For Official Use

English - Or. English

**SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA CLUB
STRATEGY AND POLICY GROUP**

DRAFT 2023-24 PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET FOR THE SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA CLUB SECRETARIAT (SWAC/OECD)

Laurent Bossard   Tél. +33 1 45 24 78 55 ; Courriel : laurent.bossard@oecd.org
Emmanuel Salliot   Tél. +33 6 44 81 25 18 ; Courriel : emmanuel.salliot@oecd.org

JT03498195

Table of contents

Acronyms

ADB:	African Development Bank
AfCFTA:	African Continental Free Trade Area
AFD:	French Development Agency
AGIR:	Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative
AU:	African Union
AUDA NEPAD:	Development Agency for the New Partnership for Africa of the AU
CGLU:	United Cities and Local Governments
CILSS:	Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
COP:	Conference of Parties
CT CH:	Technical Committee of the "Cadre Harmonisé"
DNSA:	Dynamic Social Network Analysis
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
EU:	European Union
ECDPM:	European Centre for Development Policy Management
FAO:	United Nations for Food and Agriculture Organisation
FNS:	Food and Nutrition Security
GovSAN:	Regional Governance of Food and Nutrition Security
GRDR:	Research and Achievement Group for Rural Development
HDP:	Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus
IFPRI:	International Food Policy Research Institute
IGO:	Inter-Governmental Organisation
ITF:	International Transport Forum
NAD:	Policy Brief for Decision-Makers
NDC:	Nationally Determined Contributions
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PREGEC:	Food Crisis Management and Prevention Charter
PWB:	Programme of Work and Budget
RPCA:	Food Crisis Management and Prevention Network
SCDi:	Spatial Conflict Dynamics Indicator
SNA:	Social Network Analysis
SWAC:	Sahel and West Africa Club
TFP:	Technical and Financial Partners
UEMOA:	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WHO:	World Health Organisation
UNECA:	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WACTAF:	West African Association for Cross-Border Trade, in Agro-Forestry-Pastoral and Fisheries Products

0 Overview

1. This document presents the programme of work and budget of the Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD) for the period 2023-2024. It is based on the deliberations of the SWAC's Members and financial partners during the Strategic and Policy Group (SPG) meeting in June 2022.

2. It has been formulated based on the following strategic framework for intervention:

Strategic framework for intervention

Ultimate aim	Contributing to the improvement of the living conditions of populations in the Sahel and West Africa			
Results	Nurturing and promoting sustainable public policies and international strategies that evolve to keep pace with the rapid changes taking place in the region		Nurturing and promoting regional co-operation as a tool for sustainable development and stability	
Objectives	Producing/collecting/developing data	Producing independent analyses and monitoring changes in the region	Facilitating strategic dialogue for better policies	
Sectoral and cross-cutting programmes	**Food and nutrition issues** **Food crisis prevention and management:** – Innovating to improve the efficiency of tools – Communicating to facilitate coordination **Resilience and sustainability of food systems:** – Building a common understanding – Discussing analyses and their implications for policies	**Cities, territories and the environment** – Supporting the production of urban knowledge – Supporting easy access to reliable, up-to-date and consistent data – Proposing targeted and territorialised policy options	**Security and borders** – Analysing the geography of violence and its evolution over time – Developing spatial decision support tools – Producing advocacy for the inclusion of multi-scale spatial approaches in security strategies	**Cross-cutting themes** Cross-cutting analyses of **gender** issues **Regional, multi-country, cross-border** approaches **Methodological innovations** to compensate for weak statistics
Resources	A competent multicultural team with a good knowledge of the region	Strategic dialogue networks and partnerships (RPCA, UCLGA, African Union, Sahel Special Envoys, etc.)	Research networks and partnerships (University of Niamey, University of Florida, Harmonised Framework, e-Geopolis, etc.)	Financial resources Access to OECD intellectual and policy resources

Understanding for better anticipation of crises and structural changes

3. For many years, the Secretariat has been pursuing two sets of activities in direct response to the realities of the Sahel and West Africa countries. Crises and structural transformations are strong features of these realities. Through the exchange of knowledge and policy discussion, the Secretariat has continued its work to prevent and manage food and nutrition crises, while also contributing to a better understanding of why security crises occur. It has also provided new insights into the dynamics of urbanisation, food systems and gender issues.

4. Conscious that the Club could not tackle the full spectrum of short-, medium- and long-term challenges, Members and partners wanted the Secretariat to focus its attention on key strategic issues. This focus allows the Secretariat to do long-term work, to form solid technical and policy-making networks, to build authoritative bodies of knowledge, and to inform policies and strategies in effective ways.

5. This is why the 2023-24 Work Programme will build on the current thematic foundations. In terms of methodology, it will continue to promote territorial-based approaches, assess retrospective and prospective trajectories, and innovate to compensate for inadequate or insufficient statistics. It will also continue its efforts to build databases and maintain digital platforms. As in the past, it will rely on collaborative relationships with research centres and will enhance Sahelian and West African expertise.

6. In addition, and at the SPG's request, dialogue will be strengthened and expanded. The first step will be to improve discussion on analyses and how they can inform public policies that are better adapted to regional realities. Policy dialogue will then aim to align policy makers with research.

7. To do this, the Secretariat will rely on its substantial network, regular opportunities for meetings between Members and its longstanding credibility that has led it to organise or participate in high-level policy meetings. It will commit particular efforts to reaching out to civil society and professional organisations and think tanks.

8. Finally, it will deploy its oversight capabilities as needed, as it did during the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2022. The consequences of the Ukraine crisis are likely to be central concerns.

Gender

9. In recent years, all the Secretariat's work has focused greater attention on gender issues. Significant progress was made during the first eighteen months of the biennium 2021-22. For example:

   - The number of gender-sensitive publications and analyses has increased by 100% compared to the 2019-2020 biennium;

   - The number of dialogue events and advocacy tools dedicated to women and gender has increased by 38% over the same period;

   - The number of female participants in meetings organized by the Secretariat has increased by 25% compared to the previous biennium;

   - 64% of new female contacts were added to the SWAC's mailing list which grew by 34% over the same period.

10. Similarly, data on women's employment in the food economy and how they fit into security issues were produced by the Secretariat. These figures, available for all countries in the region, are now used as the African and international benchmark.

    - The SWAC Secretariat continued its collaboration with the OECD's Development Centre to promote the SIGI (Social Institutions and Gender Index) and contributed to the drafting of the regional report on gender discrimination in social institutions in West Africa in 2022.

    - A web page dedicated to work on women and gender has been created. This resource centre collates all the gender-sensitive analyses published in recent years, lists women-focused dialogue meetings and offers data and maps on gender issues in West Africa.

11. These efforts will continue in 2023-24. The specific focus areas will be (see box):

    - Strengthening the crosscutting nature of gender-related issues in work by the Club.

    - Further incorporating gender-sensitive analyses into its thematic programmes.

    - Producing sex-disaggregated data where possible.

    - Continuing collaboration with the OECD Development Centre to promote the SIGI in the West Africa region.

    - Giving a greater voice to women in the forums organised by the Secretariat.

Thematic programme	Outputs
Food and nutrition issues	- A gender-sensitive evaluation in the area of innovation and adaptation of PREGEC instruments - Mapping of gender-sensitive FNS projects and good practices - new civil society and parliamentary oversight committees set up - Gender-sensitive analysis of the impact of food systems transformations on nutrition and food practices
Urbanisation, territories and the environment	- Participatory environmental performance reviews involving women's organisations and research centres on "gender issues and cities"
Security and borders	- Updating the temporal and spatial evolution of violence against women based on disaggregated data from ACLED in MAPTA database ("Mapping the territorial transformations in West Africa") - Two West African Papers on gender-sensitive analyses in relation to current events - A podcast series "*Shifting the Narrative: Women leading Change*". This series, hosted by a young female researcher from the region, features women civil society activists, authors, entrepreneurs, health and humanitarian workers, traders and entrepreneurs from the Sahel and West Africa, putting their experiences and the results of some of the SWAC's work into perspective.

Taking the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into account

12. The outputs expected from work on this PWB will largely contribute significantly to work done by the OECD to support the implementation of the SDGs, particularly in non-Member countries. This includes work on food and nutritional security (SDG 2), cities, communities and mobility (SDG 11), gender equality (SDG 5), climate change (SDG 13), as well as regional dialogue and knowledge sharing (SDG 17).

13. The expected achievements of PWB 2023-24 will contribute specifically to the following SDGs:

SDG 2
2.1. By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year-round.
2.4. By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

SDG 5
5.1. End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

SDG 11
11.3. By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

11.a. Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.

SDG 13

13.2. Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

13.3. Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

SDG 17

Policy and institutional coherence
17.13. Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence.
17.14. Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.
Multi-stakeholder partnerships
17.16. Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.

1 Food and nutrition issues

1.1. Background and rationale

14. Food systems throughout the world are facing a triple challenge. They must ensure food and nutritional security, provide livelihoods for people working in food supply chains and build environmental sustainability (SWAC/OECD, 2021).

15. In West Africa, these challenges are amplified by high vulnerability and the crises referred to above. The population, moreover, is projected to grow by 140 million people within the next decade.

16. Hunger and malnutrition have been increasing for a decade. Between June 2018 and June 2021 alone, the number of people in need of emergency food aid rose by 250% from 10.8 million to 27.1 million; more than 38 million people could be affected during the lean season in 2022 unless appropriate action is taken.

