

CERFAMNews

CENTRE D'EXCELLENCE REGIONAL CONTRE LA FAIM ET LA MALNUTRITION

REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AGAINST HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

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Opportunities exist !



DR ISSA SANOGO

Director of CERFAM

Dear readers,
Welcome to our first quarterly newsletter of the Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM), the third Centre of Excellence of the World Food Programme (WFP) in the world.

Created in partnership with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and inaugurated in March 2019, CERFAM, aims to be a platform of exchanges, of experiences and knowledge sharing, a forum fostering the identification of solutions suitable to food insecurity and malnutrition issues in Africa, especially in West and Central Africa.

Eradicating hunger and malnutrition, thus achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2 -Zero Hunger) and improving the well-being of the most vulnerable populations, both rural and urban, is a priority for all governments. The «Zero Hunger» Strategic Reviews undertaken under the leadership of governments in the region have identified a number of priorities and made recommendations that can advance food security and nutrition in their countries.

Lack of coordination, weak national capacity and slow implementation of national programmes are among the challenges hindering progress towards the achievement of the SDG2. Food insecurity and malnutrition are strongly linked to poverty,

“ Food insecurity and malnutrition are strongly linked to poverty. ”

subsistence food production, recurrent climate change, conflict, high food prices and weak resilience of households and communities.

The challenges are enormous, but Africa has the potential to address them. Beyond wealth creation, economic growth must be inclusive and redistributive, particularly through social protection systems. Improving the productivity of small-scale farmers and strengthening the value chains of food crops with an emphasis on better management of post-harvest losses is critical.

In view of the multifactorial and multisectoral nature of food, nutrition and resilience issues, CERFAM is committed to contributing to collective effort not only by promoting innovative approaches, methods and solutions, but also by sharing knowledge and know-how with countries in greatest need. As such, CERFAM is documenting good practices and supporting countries to replicate them, and also forging strategic partnerships to scale-up good practices.

The challenges are enormous and CERFAM cannot replace the main stakeholders in food security and nutrition, including governments, the private sector, civil society and partners whose joint efforts are indispensable. In line with this, CERFAM's contribution is to catalyze actions to support countries in the region to achieve their goals in food security and nutrition by 2030.

We have taken our first steps by organizing regional consultations on the implementation status of respective “Zero Hunger

Roadmaps” in West and Central Africa following the nationally-led SDG 2 strategic reviews supported by WFP. The main recommendations of these consultation have informed CERFAM strategic action plan which is being formulated. CERFAM strategic plan must propose concrete actions to nurture the promotion and exchange of good practices on food security and nutrition under a synergistic and complementary framework with our partners.

By working together and bringing our contribution to this collective endeavor, we will reach the goal of «Zero Hunger» by 2030. ■

Enjoy the reading !

With what strategy can we eradicate hunger in Africa ?



Photo: WFP / Conception régionale CERFAM / Boris Bahr

To answer to this question, about sixty representatives from high-level States, regional institutions, development partners and civil society, from 18 countries including 15 from West and Central Africa, participated in a regional consultation on the state of progress of roadmaps for the eradication of hunger and malnutrition in Africa.

4 From 24 to 25 June 2019, national facilitators and

other experts discussed the commonalities and constraints of Zero Hunger roadmaps and strategies developed by the countries. It was also an opportunity for the experts to define the role of CERFAM in assisting Member States, and to identify regional and continental fostering mechanisms. HE Mr. Daniel Kablan Duncan, Vice-President of Côte d’Ivoire and HE Mr. Dioncounda Traoré, former Acting President of Mali, both National Facilitators of the strategic

reviews in their respective countries, presided over the consultation.

Representatives from UN agencies, including FAO and UNICEF, called for urgent and concerted actions,



"Faim zéro" Concertation régionale Crédit photo: Boris Bah.

noting that gains in reducing the prevalence of malnutrition and food insecurity in the region have

been reversed since 2016 due to conflicts, falling commodity prices, climate challenges and decreasing investment in agriculture, which are real challenges to achieving SDG 2. In addition, they estimated that the budget deficit for nutrition is huge in the countries of the region. However, they noted that some countries including Senegal, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo are making progress as a result of strong political engagement, reflected in adequate investment.

