



Charter for Food Crises Prevention and Management

Revised text of the 1990 Food Aid Charter

“Revised Draft Text”
June 2009

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Facilitators of the Revision Process:



WARNING

This document is a draft revised instrument, which will be used as a basis for discussions with the various actors with the aim of reaching a consensus and adopting a revised Charter focusing on the prevention and management of food crises.

Therefore, it is not yet the revised Charter. It was produced based on expert analyses in accordance with precise terms of reference. Annex 1 presents the general background to the preparation of the document.

I. BACKGROUND – FOREWORD

The Food Aid Charter was adopted in Bissau (Guinea-Bissau) on 10 February 1990 by the Summit of Heads of State of the member countries of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) at the instigation of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (FCPN). Over the years, it was recognised as a code of good conduct in the field of food aid management. Since 2005, FCPN members have been underscoring the necessity to revise this text considering the changing context of food crises: (i) coming on the scene of new donors who were not signatories to the Charter in 1990, (ii) emergence of civil society organisations very active in food security, (iii) evolution of the nature of food crisis and diversification of response tools, (iv) consideration of the roles and responsibilities of intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) cooperating with the States, (v) consideration of general concerns associated with aid effectiveness (Paris Declaration, March 2005).

The Parties: *states, intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), NGOs, technical and financial partners (TFPs¹), civil society organisations (CSOs²)*

1. Considering that food security should be addressed in a broad sense including nutritional aspects;
2. Considering that food crisis prevention and management are part and parcel of beneficiary countries' development dynamics and bilateral and multilateral donor agencies' strategies for humanitarian aid and development support;
3. Considering that the right to food is included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations – 1948), included in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which has been in force since 1976 – as well as the " Voluntary guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security" approved by FAO;
4. Considering the commitment made by the international community during the World Food Summit (Rome - 1996), broadened by the United Nations General Assembly in its Millennium Declaration aimed at "halving by 2015, the proportion of people in the world whose income is less than one US dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger (...)" (MDG 1);
5. Considering the conclusion of the high-level meeting on "food security for all" held in Madrid on 26 and 27 January 2009 during which the right to food was reaffirmed;
6. Considering West African countries' and Chad's commitments to place their agricultural and food strategies in a context of regional integration in all fields, particularly through the implementation of a customs union to facilitate free movement of food commodities in the sub-region and a common trade policy within the borders of this area;
7. Considering the objectives of the ECOWAS Regional Agricultural Policy, which aim "to ensure the food security of the West African rural and urban populations and food commodity safety, within the framework of an approach, which guarantee sovereignty over food in the region, to reduce dependence on imports by giving priority to food production and processing by optimising the use and tapping complementarities and comparative

¹ TFPs include bilateral and multilateral donors and international organisations (UN system and others).

² CSOs include producer professional organisations, private sector organisations etc.

advantages within the subregion, (...)" (ECOWAP – Summit of the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS Member States held in January 2005);

8. Considering the objective of the Sahelian Food Security Strategy, which aims "to ensure access by all Sahelians, at any time, to required food to lead a healthy and active life by 2015 "via": (i) the promotion of a productive, diversified, sustainable and regionally integrated strategy; (ii) development, fluidity and sub-regional integration of national markets; (iii) sustainable improvement of conditions associated with the access of vulnerable groups and zones to food and basic social services; (iv) improvement of temporary crisis prevention and management systems, in line with the achievement of structural food security; and (v) strengthening actors' capacity and promotion of good governance in food security" (Summit of the Heads of State and Government of CILSS countries – November 2000);
9. Considering donor and beneficiary countries' commitments to improve development aid effectiveness by complying with the basic principles, which are: (i) taking ownership of development strategies by partner countries; (ii) alignment of donors with these strategies and the various countries' institutions and procedures; (iii) harmonisation and transparency of interventions; (iv) adoption of results-based aid management; and lastly (v) mutual responsibility for achieving results (Paris Declaration on aid development effectiveness – OECD 2005);
10. Recalling the main donor countries' commitments within the framework of the London Convention on food aid;
11. Referring to the main codes of conduct in force in the field of humanitarian aid (notably SPHERE, Good Humanitarian Donorship – GHD), which commit aid agencies, humanitarian NGOs, the United Nations humanitarian agencies;
12. Aware that food crisis in the Sahel and more generally in West Africa can result from the combination of several structural, temporary, natural factors , etc.;
13. Aware that these crises develop in a context characterised on the one hand, by the existence of geographic areas and sections of the populations affected by endemic poverty, and on the other hand by risks related to climate change, socio-political evolution and lastly profound changes due to population growth, urbanisation, fragile natural environments, opening up and globalisation of economies, etc.;
14. Aware that crises have become more complex and multifaceted, that they affect first the most vulnerable groups of the society, not only pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants, elderly people, the chronically ill and disabled people but also households with vulnerable livelihoods, small producers and livestock breeders³ on the one hand and result in the degradation of food diets, undernourishment and malnutrition, which can culminate in famine on the other;
15. Aware that the emergence of new civil society actors and local authorities or local governments (resulting from the implementation of decentralisation policies), who play an increasing role in the management of public goods and food security;
16. Aware that effective management of food crisis in the various countries should include all the actors concerned and be placed in the regional perspective;
17. Aware that prediction and prevention are the most appropriate tools to limit the extent of crisis and reduce related human and financial costs;

³ It is important to take these groups into account when identifying needs.

