Some 4.8 million people currently require urgent food and nutrition assistance in the Sahel and West Africa 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.

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.

Food and nutrition insecurity in the Liptako-Gourma area is exacerbated by the security crisis as well as underlying factors such as poverty, demographic growth, youth unemployment and insufficient basic social services.

RPCA members emphasised the need to strengthen gender and pastoral dimensions into the Cadre harmonisé analysis for more efficient and equitable crisis prevention and response.

Approaches to strengthening resilience should be more participative and inclusive, with a stronger role played by communities, local authorities and civil society organisations.

Local food stocks contribute significantly to ensuring food and nutrition security but face many challenges related to post-harvest losses, the quality of food products and sustainable financing.

The conference on “Food and Agriculture in Times of Crisis” highlighted the enormous challenge for all stakeholders to work together in an intersectoral manner around the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to address the root causes of food and nutrition crises.

The 35th RPCA annual meeting will be held on 2-4 December 2019 in Conakry, Guinea. It will focus on the theme: “Addressing food and nutrition challenges in the face of insecurity”.

Members of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) called for co-ordinated multi-sectoral responses and long-term investments to more effectively address the root causes of food crises. This involves empowering women, educating children, improving infrastructure, reinforcing social safety nets, and better co-ordinating stakeholders’ interventions at all levels. By working together, stakeholders can build a more resilient, stable and food secure region.
ABOVE:
RPCA Participants,
Brussels, 4 April 2019.

AT THE RIGHT:
1. Sékou SANGARÉ, ECOWAS Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources;
5. Nèmè BALI, Secretary-General, AGIR Focal Point, Togo; 6. Djimé ADOUM, CILSS Executive Secretary;
7. Thomas YANGA, Special Advisor to the Director General, African Risk Capacity
8. Coumba SOW, Head, Subregional Team for Resilience in West Africa/Sahel, Senegal, FAO.
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.
The 2018-19 agro-pastoral campaign was good overall, however food and nutrition insecurity persists. 4.8 million people are in urgent need of food and nutrition assistance (phase 3-5), 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 nutrition situation remains serious, with global acute malnutrition exceeding the emergency threshold of 15% in several zones in Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, north-eastern Nigeria and Senegal.

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). The increase in food prices is set to stay in the normal range, but will nevertheless be higher until the end of the lean season in insecure areas. The preparation of response plans is underway.

During the previous agricultural campaign, seven countries (Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal) designed and implemented response plans to help the most vulnerable populations cope with shocks, however, a large number of interventions continue to rely heavily on external funding.

Drawing on the key findings of the implementation of response plans, participants emphasised the need to harmonise targeting methods and strengthen monitoring and evaluation. They recommended that States conduct an assessment of the effectiveness of food and nutrition assistance in conflict-affected areas.

Beyond the need to improve the overall co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of national response plans, participants highlighted the following specific areas for improvement:

- integration of pastoral dimensions;
- specific consideration of displaced persons;
- better management of food stocks;
- better targeting; and
- more sustainable financing.

Addressing food insecurity in crisis situations

Against the backdrop of the recent inter-communal conflict in Burkina Faso and Mali and pervasive insecurity more broadly, the panelists identified some concrete examples of the ways in which stakeholders can join efforts and improve working relationships. These included:

- Respecting the mandates of different actors and focusing on a multisectoral approach;
- Focusing efforts in areas where recurring food security persists;
- Mutualising funding arrangements for better cohesion, collaboration and efficiency;
- Better understanding of the root causes of the different types of food crises;
- Improving targeting mechanisms;
- Better integrating gender dimensions in analyses and consulting with local populations, particularly women, who are predominantly affected by food and nutrition insecurity;
- Focusing on relevant legislation and improving its application;
- Analysing cross-border issues with the participation of local actors.

Country representatives also identified ways of tackling the current challenges facing stakeholders. These included:

- Systematically taking into account the security dimension in programme design.
- Respecting the Geneva Conventions whereby civilians not taking part in combat must be protected by governments;
- Improving our understanding of the links between conflict, food insecurity and resilience;
- Strengthening the role of local communities through decentralisation;
- Developing expertise in conflict resolution;
- Recognising the strengths and weaknesses of different actors and working together to optimise effectiveness.

PREGEC Charter: RPCA members recommended that the third evaluation of the PREGEC Charter be postponed to 2021 in order to allow more time to implement the recommendations of the second evaluation.
The Liptako-Gourma area is one of the Sahel’s insecurity hotspots where weak governance, local conflicts and violent extremism are closely intertwined, and cross-border co-operation is essential to making food and nutrition security interventions more effective. A preliminary analysis was conducted by the Regional Task Force on Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR), the UN Working Group on Resilience in West and Central Africa and the OECD Conflict, Fragility and Resilience Team to analyse the area’s multiple risks and vulnerabilities. It highlights how the security crisis compounds the serious food and nutrition situation.

