



COMITE PERMANENT INTER-ETATS DE LUTTE CONTRE LA SECHERESSE DANS LE SAHEL
PERMANENT INTERSTATE COMMITTEE FOR DROUGHT CONTROL IN THE SAHEL
COMITÉ PERMANENTE INTER-ESTADOS DE LUTA CONTRA A SECA NO SAHEL
اللجنة الدائمة المشتركة لمحاربة التصحر في الساحل



A Message from the CILSS Executive Secretary on the health crisis related to COVID-19 and its implications for food and nutrition security in the Sahel and West Africa

“Together, we will defeat the COVID-19 pandemic”

Brave people of the Sahel and West Africa!

Like the vast majority of countries in the world, the Sahel and West African countries, particularly the 17 Member States of CILSS, ECOWAS and UEMOA are facing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even though the increase in infections in this region is currently moderate compared to other regions of the world, there is a real risk of spread of the disease. The possible consequences of the virus outbreak on the fragile economies of our countries and the precarious livelihoods of our populations require that CILSS adopts, in line with its mandate, a proactive and participatory approach in order to provide technical advice to its Member States in the choice of resilience strategies and measures to face this new global threat.

“CILSS standing ready to assist its Member States”

In such a context, CILSS and its technical and financial partners are getting mobilised to provide relevant advice and assistance to its Member States and other ECOWAS countries to enable them to cope with the consequences of this pandemic, particularly in terms of its implications for food and nutrition security and cross-border trade flows.

Indeed, based on the analysis of information emanating from the Crisis Prevention and Management Mechanism (PREGEC), which is coordinated by CILSS on behalf of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA), the present health crisis linked to COVID-19 will have significant impacts on:

1. Food and nutrition security, which is already a source of concern, with nearly 17 million food and nutritionally insecure people and 50.8 million people currently under stress and at risk of falling into crisis by June-August 2020;
2. Civil security, especially in the G5/Sahel Member States facing terrorism;
3. Transhumant livestock farming, with the closure of borders in most of the countries concerned;
4. The movement and marketing of agri-food and pastoral products and the supply of agricultural inputs;
5. The 2020-2021 agro pastoral season; and
6. The resilience of vulnerable rural communities, by undermining their livelihoods.

“Engaging in synergistic action with IGOs, Governments and Technical partners”

The region and its partners have already mobilised to address these challenges, in particular through the establishment of:

- a high-level multidisciplinary Regional Task Force led by the ECOWAS Commission, in synergy with UEMOA and CILSS;
- a technical unit to support the Regional Task Force;
- a complementary information system for the close monitoring of the food and nutrition situation in all the countries of the Sahel and West Africa; and
- the initiation of the review process of 2020 national response plans with the States.

CILSS commends the bold steps already taken by its Member States’ governments and reaffirms its readiness to assist them.

Long live CILSS!

Long live international cooperation!