RPCA: FOOD SECURITY STAKEHOLDERS GATHER IN PARIS

Held under the patronage of the Commissions of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) gathered from 10-12 April 2017 at the OECD headquarters in Paris. Representatives of Sahelian and West African governments, intergovernmental organisations, professional agricultural organisations, the private sector, civil society organisations, and technical and financial partners reviewed the final results of the 2016-17 agro-pastoral campaign. They also analysed the food and nutrition situation and made recommendations, particularly focused on mobilising further urgent and co-ordinated assistance to affected populations in the Lake Chad basin. RPCA members also encouraged all stakeholders to commit to implementing long-term programmes to rehabilitate and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations. Participants at the Senior Experts Group meeting of the Global Alliance for Resilience (SEG-AGIR) assessed progress in implementing the Alliance. To date, ten countries have approved their National Resilience Priorities (NRPs); a resilience component has been successfully incorporated in the new National Agricultural Investment Programmes and the Alliance has led to many other positive structural changes in the governance of food and nutrition security. RCPA Members also brainstormed on the reforms needed to strengthen the RCPA’s impact on decision-making. While recalling the need to refocus on the RCPAs’ original mandate – analysis, information-based consensus building, co-ordination and advocacy – members validated a communications strategy and broad guidelines for reform. Moreover, 12 West African civil society organisations signed an agreement to ensure the civil society monitoring of the effective application of the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management. The second external evaluation of the Charter, scheduled for 2017, will focus on opportunity costs and the efficiency of responses to food and nutrition crises. During another side event, the Parliamentary Front against Hunger shared experiences from Latin American and the Caribbean. The event was organised by the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD). The 33rd annual meeting of the RCPA will take place in Cotonou on 11-13 December 2017 on the theme of innovative and territorial approaches to food and nutrition security.
NIGERIA AT THE GLOBAL ANTI-CORRUPTION & INTEGRITY FORUM

From 30–31 March 2017, the OECD hosted the fifth edition of the 2017 Global Anti-Corruption and Integrity Forum on the theme, “In the public interest: Taking integrity to higher standards.” Nigerian Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo participated as the keynote speaker. In his statement entitled, “United action is the key,” Osinbajo highlighted the immense challenges that corruption and illicit financial flows pose in developing countries. However, as a cause and also as a consequence, most developing countries lack strong institutions to combat these challenges. According to Osinbajo, “International collaboration is therefore the smartest and most effective approach to apprehend and deter perpetrators and ensure restitution of stolen assets.” Osinbajo also called for more inclusive participation from developing countries in the crafting of global initiatives designed to fight against corruption and illicit flows. “The OECD G20 and G8 anticorruption initiatives should have developing countries at the table. The demand and supply side of international corruption and illicit financial flows may be better served with this inclusive approach,” he said. Potential collective intervention areas include: financial transfer and jurisdiction transparency, open contracting and information systems and the global framework on stolen asset repatriation. The whistle-blower policy, launched by the Nigerian government in December 2016, aims to facilitate the recovery of looted funds and has already produced some promising results.

OECD SECRETARY-GENERAL WELCOMES AFRICAN DELEGATION

On the sidelines of the restricted meeting of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) on 11 April 2017, OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría met with a high-level delegation of African leaders for a brief exchange on co-operation between Africa and the OECD. The delegation was composed of several West African ministers as well as regional leaders from ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS and representatives of West African agricultural producers’ organisations. Mr. Gurría emphasised that Africa is crucial for efforts to strengthen global governance and collective action for inclusive development. The OECD is already working with many African countries, first and foremost, with South Africa, one of its five key partners along with Brazil, China, India and Indonesia. Moreover, ten African countries are members of the OECD Development Centre. The Sahel and West Africa Club, a specialised entity dedicated to the promotion of regional co-operation, covers 17 Sahelian and West African countries. Furthermore, the OECD plans to sharpen its approach to building a more strategic partnership with Africa. Mr Gamar Sileck Assaid, Chadian Minister for Production, Irrigation and Agricultural Equipment, drew attention to the difficult humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad area and asked the OECD to help further mobilise the international community. Chad currently hosts nearly 400 000 refugees and 100 000 internally displaced persons. Mr. Ibrahima Dieme, UEMOA Commissioner, Department of Food Security, Agriculture, Mining and Environment, confirmed the region’s commitment to improving the governance of food and nutrition security. He also announced the nomination of the new UEMOA Commission President, Mr Abdallah Boureima. Mr Dieme also reiterated his appreciation for SWAC’s support in making West African voices heard in major global debates, in particular within the G20. SWAC President François-Xavier de Donnea confirmed the Sahel and West Africa Club’s continuous support, in line with its mission to build bridges between West Africa and the OECD.

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SUCCESS STORY: SIMONE ZOUNDI’S COOKIES

Simone Zoundi, created the Sodepal company in the 1970s in Ouagadougou and has lived a life dedicated to the promotion of agro-food chains in support of local and regional development. From the very beginning, she invested in local production and developed her company, which today distributes cookies, fortified flour and many other products across the country. She now has plans to expand her business and share her experience with other West African countries. Her success story is presented in a video produced by Canal+ and the Jeune Afrique TV channel. Zoundi is an active member of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) and participates in the civil society platform to ensure the effective implementation of the Charter for the Food Crisis Prevention Network (PREGEC Charter).

