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Compilation, analysis and capitalization of best practices in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impacts in West Africa

This study was carried out as part of the implementation of the agricultural policy of ECOWAS, ECOWAP, and more specifically the Technical Cooperation Program TCP/SFW/3802 with FAO "Support for the ECOWAS Regional Coordination and strengthening of its system for monitoring and analyzing the impacts of COVID-19 on Food and Nutrition Security at the member countries level (including the CILSS space) », implemented by the ECOWAS Commission through its Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD). This study was validated during a regional workshop held in Lomé, Togo, from February 28 to March 2, 2022 bringing together the national focal points members of the Regional Task force for monitoring and analysis of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on food and nutrition security in the ECOWAS/CILSS space.

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1 Background and justification

1. According to the World Health Organization, as of December 8, 2021, 718,549 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in West Africa, compared to 8,803,524 and 267,829,762 cases respectively for Africa and the world. The toll of coronavirus pandemic worldwide is very high and continues to rise. Official figures show 5,279,200 deaths worldwide, 223,923 in Africa and 11,043 in West Africa.

2. COVID-19 also affected economic growth, particularly in the industrial, agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries production sectors, and in services (trade, transport, construction, etc.) and non-market services (health, education) in all countries. The contraction of world GDP in 2020 was in the range of 3.0 to 7.5 percent and forecasts for the recovery of world GDP that will follow in 2021 range from 2.8 to 5.8 percent. While the average contraction in West Africa is 4.91% in 2020 compared to 2019 and the growth outlook in 2021 averages 3.6%. Similarly, global trade declined by 5.3 percent in 2020, but trade volume is expected to increase by 8.0 percent in 2021 (James et al. 2021). The share of merchandise trade in the GDP of West African states ranged from 26.28% to 76.90% in 2019 and increased from 21.09% to 69.85% in 2020, a decline from 5.19% to 7.05%.

3. The World Investment Report (UNCTAD 2020) projects a decline in global foreign investment of up to 40% in 2020, and a further decline of 5-10% in 2021 (OECD 2020). In addition, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) reported a 20% increase in the number of people living in extreme poverty, an additional 150 million people falling into this category due to contraction of global economy in 2020 (Laborde et al. 2021).

4. In many countries in West Africa, food prices are more volatile than normal and food insecurity increased significantly due to COVID-19. Nearly 25 million people will not be able to meet their food needs in 2021, an increase of 34% compared to 2020, and 51 million people under pressure (Phase 2) are at risk of falling into crisis. Moreover, some countries already have more than 1 million people in a "crisis" situation over the period of June-August 2021: Nigeria (12.8 million), Burkina Faso (2.9 million), Niger (2.3 million), Sierra Leone (1.8 million), Chad (1.8 million) and Mali (1.3 million) (CH, 2021).

5. In view of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ministers in charge of Agriculture and Food of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at their video conference on March 31, 2020 expressed concern about risks related to: (i) the collapse of local agricultural production and availability of foodstuffs due to difficulties in accessing production factors (inputs, agricultural credit and agricultural extension services, etc.) and malfunctioning of collection, processing and distribution chains of agricultural products following measures to close markets and borders; (ii) surge in world food prices and their repercussions in the region, particularly due to retention of agricultural production in major exporting countries or regions (USA, Europe, Asia, etc.); and (iii) worsening of unemployment, loss of income and deterioration in purchasing

power of households, particularly those in the informal economy, which have been hard hit by lockdown, closure of markets and cessation of activities.

6. During the video conference, Ministers agreed to implement regional programs as soon as possible: (i) social protection to strengthen livelihoods and purchasing power of the most vulnerable; (ii) securing food supply chains, including free movement of food across borders; (iii) local supply (pilot shops/merchants or other mechanisms); (iv) securing access to production areas and units, supporting production (access to production factors: inputs, credit, agricultural advice...); (v) grouped public purchases from producers with the aim of guaranteeing supply to consumers and remunerative prices to farmers; (vi) prevention, monitoring and control of crop pests, (vii) prevention, monitoring and control of transboundary animal diseases, and (viii) coordination of intervention actions to ensure synergy and efficiency, through the creation of a task force.

7. The purpose of this work is to identify, centralize in a database and analyse information on best practices in response to COVID-19 implemented by ECOWAS and CILSS member countries, agricultural research organizations, farmers' organizations and other strategic partners in the region, based on a review of available literature and interviews with key stakeholders to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare member countries for post-COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery.

2 Working Methodology

8. A template describing intervention approaches, coordination and monitoring mechanisms, key partnerships established for implementation, amounts and financing arrangements for operations, drafted by the ECOWAS coordination team with FAO support, was sent to countries. They were to fill in various sections and send them to ECOWAS for processing (compilation and analysis). The initiative to compile and analyse good practices in socio-economic area of combating COVID-19, initiated by the ECOWAS Commission's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, aims to promote capitalization and sharing of successful experiences in the fight against COVID-19 and evidence-based decision making.

9. This work draws on the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Food and Agricultural Policy Decision Analysis (FAPDA) tool to identify and analyse policy trends. At the country level, Focal Point classifies policies according to classification of food and agricultural policies (producer-oriented policies, consumer-oriented policies, and macroeconomic and trade-oriented policies, each with its own sub-categories) and policy frameworks (national socio-economic development, food security and nutrition, agriculture and rural development, social protection, natural resources, trade and markets, disaster risk reduction and management, and gender). However, the areas are not independent of each other. A measure in favour of producers can affect consumers and the market, and vice versa. Similarly, all measures taken are embedded in a policy framework. However, the boundaries between policy frameworks are not so clearly defined. Policy frameworks are also cross-cutting. In practice, the report includes both regional and country-specific responses. But because of the overlap between policy areas and frameworks, these measures will be analysed by country and not by policy area and framework as described in the FAO FAPDA tool.

10. Nevertheless, compilation of best practices by focal points follows FAPDA's approach and is consistent with recommendations of Ministers in charge of Agriculture and Food, formulated during a videoconference held on March 31, 2020, leading to adoption of the Regional Emergency Action Plan to address impacts of COVID-19 and threats of pests on Food and Nutrition Security in West Africa and the Sahel

11. For the purposes of this exercise, a best practice is a policy measure with the following characteristics:

- it has been implemented one or more times;
- its effects on agriculture and food and nutrition security are evaluated and deemed conclusive;
- it is replicable in different contexts.
- A best practice deserves to be shared so that more people can adapt and adopt it. This information is captured in a report through the following points:
- Best practices and objectives of measures;

- Implementing periods;
- Target population;
- Number of beneficiaries;
- Estimated costs of response in $UD;
- Main impacts on consumption, food availability including production, imports, exports, poverty, resilience;
- Success factors;
- Challenges;
- Implementing organization(s);
- Partners
- Has the practice been evaluated?

12. In order to classify and select best practices, criteria were defined through an evaluation grid. These criteria are as follows

- Number of times the best practice is implemented: maximum score is 5 points. 2 points, if the measure is implemented once or twice; 4 if three times and 5 for a number of times greater than or equal to 4;
- Effect on Agriculture and SAN: the effect on SAN and agriculture is 5 points. 1 for one of the aspects of SAN: availability, accessibility, use or stability. 2 points, if the effect affects two SAN determinants; 3 points for three determinants; 5 for four determinants. Furthermore, if the effect of the measure affects more than one aspect of SAN to agriculture, the score is 3 points; if it affects two or more aspects of SAN and agriculture, the score is 5;
- Reproducibility: reproducibility is a function of the number of challenges. 1 point for more than 4 challenges; 3 points for 3 to 4 challenges; 5 points for less than three challenges;
- Innovation: innovation is a function of the originality of the measure. Never applied elsewhere 5 points; applied elsewhere but readapted to national and/or regional contexts 4 points; when it is a reproduction 2.

3 Response measures to COVID-19

13. Available data show that since the beginning of the pandemic, at least 706 responses to negative effects of Covid 19 were taken in West Africa, extended to Mauritania and Chad.

14. These measures can be grouped (Figure 3):

    a. Based on geographic coverage:

        i. national response plans and specific measures

        ii. regional responses, and

        iii. international initiatives (bilateral and multilateral initiatives) related to COVID-19

    b. According to duration of expected effects:

        i. cyclical measures and;

        ii. structural measures;

    c. According to the intended target:

        i. pro-consumer measures,

        ii. pro-producer measures;

        iii. trade and/or macroeconomic policy decisions

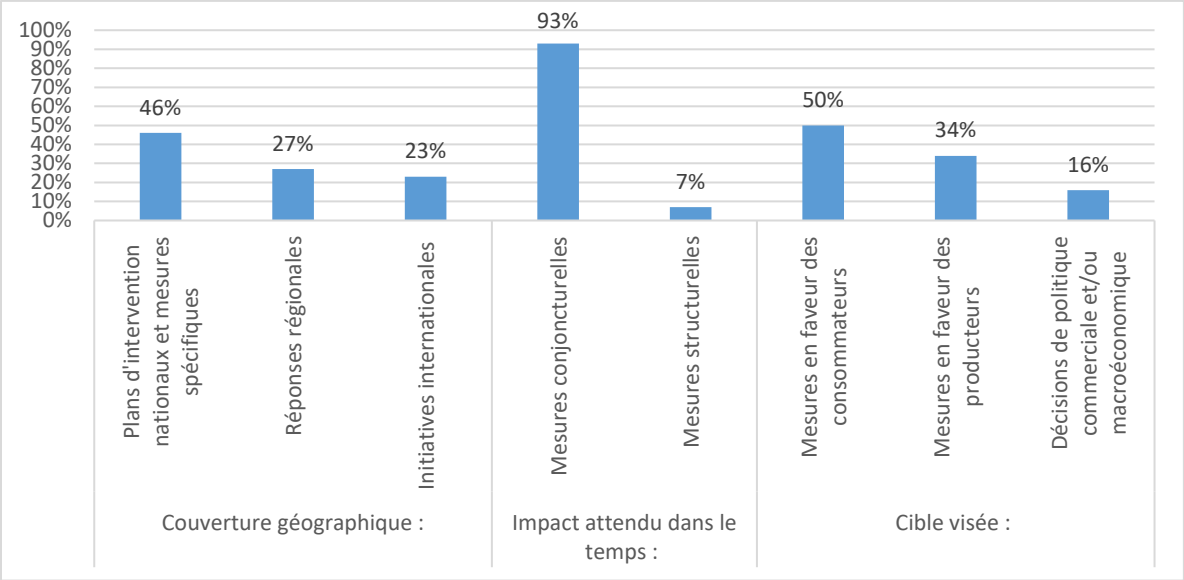

Figure 3 : Typology of responses to covid 19

3.1 According to duration of expected effects

15. Several conjunctural measures have been taken in terms of agricultural expenditure in the budgets and health, food and nutrition policies aimed at regulating the economic and health situation in order to ensure growth in agricultural production, price stability, full employment and health, foreign trade and social nets.

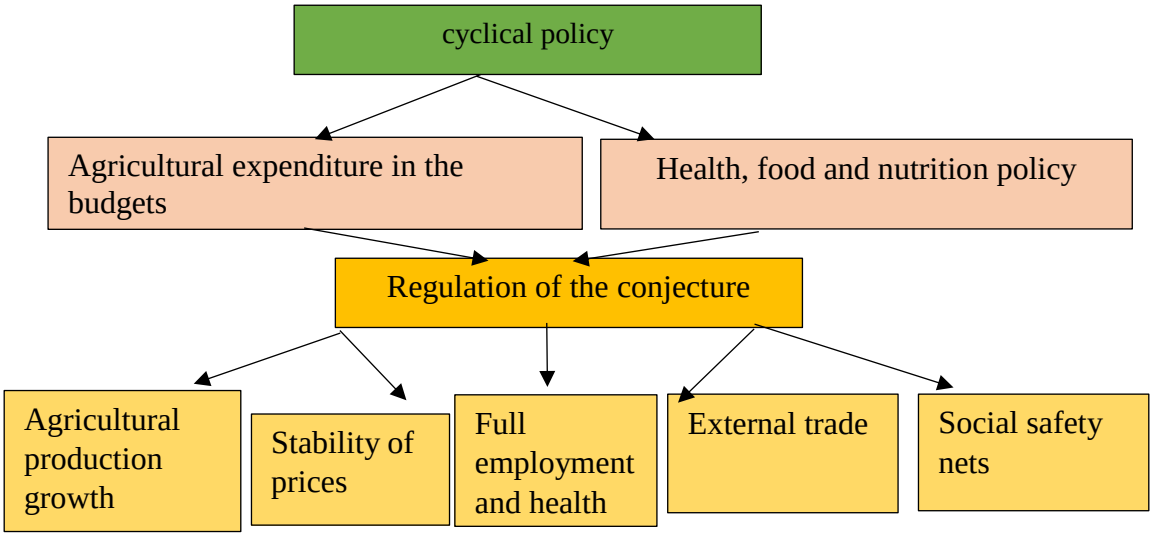

Figure 3. 1 : Cyclical measures

16. Structural policy measures include regulatory and deregulatory measures, agricultural policies and social policies that promote actions on economic structures in order to restructure productive system, ensure social protection and reduce social inequalities.

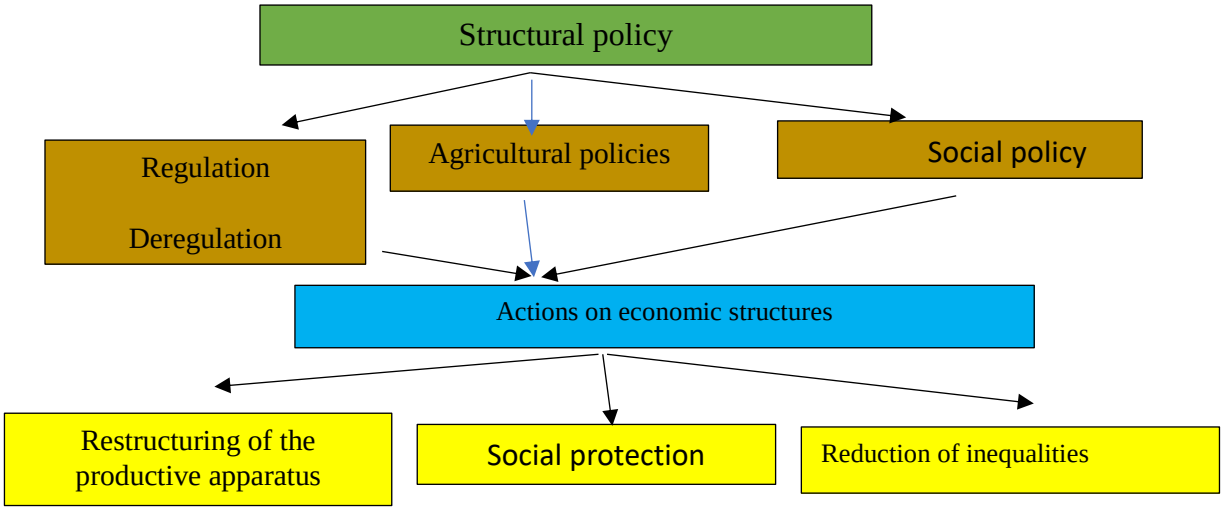

Figure 3. 2 : Structural measures

3.2 According to Intended Target

17. The costs of response measures amount to at least US$32.67 billion, which represents 4.6% of West African GDP, or US$78.06 per capita. The largest shares of GDP were recorded in Mali, Niger, Chad and Togo with ratios of 18.4%, 18.3%, 11.8% and 14.0% respectively.

Table 3. 1 : COVID-19 Response Measures Costs

Countries	GDP 2020 in US$ billions	Cost in US$ billions	% of GDP
Benin	15.65	0.72	4.6%
Burkina Faso	17.37	1.06	6.1%
Cabo Verde	1.704	0.05	3.0%
Côte d'Ivoire	61.35	2.84	4.6%
The Gambia	1.902	0.14	7.2%
Ghana	72.35	4.31	6.0%
Guinea	15.68	0.33	2.1%
Guinea-Bissau	1.432	0.02	1.3%
Liberia	2.95	0.03	1.0%
Mali	17.39	3.20	18.4%
Mauritania	7.779	0.55	7.1%
Niger	13.68	2.50	18.3%
Nigeria	432.3	12.80	3.0%
Senegal	24.91	1.82	7.3%
Sierra Leone	3.865	0.05	1.2%
Tchad	10.09	1.19	11.8%
Togo	7.575	1.06	14.0%
West Africa	707.977	32.67	4.6%

Source: carried out by the regional task force coordination

18. While Cabo Verde, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Sierra Leone allocated less than 3% of their GDP to the fight against covid 19. Depending on the target, specific measures are in favour of consumption, production, and macroeconomic/trade policy decisions. Each area is subdivided into several categories (see Figure 3.3). Measures are cross-cutting. A social protection measure affects both producers and trade and vice versa.