The experts urged CERFAM not to limit itself to a monitoring role, and to build a support framework for countries to share experiences in order to accelerate the achievement of SDG2. Achieving SDG 2 is one of the key conditions for achieving all other SDGs. Therefore, the experts and other stakeholders in this regional consultation recommended that CERFAM puts collaboration and joint actions at the center of its priorities in order to establish strategic and operational partnerships, build synergies and complementarities in the different sectors. ■





Fight against malnutrition and hunger

Her Royal Highness Princess Sarah Zeid of Jordan in action



HRH Princess Sarah Zeid demonstrated her commitment to bolstering interest in favor of CERFAM by raising more awareness on hunger and malnutrition in the world, especially in West and Central Africa. In so doing, she was aiming at fostering partnerships and mobilizing the required resources to end hunger and malnutrition.

For the Goodwill Ambassador and Special Advisor of the World Food Programme (WFP) on maternal and child nutrition, it is necessary to bring everyone, including the private sector, together to harness CERFAM's potential to capitalize on the opportunities generated by collective work and complementarities, strong pathways to achieve SDG2.

During her meetings, she appealed to the private sector, development banks and bilateral donors to support CERFAM, soliciting their adherence to the imperative to step up investments to support the promotion of good practices against hunger and malnutrition for the benefit of African countries and particularly Sahelian countries.

Referring to her trip to Burkina Faso, which has been facing growing insecurity in recent years, HRH The Princess stressed that the creation of CERFAM comes at a critical moment for the region. Indeed, the region is facing the triple threats of conflicts caused by extremist violence, inter-ethnic clashes and climate change with their ripple effects that spread beyond the Sahelian countries. These factors put a strain on entire food systems, already under immense pressure.

On Saturday, July 20, 2019, the Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM) was adorned with its finery to welcome Her Royal Highness (HRH) Sarah Zeid, the Princess of Jordan. The Vice President His Excellency Mr. Daniel Kablan Duncan headed a high-level delegation representing the Government of Cote D'Ivoire to host this special occasion.

The visit to Côte d'Ivoire offered an opportunity to HRH Princess Sarah Zeid to advocate for CERFAM and also for the mobilization of enhanced human, technical and financial resources for the fight against hunger and malnutrition.

“Everyone, including the private sector, must seize the opportunity offered by CERFAM to exploit the opportunities for collective work and complementarities to achieve SDG2.”

She expressed her concern with the worsening of the situation, as a recent UN report shows that world hunger has increased for the third consecutive year.

In West Africa, the prevalence of undernutrition has increased by more than 2% in recent years. Yet, the world has made a commitment to achieve the SDGs by 2030. According to her, it is urgent to act now because we are left with ten years only. ■

«They said »



HE Mr. Kablan Duncan, Vice President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire:

«CERFAM is not only an important asset for Côte d'Ivoire, it has the potential to become a beacon for the entire region, and why not for Africa. (...) CERFAM should continue in the coming months, its consultations and actions with the 17 countries of Southern, Northern and Eastern Africa that have completed the strategic review of their roadmaps. (...) An integrated system for monitoring and evaluating the performance of completed actions is required to ensure individual and mutual accountability at national and regional level.»



Mr. Peter OKUBEKOLA, Special Envoy of former President Olesegun Obasandjo of Nigeria:

«Nigeria is joining forces and working for the implementation of CERFAM's Roadmap against hunger and malnutrition. Achieving Zero Hunger will only be possible through effective and efficient sharing of good practices.»



Mr. Stanlake Samkange, Director of Strategic Partnership at WFP, representing the Executive Director:

«The fight against hunger and malnutrition must be a priority on top of the continent's agenda. CERFAM and National Facilitators are the key players who can and should play a key advocacy role in advancing this agenda.»



Mrs. Josephine Mayuma Kala, African Union Resident Representative in Côte d'Ivoire:

«The challenges facing Africa include population growth, climate change, the environment... These drivers exacerbate hunger and malnutrition, with their devastating consequences on humans, and hinder economic development. ... We need to focus on addressing the root causes, including the challenges posed by poorly managed population growth, with the goal of achieving sustainable solutions. The different proposals and thoughts that resulted from this consultation must be taken into account in the elaboration of CERFAM's roadmap.»



Mr. Peter Musoko, WFP Deputy Regional Director for West and Central Africa :

«CERFAM should be a platform for exchanges and coordination that merges actions that result in a multiplier effect. Together, it is possible to do more and better, using partnership opportunities and good practices that are diverse, and can contribute to improving the implementation of national policies and programs.»



Dr. N'Goran Patricia, Coordinator of the Permanent Technical Secretariat of the National Council for Nutrition (CNN) of Côte d'Ivoire:

«These are, among others, the multiplicity and duplication of initiatives, the problems of governance, accountability, mobilization and pooling of resources that undermine the current efforts in the different countries ... It is necessary to ensure the implementation state and / or local government initiatives ... CERFAM must play a catalytic role by using the African Union's leverage to encourage Heads of State to remedy this situation.»



