2ND EVALUATION
OF THE PREGEC CHARTER
ANALYSIS OF THE
PERFORMANCE AND
EFFECTIVENESS OF
RESPONSES TO FOOD
AND NUTRITION CRISIS
KEY MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OCTOBER 2018
1. INTRODUCTION

Each year, enormous amounts of money are invested by the States and their partners in the management of food and nutrition crises. For example, the response plan in north-eastern Nigeria cost USD 100.5 million in 2015. In light of these enormous financial commitments, especially the negative impact on States’ ability to engage in more structural and preventive interventions, the members of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) decided to focus the second external evaluation of the PREGEC Charter on an analysis of the performance and effectiveness of responses to food and nutrition crises.

The evaluation responds to two critical questions: How should governance structure (institutions and modes of intervention) of responses to food and nutrition crises be reformed (necessary adjustments) in order to:

• Significantly improve the effectiveness and, ultimately, the impact of responses to crisis by reinforcing the resilience of assisted communities?

• Harmonise these efforts with those aimed at prevention (notably social protection and other structural measures) in the context of emergency-development continuum that would allow the most vulnerable to reinforce their resilience and progressively exit the vicious cycle of poverty and chronic food and nutrition insecurity?

The evaluation focused on two specific objectives:

• **Specific Objective 1 (So1):** Evaluate the pertinence and consistency of the response plans compared to the actual situation on the ground;

• **Specific Objective 2 (So2):** Evaluate the effectiveness of governance structure of responses to food and nutrition crises.

The evaluation, conducted by the Easy4Dev Bureau was based on a sample of case studies from seven countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal.

This document summarises the messages and recommendations. The full report of the study will be available on the RPCA website: www.food-security.net.

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2. **KEY MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Specific Objective (So1).**

→ Evaluate the pertinence and consistency of the response plans compared to the situation on the ground

**Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 1).**

*To the States:* Make a clear distinction between chronic and cyclical food insecurity and malnutrition to develop adequate responses to each type of crisis

The current practice of the annual evaluation of food and nutrition security does not allow for a distinction between situations that are cyclical and those that are chronic. These two types of vulnerability are not necessarily responsive to the same kinds of interventions.

In order to improve the relevance of the national response plans (NRPs), the choice of response instruments and the effectiveness of implementation, the States should:

- Clearly define a targeting method that facilitates the distinction between food and nutrition insecurity (FNI) situations that are chronic versus those that are cyclical;
- Restrict the NRPs to the treatment of cyclical vulnerability by using the common instruments for response;
- Exclude zones of civil insecurity in NRPs and define specific plans for humanitarian relief or socio-economic recovery;
- Exclude areas with chronic malnutrition (above the emergency threshold throughout the year) and more generally chronic FNI from the NRPs, and implement structural nutrition and development programmes.

**Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 2).**

*To the States:* Improve the targeting of the NRPs in order to develop a better consensus around the choice of response instruments

Insufficient targeting and divergent opinions among stakeholders around the adequacy of response instruments undermine the overall effectiveness of NRP implementation.

Drawing on the principles of the PREGEC Charter, States must increase their capacity to lead and engage in dialogue in order to create an environment supportive of a real consensus about targeting practices and choice of instruments. From this perspective (and in contrast to current practice), targeting and prioritisation should henceforth:

- Be sufficiently “gender-sensitive in order to permit a tailoring of responses specific to certain vulnerable populations, notably women;
- Target households under pressure: productive support, in time, to this category of the population can help anticipate and prevent crisis.
Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 3).
To the States: Develop social protection programmes to address chronic vulnerability. These programmes could be expanded to absorb relatively modest cyclical food insecurity crises.

Once a distinction has been made between the two types of vulnerability, chronic FNI should be given high priority and receive greater political engagement from the States. To this end, States must:

- Develop significant social protection programmes to effectively respond to the chronic nature of vulnerability;
- Put in place packages of productive social transfers (consistent with development interventions) and nutrition programmes to enable chronically vulnerable populations to restore their productive capacity and to improve their nutrition status;
- Clearly define a process of graduation for households that have productive capacity in order to enable them engage in a sustainable production cycle and contribute to national economic growth.

Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 4).
To the States and to the RPCA in general: Systematically connect emergency responses with programmes designed to reinforce resilience by addressing the root causes.

Connecting emergency responses and ensuring that their implementation also supports structural programmes (social protection and others) strengthens the resilience of the chronically vulnerable people. From a practical perspective, this suggests:

To the States:

- Review and improve the institutional framework of response implementation to favour better co-ordination, -synergy and complementarity between interventions and improve the effectiveness of NRP s;
- Reform the NRP formulation process by systematically including the stakeholders in charge of implementing structural development programmes in order to make sure that responses also contribute to reinforcing the resilience of communities in structurally vulnerable areas;
- Implement contractual arrangements to mobilise structural development programmes in support of the development of a continuum between annual emergency responses and those focused on improving resilience (example of the agreement between some AfDB’s agricultural development programmes and family grant programmes in Senegal).

To the RPCA:

- Review the focus of some sessions of the PREGEC cycle in order to implement new programming standards:
  - In November-December: Encourage and support the States in defining emergency responses in order to ensure their effective implementation by January-March;
  - In April: (during the RPCA restricted meeting), Assess emergency response implementation and launch structural responses in a continuum of emergency-resilience/development approach.
Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 5).
To the States and development partners: Be proactive and anticipate crises to avoid what might be irreversible consequences.

