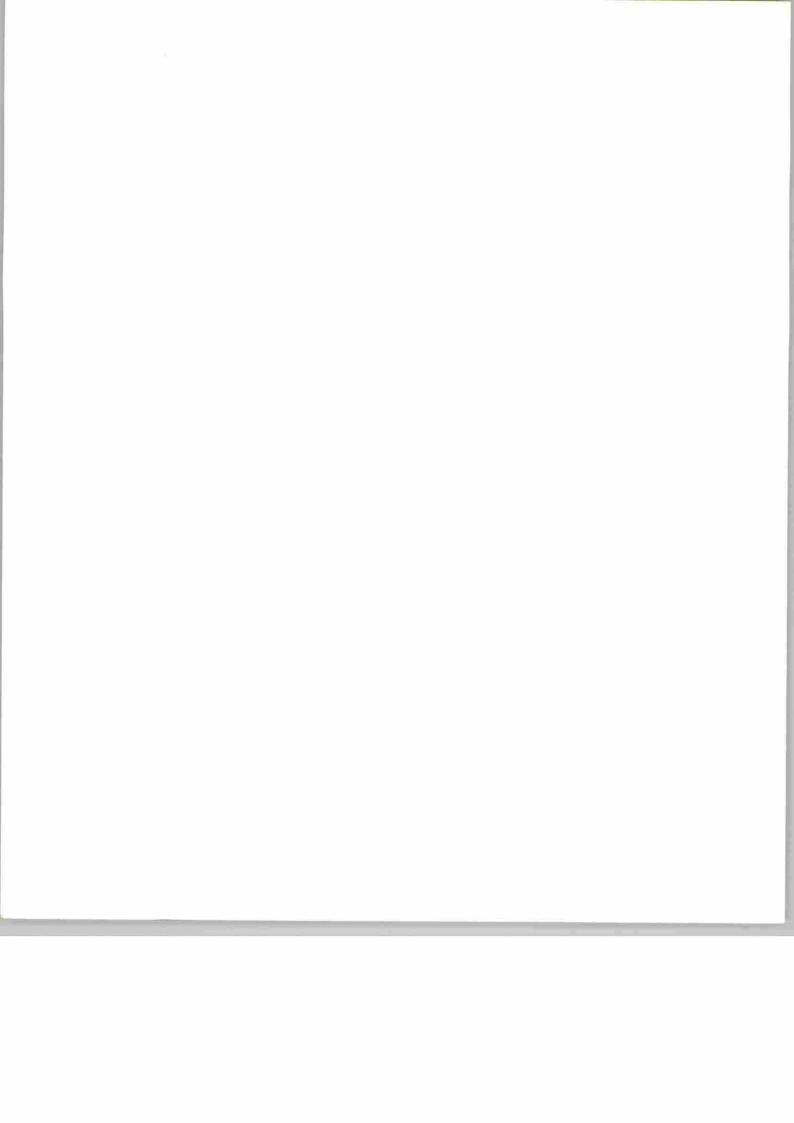
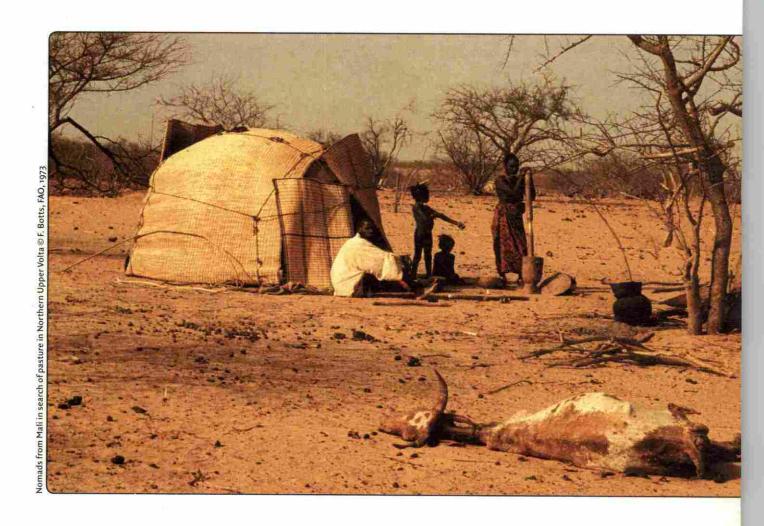


Twenty Years of Food Crisis Prevention in the Sahel

ASSESSMENT & PERSPECTIVES



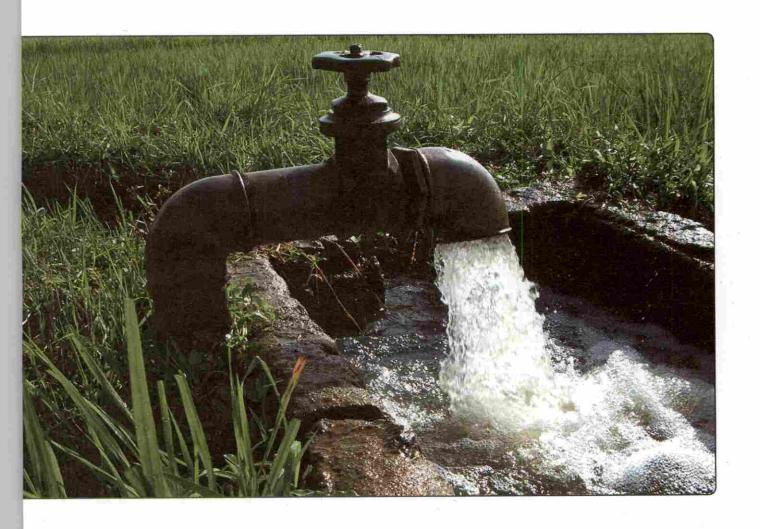




Twenty Years of Food Crisis Prevention in the Sahel

ASSESSMENT & PERSPECTIVES





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Prevention is better than cure!

1973, 1984:

two dates that leave a lasting mark on the populations of the Sahel, not only because of the tragedy they conjure up, but also because of the many fractures they symbolize.

Ecological fracture, first: The droughts amplify more structural phenomena. The drop of the rainfall level over a long period and the increasing human pressure on the natural resources increase desertification and reduce agricultural production.

Then, the socio-economic fracture: The Sahel is becoming more and more urban, the traditional risk management systems are increasingly challenged by new ways of life in the rural areas, the increase in monetary needs, weaker traditional solidarity bonds, and the degradation of the situation of migrants, etc.

Finally, the public policy fracture: Confronted with the debt crisis, the Sahelian countries undertake agricultural and food policy reforms and revise their ambition downwards. As a consequence, the structural adjustment will certainly boost the farmers and the tradesmen's activity, but it will also affect the security nets in the event of crisis.

All these fractures will combine to create the conditions of persistent food insecurity, punctuated with serious crises affecting part or the whole of the Sahel. Poverty feeds on such vulnerability and thus can spread its tentacles and grip on the Sahelians.

Our countries, in partnership with the international organisations, the development partners and the NGOs, have been devoting their energies towards developing the capacities of the Sahel to prevent such food crises. This effort -varying according to the countries—helped to improve the quality of the information and to promote early warning. National and regional consultation forums facilitated comparison of analyses and taking action with the populations well before the food crises actually spark off.

All these efforts were undertaken within the context of the Famine Prevention Network in the Sahel. Designed to be an informal forum gathering the Sahelian and the international stakeholders, the Network conducted research works and led studies and evaluations, etc. Its annual meeting provides an opportunity to share information about the food situation and to identify actions towards managing the crises. Beyond that, the Network was the instigator of the Food Aid Charter that provided the Sahelians and the Donors with common principles making it possible to minimise risks of misuse of the aid.

However, the Sahel and its partners still have a long way to go despite these immense achievements. The current locust invasion comes to remind us of this. Institutional compartmentalization, slackening attention by Governments and Donors, difficulty to invest on a long-term basis in the prevention activi-

ties in order to avoid the exorbitant costs involved in addressing ill-anticipated crises, interruptions in the information-action chain, difficulty to go beyond prediction in order to find lasting solutions to the deep causes of the crises, etc. are as many bad reasons that will throw the populations in the locust invaded areas into a situation of food insecurity that we could have been able to avoid.

This twentieth anniversary of the Network represents a unique opportunity to share the Sahelian experience with the other regions in the world, as we have been requested to do so. But it also provides an opportunity to assess its limitations and to think of the next steps towards consolidating the prevention of crisis and avoiding new disasters. The Sahel is confronted with new risks and it is our common responsibility to get prepared to address them. Finally, it provides me with the opportunity of reasserting that the best crisis prevention tool consists of investing in sustainable development and poverty reduction.

I call upon the Sahelian and international community to double up their efforts so as to prevent any future avoidable disastrous eventuality in the Sahel.

Musa S. Mbenga Executive Secretary

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publication)	 CILSS (Permanent inter-states committee for drought control in the Sahel) 		
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photoengraving)———————and printing	GALC (with Alain Codet), SAGIM-Canale		
sponsored by)—————	—— European Commission		
partners of the)————————————————————————————————————	WFP PO TO LEGISLATION OF THE PARTY OF THE PA		
Bibliographical note: Twenty Years of Food Crisis Prevention in the Sahel. Assessment & Perspectives. CILSS, 2004, 88 p.	NET COOPERAZIONE ITALIANA USAID Liberti - Égaliti - Franculti RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE		

1984. THE WHOLE WORLD discovers in horror, on television screens, the disastrous consequences of a never-ending drought that destroys both men and animals. An immense surge of solidarity helped the region get over this hurdle, thus saving the worst of sufferings to its populations. After the crisis had gone off, then came the time for stock-taking: very late and unreliable information, aids too slow to come, too important aid in some areas, too small aid in others; products that the populations did not know before; inefficient coordination, absence of evaluation, etc.

At the request of the CILSS Ministers meeting in Nouakchott in January 1985, the secretariats of the CILSS and the Club du Sahel gathered experts from the co-operation agencies to look into ways and means of addressing potential future crises and needs. Thus was born the Famine Prevention Network in the Sahel designed to be a forum for free and informal discussion and reflection, a venue for exchanges of views, comparison and analysis of information, a platform of dialogue over actions to be undertaken in the event of food crisis. The Network brings together experts and representatives from bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, international organizations (WFP, FAO, WMO, etc), the CILSS institutions, specialized NGOs and peasant farmer organizations. Long facilitated by the Club du Sahel, it is now CILSS that takes care of the animation of the Network. Its work fits into a broader and operational crisis prevention and management system, in which the Sahel countries now play a more significant role than in the past. The Network's annual meeting, which is organized at the end of the growing season, constitutes the most important

event of its activity. Specialists and decision makers meet alternatively in a Sahelian country, or a donor country to assess the food situation of the current season, exchange views and discuss forward thinking topics (methodology of information systems, definition of charters, etc) •.

The whole world discovers in horror, on television screens, the disastrous consequences of a never-ending drought that destroys both men and animals. An immense surge of solidarity helped the region get over this hurdle, thus saving the worst of sufferings to its populations. After the crisis had gone off, then came the time for stock-taking: very late and unreliable information, aids too slow to come, too important aid in some areas, too small aid in others; products that the populations did not know before; inefficient coordination, absence of evaluation, etc.

Being a result of the dysfunctions of the food aid, the Famine Prevention Network in the Sahel devoted much time and energy to this aspect. Alternatives to aid have been promoted, through local-level purchases and triangular assistance. A charter codifying the use of food aid was negotiated between the donors and the recipients. The reflection on the use of the counterpart funds of the food aid to finance the cereal and food security policies was given greater importance. The Network also carried out much reflection about methodology development.

This document simply tries to present this experience. It is an invitation to share experience and to assess the food crisis prevention and management systems. ♦ The first meeting of the Famine Prevention Network was held in Paris, October 23 and 24, 1985. After three years of food shortage the Sahel registered again a very sizeable production: + 50% compared to year 1984. The Sahel no longer had to manage food shortage only but also food surpluses, at times! This problem has been on the Network's agenda for 20 years!



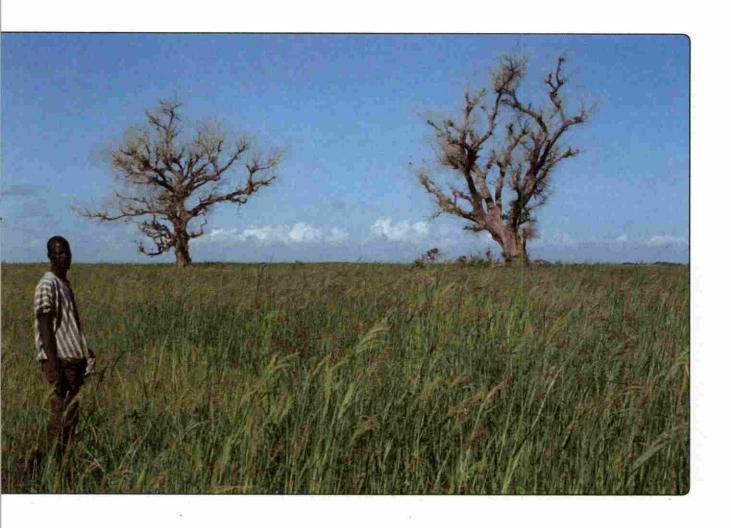
♦ A selective bibliography is presented at the end of each chapter. It is supplemented, in Part H, by an anthology of references and resources accessible on the Internet. An exhaustive bibliography is given in the CD-ROM (produced on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Network) together with the background papers.

HIS DOCUMENT was prepared within the context of the organization of the international Conference on the prevention of food crises in the Sahel, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Famine Prevention Network in the Sahel. It capitalises the work done by the Network and the contributing Sahelian and international institutions. These works • are very important references and daily working tools for the members of the Network, including particularly:

- La prévention des crises alimentaires au Sahel. Dix ans d'expérience d'une action menée en réseau, 1985-1995. This composite work directed by Johny Egg and Jean-Jacques Gabas and published on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Famine Prevention Network in the Sahel by the Club du Sahel/OECD. It takes stock of the cereal and food security policy reforms, the information and consultative systems in the Sahel, and the food aid;
- Les systèmes d'information sur la sécurité alimentaire dans le Sahel. Diagnostic et perspectives. This working paper published in 1999 collects the work of a group set up in 1993 by the Network. It takes stock of the information systems; their capacity to meet the expectations of the end-users, the information requirements of the latter, and the questions related to the internalisation and harmonization of the information systems;
- L'information au cœur de la sécurité alimentaire sahélienne. Bilan et perspectives des dispositifs nationaux et régionaux. This file published in 2000 by the AGRHYMET/CILSS Regional

- Centre and the European Union takes stock of the achievements of the DIA-PER project (Permanent Diagnosis). It sums up the challenges and choices and takes stock of the state of information systems in the Sahel;
- L'information appropriée et à temps pour la sécurité alimentaire au Sahel. This file published by the AGRHYMET/CILSS Regional Centre and the Italian Co-operation takes stock of the achievements of the AP3A project (early warning and agricultural productions forecasts);
- Le cadre harmonisé d'analyse de la vulnérabilité courante au Sahel. It is the fruit of a composite work gathering the major institutions members of the Network (CILSS, USAID, WFP, Fews.Net, FAO, French Cooperation, Care, European Union, Ibimet-Italy). It proposes a diagnosis of the early warning systems and a common vulnerability assessment framework.
- Le cadre stratégique de sécurité alimentaire durable dans une perspective de lutte contre la pauvreté au Sahel. adopted by the Conference of the Heads of State and Government of the CILSS Member States in 2000. It constitutes a common orientation framework of the national food security strategies supplemented by a regional strategy.

With this wrap-up document, CILSS wishes to cordially thank their authors and all those who have contributed to and have facilitated the work of the Network over the last 20 years.



The text in this document is printed on entirely recycled coated paper (cyclus print), the cover on vellum of Arches (curious touch velvet, 100% cotton). Inks used are vegetable oil-based inks.

Printed in May 2005 on the presses of SAGIM-Canale printing works in Courtry for CILSS.

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Printing number: 8049

The history of famines in the Sahel



AS THE SAHEL been always exposed to famine? When did the first food crises start and what were their causes? How did the pre-colonial sahelian societies organise themselves in order to prevent the famine and survive? How did the colonial administrations manage these risks? Have the traditional modes for preventing and managing crises by the rural societies disappeared or are they still existing in the vulnerable zones? What type of analysis could be drawn from the institutions on the detection and strategies for survival in crisis periods before Independence, and are there lessons learnt in tackling the present food problems? This part aims at rekindling the current debate from a historical perspective.

• Famine is the term currently used to define the total lack of grains in a region following a poor harvest. There is famine when a situation of temporal seasonal shortage commonly called drought, becomes widespread to the point of causing an unusual number of deaths on the populations who suffer from hunger.

Sahel? It is only relatively recent that this question became one of the major procurations for historical research. The conclusions of certain works reveal that pre-colonial African societies have never been exposed to catastrophic famine comparable to those that the Sahel has become accustomed to since independence. It is in fact difficult to compare the food crises that have taken place in different historical contexts. However, at any rate, the image of sahelian Africa that is free from crises for subsistence during the pre-colonial

period cannot be objectively analysed.

As regards the sahelian subspace, it is not possible to date with precision the first major famine. To as far back as we can date the time, natural or human factors have been likely to disrupt the so fragile equilibrium between man and the natural resources around him. However, it is not possible to date and analyse the famine that have been reported on documents.



The pre-colonial famine

N TIMES OF PEACE in the past and coupled with normal meteorological conditions, the populations succeeded in producing the food resources necessary for the reproduction of the way of life of the farmer. The traditional agrarian framework corresponded to a relatively stable report between infertile soil, a moderate population and a social ligneage framework. There was a certain equilibrium. There is thus a stability between the population and the available food stock during more or less long periods. However, it is a fragile equilibrium. In times of socio-political troubles, or under the constraint imposed by climatic hazards, the means of subsistence likely to guarantee the survival of groups becomes unpredictable. The rupture occurs at the slightest climatic incident or pressure on the population. In this geographical zone, the fragility of the ecological equilibrium was such that it was possible to witness, in one or two seasons, a situation of seasonal hunger to one of generalised hunger. This is why the sahelian populations always feared the lean period. In fact, in such a context, the slightest banal shortage could develop to an acute food crisis.

For the Sahel, there are teachings on the *Sudanian colmuns*: The columns of Agadez, Kano and Bornou, the columns of Tichit, Walata and those of Timbuctou. These documents which are written at times by ear witnesses, describe the causes and chronological events of major calamities (wars, famine, epidemies, epizootic, etc.).

For the central Sudan (from the river Niger to the Lake Chad), The oldest calamities are reported by the colmuns of Bornou. The periods: 1543 and 1551, 1560 and 1568, but also the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century (characterised by seven years of drought and famine), were periods of major food crises. The columns of Agadez and Kano equally highlight some major calamities in the second half of the 17th century. This period was catastrophic because the famine coincided with the wars between the different Tuareg tribes of Air. Following these plagues, there was a massive exodus of the populations from Air towards the south. In the course of the 18th century, the years 1738-56, 1780-90, 1783-95, were very difficult.

For the West African Sahel or the western Sudan (from the river Niger to the Atlantic ocean), the famine and epidemies witnessed by the populations were reported by the columns of Timbuctou, Tichit and Walata. The most severe occured in 1695, 1741, 1833-34, 1854-55, 1865-66, 1872-73, 1890-91, 1898-99.



Famine in the colonial period

In the colonial period, and more particularly in the course of the first half of the 20th century, the sahelian subspace witnessed a very critical food situation. This difficult food situation was linked to factors of a structural and temporary nature:

- The difficult natural conditions (droughts, locust invasions, epidemies, etc.);
- The coercive nature of the colonial system which profoundly disrupted the traditional way of life of the sahelian farmers and livestock breeders.

The combination of these two factors explains the evolution of the food situation and the different crises which punctuated this particular period.

The indicators of a major food crisis appear in the periodical reports of the colonial administrators in the course of the first years of colonial domination in the Sahel. The food assessment showed an acute deficit. The harvest was considered to be generally bad. The administrators at the time raised a cry of alarm right at the end of of the 1899-1900 campaign. The attention of the Governor General was attracted by the shortage of grains in several circles from ex. AOF (Dori, Ouahigouya, Timbuctou, Niamey, Bakel, Mopti, etc.) where the circle commanders complained of the difficulty they were undergoing in collecting taxes. It was from 1901 that the crisis became generalised subsequent to three years of consecutive poor harvests: a poor year in 1899, an average year in 1900 and a bad year in 1901. Drought and locust invasion seemed to be the main causes of the poor harvests.

The period between 1912 and 1914 appears in all of the colonies and also in the entire Sahel (from the Atlantic ocean to the red sea), as the worst crisis for livelihood production within the sahelian subspace. The famine was consecutive to a major drought.

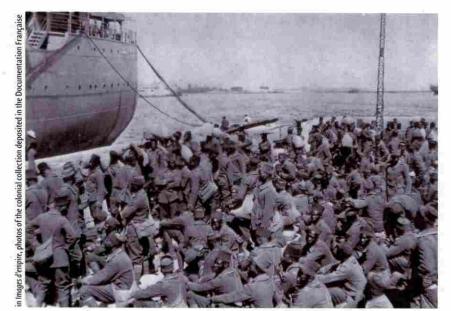
The food aspect in the period 1915-1927 was good but very bad regarding health. Only the years 1921 and 1927 are presented as years of shortage in certain regions in the Sahel.

The food situation degraded considerably after the 1927-1928 agricultural campaign. It was particularly difficult between 1930 and 1932 owing to attacks by locusts (the migrant locust) which was devastating throughout the Sahel, with a lot more intensity in the belt of the Niger. According to the inspector of the colonies B. Sol, "since 1927, and despite the so-called good harvests mentionned in the reports of the different governors, there were shortages. These drought were annual but their effects were aggravating and as money became rare, the native, being deprived of a harvest no longer had the means of providing himself with the necessary foodstuffs."

The beginning of the 1940s (1940, 1942, and 1943) were deficit years in several sahelian regions. Despite a relatively good livelihood production, food difficulties during this period are to be seen in the light of the war effort put up by the sahelian populations.

The food crises of this period clearly illustrate





the increasing role the crises can play on public policies. In the different territories (Niger, Upper-Volta, Sudan, Senegal, Chad), the force of the colonial impact which characterised the first decades of the AOF in a very fragile ecological context, resulted into a series of major crises for

subsistence and of rare intensity. The food situation was critical notably in the course of the years 1900-1901, 1913-1914, 1931-1932, and to a less extent between 1941 and 1943. This succession of famine in the colonies culminated into two major consequences: a population crisis linked to human losses caused by famine and epidemies, a massive influx towards the other colonies, notably the English colonies. The majority of the plagues affected simultaneously all of the French ex-colonies situated in the sahelo-sudanian belt. If it is true that the famine did not come about as a result of the colonisation, its scope and intensity largely aggravated the coercive system: requisitioning for livelihood, strong pressure on taxation and an increased demand in the labour force.



Post-colonial famine

THE ANALYSIS of the food situation in the countries of the Sahel from 1960 to date reveals some major fluctuations in cereal assessments although in most cases they reveal a deficit. The years 1972-73 and 1984-85 were difficult years for the farmers of the Sahel. They were in fact characterised by two periods of very severe famine which struck the region in the course of the last century. Among the explanatory factors there are two that are generally privileged: (i) a short term factor, with the effects of an exceptional drought in 1972 and in 1983; (ii) causes of a structural nature with the effects of a continuous degradation of the environment, the over-exploitation of the rural subspace, the inadequacy of farming stocks associated to the low importance accorded to livelihood crops (for the 1972-73 crisis), the low level of supervision and organisation of the rural world.

Despite the extreme severity of the drought consecutive to these two crises, it seemed that the consequences on the populations were less significant than the previous famine especially those of the years 1913-14 or 1931-32.

Apart from these two major crises of the years 1973-74 and 1984-85, other more or less generalised famine occured in many a country in the Sahel. These countries are Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso as regards the critical food situation observed in the course of the years 1990-91, 1995-96, 1997-98, and 2000-2001. The huge cereal deficit was a result of the globally poor rainfall. In 1994-95, the food crisis situation was aggravated by the devaluation of the CFA Franc which strongly increased the food imports.

Years	Affected area	Local terminology	Precipitating cause or cyclical cause [aggravating factors]	Manifestations of the crisis	
			Pre-colonial era		
1535-1543	Sahel	kayfi (terrible, horror)	drought, grasshoppers [epidemics]		
1639-1643	loop of the Niger	1	flooding [epidemics]	"people were buried with no prayer being said"	
1695-1699	Sahara & Sahel	basi	wars [epidemics]	"it was like doomsday"	
1738-1744	Sahel	tali (serious offence, sin or a lot of damage)	drought [epidemics, epizootic diseases]	"people used to eat dead animals and human beings"	
1830-1833	Sahel		drought [epidemics, epizootic diseases]		
1855	Central Sudan	banga-banga	drought [armed conflicts]	"people ate vultures"	
1864-1866	Sahel	balaw (the big disaster)	epidemics [war, epizootic diseases, grasshoppers]		
1870-1873	Sahel	gasu-borgu (famine of the calabashes)	drought [epidemics, epizootic diseases, armed conflicts]	"when all was exhausted, we ate the calabashes"	
1890-1893	Sahel	arandet	Epizootic diseases [epidemics]	90% of the livestock were decimated	
			Colonial era		
1900-1902	Sahel	sar-sar (massacre, total devastation in its wake)	Armed conflicts (colonial war) [drought, locust invasion, epidemics]	sar-sar, name given to the Voulet-Chanoine Mission	
1913-1914	Sahel	kaka-laba (empty stomach)	drought [epidemics, colonial rule]	considered by the populations as the biggest disaster human beings can ever remember	
1931-1932	most of the Sahel	doa jiire (locust year)	locust invasion (desert locust) [colonial rule, epidemics, epizootic diseases]	significant migration flows towards North Nigeria	
			Post-colonial era		
1973-1974	Sahel	dan-kusu (the jerboa year)	drought [grasshoppers (Senegalese locust), rodents, epidemics]	decimated livestock, massive emergency assistance	
1984-1985	Sahel	maiyga-asi (everyone is concerned), daa-baare (change of mentality)	drought [grasshoppers (Senegalese locusts), epidemics]	massive emergency assistance of the international community	



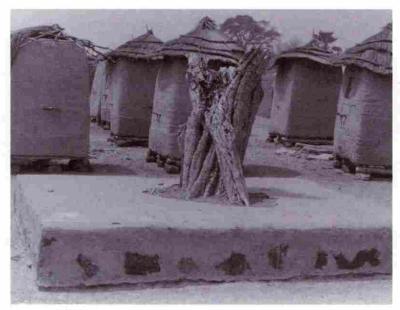
The modes of managing and preventing crises before the colonial period

Summary of the major crises

HE CAPACITY TO ADAPT TO RISKS of food shortages associated to climatic hazards is one of the essential characteristics of pre-colonial farming societies. Faced with food insecurity, the households and the rural communities developed several types of strategies which vary according to socio-professional status, the duration and intensity of the crisis, etc. The answers to the crisis are given according to the number of endogenous and exogenous factors.

The forecast institutions in the pre-colonial era

BY FORECAST INSTITUTIONS the populations refer to the organs for management of livelihood stocks that forecast agricultural risks which exist at several levels: individual level, household level, village level and stock management level of the major sovereigns. Forecast institutions can take several forms: Three of them play an essential role in times of food crisis: (i) the mutual and solidarity forms;



(ii) the grains reserve; and (iii) the major sovereign reserves

The mutual and the solidarity are essential values at the village community levels both in normal periods as in times of crisis. In periods of difficulty, village self-help takes a particular turning point. In case of calamities (war, plague, famine, etc.), the villages or regions affected turn towards their neighbours. The host populations willingly accept to share their reserves with the have-nots. There are also some forms of family self help, inter-village or inter-regional. These forms of solidarity generally do not function when food shortage or famine becomes localised. Here the farmer resorts to the millet stored in his warehouse during this famine period.