18. Aware that all crises cannot be completely curbed by prevention efforts and considering that food aid and adaptation or mitigation strategies (mobilisation of local stocks, off-season farming, income generating activities, creation of assets, etc.), are important tools to increase access to food and provide for the food and nutritional needs of the vulnerable populations affected by crises;
19. Aware of the significant changes to food aid over the last decades, in particular due to a drop in surplus and global stocks, of the increased use of cash to buy crops under food aid programmes, the heightened propensity to purchase locally or triangularly, the adoption of good conduct policies by food aid donors and the existence of innovative mechanisms such as monetary transfers and vouchers as well as direct purchases from producers;
20. Recognising that the modalities governing food aid mobilisation and management can positively or adversely affect the food security conditions of households, countries and the region and therefore strengthen or reduce the populations' capacities to cope with future shocks.

Hereby declare to adhere to the following provisions:

II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The provisions of this Charter aim to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of food crises prevention and response mechanisms in West Africa.

The parties concerned (States, IGOs, TFPs, NGOs, and CSOs) shall adhere to the general principles below:

- Respect for the dignity of the people facing a food crisis, irrespective of its extent;
- Recognition, consideration and strengthening of the leadership of local, national and regional institutions in defining response strategies and implementing actions;
- Recognition of the necessity to involve social and economic organisations in addition to organisations representing the civil society in the assessment of food situations and the identification of actions to take as well as their monitoring and evaluation;
- Recognition of the necessity to establish regional and national institution-co-ordinated intervention strategies. These strategies should be based on reliable information that is recognised, accepted and used by the parties concerned. Dialogue, co-ordination and consultation frameworks should systematically take this information into account. This calls for better understanding of the key role of national and regional information systems in the prevention and management of food and nutritional crises;
- The integration of interventions into global and coherent approaches and into the choices of policies and mechanisms by states, communities, and regional institutions, regarding development actions or emergency operations;
- Duty to intervene through emergency humanitarian actions when a crisis poses significant risks for affected populations' basic human rights and lives;

- Requirement of transparency and independent evaluation of actions. To this end, the parties to this Charter shall recognise the importance of carrying out joint, rigorous and independent evaluations, which feed into dialogue on practices, evaluate its application and call on all categories of actors to comply with the principles of this Charter.

Thus, the parties to this Charter shall unanimously recognise that any action in the field of food crisis prevention and management, irrespective of the tool used, should rest on the following three pillars:

- **Pillar 1:** Prior knowledge and analysis of the food and nutritional situation through the information systems and appropriate technological assessment tools recognised at country and regional levels;
- **Pillar 2:** Consultation among actors through consultative and decision-making mechanisms set up at country and regional levels;
- **Pillar 3:** Consensual analysis of responses so as to better direct actors towards the most adapted response tools in line with the nature of the crisis.

III. FOOD SECURITY INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS SYSTEM

3.1. Specific principles

The parties concerned (**States, IGOs, TFPs, NGOs and CSOs**) shall recognise the necessity:

- To have in due time complete and quality diagnoses on the various dimensions and acuteness of food insecurity, risks and the capacities of the various sections of the populations to cope with these risks. This information should be consensual, regular and reliable and based on recognised and tested methodologies;
- To have information systems which are part of a complete mechanism and contribute to making detailed diagnoses of the food situation and risks of deterioration of the latter: agricultural sample survey and seasonal crop monitoring, market monitoring, monitoring of household livelihoods and vulnerability, monitoring of the nutritional situation, etc.;
- Of diagnoses shared by the various stakeholders, which optimise the diversity of information sources and analyses from national, regional and international actors, be they public systems or frameworks and surveys promoted by other institutions, including IGOs, NGOs and United Nations organisations;
- To collect, process and analyse data whatever the source is, in accordance with criteria and methodologies chosen with and recognised by the States;
- To go further than the diagnosis, to provide information and analyses which facilitate decision-making by governments and regional entities and acceptable by all the stakeholders (**States, IGOs, TFPs, NGOs, and CSOs**).

3.2. Commitments

The States and IGOs shall commit to:

- Cooperating in order to support the development of operational and effective information systems within national and regional institutions;
- Contributing to the institutional and financial sustainability of the information systems. Therefore suitable funding mechanisms shall be sought at State and IGO levels. This would entail developing over the long-term early warning systems focusing on key risk factors of circumstantial crises so as to detect deteriorating food and nutritional security situations and to prevent and anticipate their occurrence- Contributing to ensuring the institutional and financial sustainability of information systems. Therefore, suitable funding mechanisms shall be sought at State and IGO levels;
- Strengthening information reliability and independence by establishing a set of rules governing information production and verification as part of a "quality assurance process"; this process shall include a report on quality from information systems as well as an independent certification system⁴;
- Promoting research and innovative initiatives to improve the understanding of risks and their forecasting, to deepen knowledge of the populations' adaptation strategies and to improve vulnerability analysis at household, community and country levels;
- Promoting dialogue and exchanges of views among the multiple actors and institutions on the above-mentioned issues.

The States, TFPs, NGOs and CSOs shall commit to:

- Cooperating with a view to preventing duplication of information production, particularly between national, regional and international information systems on the one hand and to producing joint vulnerability analyses based on harmonised and consensual methodologies. Through these shared analyses, co-operation among actors should lead to the formulation of appropriate recommendations to national and regional decision-making bodies as well as within the UN system and NGOs;
- Sharing produced information first and foremost within consultative and coordination frameworks, in order to harmonise the information and resulting analyses before their wider dissemination, particularly by the media. This sharing should also involve information related to actions that each actor intends to carry out in response to an identified crisis situation; planned actions should comply with national and regional choices;

The TFPs shall commit to:

- Supporting the initiatives developed by the states and IGOs in the harmonisation and improvement of the quality of produced information;
- Focusing their actions in order to strengthen efforts made by the states and IGOs regarding the setting up of sustainable and effective information systems.

⁴ This aspect on the quality of information could be the subject of an additional component of this Charter.