The study underscored strong gender inequalities in three specific areas:

- Gender-based violence (genital mutilation, early and forced marriage, domestic and sexual violence);
- Reproductive health (contraception, abortion, maternal death);
- Weak participation of women in economic and political spheres.

Panellists highlighted the:

- Function of the RPCA is limited to promoting dialogue and informing decision-making and therefore its capacity to concretely tackle security issues may be restricted;
- Responsibility of ECOWAS to promote cohesive action and dialogue on security matters in the region through its Department for Political Affairs, Peace and Security;
- Need to improve dialogue with local populations through social agreements and frameworks for dialogue;
- Risks around decentralising responsibilities but not the necessary financial, human and technical capacity required so that local governance can be effective, thereby exacerbating the situation for civil society organisations and NGOs.

The outcomes of the analysis should help encourage more targeted, better co-ordinated and timely humanitarian, development and security responses. Participants acknowledged the usefulness of this type of analysis and expressed interest in learning more about the next steps in the process and participating in discussions to encourage greater alignment of interventions.
A new report by the Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD) was presented to participants demonstrating the important role of women in the food economy and the ways in which their social capital and resilience may be strengthened. The most significant obstacles limiting the professional activity of women entrepreneurs in West Africa are related to education, financial services, cultural norms, real estate and the judicial system. A key difficulty for women is transcending certain social and geographical limitations in order to establish a client base that is not just linked to kinship or community. The study indicates that policies should encourage the development of this type of social capital.

A review of the rice network in the Dendi region demonstrates that women occupy peripheral positions in the value chain, which limit their ability to grow their profits or influence prices. Consequently, they have less social capital than men, who occupy more central and more remunerative positions in the value chain. This marginalisation of women requires public policies that consider not only the attributes of women but their social relations.

The maps illustrate how gender affects the social links within a supplier chain network; the women’s network is spread out and fragmented while the men’s network is dense with a central component. Men trade with men and women; however, when women trade, they do so mostly with men because they hold more strategic positions within a network (intermediaries and retailers).

High-level event: The RPCA restricted meeting was held back-to-back with the high-level event on “Food and Agriculture in Times of Crisis” within the framework of the Global Network against Food Crises. The RPCA’s consensual approach to improving food and nutrition security inspired the creation of a Global Network. Members of the RPCA and the Global Network reaffirmed the need to work together in a holistic and intersectoral manner around the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to effectively address the multifactorial challenges of food and nutrition crises.

Above
Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD Agency and SWAC Honorary President

The restricted group of RPCA members called for strengthening the gender dimensions of early warning systems (EWS) feeding into the Cadre harmonisé (CH) analysis. They recognised the limitations of the existing CH with regard to gender analysis and agreed that future updates to the CH should include a gender analytical framework as well as comprehensive guidance on conducting gender analysis and collecting sex-disaggregated-data.

STRENGTHENING THE GENDER DIMENSIONS OF THE PREGEC TOOLS

The study on “Integrating gender analysis into food and nutrition security early warning systems in West Africa” identified four ways in which stakeholders can move forward in addressing some of the challenges around gender-mainstreaming:

- **Strengthening capacity building on gender analysis** in order to ensure that both technical staff and those in leadership positions have a thorough and practical understanding of the ways in which gender impacts the food and nutrition security of an individual.

- **Pooling resources and mainstreaming gender analysis through the PREGEC and the Cadre harmonisé** thereby ensuring a widespread and standardised approach to more gender-responsive EWS.

- **Ensuring policy accountability and cohesion** with food and nutrition monitoring frameworks is key to continually improving the gender-responsiveness of EWS.

- **Promoting gender-balanced community engagement** in the design and implementation of EWS is critical for inclusive and adapted emergency prevention and response systems.
2. SENIOR EXPERTS GROUP: GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR RESILIENCE (SEG-AGIR)

Integrated approaches to resilience-building

- Members of the Global Alliance for Resilience (AGIR) discussed the Gambian government’s commitments to strengthening resilience. They also emphasised the need to strengthen the humanitarian-development-peace nexus by implementing multisectoral, participatory and inclusive approaches, with a stronger role played by communities, local authorities and civil society organisations. They also underscored the need to work collectively to scale up best practices on the use of integrated approaches to build resilience in conflict-affected areas;

- Stakeholders examined integrated approaches to strengthening resilience in insecure zones in Burkina Faso and recognised some of the key advantages and challenges to working as part of a consortium to support resilience building.

Key advantages:

- Peer-learning;
- Greater alignment of activities with national priorities;
- A more inclusive approach including state, non-state and private sector actors;
- Better monitoring and evaluation through common indicators.

