

COMITE PERMANENT INTER-
ETATS DE LUTTE CONTRE LA
SECHERESSE DANS LE SAHEL



PERMANENT INTERSTATE
COMMITTEE FOR
DROUGHT CONTROL IN THE SAHEL

CILSS

SECRETARIAT EXECUTIF

Sahel 21

***SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY
STRATEGY PAPER FOR POVERTY
REDUCTION IN THE SAHEL***

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Warning

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Foreword

This document is the outcome of a process which started in Banjul in 1997. Starting from a quick diagnosis of the situation of the countries of the Sahel, the evolution of food-related problems and the major transformations deeply affecting the Sahelian societies, the document presents the main issues at stake which all indicate that food security is unachievable without a poverty reduction strategy and thus represents, not only a burden for the countries and the international community at large, but also an opportunity for local level development and regional integration.

But, if collective food security from the perspective of poverty reduction were to be a success and achieved through regional resources, it is necessary that this issue should:

- *Be placed in the centre of the priorities of decision makers and actors of the civil society of the Sahel;*
- *Be negotiated with the other West African countries concerned and the international community;*
- *and inspire, on a day to day basis, the institutional, macro-economic and sectoral reforms.*

Food security does not cover the whole range of development issues confronting the countries of the Sahel and, more generally, West and Central African countries; but it is a condition for a well-balanced development that is based on the human, natural and economic resources of the sub-region.

Instead of a detailed plan of all the reforms which need to be undertaken, the document presents rather a Strategy Framework of sustainable food security with a view to reducing poverty in the Sahel. It details the principles of action which might guide changes in attitudes and methodologies. More particularly, it places emphasis on the opportunities offered by the institutional reforms and decentralization, and on the domains where regional co-operation and integration cannot be dissociated from national and infra-national strategies. It therefore leads to the objectives of a sustainable food security strategy and translates them into results and priority lines of intervention.

Adopted by the 2nd Forum of Sahelian Societies and the 13th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of CILSS Member States, the Strategy Framework is, as such, the only reference frame for all the Sahelian stakeholders, from the public and private sector as well. Its implementation requires, not only a significant support from the international community, but also fundamental changes in its practices.

I should extend my most sincere thanks here to all national (decision makers, administrations, components of the civil society) regional (ADB, ECOWAS, UEMOA, CMAC, CMA/AOC, ALG, CRAT, OMVS, OMVG, ABN, CBLT, CEBV, CEBVHIRA, ADEPA, WAEN, PDM, CORAF) and international (RESAL, FEWS, FAO, WFP, UNDP/UNSO, UNDP/African Futures, IUCN) actors who have contributed to the debates; the national, regional and international experts who produced the synthesis, as well as the development partners (European Union, the USA, Canada, Germany, Italy, France, Netherlands, Club du Sahel, CTA...) who have supported the process both technically and financially.

Mrs. Cissé Mariam K Sidibé

Executive Secretary of CILSS

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1. Sahel 21: from Banjul 1997 to Bamako 2000

The Assembly of Heads of State in Banjul in 1997 was a key step for the men and women of the Sahel. Indeed, for the first time in their history, the Sahelian populations, their organizations and networks were invited to give their opinion concerning their own future. The Forum of Sahelian Societies which preceded the Assembly of Heads of State was the culmination of a two-year brainstorming process on the future. Supported by CILSS and the Member States, the Sahel 21 process was designed as an exercise which should break away and depart from previous practices when the policy-makers and the international community were the only judges of development strategies. It was a crucial step not only for the economic and social democratisation, but also for drawing lessons from the past which was characterized by the inadequate consideration for the concerns of the beneficiaries of development programs. This was a major obstacle to the effectiveness of development policies, strategies and programs.

On the eve of the 21st century, the Sahelians formulated, in the declaration of the Forum of Sahelian Societies, their own vision of their future. They articulated this six-point vision (see box) supported by the following five priorities:

- promotion of human resources;
- institutional capacity-building at all levels;
- quick and sustainable development of agricultural productions, in particular through water control, re-capitalization and enhancement of soil fertility;
- economic growth and diversification;
- construction of a stronger Sahelian zone, open to the rest of Africa and the World.

Banjul was also the occasion to draw up, with the community of donors within the Club du Sahel, a joint balance-sheet of the assistance provided to the Sahel. In the memorandum of Banjul, the Sahelians and their partners committed themselves, in a second "Contract of generation", to renewing co-operation in the Sahel. This memorandum places emphasis, in particular, on the need to transfer to the Sahelians the leadership in the definition and implementation of development strategies, programs and projects.

Extract from the declaration of the Forum of Sahelian Societies - Banjul 1997 -

- *The Sahelian men and women all want people to be considered as the most important of all resources, and the potential of this "resource" to be improved and propagated by strengthening skills and promoting human resources at all levels;*
- *They long for a green Sahel and a diversity of rural productions through natural resources management but also less dependent on the whims of nature, in particular through increased water control and soil fertility; they also long for a developed and diversified economy;*
- *The Sahelian men and women want to live in an area that enjoys social, political, cultural and economic harmony, which better fulfils their expectations and, at the same time concurs with the individual interests of their countries. They want to generate a well-asserted Sahelian economy and culture, in keeping with their own values while adapting to current and future transformations;*
- *More particularly, they reaffirm their commitment to the basic values of the Sahelian society: family and community; respect and assistance for parents and grandparents; collective responsibility for the education of children and young people; collective respect for community property; protection of the weak and the poor; hospitality and respect for foreigners; tolerance, dialogue and consultations as a means to solve problems, and a spirit of sharing, solidarity and mutual assistance;*
- *The Sahelian men and women also want to live in societies and areas whose foundations would be consolidated and which are run in conformity with their expectations as the women and men who animate them. Thus the Sahel can develop its collective identity and, consequently, effective regional integration. This would give CILSS member countries increased weight on the regional and international arena. It would help redefine their co-operation and trade relations with the rest of the world;*
- *United round a project which is shared by all for the generation to come, stimulated by the pooling of the living forces of the countries which make it, the Sahel will be less dependent on aid and will be able to renegotiate with its partners the contents and modalities of the partnership which will confer on the Sahel the place and role its sons and daughters are dreaming about for the next century.*

Thus, the Heads of State requested the Ministers and CILSS to take all possible steps to implement the priorities of Sahel 21.

1.1. Operationalising the Sahel 21 process

In most countries, the process has resulted in the development of priority investment programs with a view to better defining the interventions that can make it possible to implement all the priorities. CILSS has supported these exercises, by facilitating the mobilization of local expertise and the organization of forums of discussion between the State and the Civil society around the proposals formulated for each priority. Under the aegis of the governments and with the support of the Sahel 21 national Committees, the dialogue is now open with the international community in order to help translate all these proposals into operational programs proposed by the State, the actors of the civil society, etc.

At the sub-regional level, the CILSS, in accordance with its mandate, has incorporated the lessons drawn from Banjul and the priorities defined by the Sahelian societies into its programs and strategic reflections. This was reflected in the research programs undertaken by INSAH and in the *Programmes Majeurs* on " Information " and " Training ". The design and implementation of the activities of the *Programme Majeur* on "Food Security" have been modified considerably to take account of the following aspects: Free flow of trade and Removal of obstacles, Prevention and Management of food crises, etc....

The CILSS also tried to increase the number of consultations with sub-regional actors and networks, and get the other intergovernmental organizations of the sub-region involved, so as to ensure that all the sub-regional integration strategies are impregnated with the reflections and orientations led by the Sahelian men and women.

This was undertaken at several levels:

Implementation of the **Convention to Combat Desertification**: development of a framework of co-operation gathering several actors: the sub-regional action program to combat desertification in West Africa and Chad, co-chaired by ECOWAS and CILSS. This plan is a supplement to national action plans defined and implemented at the country level;

Regarding **decentralization and local governance**. Since the regional meeting of Ségou in 1989, decentralization has become a key element in the strategy recommended by CILSS for managing renewable natural resources and combating desertification in the Sahel. This approach has been completed, since then, with the adoption of the main lines for a democratic, participatory and decentralized management of natural resources and public services in the Sahel.

The same approach was used for developing the action plan on " population and sustainable development " problems. The network of members of Parliament was actively involved in this action plan, as well as the networks of NGOs and communicators. More recently, the studies on water control meet one of the most important expectations expressed by both Sahelian decision makers and producers.

Finally, CILSS has been reactivating, over the last three years, the collective reflection on food security. During the preparatory phases of the Bamako Summit, the GMAP¹ and the GOP², aware of the significance of food security for the Sahelian region, had recommended to CILSS to concentrate its efforts - before the

¹ Ministerial Lobby Group (GMAP, French acronym)

² Club du Sahel/OECD Policy Orientation Group

Summit - on the requirements of sustainable food security in the Sahel. Furthermore, CILSS was recommended to incorporate the results of the Sahel 21 Process into the formulation of a Sustainable Food Security Strategy Paper within the perspective of poverty reduction in the Sahel.

The sub-regional actors and networks have not been passive since Banjul 1997. The majority of the platforms have set up their structures by their own means, at times with the support of the CILSS or the donors. The women now have their structure: REFESA, the Sahelian Women's Network. The peasant farmers for their part have significantly consolidated the farmers' platforms at the country level. They tried to federate, as much as possible, with peasant organizations and, at the sub-regional level as well, with the Sahel platform and, more recently, with the Network of West African Farmers' Organizations. The actors of the Sahelian agro-food sector organized themselves within the Interface Network whereas the entrepreneurs from West Africa as a whole organized themselves more largely within the framework of the WAEN (the West Africa Enterprise Network).

1.2. The preparatory process of the strategy paper

This document was prepared from this perspective. It is based on the work done in the countries which were requested to formulate a synthesis document centred on food and poverty reduction issues, basing on the priority investment programs. It also makes good use of the studies conducted at the regional level, on the basis of many consultancy works carried out in the various countries with the actors of the civil society and the IGOs, with the aim of formulating a regional priority intervention Program. Finally, it exploits the findings of many other studies conducted in the sub-region, in particular the regional meetings of Niamey on food security and natural resources management (June 1998), the reflections conducted in 1999 and 2000 within the framework of the Famine Prevention Network, the recent "Bobo 2000 " forum on " local governance in the management of renewable natural resources in the Sahel ", the regional workshop in Nouakchott on " water control for a modern, productive and sustainable agriculture ".

The orientations suggested in this **Sustainable Food Security Strategy Paper with a view to Reducing Poverty** were discussed in Paris, during the GMAP meeting on 2 and 3 October 2000, and then at the workshop of Banjul from 9 to 13 October. This workshop brought together representatives from the 9 countries (CONACILSS, officer-in-charge of the food security strategy, officer-in-charge of the poverty reduction strategy), representatives of regional networks of the civil society and the private sector, as well as the major IGOs and donors.

This Strategy Paper does not integrate all the concerns raised by Sahel 21. However, food insecurity in the Sahel is recognized, once more, as a central matter of concern, and one of the priorities that is high on the agenda of governments and the civil society as well. Indeed, even in the absence of a major climatic crisis, it is still to be noted that food insecurity remains one of the major problems the Sahel must face up. A problem which will increase if it is not properly addressed in all its complexity. This food insecurity is not only the main cause but also the consequence of the endemic poverty noted here and there in the Sahel.

Finding ways and means to remedy the situation in the long term is considered today as one of the conditions and way of fulfilling most of the ambitions expressed by the Sahelian Societies. To achieve food security in the sub-region implies the development of both human and institutional resources, the transformation of agriculture on sustainable bases in order to satisfy the growth of the demand. It requires a diversification of agriculture, and more generally of the economies, in order to help reduce vulnerability; it also requires an increase in incomes as well as their distribution and, finally, an acceleration of regional integration processes.

1.3. The Strategy Framework: a determined, participatory and empowering approach

The option in favour of the definition of a common sub-regional approach to food security and poverty reduction issues is, in fact, a strategic choice. If food security is apprehended but only in terms of satisfaction of basic food requirements without any consideration for the development issue this objective can represent, it is then possible to find solutions which come under food aid essentially or security nets for the poor. In that case, the sub-regional level has no particular relevance. If, on the contrary, food security is regarded as an ethical and developmental issue, then the perspective changes radically and calls for other approaches. Food security becomes an issue of ethics, because each Sahelian man or woman must be regarded as an actor and not as a passive individual who needs to be nourished. It is also a developmental issue, because food security issues must be put in a coherent framework in terms of building a "societal scheme" and a development strategy. It is essentially for these reasons that the development of a sub-regional strategy Paper is based on the conclusions of the Sahel 21 process and on the orientations articulated by the Sahelian Societies.

This sub-regional approach is crucial in order to:

- ✓ complete and ensure coherence amongst reforms initiated at the national and infra-national level;
- ✓ Encourage the treatment of common problems, within the context of a regional co-operation which makes it possible to reduce costs and improve effectiveness of efforts made;
- ✓ Put, resolutely, food security issues within the perspective of the regional integration of markets within the Sahel and with Central and West Africa; this is likely to impel an economic and commercial drive capable of entailing, in its wake, agricultural transformation and the organization of the agro-food produce sub-sectors;
- ✓ Control the interface between regional and international markets and to contribute effectively to the negotiation of the international regulatory frameworks.

2. Main characteristics of the Sahel

2.1. Physical context

The surface area of the nine countries of the CILSS zone totals 5 343 545 square kilometres with a very large oceanic front. There are five different climatic zones in general:

- an arid zone, characterized by the Sahara climate, with a rainfall level below 200 mm per year. Situated in the northern part of the Sahel, this zone covers a strip of land made up of immense parts of Chad, Niger and Mali, and the major part of Mauritania;
- a Sahelian zone which has an average annual rainfall ranging between 200 and 700 mm. The Harmattan wind blows there during many months.
- a Sudanian zone covering the portion of land situated between isohyets 800 and 1200 mm. It stretches out on a strip of land covering the southern part of Burkina Faso, the southern regions of Mali, Niger and Senegal, as well as north of the Gambia;
- a Guinean zone which has a rainfall ranging between 1400 and 1800 mm. It concerns the major part of Guinea Bissau;
- a littoral zone comprising the coastal parts of Senegal, Mauritania, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands. The climate is marked by the influence of the sea, with relatively important wind speeds.

Over the last 30 years, the isohyets shifted 200 to 300 km Southwards. Quite fortunately enough, the Sahel has not experienced any major droughts since 1985; however, drought always represents a permanent threat in that area. Despite the improved climatic situation on the whole, a strong variability of precipitations can be noted in time and space.

In the hydrographical plan: there are permanent and temporary water bodies (rivers) running across the CILSS countries. The main river basins are:

- the coastal basins, which group the temporary water bodies of the Cape Verde Islands and the major rivers of the Atlantic side of the Sahel (the Gambia and Casamance rivers);
- the Senegal River basin, which brings together Senegal, Mali and Mauritania. Its hydrological rate of flow is modified by the exploitation of the dams of Manantali upstream and Diama downstream;
- the Niger River basin, which waters three countries of the Sahel: Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali. Its hydrological rate of flow is modified by the dam of Sélingué;
- the Volta river basins whose upper parts are in Burkina Faso and where important hydro-agricultural and hydroelectric works are taking place;
- the Lake Chad basin, one of the largest basins in the region. It is mainly supplied by the Chari River and the Logone River.

Water resources are considerable. They provide opportunities for the development of agriculture and fisheries. Since they are resources that are often common to several countries, they require a shared management.

2.2. Demographic context

The population of countries of the CILSS zone reaches over 54 million. This population doubles every 25 years approximately. The demographic growth rates remain close to 2.7%, despite an infant mortality rate which is still high and life expectancy which is rather low on average. However, it should be noted that the demographic growth rates are falling off slightly. The portion of the population living in rural areas remains high, about 70%.

However, the share of the population living in urban areas is increasing rapidly. At present, three countries, namely Cape Verde, Senegal and Mauritania have an urban population close to or higher than 50%.

According to prospective estimations of demographic growth rates, the population of the Sahel will be about 100 million people by the year 2025. However, what is extremely important to note is that half of this population would be city-dwellers.

Table n°1: Urbanization and demographic growth

	Total population (1) (Inhab.)	Urban population (2) %		Demographic growth 1990/98 (%) (%)
		1980	1998	
Burkina Faso	10 955 000	9	17	2.7
Cape Verde	428 000	21.4 (3)	59.3	1.7
Gambia	1 336 000	17.0 (3)	30.4	3.6
Guinea Bissau	1 134 000	16.0 (3)	22.5	2.7
Mali	10 006 000	19	29	3.2
Mauritania	2 568 000	27	55	3.2
Niger	9 798 000	13	20	3.9
Senegal	9 234 000	36	46	3.0
Chad	7 233 000	19	23	3.5

(1) Diaper/Cerpod data; (2) the World Bank;

2.3. Socio-political and institutional context

Despite its endemic poverty, the Sahel region is a zone which has been relatively preserved from conflicts for quite a long time, compared to other African regions. Several countries have now democratic political systems. Elections are organized on a regular basis and their results are respected. Thus, many countries have experienced recently peaceful changeover of political power between parties, in conformity with the expectations of the populations. The liberalization of the medias and the emergence of a generation of free-lance and professional journalists is an outstanding distinctive feature of recent years. However, the region is still marked by latent conflicts which, for the moment, have not found any solution yet within the framework of the institutions or through mediation and negotiation. The guerrilla movements maintain an atmosphere of insecurity which can, at any time, degenerate, and also compromise the effectiveness of development policies. This atmosphere is of course prejudicial to food security.

2.4. Economic context

The countries of the sub-region as a whole have deeply adjusted their economies over the last fifteen years. These adjustments resulted in internal and external liberalization of the economies and in-depth reforms of the State. In the agricultural sector, the liberalization process has resulted in a significant reduction of the prerogatives of ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development and the transfer, to the private sector, of the responsibility of supplying farmers with inputs and market the produce. In fact, these policies have not proved totally successful. In particular, some public companies operating in sectors which are considered as strategic ones have not been privatised (cotton, for example).

Amongst the nine countries of the CILSS zone, six of them belong to the Franc zone including five to the UEMOA zone (Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal) and one (Chad) to the CEMAC zone. The other three countries, i.e. Cape Verde, Mauritania and Gambia have each their own currency. The structure of the economies remains marked by the primary sector. On average, the agricultural sector still represents a quarter of the GDP in the CILSS zone. In relative value, the share of the agricultural sector is decreasing, to the benefit of the service sector which now represents more than half of the economy. This sector is stimulated by tourist activities and especially commerce. However, the CILSS countries are not homogeneous in this respect: Senegal, Cape Verde and Mauritania have a contribution of the agricultural sector well below the regional average. Conversely, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger and Chad maintain economic structures which are still very strongly marked by the rural sector.

Table n°2: Economic structures of the CILSS countries

Countries	Population (1 000 inhab.)	GDP (in billion dollars) 1998	GDP per capita (dollars) 1998	Agriculture (in % of the GDP) 1998	Industry (in % of the GDP) 1998	Services (in % of the GDP) 1998
Burkina Faso	11 300	2.6	230	33.3	27.2	39.5
Cape Verde	400	0.5	1250	12.2	19.1	68.7
Gambia	1 200	0.4	333	27.4	13.7	58.9
Guinea Bissau	1 200	0.2	167	62.4	12.7	24.9
Mali	10 700	2.7	252	46.9	17.5	35.6
Mauritania	2 500	1.0	400	24.8	29.5	45.7
Niger	10 100	2.0	198	41.4	17.0	41.7
Senegal	9 000	4.7	522	17.4	24.1	58.5
Chad	7 300	1.7	233	39.8	14.3	45.9
CILSS	53 700	15.8	285	25.3	21.3	53.4

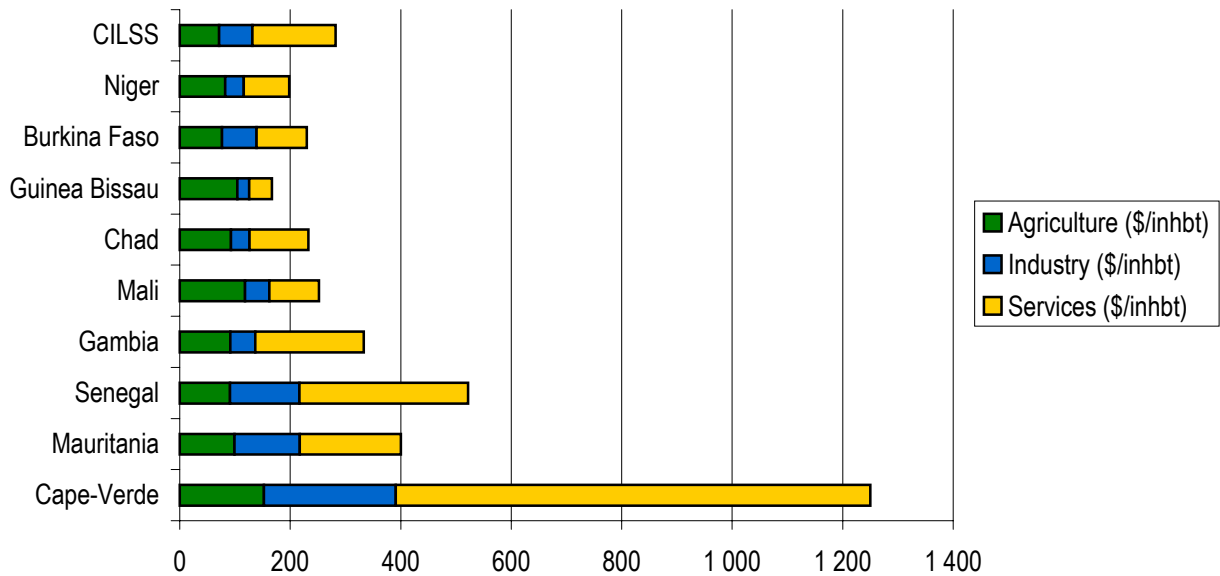
Source: The World Bank

2.4.1. An economic growth mitigated by demographic growth

The total GDP of the zone amounts to approximately 16 billion dollars, that is to say an average of 285 dollars per capita. This places virtually all the countries of the zone, except Cape Verde, among the poorest countries in the world. By way of comparison, the GNP per capita of sub-Saharan Africa as a whole is set at 530 dollars and that of all LDCs at 270 dollars.

The economic growth rates appreciably improved over the last years, for the majority of the countries. Over the 1990-1998 period, all the countries, except Niger and especially Guinea Bissau (which has a negative growth rate), have registered annual growth rates above 3%. However, taking into account the demographic growth, this growth hardly results in a significant improvement of per capita income.

Contribution of the various economic sectors to the GDP



2.4.2. Trade balances systematically in deficit

The exports of the CILSS zone amount to three billion dollars, whereas the imports amount to more than 7 billion. All the countries have a negative trade balance. This deficit partly explains the importance of the debt for the CILSS countries, insofar as the transfers of private capital and development assistance are not sufficient to set it off. Food imports represent a significant share of these imports.

