



Regional Consultation on Food and Nutritional Situation in the Sahel and West Africa

Bamako, Mali – March 25 to 27, 2014

Joint Press Release on the Food and Nutritional Situation in the Sahel and West Africa.

Cereal production in the Sahel and West Africa for the 2013-2014 cropping campaign stands at 57,010,000 tons. It is equivalent to that of last year but with an increase of 11 % as compared with the average of the last five (5) years. Maize ranks number 1 with an estimated production of 19,361,000 tons, followed by rice (15,930,000 tons), sorghum (13,084,000 tons), and millet (8,073,000 tons). All cereal crops have experienced an increase varying from 10 % to 28 % as compared with the average of the last five (5) years, except for millet the production of which has been decreased by 20%. For the whole zone, the average per capita production has been increased by 3 % as compared with that of last year and is equivalent to the average of the last five (5) years.

Cereal production in the Sahel is 19,596,000 tons. This production is equivalent to the average of the last five (5) years but in decrease as compared with last year (-12%). Production shocks are recorded in several zones, especially in Niger, Chad, Mali and Senegal. Furthermore, per capita cereal production has decreased by 14% as compared with 2012/2013.

In the Gulf of Guinea countries, cereal production is estimated to 37,414,000 tons i.e an increase of 8% as compared to last year, and 17% as compared with the average of the last five (5) years.

Tubers production is 147,052,000 tons, of which 81,980,000 tons of cassava, 59,306,000 tons of yam, 4,905,000 tons of coco-yam and 861,000 tons of sweet potato. All these crops have had increases ranging from 16% to 23% as compared with the average of the five (5) last years.

Ground-nut production is 7,463,000 tons. It has increased by 3% as compared with last year and 35% as compared with the average of the last five (5) years. However, decreases have been observed in Sénégal, Ghana and The Gambia.

Cowpea production is 8,562,000 tons, i.e an increase of 9% as compared with last year and compared with the average of the last five (5) years.

At the pastoral level, one can observe a seasonal decrease in quantity and quality of available pasturelands. In general, the prices of animal-feed have been increased in the region. Transhumance circuits are disturbed in the zones close to conflicts areas (axis South of Chad – Central African Republic, Diffa-North Nigeria and North Mali and South-East of Mauritania). Given this decrease in quantity and quality pasturelands, many conflicts between agriculturists and livestock-breeders are reported because of the presence of thousands of animals in agricultural areas on the eve of the first rains.

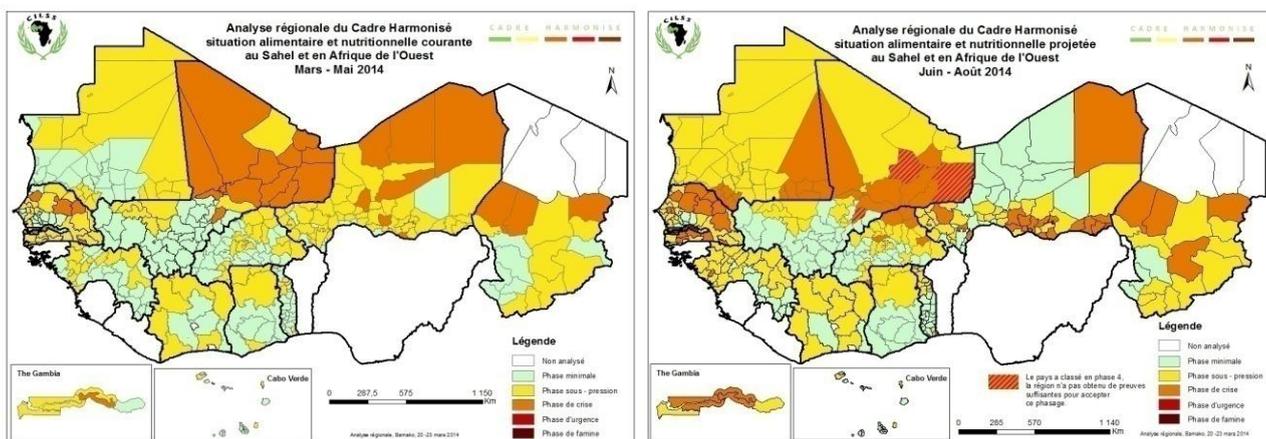
Regarding markets, they function satisfactorily in the region, with a good supply level. That contributed to the decrease or stability of prices on markets as compared with last year for all the crops. However, millet and sorghum prices remain higher than 18 % as compared with the average of the last five (5) years, mainly at the level of the East-basin. Concerning cash crops (ground-nut, cowpea, and cotton) and livestock, prices are higher than the average of the five years, inducing terms of trade favourable to producers. At the level of other food crops (tubers and plantain), prices are low as compared with last year and remain, on the whole, comparable with the average of the five () years.

