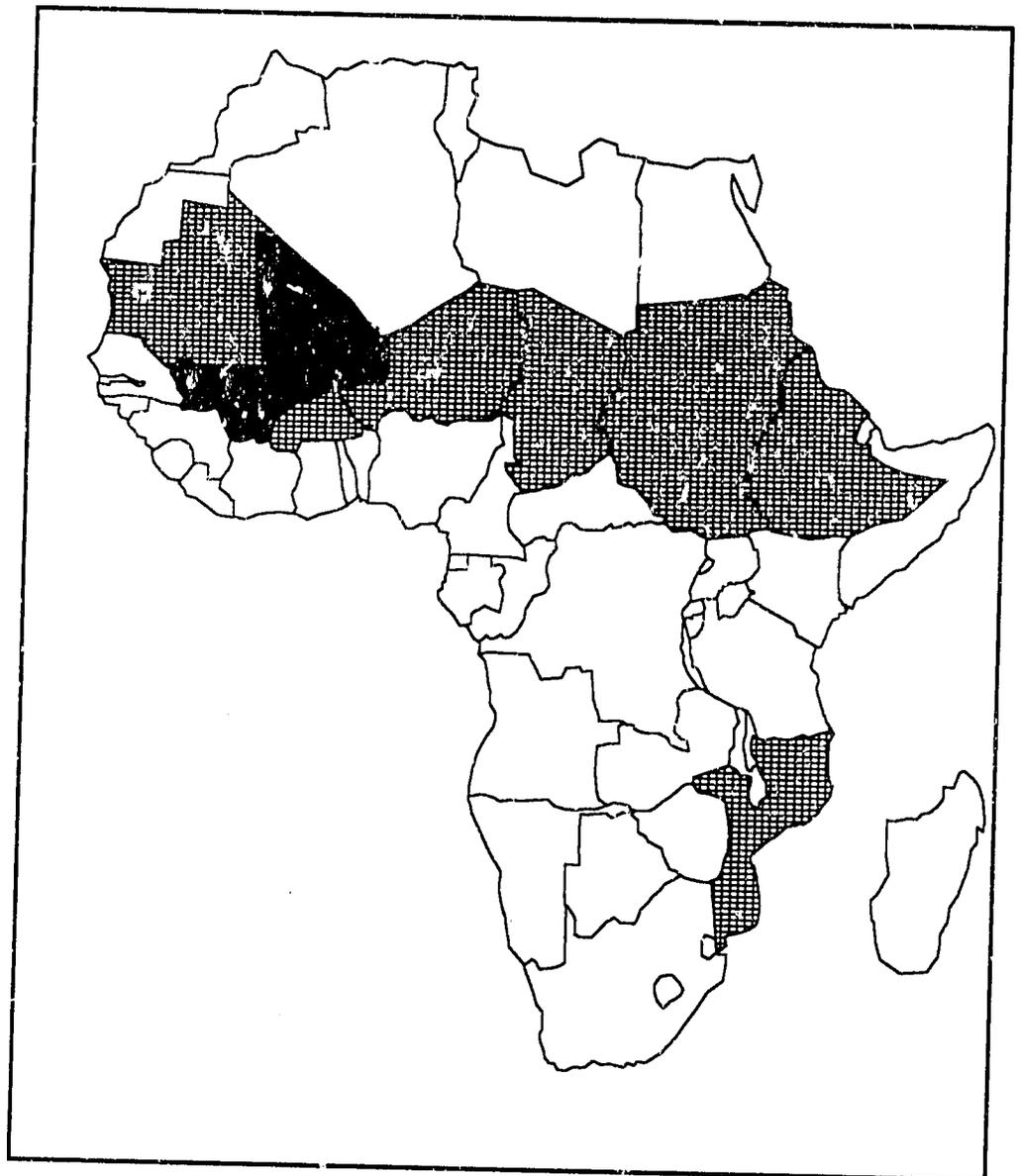


Report Number 12
June 1987

FEWS Country Report

MALI



Africa Bureau
U.S. Agency
for International
Development

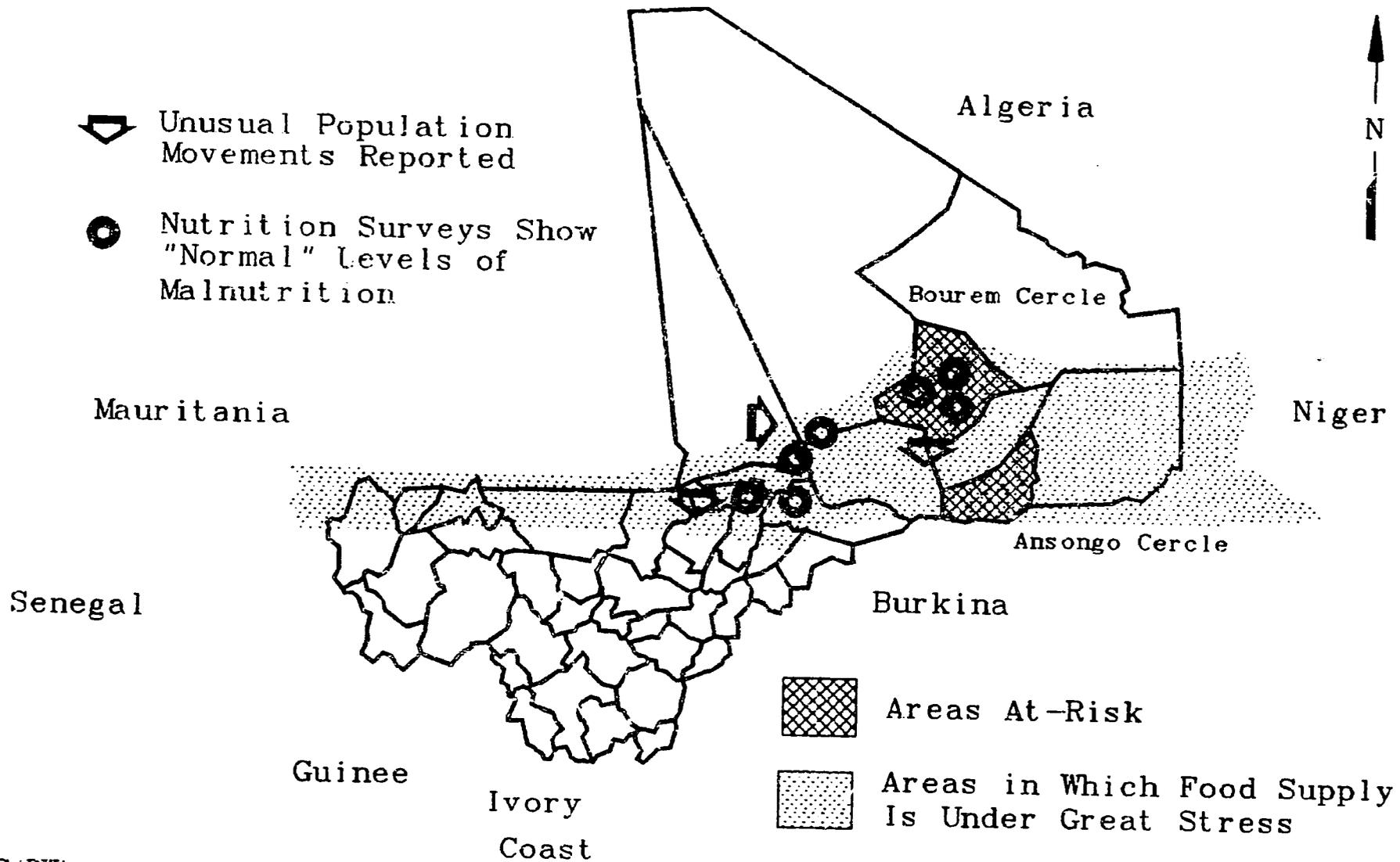
SUMMARY MAP



Unusual Population Movements Reported



Nutrition Surveys Show "Normal" Levels of Malnutrition



Famine Early Warning System Country Report

MALI

Situation Stable

Prepared for the
Africa Bureau of the
U.S. Agency for
International Development

Prepared by
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June 1987

Contents

Page

i	Introduction
1	Summary
1	Population Movements
1	Health and Nutrition
4	Market Prices
4	Food Aid