Table n°3: Trade balance of goods and services (1996)

Countries	Exports of goods and services (a)	Imports of goods and services (a)	Balance of the trade balance (a)
<i>Burkina Faso</i>	272 000	921 000	- 649 000
<i>Cape Verde</i>	124 500	284 500	- 160 500
<i>Gambia</i>	123 000	349 000	- 226 000
<i>Guinea Bissau</i>	56 000	128 000	- 72 000
<i>Mali</i>	355 000	1 483 000	- 1 128 000
<i>Mauritania</i>	602 000	833 000	- 231 000
<i>Niger</i>	112 000	719 000	- 607 000
<i>Senegal</i>	1 211 000	2 250 000	- 1 039 000
<i>Chad</i>	180 000	416 000	- 236 000
<i>CILSS</i>	3 035 500	7 383 500	- 4 348 000

(a) 1 000 dollars

Source: The World Bank

2.4.3. Declining official development assistance

In 1998, the CILSS zone received 2.15 billion dollars as development assistance. In 6 years, the ODA decreased by almost 20% in absolute value. The assistance represents 40 dollars per capita, with very important variability within the zone. It represents 315 dollars per capita in Cape Verde, 82 dollars per capita in Guinea Bissau, 68 in Mauritania. Conversely, Chad and Niger are well below the sub-regional average. For sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, the assistance per capita amounts to 21.4 dollars. On average, the ODA represents 20 dollars per capita in the LDCs.

When referred to the GDP, assistance to the Sahel amounts to 13.5%. This ratio was much lower than 10% at the beginning of the Seventies and rose to more than 20% over the 1985/89 period, representing then more than \$60 per capita. The food aid, which represented a significant share of the ODA in the past, considerably decreased, except in Mauritania and especially in Cape Verde, which certainly partly explains the special treatment these two countries seem to enjoy.

The cumulated debt of the CILSS countries amounts to more than 15 billion dollars and its annual service represents an important share of exports: from 9.7 to more than 25% according to the countries. Before the implementation of the HIPC procedure, it is nearly 600 million dollars that the CILSS countries must refund every year.

Table n°4: Economic growth, debt and development assistance to CILSS member countries

Countries	Annual growth of GNP (%)		Rate of inflation 1998	Growth GNP / inhab. 1990/98	Official development assistance				Foreign debt		
	1975/90	1990/98			Total (A)		Per capita In \$		Total (A) 1998	% GNP 1998	Service % of exports 1998
					1992	1998	1992	1998			
Burkina Faso	3.2	4.1	3.1	1.7	433.8	397.5	46	37	1 399	54.5	10.7
Cape Verde	-	4.7	2.8	2.2	119.0	129.8	330	315	244	49.8	9.9
Gambia	3.3	3.6	1.8	0.1	110.6	37.8	111	31	477	116.7	9.7
Guinea Bissau	2.5	-1.2	7.7	-3.4	104.2	95.7	104	82	964	503.7	25.6
Mali	2.1	3.7	4.8	0.8	431.8	349.3	48	33	3 201	120.4	12.6
Mauritania	2.0	4.1	8.8	1.3	200.1	177.1	95	68	2 589	272.5	27.7
Niger	1.5	2.4	3.0	-1.0	365.1	291.4	44	29	1 659	82.1	18.4
Senegal	2.4	3.2	2.2	0.5	670.3	502.1	87	56	3 861	83.1	23.2
Chad	1.6	3.1	4.1	0.1	239.1	167.4	41	23	1 091	65.5	10.6
CILSS					2 674	2 148			15 485		

(a): million dollars

Source: UNDP

3. Food insecurity in the Sahel ³

³ This section presents many data in support of the analyses. Some data vary significantly according to sources and must therefore be interpreted with precaution as a general rule.

Food security has become a major concern for the decision makers of the Sahel since the major droughts, mainly at the beginning of the seventies then at the beginning of the eighties. For basically rural populations at that time, production deficits inherent in the climatic whims were the principal factor of food insecurity of the households. These climatic shocks led the countries to question highly interventionist agricultural policies that are considered as being ineffective and costly for public finance. The adjustments made by the countries have concerned food security at different levels.

In short, the point was basically to liberalize the agricultural sector, in particular the cereal sector and to re-direct public interventions to the benefit of a strategy for the prevention of crises. The latter was centred on the estimation of harvests and more generally on the improvement of information on productions then on trade and the monitoring of zones at risk. The former marketing boards for their part were restructured in order for them to intervene only in the event of crisis via physical or financial stocks. Considerable effort was deployed in order to improve the quantification of requirements in food aid then in the management of this food aid while seeking to integrate it in more coherent cereal policies. The dialogue between the Sahelian countries and the donors was focused on this question through the development and monitoring-evaluation of the food aid charter and, in the majority of the countries, on the setting up of joint State / donor bodies.

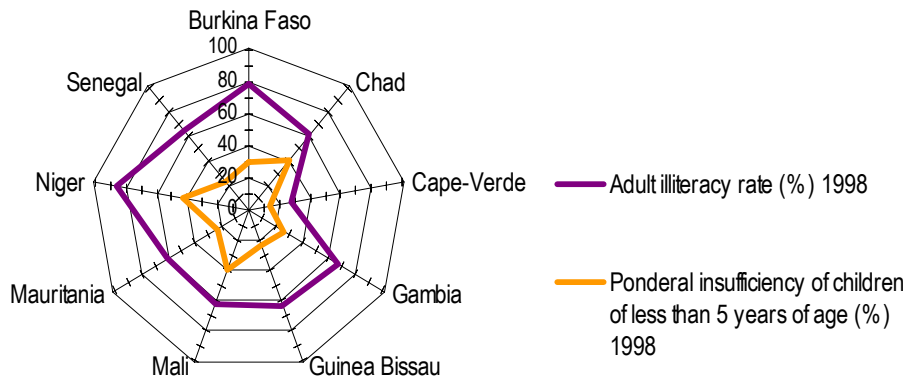
The absence of any serious widespread climatic crisis in the Sahel as a whole for nearly 15 years now certainly made it possible to avoid new famines but did not, all the same, result in getting under control, structurally and definitively, the food insecurity of the populations, although this remains high on the agenda of priorities of Sahelian decision makers. Limited too long, in practice, to the equilibrium of the national cereal balance-sheet, the food security of households and individuals seems today a concept much more complex to apprehend.

3.1. Poverty and food insecurity: structural obstacles to development

3.1.1 The equilibrium of the cereal balance-sheet conceals the food insecurity

The analysis of socio-economic and health indicators makes it possible to realise the extent of food problems in the sub-region:

- ✓ except in Cape Verde, the percentage of children of less than 5 years of age experiencing insufficient weight varies from 22 to 43%;
- ✓ the most populated Sahelian countries experience insufficient neonatal weight between 10 and 21%;
- ✓ the rates of protein-energy malnutrition remain high in the majority of the countries and affect in priority pregnant women and children, primarily in the rural areas;
- ✓ for the CILSS countries as a whole, nearly 40% of the populations suffer from temporary food insecurity, of whom 23% experience forms of chronic food insecurity;



The strategies implemented over the last 20 years were especially aimed at the forms of food insecurity related to climatic shocks and affecting cyclically, the whole of a country or a particular zone. These strategies were consequently focused on cereals, the dominant crops subjected to the whims of the sky (the estimation of harvests makes it possible to quantify cereal deficits and adjust the needs for imports and food aid) but they have had, on the other hand, very little impact on structural food problems. The latter can be explained less by the total deficits of agricultural or food supply, than by difficulties of access to food or the difficulties for the body to upgrade/use this food. To put it plainly, it is mainly poverty which explains food insecurity in the Sahelian countries, hence the incapacity of strategies centred on the dimension of "food availability" alone to reduce food insecurity in the long term.

3.1.2 *Poverty directly influences the food situation*

The inter-actions between poverty and food security are multifarious :

- **the low access to production means** does not make it possible for the poor households to increase their own food production. Furthermore, it limits the possibilities of making this production secure enough so that it may help to cope with hazards without being forced to de-capitalise, in a certain manner, the productive capital.
In the Sahel, this concerns basically access to land resources and their security, and also access to loans and inputs (fertilizers, seeds, small machinery...). This form of insecurity particularly affects households of agricultural food producers experiencing food production deficit, who must then turn to the market to make up for their deficit of domestic production, whereas they do not have alternative incomes. It is particularly developed in the Sahelian strip, where precipitations are lower than 550 mm with a rainy season below 90 days.
- **the smallness of the incomes** is generally the main obstacle to the access to food. It concerns both the level of incomes and the degree of diversification of such incomes. Thus, in agro-ecological zones with virtually identical characteristics, the food vulnerability of the populations could vary in significant proportions depending on whether they have or not access to other sources of income: small trade, gold washing, craft industry of hides and skins, resources sent home by the migrants... In predominantly rural societies, the improvement of the incomes of the populations was apprehended primarily in terms of intensification and diversification of agriculture. The fact that poverty phenomena were to be found massively in the rural areas justified such an approach. From now on, the urban demographic growth and the

development of poverty downtown militate in favour of a more differentiated approach to questions of incomes;

- **the unequal access to basic services:** drinking water, basic health services, sanitation, basic education, reproductive health... The cover rates of the territory with facilities remain low in comparison with the needs. On the whole, for all the CILSS countries, 21 million people (39%) do not have access to drinking water and nearly 30 million (59%) to health services. The inadequacy of social infrastructures is per se a worsening factor of food insecurity (poor health conditions of the populations thus reducing the productive capacities, misuse of nutriment, time spent for water supply in competition with that spent for production...). Conversely, malnutrition favours the development of diseases, reduces the productive capacities, causes delays in intellectual development which will be as many handicaps for the social and economic integration of the young adults. Malnutrition and under-nutrition are indeed a major handicap to the optimal development of human resources in the short, medium and long terms.

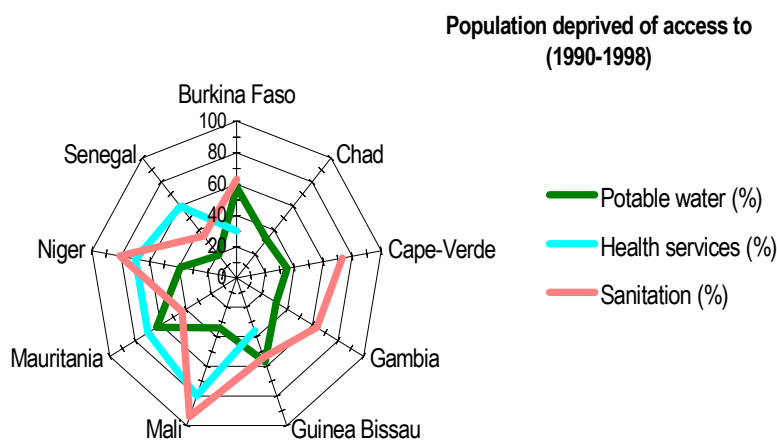


Table n°5: Main social development indicators in the CILSS countries

	Population deprived of access 1990-1998			Illiteracy rate of adults	Combined gross rate of schooling
	To drinking water (%)	To health services (%)	To sanitation (%)	1998 (%)	1998 (%)
Cape Verde	35	18	73	27.1	78
Burkina Faso	58	30	63	77.8	22
Gambia	31	-	63	65.4	41
Guinea Bissau	57	36	54	63.3	34
Mali	34	80	94	61.8	26
Mauritania	63	70	43	58.8	42
Niger	39	70	81	85.3	15
Senegal	19	60	35	64.5	36
Chad	32	-	-	60.6	32

Source: World human development report 2000, UNDP.

- **Land-lockedness and, more generally, shortage of public rural infrastructures:** in general, the Sahel is characterized by rather low densities of populations in the rural areas, and the most vulnerable zones are located very far away from the urban centres. There is consequently an important deficit of transport infrastructures, particularly, rural roads. The same holds true as regards electrification, telephony, infrastructures for the storage and preservation of products. Developing and maintaining these infrastructures is very expensive for public finance, even though they are important elements for the reduction of inequalities between the rural and urban areas, and very important factors for improving food security (accessibility to food products, buoyancy of markets and reduction of transaction costs...).

3.1.1. Poverty and inequalities

National poverty in the Sahel is coupled with a very high inequality in income distribution. In the majority of the countries, more than half of the national revenue is concentrated in the hands of the richest 20%, whereas 20% of the poorest only have about 5% of the national income. Under these circumstances, food represents the most important expenditure item for the poor households. Price instability on the markets is a very important element of food insecurity of urban households and rural households experiencing food production deficits.

Table n°6: Poverty and income distribution in the CILSS countries

Countries	GDP per capita (\$)	Distribution of income or consumption		
		The poorest 20 % (%) 1987- 1998	The richest 20 % (%) 1987- 1998	Comparison between the richest 20% and the poorest 20% (%) 1987- 1998
	1998			
Cape Verde	1250	-	-	-
Mauritania	400	6.2	45.6	7.4
Senegal	522	6.4	48.2	7.5
Gambia	333	4.4	52.8	12.0
Mali	252	4.6	56.2	12.2
Chad	233	-	-	-
Guinea Bissau	167	2.1	58.9	28.0
Burkina Faso	230	5.5	55.0	10.0
Niger	198	2.6	53.3	20.5

Source: World human development report 2000, UNDP.

Table n°7: Average level of income and proportion of the populations living below poverty line

Countries	GDP / Inhabitant (\$)	Population below national poverty line (%)				Population below international poverty lines (%)
		Year Survey	Rural	Urban	National	
	1998					National
Burkina Faso	230	1998	51.0	16.5	45.3	
Cape Verde	1250		46.1	17.2	30.0	
Gambia	333	1992	66.0	33.0	64.0	53.7
Guinea Bissau	167	1991	58.0	24.0	48.8	
Mali	252	1994	69.0	49.0	68.8	
Mauritania	400	1990			57.0	31.4
Niger	198	1994	66.0	48.0	63.0	61.4
Senegal	522	1994/95	85.6	40.8	65.3	
Chad	233	1995/96	67.0	63.0	64.0	

Source: National data, UNDP, the World Bank

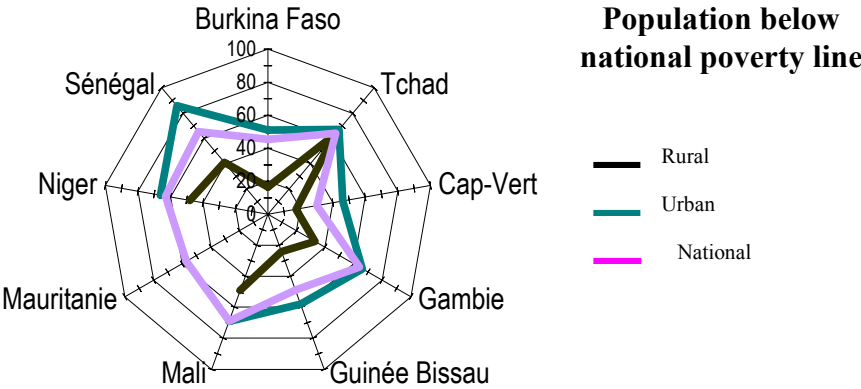
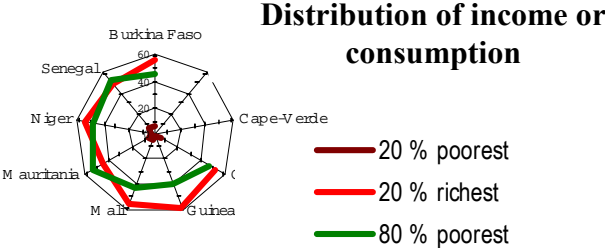
In Burkina, whereas the proportion of the poor (absolute threshold of poverty fixed at 72 690 Fcfa/adult and per year) in the rural areas is stabilized at 51% of the population, this proportion increases by 5 points in the urban areas, shifting from 10.4 to 16.5% between 1994 and 1998.

3.2 Agricultural dynamics and food security

3.2.1. Agriculture regresses in national economic dynamics

Agriculture still represents a significant share of the gross national product in the Sahelian countries. Three main categories of economic structure can be distinguished:

- ✓ the group of countries where agriculture still represents more than 40% of GDP: Mali, Chad, Guinea-Bissau and Niger;
- ✓ the group of countries in which the agricultural sector represents less than 25% of the GDP: Cape Verde, Mauritania, Senegal, and whose services sector is developing considerably;
- ✓ finally, Burkina Faso and Gambia which are at intermediate levels.



The total agricultural GDP of the CILSS zone amounts to \$ 4 billion and represents the quarter of the wealth of the sub-region. This is therefore a significant share compared to the general trend of national economies in the world, but also in sub-Saharan Africa where this share went down below the level of 20%. On the other hand, it is little when compared to the population involved in agricultural production. 70% of the Sahelian population live in rural areas and derive whole or part of their resources from agriculture. This reflects an overall agricultural productivity which is still rather low.

The erosion of the place of the agricultural sector in the countries' economic structure, in relative value, has inevitable implications on the budgetary orientations of the States. It goes without saying that it will be all the more difficult to defend the budgets allocated to agriculture in the sectoral budget tradeoffs since the sector is losing importance within development stakes as well as in terms of the proportion of the working population employed in the sector. This trend which is right now eminently variable from one country to another (Cape Verde draws the main part of its resources from services, exports of shoes and transfers of migrants, whereas Guinea Bissau or Mali still rely basically on the agricultural sector) must be taken into account when it comes to designing agricultural development strategies and approaches to food security: an adequate rural and agricultural development strategy in an enabling commercial environment can represent, in the basically rural countries, the essence of a food security policy focusing on poverty reduction; On the other hand, in the more highly urbanized countries, the food security strategy should necessarily make more room for the " access to food " dimension for the poor urban populations. Lastly, the debate on the modernization of the agro-food sub-sectors - with the development of the agricultural sector upstream and downstream - takes special significance in this context. What is at stake is no longer to defend the agricultural sector as such, but also as a potential leverage for the development of a semi-industrial or " modern craft" sector and the sector of services.

The low agricultural productivity poses serious problems with regard to food security issues. This is reflected, at the agricultural household level, by generally low incomes which affect the capacity of the families to get supplies of products necessary for them to have a balanced food intake, and their capacities to develop the household production. In addition, at the national and sub-regional level, the sub-regional agricultural products are met with difficulties to supply the markets (irregularity and dispersal of the supply, dubious quality, poor development of products processing...).

This general point of view needs however to be strongly moderated.

- at the micro-economic level:

Malnutrition and under-nourishment are not the prerogative of the zones where rainfed cropping is highly insecure. The improvement of the resources of rural households does not result "mechanically" in improved food security indicators. Not only does food compete with other basic requirements but also with needs that are considered less important but which have become part of the eating habits of the people. Moreover, other factors mentioned above such as access to drinking water, health... are obviously taken into consideration inasmuch as they can significantly upset the food conditions and the nutritional situation. A family who produces enough cereals does not necessarily have incomes allowing it to purchase the supplementary foodstuffs necessary to have a balanced food intake. Finally, nutritional education is still badly needed and its absence explains a number of cases of malnutrition, in particular, among pregnant women and infants, who, because they are unproductive, will not be necessarily regarded as priority groups for the access to good food.

A study conducted as part of the evaluation of the PRMC in Mali has showed that, in spite of a notable improvement of the cereal situation, the rates of chronic and acute malnutrition of children remained high in all the regions, including in zones of cereal production where the surpluses are sold in the markets. Always in Mali, the findings of the latest Demographic and Health Survey (E.D.S.) of 1999 do not show any positive trends as regards the rate of chronic and acute malnutrition of children compared to the previous E.D.S. conducted about ten years earlier. On the contrary, some nutritional indicators are even in regression and so following a period of relative prosperity: progression of the macro-economic indicators (improved economic growth rates — growing GDP from 3.5 to 4.4% {the World Bank, 2000 } for the countries of the CILSS zone, except Guinea Bissau, a country in war, better competitiveness of the livestock, cotton and rice sectors following the devaluation of the CFA franc in 1994), a relative stability and political liberalization, and generally favourable agro-climatic conditions.

This is true for the populations of southern Mali who are more provided with natural resources, more particularly agricultural resources (CMDT area) as well as for the populations of the upper north of the country where agricultural production is made more uncertain by climatic hazards. Paradoxically, the inhabitants of zones often considered as being more "at risk" are sometimes better protected in the event of poor production than those living in more intensively cultivated areas (more coping strategies, more diversified income sources, etc). For instance, it was noted in Burkina Faso (Reardon) that the populations of the northern part of the country were more capable of coping with the effects of a poor crop year than the farmers of the central plateau.

- at the national and sub regional level:

Regarding cereals which still make up the basis of the food systems in the Sahel (they provide about 60 to 80% of calories), it is noted that the total production of the Sahel rose from 4.4 million tons on average during years 1961-65 to more than 8 million tons in 1994-95 and comes very close to 11 million tons in 1999-2000. This capacity of response of the supply side to an increase in the demand side makes it possible for the sub-region to meet more than 80% of its needs. However, there are very strong variations from one year to another, linked to the rainfall pattern (height of the rainfall, spatial and temporal distribution).

3.2.2 An extensive agriculture, highly dependent on weather conditions

Over the last years, and despite the absence of a very serious drought, the level of cereal production has varied from simple to double between the best and the worst cropping season. Even though such variations do not correspond to the same years in all the countries, which allows for "complementarity" amongst the countries. This dependence of the productive systems vis-à-vis climatic shocks is one of the main factors of vulnerability of the region and is a considerable obstacle to the logic of agricultural intensification. When production falls, food producers find themselves in a position of purchasers of cereals, whereas prices are high in the market places because of the deficit of the supply and because their alternative incomes are small.

Very often, these climatic hazards hit the pastoral zones more severely. In that case, the livestock which is in poor physical condition because of the scarce fodder resources available, is sold at very low prices. The producers are then forced to further de-stock their livestock in order to obtain the necessary monetary resources. They thus add more to the imbalance of the livestock-meat market and get cereals at a high cost (unfavourable terms of trade for the pastoralists). This climatic insecurity explains to a large extent why the producers are reluctant to invest in production factors, insofar as the intermediate consumptions (improved seeds, fertilizers...) will be really upgraded and made profitable only in the event of good rainfalls, because water remains the main factor for determining the outputs. The same applies to the rural credit, whose levels of refunding are often closely related to the economic health of the farms which are themselves strongly influenced by the rainfall. These climatic fluctuations have more or less strong impacts depending on whether you are or not in Sahelian and Sahelo-sudanian zones, where the basically sandy soils are more fragile and the extension of cultivable areas concerns extremely vulnerable marginal lands. On the other hand, the Sudanian and Sudano-guinean zones are less sensitive, just as the zones which are made more secure thanks to water control (office du Niger, Senegal river Valley...);

3.2.3 The sub-regional approach reflects the diversity of national situations

➤ ***agro-climatic characteristics and land use***

The Cilss zone actually covers extremely differentiated agro-climatic characteristics. If 70% of the region are in a zone that receives a rainfall level below 300 mm, only 10% of the Sahelian populations live there, primarily on transhumant stockbreeding. 80% of the populations are concentrated on areas with precipitations ranging between 300 and 1200 mm, and where rain fed cropping is possible. But, the situation of the various countries, taking into consideration these problems, seems very contrasted:

- ✓ in Mauritania, Niger and Cape Verde, the main part of the populations and surface areas are to be found in zones where the rainfall is below 400 mm, including a significant portion below 200mm;
- ✓ Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso and Senegal have a broad climatic spectrum, between 400 and 1400 mm, and concentrate a significant proportion of their population in the Sudanian zone;
- ✓ Guinea Bissau and the Gambia which have a rainfall that is above 800mm.