Key challenges:

- Duration of implementation: five years should be the minimum implementation period in order to ensure ownership and continuity of activities at the local level;
- High cost of implementing a multi-sectoral approach to building resilience;
- Lack of support for the decentralisation process results in relatively weak empowerment of local populations;
- Need for stronger government leadership and greater overall coherence of activities with national priorities;
- Effective integration of security concerns at the local level;
- Risk of substituting actors on the ground;
- Greater investment in monitoring and evaluation that can be institutionalised over the long-term.

Local food stocks: a tool for strengthening resilience

AGIR stakeholders highlighted the key role of local food stocks in strengthening the resilience of the most vulnerable populations, and urged States, regional organisations and partners to seek long-term solutions to challenges around sustainable financing and better quality of food stocks.

ECOWAS and partners shared their experience in operationalising the Regional Food Security Reserve and panellists highlighted some key challenges around the management of local food stocks, notably the:

- Fragile economic model leading to reduced and variable margins due to price variations;
- Inexistence of formal response mechanisms to food and nutrition crises in certain countries;
- Lack of technical and administrative capacity of local producers to respond to calls for tender;
- Establishment of many producer organisations under community laws means they may require restructuring;
- Lack of confidence of banking institutions in local producer organisations;
- Weak supply chain and the need to engage small companies in rural areas, particularly women;
- Lack of storage space and its high cost and the need to engage with the private sector (retail shops and outlets) to increase storage;
- Lack of standardised management methods due to varying national strategies and governance and financing tools;
- Lack of clear definitions and objectives of food stocks.
ANNEX 1: AGENDA

MONDAY 1 APRIL 2019

08:00 – 08:30 Welcome and registration of participants

08:30 – 09:45 Sequence 1: STRENGTHENING GENDER DIMENSIONS OF THE PREGEC TOOLS

Chair: MS MATY BA DIAO, PRAPS Co-ordinator

Presentation: Strengthening gender dimensions of the PREGEC tools
→ MS ANALEE PEPPER, Bettine Pepper Advising

Discussion

09:45 – 10:00 Coffee break

10:00 – 12:00 Sequence 2: AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF INFORMATION ON FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

→ Cadre harmonisé challenges

→ Key findings of the study on the availability and reliability of information
→ Taking into account pastoral vulnerability in PREGEC analyses

12:00 – 13:00 Sequence 3: OTHER BUSINESS

→ 2nd evaluation of PREGEC Charter: follow-up of implementation of recommendations
→ 3rd evaluation of PREGEC Charter: selection of theme
→ 35th RPCA annual meeting: consensus on central theme

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 16:00 RPCA STEERING COMMITTEE (COR/RPCA)

TUESDAY 2 APRIL-WEDNESDAY 3 APRIL 2019

HIGH-LEVEL EVENT:
FOOD AND AGRICULTURE IN TIMES OF CRISIS
08:00 – 09:00  Welcome and registration of participants

**OPENING CEREMONY**

- **DR IBRAHIM ASSANE MAYAKI**, SWAC Honorary President *(video message)*
- **MR MAMADOU CISSOKHO**, Spokesperson for Civil Society and the Private Sector
- **MR PHILIPPE THOMAS**, TFP-AGIR Platform Representative, EU
- **H.E.MR SALIFOU OUEDRAOGO**, Minister of Agriculture and Hydro-agricultural Infrastructure, Burkina Faso and CILSS Co-ordinating Minister
- **MR JONAS GBIAN**, Commissioner of the Department for Agriculture, Water Resources and the Environment (DAREN), UEMOA
- **MR SÉKOU SANGARÉ**, Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources (AERE), ECOWAS

10:00 – 10:30  Group photo

10:30 - 18:00

**Session 1: AGRICULTURAL, FOOD AND NUTRITION SITUATION**

Chair: **DR DJIMÉ ADOUM**, CILSS Executive Secretary

10:30 – 11:10  **Sequence 1: ANALYSIS OF THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SITUATION 2018-19**

Results of the 2018-19 agro-sylvo-pastoral campaign and regional markets
- **MR SY MARTIAL TRAORÉ**, CILSS
- Supplementary information on international markets → **FAO**
- Cadre harmonisé analysis of the food and nutrition situation → **MR ISSOUFOU BAOUA**, CILSS

11:10 – 11:30  **Sequence 2: STRENGTHENING THE EFFICIENCY OF RESPONSE PLANS**

Overview and lessons learned from implementing the 2017-18 response plans
- State of play of the 2018-19 response plans → **MR ECTOR HOUSSOU**, CILSS

11:30 – 12:30  Discussion

12:30 – 14:00  Lunch break

14:00 – 15:15  Discussion (continued) and main recommendations

15h15 - 16h15  **Sequence 3: FEEDBACK FROM THE HIGH-LEVEL EVENT « FOOD AND AGRICULTURE IN TIMES OF CRISIS » : LESSONS LEARNED FOR THE REGION**