The constitution, upkeep and management of a reserve loft over a long period (sometimes individually, generally collective) is one of the fundamental pillars of the forecast systems in the traditional societies in the Sahel. Among the Zarma-Songhay (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger), the term used to refer to the reserves which are only consumed in cases of famine is bonbatuu, which can be translated as "protect us tomorrow" or "let us look ahead".

At the end of the last century, several explorers who travelled the belt of the Niger took note of the existence of these reserves lofts.

Right from the middle ages there was the appearance of certain forms of "state reserves". The constitution and management of stocks reserve were one of the institutions on which depended the strength and authority of the sovereigns of Gao. The Askia accorded a particular importance to the existence of reserves of grain cobs. The vast areas of the Songhay princes served not only to save the poor in periods of normalcy, but also to replenish the populations in case of calamities. The Tarikh of Timbuctou provide detailed descriptions on the spheres of the Songhay sovereigns by insisting on the mode of managing the harvests, a significant portion of which is reserved for the security stocks. In the reign of Askia Daoud, a quota for each province of the kingdom was fixed which was to carry the reserves by boat to the administrative centers of the different regions of the empire (Gao, Timbuctou, Tendirma, Mopti, Dendi, etc.).



The strategies of survival in periods of crisis

THE ANALYSIS of the strategies used to tackle the crises recorded down in history makes it possible to distinguish in broad outline four major phases.

The first stage of the crisis corresponds to a phase where the populations continue their habitual way of life. At this stage the productive strategies predominate. in the agricultural cycle of the farmers in the Sahel, this phase corresponds to the more or less difficult lean period. It is either precocious or late according to the size of the harvest of the preceding year. One of the main objectives is to avoid a recourse to the grains reserve. The morale and food hygiene, the consumption of food substitutes which make a number of wild plants edible (fruits and leaves of wild plants, roots and tubers, wild cereals), the recourse to the solidarity networks and the rigourous management of stocks would ease getting over the hurdle.

The second stage (famine extending over an agricultural season) corresponds to the first effects of the crisis in the face of the threat of social dsintegration. The main objective is the

survival and maintenance of the integrity of the group: overcome hunger, risk sharing, avoiding dispersion, the harmful individual actions and mass exportation of hunger.

The third stage (famine extending at least over two agricultural years) corresponds to the final stage of the crisis. The survival of the group is reduced to the survival strategies of the family. Challenged by certain extreme behaviours imposed by hunger (theft, child trafficking, transgression of social values), the purpose of the actions is the daily supply of the household and the preservation of human dignity in itself. This problem of facing hunger with dignity by preserving the maximum of the basic resources for the future is still perceptible in our days.

The fourth stage corresponds to a long duration crisis context ranging from two to four years of successive famine. In such a context, the individual actions and the extreme bahaviours take precedence over the social values and the family or community interest (cattle stealing, crime, children battering or abducting...).



The food strategies in the colonial period

In the different colonies of the ex.-AOF (French West Africa), the local administrators have for a long time been seeking to conceal the traces of a food crisis through their annual reports. Thus up to the beginning of the 1930s, little was done by the colonial authorities to save the populations during times of food crisis.

For the colonial authority, the recurrence of the famine in the colonies had two essential causes: the irregularity of the rains and the lack of foresight of the natives. However he was aware of the fact that at all times there existed a loft. He went on to say that, considering the mentality of the natives this institution, "should be regulated and adapted to the material needs of the populations". Why in the beginning of the



1930s? The dramatic consequences of the food crisis which raged over much of the Sahel had some repercussions in the whole of France owing to the politico-administrative imbroglio which shattered the colonial milieux. The French human rights league defended the farmers who were victims of the famine and accused the colonial administration of being at the root of this crisis. A commission of enquiry led by the Inspector of the colonies B. Sol was set up. Its report concluded upon the collective responsibility of the administration. For the first time, since the colonial occupation some preventive short, medium and long term measures were recommended. This was the first real mechanism for the management and prevention of crises in the Sahel. This mechanism carried measures aiming at mitigating the immediate effects of the famine and the preventive actions.



Grains reserve: colonialists take responsibility

Since the Beginning of the 20th century the colonial administration set up the lofts after taking inspiration from the existence of traditional forecast organs in the pre-colonial societies. These lofts that the populations called "lofts of the Commander" was intended for the creation of livelihood stocks to tackle the frequent famine during the colonisation. The colonial administration charged with the moni-

- These measures are manifold:
- Setting up new forecast institutions: two types of grains reserve (lofts or granaries: the lean period or family grains, the district grains or food shortage grains), setting up of the Indigenous Forecast Institutions, etc.);
- Combatting plant pests;
- Giving immediate help to famine victims: distribution of livelihoods and seeds to the farmers as an advance against the incoming harvest, free distribution of livelihood to the most vulnerable groups (women and children) in certain districts;
- Increasing agricultural production: popularisation and teaching of agricultural techniques, creation of pilot farm projects, organisation of locust control, developping basins along the river Niger, promotion of the cassava plant, etc.

- ♦ In this connection, the instructions of the Governor General of the AOF were clear: the food shortage loft (collective) remains the property of the family head, but, regarding the difference of the lean period loft (individuel), he does not have a free hand. This is only accessible upon orders from the Governor and in case of calamity.
- ♦♦ In 1953, the commission
 "Agriculture and livestock" of
 the French National Assembly
 concluded on the total failure
 of the IFI. They were replaced
 by the Societies for rural
 promotion (SMPR) from 1954
 onwards and, following the
 adoption of the framework law
 in 1956, by the mutual Societies
 for rural development (SMDR)
 which hardly had any success.

CISSOKO S.M., Famines et épidémies à Tombouctou et dans la boucle du Niger du xVIII* siècles.

BIFAN, 1968, B-23(3), pp. 806-821.

DERRIENNIC H., Famines et domination en Afrique. L'Harmattan, Paris, 1977, 283 p.

GADO B.A., Une histoire des famines au Sahel. Étude des grandes crises alimentaires (XIX^e-XX^e siècles). L'Harmattan, Paris, 1993, 201 p.

— , Stratégies de survie et méthodes de lutte contre les famines dans les anciennes colonies de l'A.O.F. in BECKER C. et al., A.O.F., réalités et héritage. Archives du Sénégal, Dakar, 1997, pp. 552-563.

TYMOWSKI M., Famines et épidémies à Oualata et à Tichit au XIX^e siècle. African Bulletin, Wazawa, 1978, 27, pp. 35-53-

toring and management of these stocks obliged each family head to contribute to the constitution of these stocks from 100 to 150 kg of grains on average per year and by taxable person. The population was prohibited from touching them without the authorisation of the circle Commander. In case of danger, the millet should in principle be given to the them.

Two types of lofts will be installed at the end of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s: the first (lean period loft) is placed at the disposal of the farmer at the time of growing and the lean period; the second plays the role of stock reserve (famine or food shortage loft). The food shortage loft of the preceding year takes second position and becomes lean period loft •.



The forecast institutions prefigure the cooperatives

THE GRAIN LOFTS were the foundations of the Indigenous Forecast Institutions (IFI). They were the first pre-cooperative structures in French West Africa. These were the life saving pre-cooperative structures and mutual loans to meet the needs of the members in case of calamity.

Theoretically, these societies were composed of the totality of farmers, herders, fishermen and self-employed craftsmen covering the entire territory. All members were subjected to an obligatory annual contribution. The members of the management and the board of di-

rectors were nominated by the governor of the colony who was himself the president. Among the main objectives assigned to the IFI were: (i) to develop the spirit between aid and the solidarity between the members; (ii) promote and sell agricultural and pastoral products; (iii)

develop the reserves and supply the farmers with seeds; (iv) come to the aid of the needy in case of calamity •••.

The measures taken by the colonial administration had effects which, in most cases contributed to making the populations more vulnerable to food crises. The setting up of new structures requiring an administrative control created a lack of coordination within the traditional social organs for village self-regulation. At the same time, owing to the weight of the colonial domination and the socio-cultural obstacles, but also and especially the incoherence of the measures taken, the populations could not adapt to the new structures.

In pratice, the grain lofts and the IFI have never served the purpose of saving the populations in times of food crisis. A colonial administrator testifies as witness and said: "the lofts have never existed in sufficient quantity. It was impossible to fill them annually. In addition, no regulation precised the conditions in which the populations could take them. The lofts were rather reserves for the heads and the notables than real life-saving reserves for the masses".

The reserves were one of the most unpopular institutions in the colonial period. In many regions, they were burnt by the populations following movements of insurrection in the face of the extent of the services provided to fill them, but especially owing to the enormous distances to travel for the delivery of the services to the head-chief of the district (30 to 50 kilometers for the distant villages).

As regards the IFI, real pre-cooperative structures (that the farmers called the second tax as a result of the obligatory annual contribution for each taxpayer), the immense majority of the sahelian farmers and breeders —in whose name this structure was set up were excluded from it.

B. Food insecurity today



HE MAJOR DROUGHTS which struck the sahelian communities in 1973-1974 and 1983-1984 largely affected the region and drew attention from the International Community. Unconsciously, the droughts brought about large scale food crises. Nevertheless these two alarms caused some very deep breakdowns characterised by a long lasting effect. They positionned the Sahel into a situation of structural vulnerability and this can be understood in the light of the rise in strength of new forms of widespread and permanent food insecurity. Apart from these circumstantial crises, the Sahel has become one of the regions in the World that is the most hit by hunger and chronic malnutrition linked to the hazards of production, poverty and the dysfunctionning of the markets.

- "Food security exists when all human beings have, at all times a physical and economic access to healthy and nutritive food sufficiency that makes it possible to satisfy their energy needs and their food preferences so as to lead a healthy and active life" (World Food Summit, FAO, Rome 1996).
- ◆◆ Malnutrition is an abnormal physiological state caused by deficiencies, excesses and desequilibrium of food energy, proteins or other nutrients.

 Under-nourishment is linked to permanent food rationning and insufficient to cover the energy needs.

Vulnerability corresponds to the existence of factors which expose the individual to food insecurity or undernourishment (probability of being exposed to a risk), or which prevent him from putting up a challenge to these situations (capacity of resistance to shocks).

POOD INSECURITY in the Sahel can be understood in the light of the different pillars on which food security is based: the availability of foods; their accessibility; stability in the supplies to the consumption units; and finally, the use to which they are put. This

last pillar, nutrition, is very much less frequently analysed in the Sahel, owing to the importance given to the other parameters.

Framed food insecurity: from the individual to the region

There are different forms of food insecurity. The lowest level is that of the individual. According to his age, sex, function, capacity to work, etc. Access of members of the same family to food varies considerably. These "distribution rules" can prove to be extremely prejudicial when applied to the underprivileged for example: children under age, girls or pregnant women, old age or handicapped people.

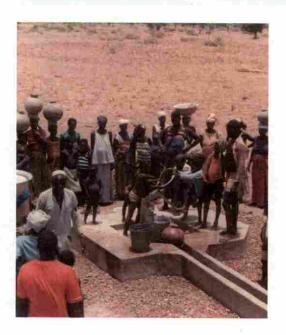
For the household, food security depends on the capacity of the family to have access to food. It is therefore linked to access to the factors of production, nota-

bly in the rural areas, or access to resources that make it possible to receive supplies from the markets both for the poor rural families as well as for the urban families.

For the village or an area or a small region food insecurity will reflect the insufficiency of production and the insufficiency of other sources of revenues that will allow a community to fill the deficit of local production.

At the country level, food insecurity will reflect the degree of global unsatisfaction of food needs, linked to a deficit of the domestic supply of food products, or the incapacity to resort imports or food aid since it depends on the level of development (domestic production) and trade flow. It can also be linked to the incapacity on one hand more or less of the households to produce or acquire the food that they so much need. This is why food insecurity is one of the principal stigmata of poverty.

When all of these factors simultaneously concern several countries, a whole region will then be paralysed by a situation of food insecurity. It is the case of the Sahel.



THESE PILLARS or dimensions of food insecurity are going to lead to distinguishing different causes and different manifestations of food crises. However, one of the characteristics of the Sahel is precisely that these dimensions are combined and rapidly usher in the appearance of a crisis. For example, a crisis of a climatic origin or a virulent predator attack on plants will devastate the resources of the agricultural population and consequently, plunge all of the non-agricultural households or the urban households in the small neighbouring town into an economic crisis and eventually into a food crisis (chain reaction impacts).



The hazards of production, main risk factor for the populations

OR THE SAHELIAN ECONOMIES that are traditionally based on the exploitation of natural resources and the use of labour force, agricultural production is essential in terms of food security. In spite of the strong urbanisation dynamics —urban population growth is above 6% per year -, and a certain diversification of the economies, the sahelian countries remain characterised by the importance of their agricultural sector which still represents about a third of the regional gross product. Still more significant is the fact that nearly 70% of the 56 million Sahelians, about 39 million people are living in rural areas, and the majority of them draw their resources from agriculture. With the exception of the southernmost sahelian countries where rainfall is around or over 1,000 mm yearly, these populations are dependent on extensive production systems and 95% of them use lands that are vulnerable to desertification.

Farmers are living in a very restrictive global environment. Whereas the productive systems are extremely sensitive to climatic conditions, water control and the recourse to irrigation remain exceptional. Whereas the irrigable lands in the Sahel represent 13% of the cultivable areas, only 3% are effectively irrigated. That makes agricultural production strongly dependent on an irregular rainfall pattern: rains frequently come late, there is irregular distribution throughout the rainy season as well as an interruption of the vegetative cycle at a crucial period and lastly, floods...

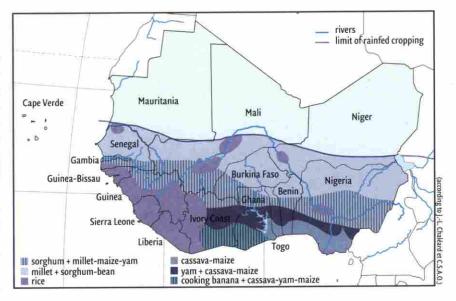
The majority of the family type sahelian agricultural farms are increasingly confronted with a strong evolution for the past twenty years.

The policy reforms that the sahelian countries have undergone have had numerous repercussions on the agricultural sector. The in-

ternal and external liberalisations of the economies and the refocussing of the States on their kingly missions have largely modified the environment of the agricultural fields. Thus, in the different sahelian countries, there has been a dismantling of the agricultural departments. Technical Committee, research, access to credit and modes of bringing agricultural products to the markets have at times taken a number of years following the large scale desorganisation and its subsequent restructuring. These evolutions are not identical in all countries in the sahelian zone.

The sahelian farmers are therefore confronted with numerous difficulties in gaining access to the different factors of production. Many market breakdowns therefore harm agricultural development activity. Rural credit, for example does not offer the response adapted to the needs of the farmers as regards the financing of investments necessary to the modernisation of farming techniques and the improvement of

Location of the major food production zones in West Africa





The Sahel, different natural milieu characterised by their fragility

THE SAHEL1, which extends over an area ranging 5,343,545 km², is composed of different natural milieu which are all characterised by a major fragility of their ecosystem. One of the factors behind this fragility is obviously the climate. It has two seasons: a long dry season and a rainy season whose duration varies from one, two or three months according to the years and zones. The corrosive effects from this heat, waters and winds that the soils are exposed to compose the second factor.

The Sahel has five climatic zones which confers a large agro-ecological diversity on it:

- An arid zone (sahelian climate) with a rainfall below 200 mm yearly. This desert area (north of the Sahel) extends over a stretch of land formed by a vast part of Chad, Niger, Mali and the major part of Mauritania.;
- A sahelian zone which receives an average annual rainfall of between 200 and 400 mm then a sahelo-soudani-

1. The countries of the Sahel to which

this refers to are the 9 member coun-

Committee for Drought control in the

tries of the Permanent Inter-States

- these meagre resources. In the south, rainfed cereals form the base of the agricultural and food systems;
 - is more blessed with rainfall, facilitates a major diversification of agricultural activity (food or cash crop productions);
 - A Guinean zone with a humid tropical type and which receives a rainfall be-
 - A coastal zone formed by the coasts of Senegal, Mauritania, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and parts of the Islands of Cape Verde. The climate there is strongly marked by maritime influence and with wind speeds that are relatively strong. The major fish resources are the source of employment and revenues.

an zone receiving between 400 and 600 mm. The Harmattan winds are active here during the long months. At the north of this zone, only pastoralism will make it possible to develop

- A soudano-sahelian and a soudanian zone covering the fringe situated between the isohyets 800 and 1,200 mm. It covers the south of Burkina, the regions south of Mali, Niger and Senegal, as well as the northern part of the Gambia. This fertile zone that

tween 1,400 and 1,800 mm. It covers the major part of Guinea-Bissau;

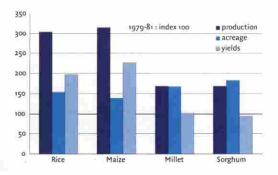
work productivity, as well as the prefinancing of the campaign. With the exception of the cash crop subsector like cotton that is still very much controlled, the present functionning of the supply circuits (fertilizer, seeds and phytosanitary products) rarely allow farmers the possibility of having access to inputs under satisfactory conditions: dysfunctionning of the trade circuits and very high costs that limit the use of the different factors of production.

The dependence of the sahelian farmers on rainfall raises the uncertainty which weighs on agricultural activity and consequently it has some negative repercussions on both agricultural investment as well as the use of different inputs. Whereas the yeilds remain above all determined by plant water supply, the farmers resent investing into factors of production that not guaranteed. The increase in the price of inputs that is associated to the suppression of subventions therefore was a fatal blow to the frail intensification strategies for rainfed livelihood plants.

The growth of family needs and the development of the towns are however the incentives to which the sahelian farmers have responded to. Thus, there is a global increase in agricultural production in the course of the last twenty years. Related to the population, cereal production has increased by 10%. This general tendency must not however overshadow the very differentiated evolutions according to the agro-ecological zones.

The strongest links between vulnerability of agricultural production and food insecurity are found in zones where rainfall is on average below 700-800 mm. Not only is this level of rainfall limited for rainfed crops, it is also often accompanied by a very strong variability around the average than in zones with much more water. This major spatial variability (the dry pockets) and temporal (pause), is strongly adversive to the development of outputs. When these pauses intervene at the time of the flowering of plants, it is not rare that the farmers be forced to completely restart their

Production, acreage and yield trends for the four cereals in the CILSS zone between 1979-1981 and 1999-2001



sowings. Whereas the rainy season is already very short, they are led to resowing using poor quality seeds or with early varieties, generally less productive.



Strongly vulnerable pastoral zones

THE AGRO-PASTORAL ZONES are also symptomatic of the risks incurred by the farmers. Developping the areas that receive the least rainfall (annual rainfall below 500 mm) into a framework of very extensive pastoral systems, livestock represents a very significant part of the agricultural GDP, to the tune of 20 to 30% in the big sahelian countries like Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal or Chad. It is not only the principal if not the only source of revenue for the herders, but also one of the main export resources supporting the whole national economy. The health progress and the increasing demand of the coastal countries that have no meat have dynamised this sector which has undergone some heavy losses in the course of drought of the 70s and 80s. The development of systems associating agriculture and livestock in the soudanian zone as well as the production of meats for the expanding urban markets (livestock on a short cycle) equally favour animal production. Poor rainy seasons have a double impact on the economy of the pastoral zones. On the one hand, the first spin-off is the reconstitution of pastures. A bad season is going to constrain breeders to long and far away transhumance than normal. They will also often lead them to be separated prematurely from one part of the livestock, provoking a drop in the flow which reduces their purchase price. On the other hand, if the year is unfavourable, the prices of cereals have the tendency to increase sharply. Forced to sell their animals when prices drop and to buy cereals when prices rise, the breeders are seriously undergoing price cutting or the degradation of the terms of trade. This latter (evolution of the price of livestock / price of cereals) is from this point of view one of the indicators of food insecurity in the pastoral milieu.



Growing pressure on resources

OR VEGETAL PRODUCTIONS, the growth Γ in production is essentially owing to the increase in surface area sown and the yeilds remain constant. The only exceptions are rice and maize, a speculation of which the demand is constantly rising in the zone. For rice, the evolution of the habits and food systems • of the consumers, is accompanied in certain countries like Mali by considerable efforts on the performance plan of the technical itenerary both on the level of rice growing as on the level of the producers. Associated to a great improvement on water management -performances on land development, organisation of the farmers ... -, these efforts can be seen in the light of remarkable performances and a doubling of the outputs in 20 years. The situation is more complex in Senegal, where the propensity of the consumers to consume imported broken rice doubles the very unequal performances in the Valley of River Senegal.

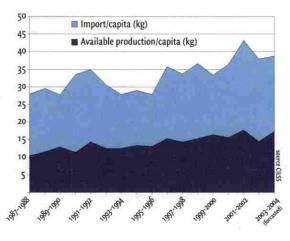
Maize is also undergoing a big increase, probably linked to the development of the production systems associating cotton and maize •• in the most fertile zone of the Sahel. The growth of dry cereal production in the sahelo-soudanian zone

- ♦ Rice is on one hand a food relatively easy to prepare and its part in food consumption of the urban households is constantly rising; on the other hand, the consumption of rice in the rural zone is equally strongly increasing: it is reserved for festive days and as such it is one of the numerous daily dishes especially during the lean period.
- ◆◆ Plant rotation is carried out on the same piece of land cotton and then maize. They help the latter to benefit from the good effects left behind by the cotton manure.

Cereal balance-sheet of the CILSS zone

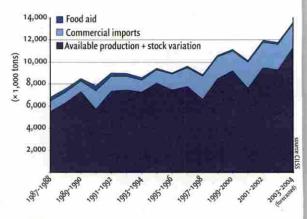
has been the least and is found exclusively over an extension of an area that expands as family needs arise. This leads to obstructing the plant cycle / natural fallow on which depend the reconstitution of of the fertility of the soils in the absence of sufficient external inputs. This transformation of the production systems largely poses the problem of sustainable management of natural resources in an extremely fragile zone. In the absence of controlled intensification of the production systems, this form of extensification fuels the desertification process and the degradation of the lands, which constitute the vectors for weakening the local agricultural economies.

The sahelian agriculture sector, despite the encouraging performances, still remain subjected to a number of constraints which impede its development. The agro-food trade balance is still in deficit despite the positive evolutions. The competitivity of sahelian agriculture though essentially nesting on its capacity to put its natural resources to good use, is extremely sensitive to the degradation of the natural and fragile environment. In an economy where autoconsumption occupies a place for choice in the food security strategies and the food risks associated to the availability of livelihood, these strategies are directly dependent on the natural shocks and the degradation of the natural environment.



• In the course of the past 30 years, the isohyetes changed from 200 to 300 km towards the south.





An increasingly precarious environment

Thus, the phenomena of desertification which are the most striking manifestation of this environmental degradation are the result of the combined action of climatic evolution and human activities and they leave a doubt as to the sustainability of the production systems. The growing increase in the level of destroying natural resources, consecutive to a population growth (at the rate of 3% yearly) over a number of years contributes to the expansion of the dry zones of the Sahel towards the south and endangers the domestic supply of foodstuffs.

As regards the shocks caused by natural factors, a poor rainfall or a threat from pests (example locusts since June 2003) will affect agricultural production in enormous proportions (cf. graph). Thus, by reducing food availabilities and the revenues of the farmers, mainly in the landlocked areas where the costs of transactions are such that the supply by the market is extremely expensive, these climatic or natural shocks can bring about consequential food crises. Thus, the farmers will have no other sources of revenue other than trading off their surplus production.



Poverty reduces access to foodstuffs

he notion of accessibility contained in the definition of food security makes reference to the capacity of the households to supply themselves with food. In the Sahel, like elsewhere, this supply is going to combine three possible modalities: (i) autoconsumption of foodstuffs produced at the economic unit; (ii) the recourse to the market; and finally, (iii) the mobilisation of the solidarity network.

Autoconsumption implies that the family units have the means of production that facilitate the development of an agricultural activity: access to cultivable lands, access to the factors of production, etc. This modality has been widely tackled in the preceding development, in tandem with the dimension "availabilities" of food security. The second modality implies that the households and the individuals have resources necessary to replenish their stocks from the markets.

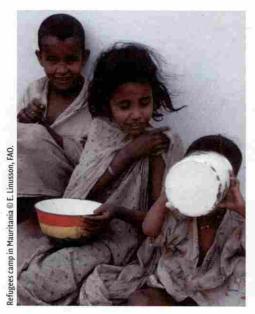
In the light of the foregoing, and in particular for the urban households and the non-autosufficient rural households, accessibility is directly linked to the resources of the households, that is to their revenues. Massive poverty which pre-

vails in the Sahel gives a measure of the importance of the food security dimension. Poverty is effectively a reality for many sahelians and this phenomena is far from reduced. In the 9 Cilss countries all belonging to the category of the LCD •, there has been in the course of the 1990 decade a regression of the regional gross product of 5% (16 billion dollars in 1999) whereas the growth of the population over the same period was 32%. The average annual revenue per sahelian therefore has the tendency to degrade and today it is at 284 dollars.

Poverty is thus very significant in the Sahel. However, a global outline must not overshadow the major disparities regarding the distribution of wealth: in the majority of the countries, more than half of the national income is concentrated in the hands of the richest 20% whereas the poorest 20% share less than 5% of the national income.

Even if this poverty is not confined to the rural world (certain urban dwellers are living in a state of utter destitution), it affects a significant part of the population and its intensity is high. Thus, at the ends of the 90s, it was considered that 27 million people (62% of the ru-

 Cape Verde is on the brink of leaving the LCD, considering the evolution of its indicators.
 A transitional phase of three years has started and will be concluded completely in 2008.



ral population) were living below the poverty threshold. This poverty in the rural milieu varies according to the country: 46% in Cape Verde, it reached 86% in Senegalese interior.

The repercussions of this monetary poverty are evident on food security: 17 million sahelians (one on three) are struck by malnutrition or are chronically under nourished.

The growing monetarisation of the food systems and of agricultural activity augments the economic risks of food insecurity. Thus, under the double effect of financial adjustments and external liberalisation, the economies have become more vulnerable to the evolutions of the international market. A sudden drop in export receipts will therefore have serious consequences both on the food security of the households of the farmers (drop in revenues and access difficulties to food) as well as the Nation (drop of the foreign exchange necessary for the financing of food

Population living with less than

imports, drop in fiscal receipts...).

A major variation of the prices of imported foodstuffs would only leave as an alternative to certain households (urban households without employment and deficits in rural livelihoods) to change their food habits or to reduce their savings or even decapitalise and reduce their productive capital so as to have access to food that has now become onerous.