PUBLICATIONS

CITIES AND SPATIAL INTERACTIONS IN WEST AFRICA

This latest paper in the OECD West African Papers series aims to capture and describe the spatial interactions of cities and how they influence urban growth rates, the development of new agglomerations and the clustering of cities. It examines city size, market potential, urbanisation level and local dominance. The initial results of this work reveal the diversity and distinctive behaviours of the region’s cities.

THE COST OF HIGH FOOD PRICES IN WEST AFRICA

Food prices in West African countries are significantly higher than in other areas of the world with comparable levels of development. This situation seriously affects food security and the welfare of households. It is, according to Thomas Allen from the Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat, “one more reason to unlock the trade potential of the region,” writing in the Rural 21 magazine.

STRENGTHENING RURAL-URBAN LINKAGES TO END HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

The second chapter of a new IFPRI report analyses rural-urban linkages. Broken value chains and poor coordination weaken rural-urban links and hold back progress on food security and nutrition. How can food systems be reshaped to benefit both urban and rural populations? The report calls for investments in rural infrastructure and in intermediate towns. “Quality rural and feeder roads, electricity, storage facilities, communications and information can build connections and create hubs of economic activity benefitting smallholders and cities,” according to the report.
The Sahel and West Africa have, once again, recorded an increase in agricultural output. Cereal production in 2016-17 reached 67.2 million tonnes, an increase of nearly 17% compared to the five-year average. With the exception of sesame (865,000 tonnes), the production of other crops is also on the rise: tubers (166.7 million tonnes), peanut (8.3 million tonnes), cowpea (7.4 million tonnes), soybeans (1.5 million tonnes). However, these positive results should not lead decision makers to neglect the region's persistent food and nutrition difficulties, especially in conflict zones like the Lake Chad basin. The Cadre harmonisé analysis reveals that approximately 9.6 million people are currently facing a crisis situation (March-May), including 1.4 million people in phase 4 (emergency). By June-August, if appropriate measures are not taken, this figure could reach 13.8 million, of which 1.6 million people might find themselves in an emergency situation. The number of severely malnourished children is likely to cross the 3.5 million mark by the end of 2017. The food and nutrition situation remains particularly critical in Nigeria, which continues to host nearly 1.7 million internally displaced persons. Some 7 million Nigerians are currently in a crisis situation, including 44,000 people in phase 5 (famine), mostly in Borno State. The situation is likely to get worse during the next lean season. However, humanitarian interventions are beginning to pay off: the estimated number of people requiring urgent assistance has been reduced by 800,000.

Source: PREGEC Technical Experts Group, March 2017
© Map by CILSS/Aghymet

WHO’S WHO

YEMI OSINBAJO, VICE-PRESIDENT OF NIGERIA

Born in 1957 in Lagos, Oluyemi Oluleke Osinbajo is a lawyer, teacher and spiritual leader. He assumed office as the Vice-President of Nigeria on 29 May 2015 under the current President Muhammadu Buhari. Osinbajo became acting president of Nigeria during Buhari’s prolonged absence in early 2017.

Osinbajo began his career as a law lecturer at the University of Lagos in Nigeria. During this time, he also served as a litigations adviser to Attorney General and Minister of Justice Bola Ajibola from 1988 to 1992. Later, he became a law professor and was the department head of public law. He also held positions as a member of the cabinet, the justice ministry of Lagos State, and as the attorney general and commissioner of justice from 1999-2007. During his tenure, Osinbajo implemented significant judicial reforms in Lagos State, addressing important areas such as judges’ recruitment, remuneration, training and discipline. He also established the Directorate for Citizens’ Rights (DCR), which provides quick and free access to justice for all residents of Lagos State, and the Office of the Public Defender (OPD), which was designed to help the needy. In 2007, he returned to teaching and simultaneously held a senior partner position at Simmons Cooper Partners (Barristers and Solicitors) in Nigeria. It was during this time that his national political career commenced with the formation of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in 2013. He was charged, along with a group of other notable Nigerians, to design and produce a manifesto for the new political party, which they called the ‘Roadmap to a New Nigeria.’ Prior to his inauguration as vice-president, he was the pastor in charge of Lagos Province 48 (Olive Tree provincial headquarters) of the Redeemed Christian Church of God.A graduate of the University of Lagos (LLB, 1978), Osinbajo holds a master’s in law from the London School of Economics (LLM, 1980). He holds the prestigious title of Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN). He is the ethics adviser to the African Development Bank’s advisory board and a non-executive director of Citibank. He has also served in various roles within the United Nations including at the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations, United Nations African Institute for Crime Prevention, the United Nations Peace Operations in Somalia, as well as the International Criminal Court for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania. Yemi Osinbajo is a co-founder and board member of the Convention on Business Integrity and the Justice Research Institute Ltd.