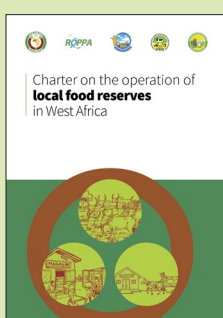
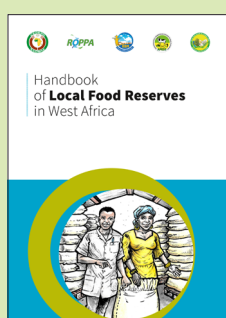
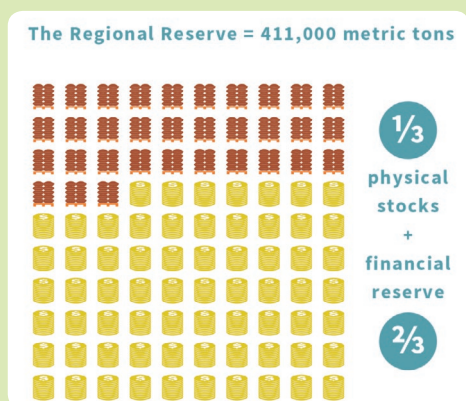
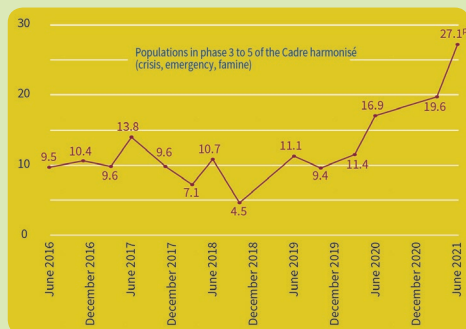
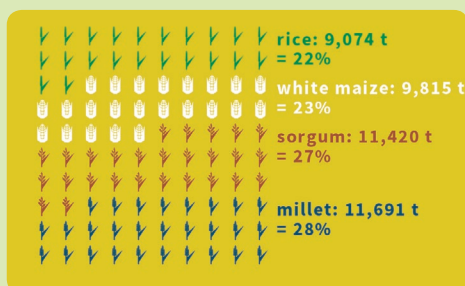
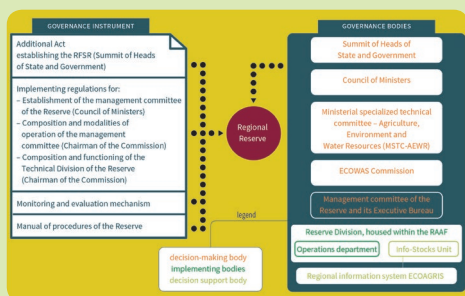




The West African Food Security Storage System in brief



1. Food and nutrition crises affect 5 to 25 million people each year, depriving them of their basic food.
2. In line with the Zero Hunger objective, the challenge for ECOWAS was to build a structural capacity for storage, intervention and crisis management that would enable the region to be sovereign and autonomous, and reduce its dependence on international humanitarian aid, which is already solicited on multiple fronts.
3. Adopted in 2012, the regional food security storage strategy has been deploying for five years a West African storage system in line with the ECOWAS Vision of the People. It combines and organizes complementarity between four lines of defense against food and nutrition insecurity: (i) local stocks managed by producers' and breeders' organizations; (ii) national stocks managed by the countries; (iii) a regional stock; and finally (iv) the recourse to international aid. It is based on three principles: subsidiarity, complementarity and solidarity.
4. The third line of defense, the Regional Food Security Reserve (RFSR), was created by decision of the Heads of State and Government in 2013 by way of an Supplementary Act to the revised ECOWAS Treaty. It is based on a physical stock and a financial reserve inserted in the ECOWAS Regional Fund for Agriculture and Food (RFAF), managed by EBID.
5. The political will of the highest authorities in the region, as well as the institutional, human and financial resources of ECOWAS, have been decisive for the operationalization of this strategy.
6. Political support from the G20, financial support from the European Union and USAID, and technical support from AFD and AECID have enabled ECOWAS, in cooperation with WAEMU and CILSS, to deploy this food reserve system to deal with cyclical shocks in the region.
7. The storage support project financed by the European Union since 2015 has made it possible to consolidate the first two lines of defense (local and national storage) and to build the Community's solidarity instrument, the Regional Reserve.
8. The local storage organizations (grouped supply organizations in deficit areas, grouped collection and marketing organizations in surplus areas, feed banks in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas) have been in dialogue with each other and with ECOWAS, capitalizing on their good practices and recording them to make build references shared by all organizations. They have adopted a charter recording their commitments in terms of good stock management, paving the way to contractual relations with the countries and ECOWAS. The regional networks of producers' organizations were able to strengthen their grassroots organizations and their stock management capacities.



