

THE SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA CLUB SECRETARIAT'S NEWSLETTER



Regular information on SWAC
work, publications and events.

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DIRECTOR'S EDITORIAL

The Sahel, and West Africa more generally, has recently been at the focus of media coverage for rather worrisome reasons: the terrorist attack on the UN house in Abuja, the return of armed mercenaries from Libya, the traffic of heavy weapons released from Gaddafi's arms depots, and the attack on military barracks in Mauritania. Fueled for a long time by traffic in drugs, arms and diamonds smuggled from West Africa, the menacing storm of AQIM forces is now also capitalising on current turmoil in the Maghreb. And so, reporters and politicians watch as this tropical storm threatens to transform into a devastating hurricane. While AQMI's presence is currently centered in Mali and Algeria, this focus could now be moved and extended to other areas in the region. The time has clearly come for the two sides of the Sahara to join in a communal response to this growing threat.



And yet, despite this rather grim introduction, the region has recently seen many positive and encouraging developments in the field of peace and governance: In Cape Verde, the ruling “African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde” (PAIVC) peacefully transferred power to the newly elected opposition candidate, Jorge Carlos Fonseca, who won the presidential election with 55 percent of votes on 21 August. The government of Benin just approved a broad anti-corruption law. An ECOWAS summit in Abuja addressed regional security issues. West African leaders are currently proposing to create a joint UN-ECOWAS force in order to secure the porous border areas between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, particularly in light of upcoming elections in both countries.

While Côte d'Ivoire has finally begun to emerge from its post-electoral chaos, much still needs to be done to foster national reconciliation. The newly created “Commission for Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation” (CDVR) can only be seen as a first step. Also encouraging is that, despite all expectations, Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa crop might reach a new record high, which will, despite the falling price of cocoa, help further boost its economic recovery. →

Excessive agricultural and food price volatility remains, indeed, a key concern for West African countries. In the run-up to the G20 summit on agriculture that took place in June, the SWAC Secretariat invited African representatives and experts to present their viewpoints on the impact of price volatility on African economies. Some promising ideas from the Conference were taken up by the “G20 Action Plan on Food Price Volatility and Agriculture,” including, for example, a pilot initiative to set up a regional emergency food reserve in West Africa.

This issue was previously addressed by the Club during its 2010 Forum on “Regional solidarity to address food crises”, which outlined the next steps of the RESOGEST initiative (a network of national food security boards that could facilitate the establishment of a regional emergency food stock). It is now crucial to ensure that the G20 proposals respond to the expectations of West African partners (ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS) and build on already existing work and networks.

Last but not least, we would like to pay tribute to one of the new Club’s “founding fathers”, Mr. Soumaïla Cissé, who has led the UEMOA Commission as president for the past seven years and finished his mandate at the end of August. West Africa needs strong leaders like him with a clear, regional vision. We wish him all the best for the new challenges he has set for himself.

LAURENT BOSSARD
Director, SWAC Secretariat

INSECURITY IN THE SAHEL, THE ARAB SPRING AND TRANS-SAHARAN CO-OPERATION

By Laurent Bossard

While, within the context of chronic irredentism, the Sahel region is already weakened from instability that is fuelled by AQIM’s presence and by various illegal activities, North Africa is now also confronted with a wave of changes in the aftermath of the revolution in Tunisia. Its impact has swept across the Arab world, from the Maghreb (West) to the Machrek (East), and beyond.

These two phenomena are closely interlinked and can not be analysed separately. While currently based in the Northern Sahel, AQIM has its roots in North Africa, and it sees the Arab Spring as an opportunity to regain control over former territories. Since the early 1980s, Colonel Gaddafi has incorporated thousands of Sahelian fighters into his “Islamic legion”. The Sahara and the Sahel are now faced with huge inflows of arms and ex-combatants, but also of innocent migrants fleeing Libya. Although the media often focuses on heavy weapons coming from Libya, it is important not to forget the large stocks of weapons that entered into West Africa at the time of the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire; these arms are now free to circulate wherever there is a perceived demand. Similarly, much less attention is currently paid to drug trafficking from South America to Europe via West Africa.

However, this does not mean that it no longer exists. If fewer drugs have been intercepted, this is most probably a reflection of stronger and better-performing trafficking networks.