IV. DIALOGUE & CONSULTATIVE FRAMEWORK

4.1. Specific Principles

Key elements for effective and collective action in food crisis management include rapid decision-making as well as synergy and coherence of the interventions.

Therefore, **the stakeholders (States, TFPs, IGOs and NGOs) shall recognise the need to:**

- Improve governance of food crisis management by combining two requirements:
 - *Compliance with the principle of participation:* the involvement of all actors in the dialogue and preparatory consultation process for decisions is an essential stage in the improvement of public decision. To do this, stakeholders' must guarantee the transparency of their actions;
 - *Compliance with the principle of responsibility:* States and IGOs are responsible for making decisions on required interventions and to ensure their implementation.

4.2. Commitments

The stakeholders (States, IGO, TFP, NGO and CSO) shall commit to:

- Supporting the setting up of dialogue and consultative entities and promoting the diversity and representativeness of the various categories of actors within these entities including public bodies, socio-professional organisations, main humanitarian agencies, nongovernmental and intergovernmental organisations as well as financial partners;
- Promoting transparency in preparing recommendations to be approved within consultative frameworks and strict compliance with decision-making by governments and regional entities by all parties concerned in order to guarantee the effectiveness of collective action in food and nutritional crisis management. Therefore, beneficiary countries' governments, donors and civil society organisations shall consult each other at least once a year to take stock of the food and nutritional situation in order to prepare and decide on, with all parties concerned, decisions to be made by governments and regional entities with regard to the measures and responses to undertake if needed;
- Ensuring that each Sahelian and West African country has only one entity or focal point easily identifiable by stakeholders in the fields of food security and humanitarian action and in charge of disseminating information, etc. They agree that any external partner (NGO, community, enterprise, etc.), planning to intervene in response to a crisis, shall contact the focal point beforehand and coordinate its action which shall be developed in accordance with a national and regional framework;
- Seeing to it that external stakeholders adhere to the principles and commitments contained in this Charter, to facilitate their integration into the dialogue and coordination framework by national authorities and actors.

V. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK GOVERNING RESPONSE TO FOOD CRISIS

5.1. Specific principles

The parties concerned have agreed to define the following terms as follows:

- "Food crisis management" means **preventive** or **curative** interventions, which addresses temporary or chronic food insecurity;
- In this framework, there are two types of "food crisis":
 - a. *Temporary food crisis*: limited over time and caused by a precise shock, which affects a significant part of the population and can have different degrees of severity and extent; circumstantial food insecurity (transitory) is short-term and often consists of a sharp decline in food access and consumption compared to usual conditions (irrespective of whether usual conditions are good or not);
 - b. *Chronic food insecurity*: persistent incapacity to have access to adequate and nutritive food. This crisis or food insecurity persists and is caused by structural factors and generally associated with extreme poverty in which part of the population lives permanently.

The parties concerned shall recognise:

- That the two types of crisis often coincide over time and within an area and that chronic food insecurity is a source of vulnerability and a fertile ground for temporary crisis. Similarly, temporary crises increase chronic food insecurity and increase the vulnerability of the populations⁵;
- That depending on the severity, extent, possible development of the crisis and on immediate, underlying and structural causes of food insecurity, responses to crises shall be specific and developed on an ad hoc basis (provisions of component III) for each situation, that there is no single solution, neither is there any one link between the possible situations of food insecurity and available tools for managing disasters caused by food crisis;
- The necessity to define beforehand a "**Strategic Framework for Food Crisis Management**" (graph 1 – Annex 2), developed in co-ordination (component IV) facilitating response analysis and aiming at directing the interventions of the various actors, particularly by addressing the problem from three angles: (a) to reduce the immediate effects of the temporary crisis, (b) to protect the livelihoods of the vulnerable populations directly affected by the crisis and lastly, (c) to address the structural causes of food insecurity.

Therefore, the stakeholders agree on the following requirements:

- "Response analysis", to take into account the advantages and drawbacks of available crisis management tools as well as the capacity of the actors who should implement them;
- To consider the existence of several available response tools (Annex 3) and to optimise their use in food crisis management. Each of these tools could be specifically developed as part of the additional components of this ever-changing Charter.

⁵ 'Temporary' should not be confused with 'acute' which refers to the idea of severity. It is the case for malnutrition, which is either chronic or acute.

5.2. Commitments

The stakeholders shall commit to:

- Seeing to it that all interventions fall within the scope of the Strategic Framework for Food Crisis Management agreed upon and intended to guide the various actors in choosing adapted tools based on the nature of the crisis;
- Seeing to it that any analysis of the situation characterising the crisis (component III) is followed by defining various response options ("**response analysis**") through the Strategic Framework for Food Crisis Management;
- Agreeing on criteria and tools for exchanging views to assess the response and promote better coordination and effectiveness of interventions, by encouraging in particular: (a) a technical consensus and a common language; (b) coordinated early warning and action; and (c) a choice of pertinent and effective responses.

VI. FOOD AID IN RESPONSE TO FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL CRISIS

6.1. Objectives

The objective of food aid is to contribute to ensuring food security by responding to food shortages or deficits in due time and in an appropriate way.

Food aid is one of the forms of intervention contributing to resolving food crisis. Appropriate responses to food crises vary according to their nature, possibility to mobilise food in the country concerned, neighbouring countries or elsewhere and based on food availability, market supply, price levels, available food security stocks etc.