List of Figures

Page

2	Map 2	Areas of Greatest Food Stress
2	Figure 1	Millet Price Trends
5	Map 3	Administrative Units

INTRODUCTION

This is the twelfth in a series of monthly reports on Mali issued by the Famine Early Warning System (FEWS). It is designed to provide decisionmakers with current information and analysis on existing and potential nutrition emergency situations. Each situation identified is described in terms of geographical extent and the number of people involved, or at-risk, and the proximate causes insofar as they have been discerned.

Use of the term "at-risk" to identify vulnerable populations is problematic since no generally agreed upon definition exists. Yet, it is necessary to identify or "target" populations in-need or "at-risk" in order to determine appropriate forms and levels of intervention. Thus for the present, until a better usage can be found, FEWS reports will employ the term "at-risk" to mean...

...those persons lacking sufficient food, or resources to acquire sufficient food, to avert a nutritional crisis (i.e., a progressive deterioration in their health or nutritional condition below the status quo), and who, as a result, require specific intervention to avoid a life-threatening situation.

Perhaps of most importance to decisionmakers, the FEWS effort highlights the process underlying the deteriorating situation, hopefully with enough specificity and forewarning to permit alternative intervention strategies to be examined and implemented. Food assistance strategies are key to famine avoidance. However, other types of intervention can be of major importance both in the short-term and in the long run, including medical, transport, storage, economic development policy change, etc.

Where possible, estimates of food needs are included in the FEWS reports. It is important to understand, however, that no direct relation exists between numbers of persons at-risk and the quantity of food assistance needed. This is because famines are the culmination of slow-onset disaster processes which can be complex in the extreme.

The food needs of individual populations at-risk depend upon when in the disaster process identification is made and the extent of the cumulative impact on the individuals concerned. Further, the amount of food assistance required, whether from internal or external sources, depends upon a host of considerations. Thus the estimates of food needs presented periodically in FEWS reports should not be interpreted to mean food aid needs, e.g., as under PL480 or other donor programs.

FEWS depends on a variety of US Government agencies, private voluntary organizations (PVO's), international relief agencies, foreign press and host government reports as sources of information used in the country reports. In particular, a debt of gratitude is owed to many individuals within various offices of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) who routinely provide valuable information; the Office Of Emergency Operations (OEO); the offices of Food For Peace and Voluntary Assistance (FFP/FVA); and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). The contributions of the Systeme d'Alerte Precoce/Mali and the National Drought Committee (CNAVS) to this report are substantial and highly appreciated. Additional useful information is also provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA), the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA), AGRHYMET/Niamey, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), the World Food Programme, and other U.N. agencies.

FEWS is operated by AID's Office of Technical Resources in the Bureau for Africa (AFR/TR) in cooperation with numerous U.S. Government and other organizations. The FEWS Country Reports are working documents of AFR/TR and should not be construed as official pronouncements of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

SUMMARY

Areas previously determined to be "at-risk" in Mali, Bourem and Ansongo Cercles (see Summary Map), remain in that category. Other cercles, generally in the northern-most areas of each region, will require close monitoring during the pre-harvest ("soudure") period, when food supplies are at their lowest level, and the agricultural workload is at its highest. Nutrition surveys carried out in several cercles within Mopti, Tombouctou, and Gao Regions show that current rates of malnutrition are largely within expected levels. Nevertheless, the surveys point out that levels could rise in these areas, as many families have extremely low, or no, food stocks and are reliant upon day-to-day economic activities in order to purchase grain on the market.

ISSUES

Preparations for a grasshopper control program appear more fully developed this year than they were at a similar time in 1985 and 1986.

KEY JUNE EVENTS

The earliest significant rains fell in May in the extreme southern portions of the country. First indications are that the amount of precipitation was slightly less than the 30 year average. This early in the season, such a slight deficit means little for the potential harvest. Nevertheless, continuing light rains in June would cause a problem for normal agricultural activity.