“The region has been turned into a powder keg” stated Mohamed Bazoum, the Nigerien Minister of Foreign Affairs. Few would contest his assessment, and while we can fear for the worst, no one can truly imagine what the worst case scenario would actually be. For those who do try to make some predictions, it is important to remember that those events that shaped the past decade were entirely improbable. The Arab Spring is the most recent example. As we cannot make any reliable predictions for the future, we thus should acknowledge the transregional nature of what is happening and reflect on how to revive trans-Saharan co-operation. Admittedly, the four Sahelian countries (Algeria, Mauritania, Mali and Niger) plan to reinforce their co-operation in fighting terrorism. However, much more must be done. What about Chad, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia? What about the even greater ambition of North Africa finally reconnecting with its African hinterland; of West Africa rediscovering its geographically natural partner in the North and of the Sahara and its Sahelian fringe becoming once again a space for economic co-operation?

Despite being often perceived as a threat, the Sahara is emerging as a strategic, resource-rich area (oil and minerals). Some are hoping to build a pipeline that would link Nigeria to the European market via Algeria, and others dream of constructing enormous solar energy parks. People living north of the Sahara are on average wealthier than those in Sub-Saharan Africa, but they have infinitely less water and less arable and pastoral land (Did not Gaddafi want to produce his rice stock in the fertile areas of the “Office du Niger” in Mali?). Morocco was the first to understand that there are plenty of economic opportunities for its entrepreneurs in West Africa and has thus concluded a trade agreement with UEMOA. Indeed, trade agreements between the two sides of the Sahara are crucial in order to: attract more North African capital to West Africa; generate more trade in agricultural goods, textiles and manufactured products; create trans-regional pipelines; and most importantly, construct more roads. This is by no means a new idea; we can only hope for a renewed interest by those countries concerned and their partners. →



A trans-Saharan road could, for example, link Bamako, Niamey and N'djaména to Alger and Gabes (Tunisia) via Tamanrasset (South Algeria); while proposed over thirty years ago, very little progress has been made in the implementation of this project. A network of roads across the Sahara would revitalize the area and thus trigger an upward spiral of positive change, bringing in electricity and telecommunications, generating trade, allowing for the creation of cities at

their intersections and promoting the development of the mining and tourism sectors. In other words, it would create a favourable environment for economic activities and trade. In the short-term, it must of course be a priority to “re-conquer” and stabilize the area so that businesses and people can feel secure. In the long run, however, it is much more difficult and more expensive to militarily control an unsettled area than to develop a vibrant economic area.

In the short-term, it must of course be a priority to “re-conquer” and stabilize the area so that businesses and people can feel secure. In the long run, however, it is much more difficult and more expensive to militarily control an unsettled area than to develop a vibrant economic area.

Priority projects need to be conducted within a suitable institutional framework. The future of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) is still, however, uncertain. Will it survive the fall of Colonel Gaddafi's regime? Although CEN-SAD covers almost half of the continent, taking it far beyond purely

trans-Saharan concerns, Algeria is not a member country. Developing an active economic co-operation between the countries of this desert region, however, is crucial, and an appropriate framework to facilitate dialogue and exchanges must be created. This dialogue could also be facilitated by the Arab Maghreb Union (which could be revitalised by the Arab Spring) and ECOWAS, in collaboration with UEMOA. CILSS should also contribute its expertise and invaluable inside knowledge of Sahelian issues in support of this ambition.

Now more than ever, the Sahara is revealing its true nature: a shared space whose risks and opportunities cannot be tackled without strong transregional co-operation. No policy, security advances or development can be sustained if it is pursued by individual states. North African and Sahelian challenges cannot and should not be dealt with separately.

FAMINE IN EASTERN AFRICA

A sustainable solution will not come from external actors – More responsibility must be taken up by the region’s leaders!