17. Driven by a combination of structural fragility or climate, environmental, economic, social or health shocks, food insecurity is exacerbated by conflicts (with more than 15 000 violent events and 46 000 deaths, mostly of civilians, over the past three years). Massive influxes of internally displaced persons, closures of schools and health centres, obstacles to agricultural production and trade and thefts of livestock jeopardise the livelihoods of vulnerable populations and drive thousands of young people towards criminal and terrorist networks. More than 80% of those affected by food insecurity in the region live in countries in conflict. In this context, the essential operationalising of the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus is proving to be a struggle because of weak political impetus and a lack of dedicated instruments.

18. These food crises, driven by many factors, are probably destined to be repeated in a context in which the response capabilities of governments and their partners are diminishing. Between 2011 and 2017, for instance, the funding gap for food aid and humanitarian assistance in the Sahel region rose from 43% to 65%.

19. Although significant advances have been made, the effectiveness of responses to food and nutrition crises still falls short of expectations. Regular monitoring under PREGEC, the Food Crisis Management and Prevention Charter – the yardstick of regional governance of food and nutrition security approved in 2012 as part of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) – highlights several shortcomings:

- Structural investments remain insufficient and are struggling to achieve the desired impacts and transformations.

- The food crisis management and prevention instruments established by PREGEC have not been adapted to the new profiles of crises, particularly their security and gender dimensions.

- Interventions on the ground still suffer from a lack of co-ordination, alignment and synergy, which undermines the leadership of States and the effectiveness of collective action. The culture of monitoring and evaluation and of accountability for delivering results and impact is at best inadequate and sometimes non-existent.

20. The accumulation of crises and depletion of the resources that are needed to deal with them underline the need to come up with diverse responses that make it possible, on the one hand, to take emergency action, including measures to operationalise the HDP nexus, and, on the other hand, to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations and of food systems.

21. How, in this context, can a shift be made towards more resilient food systems that are able to ensure access to food at affordable prices and that such access is available, *in all circumstances*, to a larger percentage of the population? How can this transition to sustainable food systems create economic opportunities and jobs? How can these aims be pursued amidst a multiplicity of successive climate, food, health and security crises?

22. To respond to these concerns, the Secretariat will implement two supplementary programmes that will capitalise on the fruits of the preceding period:

    • a support programme for the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA), which will continue the efforts that have been undertaken for many years to promote regional governance of food and nutrition security;

    • a programme for the development of knowledge and of political dialogue to promote resilient and sustainable food systems.

1.2.   Regional governance of food and nutrition security

23. Created in 1984, run jointly by the CILSS and the SWAC/OECD Secretariat and placed under the political leadership of ECOWAS and the UEMOA commissions, the RPCA is the platform for food and nutrition security governance. Within this Network, the Secretariat helps actors in the region to provide themselves with instruments, such as the Food Aid Charter of 1990; the Food Crisis Management and Prevention Charter (PREGEC) of 2012; the *Cadre harmonisé*; for the analysis and identification of areas at risk and of populations living in food and nutrition insecurity; interactive maps portraying the food and nutrition situation, projects, programmes and good practices and facilitation of technical and political dialogues.

24. The Secretariat intends to enhance the Network's capabilities in the following areas:

    • adaptation of instruments for the prevention and management of food and nutrition crises;

    • intensification of the process of dialogue and holding to account regarding adherence to the PREGEC principles, particularly increasing investment in the resilience of vulnerable populations and of food systems and more co-ordination and alignment for greater efficiency, which includes operationalising the HDP nexus in conflict zones.

1.2.1. Expected results

25. This work is intended to achieve two main outcomes:

    • better targeted and more appropriate interventions in the realm of food and nutrition security, based on innovative prevention, prediction and management instruments that are fit for use in multi-risk environments and sensitive to gender issues;

    • better co-ordinated and aligned interventions in the realm of food and nutrition security, based on high-quality information and more leadership on the part of food and nutrition security (FNS) stakeholders.

26. The first outcome is based on a process of adapting prevention, intervention, early warning and governance instruments for FNS in general. Achievement of the second outcome will depend on:

a) information that generates more synergy and makes for more effective interventions;

b) the leadership displayed by national and regional stakeholders, accountability and the ability of civil society to hold actors to account.

1.2.2. Description of activities

Activity 1: Continuing to support innovation of prevention, intervention, early-warning and governance instruments for FNS in general

27. In the framework of the 2021-22 Programme of Work and Budget, the Secretariat produced a study on innovative tools for data collection and interventions in multi-risk and relatively inaccessible environments. Its findings, validated by the Members of the Network, were made available by the Technical Committee of the *Cadre harmonisé* as input for the adaptation of the PREGEC tools. They were also used to update the "Set of instruments for food crisis management" that was developed in 2013, the purpose of the update being to add elements relating to gender, to multi-risk environments and to operationalising the HDP nexus. These innovation efforts will be pursued by the following means:

- support for the *Cadre harmonisé* of the RPCA in arranging a consultation of experts and providers of tools and methods on the harmonisation and innovation of instruments; this exercise should serve to build a consensus on improving the quality of the methodological instruments tried out by some Members of the Network; it should also speed up their validation by the *Cadre harmonisé* with a view to their wide-scale use;

- support for the *Cadre harmonisé* in the production of manuals/user guides for some validated innovative tools, including those identified in the study conducted by the Secretariat in 2021; this should serve to accelerate the promotion of their use by all of the stakeholders in the PREGEC mechanism.

28. These sub-activities will result in:

- a consensus, accompanied by a road map, on the harmonisation and enhancement of the quality of methodological tools for data collection and production of information in multi-risk environments;

- the provision of manuals or user guides for innovative data-collection tools in multi-risk areas.

Activity 2: Strengthening information to promote synergy and more effective FNS interventions

29. The Secretariat arranges annual and restricted meetings of the RPCA, culminating in the distribution of policy briefs for decision-makers (NADs). These policy briefs inform the planning activities of ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, G5 Sahel, governments and partners. On the basis of the *Cadre harmonisé* output, the Secretariat develops databases and interactive maps on the food and nutrition situation and on FNS projects as well as best practices on resilience.

30. In addition, as part of the project for improving the governance of resilience, food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture in West Africa (PAGR/SANAD), the Secretariat, together with CILSS, is facilitating a dialogue on the effectiveness of information systems on FNS systems. Regional and national road maps produced within this project have been validated.

31. In close collaboration with CILSS, the Secretariat will continue this effort by organising four meetings (annual and restricted) of the Network, which will include the production of policy briefs for decision-makers, as well as by chairing sessions of the Senior Experts' Group (SEG) of the

Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) and those of the RPCA Steering Committee (COR-RPCA). It will also pursue the upgrading of databases (interactive maps showing *Cadre harmonisé* results, FNS projects and best practices on resilience, etc.), including the development of various communication products, such as *Maps & Facts*, that are designed to inform decision-making and action.

32. Finally, as part of the follow-up to the high-level consultation on food crises, organized on April 6, 2022 by the SWAC, the EU and the Global Food Crisis Network, the Secretariat will lend its support to CILSS in its moderation of the dialogue with countries on the security front line and its provision of assistance to them in the formulation and pursuit of their road maps for operationalising the HDP nexus[1].

33. This activity, conducted in close collaboration with CILSS, will result in:

- the organisation of meetings (two annual and two restricted) of the Network;

- the production and dissemination of two policy briefs for decision-makers, including specific recommendations on operationalising the HDP nexus;

- the production of methodological grids to support the CILSS in conducting inclusive national diagnoses for the operationalization of the HDP nexus;

- the organisation and chairing of the sessions of the Senior Experts' Group (SEG) of the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR), including a dialogue sequence on the operationalization of the HDP nexus;

- the reproduction and dissemination of the conclusions reached by COR-RPCA;

- Upgrading of the databases for the interactive maps showing *Cadre harmonisé* results, FNS projects and best practices on resilience, with the addition of 50 new fact sheets on FNS projects and 10 relating to best practices on resilience as well as the production of four regional snapshots on *Cadre harmonisé* results and four issues of *Maps & Facts*.

- One methodological Guide for conducting the inclusive diagnostics

- At least 10 national roadmaps on the operationalisation of the HDP-N

- One discussion session on HDP-N at each RPCA meeting

- Communication products on HDP-N (dedicated page on the RPCA website, 1-2 Maps & Facts, 1 video clip, 2-4 News Alert, etc.)

Activity 3: Strengthening the leadership and the accountability culture of national and regional FNS actors as well as the ability of civil society to monitor actors and hold them to account

34. The second evaluation of the PREGEC revealed insufficient leadership capacities among public authorities in the governance of food and nutrition security. To remedy this issue, the Secretariat supported the creation and validation of a self-assessment grid enabling States or their regional organisations to assess their own leadership capacities. This grid, known as the Framework for Analysis of Leadership in Food and Nutrition Security Governance (C-GovSAN), enables States and regional organisations to conduct self-diagnoses and identify appropriate corrective measures.

---

[1] The implementation of this specific component of activity 2 exceeds the duration of the 2023-2024 biennium. It will be described in detail later in a dedicated document sent to Members and financial partners

35. In the framework of the 2021-22 PWB, the technical support of the Secretariat and of CILSS enabled Burkina Faso to complete its exercise and share its experience. Meanwhile, Benin, Guinea, Mali and Senegal have begun theirs. Support from the Secretariat has also enabled organisations in civil society to acquire mechanisms with which they can monitor actors and hold them to account. Several countries, including Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal and Chad, have already established their Civil Society and Parliamentary Oversight Committees on the implementation of PREGEC.

