



PRESS RELEASE on Food and Nutrition Situation in the Sahel and West Africa

TECHNICAL CONSULTATION OF THE REGIONAL SYSTEM FOR THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF FOOD CRISES (PREGEC)

The meeting of the Regional Food Crisis Prevention and Management Mechanism (PREGEC) in the Sahel and West Africa was held from 10 to 12 April 2025 in Lomé, Togo. The meeting reviewed the final results of the 2024-2025 agropastoral season, the market situation and food and nutrition security outlook, and issued the following conclusions and recommendations:

- 1.** The final results of the 2024-2025 cropping season indicate cereal production of 76.2 million metric tonnes, representing a 3.4% decline from the December forecast. This is mainly due to a significant downward revision of cereal production estimates in Guinea. Slight declines are also recorded in Mali, Cabo Verde and the Gambia. Despite these declines, regional cereal production is up 3% compared to the previous season and the five-year average. On the other hand, average per capita cereal production is down 5% compared to the five-year average.
- 2.** Regional root and tuber production stands at 271 million metric tonnes, representing a 4.5% increase compared to last year and a 10% increase compared to the last five-year average. However, this root and tuber production is slightly lower than initially forecast.
- 3.** Cash crop production is also on the rise, except for cashew nuts and soybeans, which are down around 10% compared to last year.
- 4.** The revised cereal balance sheet for the region shows a gross deficit of 16 million metric tonnes, higher than the 12 million tonnes initially forecast. Taking into account import intentions, estimated at 18.5 million metric tonnes of cereals, a net surplus of around 2.5 million metric tonnes could be generated, compared with a forecast of 7 million metric tonnes.
- 5.** With regard to the pastoral situation as at March 31, pasture availability in the Sahel remains inadequate despite the good forage production recorded at the end of the season, with a notable seasonal shortfall in forage biomass in the regions of Niamey and Dosso (Niger), Timbuktu, Gao and Ménaka (Mali), northeastern Burkina Faso and eastern Chad.

This shortage is forcing transhumant herders to migrate to the areas of the Gulf of Guinea, where fodder resources are more abundant. Bush fires have also destroyed vast tracts of land, exacerbating the situation.

The March PREGEC meeting validated the final results of the 2024-2025 cropping season and updated the food and nutrition situation in the Sahel and West Africa.

The meeting was organised by the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and its partners.

The animal health situation is stable, but access to water for livestock is increasingly problematic in Sahelian areas, often marked by tensions around overcrowded water points. Restrictions on cross-border transhumance and civil insecurity are limiting the movements of pastoralists, leading to increased concentration of livestock in areas perceived as safer, and changes in usual transhumance routes.

6. On the whole, agricultural markets are operating satisfactorily, except in areas affected by civil unrest, where supplies are relatively lower and household demand is higher than usual.

7. Prices of the main staple cereals continue to rise in most countries in the region, ranging from 10% to over 100% compared with the average for the last 5 years. These increases are even more pronounced in Ghana (100%), Sierra Leone (62%), Nigeria (+200%), and particularly in areas affected by civil unrest where supplies are more difficult. Inflation due to economic difficulties in Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Gambia remains a major underlying factor.

Added to this are rising fuel prices in Nigeria, higher transport costs and various restrictions introduced by several countries to reduce cross-border flows of agricultural and livestock products.

8. On livestock markets, livestock prices are still generally higher than the average for the last 5 years. The terms of trade between livestock and cereals are still to the disadvantage of livestock farmers, due to the sharp rise in cereal prices, which has a negative impact on livestock farmers' livelihoods.

9. On international markets, food prices remain stable overall. World export prices for vegetable oils and meat are rising, while those for cereals and sugar are falling. Milk prices remain unchanged. It should be noted, however, that lower international prices for certain food products do not necessarily mean lower prices for imported foodstuffs, which remain high in the region. This is due in particular to logistical factors, handling costs and other constraints specific to regional markets.

10. The latest analyses of acute malnutrition using the IPC tool show a worrying situation in the Sahel countries, with several areas classified as „Serious and above“ (IPC AMN Phase 3+). The deterioration in the nutritional situation is most pronounced in Chad, northeastern Nigeria and Mali, where the GAO IDPs site has reached an extremely critical level (IPC AMN Phase 5).

11. The food and nutrition insecurity situation assessed in ten countries of the region remains a cause for concern. The consolidated results of the March Cadre Harmonisé analysis cycle show that, out of a total population of nearly 323.6 million analysed, 34.5 million people are currently acutely food and nutritionally insecure (Phase 3 or worse) in the Sahel and West Africa region and in Cameroon.

The situation could worsen if appropriate measures are not taken, with this figure rising to around 49.4 million between June and August 2025, including over 30.6 million in Nigeria, followed by Chad (over 3.3 million), Cameroon (over 2.6 million), Niger (over 2.2 million), Mali (1.5 million), Senegal (over 1.3 million) and Sierra Leone (over 1.2 million). It should be noted that over 2.4 million people in several countries will be in emergency (Phase 4), half of whom are in Nigeria. Some 2,645 people living in the Ménaka region of Mali could be in a disaster situation (Phase 5).

In addition, the Cadre Harmonisé analysis shows an alarming situation for displaced populations in several countries, notably in Chad, where some 1,616,853 people have been displaced as a result of the Sudan crisis. Nearly 356,000 people are classified in CH Phase 3 or above and could reach 456,397 in acute food and nutrition insecurity (Phase 3 or worse) during the lean season if adequate measures are not taken in favour of these specific populations. This analysis does not take into account Burkina Faso, Liberia and Togo.

12. Civil insecurity has led to massive population displacements. The Sahel and West Africa region is home to 2,400,000 refugees, mainly in Chad, Cameroon and Niger, and 7,800,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), mainly in Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Niger and Chad.

Recommendations

To the States

- Allocate sovereign funds in national budgets to finance data collection;
- Provide immediate food and nutritional assistance to populations in emergency and food crisis situations;
- Mobilise financial resources for the development and implementation of National Response Plans integrating pastoral needs;
- Take appropriate measures to mitigate the rise in staple food prices and improve access to food for vulnerable populations.

For IGOs: CILSS, ECOWAS, AES and UEMOA

- Strengthen information systems on Anticipatory Actions in the region;
- Provide countries in the Sahel, West Africa and Cameroon with cross-analyses of contextual factors, such as the reshaping of regional integration processes or the trade dispute between China and the United States, which are likely to have a negative impact on markets;
- Advocate with States to lift restrictions on the free movement of agricultural products in the region in accordance with the Community's commitments;
- Continue to build the capacity of National Cadre Harmonisé Analysis Units;
- Implement large-scale coordinated interventions targeting these major challenges and focusing on the prevention of acute malnutrition to begin reducing very high prevalence rates.

For Technical and Financial Partners

- Continue to mobilise resources for the response and operationalisation of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus in order to ensure coherence and complementarity of actions in the countries;
- Support countries in conducting surveys and implementing their National Response Plans.

Lomé, 12 april 2025

The meeting.

PARTENAIRES TECHNIQUES



PARTENAIRES FINANCIERS

