



### Press Release

## **A High-level Meeting to better Coordinate Responses to the Food and Nutrition Situation of 2020 in the Sahel and West Africa.**

**Lomé, (Togo), 10 February 2020.** As part of the implementation of the orientations and decisions of the Ministerial Meeting and the Management Committee of the Regional Food Security Reserve (RFSR), ECOWAS is set to organize from 17 to 18 February 2020 in Niamey, Niger, a High-level Meeting with the Humanitarian Community and the Technical and Financial Partners on the Coordination of responses to the difficult Food and Nutritional Situation of 2020 in the Sahel and in West Africa.

As a matter of fact, faced with the gravity of the food and nutritional situation, the RFSR Management Committee launched an Emergency Appeal last December to the Regional and International Community for a concerted, coordinated, rapid and appropriate response for the benefit of the affected populations.

The objective of the Niamey meeting is to (i) make a concerted assessment of the needs and types of assistance necessary to deal with this worrying situation on the basis of national response plans, (ii) make an assessment of the response capacities available at country, regional and partner level, (iii) agree on the procedures for intervention and coordination of responses at national and regional level for more effective interventions and (iv) inform all partners of the ECOWAS initiative to organize an international conference on the West African storage system and gather their opinions, advice and recommendations.

The departments and directorates of the ECOWAS Commission involved in the response to humanitarian crises, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Permanent Inter-State Committee to Combat Drought in the Sahel (CILSS) will be in attendance for this meeting as well as the G5 Sahel, RESOGEST, the national systems for preventing and responding to food crises in affected countries, the technical and financial partners who support countries in the implementation of their response plans, the International Humanitarian Community and Non-Governmental Organizations involved in the management of food and nutritional security, regional networks of organizations of agricultural producers and breeders / pastoralists, diplomatic missions, etc.

To recall, data from the November 2019 analysis of the Harmonized Framework and PREGEC on the food situation show that if appropriate measures and responses are not taken and implemented by the next lean period (June- August 2020), more than 14.4 million people (including 12.4 million in the ECOWAS region) could find themselves in a critical food and nutritional insecurity (phase 3 and more of the Harmonized Framework), an increase of 53% compared to the current period and 48% compared to the 2018 lean period data. The number of people in food emergencies, notably in Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali could therefore reach 1.3 million.

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