

cial figures on the regional grain trade, as reported through FAOSTAT, are even more deficient. For example, while official data show millet and sorghum exports from Mali in 2010/11 totalled 280 tonnes, the CILSS study recorded 4 827 tonnes over a similar period. For Nigeria, the figures were even more shocking: official statistics recorded only 45 tonnes of millet and sorghum exports, while the CILSS monitoring noted over 53 000 tonnes (*ibid.*). Already in the 1990s, studies by Seyni and Soulé estimated the total regional cereal trade between Nigeria and its immediate neighbours (Benin, Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon) at nearly 500 000 tonnes per year (Soulé and Gansari, 2010).

#### 4.5.2 Major products traded regionally

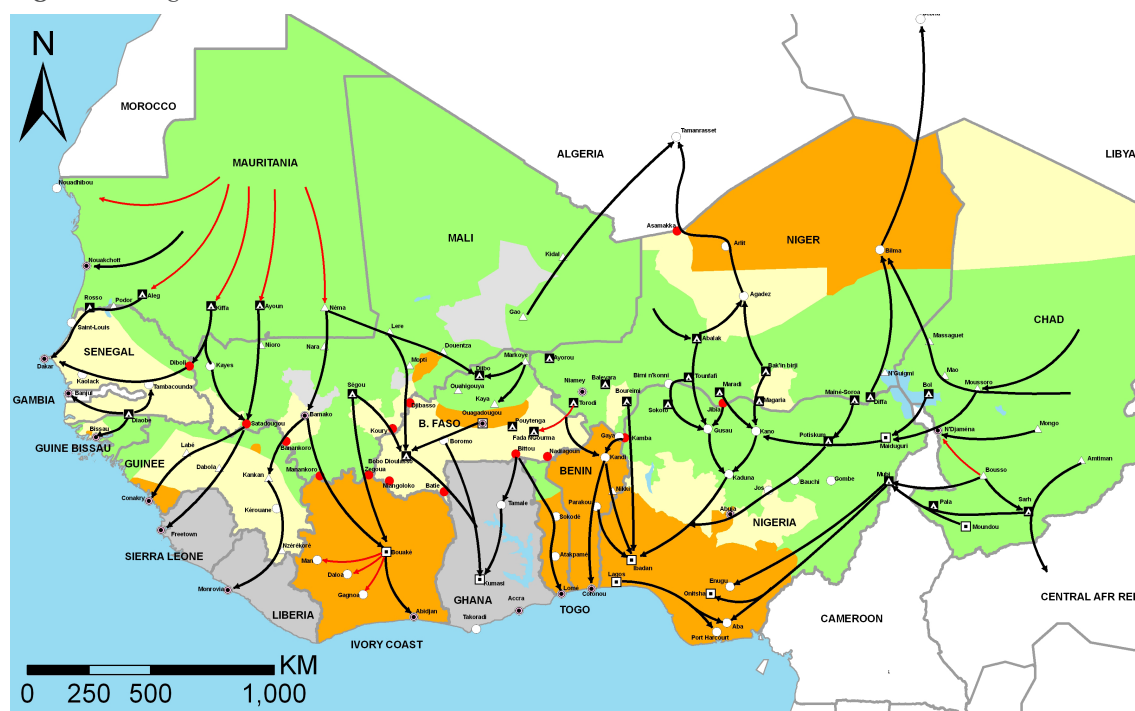
Regional trade is an important contributor to the food security of West African countries, allowing them to access a broader range of products than they produce domestically and helping them to balance fluctuations in national production with imports and exports. It is also a growing source of income for West African farmers given the growing

regional demand for an expanding range of food products. Among the key agricultural commodities important in regional trade are the following:<sup>34</sup>

**Ruminant Livestock.** Exports of cattle, sheep and goats typically flow from the Sahelian and Sudano-Guinean zones towards the demand centres of the humid coast, where disease problems limit ruminant livestock production (Figure 4.14). There are also some exports of sheep and goats to North Africa, particularly at times of major Muslim holidays such as Tabaski. In recent years, demand from Nigeria has led to expanded flows of cattle eastward from Mali and Burkina Faso towards Nigeria, but the volume of this trade fluctuates depending on the Naira/CFA franc exchange rate (Makadji *et al.*, 2013). The regional trade in livestock has proven resilient in adapting to various political and economic shocks affecting West Africa. For example, the Ivorian crisis of the 2000s combined with the paving of the road between Bamako and Dakar led to a major shift in Malian cattle exports

<sup>34</sup> FEWSNET provides maps of the regional trade flows for many of these products. Because of space considerations, only the map for livestock flows is included below.

Figure 4.14 Regional Ruminant Livestock Trade Flows, 2010



Source: FEWSNET