By Sibiri Jean Zoundi

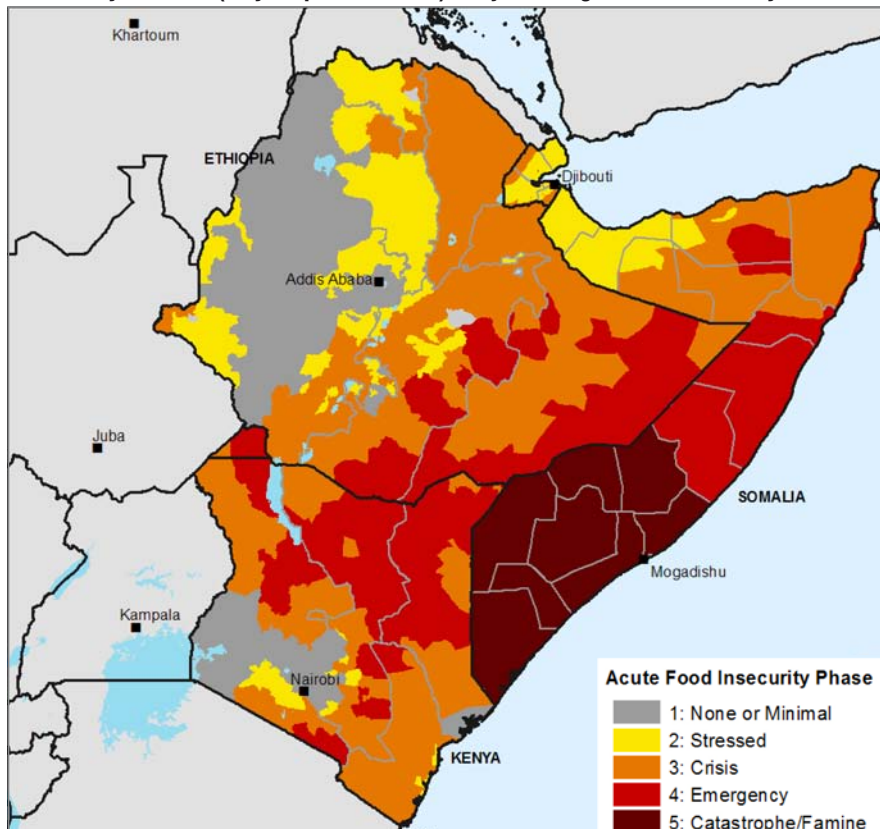
RECURRENT AND COMPLEX FOOD CRISES

Once more, the Horn of Africa is subject to a food crisis disaster affecting nearly 11 million people. What is taking place in this part of Africa, of which Somalia constitutes the epicentre, is not a new phenomenon. Eastern Africa is characterised by environmental fragility, in which episodes of drought and floods follow one another, resulting in waves of displaced populations. More than 180 million people live in the area, including 135 million people from rural populations and at least 20 million shepherds that almost exclusively depend on livestock farming. These communities represent nearly 70% of the Somali population and are the most vulnerable to food crises.

Should we attribute the recurrent food crises merely to natural phenomena?

Drought is always put forward as the main cause of repetitive famines but it alone can not explain this phenomenon. Food production is structurally insufficient, even in years of relatively good pluviometric records, due to the manifest lack of production means and weak incentive policies. Poor food aid management has also contributed in making local food production less

Most likely scenario (July–September 2011): Projected regional food security outcomes



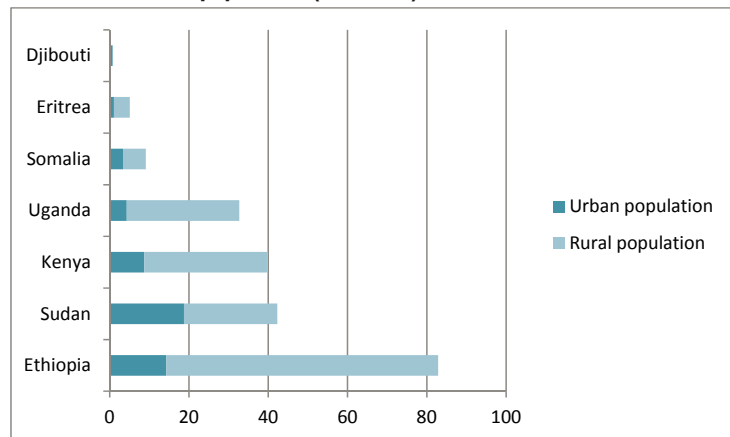
© FEWSNET, Source: Famine in Southern Somalia – FSNAU/FEWNET Declaration in Nairobi, 19 July 2011

attractive. Several analyses reveal that distributing surplus food aid at the wrong time perturbs local markets and can even impede sustainable investment in local food production. In 2007-08, five countries of the region were some of the first ten benefi-

ciaries of worldwide emergency food aid. Ethiopia and the Sudan ranked first and second, with respectively 915 000 tons and 673 000 tons of such emergency food aid received.