36. This activity, conducted jointly with CILSS, will result in:

- a report monitoring the implementation of the recommendations made in the PREGEC evaluations, including notes canvassing the PREGEC signatories on the issues of co-ordination, alignment and consistency;

- two to three more countries having diagnosed their own leadership capacities with the aid of the C-GovSAN tool;

- two more countries with Civil Society and Parliamentary Oversight Committees on the implementation of PREGEC.

1.2.3. Results and indicators

Overall objective	Impact indicators
"Assist decision-makers in the region to achieve more effectively their ambitions of food and nutrition security and resilience of the Sahelian and West African populations"	✓ Existence of national and/or regional initiatives based on the instruments promoted by the RPCA to provide solutions to the underlying causes of chronic food and nutrition insecurity (FNS)
Final results	**Impact/outcome indicators**
Final result 1 *"More targeted and appropriate FNS interventions based on innovative prevention, early-warning and governance instruments that are gender-sensitive and adapted to multi-risk environments"*	✓ Progress made by countries and other stakeholders in the use of new targeting and intervention instruments to enhance the effectiveness of their interventions on the ground
Final result 2 *"Better coordinated and aligned FNS interventions based on high-quality information and stronger leadership on the part of stakeholders"*	✓ Change in the number of spontaneous intervention initiatives in co-operation between development agencies or between inter-governmental organisations, particularly around the HDP nexus in multi-risk areas or conflict zones
Intermediate results	**Outcome indicators**
Intermediate result 1 *"Easier access for FNS stakeholders to information and intervention instruments that are better adapted to multi-risk environments"*	✓ Effective use of the recommendations generated by the dialogues organised by the Secretariat and the *Cadre harmonisé* to improve the effectiveness of methodological tools: (i) data collection and production of FNS information in multi-risk contexts; (ii) distinctive targeting of populations affected by food insecurity; and (iii) intervention instruments for use in hostile and insecure environments ✓ Change in the number of countries using innovative targeting tools validated by the *Cadre harmonisé* to improve the effectiveness of interventions for the benefit of vulnerable populations and the effectiveness of national response plans (NRPs)

Intermediate result 2 *"Relevant and diversified information that is available to benefit planning, facilitation of the political dialogue on co-ordination, alignment and the effectiveness of interventions"*	✓ Frequency of recourse to information from the interactive map tool by stakeholders to plan their FNS interventions ✓ Frequency of use of the online database of CH results by stakeholders, particularly TFPs, for the preparation of their response plans. ✓ Increase in the number of countries gradually implementing their national road maps for the upgrading of their FNS information systems ✓ Change in the number of countries in the security front line validating and implementing their road maps for operationalising the HDP nexus
Intermediate result 3 *"Instruments for holding actors to account and for capacity-building being promoted by the RPCA with the aim of better FNS governance"*	✓ Number of countries or inter-governmental organisations conducting the C-GovSAN analysis on their own initiative with a view to assessing their own leadership capacity and to implementing corrective measures to address identified weaknesses ✓ Change in the number of countries gradually setting up frameworks for *in situ* monitoring and evaluation of their commitments under PREGEC
Activities	**Performance indicators/short-term outputs (2021-22)**
Activity 1: Continuing to support innovation of prevention, intervention, early-warning and governance instruments for FNS in general	✓ Consensus, accompanied by a road map for the harmonisation and enhancement of the quality of methodological tools for data collection and the production of information in multi-risk environments ✓ Availability to the various user categories of user guides for the innovative tools for collecting information in multi-risk areas
Activity 2: Strengthening information to promote synergy and more effective FNS interventions	✓ Number of Network meetings held ✓ Number of new FNS projects and best practices added to the interactive maps tool ✓ Number of new search functions incorporating the gender dimension that are added to the interactive maps tool ✓ Existence of a functioning network for information-sharing between countries ✓ Number of policy briefs for decision-makers ✓ Number of regional snapshots presenting *Cadre harmonisé* results and number of issues of *Maps & Facts* produced ✓ Existence of distributed COR-RPCA conclusions ✓ Existence of a Methodological Guide for conducting the inclusive diagnostics ✓ Number of national roadmaps on the operationalization of the HDP-N ✓ Existence of a discussion session on HDP-N at each RPCA meeting ✓ Number of communication products on HDP-Nexus

Activity 3: Strengthening the leadership and the accountability culture of national and regional FNS actors as well as the ability of civil society to monitor actors and hold them to account	✓ Existence of a report on the implementation of the recommendations made in the PREGEC evaluations, including notes canvassing the PREGEC signatories on the issues of co-ordination, alignment and consistency
	✓ Number of new cases of countries having diagnosed their own leadership capacities with the aid of the C-GovSAN tool
	✓ Number of countries with Civil Society and Parliamentary Oversight Committees on the implementation of PREGEC

1.3. Food systems transformations and sustainability

37. Global interest in the sustainability of food systems has generated many initiatives led by regional and continental actors such as ECOWAS, UEMOA, with the Priority Actions Framework (CAP 2021-25), G5 Sahel, the African Union (AU) (Great Green Wall, African Risk Capacity) and the Sahel Alliance. Processes have also been initiated internationally, for example through the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) summit, the United Nations Food Systems Summit of 2021 and the "Farm to Fork" Strategy of the European Union (EU). How can convergence be achieved across these initiatives?

38. The Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) is the only platform that brings all stakeholders together with a set of consensual and reliable analytical instruments. Its scope for intervention, which has hitherto been limited to crisis prevention, should now be extended to food systems.

39. To reinforce this new role devolved to the RPCA, the Secretariat will continue to facilitate multi-stakeholder political dialogues by providing analytical insights, based on facts and evidence, that will aid comprehension of current dynamics. These analyses will be discussed with a view to informing the process of adapting public policies in order to strengthen the food resilience of vulnerable populations and the resilience and sustainability of food systems.

40. The role of the SWAC Secretariat will be to provide continuous facilitation of the technical and political dialogue based on existing analyses or new ones produced by SWAC itself, by partners or jointly.

1.3.1. Expected results

41. Two specific outcomes are being targeted:

- greater monitoring and analytical capabilities with regard to food systems transformations and their effects;

- an improved and shared understanding of food systems transformations and the policy options to be prioritised in pursuit of this goal.

42. Two activities will contribute simultaneously to the achievement of these two outcomes. They will deliver data and analyses to inform the political dialogue on food system transformations. They will rely on strategic partnerships with partners specialising in sustainable food system transformations. All of the outputs of this activity will inform the discussions between SWAC Members and partners and other stakeholders.

1.3.2. Description of activities

Activity 1: Producing data and knowledge that serve to inform a transparent and inclusive political dialogue on sustainable food systems transformations

43. The objective of this activity is to promote a common understanding of food systems transformations in the region through the joint production of analyses on the risks, challenges and opportunities associated with food systems transformations. These analyses will serve as a basis for discussions between SWAC Members and partners and other stakeholders. A particular aim will be to inform and supplement existing support mechanisms and processes for countries in the region, regional organisations and development partners.

44. The activity will be conducted in synergy with SWAC Members. It will involve a collective effort to gain access to various high-level bodies and forums. For the 2023-24 period, the following subjects have been identified based on their importance and political leverage and the expertise and added value that SWAC can provide in these fields:

- **Nutrition**

45. West Africa is increasingly confronted with three forms of malnutrition, namely undernourishment, micronutrient deficiency and obesity. In addition, in the wake of rapid demographic growth, rising incomes and urbanisation, food consumption habits and diets have been changing rapidly, in towns and cities and in rural areas.

46. At the same time, transformations of the food system in a wider sense are increasingly dependent on food transport, storage, processing and distribution infrastructure if the availability, accessibility and production of nutritious foodstuffs is to be guaranteed. Longer and more complex supply chains pose new challenges, such as environmental externalities, problems of food waste and health implications, for example the loss of nutritional value associated with issues of packaging, storage and cold chains.

47. Special emphasis will also be placed on the role of women in the improvement of nutrition levels. In West Africa, women play a key role in nutrition in both the private and the public sphere. In households, women play a dominant role in the use of foodstuffs, an essential dimension of food security, as they are directly linked with consumption and nutrition. The diversity of diets depends not only on women's purchasing power but also on their knowledge and abilities, which have a major impact on dietary practices and preferences. Women, moreover, play a particularly prominent role in the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) that are active in the processing and distribution of food products. Such a wealth of gender-sensitive data offers opportunities for discussion with a view to tackling the threefold burden of malnutrition by harnessing the pre-eminent role of women as agents of change.

48. The analyses that are delivered will serve to shed light on the conditions for access to and availability of a healthy diet by placing special emphasis on household nutrition and living conditions.

49. In particular, this activity will analyse the role of markets in supplying towns, cities and consumers with nutritious products and their implications for the availability and prices of these urban products.

50. The activity will yield the following results:

- an analysis of the effects of food system transformations on nutrition levels in West Africa, including the role of women, and discussion of political levers;

- an analysis of the availability of food, access to food and the role of markets.

51. These analyses will be conducted in collaboration with partners such as the World Food Programme (WFP) and research centres in the region with relevant expertise and strong regional bases. The analyses will also be used to assess the impact of food prices and the role of markets on diets. To this end, a report presenting research findings will be produced and published as part of the West African Papers series.