Moderator: **MR LAURENT BOSSARD**, Director, SWAC/OECD Secretariat

Panellists:
- **H.E.MR ALBADÉ ABOUBA**, Minister of State, Minister for Agriculture, Niger
- **H.E.MR GILBERTO CORREIA CARVALHO SILVA**, Minister for Agriculture & Environment, Cabo Verde
- **MR SÉKOU SANGARÉ**, Commissioner, AERE, ECOWAS
- **MR MAMADOU CISSOKHO**, Honorary President, ROPPA
- **MS KHADY FALL TALL**, President AFAO/WAWA

16h15-16h30  Coffee break

16h30 – 17h30  **Sequence 4: LIPTAKO-GOURMA: RISKS, VULNERABILITIES AND CAPACITY FOR RESILIENCE**

Introductory remarks
- **MR SAIDOU OUA**, Director-General, ALG

Results from a study led by the working group on resilience (FAO, OCHA, WFP, UNICEF) in partnership with ALG
- **MR GILLES CHEVALIER**, UNICEF
- **MR ERIC BRANCKAERT**, WFP

Discussion and wrap up by the moderator

17:30-18:00  **Women and trade networks in West Africa**

- **MR LAWALI DAMBO**, University of Niamey
- **MS MARIE TRÉMOLIÈRES**, SWAC/OECD Secretariat
- **MR LAURENT BOSSARD**, Director, SWAC/OECD Secretariat

Using social network analysis, this report demonstrates the role of women in the food economy and proposes policy options to reinforce the social capital of women and better coordinate initiatives to empower them and strengthen their resilience.
FRIDAY 5 APRIL 2019

08:30 – 13:15 Session 2: SENIOR GROUP OF EXPERTS OF THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR RESILIENCE (SEG-AGIR)
Chair: MR JONAS GBIAN, Commissioner of the Department for Agriculture, Water Resources and the Environment (DAREN), UEMOA

08:30 – 09:15 Sequence 1: FOCUS ON GAMBIA: EXPERIENCES IN IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL RESILIENCE PRIORITIES (NRP-AGIR)
Introduction
Video projection: Four examples of Gambia’s investment in resilience-building, WARI programme
Discussion

09:15 – 10:45 Sequence 2: INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO RESILIENCE-BUILDING: FOCUS ON BURKINA FASO
Moderator: MS MATY BA DIAO, PRAPS Co-ordinator
Panellists:
→ MR MICHEL SAVEL, Co-ordinator, Inter-Consortia, Burkina Faso
→ MS MAR POZUELO CASTILLO, Humanity & Inclusion, Co-ordinator, RESA project
→ DR LAMOURDIA THIOMBIANO, Executive Secretary, CNSA, Burkina Faso
Introductory presentation
→ MS HELENE BERTON, Food security and nutrition advisory services, European Commission
Discussion and wrap-up by the moderator

10:45 – 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 – 12:45 Sequence 3: LOCAL FOOD STOCKS: A TOOL FOR STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE
Moderator: MR SY ALAIN TRAORÉ, Director, Agriculture & Rural Development, ECOWAS
Panellists:
→ MR NADJIROU SALL, ROPPA Vice-President
→ MR SOUMABERE DIOMA, UGCPA, Burkina Faso
→ MR SOUMANA LADAN, Mooriben, Niger
→ MR YOUSSOUF MAIGA, OPAM CEO & RESOGEST President
→ MS BÉNÉDICTE PEMOU, SONAGESS
Introductory presentation
Food stocks: how synergies between local and regional levels contribute to food security in West Africa
→ MR MALICK LOMPO, ARAA/ECOWAS
Discussion

12:45 – 13:15 CLOSING CEREMONY
Chair: MR LAURENT BOSSARD, Director, SWAC/OECD Secretariat
Summary of conclusions → MR SEYNI HAMADOS, Director of Agriculture, UEMOA
Closing remarks
→ MS SIMONE ZOUNDI KAFANDO, Spokesperson for Civil Society and the Private Sector
→ MR DIDIER VERSÉ, TFP-AGIR Platform Representative, EU
→ MR FRANÇOIS-XAVIER DE DONNÉ, Former SWAC President
→ MS. ELVIRA PRUSCINI, United Nations Representative
→ H.E. MR SALIFOU OUÉDRAOGO, Minister of Agriculture and Hydro-agricultural Infrastructure, Burkina Faso and CILSS Co-ordinating Minister

13:15 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 16:00 ECOWAP partners meeting (only for concerned participants)
## ANNEX 2

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRIES</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AUSTRIA</strong></td>
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<td>CEDRIC BERNARD</td>
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