The third modality, the recourse to the networks in which the individual or the household are in constant change. Poverty is accompanied by a breakdown in social links, especially between the young category in the towns and the family of origin which remains in the village. The adjustments measures of the public sector also have some major consequences on the transfer of resources between town and rural milieu of origin of the senior civil servants "deflated". Finally, the rise in strength of a certain type of individualism puts the traditional solidarities into question within the family or community circle.

weight insufficiency

Some food insecurity statistical indicators

	a dollar per day	malnutrition		(%) 1995-2001 (last year)	
1	(%) 1990-2001 (last year)	(%) 1990-1992	1998-2000	children of less than 5 years	neonatal
Burkina Faso	61.2	23	23	34	18
Cape Verde		_		14	13
Gambia	59-3	21	21	17	14
Guinea-Bissau	-	-	-	23	20
Mali	72.8	25	20	43	16
Mauritania	28.6	14	12	32	
Niger	61.4	42	36	40	12
Senegal	26.3	23	25	18	12
Chad	24-417-5-41	58	32	28	24

Population suffering from

source UNDP 2003



The markets, vector for food security and source of... instabilities

HEREAS a large proportion of the sahelian households were relatively self-sufficient some thirty years ago, it is no longer the case today. The recourse to the market to trade their surpluses of production or acquire the food they need concerns the majority of the households. Furthermore, the conditions for trading the products, the imperfections and uncertainties of the markets weigh strongly on the realisation of food security for all of the households.

Obviously, the improvement of the functionning of the markets under the effect of an approach that is poorly administered (the withdrawal by the State of the functions of the operator, liberalisation of regional trade...), the development of infrastructures (roads, runways, storage capacities ...) and the institutions (information systems, financing ...) all contributed to the food security of the sahelian populations. To be convinced, suffice it to recall that in the 80s, the connection between the surplus areas in cereals and the deficit areas did not augur well. The logic of self-sufficiency and a conception of storage as an element of security made approaches which considered on the other hand that the circulation of foodstuffs is a factor for securing supplies. •

Thus, the local production deficits could be compensated by the trade flows on the condition that the flow of the markets be effective. If the markets for agricultural livelihood products (livestock, cereals, tubers, vegetables...) are considerably developped both on the national as well as the crossborder levels and more widely on the regional level, numerous obstacles to trades (informal or not) will still obstruct a complete flow. Certain basins of production are not sufficiently connected and dynamised by the demand and are subjected to a strong variabil-

ity (intra annual or inter annual) of the prices. The complementarity between the systems of production and consumption structures is not adequately exploited between sahelian country and between the latter and the coastal countries of the Gulf of Guinea. The majority of the sahelian countries are positionned between two subspaces of economic and trade integration, UEMOA and ECOWAS. These two subspaces are connected in a way hitherto concerted and convergent, in the setting up of customs unions designed for an integral liberalisation of trade at the interior of West Africa and the setting up of an external common tariff system at the border of the region. These evolutions should facilitate trade. However, the political, economic and monetary disparities as well as the existence of corruption in certain places "constituted body" seriously complicates the emergence of the unique West African market. Not to mention that despite the regional commitments, certain governments are sometimes tempted to close the borders fearing shortages if "the livelihood leaves the country"!



A fragile insertion into the world economy

The insertion of the region into the international markets is another uncertain vector. The sahelian economies are relatively marginal in world trade. They rely on a very reduced number of agricultural or mining products, little or not processed at all. This is a major factor for vulnerability. The cotton sector, with several million people depending on it is the spearhead for exports in the sahelian region. But it also illustrates the fragility and the extreme dependence of a region with regard to a lone product. The main competitors

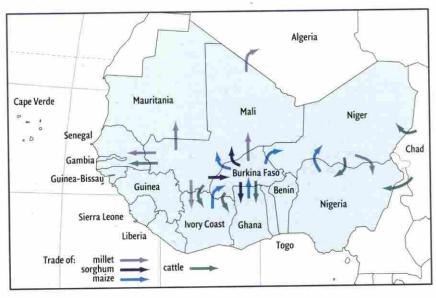
- · Regional trade contributes to food security in the region. This trade goes beyond the limits of the Sahel area. The coastal countries play an active role in the regional trade; by buying the coarse cereals, the Sahelian segments of their population need for their consumption, and exporting maize. Very significant cereal exchanges are taking place between Nigeria and Niger. Even in poor crop production years, Niger continues to export products to the highly populated border zones of Nigeria. Some NGOs, like Afrique Verte, have made trade promotion between surplus and deficit production zones of the Sahel a basis for their intervention in favour of food security and the promotion of the cereal production zones.
- See part E on the Malian experience.

 Please refer to part F where the new risks, particularly economic risks, are treated of the region only had to support significantly their producers so as to drop the prices on the international markets and thus make the domestic producers and the countries with little alternatives lose several billion dollars.

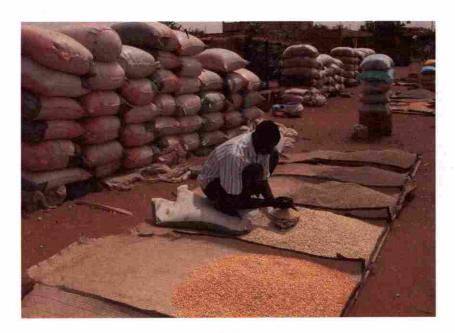
Generally, the sahelian countries have largely liberalised their imports on food products. This represents a very significant part of the total imports of these countries. Corn and corn flour, rice, pastry foods and diary products are the main imported products which weigh strongly in the trade balance. Although it regards the competing products from the local subsectors and frequently subventionned by the western countries, the imports are lowly taxed at the entry into the west African territory. The countries are reluctant to give up the short term advantages that the cheap imports represent for the consumers, instead of reducing the unfair competition that these imports exert on the farmers. The countries of the region are moreover committed in the international negotiations aiming to further increase the opening of the markets to imports. It is the case of the negotiation of the economic partnership Accords (EPA) with the European Union which falls within the perspective of creating a free trade zone between the EU and ECOWAS. It is also the case of the American initiative AGOA (African Growth and Opportunity Act) and in a more multilateral manner within the framework of renegotiating the agricultural component of the WTO.

Conversely, the opening on the international markets is a means that the Sahel has in order to, on the one hand, complete its deficit regional production and on the other hand contribute to a certain stabilisation of internal prices strongly influenced by the desequilibrium between supply and demand. The opening of the regional and international markets makes it possible to better break the shocks and play a role of regulation and the stabilisation of prices.

Inspite of all this, many questions remain regarding the capacity of the market to contribute to food security. With a private sector that is often oligopolistic, depending on a low number of operators, the practice of stock retention, the cordiality on the tenders at the time of institutional invitation to tender are as much practices which have come to abnormally amplify the market tendencies. A climatic crisis may be in formation in the horizon and the prices, already inflated by ominous harvest forecasts, are already rising because certain traders (and moreover traders termed as "opportunists" owing to the fact that



Cereal and cattle trade in West and Central Africa they are not regularly present at the market for agricultural products) are going to organise the shortage so as to maximise their income. The asymmetry of the access to information which is often at the expense of the farmers, is going to open the road to some major dysfunctionning. These have magnified the difficulties that landlocked zones have encountered being far away from capitals and ports and with a very low purchasing power for their inhabitants. Rare are traders interested in replenishing stocks under these conditions but would rather leave that to national or international solidarity to take care of!





Food security is inseparable from health condition

HE DEFINITION of food security since 1992 and the works of the international Conference on nutrition (CIN), make a reference on the use which is made of food. It is not enough to provide the necessary nutriments but the food must be healthy and that the organism gets the benefits.

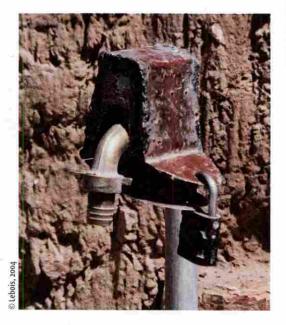
Food consumed by a human being is very much linked to his state of health. As with young children for example, the consumption of polluted water will lead to digestive problems which will be accompanied by repetitive diarrhoeaand this causes dehydration, the loss of appetite and weight loss etc. Therefore the availability of food is not sufficient in ensuring normal food supply. In another context, malaria or other illnesses like river blindness will indirectly cause some major food problems. Food security is thus both inseparable and very much dependent on the level of satisfaction of a certain number of primary needs. These are what are referred to as basic social services: 58% of sahelians have no access to health services, 39% have no access to medicine and essential vaccines and 39% have no access to potable water... Food hygiene is also very much dependent on the levels of education of the populations who are considerably poorly educated despite recent efforts, particularly concerning the education of girls and adults. Only 22% of girls and 34% of boys are educated. These indicators tend to

Water and health infrastructures

		g regular access to ater points	Urban population using improved sanitary facilities	
	rural area (%) 2000	urban area (%) 2000	(%) 2000	
Burkina Faso	37	66	39	
Cape Verde	89	64	95	
Gambia	53	80	41	
Guinea-Bissau	49	79	95	
Mali	61	74	93	
Mauritania	40	34	44	
Niger	56	70	79	
Senegal	65	92	94	
Chad	26	31	81	

source UNDP 2003

drop owing to the increasing needs posed by population pressure: half of the sahelian population is less than 15 years. However, it is on these aspects that the strategy for poverty control focusses on.





Next to the structural factors there are serious crises!

In the Sahel, food insecurity permanently covers the two phenomena: structural and circumstantial food insecurity. The first, structural or chronic food insecurity is caused by abject poverty. It results more from problems of accessibility to food than the insufficiency of foodstuffs at the markets. It also makes reference to the lack of income and could be curbed in the long term by development or poverty reduction programmes. The succinct presentation of some sahelian characteristics helped shape some of its numerous aspects.

Circumstantial food insecurity refers to food difficulties which periodically affects certain categories of the population. The intensity of the latter is variable: since the limited crises in time and in space up to the generalised crises. Circumstantial food insecurity is in part linked to events which affect the environment in which the sahelian communities live. The climatic shocks, or attacks from predators are part of them. However other shocks such as political upheavals taking place in the sahelian countries or in the sub-region, will largely influence the food situation of the Sahelians. In fact, such conflicts create a strong insecuri-

ty whose impacts are numerous. This insecurity first of all affects all communication lines and also the stakeholders of the trade circuits (farmers, traders, transporters). They impede the flow of goods and thus hike the prices. In the case of countries like the Ivory Coast which is an essential outlet for sahelian livestock products, the repercussions on the revenues of the cattle and thus on food security are colossal. The movement of the populations and the insecurity are also factors which disorganise the productive activities and subsequently eat into the revenues of the farmers.



The rise in strength of conflicts

CRISIS MANAGEMENT is another disturbing factor that can affect food security conditions. For example, following the influx of refugees as in the case of the East of Chad in the wake of the Sudan crisis, the emergency interventions are to going to emerge without the humanitarian stakeholders being really able to consider the specificities of the milieu: very short notices, mobilisation of standardised

products, etc. It can result into negative effects on the functionning of the local economies. In the same vein, a massive aid can also enter into "competition" (in terms of mobilisation of the teams and of allocation of resources) with the crisis becoming more widespread and posing the risk of being neglected.

In certain zones exposed to recurrent food crises, the transfer of revenues of the migrants is a substantial supplement which makes it possible to face the food needs that have not been satisfied by domestic production. Events, like the one in the Ivory Coast, can strongly reduce these transfer of funds and secure the food security of a large number of persons in the villages of origin.

In the long term, political troubles can usher in a degradation of the confidence between a State and its partners (suspension of public aid to development) or a long lasting deterioration of a part of the productive potential.

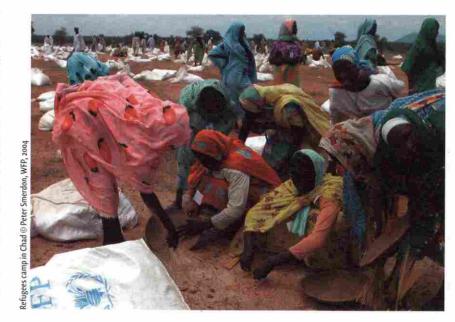


All men are not equal in the event of risks!

HIS BRIEF ANALYSIS of food crisis risks facilitates introducing the notion of vulnerability. In fact, all sahelians are not exposed to food crisis risks at the same level given their purchasing power, their geographical position, their activity, their capacity to resist shocks, their social relations, etc.

Certain fringes of the sahelian population appear more vividly vulnerable than others. Thus, circumstantial crises affect mainly two categories of the sahelian population: rural households living in areas where agricultural production is uncertain (poor conditions and rainfall variability) and where alternative sources of revenues are limited and the poorest urban households cannot have access to foodstuffs when prices of these skyrocket. Moreover, the rules of food distribution within the families consider that the children, the old people and the pregnant women are equally the most exposed to food risks. It seems therefore that vulnerability can be linked to a geographical area or to a category of the population (vulnerable group).

Vulnerability depicts a food security situation that regards the availability of, or accessibility to food. It is a notion bearing an intrinsically probabilistic character since it depicts the exposition of a particularly elevated risk to hunger. It is therefore not synonymous to poverty which refers to a state more or less characteristic of the permanent insufficiency of resources.





The double facet of vulnerability

VILNERABILITY COMBINES two elements: the first is relative to the probability to be confronted to a major risk (external factor) and the second is relative to the incapacity (or not) to defend oneself (internal factor which is linked to a lack of means to tackle the situation without suffering from severe losses). These two vulnerability elements refer to the different components of food crisis: the biophysical and socio-economic environmental factors and the behaviour of the victims, namely the access strategies to food and their capacities to resist shocks.

It appears thus that vulnerability refers to the two dimensions of food insecurity: structural food insecurity and circumstantial food insecurity. These two dimensions of food insecurity are closely linked. On one hand, low income increases the vulnerability of the populations to food crisis risks; on the other hand, the succession of several difficult years (on the food aspect) limits the capacity of the people to undertake technical or organisational changes likely to bring about an improvement in their incomes. Food crisis therefore comes about af-

ter a succession of tests which weaken the adaptation or survival strategies organised through family or social networks.

All the more so, food crisis, with its negative spinoffs on human, environmental and productive capital of a region or country, endangers, and at times for many years, the possibilities of a sustainable improvement on food security.

These two dimensions of food insecurity are interdependent in that they feed each other. They must therefore be considered simultaneously whether in the approach of strategies for the prevention and analyses of their determinants or in the definition of their strategies and policies on food security in the long term. The same with answers to give in case of crisis which the emergency measures must have of course but also, other more structural measures that make it possible to reinforce the capacity of the populations in tackling shocks and therefore reduce their vulnerability.

Selective bibliography: L'état de l'insécurité alimentaire dans le monde, 2003; suivi des progrès accomplis en vue de la réalisation des objectifs du sommet mondial de l'Alimentation et du Millénaire. FAO, 2003, 37 p. Sahel 21: no to poverty, opting for sustainable food security. CILSS, 2002, 61 p. Rapport mondial sur le développement humain, 2003. Les objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement. UNDP, 2003, 367 p. La situation alimentaire de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture, 2003-2004. FAO, 2004, 228 p. Rapport sur le développement dans le monde, 2000-2001. Combattre la pauvreté. World Bank-Eska, 2001, 381 p.

NITS ARTICLE 25, the universal Declaration of Human rights stipulates that: "Every Man has a right to an adequate standard of living in ensuring his health, his

living in ensuring his health, his well-being and that of his family, especially his food [...]" (1948).

These rights are again spelt

out in article 11 of the international Pact which relates to economic, social and cultural rights in 1966 (pact came into force in 1976): "The signatory States to the present Pact recognise the right of any person to an adequate

Food, every Man's right...

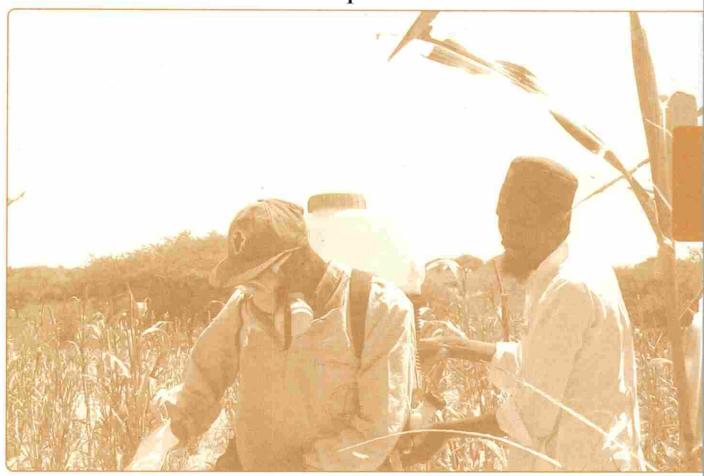
standard of living [...] including adequate food and commit themselves to taking the appropriate measures for the realisation of this right".

The declaration of Rome on world food security, adopted during the world Food summit in 1996 refers to these rights: "We, heads of State and government, [...] reaffirm the right of each human being to having access to healthy and nutritive food in accordance to the right to adequate food and the fundamental right

of each person to be protected from hunger."

The Millenium declaration adopted in September 2000 by the general Assembly of the United Nations spells out the objectives of the international community between now and 2015 concerning poverty reduction and draws out the ambition of "reducing by half the population which is living in extreme poverty and the proportion which is suffering from malnutrition".

Food crises prevention



N THE WAKE of the dramatic situation created the food crises, the Sahel and its partners put up some prevention strategies in order to counter this offensive. These prevention strategies are mainly on information and early warning and they relate to the early detection of a crisis situation, determining the magnitude, identifying the zones and the populations that are vulnerable who, confronted with this shock, find themselves in a situation of famine. The informations produced by the different specialised mechanisms on the different food security parameters —the productions, the market and accessibility—, have been debated upon by the consultation and decision mechanisms linking the Sahelian States and the donors. The diagnoses which emanate from these, based on the convergence of proofs, provide the decision on the interventions to be adopted.

 Please refer to part D on crisis management.

- As regards the consultation meeting on food aid. Dakar 14 and 15 June 1982, under the aegis of CILSS and the Club du Sahel/OCDE.
- See part F on the genesis of the Network for the prevention of food crises.

See in part F devoted to the acheivement and perspectives of the Network, the reflection on the definition of a charter on the quality of informations. HE CRISES PREVENTION mechanism in the Sahel is based on three complementary components. The first integrates the totality of the information systems. The second component deals with the dialogue, consultation and coordination mechanisms. These two aspects are precisely the subject of this section. The last component is on the intervention mechanism and involves the different instruments which facilitate the alleviation of crises or providing answers to them. This last operational component is treated in the following part.

"[...] The food production and consumption statistics are not reliable in the Sahel. The annual evaluations carried out so far by the multidonors missions in each of the CILSS countries are rather the prelude to a bargaining on food security between donors and recipients, than an objective evaluation of resources and needs. In order to change the procedures and habits, it would be proper to better appreciate these resources and needs [...]. To be better informed of these resources and food needs, the national statistical tools must be improved upon and the data be used by advanced technology. The national and private stocks must be [...] evalu-

ated, particularly the village stocks that current estimates totally neglect. It is advisable to carry out estimates on cereal supply and demand by zone in each country and by sub-region [...] in order to understand how trading is either or not carried out [...]. All delegates agree that the tools which would make it possible to understand cereal and food production, the stocks, the surpluses and the deficits in each zone [...], the needs of the most underprivileged groups, the most vulnerable zones, etc are very much ineffective. [...] The current situation would be improved if the CILSS countries decided to organise [...] an annual consultation with the cooperation agencies. Such a consultation would make it possible to assemble and compare the existing data provided by each and also to debate on the means of improving them and finally agree on the food aid need [...]."

Thus, the food crisis prevention problem that is going to structure more than twenty years of effort in the Sahel, is hereby summarised in this introduction by the CILSS Secretariat at a consultation on food aid held in June 1982.



Food aid structures the demand for information

Since that period, food aid which has become a structural modality since the drought of the 70s, is now the subject of staunch criticism from the both the Sahelians as well as the NGOs and certain donors. A form of compromise is going to be quickly formed. It is about recognising the fact that food aid is necessary but can be very harmful. It suggests according a privilege to local supplies (certain zones are already in surplus and competed for by aids). Finally, it is admitted that to reduce the negative impacts of aid, the

needs must be quantified more precisely, then localised and finally be shipped in the shortest possible time.

It is in this way that this necessity for correctly quantifying the food aid needs is going to weigh strongly in the orientation of the information mechanism. A reliable and independent information has already been highlighted and this is a demand that will be regularly found in the dialogue between countries and donors and it remains a crucial problem today.

Besides the information mechanisms there

has been since the beginning of the 1980s the dawning of this consultation need on both the national as well as the regional levels. Once again, the conception of the mechanisms is "oriented by the demand". It is always the need to improve upon the quality of information so as to polish the decision-making that has been put forward. Confrontation of the sources, contradictory analysis of the data will facilitate to better quantify the deficits and formulate the food aid requests which correspond to the real needs. The passage to a regional consultation aims at exploiting the opportunities that regional integration offers to the markets.

The evolution of the information systems in the Sahel is directly linked to the evolution of the food security problem, such as is posed by the sahelians and their partners. The first generation of the information systems occupies an important place in the understanding of productions. It is in line with a vision dominated by the search for national (cereal) food self sufficiency. The information systems on the markets fall within a food security vision in which the market plays a more important role in the supply to the households and the deficit zones. The rise in significance of the information systems centered on the analysis of the vulnerability of the zones is in line with a vision which occupies the most important place on the "accessibility" dimension ..

In the Sahel, the information mechanisms derive from three major systems which correspond to principal food security dimensions:

- information on agricultural productions;
- information on the markets;
- information on the vulnerability of the populations.

The Sahel under surveillance

The global information mechanism combines several geographical and institutional levels:

- The national level with a permanent agricul-

tural enquiry conducted under the aegis of the departments for agricultural statistics and the monitoring of the agricultural campaign; the information system on the cereal or cattle markets; the early warning system;

- The regional level within the framework of information activities from the Agrhymet Regional Center (ARC) as well as the monitoring of the agricultural campaign, the monitoring of the risk zones and the support to the national mechanisms for the harvest estimates and the establishment of the cereal assessments;
- The international level with the world information and early warning System (SMIAR/FAO) as well as the monitoring of the agricultural campaign, the harvest estimates and the FEWSNET/USAID system which intervenes at the international level but also renders support to the national and regional mechanism.

Two parameters confer a very great importance to the appreciation of availabilities to prevent food crises in the Sahel: a largely rural population which bases its food security mainly on self consumption; and a strong dependence of these productions vis-à-vis cli-

Two conferences "founders" are regularly referred to when it becomes a question of cereal policies. The conference in Nouakchott in 1979 is going to advocate a sort of food crisis through the relaunching of production, in order to correct the growing gap between supply and demand, and combat the penetration of rice and corn. The Mindello conference in 1986 will introduce the subsector approach by showing interest in the upstream and downstream of production. Within a context characterised by the rise in importance of the adjustments and of liberalisation, but also by a world market congested by surpluses and subventionned exports, the conference will, a little against the tide, promote the concept "protected regional subspace".



matic hazards. The awareness of the level of production is therefore a determining factor. As regards the rural zones that are sometimes surrounded and inhabited by populations with low incomes and unable to replenish their stock at the markets particularly in difficult years, the determination of early risks in the drop of production during the period of the agricultural campaign will make it possible to take the necessary actions and to forewarn the risks concerning the rupture of supplies.



A cereal assessment that is difficult to establish

THE AWARENESS on productions is based on two major types of mechanism:

Strict agricultural enquiry;

The monitoring of the campaign period.

The two are going to kindle the setting up of the cereal assessment. The cereal assessment is a tool elaborated since the beginning of the 8os preceisely in response to the observations formulated by CILSS and the donors (see above). Its objective was very much so to quantify the deficits and to precise the real food aid needs by relying on reliable information.

The cereal assessment is each year carried out

in each of the nine countries. It is consolidated by all nine CILSS member countries.

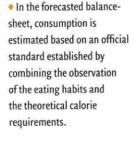
The forecast cereal assessment is elaborated within a perspective of crises prevention analysed in terms of the country's cereal supply structure. It is based therefore on estimated rather on measured data. This forecast is established in the month of October and becomes the subject of regional consultation cf. infra). To this date, being the time of dry cereal harvests, the cereal supply or the "resources" are composed of three major chapters and estimated on the following basis:

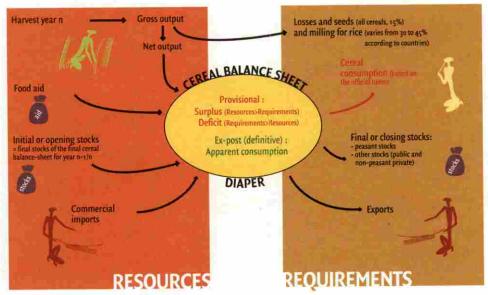
 estimate of the production outputs based on the declarations of the farmers who are interviewed at the end of the rainy season on the sampling of the agricultural enquiry;

 estimate of the initial or opening stocks: these are the final stocks of the definitive assessment of the preceding year. They are the farmers stocks monitored within the framework of the agricultural enquiry and the public stocks
 —the national security stocks—;

 estimate of the trade imports and of food aids, especially the "aid programmes";

Consumption, losses and provisions for growing, as well as an estimate of the final or closing stocks are shown on the cereal demand or "employment" column.





Cereal balance-sheet (provisional or ex-post) of year n/n+1 (from November of year n to October of year n+1)

The assessment forecast established earlier (October-November) on the basis of estimated productions is then readjusted between January and March when the outcome of the output measures carried out within the framework of the agricultural enquiry are examined and known.

Finally, at the end of the lean period, the definitive or ex-post assessment will be established. In this assessment, the final or closing stocks are going to constitute the initial or opening stocks of the forecast assessment of the following campaign.

The production estimates are the determining parameter of the level of cereal supply. This varies according to country (see graph), but on average for the region, the productions represent 78% of the cereal supply.

Consumption norms per country (kg de céréales/hab./an)

Burkina Faso	190 206 175	
Cape Verde		
Gambia		
Guinea-Bissau	175 204 176 242 a 185	
Mali		
Mauritania		
Niger		
Senegal		
Chad	141	

a. Average between nomadic and urban populations (200 kg) and rural sedentary populations (250 kg)

Obviously, the evaluation of the level of stocks falls in line with the information data required to evaluate the capacity of the rural households to tackle a drop in production.

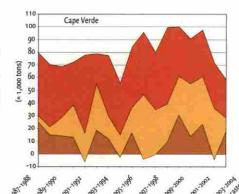
A fairly good awareness on productions... cereals!

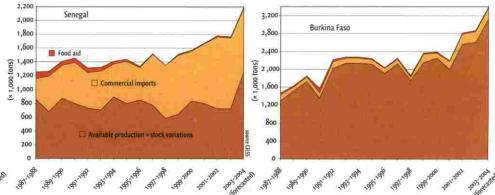
PERMANENT agricultural inquiry is the basic instrument for the determination of agricultural and food availabilities. It does not only aim at providing information to the managers of food security. In fact it has a much wider vocation regarding the production of statistical data which facilitate information on a set of indicators that are useful to the steering of the economy, the definition and monitoring of the agricultural development strategies. The informations produced also serve to enhance national accountability.

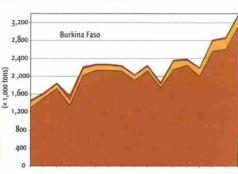
It is in this area that the regional harmonisation efforts on the methodologies of the information systems have been the most important and have to a large extent borne fruits. One of the major difficulties was in fact that of comparing and evaluating the data produced at the regional level by the mechanisms based on various methodologies. The harmonisation was done with the aid of the DIAPER programme conducted by the Agrhymet Regional Center over the period 1984-2000 .

In principle, all countries have an agricultural enquiry. However, and on a yearly basis, several countries fail to implement them The Diaper Regional Program, "Improvement of Permanent Diagnosis Instruments for Regional Food Security", was set up to assist national agricultural and livestock statistics services in the nine CILSS countries. It comprised three phases financed by the European Development Fund.

