



REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SITUATION IN THE SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA

Nouakchott, Mauritania, April 1 to 3, 2015

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

The 2014-2015 Cereal production, revised in March 2015, for the Sahel and West Africa stands at **61,612,000** metric tons. It is 7 % higher than the one for last year and 10 % higher than the average production for the last five (5) years. Maize ranks number one with a production estimated to 20, 385,000 tons, followed by rice (17,325,000 tons), sorghum (13,664,000 tons) and millet (9,183,000 tons). Except for millet the production of which declined by 12 % , the productions of the main crops have been increased as compared with the average for the last five (5) years (3 % for sorghum , 15 % for maize , and 25 % for rice).

In the Sahel, cereal production is about 21, **027, 000** tons. This production has been increased by **7.3%** and 7.4% as compared with last year and the average for the last five (5) years, respectively. However, significant decreases in production have been recorded in several countries , mainly in Senegal (-16 %), in the Gambia (-16 %), in Guinea Bissau (- 33 %) and in Cape Verde (-83 %)

In the Gulf of Guinea countries, cereal production is estimated to **40,589,000** tons, i.e. an increase of **6,8%** as compared with last year and of 12 % as compared with the average for the last five (5) years .

The other productions such as tubers, groundnut, and cowpea have also been increased in the region respectively by 18, 15, and 4 % comparatively with the average of the last five (5) years.

Regarding the pastoral dimension , the availability of pastures and water-points is average .However, the feeding conditions of livestock difficult is owing to the poor availability of grazing-lands and water in the sahelian zone of Chad ,in the South- East of Mauritania, and in the Centre and the North of Senegal ,and in some parts in Niger and Mali. Transhumance is disturbed around Lake Chad because of the combined effect of fodder deficit and civil insecurity. Conflicts opposing agriculturists and pastoralists occur in some host-areas in the Northern part of Togo and Benin.

The functioning of markets is satisfactory as they have a good level of cereal supply. The prices of all the main commodities are stable, with a downward trend as compared with last year and the average of the last five (5) years. The most important diseases are observed in the commercial East Basin. However, increases in prices of over 30 % as compared with the average of the five (5) years, are recorded in the Lake Chad Basin and in the pastoral zones in Senegal and in Mauritania. In countries affected by the Ebola Virus Disease, cereal prices are also stable, except for Sierra Leone where increases have been observed, following the disturbances of production and marketing. As regards cash crops, prices vary from stability for groundnut in Sénégal to decline for cowpea in Niger and Burkina Faso.

Livestock prices have been increased globally as compared with last year and as compared with the average for the last five (5) years. However, decreases in animal prices have been recorded in Mauritania, in the Chadian Sahel and in the Lake Chad area because of the difficult pastoral conditions and the decrease in the demand following the insecurity which prevails in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria and in Lybia.

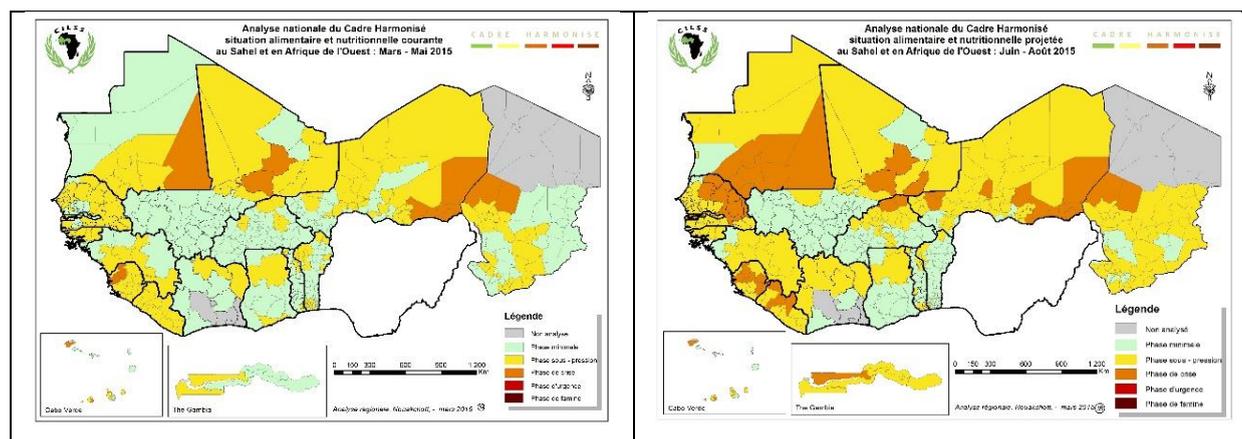
In prospect, with a good level of trans-border flows supported by good differential prices and the re-opening of the borders of countries affected by the Ebola Virus Epidemic, markets will be well-supplied until the lean-period and the prices of the main commodities will remain close to their average level. However, in conflict areas and in pastoral areas, prices will remain high and will reach peaks during the lean-period (June –August).