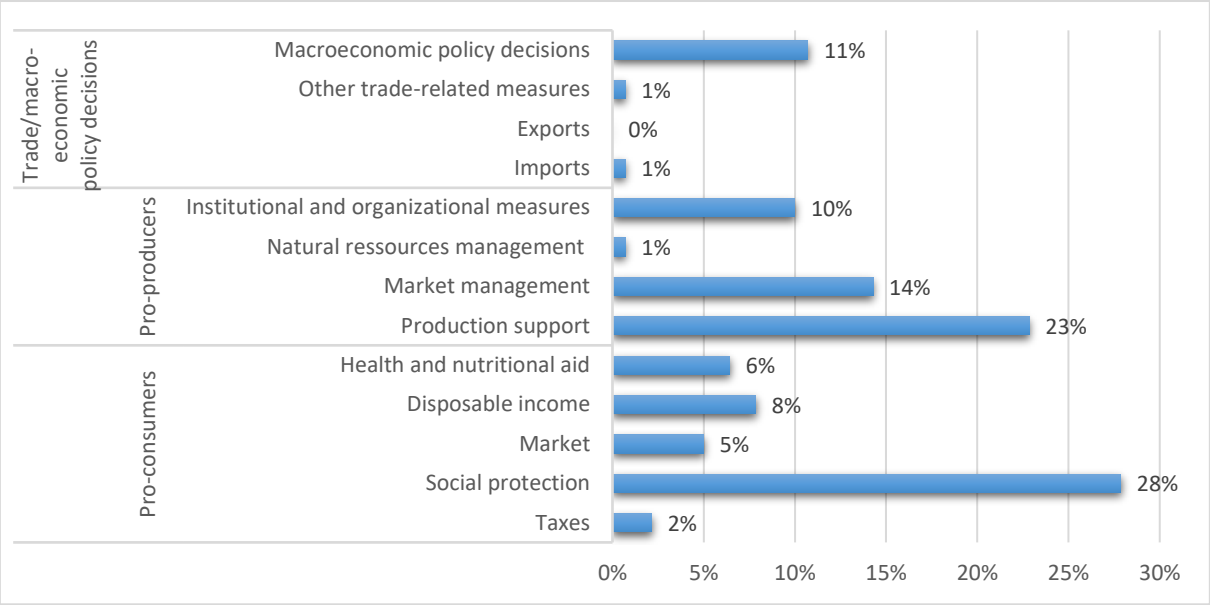

Figure 3. 3: Distribution by number of measures against COVID-19 (%)
Source: carried out by the coordination of the regional task force

19. In numerical terms, social protection measures account for 51% of costs, followed by production support measures (22%). The two targets alone account for 73% (figure 3.4) of the amounts committed by countries to counter the effects of covid, due to the institutional anchoring of these two mechanisms, which facilitated their deployment as soon as the pandemic broke out. These include:

- Increased agricultural expenditures in country budgets, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire (CFAF 300 billion), Niger (CFAF 139.38 billion) and Senegal (CFAF 60 billion),
- Allocation of funds to ensure food security in Burkina Faso (394 billion) and Mauritania;
- Investment of US$80 million in agricultural sectors and GH¢951 million to increase production of rice, maize, soybeans, sorghum and vegetables in Ghana;
- Increasing the commercial price subsidy rate of fertilizer (NPK and urea) from 10% to 80% in Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, and Senegal.
- Intervention in the market to maintain the purchase price of cotton in 2020/2021 identical to that of the 2019/2020 season, as well as that of the 50 kg bag of fertilizer used for cotton cultivation at 12,000 FCFA in Benin.

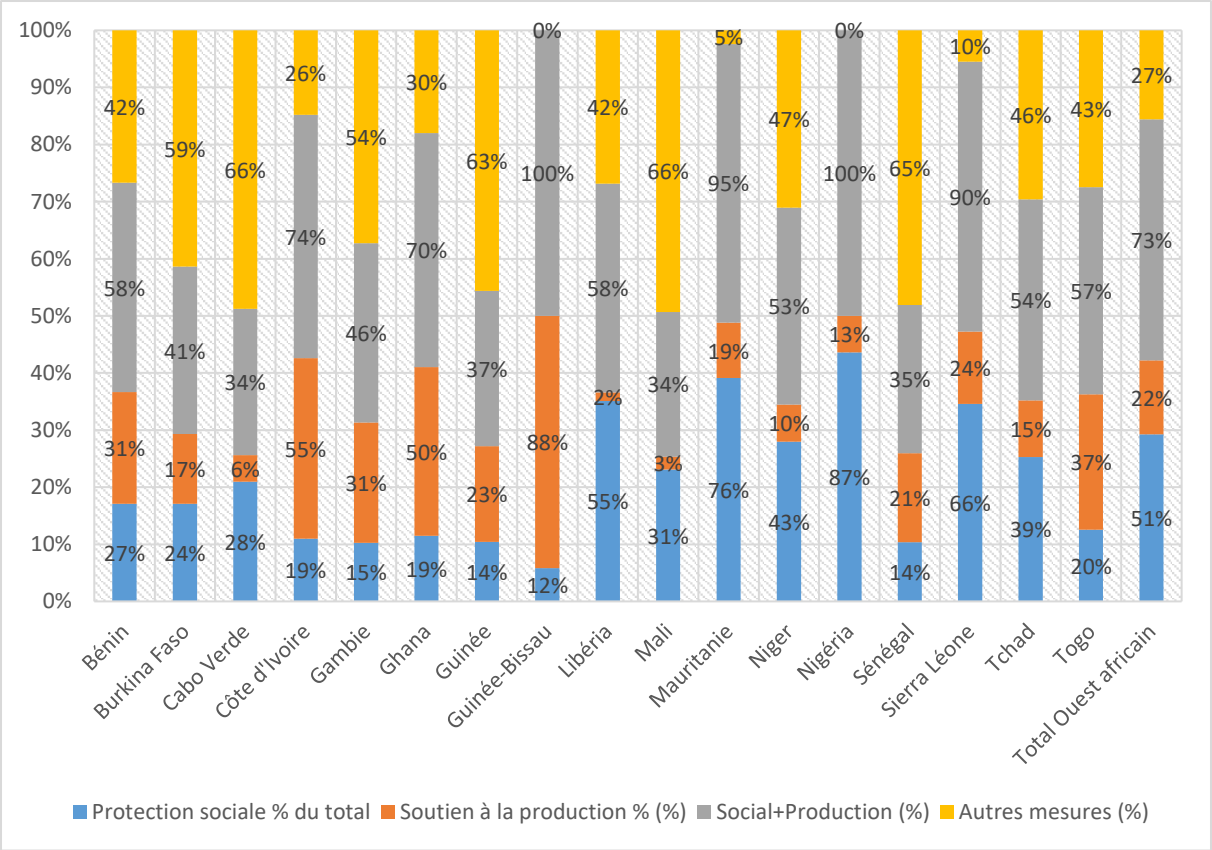

Figure 3. 4 : Distribution of response measure costs by target (%)

Source : carried out by the coordination of the regional task force

20. In particular, there was an increase in expenditures on social nets in this context of COVID-19 and security crises in terms of:

- Subsidies on fuel, electricity and water and full coverage of COVID-19 patients in the 17 countries.
- Distribution of livestock and feed (Ghana, Niger and Senegal (US$3.3 million), food (Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Ghana, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal) for 90,000 to 5.6 million vulnerable people in terms of food and nutritional security in the countries. This measure represents between 0.3 to 7.5% of the respective countries' budgets.
- Launch of food kits in Liberia (US$30 million), Senegal (€105 million), and implementation of an Agricultural Risk Management program in Burkina Faso and Senegal (US$1,629,680)

Increased spending on social safety nets in terms of:

- Introduction of cash transfers to vulnerable workers and households in Burkina Faso (CFAF 5 billion), Côte d'Ivoire (CFAF 17.6 billion), Ghana, Liberia (USD 700,000), Niger, Togo (13.3 billion) and Mauritania (USD 132,496,000)

- Strengthening of food price control mechanisms (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal and Togo)
- Creating jobs for youth in Ghana and Nigeria. Nigeria set up a new agricultural and food security project worth US$1,636.6 million that is expected to generate 5 million jobs for young people.
- Tax suspensions, exemptions or deductions in several sectors to support household incomes in all 17 countries; suspension of agricultural taxes in Côte d'Ivoire.

3.3 General response measures to COVID-19

3.3.1 ECOWAS response measures

A series of measures have been taken by ECOWAS to curb the effects of COVID-19 can be summarized as follows:

- Mobilization of US$1 million from the ECOWAS Regional Reserve's humanitarian emergency fund
- Mobilization of the ECOWAS Regional Food Security Reserve through rapid destocking of 5,529 metric tons of cereals for the benefit of vulnerable populations in Burkina Faso (954 metric tons), Mali (793 metric tons), Niger (473 metric tons) and Nigeria (3,309 metric tons)
- An additional 2 million euros mobilized for contingencies for the European Union's West Africa Food Security Storage Support Project to increase food assistance to target countries by mobilizing more stocks from the Reserve.
- Regional Strategic Plan with a budget of approximately 51 million Euros;
- Procurement of essential medical supplies and equipment for member states, including test kits, personal protective equipment and medicines;
- Coordination within the African Task Force for COVID-19; Reference Laboratory Technical Working Group and African Centre for Disease Control (CDC Africa);
- Dissemination of a weekly epidemiological bulletin to member states' ministries of health, directors of national public health institutes, and partners.

21. As soon as the pandemic emerged, a regional response was taken by ECOWAS authorities to complement the urgent and specific measures taken by States. At an Extraordinary Summit held on April 23, 2020, ECOWAS Heads of State and Government established Ministerial Coordination Committees on Health, Finance and Transport to coordinate regional efforts to combat the pandemic, under the supervision of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Champion of the regional plan to combat COVID-19. A regional strategic plan with a budget of about 51 million Euros was adopted for the procurement of essential medical supplies and equipment for member states, including test kits, personal protective equipment and drugs.

22. In accordance with the implementation framework of regional response, the West African Health Organization (WAHO) is coordinating the regional health response to the pandemic in close collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission and Member States, as well as partners including CDC Africa in the implementation of this plan. Thus, WAHO is working to mobilize internal and external resources to increase availability of medical equipment and supplies needed for prevention, surveillance and eradication of the pandemic. To date, close to $38 million of the planned allocation of $51 million has been mobilized, of which $8 million (26% of the amount) has been mobilized internally at WAHO and the ECOWAS Commission, and $30 million (74%) represents external funding and pledges from partners.

23. In addition, in response to member states' request for targeted support for specific response efforts to COVID-19, WAHO has, to date, disbursed approximately $1.109 million to 15 countries for identified needs, such as the deployment of rapid response teams and medical personnel overseas, staff training, or the purchase of equipment such as thermal imaging cameras or intensive care unit devices.

24. On the economic and financial level, measures taken by the States relate in particular to various fields:

- In terms of resource mobilization by member states through the issuance of treasury bills and bonds on the financial market, the total amount raised was US$14.37 billion;
- With regard to resource mobilization from the international community, the resources mobilized by the end of June 2020 amounted to US$12.67 billion;
- With regard to the support of member states to the most vulnerable sectors of the respective countries, the actions are, among others, food distribution, cash transfers, reduction of electricity and water bills;
- In the area of support for local production, tax rebates and deferrals have been granted to businesses. Aid funds have also been created and measures to reduce interest rates have been put in place to support businesses;
- With regard to the decision on negotiation of external debt relief for ECOWAS member states, UEMOA countries benefited from deferrals of repayment of the principal due to BOAD (West African Development Bank) for 2020. In addition, IMF debt relief was provided to member states in the Least Developed Country (LDC) category.

25. In view of the economic situation of States and actions already implemented, Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks have formulated the following recommendations designed to promote recovery of the economies:

- Establish uniform tariff relief measures for goods and commodities labelled as essential humanitarian products in the fight against COVID-19.

- Adopt tax measures for traders and transport service providers.
- Establish a relief system for essential commodities and humanitarian goods.
- Develop a framework to assess the effectiveness of member states' measures to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and stimulate economic recovery, in order to identify best practices to be shared.
- Mobilize additional resources to support national and regional efforts to address the challenges posed by COVID-19.
- Develop an advocacy strategy for further debt relief within the framework of the African Union.
- Implement procedures to digitize customs activities to promote harmonization and speed of processes.
- Continue efforts to develop and improve programs to support key economic sectors affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

26. With regard to agriculture and food and nutrition security, the meeting of Ministers in charge of Agriculture and Food of ECOWAS Member States held on March 31, 2020 made recommendations and resolutions to mitigate the impacts on access to food and the risks of malnutrition. Following these recommendations, an emergency regional action plan to respond to the foreseeable impacts of the COVID-19 measures was adopted, focusing on 4 pillars: facilitating access to agricultural inputs (not compromising the agricultural season) and putting in place social food security nets; increasing the intervention capacities of the National Stocks and the Regional Food Security Reserve (Cf. Additional Act A/SA.2 /02/13); prevent, monitor and control pests (locust threat at the same time as COVID-19); and control transboundary animal diseases (Peste des Petits Ruminants persisted at the same time as COVID-19). In the area of humanitarian and social affairs, the Commission has taken various actions to provide rapid humanitarian responses and interventions to the populations affected by COVID-19 :

    - In order to support the States in supporting vulnerable populations, it was decided, within the framework of the Regional Food Security Reserve, to allocate 2.2 million euros from the project to assist vulnerable populations in the context of COVID-19;
    - The ECOWAS Humanitarian Emergency Fund was mobilized to the tune of $1 million for the acquisition of a stock of cereals. Acceptance and implementation of the "third-party payment" principle by ECOWAS and EU enabled the rapid release of 5,529 metric tons of cereals for the benefit of vulnerable populations in Burkina Faso (954 metric tons), Mali (793 metric tons), Niger (473 metric tons) and Nigeria (3,309 metric tons);
    - Finally, the extension until May 2021 of the regional project "Support to storage in West Africa" has enabled a re-allocation of resources in the amount of

approximately 3.7 million euros for the purchase of cereals and enriched flour to further contribute to the ECOWAS emergency plan and to increase the total response capacity of the reserve by approximately 6,048 tons of grain.

27. On the transport front, a Committee of Experts was set up by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for Transport, Logistics, Free Movement and Trade in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, which met virtually for the first time on June 8, 2020 to specify guidelines for harmonization and facilitation of cross-border trade and transport in the region.

3.3.2 Measures taken by ECOWAS Partners

28. In terms of external resource mobilization, to date, the AfDB provided US$ 856.35 million to ECOWAS member countries to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the World Bank, the IMF and the European Union have supported ECOWAS countries with $771.7 million, $6,449.2 million and $100.2 million, respectively, to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

29. The UEMOA Commission mobilized more than CFAF 1,000 billion on Public Securities Market called "COVID-19 social bonds" to meet financing needs of its member states. In addition, it financially supported its member states to the tune of CFAF 3 billion (4.6 million euros) for implementation of their national response plans to COVID-19. In addition, the WADB authorized CFAF 196.6 billion in support to member states in conjunction with the BCEAO and the UEMOA Commission and approved new project financing for a total amount of CFAF 158.1 billion. Finally, the countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) have issued, as of 27 April 2020, treasury bonds called "COVID-19 social bonds" for an estimated total amount of CFAF 846 billion (1.29 billion euros) to finance their respective response plans.

30. The World Bank, the IMF and the European Union supported ECOWAS countries with US$771.73 million, US$6449.19 million and US$100.15 million respectively to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

31. The United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) today committed $40 million and launched an urgent appeal for additional funds to support farmers and rural communities to continue growing and selling food. IFAD's new multi-donor fund, the Rural Poor Facility (RFF) COVID-19, will mitigate the effects of the pandemic on food production, market access and rural employment. As part of the broader UN socio-economic response framework, the Facility will ensure that farmers in the most vulnerable countries have timely access to inputs, information, markets and cash. In addition to its own contribution, IFAD aims to raise at least an additional $200 million from member states, foundations and the private sector.

32. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) provided EUR 77.7 million (USD 88.8 million) to Niger to combat food insecurity and make populations more

resilient to the effects of climate change and COVID19. A total of 210,000 poor households that depend largely on agriculture are benefiting. It enables the implementation of Niger's Project to Strengthen the Resilience of Rural Communities to Food and Nutrition Insecurity (PRECIS), with an estimated total cost of $194 million, funded by the Nigerien government and donors. The project aims to build the capacity of small-scale farmers and their organizations in the production, storage, and processing of perishable products, as well as in food, good nutrition, and hygiene practices.

33. FAO put in place appropriate responses to COVID-19, particularly in the most fragile and insecure transboundary areas, to enhance food and nutrition security and livelihood resilience of vulnerable communities. In addition, FAO has designed and is implementing integrated activities and services based on good practices developed by FAO in the Sahel and other arid and semi-arid areas, in order to protect in particular agropastoral communities and help them prevent, anticipate and adapt to multiple risks. These activities and services take into account the different risks faced by the communities. The modalities of the response for the period April 2020-April 2021 to assist 2,140,000 people in the Liptako-Gourma cross-border area (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger) FAO requires USD 62 million. The intervention zones (departments/communes) are selected according to criteria related to food and nutrition insecurity of the Harmonized Framework and household livelihoods of the Household Economy Approach (HEA) with the participation of the populations. In addition, FAO has adopted a Comprehensive Humanitarian Response Plan - COVID-19, including the creation of a Food Chain Data Tool under the COVID-19 pandemic with a global value of US$ 100 million to stabilize incomes and access to food, ensure continuity of the critical food supply chain and prevent new infections, in partnership with WHO.

34. The other countries with their own central banks have taken macroeconomic policy measures to facilitate financing and credit. These include Cabo Verde, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

    - The government of Cabo Verde approved a package of funds to support major Cabo Verde-based enterprises with loans and interest rate reduction by establishing a US$10 million SME credit line.
    - The same is true for Ghana, which launched the US$250 million Development Bank of Ghana (DBG) to provide lines of credit to qualified financial institutions to lend to their clients, especially SMEs, at below-market rates to support Ghanaian businesses, especially in agribusiness, manufacturing, and modern services, including the ICT/digital economy.
    - The Central Bank of Liberia (CBL), maintained the monetary policy rate at 30 percent, the suspension of the fractional remittance policy and the continued issuance of shorter-term financial instruments (CBL Bill) at two weeks, one month and three months above the current inflation rate and decided to

continue the awareness campaign on the CBL Bill and the use of electronic payments as an alternative to cash transactions.

- The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has taken a battery of measures to support its currency for restructuring of credit facilities in the other financial institutions (OFI) sub-sector by granting an additional one-year moratorium on all principal repayments and revising the deadlines for compliance with minimum capital requirements for Microfinance Banks (MFBs), effective March 1, 2020; interest rates on CBN's intervention facilities through participating OFIs are reduced from 9% to 5% per annum for 1 year effective March 1, 2020; provide foreign exchange, which it had suspended, to all commercial banks for sale to parents wishing to pay school fees and to SMEs wishing to make essential imports needed to revive economic activities in the country in order to support its currency.
- Sierra Leone's central bank reduced the policy rate by 150 basis points from 16.5 percent to 15 percent, effective March 19th; created a special credit facility (SLL 500 billion) to support production, procurement, and distribution of essential goods; and extended the reserve requirement period from 15 to 28 days to facilitate liquidity tightening.
- The Central Banks of Guinea and The Gambia reduced the intervention rate to support the financing of the economy;

35. Farmers' and rural organizations (FROs) and NGOs have also taken steps toward sustainable development and in favour of vulnerable households and pastoralists.

3.3.3 Measures taken by NGOs and PROs

36. 3 Several measures have been taken by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and farmers' and rural organizations (FROs) in terms of social safety nets (cash and food transfers, school canteens, etc.), revitalizing organizations, and setting up a monitoring system to measure the economic impacts of COVID-19.