Very contrasted cereal balancesheets from one country to another.







Comparison between consumer standard and apparent consumption.

· Carrying out an agricultural

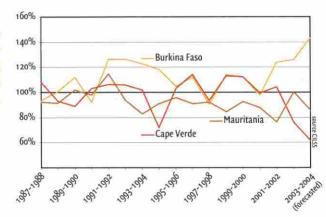
sample survey on a regular

allocating resources in the

national budgets to that end but also making such resources

basis requires not only

available in due course.



within the appropriate time frames and also do not succeed in conducting them and this concerns countries that are largely in need of them given the degree of their vulnerability: Chad and Guinea Bissau are regularly uncapable of conducting the agricultural enquiry and have been led to making estimates on the basis of "sayings of experts" depending on qualitative type analyses and coupled with the rise of ground informations that emanate from a set of privileged observers. However, the absence of an agricultural enquiry also concerns certain countries on certain years, as in Senegal, owing to the late disbursement of funds that would have secured the start of the work of the enquirers.

The enquiries depend on very close methodologies. They are similar as regards the survey and observation methods: two degree surveys (except in Chad: 3 degrees), effective measure of the surface areas (except in Cape Verde where the surfaces are determined on the basis of the quantity of seeds used) and estimate of the production per square output. The bases of the surveys are established from an exhaustive census operation of the agricultural fields or the whole population.

The forecasts for harvest are carried out either through the method of ear density, or by informal methods (physionomy of the countryside, vegetative state of the plants, declarations of the farmers). These harvest forecasts serve

to set up the provisional cereal evaluation, in October. The examination and treatment of the data obtained from the square output method during the harvest are meant for revising the the provisional cereal evaluation and then set up the ex-post evaluation.

The enquiry is in general recognised as providing some good results nationally for the cereal plants. It would also be relatively reliable and would furnish the results that could be used at the first sub-national divisional level, if the first survey is regularly carried out. On the other hand, it is not sufficiently reliable for non-cereal plants.

In most countries, the agricultural enquiry integrates the evaluation of farmer stocks at the end of the lean period and the methodology is based on the declarations of the farmers.

In addition to the annual publication on agricultural statistics, the data on the enquiry are used in the framework of setting up the provisional cereal assessment, ex-post and definitive.

Regularly, the results of the enquiry are the subject of heated arguments in either one or another country. This is particularly the case when the definitive production results vary considerably from the harvest forecasts. In certain cases it is the basis of the survey which is challenged, particularly in the absence of a general agricultural census which would have paved the way for the consideration of the rather rapid evolution of the agricultural structures. In other cases, the national departments are suspected of manipulating the figures in order to influence the results of the cereal assessment.



Combine ground observations and satellites

The monitoring of the agricultural campaign falls in line with the early warning approach and aims at detecting as early as possible the supply difficulties of a zone, a country or the sahelian region as a whole. This monitoring is carried out by combining the ground

knowledge and of several departments (agrometeorology, protection of plants, livestock, information systems...). In each country, these departments meet in the form of multidisciplinary working groups (Gtp/Agrhymet national). Completed by the treatment of informations collected by the Agrhymet Regional Center, this monitoring aims at informing the stakeholders and sahelian and international decision makers on:

- the evolution of the situation of the plants in the course of the campaign: setting up conditions, phenology, water supply conditions, plant life (phytosanitary) state;
- the evolution of the meteorological situation (rainfall, winds, fluctuations of the FIT), hydrology (rate of flow of running water and filling of lakes), condition of the pastures (evolution of the natural vegetation, pastoral water points, potential for fodder production);
- the evolution of the locust situation in the regrouping zones and the evolution of the zones infested in case of invasion as well as the risks of proliferation by newly born locusts or the senegalese locust.

By using this set of informations, the multidisciplinary working groups and the Agrhymet Regional Center are going to set up an early estimate of cereal outputs and from that deduce an estimate of the harvests. To arrive at this, the regular collection of data on the decentralised observation sites in the countries is consolidated by informations from the Agrhymet Regional Center. These are data supplied by teledetection: estimate of the rains via satellite, water diagnosis of the plants. The satellite images are used in a qualitative way so as to monitor the progress of the agricultural season, particularly on the basis of a comparison with the preceding years.

This monitoring is carried out with the use of teledetection facilities and it enhances the reliable determination of the condition of the plants and to elaborate projections on the expected yeilds through the measurement of the foliation rating, the quantity of the biomasse...

Teledetection is also used to monitor pastoral resources. In collaboration with the national livestock departments Agrhymet produces some evolution maps on active biomass, from vegetal signs and soil observations. This combination and confrontation between the ground surveys of the referenced sites and the data obtained from teledetection make it possible to determine the primary fodder production of the pastures.

The monitoring of the progress of the campaign falls in line with two complementary approaches: early warning on one hand, the determination of the configuration of the campaign in order to estimate the probable outputs and thus the productions.

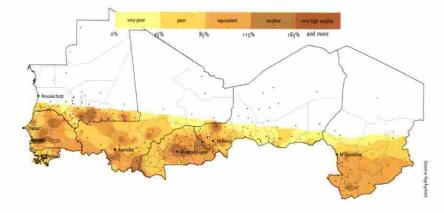
The joint missions realised during the establishment of the provisional cereal forecast involve the departments of SMIAR/FAO and CILSS. They aim at supporting the countries in the elaboration of the cereal assessment.



National vision vs. regionalised markets

Stal characteristic of sahelian cereal economies. However, this generality masks the very

Comparison in percentage of rainfall heights during the month of September 2004 with that of the 1971-2000 normal level in the Sahel (extract from the Agrhymet newsletter of September 2004)



 Knowledge about the proportion of traded cereals is still very fragmented.
 Very few investigations led on the subject, which is however essential for a better understanding of the local food economies. different realities according to the countries. Urbanisation involves increasing trades. If the landlocked countries (Mali, Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso) have a population that is on the majority rural, it is the same phenomenon for the countries on the Atlantic coast who are now witnessing urban growths close to or above 50 %. Moreover, cereals such as corn(wheat) and rice are essentially imported and occupy a place which has the tendency to be developped into food diets. Thus, if it is estimated that only 10 to 15 % of the traditional cereals are put to the market, the food supply of the sahelians are not going to be increasingly less and irreversible on the recourse to the market. Furthermore during the reform of the cereal agencies, as well as the management of security stocks, one of the main missions which was assigned to them was to promote information systems on the markets .

This question of food security is a determining factor in the understanding of food security. It is obviously the case for the consumers for whom the recourse to the market is the principal supply modality. However, it is also the case for a very large number of producers. The majority of cereal producers are « showing a net deficit « and must therefore complete their production through pruchases from outside. If in general, the producers of the surplus zones are stimulated by price rises in production, the deficit and urban producers on the other hand are going to dread the sharp rise in prices. Whereas, despite the liberalisation, the prices remain very volatile and still witness today some very strong intra and interannual variations.

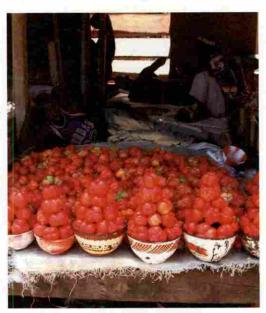
For this set of reasons, the monitoring of the markets as an element for assessing the food situation of the different categories of population, and as an aid tool to decision making is indispensable.

The majority of the countries have some information systems on the markets. These systems cover in general the cereal markets and more rarely the cattle markets, or even other products like niébé (beans). The monitoring of the markets is done according to a sample group of representative or reference: rural production markets, urban markets, rural consumption markets.

These information systems (MIS) were conceived with a double purpose:

- information on the economic operators and the different stakeholders of the subsectors so as to reduce the asymmetries of information and to improve the functionning of the markets (reinforce their competitive character), on one hand;
- information for the decision makers so as to facilitate the orientation of their policies, or to mesure the impact of the public decisions on the evolution of the markets, on the other hand.

As regards food security, the data provided by the information systems on the markets are strengthening their entry among the parameters analysed to judge the food situations and the rise of risks. As a general rule, the analysis of prices, especially in the productionzone, makes it possible to corroborate the judgement of the agricultural campaign and the evolution of prices on the consumption markets allows



for the consolidation of the analyses of risks posed in terms of accessibility.

The monitoring of the cattle markets is another important element of the global information mechanism on food security, especially in making room for an analysis of price evolution relative to cattle and cereals.

The connections between the national MIS still remain insufficient for a real spatial analyis above the national sphere. However, certain MIS have started to develop a partnership network with the MIS in the neighbouring countries. Likewise, certain countries like Niger are following the example of certain markets outside the country, such as the frontier markets of Nigeria which own a large share in trade and the conditions of supply to the markets of Niger. The MIS fully understands the prices as a result of a daily enquiry. On the other hand, the flow of products remains very much misunderstood and this hinders the regional analyses as regards the supply to the markets and the connection between surplus and deficit zones ... -



Information on accessibility

THE NATIONAL or regional cereal assessment provides for the consideration of food availabilities but is by no means a tool for ascertaining the access difficulties to food for the populations. The mechanisms for the identification and monitoring of the vulnerable populations or those with a food risk are meant to complete the monitoring of the agricultural campaign and the cereal assessment so as to treat the question of accessibility. The first national early warning systems that were set up in Mali and in Chad in 1986 were the initiative of an NGO of Belgian origin, AEDES. The methodologies developped in these first experiences later served in the setting up of other national systems, particularly in Niger and in Burkina Faso. The national systems are now based on various methodologies but generally, they aim first of all at the identification of the food needs of the vulnerable populations and an improved targetting of food aids. This objective at times competes with the heavy approaches that aim at an understanding of the functionning of the local economies in the risk zones as well as the adaptation mechanisms used by the households in tackling food risks. The identification of the vulnerable populations that need external aids is linked to the necessity to allocate these "rare" public aids by reserving them to the people who really need them, and who in the absence of these supports would not be in the position to withstand a crisis. The targetting remains a complex method to be implemented and which often comes to interfere in a set of social and economic relations that makes it advisable to understand it as best as possible. This is the challenge of the principal mechanisms for monitoring vulnerability.

The national systems have encountered many difficulties in these past years and this has at times questionned the existence of these mechanisms. The SAP of Burkina Faso is longRecent works on more systematic integration of the dynamics of the cereal markets in the analysis and aid to decision making are presented in part F devoted to the acheivements of the Network.

Please refer in part D
devoted to crisis management,
to the box dealing with
problems related to the
targeting of the beneficiaries.

er functional, likewise that of Chad. The SAP of Niger has been restructured after the crises management which which was one of the missions was transferred to the food crises Unit, the CCA. The SAP bearing an information and early warning function. In many other countries, there is no SAP strictly speaking. These are countries where there are major food problems such as Guinea-Bissau with the recurrent political problems these past years.

The SAP are often seen to embody several missions:

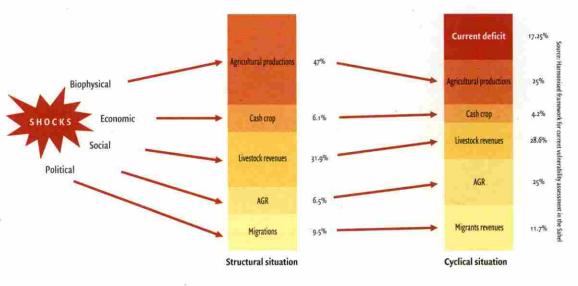
- The analysis of current or structural vulnerability;
- The monitoring of circumstantial vulnerability directly measures the shocks to which the populations are subjected to;
- The synthesis of the whole gamut of informations emanating from the different information mechanisms which compete in setting up a complete food situation;
- The definition of the needs for assistance and sometimes the implementation of the actions conducive to alleviating crises, food aid, etc.

Involved simultaneously in the management of information, aid to decision making and the

implementation of assistance strategies, the SAP can still not show their independence, their objectivity and their autonomy.

Given the absence of the national systems for monitoring vulnerability or their deficiency, certain international organisations and NGOs involved in the management of food aid have developped their methodology. The boxes briefly present the approaches of the WFP and the CARE NGO. Other organisations such as FEWS.NET are developping a synthesis capacity for multiple sources of information existing at the national level, and a capacity for analysing this information. On this basis, the system is in a position to formulate recommendations both for the national authorities as well as for the American administration. The Agrhymet Regional Center has for several years now developped its own methodology, with the support of the Italian Cooperation . It privileges the monitoring of the risk zones (ZAR) in the rural milieu for which it has proceeded to a cartography for structural vulnerability -according to the characteristics and principal orientations of the major production systems- and defines a system for analysing circumstantial vulner-

• The integrated early warning system (SIAP) is based on four elements: the management of a data bank (SGBD); a system for territorial analysis (SAT); a representation procedure for structural vulnerability (PRVS) and a system for circumstantial analysis (SAC). The final beneficiaries are the national SAPs.



Shocks and impact assessment process on the food security components (extract from the harmonised framework)

ability based on a set of biophysical and socioeconomic informations.



Several methodologies

T THE REGIONAL LEVEL, the majority of Athe organisations intervening in the region are henceforth engaged in the elaboration of a harmonised framework • for the identification and analysis of the risk zones and vulnerable groups. The methodology used is based on "a stratification of all the countries into homogenous survival zones which will be characterised based on their agricultural productions, livestock productions, revenue generation activities (RGA) and all other sources of revenue that the populations of the zone are benefitting from and which contribute to the satisfaction of the food needs". The vulnerability will be appreciated at the level of the lessening of the availabilities and/or the accessibilmity in each homogenous zone.

All of the information mechanisms in the Sahel have largely benefitted from a training policy for the executives, engineers and technicians implemented at the Agrhymet Regional Center. This policy provided the countries with qualified human resources capable of intervening in the information mechanims be they collection of information (maintenance of the instruments, methodologies of sampling...), treatment of data (statistical treatment, use of software...), analysis and interpretation (training on the capacities of analyses), etc. This regards an area where regional cooperation helped give the countries a high level training capacity that no country was able to implement in isolation. This training dimension largely exceeds the information framework. It includes the major components for the prevention of crises: detection of parasites and illnesses, techniques to combat predators, etc.

The HLS vulnerability evaluation method of the Care NGO

Care Niger has developped a food security diagnostic methodology based on an understanding of the conditions of life of the populations. It has thus been defined into a framework for analysing the "Household Livelihood Security" (HLS).

Through a varied range of techniques for the collection of data (enquiry with the households, group meetings etc.) including informations relative both on food security as to education and access to basis health services or the economic activities of the households and their incomes, it is possible to present a global and "trustworthy" image of the local situation.

An identification of the causes of food insecurity and the strategies adopted in the face of the latter facilitates characterising the most vulnerable groups into a given region. This classification is based on the external factors of vulnerability, the possibilities of the households to use the opportunities and the capacities for resistance to the negative effects of food shocks.

This analysis leads to the creation of vulnerability indicators which will be monitored in the medium and long terms so as to evaluate the food situation of the groups identified as sensitive.

The VAM method "Analysis and cartography of vulnerability" of the WFP

In order to improve the planning and targetting of food aid, The world food Programme (WFP) is developping for several years now some analysis and cartography instruments linked to food security (VAM, Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping). These analysis instruments were developped around the triple dimension of food security and the notion of vulnérability

Vulnerability is defined as the degree of exposure of the population to risks (drought, conflict, market...) and its capacity to face it. It can therefore be explained as the decline probability in the access to food.

Thus, from an analysis of secondary data (rainfall indicators, inter-annual variability of output ...) it proceeded to

an identification of the vulnerable zones in the countries making them part of the WFP area of intervention.

For the rest, group meetings, enquiries with the households and health and anthropometric enquiries conducted in the vulnerable zones help identify the most affedted groups based on the indicators that reflect the socio-economic insecurity conditions, as well as the determinants of this vulnerability.

The monitoring of the groups in circumstantial food insecurity also helps evaluate the extent of the food needs and to define the adequate forms of intervention.

The organisations involved in the elaboration of the harmonised framework under the leadership of CILSS are USAID, WFP, FEWS.NET, FAO, IBIMET/Italy, MIFRAC/France, Care and European Union.



The supremacy of consultation and coordination

THE STEERING of food security requires multiple sources of information. A crossed analysis of all of these data helps start the early warning process. This is based on the convergence of proofs. For example, the rainfall statistics in the decentralised stations will be confronted to the satellite images showing the vegetation indicator in order to verify the convergent character. A major delay in the development of biomasse is going to help identify a crisis risk, which should rapidly be corroborated by tensions on the markets and price rises. The examples are many making it possible to illustrate the importance which was accorded to the consultation and the confrontation of informations to improve the analyses and diagnosistic pertinence, reinforce their precocity, etc.

Within the framework of early warning, this consultation is especially animated at the multidisciplinary working group level. In downstream, once a crisis risk is recognised, the principle of consultation and coordination in certain areas become acceptable.

The consultation at the national level aims in general to coordinate the interventions of the different organisms, especially those that were brought to manage food security in or-

der to avoid duplications, the non-covered zones, etc. and often, the States and donors have put in place consultation and coordination mechanisms which take the form of equal management organs. This is particularly the case when the strategy for prevention and management of food crises is based on a co-financing mechanism, supported by aids from donors or the counterpart funds for food aid. The objective is therefore of a double purpose: improve decision making and develop approaches based on consensus on one hand; improve the security on common resources (financial resources and physical stock on the other hand).

These consultation mechanisms extend to the regional level. As in the national level, they intervene in the area of information in order to improve the diagnosis and confront the analyses on the risks of food insecurity. They also aim at exploiting the potentialities offered by the regional cooperation to contribute answers to the crises (means of facilitation of trade for example) and finally to formulate recommendations for the decision makers: Governments, national mechanisms for food crisis management, international organisations and aid agencies.



From the national up to the regional level

A T THE REGIONAL LEVEL, the mechanism is animated by the Agrhymet Regional Center for the coordination and the information and by the PREGEC project (Prevention and Management of Crises) for aid to decision making.

For several years, CILSS has set up a monitoring mechanism for the agricultural cam-

Please refer to part D

stock management.

devoted to food aid and security

paign and the food situation . This is based on the following mechanism:

- In September: regional meeting on monitoring the agricultural and food situation and the harvest forecasts for the agricultural campaign (pre-evaluation of the campaign);
- -End of October: regional meeting on the harvest forecasts and the food situation: this stage is devoted to the regional consolidation of the provisional cereal assessments and the establishment of the ex-post cereal assessment of the preceding campaign. It helps to identify the major risks in the region's cereal supply structure.
- In November or December, the international meeting of the Network on the prevention of food crises and which is organised by CILSS and the Club du Sahel provides the occasion for a presentation of provisional cereal assessments and a first hand evaluation of the risk zones. The network recommends complementary missions for the identification of the assistance needs to the populations in these zones;
- Organisation of joint missions PREGEC-CILSS/WFP/FEWS.NET in certain countries designed to refine the evaluation of the assistance needs to the populations of the risk zones;
- In March: regional meeting on the evaluation of the food situation;
- In June: meeting on the monitoring of the food situation and preparations for the agricultural campaign.

CONTRE LA RÉCHERESSE DANS LE BAHEL



PERMANENT INTERSTATE COMMITTEE

MENSUEL AGRHYMET

N" M-09/04

Septembre 20

Baisse pluviométrique au Sahél et anticipation des récoltes à cause de la situation accidienne

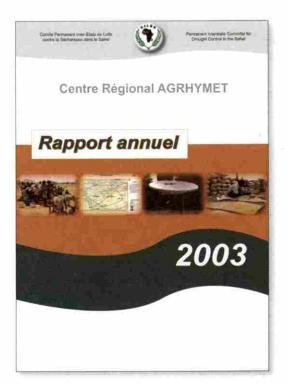
✓ Le mois de septembre s commencia en première décade avec un régime pluvionétrique très feible à muite dans la partie pastraite et décarrique de Sañel, en particulier au Thérêt, ai viliger, au correct du Mail, an Mauritania et su Cap Vert. De la seconde décade juquir la fin du mois, une séchemase s'est installés avec capendent, un régime pluvionétroje modées du se permis la civide de fabiles pluies dans le désent au Mail, en Mauritania eu not du Sérégal et su Cap Vert. En boisième décade, un arelt troit des pluies est mail maireure un Mantierania, cens le Sérée du Mail, ou Maintriania de la commentation de la

La pluriomètrie assonnière cumulée du 1° mai au 30 apptembre a varié de 1100 mm dans la préfecture du Logore cinetal au l'Abel et au sud de la région de Bhasso au Mail à minis et 150 mm dans la zone désertique. Formai la zone auptimisment du Torbart à role la cod du Burdinia Fast, la bassia manchaire du Bartégal, las quantities pluviométriques selaconnières cet de indérigures à ceitae de l'anché 2003, Pré de la station pluvionnique selaconnière est prodre de la rémande pluvionnique, 1871-1800, et particular la station pluvionnique selaconnière est prodre de la rémande pluvionnique, 1871-1800, et particular la station pluvionnique selaconnière est prodre de la rémande pluvionnique, 1871-1800, et particular la station pluvionnique selaconnière.

«Duant le mais de septembre, le shalson hydrologique a été carsolatiele par l'installation de la période or nous avec une montrée franche des exeu a uses nie a sujeur des cours d'aux permanents. Les débits sont d'une manière générale netterment indérieurs à coux de l'an passé pour la majorité des stations. Ce qui vestif der que cette année, pour présipieure l'ensemble de la beaine de la région, une table enue serie verragatée companié à le studion de l'an passé. Cette shustion est la conséquence directe des éléction contracteurs de la studion de l'an passé. Cette shustion est la conséquence directe des éléctions contracteurs de la studion de l'an passé. Cette shustion est la conséquence directe des éléctions contracteurs de la serie de la consequence de la studion de la conséquence directe des éléctions cette année avec de la suitable de la consequence de la consequence des crises recypiences à tablés cont été amégatéres. Le remplissage des réserviors à est opéré avec un peu de retain recypiences à tablés cont été amégatéres. Le remplissage des réserviors à est opéré avec un peu de retain recypiences à faibles cont été amégatéres. Le remplissage des réserviors à est opéré avec un peu de retain recypiences à faibles cont été amégatéres. Le remplissage des réserviors à est opéré avec un peu de retain recypiences à faibles cont été amégatéres. Le remplissage des réserviors sets opérée avec un peut de réservice recypiences à faibles contracteurs de faibles de la contracteurs de faibles de la contracteur Les contracteurs de la surveille Cette shutetion avant des contracteurs en régistrées au le la contracteur de la contracteur de des la contracteur de la contracteur des des la cette de la contracteur de la contracteur

ZLs situation des cultures au 30 septembre 2004 est caractérisée par l'infolgation des récobles des cultures púvisies en ocurs de matterion, à cause de la situation exclièrem aismente petruit us Banel. Curpuse ayent benéfold dans l'exisemble de bonnes conditions d'alimentation tyrique (figure 4.1), les cultures ont performent souther de manque d'esus personnelles de cultures contrates de capitalitées, particulièrement dans les zonnes sanétiernes du Sériégat, du Mail, du Burkina Faco, du Rigar et du Tourisse particulièrement dans les zonnes sanétiernes du Sériégat, du Mail, du Burkina Faco, du Rigar et du Tourisse de confession de confe

Cantre Régional AGRITTMET, B.P. 11011 NIAMEY (NGER) TEL: (227) 73.31.16 / 73.24.36



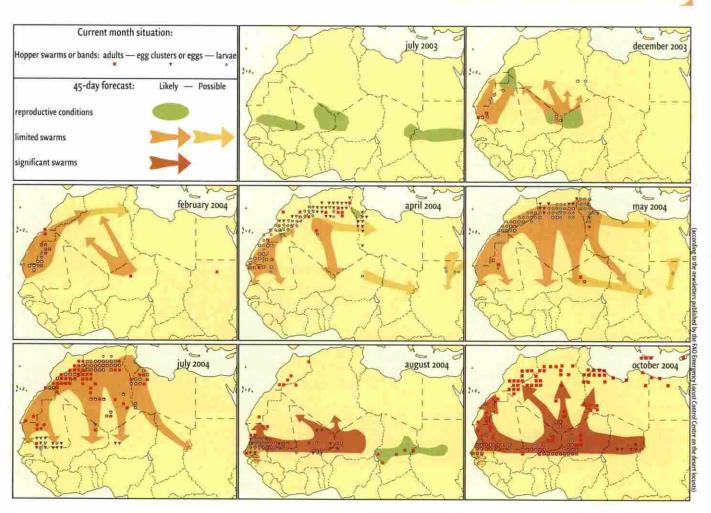
Locusts: it is not enough to raise an alarm to warn

A THE TIME when this work is being published, the debate on the damages caused by locust attacks in several countries is raging in the Sahel. Nevertheless, as shown by this succession of charts established from the information collected since July 2003 by the FAO, it is not by error that this risk came about. In October 2003, the Malian unit for locust control detected in the North of the country some locusts in various developmen-

tal stages. According to the FAO, the alarm was given at this stage: news, press releases, alarms on the internet, meetings of donors, of Heads of State, etc. Still according to the FAO, the preventive actions which should have been carried out would only have cost 7 millions dollars for the western zone. The FAO estimates that the "losses could have reached the level of 2.5 billion dollars". The conditions are ripe for there to be a major in-

festation in 2005. The alarm produced effects but the means of prevention were not enough to act: divisions or even conflicts of activities between the specialised institutions, random monitoring and very limited means of prevention, difficulty in mobilising resources for prevention purposes, etc.

Source: FAO, Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, CILSS, CIRAD.



New stages to cross

HE INFORMATION MECHANISMS COUpled with those of consultation and coordination in force in the sahelian countries give the region an image of a subspace endowed with all the major anticipation and crisis management capacities. With regard to the lack of information which characterised the region in the beginning of the 1980s, it is clear that major progress has been accomplished. If tomorrow, a risk of famine unfolded, the mechanism would certainly be in a position of both detecting it and responding to it, by strongly limiting the consequences to the populations. So many questions remain and deserve to be treated within the framework of future meetings of the Network for the prevention of food crises.

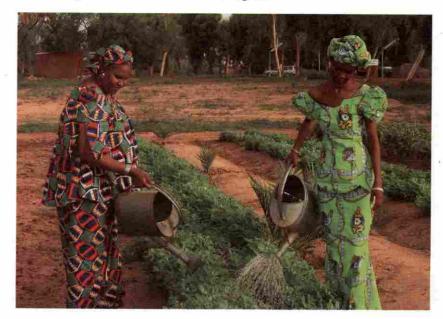
The internalisation of the information mechanisms and the securing of financial and human resources: the agricultural enquiry is wholly internalised but its financing is not regularly monitored or set up in time; the SAP or Early Warning Systems worthy of this name are becoming rare, and the MIS (market information systems are undergoing operational difficulties which lead to temporary suspensions in the collection or treatment of information; the States and the donors did not consider the contribution of the information systems and are not supporting them sufficiently, especially in periods «without a major crisis».

Conscious of the weaknesses of the cereal assessment in apprehending food crises, the majority of the stakeholders envisage, henceforth, extending the approach to the bulk of the livelihood products. This poses a major challenge for the agricultural enquiry which makes it necessary to redefine the basis of the survey. Some major questions arise concerning the evaluation of the other sectors of

the assessment: losses, imports and exports, stocks and especially the consumption norms (already very much discussed in the cereal assessment). This requires major initial investments so as to precise the methodologies and will bring about high costs for the collection of information in order to obtain data that are sufficiently reliable.

How could the capacity of the information systems on the markets be improved upon to influence the trade dynamics at the sub-regional (Sahel) and regional (ECOWAS) levels, and improve upon the awareness on the functioning of the markets and operators in the zone, and their contribution to the regulation of the markets and to food security?