- **Value chains, markets and trade in foodstuffs**

52. Agricultural markets and trade in agri-food products are powerful vehicles in the quest for the sustainable and resilient food systems that are essential in the effort to improve access to sufficient healthy and nutritious food and to provide decent livelihoods for millions of vulnerable people. This implies a need to reinforce food and nutrition security by improving the availability, accessibility, use and stability of foodstuffs. Trade shocks, such as those caused by the COVID-19 pandemic or

by conflicts, are compounded by the effects of climate fluctuations, such as periods of drought, by demographic growth and by urbanisation to exert additional pressure on national and regional food and nutrition security.

53. Agricultural markets and food trade have the potential to stabilise regional and local food systems and to strengthen their resilience. It is essential to understand more fully the market and trade environment, including the impact of the political environment on trade in agricultural products, in order to provide evidence that can serve to inform agricultural trade policies and improve food and nutrition security in the region.

54. This activity will yield the following results:

- an analysis of the impact of the availability or lack of data on regional agricultural trade on the agricultural trade policies of ECOWAS Member States;

- an analysis of the current agricultural trade environment in the ECOWAS area with special emphasis on issues relating to tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, the implementation of trade policies and private-sector perceptions.

55. Priority will be given to collaborative arrangements with research centres, think tanks and private partners such as Akademiya 2063, AGRHYMET, IFPRI, the ECDPM and WACTAF.

Activity 2: Informing technical and political platforms for the continued pursuit of strategic discussions on food systems transformations and sustainability

56. The aim of this activity is to enhance a common understanding of the conditions for food system sustainability and resilience by facilitating the sharing of information and of retrospective and prospective analyses of risks, challenges and opportunities.

57. The analyses and their policy implications will serve as a basis for discussions among SWAC Members and partners, also involving other stakeholders, with a view to promoting more consistent and appropriate policies. Special emphasis will be placed on information and on the complementarity of existing mechanisms and processes for the support of countries in the region, regional organisations and development partners.

58. The Secretariat will take the opportunities offered by the international agenda to put forward its political recommendations at regional and international meetings. This activity will be conducted in synergy with SWAC Members and will involve a collective effort to gain access to various high-level bodies and forums and to make good use of complementary capabilities.

59. The activity will yield the following results:

- Joint organisation with the WFP, during an RPCA workshop, of a joint dialogue event based on the findings of the nutrition report;

- Organisation of a technical workshop for the co-production of the study on the upgrading of information systems relating to markets and trade; it will bring together specialists in data production (Akademiya2063, CILSS/AGHRYMET, FAO, the WFO, IFPRI, etc.) and the heads of the main regional and national information systems;

- Organisation of a regional event for the dissemination of findings from the study on the upgrading of information systems;

- Organisation of two workshops with stakeholders from the region during the process of producing the study on community trade environment;

- Organisation of a webinar for the dissemination of findings from the study;

- Provision of communication materials and cartographic and statistical products to support the organised events.

Activity 3: Strengthen the capacity of the ECOWAS Commission to better promote intra-regional agricultural trade

60. Strengthening the capacity of the ECOWAS Commission to promote intra-regional agricultural trade is an important vector for improving the contribution of food trade and the design of coherent policies in support of sustainable and resilient food systems.

61. The SWAC will provide analyses and evidence on the contribution of agricultural trade to improving food and nutrition security and resilience, livelihoods and economic development as well as environmental sustainability of food systems. In addition, analyses of the current trade environment and trade policies will highlighted constraints and opportunities to increase intra-regional agricultural trade and to inform policies. These analyses will serve to provide policy advice and organise policy dialogues at regional and country level to improve regional agricultural trade.

62. In this perspective, SWAC will combine state-of-art quantitative and qualitative analyses of agricultural trade in the ECOWAS region. The analyses will involve a variety of stakeholders from relevant organisations, research centres, think tanks, and development partners through formal and informal meetings to present and discuss methodologies, analyses and results.

63. In addition, private sector stakeholder consultations will be organised to reflect and describe trade environments, notably to integrate country and sector specific contexts. The gender dimension will be taken into account in the analyses, consultations and recommendations. The project will also aim to contribute and involve other related projects and partners to improve coherence and relevance. The produced analyses are targeted at policy makers and will identify opportunities, constraints, and ways forward to promote ECOWAS and Member States agricultural trade policy capacity.

64. The whole activity could be divided into three sub activities, two of whom will be implanted for the biennium 23-24:

65. *Sub-activity 1: Strengthen ECOWAS Commission and member countries' understanding on impact and drivers of regional agricultural trade and capacity to improve the agricultural trade policy environment.*

66. It will yield the following outputs:

- One technical/expert meeting with actors involved in the production of evidence and data on intra-regional trade in the region (CILSS/AGHRYMET, UEMOA, ECOWAS, FAO, WFP, AKADEMIYA2063, IFPRI, ITC etc.);
- One report analysing and describing the trade data available for market and policy analysis, the data gaps and data needed to better analyse markets and trade policy instruments and the macro drivers of intra-regional agricultural trade in West Africa;
- Up to 4 interactive factsheets (web-based) summarising messages from report using digital visualised data;
- One regional stakeholder (data producers and policy makers) workshop/webinar to present and discuss the results of the study
- Advices to ECOWAS and member state governments by presenting and discussing the results as key inputs at various relevant workshops and seminars.

67. <u>*Sub-activity 2*</u>*: Identify policy interventions and instruments for ECOWAS Commission to promote intra-regional agricultural trade. These can cover trade policy instruments, lobbying and awareness activities, capacity aspects.*

68. It will yield the following outputs:

- One report presenting the findings of the assessment of agricultural trade policy environment in ECOWAS;
- 4 stakeholder dialogue events on trade environment;
- One webinar to discuss the findings from private sector stakeholder dialogues;
- Up-to 4 policy briefs / factsheets;
- One regional workshop with public and private trade actors;
- One event report presenting key messages from stakeholder dialogues;
- Contributions to round table discussions and policy advice during ECOWAS regional public private dialogue;
- Advices to governments on concerted action for harmonized national trade policy instruments and private and public investment needs (in close cooperation with other key-implementing partners such as ITC, World Bank or USAID).

1.3.3. Results and indicators

	Indicators
Overall objective	**Outcomes indicators**
"Bolster the commitment of Members and partners to developing and promoting holistic policies in favour of sustainable and resilient food systems"	✓ Change in the number of political and financial decisions reflecting Members' and partners' commitment to incorporating this type of approach into their support policies for resilient and sustainable food systems in the region
Final results	**Outcome indicators**
Final result 1 *"Improved monitoring and analytical capacity regarding food system transformations and their effects"*	✓ Improvement of the analytical and monitoring capabilities of Members and partners regarding food system transformations and their effects
Final result 2: *"An improved and shared understanding of food system transformations and the policy options to be prioritised in pursuit of this goal"*	✓ Improvement in the level of understanding of food systems and their transformations among target groups ✓ Change in the level of awareness among target groups of the consideration given to analyses of food system transformations and their policy implications
Activities	**Performance indicators**
Activity 1: Producing data and knowledge that serve to inform a transparent and inclusive political dialogue on sustainable food system transformations	✓ Existence of an overview of the nutritional challenges associated with food system transformations ✓ Availability of a report on nutrition ✓ Effectiveness of collaboration with the World Food Programme for the purpose of joint production ✓ Existence of an overview on the scope of the gaps in information systems ✓ Availability of a report on trade information systems ✓ Availability of a report on the agricultural trade instruments in the ECOWAS area
Activity 2: Informing the technical and political platforms for the continued pursuit of strategic discussions on food system sustainability and resilience	✓ Number of technical meetings held with partners from research networks ✓ Number of planned political dialogue events actually held ✓ Number and position of stakeholders participating in political dialogues ✓ Number of visual, cartographic and statistical media and presentations devised in support of political dialogues

Activity 3: Strengthen the capacity of the ECOWAS Commission to better promote intra-regional agricultural trade	✓ Number of technical meetings organized by SWAC ✓ Number of reports and analyses produced and disseminated ✓ Number of regional stakeholder dialogue meetings organized or co-organized by SWAC ✓ Number of advices and recommendations provided by SWAC to ECOWAS and member state governments ✓ Number of policy briefs and communication factsheets produced and disseminated

2 Urbanisation, territories and the environment

2.1. Background and rationale

Supporting rapid transformations in cities and grasping opportunities

69. The cities of Africa are the fastest-growing in the world. They contain some of the youngest populations and are experiencing accelerated transformations. Their impact on the economic, social and political landscape of Africa in the coming decades is likely to be dramatic.

70. Urbanisation undeniably offers ample opportunities to speed up progress towards achievement of the goals of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and of the African Union's Agenda 2063. Urbanisation will act as a powerful lever for promoting integration within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) but is already confronting African decision-makers, both local and national, to huge challenges in terms of the planning, management and funding of urban growth.

71. The most recent projections indicate that Africa's cities will have 900 million more inhabitants by 2050, which means that two-thirds of the African population will be city-dwellers. This urban expansion requires not only planning, management and funding of infrastructure and public services but also the formulation of strategies that promote employment, encourage the digitisation of services and the adoption of green technologies and enhance competitiveness. To this end, national development programmes must recognise the role of cities in driving economic development and strengthening resilience. Consistency and efficiency must also be targeted when national policies are applied at the local level.

72. The latest SWAC report, entitled *Africa's Urbanisation Dynamics 2022: The Economic Power of Africa's Cities*, is based on a study of 2 600 cities and 32 countries and shows that urbanisation contributes to better economic performance and higher living standards. It emphasises that, in terms of most socio-economic indicators, cities in African countries achieve significantly better results than the national average and that this performance gap is greater than in many other regions of the world.