37. The Maroobe Billital Network (RBM) and *Action Contre la Faim* (ACF), with the support of technical and financial partners (IOM, CARE, GIZ), have set up a monitoring system to measure the economic impacts of COVID-19 on pastoral populations in RBM and ACF intervention zones. These areas are pastoral sub-areas in 9 countries: Mali (TASSAGHT), Niger (AREN, GAJEL), Burkina Faso (CRUS, RECOPA), Senegal (ADENA), Mauritania (GNAP), Togo (PATTogo), Benin (ANOPER), Nigeria (BILPAN), and Côte d'Ivoire (OPEF) with the support of the decentralized technical services of Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. The monitoring system is based, on the one hand, on the optimization of existing systems (information monitoring, alert/prevention/conflicts, counting/mapping of transhumance movements), established by the pastoral organizations and, on the other hand, on the exploitation of data transmitted regularly by key informants. The different information systems allow, on a periodic basis : (i) provide information on the situation

of pastoral households, the functioning of markets and the support received by the livestock sector; (ii) map the herders and animals currently stranded in the Gulf of Guinea countries (Benin, Togo, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire) due to political and health measures (pandemic context); (iii) identify the assembly points of animals that are forced to interrupt their movements as a result of mobility restrictions linked, at least in part, to the pandemic; and (iv) map the movements of transhumant herders along the central transhumance corridor, in order to better understand the dynamics and characteristics of internal (national) and cross-border mobility systems.

38. The West African Fertilizer Association (WAFA), the International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC) and its AfricaFertilizer.Org (AFO) initiative are working to ensure that fertilizer and other agricultural inputs are not restricted, but rather supported by government decisions, so that they can continue to reach farmers in time for the growing season. This initiative is supported by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). They also launched the West Africa Fertilizer Watch on April 10, 2020. The Observatory has been highly valued by private sector companies along the value chain, the public sector, and development partners responsible for policy and food security interventions, including government ministries, regional economic communities (ECOWAS, CILSS, UEMOA), and the African Union, as a valuable tool for tracking actions and analysing data to assist in decision-making regarding fertilizer availability and use.

39. The Africa Fertilizer Financing Mechanism (AFFM)-*Office Chérifien des Phosphates* (OCP) partnership worked with the private sector to strengthen fertilizer value chains. In 2019, AFFM and OCP Africa agreed to collaborate on a trade credit guarantee program to improve access to fertilizer in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Together with covid, the two organizations decided to expand OCP's Agri booster initiative. The Agri booster mechanism helps smallholder farmers access good quality products and services such as: inputs (fertilizer, seed and crop protection products); training on good agricultural practices; and market linkages and financial services such as credit loans. AFFM and OCP have agreed to commit $2 million each for a total of $4 million to the credit guarantee. Each party to the credit guarantee scheme will hold the committed funds in separate revolving funds. Both parties will share the risk 50%-50% *peripasu*. This credit guarantee program will last until the year 2022. The project aims to reach 250,000 smallholder farmers in Ghana under a partnership agreement between the government and OCP, and 180,000 in Côte d'Ivoire in partnership with the Rice Development Agency, with yield increase targets of 35% and 30%.

40. In addition, AFFM launched a US$2.2 million project in Nigeria to provide Nigerian fertilizer suppliers with financial support to improve the supply of 200,000 smallholder farmers with AFAP, the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership, its

implementing partner in the country. The trade credit guarantee project is AFFM's first in the West African country and involved 10 fertilizer suppliers, 12 distributors and 120 retailers. The project also trained farmers in the proper use of fertilizer and other good agricultural practices. To address the current crisis following the COVID-19 pandemic, Fairtrade International is launching two producer support funds totalling €3.1 million.

41. In Burkina Faso, the social safety net project "*Burkin - Naong - Sa ya*" implemented from 2014-2024 and financed by the Spanish Cooperation, readapted its activities to take into account the additional vulnerable people created by covid 19 in order to increase the access of poor and vulnerable households to social safety nets and establish the foundations of an adaptive social safety net system (cash transfers coupled with accompanying measures / rational use of resources, promotion of good food and nutritional practices) in Burkina Faso. This allowed for the realization of a :

    - computerized and dynamic management of a database that hosts data on the beneficiaries and the activities carried out by the project, which can be used by other actors
    - improved living conditions: better household nutrition, schooling for children, good health care, etc;
    - High participation of beneficiaries in awareness-raising activities (81% out of a target of 75%)
    - Increased economic empowerment of women: through the development of income-generating activities (over 90%);
    - Community anchoring of the project in all beneficiary localities
    - 12% coverage rate of the poor (1,065,186 individuals)

42. CERAI and *Associação dos Amigos da Natureza* implemented in Cabo-Verde over the period 2016/2020 resilient agri-ecological practices and participatory marketing as a tool for school nutrition and food security on the islands of Santo Antão and Fogo. Its programs were strengthened in 2020 with the advent of COVID-19 to contribute to the reduction of food and nutritional insecurity of rural populations and students in the islands of Fogo and Santo Antão. This allowed innovative practices of resilient production and participatory marketing disseminated and adopted, rural associations to form productive alliances and provide products to the PNASE, and the local purchase of agricultural products is promoted as an instrument of community and food security.

43. Thus, on the Island of Fogo notes:

    - the creation of the 1st national cooperative for the production and marketing of local processed corn (but broken)
    - more than 37,000 students (42% of the student population) with daily access to a traditional hot meal (catchupa) in the first quarter
    - 47% of quarterly corn demand covered

- agreement of a new contract for the next school year 2021-2022 (broken maize and harricot).

44. On the Island of Santo Antão :

- more than 7,000 students (7% of the cv student population) with access to a daily meal (sweet potatoes, potatoes, carrots)
- since march 2021, the alliance has been collaborating with the network of local agricultural producers (repal) of são vicente island under the contract to supply the island's schools (15,000 euros).
- the agreement of a new contract for the next school year 2021-2022 (50,000 euros),
- cooperation between the producer alliances of the two islands.
- financial participation of parents in the pnase (empowerment)

45. Network of Animators for Integrated Development in Guinea (RADIG) through the Support Project for Market Gardening in Forest Guinea in:

- Strengthen the production and management capacities of 62 market gardening groups in order to improve their productivity;
- To increase the community's contribution to the improvement of the nutritional status of students through the supply of vegetables to school canteens;
- To improve the marketing capacities of 62 market gardening groups in order to increase the income of their members.

46. The project provided 62 groups with small agricultural tools and food kits; trained 2,385 members of the 62 groups, including 2,103 women (88%) in market gardening techniques, including composting; produced and used 40.26 tons of compost by the 62 groups; supported 62 groups, advised and monitored them in the implementation of their market gardening activities; and developed 72 ha of market gardening perimeter for the benefit of 62 beneficiary groups. In addition, 62 groups benefited from 68 kg of seed during the project, generated income of 3,459,848,125 GNF from the sale of market garden products and other agricultural products; 62 school canteens benefited from 18,277 kg of vegetables worth 54,771,050 GNF; 17,335 students from 62 schools, including 8,014 girls, received support for school feeding; and 15 marketing zones were identified for the promotion of grouped sales with partnership agreements Finally, 62 beneficiary groups received 58.90 tons of rice, 1736 kg of salt, 8680 litres of vegetable oil and 2480 kg of smoked fish during the project period. In terms of impacts:

- School feeding has helped to improve school indicators at the school level
- The application of mulching and oil cakes to maintain soil moisture has reduced the women's workload and helped protect the plants;
- The production of compost has become an integrated practice to promote organic agriculture and improve yields;

- The involvement of technical services has helped to improve their collaborative relationships with the groups;
- The development of market gardening perimeters still remains a challenge to strengthen the control and profitability of the sector, etc.

47. ZOA Liberia through its Local Agriculture for Nutrition in Education Value Chain (LANE VC) has:

a) At the level of the favoured farmers

- Development and implementation of community agricultural development plans;
- Agricultural training + provision of seeds and inputs to farmers
- Improved post-harvest management
- Market linkages
- Establishment of agricultural value chains
- Food safety training for farmers and agribusinesses.

b) At the favoured school level

- improvement of school indicators at the school level
- The application of mulching and oil cakes to maintain soil moisture has reduced the women's workload and helped protect the plants;
- The production of compost has become an integrated practice to promote organic agriculture and improve yields;
- The involvement of technical services has helped to improve their collaborative relationships with the groups;
- The development of market gardening perimeters still remains a challenge to strengthen the control and profitability of the sector, etc.

3.4 Specific Measures

48. The ECOWAS and CILSS member countries, at the invitation of their respective organizations, have adopted national plans to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. These plans focus on the launch of food kits, the opening of flagship stores, support to agropastoral sectors, resource mobilization, cash transfers, etc. But for the purposes of this work, food security and nutrition response measures are classified into food and agricultural policies (producer-oriented agricultural policies, consumer-oriented agricultural policies, and macroeconomic and trade-oriented policies, each with its own subcategories) and policy frameworks (national socio-economic development, food security and nutrition, agriculture and rural development, social protection, natural resources, trade and markets, disaster risk reduction and management, and gender) from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Food and Agricultural Policy Decision Analysis (FAPDA) tool to identify and analyse policy trends.

3.4.1 Food and Agricultural Policy Decisions Pro-consumer

49. Several pro-consumer decisions have been made across the WA to address the socioeconomic effects of COVID-19:

- All West African countries have proceeded to rebate taxes to companies affected by the restrictions and to moderate penalties resulting from tax audits.
- the establishment of private sector guarantee funds to guarantee the financing needs of SMEs/SMIs, decentralized financial systems, agribusinesses and other industries affected by COVID-19;
- support for the electricity and water sector, which has enabled vulnerable groups to pay their water and electricity bills;
- the revision of the national budgets for 2020 by increasing the budgetary shares for health, agriculture and social protection to take into account the situation created by COVID-19. This has made it possible to provide free screening and treatment for COVID-19 patients; the distribution of free hygiene kits and the revival of the economy in 2021;
- the mobilization of contributions from technical and financial partners - ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, FAO, BCEAO, AfDB, BOAD, European Union, UNICEF, WFP, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, GIZ, AFD, etc. - following emergency appeals launched by the governments of African countries at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020;
- Strengthening social protection mechanisms by revitalizing school feeding programs, distributing food and food kits, increasing cash transfers, implementing cash-for-work programs, implementing information,

prevention and infection control measures at distribution sites, and increasing price controls on basic foodstuffs.

50. Pro-consumer covid response measures are subdivided into fiscal (taxes), social protection, market, disposable income, and health and nutrition assistance policies.

3.4.1.1 Fiscal policy measures

51. According to the available literature, all countries have taken measures in terms of subsidies on fuel, electricity and water that affect consumers' disposable income. These utility support measures include subsidies for water bills and water points, subsidies for electricity bills (100% for some types of connections, 50% for others), removal of penalties on water and electricity bills (Burkina Faso, Mali for the months of April and May 2020 in the so-called social categories), reduction in the cost of solar panel kits by 50% for poor households, and subsidies on water and electricity costs for market vendors. In addition, the vehicle tax has been postponed to the end of June 2020 in Burkina Faso. In The Gambia, tax policy changes and assessments on 2019 tax returns for the retail and service sectors have been delayed from the first quarter of 2020 to the second quarter. In addition, the state has made a deferral of taxes and payroll taxes and deferral of expenses to the current fiscal year and an extension, for two months expired at the end of May, the filing of the 2019 annual tax return and payment of the final 2019 tax, as well as for the filing of the first quarter 2020 return and payment of the first quarter. It also lowered its annual revenue target by about 2.2% of GDP.

52. The disbursement of CFAF 7.1 billion (US$11,866,500) to pay the March and April 2020 electricity bills for 1,052,000 households subscribing to the social electricity tariff in Côte d'Ivoire was noted. While in Benin FCFA 5.76 billion has been mobilized to pay for subsidies on electricity and water rates for the entire population. The Senegalese government allocated 12.5 billion CFA francs ($20.8 million) and 3 billion CFA francs ($5 million) to pay the electricity and water bills of 975,000 and 670,000 families, respectively. In addition, Ghana provided GH¢1,028 million as a three-month subsidy for electricity consumption in households and businesses, a reduction in the communication services tax (CST) from 9% to 5% to reduce the cost of communication services, and a GH¢323 million subsidy for relief (e.g., PPE, tax exemption, allowances, transportation, and COVID insurance) for front-line health workers. The government of Guinea Bissau announced the provision of free electricity and water to the poorest consumers, and tax relief in terms of import duties on basic foods such as rice and milk.

53. Sierra Leone used $234,074 in savings from the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance to Flood Victims project in emergency assistance to COVID-19 for water, sanitation, and hygiene improvements

54. The Société Béninoise d'Energie Electrique (SBEE) has suspended power cuts for non-payment of bills for the period from March to May 2020 for households to ensure

continuity of energy supply and therefore production activities (welders, processing units, etc.). In addition, women of markets of Burkina Faso and the actors of the accommodation and catering sector of Benin have benefited from a business support program which consists of the assumption of rent for Burkina Faso and a reimbursement of salary charges and taxes related to salaries for a period of 03 months up to 70%; payment of three months of commercial rent and full payment of water and electricity bills for a period of three months, reimbursement of VAT credits, exemption from payment of the motor vehicle tax for those who have not yet paid it for the year 2020 or its conversion into a tax credit for the year 2021, for those who have already paid it in Benin has mobilized CFAF 40 billion to support businesses in difficulty through targeted and temporary tax exemptions and a relaxation of certain payment rules. In addition, the Beninese government has made available a budgetary package of USD 17 million (0.1% of GDP) for vulnerable groups and for economic recovery and has provided support to the cotton sector to maintain cotton purchase prices and input prices for the 2020/2021 season at the same level as the previous 2019/2020 season.

55. These measures have mitigated the impact of job losses and declining incomes. In addition, since June 2020, the Ministries of Social Affairs, Culture, Handicrafts, Finance and Decentralization in Benin have implemented subsidy programs for artisans and small service units at a total cost of CFAF 4.98 billion. In total, 44,881 artisans and small service units have been subsidized. The political will combined with the targeting and exhaustive census of beneficiaries have been the success factors of this program. However, the program is facing the low availability of financial resources. To this end, more than 63.38 billion CFA francs have been mobilized for this purpose despite the limited availability of financial resources.

56. With the exception of Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, and Chad, the other countries have fertilizer subsidy programs in place. Seven of them subsidize more than 50 percent of the national fertilizer market. With 80% of their market subsidized, Ghana and Senegal, Mali have the largest programs relative to their respective market sizes. Subsidies and programs, such as the PFI in Nigeria, keep the price of urea around $275 per ton at farm gate, and always below $400 per ton. Local fertilizer distribution costs typically add +50% to +70% to the FOB price (Senegal, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Burkina), and up to +123% in Niger.

57. In addition, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal have also subsidized agricultural inputs and materials. To this end, in order to improve agricultural production despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Burkinabe government has made available to producers "at highly subsidized prices" nearly 40,000 tons of fertilizer, a little over 14,000 tons of improved seeds, 24,000 litres of pesticides, as well as 400 tractors, 132 motorized cultivators, 4,000 plows, 200 seeders, and 1,020 draught animals for the production of more than 8 million tons of agricultural products. These inputs were distributed to farmers through agri-Voucher. 50,000 tons of fertilizer for

cotton and cereals were distributed and the subsidy rate is 50% of the commercial price of fertilizer (NPK and urea) in Guinea. Mali granted XOF 35 billion in subsidies to cotton producers to compensate for the drop in the price of cotton on the international market. Each producer will receive a premium of 50 CFA per kg based on the volume produced during the crop year.

58. In addition, as part of the 2020/21 agricultural program financed by the Senegalese government to the tune of CFAF 60 billion, it decided to subsidize 100% of more than 700 units of motorized agricultural equipment for women and young people with agricultural initiatives. The government spent two billion CFA francs (US$3.3 million) to purchase feed for livestock and poultry. The feed is resold at subsidized prices to livestock farmers. A total of 660 tons (13,200 50 kg bags) of poultry feed was distributed.

59. The Ivorian government released a fund of 150.8 billion CFA francs to support the agricultural sectors. These include the cashew nut sector with a subsidy of 35 billion CFA francs, the cotton sector with a subsidy of 5.56 billion CFA francs, the rubber sector with a subsidy of 24.98 billion CFA francs, the oil palm sector with a subsidy of 3.5 billion CFA francs, the fruit sector with a state subsidy of 10.5 billion CFA francs and the rice sector with a State subsidy of 12 billion CFA francs. The poultry sector receives a contribution of 2.66 billion CFA francs. The food sector for a support of 16.82 billion FCFA, the pork and livestock sectors in development, with a support of 1.51 billion FCFA. The artisanal fisheries and aquaculture sectors with support of CFAF 2.56 billion. The marketing of food products will receive support of CFAF 4.4 billion for logistics, market supply and health protection for traders and users. An agricultural response plan to support Togolese producers and to increase production and productivity levels promotes better management of labour mobility through a specialized agency; and 3) subsidized input credits at zero interest. The input credits target nine crops (cotton, maize, rice, soybeans, sesame, ginger, tomato, onion and chili).

60. The Government of Liberia, through the Ministry of Agriculture and the World Bank-funded Smallholder Agriculture Transformation and Agribusiness Revitalization Project (STAR-P), launched a $10,000 grant to support small and medium-sized agribusinesses in the country to mitigate post-COVID-19 shocks. The Mauritanian government established an $80 million emergency fund (1.1% of GDP) for emergency purchases of medical supplies and equipment, subsidies to 30,000 poor households, and financial support to individual small businesses. In the same vein, Chad has provided public sector grants to businesses. The package of measures decided upon by the authorities includes the establishment of a Youth Entrepreneurship Fund (0.6 percent of non-oil GDP), the clearance of approximately XAF 110 billion of domestic surfaces owed to suppliers, a planned subsidy to the agricultural sector (0.3 percent of non-oil GDP), and the simplification of the import process for food and basic necessities, including health equipment, and tax exemptions for these items.

61. Loans or capital injections to businesses through the stimulus package has been put in place in Benin. This plan includes a XOF 30 billion (US$51.3 million) grant fund to support a XOF 100 billion (US$171.2 million) zero-interest financing line provided through banking and microfinance institutions. The West African Development Bank (WADB) has decided to grant UEMOA member countries CFAF 120 billion in concessional loans (CFAF 15 billion per country) for immediate disbursement. These loans benefit from an interest rate subsidy mechanism financed by the BCEAO and the UEMOA Commission up to CFAF 25 billion and CFAF 15 billion respectively.