The vulnerability of the agricultural households depends naturally, but not only, on these climatic conditions. Soil degradation also affects the more watered areas, where farming is more intense and the lack of access to the means of production does not allow for an intensification of the productive systems, and a restoration of soil fertility.

Three countries concentrate 75% of the sub-regional cereal production; Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali and make up 60% of the population;

Mali produces half of the rice of the sub-region, followed by Senegal with 15%;

The exploited surface area per capita ranges from 1 to 10: from 0.1 to 0.2 ha per capita in Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Chad; it ranges between 0.4 ha in Mali and Burkina Faso, and 1.1 ha in Niger;

Cereals account for between 50 and 60% of cultivated surface areas in Cape Verde, Gambia, and Senegal, about 70% or more in the other countries;

Table n°8: Per capita average acreage exploited and distribution between cereals and the other crops

Country	Burkina Faso	Cape Verde	Gambia	Guinea Bissau	Mali	Mauri Tania	Niger	Senegal	Chad	CILSS
Surf/inhbt. (ha)	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.46
Cereals (%)	84	50	61	-	75	80	68	56	73	73
Other crops (%)	16	50	39	-	25	20	32	44	27	27

Source: CILSS

➤ Balance between the supply and the demand

The self-supply situation varies considerably from one country to another :

- ✓ the landlocked countries namely, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger meet the major part of their requirements and resort to external market for their wheat supply and make up for the inter-annual variations of production, via rice or dry cereal importation (maize, millet and sorghum) mainly from the world market but also from the sub-regional market. On average, for this group of countries, the commercial imports and food aid represent less than 25 kg per capita, i.e., about 5 to 10% of total availabilities;
- ✓ the countries of the Atlantic coast are, on the other hand, structurally dependent on the world market for their cereal supplies in very significant proportions. Over the last ten years, the rate of self-supply

deteriorated to such a point that the production ensures from now on less than 50% of the needs, except in Guinea Bissau.

The first group of countries (73% of the CILSS population) accounts for 87% of the sub-region's cereal production, whereas the second group of countries (27% of the population) realizes 73% of imports. With such disparities, it goes without saying that the tendency of producing countries is to seek ways and means of food security based on agricultural development and the use of their resources. From this point of view, they are interested by a stronger sub-regional integration to facilitate the regulation of their domestic markets, whilst the countries with high potential production river basins are interested in developing sustainable strategies of export of cereals or other agricultural produce. On the other hand, the main concern of the coastal countries, from the perspective of the food security, is how to minimize the importation bill. Hitherto, cereals on the world market proved more competitive and supply more secure or more regular, than sub-regional cereals. All the more so since, in the event of good production, the landlocked countries are rather dry cereal suppliers, whereas the consumption patterns of the coastal countries are rather in favour of rice and wheat. May be the only exception to that rule is Mali. Thanks to the gravity irrigation system of the *Office du Niger*, the high increase in yields, the continuous increase in the acreages cultivated during the last ten years, a high quality of the product, well appreciated by the consumers (Gambia K), and the induced effects of the devaluation, the Malian rice is becoming competitive with the Asian rice. It is now being exported to Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritania. Improving the competitiveness of the Malian rice and developing significantly the quantities produced, as well as developing drastically the production of wheat in Mali and Burkina can change the deal in the next years.

➤ **adequacy between the type of cereals produced and the type of cereals consumed**

Eating habits are changing significantly in the Sahel. The urban way of life leads women to prefer foodstuffs that can be cooked more rapidly and easily. Taking into account the times spent for transportations, most of the meals are now taken outside, which appreciably increases the share of bread and rice in the consumption pattern. These trends which are well pronounced in the big towns are also affecting increasingly the minor cities and the rural areas. Recourse to the market in the urban areas to get food supply for the households has resulted in greater importance being given to price taking into account the fact that a number of non-food expenditure items (housing...) are compulsory. This favours importation to the detriment of local cereals, often less competitive. In the rural set-up, the share of self-consumption is still significant and involves food systems that are linked primarily to the productive systems. As a consequence, the countries closest to the world market will gradually develop food systems that are directed more towards rice and wheat. At the global level, this bias will be strengthened by the dynamics of urban demographic growth.

3.2.4. Non-cereal agricultural productions

Food availabilities are still considerably determined by the level of cereal productions. Indeed, cereals account for 70% of the acreages sowed with crops. The prevalence of rain fed cereals is thus an important element in the vulnerability of the Sahelian system, taking into account the variability of rainfalls. Considering their importance in the Sahelian eating habits in terms of caloric intakes, cereals have been, for quite a long time, the main if not the unique, element of appreciation of the food situation. This approach is now considered by the Sahelians as being too restrictive. It needs to be complemented by an analysis of the diversity and trends of the food systems which tend to give greater place to other vegetable and animal products. Such trends have significant impacts on the dynamics of the productive systems: diversification of crops with speculations that provide significant incomes, thus making it possible to finance the high costs involved in agricultural intensification.

Moreover, this diversification of the food systems contributes to improve the food equilibrium and reduce nutritional deficiencies. It has an impact on the nutritional health of the populations. Lastly, cash crops bound for the international markets, even though they are not products which are included directly in the food security system of the Sahel, are very important sources of income for both the rural households and the national economy as well. As such, they play a decisive role in the evolution of the food situations of the households and the capacities to finance imports.

3.2.4.1. Tubers

The tubers, particularly cassava, sweet potato and yam, play an important role in the food security of the households. They are regularly produced in huge quantities in some countries: 87 and 67 kg per inhabitant respectively in Chad and Guinea-Bissau. Niger and Cape Verde are "mean" producers with a level of about 25 kg per inhabitant. In the other countries, this level is very low, from 2 to 7 kg. On the whole, the CILSS countries produce more than one million tons of tubers (regional average of 21 kg per inhabitant). Besides, tubers are exploited as extra crops for self-consumption purposes when the cereal crop year proves poor.

3.2.4.2. Legumes

Legumes (cowpea, dry beans, groundnut) are very important productions in Senegal, the Gambia, Chad, Burkina Faso and Niger. Legumes are not only important from the nutritive point of view, but they also make up an important supplement in animal feed. Furthermore, They are an important source of income and help to improve soil fertility and yields of cereals to which they are more and more frequently associated.

Over the period 1994-99, CILSS countries have produced on average 720 000 tons of cowpea and dry beans and 1 604 000 tons of groundnuts. 70% of cowpea are produced in Niger where it is a cash crop bound for the Nigerian market. The prices of cowpea strongly vary on the coastal markets, thus causing important variations of export earnings. According to the volumes exported and the price level, export earnings of cowpea for Niger vary from 12 to 83 billion FCFA depending on the years. In the other countries, cowpea is primarily a crop intended for self-consumption. Groundnut is produced to a total value of 42% by Senegal, 22% by Chad, 13% by Burkina Faso and 7% by Niger.

The production of sesame is marginal in spite of its importance on the international market: 26 000 tons produced primarily in Chad and Burkina Faso. Cropped by women, it represents nonetheless an important activity for poverty reduction.

Table n°9: Production of roots and tubers (average 94-98 and 1999, in thousands of tons)

PRODUCTS	BURKINA FASO	CAPE VERDE	GAMBIA	GUINEA BISSAU	MALI	MAUR.	NIGER	SEN.	CHAD	SAHEL TOTAL
Sweet potato										
Average	15.8	4.4	-	-	15.0	2.0	38.7	2.6	58.0	136.5
1999	13.6	3.8	-	-	15.8	2.0	35.0	0.3	65.0	135.5
Cassava										
Average	1.8	2.8	6.0	15.9	5.0	-	195.0	54.0	256.0	536.5
1999	2.0	3.0	6.0	16.5	10.5	-	230.0	42.0	275.0	585.0
Yam										
Average	41.0	-	-	-	12.2	-	-	-	240.0	293.2
1999	46.0	-	-	-	14.8	-	-	-	240.0	300.8
Total roots. and tubers										

Average	5.6	7.2	6.0	15.9	32.2	2.0	233.7	56.6	554.0	966.2
1999	61.6	6.8	6.0	16.5	41.1	2.0	265.0	98.9	580.0	1077.9

Source: FAO

3.2.4.3. Market garden productions

Market garden productions boom in the Sahel, when water control as well as outlets towards national, sub-regional and European consumption centers allow it. Cultivated basically during the dry season, from November to March, they provide an important opportunity to improve labor productivity and Sahelian farming systems. Market garden productions are often at the basis of the diversification and transformation of the farming systems, improvement of incomes in the rural areas and diversification of food products which is very important from the point of view of food equilibrium, in the rural areas and urban centers as well. The demand for market garden productions in the Sahelian countries and especially in the coastal countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Benin, Togo...) has increased considerably over the last years.

The information systems do not easily produce data concerning these productions. Although they are generally underestimated, the cumulated volumes of production of tomato, green bean and onion have amounted to 467 000 tons on average over the period 1994-1998. All the vegetables, it is said, represent a volume of production of about 1.4 million tons. Niger meets 56% of the supply of onion of the CILSS zone and half of the regional supply of tomatoes. Senegal and Burkina Faso produce primarily green beans, half of which is exported. The average production of vegetables is 26 kg per capita for the CILSS zone as a whole. Senegal, Mali, Cape Verde and Niger are well above this regional average.

In 1996, the value of the production of onion is estimated respectively at 17, 24.7 and 4.4 billion FCFA in Mali, Senegal and Burkina Faso. As for potato production in Mali, it is estimated, for the same year, at more than 9 billion FCFA (Data source: INSAH).

The analyses of the vegetable markets show however that some countries remain high importers of vegetables. Same for the coastal countries. Imports concern mainly onion, tomato purée, potato. These imports are partly stimulated by the low prices, particularly in the case of potatoes whose qualities (calibration...) make them substandard products in Europe. Concerning the tomato puree, it is basically the assistance provided by Europe for the processing of this product which influences the levels of prices. In spite of the beneficial effects of the devaluation, the export-oriented market garden productions, in particular to the European Union, are met with many difficulties. This deals with the difficulty to ensure a regular supply and meet the required quality standards, on the one hand, and the exorbitant cost of air transport penalizing West Africa compared to other African competitors like Kenya, on the other hand. The various analyses show that, if market niches in Europe can be interesting opportunities, this strategy should not divert attention from the West African market. The latter is a market which is easier to grasp, with less Draconian standards, and which can make it possible to increase significantly incomes in the rural areas. But, improving the trade balance of market garden products in the sub-region implies also a better control and harmonization of the import policies applied by the various countries.

Table n°10: Production of vegetables (average 94-98 and 1999, in thousands of tons)

PRODUCTS	BURKINA FASO	CAPE VERDE	GAMBIA	GUINEA BISSAU	MALI	MAUR.	NIGER	SENEGAL	CHAD	SAHEL TOTAL
Onion										
Average	19.5	1.3	-	-	46.6	-	181.4	61.4	14.0	324.2
1999	17.0	1.6	-	-	64.6	-	181.7	60.8	14.0	339.7
Tomato										
Average	12.5	3.5	-	-	26.2	-	64.2	24.1	-	130.5

1999	9.0	4.5	-	-	34.4	-	65.0	19.3	-	134.9
Green bean										
Average	3.8	1.4	-	-	1.3	-	-	5.8	-	12.3
1999	3.8	2.0	-	-	1.3	-	-	6.0	-	13.1
Total vegetables										
Average	35.8	6.2	-	-	74.1	-	245.6	143.5	14.0	467.0
1999	29.8	8.1	-	-	100.3	-	246.7	86.1	14.0	487.7

Source: FAO

3.2.4.4. Fruit productions

The production of fruits is even more badly apprehended than the production of vegetables. However, the total level of production is estimated at about 540 000 tons, representing an average availability of 10 kg per inhabitant in the CILSS zone. Mangos and citrus fruits make up an important share of the production. In total volume, Chad and Senegal are the most important fruit producers. But, when referred to the population, the production is highest in Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde.

Table n°11: Production of fruits (average 94-98 and 1999, in thousands of tons)

PRODUCTS	BURKINA FASO	CAPE VERDE	GAMBIA	GUINEA BISSAU	MALI	MAUR.	NIGER	SEN.	CHAD	SAHEL TOTAL
Citrus fruits										
Average	1.1	-	-	8.2	-	-	-	-	29.9	39.2
1999	1.1	-	-	8.2	-	-	-	-	30.0	39.3
Mangos										
Average	-	0.4	0.6	4.5	40.8	-	-	74.9	32.0	153.2
1999	-	0.4	0.7	4.5	50.0	-	-	75.2	32.0	162.8
Total										
Average	1.1	0.4	0.6	12.7	40.8	-	-	74.9	61.9	192.4
1999	1.1	0.4	0.7	12.7	50.0	-	-	75.2	62.0	202.1

Source: FAO

3.2.4.5. Industrial crops

They are basically cotton and sugar cane. The countries of the Sahel are generally producers of good quality cotton because of their climate. All the countries produce cotton to different degrees except Cape Verde and Mauritania. The regional average production over the period 1994-99 is approximately 920.000 tons i.e., 18 kg per capita on average. The major part of this production is ensured by 3 countries namely Mali (407,000 tons on average and 39 kg per capita), Burkina Faso (259,000 tons on average and 24 kg per capita) and Chad (210,000 tons and 30 kg per capita). During the crop year 1999/2000, the countries of the Sahel produced 1,139,000 tons of cotton including 523,000 tons in Mali.

The regional production of sugar cane is 2,053,000 tons representing 40 kg per capita on average over the period 1994-2000. All the countries produce sugar cane except Gambia and Mauritania. In the major producer countries, this production is done in irrigated zones managed by sugar companies (Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal and Chad). In Cape Verde and Niger, sugar cane is produced in bottom lands by individual farmers. Senegal ensures 40% of the regional production.

Over the period 1994-1999, the exploited acreages are 963,000 hectares for cotton and only 26,000 hectares for sugar cane. The fact that the production of cotton is rain fed in several countries (Burkina Faso, Mali,

Senegal and Chad) explains the importance of surfaces sowed. On the other hand, the exploited surface areas are very small as far as sugar cane is concerned because of the water requirements of the plant and the difficulties to mobilize this water.

3.2.5. Animal productions: livestock breeding and fishing

3.2.5.1. Livestock products

The livestock products are also an essential component of the Sahelian agro-food economies. Some countries have an extremely important ruminant livestock which is a method for exploiting and upgrading natural resources in non-cultivable pastoral zones. The number of livestock in 1999 is very important: about 24 million cattle, 30 million sheep, 36 million goats, 2.6 million camels, 2 million pigs and more than 121 million poultry.

Table n°12: Total numbers (in thousands of heads) in 1999

Country	Burkina Faso	Cape Verde	Gambia	Guinea Bissau	Mali	Mauritania	Niger	Senegal	Chad	CILSS
Cattle	4550	22	360	520	6058	1395	2174	2955	5582	23616
Sheep	6350	9	190	280	5975	6200	4312	4300	2431	30047
Goats	7950	112	265	315	8524	4133	6469	3595	4968	36331
Camels	13	-	-	-	289	1185	404	7	700	2598
Pigs	590	636	14	340	65	-	39	330	23	2037
Poultry	21000	417	680	850	24500	4100	20000	45000	4800	121347

These livestock resources make up a good share of the protein intake. In addition, they provide, when exported to the coastal countries, very important incomes to the major producer countries (Niger, Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso) and to the producers and all the stakeholders of the cattle, meat, hides and skins sectors.

Livestock is, in the agricultural sector, a basic resource, in particular for the landlocked countries. Thus, in Niger, livestock accounts for 31 % of the gross agricultural product, that is to say more than 10 % of the gross domestic product. In Mali, the livestock sector accounts for more than 13 % of the gross product. For these countries, the export earnings drawn from the livestock resources are considerable. Since the devaluation of the Fcfa and the significant fall of the repayments granted by the European Union for its meat exports towards West Africa, the Sahelian livestock has become competitive again on the coastal markets.

Table n° 13: structure of the agricultural GDP in 1990

sector	CPV	SEN	MRT	GMB	GNB	MLI	BKF	NGR	CHD	CILSS
years	1992	1995	1995	1995	1995	1994	1992	1993	1995	1995
source	Nat. account	Nat. account	Nat. account	Nat. account	Est.	Nat. account	Nat. account	Nat. account	Est.	Est.
fish	27	15	32	8	1	3	1	1	6	7
Agriculture stricto sensu	58	47	15	61	63	64	65	62	65	57

Including cotton and groundnut	0	13	0	21	3	14	12	1	11	7
<i>Livestock</i>	12	35	51	23	25	28	26	31	20	30
<i>forests</i>	4	4	2	8	11	5	9	6	9	6

Source: the World Bank and national accounts. Figures re-calculated on the basis of homogeneous definitions.

It should be noted that the livestock sector is going through significant transformations. The production of poultry and small ruminants is booming in the urban and peri-urban areas. This sector is becoming a major consumer of agro-industrial by-products and cereals such as maize.

3.2.5.2. Fishery products

Fishery products play an important role in food security. The aggregate output of the West African region is estimated at 1.6 million tons of which 47% are produced by the CILSS countries.

Traditional fishing contributes for more than 70% of the aggregate output. It is the main source of employment, incomes and livelihood for approximately four million people. The women occupy a dominating place with 70% of the jobs in the sector. They are especially involved in the activities that are carried out after the fish are caught (processing, fish trade). Fish is the less expensive source of protein. Consumption per capita is estimated at 9 kg. This level falls in certain areas that are far away from the places of production, hence the need to pay attention to the means of preservation.

The fisheries sector has been regaining vitality over the last couple of years thanks to these actors who are increasingly aware of their social and economic weight.

3.3. Agricultural transformation and natural resources management

The Sahelian agriculture is going through a series of major changes which reflect in fact the capacity of the producers to adapt themselves to the developments taking place in their economic, natural and institutional environment, and so, despite the many structural constraints to which they are subjected. These transformations need to be kept in mind because they are the early signs of yet more important changes to come which can reasonably allow the Sahel and West Africa to take up the challenge of food security without becoming too dependent on imports from the global market.

The first of these changes, and indisputably the most important one, relates to the organization of the rural set-up. In all the countries of the CILSS, where the rural world has long been supervised by government bodies, the dynamics of autonomous organization has resulted in the development of a number of local structures in which the producers and their families try to find collective solutions to their many problems. Beyond these local bodies, the structuring movement at the national level has developed considerably over the last years, but differently according to the countries. At this juncture, the producers are expressing more and more their will to put a lot of time and effort into the economic organization and especially in the negotiation of public policies affecting them. Lastly, at the sub-regional level, the organizational movement has resulted in the development of the Sahel Farmers' plat-form and, more recently, in the creation of the Network of West Africa farmers' organizations.

Agricultural transformation in the Sahel is difficult to follow because it is not the result of a homogeneous movement. On the contrary, it results in increased differentiation of agricultures, linked with a series of factors:

- training and dynamism of the farmers;

- access to information;
- land security;
- soil fertility management, which goes through either external inputs or a successful integration between agriculture, breeding and forestry;
- access to credit which is a determining element for financing the equipment and intermediate consumptions related to the crop year;
- possibility of increasing the value of the agricultural produce (storage, preservation, processing, transport) in order to access the national, sub-regional or international market.

There are henceforth, side by side, in the Sahel two types of agriculture: a rather traditional nutrient mining agriculture and an agriculture in the process of modernization. In the less watered areas, the traditional farming systems are now in crisis, with the decline in rainfall and the continuous extension of cropped lands. The ratio between cultivated and uncultivated lands does no longer allow for long time fallow periods to keep the fertility of the soil. In more watered areas or in dry lands where even partial irrigation can be practiced, the farming systems were intensified at least partially, thanks in particular to the access to credit and the existence of outlets which provide monetary resources enabling to buy the inputs and solve financial problems.

3.3.4. Water control

The majority of the CILSS countries have considerable water resources. Whereas the threshold of water shortage is estimated at 1000 m³ per capita, the availabilities range, according to the countries, between 787 to more than 25 000 m³. These resources are made up of:

- large permanent rivers (the Niger, Senegal, Gambia, Chari rivers...);
- non-permanent rivers, active only during the rainy seasons;
- natural and artificial water bodies (Lake Chad, Lake Guiers, dams...)
- renewable underground waters.

On average for the CILSS zone, 37% of the resources are common to several countries and therefore fall under the principle of shared management.

Only 4.4% of renewable water resources are developed for various forms of utilization: human and animal consumption (9.7%), irrigation (89%) and industry (1.3%). This use rate ranges from 0.1% in Guinea Bissau and 12.2% in Mauritania.

Irrigable surface areas in the Sahel are estimated at approximately 2.4 million hectares (excluding Guinea Bissau), primarily in the river basins. This potential is especially concentrated on Mali, with one million ha.

The irrigable lands account for 13% of cultivable lands on average. This share varies from 4 to 5% in Niger and Burkina Faso, from 7 to 10% in Chad and Cape Verde, 20% in Senegal, 27% in the Gambia, 30 and 33% respectively in Mali and Mauritania.

The irrigated zones cover a surface area of 479 500 ha under full or partial water control, that is to say about 20% of irrigable lands. About half of the irrigated lands are situated in Mali.

Table n°14: Evolution of irrigated zones between 1979 and 1999 (total ha).

COUNTRY / Year	1979	1989	1999
Burkina Faso	9,600	16,250	20,800
Cape Verde	2,300	2,780	2,780
Gambia	2,250	2,650	3,000

Guinea Bissau	-	-	17,000
Mali	111,000	138,000	234,500
Mauritania	2,400	28,500	50,000
Niger	5,800	65,000	80,000
Senegal	25,000	46,750	51,400
Chad	16,800	18,500	21,000
Total CILSS	175,150	318,430	480,480

Table n°15: Land resources, pastures, forests and irrigation in the Sahel

	Burkina Faso	Cape Verde	Gambia	Guinea Bissau	Mali	Mauritania	Niger	Senegal	Chad	CILSS
Agricultural areas (ha)	9487000	67000	378000	1424000	33275000	39714000	15529000	8002000	48430000	156306000
Cultivable areas	3487000	42000	185000	344000	3341000	464000	4368000	2314000	3430000	17975000
Cultivable areas per rural capita (ha/inhab.)	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.5
Pastures (1000 ha)	6000	25	194	1080	30000	39250	11160	5688	45000	138397
Forest (1000 ha)	7668	1	53	594	6601	2453	1396	4184	18006	40956
Irrigable lands	160000	3100	50000*		1000000	152000	220000	460000	335000	2380100
Irrigated zones	20800	2.780	3000	17000	234500	50000	80000	51400	21000	480.480
Rate of mobilization of irrigable lands (%)	13.0	89.7	6.0		23.5	32.9	36.4	11.2	6.3	20.2
Irrigable areas / Cultivable lands (%)	4.6	7.4	27.0		29.9	32.8	5.0	19.9	9.8	13.2

Thus, the rate of irrigation has remained short of expectation. This is attributable to the very important investments involved, the competition on the financial resources between old irrigation system rehabilitation projects and the development of new irrigated zones. Investment cost per hectare exceeds 10 million Fcfa within supervised irrigation projects with full control and pumping of water. This cost is reduced by approximately 1/3 with the gravity irrigation system and ranges between 2 and 3 million in the village irrigated zones. The operating costs necessary to ensure suitable production and make the irrigation works sustainable are always high in state-controlled irrigated areas. These investment and maintenance costs prove difficult to pay off when the intensity of the crops remains low, as it is often the case. It is especially in the coastal countries that this profitability is most difficult to obtain, owing to the fact that these countries are exposed to competition.