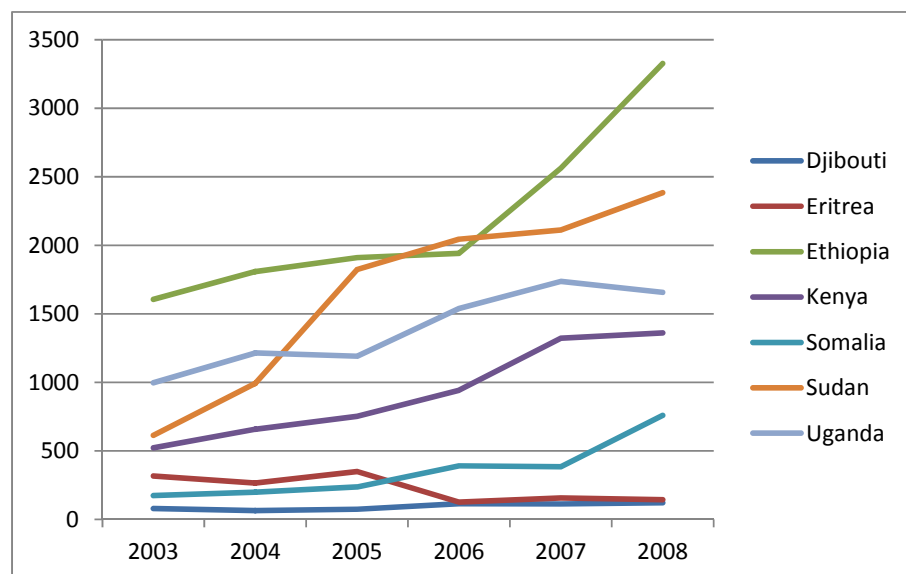
The region is also weakened by recurrent armed conflicts that have affected the area for several decades. Endemic conflicts and widespread poverty reduce the populations’ ability to face environmental and climate related challenges. Drought, famine, conflict and governance issues are thus interlinked and help explain the cyclical nature of food crises in the region. Consequently, an integrated, regional and inclusive approach is needed. An economic regional organisation, such as the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD), could play a key role.

Urban versus rural population (in million)



Source: African Economic Outlook 2010, Demographic indicators, table 13.

Official Development Assistance (ODA) net total, all donors, 2003-2008 (USD million)



Source: African Economic Outlook 2010, Aid flows, table 11.

THE REGION'S GOVERNMENTS MUST TAKE ON MORE RESPONSIBILITY

Breaking the cycle of food crises in Eastern Africa requires that African governments take on more responsibility. The humanitarian emergency attenuates the most serious suffering but it does not address the root causes. Therefore, although necessary and vital at times, humanitarian aid should not be perceived as the sole or primary solution to food security crises. A sustainable solution cannot come from external actors. Populations have the right to expect swift political action from their leaders.

The affected countries and development partners need to better take into account the regional dimension of food insecurity.

East African leaders must:

- Put an end to the vicious cycle of armed conflicts and political instability;
- Put in place government-sponsored agricultural and food policies that attract sustainable investments; raise agricultural productivity and develop adaptation and mitigation measures in response to the impact of climate change (including irrigation methods, investments to reduce the vulnerability of pastoral populations); create incentives for local food production;
- Reinforce the regional market by removing the distortions between national markets and by improving the business climate;
- Reinforce the early-warning and alert systems on drought, food security, and armed conflicts.

These are key concerns for the international community, whose aid, especially in Ethiopia and the Sudan, has greatly increased during the past years. This increase in aid to IGAD member countries clearly aims to place international action beyond humanitarian interventions in order to support the countries' efforts in addressing root causes of food insecurity.

DRAWING LESSONS FROM WEST AFRICA'S EXPERIENCE

Eastern Africa can draw lessons from the experiences of other African regions, particularly those of West Africa. Following the recurrent food crises in the Sahel, notably in 1973 and 1984, and within the framework of the Food Crises Prevention Network (RPCA), the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the "Club du Sahel" have elaborated a process of

analysis and co-operation that led to the approval of the Food Aid Charter in 1990. This Charter defines the basic principles to which Sahel countries and donors are committed in order to avoid the negative effects of aid. It thereby helps improve food aid effectiveness.

The Charter has just completed a revision process which became necessary in order to effectively respond to a changing environment. The situation is marked by the increasingly complex nature of food crises, the arrival of new donors, the stronger impact of the global market, and the rising role of civil society organisations and local actors.