POPULATION MOVEMENTS

As the rainy season approaches, the Systeme d'Alerte Precoce (SAP) reports that some residents of Niafunke and Goundam cercles (Tombouctou Region) and Bourem Cercle (Gao Region) are leaving those areas in search of food or work (see Map 2). These movements are only unusual in that they involve entire sedentary families, as opposed to specific family members who normally migrate to urban areas at this time of the year. Lack of food is the main reason given for the departure of these families. Meanwhile, the number of people in the displaced persons camps in the towns of Kidal and Gao, has remained stable.

HEALTH and NUTRITION

Several nutrition surveys were carried out by UNICEF and SAP during February and March in "at-risk" and vulnerable areas (See Map 2). The results show no immediate cause for extreme intervention measures; malnutrition levels are near the 10% rate, which is usually judged to be "normal" for this area. Nevertheless, where rates approach or rise above this level, continued monitoring is necessary. UNICEF conducted surveys in Dire Cercle, and in the Toureg

Map 2

AREAS of GREATEST FOOD STRESS -- March/April, 1987

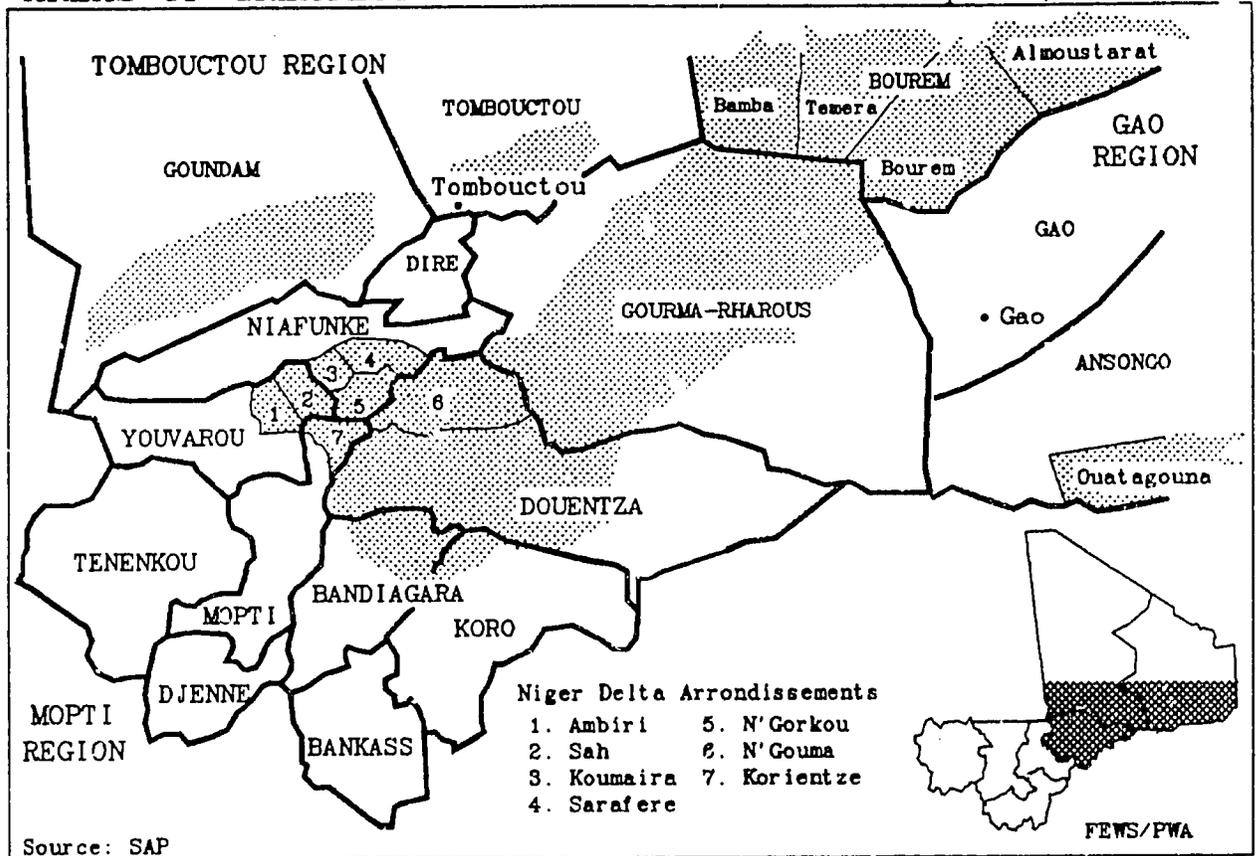
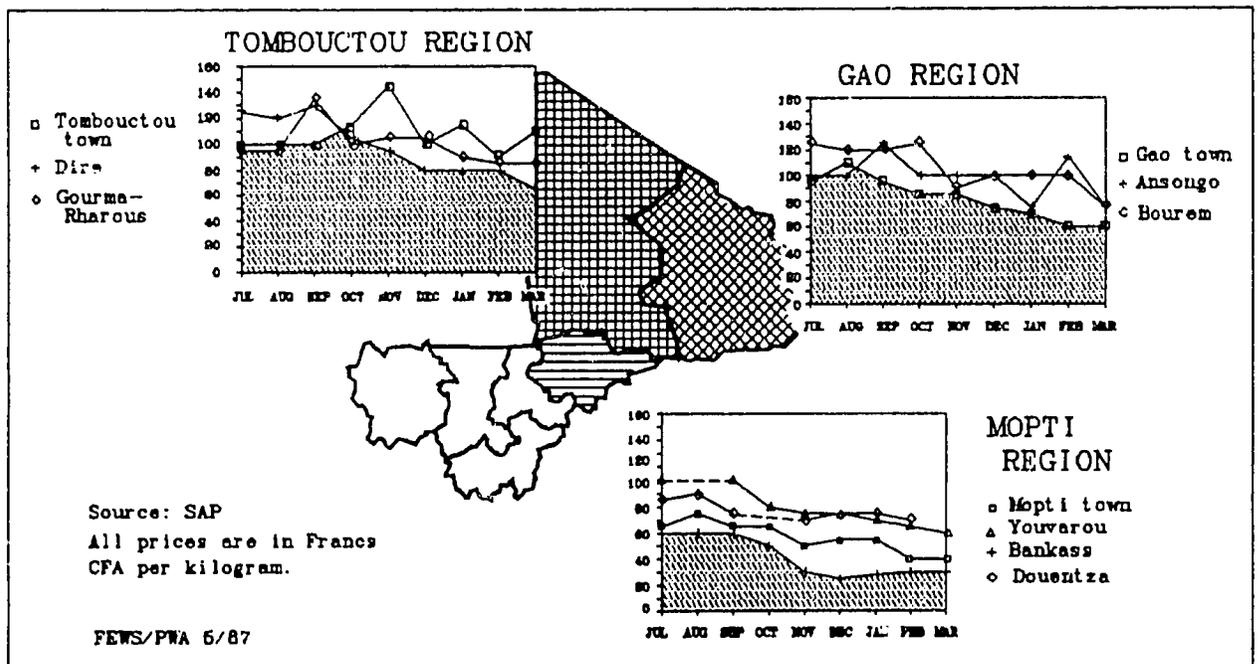


Figure 1

MILLET PRICE TRENDS -- July 1986 to March 1987



camps of Tombouctou Town. It found a malnutrition rate of 8.56% in Dire, and 12.32% in the Tombouctou camps. The population of the camps in Tombouctou is made up of nomadic cattle herders who became displaced during the 1984-85 drought. UNICEF also carried out several nutrition surveys in Bourem Cercle during March, and found the following malnutrition rates.

Arrondissements - Level of Malnutrition

Bourem Central	10.2%
Temera	7.1%
Almoustarat	3.5%
Bamba	9.8%

The UNICEF survey team in Almoustarat found that many "fractions" (nomadic population groups) were absent at the time of their visit. It is likely that these groups left during the dry season for more favorable areas, and may return to Almoustarat at the start of the rainy season. Therefore, it may be important to perform another survey later in the year.