However, several elements need to be pointed out to give a moderate tone to the often pessimistic diagnoses formulated with regard to irrigation:

- ✓ many irrigated zones have been developed at the village level, with moderate costs and have made it possible to develop, alongside the rain fed crops, off-season productions whose value added is significant and allow for a diversification of incomes and make production partially secure. One irrigated hectare under these conditions enables ten families to generate each income of about 300 to 400 000 FCFA on the basis of market gardening crops;
- ✓ many problems are related to the very "top down" approaches, in particular as regards ownership of the irrigated zones and their management by the village organizations. The State divestiture coupled with the fact that these organizations should learn water control techniques ... are a radically new context.

- ✓ the development of outlets for diversification crops is an important support point to make such investments economically profitable.

3.3.1. Soil and fertility conservation

3.3.2.1. Poor and fragile soils

On the whole, three types of soils can be distinguished in the Sahel:

- pedological covers on wind-origin sandy materials: They characterize half of the soils in Sahelian zone and approximately 10% of the soils in the Sudanian zone. These soils have low mineral elements and are acidified easily. Their coarse texture makes their capacity to retain water low. They are sensitive to wind erosion, in particular when they are trampled underfoot by the animals;
- pedological covers rich in swelling clays: 20% of the soils in the Sahelian and Sudanian zones are concerned. These grounds are heavy to work, not very permeable, quickly clogged but also sensitive to water erosion and run-off. They are frequently unbalanced in calcium, magnesium and sodium, which makes them unfavourable to the assimilation of mineral elements and unpropitious to agriculture;
- ferralitic or ferruginous pedological covers derived from more or less armoured glacis or plateaux. They concern 30% of the soils in the Sahelian zone and 70% in the Sudanian zone.

Erosion is the main factor of soil degradation. In Mali and Senegal, soil salinization is another form of extremely alarming degradation in the irrigated areas.

3.3.2.2. Man: the main actor in soil degradation and conservation

Anthropogenic activities are a major source of soil degradation, in particular through:

- deforestation and clearing of spontaneous vegetation;
- adoption of farming practices which favour erosion: reduction of fallow periods, taking away of harvest wastes, weakness of organic and chemical soil amendments, absence of anti-erosion practices;
- overgrazing which causes vegetation cover to disappear, a physical soil degradation and favours erosion;
- overexploitation of trees and shrubs for household use, as well as bush fires and straying of animals...

It should be noted that quite a number of initiatives were taken at the local level to stop land degradation. All these water and soil conservation activities sometimes made it possible, when associated to changes in farming techniques (agriculture/livestock integration in particular, with the creation of manure pits and inputs of organic amendments to the soil, cultivated fallow lands...), to bring changes into the farming systems and to improve appreciably the yields while reducing the vulnerability of the crops vis-à-vis rainfalls. However, these innovations involve investments in time or money which limit their widespread use in the current context. The work necessary for land protection activities requires a significant labour. This activity can be in competition with other strategies meant to limit risks that are more advantageous in the short run such as the temporary and seasonal migrations of the strong men. The problem of access to production means, in particular credit and inputs is quite essential to develop a large scale strategy of soil conservation. Emphasis should be also placed on the land tenure statute and the importance of making the producers feel secure in relation with the investment they make.

3.3.3. Forest resources management

Forest resources in the Sahel are an important element which is not well taken into account in the food security problematic. The forest is a fundamental element of the Sahelian ecosystems, and its products are a major element of the populations' economic strategies: firewood, use of many species for food or medicinal purposes... The firewood alone accounts for 60 to 95% of energy sources.

During the last decades, the Sahelian forest has been misused as a result not only of the demographic growth which led to an increase in energy requirements, but also the extension southwards of pasture lands and the extension, Northwards, of the cultivated lands.

3.3.4. Fishery management

Fishery resources of the West African region are decreasing drastically. The scarcity of the resources is due to unrestrained exploitation by fleets from the coastal countries but especially by those of the Northern countries, in particular the European Union within the framework of the fishing agreements.

Consequently there is a real difficulty to ensure a sustainable use of Sahelian fishery resources. To allow a regeneration of the destroyed biotope, it is necessary that the coastal countries, which often share the same fish stocks, should consult each other in order to harmonize their approaches to the negotiation of fishing agreement. Should be explored the opportunities for groups of countries to negotiate fishing agreements.

3.4. Imports: costly yet crucial for the cereal equilibrium

➤ The demand for importation increases despite an increase in productions

Extra-regional imports which were lower than 300 000 tons at the beginning of the Sixties, bordered 1.3 million tons throughout the Eighties and, despite good harvests on average since the beginning of the Nineties, the sub-region is importing between 1.5 and 2.2 million tons. This represents a significant cost in currencies, of about 250 billion FCFA per year. Cereal imports represent on average, in the CILSS zone, approximately 7% of overall cost of imports of goods and services and 12% of the deficit of the trade balance. Taking into account the high growth of the trade deficit (the imports of goods and services increased by 65% between 1980 and 1996 whereas exports increased by 25% only), the share of cereal imports has tended to decrease since 1980. However, the weight of cereals seems extremely important in the case of Guinea Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal. The latter two countries alone concentrate 60% of imports of the CILSS zone.

Table n°16: Trend of the cost of cereal imports and its significance in the trade balance of the CILSS countries

	Cost of the cereal imports (\$ 1 000)		Imports of goods and services (\$ 1 000)	Exports of goods and services (\$ 1 000)	Share of cereals in the deficit of the trade balance of goods and services (%)
	1989/91	1996/98	1996	1996	
Burkina Faso	52 013	63 370	921 000	272 000	9.7
Cape Verde	12 131	11 302	284 500 (*)	124 500 (*)	6.9
Gambia	17 448	31 018	349 000	123 000	13.7
Guinea Bissau	14 714	22 467	128 000	56 000	30.6
Mali	38 697	28 811	1 483 000	355 000	2.6
Mauritania	51 316	108 175	833 000	602 000	46.7

Niger	34 483	27 782	719 000	112 000	4.6
Senegal	150 913	203 467	2 250 000	1 211 000	19.5
Chad	10 795	22 272	416 000	180 000	9.3
CILSS	382 510	518 664	7 383 500	3 035 500	11.9

(*) 1998

Source: CILSS, FAO

- **This growth of imports can be explained to a large extent by the qualitative inadequacy between the Sahelian supply and demand.**

The Sahel does not virtually produce wheat; it does not produce enough rice to meet food systems that give greater importance to these products, especially in the urban areas, but also more and more in the rural areas. On average, over the last three years, the rice has accounted for half of the imports (1.47 million tons; wheat represents a third (690 000 tons).

Table n°17: Qualitative imbalance between the Sahelian supply and demand (1996-1999)

	Apparent consumption		Available production		Imports	
	(kg/inhab./year)	(%) of overall consumption	(kg/inhab./year)	(%) of cereal consumption	(kg/inhab./year)	(%) of cereal consumption
All cereals	189	100	149	79	40	21
Coarse cereals	140	74	133	95	7	5
Rice	35	18,5	15	43	20	57
Wheat	14	7,5	0	0	14	100

Source: Diaper/CILSS

- **On the whole, the average cereal availabilities per capita improved appreciably under the double effect of the increase in the Sahelian supply and extra-African imports.**

On average, the apparent consumption improved for the region. Generally, rice production increased by 30% during the last ten years, thus enabling to make up for the increase in the place rice now occupies in the food systems. On the other hand, the production of coarse cereals (millet, sorghum and wheat) increased only by 15 % over the same period. Whereas the latter accounted for 80% of cereal consumption at the end of the decade 80s, they account for only 75% ten years later, to the benefit of rice and wheat;

In short, in 10 years:

- ✓ the aggregate output increased by 19%;
- ✓ the production per capita regressed by 6%
- ✓ the total imports increased by 65%;
- ✓ the imports per capita increased by 32%.

- **Food aid which played an important role in attaining the equilibrium of the cereal balance-sheet is decreasing sharply to such a point that it now represents but a marginal form of food supply.**

Whereas food aid accounted for 30 to 40% of cereal imports in 1984/86, it has contributed only to 2% of the consumption and 10% of the imports over the last couple of years. This share in the imports remains however significant in Cape Verde (74%) where it represents an assistance to the balance of payments, and to a lesser extent, in Burkina Faso (about 15 to 20%). This decrease in food aid is due to the absence of a serious and widespread climatic crisis in the Sahel region as a whole on the one hand, and to a more judicious use of this instrument on the other hand. Indeed, food aid is now more and more integrated in the cereal policies. It is a resource used to finance these policies, thus making it possible to avoid thwarting the efforts made towards a stabilisation of the markets and, to mitigate the depressive effects on the production. Some donors have substituted financial assistance for assistance in kind, either in the form of budgetary support or assistance to the balance of payments, or in the form of financing of security stocks or, more generally, cereal policies. Lastly, it fits within a general context characterized by a fall of flows of food aid on the world level. The offer of food aid by the major cereal donors/exporters is closely dependent on the situation of the market. It proves often counter-cyclic, i.e. available in higher quantity when the prices fall on the world market and supply costs are low, and unavailable when prices are high and imports expensive. Aid thus seems to be an instrument of little help to cut down the food bill of developing countries, and Sahel countries in particular.

Table n°18: Trends of the components of the cereal balance-sheet

	Period 1987/88-1989/90	Period 1996/97-1998/99	Variation (%)
Population (inhabitants)	40 790 000	51 244 000	+ 25.6
Gross output (1000t)	7 812	9 364	+ 19.9
Production available (1000t)	6 440	7 639	+ 18.6
Stock variation (1000t)	+ 63	+ 13	
Imports (1000t)	1 266	2 089	+ 65
Exports (1000t)	62	47	
Production available per capita (kg)	158	149	- 5.7
Imports per capita (kg)	31	41	+ 32
Food aid per capita (kg)	7,6	3,3	- 56.6
Apparent consumption per capita (kg)	185	188	+ 1.6

Source: Diaper/CILSS data

Table n°19: Trends of the contribution of the production and imports of the various cereals in the cereal availability

	1987/88-1989/90	1996/97-1998/99	Variation (%)
<i>RICE</i>			
Production available (t)	474 000	766 000	+ 61.6
Production available per capita (kg)	11.3	14.7	+ 30
Imports (t)	682 000	1 047 000	+ 53.5
Imports per capita	17	20.3	+ 19
Share of rice in average consumption (%)	14.7	18.6	+ 26.5
<i>Wheat</i>			
Production available (t)	7 000	13 000	+ 86
Production available per capita (kg)	0.2	0.2	=
Imports (t)	402 000	690 000	+ 71.6
Imports per capita	9.7	13.7	+ 41.2

Share of wheat in average consumption	5.8	7.4	+ 27.6
<i>COARSE CEREALS</i>			
Production available (t)	5 959 000	6 859 000	+ 15.1
Production available per capita (kg)	146	134	- 8.2
Imports (t)	181 000	352 000	+ 95
Imports per capita	4.3	6.6	+ 53
Share of coarse cereals in average consumption	80	74.5	- 7

Source: according to Diaper/CILSS data

3.5. Food security and regional agricultural produce markets

Economic liberalization, coupled with the fact that food demand centres are increasingly situated far away from the production zones, has boosted cereal markets over the last 15 years. The urbanization and the emergence of structurally surplus production zones supply increasingly important (about 1 to 1.5 million tons nowadays) commercial flows with cereals that are produced locally.

These transactions account for but only 15 to 20% of the production available and are still rather lower than cereal flows imported from the world market.

In principle, the foreign trade system is free within the CILSS zone and West Africa. However since the countries of the Sahel straddle four economic zones (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CEMAC and UMA), the disparities noted in the national tax policies are in fact obstacles to the free movement of products and the optimum promotion of comparative advantages within the sub-region.

The analysis of national policies mapped out to get control over trade highlights, inter alia, three main facts:

- ✓ the disparities between trade control policies are the main support for intra-regional flows. In some cases, they are even more decisive than the "natural assets" available to a country to help it specialize in a given activity.
- ✓ the complexity of the nomenclatures and codifications coupled with the possibilities that they can be interpreted in different ways very strongly affect the effectiveness of the national policies. Indeed, the interpretations change very often because the specific interests to manage are diverse and often contradictory. As a result, there is a hiatus between official policies and the policies really applied. By way of illustration, we can mention the many and illicit (in the majority of cases) harassments Sahelian livestock exporters to the coastal countries, in particular to Côte d'Ivoire, often suffer from.
- ✓ The very different nature of the problems affecting each State specifically is not in favour of a natural harmonization of national policies. For example, the production capacity of landlocked countries such as Mali and Burkina Faso, cannot be compared to that of the Gambia which can take the liberty of opening itself to all-out imports at the risk of penalizing its own production; Senegal and Mauritania have very urbanized populations, on the doorstep of the world market.

Notwithstanding these disparities, the national policies are interrelated and correspond to each other. When Mali removed subsidies to its agricultural sector, in accordance with the commitments entered for the structural adjustment of its agricultural economy, the subsidized agricultural inputs from Burkina Faso (aimed at encouraging agricultural intensification) fuelled the demand from Malian producers.

The fact that there are zones governed by different economic and/or monetary policies has always been and still is an incentive to trade for the inhabitants of the frontier zone. Today, the existence of commercial areas that go far beyond the narrow context of the countries is materialized by the intense flow of local products imported through the borders. Those who maintain this cross-border flow of products are dynamic tradesmen organized in effective networks carrying out trans-national activities. They have their own information system and are fully adapted to the various economic systems, in particular to the complex nature of the monetary system (the Sahel has 4 monetary areas and only the FCFA is convertible with a sizeable restriction, for Chad, between the CFA of the West and that of the East). As a consequence, there are strong informal trade flows between the countries. Such trade flows are robust and show the interdependence between the States; however, they do not participate in the processes of formal integration or "**integration from the top**". They are especially at the basis of the "**actual**" integration achieved by the populations.

Their dynamics deeply modifies the way the West African sub-region functions and entails a division of this zone in three sub-markets through which it is more likely to achieve economic integration: the northern, central and eastern sub-markets.

- **The common feature of the northern sub-market (Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Guinea Conakry)** is the strong social influence of rice associated with important crops of millet, sorghum and leguminous plants (mainly groundnut). Being a zone of very strong regional solidarity ties resulting from historical and geographical realities, this sub-market is split up through the management of the States which make it up. The dominant features of this explosion are, among others:
 - ✓ monetary fragmentation (4 monetary systems for 6 countries) which has had negative consequences on regional solidarity and;
 - ✓ discontinuous roads characterized by a weak road network of good quality and the unfinished character of the network; all the roads start at the coast and suddenly stop inside each country.

In spite of the political and economic constraints which cause the zone to be split up in several socio-economic units, the populations for their part, have turned to good account all the contradictions and initiated a regional dynamics based on informal trade involving all the productions but dominated, to a large extent, by cereals imported from the world market.

Trade is taking place in the following way:

- ✓ **Coarse cereal flows (millet, maize, sorghum).** Mali exports towards Senegal, Mauritania and Guinea. Although in limited quantities, these cereals circulate in the two directions between Senegal and the Gambia; same between Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Senegal;
- ✓ **Local rice flows.** In Mali, the rice of the Office du Niger marketed in the country is exported towards Mauritania and, since the devaluation of the CFA franc, towards Senegal and Burkina Faso. Senegal also receives paddy rice produced in the Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Guinea;
- ✓ **Flows of rice re-exportation.** A major part of the rice imported into the Gambia is re-exported to Senegal and to a lesser extent towards Mali and Guinea Bissau. In addition, Mali is the principal destination of rice re-exported by the Guinean operators. The re-exportations of rice from Guinea Bissau are bound to Guinea and Senegal. These re-exportation activities are the result of the disparities existing between national tax policies, thus creating important differences in prices (from simple to double);

- ✓ **Flows of other products.** Senegal exports salt and smoked fish to Mali and Guinea and imports cattle from Mali and fruits and vegetables from Guinea. Mali exports fruits and vegetables to Mauritania. Malian fruits and vegetables are in competition there with those coming from Morocco and Europe. Approximately 90% of sugar and 98% of tea and concentrated tomato imported by the Gambia are re-exported to Senegal because of the difference in taxation. Guinea exports fruits and vegetables to Senegal and Mali.
- **The central sub-market (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Togo)** is characterized by the strong hold of export agriculture based on coffee and cocoa, the abundance of bauxite and gold in the sub-soil. It is the most important centre of immigrants in West Africa, especially towards Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana which remain the main structuring factors of the zone. Trade in this sub-market concerns products such as cola, coconut, livestock, fruits and vegetables, tubers and roots and cereals;

Sahelian countries like Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger export cattle, fruits and vegetables and cereals to the coastal countries, and at many more important intervals since the devaluation of CFA franc in 1994. One effect of the devaluation (on top of the effects of cutting down subsidies on exports to Europe) was to significantly reduce the quantities of meat of non-African origin (mainly from Europe) imported to the coastal countries (Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire) and therefore to give an opportunity to Sahelian pastoralists. In absolute terms, the export of cattle after the devaluation increased by 58% in Burkina Faso and 85% in Mali, compared to the period 1990-93. Over the period 1996-98, livestock exports accounted for 20% of total exports in Burkina Faso (only cotton is higher) and 34% of the value added of the agricultural sector in Mali. Over the period 1990-1998, livestock exports concerned, on annual average, 1,700,000 heads (cows, sheep and goats) which yielded approximately more than US \$ 180 million per year. In the same vein, Niger exports about 20 % (between 17,000 and 100,000 tons a year) of its exportable cowpea to Togo, Ghana, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire. Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire are the main destinations of onion from Niger (about 57,123 tons on average per year which brings in earnings valuing US \$ 8,560,000). All in all, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger export annually more than 40,000 tons of horticultural products that yield revenues estimated in 1995 at US \$ 25 million.

Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo for their part export cola, coconut, tubers and roots, cereals (primarily maize) to their Sahelian neighbours. The fruits and vegetables are traded reciprocally according to the products and the period. They are basically mango, onion from Niger, potato. The coastal countries are the entry points for products (cereals, building materials, petroleum products, etc...) imported from the world market for the landlocked Sahelian countries. As regards the processed agro-food products (PAFP), Côte d'Ivoire takes the lead in the sub-region with its fruit juices, jams, syrup, liquors and dehydrated fruits (pineapple, passion, mango, ginger, etc...).

A significant part of Malian exports of mangos is re-exported from Côte d'Ivoire towards Europe. A marketable surplus of approximately 13,000 tons was exported in 1995. The processing activities are limited to the drying of vegetables in the villages, drying of fruits, vegetables and spices by small size processing units, and to the industrial production of juice, syrups and tomato concentrates. The processing companies are faced with problems of packing, high costs of transport, bad management and lack of information on business opportunities at the regional level.

- **the Eastern sub-market (Benin, Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad)** is under the influence of Nigeria, the giant of West Africa, and even Africa, because not only of the importance of its population (more than 100 million inhabitants) and ethnic groups but also the richness of its sub-soil. Here, the problem facing the region is the extraordinary development of regional trade. About forty products circulate among the countries of this zone. The main decisive element of this trade is the exchange rate of the Naira which

depends itself on Nigerian oil exports. The consequences of the economic policies of Nigeria (subsidy and prohibition) are other determinants of trade in this zone.

In addition to oil, Nigeria exports manufactured goods, non-agricultural inputs (fuel and motor-driven pumps), agricultural inputs (urea and NPK) and agricultural produce (cereals, market-garden products and citrus fruits) on the markets of its neighbours. Nigeria is one of the major hydrocarbon producers in the world. The very low price of fuel in Nigeria (among the lowest in the world) feeds a very important informal trade which is uncontrollable for the neighbouring States. The pressures of the Breton Woods Institutions on the Government of Nigeria to raise the price of its fuel towards parity prices will slow down, in the future, this flow by reducing the price gap between the countries.

Sub-regional livestock trade is also flourishing. Nigeria has the largest potential of livestock in this zone. However, it meets only 61% of its demand. This country is thus an important market for the livestock from Niger, Cameroon and Chad. Benin covers only 51% of its demand which is met by exports of Niger. The sub-regional livestock trade concerns nearly 200,000 heads of cattle and 110,000 heads of small ruminants per year.

Exports of countries bordering on Nigeria also concern cereals, cowpea, onion, market-garden products (garlic, sweet pepper, tomato, cabbage). The latter are subject of very important cross-border transactions. Niger and Nigeria show surpluses which are exported to the other countries of the sub-region. In addition, Niger places every year between 68,000 and 400,000 tons of cowpea on the sub-regional market.

In short, the trade dynamics rests on:

- ✓ some complementarities between the countries on the level of the productions;
- ✓ disparities of monetary and tax policies;
- ✓ disparities of taxation at the frontiers of the world market;
- ✓ informal obstacles resulting basically from the dysfunction of Government services.

3.6. Reconstruction of the actors' interplay and definition of a new role for the State

The withdrawal of the State has been an outstanding phenomenon over the past fifteen years: liberalization of domestic and foreign trade, dismantling of marketing boards. Such withdrawal was not always accompanied by a vision or a dynamic construction of the respective roles of the private actors, socio-professional organizations, NGOs and State. Civil society organizations appear to be particularly relevant as they intervene at local level through modest operations that present the advantage of closely involving the beneficiaries in the definition and implementation of objectives and activities. The opposite course of such profusion of initiatives is the low level of coordination and the multiplication of different approaches, of zones with a concentration of initiatives on the one hand and, on the other hand, of " abandoned " zones, the absence of evaluations and capitalization of experiences, the lack of linkage between public action and NGO interventions...

Now, in the field of food security, we are obviously faced with a complex set of problems, which compels us to work out and establish operational linkages between the various public policies, the regional integration dynamics and actors' initiatives at sub-national or local levels. Whereas food security is mainly the outcome of the interaction of private actors (producers, traders, consumers), the fact remains nonetheless true that the market cannot guarantee access to food for all as the importance of poverty is, in the Sahel, determining in this respect. Therefore, food security is a prerogative that cannot be left to the sole private sector. Its character of " common good " leads to work out forms of governance or regulation, which involve the State -guarantor for the general interest- and the various types of actors. This notion benefits from a rather broad-based theoretical consensus. However, in practical terms, the various spheres (the State, the private sector and

peasant-farmer organizations) act in a rather compartmentalized manner.

3.4. Evolution in the aid agencies' approaches to food security

The international community put significant efforts in the food sector during the major droughts. At that time, the inadequacy of information and warning systems led to intervene under circumstances driven by emergency and which, de facto, granted a significant place to food aid in kind. Very soon, the negative effects of this form of assistance were felt and denounced by the NGOs in particular: discouragement of producers, destabilization of markets, development of the beggar mentality... As a result, the dialogue started up within the framework of the food crises prevention network between the Sahelian countries and the donor community mostly related to the management of food aid. This dialogue, which was a significant innovation in the donor/beneficiary relationship, enabled some positive developments in terms of practices in many fields, in particular:

- The issue of information: how to improve information collection and processing tools so as to ensure accuracy in the evaluation of deficits and, consequently, in the quantification of food aid requirements? How to collate information sources in order to improve data objectivity and to ensure independence of the information produced? How to go beyond the sole quantification of national deficits so as to understand the issue of vulnerable groups and better target food aid;
- The issue of consultation mechanisms: most countries have set up joint State/donor Committees intended to coordinate food aid;
- The issue of instruments: the food aid charter adopted jointly by the States and major donors allowed to establish a common system of reference on the approach to the food aid management, while seeking to reduce the use thereof and to develop alternatives to in-kind aid. This led to the development of triangular purchases and local purchases, making it possible to supply deficit areas in priority from surplus areas. Also, within the framework of the same dynamics, most donors limited free distributions but conversely developed monetization and fed counterpart funds allowing to finance activities that are conducive to food security or rural development.