6.2. Assessing Needs and Supplying Food Aid

Beneficiary States' governments, **TFPs**, **IGOs** and **NGOs** shall recognise that:

- The assessment of needs for food aid shall be jointly carried out by the stakeholders, and shall only aim to improve beneficiary countries' food security. The assessment shall be carried out as part of dialogue and consultative frameworks (see component IV) set up based on information provided by the various information systems (see component III) and shall consider the strategies implemented by the populations to adapt to the crisis and the bodies put in place by the governments;
- In order for a response to be well-adapted to the needs, it is essential to ensure that assistance operations be in line with the recommendations made by the consultation framework. If the response should differ from the recommendations formulated during the needs analysis process, it should be clearly explained, discussed and approved within the consultation framework;
- The determination of needs, except in the event of humanitarian crisis which disrupts public bodies, is at the last resort part of the responsibility and remit of the governments;

- Consultation between actors is essential to ensure that the response corresponds sufficiently to the identified needs and to avoid interventions likely to affect the smooth operation of markets (slump in prices, speculative practices, etc).

Therefore:

The States, TFPs, IGOs and NGOs shall commit to:

- Improving and harmonising their criteria for assessing needs for food aid through an assessment of food and nutritional security, including an analysis of:
 - Food availability (domestic production, stocks, imports, exports and aid);
 - Markets (supplies, prices, trade flows, operating conditions of the market at national, sub-regional and international levels);
 - Access by households and affected populations to food resources (local production, commodity prices in the affected zone, purchasing power and sources of income of the populations, household coping strategies and mechanisms, etc.) ;
 - Food use and nutritional conditions of the populations in affected zones (health, water, hygiene, education, food habits and practices), particularly the most vulnerable groups (children of less than five years of age, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, elderly people, refugees, displaced people, etc.).
- Ensuring, through their response options, the satisfaction of the specific nutritional requirements of pregnant and breastfeeding women, children of less than five years of age and elderly people by providing suitable healthy and nutritional food⁶;
- Seeing to it that in this context food aid is firstly reserved for responding to emergencies and that free food aid distribution is targeted only to the most vulnerable groups, which have been identified according to the vulnerability analysis criteria, irrespective of whether there is an emergency or not;
- Using food aid only when it is the most effective and best adapted means of assistance in response to the identified crisis;
- Giving priority to alternatives to food aid, and using it wittingly, to provide an adequate response to identified needs while avoiding the adverse effects of this form of aid on food habits and market functioning as well as sustainable dependence;
- Giving priority to the local market (by giving priority to the purchase of supplies in national and sub-regional markets) or triangular operations for the purchase of products intended for food aid. These operations assist in promoting the development of local commodity chains, in strengthening national and sub-regional markets and improving food security in the long-term. They will also help provide products adapted to food habits of food aid programme beneficiaries;
- Pay particular attention to the consequences that local purchasing can have on food commodity prices and thus food security- vulnerable populations;
- Except in emergencies, mobilising only products corresponding to the food habits of the communities targeted by food aid operations;

⁶ A special component on addressing nutritional crisis could be prepared later under the additional components of this Charter.

- Deploying the human, technical and financial resources to send food aid in due time to the beneficiaries for whom it is intended, to develop mechanisms for monitoring the implementation and to carry out an independent evaluation of interventions or to contributing to an overall evaluation;
- Communicating without delay to the national consultative framework, including during emergencies, the information in their possession to facilitate decision-making and the implementation of appropriate action;

States shall commit to:

- Providing information on existing or anticipated surplus and on food commodity prices on the main national markets in order to facilitate local purchasing;
- Refraining from restricting local or triangular purchasing during surplus years and respecting the free trade principle for food trade in the region.

The **States and IGOs** shall commit to:

- Searching for sustainable solutions to the structural causes of food and nutritional insecurity; they shall particularly commit to:
 - Implementing policies conducive to the development of local food production (national and sub-regional), to strengthening national and sub-regional food commodity markets and to improving vulnerable populations' incomes;
 - Promoting sustainable national and regional investments in line with the improvement of local production and marketing of food resources, access to food and its utilisation by the populations;
- Banning the implementation of any agricultural and/or trade policy or the making of any commitment, which would adversely affect the achievement of the objectives pursued by the various countries and the sub-region in sustainable food and nutritional crisis prevention and management;
- Gradually implementing, and in accordance with national priorities, the right to food.

The **IGOs** shall commit to:

- Strengthening the States' action through regional mechanisms to assist and manage food and nutritional crises and other natural disasters. These mechanisms, to be triggered at regional level, should supplement the efforts made by the states in the event of a crisis;
- Promoting policies conducive to better application of the principles and commitments of this Charter.

6.3. Evaluation Mechanism

The stakeholders (**States, TFPs, IGOs and NGOs**) agree on:

- Conducting annual independent evaluations of the level of application of the principles and commitments of the Charter and of the implications on the food and nutritional situation;
- Creating tools or mechanisms to monitor the application of recommendations stemming from the periodic evaluations of the Charter. The annual meeting of the Food Crisis Prevention Network in the Sahel and West Africa (FCPN) is a suitable framework for examining the aforesaid recommendations and making consensual decisions;
- Developing specific tools to express concern to the various states' governments, IGOs and donors regarding the application of the Charter for Food Crises Prevention and Management.

ANNEX 1. APPROACH AND BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVISED FOOD AID CHARTER

Presentation of the Approach

This note is the draft revised Food Aid Charter. The structure of the document was discussed by the Steering Committee and validated during the annual Meeting of the Food Crisis Prevention and Management Network.

The revision is based on the retrospective evaluation of the application of the Food Aid Charter and a prospective thinking about the evolution of the context in which food crisis develop and the new issues at stake that the countries of the region, socio-professional actors, NGOs and donors will have to face in the future.