73. One of the most underestimated successes of African cities over the past 30 years is that, despite growing in size by a total of 500 million inhabitants, they have continued to outperform rural areas, offering better jobs and better access to services and infrastructure. The fruits of urbanisation also extend to rural areas, which benefit from the proximity of cities.

74. Nevertheless, economic and political constraints are still limiting the capacity of cities to contribute to growth and social development. There is an urgent need to adopt new approaches that are more in tune with local dynamics, and this poses considerable challenges. The report also underlines the importance of investing in better planning, developing co-ordinated policies, anchoring the role

of cities in national development planning and enhancing the fiscal and administrative capacities of local government.

75.   Meeting the challenges posed by urban growth in Africa also implies facing the fact that planning the future of urban areas cannot follow the same route map as urban development in the Americas, Asia and Europe. Twenty-first century cities will be different from those of the 20th century. Urban settlements in Africa, particularly small and medium-sized towns, are already distinctly less rooted in high-carbon development models than those in many other parts of the world. At the same time, there are still huge investments to be made in urban infrastructure, and the populations of African cities are young. These factors provide an important basis for the creation of new models for cities that are more climate-neutral, more inclusive and more liveable.

Enabling cities to cope better with climate change by focusing more sharply on geographical disparities and the regional and local tiers of government

76.   Changes in rainfall levels, increasingly frequent extreme temperatures and rising sea levels are already having a severe impact on African territories. Faced with these great variations and vulnerabilities that characterise climate change and its effects, African cities must continue to prepare, especially as they will have a leading role to play in a context of rapid demographic growth and urbanisation in countries where both economic and social systems are already fragile.

77.   The effects of climate change vary from one country and one city to another. While it is a shared global challenge, responses to climate change, in terms of both adaptation and mitigation, depend on local actions and their co-ordination with national governments.

78.   For the African continent, which is highly exposed to the effects of climate change yet contributes less than the other continents to global emissions, a fair transition, particularly with regard to energy, must be conceived in accordance with the announcements made at the EU-AU Summit and at COP26 in Glasgow.

79.   Geographical disparities and the opportunities that are specifically available to cities and their environs receive insufficient consideration from development partners and national governments, which hinders systematic and effective climate action. This is also reflected in a limited focus on the local level in nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

80.   The Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 recognise the vital role of urbanisation as expressed in SDG 11 – Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. COP21, for its part, acknowledged the major role that cities have to play in addressing climate change.

81.   Nevertheless, as the [Second Assessment Report of the Urban Climate Change Research Network](#) states that, "*Cities may not be able to address the challenges and fulfil their climate change leadership potential without transformation.*" While urbanisation brings opportunities, it also exacerbates risks, particularly environmental risks. These transformations involve several spatial scales and several economic sectors, hence the challenge of anticipating their development by analysing urban and environmental functional realities and the diverse potential of territories and of institutional and legal frameworks, and by producing data and tools with a view to supporting the urban agglomerations of West Africa and their partners in considering the policy options for promoting a form of urban development that is more conducive to climate sustainability.

2.2. Expected results

82.   The work has three main outcomes:

*   deepening understanding of current and projected urban expansion in West Africa;

- better comprehension of the links between urban form, the environment and the climate and of the diverse potential of territories and the diverse frameworks of climate governance;

- promotion of multi-stakeholder dialogues with a view to informing urban policies, particularly policies for supporting urban expansion and policy options for promoting a form of urban development that is more conducive to climate sustainability.

2.3. Description of activities

2.3.1. Planning for urban expansion

Activity 1: Africapolis: Visualising urbanisation in Africa

83. The growing volume of visits to the Africapolis database by users with a wide range of profiles testifies to the success of a tool that remains unmatched as a source of insight into urban dynamics in Africa.

84. The recent analyses that were conducted as part of the report *Africa's Urbanisation Dynamics 2022: The Economic Power of Africa's Cities*, which compares performance levels throughout the urban network, is based on Africapolis data as well as on studies of the links between urban forms and the environment (see the activities described in point 2.3.2 below). Similarly, many other analyses combining data on the environment, connectivity, accessibility and socio-economic performance as well as vulnerability are benefiting from the comparability and coverage provided by Africapolis.

85. The Secretariat will continue its update of data for 2020, which will serve to identify new towns on the basis of the Africapolis criteria (more than 10 000 inhabitants and less than 200 metres between buildings).

86. To increase the relevance of the Africapolis.org database, the Secretariat will continue with the addition of new data, particularly urban development projections, socio-economic data and accessibility indicators. The development of new parameters in the Africapolis database will make it possible to incorporate other data produced by SWAC or other bodies in due course. New functions and map views will also be added gradually to the website.

87. The results of this activity will be as follows:

- addition of socio-economic data and design of new visual aids;

- regular updates of population data, depending on the availability of new data;

- inclusion of accessibility data and clusters.

Activity 2: Producing analyses of urban expansion and of national urban policies

88. The key to absorbing 900 million new city-dwellers by 2050 and to guaranteeing liveability, fairness and sustainability in African cities is the pursuit of policies that are able to support urban expansion flexibly and effectively. Two-thirds of the towns and cities housing this expanded population of Africa have yet to be built, which presents an opportunity to build more sustainable, more inclusive and more productive urban settlements.

89. More appropriate national planning frameworks, encompassing strategic planning, urban planning regulations and urban planning itself, would help to promote sustainable urban development, to provide local authorities with planning and fiscal resources, to encourage social inclusion and to reduce the cost of urban planning and expansion.

90. To ensure that planning can play a constructive role in a context of rapid urbanisation, it will be crucially important to produce data and analyses that can map this growth and define its characteristics. Such information is the key to understanding the priority areas for intervention and identifying strategic geographical areas and then being able to launch technical feasibility studies and to obtain investment pledges from partners.

91. At the present time, only some countries in the region have established national urban expansion strategies or created a favourable regulatory environment. Most local authorities are not sufficiently involved in planning – because of legislative constraints or a lack of technical or financial capacity – which limits their ability to manage expansion and to benefit from it. Delivering evidence-based analyses on a wide variety of matters, that will have an impact on present and future planning capabilities, would help Members and partners to understand the challenges and opportunities more fully and to identify policy implications and priorities, especially in the realm of construction.

92. The results of this activity will be as follows:

    - a report, in the *West African Studies* series, on the dynamics of urbanisation and on the key-issues relating to planning for urban expansion in Africa;

    - two to four West African Papers, two to three blogs and synthesis on the strategies, regulation and impact of urbanisation.

Activity 3: Developing inclusive political processes through dialogue, strategic partnerships and joint knowledge creation designed to inform the development of appropriate urban policies

93. Urban expansion will continue in Africa and will have to be underpinned by policies and instruments that can counteract its adverse effects while offering governance and management models to fit every context and all of the dimensions of urban planning – housing, transport and mobility, environmental services, water and sanitation, property taxation, etc.

94. There is an imperative need to engage in this dialogue on the technical, political and financial challenges and to mobilise national governments and local authorities as well as international partners to focus on these issues with a view to understanding them more fully and incorporating them into their interventions and their policies.

95. The analyses that have been produced on urban expansion in West Africa are informing academic debates between Members and the research community as well as providing advocacy for decision makers on the political, technical, financial and regulatory implications of that expansion.

96. The activity will lead to the arrangement of technical and political meetings that bring together the SWAC Member and partners as well as other partners such as UNECA, the AfDB, UCLG Africa and AUDA-NEPAD. The Secretariat will ensure that discussions are initiated on the implications of urban expansion support policies, covering urban planning legislation and the rules governing urban management, policy choices and territorial governance, urban development plans and, lastly, co-operation policies and financial investments. In particular, these dialogue sessions will involve African institutions, national governments and local authorities and other relevant private and public-sector stakeholders.

97. The result of this activity will be the joint organisation of four technical sessions and of multi-stakeholder policy dialogues on the political, regulatory, financial and environmental implications of urbanisation.

2.3.2. Urban territories, environment and climate governance

Activity 4: Promoting a deeper understanding of the links between urban forms and the environment in Africa

98. The objective aims to continue the work begun in 2022 on the urban forms and the sustainability of urban agglomerations in West Africa. These analyses are based on the updating of the shape files defining urban agglomerations (Africapolis) from 2015 to 2020. The production of harmonized analyses and data shedding light on the realities of west African urban territories from an environmental perspective is indeed essential for actors at all levels of government to steer urbanization towards a more sustainable and resilient path.

99. Sub-activity 1: Devising a module for the Academy of UCLG Africa addressed to West Africa's institutional and local stakeholders and entitled "Linking urban resilience and data to guide land policy and the issue of land funding". It is structured around the following objectives:

100. Sub-activity 2: Illustrating the evolution of urban forms and mapped environmental indicators in 2022 (green spaces, urban mobility and accessibility) with the new update of Africapolis 2020. Updating the MAPTA platform which is designed to map territorial transformations in Africa and make them comprehensible.

Partnership with the Confederate Technical University of Zurich (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich – ETHZ) devoted to devising effective and institutionally feasible policies for cleaner urban air in the global South

The University of Bern and the World Health Organization (WHO) Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health are also members of this partnership, which focuses on the key question of how to reconcile the necessary transformations in the realm of clean-air policy with the costs they generate for national and local budgets.

A diagnosis of the instruments of clean-air policy and their adaptation to a local context will be carried out for several cities of the global South, such as Jakarta, Mexico City, Santiago, Accra and Abuja. Based on qualitative surveys and quantitative research, this inventory will make it possible to assess the feasibility and applicability of clean-air policies and to conduct cross-analyses. SWAC provides data on the link between urban forms and the environment, produced in 2022, as part of the diagnoses made for Abuja and Accra.