How could certain duplications be avoided whereas resources are rare and that certain dimensions of information remain unreliable? Several regional and international organisations using satellite data are monitoring the

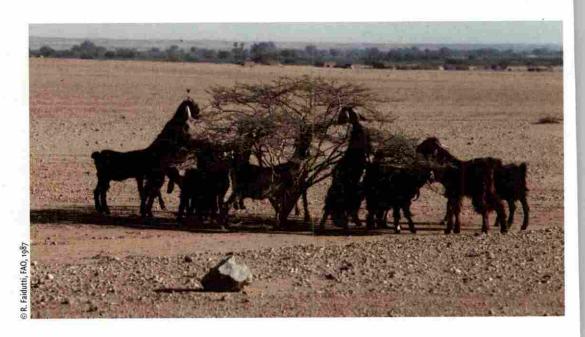


Selective bibliography: Egg J., Gabas J.-J. et al., La prévention des crises alimentaires au Sahel. Dix ans d'expérience d'une action menée en réseau, 1985-1995. Club du Sahel-OECD, 1997, 210 p. Les systèmes d'information sur la sécurité alimentaire dans le Sahel. Diagnostic et perspectives, CILSS-Club du Sahel, 1999, 176 p. Les systèmes d'information sur la sécurité alimentaire dans le Sahel. Diagnostic et perspectives, CILSS-Club du Sahel, 1999, 176 p. Boulanger P.-M. et al., Systèmes d'information pour la sécurité alimentaire. L'expérience AEDES en Afrique. L'Harmattan, 2004, 305 p. L'information au cœur de la sécurité alimentaire sahelienne, Bilan et perspectives des dispositifs nationaux et régionaux.

agricultural campaign and separately publishing data on the availabilities, at the same time that certain sahelian countries have an inefficient agricultural enquiry and that the coastal countries do not need them. Now there is greater awareness on the interdependencies between the Sahel and the coastal countries on the plan of the markets and the food situation and the resultant necessity to arrive at pertinent regional analyses that are based on incontestable information. In this context, a rationalisation of the resources at the regional level appears like a major step in the right direction.

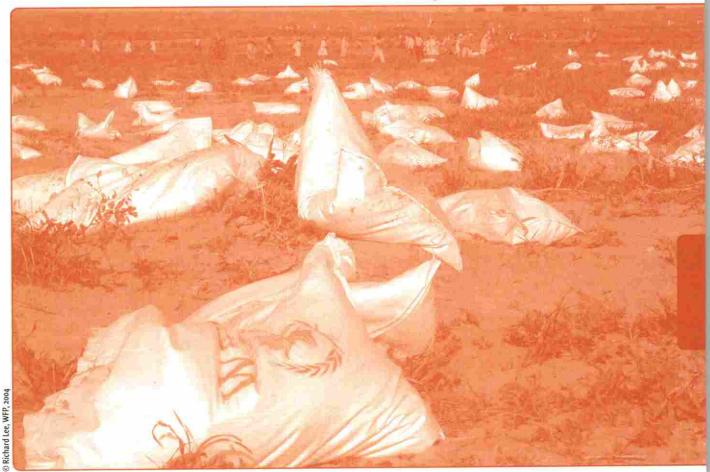
Regularly, the reliability of the information produced by the national systems is challenged in one country or another, to the extent that the trust between States and donors is damaged. How could the validation capacity of the methodologies and information through the regional level and the Network be ascertained in order to secure the chain of production and analysis of information?

Whereas the Sahel has not been exposed to major food crises since the beginning of the 1980s, attention to the information systems has the tendency to relax. In 2004, it has been observed that there is a price to neglecting the alarms raised in 2003 regarding the locust invasions. The importance given to the poverty reduction issue has dominated the food crises issues. In this regard, the food security agents must give attention to one of the main causes and consequence of poverty: food insecurity and the crises which follow in case of shock. This does not prevent analysing the way the information systems on food security can be reviewed so as to integrate on a wider scale the information needs that are indispensable to the steering and monitoring of strategies for poverty reduction.



CILSS-Diaper, 2000, 79 p.

:D: Food crises management



T ALL TIMES, Sahelians adopted strategies that made it possible for them to mitigate or avoid food crises (reserve lofts, migrations, etc.). The scope of the media coverage of the recent famine brought about the precedence of the imported emergency food aid which became the subject of repeated criticisms and sharp controversies. Its use in the Sahel is henceforth better supervised. Other tools that better respond to the diversity of the crises have been used. Physical and financial security stocks, cereal banks, triangular operations, off-season planting, etc. seek to privilege the local resources and reinforce the capacities of the populations to manage food risks. However, once declared, food crisis never leaves its victims unscathed.

HE ANALYSIS of the management modes for food crises in the Sahel often makes reference to the strategies implemented in case of food crisis confirmed either by the States with the support of the donors, or by the international organisations such as WFP or FAO as well as the NGOs. Nevertheless, the management of the risk is an integral part of the permanent strategies of the sahelian societies. The rural communities do not remain inert in the face of fluctuations on the food availabilities linked to climatic hazards (drought, poorly distributed or irregular rain-

fall), attacks from predators (locusts, birds), and also the mal-functioning of the markets as a result of enclosure, etc. All these risks are structural and generate, within the milieu of the populations who are tackling them, a combination of behaviours and strategies which are not always well known around the institutional environment.



The populations on the front line, the institutions providing cover

See part C devoted to the prevention of crises. Certain methods for evaluation of vulnerability occupy a major place in the analysis of the systems of life and the survival modes of the populations, so as to recommend measures that most tally with the behaviours.

HESE STRATEGIES are manifold and are going to bring about the intervention of different actions according to the potentialities of the milieu, the frequency of the crises and their nature, the available resources, the social relations, etc. They range from the community stocks to the decapitalisation and sale of goods and capital or the definitive migrations, by going through a series of adaptations and safety valves: diversification of productions, combination of early and late varieties in crop rotations, search for harvest complements (bush fruits, hunting for hoppers...) introduction of tubers and small scale livestock, indebtedness to the upper class or the traders, reduction of a number of meals, temporary migrations, diversification of sources of revenue in the household, etc. These strategies combine the short term and the medium term actions. They will be deployed differently according to the situation and in a gradual manner as the lean period approaches and during the lean period.

The comprehension of these multiple strategies is essential for the institutions in charge of the prevention and management of crises. It is in fact the observation of these behaviours that will provide information in part on the intensity of the crisis and the available endogenous resources needed to face it. This awareness makes it possible to devise an intervention strategy which will depend on the mechanisms understood by the populations and seeks to strengthen them, rather on interventions conceived ex nihilo.

In the strict sense, this comprehension goes beyound the problems of food security. Throughout the sahelian band, the management of risk is an integral part of household and community strategies and have a major impact on the development strategies. For example, how many micro-finance projects have collapsed owing to the lack of serious consideration of the hazards of production? How many projects on agricultural modernisation based on the specialisation of the units of production have not produced the expected results because the "beneficiaries" on the contrary hoped to base the minimisation of risks on the diversification of productions and sources of revenues... The examples are many and send the signal for seriously taking into account this dimension in the

conception of strategies for local development and agricultural development. The populations are not for all that in a position to tackle food crises only. Their strategies are often suitable for the management of risk "current". On the other hand, confronted by unusual crises, they need to be relayed by interventions which go beyound their capacities. The institutions in reality are going to mobilise instruments which are of the same range as those implemented by the populations: security stock, the market, the mitigating measures and finally, solidarity (the recourse to food aid).

The adaptative strategies revealed in enquiries in Niger

In the enquiries conducted by Care in several districts in Niger (on the security of the living conditions of the households), it was revealed that the rural households are implementing a very wide range of adaptative strategies. Some thirty strategies or behaviours classified into four groups have been listed in the three districts of Tahoua, Maradi and Zinder:

- The strategies aiming to improve the purchasing power: seasonal emigration, revenue generating activities (petty trade, off-season planting), divestiture (sale of animals);
- The strategies aiming at the modification of food habits and practic-

- es: rationing of food aid; change in ways of supplying cereals (daily retail purchase); food substitution and consumption of new products; consumption of bush plants (71 species listed);
- The strategies on mutual aid and solidarity: recourse to loans; family and community sel-help; food aids;
- The restructuring strategies in other activities: migrations towards the towns.

Source: Care HHLS studies mentioned by the Quaterly Report of the Resal n°2, march 1999.



The recourse to imports and food aid

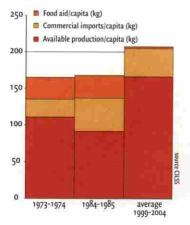
Interest of a climatic origin affecting agricultural supply, the crisis management mechanisms attach a major place to the margin of the cereal assessment deficit. The most flexible adjustment variable corresponds to extraregional imports. In addition to the stocks reports from one year to another (cf. infra), the recourse to proportions that vary from trade imports and food aid is going to represent the simplest means for matching the supply to the demand.

In years of serious crisis, the trade imports and food aid represented a considerable share of food availabilities for the sahelians. In 1973-74, nearly 30% of the cereal availabilities came from imports half of which were in the form of food aids. Ten years later , during the time of the 1983-85 drought, nearly 40% of the cereal

supply was imported and food aid represented 17% of the total food availabilities. For the 1984-85 campaign alone, the Sahel imported 2,830,000 tonnes out of which 40% was in the form of gifts, whereas regional production rose to 4,175,000 tonnes.

The extent of the deficit hardly offers any alternative. The media coverage of the crisis at the time when the West was being inundated with stocks of unsold agricultural products opened the way to a considerable use of food aid. In the first place, donors in the North, States and beneficiaries in the Sahel only saw in it one conjunction of interests that was beneficial to the different parties. By being substituted to trade imports, these food aids made it possible to ease the balance of trade of the sahelian countries and thus realise foreign exchange savings. However, it is observed that

Comparison of the cereal balance-sheets of the crises in 1973-1974 and 1984-1985 with that of the last years



For 20 years, the import quota oscillates between 16 and 32% of the cereal supply for the sahelian countries. Food aid represented 20 to 25% (22.6 on average) of the total imports over the period 1985-86 to 1989-90, it now represents less than 10% (9% on average).

food aid allocations by the donors are generous because world stock levels are high and prices very low. When world availabilities are more reduced and that cereal prices are high thereby making the trade imports costly, the recourse to food aid turns out to be more difficult for the developping countries.



The perversities of food aid

Being so indispensable to facing an unmajor shortage in terms of livelihood coupled with the fact that the countries do not have sufficient resources to import and the households no longer have enough resources to replenish their stocks on the markets, food aid by nature encounters major difficulties.

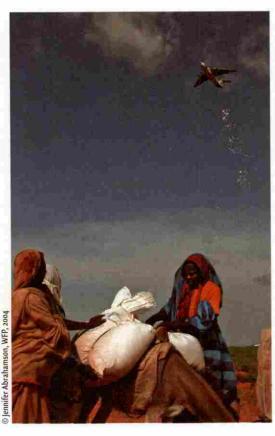
The sharpest criticism made on food aid re-

gards its medium and long term effects. As regards the modification of eating habits, the debate is still too controversial. There are some who feel that international aid has modified the food diets and has introduced food products that the region cannot possibly cultivate thereby opening the way to expensive trade imports and thus plunging the region into a situation of food dependency. This situation is not totally baseless. Certain food aid policies, particularly the PL 480 of the United States makes reference explicitly to this type of objective. It is mainly rice and maize which are put into question. Other research works show that on the contrary if there is really a major change in the food diets in the region in the course of the last 30-40 years, it is not as a result of food aid. They give as proof the behaviour of the beneficiaries who seek to resell the products that they have received as aid—the "drought foods"— so as to be able to buy foodstuffs that correspond to what they are accustomed to and this is when the markets become once again replenished. They do so for reasons owing to their food preferences but also to preserve their dignity.



Aid and market: a difficult cohabitation

THE SECOND RESULT which is largely based no consensus is on the effects of economic destabilisation. Aid, when freely distributed, inevitably disrupts the markets. At times the decision makers opt for this objective in order to incite a drop in prices and thus encourage the accessibility of foodstuffs for the populations by creating a competitive atmosphere vis-à-vis the private supply networks and also filling the supply-demand deficit. However, the disruptions are often linked to the late or ill-timed arrivals which will disorganise the trade circuits. The time frames for mobilising aid are such that it is still not rare to see distributions occuring at the time of harvests. Whereas prices in the productions zones are witnessing a downward trend in this period, these aid programmes in principle, in order to ease the lean period, are going to accentuate price drops and thus incite drops in sales. This has two direct consequences: on one hand they discourage the producers and lead them to turning towards other productions; on the other hand, in the short term, they will lead them to "over-trading". In fact, market supply is directly linked to needs determined by funds. The lower the prices, the more the producers are reluctant to sell large quantities. They trigger the disequilibrium of



Food aid often poorly connected to the needs

Several Countries, particularly in the West of the Sahel have witnessed a difficult agricultural campaign in 2000. The evaluation of the cereal deficits were the subject of heated polemics between the national departments, the decision makers and the donors. The evaluation carried out in favour of the Network for the prevention of food crises reports on these difficulties, problems of reliability and of independence of these information mechanisms and demonstrate, with the support of figures, that the quality of the States-donors dialogue is more important than the cereal

deficit in mobilising food aid. Extract.

"The mobilisation of food aid is low with regard to the scope of the deficit reported: in the case of Burkina Faso, the emergency aid is in the range of 50,000 tonnes for an 'official deficit' nearly 200,000 tonnes. In Niger, the quality of the consultation between Government and the donors made it possible to mobilise quantities proportionally higher: in the range of 44,000 tonnes for an 'official deficit' the range of 163,000 tonnes. In Chad the aid mobilised is in the range of 27,000 tonnes (all products compounded) for a forecast deficit of 377,000 tonnes! Problems of time frame for the mobilisation of food aid are posed, the disparities between the interventions of the different stakeholders, the absence of a systematic evaluation of the operations engaged."

In Évaluation de l'application de la Charte de l'aide alimentaire au Burkina Faso, au Niger et au Tchad lors de la campagne 2000-2001. CILSS-Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, annual meeting of the Network, november 2001, Florence (Italy).

the market and accentuate the drop in prices. They can be led to trading a part of the stocks needed to keep the family going up to the next harvest season. This is why in the surplus zones producers are reluctant to buy cereals at very high prices during the lean period. Food aid is not the sole cause for these break downs, but it will amplify the tendences whereas the external interventions should rather contribute to regularising the markets and a certain stabilisation of prices.

In the short term however, it poses a lot of difficulties. The mobilisation of aid is a complex operation, whoever the operator may be. From the time when the needs were determined —this stage being already fraught with pitfalls—, and the time when aid by nature is effectively placed at the disposal of the populations, takes several months. These time frames are linked to the procedures of decision, to the availabilities of livelihoods as well as financial availabilities, to the management of the procedures to tender for the mobilisation of food aid and their transportation, quality controls and conformity, unloading and customs pro-

cedures, transportation between ports and the disaster-stricken areas, the identification of recipients, the distributions etc. The absence of coordination between the different donors can lead to excessive allocations in certain localities and on the contrary very much insufficient in other places. Finally, certain analyses have shown that there often exists a major discrepancy between the localisation of needs and the localisation of the aids allocated. Nevertheless, in recent years the States concentrated in the coordination of interventions and have taken the leadership, all by themselves or with the support of the donors.

Aid: struggled for and often expected

THIS CHAPTER would be incomplete if it was reticent on the "customer temptations" that is induced by food aids. Although the majority of the protagonists —States, NGOs and donors— recognise all of the risks brought about by an abusive or inappropriate use of food aid, it is needless to say that the temptation is

 Two food aid spatial analyses covering the period 1993-95 have been carried out under the aegis of the Club du Sahel/ OCDE, in Niger and in Burkina Faso. In the years 1985-86, food aid in the Sahel represented 11.7% of world aid. This quota has dropped to 2.6% on the period 2000-04.

always great to have recourse to it, owing to reasons of visibility. These three stakeholders can at one time or another be led to it and are ready to contest or even seek to manipulate the data and the analyses churned out by the information mechanisms in order to arrive at their objectives.

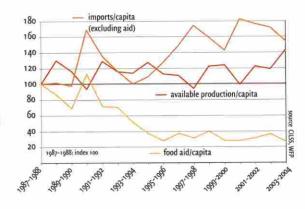
These multiple difficulties fomented the consideration that food aid was by nature a crisis management tool which is extremely difficult to implement in good conditions. This made the sahelians and their partners to reflect in several directions:

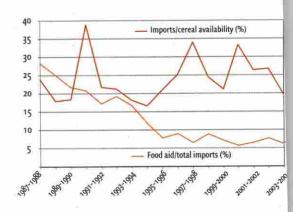
- How could the use of aid be limited to only situations where there is no effective alternative and how in these cases, could the practices be improved so as to upgrade the effectiveness of aid and thus limit the perversive effects? In this perspective, could common principles be obtained and shared among several participants? This orientation translates into the preparation and adoption of the food aid Charter :
- How to promote food aid alternatives from local resources: local purchases and triangular aids for example?
- How to reinforce the institutions or the local organisations and mechanisms on the preven-

tion and management of crises implemented by the communities and the households?

For several years now, the volumes of food aid have greatly plummeted. This is the end result of a combination of factors: more favorable climatic years —the Sahel has not witnessed a generalised shortage in all of the countries for more than twenty years—, an improved management of food aid instead of other forms of interventions, in order to limit the perverse effects and finally, a difficulty for the donors to honour their commitments within the framework of the London Convention (cf. box), on the food aid volumes owing to a diminution of stocks and surpluses of the main foodstuffs (cereals, diary products, oils...).

The food aid Charter prepared and adopted jointly by the main donors and the CILSS countries remain one of the main acheivements of the network on the prevention of crises. This initiative is detailled in part F on the acheivements of the Network.





Production, commercial imports and food aid trends per capita and share of food aid in imports

The London convention relative to food aid

THE CONVENTION of London relative to food aid (CAA) was negotiated within the framework of the international Agreement on cereals (AIC). This also integrates the Convention on cereal trading. The preceding multilateral agreements on food aid date as far back as 1967. The convention currently in force was signed in 1999 for a duration of 4 years. It has been extended for another two years.

This convention aims at "enhancing the aptitude of the international community to respond to food emergency situations and other food needs of developping countries, by (a) ensuring availability of sufficient food aids on a foreseeable basis (quantitative commitments); (b) [...] seeing to it that the food aid provided aims at particularly reducing the poverty of the most vulnerable groups and that it is compatible with the agricultural development of these countries; (iii) including the principles that aim at optimising the impact, effectiveness and the quality of the food aid provided in support of food security and, (iv) envisaging a framework for the cooperation, coordination and exchange of information [...]."

It indicates that "the ultimate objective of food aid is the elimination of the food aid needs itself [...]."

The eligible products are cereals, including rice, unrefined or after 1st or 2nd transformation; leguminous plants; oil, tubers from triangular operations or local purchases; powdered cream milk; sugar, seeds.

The food aid committee includes the donor countries (Argentina, Australia, Canada, The European Union and its member States, The United States, Japan, Norway and Switzerland. FAO, WFP and the WTO participate in its sessions as observers. The recipient countries are not mem-

bers of this Committee.

The debates which led to the elaboration of the food aid charter in the Sahel have also largely influenced the global conception of the aid policies and the food security of the donors and have indirectly influenced the content of the food aid Convention, by placing it into a development perspective.

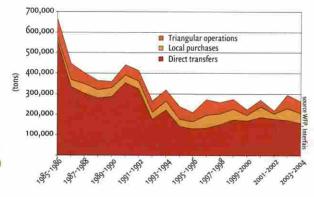
Amount of the minimum obligations of the different Conventions:

- 1967 and 1971: 4.5 million tonnes per year;
- 1980: 7.6 million tonnes per year;
- 1995: 10 million tonnes;
- 1999: 4.895 million tonnes (plus 130 million Euros of financial commitment from the EU).

Source: 1999 Convention relative to food aid (International cereals Board, food aid Committee)



Breakdown of the various aid forms (cereal and non-cereal) in the CILSS countries





Security stocks that is difficult to manage

THE CYCLICAL CHARACTER of agricultural activity is accompanied by very strong fluctuations of prices in the course of the year. Generally, this is translated by a collapse of the prices in the post-harvest period and by a sky-rocketing of prices in the lean period. This intra-annual instability is doubled by a major inter-annual variability of the productions which amplify or alleviate the price instability. The storage is often considered as one of the privileged tools for market regulation and alleviation of risks.

It already was the style for securing family and community supply in traditional societies. This form of mitigating risks is reintroduced under two modalities: the encouragement for decentralised storage through village granaries or lofts, cereal banks, etc. and through national security stocks obtained and managed by cereal agencies.

The agricultural and food reforms engaged within the context of the structural adjustment in the beginning of the 1980s have questionned the intervention of the public authorities in the marketing of cereals. The cereal agencies which often controlled the monopoly in this domain saw their missions redefinied. In the majority of the sahelian countries, the agencies were seen to be playing the role of regulation of the markets. Challenged by traders considered as speculators who were buying cereals at give away prices from the producers and reselling them at very high prices to the consumers for whom cereals weighed heavily on their expenses, the agency had to compete the economic operators (by buying at prices higher than the market prices and reselling at lower prices, especially during the lean period). In the same vein, the agencies had to introduce transparency in the trade transactions. In reality, this function of market regulation has never really functionned. The network of traders had supply circuits which surpassed the strict national framework, whereas the areas for action of the public agencies were strictly national (they still are today). These agencies rarely had an adequate treasury that made it possible for them to intervene on time on the markets. Moreover, they largely misunderstood the real operations of the markets and the game of their stakeholders so as to intervene in an effective manner. Not to mention that in the face of the fragmentation of the supply and demand, the agencies have often had the traders as principal interlocutors...! Moreover, behind a speech which tended to pit the producers and consumers against the "crooked traders or speculators", the decision makers have more often than not joined hands with the network of traders with whom they entertained multiple relations. The financial collapse of the agencies was as a result of this mission of market regulation which really never sought to exert and surpassed the stage of limited operations.

Within the framework of restructuring the agencies, one of the main functions assigned to them was, and still is today, on the management of a national security stock (NSS). Composed mainly of local cereals and collected on tender basis and stored into warehouses generally located within the vulnerable zones, this NSS is for the management of food crises. As a general rule, these stocks are co-financed by the State and by a group of donors. They are only used within the framework of co-decision procedures. The difficulties that the agencies encountered prior to their reform in the beginning of the 1980s have not totally disappeared.

The first relates to the cost of the stocks and

 See part E for the case of OPAM.

	Physical stock (tonnes)	Financial stock (eq. tonnes de cereals)	Average available production (tonnes) 2000-2003	Trade imports (mainly food aids) (tonnes) 2000-2003
Burkina Faso	35,000	25,000	2,386,000	197,700 (20,700)
Niger	40,000 (objective)	40,000 (objective)	2,411,000	351,300 (11,400)
Mali	35,000	25,000	1,920,000	20,5000 (5,930)

source CILSS

their maintenance. These stocks were measured on the basis of a form of compromise between the mobilisable resources on one hand and, the magnitude of the emergency cereal needs in case of crisis. In the landlocked sahelian countries, these national stocks represent between 1% and 2% of the national cereal production. In case of a moderate and localised crisis, they can be mobilised in time to reach the populations at the time of the lean period. In case of an acute crisis as in periods of flood or an influx of refugees, etc., the NSS can be mobilised very quickly if there is consensus among the management committees and the different parties. They are well adapted to this type of crisis, in the interim that the mobilisation and arrival of food aids is underway. However the difficulty rests on the almost permanent difference between the needs and the availabilities. In the absence of crisis, the stock is expensive to maintain. The technical rotations • are difficult to organise. Carried out according to tender procedures, these stock replenishment operations can weigh heavily on the market prices, price drops during stock depletion operations and price rises during the reconstitution of stocks. It often turns out to be delicate for the managers of these agencies to realise these operations without at times incurring heavy losses. On ther other hand, in case of a serious crisis, the volume of the NSS is greatly reduced. It only represents for example a small share of the production variations that the Sahel witnesses from year to year. In this case, after the depletion which facilitates responding to the food needs of the populations in times of crisis, the difficulty will be to replenish the

stock, in order to confront future risks. In fact,

in a year of crisis production, the Sahel is con-

fronted by a problem of availability on one hand and a problem of price rises on the other hand. The risk is high either by not being able to replenish the stock or by strongly reducing the revolving fund and consequently the volume of physical stock. These difficulties are such that when associated to draconian rules regarding the replenishment of the NSS -"grain for grain"-, they lead the decision makers to hesitating mobilising the security stock, prefering at times to wait for the arrival of external aid. For the decision makers however, despite these rigidities and these management difficulties, the existence of a physical security stock is considered as a form of insurance against food risks. The debate is on the equilibrium between the physical stock and the financial stock.

The food security funds: a more flexible "stock"

THE FINANCIAL STOCK has often been abounded with compensation funds generated through the sale of food aid. Since the 1970s, major efforts have been made to open up the sahelian region (roads, tracks). To the extent that today boats can be unloaded at the ports and the cereals transported by trucks up to the capitals of the landlocked countries in less than two days. Even the rural areas situated in the North of the sahelian countries often the first to be affected by the climatic crises, are a lot more accessible. Certain villages nevertheless are going to remain difficult to access particularly during the rainy season, which also is the lean period during which supply difficulties are more crucial. For the latter, the modes of physical storage remain a major and difficult security measure to be replaced. But for

Volume of stocks for the national agencies with national production and imports

• The technical rotation corresponds to the placing onto the market of a part of the stock, in the warehouse for quite some time, and the reconstitution of the stock with the year's cereals. This operation aims at guaranteeing the quality of the cereals stored and avoid their degradation.

Return to section B on the markets, to section C on the MIS and decision-making and to section F on the assessment of the achievements of the Network. the other areas, the availability of financial resources that make it possible to operate on the markets seems to offer the same guarantees for rapid reaction capacity and intervention on the side of the populations. To do this however it is necessary that the resources be secured (available and mobilisable in case of need) and that their mobilisation conform to the strict criteria and modalities without it affecting their flexibility. With the difference of physical stocks, the financial stocks make it possible to bring in a variety of responses to the crises according to concrete situations. If it is necessary to provide livelihoods, it will be preceded by purchases. According to the market situations and the availabilities, we prefer either a local supply of cereals available in the surplus areas, or sub-regional if the neighbouring countries have surpluses or finally from imports of an extra-regional origin if we want to avoid provoking additional tensions on the markets. These operations are more delicate than they appear. In fact on the relatively close local and regional markets, the institutional operations on proportionally high volumes - several thousands of tonnes - are going to have considerable impact on the prices. When this regards purchases, the mere announcement of an operation launched by the agency is going to provoke tensions on the markets, raise costs of foodstuffs for the consumers. This impact makes access to the markets more difficult, especially for the poorest people, and this is contrary to the food security objective. Inversely, when the public authority trades a part of the stock through the agency, it runs the risk of plummeting the market prices and if not, it will disturb the marketing campaign of the producers. In any case, this type of intervention necessitates a profound understanding of the markets and a sufficient anticipation of price dynamics in order to avoid that the public interventions do not aggravate the tendencies and thereby play a counter-productive role with regard to the food security objective and market regulations. However the food security funds can also be mobilised so as to engage other actions conducive to the mitigation of crises which do not involve interventions on the markets • (cf. infra).