3.4.1.2 Social policy measures

62. A total of 33 social protection measures have been implemented. These include 2 nutritional and health policies, 11 food distribution measures, 4 unconditional cash transfer social policies, an unspecified financing and credit facilitation measure, an insurance and reinsurance policy, 2 mutual support and conditional risk financing measures, 4 unspecified production support decisions, 2 agricultural expenditure decisions in the national budget, a conditional cash transfer measure to support youth and women's employment and 5 unspecified social policy measures. In terms of nutrition and health policies, the Burkinabe government has allocated 394 billion CFA francs ($658,495,000 USD), representing 4.45% of GDP, to implement all measures to address the COVID-19 crisis. This amount includes the overall health response plan, which amounts to approximately 178 billion CFA francs (US$297,493,000).

63. A minimum of approximately US$162 million was identified as having been spent on food distribution to vulnerable households. Indeed, the governments of Liberia, Mauritania, Mali, Senegal and Ghana spent US$30 million, US$77,936, US$8,347,150, US$114,328,000, and US$8.9 million respectively on food distribution. This concerned respectively the implementation of a food distribution plan in Liberia, the distribution of 56,000 tons of cereals for 1,382,556 people in Mali, the distribution of food baskets to 1,750 poor families and 270 food kits to families of disabled children in Mauritania, the one-time distribution of a basic food kit to 1 million poor households in Senegal and the distribution of hot meals and food parcels in Ghana.

64. In addition, the Cabo Verde governments have adopted food assistance programs that target the most vulnerable population in terms of food security and nutrition, whose income is below the minimum wage or without any source of income. These programs have benefited 22,500 families in Cabo Verde and 200,000 households in Nigeria totalling 90,000 individuals (30,000 children) and 1.2 million people targeted respectively. Ghana has distributed hot meals and food parcels to over 400,000 Ghanaians at a cost of GH¢54 million to improve the food security of those who received the meals.

65. Conditional and unconditional cash transfers were introduced in Burkina Faso (5 billion CFA francs), Côte d'Ivoire (17.6 billion CFA francs), Togo (13.3 billion CFA francs), Ghana, Liberia (700,000 USD), Nigeria, and Mauritania (132,496,000 USD)

66. The government of Burkina has introduced cash transfers to informal sector workers (fruit and vegetable vendors). These $10 million (5 billion CFA francs) transfers is intended to assist informal fruit and vegetable retailers affected by COVID-19, particularly women. In addition, the government of Burkina Faso, in partnership with the World Bank, has come to the aid of poor and vulnerable populations affected by the coronavirus in the cities of Ouaga and Bobo through direct transfers of 20,000 CFA francs per month for three months to each beneficiary. The program called Cash Transfer, from the project " *burkin-Naong Sa Ya* social nets ", was launched with the objective of mitigating the negative impacts of the pandemic on 43,000 vulnerable women in the cities of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso poor and vulnerable households.

67. 113,000 people received cash transfers of XOF 17 billion from the COVID-19 solidarity fund in Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, the humanitarian plan provided care for 253 street children. The government allocated CFAF 600 million (US$1,015,630) to support 2,279 informal sector workers affected by the health crisis. Nigeria provided conditional cash transfers for two months to vulnerable people and IDPs. In addition, with support from the U.S. government's Food for Peace program, Nigeria provided cash transfers to needy displaced mothers, helping them purchase basic necessities, including food and medicine. Finally, the Support Plan was revised to set a target of 5.6 million people to be supported through emergency food aid for 2.7 million people and unconditional cash transfers for 2.9 million people.

68. The Togolese government set up a cash transfer program to assist those who lost their jobs following the implementation of the response to the coronavirus. A total of about 13.3 billion was mobilized for 819,972 beneficiaries (516,573 women).

69. For the duration of the state of emergency, NOVISSI beneficiaries received monthly financial support of a minimum of 12,250 CFA francs for women and 10,500 CFA francs for men: Every two weeks, half of this amount was directly deposited into the beneficiaries' electronic wallets for the duration of the state of emergency. Mauritania, through its emergency fund, has allocated 5 billion ouguiya (USD 132,496,000) to support 30,000 dependent families of women, the elderly, and the disabled, most of whom are in Nouakchott, with monthly financial assistance for three months.

70. Liberia provided US$700,000 in agricultural loans over three years at an interest rate of 7% to rice processors to buy more paddy from small-scale rice farmers for processing on the domestic market.

71. There is evidence of job creation for youth in Ghana and Nigeria through cash for work programs. Indeed, Nigeria implemented a new $1,636.6 million agricultural and food

security project that is expected to generate 5 million jobs for youth. The government of Ghana established a national unemployment insurance scheme for workers to provide temporary income support and retraining opportunities to laid-off workers while they seek alternative employment.

3.4.1.3 Market policy measures

72. At least seven agricultural market-oriented policy decisions were identified. These included measures for institutional reform of the National Market Information Systems (Ghana) and the creation or modification of a food reserve for better price control in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Côte d'Ivoire; the release of food reserves and the creation or modification of a food reserve in Nigeria; legal and regulatory measures related to consumer protection governing sanitation and hygiene in Liberia; and the creation or modification of a food reserve in Burkina Faso.

73. Indeed, the government of Ghana has established a national food security committee to effectively monitor and report on food prices, supply and distribution systems to enable the government to take timely action when warranted. In addition, financial support was provided to the National Food Buffer Stock Company and the Ghana Commodity Exchange to increase food stock levels to purchase and store a two-month supply of maize, rice, and gari that would be released in the event of shortages and price increases to assist vulnerable members of society in particular.

74. In the same vein, several governments (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, etc.) have imposed price controls on basic foodstuffs as well as on COVID-19 protection products (masks and hydro-alcohol gel) in order to limit price hikes. The products concerned are rice, sugar, vegetable oil and wheat flour. In Togo, Thai rice with 5% broken rice was set at 18,500 FCFA per 50 kilo bag and Pakistani rice with 25% broken rice at 17,200 FCFA per bag. For sugar, the 50-kilo bag is FCFA 16,000. The Ivorian government has deployed about 300 agents throughout the country to ensure compliance with the price control measures adopted as part of the COVID-19 health crisis.

75. In Nigeria, the president approved the release of 70,000 metric tons of grain from Nigeria's National Strategic Grain Reserve, followed by the agreement of the Minister of Agriculture to resupply the reserve with 100,000 tons. This food is being distributed to the poor and vulnerable, as well as those whose livelihoods have been affected by the closures. In addition, under the Presidential Fertilizer Initiative (PFI), the federal government reduced the price of NPK fertilizer from N5,500 to N5,000 per 50 kg bag. Niger sold over 81,000 tons of cereals and almost 3,000 tons of sugar at moderate prices to benefit over one million people. Operations to support infant and child feeding have been maintained and reinforced by awareness-raising measures worth CFAF 2.1 billion. Finally, the Burkina Faso government has adopted several measures to secure stocks of consumer products, including the opening of social stores at 150 points of sale at

subsidized prices for approximately 25,000 tons of grain. The outlets, commonly known as "*boutiques témoins*," have facilitated access to cereals for vulnerable people, allowing them to buy at a subsidized price of 6,000 CFA francs per 50-kg bag. Some 150 outlets sold approximately 25,000 tons of cereals at a subsidized price, as well as 4,796 tons of cereals at social prices. Over the lean season, needs are estimated at more than 121,000 tons of grain, or 21 billion CFA francs.

76. Côte d'Ivoire has provided the cassava sector with the means to consolidate a price observation system by producers and on urban markets, in order to make price formation more transparent. In addition, the government has set itself the political objective of being self-sufficient in rice by 2025 by creating a ministry for the promotion of rice production. In addition, for the monitoring of prices 300 agents deployed to ensure compliance with the price ceiling to preserve the purchasing power of the people and to punish all violators.

77. In order to control food prices on the market, the Beninese government has taken measures to prohibit the uncontrolled export of foodstuffs from the national territory from June to October 2021. More than 266 tons of corn, sorghum and millet were seized by the police, thus helping to reduce the price of agricultural products. The success of such a measure depends on political will and the existence of deconcentrated structures in charge of control.

78. Mali banned the export and re-export of certain food products, including rice, millet, sugar, milk, and pasta, and reduced customs duties on rice and milk imports. In addition, on March 27, the Directorate General of Trade and Competition adopted a price cap scheme for key staples, including rice, sugar, vegetable oils, and bread. Niger has revised its existing plan to support vulnerable populations by increasing the amount of food aid to CFAF 343 billion (from CFAF 186 billion). The plan aims to support 5.6 million people during the lean season with emergency food aid and financial assistance. The sale of cereals at moderate prices has been renewed, with more than 81,000 tons of cereals and almost 3,000 tons of sugar benefiting more than one million people. Operations to support the feeding of infants and children have been maintained and reinforced by awareness-raising measures worth CFAF 2.1 billion.

3.4.1.4 Disposable income measures

79. Several policy decisions in favour of disposable income have been identified. These are directed at consumer credit through unspecified financing and credit facilities and support for financing by public banks in Ghana, Liberia, and Nigeria and in UEMOA countries respectively.

80. **Guinea** reduced the intervention rate of the Central Bank to support the financing of the economy; distributed 50,000 tons of fertilizer for cotton and cereals free of charge;

subsidized the commercial price of fertilizer (NPK and urea) by 50 percent; and supported local producers, particularly in the potato, pineapple, and cashew sectors.

81. In **Liberia**, as the fight against the virus intensifies in the country, the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) authorities suspended all fees on the Automated Clearing House (ACH), Direct Credit (DC) and Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) systems for three months. Commercial banks are therefore required to suspend all fees related to these Electronic Payment Channels for customers. The measure will reduce the cost of clearing, payments and transfers for individuals and businesses.

82. **The government of Cabo Verde** supported the private sector, including loan guarantees and tax bond facilities, providing loan guarantees of up to 50 percent for large companies; up to 80 percent for companies in the tourism and transportation sectors; and up to 100 percent for small and medium-sized enterprises. It has provided an estimated CVE 2.2 billion in support for the most vulnerable.

83. **The Bank of Ghana**, for its part, introduced measures to create credit space for banks, such as reducing primary reserve requirements, reducing capital conservation buffers and relaxing prudential guidelines. As a result, domestic banks have provided about GH¢7 billion in support to borrowers (between March and June 2020) through loan restructuring, repayment moratoriums, interest rate reductions and provision of new facilities.

84. **The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN),** in order to further mitigate the impact of the pandemic on households, businesses and regulated institutions, approved regulatory forbearance for the restructuring of credit facilities in the Other Financial Institutions (OFI) sub-sector as follows:

    - CBN intervention facilities made available through participating OFIs receive an additional 1-year moratorium on all principal repayments, effective March 1, 2020;
    - Interest rates on CBN intervention facilities through participating OFIs are reduced from 9% to 5% per annum for 1 year starting March 1, 2020;
    - OFIs are allowed to consider temporary and time-limited restructuring of loan tenors and terms for households and businesses affected by COVID-19, subject to the recently issued guidelines for restructuring of affected credit facilities in the OFI sub-sector.

85. **The Central Bank of Sierra Leone** at an emergency meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee decided to: (i) reduce the policy rate by 150 basis points from 16.5 percent to 15 percent, effective March 19; (ii) establish a special credit facility (SLL 500 billion) to support the production, procurement, and distribution of essential goods; and (iii) extend the reserve requirement period from 15 to 28 days to facilitate liquidity tightening

86. **The UEMOA Commission** is mobilizing more than CFAF 1,000 billion on the Public Securities Market called "COVID-19 social bonds" to meet the financing needs of its member states. In addition, the UEMOA Commission is providing financial support to member states to the tune of CFAF 3 billion (4.6 million euros) for the implementation of their national response plans to Covid 19. Member States have also taken specific measures to maintain the disposable incomes of their respective populations.

87. **Benin** mobilized CFAF 40 billion to support struggling businesses through targeted and temporary tax exemptions and the relaxation of certain payment rules. In addition, the Government of Benin has made available a budgetary package of USD 17 million (0.1% of GDP) for vulnerable groups and for economic recovery and has provided support to the cotton sector to maintain the purchase price of cotton and input prices for the 2020/2021 season at the same level as the previous 2019/2020 season.

88. **Burkina Faso** deferred payments to the government and suspended government fees charged to informal sector operators for leasing. A *Projet d'accompagnement à la Résilience économique* face à la COVID-19 (PARECOVID-19) aimed at supporting 15,000 businesses experiencing difficulties due to the new Coronavirus has been put in place. In addition, the government has subsidized agricultural inputs and materials to produce over 8 million tons of agricultural products. The government has made available to producers "at highly subsidized prices" nearly 40,000 tons of fertilizer, just over 14,000 tons of improved seeds, 24,000 litres of pesticides, as well as 400 tractors, 132 power tillers, 4,000 plows, 200 seeders, and 1,020 draft animals.

89. **The Ivorian government** created 4 special funds to be spent over 2 years, namely the national solidarity fund of 170 billion CFA francs, which supported 72,498 vulnerable households, the support fund for the informal sector of 100 billion CFA francs, the support fund for small and medium enterprises of 150 billion CFA francs and the support fund for large enterprises of 100 billion CFA francs. It also provided financial support to the agricultural sector to the tune of CFAF 300 billion for the distribution of seeds, fertilizers and agricultural equipment to more than 100,000 farmers benefiting from the agricultural emergency plan, for an investment of CFAF 50 billion in order to anticipate a possible food crisis and drop in income, for monitoring food prices.

90. **The government of Guinea Bissau** announced the provision of free electricity and water to the poorest consumers, and tax relief in terms of import duties on basic foods such as rice and milk.

91. **Mali** adopted a response plan valued at 18.4 percent of GDP, including food distribution, two months of free utilities (water, electricity) for vulnerable households, temporary tax relief for hard-hit sectors, and XOF 35 billion in subsidies for cotton producers.

92. **The government of Senegal** as made cash transfers for informal workers of at least 30% of the minimum wage, at a total cost of 11.4 billion CFA francs, followed by a reduction in the VAT rate from 18% to 10% for businesses in the hotel sector, the issuance of

vouchers for farmers' inputs estimated at 5.5 billion CFA francs, and subsidies for water and electricity for groups at a total cost estimated at 6.6 billion CFA francs. It has increased the subsidy rate from 50% to about 80% on certain products (urea + DAP used in rice), subsidized 100% of more than 700 units of motorized agricultural equipment intended for women and young people with agricultural initiatives, mobilized 2.2 billion FCFA as a matter of urgency to market outstanding horticultural production and for the purchase of rice harvesting equipment.

93. **In Togo**, the government set up a national solidarity fund, including contributions from the state budget, development partners and voluntary donations from the private sector and the Togolese diaspora. In addition, a NOVISSI monthly cash transfer program of a minimum of 12,250 CFA francs for women and 10,500 CFA francs for men has been set up by the government. From April 8 to June 6, 2020, 1,379,435 registrations were recorded. However, 11.3 billion FCFA (US$19.5 million) were distributed to 567,002 eligible beneficiaries, 65% of whom are women.

94. Disposable income measures were also included measures for employment programs (Burkina Faso), specified employment programs (Ghana, Nigeria, Mali, Mauritania), conditional cash transfers to support employment (Ghana), employment programs in terms of technical assistance, training and extension, and programs for food enhancement (Nigeria). Indeed, Nigeria has announced, as part of a strategy to reduce the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic on youth, the creation of over 774,000 jobs in 774 areas across the country. The government of Ghana, in addition to reducing the Communications Services Tax (CST) from 9% to 5%, has under the CARES Obaatanta Coronavirus Control Program:

    - established a start-up fund for a retraining program;
    - Established a national unemployment insurance scheme to provide temporary income support and retraining opportunities to laid-off workers to improve their skills and increase their chances of finding new employment;
    - through the Livestock for Food and Employment program, supported chicken (broilers and layers) and guinea fowl production by suspending its soybean exports to enable the poultry industry to create new jobs and produce more than 5,000 tons of chicken per year. In addition, the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB), in collaboration with the government, has developed a poultry value chain financing model that is currently being piloted and is expected to produce about 7,500 tons of chicken per year.
    - The AfDB has committed GH¢600 million to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) through the Coronavirus Control Program - Business Support Program (CAPBuSS), which is expected to be supplemented by up to GH¢400 million in bank loans

3.4.1.5 Specific Health and Nutrition Assistance Measures

95. Specific health and nutrition assistance measures taken by States consist of unspecified nutrition and health interventions, and water, sanitation, and hygiene measures.

96. Burkina Faso made unspecified nutrition and health interventions by allocating 178 billion CFA francs ($297,493,000) of which (41,017,556,333) CFA francs ($68,553,000) were allocated to emergency expenditures. Unspecified production support measures have been taken in Côte d'Ivoire through a CFAF 95,880 million (US$161,618,000) health response plan to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the government has developed an Economic, Social and Humanitarian Support Plan of CFAF 1.7 trillion (US$2,865,570), or about 5% of GDP, which will help mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the population and economic actors in the formal and informal sectors.

97. Macroeconomic policies have been taken in Liberia and Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources in Mauritania defining the conditions for fishing vessels wishing to enter the fishing zone and holding a fishing license; cargo vessels transhipping fishery products in port; merchant vessels serving Mauritanian ports. Finally, port authorities, ship owners, and ship captains must follow the guidelines and directives of the Inter-Ministerial Committee in charge of monitoring the coronavirus pandemic and the Ministry of Health.

98. Regarding water, sanitation and hygiene measures, the Ghanaian government has announced the extension of free water supply for another 3 months at a cost of GH¢200 million. While on the Liberian side, supermarkets and department stores are not allowing more than 10 customers at any one time and with a six feet distance between customers inside and outside the facilities, and no street vending is allowed during the quarantine period.

99. Within the framework of health and nutritional assistance, 1,052,484,576 CFA francs were mobilized to inform, educate the entire population and ensure communication on the pandemic. This decision has reduced cases of contamination by promoting the adoption of good hygiene practices, self-protection of vulnerable groups and the existence of the integrated national response plan. In addition, the Ministries of Health and Finance and the PTFs have distributed protection kits and subsidized 50% of the price of mufflers and set up consumables and laboratory inputs. This measure, which affects the entire population and costs 41,173,575,755 CFA francs, has helped reduce cases of contamination and the adoption of good hygiene practices.

100. The government of Benin has taken measures to increase the number of screening centres and the daily capacity of COVID tests. To this end, 89 screening sites accessible to the populations of the 77 communes have been set up, 150 doctors and 700 agents of all corps (midwives, nurses, laboratory technicians, hygienists, epidemiologists, social assistants and psychologists) have been mobilized to run these screening sites. To this end, 122 medical students and 35 young doctors were assigned to the communes to

reinforce the staff of the screening sites. In addition, 184 rapid response teams (nurses, laboratory technicians, hygienists, epidemiologists, social workers and psychologists) and 13 screening laboratories spread over the 12 departments of the country for the confirmation of COVID-19 cases have been set up. Implementation of an e-result platform www.eresultats.bj for systematic and progressive screening of teachers, administrative and service personnel; and a platform www.apresmonbac.bj to dematerialize the process of orientation, classification and selection of new baccalaureate holders to prevent cases of contamination in schools and universities. One of the challenges of these measures is the quality of the internet connection.