Being proactive and acting at the beginning of January before vulnerable populations move into negative strategies (notably with the loss of their means of production) is essential in order to improve the effectiveness of NRPs. To this end, the States in collaboration with their partners should:

- Put in place sustainable finding mechanisms for the NRPs based on local and external resource mobilisation opportunities. This implies a better financial predictability by States to support the implementation of the NRPs. For example, structurally vulnerable countries could better anticipate budget requirements based on an estimate of the annual average of the number of vulnerable people regularly faced with food insecurity;

- Adopt more flexibility in planning the activities of development programmes operating in structurally vulnerable areas in order to make them more responsive to cyclical risks and hazards. For example, the “zero-dollar” budget component of the Regional Support Project for Pastoralism in the Sahel (PRAPS) allows to define and quickly allocate budgets in time of crises.

Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 6).
To the RPCA: Develop specific strategies and innovative instruments adapted to conflict zones

According to several projections, 80% of vulnerable and poor populations will live in conflict-affected areas in 2030. In order to deal with an increasing number of the most vulnerable people living in these areas of aggravated civil insecurity, the RPCA should:

- Develop and permanently innovate the tools of the PREGEC system to integrate conflict-sensitive approaches;

- Invest in the definition of guidelines allowing the States to implement NRPs in hostile environments, with maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Specific Objective 2 (So2).
→ Evaluate the effectiveness of the governance structures of responses to food and nutrition crises

Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 7).
To the States: Strengthen the capacity of States to lead the response process from planning to implementation

The leadership capacity of States is essential to ensure the effectiveness of the NRP. As the PREGEC Charter recommends, the States should:

- Invest in the establishment of appropriate and functional dialogue/concertation and intersectoral co-ordination mechanisms of food and nutrition security (FNS), with high political leadership, in order to respond to the following key expectations:

  → Break with parallel response planning and ensure a co-ordinated implementation of a single, coherent NRP;

  → Reinforce co-operation and intersectional co-ordination between different government technical entities with a view towards improving the definition of roles and responsibilities and identifying the contributions of all stakeholders involved in the emergency-humanitarian/resilience-development continuum;
→ Break with the fragmented institutional environment which is unfavourable to the setting up of effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, results accountability, and the co-ordination of interventions.

- Assume sovereign financing of the NRP by breaking with the dominant culture of capturing external financing; this would further empower States and give them more flexibility for the co-ordination of the NRP implementation.

**Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 8).**
**To the States:** Implement transparent oversight mechanisms (M&E, results accountability, documentation of lessons learned and best practices) of the NRP implementation

As the PREGEC Charter recommends, the States should institute results-based culture of the NRP implementation. To this end, the States should:

- Invest in the establishment of a unified monitoring and evaluation system with substantial operating resources;
- Systematically integrate a livelihood approach to measure the impact of NRP’s implementation on living conditions of assisted populations. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should, therefore, go beyond a narrow consideration of output indicators (such as the number of interventions and costs) and integrate a robust framework for performance and impact analysis, including the following indicators:
  - Learn from the trajectories of vulnerable populations and analyse household graduation and resilience dynamics in order to improve future plans;
  - Benchmark response processes based on quality norm indicators, including the partnership framework, processes and implementation mechanisms;
  - Implement learning and capitalisation strategies and favour evidence-informed decision-making.

**Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 9).**
**To the States and to the RPCA:** Intensify the appropriation of the PREGEC Charter

Most of the shortcomings that negatively impact the effectiveness of the response to food and nutrition crises stem from gaps in the application of the PREGEC Charter. States, with the support of the RPCA, should intensify the domestication and popularisation of the Charter. States should:

- Accelerate the setting-up of operational in situ monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as recommended by the Charter;
- Support the establishment of civil society and parliamentary oversight committees, essential lever for improved FNS governance and resilience in general.
Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 10).
To the CILSS: Provide technical support to States in order to reinforce the effectiveness of NRPs

In addition to its current engagement in the regional oversight and M&E mechanism, CILSS as co-ordinator of the RPCA's PREGEC system, should provide consistent support to the States in the areas of formulation, implementation and monitoring of the NRPs. To ensure this technical leadership, CILSS should acquire and pool the expertise in order to adequately support the States to:

- Put in place a standardised process, methodology as well as a set of instruments for the formulation of the NRPs;
- Produce norms/standards of quality control for the processes of elaborating, implementing, and evaluating the NRPs;
- Strengthen the M&E mechanisms, including the integration of impact indicators related to the transformation of living conditions of the affected populations and the capitalisation/sharing of lessons learned.

Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 11).
To the RPCA and its political and technical leaders (ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS): Update the Set of instruments for the management of food and nutrition crises, disseminate and promote its adoption

As the PREGEC Charter recommends, it is time for the RPCA, with the support of its technical and policy leaders to:

- Review the content of the “Set of instruments” elaborated in 2015, in order to integrate new issues, including the possible links with other sectors such as social protection, access to basic social services and development interventions (nexus of emergency/resilience-development). Several innovative approaches that have demonstrated a significant impact can be valued in the revised version: for example, FAO’s Caisses de resilience programme, the World Food Programme’s Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) initiative, the approach developed by the KEY consortium in Mali, integrated social protection packages, the emergency/resilience-development nexus, etc.;
- Support countries in the development of technical norms of intervention for the implementation of the Set of instruments;
- Promote knowledge of the Set of instruments and its adoption by all stakeholders.

Policy Message/Recommendation (MR 12).
To the technical and financial partners: Align and better co-ordinate interventions and provide country-level support which reinforces the States’ ownership and leadership

The alignment, co-ordination and harmonisation of interventions are essential to the effectiveness of the NRPs. To support the States’ leadership in facilitating and establishing dialogue and co-ordination frameworks, the partners should commit to:

- Better align their interventions with the priorities defined by the States and their intergovernmental organisations;
- Make sure that partners’ support, notably financial support, contributes to reinforcing the leadership and governance capacities of the States to ensure ownership of the NRP in all stages (formulation, implementation and evaluation).