

Programme of Work 2013-2014
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INTRODUCTION

1. The Programme of Work is largely built on 2011-2012 activities and seeks, as much as possible, to translate the results of the Secretariat's work into tools that will help improve the implementation of regional policies. It also opens a new space for reflection of major concern for West Africa and the rest of the world: the Saharo-Sahelian areas. The Programme of Work is organised into two dossiers:
 - A “food and nutritional security” dossier with the double objective of 1) continuing to support the strengthening of regional governance of food and nutritional security, and 2) improving regional tools for policy management in this area. This dossier will capitalise on the work conducted in 2011-2012. It will focus on:
 - i. Support for regional governance, through the strengthening of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) under the political auspices of the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions; the application of the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management; support for the establishment of the Regional Food Reserve; and support for the regional organisations in international initiatives and debates.
 - ii. The improvement of management tools for regional policies. Drawing on the work of the “West African Futures programme: Settlement, Market and Food Security” (WAF 2011-2012), more information will be added to the statistical and spatial database in order to provide an overview of the region's needs which will facilitate the implementation of food and nutritional security strategies. In particular, a protocol will be developed allowing for the collection of harmonised statistics on household food consumption.
 - A dossier focusing on “Medium- and long-term prospects for the Saharo-Sahelian areas of West Africa”: Beyond “immediate” crises, what potential do these areas have to develop themselves and how can they contribute to the development of the region as a whole? A retrospective Atlas which outlines future prospects will inform this debate. A deeper reflection will be led on the prospects for transhumant pastoralism, in particular in relation to development, food and nutritional security, and security issues.
2. These two areas of work will be supported and complemented by cross-cutting activities which are focused on fostering the impact of SWAC work on policy-making and on providing services to Members. These activities include the promotion of achievements, advocacy, information and communication and the continued development of the West Africa Gateway.
3. Focused on supporting West African regional policies, in accordance with the Club's mandate, the 2013-2014 Programme of Work also aims to ensure that West African concerns and initiatives are more visible and better taken into account in discussions on major contemporary global challenges. Taking advantage of its position within the OECD, the Secretariat will continue to ensure that the relevant structures of the Organisation are involved in the work of the Club and that the Club is effectively contributing to the implementation of the OECD Strategy on Development. The strategy includes a focus on food security, and emphasises the importance of regional approaches and/or actions taken by groups of countries facing the same challenges (clustering approach). The OECD will be associated as an observer in the preparation of the AGIR-Sahel Resilience Initiative. The Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management will be presented to the members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as a concrete example for the application of the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The Secretariat will also facilitate the participation of West Africans in the OECD Global Forums. Finally, the Secretariat will continue making regular contributions and facilitate the co-ordination of the [OECD and Africa](#) website.

I. REGIONAL GOVERNANCE OF FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY

1.1. Strengthening the RPCA and applying the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management

4. The ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions have clearly expressed their desire to position the RPCA as a major body in international policy dialogue and co-ordination in the area of food and nutritional security in West Africa. To support the implementation of this ambitious agenda, the process initiated during the 2011-2012 biennium will be continued and expanded. Work will be based on a permanent collaboration between the Secretariat, the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions, and CILSS. It will inform regional decision-making bodies, notably the ECOWAS Technical Ministerial Committee specialised in Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources (CTS-AERE) and the UEMOA High-Level Committee on Food Security (CHN-SA).

5. *The application of the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management* will be a key element of the Programme of Work. Formulated within the framework of the RPCA, and submitted to consultation meetings in the 17 member states of ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS, the Charter was adopted on 17 November 2011 at a ministerial meeting in Conakry, and on 17 February 2012 at the 40th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government.; The key challenge will now be to apply the Charter principles. To this end, the following activities will be conducted:

- *Adopting a “Set of Instruments for Food and Nutritional Crisis Management”.* Created in 2012, this tool is essential for building the necessary consensus on the appropriate response tools depending on the nature of each crisis and on the local context. It defines the tools needed to respond to different types of food and nutritional crises. It was on this point, among others, that major discrepancies were seen in 2011-2012. The final text of the set of instruments will be subject to broad consultation and debate within the RPCA. As the key tool of the Charter, the regional organisations (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS) will promote its application in each member country.
- *Establishing an evaluation mechanism.* A matrix of indicators will be proposed, debated and validated by all stakeholders, including by national food security authorities, as well as technical and financial partners. These indicators will be used for field-based evaluations and for external review (annual evaluation of the application of the Charter).
- *Assessing the application of the Charter.* In 2013, the first external evaluation will focus on the consensus building mechanisms that were not effective in 2012. The results of this evaluation will be debated by the RPCA in December 2013. The Members of the Network will determine the theme of the 2014 evaluation. The “in situ” evaluations will be put in place gradually by national food security authorities, civil society organisations, as well as technical and financial partners.