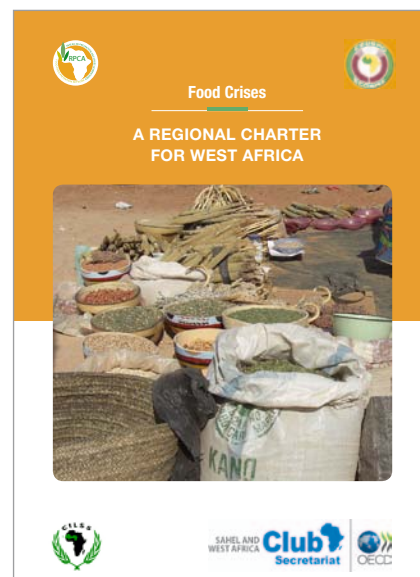
The Charter insists upon governmental and intergovernmental responsibilities in order to seek sustainable solutions to address the root causes of food insecurity:

- Develop an operational food security strategy and corresponding policies in each country and define implementation programmes based on participative consultations of all stakeholders;
- Implement development and investment policies to promote local food production (for example: training agricultural professionals, strengthening national and regional markets, and increasing the overall level of income);
- Promote research and training in the field of nutrition and reinforce food safety;
- Finance through endogenous financial resources (governments, regional organisations) at least 50% of implemented food security programmes;
- Proscribe policies that compromise food security objectives set by the countries and the region;
- Make progress towards the realisation of the “right to food” in accordance with national priorities, particularly through the elaboration of legal frameworks, action plans, and their financing.

From 2007-2011, CILSS and the Secretariat of the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC/OECD) conducted, under the auspices of the ECOWA Commission, a consultation process that included such new actors. It aimed at reflecting and responding to these new realities of food security. The “Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management” is set to shift from joint food aid management towards prevention and crisis management. It clearly affirms the responsibilities of regional organisations and of non-state actors, and enlarges its geographic coverage from the Sahel to West Africa.

Following a consultation process in the 17 countries that are covered by the Charter, the new text is currently in the process of finalisation and will be approved by an ECOWAS ministerial meeting in November 2011. This West African experience could be a source of inspiration for other regions facing food insecurity.

The West African experience also teaches us that a permanent regional dialogue on combating drought and food crises is a way to reinforce solidarity between people and their governments. CILSS’ impact on



Resolving common problems together provides an opportunity to improve relationships while deepening the regional policy dialogue.

the inter-Saharan policy dialogue, although not quantifiable, is obvious. Close collaboration between local and national administrations, as well as regular regional meetings between ministries and Heads of State, has undeniably facilitated dialogue on other issues, particularly security-related ones. From this point of view, IGAD is certainly a precious tool that needs to be reinforced.

G20 OUTREACH SESSION “AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD PRICE VOLATILITY”



14-15 June 2011, OECD Conference Centre

In the run-up to the G20 summit on agriculture, the SWAC Secretariat, in collaboration with the OECD Directorate for Trade and Agriculture (TAD) and the OECD Development Cluster, invited African representatives and experts to present their viewpoints on the impact of price volatility on African economies. While Africa is particularly affected by the impact of price volatility and high prices, partic-

ipants underlined that price volatility is a common challenge for all members of the international community. They thus called for decisive action from G20 countries. Moreover, participants made a series of concrete proposals (see page 10) for follow-up actions which were partly taken up by the G20 summit, including a pilot initiative for a “Regional Emergency Food Reserve” in West Africa.

ECOWAS presented at the SWAC conference its plans to establish a regional emergency food reserve facilitated through a regional network of national food stock reserves managing boards (RESOGEST initiative).

VIEWPOINTS



Elisabeth Atangana
President, Pan-African Farmers' Organisation (PAFO)

Building on participatory analyses and information-sharing, it would be useful to assist agricultural producers in creating tools that would allow them to mitigate the impacts of price volatility. Small producers need technical, technological and financial support to help them improve production, productivity and market access.



Djibo Bagna
President, Board of Directors, Network of Farmer Organisations & Agricultural Producers of West Africa (ROPPA)

Those believing that agricultural activities can be managed at an international level should look at the results. I believe that the discussion must start at the local level. [...] It is now time to involve local actors, as this is what has been missing until now. People have been thinking in the place

of others, and this must be changed. Funding for agriculture should also be re-examined.



Christian Adovèlande
President, West African Development Bank (BOAD)

Everyone has developed agricultural development strategies; the problem is how best to help these strategies be implemented. For this we need a great deal of resources. [...] We have asked for contributions from various sources, particularly OECD countries, to compliment our own. [...] We have to move away from ideological concerns and head towards specific projects. Be it in agriculture or infrastructure, these projects already exist and just need financing in order to get started.