---

101. Sub-activity 3: Producing mapped data and analyses on accessible and sustainable mobility in African cities: a spatial and gendered approach. This work is based on an intera-OECD synergy and a request for contextualization to African territories of a model developed by the international Transport Forum (ITF) whose initial findings will be presented and valorized at the COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh in November 2022.

102. Are the different modes of transportation (walking, cycling, by car, by informal or formal public transport) and their linkages to key economic centres modelled? Which parts of the city are inadequately served? Is there a link between particular urban shapes (urban sprawl, polycentrism), accessibility and mobility?

103. The cities of Kumasi and Accra in Ghana will be the subject of a pilot study. Scenarios will be modelled around potential improvement options. This process involving teams of Ghanaian researchers will be complemented by spatial and qualitative surveys, particularly to illustrate gender mobility patterns.

104. These three sub-activities will deliver the following outputs:

- a training module and capacity building of UCLG Africa Academia;

- development of the MAPTA platform, designed to map territorial transformations in Africa and make them comprehensible, with updating of data on urban shapes, green spaces, accessibility and mobility from the new data in Africapolis 2020;
- continuation of the partnership with the ETHZ for the purpose of devising effective and institutionally feasible policies for cleaner urban air in the global South;
- Analytical contributions from partners who are members of the scientific committee undertaken the above-mentioned work's.

Activity 5: Promoting a better understanding of how climate governance works in West Africa

105.   Because of the multi-scale and cross-sectoral nature of climate change as well as the number of stakeholders and sectors involved in the mitigation effort, the adoption of a collaborative approach to managing the climate crisis should contribute to more effective action on the part of local authorities. Towns and cities are at the heart of territorial governance at every tier, because, while they constitute the level of collaboration that is closest to the people, they are also subject to decisions that are taken regionally, nationally and internationally.

106.   The formulation of policies on the basis of a territorialised approach contributes to territorial cohesion. This approach is based on horizontal and vertical co-ordination, on the formulation of policies based on empirical facts and on integrated territorial development. By incorporating various levels of governance, it helps to promote subsidiarity.

107.   Sub-activity 1: Making a diagnosis of the institutional and legal system of climate governance in urban agglomerations in different pilot-cities

108.   The aims of this sub-activity are to understand the conditions for good governance and the institutional innovations that are needed to facilitate the implementation of adaptation policies for urban territories and to nurture advocacy for better incorporation of local dynamics into NDCs. In an initial pilot phase, this work is being focused on a small selection of urban agglomerations.

109.   Sub-activity 2: Identifying and mapping climate governance and its actors.

110.   Understanding climate co-operation networks is the key to identifying the elements of more sustainable and horizontal territorial intelligence (Accra and Kumasi in Ghana).

111.   The methodology of social network analysis has been chosen for this sub-activity, as was the case for the analysis of cross-border governance (*Cross-border Co-operation and Policy Networks in West Africa*, West African Studies, 2017). The use of this methodology serves to ensure a better grasp of the reality of co-operation networks and political decision-making processes. This work conducted with partners from the region aims to discuss connecting levels of decision-making so as to guarantee sustainability, adaptability and resilience and how to take account of the specific contexts of each territory and city. This work will be based on the surveys conducted in two pilot urban agglomerations.

112.   This activity will deliver the following outputs:

- a West African Paper dealing with the conditions for good governance and the institutional innovations that are needed to facilitate the implementation of policies enabling urban territories to adapt to climate change;

- mapping of the key stakeholders that influence the climate governance of an urban agglomeration at the national level.

113.   Sub-activity 3 of activity 4 as well as activity 5 are subject to additional contributions in order to continue the work begun in 2022 and extend it.

Activity 6: Reflecting on contextualised environmental performance reviews tailored to West African cities

114. The purpose of these reviews is to consider how the methods used in the national environmental performance reviews for OECD countries can be adapted for urban agglomerations and for West Africa.

115. This activity will deliver the following outputs:

- a step-by-step guide to the implementation of a review, tailored to conditions in West African agglomerations;

- participatory sessions conducted as part of a peer-learning process;

- a West African Paper assessing the environmental and economic effectiveness of policies (review) and analysing governance structures; the analysis is accompanied by a focus on a specific topic, such as mobility or energy, chosen by the partnered city and develops shared recommendations (horizontal participation) for one or two pilot urban agglomerations (to be defined).

116. This activity is subject to additional funding.

Activity 7: Developing policymaking support tools to facilitate the regional and local implementation of climate action

117. The data produced in activities 4, 5 and 6 will make it possible to develop dynamic spatial scanning tools to ensure a fuller understanding and better management of the diversity of situations and strategies and to forge a link between local and national interests.

118. The MAPTA platform and Africapolis provide dynamic spatial scanning tools that allow users to understand a wide range of situations and strategies more fully and to manage them more efficiently, to make the connection between local and national interests and to incorporate a spatial and a territorial dimension into policies and into the development of observation instruments that can be used in various contexts and at various levels. All of the data will be generated by activities 1 to 6.

119. Co-operation with partners will be chiefly pursued and sustained by participatory urban dialogue initiatives that will target discussions more horizontally to include civil society, the research community and private operators.

120. This activity will produce the following two outputs:

- the creation of spatial policy making support tools for regional and local climate action; these will provide input for the dedicated pages on the MAPTA website;

- organisation of or participation in events with partners in the framework of participatory urban dialogues.

2.4. Results and indicators

	INDICATORS
Overall objective	**Outcome indicators**
A fuller understanding among Members and partners of the dynamics of urbanisation and their socio-economic, environmental and political implications in order to inform deliberations on the relative merits of the options for a transition to more sustainable urban systems.	✓ A growing consensus within and between target groups on the conditions for more appropriate and sustainable urban and territorial development ✓ An increase in the number of political and financial decisions that testify to interest in and commitment to the approaches promoted by the SWAC on the part of technical and financial partners
Final results	**Results indicators**
Final result 1 *A fuller understanding of current and projected urban expansion in West Africa.*	✓ Greater understanding among target groups of the present dynamics of urbanisation and of its effects and implications ✓ Progress towards greater use of the Africapolis database by each identified type of target group
Final result 2 *A better grasp of the links between urban shapes, the environment and the climate as well as a better understanding of the diverse potentials of territories and of climate governance frameworks.*	✓ Improved understanding among target groups of the connections between urban shapes, the environment and the climate ✓ Increased knowledge regarding climate governance

Final result 3
Promotion of multi-stakeholder dialogues with a view to shedding light on urban policies, particularly support policies for urban expansion and policy options for a form of urban development that is more conducive to climate sustainability.
	✓ Greater awareness among beneficiaries and target groups of the prerequisites for more appropriate and sustainable urban development
	
	✓ Demonstration and persuasion capabilities of the SWAC:
	  – perceived degree of usefulness of formulated recommendations
	  – ability to reconcile the interests of target groups
	
	✓ Shifts in target groups' opinions regarding the issues addressed by the SWAC's political and technical recommendations

Activities	**Performance indicators**
<u>**Activity 1**</u>: Updating Africapolis to portray urbanisation in Africa	✓ Number of items of socio-economic and demographic data fed into the Africapolis database ✓ Number of new functions added to the Africapolis site

	✓ Number of new visualisations created
Activity 2: Producing analyses of urban expansion and of national urban policies	✓ Number of reports on the dynamics of urbanisation published in the *West African Studies* series ✓ Number of West African Papers published and disseminated ✓ Number of blogs with regular posting activity ✓ Number of background papers produced on the strategies, regulation and impact of urban expansion
Activity 3: Developing inclusive political processes through dialogue, strategic partnerships and joint knowledge creation designed to inform the development of appropriate urban policies	✓ Number of technical sessions and multi-stakeholder dialogue workshops devoted to the political, regulatory and environmental implications of urban expansion
Activity 4: Promoting a fuller understanding of the links between urban shapes and the environment in Africa	✓ Delivery of a complete training module for UCLG Africa ✓ Availability of new charts and maps on the MAPTA website ✓ Number of papers produced with the ITF on the links between urban shapes, transport systems and mobility
Activity 5: Promoting a better understanding of how climate governance works in West Africa	✓ Number of analyses of the conditions for good governance and of institutional innovations conducive to policies enabling cities to adapt to climate change ✓ Number of mapping exercises relating to urban governance that are conducted for the West African pilot cities
Activity 6: Reflecting on contextualised environmental performance reviews tailored to West African cities	✓ Number of participatory sessions conducted as part of a peer-learning process ✓ Delivery of a step-by-step guide to the implementation of a climate performance review ✓ Number of West African Papers published and disseminated
Activity 7: Developing policy-making support tools to facilitate the regional and local implementation of climate action	✓ Actual input to dedicated pages on the CARTA platform

3 Securities and borders

3.1. Background and rationale

121. Since 2015, violence in North and West Africa has become significantly more widespread and more intense. More than 14 000 violent events were recorded between 2015 and 2019. The past three years have witnessed an exponential growth in instability, leading to more than 1 000 events between 2020 and mid-2021. Recently, the number of violent events has more than doubled, seeing an increase in the monthly average from 233 violent episodes between 2015 and 2019 to 555 recorded incidents in the past 18 months.