3.4.2 Pro-producer response measures

101. Within the framework of the response to COVID-19, several measures have been taken by the governments of ECOWAS countries as well as those of other regional groupings to reduce the restrictions imposed on production as a result of this pandemic. These measures include (i) production support measures, (ii) specific interventions in the functioning and management of markets in these countries, (iii) actions in favour of natural resource management, and finally, (iv) the implementation of flexibility measures relating to institutions and organizations.

102. On the ground, these incentive measures for production are essentially political decisions to increase agricultural expenditure in public spending, to set up an agricultural insurance mechanism to protect producers from climate risk, and to develop sustainable production systems that are resilient to climate change, such as the farming model. They also concern the strengthening of governance and innovative financing mechanisms for food systems, the rational and equitable management of land resources and the development of irrigation. In addition, some countries have worked to strengthen agricultural competitiveness through free distribution programs or subsidies for producers of agricultural inputs, to intervene in the prices of basic foodstuffs and cash crops (cotton and soybeans), to improve the structuring of professional organizations in strategic sectors such as rice, soybeans and local poultry, and to promote the gender dimension for resilient food systems. But it also involves promoting the establishment and operationalization of national monitoring and early warning systems:

- Creation of phytosanitary brigades and training of brigadiers;
- Providing plant protection brigades with plant protection equipment and materials and bio-pesticides;
- Training of producers' supervisors on the identification and management of food crop pests;

3.4.2.1 Production Support Measures

103. In terms of production support measures, there are also unspecified support measures. These have been implemented in eight (8) countries including Ghana, Niger, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Mali, Sierra Leone, Togo and Nigeria. The nature and modalities of implementation of these measures vary from one country to another in light of the socio-economic challenges faced by the country. In Ghana, for example, it consisted of increasing the production of strategic products such as soybeans and local poultry meat (3,000 additional tons per year) on the one hand, and increasing the number of farmers with access to fertilizer and seeds from 1.2 million in 2019 to 1.5 million on the other. In the end, 1.7 million farmers benefited from the measure at a total cost of GH¢951 million.

104. **The Government of Niger** undertook short and medium-term restructuring in the production sector. In the short term, it has provided support to 50,000 households producing market garden crops in vulnerable and peri-urban areas in order to protect and rehabilitate the livelihoods of populations affected by food crises, natural disasters (climate change, floods, droughts, attacks by crop pests, etc.) and Covid 19 The amount of the measure is estimated at US$147,851,89 and has enabled the increase and diversification of existing agricultural production and irrigable potential, the strengthening of the supervision system and the mobilization of financial resources to complete the operation on time. In the medium term, existing and start-up programs and projects will be revised to release US$850,000,000 to respond to Covid, with the easing of administrative procedures to help mitigate the socio-economic impacts of Covid. In the medium term, the policy of increasing and diversifying agricultural production will be continued.

105. In **Guinea and Sierra Leone**, governments, with support from technical and financial partners, worked to facilitate and improve access to agricultural products and to improve production and producers' incomes. In Sierra Leone, government actions are aimed at increasing production for both small and large producers. For small-scale producers, the government has provided ploughs, harrows and seed drills. Between April and May 2020, nearly 9,500 ha of additional land for rice cultivation were sown thanks to this measure. For large-scale producers, the government rented tractors to private contractors for plowing, harrowing and seeding 6,000 ha of land for rice cultivation in 10 districts over the same period.

106. While in **Togo**, we are witnessing support for the emergence of 500 agricultural service companies, producers and agricultural cooperatives and the provision of agricultural mechanization services, the organization of a land clearing campaign of 8,000ha (80 sites) during the 2020-2021 agricultural season at an estimated cost of 4 billion CFA francs to facilitate the development of mechanized plowing work financed by the Togolese government and the Japanese government. In addition, an increase in the purchase price to producers, purchases at remunerative prices to support 25,000

vulnerable farming households worth nearly 1123292000 FCFA to improve the incomes of these producers.

107. **In Burkina Faso**, the emphasis is on postponing deadlines for companies that request it, encouraging producers and putting in place appropriate support measures for the planting of an additional 30,000 ha in undeveloped lowlands. We are also seeing the establishment of an economic recovery fund for companies in difficulty amounting to CFAF 100 billion, the establishment of a solidarity fund for the benefit of informal sector actors, in particular women, for the revival of vegetable and fruit trading activities, weaving, soap making and catering, for an estimated amount of CFAF 5 billion.

108. In Mali, the first step was distribution of 950 hand-washing kits, 35,000 bottles of hydroalcoholic gel and 50,000 masks to people working in the agri-food and agricultural sectors. In addition, 150 fruit and vegetable conservation and processing kits have been distributed, and equipment for processing and conserving forage crops (straw chopper, bundling machine, etc.) has been installed at an estimated cost of USD 25 million. Finally, in Nigeria, state governments have contributed to the increase of cultivated land between 20,000 and 100,000 ha. This has been achieved through a combination of small-scale aggregated farms and the use of abandoned farm settlements and agricultural projects.

3.4.2.2 Production Support Measures

109. There are several types of supporting actions for production. They include increased agricultural spending in country budgets, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire (CFAF 300 billion), Niger (CFAF 139.38 billion) and Senegal (CFAF 60 billion). But also, the allocation of funds to ensure food security in Burkina Faso (394 billion CFA francs) and Mauritania. Ghana has increased its investment by 80 million US dollars in agricultural sectors managed by women and youth and by 951 million GH¢ in those of rice, maize, soya, sorghum and vegetables to increase production. Market intervention to support producer prices for exportable products. To this end, Benin has set a floor price above the market in order to boost cotton production and preserve the income of cotton farmers.

110. Cotton purchase prices in 2020/2021 were kept the same as those for the 2019/2020 season, as well as the price of a 50-kg bag of fertilizer used for cotton cultivation at 12,000 FCFA in Benin. In addition, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, and Senegal have increased their subsidy rate for the commercial price of fertilizer (NPK and urea) from 10% to 80%. Mauritania's Ministry of Social Affairs for Children and the Family has allocated MRU 17,945,000 (US$464,395) to finance 374 micro-projects and income-generating activities (IGAs) that are expected to benefit 1,724 women and people with disabilities. This funding is provided in the form of interest-free repayable concessional loans, which will in turn be used to finance IGAs for the benefit of other women or people living with disabilities. In addition, the government has adopted a

multi-sectoral response plan to COVID-19 that encompasses the pre-existing response plan of the Ministry of Health and is complemented by the response to the economic and social impact of the pandemic. It also involves the adoption of an agricultural response plan to COVID-19, designed to improve the income of producers and consolidate food security. For example, in Togo, this plan aims to produce 225,000 tons of cotton, 2 million tons of corn, 140,000 tons of soybeans and 330,000 tons of rice.

111. **Nigeria** announced a new agricultural project as part of its Economic Sustainability Plan (2020) in response to the effects of COVID. Food for All: Agriculture and Food Security. This project will run for 12 months and aims to expand existing production in the agricultural sector and stimulate the creation of new farms in partnership with state governments, the private sector and citizens. The intention is that the project will create 5 million jobs by focusing on increasing the amount of land under cultivation, with state governments contributing between 20,000 and 100,000 hectares from a combination of small-scale aggregate farms and the use of abandoned farm settlements and agricultural projects.

112. Nigeria put in place a $1,636.6 million integrated and structuring program that covers the entire agricultural value chain from "farm to table" and is expected to generate 5 million jobs. The project also aims to support smallholder farmers directly or through subcontracting programs with services and inputs, including land clearing, plowing, provision of seeds, saplings, fertilizers, pesticides, as well as extension services, storage to mitigate post-harvest losses and equipment. Farmers are also provided with low-interest input financing.

113. The additional production generated is expected to be purchased by key private sector buyers (e.g., large conglomerates), agribusinesses, commodity exchanges, and purchases for government strategic reserves. In addition, any unsold commodities are purchased at a reserve price by the relevant agencies on behalf of the federal government. In addition, to facilitate access to the farms, an extensive rural road construction program has been initiated, using locally sourced materials such as granite and rock.

114. In **Ghana**, there is timely access to inputs (fertilizer and seed) and provision of 412,000Mt of fertilizer and 29,496Mt of improved seed of maize, rice, soybean, groundnut and vegetables to 1,700,000 farmers across the country for GH¢951 million to increase production of rice, maize, soybean, sorghum and vegetables. The government is also targeting an increase in these inputs over the period 2020-2023 for the production of rice, maize, sorghum, soybeans, cassava and vegetables and to facilitate access to finance by farmers/agro-enterprises and the market.

115. **Niger**, through the *Centrale d'Approvisionnement en Intrants et Matériels Agricoles* in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance, has made an exceptional tax exemption to facilitate the acquisition of fertilizer for 400,000

agricultural producers. This measure, in addition to facilitating and alleviating the costs of acquiring fertilizer, has ensured the availability of fertilizer in order to increase agricultural production thanks to the political will and the flexibility of the institutional and regulatory framework. The main challenges are to meet deadlines, mobilize financial resources, conduct the operation on time, formulate the request, and examine and grant the waiver.

116. In addition, state-subsidized fertilizer was introduced for 400,000 farm households. The cost of the action is US$25,020,67. To this end, fertilizers are available at the various sales outlets, and local fertilizer management and monitoring committees have been set up by the State with the help of the European Union for this purpose.

117. **In Guinea**, the government is also distributing agricultural inputs over the period 2020-2021 at a cost of US$1,156,006. In Burkina Faso, the initiative involves the purchase of agricultural inputs and livestock feed to support food and pastoral production, amounting to 30 billion CFA francs ($501,392,000), the additional subsidy of 34,000 tons of fertilizer (NPK+Urea), 352 tractors (one per commune), and 4,000 tons of seed.

118. **In Mali**, the associated actions, including the provision of agricultural inputs, have enabled producers to start farming activities to produce enough cereals and other commodities for the season and thus minimize the impacts of COVID-19 on the agri-food system. The distribution of 75,000 cereal kits including 20 kg of seeds, 200 kg of fertilizer, 2,000 liters of pesticides and 5,000 market gardening kits and seeds to 5,000 market gardeners including 3,000 women.

119. We also recorded the granting of 5.6 tons of basic and pre-basic seeds distributed by the IER to seed producers in Kayes, Segou, Timbuktu, Mopti and the Bamako district. The provision of approximately 100 tons of forage seeds to support livestock farmers, particularly in the Mopti, Ségou and Kayes areas for forage production activities, especially for dairy farmers. Providing agents and producers with protective equipment, distribution of input kits (seeds, fertilizers) and food support (FAO, USD 773,000). In terms of fertilizer, a stock of 264,252 tons was built up by suppliers before the borders were closed. The quantities of fertilizer put in place (before the border closure) for the needs of the crop year plan (385,176 tons) and those of CMDT, already deposited at the level of the cooperatives, are sufficient to start cultivation operations for the 2020 winter season.

120. 120 A stock of 3,200,000 litres of pesticides was built up before the pandemic, which is sufficient to start the activities of the 2020 agricultural season in a Sahelian zone that is prey to attacks by several pests. It should be recalled that plant protection is of great importance given the vulnerability of the country and its exposure to crop pests such as grasshoppers, desert locusts, granivorous birds and army worms. The development of an adequate stock of treatment products and the training of agents and producers are

important for the implementation of the 2020 crop year plan, the first since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

121. **In Sierra Leone,** as in other countries, the distribution of 45,315 MT of rice seed and 3,000 bags of fertilizer to small-scale farmers is continuing with the aim of increasing production and the area cultivated. In Togo, it is an input credit support (facilitating access to production factors) in July 2020 that is granted to 256,000 farming households to improve yields on farms) with funds from the Togolese government, FAO, IM, ADB, BOAD and UEMOA.

122. Facilitating access to fertilizer has made it possible to increase agricultural production and make the prices of agricultural inputs and products more affordable. However, the effectiveness of the action depends on the proximity of sales outlets, the mobilization of financial resources, and the ability to carry out the operation in a timely manner.

3.4.2.3 Measures Related to Easing of Agricultural Taxes

123. With regard to measures related to the flexibility of agricultural taxes, Benin, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Liberia have experimented with this measure, with variations depending on circumstances. In this context, Benin has reimbursed VAT credits, exempted those who have not yet paid the motor vehicle tax from paying it in 2020 and converted it into a tax credit for those who have already paid it in 2021. The mobilization of CFAF 40 billion to support businesses in difficulty through targeted and temporary tax exemptions and a relaxation of certain payment rules.

124. In Nigeria, the deadline for payment of the vignette has been extended to the end of June 2020 instead of March 31, 2020, to ease the reporting and payment obligations for taxes in particularly vulnerable areas of activity in order to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 on the national economy and households due to administrative measures to suspend activities and change habits. Although not quantified, this measure has benefited vehicle owners (private individuals and transport companies), thus reducing their tax burden and improving the purchasing power of vehicle owners in a context of price volatility caused by the restrictive measures.

125. In addition, the suspension of on-site tax audits for two months, for April and May 2020, to alleviate the reporting and payment obligations of taxes in particularly vulnerable areas of activity in order to mitigate the impact of Covid on the national economy and households due to administrative measures of suspension of activities, and changes in habit.

126. **In Burkina Faso,** the government exempted microenterprises in the informal sector from paying taxes and issued tax status certificates to companies that have not fulfilled their tax obligations by June 30, 2020. In addition, the Employer's Learning Tax (TPA) on salaries has been suspended for companies in the passenger transport and hotel sectors,

and the collection of the minimum tax for establishments in the passenger transport, hotel, restaurant and tourism sectors has been suspended.

127. This results is a 25% reduction in the tax for companies in the passenger transport, hotel and tourism sectors. Companies that have already paid the tax will be able to opt for compensation with other local taxes, the application of a reduced VAT rate of 10% to the hotel and restaurant sector, the elimination of charges and taxes that are taxable for the organization of cultural activities, the cancellation of penalties for delays in the execution of public contracts at the level of the central government and local authorities, and the remission of direct taxes within the framework of an individualized examination of requests, in extreme cases

128. **In Mali**, the authorities first remitted CFAF 11.776 billion (US$21.2 million) in taxes to companies affected by the restrictions (on a case-by-case basis and by sector) and then reduced penalties resulting from tax audits by CFAF 31.866 billion (US$57.5 million). In Côte d'Ivoire, the Ivorian government is suspending, exempting and deducting taxes in several sectors for three months to support the fight against the Coronavirus.

129. **In Nigeria**, the CBN approved regulatory forbearance for the restructuring of credit facilities in the other financial institutions (OFIs) sub-sector in terms of CBN intervention facilities made available through participating OFIs are granted an additional one-year moratorium on all principal repayments, effective March 1, 2020; interest rates on CBN intervention facilities through participating OFIs are reduced from 9% to 5% per year for one year starting March 1, 2020 and OFIs are allowed to consider a temporary and time-limited restructuring of loan terms and conditions for households and businesses affected by COVID-19, subject to the recently issued guidelines for restructuring of affected credit facilities in the OFI sub-sector.

130. **In Liberia**, the government is providing cash guarantees to facilitate a revolving credit facility for rice processors at a lower interest rate, which is expected to increase local rice production and distribution through the purchase and processing of paddy rice from farmers and cooperatives. In addition, a three-year facility agreement has been signed, with an interest rate of 7 percent exclusively for farmers. In Mauritania, the government is removing customs duties and taxes on imports of essential goods and has indicated that it will take additional measures as resources are mobilized.

131. Production subsidies were particularly important in Benin, Ghana, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Côte d'Ivoire compared to the pre-covid period and include subsidy programs for artisans and small units, subsidies for modern poultry farmers, and aflatoxin control.

132. **In Benin**, since June 2020, the Ministries of Social Affairs, Culture, Handicrafts, Finance and Decentralization have implemented subsidy programs for artisans and small service units at a total cost of 4.98 billion CFA francs. In total, 44,881 artisans and small service units have been subsidized. The *Agence Territoriale de Développement* 7 (ATDA 7) subsidized modern poultry farmers by 60% for the purchase of day-old chicks.

This action has enabled the acquisition of 400,000-day-old chicks. In addition, the Benin government has made available a budgetary package of USD 17 million (0.1% of GDP) for vulnerable groups and for economic recovery, and has provided support to the cotton sector to maintain the purchase price of cotton and input prices for the 2020/2021 season at the same level as the previous 2019/2020 season. The FNDA Granted zero interest credits for the processing of local agricultural products to units processing local agricultural products in order to increase the local processing of agricultural products.

133. **Ghana**, has extended support to 1.5 million farmers under the Planter program which is being implemented for food and employment to increase production of rice, maize, sorghum, cowpea, cassava, soybeans and vegetables. Also of note is the state intervention to reduce aflatoxins in maize and groundnuts, worth GH¢173,628, the interest rate subsidy for agribusinesses. Ghana's CARES program, which supports the development of cassava, rice, poultry tomato and sugar producers, worth €126 million (2021 only) to improve the dissemination of tomato varieties and increase cassava production. In addition, this cash-for-work program enabled young people to produce vegetables in the greenhouse villages. Implementation consisted of (i) providing grants to 500 youth, including young women, to acquire 100-unit greenhouses; (ii) training 200 youth and 500 extension agents, including young women, on greenhouse production protocols and phytosanitary measures.

134. **In Niger**, the authorities distributed free rainfed crop kits to 55,855,557 vulnerable households incorporating barrier measures to cover the seed needs of vulnerable households, intensify agricultural production in June 2020. The action cost US$12,670,015 and allowed for an increase in yields and production that met the real needs of vulnerable households, the timely installation of seeds in certain areas and the mobilization of financial resources and the timely completion of the operation. Upstream, the targeting of beneficiary villages and households, the establishment of distribution plans, the setting up of village distribution committees, the establishment of monitoring and supervision mechanisms at all levels (national, regional, departmental and communal) were factors in the success of this program. In addition, it benefited from a synergy of action on the part of the State, the World Bank Projects, IFAD and FAO.

135. In Côte d'Ivoire, a solidarity fund of $250 billion ($419,217,000) was used to support private enterprises, $100 billion ($167,687,000) specifically for small and medium-sized enterprises in the informal sector. While $250 million ($419,217) was used for the country's main economic sectors, including cashew nuts, cotton and rubber.