The SAP conducted two nutrition surveys in Mopti Region during April. The first, in Sah Arrondissement (Youvarou Cercle), found a malnutrition rate of 11.4%. The second, in the N'Gouma Arrondissement (Douentza Cercle), found a malnutrition rate of 7.3%. (Several other neighboring arrondissements within the Niger Delta area have previously been cited as suffering from extremely meager food supplies. See Map 2.) The N'Gouma survey found a wide disparity in malnutrition rates between the eastern part of the arrondissement, where rates were higher, and other sectors.

A detailed socio-economic survey was carried out in these same two arrondissements. In Sah Arrondissement, the survey revealed that the most common source of food is the market; foodstuffs are purchased with money received either from selling straw mats (50%) or from relatives working outside of the area. Food aid was the primary source of food for 33% of those surveyed. Family-level grain reserves are almost non-existent because of the extremely poor agricultural harvest last year. In N'Gouma Arrondissement, most families purchase their food with money earned from selling straw mats. This is the main economic activity in the area and is dependent upon a fluctuating demand for mats in the town of Mopti. Forty-nine percent of the families surveyed in N'Gouma reported at least one male member leaving the area to find work since last year's rainy season.

MARKET PRICES

Millet prices have remained stable or have declined slightly overall since the harvests in September and October (see Figure 1). While reflecting this trend, millet prices remain higher in Douentza and Youvarou than in other cercles of the region of Mopti. This is attributable, to some degree, to the poor harvest in both of those cercles. In Youvarou, the higher prices may also be a result of the difficulties involved in transporting grain to the area.

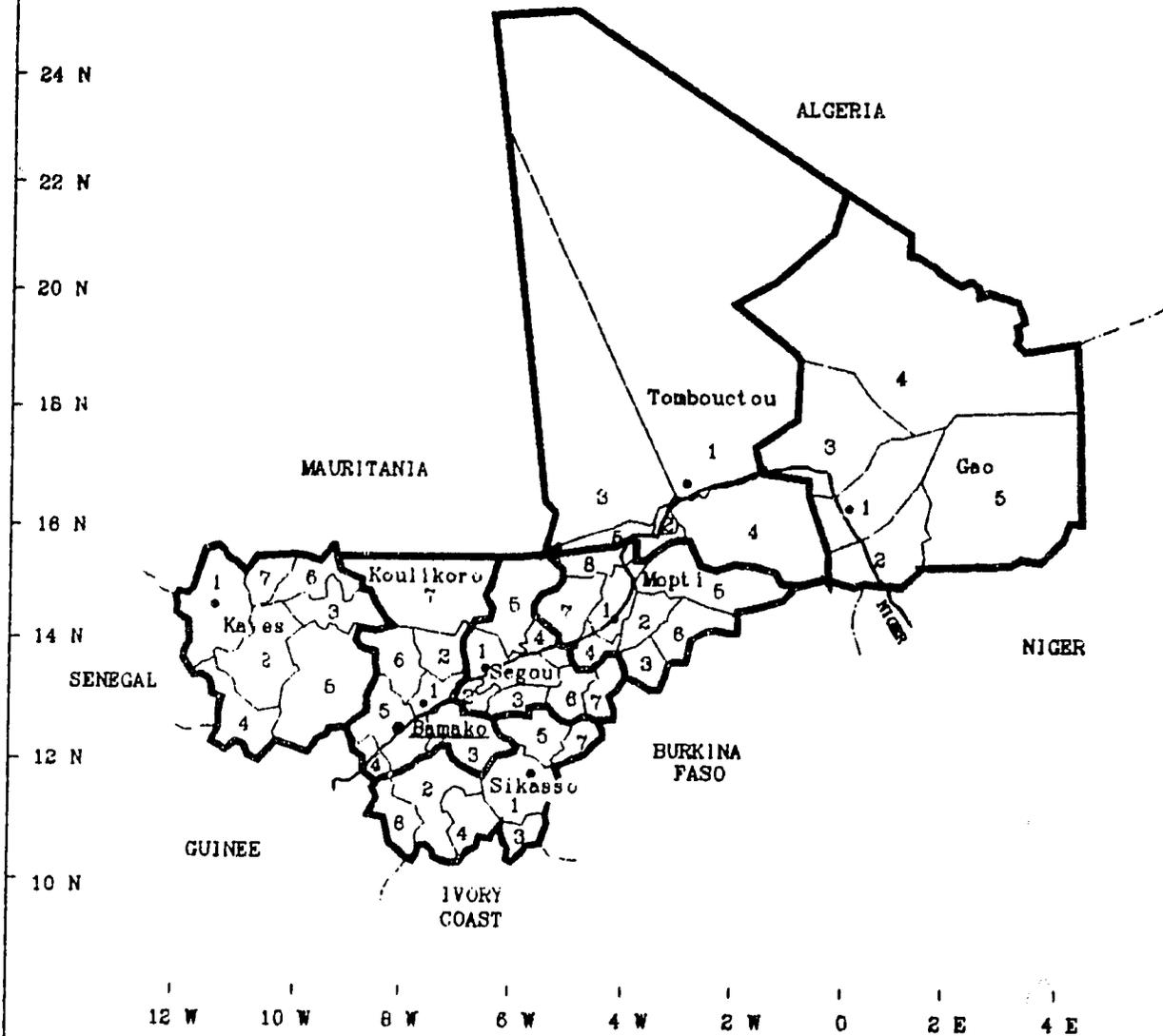
The price of cereal on the market is an important indicator of vulnerability to food emergencies to monitor, particularly in areas like Sah and N'Gouma, where families must purchase most of their staple foods. A rise in the price of millet there would have a severe impact on the ability of inhabitants to feed themselves. As the "soudure" period progresses, it is likely that the price of cereal will rise throughout most of the country. In most of the markets shown in Figure 1 (except that of Bankass Cercle), the rate of increase may be more rapid, and the absolute price levels higher than in other, more southern, markets.

