The 2018-19 agro-pastoral campaign was good overall but the fall armyworm remains a threat for crops across the region. Cereal production reached 73.2 million tonnes in the CILSS, ECOWAS and UEMOA space, up from 17.7% compared to the five-year average and up by 6.6% compared to the previous campaign. However, some countries recorded significant decreases compared to the previous campaign, in particular, Gambia (-24.3%) and Sierra Leone (-15.7%).

Leguminous crops and oilseed production, estimated at 26.4 million tonnes, increased by 30% compared to the five-year average. Root and tuber production, estimated at 185 million tonnes, increased by 19.9% compared to the five-year average. Fodder supplies are relatively good; however, some pastures remain difficult to access in insecure areas of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, north-eastern Nigeria and Senegal. In the rare pastoral zones that are easily accessible, there is a risk of infectious animal diseases due to a high concentration of livestock. Food markets remain well supplied and the price of local cereals is decreasing overall, except in certain countries where inflation is high (Ghana, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria and Sierra Leone).

Food and nutrition insecurity persists in insecure zones (northern and western Chad, eastern and western Niger, north-eastern Nigeria, eastern and northern Burkina Faso, and central and northern Mali) as well as in south-eastern Mauritania. Throughout the region, 4.8 million people are in need of food and nutrition assistance, of which 2 million are in Nigeria. If appropriate measures are not taken, nearly 9.7 million people will be affected during the lean season from June to August 2019, of which 450 000 people will be in an emergency situation (308 000 in Nigeria; 41 000 in Mauritania; 30 000 in Niger; 26 000 in Burkina Faso; 24 000 in Mali and 22 000 in Chad).

The prevalence of global acute malnutrition exceeds the emergency threshold of 15% in several zones in Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, north-eastern Nigeria and Senegal. Every year, almost 20 million children under 5 years of age (one in three children in this age group) suffer from chronic malnutrition and one in two women suffer from anaemia. The social and economic costs are enormous and represent more than 10% of GDP in some countries. In light of this situation, the RPCA adopted a Joint Declaration in Banjul i) recalling that nutritional vulnerability combined with economic and job insecurity among the youth and women exacerbate instability and insecurity and ii) urging stakeholders to act with a long-term vision in order to reverse the negative trends in nutrition.

The Liptako-Gourma analysis shows that the persistent security crisis exacerbates food and nutrition insecurity as well as underlying structural factors (poverty, population growth, youth unemployment and insufficient basic social services). In addition to refugees and internally displaced persons, the security crisis led to the closure of 2 000 schools, raising the risk of generations of uneducated people.

The CILSS Executive Secretariat and the Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD) produced this policy brief. It draws on the conclusions of the annual and restricted Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) meetings, held respectively on 3-5 December 2018 in Banjul and on 4-5 April in Brussels. The Brussels meeting was held back-to-back with the Global Network against Food Crises’ high-level conference on “Food and Agriculture in Times of Crisis”. 

About Club Sahel and West Africa

Created in 1984 and placed under the political leadership of ECOWAS and UEMOA, the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) analyses the food and nutrition situation and promotes dialogue and co-ordination in order to build a coherent shared understanding for decisionmaking and more effective actions.
RECOMMENDATIONS

ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS and States:

- **Recommendation 1**: Quickly find sustainable solutions (political, economic and social) to address the root causes and put an end to the spiral of transnational and intercommunal conflict that undermines the region’s stability.

ECOWAS:

- **Recommendation 2**: Immediately organise a high-level meeting on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in cross-border crisis-affected areas.

Key stakeholders (humanitarian, development and security actors):

- **Recommendation 3**: Further consolidate efforts to implement better co-ordinated, planned interventions focusing on strengthening the resilience of populations.

States:

- **Recommendation 4**: Conduct evaluations on the effectiveness of food and nutrition assistance in conflict-affected areas.

ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS and States with support from partners:

- **Recommendation 5**: Implement preventative, local and community approaches that address all forms of malnutrition, including emerging issues such as overweight and obesity.

- **Recommendation 6**: Mobilise the necessary resources to accelerate the scaling-up of multisectoral approaches to nutrition combining treatment, prevention and social protection measures.

- **Recommendation 7**: Implement a co-ordinated and coherent regional response to the fall armyworm by:
  - Stepping-up efforts to find pesticides and new ways of fighting against the pest;
  - Accelerating the implementation of monitoring mechanisms at local, national and regional levels.

KEY IMPLICATIONS FOR ECOWAS, UEMOA AND CILSS

In order to address the food and nutrition vulnerabilities exacerbated by the persistent security crisis:

- Immediately organise a high-level meeting on cross-border conflict-affected areas around the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

- Organise a restricted consultation with the countries (including central and local governments, civil society, customary and religious authorities) affected by the transnational spiral of intercommunal conflict in order to find inclusive and sustainable solutions that address the root causes.

Regarding the food and nutrition situation in general:

- Take the necessary measures, in collaboration with the States, in order to implement the Banjul Declaration and reverse the negative and destructive trends in nutrition across the region.

- Organise a technical consultation with the three IGOs (ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS) in order to produce a joint roadmap for a co-ordinated regional response regarding the fall armyworm.

FOOD AND NUTRITION SITUATION IN THE SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA

- **March-May 2019**: current situation
- **June-August 2019**: projected situation

Source: Cadre harmonisé analyse, regional validation workshop, Cotonou, March 2019

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