Markets are seen to be functioning normally until the period of food-shortage, though some slight increases of prices may occur for all the crops. However, the prices of the main commodities will remain close to the average of the five years in the East and West Basin until the period of food-shortage.

Regarding malnutrition, the situation is still preoccupying in the region. In November 2013, 20 zones had put malnutrition in an emergency phase. Between June and August 2014, the expected rate of *Global Acute Malnutrition* would be above critical thresholds (MAG: 10-15 %) or be an emergency one (*Global Acute Malnutrition*: 15-30%) in a higher number of zones in Sénégal, au Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Chad and in a localized way in Burkina Faso.

An analysis of food and nutritional situation by the Harmonized Framework pin-points that 26 zones out of 345 zones analyzed show currently a food insecurity reaching a crisis phase in The Gambia, Mali ,Niger, Sénégal ,and Chad .During the food-shortage period, from June to August 2014an increase of the number of zones ,up to 58 , will be observed as in being in a crisis phase , with an extension to Burkina Faso , Guinea and Mauritania. That is due to the localized poor conduct of the agro-pastoral campaign, the erosion of livelihoods, the high level of the global acute malnutrition and the deterioration of access to food, particularly for the very poor and poor households.

Currently, 4, 895, 000 persons (crisis phase and above) have an immediate need in assistance . Their number could reach 8 million during the food-shortage period if no adequate actions are taken accordingly.



Taking account of the foregoing, it is important for countries and their partners:

To meet the needs of the population in the crisis and emergency situation in the areas of nutrition, access to food and livelihoods.

- Draw up and implement response plans ;

- Bring rapidly an emergency food assistance in kind or in the form of monetary transfers for enabling very poor and poor households to meet their basic food requirements ;
- Protect and strengthen livelihoods by supporting productive activities upstream the beginning of the 2014/2015 agro-pastoral campaign;
- To strengthen access to animal-feed and to basic veterinary services for the agro-pastoralists and the pastoralists of Niger ,Mauritania, Mali ,Sénégal ,and Chad for remedying the fodder deficit and difficulties related to the disturbance of the transhumance movements ;
- To strengthen surveillance , prevention and treatment of global acute malnutrition and access to health cares particularly in all the zones where global acute malnutrition(GAM) exceeds the critical threshold of 10%;
- To meet the specific needs in the zones currently receiving flows of refugees and displaced persons , especially the Eastern part of Mauritania, the Eastern and Western part of Niger, the Eastern and Southern part of Chad and the Sahel prone part of Burkina.

To support the livelihoods of the population under pressure:

- To strengthen sustainable livelihoods by supporting productive activities ;
- To strengthen social net programmes and access to basic social services;
- To define strategies for conflict prevention and management in sensitive zones ;
- To strengthen mechanisms for disaster risk management and prevention at the community level.
- To encourage countries which have started their inclusive dialogue process for defining Country-Resilience priorities ,whilst urging the others to launch their own with a view to reducing structurally and sustainably food and nutritional insecurity in the Sahel and in West Africa.

Bamako, March 27 ,2014
The Meeting