Three principles were agreed upon to guide the revision of the Charter:

- to combine the concern of keeping a Charter focused on food aid while considering the concern of innovation and openness in line with the evolution of current and future issues and stakes;
- to lay emphasis on principles which are easily applicable and measurable;
- to take into account the new situations of non Sahelian West African countries and to include the issue of food crisis prevention and management into the context of subregional integration across the entire region.

The draft revised instrument will be the subject of consultation at national, regional and international levels involving the diversity of actors in the Sahelian countries and some West African coastal countries.

1. What are the new stakes taken into account?

The new issues at stake to take into account cover thematic dimensions (diversification and increased complexity of crisis, diversification of tools for responding to these crises, etc.), geographic dimensions (Sahel/West Africa), institutional aspects (ascendancy of new actors, strengthening of regional integration institutions). The latter also include aspects related to the architecture of regional and international agreements and commitments and to their overall coherence.

The report entitled « *Eléments d'analyse sur les nouveaux contextes et enjeux de sécurité alimentaire au Sahel et en Afrique de l'Ouest*⁷ » details these various aspects and serves as a reference for their integration in the revised Charter. They are pointed out below:

11. Thematic stakes:

- *Diversification of food crisis:*
 - Crisis associated with production /food availability;
 - Crisis associated with accessibility (shocks related to incomes, sudden rise in prices, etc.) in line with market risks;
 - Occurrence of conflicts, political crisis, etc;
 - Gradual or sudden degradation of the food diet;

⁷ "Elements of analysis on the new contexts and issues at stakes in food security in the Sahel and West Africa".

- Increased nutritional crisis affecting infants;
- Disruption of traditional modes of regulation of food crisis;
- Etc.
- *Increased complexity of crisis:*
 - Significant intricacy between temporary and structural food crisis;
 - Increased nutritional crises, which share some determinants with "traditional" food crises but have their own triggering factors. These crises simultaneously require emergency humanitarian responses and long-term responses associated with public policies;
 - The regionalization of risk factors, whilst the institutions in charge of managing crisis remain mainly structured at national scale.
- *Risks of increased soaring prices in the main food commodity markets:*
 - Rise in prices favourable for productive investment in developing countries' rural areas;
 - Rise in food commodity prices, which complicates access to food by the poor sections of the population;
 - Probable scarcity of available international food aid, which results in a significant selectivity in aid allocations, first and foremost during humanitarian emergencies.

12. Geographic stakes

- Regionalisation of factors associated with food insecurity beyond the Sahel (socio-economic, commercial and political integration between coastal and Sahelian countries) and the interdependences resulting from this regionalisation of economies (labour market, flow of goods, etc.);
- Regionalisation of responses to crisis: role of markets and migrations;
- Liberalisation of markets in line with integration policies and absence of national and regional market management systems.

13. Institutional stakes

- Multiplication of sources producing and analysing information, much increased role of the media and public opinion in the appraisal of the nature and extent of crisis and in the determination of responses to these crises;
- Renegotiation of the Food Aid Convention (London Convention);
- Multiplication of aid actors (Arab countries, communities, companies, NGOs, etc.);
- Increased role of socio-professional actors (FOs) and economic operators in markets and food security management;
- Ascendancy of economic integration institutions, with ECOWAS playing the role of leader.

2. What are the principles agreed upon to ensure that these aspects are taken into account?

It is proposed to continue to work on a tool regulating practices, which remains focused on food aid for three major reasons:

- Food aid is a crisis response tool, which is shared by the various protagonists involved in crisis prevention and management. Therefore, stakes related to the coordination and the coherence of interventions or practices are crucial and clearly identifiable. They are of interest to all the food aid partners and actors;

- The necessity to deepen international dialogue and the commitment on collectively accepted practices or standards, involves well determining the "perimeter" and working based on practices which are measurable and assessable, with a view to be effective;
- The necessity to focus undivided attention on the issue of food aid in a context characterized by profound changes in the international context (changes which are not always perceptible and one-way process) and at a time when the London Convention is being renegotiated. The latter was, in recent years, strongly influenced by the lessons learnt from the Food Aid Charter and especially by the dialogue among donors that it allowed to happen.