HE Mr. Dioncounda Traoré, Former Acting President of Mali:

«We must capitalize on the construction of an edifice that strengthens the resilience of vulnerable populations with the understanding that peace and security stability and consolidation are the cornerstones (...) Integrated resilience building will advance the fight against hunger and malnutrition.»

Post-harvest losses and impacts on food and nutrition security



Post-harvest losses represent about 37% of the total production for the African continent. They are valued at 48 billion US dollars.

Several factors and conditions contribute directly to the increase in post-harvest losses and the negative impacts that these losses have on the food and nutritional security of the populations in the region. These are, among other things, the conditions of harvest, the handling of production, the rotting of food, unsuitable processing tools, the degradation or lack of storage and transport infrastructure, etc.

In the agricultural sector, post-harvest losses refer to the food losses that are recorded between harvest and consumption, meaning before the product reaches the consumer, unlike the food waste that takes place after the product is in the hands of the consumer.

Post-harvest losses can be quantitative and/or qualitative and have an impact on prices and the environment. Quantitative losses or gross losses are related to poor harvesting, handling, storage and processing conditions. The qualitative losses are related to the degradation of the nutritional quality

of foods or even to the risks they may represent for the health of the people who consume them. According to the World Health Organisation, in 2010 31 contaminants caused 600 million cases of foodborne illness and 420,000 deaths worldwide. The prevalence of diseases and deaths was highest in sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia among children under 5 years of age.

Challenges and opportunities in the region

The challenges in the region are many. They are linked to the practices of the actors in the agro-pastoral sectors and also to the environment in which these actors operate. For example, the lack of and out-dated transport infrastructures make it difficult for producers to access markets and also for downstream actors to access production areas. Storage infrastructures are difficult to calibrate and maintain because of variability and uncertainty in production levels (mainly related to climatic hazards). Support for small scale family farming, which is largely predominant, remains insufficient because the organization of the agro-pastoral

sector is pre-dominantly in the hands of the private sector which is better organized. Added to this are the problems related to taxes and pests that can be detrimental to the quality of products.

Despite these many challenges, some opportunities could be seized. For example, urbanization and population growth represent an opportunity for rural areas that must meet the growing demand of such population. Some tailored training--in terms of cost, duration, content, etc.-- and support to producers can have immediate positive impacts. Also, the existence of a sub-regional market offers a great opportunity for producers. However, it is necessary to put in place policies to reduce transport constraints and facilitate exchanges between countries. Finally, the extension and strengthening of preventive actions against insects and organisms that could cause significant losses in farms and storage warehouses could be beneficial for producers.



Sustainable and innovative solutions

The reduction of post-harvest losses is of major importance in the context of economic development. There are many loss reduction interventions that may be more profitable--better return on investment--than production enhancing activities. This approach is also in line with the value chains that emphasize the importance of ensuring regular opportunities for productions. These measures are aimed at optimizing the value of existing products through appropriate methods to preserve them and increase their value. Increasing production to compensate for losses still involves the use of scarce and expensive resources to promote more intensive and input-intensive agriculture, including additional land. Promoting agriculture centered on the principles of agro-ecology is paramount. Thus, the benefits are reflected not only in financial terms but also in environmental terms.

Considering the problem as a whole, the solutions to reduce post-harvest losses can be classified in three categories. Firstly, innovations and technical solutions having a direct action on reducing losses—e.g. containers, inventory management, packaging, etc. Secondly, measures that contribute to creating a

conducive environment and regulatory framework favourable to the reduction of losses (e.g. deadlines for consumption, optimal use, donations, etc.). Lastly, the implementation of a multidisciplinary approach (biologists, entomologists, physiologists, animal health specialists) and food engineers, in collaboration with industry players. Agricultural producers must be at the center of these innovations through direct involvement in the definition of proposed solutions and active participation in research.

It is worth noting that 500 million small farms provide up to 80% of the food consumed in developing countries. Therefore, investing in these farms to reduce or eliminate post-harvest losses is an important means and effective pathway to improve the food security and nutrition of the poorest, and increase food availability for local and global markets.

The strengthening and promotion of cooperatives reduces burdens on individuals related to transport, processing and preservation of products, and promotes economies of scale that potentially allow for investments in other key stages that can also help reduce losses. New initiatives are emerging with collection and distribution systems via applications, making it faster to execute some aspects of the chain.

Although some of these solutions have been proven in Asia, further research and testing is needed to identify locally appropriate interventions in Africa.