The cereal banks: collective and decentralised storage

The cereal banks are one of the privileged tools for reinforcing the capacities of the populations to manage the uncertainties and to be protected against crises. The Sahel shelters thousands of these, often organised at the village or inter-village levels. Behind this concept, there is in reality a major diversity of practices which essentially are as a result of the problem of the zone in which the bank is located and the promoter of the BCV.

Like the national security stocks, the BCV are in general assigned two main missions: the storage (from 10 to 40 tonnes per bank) and the organisation of rural households in the face of the market. These missions vary according to the zone:

- In structurally deficit zone: a cereal bank resembles a purchase cooperative which supplies outside the zone, if possible at the time of the harvest so as to profit from the price drop and avoid that the village be replenished during the lean period when cereals become more expensive, villages difficult to access due to the rains and finally, when the populations are preoccupied with agricultural works;
- In structurally surplus zone: a cereal bank conducts activities for grouping the supply and the postponement of market sales in order to avoid sales during the harvest season when prices are much lower. Sales are made to traders or groups of producers located in the deficit zones. The price differential between purchase and resale makes it possible to cover the current charges;
- In a zone where there is "precarious equilibrium", the cereal banks develop some mixed functions and are going to privilege one or the other according to the years.

The cereal banks are the instruments for the



stabilisation of the local market and they facilitate both the supply to the households in the remote areas or the conservation of cereals in the villages as well as the improvement of the conditions for marketing produces.

The intra-annual instability of prices makes it possible for the cereal banks to realise their operations by limiting the economic risks if they can be supplied right after the harvest. The possibility of making purchases right after the harvest is the cornerstone of the system. This latter depends, in addition to the competencies of the managers (knowledge on the market, voucher maintenance of stocks, financial management capacities) on the existence of a working capital. It is there where the shoe often pinches and once again the problem is of the same nature as that encountered by the State with the management of the national stock: the risks of stock depreciation, selling at prices lower than the purchase price which reduces largely the working capital (here we refer to the erosion of funds relating to the working capital). The difficulty for the banks to adapt to a succession of very variable years makes them particularly vulnerable. These cereal banks are difficult to understand for they call for multiple competencies and they are development tools which are very often implanted hastily during a crisis. Their external promoters are expecting from them a place for the storage of livelihoods provided as food aid and a collective organisation of the populations to manage this endowment fund and ensure the distributions under their control. However, requiring an elevated emergency desire to promote some complex tools which necessitate a total involvement of the beneficiaries, donors take major risks. The village organisations do not have the possibility of evaluating this tool and often the organisms which contributed to implanting it (the food aid donors, NGOs...) become no longer interested in it up to the next crisis and observe then that the working capital has disappeared! The absence of a common approach for the different participants and the lack of support during the period are very destabilising factors for the BCV. This is the reason why the departure enthusiasm for this food security decentralised tool often is a source of major deceptions.



Local purchases and triangular aids

 The triangular operations involve three parties: the country which provides the product needed, the recipient and the donor financing the operation.

Today (2001-04) the local purchases and the triangular operations represent 33.6% of food aids allocated to the Sahel.

F THE PRECEDING MAJOR DROUGHT are translated into production deficits in the majority of the countries and production basins, the bulk of the crises will concern only a part of the sahelian territory and the cereal production zones will often become surplus zones even if a part of the territory is in deficit. For the donors, the recourse to local supplies (in the recipient country) or to triangular operations • (supply in another developping country, notably a sahelian country) has a double objective: provide foodstuffs that are more in line with the eating habits and contribute to dynamising the demand, and as a result encourage the producers. In the Sahel these food aid supply modes have been strongly developped although they are often more complex to implement than the direct transfer of imported cereals: difficulties linked to the fragmentation of the supply, the high cost, the impact of the tenders on the market prices and finally the quality of the products delivered, etc.

Being in proximity to local purchases, these triangular operations have supplementary advantages concerning the suppliers: augmentation of export receipts, price stabilisation, stimulation of production just to mention a few. The triangular operations therefore put emphasis on the flow of the surplus of the developping countries, the integration of regional economic trade and the development of the south-south trade network.

Apart from the difficulties encountered in the execution of the contracts, the triangular operations manifest certain limitations. Thus, they can generate some harmful effects on the markets of the supplier countries (augmentation of prices for the consumers) and bottle necks in the purchase and transportations can strongly put a strain on the delivery dates.

Between gift and market: sales at moderate prices

THE SCARCITY of cereals translates almost immediately into the skyrocketting of prices. The difficulty of access to cereals is less attached to their total absence on the markets than to their price. Worried about alleviating the negative impact of aid distributed freely, the managers of the crises and the donors have sought to promote more differentiated approaches:

- Free distribution for the most vulnerable populations, which would be constrained by behaviours that compromised the "return to normalcy" in the phase according to the the crisis: decapitalisation, migration of able-bodied persons, etc.
- Sale at "moderate" price, "social" or "subventionned". There are a myriad terms to qualify sales at prices lower than the market prices. Generally, these sales aim at encouraging the access to cereals for the populations of the villages targetted. They also seek to have a bearing on the market price and therefore facilitate the access to food for all of the consumers. Niger, for example, has ro a large extent developped this intervention modality in the course of the preceding years;
- The operations "food against work", the high intensity labour works (HILO), "food against training", etc. These operations are meant to avoid the emergence of handouts attitude on the side of the recipients and to respect their dignity. They therefore aim to carry out investments on infrastructure (constructions of roads, anti-erosion constructions, well digging, construction of schools...). This form of intervention is very much developped in Cape-Verde.



Crisis management and long term food security

are the links between the modalities for crisis management and the conditions for ending the crisis. This problem is twofold. The first is on the use of a much wider range of instruments for crisis management that serve to register the actions beyound the sole objective of short term survival of the populations stricken by misfortune. The second is the link between the management of short term crises and the search for long term food security, integrating the reduction of vulnerability and the prevention of crises as a fundamental pillar of the strategy for poverty reduction and the food strategy.

On the first point, in the course of the past 20 years progress has been considerable. They are largely owing to the development of early warning mechanisms. which facilitate interventions before the crisis starts to produce effects that lead to a reduction of meals as well as a deep reduction of the quantities or the quality consumed-food varieties.

The food security managers in all of the countries are resorting more and more to diversified measures which present two major interests: reducing the food aid needs and facilitating the end to crises. In any case, safeguarding the potentialities of the populations affected is sought after as a matter of priority: conservation of the reproducing livestock, safeguarding of lands and production capital, etc. This means to preserve as far as it is possible

the capacities of the rural households to start a new farm without the conditions of the foregoing not obstructing it right away, fuelling a cycle of successive long and acute crises. This approach depends on the observation that the most serious crises in terms of consequences are produced when a zone accumulates several shocks having affected the survival capacities and the populations bereft of the possibility to reconstitute their previous level of resources (capital, work, stocks, savings, other revenue generating activities, etc.).

Some appropriate tools to the diversity of crises

THE CHOICE OF MEASURES is thus going to depend on a diagnosis of the origins of the crisis and the capacities of the populations to put up a challenge . The instruments used are for the:

- The preservation of the productive capital: livestock food supply, vaccinations, development of water points (cleaning out pastoral wells) and ponds. Supplies of seeds, inputs and tools to encourage a good installation of off-season plants if the climatic conditions permit, or for the following rainy season, fall in line with this strategy;
- The reinforcement of purchase capacities and decentralised storage: making credit lines available for the rapid and early supply (when prices are at their lowest in the

The early warning mechanisms made it possible to resort to a range of crisis mitigation measures that are more integrated than food aid in the continuum "emergency-rehabilitation-development".

 The experience of Mali is presented in a detailed manner in part E, which is devoted to it. purchase zones) of cereal banks in the villages; food aid operations via local or triangular purchases can be benefitted from so as to give the cereal banks a new stock which will permit them to reconstitute their operating capital;

Other mitigation measures through the implementation of revenue generating activities, food for work operations or cash for work, that allow the populations to improve their access to food through conducting collective work interests which will contribute to the reduction of structural vulnerability: antierosive works, roads...

On the second point, the links between crisis management and food security building, the sahelian countries have recorded some major integration efforts. On the national level, several countries are now equipped with some real short term crisis managament strategies: one example is Burkina Faso where there is the setting up of the national organisation Plan for emergency aid (see box). The same applies to Niger, Mali and Cape Verde. The crisis management mechanisms are less structured in the other countries of the CILSS zone. However, generally, all of this integration effort centered first of all only on short term crisis prevention

The PNOCSUR or the risks of overdoing it a bit!

THE NATIONAL organisational and coordination plan for emergency measures and rehabilitation in Burkina Faso was adopted in 2000. It envisages an intervention mechanism in case of short term food crisis. It privileges a progressive granting of benefits at the local and national level according to the scope of the crisis and it seeks to involve the stakeholders on the ground, the beneficiaries and the decentralised structures. The national Committee for emergency aid and rehabilitation (CONASUR) which was mandated for its implementation is a structure which exists at the provincial level (COPRO-SUR) then district level (CODES-UR) and finally village level (CO-

The PNOCSUR is supposed to be a coherent information framework and organisation of the emergency actions by being based on the determination of the threshold for its launching. These thresholds exist at the

national level -four thresholds according to the result of the cereal assessment be they surplus, balanced, deficit or super deficit- and in the provinces -four thresholds also according to the scope of the deterioration of the food situation with regard to a "normal situation". At the national level, the declaration of the disaster comes along with a deficit of the cereal assessment above 3%. The SNS is mobilised as soon as the deficit surpasses 5% and beyound 7% appeal is made to the financial stock official.

The plan proposes five scenarios that envisages different types of actions, participants and funds to mobilise as well as the mobilisation and distribution procedures of food aids. The actions advocated fall in line with the gradual approach ranging from the mitigation actions (revenue generating activities, HIMO programmes, supplies of the cereal banks...) to the releasing of the «financial stock» by passing through trade

credits allocated in order to facilitate trade or imports, the mobilisation of national security stock or food aids, etc.

Being so sophisticated the PNOCSUR has still not witnessed its application. Actively promoted by its technical and financial partners, it received little support from the national partners who find it complicated, poorly flexible and finally incapable of responding to the emergency situations. It is considered as a stumbling block imposed by the donors so as to avoid the use of the national security stock whose mobilisation depends on the principle of codecision. Consequently, Burkina Faso has set up a second stock, the national intervention stock, managed by the Government.

Extract of a contribution to the works of the 18th meeting of the Network for the prevention of food crises in the Sahel. Brussels, 2002.

and management, became expressed within a much larger framework. All of the sahelian countries are henceforth equipped with national food security strategies all of which fall in line within the "sustainable food security strategic Framework for poverty reduction in

The sustainable food security strategic framework in the Sahel

DOPTED by the second forum of sahelian societies and the conference of heads of State and Governments of the CILSS member countries in 2000, the Sustainable food security strategic Framework for poverty reduction in the Sahel is an orientation and coordination referential of the interventions for all the stakeholders who are involved in the search for food security in the Sahel: The States, the socio-professional organisations, the economic operators, the associations and NGOs, the organisations for regional integration and the external partners.

The general objective is to "ensure, at all times, the access of all sahelians to the necessary foods so as to lead a healthy and active life between now and 2015". It also spells out the objectives defined by the world food summit (FAO, 1996) and the Millenium commitments (50th anniversary of the United Nations).

Five specific objectives have been fixed:

- The promotion of a productive, diversified and sustainable agriculture is an essential stake in the Sahel. It is about limiting external dependence and promoting the development of regional productions through the transformation of production systems and a good management of natural resources. This requires a considerable investment effort in the area of water control and in the improvement of the institutional environment of the producers;

- The development, fluidification and sub-regional integration of the markets is one of the conditions necessary for the improvement of the functioning of the food economies. They must allow for price stabilisation, encourage producers and avoid price rises which halt access to the food of the populations, notably the most vulnerable ones;
- The sustainable improvement of the access conditions of the vulnerable groups and zones to food and basic social services aims at apprehending all of the dimensions linked to poverty and which weigh negatively on the realisation of food security and nutritional improvement (access to drinkable water, health...);
- The improvement of the mechanisms on prevention and management of short term crises. By keeping the watch and the intervention capacities in the face of habitual crises (climatic shocks), the Sahel must be better armed to tackle the economic and political risks.
- The reinforcement of the capacities of the stakeholders and the promotion of good

governance for food security. Recognised as a public good, food security must be ensured by a joint action of the public institutions, the private sector and the professional organisations. It must also fall in line with the current decentralisation. The articulation of the different echelons of governance (local, national, regional and international) requires major efforts for the management of information, consultation and coordination.

The implementation of the strategic framework is based on nine food security national strategies, completed at the regional level by a specific strategy, in order to treat the problems at the most adequate level. It is based on a set of guiding principles: differentiation; complementarity and subsidiarity; decentralisation and good governance; participation; multi-stakeholder and inter-institutional partnership; equity; shared responsibility; transparency, good management and obligation to accountability; coherence; coordination and sahelian leadership.

Source: Sahel 21: no to poverty, opting for sustainable development. CILSS, 2002. 61 p. the Sahel". The programmes which emanate from them at the national and regional level stem from two pillars: the prevention and management of short term crises on one hand, and the building of structural food security on the other hand.

Difficulties met in targeting the beneficiaries

Selective bibliography: Egg J., Gabas J.-J. et al., La prévention des crises alimentaires au Sahel. Dix ans d'expérience d'une action menée en réseau, 1985-1995. Club du Sahel-OECD., 1997, 210 p. Sahel 21: no to poverty, opting for sustainable food security. CILSS, 2002, 61 p. Cadre stratégique de sécurité alimentaire durable dans une perspective de lutte contre la pauvreté au Sahel. Summit meeting of Heads of State and Government of the CILSS member countries, CILSS, 2000. Le moniteur de l'aide alimentaire 2003 and special issue of the Moniteur de l'aide alimentaire au Sahel, WFP, La sécurité alimentaire au cœur de la lutte contre la pauvreté, progress report 2000-2001 of the community aid and food

THE 2002-2003 Campaign was particularly difficult for those countries situated in the West of the Sahel. Certain countries, particularly Mauritania already had a bad campaign. The WFP (World Food Programme) decided to organise a regional operation in the five countries that were affected by the major drops in cereal production: Cape-Verde, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. Out of a cost of 28 million dollars, the operation had envisaged the supply of 55,000 tonnes of foodstuffs to 420,000 beneficiaries. Mauritania alone should have received 45,000 tonnes. The targetting of beneficiaries was based on an analytical enquiry into the cartography of the vulnerability (SCV) which recommended three intervention strategies: therapeutic nutrition; free aid; food against work; food for training. In total, 120,000 peo-

ple should have received complete rations over nine months and another 200,000 to have received a reduced ration over six months.

This operation was the subject of an ex-post evaluation the results of which were submitted to the WFP board of directors during the October 2004 session. The report of the experts point at a numer of problems in the implementation of the operation and dwells on the inherent difficulties regarding the target groups.

According to the experts, in Mauritania: "[...] more than 900 families have been officially targetted, but more than 2,200 have received emergency aid. The notion of targetting households implies that those who have been targetted will be the final consumers of the food aid, as if it was possible to isolate the persons targetted from their social milieu, village or community, thereby making an abstraction of the links which exist and conditionning the daily life of the populations. The targetting must be adapted to the context and incorporate the social realities in the approach rather than seeking to adapt the reality to the model". Regarding the impact, the evaluation states that in Mauritania, 84% of the food aid needs have been received but only 51% of the aid received was distributed as at 30th September. This is explained by the delays in the arrival of aids, the logistical bottle necks linked to trade imports, human resources and inadequate materials provided by the WFP and the NGOs responsible for the distributions.

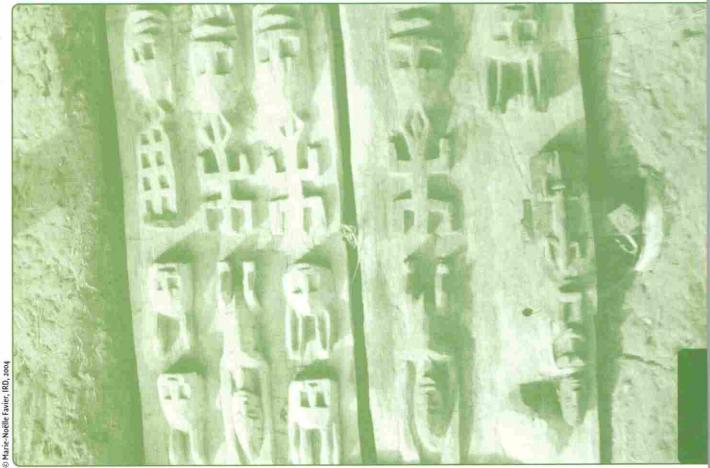
Source: Rapport résumé d'évaluation de l'opération d'aide d'urgence régionale au Sahel (10249.0), WFP, 2004.

Commission.

Interfais, 2004.

security program, European

E Mali's experience



Sof its cereal policy and its famine prevention and management strategy, in the beginning of the Eighties. The Malian experience illustrates the orientations and systems developed in most of the CILSS countries over the last 20 years. The approach combines both long-term food security building and circumstantial food crisis prevention. Based on constant dialogue and joint management between the Government and the Donors, as well as on innovative institutional management, financing and intervention mechanisms, this approach, beyond its contents, is indeed worthwhile sharing.

HE FAMINE prevention and management system set up in Mali more than 20 years ago, following the major droughts, is generally regarded as a particularly efficient model. It is currently used as a model for the development of similar mechanisms in the sub-region and the world. The system is characterised by the following distinctive features: the problems are addressed from a longterm perspective (nearly a 23-year long policy supported by the Donors and the Government); a multi-annual (3 to 5 years) planning system serves as a framework for the annual plans and budgets which are later systematically controlled in detail; consensus is the only rule that applies to all dialogue and coordination levels; the financial tools (counterpart funds and food security funds) help ensure that all the contributions (Government and Donors) are merged and used according to common rules

combining flexibility and safety in the use of the funds. The costs and responsibilities are gradually transferred, from the Donors to the Malian Government, without calling into question the Donor-Government consultation and coordination bodies and rules.



A country severely hit by the drought in 1973



ali was one of the countries most affected Lby the general alarm of 1973: 1,850,000 disaster victims, a livestock that decreased by more than 40%, industrial crops hardly reaching 60% of the forecasts, a food deficit of 260,000 tons in 1973 and 400,000 tons, the following year. Towards the 1980s, the rainfall conditions of the country worsened again; the deficit of rains, compared to the average of the precipitations recorded between 1926 and 1975, was approximately 30% on average and reached 40% in the north. Whereas the country's needs, all cereals taken together, were assessed at about 1,400,000 tons per year, the cereal deficit in 1982 was approximately 200,000 tons, leading the country to turn to very costly imports. This deficit even worsened during the crop year 1983-1984, reaching 330,000 tons of cereals.

Answers considered

In view of the situation, two types of answers were considered: liberalization of the cereal market and formulation of a food strategy. This strategy was based on a large vision of food security and sought to grasp the production, trading and consumption systems as a whole, and then to define a whole series of integrated and coherent actions.

The field of actions to be carried out under this food strategy is vast. The interventions in direct support of the quest for food self-sufficiency accounted for 60% of total official development assistance between 1981 and 1983, although the sectors involved do not absorb much capital. The Malian Government was fully aware that any action limited to improving the cereal sub-sector alone could not be enough in itself to prevent and manage food crises in the short, medium and long terms. The enlarged consultative process that led to the liberalization of the cereal market on the one hand, and to the food strategy formulation on the other hand, was similar. However, the slowness of the administrative procedures as well as the lack of enthusiasm from the donors broke off the momentum and dissipated the energies devoted to the strategy, which were then concentrated exclusively on the liberalization of the cereal market.

The original aspect of the Malian experience

The reflection on the setting up of a real famine prevention and management system that forms part and parcel of an overall rural development policy as a factor of food security and economic growth started concretely from the studies undertaken within the Club du Sahel/OECD, the FAO, the CILSS and the Government of Mali in 1978 • • . Since 1981-1982, these studies have been making the reorgani-

zation of the cereal market in particular and the institutional reforms in general, a priority course of action.

What is at stake here is to supplement the market liberalization with structuring actions likely to stimulate the production, in order to be able to provide the producers with incomes as an incentive and to achieve economies all across the agricultural sub-sector. These must allow decreasing the consumer prices. The main tool set up to give concrete form to this political will is the Cereal Market Reorganisation Programme (Programme de Restructuration du Marché Céréalier, PRMC) the Government initiated in 1981-1982, with the support of nine countries and food aid agencies (Belgium, Canada, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, the USA, Germany, the EEC and WFP). The PRMC pursues —through the liberalization of the cereal market— the suppression of the monopoly of the Office des Produits Agricoles of Mali, the progressive abandonment of consumer subsidies, the increase in farmer prices and the rise in national cereal production in order to reach food security. The aim was to support the shift from "a strongly controlled economy" to "a free-market economy", while guaranteeing the cereal supply of the deficit areas.

The innovative aspect of the PRMC is to use the necessary yet denigrated food aid, for structuring purposes. To that end, the PRMC was to be run jointly between the Government and the Donors on the one hand, and be provided with three entities, always with equal representation, likely to fulfil the decision-making, consultation/coordination and implementation functions (cf. box).

- The aim of Mali's food strategy, adopted in 1982, was to ensure "food security within a precise time horizon: the last decade of the century". Its primary goal was: "to provide the population with a balanced, adequate and low-cost food ration" and two objectives to be reached simultaneously: "food self-sufficiency and an adequate nutritional level guaranteeing a balanced food ration to the population".
- * Since 1978, the report of the mission led by H de Meel on the cereal policy and made up of experts from various international institutions (FAO and various agencies gathered within the Club du Sahel/OECD (France, the United States. Germany, United Kingdom, Canada) has been making several recommendations on the policy to follow in the fields of the production, marketing, cereal prices and storage and on the role of the Office des Produits Agricoles (Agricultural Produce Marketing Board) of Mali. The liberalization of the cereal market, the regulation of the sector including the approval of the tradesmen and the organization of the associations of producers and tradesmen, should help boost the production.

Three entities of the institutional and financial framework

HE DECISION-MAKING FUNC-TIONS relate to the definition and orientations of the food security policy. They are held by the Government and the representatives of the Donors through the Orientation and Coordination Committee (COC) from April 1982 to February 1999, the Orientation and Coordination Committee of the Food Security System (COCSSA) from February 1999 to April 2003 and through the National Food Security Council (CNSA) and the Technical Coordinating Committee of the Food Security Policies (CTCPSA) since April 2003. The latter are extended to include representatives of the civil society.

The consultation/coordination functions relate to the formulation of the recommendations that can contribute to the decision-making and the intervention. Since the adoption of the new Institutional Framework for Food Security Management in April 2003, these functions have been taken care of by the CTCPSA charged with coordinating the whole of the food security activities, facilitating the dialogue between the various parties, promoting synergies between the various stakeholders and components, ensuring that the decisions made are enforced, taking action to prevent, address circumstantial food crisis conditions and launch, if necessary, the emergency intervention plan, coordinating the collection and processing of food security data, ensuring the publication and dissemination of documents, creating and running an effective food security monitoring-evaluation mechanism.

The implementation functions relate to the management and coordination of the institutional framework ensured by the Technical Secretariat of the CTCPSA

assisted by a Permanent Working group composed of seven members including a representative of the Donors, the prevention and management of food crises ensured through the information (EWS, MIS ...), intervention (the OPAM through the National Security Stock, the Surveillance Unit and the Grassroots Development Support Unit...) and financing tools (Joint Counterpart Fund (FCCC) and the Food Security Fund (FSA) supplied with financial resources, under the same conditions, by external contributions or by a participation of the State budget). These two funds are managed by double signature, by the Supervisory Minister and the Coordinator of the Donors of the PRMC.

Broad lines and modalities of the medium-term Action plan (2000-2004)

- To continue strengthening and improving the existing food security system;
- To adapt the system to the evolution of the food risk and integration of new risks;
- To make the approaches to "food security system" and to "poverty reduction programme" more coherent to ensure increased effectiveness;
- To improve operation of the cereal markets through better use of the market mechanisms;
- To support the cereal productions for

- them to be able to take up, in the long run, the challenge posed by the supply of an expanding domestic market on the one hand and a significant external demand on the other;
- To reduce the prevalence and the impact of the various risks (climatic accident, attacks by pests, price variability, etc.) which, by compromising the agricultural production and the operators' incomes, represent obstacles to the development of the cereal sector.

A medium-term action plan

THANKS TO the two financial tools, the activities agreed upon are carried out essentially within the framework of the mediumterm Action plan, developed by the PRMC as a strategic planning tool and which forms the subject matter of a specific financing by the Government and the partners of the programme. For the Programme 2000-2004, the total cost over the five years is estimated at 8.5 billion FCFA, including 6 billion to be contributed by the State Budget and 2.5 billion by the external partners. Indeed, in accordance with the PRMC reinforcement and consolidation

strategy, the Government of Mali committed itself to gradually meet the major part of the operating cost of the food security system.

The adoption of the new Institutional Framework of Food Security management in April 2003 marks a crucial turning point since we shift from the management of the cereal policy alone to the management of the food security policy as a whole. In the same vein, the Food Security Commission (Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire), established in May 2004 and aimed at working out and implementing the national food security policy, was provided with Departments and Services including the Department of Production, Prevention and Management of Food Crises *.



A segment of the cereal system

Mali is better equipped today than in 1984 to cope with a severe crisis. The system set up in a gradual way provides the country with a more adequate, faster and more coordinated answer. It operates around two main systems: information and early warning placed under the responsibility of the early warning system; interventions entrusted to the Office des Produits Agricoles of Mali.

The focal point for the prevention and management of the crises is the Early Warning System (EWS). Its aim is to provide answers to the following questions: which are the zones and populations likely to experience food or nutritional problems? Which assistance to provide? How to use it? The EWS thus enjoys support from the PRMC of which it forms integral part. Its methodology is based mainly on a comparison of circumstantial and structural data enabling to understand and sense the evolution of food monitoring indicators, or any unusual situation requiring special attention. The institutional and financial framework aims, inter alia, at gathering and sharing information from various sources, comparing the analyses making it possible to foresee risks of crises,

identifying appropriate answers geared to the nature of the crises and their context and finally developing forward thinking.



The system as a whole is centred on food security

THE OTHER SUBSYSTEMS that make up the PRMC aim at preventing food crises and improving food security in the broad sense of the world. Thus, a number of interventions aimed at improving the operation of the markets or supporting the production zones contribute to reduce the impact of the food crises: credit allocated to various categories of tradesmen, a credit line for marketing-storage activity which was used by the Village Associations more particularly; loans granted to the associations of rice growers of the Office du Niger, equipment of the Village Associations with materials and storerooms, etc. This made it possible to get the private sector and the village associations gradually involved in the food crisis prevention and management system; it also paved the way to a more transparent market, developed competition in the private sector, and contributed to strengthen the bargaining capacity of the village associations and farmer groups. The establishment of a Joint Counterpart Fund showed that it was possible to mobilize, in the Sahel, a significant amount of resources to undertake reforms of the cereal sector since nearly 12 billion francs CFA were raised to help cover a wide range of assistance and supportive measure costs.



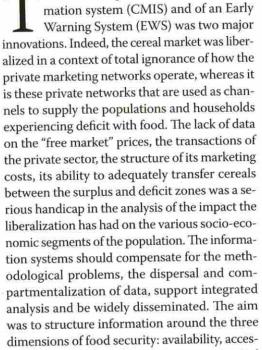
The Department of Production, Prevention and Management of Food Crises of the Food Security Commission is charged with following through the growing season, taking part in the assessment of the national production, ensuring that the national security stock is built, rebuilt and properly managed, seeing to the formation and monitoring of the cereal banks, coordinating and controlling the food supply and distribution operations in the deficit and disaster-stricken areas.