3.4.2.4 Financing and Credit Facilities Measures

136. The financing and credit facilities have been implemented by Benin, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Togo, Nigeria and Liberia. Although there are disparities between countries in terms of implementation modalities, there are nevertheless common points. These

are the creation of specific financing lines by these countries to meet the financing needs of companies in difficulty.

137. **In Benin,** for example, it is implemented through the creation of a financing line for agricultural sector actors in July 2020 for the benefit of all farms. The National Agricultural Development Fund (FNDA) has mobilized nearly CFAF 100 billion (CFAF 50 billion to refinance the SFDs, CFAF 35 billion to set up guarantees and CFAF 15 billion in interest rate subsidies). In addition to this, the State has put in place a measure to facilitate access to seeds and other agricultural inputs (plant, animal and fishery) to all agricultural producers. All this has helped to improve the yields of the main crops.

138. **Niger**, announced establishment of a bank line of credit worth US$270,022,142, of which US$1,800,147,76 was raised to support SMEs and large enterprises affected by the pandemic in COVID-19. In Burkina Faso, the authorities are providing additional financing for 200 modern farm models. It is increasing credit for women and setting up an economic recovery fund for companies in difficulty at a cost of CFAF 100 billion.

139. **In Mali and Togo**, actions to support the economy, businesses and households (social protection, support for SMEs/SMIs, etc.) have been put in place. In addition to these actions, the Togolese authorities have put in place facilities to finance agricultural product processing and distribution companies, with a total of CFAF 1 billion for the processing of agricultural raw materials.

140. **The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea** have provided credit facilities by waiving the requirement for collateral from households and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) seeking credit. However, the CBN has made available to the banks a package of N50 billion as collateral to enable small businesses affected by the coronavirus to remain in business and not lay off workers. Similarly, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and the Liberian Ministry of Agriculture on Thursday, March 26, 2020, signed a cash guarantee agreement with Afriland Bank to provide financial recourse to major rice processors to improve rice processing and production. Under the agreement, the MFDP is providing an initial amount of US$700,000 to Afriland Bank in the form of cash to be used by three rice processing companies.

3.4.2.5 Measures for production and dissemination of knowledge

141. The production and dissemination of knowledge is also part of the pro-production measures. Under this measure, Ghana, Mali, Sierra Leone and others have implemented such measures. Ghana has improved extension services and increased access to agricultural extension agents as of June 2020. In addition to this, it has put in place training programs for 200 youth and then 500 extension agents to create new jobs for youth. This is followed by the creation of training centres for young people, all to the tune of GH¢ 29191460. Mali has promoted the dissemination of good resilience

practices such as the use of certified seeds, the use of adapted varieties, supplementary watering, the improvement of soil fertility through sustainable land and water management practices.

142. **In Sierra Leone**, authorities supported farmers intervening in micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) by introducing key technologies along the value chains of cassava, palm oil and cocoa. In Mauritania, the government announced the creation of an emergency fund of 80 million USD (1.1 per cent of the GDP), to purchase emergency medical equipment and supplies, subsidies for 30,000 households and financial support to individual small enterprises.

3.4.2.6 Support Measures to the Livestock, Fishing and Aquaculture Sectors

143. The livestock, fishing and aquaculture sectors have also been provided with a number of support measures. These include the compliance with the closed seasons for fishing and hunting despite the pandemic, reforms in these sectors, intensification of production and processing, the sale of livestock feed at moderate prices, and the distribution of kits to small ruminants, especially in Ghana, Niger, Mali, Chad, and Sierra Leone. To this end, Ghana has focused on intensifying the production and processing of poultry and small ruminants (June 2020-December 2021) for the benefit of 14049 poultry farmers at a cost of nearly GH¢656,187,525 to increase livestock production.

144. **The governments of Niger, Mali, and Chad** subsidized feed to help livestock farmers cope with the effects of the fodder deficit and the suspension of transhumance. The cost of subsidizing feed in Niger was US$12,116,598, which allowed it to be sold at a moderate price. The action reduced the vulnerability of 8,250 livestock-raising households and improved the coverage of animal feed needs. In addition, the Nigerien authorities distributed small ruminant kits worth US$135,01107 to 50,000 agropastoral households vulnerable to small ruminant livelihoods. In addition, lick-blocks worth US$105,3086 were distributed to 7,4880 households.

145. In the same vein, **Sierra Leone** resupplied 2,500 small ruminants and 3,500 poultry to increase animal protein. Mali and Sierra Leone have also taken measures to secure livestock (stock of animal feed and vaccination). In fact, in addition to subsidizing 16,000 tons of livestock feed and poultry feed (in Mali), Mali and Sierra Leone (15,000 farmers) provided livestock vaccines to farmers free of charge in 2020. In addition, Sierra Leone has strengthened the vessel monitoring system (VMS) installed in all pelagic and demersal fishing vessels in 2019. The government has also proceeded with capacity building in transboundary disease surveillance and the development of a fisheries management plan since 2018.

3.4.2.7 Measures related to Productive Assets and Irrigation Infrastructure Development

146. Measures related to productive assets and irrigation infrastructure were taken by **Ghana, Mali, Sierra Leone and Togo**. In Ghana, this involved providing youth with support infrastructure such as packing houses and subsidizing 500 youth to attend water efficiency training provided by the Ghana Agricultural Sector Investment Plant (GASIP) to 20,000 smallholder farmers to improve water availability and efficiency. In Mali, 130 supplementary irrigation kits (watering cans, water distribution pipes, pumping equipment, etc.) are being distributed to producers in the driest areas, as lack of water during these critical periods can jeopardize the entire agricultural season's crops and lead to food insecurity.

147. 147. **In Sierra Leone**, the focus is on water resource management, construction of gravity systems and solar-powered motorized drilling, which will benefit 4,540 women and children by 2020. As a result of this water resource management program, approximately 43,000 additional people have access to water supply services with the rehabilitation of 86 community water tanks. In addition, 6 health facilities and 4 elementary school also have access to water supply.

148. In **Togo**, the State provides support in the form of irrigation kits based on a solar pumping system and "pay as you go" management to ensure off-season production. In November 2020, 15350 households of agricultural producers benefited from a program that cost 600 million F CFA to the Government of Togo for a good control of water based on a solar pumping system used in the development of market garden crops and arboriculture.

3.4.2.8 Contract Management Measures

149. Market management concerns specific interventions in the operation of markets in order to support production. These are public interventions to facilitate access to mechanization, to increase the productivity of the food chains and to structure the actors, to provide sustainable support to the agri-food chains and to provide tax exemptions. Côte d'Ivoire has taken policy decisions to increase the productivity of food-producing sectors and to structure the actors, particularly in the rice and cassava sectors, by providing the cassava sector with the means to consolidate a price observation system by producers and on urban markets, in order to make price formation more transparent. In addition, the government has set itself the political objective of being self-sufficient in rice by 2025 by creating a ministry for the promotion of rice production. In the same vein, Guinea has taken actions to support operators involved in the rice value chain in order to improve the household basket and trade, and the income of economic operators. This is also accompanied by the supply of primary

equipment to the markets. All these actions are financed by the state budget and by the TFPs.

150. In addition, a US$700,000 agricultural loan with an interest rate of 7% over three years was initiated by the State of **Liberia** to enable rice processors to purchase more paddy from smallholder rice farmers for processing in the domestic market. The cash guarantee is a revolving credit facility for rice processors at a lower interest rate and is expected to increase the production and distribution of local rice through the purchase and processing of paddy from farmers and cooperatives. In addition, the government has allowed the movement of shipments and trade in foodstuffs during the quarantine.

151. **Burkina Faso** has provided sustainable support to the agri-food sectors in terms of increasing support for the supply of inputs and equipment, promoting and developing digital infrastructure in rural areas, investing in storage and conservation structures for agricultural products, strengthening the monitoring of food prices on the markets, and increasing national rice production during the 2020/2021 season (project "1 million tons of rice in Burkina Faso by 2021").

152.

153. **Benin** has taken measures to facilitate access to mechanization to compensate for the scarcity of labour due to closed borders and cordon sanitaire. **Ghana,** on the other hand, has introduced "tax privileges" for the cross-border movement of live animals and significant movement of goods, particularly food products, between Ghana and neighbouring countries. In addition, under Phase 2 of the CARES Obaatanta Coronavirus Control Program, Ghana has announced the expansion of the operations of the Ghana Commodity Exchange, particularly with respect to warehouse receipts, which will facilitate access to cash by raw material sellers, and the establishment of a National Food Security Committee to effectively monitor and report on food prices (20 commodities), supply and distribution systems to enable the government to take timely action when warranted. This serves as an early warning system to trigger market interventions through the release of stocks in case of a strong upward trend in prices.

154. However, preventive measures for transportation were outlined in a notification from the Ministry of Transport. The Mauritanian government established an emergency fund of $80 million (1.1 percent of GDP) for emergency purchases of medical supplies and equipment, subsidized 30,000 poor households, and provided financial support to individual small businesses.

3.4.2.9 Agricultural Risk Management Measures

155. Production support measures have been taken in terms of agricultural risk management in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone. Burkina Faso (US$167,131,000), Côte d'Ivoire (US$1,089,960,000), Mali and Sierra Leone (US$1,629,680) have set up mutual and conditional risk financing.

156. These measures involve mutual and conditional risk financing **in Burkina Faso**. 60 million ($67 million) in financial support from the EU, the government of Burkina Faso has invested in humanitarian assistance, food security, health, and mitigation of the economic consequences of COVID-19. In addition, to support economic recovery, the government has set up an economic recovery fund for companies in difficulty in the amount of CFAF 100 billion (US$167,131,000), purchased agricultural inputs and animal feed to support food and pastoral production in the amount of CFAF 30 billion (US$50,139,200), set up a solidarity fund for the benefit of informal sector actors, in particular women, for the revival of commercial activities in vegetables and fruits, in the amount of CFAF 5 billion (US$ 8,356,540), ensured the financing of research on infectious diseases and the production of drugs in the amount of CFAF 15 billion (US$ 25,069,600); and ensured the continued payment of the domestic debt.

157. **Côte d'Ivoire** has created a solidarity fund of CFAF 650 billion (USD 1,089,960,000) for the economy, to support businesses and employment. Of which 250 billion (US$419,217,000) was used to support private enterprises, 100 billion (US$167,687,000) to assist small and medium-sized enterprises, 100 million (US$167,687) is used to assist the informal sector. The remaining $250 million ($419,217) is being used for the country's main economic sectors, including cashew nuts, cotton, and rubber. Additional measures to support businesses include: 3 months of deferred business taxes for hotels and tourism-dependent businesses, and deferred tax audits for all businesses.

158. **Mali** has provided unspecified production support in terms of mutual and conditional risk financing through the creation of the Solidarity Fund for the fight against COVID-19 is intended to cover expenditures in the framework of the fight against COVID-19, namely: support for the health system, support for households and the economy, support for the functioning of the institutional mechanism for managing the COVID-19 crisis and all other operations in the framework of the response plan for COVID-19 The government of Sierra Leone has established the Solidarity Response Fund, with contributions from the private sector and other agencies, for CFAF 1,000 billion (US$1,629,680). Half of the funds will be allocated to obtain food for emergency food aid. Resources from the fund will also be used to support businesses, households, and the diaspora.

159. **The Government of Ghana**, under Phase 1 of the CARES Obaatanta Coronavirus Control Program, established a GH¢2 billion guarantee fund to help large companies borrow at lower interest rates and longer terms to adapt to the challenges of COVID and maintain employment. The fund also enabled companies to take advantage of opportunities created by COVID-19 (e.g., in the pharmaceutical, textile and apparel sectors). The government of Cabo Verde approved a plan to support the main companies based in Cabo Verde with loans, interest rate reduction, state guarantees, among other measures to avoid laying off employees. The Central Bank has taken steps

to secure liquidity in the economic system by creating a credit line for SMEs of US$10 million.

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3.4.2.10 Measures for the Development of Sectors

161. Several countries have taken measures to develop the value sectors. In Ghana, the authorities have supported farmers and breeders through the "Livestock for Food and Employment" program and the production of chickens (broilers and layers) and guinea fowl (June 2020 December 2021). This program with a total cost of GH¢ 656187525 has enabled farmers to acquire 116,000 cockerels. A poultry value chain financing model is also being developed to produce about 7500 MT of chicken per year to increase access to finance for poultry farmers.

162. In addition, to reduce post-harvest losses, special emphasis has been placed on high value-added chains and the development of new products for strategic agricultural products such as maize, soybeans, cassava, yams, orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, plantains, and vegetables. This program has provided support worth GH¢14,948,000 to these farmers and the development of 80 warehouses for grain storage. Interventions are aimed at facilitating the formulation and implementation of contract farming contracts to ensure the supply of high-quality raw materials to processors; facilitating access to credit for agro-processors; supporting access to on-farm and off-farm processing machinery; supporting access to drying equipment and packaging materials for indigenous food processors.

163. **The State of Niger** implemented a US$317,3480 cassava cutting operation in July-August 2020 to diversify the production of 25,000 vulnerable households. This allowed for the diversification and increase of cassava production. The success factors of this measure were the availability of cuttings, the mastery of the technique and crops that require little cultivation. However, the ability to mobilize financial resources and conduct the operation on time, target beneficiary villages and households, establish distribution plans, purchase and make the cuttings available to village distribution committees, and set up monitoring and supervision mechanisms at all levels (national,

regional, departmental and communal) were the main challenges to be met by the State, the World Bank, IFAD and FAO projects.

3.4.2.11 Natural Resource Management Measures

164. In terms of natural resource management, Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Mali and Sierra Leone have implemented conservation and restoration of natural resources and land policy. With respect to the conservation and restoration of natural resources

165. Thus, **in Ghana**, promoted traditional agriculture, agroforestry and afforestation for 65,000 tree farmers. To this end, 9585217 tree seedlings were provided under SAPIP, PERD and SLWMP, and 5,000,000 seedlings were distributed under the Green Ghana project. Guinea has proceeded with the restoration of the vegetation cover and the protection of the fauna (2020 - 2021); as well as for the populations of the mining areas, accessibility of natural products on the market. These sustainable natural resource management measures are financed by the government, NGOs and TFPs.

166. While Mali is promoting the use of bio-pesticides in major maize production basins. Although this measure is not specific to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, its implementation has particular importance at the beginning of the 2020 agricultural season. In addition, due to the uncertainties regarding the availability and accessibility of inputs to farmers, these measures will help to reduce them. Bio-pesticides are indeed locally manufactured and less expensive than conventional pesticides and are less harmful to the environment and their users. In a context marked by the COVID-19, this action has allowed producers, especially small producers, to have access to these inputs more easily and to ensure better harvests, thus reducing the rural exodus.

167. **Sierra Leone**, initiated the distribution of 20,000 forest tree seedlings to local communities in 2020 through the Forest Communities Reforestation of Degraded Lands and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. This has allowed to restore "110 hectares of degraded mangrove and reduce the risk of climate vulnerabilities. The recovery of degraded land through rehabilitation has increased access to arable land for agricultural production along the Fouta Djallon and Little Scarcies River watershed.

168. **Mauritania** has adopted Circular N°000003 in order to minimize the risk posed to the seafarers and the country by vessels coming from areas infected with the coronavirus (COVID-19). This decree invites the port authorities, ship owners and ship captains to comply with the directives and provisions concerning the following vessels: fishing vessels wishing to enter the fishing zone and holding a fishing license; cargo vessels transhipping fishing products in the port; merchant vessels serving Mauritanian ports. Finally, port authorities, ship owners and captains must follow the guidelines and directives of the Inter-ministerial Committee in charge of monitoring the coronavirus pandemic and the Ministry of Health.

169. Land policies have been implemented by Ghana and Sierra Leone as part of the fight against COVID-19. In Ghana, the focus has been on facilitating access to land for commercial agriculture. In addition, under the Ghana CARES program, the government is establishing a Ghana Land Information Bank (GhLIB) to provide a reliable and easily accessible land information platform to improve access to land.

170. In Sierra Leone, capacity building initiatives on gender and land rights have been implemented and have begun to support communities in Bo, Kenema, Port Loko and Bombali districts on land rights and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Various forms of land discrimination and practices against rural women's access to and ownership of land and other productive assets have been reduced. In addition, there has been an increase in women's involvement and decision-making. This measure has enabled women to defend and own land and plantations. Consultations on land use and distribution of women's land have also improved.

3.4.2.12 Measures relating to Institutions and Organizations

171. Few easing measures on institutions and organisations were put in place. We note unspecified institutional measures, measures in favour of public institutions, deprivations measure to build institutional capacities of producers' organisations.

172. Among the unspecified institutional measures, some were implemented by Benin, Guinea, Mali and Sierra Leone. In this regard, it is worth noting that **in Benin**, as of May 2020, the Ministry of Finance, Culture and SMEs has implemented a support program for businesses affected by covid 19. The measure involved a reimbursement of up to 70% of salary charges and taxes related to salaries, payment of rent and assumption of responsibility for all water and electricity bills for a period of three months. The measure had the effect of reducing the impact of job losses and the decline in income thanks to the political will and formalization of the actors.

173. Sierra Leone, supported 22 local councils to review, validate, and approve bylaws related to the COVID-19 response in communities. Additional support enabled them to monitor, track, and fill gaps in the COVID-19 response provided by the emergency centres." In addition, 64 members (40 percent women) of the Sierra Leone Local Councils Association revised the association's constitution to align with the government's Medium Term National Development Plan (MTNDP). This served as a catalyst for the association's involvement in working with their members at the national level on Response to COVID-19.

3.4.2.13 Measures relating to Public Institutions

174. On behalf of public institutions, **Benin, Ghana, Niger, and Mali** have implemented responses ranging from water and electricity subsidies to financial support for the national food security stockpile and institutional capacity building for producer

organizations to increase food stock levels. In Benin, more than CFAF 63.38 billion has been made available to SBEE and SONEB CFAF 5.76 billion in terms of electricity and water rate subsidies for the entire population. 3 laboratories of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Directorate of Veterinary Services (VSD) are being renovated for the Covid19 test in Ghana.

175. **Niger** has set up coordination bodies and structures through steering committees, the inter-ministerial committee for the fight against the pandemic, the multi-sectoral technical crisis committee, 8 multi-sectoral regional committees, and sectoral technical committees in order to facilitate the operationalization of the response plan adopted in March 2020 by political decision-makers in collaboration with technical and financial partners and civil society, and aimed at mitigating the impact of covid 19 on the various sectors of socio-economic activity. For this measure to succeed, there had to be political will, frameworks for consultation and exchange, the involvement of all stakeholders, the normal functioning of bodies and structures, and the mobilization of resources. The Malian Department of Agriculture has developed a response plan to facilitate the implementation of the harmonized and consolidated agricultural campaign plan approved by the Higher Council of Agriculture.