6. *Support for streamlining mechanisms for consultation and dialogue on food security.* At the request of the regional organisations and in line with the strengthening of the RPCA, the Secretariat will co-ordinate a study which will take stock of the actions of all involved structures and propose options for harmonisation, synergy and streamlining. The conclusions of the study will be submitted to Network members, then to the decision-making bodies of ECOWAS and UEMOA.

7. Strengthening the role of West African agricultural producers' organisations in the Network, in particular ROPPA, APSS, RBM, the Grain Farmers Network, the RECAO, etc.¹ The Network must respond to the *ad hoc* needs and requests of these organisations to inform and facilitate the development of their positions on topics addressed by the Network: punctual support through external expertise, support for dialogue meetings, etc.
8. In addition to supporting the RPCA, the Secretariat will continue to participate in the taskforce charged with the implementation of the regional strategy of food security stocks². It will seek convergence and synergy as well as the involvement of Chad and Mauritania in the implementation of the regional food reserve. It will complement the spatial database of storage capacity³ (60 000 storage locations geographically referenced) by cross-referencing this database with other spatial data from the WAF programme (urban and rural population, agricultural and non-agricultural population, and distance to markets) and other sources (production systems, agro-ecological zones, communications infrastructure). The objective is to assist the region in developing a regional tool for monitoring and analysing food stocks (see also section 1.3).

1.2. Supporting regional organisations in global initiatives and debates

9. During the 2011-2012 biennium, the Secretariat actively promoted the voice of West Africans in global debates: the Conference on Food Price Volatility, held in June 2011 with the support of the French presidency of the G20; West African participation in the Development Working Group in 2012, with the support of the Mexican presidency of the G20. The Secretariat also plays a key role in the policy dialogue on the roadmap of the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) – Sahel, initiated by the European Union: facilitating the West African position; gathering viewpoints from civil society, agricultural producers and the private sector; facilitating dialogue among all stakeholders; organising a high-level meeting and the official launch of the Initiative within the RPCA on 6 December 2012 in Ouagadougou.
10. The Secretariat will continue to facilitate the AGIR initiative basing its actions on the promotion of West African leadership and priorities of the West African food security agenda. The precise modalities of its action remain to be determined based on the proposals of the stakeholders in the Initiative, the roadmap and the position of Club Members. At this stage the Secretariat intends to:
 - Fine-tune the draft roadmap. This will involve, for example, developing the indicators for evaluation of the implementation of the initiative, defining in more depth the modalities for governance and/or supporting the participation of West African professional organisations, the private sector and civil society.

¹ Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organisations of West Africa (ROPPA); Association for the Promotion of Livestock in the Sahel and the Savannah (APSS); Billital Maroobé Network (RBM); Network of West African Chambers of Agriculture (RECAO).

² An integral part of the ECOWAS Regional Agricultural Investment Programme (RAIP) adopted in 2010. It includes a regional strategy of food security stocks. The Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS) is the regional framework for the convergence of all initiatives for regional solidarity in response to food crises: the network of national offices and bodies responsible for the management of food security stocks (RESOGEST), facilitated by CILSS with the co-operation framework signed on 2 March 2012; the initiative promoted by UEMOA in 2010 for the establishment of a regional plan for the strengthening and co-ordination of national food security stocks; the regional food security reserve, facilitated by ECOWAS with the feasibility report validated by ECOWAS Ministers of Agriculture and Food on 27 September 2012.

³ Key findings from a mapping study conducted by the Secretariat in 2012; the study complemented work already undertaken by the UEMOA Commission in its member countries.

- Continue to take stock of good practices in resilience and encourage their large application through the organisation of information-sharing and discussion forums, etc.
- Organise regular stakeholder meetings and produce an annual report.

