

WEST AFRICAN FUTURES

SETTLEMENT, MARKET AND FOOD SECURITY

JOINT CONCLUSIONS OF THE TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

Regional settlement statistics and food security policy design 15-16 February 2012, UEMOA

Under the auspices of the UEMOA
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Under the auspices of the UEMOA, the Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD) organised a technical workshop on “Regional settlement statistics and food security policy design” in Ouagadougou on 15-16 February 2012. Representatives of the UEMOA, CILSS (SE, INSAH and AGRHYMET), AFRISTAT and FAO participated in the workshop. Due to the preparation of the 40th Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government, ECOWAS was unable to attend the meeting.

The participants agreed on the necessity to better integrate settlement and regional market dynamics in the development of food security policies. Discussions pointed to the lack of homogeneous and coherent data at the regional level as well as the need to improve statistical concepts of agriculture and settlement dynamics. These improvements require better co-ordination between regional and international organisations.

The conclusions do not intend to summarise all presentations and discussions but rather highlight the main recommendations reached by the participants:

Proposal 1: Synergies between regional organisations for harmonised data

- **Facilitate discussions and strengthen synergies** between organisations: UEMOA, ECOWAS, CILSS, AFRISTAT and the FAO. Discussions should promote strengthened co-ordination with regard to needs, concepts and sources of information, and to defining the thematic and spatial responsibilities. The participants proposed that the SWAC Secretariat promotes this process.
- Data harmonisation should take into account on-going activities at the ECOWAS Commission, AGRIS project (Agricultural Information System); UEMOA, SIAR project (Regional Agricultural Information System covering 4 domains: food security, agricultural sector, international commercial negotiations and markets); AFRISTAT, harmonised and simultaneous population and housing censuses project and FAO, CountrySTAT programme as well as harmonised data available at the CILSS and its specialised agencies (AGRHYMET, INSAH).

Proposal 2: Harmonised regional database

- It was proposed to **set-up a regional database**, managed by the regional organisations on agricultural, demographic and settlement statistics. A special unit should be responsible (i) to ensure coherence between the various datasets and (ii) to update the data and their status (estimated, calculated, definitive; harmonisation *ex-post* vs. *ex-ante*).
- Settlement dynamics also require developing new and simple indicators to monitor these changes. It is necessary for that purpose to have demographic and consumption data which provides information on food security in its accessibility dimension.
- Improve the quality of raw data. Such an improvement will necessitate a redefinition of concepts prior to data collection as well as regularly updating survey results.
- Modelling can be used in order to temporarily fill the absence of coherent and harmonised agricultural and settlement data. Participants asked for a training session on the population matrix and the demo-economic model used by the SWAC Secretariat.

Proposal 3: Harmonisation of population censuses

- **Harmonisation of population censuses** (periodicity, sequencing) to be coupled with agricultural censuses. This combination will also redefine priorities in terms of format and questions.
- Given the strong demographic and settlement dynamics at work in West Africa, it is important to be able to follow these transformations more closely by conducting more regular censuses and by reducing lead times between data collection and publication of the results.

Proposal 4: Integrated food security policies

- Food security goes beyond agricultural policies. The regional organisations have to **design integrated food security policies**. More attention should be paid to other domains which impact food security (infrastructure, urban planning, population policies, etc.).
- Exploring synergies and possibilities of collaboration to design integrated food security policies. Linking analyses of the SWAC Secretariat in terms of settlement patterns and the INSAH programme on demography and food security.

Participants wish to emphasise the need to organise regular meetings involving all stakeholders on these issues, allowing for open discussions and criticism, prerequisite for data harmonisation.

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