Information mainstreaming

 The Observatoire des Marchés Agricoles (Agricultural Market Observatory) is now located with the Assemblée Permanente des Chambres d'Agriculture du Mali (APCAM, the Assembly of Mali's Agricultural Chambers). * To characterise the food crises, the EWS has set a graduation, i.e., the degree of food or nutritional difficulties, which comprises several levels: - Nothing to report; sibility and stability. This mission was entrusted - Mild or severe economic

> markets observatory) . has been monitoring the producer and consumer prices of the various cereals.



in 1989 to the MIS housed within the OPAM,

with the aim of meeting the information needs of

both the public decision-makers and the private

sector. Since then, the MIS -now known as the

observatoire des marches agricoles (agricultural

▼HE SETTING up of a Cereal Market Infor-

The PRMC responsible for the operation of the EWS

CET UP IN 1986, and sponsored by the Com-Omon Fund of the PRMC, the task of the Early Warning System is to foresee the food crises as well as the populations likely to experience food or nutritional problems, to determine the aids to be provided and how they can be used. It is a tool for the observation of deficit areas and zones at risk.

The EWS intervention methodology consists of three phases. The first phase consists in delimiting the country's zones at risk: 168 districts, in the Sahelian zone mainly, that is to say a total of 349 communes primarily located in the North of the 14th parallel. The second phase is the development of a battery of indicators, constantly monitored and making it possible to raise the alarm in these zones. For each geographical area, the system is based on an analysis of the production gaps compared to an average year whose definition includes the rainfall pattern of the cropping season and the pest situation. In order to make a qualitative (or quantitative) assessment, the EWS developed a comparison base for each commune or group of communes, corresponding to an average year, including data relating to the various categories of populations; inventory of activities practised; crop potentialities; monetary resource potentialities; modes of supply to the populations; their mobility; the existence and structure of the cereal markets and livestock markets; coping strategies used in case of difficulty. Thus, the EWS can identify very early the existence of any food risk **. The third phase consists in assessing the needs and suggesting the necessary interventions. It charts the developments and suggests measures likely to mitigate the effects on the populations.



difficulties;

- Food crisis;

- Famine.

- Food difficulties;

At the request of the public authorities and the Donors, the EWS determines the food requirements of the zones in tonnage and makes recommendations based on which the PRMC can order the OPAM and the Grassroots Development Support Unit to implement:

 Distributions of food aids in the communes or parts of the communes experiencing or likely to experience a situation of famine, food crises or food problems;

 Intervention sales by OPAM in the zones at risk and/or experiencing a break in the supply pattern according to the Plan of Operation of the OPAM adopted by the PRMC; and

 Income-generating development actions in order to improve access to the market for the beneficiary populations.

To successfully carry out its mission of information and early warning, the EWS works closely with the other information systems at the national level —the agricultural sample survey and the MIS—, at the regional level with the CILSS (Agrhymet and PREGEC) and at the international level with the GIEWS/FAO and FEWSNET .

In Mali like in the other CILSS Member countries, these national, regional and international food security information systems monitor, during the growing season, the evolution of the weather conditions, the areas under cultivation, the river floods, the diseases or pest attacks and try to make yield and production forecasts in order to anticipate and prevent food crises.

At the national level, three networks contribute, on various degrees, to information and early warning:

The Agricultural Sample Survey, managed by the Direction Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Informatique and the Direction Nationale de l'Agriculture, aims at making quantified forecasts of cereal harvests, mainly with a view to drawing up the cereal balance-sheet → which helps determine, theoretically, the deficit or surplus of production at the end of a cropping season, in order to define the level of aids or



public and private imports necessary to mobilize. This balance sheet is produced with a technical support from CILSS.

Le reflet : Observatoire du Marché Agricole BF : E5589 - Tél. : 22° -40-73

Malgre cette évolution ascendar sur les murches de gros des ci

The Market Information System now known as the Agricultural Markets Observatory in charge of collecting, processing and disseminating information on the agricultural products and in 78 markets. The information collected relates to the prices, the supply of the markets, and the levels of the transactions. The objective is to make the cereal market more transparent and to place the information needed for decision-making at the disposal of the policy makers.

- The information is circulated through monthly bulletins meant to guide the Government's action and to get support from the Donors of the PRMC. Finally, the EWS system follows up the recommendations in order to reduce the gap between the needs identified and the distributions of food aids in the field. Please refer to part C devoted to the information and regional watch systems.

See part C to know how the provisional and ex-post cereal balance-sheet is drawn up. The main tasks of the OPAM as stated in the current Performance Contract (2003-2005) consist of the management of the national security stock, the mobilization of the Cellule de Veille et de Logistique (Surveillance and Logistics Unit) in the event of any major food crisis, the facilitation of the implementation of the recommendations of the EWS system, the management of the "food security" aids and the implementation of any specific action decided by the Government in connection with the food security.

** The Emergency Intervention Plan of the OPAM is based on (i) the preparation of a detailed supply plan; (ii) the reactivation of key infrastructures and equipment; (iii) the mobilization of additional material and human resources; (iv) preparation and launching of the public cereal imports programme; (v) management of the transport system for the transportation of the imported cereals as well as regular supply of the distribution centres. *** The mechanism has, for the moment, opened 21 bank accounts including 17 for the

common counterpart fund and 4 for the food security equity fund. The funds that have been deposited in these accounts reached, in 2001 and 2002, the amount of 5 billion Francs CFA, and came down to 4 billion in 1999. Given that there has been two poor agricultural seasons successively, the amounts decreased to 1.4 billion Francs CFA in January 2004. The fall has reached 80% as far as the common counterpart fund is concerned, between 2002 and 2004 (PRMC, April 2004).

OPAM: the keystone of the operation plan

HE PRMC is currently in its 6th phase. Each phase capitalizes on the assets of the previous ones and plays increasing role in the prevention and management of food crises. Thus, the relationship between the Government and OPAM has been formalised through the signature of seven performance contracts since the beginning of the programme.

The OPAM , which enjoyed monopoly over the marketing of all cereals, saw its main task now limited to the management of the 58,500 ton National Security Stock maximum of coarse cereals —brought down to 35,000 tons after the creation of a Food Security Fund whose amount should exceed the monetary equivalent of 25,000 tons of coarse cereals, i.e., a financial target of approximately 5.5 billion Francs CFA-, and to the supply of the deficit areas. Several secondary tasks were assigned to it: centralization of the Market Information System; renting out warehouses to the private sector and/or the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Mali; treatment of the cereal stocks at request; management of rice aids intended to be resold at the market prices and representing financial assistance to the balance of payments, and finally, according to the needs, particularly in case the private sector fails to meet their obligation: exports of cereal surpluses (triangular operations) and imports of bags.

The intervention zone of the OPAM —for the supply of the Cercles experiencing chronic food deficit— virtually overlaps the zone of observation of the EWS system, as part of its new assignment.

Management of the National Security Stock

THE OFFICE des Produits Agricoles (the Agricultural Marketing Board) of Mali manages the National 35,000 ton-Security Stock of local cereals and has a Cellule de Veille et de Logistique (Surveillance and Logistics Unit) responsible for keeping up the buildings and equipment, updating the basic information and taking part, should a serious crisis occur, in the implementation of the emergency Intervention Plan. The guiding principle is to distribute free or to resell cereals from OPAM only if the normal operation of the market does not make it possible to ensure food security in the zones at risk identified by the EWS system due to inadequate income for the affected target groups, inadequate supply or its interruption by the private sector. Besides, in case a major crisis occurs, based on the assessment of the situation by the EWS system and the relevant technical bodies and after decision by the PRMC, the OPAM starts the emergency Intervention Plan it is in charge of ...

The Cellule d'Appui pour le Développement à la Base (Grassroots Development Support Unit) prepares applications for emergency relief and follows through, in the field, the proper execution of the emergency actions, actions alternative to free distributions and of rehabilitation.

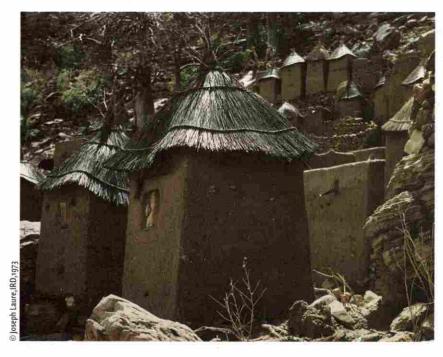
The Fonds Commun de Contrepartie (Joint Counterpart Fund) and the Food Security Fund are the financial tools for the implementation of the food security actions (free food distributions, alternative actions) to which should be added the complementary commitment by the foreign partners to mobilize immediately, should a widespread crisis similar to that of year 2002-2003 occur • • •.

Undeniable assets

N THE WHOLE, the PRMC, from which the above current food crisis prevention and management system is derived, has reached the major part of its objectives, in terms of market liberalization as well as establishment of an efficient and effective food security system. The State has actually withdrawn from the cereal market sector. The cereal marketing and transport process is liberalized and prices are free. An enabling environment for the promotion of the private and associative operators of the cereal sector is now in place. The entrenched food security system based, inter alia, on the various methods of assistance to and supply of the most vulnerable zones, constitutes a satisfactory response to local food crises. The redefinition of the role and missions of the OPAM allowed setting up an entrenched Food Security System and reducing food risk in the medium term through improved operation of the cereal markets.

However, it should be noted that the system has many weaknesses as regards particularly its capacity to cope with the major food crises. The system is effective in addressing immediately limited or local-level food crises via very fast free distributions and/or sales of intervention. But it does not have the necessary tools and means that can help reduce structural deficits, on a long-term basis, particularly by decreasing the vulnerability of the populations. Moreover, it is still difficult to target the populations, beneficiaries of the free distributions because such distributions are made to the entire population of the area concerned. There are still unanswered questions regarding particularly how to target the recipient zones and populations, certain political considerations, the forms of "clientelisme" (client-centred approach) and the many conflicts around the determination and modalities of management of the aids intended to be distributed free of charge.





Mali: at the crossroads again

IKE IN 1981-82, Mali is at the crossroads again, in view not only of the new risks, but also the resurgence of the formulation and the adoption of a new Food Strategy, the operationalization of the new Institutional Framework for Food Security Management and the new Commission on Food Security. The food security of the country has improved thanks to the PRMC, because of the increase in the production levels and a better operation of the markets but also thanks to the crisis prevention and management system put in place. The available cereal production increased from 1,109,086 tons in 1983-85 to 2,399,873 tons in 2002-04, that is to say a 116% rise, whereas the population increased by 46% only over the same period. During the last 20 years, the available paddy rice production increased by almost 400% (DNSI/DNAMER, 2004). But for all that, the problem of food insecurity is still there. As years go by, the nature of the risk has changed, from basically cyclical food insecurity in the rural areas, due to climatic factors, to more structural food insecurity, due to poverty principally in the urban and peri-urban areas. This phenomenon isn't yet properly assessed and taken into account satisfactorily in the current system. Similarly, price instability remains a factor that impedes access to food regularly. Lastly, like all the other countries of the region, Mali remains vulnerable to risks resulting from the political crises in the subregion: floods of refugees, economic and commercial disturbances. Not to mention the fact that the systems in place are not quite effective in addressing certain old and well-known risks, such as the locusts.

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december 1997.

The Network: achievements & prospects



The Sahel has not experienced any famine on a large scale over the last 20 years. The absence of widespread drought has a lot to do with it. However, significant progress has been made towards providing the region with the capacity to anticipate and prevent crises. The Sahel is not safe from another new shock, but it is certainly better fitted now to face it and to avoid famine. The Network has amply contributed to such a progress through the creation of a forum for dialogue and coordination. The reflection on the methodologies as well as the formulation of the food aid charter has facilitated control over the food aid. But for all that, the Sahel hasn't done yet with food risks. In an area subject to deep and profound transformations and confronted with new risks, the future of the Network is indeed quite a burning issue.

♦ Apart from a few observers, 31 people attended this first meeting of the Network in 1985. Only one participant represented CILSS. All the others came from aid agencies, international organizations and NGOs.

Though the Network always claimed to be a forum for dialogue and coordination among the donors, it was noted a progressive change in its membership at the beginning of the Nineties. The Network is more open to the CILSS Sahelian experts. In 1995, during the 10th anniversary of the Network, the meeting brought together 34 specialists including 10 representatives from the various specialized institutions and programmes of CILSS.

The restoration of the balance within the Network's members continued with the transfer, in 1999, from the Club du Sahel to CILSS, of the responsibility for leading and coordinating the work of the famine prevention Network. At the same time, the aid agencies seem less mobilized to take part in its deliberations.

T IS NO EXAGGERATION to say that the dysfunctions of the food aid have given birth to the famine prevention Network. Since its inception, the problems that will later recurrently regulate the work of the Network were present. 84-85 was a very negative crop production year. This led to the transfer of considerable amounts of food aids. Thus, the aids made available exceeded by 200,000 tons the requests submitted by the Sahelian countries. A significant share of this assistance was received late and filled the storage capacities. The following cropping season was a good one and the Sahel was again in a position of positive crop production. The prices collapsed. The first meeting of the Network in October 1985 expressed concern over its impact on the size of the areas under cultivation of the following year. The locusts threaten.





Assistance to food security

BEYOND THESE PROBLEMS that are constant and are characterized by climatic instability and hazards, the first meeting of the Network defined, from the outset, the topics that would structure its work for many years:

- Accurate assessment of the food needs, appraisal of the amount of the harvest, inaccuracy of the population, consumption, inter-African trade statistical data, etc.
- Use of satellite technologies and setting up

of an early warning system;

- Management of the food aid with the attendant logistic problems of transport and storage, the possibilities of supply from within the Sahel countries or from other developing countries (triangular purchase);
- Use of the counterpart funds for development purposes, in particular through financing of the cereal policy reforms.

Also from the outset, the linkage between the food crises in the Sahel and the regional integration of the markets was clearly identified and the Network was concerned about collaboration between the Sahelian and the coastal countries, the CILSS and CEAO, the West African Economic Community.

This predominant food aid topic strongly influenced the course of the work of the network. The accurate assessment of the cereal deficits constitutes the first matter of concern. The second one relates to the reflection about alternatives to direct food aid transfers, the rationalization of food aid management and its use within the context of a more structural vision to improve the food situation of the Sahel region.



Information at the heart of the dialogue

THE CREATION of the Network takes place in a context characterised by weak information systems: production data are released very late, the cereal balance-sheets are not very reliable and do not take into account certain significant parameters, such as the farmer stocks, in order to assess conditions of supply of the region. The donors do not have any information base reliable enough to help them properly assess the volumes of food aid necessary to mobilize. They don't have any platform for dialogue to coordinate their interventions and consequently to improve the overall effectiveness of the food aid. The national structures are not organized either in the Sahel to provide a general analysis of the risks and food needs, and a fortiori to coordinate the intervention of the various donors.

The Network then took action in several directions. It became first a forum for comparing information by bringing together the main information systems: the Agrhymet Regional Centre, GIEWS/FAO and FEWS, and experts from the agencies that have their own qualitative sources of information. Thus, every year the meeting of the network provides an opportunity to compare information on the cereal

productions and balance sheets, the vulnerable zones and groups, etc.

Thereafter, the Network did an important work in terms of methodology improvement, in cooperation with various projects involved in the development of national and regional information systems. For example, the Permanent Diagnosis Project enabled to further develop and test methodologies for the agricultural sample surveys, assessment of the productions, stocks... Collaboration between CILSS and FAO made it possible to substantially improve the design of the cereal balance sheet. Other projects implemented at the national level facilitated testing the methodologies for market monitoring and vulnerability assessment, etc purposes.

The work on the methodologies of the information systems and their harmonization was then further developed within the framework of a "Working Group on Information systems for Food security in the Sahel (SISAS)". At the early Nineties, many information systems used to be set up without any regard for each other, without any coordination. This initiative was thus in response to a very important need for capitalizing and sharing the methodologies. The goal was then "To consolidate the dialogue between the various information systems at the national and international levels, in order to achieve overall coherence among all these information mechanisms and to help make these systems sustainable and get the Sahelians shoulder more responsibilities towards them". This group worked from July 1994 till the publication of a document centred on the diagnosis and perspectives of the information systems, published in 1999 by the Club du Sahel and CILSS. This work was based on an inventory of the systems existing in the various countries and an analysis of the methodologies used. It is quite interesting to revisit the main recommendations (box) produced at the end of this work in order to see how far they have gone and what remains to be done.

The situation of the information systems

"The Network is, in the world, a unique forum for discussion, analysis and experience sharing on the agricultural and food situation in a given region" Stéphane Jost, FAO.

"The pre-eminence of the Institutions and personalities from the North is a weak point of the Network, so much so that very few initiatives were coming from the Sahel. Things have been changing during the last three years, even though some partners from the North are still reluctant and there is still very little political will, in the Sahel"

Brahima Sidibé, CILSS.

"It is an ideal forum for more in-depth consideration of the regional and national food security issues. This experiencesharing process, as well as this invitation to more transparency through comparison, cannot but help to improve public governance, not only in the food security sector. The network is an excellent tool for learning how to achieve regional integration around vital issues, just like coal and steel were vital issues for Europe in the Fifties" Stéphane Devaux, European Commission.

"A very good and operational food security system gathers and uses information, but it must also and especially be able to produce consensus. The consensus deals, above all, with dialogue, negotiation and confidence. This is the type of forum that the meeting of the network provides, with much more objectivity in retrospect than what can be reasonably achieved at a national level." Stéphane Devaux, European Commission.

"The absence of a crisis has resulted in governments and donors (bilateral, multilateral or NGO) turning their back to the monitoring and information systems. Thus, the sustainability of such systems is called into question locally and the reliability of their data can strongly decrease. Many EWS or MIS systems don't have any longer the minimum resources they may need to run smoothly."

Stéphane Jost, FAO.

"We should not forget how the network has served the cause of cereals policy dialogue, and the opening up of regional markets, so that today we understand the role that regional demand and markets are playing in the filling of food availability gaps."

Roy Stacy, Fewsnet.

tends to deteriorate. At that time, the majority of the countries had at disposal a full system integrating the agricultural sample survey, the MIS for market monitoring, and the EWS for early warning and vulnerability monitoring. Today, very few countries still have these three components that can provide primary information. On the other hand, there are in several countries a number of structures that collect and process data emanating from various sources, in order to assess risks of food insecurity. These bodies often receive support from a donor and are in line with the development of the mapping and information system on food insecurity and vulnerability (SICIAV), promoted by FAO. One of the major problems involved in this evolution resides in the financing and

internalisation of the systems producing basic information: agricultural statistics, monitoring of a whole set of indicators allowing to track the evolution of the food risks for the vulnerable populations, collection of market information... Many other institutions invest in data processing and decision-making, which are functions more prestigious and less costly.

The fragilization of the information systems is also due to decreasing regional support. The end of the DIAPER project has reduced the resources and methodological support the countries used to enjoy. This also helped to more easily impel methodology harmonization projects and contributed to compliance with a number of deadlines: for example, publication of harvest estimates, drawing up of the cereal

Extract of the recommendations of the "think tank" on SISAS

- 1. The food security information systems are an integral part of the elements the authorities [...] and their partners need for decision making. It is thus necessary to ensure that they are sustainable. These systems, as tools, need to be taken into account in the national and regional food security strategies.
- In view of the increasing use of information [...], it is essential to ensure internalisation, i.e. to get national budgets meet the operating costs of the information systems.
- 3. It is desirable that the Donors continue to back up the capital expenditures for the development of food security information systems in the Sahel, in a balanced way between the various countries of the sub-region.
- The national systems must intensify the dissemination of the information at their disposal as

- widely as possible, by providing the users with all the information needed to make their working methods transparent.
- 5. All the systems must try to use information already available to the national, regional and international levels, avoid creating duplications and improve their cooperation in order to reduce the costs, coordinate the dissemination and messages provided to the end-users. They are encouraged to ensure transparency of their working methods and of the terminologies they use.
- The Club du Sahel and the CILSS are invited to facilitate such a coordination by providing these systems with the necessary institutional framework;
- 7. [...]
- The CILSS is invited, through its specialized institutions, to draw the attention of the Member States to the operation and diffi-

- culties of the national systems and to regularly report to the Famine Prevention Network.
- 9. The Club du Sahel and the CILSS are invited to review at regular intervals the levels of coordination between the international and regional systems, to followup the use of their products by the Donors and the countries, to draw their attention to the problems and to regularly report to the Famine Prevention Network.

Source: the food security information systems in the Sahel. Analysis and prospects. Club du Sahel – CILSS, April 1999. balance sheet, etc. The countries haven't yet managed to "internalise" their information systems and the "landscape" remains highly heterogeneous. The information systems that used to rely on project-type structures (the EWS systems, very often) are met with many difficulties when the external financings dry up. Then, problems of institutional integration, sustainability of financings through the State budget, and human resource management, etc., arise. The debate on the institutional and financial implications of food security information as a public good has not made any progress in fact, at each country level as well as at the Country/Donor dialogue level.

Duplications also exist. The FEWSNET developed significantly and strengthened its operational co-operation with the national institutions, and with CILSS at the regional level (joint bulletins for example). The GIEWS and Agrhymet collaborate regularly and lead the joint missions for harvest assessment; yet, they don't go as far up as making joint publications.

The discussion about the methodologies is now centred on the work carried out on the "Harmonized framework for permanent analysis of current vulnerability in the Sahel". It clearly illustrates the fact that food security problems have shifted from an availability-centred approach essentially to an approach that gives increasing importance to access to food for the populations.

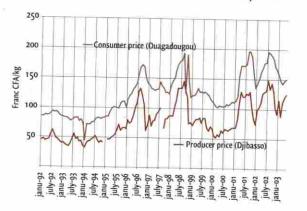
Investigations have been conducted in recent years in order to improve consideration

for market indicators. The aim is to improve understanding of how the markets operate on the one hand: more precise identification of the most determining factors in the price trends, analysis of interconnections between the markets within the sub-region, linkage between the coastal and Sahelian markets, etc. The aim is also to test the possibility of using the market data and the historical series to improve the analysis of the probable evolution of the food situation (probable short-term price trends, level of market supplies, impact on accessibility for the consumers). The investigations led within the framework of the Network, with the support of the Club du Sahel, were concentrated on three countries that have long data series of cereal prices on the production and consumption markets (Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso). The tools developed on these three countries are now in the process of internalisation and extension to the whole of the CILSS Member States.



The food aid charter

It is indisputably one of the most significant achievements of the Network. As mentioned above, the dysfunctions of aid and its very often-negative impacts are the root causes of the creation of the Network. Very quickly, the idea of developing a code of conduct allowing rationalizing the management of the aid and committing the Donors as well as the recipients, cropped up. It took several years to



Chronological series of the millet price in a producer market and a consumer market in Burkina Faso "One of the major achievements of the Network is the creation of a coordinating system and a sustainable forum between analysts, regional institutions and donors for regular information sharing on the food situation in the field and the actions to be undertaken to avoid crises."

Karim Hussein, Club du Sahel et d'Afrique de l'Ouest.

"The methodologies and the selection of indicators must make up a central element of our analysis within the Network to assess food insecurity in the Sahel."

Amadou M. Konaté, CILSS.

"The Network is also a relatively closed forum gathering always the same people and where it is unwelcome to call into question or express doubt about the information submitted for consideration. There is no strict and indisputable control of the statistical data communicated by the States and which are simply validated without any discussion by the Network. The Network is hardly something more than a 'sounding-box'." Stéphane Devaux, European Commission.

 Please refer to part C devoted to the food crisis prevention systems. bring this project to fruition because it must take into account very different realities at the level of the agencies and the countries as well. The food aid reform does not indeed represent the same challenge for Cape Verde or Mauritania as for Mali or Burkina Faso.

The assigned objective was to arrive at using food aid for development purposes. To that end, the various parties involved considered that there couldn't be any reform without a consensus among the Donors and, an agreement with the recipients.

Thus, the food aid charter specified the objectives of the food aid and defined a whole set of principles that commit the international donor countries and institutions and the recipient countries. They are classified under three big chapters:

- Assessment of the food situation: co-operation to improve the reliability of information and the credibility of the estimates; harmonization of assessment criteria of the food situation (indicators pertaining to the nutritional situation, purchasing power, etc).
- Assessment of the food aid needs: dialogue over the assessment of the needs based on an analysis of the food situation: quantities, types of assistance, qualities, zones and populations concerned, logistic constraints, delivery period, etc. All these elements make up the acquisition plan that both the Donors and the national authorities undertake to respect.
- Implementation of the food aid: commitment to harmonizing decisions among Donors and to coordinating the actions; definition of the allocation of the aids with the recipient country, the selection of the products, the modes of distribution (free distribution, sale...); mainstreaming of the aid into the agricultural and rural development strategy, coordination with the other types of assistance, etc.

On this latter point, the Donors commit themselves on a number of very significant elements: to avoid actions that would contribute to change the eating habits; to adjust aids in





Texte officiel de la Charte de l'Aide alimentaire

Ce document a reçu l'adhésion unanime des États membres du CILSS et des pays donateurs membres du Club du Sahel (Canada, Communauré Economique Européenne, États-Unis d'Amérique, France, Pays-Bas, République Fédérale Allemande), il a été formellement approuvé par les chefs d'État du CILSS au cours de leur réunion au sommet de Guinée-Bissau le 10 février 1990.

- considérant l'importance de l'aide alimentaire pour lutter contre la faim et la
- mainutrition;

 2 considérant l'opportunité de faire de l'aide allimentaire une composante active du dispositif général d'aide au développement visant à créer la capacité nationale de disposer des denrées alimentaires, nécessaires, soit en les produisant, soit en recourant à des importations commerciales;

 3 considérant le souhait exprimé, par les donateurs et les bénéficiaires d'amétorer. L'utilité de cette aide, en s'appuyant sur les leçons de l'expérience acquise et les réfléxions ensagées à son uniet;
- Tomate un coste ance, en 3 appayant sur les seçons de l'experience acquiss et les réflexions engagées à son sujet ;
 Considérant la nécessité d'idapter, sur les plans qualitatif et quantitatif et dans la mesure du possible. L'aide alimentaire aux besoins des populations cibles, dans des conditions telles que les productions locales n'aient à souffrir ni de dépréciation en valeur ni de difficulté d'écoulement ;
- 5 considerant que pour répondre dans les meilleurs délais aux besoins il convient de mettre en œuvre des procédures raprèses et souples, susceptibles de favoriser la fiabilité au meilleur prix de l'acheminement des aides par voie maritime, terrestre ou.
- en dermer recours, aéfenne;
 6- considérant la nécessité de ne pas aggraver la dépendance extérieure, par des actions susceptibles de modifier à long terme les habitudes alimentaires au détrinent des céréales de production locale
- 7 considérant que les surplus alimentaires peuvent, tout autant que les déficits, déstabiliser les prix, revenus et disponible alimentaire, et qu'il convient d'intégrer l'aide alimentaire aux politiques commerciales régionales pour que le marché puisse mieux réduire les fluctuations locales en disponible alimentaire :
- 8 considérant qu'il n'est de véritable solution aux problèmes posés par l'aide alimentaire sans un consensus entre les donateurs, eux-mêmes en accord avec les bénéficiaires, en vue de coordonner les efforts et les actions ; déclarent adhérer aux dispositions suivantes :

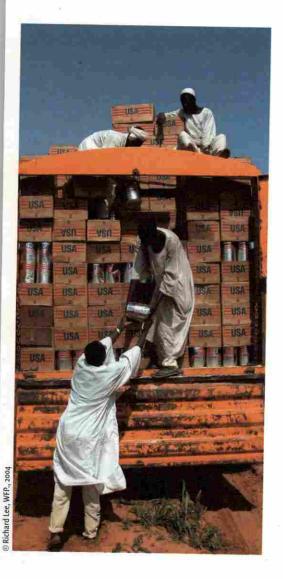
I. Définition des objectifs de l'aide alimentaire

L'objectif général de l'aide alimentaire est de contribuer à assurer la sécurité alimentaire en répondant en temps voulu et de manière appropriée aux situations de pénurie ou de déflicit alimentaires, qu'elles solent le fait d'insuffisances structurelles ou de situations de crise nécessitant l'organisation d'opérations d'urgence exceptionnelles.

order to avoid competition with the local productions; to assign the proceeds of the sales (counterpart funds) for financing development actions pursuing food security; to promote the regional cereal trade; to limit free distributions to the emergency situations; and to substitute financial assistance for assistance in kind.