122. This violence is not evenly distributed. 87% of the events and of the victims can be found in five countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Libya, Mali and Nigeria. Border violence is also intensifying, with 60% of victims and violent events being recorded within 100 kilometres of a border between January and June 2021, compared with 40% in 2019. Half of the victims are civilians. This pattern, which was already detectable in SWAC's 2021 report *"Conflict Networks in North and West Africa"*, is particularly evident in West Africa, while the situation in the Maghreb has been gradually stabilising since the signing of a ceasefire agreement in October 2020.

123. Border areas, despite lying on the geographical and political outskirts, affect the spatial distribution of violence and political instability. Border conflicts are not solely the result of poor relations between the State and its peripheries but also that of wider political issues such as the perceived marginalisation of certain groups and poor political governance. The conflicts that arise in these areas stem from a combination of overlapping issues commonly seen, such as under-investment in territorial development, community conflicts and a strong sense of marginalisation on the part of large portions of the population. Currently, the region's main hotspots for border violence are the Liptako-Gourma and the Lake Chad Basin, where conflicts are more intense and violent events more concentrated than elsewhere. A coalescence of violence is also increasing along several of Nigeria's borders, where the geographical convergence of multiple issues creates breeding grounds for tension. The ever-shifting location of the violence makes the dynamics more complex.

124. The cross-border nature of conflicts and of terrorist groups is also apparent. Meanwhile, the drivers needed for state and non-state actors to want to adopt cross-border strategies are highly dependent on state and local contexts, which explains why some border regions are much more violent than others.

125. The deterioration in the security situation seen over the past 15 years bears witness to the extreme fragility of States and societies, particularly in the Sahel. This deterioration cannot be imputed solely to terrorist or Jihadist actions but also points to the emergence or re-emergence of community conflicts, social disputes and armed insurrections, a consequence of which is a proliferation of self-defence militias driven by a variety of motives. If more appropriate solutions to territorial development are to be found, it is essential that decision makers have a better grasp of the convergence of these dynamics of violence that interlink at local, national and global levels.

126. To this end, multi-scalar approaches are invaluable in supporting decision-making. The Secretariat has at its disposal two innovative tools based on qualitative and quantitative analysis, the Spatial Conflict Dynamics indicator (SCDi) and the analysis of networks of actors, which allows monitoring to be carried out at a temporal, relational and spatial level. These tools provide Members and partners with information and insights to better anticipate the changes taking place and better understand the increasing complexity and volatility of conflict dynamics. The analytical approaches advocated by SWAC also provide them with decision-making support for devising territorial development policies that are more inclusive and sustainable because they are better suited to the fragilities of the region and their interactions and volatilities.

3.2. Expected results

127. The two following outcomes are targeted:

- Enhancing the understanding of Members and partners about the links between spatial factors and the evolution of conflicts;

- Increasing awareness among Members and partners of the importance of using these analyses to adapt their policies to support territorial development, in particular in cross-border areas.

128. Achievement of these outcomes involves carrying out the following four activities:

- Developing spatial decision making tools;

- Updating the analysis of conflict networks;

- Increasing understanding of the link between gender and violence;

- Facilitating discussions and exchanges.

3.3. Description of activities

Activity 1: Continuing the development of spatial policy decision support tools

129. This activity continues the development of the Spatial Conflict Dynamics indicator (SCDi), an innovative tool that supports the building of development and security policies which are better contextualised and therefore more effective.

130. The SCDi was launched in 2020 by SWAC/OECD in co-operation with the University of Florida's Sahel Research Group and allows for the monitoring of temporal and spatial changes in violence in 21 North and West African countries. The SDCi combines two fundamental properties of violence: intensity, which measures the number of violent events, and concentration, which relates to the distribution of violent events. The data collected by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset (ACLED), allows for the measurement of conflict evolution over the past 25 years, by using a grid of 6 540 cells each measuring 50 x 50 kilometres.

131. The Indicator provides a comparative territorial analysis of the evolution of conflicts across geographical spaces, between different regions and on different timescales (by month or year). It is a useful tool to support decision making at all levels of policy intervention (local, cross-border and regional).

132. Sub Activity 1: The first aim of the 2023-24 programme is to update the SDCi, which is currently available on a year-to-year basis from 1997 to 2021.

- *Mapping the recent evolution of conflicts at a regional level and in border areas.* Updating the SCDi on the basis of the data collected by ACLED will allow the recent evolution of conflicts in North and West Africa from 2021 to 2024 to be mapped. As with the reports on *The Geography of Conflict* (2020) and *Borders and Conflicts in North and West Africa* (2022), this work involves monitoring three hotspots of violence and comparing patterns: the Central Sahel, comprising Mali and its neighbouring countries, the Lake Chad region and Libya.

133. Sub Activity 2: The development of three new parameters will make it the region's foremost tool for analysis and decision-making support:

- *Understanding local conflict determinants.* The Indicator can be combined with socio-economic and political data, such as changes in the price of food, demographic factors, changes in climate and local governance institutions. This approach allows the evolution of violence to be monitored in different regions according to the factors which have the greatest impact, and for different political perspectives to be put forward to assist with conflict resolution. The SCDi is ideally placed to respond to those issues. The grid used can be adapted to existing administrative units. The indicator helps to understand any recurring patterns by putting the case studies into perspective, and clarifies development strategies by enhancing knowledge of the dynamics at play and the interaction between them. Maps of violent events and of victims in border zones are updated on a new digital platform called MAPTA, designed to map territorial transformations in Africa and make them comprehensible.

- *Developing a long-term understanding of regional conflicts.* The geography of violence is very fluid in North and West Africa: the majority of conflicts that affected the region in the 1990s are now resolved, whereas those regions currently in conflict were stable 15 years ago. This temporal variation means there is a need to map the emergence, development and resolution of conflicts in the whole of the region over several decades. In order to analyse the life-cycle of conflicts, the SCDi can help identify the local, national and international conditions that determine why conflicts arise and why they are resolved. By mapping the way in which each region is affected by various types of violence, the Indicator provides a tool to support political decision makers to monitor current violent hotspots as well as the regions with the potential to turn into hotspots, such as the Gulf of Guinea (additional funding).

- *Integrating local constraints.* The methodology currently used assumes that violent events can occur anywhere within a grid cell, regardless of the topographical constraints of the area. In order to take account of the real environment in which conflicts take place, a weighting index relating to the concentration and intensity of the violence will be integrated into the SCDi. By taking into account potential obstacles encountered locally such as terrain shape or the presence of a lake, this index distributes the potential for events in a grid cell unevenly so that the clustering or dispersion of violent events can be analysed in a more nuanced way. Similarly, the SCDi could give more weight to certain events according to population density and the presence of roads, two key factors in quantifying the intensity or the concentration of a conflict.

134. Sub activity 3: Various other activities could be undertaken to develop the SCDi further, subject to additional funding.

- *Measuring the short-term impact of a conflict.* The SCDi could be used to monitor the rapid evolution of certain conflicts on a shorter timescale than that currently used. For example, the Indicator could be updated every two weeks to measure the impact of a large-scale military

operation against armed groups, the territorial expansion of a cross-border insurrection, or the influence of a governmental actor or a regional coalition on the evolution of a particular conflict.

- *Measuring the impact of a conflict on a specific group.* The Indicator could be used to measure the effects of a conflict on a specific group of actors, such as civilian populations, who are greatly afflicted by violence, or village militias, which have developed in response to rural and urban insecurity.

135. This activity will deliver the following outputs:

- A West African Paper (2023) and a report in the *West African Studies* series containing updated analyses, maps and graphs (2024). A topic for the report will be identified according to the situation at the time;

- A set of combined statistical data and maps accessible on the MAPTA digital platform.

Activity 2: Updating the analysis of conflict networks and developing new parameters

136. This activity will continue the analysis of the relationships between groups involved in violence, which was initiated in SWAC's 2021 report *"Conflict Networks in North and West Africa"*. This work is based on social network analysis (SNA), a quantitative approach to alliance and conflict relationships. Since the report *"Cross-border co-operation and policy networks in West Africa"* was published in 2017, SWAC has used this method on a recurring basis and regards itself as a leader in analysing networks for public policy purposes.

137. The benefit of analysing networks of actors has been proven in understanding the role and evolution of alliances and rivalries in the evolution of conflicts. In particular, it sheds light on the polarisation of violence by certain groups, the propagation of violence and the volatility of relationships between actors of violence. This approach allows a very large number of actors to be modelled and political responses to be chosen that take into account all relationships between the actors in a region of conflict, transcending institutional limits or national borders. For example, the last SWAC report highlights the growing centralisation of Sahelian conflicts, signalling an increase in violence between State actors and armed groups, as well as the growing influence of militias in rural violence.

138. As part of the 2023-2024 programme, it is proposed that the map of alliance relationships and of conflicts between violent organisations in North and West Africa, currently available on a year-to-year basis from 1997 to 2020, should be updated.

- *Measuring the influence of relationships between violent organisations*. The fluctuation in alliance relationships and conflict relationships between violent organisations has an impact on regional violence dynamics. Data obtained from the ACLED database will be updated in order to (a) measure the centrality of each violent organisation; (b) map their alliance relationships and conflict relationships; and (c) measure the centralisation and the density of each conflict to gain an understanding of its potential for violence.

- *Adding new attributes.* New attributes can be added to the actors involved in regional violence, subject to the availability of data, such as their location or the different types of violent organisation to which they belong. These new attributes will help better understand the volatility of these relationships and their effect on the conflict cycle.

139.   This activity will deliver the following outputs:

- This work will complete the analyses in the report published in the West African Studies series (see Activity 1) and feed into the MAPTA platform.

