of food security and preparedness for a shock to food-production systems. The quantitative survey comprised household-level surveys with 452 respondents, drawn from 36 villages, across 18 communes and 11 cercles during the period November 14-17.

KEY FINDINGS

- Percentage of households whose harvest met their household's food needs for six months or more in **2016-2017**

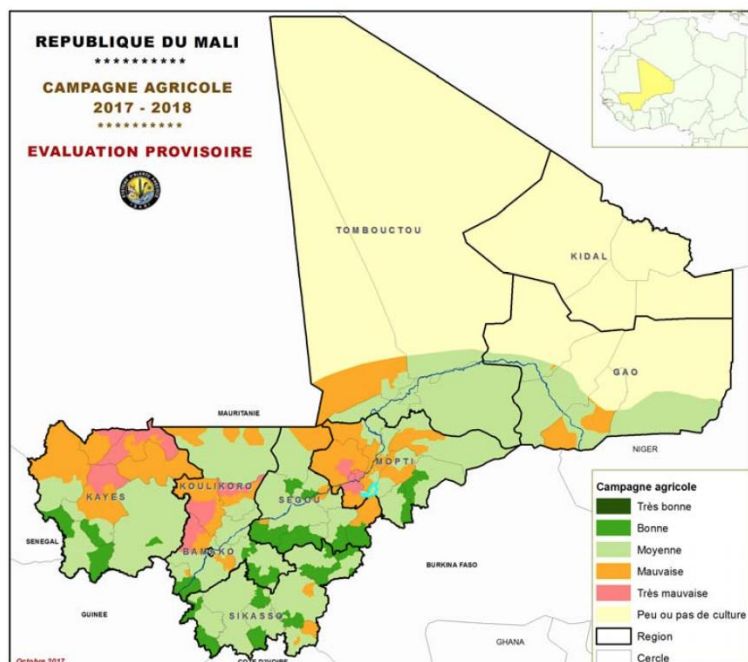


- Percentage of households expecting a harvest that will meet their household's food needs for six months or more in **2017-2018**



- 16 percent** of households reported having remaining reserves of grain as of mid-November;
- 70 percent** of respondent households in Kayes and Koulikoro had Reduced Coping Strategy Index scores surpassing the threshold denoting a high-level of food-related coping strategy use;
- 42 percent** of all households across the five regions were found to be utilizing a high-degree of food-related coping strategies;
- 20 percent** of households had two or fewer available non-food related coping strategies across the five regions, with 43 percent of households having two or fewer available strategies in Kayes region.

MAP: SAP's predictions for poor (orange) and very poor (pink) harvests throughout central and southern Mali.



CONCLUSIONS

Data collected by CRS Mali and Caritas Mali suggest that low agricultural production in 2017-2018 in several areas of the country may leave approximately two-thirds of the population with fewer than six months of food reserves following the harvest. In some areas that number may surpass 80 percent, particularly in parts of Kayes and Koulikoro regions, where by November more than 7 in 10 households surveyed were skipping meals, reducing the portion size of meals or using other food-related coping strategies after a relatively favorable agricultural year.

These findings largely coincide with early warning system data that predict a longer than usual lean season in 2018. This will mean a greater number of households will be forced to modify their food consumption patterns, or resort to other strategies to cope with food shortages, with negative long-term impact on their household such as taking on debt, selling livestock, or harvesting trees for charcoal sale.

¹ Système D'Alerte Précoce (2017). Note Technique : Evaluation provisoire de la situation alimentaire du pays campagne agropastorale 2017-2018.

² FEWS NET (2017). Mali : Perspectives sur la sécurité alimentaire : Octobre 2017 à Mai 2018.

³ Cadre Harmonisé d'identification des zones à risque et des populations vulnérables au Sahel et en Afrique de l'Ouest (CH2), (2017).