Colonel Abdoukarim Goukoye
President, High Authority for Food Security (HASA), Niger

I believe that we need to develop a much more integrated and structured long term vision. As price volatility impacts everyone to a certain extent, we should no longer differentiate between emerging countries, developing countries and the rest of the world. [...] However, we Africans also need to get more involved and develop our own vision on how we would like to address this issue ourselves. To me, this is a pre-condition that must be fulfilled before asking others for help. [...] I think this advice applies to both the G20 and we Africans who should go further in taking charge and convincing others.



Paco Sérémé
*Exec. Director,
 West and Central
 African Council
 for Agricultural
 Research and
 Development
 (WECARD)*

competing interests and it is with these power dynamics in mind that we have to build our own strategy.



Awudu Abdulai
*Representative,
 African Association
 of Agricultural
 Economists
 (AAAE)*



Ken Ash
*Director, Trade
 and Agriculture
 Directorate
 (TAD/OECD)*

In Africa, we will always be dependent on certain products, but we also export other products. There needs to be a level of fairness and mutual trust between different parties, trust that those fixed prices out of African control or influence will not harm them. And for these prices not to be harmful, Africa must take part in global debates on the future of humankind.



Ibrahim Assane Mayaki
*Chief Executive
 Officer, NEPAD
 Planning and
 Co-ordinating
 Agency*

To address root causes of food insecurity and mitigate the impact of price volatility, G20 countries could also support poor countries in increasing their agricultural productivity. The key issue is to increase productivity of small-holder farmers; African people, in particular in rural areas, must become net producers rather than net buyers or net consumers, which make them very vulnerable to price volatility.

I think that it is really important that the attention focuses on the issue of global food insecurity and that it continues to focus on it over the long-term. There are a number of things that the G20 could look at doing. One is encouraging, making it more possible and supporting greater investment in developing countries' agriculture; not exclusively investment in infrastructure and investment in people, which is of course very important. However, a special emphasis must also be placed on investment in innovation to increase productivity and thus narrow the gap between current productivity levels and what is scientifically possible today in Africa. In addition, there are a number of proposals that we [the OECD and its partners] have made to improve the functioning of financial markets and to improve international co-ordination, not after a crisis occurs, but before a crisis occurs.

Africa is looking for wider representation within the G20. There is also a certain number of emerging economies trying to promote their own interests. We find ourselves, therefore, in a transitional phase in the construction of a new system of world governance. Africa's primary concern is to push its strategic interests. Whatever the propositions made by the G20, they are the results of



POLICY RESPONSES*

▶ Reduce the extent of the phenomenon

- **Create a more effective global governance:** More transparency on the level of food stocks and better access to information on global commodity markets, business transactions of agricultural products, etc. should reduce excessive volatility. It would also help avoid counterproductive decisions by policy-makers and market participants. It is therefore urgent to:
 - ▶ **Develop information-sharing tools and a network of key players** to improve the availability and access to existing data and market-relevant information at the international level;
 - ▶ **Strengthen data collection and analytical capacities** as well as dissemination networks in developing countries;
 - ▶ **Further analyse price transmission mechanisms on the African continent** to better understand linkages between global, regional and domestic markets and mitigate negative consequences of external volatility through risk management tools.
- **Promote regional integration and improve the business environment:** African States must increase efforts to support the building of well-functioning regional markets in order to open-up intra-regional trade opportunities and better connect farmers to the market (removal of trade barriers and restrictions, reduction of transaction costs, better infrastructure, more reliable access to energy, capacity-building for local actors, etc.). African regional organisations have a key role in creating such an environment.

* Extract from the summary record.

▶ Mitigate the impact of volatility and protect vulnerable populations

- **Develop effective alert systems and safety nets:** African governments need to pursue setting up tools for producers and vulnerable households. Governments need to be prepared to take action before the crisis starts in order to respond timely. Regional information-sharing initiatives such as the Regional Food Security Information System (SRISA) of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) or the ECOWAS Agricultural Information System (AGRIS) would need stronger support.
- **Analyse the effectiveness of policy measures** taken in response to the price hikes of 2007-08: While some measures have effectively protected vulnerable populations, others were costly and counterproductive. Strengthening policy dialogue between African countries would allow them to share lessons, capitalise on various experiences and set up best practices. Successful African initiatives could be scaled-up and supported by development partners.
- **Promote the establishment of emergency food reserves at all levels (local, national and regional):** Food stocks at the village, local and national level are an important part of food crisis management strategies in Africa. Conceptual frameworks to establish regional reserves were already developed by regional economic communities and NEPAD. Feasibility studies and pilot projects need to be launched in order to collect concrete experiences in the collective management of these regional stocks, in particular within ECOWAS and SADC. Strong and sustainable commitment of African States and their regional economic communities is needed to make rapid progress in setting up regional emergency food reserves.