FOOD AID

As a result of recommendations made by the SAP, the National Drought Committee (CNAVS) distributed food aid during April in Diema Cercle (10 MT) and Nioro Cercle (40 MT) of Kayes Region, and in Bourem Cercle (500 MT) of Gao Region. A free food distribution, planned by CNAVS in the cercle of Nara (Koulikoro Region), did not take place for lack of transport. The required food aid for Nara Cercle is 135 MT. As a result of the nutrition and socio-economic surveys carried out in Sah and N'Gouma Arrondissements in March, the SAP has recommended that 315 MT of cereals be made available for 7,000 people in those areas before September.

MAP 3

Administrative Units: Regions & Cercles



REGIONS and CERCLES

- KAYES**
1. Kayes
 2. Bafoulabe
 3. Diemo
 4. Kenieba
 5. Kita
 6. Nioro
 7. Yelimane

- SIKASSO**
1. Sikasso
 2. Bougouni
 2. Kadiolo
 4. Kolondieba
 5. Koutiala
 8. Yanfolila
 7. Yorosso

- MOPTI**
1. Mopti
 2. Bandiagara
 3. Bankass
 4. Djenne
 5. Douentza
 8. Koro
 7. Tenenkou
 8. Youvarou

- GAO**
1. Gao
 2. Ansongo
 3. Bourem
 4. Kidal
 5. Menaka

- KOULIKORO**
1. Koulikoro
 2. Banamba
 3. Dioila
 4. Kangaba
 5. Kati
 6. Kolokani
 7. Nara

- SEGOU**
1. Segou
 2. Baraoueli
 3. Bla
 4. Macina
 5. Niono
 8. San
 7. Tominian

- TOMBOUCTOU**
1. Tombouctou
 2. Dire
 3. Goundam
 4. Gourma-Rharous
 5. Niafunke

Other Int'l
Boundaries

Region Boundary

Cercle Boundary

● National Capital
○ Regional Capital

200 km

FEWS/PWA 1/87