The Donors and the Sahel countries adopted this food aid charter in Bissau in 1990. The Network was charged with following up and regularly assessing it. Because it is a non-binding charter, the respect of its clauses depends on the goodwill and the requirement of the partners. Many evaluations of the implementation of the charter were made between 1990 and 2000; they have been used to keep the dialogue over aid policies and food security going.

However, because the charter is not well known in the countries, and at times in the donor agencies, it has not been possible to improve aid practices on a sustainable manner. This is due to inadequate information and to frequent changes in the human resource structures in the Sahel countries. This problem was already raised five years only after the adoption of the charter. This is confirmed by the recent evaluations in Niger, Burkina and Chad.





The Donors reform their policies

THE WORK carried out in the Sahel and within the framework of the Network has had some effect in the change of the Donor policies. One can even recognize that the Sahel has served as a laboratory for a wide range of innovations. These have been re-examined and used for the definition of new instruments in support of food security. The most remarkable change remains the reform of the European food aid and security policy, but these reflections have influenced the whole of the bilateral and multilateral policies.

"This charter can be used as a tool in other regions which depend on very significant food aid flows every year - such as Eastern Africa and Southern Africa."

Karim Hussein, Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.

"Certainly, the climatic factors are still predominant, but in my opinion, the absence of any serious food crisis in the Sahel for twenty years now is also attributable to the existence of this monitoring and consultative network."

Stéphane Jost, FAO.

"The network has provided an indispensible context for policy dialogue on the costs and benefits of food aid and was the place where the Food Aid Charter was born. In short, the network has acted as neutral ground for beginning to discipline both the demand side of food aid, as well as the supply side. The Food Aid Charter could not have come about without the shared engagement of Sahelians and donors to cure the «food aid addiction» and for that the network was essential."

Roy Stacy, Fewsnet.

The future of the Network ...

"The Network must select, for every new meeting, a «specific topic» and definitely adopt a militant approach in order to defend certain strong positions like the fact that food aid generally goes against food security".

Stéphane Devaux, European Commission.

"Enlargement of the Network and its adaptation to take up new food security related challenges different from the traditional ones such as availability and accessibility. I am thinking particularly of the conflicts, AIDS, governance, the locust peril, regional integration etc." Salif Sow, Fewsnet.

"In the future, the Network should support the implementation of the Harmonized Framework for vulnerability assessment, by taking into account the biophysical, social and economic dimensions and, in so doing, it should think of the types of answers deemed most suitable to the structural crises. It must also develop more effective decision-making tools that better meet the expectations of the decision makers and the actors (farmers and tradesmen)".

Yamar Mbodj, ECOWAS.



Facing up to new risks of crisis

▼HE NETWORK still has many challenges to take up. It is first of all necessary to preserve the spadework it has carried out. The information systems need to be internalised and further strengthened. They must remain independent and produce reliable information, according to accepted and transparent methodologies'. The setting up of a regional market information, the consolidation of the EWS system and the harmonization of their methodologies, the revision of the agricultural sample survey to take into account the rapidly changing production structures and the new needs (food balance sheet) are as many important priority actions for which the Network has some expertise as a group. By working hand in hand with CILSS, the Famine Prevention Network can usefully assist the countries and the region in carrying out these projects. One of its more specific tasks could be to mobilize the whole of the Sahelian and international partners in order to define a quality information charter for food security, by capitalising on the knowhow the food aid charter has acquired. This would be a framework for the certification of the statistical data produced in the region,

thus making the end-users of information feel more secure.

Another challenge is the capacity of the Network to take into account new factors of food risk. On top of the traditional risks that are still important to consider in the region—in particular the rainfall risk and the risks linked to endemic poverty—it is necessary for the region to organize itself in order to be more proactive with regard to other parameters:

 Risks inherent in climate change: the third report of the Intergovernmental Group of experts on climate change sums up the foreseeable impacts. For the Sahel, the report confirms the persistent decline of the pluviometry, which does not exclude normal pluvial episodes. It also confirms a more important frequency of sudden climatic events, involving floods, periods of atmospheric cooling, etc. These modifications will certainly have impacts on the production systems, the biodiversity, the adaptivity of the ecosystems and, more significantly, on the water resources of the region, including the shared resources. The management of water and its use for agricultural production will become even more crucial issues than today. Faced with



these evolutions, the countries are not in a position to adapt to the novel situations, especially in terms of research, financing, and early warning systems, etc.

 Demographic impact: more than 100 million inhabitants in the Sahel in 2020, more than 200 million in 2050 according to UN-FPA. Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger alone should have a population of 141 million inhabitants at that time. This obviously raises questions as regards the carrying capacity of the environment for such population density, knowing, all the same, that the Sahel has already increased twofold the number of its population over the last 20 years and has managed to match up its agricultural production with the growth of its needs. How will the Sahel be able to radically change the way it uses its resource base? What will be the impact of conflicts over the use of the resources (lands, energy, pastures, water, etc.)? What will be the impact on the regional migrations, the rising tensions between ethnic or religious groups, between countries?

- Impact of the AIDS. For the moment the Sahel is less affected than the rest of West Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. But some countries have more and more alarming infection rates. What are the possible risks associated to a rapid development of the disease and what may be the impacts on the agricultural production, the heath status and consequently the food situation of the affected populations, etc? The development of the AIDS is first of all an urban phenomenon. However, in the Sahel, the early warning and vulnerability monitoring systems are poorly developed except in the rural areas.

 Economic risks. The region is marked by a harsh economic situation. The agriculturebased economies are still dependent on a very few and unprocessed export crops. When a crisis occurs in a given sub-sector, it is at times millions of households that are affected. This is the case of cotton, at the moment. Conversely, the region imports increasing quantities of rice. The rice prices that are rather cheap now are likely to undergo very strong strains in the years to come, as a result of developments in the demand from Asia, especially from China. Being too dependent on imports is obviously a factor of significant risk in a volatile economic situation.

- Finally, political risks. The West African region has henceforth entered a conflictual situation which, after having destroyed the economies of Liberia and Sierra Leone, has been affecting for several years now the biggest French-speaking economy of the region, namely Côte d'Ivoire. The impacts are many on the Sahelian economies (return of migrant workers, lower flows of resources, lower demand for importation of products form the Sahel, increase in export costs, etc).

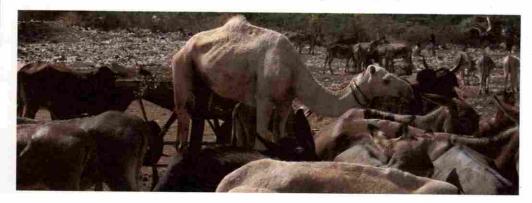
"The working priorities should be the consolidation of the national information systems and the continuation of the harmonization of assessment methods. This requires training of the relevant technical staff and lobbying with sponsors of these systems to remind them of their strategic and economic interest. The operating cost of an information system is much lower than that of a food aid in the event of crisis. A specific work would be also useful as regards adaptation of information and publications prepared by the national or regional information systems to meet the requirements of the policy makers".

Stéphane Jost, FAO.

"How to better integrate the market mechanisms, the non-agricultural sector activities and urbanization that naturally implying diversification of the food ration? How can the Sahelian agricultural sector meet these changes in the demand for food (people consume coarse cereals less and less), which is a positive element for health and food balance?"

Karim Hussein, Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.

"The actions of the Network must henceforth be directed towards the development of the regional market and better targeting of the vulnerable zones while consolidating the assets. To that effect, the partners from the North should let the Sahelians take the lead" Brahima Sidibé, CILSS.



"The network in 2004 has a real opportunity. That is to assist CILSS/ PREGEC with the technical lessons and experience to sustain a multi year process of 'south/south' dialogue with SADC and IGAD... to share the experiences of the Sahel. For instance, in policy reform, information sharing, harmonization of assessment methodologies and how to work through consensus producing processes."

Roy Stacy, Fewsnet

Selective bibliography: Egg J., Gabas J.-1. et al., La prévention des crises alimentaires au Sahel. Dix ans d'expérience d'une action menée en réseau, 1985-1995. Club du Sahel-OECD, 1997, 210 p. Les systèmes d'information sur la sécurité alimentaire dans le Sahel. Diagnostic et perspectives. CILSS-Club du Sahel, 1999, 176 p. The various Compte-rendus de réunion annuelle du Réseau de prévention des crises alimentaires, 1985-2003. CILSS-Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. The various Évaluations de l'application de la Charte de l'aide alimentaire, 1990-2000. Club du Sahel. Traoré K. et al., Sécurité alimentaire en Afrique de l'Ouest. Recherche d'outils complémentaires intégrant la dynamique des marchés céréaliers dans l'analyse et l'aide à la décision. CILSS-Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, 2004, 60 p.

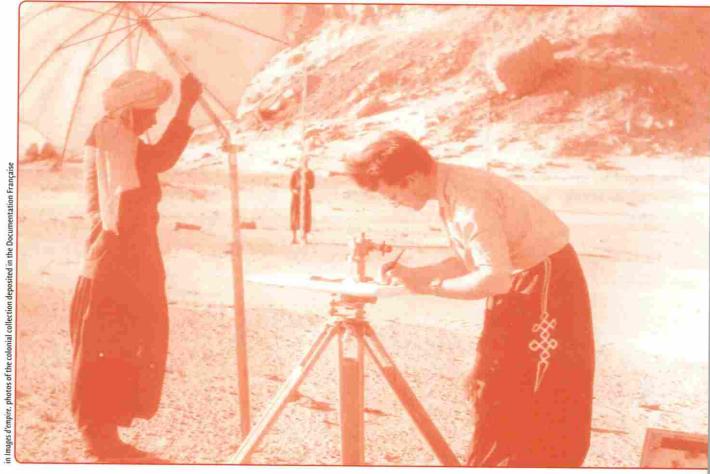
All these aspects require changes in the surveillance and early warning systems. The information systems will have to diversify their partnership in order to collaborate with observatories specialized on these types of risks which have an impact on the food situation and the risks of food crisis: poverty observatory, observatories of the agri-food systems, observatories of good governance and conflicts, etc. The Network could play a major role to promote forward thinking about these issues and be a forum gathering the other crisis prevention systems.

But, after 20 years networking, a thorough and independent assessment of the outputs and methods seems quite necessary. This will provide tools enabling to think of the future course of the work and the evolution of the Network's practices. It is also within this context that could be examined the conditions through

which the Network would be expanded to take into account other food related initiatives of the West Africa region: how could the achievements of the Network benefit the coastal countries? How can the information from the coastal countries be more systematically used in the Sahelian food situation diagnoses?



:G: Key figures



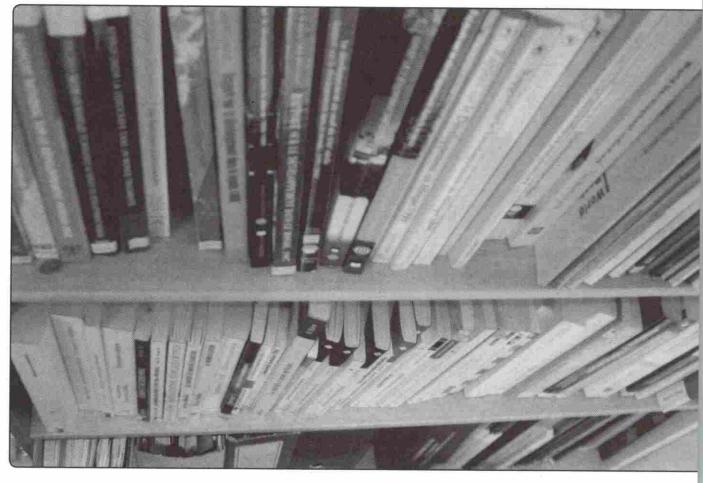
Cereal balance-sheet for all CILSS countries

Apricultural season	1087-1088	1988-1989	1987-1988 1988-1989 1989-1990	1990-1991		1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	9661-5661	2661-9661	8661-2661	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	1992-1993 1993-1994 1994-1995 1995-1996 1996-1997 1997-1998 1998-1999 1999-2000 2000-2001 2001-2002 2002-2003 2003-2004	2003-2004
Donulation (inhabitants) 30,824,000,40,780,000,41,767,000	20.824.000	40.780.000	41.767.000	42,747,000		45,200,000	46,327,000	47,431,000	48,666,000	49,861,000	51,178,000	52,692,000	54,045,000	55,442,000	56,561,000	44.100,000 45,200,000 46,327,000 47,431,000 48,666,000 49,861,000 51,178,000 52,692,000 54,045,000 55,442,000 56,561,000 57,825,000 59,841,000	59,841,000
Gross production	6,632	8,752	8,053	6,619		8,709	8,744	10,010	9,126	9,243	8,089	10,746	11,223	9,256	11,629	11,455	4,264
Available production	5,459		T.			7,160	7,186	8,243	7,485	7,550	6,563	8,798	9,160	7,515	9,447	9,374	11,691
Opening stocks	999		1,552			1,036		620	786	806	551	479	782	714	919	589	699
1000 Imports	1,297	1,288		2	1,677	1,517	1,298	1,364	1,564	1,896	2,225	2,146	1,930	2,495	2,483	2,502	2,289
Exports	92	54	38	93	85	47	26	99	7	38	54	50	53	144	151	22	121
Closing stocks	109	1,552	855	614	980'1	721	620	186	806	595	489	791	714	592	585	699	1,054
Human consumption	6,728	7,522	8,494	2/1/2	8,930	8,944	8,530	9,376	9,023	9,619	8,795	10,582	11,105	9,988	018,11	11,738	13,474
Apparent consumption	169	184	203	182	202	198	184	198	185	193	172	201	205	180	500	203	225
Gross production	167	215	193	155	213	193	189	117	188	185	158	204	208	167	300	198	238
Available production	137						155	174	154	151	128	191	169	136	167	162	195
Cereal imports	33								32	38	43	14	36	45	44	43	38
Food aid	6	00	9	-	7 0	9	S	3	2	œ.		4	3	3	3	3	
Opening stocks	71	15	37	20	14	23	91	13	16	16	11	6	41	13		10	F
Closing stocks	15	38	3 20	14	1 23	91	5.	71 3	71	12	01	15	3	F	01	12	18
Average stock held	91	92	29	17	61 7	19	14	15	91	14	10	12	14	12	F	=	14

Calendar year	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Burkina Faso	133,085	80,395	44,702	48,189	37,787	33,642	91,190	58,764	36,408	49,064	41,490	506'92	45,699	27,778	62,200	33,167	42,787	35,548	30,054
Cape Verde	54,922		67,720	58,520	53,777	58,702	64,204	59,160	27,824	73,406	73,417	44,501	992,299	59,882	22,037	53,180	35,476	51,602	47,724
Gambia	2,170	17,525	22,708		15,490	4,089	16,321	10,685	8,541	9,694	3,802	4,267	9,249	2,676	6,507	8,357	3,351	4,305	18,525
Guinea-Bissau	17,561	19,610	27,687	9,512	9,331	5,193	15,861	7,501	10,805	4,490	3,240	7,792	5,946	3,604	17,131	721,72	6,312	6,816	198'91
Mali	217,894	117,447	51,110	56,314	47,473	38,554	47,009	38,469	27,820	27,114	20,048	911,61	23,024	23,938	14,073	12,320	621,12	806'9	37,441
Mauritania	131,538		62,570	45,472	64,961	45,242	89,956	29,887	82,480	25,593	44,945	17,312	43,971	18,623	30,651	16,574	38,173	48,756	105,082
Niger	26,932		22,918	78,915	41,611	40,058	91,888	46,181	26,364	46,930	24,607	32,386	62,021	53,724	37,879	20,396	62,720	37,133	21,412
Senegal	82,290		96,764	73,618	64,884	63,483	42,224	80,865	52,165	25,700	21,323	8,613	12,981	12,041	31,823	53,944	30,290	9,411	36,610
Chad	116,526				27,288	25,979	77,569	161,8	4,704	22,184	1/1,12	169,61	49,455	18,226	13,364	23,406	38,364	13,078	19,535
	1,052,918		422,246		362,601		536,221	339,703	111,772	284,176	254,042	180,584	317,611	225,490	270,665	248,470	278,603	213,558	333,244
ft. world	4,726,869	11,590,144	3,608,071	14,116,931	11,247,992	12,856,948	2,197,660	14,969,119	17,061,114	4,726,869 11,590,144 13,608,071 14,116,931 11,247,992 12,856,948 12,197,660 14,969,119 17,061,114 12,641,476 9,948,697	9,948,697	7,047,757	7,010,116	8,179,299	4,780,302	11,097,811	7,010,116 8,179,299 14,780,302 11,097,811 10,701,609 9,520,474 10,111,825	9,520,474	10,111,825
Total	5,779,786	12,224,389	4,030,317	14,532,509	11,610,593	13,171,890	2,733,881	15,308,822	17,338,225	5,779,786 15,308,821 72,338,439,44,030,317 14,532,509 11,610,593 13,171,890 12,733,881 15,308,822 77,338,421 72,505,417 78,308,822 77,338,425,417	0,202,739	7,228,341	7,327,727	7,327,727 8,404,789 15,050,966 11,346,281 10,980,212	996'050'51	11,346,281	10,980,212	9,734,032 10,445,068	10,445,068
Proportion CILSS/world	18.2%	8.5%	3.0%	2.9%	3.1%	2.4%	4.2%	2.2%	1.6%	2.2%	2.5%	2.5%	4.3%	2.7%	1.8%	2.2%	2.5%	2.2%	3.2%

Food aid delivery (all commodities) to the CILSS area

H: Resources & references



Abbreviations & acronyms

	₩.		
AEDES	European Development and Health Agency	MIFRAC	French Mission in support of CILSS
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act	MIS	Market information system
AGRHYMET	Regional Training and Application Centre in Agro-mete-	NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's development
	orology and Operational Hydrology (RAC) (CILSS)	NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
AOF	French Western Africa	NGP	National gross product
APCAM	Permanent Assembly of the Agricultural Chambers of	OCC	Orientation and coordination committee
	Mali	ODA	Official Development Assistance
CCA	"Food crisis" Unit (Niger)	OECD	Organisation for economic cooperation and develop-
CEAO	West African Economic Community		ment
CILSS	Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in	OPAM	Agricultural Produce Board of Mali
	the Sahel	PMT	Major Programme on "Training" (CILSS)
CIRAD	International agronomic research centre for develop-	PMPSA	Major Programme on "food security policy" (CILSS)
	ment	PNOCSUR	National plan for the emergency relief organisation
CNSA	National food security committee	PREGEC	Unit in support of the "prevention and management of food
COCSSA	Food security system orientation and coordination com-		crises" (CILSS)
	mittee	PRMC	Cereal market restructuring plan
CODESUR	Departmental emergency relief and rehabilitation com-	PRSP	Poverty reduction strategy paper
	mittee	PRVS	Structural vulnerability representation procedure
CONASUR	National emergency relief and rehabilitation committee	SAC	Cyclical analysing system
COPROSUR	Provincial emergency relief and rehabilitation commit-	SAP	Structural adjustment programme
	tee	SAT	Territorial analysing system
COVISUR	Village emergency relief and rehabilitation committee	SCVM	Security of the household living conditions
CSAO	Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest	SGDB	Database management system
CTCPSA	Technical food security policy coordinating committee	SIAP	Integrated early warning system
DIAPER	Permanent diagnosis	SICIAV	Food insecurity information and mapping system
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	SIP	Indigenous Providence Company
EDF	European development fund	SISAS	Food security information system in the Sahel
EEC	European Economic Community	SMDR	Mutual Company for rural development
EPA	Economic partnership agreement	SMPR	Mutual Company for rural promotion
EU	European Union	SNS	National security stock
EWS	Early warning system	UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union
FAA	Food aid agreement	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation	UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
FCC	Common counterpart fund	UNO	United Nations Organisation
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning System Network (USAID)	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
FSA	Food security fund	VAM	Vulnerability analysis and mapping
GDP	Gross domestic product	VCB	Village cereal bank
GIEWS	Global Information and Early Warning System on Food	WFP	World Food Programme
	and Agriculture (FAO)	WMO	World meteorological organisation
HDI	Human development indicator	WTO	World Trade Organisation
HIMO	Labour intensive	ZAR	Risk Zone
HLS	Household livelihood security		
ICN	International conference on nutrition		
IGA	Income generating activities		
IGA	International Grain Agreement		
TATE ALL	C. L. H. L. Library (CH CC)		

MGW

INSAH

IRD ITCZ

LDC

Sahel Institute (CILSS)

Least developed countries

Multi-disciplinary working group

Development research Institute

Inter-tropical Convergence Zone

CILSS' website provides information on current events and on the monitoring of the agricultural and food season, particularly the CILSS-FEWSNET joint newsletters and some documents published by the institution and reports and minutes of the meetings and Council of Ministers. The AGRHYMET Regional Centre puts on-line the monthly and quarterly newsletters, as well as Special Decision-maker Newsletters.

http://www.cilssnet.org/

http://www.agrhymet.ne/

The European Food Aid and Security Programme implemented by the European Commission. You can find on the website the policy documents and regulations that form the basis of the food aid and security policy, as well as the intervention strategies in the priority countries facing cyclical and, especially, structural food deficit problems, the evaluation reports, the annual reports, the commitments entered into with the NGOs and international organisations, etc. http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/foodsec/

index fr.htm

The WFP (World Food Programme) website, with especially an «interactive hunger map» worldwide well done. Click on "interactive hunger map". You can find also on the «newsroom» an update of the emergency actions. Several analysis documents on the linkage between food aid and food security produced in cooperation with IFPRI (International Food Policy Research Institute). Finally, the available evaluations and the documents submitted to the Board of Directors. http://www.wfp.org/

Of course, the FAO website is one of the most important resources available on the matter. The following addresses were selected to guide the cybernaut inside a very rich and informative documentation source and allow him/her download the files directly related to the food crisis prevention and management topic.

> The manual for the determination and setting up of a Food Security and Rapid Warning Information System (FSRWIS) SISAAR) in French

> ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/oo3/X8622f/X8622foo.pdf for the pdf version, and

> http://www.fao.org/documents/show_cdr.asp?url_file=/ docrep/003/X8622F/X8622F00.HTM for the internet version - Document also available in English and Spanish.

The Guidelines for Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions, FAO/GIEWS, 1996): http://www.fao.org/giews/ english/alert/CFSAME1996.pdf

A Powerpoint presentation of those missions (Overview of Methodology on FAO/WFP CFSAMs powerpoint file, work in progress):

http://www.fao.org/giews/english/alert/ CFSAM%20Methodology.ppt

The state of the world food and agriculture (SOFA) 2003-2004: http://www.fao.org/documents/show_cdr.asp?url file=/docrep/oo6/Y5160F/Y5160Foo.HTM

The state of food insecurity in the world (SOFI) 2003: http://www.fao.org/documents/show_cdr.asp?url_file=/ docrep/006/joo83f/joo83foo.htm

SOFI of the previous years at: http://www.fao.org/SOF/ sofi/index_fr.htm

The GIEWS introductory brochure:

http://www.fao.org/giews/french/giews_fr.pdf (also available in English, Spanish and Arabic).

The introductory brochure to the United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security: http: //www.rdfs.net/linked-docs/booklet/bookl_all_fr.pdf (also available in English, Spanish and Arabic).

Could be also added the Action plan of the World Food

http://www.fao.org/documents/show_cdr.asp?url_file=/ DOCREP/003/W3613F/W3613F00.HTM

The documents of the World Food Summit: five years after: http://www.fao.org/documents/show_cdr.asp?url file=/DOCREP/004/Y1780F/Y1780F00.HTM

And an introductory brochure to the International Hunger Alliance: http://www.fao.org/wfd/docs/Issues_leaflet_ 2003_fr.pdf

Lastly, other interesting bibliographical references can be found at the following pages:

SICIAV website bibliography:

http://www.fivims.net/publication.jspx?lang=fr#is

Bibliography of the United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security:

http://www.rdfs.net/themes/themes_fr.htm

The Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) is the principal FAO-coordinated food security information system in the world. It prepares at regular intervals newsletters on crop production and the various food crop markets at the global, sub-regional and national levels. To that end, the site provides a wide range of information, especially maps, enabling actors to chart the evolution of the food situation, but also analytical documents allowing for anticipation.

http://www.fao.org/giews/french/index.htm

An information gateway on the locusts was designed specifically on the FAO website with the latest updated newsletters and a number of documents.

http://www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhome.htm

The Famine Early Warning Network (FEWS.NET), an information system designed by the United States Cooperation Agency USAID in order to assist American and African decision-makers in anticipating the food crises. The website publishes alerts on food crises, but also resources allowing for monitoring the regional situations.

http://www.fews.net

EuronAid: A European Association that brings together 42 NGOs, active members in food security and food aid. It works in tandem with the European Commission and places its operational skills (assistance in programme implementation, lobbying, training, information) at the service of over 100 NGOs worldwide.

The website is one of the most documented resources (documents of the members and the EC). This site is also a good entry point on the web in that area, via the numerous links it proposes.

http://www.euronaid.net/menu_main_fr.htm

The NGO Afrique Verte assesses the food situation in Mali, Niger and Burkina every month.

> http://www.afriqueverte.org/france/actualites/point-situation-alimentaire.htm

The "agricultural policy and food security" working party of REDEV (Rural development network) led by the GRET on behalf of the French Cooperation, publishes synopses on these topics, as well as current events and feedback on experiences. In French.

http://agri-alim.redev.info/

Scientific information and resources on arid and semi-arid land development. This website is a mine of information in French: current events, agenda, links towards new documents published and on the most pertinent links in that area.

http://www.secheresse.info/

Eldis Food Security Resource Guide. In English. One of the most important and complete gateways. Thus, you can find current events; as well the summary of many documents the integral version of which you can get through a system of reference to the links. The link bookstore needs to be visited more particularly.

http://www.eldis.org/food/index.htm

The "foodsecurity" section of the World Bank's "development gateway" takes up contributions and suggests links towards articles on the web on that topic. An essential documentary base. You can register to regularly receive alert mails allowing knowing about documents recently published, in order to be regularly informed.

http://topics.developmentgateway.org/foodsecurity

The "Urgence-Rehabilitation-Développement" (URD) group brings together actors of the international solidarity of development and emergency action. It proposes reflection and practices to ensure continuity between these two types of assistance, especially in crisis situation.

http://www.urd.org/

This internet watch was ensured in cooperation with the Inter-réseaux – développement rural:

http://www.inter-reseaux.org/rubriques/infosreso/ inforeseaux.htm