- A set of combined statistical data and maps accessible on the MAPTA platform.

Activity 3: _Improving understanding of the link between gender and violence_

140.   Localised understanding of challenges and obstacles remains limited, as do spatial tools for understanding issues of gender and violence. The aim of this activity is to gain a better understanding of the link between gender and conflicts using disaggregated data from the ACLED database and to engage in regular dialogues with women from various occupations (civil society, private sector, local actors).

141.   This activity will deliver the following outputs:

- Updated temporal and spatial evolution over the past 20 years of violence involving women in West Africa, which is on the rise as violence towards civilians grows. This work builds on West African Paper No. 28 _"Women and Conflicts in West Africa"._ The data and dynamic maps produced will be published on a dedicated page of the MAPTA platform;

- Two West African Papers, the topics of which will be decided on depending on the situation at the time and the partnerships;

- Various podcasts recounting conversations between a female West African researcher and a female audience from many walks of life responding to a policy brief that draws on SWAC work on "Security and Borders".

Activity 4: _Facilitating discussions and exchanges_

142.   This work aims to build political advocacy showing the benefit of integrating the scalar dimensions of violence into the response strategies and the human security and development policies of SWAC Members and partners. This will be based on analyses and data produced by the SCDi and the SNA.

143.   In addition to participation in high-level meetings, dialogue will be extended to other discussion platforms including civil society and research networks.

144.   This activity will deliver the following outputs:

- Participation in two meetings of the group of Special Envoys for the Sahel in 2023 and 2024 and two meetings of the _Munich Security Conference_.

- Organisation of at least two dialogue side events (webinars) relating to the publication of the analyses and participation in working sessions with the Members and partners.

- Six West African Papers following current developments in the region produced by researchers working on West Africa and promoting the findings of their research.

- Production and broadcast of several podcasts in which a guest responds to a policy brief or a West African Paper. The SWAC Secretariat is seeking to improve its awareness-raising strategy among civil society actors on security matters in the Sahel and West Africa. This includes making better connections between the analyses and work outcomes and the actions of civil society or Members through dialogue and the exchange of knowledge. These podcasts, which will feature an equal balance of men and women, will also serve as a feedback platform to inform SWAC's work.

- Development of the MAPTA platform as a visualisation tool for African territorial transformations and as a political decision support tool. As regards the Security and Borders programme, regular

updating of the platform will lead to visualisation of the following: (a) the evolution of border violence over the past 20 years (events and victims), notably in the Lake Chad region and the Central Sahel; (b) gender-based violence using ACLED data; (c) the four categories of violence identified by the SCDi on a localised scale. The aim of the tool is to make the data and analyses more accessible and comprehensible. It helps to make sense of the information and also acts as a communications tool. This outreach objective is complementary to the analytical studies, production of data, and monitoring and evaluation exercises. Visualisation of the data will allow a wider audience to make effective use of key information through a variety of clear representations (maps, tables and graphics). Access to downloadable data gives users, whether they are political actors or researchers, the ability to confirm or reject the assumptions that shape the definition of policies and strategies. These spatial and historical visualisations will provide valuable support in decision making and offer an opportunity for key indicators to be discussed and specific areas to be focused on. Improving data comprehensibility will assist in detecting patterns and correlations which can then be used for strategic purposes. The mapped data tell a story which then needs to be integrated into territorial action plans. By reaching a wider audience, the MAPTA platform will contribute to a more participative dialogue strategy.

3.4. Results and indicators

	INDICATORS
Overall objective	**Outcome indicators**
Growing commitment among Members and partners to integrate multi-scalar and territorial approaches in human security strategies in West Africa	✓ Increased number of references to SWAC's work on scalar approaches in strategies and policies of Members and partners ✓ Number of references to SWAC's work on spatial approaches in articles published by specialist research institutes
Specific results	**Outcome indicators**

Specific result 1
Enhanced understanding of Members and partners on the links between spatial factors and the evolution of conflicts
	✓ Improved understanding by target groups of the importance of taking into account spatial analysis for a better understanding of the different forms of violence and their evolution
	
	✓ Perception by target groups of SWAC's ability to demonstrate that geography significantly influences the nature and evolution of conflicts:
	
	  - Perceived relevance of the analysis
	
	  - Perceived clarity of arguments
	
	  - Relevance of the choice of illustrations used to support the argument

Specific result 2 *Increased awareness among Members of the importance of integrating these analyses for the benefit of more flexible and multi-scalar strategies, in particular cross-border strategies*	✓ Increase in the number of beneficiaries convinced of the need to integrate these approaches into their strategies ✓ Increased awareness among target groups of the benefit of integrating these approaches into their strategies and programmes.
Activities	**Performance indicators**
Activity 1: Development of spatial decision support tool (SCDi)	✓ Number of reports published in the *West African Studies* series ✓ Number of maps and graphs produced and disseminated ✓ Number of new parameters included in the SCDi indicator

	✓ Number of analyses and maps published in the *West African Studies* series and disseminated
Activity 2: Continued analysis of conflict networks	✓ Number of analyses published in the West African Papers series and disseminated
Activity 3: Improved understanding of the link between violence and gender	✓ Number of West African Papers including gender-sensitive analyses published ✓ Number of graphs and maps relating to violence and gender issues, produced and disseminated on the CARTA platform ✓ Number of podcasts produced and broadcast
Activity 4: Facilitation of discussions and exchanges	✓ Number of international conferences or high-level ad hoc meetings in which the SWAC participates ✓ Number of papers presented by the SWAC at external events ✓ Existence of a functional digital mapping and analysis platform ✓ Number of internal meetings for Club Members organised and facilitated ✓ Number of beneficiaries reached by type of target groups

4 Multi-stakeholders strategic dialogue and advocacy

4.1. Background and rationale

145.   Dialogue and advocacy are intrinsic elements of the thematic programmes that the Secretariat implements: partnerships, networking, co-construction of knowledge, increased involvement of civil society and professional organisations, collaborations with think tanks, contributions to key African and international forums, etc. This flexible and inclusive approach is the most advisable one for the complex and evolving West African context, and it is how the Club seeks to influence the understanding and anticipation of crises and structural changes in the best way possible.

146.   To do this, the Secretariat intends to bolster its interactions with Members and financial partners, develop effective means of communication and begin opening up its bodies to non-governmental stakeholders that are conscious of the complex development, governance and stability equation.

4.2. Expected results

147.   Two sets of results are targeted:
*   strengthening interactions with Members and partners;
*   strengthening communication and expanding dialogue.

4.3. Description of activities

4.3.1. Strengthening interactions between Members, partners and the Secretariat

148.   The Secretariat will continue to provide support and advice to Members and partners that wish to receive it. This support and advice may take the following forms:
*   Ad-hoc consultation sessions within Members' and partners' administrations.
*   Contributions to statutory meetings of Members and partners known as "annual development days".
*   Thematic or general contributions to strategy documents, including in the framework of initiatives driven by civil society organizations.
*   Substantial contributions to initiatives by a Member or partner linked to the international agenda, for example the contribution to the G7 discussions held under the French Presidency in 2019 or, more recently, the West African perspective brought to the United Nations Food Systems Summit in 2021, under the impetus of the European Commission.

149.	The Secretariat will also commit to further efforts to inform Members and partners about the progress of its work and to hear their views. In practice, this will mean:
- Organising virtual "Club Meetings" on the final or intermediate results of ongoing projects, methods and approaches adopted, and the purpose of the meetings held. The "Club Meetings" are also an opportunity to address issues beyond those covered by the Secretariat's work, provided they are relevant to the region, and always with the aim of discussion and interaction between Members and partners.
- The production of a newsletter about the Secretariat's activities; this newsletter will complement the News Alerts, 27 issues of which have been sent to 6 000 contacts since 1 January 2021.

4.3.2. Strengthening communication, expanding dialogue

150.	Methods of communication are strategic drivers of influence. The challenge is to get messages across and put them forward for discussion in the most appropriate and concise way. It is now a question of adapting to changing patterns of information consumption, particularly to new information and communication technologies.

151.	This is why the Secretariat increasingly favours:
- Publishing digital books and producing videos, podcasts and other multimedia tools.
- Easy access to data and analyses via digital platforms (Africapolis, RPCA interactive maps, the new MAPTA platform, etc.).
- Setting up virtual portals – such as the webpage "Tackling the Coronavirus (COVID-19): West African perspectives" and the pages of the RPCA website dedicated to the Food and Nutrition Crisis in 2020, 2021 and 2022 – to ensure continuous oversight, gather the knowledge accumulated by the Secretariat over the years and make it accessible on a single interface, or to promote West African expertise.
- Communication via social networks, including new opportunities opened up for discussion (Twitter Spaces, which are very popular in the region).

152.	The Secretariat will continue to step up its efforts to produce educational snapshots, beginning with:
- The Maps & Facts collection (a map with a summary analysis on a two-sided English-French page).
- The Maps & Facts booklets (special publications compiling maps on a given topic).

153.	These efforts will be complemented by specific co-operation with regional think tanks, continuing the "Sahelian consultations" (*concertations sahéliennes*) held in 2022. The aim will be to discuss the Secretariat's work in the civil society networks co-ordinated by these think tanks, and to use the Secretariat's outputs to inform the specific focus of the discussions held within these networks. Advocacy activities are inherent in all of the thematic programmes described above. They are part of their objectives, activities and results. They contribute to the creation and animation of networks, the dissemination of new ideas or approaches, the development of partnerships, and the promotion of the region.