176. Institutional capacity building of producer organizations has been a concern for Benin, Ghana, Niger and Sierra Leone. **In Benin,** the emphasis is on promoting digital solutions in the agricultural sector, such as e-advisory, digital payments, video-conferencing, etc., to mitigate the impact of travel restrictions, limitations on the number of participants in meetings, etc. These measures have maintained continuity of service. These measures have had the effect of maintaining continuity of service.

177. **Ghana,** has worked to strengthen NAFCO; the school feeding program with an amount of GH¢212 million to increase the stock of cereals for effective food distribution and to improve marketing systems. It also involves capacity building of stakeholders on food quality and safety over the period from June 2020 to December 2021. In addition, the training of producers in the mastery of smart agriculture and natural resource conservation technologies. To this end, 20,000 smallholder maize and rice farmers have been trained in the use of climate-resistant seeds and the adoption of climate-smart agriculture to increase grain production.

178. **Niger** expanded the use of digital solutions in 2020 with COVID-19 in "e-extension" food systems for remote or contactless knowledge transmission. A total of 126,500 rural producers and rural development managers in WhatsApp groups, call centres, voice servers, and community radios have benefited directly from this measure, which cost the Nigerien government US$144,011. This measure has had the effect of improving agricultural production techniques and the conservation and storage of agricultural products. We are also witnessing the reactivation of discussion groups on food security, nutrition and health to develop initiatives to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the various sectors including food security, nutrition, agriculture, water, sanitation and

hygiene. The challenges were, among others, the progressive mastery of the tools used, the permanent adaptation of the content towards the producers, the improvement of the communication network, the equipment of smart phones for the producers. The organizations involved in the implementation of the measure are the call centre, the mobilization of staff, the partnership between the World Bank, ENABEL, AFD, IFAD, Switzerland.

179. **Sierra Leone,** has established an E-Extension 2020 platform for 1000000 small and large farmers to increase farmers' access to information, access to inputs, promotion of the use of climate-smart agriculture through demonstration plots established in 2020 and increased community disaster preparedness and management capacity to better respond to emergencies (community disaster management skills, etc.).

3.4.3 Trade and/or macroeconomic policy decisions

180. Trade and/or macroeconomic policy decisions with an overall cost of more than US$27.85 billion (according to available data), are directed towards Monetary Policy, Prudential Regulation, Trade or Macroeconomic Policy Decisions, Agricultural Expenditures in the National Budget.

3.4.3.1 Monetary policy

181. These are monetary policy decisions taken by central banks to ease their monetary policy stance and increase liquidity in the banking system. The main measures included a reduction in interest rates and reserve requirements. For the UEMOA (UEMOA) countries, the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) adopted a full allocation strategy at a fixed rate of 2.5% (the minimum monetary policy rate), allowing banks to fully meet their liquidity needs at a rate about 25 basis points lower than before the crisis. On June 22, the Monetary Policy Committee lowered the ceiling and floor of the monetary policy corridor by 50 basis points, to 4 and 2 percent, respectively.

182. BCEAO also: (i) extended the collateral framework for accessing central bank refinancing to include bank loans to 1,700 pre-qualified private enterprises; (ii) put in place a framework inviting banks and microfinance institutions to respond to requests from clients with Covid19-related repayment difficulties to defer servicing of maturing debt for a renewable period of 3 months, without the need to classify such deferred debts as nonperforming; and (iii) introduced measures to promote the use of electronic payments. In addition, the BCEAO launched a special 3-month refinancing window at a fixed rate of 2.5% for limited amounts of 3-month "COVID-19 T-Bills" to be issued by each UEMOA sovereign to help meet immediate financing needs related to the current pandemic. In addition, the West African Development Bank (WADB) has decided to provide West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) member countries with CFAF 120 billion in concessional loans (CFAF 15 billion per country) for immediate

disbursement; these loans are made more flexible through the interest rate subsidy mechanism replenished by the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) and the UEMOA Commission for CFAF 25 billion and CFAF 15 billion respectively.

183. The Bank of Central African States (BEAC) announced a package of monetary easing measures, including a 25 bp cut in the policy rate to 3.25 percent, a 100 bp cut in the marginal lending rate to 5 percent, a suspension of absorption operations, an increase in the liquidity provision from CFAF 240 billion to CFAF 500 billion, and an expansion of the range of private instruments accepted as collateral in monetary operations. It allowed banks to use their 2.5% capital conservation cushions to absorb pandemic-related losses, but called for a restrictive dividend distribution policy.

184. Countries that are not members of an economic and monetary union have also adopted similar monetary policy measures. These included a reduction in the policy rate in Cabo Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. The rate was kept unchanged in **Ghana**. However, Ghana has implemented a new bond purchase program to provide emergency funding to the government in light of an expected higher budget financing gap in Ghana. A 10-year bond with a face value of GHS 5.5 billion (1.4% of GDP) was purchased, and the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) reduced the interest rate from 16% to 14.5%. Other measures include: lowering reserve requirements from 10% to 8% to provide liquidity support to critical sectors, lowering the capital conservation buffer from 3% to 1.5%; revising the provisioning and classification rules for specific categories of loans and measures to facilitate and reduce the cost of mobile payments; continuing to monitor the economic impact of COVID-19, holding emergency meetings if necessary were taken

185. Cabo Verde recorded a reduction in policy rate from 125 basis points to 0.25%, reserve requirements from 13 to 10% and the demand deposit rate from 5 basis points to 0.05% in Cabo Verde from 2 points to 10% resulting in a cumulative reduction of 2.5 percentage points since the end of 2019 in The Gambia to encourage the decline in headline inflation from 7.7% at the end of 2019 to 5.6% by April 2020. In addition, the Cabo Verde central bank has introduced long-term lending instruments for banks, while the Gambian central bank has reduced reserve requirements from 15 percent to 13 percent, freeing up nearly 600 million dinars (US$14 million, 0.7 percent of GDP) of liquidity for banks, and by 50 basis points to 12 percent by end-February 2020, and has increased the rate of its permanent deposit facility by the same margin to 3 percent.

186. **The Central Bank of Nigeria** (CBN) first reduced its monetary policy rate by 100 basis points in May while increasing the liquidity available to non-bank financial institutions, resulting in a significant decline in the yield on government securities. The CBN maintained this March monetary policy rate and introduced the following measures: (i) reduction of interest rates on all applicable CBN interventions from 9 percent to 5 percent and introduction of a one-year moratorium on CBN intervention facilities; (ii) creation of N50 billion (US$139 million) of targeted credit facilities; iii) injection of N3.6

trillion (2.4% of GDP) in liquidity into the banking system, including N100 billion to support the health sector, N2 trillion to the manufacturing sector and N1.5 trillion to impacted industries. Regulatory forbearance has also been introduced to restructure loans in the affected sectors. The CBN is also coordinating a special private sector intervention initiative targeting N120 billion (US$333 million) to fight COVID-19.

187. As part of the April 6 COVID-19 economic response plan, **the Central Bank of the Republic of Guinea** (BCRG) reduced the policy rate and reserve requirement ratio by 100 basis points to 11 percent and 15 percent, respectively; and allowed banks, for the duration of the pandemic, to charge against their credit reserves for SMEs, impacted service sector businesses (hotels, restaurants, and transportation), and large importers of food and pharmaceuticals.

188. **The Central Bank of Liberia** reduced the policy rate by 500 bps to 25 percent in part to support increased financial intermediation and accelerated the purchase of additional bank bills to help meet the demand for Liberian dollars in the economy. In response to the difficulties experienced by the private sector, the CBL is also allowing banks to exercise limited forbearance on asset classification, provisioning, and conduct policies in hard-hit sectors of the economy, while remaining vigilant to signs of stress in the banking sector.

189. Mauritania's central bank reduced the policy rate from 6.5 percent to 5 percent; reduced the marginal lending rate from 9 percent to 6.5 percent; and lowered the reserve requirement ratio from 7 percent to 5 percent to support the economy. In addition, a "Social Solidarity and Coronavirus Fund" was created to deal with the pandemic and its health, economic and social consequences.

190. Sierra Leone's central bank reduced the monetary policy rate by 150 bps from 16.5 percent to 15 percent, effective March 19, 2020, created a special credit facility (SLL 500 billion) to support production, procurement, and distribution of essential goods, and extended the reserve requirement maintenance period from 15 to 28 days to facilitate liquidity tightening.23.

3.4.3.2 Prudential Regulation Measures

191. Prudential regulations have been introduced in UEMOA countries, Cabo Verde, Guinea and Nigeria. The BCEAO has extended the guarantee framework for access to central bank loans to 1,700 pre-qualified private enterprises; ii) a framework inviting banks to respond to requests from enterprises with repayment difficulties related to COVID-19 to defer for a renewable period of three months the servicing of maturing debt, without the need to classify these deferred debts as Non-Performing Loans (NPLs). In the same vein, Nigeria at the onset of the federal budget review process, President Buhari instructed the Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment to work with the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), to ensure the continued production of

essential items such as food, medical and pharmaceutical products. The Bank of Cape Verde (BCV) has implemented the reduction of the credit ratio and the provision of banks based on borrowers' requests to put in place a moratorium or forbearance on loan repayment for 3 months.

192. **The Central Bank of the Republic of Guinea** (BCRG) has taken measures to mitigate prudential requirements, including:

- lowering cash coverage ratio from 100% to 80%;
- suspending classification of bad debts for companies and individuals affected by the pandemic and the provisioning of these loans;
- relaxing limits on foreign exchange positions from 20% to 25% of capital, and from 10 to 12.5% for the position in each currency;
- dividend payments have been suspended while financial institutions are required to keep technical assistance fees paid to their parent companies to a minimum;
- financial institutions have been granted a 3-month deferral of the supervision payment
- related fees as well as contributions to the deposit insurance scheme;
- insurance companies defer payment of premiums due during the pandemic and suspend policies at the request of customers;
- identification requirements for e-money accounts have been relaxed and businesses are encouraged to reduce e-money transfer fees.

3.4.3.3 Trade or Macroeconomic Policy Decisions

193. In terms of trade or macroeconomic policy decisions, we note the measures to ban exports and subsidize or eliminate customs duties on basic foodstuffs and to maintain the transport of goods. Indeed, from the beginning of the pandemic, governments have implemented measures to cushion the effects of the pandemic on the economy (as in Nigeria, where the announced interventions represent a total of US$11.2 billion, or 3.1% of GDP) and to control food prices (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal).

194. With the easing of restrictions, **Chad, as well as Benin, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire**, have been able to revive public transport and catering, i.e., much of the informal economy. Food aid distribution programs for the poorest households in large cities (Lagos, Accra, Abidjan) and in rural areas have also been set up with varying degrees of success by governments. In addition, programs to support the purchase prices of cotton and inputs in Benin have made it possible to keep the purchase prices of cotton and inputs in 2020/2021 identical to those of the previous season, so as not to pass on to producers the effects of the drop in cotton prices on the international market over the past few months due to the coronavirus. In this way, a kilogram of 1st choice cotton is

traded at 265 FCFA, while 2nd choice cotton is traded at 215 FCFA during the 2020/2021 season, and a 50 kg bag of fertilizer used for cotton cultivation cost 12,000 FCFA.

195. **Mali and Ghana** banned the export and re-export of certain food products, including soybeans (for Ghana), rice, millet, sugar, milk, and pasta, and reduced tariffs on rice and milk imports. In addition, the Executive Management of Trade and Competition on March 27 adopted a price cap scheme for key staples, including rice, sugar, vegetable oils and bread. Ghana is promoting FDI in agri-processing for the export market through the GIPC and the Free Trade Zones Board, with $3 billion in FDI annually during the period 2021-2023. In addition, "tax privileges" for cross-border movement of live animals has been introduced by Ghana.

196. On import side, Mauritania suspended customs duties on food products. Burkina Faso signed a contract for FCFA 1.48 billion (EUR 2.26 million) to mobilize more than 2,700 metric tons of rice for displaced persons and confined vulnerable households. In addition, the Ministry of Trade, after consultation with supply chain actors, has taken measures to facilitate the import of consumer and pharmaceutical products while ensuring that quality standards are met. As part of the Ghana CARES program, which aims to make Ghana self-sufficient in rice by 2024, wheat, sugar and tomatoes, the country has proceeded to reduce their imports into the country by the following means

a) Rice:
    - Rehabilitation and expansion of land under existing irrigation programs and development of over 80,000 ha of inland valleys for rice production through PPPs; 40,000 smallholder rice farmers; 240 million Euros to increase the irrigated area for rice and increase rice production
    - Facilitating access to finance for private millers and improving access to quality paddy rice under the Planting for Food & Jobs (PFJ) program; 15 medium-sized bidders and millers; GH¢20 million; improving access to finance;
    - Provision of equipment for land development, planting and harvesting of rice (tractors, planters, harvesters, threshers, etc.); GH¢30 million for rice farmers to increase rice production.
b) Wheat: To reduce wheat imports by partially replacing (20%) wheat flour with high quality cassava flour (HQCF) to produce composite flour, cassava producers and processors
c) Sugar: 3. To reduce sugar imports, the government supports the private sector in establishing and operating sugar plantations and factories to ensure sugar self-sufficiency by 2030. Sugar producers
d) Tomatoes: 4. To reduce tomato imports, the government has prioritized the tomato value chain and is engaging existing facilities and investors who have expressed interest in developing new production and processing facilities, such as a 200-acre private tomato farm in Akomadan. Domestic Tomato Producers. Introduced 6 new tomato varieties suitable for processing Redeveloped existing processing facilities

197. With the gradual easing of the COVID-19 lock-in both globally and in Nigeria, the **Central Bank of Nigeria** (CBN) has resumed the supply of foreign exchange to all commercial banks for onward sales to parents wishing to pay school fees and SMEs wishing to make essential imports needed to revive economic activities across the country. Specifically, the CBN is resuming the supply of over US$100 million per week for both categories.

198. Establishment of a COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund to supplement the **Government of Liberia's** purchase of basic necessities for vulnerable people and test kits, PPE and other protective equipment for health workers. The fund is based on voluntary contributions (the proposal of 25% of all active salaries for the period May-June 2020 was rejected) and private donations. In addition, the Liberian government has assumed full payment of loans owed by market women and small and petty traders in the affected counties, subsequently approved by the Liberian legislature.

3.4.3.4 Agricultural Expenditure in the National Budget

199. Many countries have revised their budgets, especially for 2020, to take into account the new situation created by Covid 19. These include increased agricultural spending in country budgets, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire (CFAF 300 billion), Niger (CFAF 139.38 billion) and Senegal (CFAF 60 billion); the allocation of funds to ensure food security in Burkina Faso (CFAF 394 billion) and Mauritania; the investment of US$80 million in agricultural sectors and GH¢951 million to increase the production of rice, maize, soya, sorghum and vegetables in Ghana; the implementation of employment programs for youth in Ghana and Nigeria through labour-intensive projects such as the US$1,636.6 million Food for All agricultural and food security project in Nigeria, which will eventually generate 5 million jobs for youth.

4 Trend Analysis of Policy Decisions in Response to COVID-19

4.1 According to the impact over time

200. The measures implemented are essentially cyclical. In fact, on average 7% of the measures taken are structural in nature as opposed to 93% of the short-term measures, with a strong dominance of lockdown measures as shown in figure 4.1. These include quarantine (curfew, mandatory wearing of masks in all public places, etc.), travel bans/restrictions (restrictions on travel within countries, closure of borders, mandatory quarantine for all travellers from an affected country, suspension of all commercial flights; control of land borders is reinforced, etc.). It also includes school/university closures, cancellation of public events/closing of public places, mandatory shutdown of economic activities (restaurants and cafes closed and reopened, public markets reopened; restaurants are allowed to make take-away food, closure of all public markets except those selling food).

201. Restrictive measures were particularly important in Guinea (85%), Liberia (78%), and Mauritania (75%).

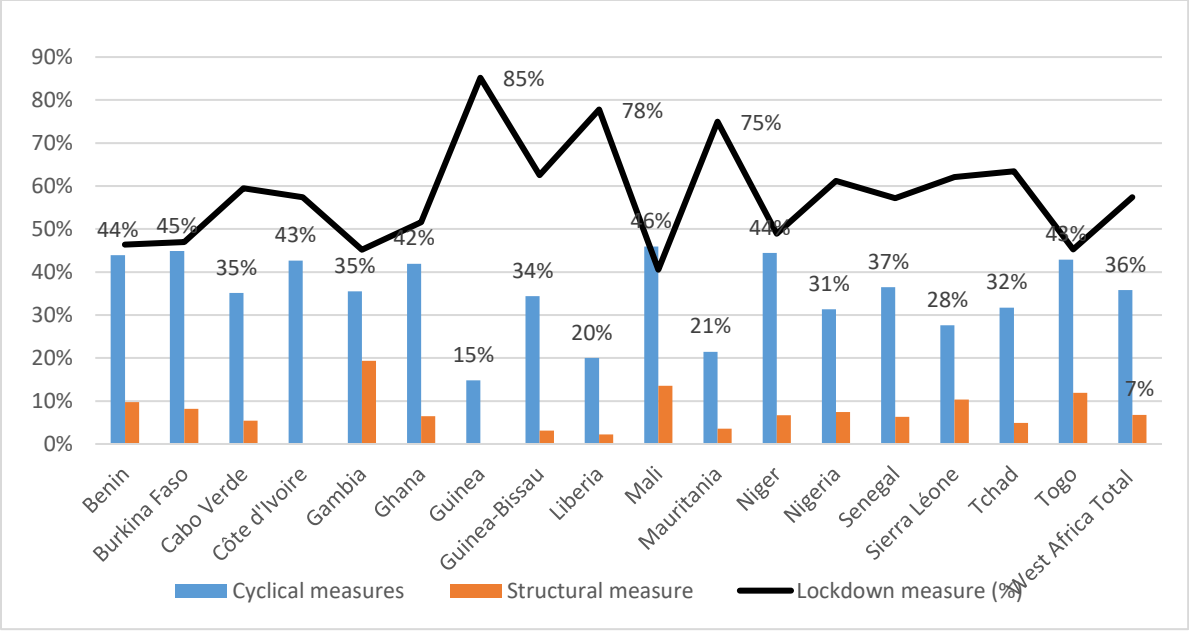

Figure 4.1: Country-level Trend in Covid Response Measures

4.2 Depending on the Intended Target

202. The results of the principal components analysis (PCA) show that there are three main groups of actions taken (see Figure 4.2). Countries that took actions to support production also took actions in terms of market management, taxes, and markets. Those that emphasized social protection measures also placed more emphasis on health and nutrition support measures, institutions and organizations, and other trade-related measures.