From a status of essential component, in-kind food aid became a minor component in food security strategies, under the double effect of improved food availability in the Sahel and a more judicious utilisation of an instrument difficult to manage correctly in a long-term perspective.

Consequently, the agencies rather refocused their policy on assistance aimed at the improvement of market operation, taking account of the logics of liberalization and state divestiture: support to information systems, support to the reforms and reorganization of marketing boards, support to sectoral policies favouring institutional reform and the reinforcement of actors and private operators.

Currently, the agencies are supporting the Sahelian countries in the definition of better integrated food security strategies. This particularly holds true for FAO or the European Union. Such move offers an opportunity to revisit policies and, more specifically, to establish linkages with poverty control. And yet, these efforts are faced with many difficulties, especially the deficient coordination between agencies and still too superficial involvement of the major actors and socio-professional organizations. Attempts towards the definition of strategies are often presented and perceived as preconditions to the programming of financial assistance by the aid agencies. Such attempts are mostly undertaken within the framework of an arrangement between some donors and the administration, and do not result from genuine negotiation involving the actors whose central role is all the same recognised in the changes needed to sustainably improve food security.

3.5. Aid Budgeting and food security

Budgetary assistance aims at helping the government to recover ownership of the conduct of development strategies, policies and programmes. This is true in the field of food security as is the case in other fields. Such evolution is significant in many respects:

- In terms of effectiveness, budgetary assistance seems like a means for better coordinating and arbitrating resource allocation;
- In terms of sustainability, insofar as budgetary assistance is supposed to replace the project approach, the main limit of which is the low level of sustainability in investments. By including activities in the general budget of the State, the decision-makers expect greater internalisation and a sustainability that is higher and more coherent with the long-term character of development policies;
- In terms of democratisation and rehabilitation of the government's role: budgetary assistance is regarded as a significant element which makes it possible to restore the beneficiary countries' leadership in choices which the decision-makers are accountable for to their people;
- In terms of the evolution of consultation between donors and beneficiaries: budgetary assistance should allow to start up an overall policy dialogue between the country and the donor community, a dialogue steered by the beneficiaries and used to determine a series of commitments, objectives and criteria joint assessment of outcomes... In other words, beyond the issue of budgetary aid, it is the overall approach to conditionalities, which is being changed completely.

Such evolution that is not specific to the Sahel falls in line with the expectations of the Sahelians, particularly as regards their desire to play a more active role and to be at the centre of choices. This policy change is all the more fundamental in this area as it is, more even so than in other developing regions, the backbone of a great number of development projects by innumerable actors with as many underlying logics. The issue of leadership and coordination is particularly acute in the Sahel. This evolution is also beneficial insofar as most of the systems of government in the Sahel have been democratic for many years now. Not only these governments have the "merit" and legitimacy to lead state affairs, but also the weakness of their current leadership resulting from the fragmentation of external assistance could threaten political and social stability through further weakening of the State.

However, budgetary aid can only prove really positive provided the established political dialogue is not conducted at the expense of the involvement of the main actors, that budgetary choices are not the result of the sole arbitrations between the government and the agencies and, finally, that the expenditure programmed in the national budget is actually implemented and is mobilized in accordance with the arbitrations. Therefore, it seems necessary to be pragmatic enough and to avoid the all or nothing logic. In particular, depending on the quality of the institutional framework, it may be necessary to maintain off-budget support to contribute to the strengthening of some actors.

The fact remains that, for the years ahead, one of the major stakes for the food security actors within and outside the State will be to assert the priority of food security in the national discussion and budgetary choices. The issue will be less a matter of convincing such or such donor of the relevance of a given sectoral project or programme than of convincing the national decision makers. For example, it will become increasingly difficult to finance food security information systems on a project basis, insofar as this type of expenditure

does not pertain to temporary investments, but is undoubtedly part of the sovereign functions of the State. Therefore, the issue of internalisation of the information systems becomes an urgent matter to be addressed in this new context.

3.6. Food security in a changing international context

The Marrakech Agreement contributed to partially stabilizing world markets, thanks to the gradual reduction in export subsidies granted by the major exporting countries. However, western producers still enjoy considerable subsidies, which allows them to maintain their export capabilities, including for products where their comparative advantages are questionable. The argument about export subsidies is all the more significant for the Sahelian countries as most of them have embarked on asymmetrical liberalization negotiated with the Bretton-Woods institutions since the mid-eighties, i.e. well before the conclusion of the multilateral negotiation which led to the establishment of the WTO. Such liberalization of trade policies resulted in the introduction of direct competition between modern agriculture, which benefited from protectionist policies to take off and still enjoying significant subsidies, and traditional agriculture yet, which was granted little attention by the States, except for the export sub-sectors. The debate on the conditions of fairer competition is re-emerging, especially with the increasing claims of the Sahelian and west-African peasant-farmer organizations for the protection of agricultural markets, namely those strategic products in terms of food security.

Beyond the debate on agricultural subsidies, the fact remains that the agricultural markets are still considerably unstable markets. This is partly due to variations in supply, mainly related to climatic conditions, but also to sharp variations, which may affect food demand. The recent Asian crisis bears witness to this assertion. Now, the impact of such market instability needs to be better understood so as to guide the strategic choices of the Sahelian countries. High dependence on basic foodstuff imports is most certainly a considerable risk for food security on the one hand and for the balance of trade on the other hand. Now, most of the prospective studies show that the high growth in demand, especially in developing regions, could result in tension and increased international prices on the medium and long terms. The dynamic currents in countries like China, and in Asia more broadly speaking, will have an influence on international markets and partly affect the supply conditions of the Sahelian countries (directly for rice, more indirectly for wheat).

The WTO agricultural arrangement is still being renegotiated following the Seattle setback. The degree of liberalization of foodstuffs as well as the autonomy margin of the LDCs in the field of trade policies will be pivotal in such renegotiation. The Sahelian countries must push forward their interests in order to avoid reducing foodstuffs to mere goods.

Lastly, the EU/ACP partnership Agreements, adopted in June 2000 in Cotonou, open up the way for the negotiation of economic partnership arrangements between the EU and the ACP sub-regional groupings, arrangements that would be marked by reciprocity in commercial concessions. These free trade areas, which will allow the non-LDC countries to preserve preferential conditions of access to European markets (compatibility with WTO rules), could radically change the conditions of cereal imports and, more generally of European foodstuffs, and consequently noticeably alter the conditions of competition between local and imported produce. Conversely, the LDCs are obliged to integrate a free trade area with the EU before they can preserve the current dissymmetrical relations with the EU (non reciprocity in commercial concessions). Such diverging interest between LDCs and non-LDCs can lead to significant distortions within the sub-region and encourage flows of cereal re-exportation or other community products imported tax-free by non-LDC countries.

4. The issues at stake

4.1. How to meet the requirements of an ever growing and increasingly urban population

By 2015, the Sahel will have to feed a population of about 85 million inhabitants, and more than 100 million inhabitants by 2025. In most countries, the demographic growth rates remain high, between 2 and 3% per annum, i.e. an average 2.7%.

The urban population accounts for 30% of the Sahelian population. This segment markedly increased over the past 20 years (urban demographic growth higher than 6%). This trend is unlikely to fall in the future. The city will probably host nearly 50 million inhabitants in 2025. In other words, the urban population should treble and the rural population increase by about 50%.

This fundamental change in the Sahelian societies is, in terms of food security and poverty control, both a serious constraint and a major opportunity. It is a constraint insofar as the provision of basic services (health, education, sanitation...), which is currently extremely inadequate, will require considerable resources. Urban development is also very expensive in terms of trunk infrastructure. But it is an opportunity insofar as the Sahelian agricultural producers and more generally all actors in the agro processing sub-sectors suffered a lot in the past from the small size of markets. The increase in outlets (potential size of market as per producer) is a deciding factor in financing agricultural development and the intensification of production systems.

Since the demographic dynamics in the coastal countries of western and central Africa is not significantly different from the Sahelian trends, and since these countries representing a " traditional " outlet for the Sahelian producers, the increase in market size becomes a historical opportunity for the Sahel, provided this opportunity is actually seized by all actors concerned.

Recognition of these factors is all the more essential as the design and implementation of structural, institutional and sectoral reforms commit the future for about one generation, and consequently imply to zero in on the stakes and the objective to be achieved.

4.2. Basing the growth of incomes in the rural areas on a strategy of rapid expansion of the agricultural sector

In spite of an increasing urbanization, the Sahelian rural population will continue to increase in the next 25 years. Without a high growth in the commercial production sectors, there are no prospects of improving incomes in agricultural and rural areas that are host to the majority of the poor in the Sahel. Now, it is poverty, which explains the lack of food security in the Sahel for the most part. In other parts of the world, it is the fast growth of agriculture, which results in poverty alleviation. Except those countries with an extremely unequal distribution of lands, growth in the agricultural sector not only contributes to feeding overall economic growth, but also to improving income distribution. In other words, the poor benefit more than proportionally from income growth. In the countries of the CILSS zone, the driving force of growth in the agricultural sector can only be cash crops: the traditional crops intended for export on the international markets (cotton, groundnuts, horticultural products), but also products intended for the local and sub-regional markets such as livestock, cereals (e.g. rice in Mali), and vegetables are significant levers for such growth.

The intensification of production in sectors already well controlled, with export outlets and proven comparative advantages is absolutely essential for such prospective agricultural growth. Diversification is therefore a supplementary option, as it allows reducing the vulnerability of agricultural economies, which exclusively depend on cash crops. Indeed, it appears today that it is primarily thanks to the resources drawn from cash crops that

farmers can finance the diversification of their productions and intensification of their production systems, which is essential for reducing the pressure on natural resources and restoring soil fertility.

Four priorities may be put forward for rapid growth in the agricultural sector towards poverty alleviation:

- Accelerated growth in the sectors of export produce (particularly cotton, groundnuts, livestock and horticultural products);
- Emphasis on regional exports, but also outside the region, in particular by exploiting buoyant sectors (flowers, dried fruits...) where the Sahel can improve its competitiveness on the European market within the framework of the new commercial provisions of the EU/ACP Convention;
- Accelerated growth in the traditional cereals sector, to meet the increasing demand generated by the rise in incomes as a result of export growth;
- Growth in the availability of services and goods in rural areas, to meet the rise in demand resulting from the increase in farmers' incomes.

4.3. Coping with a variety of food crises

Basically, one may consider that the major stake for the Sahel is to ensure food security for all households. Such security requires a vigorous policy towards poverty control and reduction of inequalities. More specifically, the objective is to make sure that all households have adequate resources to cover all their basic requirements. **Such approach is both a strategic objective and a means.** It is an objective insofar as the satisfaction of food requirements is one of the basic human rights and also because a country cannot sustainably exclude a significant segment of its population without running significant risks of social, environmental and political destabilization. It is a means insofar as the satisfaction of food requirements represents a very significant potential of economic development and, therefore, of income-generation for households and countries.

In spite of diverse national circumstances, and sometimes diverging short-term interests, the Sahel can draw from substantial benefits from sub-regional co-operation in the fields of food security, and from greater integration between the Sahelian and coastal countries.

The contribution of co-operation and regional integration must be considered in a twofold dimension:

- Construction of a long-term food security based on the development of regional supply to meet growth in demand and diversification thereof;
- Active prevention of circumstantial economic crises to avoid annihilation of long-term investment efforts via sudden impoverishment of households, degradation of capacities to face shocks, destruction of the productive capital for survival purposes;

Crises prevention has been a significant thrust in food security policy reform. To various degrees, the countries are equipped for early detection of a crisis caused by climatic hazards. To this end, they jointly developed some rather powerful tools in the field of agro-climatic forecast and monitoring. For all that, and in the light of recent experience, crises in the Sahel are much more diversified in their origins, and the prevention and management mechanisms do not seem to tally with this evolution. Some examples could be mentioned in this connection:

- **Political instability and crises in the CILSS and neighbouring countries:** the crises in Casamance, Guinea Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad or even Sierra-Leone and Liberia all have short-term repercussions because of socio-economic disorganization and sometimes massive displacement of population, insecurity on roads and at the borders, as well as long-term impacts (slow restoration of confidence and productive capacities, slow return of private investment, development of mafia-like networks which blossom taking advantage of conflicts...). The emergency aid mobilized under such circumstances harnesses resources normally allocated towards the mitigation of more diffuse or structural crises, resulting in serious impact management and control problems while seldom resting on profitable use of local resources (e.g. triangular aid programmes);

Finally, these crises paralyse national and international public initiatives (freezing or postponement of reforms, suspension of aid...). Regional organizations with a political mandate and, theoretically, conflict prevention mechanisms seem rather helpless before such situations, because of their low capacities in anticipation and resources to facilitate mediations. These organizations could have a greater political weight through more explicit recognition of the fact that such crises, albeit the product of internal conflicts (therefore stamped in theory with the seal of national sovereignty), are actually common problems because of their sub-regional impacts.

The international community also certainly has a role to play in this field, insofar as part of the imperilled investments originates from external public financing, and as international assistance will have to be mobilized to finance very costly rehabilitation programmes. Besides, a clearer perception of the economic impacts and dangers for the integration processes that result from these conflicts would probably bring the leaders of the sub-region to take more determined. Lastly, these conflicts are frequently a reflection of political (faltering or uncompleted democratisation) or socio-economic (monopolization of revenues, control of territories...) malfunctions that were not redressed through transparent and democratic negotiation. Food security and regional economic integration need political stability and a resolutely democratic environment to develop!

- **Sectoral economic crises:** Under the double effect of macro-economic and financial adjustment and economic liberalization, the Sahelian countries are now better integrated into international markets. Such integration, which was desired by most of the States and actors, is a significant factor in the Sahelian countries' development strategy and should allow improving their exporting position. However, this integration also increases the region's vulnerability to sometimes brutal trends in the international markets. This is the case nowadays for cotton, where prices sharply fell on the world market to the extent of inspiring producers to turn to some other crops.

This affects both producers' incomes and national resources. The erosion of customs preferences granted by the European Union to the ACP countries does not have the same impact width but it can also contribute to gradually reducing outlets for some west-African sub-sectors to the profit of other exporters from non-ACP developing countries. This erosion of external market shares can also result from the development of environmental standards in the western countries (see new European regulation on pesticide residues) if the African sub-sectors, for lack of information or ability to adapt, are no longer in a position to meet these new demands. These economic shocks can also affect the import capacity for products in want. We are referring here to sudden price increases on world markets (case of cereals in 1995) that the countries must inevitably pass on to the consumers for fear of increasing their budget deficits.

As a result, the households which buy supplies via the market will see the share of expenditure devoted to food climb beyond their purchasing power or they will have to pay at the expense of changes in food systems

(temporary elimination of meat or vegetables), of a reduction in savings or increased appeal to solidarity networks. In poor rural areas, these price increases are all the more detrimental as they occur in a year of bad harvest when the food producers experience a deficit, with no alternative resources but to resort to the market under very unfavourable conditions.

4.4. Integrating food security management into decentralization and State reform processes

The decentralization dynamics in progress in most of the Sahelian countries fall within the framework of an in-depth reform in the management of public affairs. The decentralization logic as well as the emergence of local authorities managed by officials elected by the population of a given territory were first observed in urban municipalities. Decentralization is now expanding to rural municipalities. For the time being, in rural areas, the priority prerogatives considered as the remit of the local authorities relate, on the one hand, to natural resource management and on the other hand, the management of public goods. Food security does not appear as such to be an exclusive or shared prerogative of the local communities. Several factors argue for the need for the decentralization exercises to gradually incorporate some dimensions of food security:

- The character of public good of collective food security: where food security is not met, the negative externalities are expensive for the whole community and not only the concerned individuals and the households. Therefore it is a matter of a general interest that the conditions of food security be ensured;
- The conditions of food security affect the management of all public goods as well as natural resource management: the improvement of FS can, in some cases, take the form of actions related to health (nutritional and child health), availability of potable water, access to resources (development of irrigable lands so as to diversify production or sources of income...).
- Some tools indispensable for rational management of food security (safety stock, income generating activities, availability of credit lines...) could be used more effectively at local than at central government level;
- Information: it is hard for the national information systems (agricultural statistics in particular) to be relevant on too limited geographical scales. Conversely, the local actors and operators often have an in-depth knowledge of the field that allows them, virtually in real time, to assess the evolution of agricultural and food situations. The establishment of committees at the regional or departmental level could enable monitoring of some indicators and prevention of many crises, especially when they occur on limited territories (which is increasingly the case with the increase in spatial and temporal variability of rains). The same committees could consult on the lines of action to be adopted as a response to such or such situation and, where necessary, warn the leadership at the national level when local solutions prove inadequate or inappropriate.
- The coordination of interventions in the field of food security is a determining factor for sustainable improvement in the food situation. It requires initiatives and consultations as close as possible to the sites of intervention. In addition, it requires a legitimacy that the local authorities can draw from the mandate their elected officials receive from the people.

4.5. Integrating food security management into a strategy for alleviating poverty and reducing inequalities

Most of the Sahelian countries are currently busy preparing a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Under the impulse of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, such move now conditions the granting of concessional loans and debt reduction under the HIPC Initiative. For the countries, the main objective, after a long period marked by the adjustment of public finance and liberalization of the economies, is to develop medium and long term economic growth as well as a social development strategies likely

to effectively eradicate poverty.

These papers, prepared in theory with the actual participation of the people, especially of the poor, should enable the definition of intervention priorities for the various sectoral policies and institutional reforms. Gradually, the PRSPs should provide a background for all actors involved in the development strategies and programs and, therefore, offer a framework for harmonising and coordinating external interventions and support. Lastly, the preparation of the PRSP includes the definition of quantified objectives to be achieved within given periods of time, and further developed into intermediate objectives with indicators to evaluate the achieved results. Monitoring of these indicators would become a key element in the external aid disbursement schedule.

Improvement of food security in the Sahel has a close interrelation with the various dimensions of poverty:

- The decline of poverty is a key element for sustainable improvement in food security, in particular for the most vulnerable groups (relationship between food / upgrading of nutrients, access to potable water, access to education, access to health...);
- Access to food is a key factor in the decline of poverty. A healthy diet, in adequate quantity and quality, is a significant element that reveals some improvement in the economic situation of households (lesser sensitivity to affections, better labour productivity...);
- Policies, programs and projects falling within an overall strategy of economic growth and poverty reduction have a direct influence on the communities' and country's food security, and they must therefore better integrate the food security dimension at the various stages: diagnosis, preparation of activities and prioritisation.

Then, the question is to know whether it would be advisable to work out specific food security strategies or rather to integrate the food problem as a component of the overall poverty reduction strategy. It does not seem indispensable to provide a single answer to this question, as the terms of the question differ from country to country: in Cape Verde, the lack of food security virtually boils down to the issue of access for the poorest segments of the population. Now, this problem of access to food does not differ very much from the issue of access to healthcare or education. Above all, the problem is one of improving the people's incomes outside agriculture. Conversely, in the mostly agricultural countries, the issue of food still includes a fundamental "agricultural production" component, although it cannot be limited to and exclusively find answers in agricultural sectoral policies.

The ongoing attempts towards the formulation of the PRSP show that the food security issue is covered but in part. Therefore, the PRSP formulation process and elaboration of the food security strategy do not really result in duplication. Better still, the review of the national food security strategies and formulation of a regional Strategy Paper should allow, in the long term, to enrich and complete the PRSPs and, gradually, to develop a regional vision as well as priorities and convergence in the field of poverty reduction.

Consequently, it falls to those in charge of defining a food security strategy to make sure that the poverty reduction strategy takes into account a number of problems that obviously go beyond the sole food issue. Conversely, the attempts towards harmonization must result in the fact that those sectoral policies and programs directly integrated into the food security strategies take into account the more general concern of poverty reduction. For example, steps are to be taken so that food crop development programmes first target the poorest households (which implies a series of conditions: access to financing, training/backstopping...), the areas most vulnerable or relatively abandoned so far by co-operation agencies or NGOs...

4.6. Strengthening regional co-operation and integration

The countries' interest in regional co-operation clearly lost ground in the 1980s following the enthusiasm of the 1970s and the establishment of many sub-regional organizations. Since the early 1990s, the States, economic operators and the rural organizations have been multiplying initiatives to revitalize on more pragmatic bases the integration efforts now perceived as a must in order to confront the globalisation of economies. The structural adjustment programmes actually led the countries to negotiate individually the reforms with the donors. In spite of the similarity in the principles that guided such adjustment programmes, the countries now realise that their policies still remain too disparate and they feel the need to intensify consultations for gradual harmonization of their national policies and removal of -formal and non-formal- hindrances to better market integration. In other words, the progress made in the field of integration cannot exclusively rest on political will or " technical " approaches in spite of their greater pragmatism. They require permanent combination of both approaches, and probably some support from the international community to help reconcile the short-term interests of each country and the long-term interests (equalization modes of tax revenue losses...). They also require firm commitment at the highest decision-making level by decision makers so as to set a clear course for the reforms initiated by each ministry.

Food security probably represents one of the fields where regional co-operation developed most over the past 25 years. The very creation of CILSS partook of the will of the countries of the sub-region, which faced severe droughts, to find common answers to the crisis. Initially focused on the coordination of emergency assistance, the institution gradually organized itself to face the more structural causes of the lack of food security. With the support of the Club du Sahel, it could develop its activities in several fields directly related to the issue of food security: cereal policy reform, fluidity of markets in the sub-region, establishment and development of information systems allowing harmonization of national methodologies and development of early warning systems...

Such regional co-operation appears today more than necessary to allow the sub- region to take up the multiple challenges it is confronted with. While food security remains first and foremost a sub-national and national prerogative, some of its dimensions cannot be correctly addressed without a sub-regional harmonization framework.

The Sahelian countries envision their food security Strategy Paper from an integration perspective on a significant and relevant scale in the light of the human, economic and commercial dynamics. The priority granted to sustainable food security as a strategic factor in the fight against poverty and inequalities is consonant with the characteristics of the Sahel, which make it an area of special vulnerability. Facing the lack of food security in its various symptoms leads to develop complex strategies which question the orientation of macro-economic policies, the priorities of sectoral policies (education, health, infrastructure...), trade policies and, more broadly, of many elements in the regulatory framework, more political aspects such as the democratisation process and the improvement of governance or management of public affairs... Lastly, these strategies include more technical components, whether on sub-national and national scales or on a sub-regional scale (development of information and early warning systems, pest control...).