9. The countries have capitalized on their best practices in public storage management and have adopted a code of conduct that is currently being transcribed into a regional directive common to ECOWAS and WAEMU. They are all committed to defining an explicit storage policy with governance instruments (mechanisms and procedures). They have designed contingency plans, which are tools for anticipating and preparing for the management of different crisis scenarios.

10. At the ECOWAS level, the Regional Reserve has developed transparent governance bodies and instruments. It has a physical capital of 42,000 metric tons of cereals, stored in the warehouses of national storage bodies. The RFSR benefits from the skills of the latter for the conservation and security of foodstuffs. Since its establishment, it has intervened 12 times in four countries facing crises on the basis of eligibility criteria. It has provided 26,000 metric tons of grain to 1,734,000 people for one month.

11. A technical rotation operation has made it possible to supply the school canteen program in Ghana, to avoid deterioration in the quality of the stock. The capital of the Reserve is replenished in two main ways: “grain for grain” reimbursement in physical or monetary form by the beneficiary country, or reimbursement by a “third party paying” institution (ECOWAS solidarity or international partner).

12. The financial reserve, which will allow for the diversification of responses to food crises and respond to pastoral and nutritional crises, is in the process of being operationalized following the signing of the agreement between ECOWAS and EBID, within the framework of the management of the Regional Fund for Agriculture and Food.

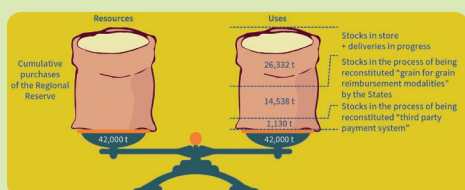
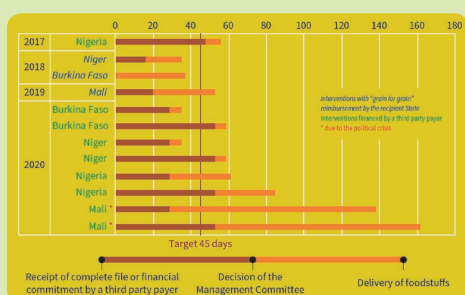
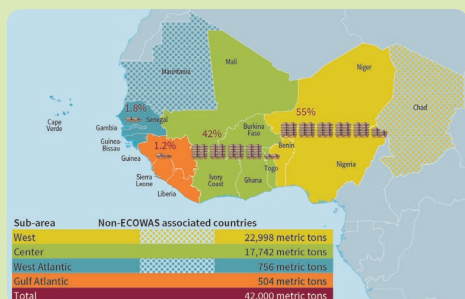
13. The mechanisms for regional pooling of 5% of national stocks within the framework of the Network of Public Companies in charge of the Management of National Stocks (RESOGEST) have been defined but are slow to be implemented.

14. The regional agricultural information and decision support system ECOAGRIS has been strengthened and has made it possible to inform the RFSR’s intervention decisions, while more broadly meeting the information needs for the management and monitoring-evaluation of regional agricultural, food and environmental policies and programmes.

15. The dynamic of inter-departmental dialogue within ECOWAS (agriculture and humanitarian action) has allowed for synergies and operational cooperation between the RFSR and humanitarian interventions.

16. After five years of implementation, the regional institutions have undertaken an in-depth review of the achievements and lessons learned from this storage experience in order to draw up clear prospects for consolidating the system in view of the region’s growing vulnerability. Risk factors and shocks are becoming more diverse (economic, climatic, health and security shocks, etc.). The scale of the crises is increasing, causing global humanitarian crises affecting all the countries in the region.

17. The challenges remain considerable. The resources needed to deal with the food and nutritional consequences of shocks amount to between \$1.2 and \$2 billion per year in West Africa. The regional storage system plays a dual role in preventing and managing



these shocks. It reduces the human and financial costs of crises and contributes to the deployment of sustainable institutions, strengthening the region's resilience to shocks. Increasing the physical stock (target 150,000 tons) and building up the financial reserve are now strategic. However, the deployment of such a system can only be based on innovative financing mechanisms, and a close partnership between the regional and international communities, financial and banking institutions as well as insurance and risk management systems.

18. Adjustments to the governance of the RRSA will be required to better handle the diversification of crises and their triggering modes (slow onset crises versus sudden onset crises).

19. The storage system will also have to find its place within the social protection policies of the most vulnerable populations and the social safety net programmes.

20. Finally, stocks will have to play an increasing role in promoting sustainable and resilient food systems, strengthening the region's food sovereignty and its capacity to feed a growing population. In this sense, they should contribute to improving the functioning of the regional market through closer cooperation and partnerships with the private sector and professional organizations.

21. These issues are the subject of the discussions that will feed the International Conference on the West African Storage System from April 28 to May 10, 2021, with a view to laying the foundations of a multilateral partnership capable of supporting the deployment and adaptation of the system over the next 10 years. This conference will also provide an opportunity to report to the G20, which supported the initiative, and to share this original and innovative regional experience with other regions of the world.

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