- **Set up Regional Finance Facilities** to provide support for vulnerable net food importing countries in times of crisis. Based on the principal of solidarity among its member countries, UEMOA has collected first-hand experience in 2008. Regional Finance Facilities should be managed by African regional economic organisations. An International Finance Facility could complement these efforts.
- ▶ **Address the root causes of food insecurity**
 - **Go beyond the commitment made at Maputo in 2003** (spend 10% of national budgets for agriculture). The NEPAD Agency, in collaboration with the AfDB and UNECA, should be responsible for lobbying targeting African States and the African Union.
 - **Prioritise improving agricultural productivity** through financial, human and material investments (Research & Development, training for local farmers, better access to credit and inputs, connecting small farmers to the market).
 - **Accelerate improvements in the business environment:** Rising prices will benefit producers and states only if incentive measures (attractive profits for investors and producers) are part of coherent policies that encourage an improvement of the business environment and attract more investment in agriculture.
- **Improve farmers' access to markets and risk management tools:** African agricultural producers must take full advantage of the upward trend in prices. Policy measures to be taken include developing agricultural and marketing infrastructure, tax incentives and appropriate land policies, as well as insurance mechanisms against risks to a stable income for producers.
- **Improve analytical and anticipation capacities:** As the food situation is evolving rapidly, short-term and structural trends (changing consumption patterns, increased global food demand, urbanisation, population growth, climate change) require permanent monitoring and assessments. African leaders must gain access to information and decision-making tools with equivalent quality to those of their counterparts from around the world.
- **Strengthen African ownership:** In the spirit of the "Paris Declaration" and the "Accra Agenda for Action", development partners should provide direct support to African agricultural investment and food security programmes within the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP/NEPAD).
- **Protect the most vulnerable economies:** Development partners also need to promote more equitable trade policies (fewer trade distortions caused by export subsidies). Consultations on how to protect emerging markets in developing countries could help identify new, innovative tools.

Proposed follow-up actions

- **A pilot initiative for a "Regional Emergency Food Reserve in West Africa":** Building on the conceptual framework of the RESOGEST initiative, this pilot programme, led by ECOWAS/UEMOA/CILSS with the support of the SWAC/OECD Secretariat, FAO and the WFP shall be implemented by 2012.
- **Lobbying in favour of the Maputo objective** on national budgets for agriculture, by the NEPAD Agency, AfDB and UNECA.
- **A pilot experience in public resource mobilisation for agriculture and food:** This initiative aims at increasing public resources for agricultural investment through fiscal reforms and other mechanisms.
- **An initiative to improve analytical and anticipation capacities in Africa** within the field of agriculture, food issues, and on rural transformation.
- **A pilot experience to create a more favourable environment for sustainable investment in agriculture for food:** A special focus should be placed on sustainable financing mechanisms for Research & Development and training for farmers.

SWAC STRATEGY AND POLICY GROUP MEETING

15 June 2011, Paris, OECD Conference Centre



Strategy and Policy Group Members met to provide feedback on ongoing SWAC work and finetune work priorities. In his opening remarks, SWAC President de Donnea applauded the success of the SWAC's G20 Outreach session on "Agricultural and Food Price Volatility", and encouraged the organisation of a similar event next year. According to him, this

framework would perfectly respond to the SWAC's ambition to play a bridging role between West Africa and OECD countries. Governance issues related to the signature of the new Mandate and observer status were also addressed. A discussion on security issues in the Sahel aimed at identifying Members' priorities in the field of security and development.

SHARING EXPERIENCE FROM BRAZIL

30 May – 4 June 2011, Brasilia, Brazil



On the left: Maya Takagi, Brazilian Secretary for food and nutritional security

SWAC met with Brazilian authorities to learn from Brazil's experience with bioenergy and food security challenges ("Zero Hunger" initiative, "Action Against Hunger and Poverty" initiative, etc.). Biofuels accounted for 26% of Brazil's 2010 energy consumption (compared to a world average of 2.3%). Brazil believes in West Africa's potential to develop a strong biofuels industry. It confirmed its willingness to contribute to the 2011 SWAC Forum which is dedicated to renewable energy issues within the context of south-south co-operation,

in particular with Brazil. Capitalizing on Brazil's experience in biofuels, the Forum aims to define a road map towards a regional strategy on renewable energy in West Africa. Brazil currently has co-operation agreements and activities with eight West African countries. Beyond the Forum, SWAC aims to establish a longer-term co-operation with Brazil, in particular with its co-operation agency (ABC), the Brazilian Secretariat for Food and Nutritional Security (SESAN) and other Brazilian partners with an interest in West Africa.