1.3. Improving policy management tools

11. Drawing on its strategic discussions and studies, the Secretariat also has the role of formulating guidelines and policy tools. The 2011-2012 WAF programme revealed serious discrepancies between data available and needs. Policymakers have access to data on production, prices and imports in the global market. However, there is little information on household food consumption, with the exception of a few case studies. Consumption is thus “the missing link” in the policy dashboard. Understanding and monitoring its progress would allow for a much more precise assessment of the food and nutritional situation (energy intake, changing of consumption habits). It would also improve the measurement of surplus and deficit areas and trade flows, including the share of regional trade.
12. Survey methods on food consumption are well-known and mastered. However, the development of a regularly updated and exhaustive regional information system appears to be out of reach due to the large diversity in local conditions (the need for a very large number of surveys), disparities between national definitions (urban and rural population, agricultural and non-agricultural, formal and informal).
13. The data collected and developed within the WAF programme (spatialisation of different population groups on a regionally harmonised basis) have opened some new prospects. Combined with spatial information on production systems, agro-ecological zones and distances to markets, they could help generate a representative sample of households for the entire region. Based on this, simplified surveys conducted at regular intervals could be carried out. The selection of relevant information to be collected during these surveys, necessarily on a small scale and in a transferable format must be considered with respect to the information already available, especially in the area of prices in order to contribute to the establishment of a multidimensional information system on food security.
14. The Secretariat will co-ordinate the design of a regional protocol for the monitoring of food consumption. This work will be conducted under the auspices of the RPCA and led by a team of regional and international experts. The protocol will outline the elements necessary for its implementation (sampling, mapping survey and processing methods, budget). It will be examined and validated by the members of the RPCA. Its operational implementation will be handed over to a structure designated by the West African regional organisations.

II. WEST AFRICAN FUTURES: THE SAHARO-SAHELIAN AREAS

15. The anticipation of sources of risk and conflict associated with pastoralism has been proposed as a second priority in the 2013-2014 Programme of Work. This theme cannot be undertaken without a larger discussion of the general prospects for the development (and on the associated risks) of the pastoral zone, that is to say the Saharo-Sahelian areas. A specific focus will thus be placed on the pastoral livestock sector.

2.1. Informing the debate on overall prospects

16. The Saharo-Sahelian areas (dominated by subsistence pastoralism and agricultural production) represent respectively 40%, 50% and 70% of the areas of ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS, about 5% of the regional population (approximately 15 million people) and probably less than 3% of the regional GDP. However, these areas cannot be seen as a “vast wasteland” at risk of becoming a serious cause of long-term destabilisation for the entire region. Some countries (for example, Mauritania) are developing territorial integration policies for these areas, which are not universally in the process of depopulation and urbanisation. The Saharo-Sahelian areas hold a much greater potential for development than is often said. In all cases, this potential (pastoral livestock, irrigated agriculture, mines, tourism, energy, trade) cannot be exploited except through policies based on complementarity and solidarity between the North and South of the West African region. For this reason, the discussion must not focus on the future of the Saharo-Sahelian areas in isolation but rather on the prospects of these areas as an integral and integrated part of West Africa.
17. Beyond the current crises and fears, it is important to develop a detailed factual analysis of the geography, population, economy, development potential and possible sources of tension contained in these areas. This work will be conducted with the support of a group of geographers from the countries concerned and will lead to the production of an Atlas. The objective is to provide policymakers with a vision and strategic options for the medium- and long-term. Regional dimensions and cross-border co-operation will be at the heart of the discussion, both in terms of development potential and risks.

