

**COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO**

**ECOWAS COMMISSION**



**COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO**

**Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources**

**ECOWAP/CAADP process**

**Memorandum on the assessment of activities carried out in 2011-2012 and  
work prospects for 2013-2015**

September 2012

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## 1 Introduction

1. The agricultural sector, in the broad sense of the term (crop, animal, fishery and forestry production) is one of the main drivers of social and economic development of West Africa. It is a key source of wealth creation, contributing to 35% of GDP at the regional level. It occupies about 60% of the working population of the region, more than half are women engaged in multiple production, processing and marketing activities. The agricultural sector contributes about 16% to external revenues, and makes West Africa the largest cocoa exporter in the world.
2. The agricultural sector generates most of the products that feed the intra-community trade and is one of the main vectors of regional market integration. It plays a key role in the fight against food and nutrition insecurity, and thus against poverty. Indeed, it contributes more than 80% of food needs of West African peoples, through the consumption of farm households, and the supply of local markets and urban markets with food products. Much of the revenue of family smallholders comes from agricultural, pastoral, and fishery activities. However, food imports represent an important item in the trade deficit of the majority of countries. These imports help to offset the uncertainties of production, but do not address the food insecurity of the poorest households, due to their low purchasing power.
3. Over the last thirty years, the West African agriculture has made significant progress, particularly in terms of volume of production of various crops. Although the average growth rate of productions is slightly higher than the population growth rate, these performances are less the result of productivity gains than a significant increase in cultivated area. This extensive strategy responds to the rural population growth, but has its limitations: scarcity of land, falling fertility, household production surpluses too low to reduce food dependency in the region and improve incomes of farmers, etc. The West African agriculture faces many difficulties in connection with the limited use of production factors (inputs, agricultural equipment) and inadequate funding mechanisms.
4. The massive transformation of West African agriculture depends largely on the judicious use of the enormous potential and assets available to the region. Indeed, when it comes to diversity of agro-ecological zones, availability of arable and irrigable land, surface and groundwater resources and human capital, West Africa is full of potential sufficient for agriculture, which is the base for social and economic development of the region.
5. Based on these observations, and after the ECOWAS Treaty revision, the Heads of State and Government instructed the Commission of the Organization to provide the region with a common agricultural policy. The policy formulation process was accelerated by the mandate the African Union has given to Regional Economic Communities to operationalize the NEPAD, including implementation of its agricultural component, the CAADP.
6. In 2004, the ECOWAS Commission initiated a participatory and inclusive process of consultation which helped to diagnose the challenges, issues and agriculture model that takes into account the concerns of stakeholders: States, socio-professional organizations, and the private sector. The process culminated in January 2005 with the adoption of the Community's agricultural policy (ECOWAP) in Accra (Ghana), by the Heads of State and Government.

7. ECOWAP focuses on regional issues and is a tool for managing interdependencies and issues common to ECOWAS Member countries. It does not replace national agricultural policies, but stimulates their harmonization and convergence through the NAIPs and the RAIP. It is based on *"a modern, sustainable agriculture, based on the efficiency and effectiveness of family farms and the promotion of agricultural enterprises through private sector involvement. Productive and competitive on the intra-community market and international markets, it must ensure food security and provide decent incomes to its workers"*. Its purpose is the promotion of food security in the region.

## 2 The major phases of the ECOWAP operationalization: a reminder

8. Upon its adoption in January 2005, the ECOWAS initiated the ECOWAP implementation, both nationally and regionally, through the development, in 2006, of the first action plan. This plan incorporated the large major programmes being implemented by IGOs in the region, and outlined pioneering plans to operationalize the ECOWAP.
9. The food crisis due to soaring world prices of commodities has hastened the ECOWAP implementation, by bringing the States and the Commission to develop emergency programmes which, in their design and essence, foreshadowed the national and regional agricultural investment plans. Adopted in 2008 by ECOWAS, "the regional offensive for food production and the fight against hunger" formulated a response to the crisis, which is structured around three main lines for action: intensification of production, market regulation and improving access to food for vulnerable populations.
10. These lines of intervention will be the backbone of the three mobilizing programmes formulated in 2009. These include (i) promotion of strategic commodities for food security and sovereignty, (ii) promotion of an enabling global environment for agricultural development and (iii) reduction of food insecurity and structural vulnerability of the populations through social safety nets. These three programmes include components on investment, on the one hand and public policy instruments to guide agricultural development and accelerate agriculture transformation, on the other hand: (i) support to production intensification, (ii) market regulation and (iii) improving access to food for vulnerable populations (food security reserve and social safety net programmes, in particular).
11. The three programmes have fueled the conference on financing agriculture, organized by ECOWAS in November 2009. At the end of the Conference, all players in agricultural development (the ECOWAS Commission, the African Union Commission, the States, agricultural socioprofessional organizations, the private sector and technical and financial partners) signed a compact making ECOWAP the reference frame for interventions in the agricultural sector in West Africa.
12. Consecutively to the regional conference on financing, the National and the Regional Agricultural Investment Programmes were worked out in 2009 and 2010. They resulted in national roundtables in 2010 and business meetings that helped mobilize the initial funding. Regionally, the business meeting was held in June 2010, in Dakar.