Sustainable farming systems to feed a growing population

If sustainable farming systems are to be developed to feed a growing population in the region, food conservation and food loss reduction across the entire food chain must be key pillars of future national and regional food systems strategies.

To speak of a system is to speak of a dynamic and complex set of sequential functions or operations which can be logically applied to a particular field of activity. The word chain or field underlines the functional succession of the various operations, but it can make lose sight of the complexity of these operations and their reciprocal interactions.

Improving the management of post-harvest losses remains crucial for the continent as millions of Africans still suffer from malnutrition and food imports exceed 35 billion US dollars per year. ■

Cédric BERNARD
Food Security and Livelihoods Advisor Regional Office for West and Central Africa/
Action Against Hunger

Fanta Touré Diop
West Africa Nutrition-Health Advisor/ West Africa Regional Office



Who are we ?



Inaugurated on March 25, 2019, CERFAM is the result of an innovative and inclusive partnership between the United Nations World Food Programme and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, both committed to fostering new momentum to capitalize the expertise, knowledge and best practices available on the continent.

CERFAM aims to provide governments, regional and continental institutions, development partners, UN agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector and particularly communities, with an ideal framework to work in synergy and maximize complementarities to achieve SDG2.

CERFAM's vision is "to be a catalyst and an enabler of good practices and innovative solutions against hunger and malnutrition in the region and Africa." CERFAM aims to transform good practices and lessons learned against hunger and malnutrition into concrete opportunities to advance the implementation of SDG2.

CERFAM's mission is to contribute to accelerating progress towards ending hunger and malnutrition in the region and Africa. To achieve this, CERFAM has developed an action plan that focuses on four pillars: Research, Technical Assistance, Partnership, and Advocacy and Communication.

1. **Partnership** to be established at all levels, including with the Centres of Excellence of Brazil and China, regional institutions and other platforms, the cross-fertilization of technical expertise, innovation, technologies, and creating synergies to achieve SDG2.
2. **Technical Assistance** to support countries to strengthen their policy, legal and institutional frameworks, as well as to implement good practices against hunger and malnutrition through a network of experts in relevant domains.
3. **Research** to enable the identification, documentation and dissemination of good practices

and lessons learned on family farming, post-harvest losses management, coordination and convergence of nutrition interventions, community resilience building and social protection.

4. **Advocacy and communication** to raise awareness and mobilize collective action at all levels, build and strengthen partnerships, mobilize resources to leverage investments aimed to promote and implement good practices and innovative solutions in the region. ■

Under the leadership of Dr. Issa Sanogo, CERFAM aspires to become a centre for capacity strengthening on scalable innovative hunger and malnutrition solutions.



Issa Sanogo is the Director of the Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM), based in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. Issa brings more than 20 years of national and international experience and knowledge in the humanitarian, development, food security and nutrition fields.

He holds a PhD in Development Economics from the Center for Studies and Research in International Development (CERDI) at the University of Auvergne in France, with research experience. He is the author of various papers on the impact of shocks (climate change, economic, financial and conflicts) on food security, nutrition, economic policies, private investment, infrastructure and productivity published in renowned international scientific journals.

Before joining CERFAM, Issa assumed high-level responsibilities in the management of food security and nutrition operations. As Deputy Country Director, he managed WFP's most complex and innovative food and nutrition security operations in Lebanon during the peak of humanitarian crisis in Syria from 2014 - 2016, and subsequently in Chad from 2016 - 2019. Prior to that, Issa worked in Asia and at WFP headquarters in Rome where he led the development and deployment of analytical vulnerability tools and methods to inform policy and programmatic deci-

sion-making on humanitarian actions and development programmes, including social protection programmes, market access programmes for smallholder farmers.

Prior to joining WFP, Issa worked as a macro-economist at the World Bank in Guinea. He also served as Technical Advisor to the Ministry of Industry and Private Sector Promotion in Cote d'Ivoire and as Economist at the National Bureau of Technical Studies and Development (BNETD), also in Cote d'Ivoire. ■

IN THE NEXT EDITION

- * *Premises of a partnership with the African Union*
- * *SARA 2019 - Improving food security and nutrition: Investing in good practices and innovative technologies to reduce post-harvest losses.*
- * *South-South cooperation: Technical support from Côte d'Ivoire and Benin to Congo Brazzaville for cassava transformation*

Our sincere thanks to the Bureau Regional for West and Central Africa / Action against Hunger for its valuable contribution.

We would be happy to publish in our next issues the contributions of partners wishing to develop themes related to the fight against malnutrition and hunger.



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