2.2. Offering strategic options on the role of pastoral livestock in the development and security of West Africa

18. Perceived by some as an economically viable and sustainable solution for the development of the Sahelian zone, pastoral livestock is described by others as a way of life that is bound to disappear. In reality, this economy is still not well understood (it is barely addressed by statistical systems), and its actors are rarely involved in the drafting of the policies that affect them. Moreover, the Saharo-Sahelian areas have been at the centre of a chronic food and security crisis for the past decade. Here more than anywhere else, the issues of development and stability are so tightly interwoven in cross-border areas that they can only be addressed through strengthened regional co-operation. A new impetus is needed in the policy dialogue on the pastoral economy, the development potential it holds for itself and for the rest of West Africa, its capacity to invigorate – and to a certain extent regulate – the vast northern territories of West Africa.
19. The Secretariat will lead a process of analysis and reflection to inform or complement national, regional and cross-border policies and encourage medium- and long-term strategies from international partners on the intersection of development and security issues. This two-year process will be based on:
- Preliminary historical summaries on the pastoral economy and depending livelihoods, its place in development policies and donor strategies.
 - A colloquium on the role of the pastoral livestock sector in the development and stability of the Saharo-Sahelian areas of West Africa will identify additional work areas which could feed into medium- and long-term strategies.
 - A dialogue about the future based on the conclusions of the colloquium. These discussions will focus on the capacity of pastoral livestock to better integrate into the regional market for meat, the identification of good practices in the diversification of the pastoral economy, cross-border co-operation, territorial management and the role of pastoral communities in local governance with respect to security concerns.

- The synthesis of these discussions, and the resulting proposals, will be the subject of the Club Forum in December 2014.

III. IMPACT ON POLICY-MAKING AND SERVICES TO MEMBERS

20. Dialogue, advocacy, information and communication will play an essential role in the 2013-2014 Programme of Work. These activities aim to share experiences, promote key outcomes, particularly among policymakers, thereby amplifying the impact of the Club's work on West African policies and partners' strategies. The Secretariat will also seek to increase the Club's visibility and West Africa's participation in the major global debates, while strengthening its services to Members in order to respond to specific needs. To this end, the Secretariat will implement the following activities:
21. Promote and debate the results of the WAF programme: Broad dissemination of thematic summaries, development of an interactive online mapping tool for settlement dynamics, promotion of statistical tools for the management of regional food and nutritional security policies (see section 1.3). These tools and approaches will facilitate a series of presentations to international and West African institutions and forums, as well as within the administrations of interested Club Members. The objective is to inform the debate, contribute to policy discussions and strategies, and identify and engage potential new partners in the leveraging of the achievements of the WAF programme and/or the deepening of these achievements by interested entities.
22. Support for the strengthening of the RPCA: A new communication strategy will aim to revamp the Network's operational functions in order to give the Network a permanent dynamic between its two annual meetings (April and December): monitoring service/regular information on current food security trends through the Club's NewsBrief, monthly information note, RPCA presentation flyer, promotion of the Network among policymakers, redesigned and simplified website available in English, French and Portuguese, inter-linked with the West African Gateway (see below). To increase its impact, the Network's contacts will also be updated and expanded, especially in Anglophone countries, in the private sector and other countries of the southern hemisphere like Brazil.
23. Promotion of the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management: The key objective is to raise awareness of this tool among concerned actors at all levels. Communication/promotion tools (brochure, video clip presentation, text of the Charter, set of instruments, etc.) will be developed to facilitate the presentation of the Charter in various forums⁴. The text of the Charter will also be widely promoted on the Web in order to increase access points to this reference document.
24. Monitoring current trends: Within the framework of the West Africa Gateway and with the support of West African journalists, the Secretariat will continue to produce *a weekly NewsBrief* in English and French. The NewsBrief devotes considerable space to the promotion of Members' activities, particularly those of ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS. A promotion campaign targeting all key actors involved in the development of the region will broaden the base of regular readers (currently 2 500 subscribers, 400 regular readers).

⁴ Consultative Committee for Agriculture and Food, Committee on Global Food Security, interested administrations in charge of food security in the Club's member countries and other bilateral and multilateral institutions, OECD Development Assistance Committee, etc.

25. The West Africa Gateway: More content will be added and updated: contact directory, map library, regional database, thematic dossiers, interviews with West African personalities, etc. More particularly, the document database will be further developed to facilitate access to all strategic documents, common policies and Member publications, especially in the area of food security. The promotion campaign, initiated in late 2012, will be continued throughout the 2013-2014 period in order to improve the Gateway's ranking on Google with the objective of becoming the benchmark resource centre for the region.
26. Regular services: The Secretariat will maintain its regular information services to Members through the newsletter, NewsAlerts, annual activity reports, the Club's website and social networks (YouTube, Flickr, etc.). Video and media coverage will continue to be provided for all major Club events.