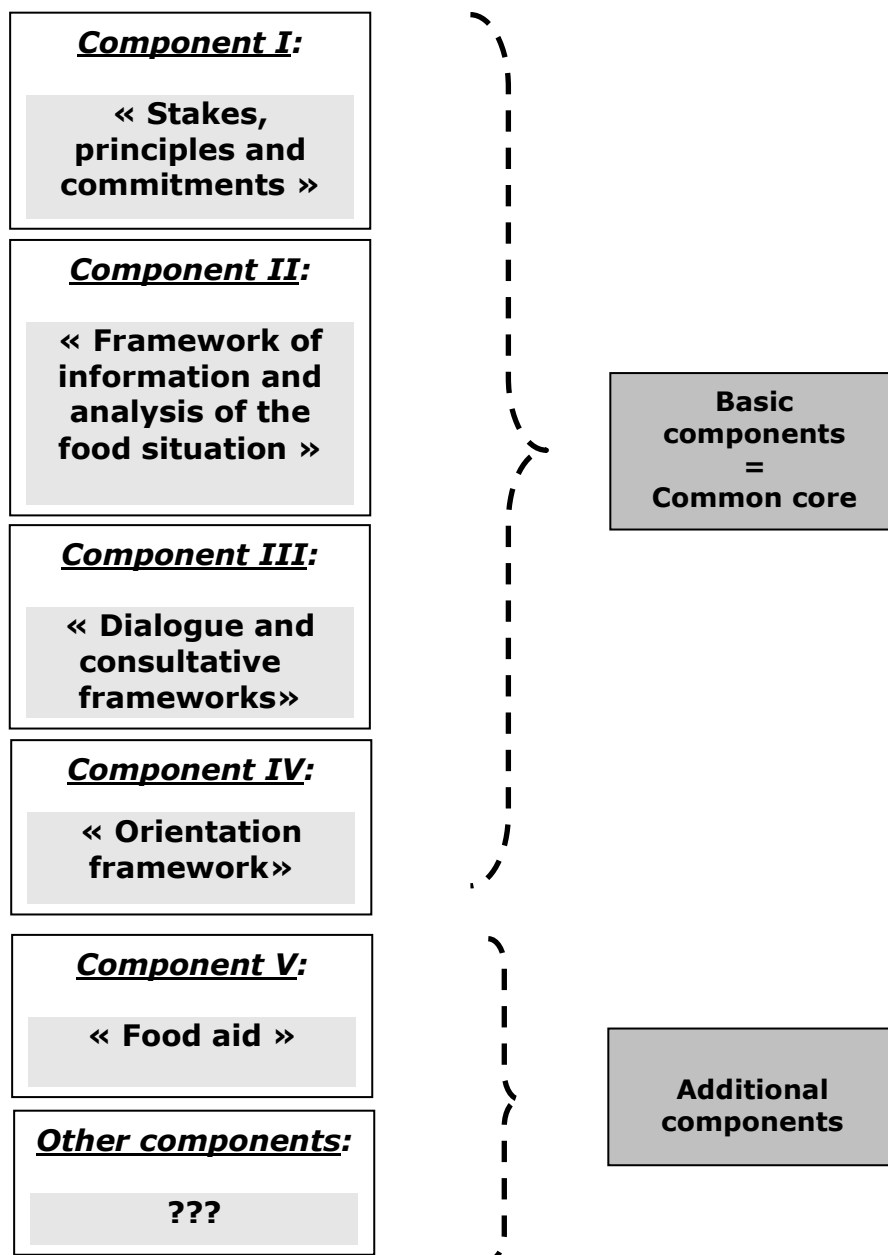
Considering the limitations of an approach focused on food aid to manage crisis, it is proposed to consider an ever-changing Charter, which could include complementary components. The latter will make it possible to better and gradually take into account the diversity of actors in crisis prevention and management, to better involve civil society and private sector organisations concerned with food security and development strategies, to take into account responses to crisis other than food aid, other responses for which needs for regulation of practices can also prove to be essential within a context of improvement of collective effectiveness.

These complementary components should meet the needs for harmonization of approaches and practices and contribute to improving the effectiveness of the strategies for food crisis prevention and management (FCPM) and achieving the objectives of food security. For example:

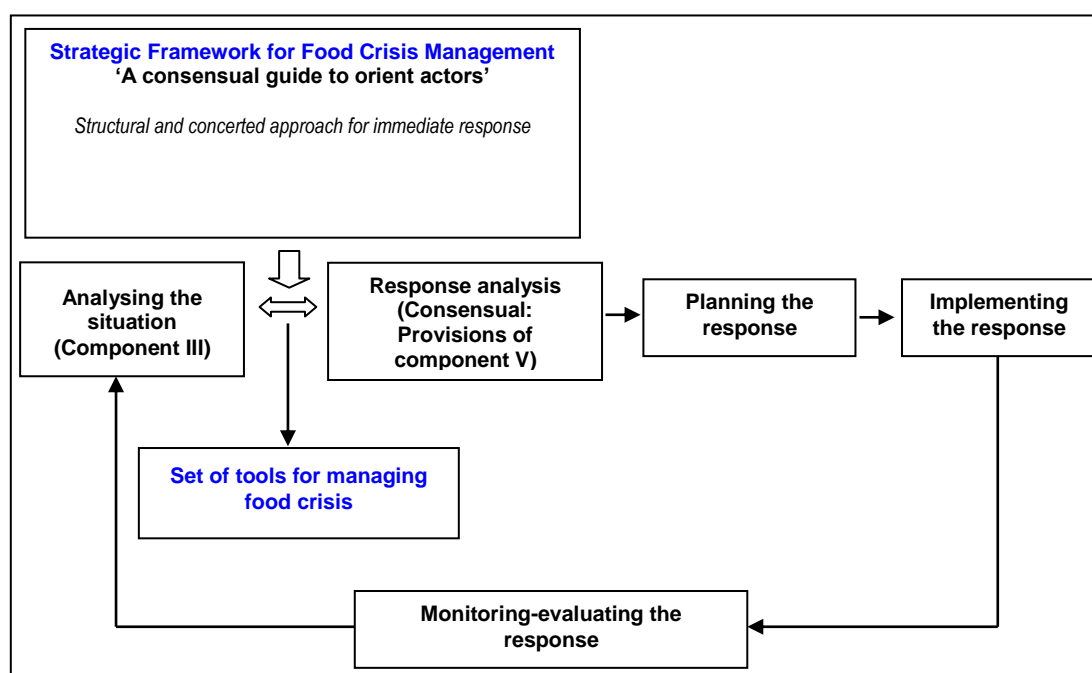
- Approaches to promotion and management of decentralized stocks, cereal banks, food security granaries, etc;
- Tools for mitigation crisis via interventions in the market: sales at "social", "moderate" or "analysed" price, setting up and management of buffer stocks or stocks to intervene in markets, etc.;
- Nutritional crisis management;
- Safety nets;
- Etc.

It is suggested through the new instrument proposed to specifically address the issue of information and of dialogue and consultative frameworks, because these two domains go far beyond the issues at stakes in food aid. In the same way, it appears opportune to address the issue of response analysis as a crosscutting element considering its key role in the choice of response tools depending on the nature of the crisis. These three elements are part of the basic components of the Charter.