As the various Sahelian countries are part of four economic integration and/or monetary zones, they perceive sub-regional co-operation in fields relating to the determining factors of food security as a priority and a necessity. They will see to it that the decisions made in the framework of the various sub-regional integration organizations foremost incorporate the concerns related to food security. They are calling for the establishment of a co-operation framework of all IGOs so that the various economic and monetary integration

efforts are achieved in conformity with the objectives of food security and really contribute to gradual construction of a sub-regional space marked by free movement of people and goods. They want this framework to go beyond the sole IGOs and integrate the major actors organized at sub-regional level so as to better take into account their specific expectations.

In the field of food security, the expectations of the Sahelian countries vis-à-vis regional co-operation comprise seven thrusts:

4.6.1. Harmonization of the macro-economic frameworks

The expansion of markets is regarded as a significant element that allows to narrow the gap between supply and demand, to stabilize markets gradually, to encourage producers by securing markets for their products. A better regional market integration should improve the competitiveness of Sahelian products, reduce dependence vis-à-vis the international markets and cut costs for the consumer, thus furthering access to food and reducing the weight of food expenditure in the "housewife's shopping basket". In the event of a crisis confined to part of the Sahel, a greater market flow could help to limit sudden price rises, the speculative transactions of traders' networks and facilitate the supply of deficit areas by surplus areas, thus reducing the need for imports. The Sahelian countries are not considering these integration efforts within the exclusive boundaries of the Sahel, but in terms of closer relationship between the Sahelian and coastal countries. Therefore, the issue of economic integration must be revisited in the light of the dynamics of the agricultural produce markets so that the integration efforts do not result in further fragmentation of the sub-regional space. This aspect is fundamental in the field of food security because of the shape of the Sahelian trade, especially with Ghana and Nigeria.

The Sahelian countries are part of several economic and/or monetary integration zones. They are consequently faced with a twofold harmonization of their macro-economic and trade policies:

- *among Sahelian countries so as to take account of the interdependence of their economies; and*
- *within the various economic and monetary zones which each Sahelian country belongs to: UMA; UEMOA, CEMAC, ECOWAS. These various integration zones have differing agendas, which does not facilitate overall harmonization of policies and removal of formal barriers to trade between those countries as a whole.*

Given the impact of economic and trade policies on the conditions of food security, the Sahelian countries wish to promote a concerted approach involving all institutions. This is particularly essential in the light of the stakes of agricultural development that require a palpable improvement of the producers' economic environment especially in terms of market stabilization. By feeding re-exportation flows between countries, diverging policies at the borders (disparities between countries in tariffs applied to food imports) significantly threaten private operators' investment options and hamper the development of internal sub-sectors.

4.6.2. Removing trade barriers and making markets more fluid

Beyond the formal harmonization of policies, which gradually allows building a regional free trade area, there remains a host of informal trade barriers. Mostly inherent to corruption, these barriers seriously reduce the competitiveness of the sub-sectors and fragment the markets. They result in high costs for the private operators who inevitably pass them on the consumers. The incorporation of decisions taken at sub-regional level into the national legislations and especially their implementation are now essential. The observation of unfair trading practices, effective corruption control as well as compliance with the rule of law and better operation of

the judiciary (allowing for real appeals and law enforcement) are fundamental aspects in the improvement of market operation and integration at sub-regional level.

4.6.3. Prevention of conflicts, strengthening of democracy and good governance

These are fundamental stakes for food security in the Sahelian countries. Given the importance of migration in the Sahelians' demographic and economic regulation strategies as well as economic interdependence within the sub-region, conflicts have considerable impacts on development in the Sahel. This is why the Sahelian countries are mindful to entrench democracy and good governance in western and central Africa. Efforts made within the framework of ECOWAS and the OAU towards conflict prevention must be intensified and started as early as possible before any irreversible degradation of the political and social climate.

4.6.4. Enhancing the comparative advantages and management of complementarities among the countries

This aspect relates to both the complementarity of agricultural productions (surplus countries/deficit countries, types of products...) and other fields such as the production of fertilizers through exploitation of national deposits. A precise inventory of potentialities in each country and an analysis of complementarities and differences are essential to move towards regional exploitation of national resources.

4.6.5. Incorporating food-related issues into the negotiation of the economic and trade partnership Agreement with the European Union

The ACP countries and the European Union have just thoroughly renewed their partnership agreement. From now on, the Cotonou Accord will be the new co-operation framework that integrates policy dialogue, trade co-operation and development aid. The EU and the ACP countries have agreed that this Accord should result in the negotiation of regional partnership agreements. The regional pattern to be adopted to steer the negotiation with the European Union is extremely important in view of both the food security and economic integration aspects.

The Sahelian countries would like the regional agreement to take into account the strategic nature of the food in the negotiation of the free trade area with the European Union, insofar as the major European export products are formidable competitors for the Sahelian agriculture (especially cereals, meats, milk). In addition they would like the negotiation to be a genuine opportunity for the regional integration dynamics. Therefore, in order to take into account the real nature of the economy and trade in the sub-region, they are calling for an approach that encompasses all west-African countries.

More broadly speaking, the Sahelian countries feel that the negotiation should be used, as provided for by the Cotonou Accord, to define co-operation policies based on coherent national and regional strategies and involving all stakeholders, and which meet the countries' main developmental stakes, especially poverty alleviation. This is a fundamental opportunity for food security issues insofar as the food security concurrently requires significant investments, regional integration of policies and markets and the control of imports.

The European Union must see to it that all its member States are involved in the negotiation so as to significantly improve co-ordination and coherence in its support. Should this be accepted by other agencies, it could play a significant leadership role in co-ordinating the entire international community, working in tandem with the Americans. The outstanding balances of EDF commitments could be used to start off the most urgent regional programs. Above all, they could be used to provide the sub-region with a sustainable economic and social development framework thoroughly negotiated with all the sub-region's actors and discussed with all aid

agencies. This would enable a really participatory programming of the 9th EDF, an ambition stated in the Cotonou Accord.

4.6.6. Preparation of multilateral international negotiations

The Sahelian countries are committed to jointly submit proposals that meet their expectations and peculiarities as regards the organization of international trade. They would like their specific food security problems to be taken into account during the renegotiation of the WTO agricultural Agreement. More specifically, they wish to defend some market protection when their fundamental interests are threatened as well as some flexibility in the financing of their agricultural policies that would allow them to modernize and intensify their agricultural sector in order to confront international competition. They wish to question the relevance of some quality standards imposed by the western markets and which, for the most part, seem to be market protection in disguise. Lastly, they will formulate proposals pertaining to the development of biotechnologies and to patents, especially as regards seeds.

4.6.7. Development of experience-sharing and setting up of a sub-regional network of experts in the field of food security

The various countries have accumulated a significant amount of experience in one or several significant aspects of food security: cereal policy reform, decentralized strategic stock management tools, development of labour-intensive activities, institutional steering mechanisms for the food security strategy etc. Without taking for granted that such experiences are directly transferable from one country to another, it is obvious that a better knowledge of practices in the various countries could contribute to both better understanding the impacts of a given reform and to sub-regional convergence of the policy instruments. In the same vein, the various countries are host to qualified experts whom it would be advisable to organize and mobilize within the framework of a sub-regional network.

4.7. The need for adapted and reliable information

In a liberalized context, an information network plays a major role in the definition of the actors' strategies and in guiding policies and public interventions. The information systems have noticeably come a long way over the past years, at both national and sub-regional levels.

The countries and aid agencies have made significant investments. But one has to acknowledge that efforts in the field of information were mostly dictated by the need to improve the quantification of food aid requirements and to refine utilization thereof. The mechanisms set up to supplement the agricultural survey and to have information on other food security indicators, especially the information systems on markets and prices as well as the follow-up of vulnerable areas and groups, are still mostly based on project approaches which do not ensure their sustainability.

The completion of the Diaper/CILSS project allowed to take stock of the achievements and new needs as regards the various food security issues. Given the considerable cost of an integrated and effective information system and also because of the nature of information as a public good, the discussion will have to continue on the priorities to be established and methodologies to be promoted so as to improve data reliability and reduce the collection costs and prospects for financial internalisation by the States.

The Sahelian countries believe that a food security information system must comprise at least three components :

- agricultural production information system ;
- market information system ;
- information system on at-risk areas and groups.

It must be supplemented by macro-economic information, information on aid flows, on households' living standards (poverty survey, budget/consumption).

5. The regional sustainable food security strategy paper within the perspective of poverty reduction

5.1. Aim and general objective

The lack of food security and poverty generally go hand in hand. In fact, the lack of food security is, together with inadequate incomes, the very first dimension of poverty, and poverty explains most of the structural conditions of the lack of food security in the Sahel. They are both multidimensional phenomena, many facets of which overlap, and call for a multisectoral and participatory approach as well as a common fight at the local, national and regional levels within the framework of sound natural resource management. Therefore, the objective of food security in the Sahel can be pursued but in terms of poverty reduction.

In accordance with the Sahel 21 process, **the ultimate goal** is, therefore, to create the conditions of sustainable regional food security, to reduce the structural causes of poverty and inequalities in the Sahel.

The general objective is " to ensure permanent access for all Sahelians to the food needed to lead a healthy and active life by 2015 " . This objective is based on the widely accepted definition of food security and covers the four dimensions which correspond to the major determining factors of food security in general and in the Sahel in particular:

- availability of food of good health and nutritional value;
- accessibility to the populations, including the most vulnerable groups;
- stability of supplies in space and time;
- optimal utilisation of food by individuals.

Each such dimension of food security must be understood at 4 levels:

- individuals and households;
- communities and local authorities;
- the nation;
- the Sahelian sub-region .

The analysis of the lack of food security in the Sahel, in the light of the challenges that are looming on the horizon 2015, shows that, to achieve the general objective of this Strategy Paper, the interventions must seek:

- on the one hand, **to create the conditions for a structural food security mostly based on systematic and sustainable mobilization of food resources in the sub-region**: this component mainly refers to the transformation of the agricultural productive basis and, in particular, the fundamental and urgent issue of water control, the processing and marketing of foodstuffs, development of the capacity of households to produce or buy all or part of their food. These objectives therefore address the root causes of the lack of food security, in a coherent and rational manner.
- on the other hand, **to build capacities in the prevention and management of economic crises**. So far, these crises have been mostly climatic in their origin and chiefly perceived through deficits in cereal production at the national level or in vulnerable agro-ecological areas; however, their origins tend to diversify and their impacts to be confined to given areas and/or population categories.

The underlying components of food security must contribute to reducing the vulnerability of the households, communities, countries and sub-region, and to building their capacities to face external shocks (cyclic crises). Conversely, the interventions geared towards the management of cyclic food crises must take into account

medium and long-term stakes and options. Consequently and as far as possible, they must be based on tools that develop local coping capacities rather than intervention patterns, which leave too much room to assistance. Such integration and synergy are not possible unless they result from clear strategies, broadly discussed and agreed upon by the national communities, in consultation with the international community.

5.2. Orientations and intervention strategies

5.2.1. General principles of action

The food security Strategy Paper within a perspective of poverty reduction is a guide for all the States and actors who agree to consult and coordinate their actions towards a common goal: to ensure food security for all Sahelian citizens. In the first place, it is based on a set of **ten guiding principles** shared by all public, private and civil society actors and used by them to build food security at all territorial levels.

The adopted principles are the following:

Principle 1: differentiation

In spite of characteristics common to all Sahelian countries, the lack of food security and poverty, their forms and manifestations appear to be quite different from one country to another. Furthermore, they take different forms within the same country, requiring differentiated responses, priorities and intervention tools. The identification of the various issues pertaining to the lack of food security and the recognition of the diversity in national and sub-national situations are pivotal in the relevance of the diagnoses that justify the responses aimed at mitigating the lack of food security.

Principle 2: Complementarity and Subsidiarity

Food security in the Sahel concerns the national and regional levels. The national and sub-national levels are relevant territorial scales for many actions aimed at improving food security. But economic and territorial interdependence also entails a significant sub-regional dimension for many aspects of food security (taxation, customs duties, management of shared natural resource...). Many initiatives developed at the national level have undeniable regional repercussions.

Application of this principle aims at fully empowering the actors at the level where problems arise and transferring to a higher echelon only those issues which cannot find a relevant and coherent response at the lower echelon alone. In practice, some dimensions of food security can be addressed mainly at the national level while others imply harmonization efforts at the sub-regional level. Finally, some others mostly call for sub-regional action. This principle will also be used as a guide to clarify the missions of the various IGOs in the implementation of the regional lines of action of the Strategy Paper.

Principle 3: Decentralization and good governance

The complementarity principle is also applicable at the national level and must result in a clarification of prerogatives between the national level and the decentralized level. The State and the national level cannot respond to all situations due to the lack of food security and to poverty. It is therefore important to resort as much as possible to those mechanisms and institutions which are closest to problem foci: village or inter-village level, municipalities, departments, provinces... (recognition of jurisdiction). The direct intervention of the State should be required only where the latter appears to be in a better position than the other territorial levels to

provide suitable responses or appropriate services. This principle of decentralization is a fundamental factor that allows to involve the actors at the level where they are best organized and to better take account of their expectations.

Decentralization has become a pivotal element in the food security strategy, particularly as regards natural resource management, desertification control and management of public utilities. It is all the more relevant as the achievement of food security in the Sahel falls in line with efforts aiming at sustainable reduction of poverty. As a process that stimulates civic participation, decentralization furthers the emergence and mobilization of many development actors, creating the actual conditions of democratic participation, dialogue and empowerment of the local communities, peasant-farmer organizations and other civil society (women, youth, NGOs inter alia) organizations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of sustainable food security strategies.

These strategies should correspond to realities and capitalize local experience and know-how, leading to better local governance and greater involvement of the local authorities entrusted with prerogatives of their own as regards food security. Activities and programmes are implemented the closest possible to the beneficiaries, namely the communities, especially the poorest and most marginalized, so as to maximize the effects they could expect from the food security Strategy Paper.

Principle 4: Participation

The participatory approach should allow to involve, in the institutional mechanisms at local, national or regional levels, all food security actors. The participatory processes should go further than mere validation of diagnoses and lines of action prepared by the State or experts. The objective of the participatory approach is the negotiation of collective choices, and it should result in compromise solutions accepted by the actors.

Therefore, improved participation, from design to implementation of strategies, programmes and actions - at all levels - is crucial for the effectiveness of the adopted strategies: better knowledge of situations in the field and of the actors' positions, which allows to better target the policy instruments, to identify solutions for each relevant territorial level, to prioritise activities within the framework of a dialogue among actors, etc. This implies:

- the predictability of the definition of a strategy or sectoral policies, and the transparency of the Government's working schedule, so that the actors can organize themselves accordingly and get actively involved in the process;
- the flow of quality information adapted to the needs of the various categories of actors and in accessible languages;
- the capacity of actors to be actively involved in the participatory processes;
- consultation and negotiation mechanisms with clear prerogatives.

Principle 5: Partnership with many actors and institutions

Recognition of the respective responsibilities, roles and missions of each category of actors in the management of food security. The right to food, recognized in international conventions necessarily refers to a state responsibility. If the State, as a product of the will of the national Community is really the guarantor of this right, it must see to it that each individual meets his/her food requirements while respecting his/her dignity. The State therefore claims to be above all the guarantor of equitable access to resources, means of production or market that allows all households to meet the food requirements of their members in an autonomous way.

This new approach implies a redistribution of roles and jurisdictions between all actors involved in the attainment of food security (State, local authorities, private sector, peasant-farmer organizations, women, youth, NGOs and other civil society organizations).

Recognition of the multidimensional nature of food security in a perspective of poverty reduction, imposes a specific institutional management involving all institutions concerned and responsible for one or several aspects of the equation. Indeed, food security does not pertain to any single sectoral policy, unlike agriculture, industry or transport. Thus, like the environmental strategy, an integrated food security and poverty alleviation strategy must rest on an original institutional mechanism the major characteristic of which is to ensure cross-sectional coordination. Such coordination should facilitate the mobilization of, and allocation of responsibilities to, public institutions and parastatals, each in its specific domain (agriculture, environment, health, education, transport, trade...). Therefore, the overall objective defined at the national level must be spelt out in specific objectives for each ministry concerned;

Principle 6: Equity

Given the importance of women in the various dimensions of family food security, the gender approach set up as a systematic and deliberate policy will result in practical applications, especially in terms of:

- information management ;
- women's involvement in the consultation mechanisms;
- policy and programme design and implementation ;
- access to resources (land, assistance mechanisms, training and capacity-building...) and to inputs, especially credit.

Principle 7: Shared responsibility

The leaders of peasant-farmer organizations or socio-economic organizations and, all the more so, decision-makers are now regularly brought to book by their constituents. Such approach is a fundamental element in the ongoing democratisation in the Sahelian societies. At this juncture, it is still the assistance system that replaces too much the democratic system in assessing the relevance of the implemented programmes as well as in controlling and sanctioning performance. The reinforcement of the democratic processes calls for a transfer of such " control ", from the donors to the societies. This choice has many implications. In particular, it implies that arbitrations regarding priorities and selection of programs and actions are actually carried out by the Sahelian decision-makers and leaders, and that the latter enjoy greater autonomy in resource allocation, including resources from aid, so as to avoid diluting responsibilities and preventing actual democratic control of the leaders and elected officials.

This principle of responsibility applies to each category of actors, which takes part in the implementation of one of the intervention priorities of the Strategy Paper. Steps will be taken to systematically entrust the responsibility for actions and programs to the most relevant actors and most interested in the results. Conversely, these leaders will be accountable to all other actors.

Principle 8: Transparency, sound management of public affairs and accountability

The implementation of the framework rests on each actor's accountability to the community. This principle applies to the results obtained but also to the management of the financial resources.

The achievement of objectives and attainment of results which contribute to improving the people's food security through mobilization of many institutions and actors, mechanism for steering, monitoring and evaluating progress, deficiencies and difficulties are very significant elements to ensure the effectiveness of the implemented policies. Monitoring-evaluation is therefore one of the most significant prerogatives to be considered in the reform or design of the food security management institutional mechanisms. In accordance with the previous principle, the monitoring-evaluation mechanisms will be mostly set up to steer the implementation of the Strategy Paper, to feed the dialogue between actors and to assess the results so as to take the necessary corrective steps. They will be stepped up simultaneously to ensure absolute transparency vis-à-vis the international community.

Principle 9: Coherence

In the light of the stakes of food security, coherence is essential in public action and in the actors' strategies in order to achieve the objectives stated in the Strategy Paper.

There are several levels to this problem of coherence:

- the harmonization of food security strategies with the macro-economic framework on the one hand and , on the other hand , with the poverty reduction strategy, and more generally, with all the sectoral policies and strategies relating to food security. It is not only a matter of recognizing food security as a fundamental factor in poverty reduction and of exploiting the multiple interactions between these two phenomena, but also of ensuring that the specific dimension of food security is duly taken into account in macroeconomic and sectoral strategies and programs ;
- the linkage and coherence between the strategies for crises prevention or circumstantial disaster management and the sustainable and structural construction of food security. The linkage between these two major components of food security proves to be essential for better overall effectiveness. On the one hand, structural actions must contribute to sustainably reducing household vulnerability, while on the other hand, circumstantial actions, long-standing synonyms of assistance, must as far as possible be part of an approach which goes beyond the instant and consequently contributes to building the capacities of households to face crises.
- coherence at the sub-regional level between the construction of food security in the Sahelian space and the other integration strategies under way in the various economic and monetary zones of which each Sahelian country is a member.
- a better co-ordination of the various actors' programmes, especially of those IGOs working in the same geographical area, for greater overall coherence.

Principle 10: Co-ordination and Sahelian leadership

Co-ordination and harmonization of the interventions of the various actors from the national, sub-regional and international community, under the leadership of Sahelian actors, are essential for improving governance in food security in the Sahel. Food security is one of the fields where the majority of actors have been working, especially at the decentralized level. Co-ordination of these multiple interventions is a fundamental element for the effectiveness of the strategy, but it implies that these actors are involved in policy and programme definition in this field.

The implementation mechanisms of the Strategy Paper at the decentralized, national and sub-regional levels will be the privileged poles for the co-ordination exercise under the aegis of the Sahelians. The integration of financial negotiation as part of the consultations among these mechanisms will be the cornerstone of a genuine co-ordination by the Sahelian actors.

5.2.2. Role and significance of the regional Strategy Paper

Resulting from a negotiated approach, **the regional Strategy Paper is a system of reference for guiding and co-ordinating interventions for all those who are involved in the search for food security in the Sahel: the states, Sahelian civil societies, foreign IGOs and partners.** It is thus complementary to the national strategies, which it does not mean to replace, but rather to work towards their convergence in the light of the current and long-term stakes of food security in the sub-region.

The sub-regional approach to food security within the perspective of poverty reduction is deemed necessary and essential by the Sahelian states and those actors working towards food security in order:

- *To supplement and ensure coherence in the reforms initiated at the national and sub-national levels;*
- *To promote the solution of common problems within the framework of a regional co-operation which allows to reduce costs and to improve the effectiveness of their efforts;*
- *To resolutely work towards food security in a perspective of regional market integration in the Sahel as well as West and Central Africa, so as to yield an economic and commercial dynamics capable of playing the role of driving force for agricultural transformation and structuring of the food sub-sectors;*
- *To master the interface between regional and international markets, and to contribute effectively to better negotiation of international regulations.*

As such, the courses of action suggested in the Strategy Paper rest on two pillars, according to whether they pertain :

- mostly to the national level while covering concerns common to the Sahelian countries as a whole and, consequently, have a considerable regional impact and/or are a breeding ground for the development of sub-regional co-operation; or
- specifically to the regional level, as they cover those aspects that the national level cannot deal with alone or which supplement national and sub-national interventions and/or which come under the exclusive or shared mandate of CILSS or other IGOs in the sub-region.

Whatever the case, they all contribute to the convergence of national policies.

In that regard, the Strategy Paper is flexible enough:

- to leave each country free to determine its own policies and its tools, according to its realities, while complying with the requirements of regional convergence; and
- to allow an updating of existing or future national and regional strategies as well as more accurate identification of activities for circumstances specific to each country and in line with the institutions' specific mandates.

The institutional mechanism adopted for the implementation of the Strategy Paper includes local, national and sub-regional dimensions. Compliance with the principles stated in the Strategy Paper must allow the various levels to concretise the relevant lines of action.

5.3. Specific objectives

This Framework addresses in detail all the specific objectives, results and lines of action most relevant for the Sahelian civil society actors and decision-makers as well as the international community and which could therefore meet all the region's requirements. A feature of the Framework is therefore the flexibility needed to adjust the priority actions in the national and regional operational strategies while enabling the concerned actors' participation in their identification, design and implementation at the various territorial levels.

The overall objective as defined above is sub-divided into **five (05) specific objectives** namely:

- the promotion of a productive, diversified, sustainable and regionally integrated agriculture (Specific Objective n°1);
- the development, free flow and sub-regional integration of national markets (Specific Objective n°2);
- Sustainable improvement of access of vulnerable groups and areas to food and basic social services (Specific Objective n°3);
- improvement of mechanisms for the prevention and management of circumstantial crises, in coherence with the construction of structural food security (Specific Objective n°4);
- Building of the actors' capacities and promotion of good governance in the field of food security (Specific Objective n°5).

5.3.1. Specific objective n°1: The promotion of a productive diversified, sustainable and regionally integrated agriculture

The objective is to ensure food security in the sub-region without increasing its dependence vis-à-vis extra-regional imports while ensuring the development of local production capacities. But another objective is to take advantage of market growth to launch the economic bases for the development of the Sahelian agriculture (especially the development of the production basins), to diversify and increase incomes in rural areas.