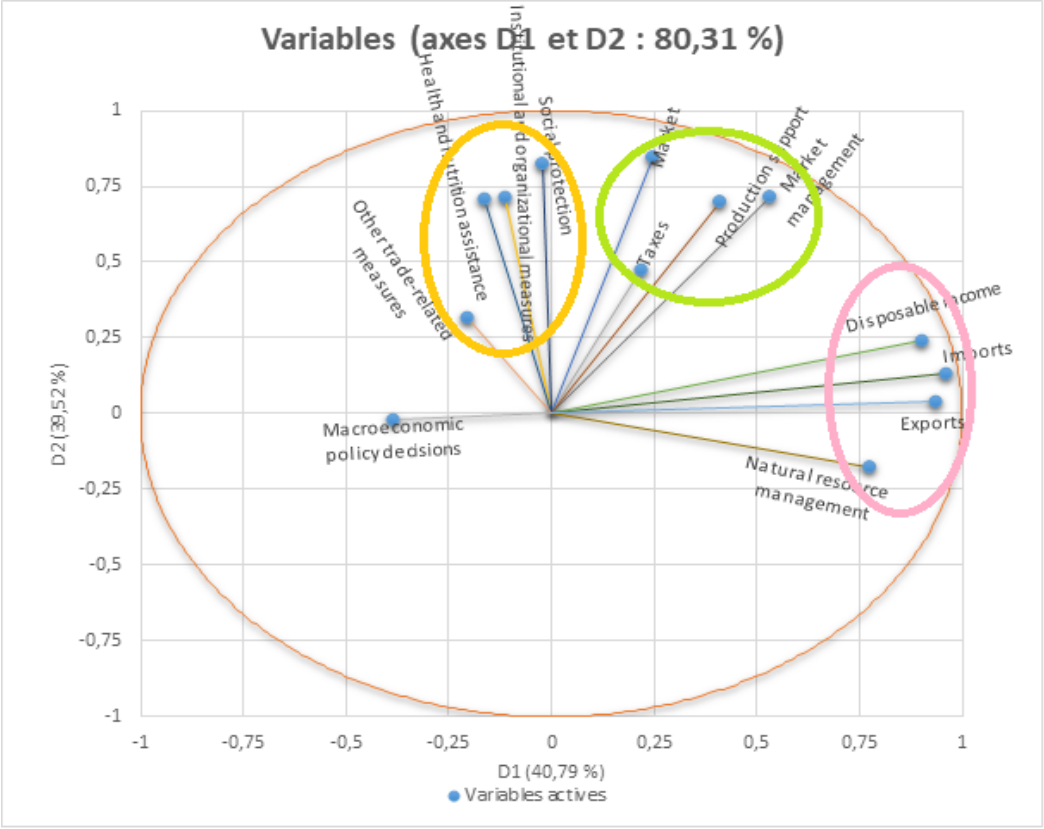

Figure 4.2 : Trend in the Distribution of Actions Taken

203. Finally, countries that have taken action on macroeconomic policy decisions have taken less action on natural resource management, exports, imports, and disposable income.

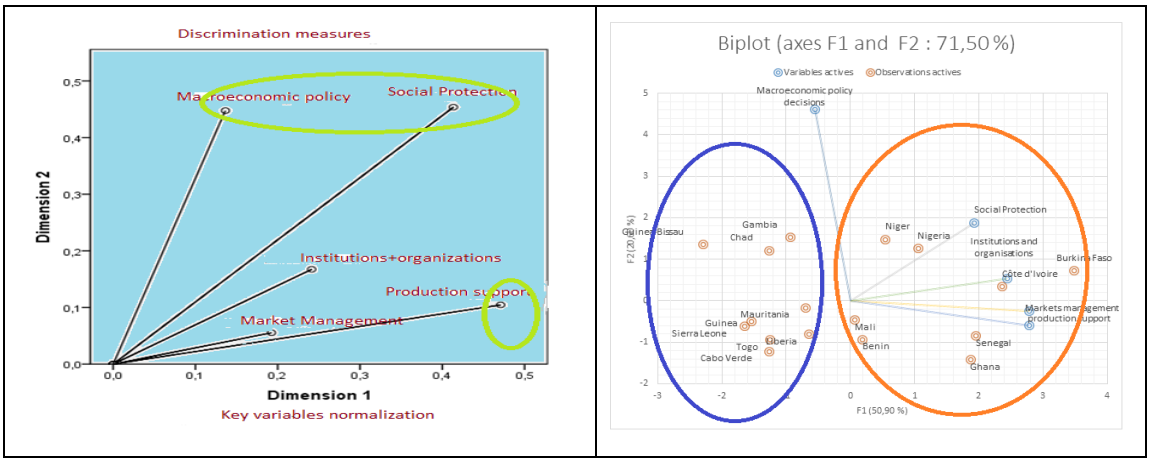

Figure 4.3 : Most Important Variables (a) and Countries Profile (b)

204. The most important measures are those of macroeconomic policy, social protection and production support (Figure 4.3 a), as shown by the results of the discriminant analysis. In other words, they are the most important variables to monitor because they are institutionally anchored. These three variables alone represent, in relative frequencies, more than 90% of the measures taken against covid 19. The same is true of the implementation costs. Moreover, according to the measures implemented, two groups of homogeneous countries can be clearly distinguished, as shown in figure (4.3 b).

205. These are Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal, which show strong correlations with social protection measures, market management measures, and institutional and organizational measures and weak correlations with trade and macroeconomic measures. These groups of countries took opposite measures to those of the Gambia, Cabo Verde, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Chad and Togo.

4.3 Difficulties

206. One of the recommendations of the ECOWAS Ministers in charge of Agriculture and Food during their video conference of March 31, 2020, is to implement regional programs whose intervention actions should be coordinated to ensure synergy and efficiency, through the creation of a task force. Although regional coordination with the aim of strengthening the monitoring and impact analysis mechanism of the COVID-19 on food and nutrition security in the Sahel is effective thanks to the protocol agreement signed between the FAO and ECOWAS and the designation of sixteen country focal points (except for Chad), the fact remains that information does not circulate between countries. No country is kept informed of the actions taken by the others and acts in isolation. It is a case of "every man for himself" facing his difficulties alone, to the detriment of the solidarity desired by the collaboration.

207. While tensions arise when interests diverge. A typical example is border management and covid testing. Movement restrictions and border controls in West African countries put in place to combat the COVID-19 pandemic vary from country to country and have been a hard blow to thousands of people conducting transnational business. While some countries are opening their land borders, others are keeping them closed. The same is true for air borders in terms of their opening and the management of the inherent covid tests and health pass.

208. Another case was the lack of harmonization in containment measures between countries and the tensions caused within countries. With the exception of Benin, all West African countries took total or partial lockdown measures followed by curfews. Nigeria and Burkina Faso have taken measures to quarantine major urban centres or states. However, the measures recommended by the African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention have met with resistance from the populations of the countries where they have been implemented on several occasions. Thus, despite the massive deployment of police officers in West African cities, several curfew violations have been observed. Clandestine inland transport networks have also emerged in response to the containment. In addition, law enforcement officials faced numerous demonstrations denouncing police violence and anti-COVID 19 measures (particularly in Niger and Guinea, where the majority of the population is Muslim), especially during the closure of mosques and in response to the subsequent ban on collective prayers during Ramadan.

209. The similarity in the political decisions on response measures is quite coincidental and not the result of any upstream harmonization. These are:

- the remission of taxes to companies affected by the restrictions
- the moderation of penalties resulting from tax audits;
- the creation of private sector guarantee funds to guarantee the financing needs of SME/SMI, decentralized financial systems, agri-food industries and others affected by COVID-19
- support for the electricity and water sector, which has enabled vulnerable groups to pay their water and electricity bills;
- the revision of the national budgets for 2020 by increasing the budgetary shares for health, agriculture and social protection to take into account the situation created by COVID-19; the free distribution of hygiene kits and the revival of the economy in 2021;
- mobilization of contributions from technical and financial partners - FAO, European Union, UNICEF, WFP, World Bank, etc. - following emergency appeals launched by the governments of African countries at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020;
- Strengthening social protection mechanisms by revitalizing school feeding programs, distributing food and food kits, increasing cash transfers, implementing cash-for-work programs, implementing information, prevention and infection control measures at distribution sites, and increasing price controls on basic foodstuffs.

210. The lack of coordination and synergy of actions is a hindrance to the implementation of the regional emergency action plan. Many resources have been deployed by the West

African States accompanied by financial partners, but they have not been able to develop more synergies to make the actions more effective and efficient, despite the existence of the regional task force which is the framework dedicated to this purpose.

211. The reasons that prevented all members of the regional task force from acting together and having a common mission as their objective include:

- The delays in the implementation of the LETTER OF AGREEMENT (LoA) on the Regional Coordination for the strengthening of the monitoring and impact analysis mechanism of COVID-19 on Food and Nutritional Security in the Sahel did not allow for the timely designation of the focal points who are members of the regional task force to be set up. Indeed, the activities of LoA-COVID 19 started on May 2, 2021, for example fifteen months after the adoption of the regional emergency action plan. The absence of a framework for consultation has favoured isolated actions to the detriment of cohesion around a common goal, respect for commitments, communication and recognition of the work of each person in order to generate collective efficiency through working methods that save time and solve difficulties together;
- The instability of addresses of the contact persons in the countries did not make it easy to send correspondence for the designation of country representatives to the regional task force;
- The difficult collaboration with some focal points who do not react by e-mail, or send incomplete and sometimes late deliverables, does not allow upstream to make an appropriate diagnosis of the situation of each country in order to organize productive meetings for the harmonization of actions;
- The interventions of the focal points of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Togo during the virtual meeting revealed that data collection has encountered certain difficulties. In particular, these were:
  - ✓ the difficulty of finding certain information that is not monitored in the agricultural statistics system
  - ✓ the difficult cooperation of some actors;
  - ✓ the nature of the data to be collected, which requires the establishment of an inter-ministerial team to facilitate cooperation between actors
  - ✓ the very short time frame for return of deliverables.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

212. Several measures have been taken at the international, sub-regional and national levels to counter the adverse effects of the pandemic on the socio-economic life of the population. The costs of the response measures amount to at least US$ 32.67 billion, which represents 4.6% of West African GDP, or US$ 78.06 per inhabitant. The largest shares of GDP were recorded in Mali, Niger, Chad and Togo with ratios of 18.4%, 18.3%, 11.8% and 14.0% respectively.

213. These are mainly short-term, cross-cutting emergency measures aimed at mobilizing resources to support the most vulnerable sectors in the respective countries, including agriculture. The actions most undertaken to this end are in favor of social protection, production, market management, institutions and organizations and macroeconomic policy decisions. In terms of numbers, social protection measures account for 51% of costs, followed by production support measures (22%), which represent 73% of the amounts committed by countries to counter the effects of covid. The institutional anchoring of these two mechanisms facilitated their deployment as soon as the pandemic emerged.

214. One of the major trends is the backlash in decision making to address the adverse effects of the covid 19 as the waves of contamination follow one another with heavy human and socio-economic tolls.

215. There is a need to support ECOWAS in continuing to collect and analyse information on country measures against Covid.

216. Establish inter-ministerial consultation mechanisms in countries to facilitate collaboration and obtain the data to be collected.

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7 Annexe

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Template for Compilation and Analysis of Good Practices in Covid 19

Background

1. In an effort to manage the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in West Africa, the ECOWAS Ministers of Agriculture and Food held a video conference on March 30, 2020 on the impact of COVID-19 and crop pests on food and nutrition security in West Africa. The ministers noted that the following pandemic control measures have been taken in all countries: partial or total containment of populations, limitation of people's mobility, closure of borders, closure of urban, peri-urban and rural markets that structure the relationship between supply and demand. While recognizing the positive effects of these measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, they also mentioned the initial negative impacts on food and nutrition security, including: the increase in the price of basic foodstuffs, the limited access of vulnerable people to food, the drastic decrease in the marketing of perishable vegetable and fruit products, the increase in transportation costs, the difficult access to seeds, fertilizers, phytosanitary products, etc. It should be noted that responses to COVID-19 vary from country to country. However, few specific studies have assessed the precise impact of different policy measures on food and nutrition security in the West African region and in Chad. While knowledge sharing and capitalization of good practices would play a key role in eradicating COVID-19 and mitigating its impacts on food security in all ECOWAS and CILSS countries.

2. In July 2021, ECOWAS sent a letter to the relevant Ministries of Agriculture/Food Security and Nutrition to propose a representative whose mission will be to compile, analyse and capitalize on good practices in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impacts. These good practices concern those implemented in his country by the government, agricultural research organizations, farmers' organizations, and other strategic partners of his country, based on a review of the available literature and interviews with key actors.

3. For the purposes of this exercise, a best practice is a policy measure with the following characteristics:

   - it has been implemented one or more times;

- its effects on agriculture and/or food and nutrition security are evaluated;
- it is replicable in different contexts.

A best practice deserves to be shared so that more people can adapt and adopt it. This information will be recorded in a report, the outline of which will be defined by ECOWAS.

Content of the report

The initiative to compile and analyse good practices in the socio-economic fight against COVID-19, initiated by the ECOWAS Commission's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, aims to promote the capitalization and sharing of successful experiences in the fight against COVID-19 and evidence-based decision making. This work will draw on the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Policy Decision Analysis (FAPDA) tool to identify and analyse policy trends. At the country level, the consultant categorizes policies according to food and agricultural policy classifications (producer-oriented policies, consumer-oriented policies, and macroeconomic and trade-oriented policies, each with its own subcategories) and policy frameworks (national socio-economic development, food security and nutrition, agriculture and rural development, social protection, natural resources, trade and markets, disaster risk reduction and management, and gender). Furthermore, the analysis of these impacts must be done according to the table below and in line with the recommendations of the Ministers in charge of Agriculture and Food, formulated during a videoconference held on 30 March 2020. These recommendations led to the adoption of the Regional Emergency Action Plan to address the impacts of COVID-19 and the threats of pests on food and nutritional security in West Africa and the Sahel.

Among others:

What are the **impacts of pro-producer and trade policy decisions** on local agricultural production, food availability, and on continued functioning of agricultural product collection, processing, and distribution chains?

Do pro-consumer and trade **policy decisions** ensure food price stability despite soaring world prices and their impact on the region?

What are the impacts of policy decisions on unemployment situation, income and purchasing power of households, especially those in the hard-hit informal economy

Table 1: Best Practices in Policy and Political Decisions against the Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19

Policy Decisions: Good Practices in Food and Agricultural Policy											
Category	Best practice objectives of measures	Implementing period	Target population	Number of beneficiaries	Estimated costs of the measure in USD	Indicate the main impacts on consumption, food availability including production, imports, exports, poverty, resilience.:	Success factors	Challenges	Implementing organization(s)	Partners	Has the practice been evaluated?
Pro-consumers											
Taxes											
Social protection											
Contract											
Disposable income											
Health and nutritional aid											
Pro-producers											
Production support											
Contract management											
Natural resources management											
Measures relating to institutions and organizations											
Trade/Macroeconomic Policy Decisions											
Imports											

Exports											
Other trade-related measures											
Macroeconomic Policy Decisions											
Framework Policy											
National socio-economic development											
Long term Development plan or vision											
Medium term implementation strategy											
Poverty reduction strategy											
Investment plan											
Food and Nutrition Security											
Food and Nutrition Security (general)											
Nutrition											
Food safety											
Food Losses and Wastage											
Agriculture and Rural Development											
Agriculture and rural development (general)											

Crop development and diversification											
Livestock											
Fisheries and aquaculture											
Regional development											
Social Security											
Social Security											
Labour and employment											
Youth Development											
Natural Resources											
Natural resources											
Forests											
Land											
Water resources management											
Climate change											
Biodiversity											
Trade and Markets											
Trade											
Promotion and diversification of exports											
Development of value chains											

Disaster Risk Management and Reduction											
Disaster risk management and reduction											
Genre											
Genre											

In order to classify the good practices and to select the best ones, some criteria have been defined with their evaluation grid in table 2;

Table 2: Best practice evaluation grid

Evaluation grid for a best practice/ grade (1 to 5) for each criterion					
Category	Number of times implemented [a]	Impacts on agriculture and SAN[b]	Reproducibility	Innovation	Weighted grade
Pro-consumers					
Taxes					
Social protection					
Contract					
Disposable income					
Health and food aid					
Pro-producers					
Production support					
Contracts management					

Natural resources management					
Measures relating to institutions and organizations					
Trade/macroeconomic policy decisions					
Imports					
Exports					
Other trade-related measures					
Macroeconomic policy decisions					
Policy Framework					
National socio-economic development					
Long-term development plan or vision					
Medium-term implementation strategy					
Poverty Reduction Strategy					
Investment plan					
Food security and nutrition (general)					
Nutrition					
Food safety					
Food Losses and Wastage					

Agriculture and rural development					
Agriculture and rural development					
Crop development and diversification					
Livestock					
Fisheries and aquaculture					
Regional development					
Social Security					
Social security (general)					
Labour and employment					
Youth development					
Natural Resources					
Natural resources (general)					
Forests					
Land					
Water resources management					
Climate change					
Biodiversity					
Trade and Markets					

Trade (general)					
Promotion and diversification of exports					
Development of value chains					
Disaster Risk Management and Reduction					
Disaster risk management and reduction					
Genre					
Genre					

a. Maximum score for the number of times the measure is implemented is 5 points. 2 points, if the measure is implemented one to two times; 4 if three times and 5 for a number of times greater than or equal to 4 times.
b. Effect on SAN and agriculture is 5 points. 1 point for one of the aspects of SAN: availability, accessibility, use or stability. 2 points, if the effect affects two SAN determinants; 3 points for three determinants; 5 points for four determinants. On the other hand, if the effect of the measure affects more than one aspect of SAN, agriculture the score is 3 points; if it affects two or more aspects of SAN and agriculture, the score is 5 points.
c. Reproducibility depends on the number of challenges. 1 for more than 4 challenges; 3 for 3 to 4 challenges; 5 for less than 3 challenges.
d. Innovation depends on the originality of the measure. Never applied elsewhere 5 points; applied elsewhere but adapted to the national and/or regional context 4 points; when it is a reproduction 2