3. Ever-changing structure of the Charter



ANNEX 2. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR FOOD CRISIS MANAGEMENT



Graph 1. Strategic Framework for Response Analysis

ANNEX 3. SET OF AVAILABLE TOOLS FOR MANAGING FOOD CRISIS AND FOOD SECURITY

1. Tools for direct support to the affected population or to the population at risk of food insecurity with regard to livelihood strategies

Intervention	Description	Objectives	Selection criteria	Usual emergency context	Advantages	Drawbacks
General distribution						
	Free distribution of a combination of food commodities to the affected population as a whole. If the population is cut off from their food supply or suffers abnormally high rates of malnutrition, food rations should meet nutritional needs.	To meet immediate food needs of populations cut off from their normal sources of food. To protect or recover livelihoods by preventing the sale of assets, or allowing households to spend time on productive activities that will restore livelihoods.	People are cut off from normal sources of food. Lack of food availability. Alternative ways of increasing access to food would take too long.	Acute emergencies. Large scale emergencies. Displacement.	Most readily available resource.	Tied food aid takes a long time to reach destination. High logistics requirements. Can undermine markets and production if food is locally available.
Incomes and jobs						
Food for work: (FFW)	Public works programmes where workers are paid in food aid. The food ration is often calculated to be less than the daily wage rate for an area. The rationale for this is that the poorest self-select.	To provide food aid as income support for the poor or unemployed. To rehabilitate infrastructure, e.g. roads, schools, irrigation systems etc.	Lack of access to food. Lack of food availability. Labour potential. Infrastructure damaged. Security and access. Target population should not suffer acute food insecurity or high levels of malnutrition.	Slow-onset or recovery stage of crisis. Chronic food insecurity.	Easier to target than free food distribution. Restores community assets as well as providing food.	Small scale. Not everyone can work.
Cash for work (CFW)	Beneficiaries are paid in cash to work on public works or community schemes. Commonly these are to improve roads and water sources. The programme targets the poorest or most food insecure.	To provide income to meet basic food and non-food needs and provide income support. To rebuild community assets. To stimulate the local economy.	Food available and markets functioning. Food insecurity result of loss of income, assets or employment. Risk of inflationary pressure is low. Security and access.	Recovery phase. Chronic food insecurity.	Choice. Creates community infrastructure. Stimulates markets. Stimulates recovery. Easy to target. Small scale.	Not everyone can work. May interfere with livelihood Strategies. High management Requirements.
Cash grants			Food available and markets functioning. Risk of inflationary pressure is low.	Early stages of emergency or rehabilitation	Cost efficient. Choice for beneficiaries. Quick way of meeting basic needs. Stimulates markets.	Risk of inflation. Cash may not be spent on Intended programme objectives. Difficult to monitor. Difficult to target.
Micro-finance	The provision of financial services to vulnerable but economically active individuals and households. This can be loans, remittance services, loan rescheduling, insurance, etc.	To restart local economies through enterprise and employment creation. To increase economic self-sufficiency	Microfinance Functioning markets and banks. Stable economy (no hyper-inflation). Skilled workforce	Recovery stage of emergency. Relatively secure context. Home based populations or returnees.	Can be sustainable	High management costs. Risk of default on loans.
Market support						
Commodity vouchers	Vouchers distributed to emergency- affected populations which can be exchanged for fixed quantity of named commodities from certified traders either at distribution outlets, markets or special relief shops. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide income support and meet basic needs. To provide production support; in case of seed vouchers. To support traders/retailers and stimulate markets. 	Essential commodities can be brought in by traders. Opportunities to make agreements with traders. Food availability and functioning markets.	Usually second phase response in acute emergencies.	Promotes purchase of local products. Can specify commodities	Commodity vouchers protect from inflation. Easy to monitor.	Risk of forgery. May create parallel economy. May need regular adjustment to protect from inflation.
Cash vouchers	Cash vouchers have a fixed cash value and can be exchanged for a range of items up to this value, from special shops or traders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide income support. To recover livelihoods. To stimulate markets and trade. 	Essential commodities can be brought in by traders. Opportunities to make agreements with traders. Food availability and functioning markets.	Usually second phase response in acute emergencies.	Promotes purchase of local products. Can specify commodities	Commodity vouchers protect from inflation. Easy to monitor.	Risk of forgery. May create parallel economy. May need regular adjustment to protect from inflation.

Intervention	Description	Objectives	Selection criteria	Usual emergency context	Advantages	Drawbacks
Monetisation and subsidised sales	Putting large quantities of food aid grain on to the market or subsidised sale through specified outlets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve access to staple foods for consumers. To ensure that prices are kept within normal boundaries. To improve traders' access to commodities. 	Local food prices volatile. Targeted at areas that face food deficits. Affected population still has some purchasing power. Direct distribution not possible because of insecurity.	Early stage of emergency.	No targeting. Potential for quick impact on large population.	Can have negative impact on markets if done when criteria are not met.
Market infrastructure	For example, transport and feeder roads. Some of this may be done through cash or food for work programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve physical access to markets for producers. 	Food insecurity is result of fragmented markets.	Both emergency and development contexts.	Can bring about long lasting change in people's access to markets.	Needs in-depth market analysis. Often done badly as part of FFW or CFW if focus is on providing food or cash.
De-stocking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase of livestock when there is pressure on water and pasture and prices are falling, at above prevailing market prices. Animals can be slaughtered and meat distributed as part of the relief effort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect income and terms of trade for pastoralists. <p>To prevent collapse in livestock market.</p>				
Production support						
Agricultural support Seeds and tools	Agricultural support programmes usually involve some form of seed distribution in conjunction with inputs to help plant and harvest crops e.g. tools, pesticide spray.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help re-establish crop production. 	Food insecurity due to reduction or loss in crop production. Affected households lack seeds and tools. Lack of availability of seeds and tools. The lack of seeds/tools limits production. Local knowledge.	Recovery stage or protracted emergencies.	Re-establishes crop production. Strengthens agricultural systems in the longer term.	Requires knowledge of local seeds. Imported seeds may not be used.
Livestock support	This can take a variety of forms. Early in a food crisis, interventions include provision of water, fodder, veterinary care, livestock offtake/de-stocking (when animals are at increased risk of dying). After the acute stage of crisis, interventions may include restocking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prevent loss of livestock through sales or death. To assist in herd recovery. 	Depends on type of intervention but some livestock intervention can be implemented at all stages.	Sales causes collapse in market prices. Deaths result from lack of pasture and/or water. Livestock disease. Restrictions to livestock movements. Local knowledge	In line with people's own priorities, and thus likely to get high levels of community participation.	Can usually only be done on small scale.
Fishing support	Distribution of fishing tools to improve catch (nets, boats, cages).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase ability of people to fish as a source of food and income. 				

