



Meeting of the Food Crises Prevention Network in the Sahel and West Africa  
Paris, 22 April 2011

## FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ

*Despite record high agricultural production in 2010/2011, rising global food prices, high rates of malnutrition and political crises in the region are undermining the food security situation of vulnerable populations in urban and agro-pastoral areas. Socio-political crises in the region have disrupted the functioning of the regional market, also provoking population movements and increased insecurity.*

At the RPCA meeting held at the OECD Conference Centre in Paris on 21 and 22 April 2011, network members confirmed record high cereal production for 2010/2011 in the Sahel and West Africa. Global cereal production is estimated at 60 million tonnes, representing an increase of 16% compared to 2010. The cereal production of CILSS member countries is estimated at 22 million tonnes up to 39% compared to last year and 45% compared to the average of the last five years. Cereal surpluses have been recorded in Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger and Mali. Public stocks are replenishing. Cowpea and groundnut production increased by 23% and 12% compared to 2010.

The markets for agrifood products are well supplied. Consumers enjoy lower cereal prices compared to last year but prices remain nevertheless above average over the last five years. This situation could deteriorate at the beginning of the lean season due to rising world prices affecting West African markets. The terms of trade for livestock/cereals are better than last year due to very good weather conditions for livestock and high urban consumption of Sahelian meat in coastal countries, substituting imports from the international market. Access to food in agro-pastoral households that were hit hard by the food crisis in 2010, has improved. Populations affected by the pastoral crisis in 2010 have not yet replenished their stocks nor their livelihoods.

Despite improved cereal availability and access to food, acute malnutrition rates in Chad and Niger remain high. Socio-political crises in the region disrupt the functioning of the regional market for agro-food products. This has already caused migrants to return back home and affects the most vulnerable populations in neighbouring countries strongly dependent on remittances.

Moreover, participants acknowledged that the implementation of the RESOGEST initiative (aiming at building a network of bodies responsible for the management of national food security stocks) is an important instrument of the RPCA. They would like to see faster progress, fostered through strong leadership taken by West Africa's regional organisations (ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS) to accelerate the implementation of this initiative. Market players, the private sector and civil society must play a fundamental role.

**Based on the following information, the network members recommend:**

➤ **Governments to:**

- Accelerate the replenishment of food security stocks, especially in major production areas in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Niger;
- Promote the protection of the most vulnerable populations through the creation and implementation of participatory social safety networks;

- Incorporate nutritional programmes through budgeting, education and the enhancement of local products;
  - Continue and strengthen measures to support vulnerable populations through the implementation of projects for the sustainable management of the environment and multi-country projects.
- **Food security information systems (CILSS, FAO, FEWS NET, WFP) to:**
- Strengthen the analysis of the food situation of vulnerable populations affected by rising prices, in particular the displaced from socio-political crises (Côte d'Ivoire and Libya);
  - Provide actors with all the necessary information required for decision-making.
- **ECOWAS and UEMOA to:**
- Ensure an urgent response upon the request of States and humanitarian actors in host areas of displaced populations due to socio-political crises;
  - Enforce the respect of trade regulations for the free movement of persons and goods and accelerate the construction of the common market;
  - Promote and support regular consultations with market actors in order to share information on trade opportunities;
  - Accelerate the implementation of RESOGEST and budgetise the annual funding of food security stocks.
- **Civil society to:**
- Ensure monitoring of commitments and information-sharing of actions taken by different actors.
- **Technical and financial partners to:**
- Support governments and IGOs in enhancing preventive action nutrition programmes.

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The RPCA