However, a precondition remains the control of water and other natural resources as well as sustainable management thereof, in the context of structural scarcity that characterizes such resources in the Sahelian space. A structural convergence relationship is thus established between the SRAP (Sub-regional Action Programme to Combat Desertification) and this food security-oriented Strategy Paper.

The main expected outputs are as follows:

Output 1: The development of natural resources is optimised through sustainable management of agricultural and agro-pastoral production systems.

Output 2: The Sahelian agriculture better meets the increasing diversification of demand in agricultural and food products.

Output 3: The agricultural production better meets the increasing demand for agricultural and food products.

Output 4: Fish production is highly increased on sustainable bases.

Output 1: The development of natural resources is optimised through sustainable management of agricultural and agro-pastoral production systems

The first characteristic of the Sahelian rural economy is that it remains extremely dependent on natural resources, as the desertification phenomena are less due to physical constraints than human activities. In the absence of other production factors, the populations often have no other choices than to consume natural resources for their survival, thereby increasing pressure on the resources. In such a context, the renewal of resources is no longer ensured.

The Sahelian countries have a significant irrigable land potential, only a limited proportion of which is being farmed, with a very slow increase in the said proportion. But increasingly, village lands and private farms are being developed. The development of the current potential is a real challenge for the Sahelian actors and the international community, but it represents an essential precondition for the development of agriculture in the Sahel. Several avenues are opening up to improve water control in terms of both the technical elements relating to implementation costs as well as the management methods likely to allow sound economic, social and environmental exploitation of the said water resources.

Population growth is increasingly underscoring the need for better regulation and greater rationalization of access to resources as well as for conflict management between users, both within the countries (for national resources) and between nationals of neighbouring countries (shared resources). Hence the need to fully involve the actors in the management of these resources through efficient consultations, preparation of concerted and better designed development plans, better co-ordination of research in order to protect the productive capital etc....

Output 2: The Sahelian agriculture better meets the increasing diversification of demand for agricultural and food products

While cereals represent a sizeable share of energy intake in all the Sahelian countries, food security cannot boil down to cereal production alone. In addition to other plant products which occupy a significant and increasing place (tubers, legumes, vegetables...) and which are at the root of a gradual change in agricultural supply and of an improvement of peasant farmers' incomes, it is increasingly indispensable to diversify productions through more active promotion of those sub-sectors related to animal resources (livestock, meat, skins and hides, fish...) which most significantly contribute to balancing the people's diet on top of being considerable sources of income.

In this respect, urbanization in the Sahelian and coastal countries provides increasing market opportunities for the sub-region's producers who could also benefit more from the provisions of the EU/ACP Convention to access the European market under particularly privileged conditions and with sub-sectors that yield high added value. A strategy to diversify the Sahelian agricultural economies is essential for reducing the economic vulnerability of households and at-risk zones and, therefore, of the sub-region as a whole.

Output 3: Agricultural production better meets the increasing demand for agricultural and food products

Agriculture in the Sahel represents the core activity for more than two thirds of the Sahelian working population and accounts for about one third of total gross domestic product in the region. Most of the increase in production has been so far achieved through an increase in farmed acreage. Under such circumstances, the development of production calls into question traditional balances between short fallows/long fallows/farmed lands but also between farmlands/transhumance zones, and jeopardizes the restoration of soil fertility. Lastly, the expansion of acreage concurrently raises problems of labour and arable land availability, which leads to better take into account the land tenure issues in the various zones concerned.

In the future, the increase in the Sahelian agricultural production will have to be achieved through productivity gains, while ensuring sound natural resource management (especially shared resources), which implies an evolution of production systems (intensification, balance of fertility...). Indeed, the intensification of agricultural production is essential to ensure the sustainability of production and the competitiveness of the Sahelian agriculture in the perspective of increased market opening onto the rest of the world. This calls for multiple lines of action.

Output 4: Fish production is highly increased on sustainable bases.

Products from the maritime and continental fishing sub-sectors significantly contribute to the incomes of rural and peri-urban populations, and to food security in general, although they still remain unaccounted for in a number of national food balances. In the Sahelian coastal countries but also in some continental countries, a very significant potential exists in terms of both production and market opportunities that should be developed.

5.3.2. Specific objective n°2: Development, free flow of trade and sub-regional integration of the national markets

The objective is, on the one hand, to improve the operation of the national markets and, on the other hand, to increase their sub-regional integration, so as to better stimulate demand, to encourage investments in the food sub-sectors, to reduce transaction costs, to decrease consumer prices and to reinforce the competitiveness of the regional production as compared to imported products.

The major expected outputs are as follows:

Output 1: The national markets are more dynamic.

Output 2: The regional markets are more flexible and better integrated, and trade is highly increased.

Output 3: The Sahelian agriculture and the food sub-sector are more competitive on external markets and are better prepared to face international competition.

Output 1: The national markets are more dynamic.

Over the past years, the Sahelian countries, with the support of their development partners, made considerable efforts as regards the internal and external liberalization of agricultural markets and promotion of the private sector; they also made available to producers and merchants many tools in order to encourage the creation of

more transparent markets and to ensure better resource allocation at regional level.

Such efforts were also geared towards the energization of markets, especially through improved road networks, reinforcement of the conditions of freight and the removal of some obstacles to the movement of local products. These efforts must not only be pursued but also systematically developed and better directed towards gradual transformation of the Sahel into a regional market profitable to all the Member States. This is fundamental to promote the development of the agricultural sector and to contribute to food security in deficit areas, while ensuring outlets for surplus areas.

For all that, market analysis shows that the markets remain fragmented and often little competitive. Speculative practices and landlockedness are genuine obstacles to food security; they weigh heavy on transaction costs and affect the income of producers and purchasing power of consumers.

Output 2: The regional markets are more flexible and better integrated, and trade is highly increased.

The current approach which aims to make trade-related information more useful at the regional level is intended to encourage regular and day-to-day exchange between the various national market information systems (MIS), with a view to allowing economic operators have a better visibility and make arbitrations on more rational bases. Efforts now needed for greater flexibility of commercial circuits and a more comprehensive integration of markets at the regional level, especially through reduction of trade barriers as well as the extremely high transport costs which heavily affect the intra-regional competitiveness of the Sahelian agricultural produce.

Output 3: The Sahelian agriculture and food sub-sectors are more competitive on external markets and better prepared to face international competition.

The exportation of products has a beneficial effect on food security, through the incomes generated at household, country or regional level. An analysis of the comparative advantages of the Sahelian production reveals a potential trade yet to be adequately tapped among the Sahelian countries themselves, the Sahelian countries and the coastal countries and finally with the rest of the world (international market). Several factors, including the 1994 devaluation of the CFA franc (for countries belonging to the CFA zone), boosted competitiveness and opened up new opportunities for intense and advantageous trade.

In the field of traditional exporting sub-sectors, the Sahelian countries must confirm their comparative advantages and be watchful as regards the evolution of quality standards and, more generally, the evolution of demand. They must also diversify their export bases so as to reduce the vulnerability that weighs heavy on the economy of households as well as the national economy (falls in the prices of cotton, for example). The low level of input utilization, which characterizes the Sahelian agriculture, could be an opportunity to label and upgrade "biological" products on Western markets that are increasingly sensitive to environmental protection. This implies to re-examine the intensification of productions on the basis of technological package, which borrow more from agro-biology, or the so-called "reasoned" agriculture than excessive utilization of chemicals in agriculture. Finally, the Sahelian countries must however ensure greater coherence in their tariff policies at entry points and improve their conditions of sale (quality of products, price, delivery deadlines...) so as to effectively face international competition in a context increasingly characterized by market globalisation.

5.3.3. Specific objective n°3: Sustainable improvement of access of vulnerable groups and zones to food and basic social services

The Sahel remains confronted with a twofold challenge: to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population and to adapt to ongoing socio-political and economic changes. The incomes of the rural populations and of a great proportion of the urban population remain low and their access to food is increasingly precarious, owing to poverty. Strategies and measures are to be taken to enhance access of the poor to higher incomes and to those means of production likely to contribute to income-generation. However, such steps require thorough knowledge of the phenomena of poverty, which are especially characterized by the extreme diversity of their causes, their polysemy as well as the high number of objectives, measures, actors and means to be taken into account in order to find socially and economically sustainable solutions.

The objective is to ensure that each Sahelian has access to the resources that will enable him/her to meet his/her food requirements and ensure access to public services such as potable water, health and education, which are aspects of well-being and cannot be dissociated from food security.

Output 1: Access to food is notably improved in the underprivileged zones for the poor

Output 2: Access to basic social services is notably improved in underprivileged zones for the poor

Output 1: Access to food notably improved in underprivileged zones for the poor

The rural people's incomes remain low and their access to food is sensitive to the effects of the various economic shocks, which may occur following bad agro-climatic conditions, civil and political crises, etc. The incomes of the urban poor, certainly less affected by the effects of climatic risks, are also precarious, as they are mostly generated by activities in the informal sector and are vulnerable to the effects of rises in international prices (basic foodstuff, petroleum products, etc).

Without a high growth in the commercial agricultural production sectors, there are no prospects for an improvement in incomes in the agricultural and rural world that is host to the majority of the poor in the Sahel. Such growth is also essential for many urban and peri-urban incomes, which stand upstream and downstream agricultural production. Strategies and measures will be developed to enhance the poor's access to incomes and means of production.

Output 2: Access to basic social services is notably improved in the underprivileged zones for the poor

Most of the Sahelian countries are currently preparing a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper with the support of the development partners and pursuant to the Highly Indebted Poor countries (HIPC) Initiative taken by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund so as to contribute to reducing the national debt of eligible countries and finance development (Cape Verde excepted, all CILSS Member States are in this case). This must be done with the effective participation of the populations in order to define priority lines of action to improve access to social services.

5.3.4. Specific objective n°4: Improvement of mechanisms for the prevention and management of circumstantial crises, in coherence with the construction of structural food security

The objective is to anticipate crises so as to limit as much as possible their scope and optimise management thereof on the one hand and, on the other hand, to prevent circumstantial crises from suddenly jeopardizing efforts towards the construction of long term food security and result in considerable human and financial costs.

In its broad meaning, the concept of crisis prevention integrates all the above elements relating to strategic directions as regards structural food security. From a more operational point of view, a crisis prevention strategy aims at anticipating the circumstantial factors, which will affect the capacity of the populations to feed decently during the crop year.

Crisis prevention has been a significant thrust in the reform of food security policies. At various degrees, the countries are equipped to detect a food crisis at an early stage. To this end, they developed collectively rather effective tools and mechanisms in the field of forecast of food crises, in particular of climatic origin. The crises now have more diverse origins that need to be better identified.

The major expected outputs are as follows:

Output 1: Relevant early warning systems allowing to prevent the various forms of food crisis are reinforced or set up.

Output 2: The information network on food security in the Sahel is better coordinated and analyses on vulnerability and households' coping mechanisms etc are better harmonized .

Output 3: Emergency actions are better directed towards possible ways to get out of the crisis.

Output 4: Available food surpluses are better known and better used to ensure the supply of vulnerable populations and zones.

Output 1: Relevant early warning systems allowing to prevent the various forms of food crisis are developed and set up.

There is a capital of relatively convincing experiences in the field of early warning in the Sahel, but there is room for improvement so as to develop the control of the variability of events. From this point of view, the reinforcement of existing systems remains essential, in particular in terms of decentralization, which would allow to take into account the diversity in local situations.

Output 2: The information network on food security in the Sahel is better coordinated and analyses on vulnerability and households' coping mechanisms etc. are better harmonized

A long-standing subject for brainstorming, analysis and study (Study on the CILSS/Club du Sahel SISAS), the co-ordination of the information network and harmonization of analyses (on vulnerability and at-risk zones, inter alia) have gone a long way but remain fragile and insufficient. Various international institutions, development partners and NGOs have their own methodology and information systems for vulnerability assessment. Under the leadership of CILSS, it is necessary to better harmonize and coordinate these various efforts.

Output 3: Emergency actions are better directed towards possible ways to get out of the crisis.

The objective is to prevent circumstantial crises from annihilating the sometimes significant efforts which will have been made towards the construction of long-term food security, resulting in prohibitive human and financial costs .

Output 4: Available food surpluses are better known and better used to ensure the supply of vulnerable populations and zones

The rural populations who are most affected by circumstantial crises have grown used to resorting more to the State (national security stock, food aid) rather than the market for their supply requirements. A crisis may be a propitious opportunity to gain better knowledge and command of supply sources offered by the regional market. The issue is to assist the local actors in this direction.

5.3.5. Specific objective n°5: Capacity-building of actors and promotion of good governance in the field of food security.

In the Sahel, the discharge of collective responsibilities in the economic and social fields is still too often dominated by the authorities, in particular by the central State which is expected to solve all development-related problems. This also holds true for issues pertaining to food security and poverty reduction, in spite of increasingly frequent NGO interventions.

The actual involvement of other categories of actors (professional organizations, company managers, elected officials of the local governments...) requires capacities in the fields of organization, steering, management and expertise, where, very often, the States have a comparative advantage over the other actors. The development, if not creation, of such capacities is also a precondition for giving shape to the necessary move towards good governance in the food security sector in the Sahelian countries, especially by basing action on the ongoing decentralization and local development processes.

The major expected outputs are as follows:

Output 1: The decentralization process is entrenched and consolidated, and the capacities of local governments are strengthened.

Output 2: The peasant-farmer organizations are consolidated and more closely involved in the definition of food security and poverty reduction strategies .

Output 3: Regional training and experience-sharing activities related to sustainable food security and poverty reduction are systematically implemented, on the basis of convincing regional practices.

Output 4: The demographic constraints to sustainable development in the Sahel are better controlled.

Output 5: The regional and national policies for the development of the agricultural sector are harmonized for more effective governance in sustainable food security strategies and programmes at the national and regional levels

Output 1: The decentralization process is entrenched and consolidated, and the capacities of local governments are strengthened

The strengthening of the capacities of actors working in local governments also represents a stake that needs to be taken into account as an essential condition for better ownership and sustainability of the empowerment process of the decentralized bodies of the State currently in progress in the Sahelian countries . The majority of the CILSS Member States have transferred to their decentralized local governments part of the authority

needed to ensure sustainable human development. However, it should be noted that such transfers were not always accompanied by the necessary reforms at the institutional, legislative, technical and financial level, which made them difficult to implement in the field. Therefore, additional interventions are indispensable.

Output 2: The peasant-farmer organizations are consolidated and more closely involved in the definition of food security and poverty reduction strategies.

The many local initiatives noted in some Sahelian countries over the past decade in terms of empowerment in the fields of food security bear witness to the concerned actors' will to influence, to the best of their interests, development policies and strategies. One condition for this objective to be achieved is the actual participation of the actors in all stages of the decision-making process, from the preparation of decisions up to the implementation and evaluation of activities related to food security. In this regard, the peasant-farmer organizations represent a pivotal category of actors who therefore deserve special treatment.

Output 3: Regional training and experience-sharing activities related to sustainable food security and poverty reduction are systematically implemented, on the basis of convincing regional practices.

The Sahelian societies are not, far from it, deprived of traditional knowledge and skills as regards preparation, production and sustainable management of their agricultural capital. A great deal of this knowledge and skills is still vivid and, for some, actually implemented by the populations, often outside the official extension services set up by the States and/or by regional IGOs.

The Sahelian producers would currently benefit from the ascertained knowledge that, for the most part, contributed to good preservation of the agro-forestry heritage in some parts of the region. In this spirit, training and experience-sharing activities will have to be encouraged.

Output 4: The demographic constraints to sustainable development in the Sahel are better controlled.

The Sahelian population will double by 2025. It is clear that the Sahelian agriculture will not be able to feed all this population, if the current context of extreme poverty and high fertility were to last. Now, the need to have human resources in quantity and quality is essential to launch the internal bases for sustainable development in the region, in particular for achieving food security while seeing to a rational management of natural resources.

The objective is therefore to strike a balance between already largely invariant demographic trends, economic growth and ecological evolutions at the national and Sahelian levels.

Output 5: The regional and national policies for the development of the agricultural sector are harmonized for more effective governance in sustainable food security strategies and programmes at the national and regional levels

Since the Sahelian countries are stakeholders in four economic and/or monetary zones, regional co-operation in the fields of integration regarding the determining factors of structural or circumstantial food security is a must. Basically, the issue is to ensure that decisions taken at these levels are in conformity with the objectives and interventions in the fields of food security. Also, the construction of food security should contribute to the integration of the West-African economies.

Moreover, such approach is indissolubly linked to the political stakes, in particular good governance, prevention of the regional conflicts, and entrenchment of the democratisation process within countries and transparent management of public affairs.

5.4. Implementation

5.4.1. Implementation principles

This sustainable food security Strategy Paper within a perspective of poverty reduction was prepared on the basis of brainstorming exercises masterminded by CILSS over several years (the Sahel 21 process, strategy papers as regards food security , natural resource management and decentralization). Its originality lies in the fact that its elements were discussed at country level, with actors from the private sector and civil society, at the sub-regional level between the countries and with the main IGOs and actors' networks , and finally with the development partners. These broad-based consultations were conducted with the aim of equipping the Sahel with an analysis of its own on the stakes of food security, resulting in strategic options shared between the countries and actors from the civil society and private sector.

Being the result mostly of a multisectoral and multi-actors approach, food security cannot be the exclusive remit of any single ministry, actor or IGO. No single actor or territorial entity is relevant and sufficient to tackle all the problems or aspects of food security. Only concerted and sufficiently coherent action by these various actors and levels of intervention can create the conditions of food security for all. This is why this Strategy Paper does not belong to the sole CILSS but to all actors who work in the Sahel, all being empowered to act at their individual levels, in accordance with their prerogatives, but in a spirit of co-operation with the other actors. Therefore, this Framework is a collective system of reference for all Sahelian countries and actors involved in food security to use in directing their own strategies and developing their initiatives.

It is also a coordination framework for the various levels of implementation of food security strategies by these actors, aid agencies and various assistance bodies and associations. The Strategy Paper is a collective endeavour for all these actors who are committed and responsible for its implementation.

The principles stated above and which are shared by the Sahelian countries are meant to guide the implementation of the Strategy Paper as a whole. Its interest and effectiveness will depend on the actors' commitment to comply with the said principles. These principles are the basis for the definition of the institutional mechanisms and methods of mobilization of financial resources presented below, namely:

- the principle of complementarity and subsidiarity, from the local level up to the national and sub-regional levels;
- the principle of actual participation of all actors;
- the principle of collective responsibility;
- the principle of transparency and accountability;
- the principle of permanent and thorough negotiation between actors.

5.4.2. Institutional mechanism

The institutional mechanism proposed for the implementation of the Strategy Paper includes two levels:

- the national and decentralized level;

- the sub-regional level.

5.4.2.1. The national and decentralized level

The Sahelian countries agree on the fact that the institutional options selected in each country must achieve the objectives deemed essential to optimise the Strategy Paper and enable dialogue and the convergence of efforts between the countries of the sub-region, especially:

- by strengthening partnership and good governance, through involvement of the various competent ministries and administrations, the main socio-professional actors, the civil society and elected officials (Parliament, national association of the local elected officials);
- by establishing linkages with the national mechanism in charge of the poverty reduction strategy;
- by hosting the Strategy Paper within an institution where it could influence the various national policies and choices (in the Office of the Prime Minister, for example);
- by creating agencies at decentralized levels so as to ensure the broadest possible local participation and due consideration for the peculiarities and concerns of the most vulnerable groups;
- by setting up a mechanism for coordination of and coherence in external assistance and activities of co-operation agencies in the fields of food security and poverty reduction.

On the basis of these objectives, each country defines the institutional configuration most adapted to national circumstances.

5.4.2.2. The sub-regional level

On the sub-regional plane, the Strategy Paper will be steered in the same spirit, by associating country representatives, representatives of the major IGOs concerned, representatives of the civil society and representatives of the various networks of actors.

The sub-regional mechanism will be entrusted to CILSS and will include

- a political authority: **the Council of Ministers of CILSS**
It shall be the political steering body for the implementation of the Strategy Paper.
- a technical body: **the sub-regional Food security Committee**
It shall sit as a forum for sub-regional dialogue and coordination, and for monitoring-evaluation of the implementation of directives from the Council of Ministers.
- a technical secretariat: **the CILSS strategic Think tank**
It shall use the institution's major policy Programmes as a basis for ensuring coordination of the implementation of the Food security Strategy Paper :
- formulation of operational national and regional strategies stating the priority objectives, results, priority interventions and actions for the next five years as well as their costs, schedules, indicators and other implementation conditions;
- development of a regional network for exchange of information and sharing of ideas and experiences;
- drafting of briefs and reports on the state of progress of the food security

Strategy Paper.

5.4.3. Mobilization of financial resources

The regional nature of the food security Strategy Paper does not mean a regional centralization of resources needed for its implementation. On the contrary, each level of responsibility in the implementation of the Strategy Paper is also responsible for the mobilization of the resources necessary for the execution of programmes and commitments. However, the various levels (decentralized, national and sub-regional) must help each other to ensure coherent and collaborative allocation of resources in the light of the priorities stated in the Strategy Paper. This implies significant efforts in terms of transparency in order to avoid possible competition for access to financial resources.

The Strategy Paper adopted the principle of **roundtable conferences of donors**. These round table conferences will be held at three levels:

- At the decentralized level, for the financing of local sustainable food security and poverty reduction programmes;
- At the national level, for the financing of the various components of the food security national strategies;
- At the sub-regional level, for the financing of activities aimed at striking convergence in the national strategies and for activities that supplement the national and local actions.

The principle of roundtable conference of donors must allow to rationalize programme priorities, on the basis of a better visibility whereby all actors can see the resources that can be actually mobilized (budgetary resources, resources mobilized by the local governments or communities, resources from official or non-government development aid...). The effectiveness of the Strategy Paper largely depends on the flexibility in the allocation of resources and harmonization of financing procedures.

The institutional mechanisms proposed for its implementation aim at ensuring total transparency and sound management of resources so as to create the conditions for greater flexibility in the assistance. This particularly depends on the membership of the institutional mechanisms, their procedures, monitoring-evaluation methods (see above).

Given the importance of food security in the issue of poverty reduction in the Sahel, it is advisable and legitimate that a substantial share of the resources under the HIPC initiative be mobilized to ensure the financing of activities programmed towards food security.

5.4.4. Schedules, responsibilities and monitoring-evaluation indicators

The implementation of the sub-regional Strategy Paper entails multiple responsibilities at the level of public actors as well as private and socio-professional actors. Compliance with the principles of the Strategy Paper requires that some time be given for the consultations and negotiations to be conducted normally and effectively at the various geographical levels. Operational national and sub-regional strategies will be proposed by CILSS (in 2001) for the implementation of concrete actions over the next five years (2001-2006).

The monitoring-evaluation approach relating to the implementation of the Strategy Paper also draws inspiration from the principles mentioned above, especially the principles of responsibility, transparency and accountability as well as of Sahelian leadership. It is based on a mechanism that takes into account the studies carried out within the framework of the reform of assistance.