2. Policy Instruments and Measures in Support of the Affected Population or the At-risk Population of Food Insecurity

Policy instruments	Advantages	Drawbacks
Taxes and tariffs		
Import duties on food	<p>The countries, which impose import duties on food, can reduce or abolish them. This can result in an immediate fall in domestic food prices</p> <p>import duties often create serious distortions and revenue can be collected using more effective instruments within the framework of a more general reform of the tax system</p>	<p>Poor producers can suffer from them at country-level.</p> <p>Higher-income urban groups often receive a relatively significant share of the subsidy</p> <p>losses of revenues should be recovered elsewhere in the tax system</p> <p>Can result in the request for other tariff reductions</p>
Food sales VAT and taxes	<p>The countries, which currently impose food sales VAT or taxes can reduce or abolish (zero tax rate) these taxes. This can result in an immediate fall in food prices</p>	<p>It may be necessary to recover lost revenues through other taxes, which create increased distortions.</p> <p>Higher-income urban groups generally receive a relatively significant share of the subsidy</p> <p>Difficult to abolish, because many households benefit from them.</p> <p>Can result in the request for preferential tax rates in other sectors; incompatible with the standard recommendation to widen the tax base by abolishing sectoral exemptions and preferential rates.</p>
Subsidies		
Food import subsidy	<p>Possible when importers are already governed by regulations and when there are very few big importers. : This can result in an immediate fall in food prices</p>	<p>Import subsidies can create serious distortions and increased demand for food exacerbates the adverse impact of import price increase on the terms of trade.</p> <p>Funding subsidies may require rising other taxes, which create distortions.</p> <p>Higher-income groups often receive a relatively significant share of the subsidy</p> <p>National producers lose at a time when one should promote agricultural investment</p>
Targeted food subsidies	<p>Some countries can have access to existing food subsidy programmes specifically intended for low-income groups (food ration programme or geographically targeted programme)</p> <p>Increased financial difficulties may draw attention to the need to improve targeting.</p> <p>If they are well targeted, they will mainly benefit low-income groups.</p>	<p>May be expensive if the government takes part in food commodity acquisition and distribution.</p> <p>Require adequate capacity to design and implement a well target programme.</p> <p>Reduce current poverty, but have little chances to impact on future poverty by increasing opportunities to earn an income</p>
Other policies		
School feeding programmes	<p>Countries with existing programmes can increase the subsidy and expand the coverage.</p> <p>Can be well targeted if they are focused on public schools and primary school pupils.</p> <p>Encourage children registration in schools and can improve the participation of schoolboys in the learning process</p>	<p>Do not cover the poor households, whose children are not registered at the schools, taking part in the programme.</p> <p>Can be expensive if the government takes part in food commodity acquisition and distribution.</p>
Remission of fees/costs	<p>The countries, which impose registration and tuition fees or health care costs can reduce or abolish these fees/costs.</p> <p>Can encourage school attendance and going to health care centres</p>	<p>Can result in inadequate coverage of poor people if the latter do not have access to education and health services</p> <p>Admission can be limited to those who attend/go to public establishments and even in geographic terms to the poorest areas</p> <p>Poor people without children do not benefit from the fall in school fees</p>
Public works programme	<p>Countries with existing public works programmes can increase the coverage and paid minimal salaries</p>	<p>Require capacity to design and implement such programmes and to expand them over a short period of time</p> <p>A substantial part of the budget can be absorbed in meeting administration, management and input costs</p> <p>Usually, these programmes are concentrated in poorer localities and therefore do not cover the poor of other localities</p> <p>When payment is made in the form of food, it may increase the programme's administrative costs.</p> <p>Are not effective in targeting poor workers, disabled people or women with very young children</p>
Targeted safety nets	<p>Some countries can be in a position to expand existing targeted safety nets to largely cover the poor. One could quickly increase (or index) the level of transfers and/or coverage of poor households.</p> <p>If transfers are carried out in cash, they could be less expensive to manage and will not create price distortion.</p> <p>Transfers can be accorded provided that households invest in human capital (e.g. attendance of a school, training, health care centres, agricultural extension programme)</p>	<p>Require administrative capacity to design and implement well targeted programmes.</p> <p>Often, it is not easy to increase the coverage of these programmes in the short term.</p> <p>One needs time and resources to design and implement these programmes or to increase their coverage</p>
Agricultural input subsidy	<p>Countries can subsidise import of agricultural inputs like fertilizers and pesticides. What is needed to stimulate domestic food production and to reduce dependence on imports</p>	<p>Usually, big farm owners are the main beneficiaries of these programmes and price subsidy does not enable to achieve the underlying objective, which is to increase agricultural productivity</p>