Owing to a lack of available updated data, the nutritional situation could not be assessed all over the region. However, during the lean-period and based on the historical data, prevalences could go beyond the alert threshold of 10 % in many countries, especially in Sahelian countries and could even go beyond the emergency threshold of 15 % in some areas.

An analysis of the Harmonized Framework highlights minimal food insecurity in several areas in the region. However , between March and May 2015 ,4,749,000 persons are identified as being in crisis and emergency situation distributed in seventeen (17) areas in Cape Verde , Guinea Bissau , Mauritania ,Mali ,Niger , Sierra Leone and Chad. During the lean-period ,the population in critical food and nutritional insecurity situation (crisis phase and emergency) are estimated to 7,364,000 persons distributed in 48 areas in Burkina Faso , Cape Verde , Mali , Mauritania ,Niger , Sénégal , Chad ,Sierra Leone and Liberia .The security tension in the Lake Chad Basin and in Northern Mali that gives rise to the movements of refugee populations, internally displaced persons or returnees in their countries, the poor fodder production in the Sahelian strip , the increase in prices and the deterioration of the purchasing power of the poor and

very poor households, account for the probable deterioration of the food and nutritional situation in the course of the lean-period which extends from June to August 2015. Such populations will need appropriate and immediate food aid as well as a nutrition-health support and a protection of livelihoods. In addition, there are Malian, Nigerian, Centrafrican and Sudanese refugee populations as well as the internally displaced persons in Mali, Niger and Nigeria.

Furthermore, 23,052, 000 persons are currently identified as in phase 2- under pressure of food and nutritional insecurity. These populations will be able to meet their food requirements but will have great difficulties in preserving their capital goods or in ensuring other basic needs such as health. Their number would reach 26,615,000 persons during the lean-period (June- August 2015). This form of under-pressure food insecurity is linked to the combined effects of several factors, including mainly localized poor harvests, civil insecurity and the poor purchasing power of households. Any time, these populations can shift drift into a food and nutritional crisis situation. Building their capacities for resilience is essential for protecting their livelihoods.



In consideration of the above, it is important for :

Countries and their partners to :

- Meet immediately the needs of the populations in crisis and emergency situation , mainly in the fields of food aid , the treatment of acute malnutrition and the strengthening of livelihoods , through the mobilization of fundings and the implementation of national response plans ;
- Protect and strengthen the livelihoods by supporting the productive activities upstream the start of the 2015 / 2016 agro-pastoral campaign ;
- Facilitate access to animal-feeds and to basic veterinary services for the agro-pastoralists and pastoralists of Niger, Mauritania, Mali, and Sénégal, Chad, and North-Eastern part of Nigeria. ;
- Take adequate measures for making available enough animal-feeds in the areas of civil insecurity or poor grazing-lands, mainly in the Lake Chad basin and in the Western part of Niger, in Northern part of Mali, in Mauritania, and in Sénégal.
- Strengthen the surveillance , the prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition and access to health cares in particular in all the areas where global acute malnutrition goes beyond the alert threshold of 10 % ;
- Meet the specific needs of the refugees, the displaced persons and the host-communities, mainly in the Eastern part of Mauritania, the Western part of Niger, the North-Eastern part of Nigeria, in the East and South of Chad, and in the Burkina Faso Sahel. ;
- Develop and implement structural programmes for the rehabilitation and the (re) constitution of the resilience for the benefit of countries which are most affected by the Ebola Virus Disease ;
- Strengthen national information systems on food and nutritional security.

Regional information systems :

- Establish a mechanism for monitoring the recommendations from the Harmonized Framework and from PREGEC ;
- Continue to monitor and assess the impact of the Ebola Virus Disease in the affected countries ;
- To encourage and assist the countries in establishing national analysis units ;
- Build the capacities of countries in basic data collection and processing and in the mastery of analysis tools: Food Balance-Sheet and Harmonized Framework.

Nouakchott, April 03, 2015

The participants