CAPE VERDE TO HOST THE 2011 SWAC FORUM

27-29 June 2011, Praia, Cape Verde



Paolão dam

SWAC President François-Xavier de Donnea and SWAC Secretariat Director Laurent Bossard met with Cape Verdean authorities to advance preparatory work for the 2011 Forum, which will be hosted by the Cape Verdean government in Praia on 5 and 6 December 2011. It also accepted to host the SWAC's next Strategy and Policy Group meeting and the 27th Annual Meeting of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA). Cape Verdean authorities hope to draw

attention to its specific experience as a small, emerging African economy. They have set up a very ambitious development plan for renewable energy sources, aiming at covering 50% of its energy needs. Moreover, its National Agency for Research in Agriculture is working on an improved *Jatropha* seed for the production of biofuels. Cape Verde is highly dependant on food imports and thus particularly concerned by high food price volatility.

ENERGY: TOWARDS A PARTNERSHIP WITH ECREEE

June 2011, Praia, Cape Verde



ECREEE team with SWAC President de Donnea

The SWAC Secretariat teamed up with the Praia-based ECOWAS Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) that will provide substantial inputs for the 2011 Forum. SWAC and ECREEE are planning to formalise their co-operation through a memorandum of understanding that shall set up a joint work programme for 2012 and kick off the production of a "Regional Atlas on Renewable Energy in West Africa".

“Feed the Future” initiative: improved regional coherence**31 May – 1 June 2011, Accra, Ghana**

USAID's West Africa Regional Mission organised an information-sharing meeting on its “Feed the Future” initiative (<http://www.feedthefuture.gov>) aimed at mainstreaming activities in response to priorities of the ECOWAS Regional Investment Programme for Agriculture. Various partners involved in USAID's work on food security exchanged experiences in order to improve the effectiveness, coherence and synergies of their actions. The SWAC Secretariat shared initial outcomes of its West Africa Futures programme on settlement, market and food security.

Food security: new funding prospects for the K2M initiative**26-27 July 2011, Niamey, Niger**

At the Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission's Donor Roundtable, government representatives from Niger and Nigeria met with development partners to discuss the future of the Kano-Katsina-Maradi initiative (K2M) which was initiated with the support of the Club in 2004. The States of Katsina and Kano expressed their willingness to contribute to the funding of joint projects, opening a window of opportunity for additional funding from international partners. ECOWAS pledged to fund the radio network providing information on cereal markets and ECOWAS laws and regulations.

PUBLICATIONS

**West African urbanisation trends****West African Futures, no. 1, June 2011**

West Africa has been experiencing intensive urbanisation for more than fifty years. A sound knowledge of population distribution is essential for food policies.

**Harmonisation of West African settlement data****West African Futures, no. 2, July 2011**

This note calls attention to the need, within a regional approach, to pursue the consistency and harmonisation of settlement data.

**Economic concentration and settlement****West African Futures, no. 3, August 2011**

Drawing on the World Bank's World Development Report 2009, “Reshaping economic geography”, this note analyses the ongoing transformation of the rural-urban relationship in West Africa.

**Agricultural and non-agricultural population****West African Futures, no. 4, Sept 2011**

This note highlights the difficulty of measuring and monitoring the ratio between agricultural and non-agricultural populations (PP/NPP ratio), an essential indicator for managing food security policy.

**The 2008 rice crisis – shock and new challenges****West African Challenges, no. 2, June 2011**

This paper analyses the 2008 crisis, along with current trends and policy responses to address new challenges in the rice sector. It is based on a study carried out by CILSS, CIRAD, FAO, FEWS NET and the WFP.

UPCOMING EVENTS

27-28 October 2011, 2nd Working Group meeting on West African Futures, OECD Conference Centre, Paris.

23 November 2011, Launch of the “Guidebook on emerging best practices in combating child labour in the cocoa sector”, Brussels.



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Your comments are welcome!

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