The mechanism aims at ensuring simultaneously:

- transparency in the utilization and management of financial resources, which is necessary to build confidence between all actors mobilized within the decentralized, national and sub-regional mechanisms;
- transparency vis-à-vis the aid agencies so as to facilitate the pooling of funds and their fungibility by providing all the necessary guarantees as regards funds utilization;
- permanent evaluation of the results achieved by the implemented actions and programmes , allowing to improve the steering of the Strategy Paper, by means of output indicators and evaluation criteria accepted by all actors involved and by the development partners .

The monitoring-evaluation methodology therefore identifies two levels:

- monitoring-evaluation of the programmes implemented at the various levels and coming under the Food Security Strategy Paper. This component aims to check the implementation of the principles, compliance with the directions and schedules as well as the adopted activities.
- monitoring-evaluation of the results of the national strategies and regional actions, in the light of the objectives stated in the field of food security.

The set of indicators will be defined under the aegis of the regional food security Committee. As an example, the monitoring indicators could be organized under four headings that will be the performance chart of food security:

- macro economic convergence indicators based on studies carried out by UEMOA and ECOWAS;
- indicators relating to incomes, poverty and affordability (systematisation of the budget surveys...);
- indicators relating to food availability: productions, food aid, imports;
- indicators relating to the market/trade component : Regional MIS.

Monitoring of these indicators will be carried out by **the CILSS strategic Think tank** as per the terms stated above.

ANNEXES

Priority lines of action of the specific objectives

Specific Objective N°1

Promotion of a productive, diversified and sustainable agriculture

The main outputs to achieve are the following:

Output 1: The development of natural resources is optimised through sustainable management of agricultural and agro-pastoral production systems

Priority lines of actions:

(a) Development of water resources

- To assess national and regional groundwater potentials so as to tap them efficiently and sustainably;
- To improve the knowledge base on river dynamics and stranding of rivers in the Sahelian countries (studies of hydrosedimentology of the major rivers), with the definition of common standards and methods for the management of shared resources and ecosystems, including coastal resources.
- To improve the knowledge base on Sahelian traditional practices and experiences in the field of irrigation and water conservation as well as soil conservation and restoration of fertility;
- To ensure the promotion of irrigation and water control methods that are easy to disseminate through the building of appropriate capacities in research/development/application;
- To produce, based on the inventory of the irrigable potential in the Sahel, a development master plan especially for the river basins and bottomlands, within the framework of the systematic development of water control for agricultural and pastoral purposes;
- To prepare a regional master plan for the development and protection of the banks and beds of the major regional or sub-regional rivers (bank erosion control, control of harmful plant species...);
- To initiate the drafting and adoption of legislation related to water resources for sustainable management;
- To build dams, crests and reservoirs on the rivers and their tributaries in areas with high irrigation potential and to rehabilitate existing works;
- To ensure the definition and implementation of regional hydro-agricultural development Programs using shared resources and through consultation and management mechanisms so as to ensure the sustainability of investments and prevent conflicts arising from resource utilization;
- To stimulate investments (especially private) in water control and irrigation, relying as much as possible on inexpensive systems likely to be mastered by the producers and their organizations on the one hand and, on the other hand, supporting private initiatives likely to ensure economic and financial profitability;
- To develop decentralized (local) investment plans in the field of water control, taking into account social and environmental constraints and using public funds towards collective facilities;
- To build the actors' capacities at regional, national and local levels and to strengthen regional co-operation in the field of desertification control, knowledge, management and exploitation of the water resource potential;
- To promote associations of common interest between Sahelian national investors and foreign investors in the development and management of natural resource.

(b) Recapitalization and improvement of soil fertility

- To strive for the restoration of soil fertility as well as the reclamation and rehabilitation of degraded lands;

- To decentralize natural resource and land management through increased empowerment of local actors, in conformity with the provisions of the CCD and NAPs;
- To improve integrated soil fertility management and, based on the outcomes of research, to propose technical choices more adapted to the Sahelian realities in terms of exploitation and utilization;
- To secure land tenure within the framework of policies governing land tenure systems, and to improve management of the rural land tenure system, especially through more balanced recognition of the land rights of pastoralists as well as farmers because of the problems that exist at country level in this regard.

(c) Management of forest resources

- To build regional and national research capacities in the development and management of forests and fauna; to promote the incorporation of national forest research systems into the sub-regional, regional and international networks; and to reinforce regional co-ordination in the field of bush fire control and surveillance;
- To reduce the high pressure on forest resources for the satisfaction of requirements, especially domestic energy, in particular through the promotion of research and dissemination of alternative sources of energy (including renewable energies) and more efficient technologies for the production and utilization of fuelwood and charcoal, and make alternative energy technologies more accessible to households;
- To encourage the intensification of reforestation and desertification control programmes and to promote education towards the conservation of forest and wildlife resources.

Output 2: Output 2: The Sahelian agriculture better meets the increasing diversification of demand for agricultural and food products

Priority lines of action:

- To develop and disseminate irrigation techniques and technologies;
- To disseminate innovations adapted to the non-cereal productions so as to enhance the diversification of the productive systems;
- To promote animal husbandry (livestock, poultry farming...) as an economic alternative or activities that supplement agricultural production;
- To promote vegetable and fruit production for more regular supply of the national and regional markets as well as for exports outside the region;
- To encourage the agriculture/livestock development integration dynamics at the micro and macro-economic levels as part of a strategy for better spreading the risk of lack of food security on the national and regional planes, and as a basis for improving the balance of technical systems;
- To improve the information mechanisms in order to cover the major productions and improve the detection of the lack of food security at the sub-national level;

Output 3: Agricultural production better meets the increasing demand for agricultural and food products

Priority lines of action:

- To gain greater command of the production systems dynamics, the evaluation of productions and costs, allowing to improve knowledge in the agricultural economies (steering policies);
- To promote research/development to support the creation of seed varieties and more generally, of more coherent technical packages that are better adapted to conditions in the Sahel;
- To seek complementarities at the regional level between the research institutes, and to stimulate the

operation of a network for exchanges between the national agricultural research systems;

- To promote the development of a policy and of a more suitable system to finance agriculture and which especially allows to redirect more significant resources towards resource-poor farmers and pastoralists. In particular:
 - To extend the coverage of the decentralized financial systems, to promote the harmonization of intervention methods, to improve the conditions for their development and to set up mechanisms to ensure sustainability (insurances schemes...);
 - To raise the interest of the formal banking system in the financing of agriculture;
 - To improve the effectiveness of the extension services, especially through involvement of the peasant-farmer organizations;
 - To promote and intensify information, education and communication for small farmers;
 - To train the actors in the maintenance of hydro-agricultural works;
 - To promote experience-sharing among the Sahelian farmers on techniques to intensify agricultural and animal production;
 - To reduce harvest losses through better integrated plant protection, processing as well as better conditions for the conservation and storage of products;
 - To improve access of small farmers, and resource-poor farmers, to agricultural inputs (improved seeds, organic and inorganic fertilizers, pesticides, drugs and vaccines, vitamins and minerals...) and to train them in utilisation thereof;
 - To promote suitable mechanization of the Sahelian agriculture through gradual introduction of technologies and more efficient equipment, while making them more accessible to resource-poor communities;
 - To improve the genetic potential of local stocks so as to raise productivity in meat, milk and milk products, through intensification of the livestock development systems;
 - To support national efforts in the field of animal health and to encourage co-operation and exchange of information at regional level;
 - To increase the involvement and role of private investors in increasing agricultural production, in particular their participation in the distribution and marketing of agricultural inputs.

Output 4: Fish production is highly increased on sustainable bases.

Priority lines of action:

- To ensure regular assessment and follow-up of fish resources in the sub-region for more rational and sustainable exploitation;
- To train and improve the skills of all actors in the sub-sector in effective fishing techniques, upgrading and marketing of fish products;
- To promote the establishment of financing systems more adapted to the needs of artisanal fishing;
- To encourage visits and experience-sharing among the Sahelian actors of the fishing sub-sector;
- To encourage regional co-operation in the control and surveillance of the sub-regional maritime zone with a view to protecting fish resources and combating plundering;
- To assess the economic, financial and social performance of the fishing agreements binding the various Sahelian countries to partners from outside the Sahel, with a view to better adjusting them with the requirements of collective and sustainable exploitation of the resource;
- To develop negotiation capacities in the field of fishing agreements to protect the interests of countries in the sub-region;
- To ensure joint management of fish resources as per sub-regional groups of countries;
- To implement specific policies for the continental fishing sub-sector.

Specific objective n°2

Development, free flow of trade and sub-regional integration of the national markets

Output 1: National markets are more dynamic.

Priority lines of action:

- To help the countries better identify and tap more effectively their respective comparative advantages at the regional level, and take the said advantages into account in their national policies for better positioning on the markets;
- To encourage the organization of those economic operators involved in the operation of transboundary and regional markets;
- To promote the creation of an economic and institutional environment conducive to investment in agriculture as well as the emergence of companies with a regional production and marketing vocation, based on the consolidation of the market and sub-sectors liberalization process and reinforcement of the competitiveness of the agricultural produce markets;
- To combat corruption and to set up complaint procedures for individuals or operators who are the victims of unlawful practices by government officials;
- To develop wholesale markets in agricultural produce and food products as well as transboundary markets;
- To concretise the Observatory on unfair trading Practices at border checkpoints created by the West African Forum between CILSS, UEMOA, ECOWAS and WAEN, which should be supplemented by a permanent regional Observatory of regional markets dealing in agricultural and food products.

Output 2: The regional markets are more flexible and better integrated, and trade is highly increased.

Priority lines of action:

- To promote better knowledge of the dynamics and potentialities of the regional market of agricultural and food products;
- To organize and reinforce intra and inter-States dialogue on the promotion of regional and extra-regional trade;
- To develop the market information systems and adapt them to user demand (decision-makers, operators...), based on consolidation of the achievements of the cereals and cattle-meat MIS and harmonization of the systems currently being used by the countries or regional IGOs;
- To improve access of the Sahelian business people to information relating to regional markets and facilitate utilization of such information for commercial purposes;
- To develop a strategy and programmes aimed at opening up the production belts with a view to developing sub-regional trade and strengthening consultations among the Sahelian IGOs;
- To speed up the implementation of programmes aimed at building regional transport infrastructure through interconnection of transboundary and intra-regional networks;
- To reduce the constraints to the free movement of Sahelian agricultural and food products on national and regional markets, especially the many unlawful obstacles to trade, while complying with the requirements of the Rule of Law (active corruption control within those administrations involved);
- To encourage the development of powerful networks of trade organizations in the agricultural and food sub-sectors at regional level.

Output 3: The Sahelian agriculture and food sub-sectors are more competitive on external markets and better prepared to face international competition.

Priority lines of action:

- To encourage the exploitation of the potentialities of the regional markets or national markets with a regional vocation, especially through the identification of buoyant niches;
- To define, adopt and impose standards and labels aimed at improving the quality of Sahelian produce, including livestock products (product standards and trade rules at the regional level within the framework of a dynamic competition between countries in the region);
- To develop a system of incentives intended to encourage the emergence and development of food industries at country and regional levels;
- To assess trade policies at the borders of the international market and to define conditions of effective protection so as to reduce the instability of international markets and offset the impact of subsidies granted by partner countries as well as other unfair export practices;
- To encourage balanced development of the food sub-sectors at both the national and regional levels so as to ensure competitiveness of their products on international markets;
- To improve the coherence of policies at the borders of West Africa vis-à-vis extra-regional imports of agricultural and food products;
- To ensure effective information and training of regional economic operators as regards the standards and rules governing extra-regional trade and trade in agricultural and food products on world markets;
- To encourage the various actors involved in the marketing of products from the Sahelian countries to get organized so as to develop their negotiation capacities and to undertake concerted actions in order to improve the competitiveness of their products on international markets;
- To support the States in preparing and upholding their specific and common positions in the field of food security, within the framework of international negotiations (WTO agricultural Agreement EU/ACP Agreements...);
- To ensure more effective involvement of the non-government Sahelian actors working in agriculture (professional organizations, company managers, IGOs, regional networks, NGOs...) in multilateral negotiations (WTO, EU...), so as to guarantee equal competitiveness between the Sahelian and non-Sahelian producers.

Specific objective n°3

Sustainable improvement of access of vulnerable groups and zones to food and basic social services

Output 1: Access to food notably improved in underprivileged zones for the poor

Priority lines of action:

- To intensify production in the commercial agricultural production sectors;
- To improve the rural and urban poor's access to means of production;
- To diversify sources of income, other than the agricultural activity in rural areas, especially through the provision of decentralized financing towards income-generating activities (craft industry, small-scale processing of agricultural produce, trade...);
- To develop employment for the poor through labour-intensive activities targeted at the most vulnerable populations and aiming at their socio-economic integration;
- To develop an economic, fiscal and legislative environment conducive to the development of private companies;
- To ensure an effective redistribution of incomes allowing to mitigate the phenomena of wealth concentration thanks to more equitable fiscal policies;
- To set up social safety nets for people excluded from the labour market, in particular the elderly, disabled

- and women heads of household;
- To improve the effectiveness of the instruments designed to target and follow-up vulnerable groups and zones ;
- To support the EWS (early warning systems) and MIS (Market Information Systems) where they exist, and to create new ones or improve their operation as appropriate;
- To grant priority to the specific situation of women in poverty reduction and food security programmes;
- To promote village-level storage and cereal banks.

Output 2: Access to basic social services is notably improved in the underprivileged zones for the poor

Priority lines of action:

- To improve and extend the water supply networks in urban and rural areas;
- To improve the quality of supplied water;
- To develop information, education and communication programmes intended for the vulnerable groups, particularly regarding nutrition, hygiene, health..., so as to build their capacities to take charge of their own development;
- To set up the infrastructure needed to meet requirements in the field of education, access to potable water, sanitation and health; to take advantage of the HIPC initiative to finance, as a matter of priority, these activities on the basis of local development plans designed by and implemented under the responsibility of the local governments and local actors;
- To substantially improve access to education so as to increase primary school enrolment rates;
- To reinforce adult literacy programmes;
- To develop and improve the effectiveness of public health interventions;
- To reinforce actions in the field of family planning and reproductive health, in accordance with the "Population and Sustainable Development in the Sahel" action plan.

Specific objective n°4:

Improvement of mechanisms for the prevention and management of circumstantial crises

Output 1: Relevant early warning systems allowing to prevent the various forms of food crisis are developed and set up.

Priority lines of action:

- To promote a more decentralized management of crisis prevention strategies, allowing the local actors to have means of intervention that can be mobilized at short notice and integrate the crisis prevention into their development strategies ;
- To strive for each country to have a suitable warning system for monitoring a limited number of indicators, which would allow all national and international actors to have reliable and timely information to be used as a basis for consultation among actors as well as the definition of actions to be undertaken;
- To reinforce the national food policy co-ordinating bodies, by opening them up to new actors (private sector, NGOs, civil society...);
- To assess and change the Food Aid Charter into a Food Security Charter so as to facilitate co-ordination of the response tools.

Output 2: The information network on food security in the Sahel is better coordinated and analyses on vulnerability and households' coping mechanisms etc. are better harmonized

Priority lines of action:

- To have reliable and relevant information systems capable of providing information at short notice about risks of degradation of the food situation, based on monitoring of relevant indicators in the light of the usual food security conditions of potentially vulnerable households and zones;
- To develop information systems on vulnerable populations, taking account of vulnerability in urban areas and rural areas with no deficit in cereal, and beyond the analysis of incomes, integrating an analysis of coping systems so as to better target the response tools and develop communities' and households' internal capacities in risk management;
- To improve understanding of the rural and urban Sahelians' coping systems, of the forms of household vulnerability and of the communities' and households' ability to face a sudden change in their environment, taking account of the extreme diversity in situations within individual countries;
- To improve co-ordination between IGOs, NGOs, Member States and development partners in the determination of vulnerable populations;
- To involve the poor, as actors in their own right, in the diagnoses on vulnerability, design and implementation of food aid programmes and actions to be undertaken to effectively combat poverty and the lack of food security;
- To ensure better monitoring of the Sahelians' income evolution and pattern through regular budget / consumption surveys;
- To harmonize the information systems and approaches used in vulnerability analysis by international institutions and development partners (FAO/GIEWS, WFP, EU/RESAL, USAID/FEWS, various NGOs) under Sahelian leadership.

Output 3: Emergency actions are better directed towards possible ways to get out of the crisis.

Priority lines of action:

- to base action on instruments which, while ensuring transition out of difficult periods, contribute to building the communities' capacities and to reducing their economic vulnerability (community work directed towards food security building activities, income diversification, development of off-season crops, local storage facilities...);
- To assess the relevance of national security stocks as suitable instruments for intervention in the event of a crisis, taking into account possibilities offered by the market, and their cost, as compared with the possibility of extension of financial stocks and decentralization of their management;
- To build capacities in the estimate of the vulnerability of the area and human settlements by setting up permanent monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the field of environment and natural resources;
- To build the actors' capacities in the fields of early warning and mitigation of the effects of drought;
- To intensify research in the field of harvest forecast, including research on traditional methods and tools;
- To support the development and implementation of national programmes on drought preparedness and crises management;
- To develop and implement national emergency assistance plans expanded to the mitigation of food crises arising from regional or transboundary socio-political conflicts;
- To develop a gradual response strategy according to the severity, geographical scale of the crisis, while seeking to exploit first local resources;
- To develop strategies for improvement of social solidarity mechanisms existing in urban centres;

- To develop and better organize in space, food storage/distribution in rural areas through cereal banks managed by rural organizations, especially women peasant-farmer organizations.

Output 4: Available food surpluses are better known and better used to ensure the supply of vulnerable populations and zones

Priority lines of action:

- To tap more effectively the information provided by the countries and MIS so as to assess the existing national and local surpluses ;
- To develop capacities in providing early information and taking action by the operators working in the marketing of agricultural produce;
- To support the peasant-farmer organizations in the development of regional partnership in the field of foodstuff supply and distribution.

Specific objective n°5

Capacity-building of actors and promotion of good governance in the field of food security.

The expected major outputs are as follows:

Output 1: The decentralization process is entrenched and consolidated, and the capacities of local governments are strengthened

Priority lines of action:

- To integrate the stakes of food security into the prerogatives and administrative remit of the local governments, by reinforcing their regulatory and institutional capacities as well as their own means of intervention;
- To develop financing systems intended to support the generation of significant and regular resources for the local governments (local public popular funds, local development funds, co-financing...), especially through an appropriate reform of the local tax systems within the countries;
- To take further action in the decentralized management of natural resources and basic social service for genuine empowerment of the local actors, especially through greater democratisation in access to resources, greater consideration for the legitimate needs and interests of specific groups and application of the principle of subsidiarity;
- To promote and strengthen decentralized co-operation at the sub-regional and regional levels;
- To promote the creation of a regional local governance Observatory, in relation to the management of food security, natural resources and basic social services in the Sahel;
- To develop information, education and communication programmes in the fields considered.

Output 2: The peasant-farmer organizations are consolidated and more closely involved in the definition of food security and poverty reduction strategies.

Priority lines of action:

- To capitalize those effective national and local initiatives in the field of food security and to disseminate them at the national and regional levels;
- To train the members of socio-professional organizations in the agricultural and food sub-sectors in

- production technologies as well as management of their farms;
- To encourage and support the development of the institutional capacities of national and regional professional organizations (especially peasant-farmer organizations), and systematically to involve them in the definition and implementation of strategies and programs at all levels, by providing them with adequate resources;
- To facilitate and promote information and experience-sharing between the professional organizations (agricultural in particular) in the sub-region;
- To develop information and communication programs for the local agricultural actors on the local dynamics, especially using the rural radio and other means of social communication (including the traditional channels) and modern media (Internet...).

Output 3: Regional training and experience-sharing activities related to sustainable food security and poverty reduction are systematically implemented, on the basis of convincing regional practices.

Priority lines of action:

- To promote thorough knowledge of the socio-demographic constraints and disseminate throughout the sub-region the outcomes of research (migrations, urbanization, AIDS, reproductive health, population and environment, women and development...);
- To increase national and Sahelian skills in the preparation of integrated strategies and programs related to population and sustainable development;
- To support and reinforce the implementation and monitoring-evaluation of programs and policies on population and sustainable development at the national and sub-regional levels.

Output 4: The demographic constraints to sustainable development in the Sahel are better controlled.

Priority lines of action:

- To improve knowledge on local Sahelian practices and experiences as regards production and farming technologies and techniques, following joint evaluation and validation with research;
- To disseminate the integrated agro-sylvo-pastoral developments (sylvo-pastoral systems, associated cropping using trees and shrubs, shelterbelts, windbreakers...) among the actors working in agro-forestry development;
- To facilitate visits and experience-sharing among Sahelian professionals on issues pertaining to empowerment in the fields of food security and poverty reduction;
- To support the States in the training of decision-makers, managers, executives and technicians in charge of the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of strategies and programmes related to food security and natural resource management;
- To promote education in forest conservation and the involvement of the local populations in the conservation of fauna and its habitat, in line with their economic production systems;
- To encourage the multiplication of pilot operations and more systematic dissemination of tested technologies relating to the integration of trees in the agrarian systems;
- To develop a regional I.E.C programme in the field of potable water and public health, and of decentralized management of watering points in the Sahel.

Output 5: The regional and national policies for the development of the agricultural sector are harmonized

for more effective governance in sustainable food security strategies and programmes at the national and regional levels

Priority lines of action:

- To perform a detailed inventory of the existing national and regional potentialities and of their medium and long term dynamics in order to ensure the conditions for more effective control of the Sahelian agricultural, animal, fish and forest resources ;
- To set up and feed a regional mechanism for integrated planning and management of national productions so as to enable more systematic development of the national agricultural potentials in a regional perspective;
- To develop national sustainable food security strategies and programmes within a perspective of poverty reduction in the Sahel, by strengthening gradual convergence at the regional level, with the establishment of effective mechanisms for policy dialogue and negotiation ;
- To assess ongoing economic policies and sub-regional macroeconomic convergence frameworks with a view to ensuring compatibility with the objectives of food security and poverty reduction, especially through harmonization of tariffs at the region's external borders;
- To reinforce the regional and sub-regional mechanism for the prevention and management of regional conflicts (between the Sahelian countries and/or coastal countries) or transboundary national conflicts (likely to spill over neighbouring countries);
- To reinforce (through diplomatic and military means) the ECOWAS mechanism for the prevention and management of conflicts with a regional or sub-regional effect so as to minimize their negative consequences on food security for the local populations ;
- To set up and/or reinforce the poles of excellence as regards research on food security and poverty reduction in the Sahel;
- To build and develop a Sahelian collective technical expertise intended to be systematically invited to contribute to the resolution of problems related to agricultural development in the Sahel;
- To support the Sahelian States in the preparation and negotiation of national roundtables for financing of their food security and poverty reduction strategies and programmes , especially as regards their priority investments.

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This document is the outcome of a process which was started in Banjul in 1997. Basing on a rapid diagnosis of the situation of the countries of the Sahel, the developments of food-related issues and the major transformations at work in the Sahelian societies, it outlines the major issues at stake that all indicate that food security cannot be achieved unless it is closely associated with a strategy for alleviating poverty. It does not represent therefore a burden for the international community but rather an opportunity for local level development and regional integration.

Adopted by the second Forum of Sahelian Societies and the 13th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of CILSS Member Countries, this Strategy Paper is the single reference frame for both the public and private actors of the Sahel.