## 3 The Accra Ministerial Committee orientations– February 2011: a reminder

13. Held in Accra (Ghana), in February 2011, the last Ministerial Committee meeting made a number of decisions guided by the need to focus on a number of priorities that meet the expectations of the countries and the Regional Community.
14. These priorities were:
  - a. *The institutional field*, with the establishment of the Regional Food and Agriculture Agency (ReFAA), the Regional Fund, housed at EBID (ECOWADF), the Food and Agriculture Advisory Committee and the Inter-Departments Committee for Food and Agriculture (ICFA), through the adoption of consistent legal acts ;
  - b. *The ECOWAP financing*, including financing of the NAIPs, with an urgent appeal to the technical and financial partners to identify additional resources and meet commitments made at the Summit in L'Aquila (Italy). The Ministers also called on the TFPs to actually align their interventions with national and regional policies and improve their coordination. To that end, the Ministerial Committee encouraged the TFPs to finalize their mapping support to the agricultural sector;
  - c. *The regional public policy instruments*, inviting the Commission to prepare guidelines to harmonize national policies and establish regional Task Forces to speed up the operationalization of the instruments. These Task Forces focused on several major thematic: (i) strengthening the institutional and human capacities of key regional Compact partners; (ii) implementation of tools to support production; (iii) development of instruments to support storage, warrantage and group marketing by producers' organizations and promotion of value chains within the sub-regional sub-markets; (iv) implementation of targeted safety nets on vulnerable populations and implementation of a regional food security reserve;
  - d. *The ECOWAS policy coherence*, with the hope of the Ministers of Agriculture to see CET negotiations concluded, with tariffs in line with issues of the agricultural sector, supplemented by additional measures (trade defence instruments) to reduce the impact of global market volatility on regional markets.

## 4 The main achievements

### 4.1 The initial actions and programmes

15. Upon adoption of the ECOWAP in 2005, the action plan 2006-10 helped to “progressively re-align” existing regional programmes around the new regional policy’s guidelines and to plan a set of initial actions to initiate its implementation.
16. This initial phase has also been used to prepare the Regional Agricultural Investment Programme (RAIP) covering the period 2010-2015.
17. Concrete actions have focused on the following projects:
  - a. Revision and adoption of the Charter for the prevention and management of food crises in West Africa, enlarged to include Chad and Mauritania;
  - b. Establishment of a regional agricultural information and decision-support system (ECOAGRIS), with two groups of countries: 7 countries in 2011 and 8 other countries in 2012;

- c. Launching a Biotechnology and Bio-safety Programme, implemented in collaboration with CORAF/WECARD ;
  - d. Strategy to promote fertilizer use in West Africa and support the implementation of the UEMOA-ECOWAS joint project on the Regional Inputs Market (MIR PLUS), in collaboration with IFDC;
  - e. Implementation of a regional action plan to control the fruit fly (supported by the European Union);
  - f. Development of a framework for convergence and implementation of harmonized land policies in ECOWAS countries;
  - g. Establishment of a framework for accelerating the dissemination of proven agricultural technologies;
  - h. Promotion of the Agricultural Productivity Programme in West Africa (World Bank support), implemented in conjunction with CORAF/WECARD;
  - i. Support for the production of improved seeds as part of the response to the food crisis (European Union facility) and establishment of a Seeds Alliance (USAID support) in collaboration with CORAF/WECARD.
18. Several sub-sectoral programmes have been initiated for the value chains;
- a. The Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Programme;
  - b. The West African Livestock Development action plan;
  - c. The development of a harmonized framework for the development of the regional agricultural inter-profession, to promote the value chains;
  - d. The development of value chains for regional products with high trade flows between the Sahelian and coastal countries: maize, livestock, etc. (USAID/ATP-EATP);
19. The food security issues have formed the subject of several programmes. They are usually implemented by CILSS, which has some expertise recognized by ECOWAS:
- a. The programme implemented with support from the European Union, focusing on information and support for decision-making in food security management matters;
  - b. The programme implemented by ECOWAS and CILSS, with support from the French Development Agency, on capacity building of regional and national stakeholders and mechanisms to ensure food security of the populations in West Africa;
  - c. In addition, over the period, ECOWAS, in collaboration with UEMOA, CILSS and the Hub Rural, took the initiative to gather decision-makers when major crises occurred in the region;
20. Several regulations were prepared jointly, in most cases, with UEMOA, and adopted. These are regulations: (i) ECOWAS N°C/REG.4/05/2008 harmonizing the rules governing quality control, certification and marketing of vegetable seeds and seedlings in the ECOWAS countries and associated implementing regulations (remains Implementation REG on: Catalogue + COASem); (ii) ECOWAS N°C/REG.3/05/2008 harmonizing the rules governing registration of pesticides in the area and associated implementing regulations –(Remains Implementation REG on: COAHP); (iii) ECOWAS N°C/REG.21/11/10 harmonizing the structural framework and operational rules on animal health, plant and food safety in the ECOWAS area; ECOWAS N°C/REG.22/11/10 on community procedures for the management of veterinary medicinal products in ECOWAS countries; (iv) ECOWAS N°C/REG.23/11/10 establishing and setting operating procedures of a Regional Veterinary Committee (RVC) within ECOWAS. In these regulations we must integrate the adoption of Directive C/DIR.1/11/10 on Vet Pharmacy within ECOWAS.
21. The achievements, nationally, are in line with a stronger internalization of the CAADP approach and process. Thus, all countries in the region have developed and validated their National

Agricultural Investment Programme covering the entire agricultural sector, organized a national roundtable and signed a multi-stakeholder Compact. They also developed their agricultural investment plan, subject to external review. Twelve of the fifteen Member countries of the Community have organized their business meeting. Budgets devoted to the agricultural sector are increasing in all countries, with a plan to comply with the Maputo commitment set for 2013 at the latest, with the exception of Nigeria (which has already achieved an agricultural growth rate of more than 6% with its current budget). All countries have benefitted from GFRP funds, 5 from GAFSP funds and IDA or other partner funds. The amount of additional funds mobilized by the States to finance their NAIP is presently estimated at over US\$ 2 billion.

22. Finally, in response to the food crisis born of the soaring commodity prices, all countries of the Community adopted a set of measures to: (i) boost production, in the short and medium terms, through supply of inputs (fertilizers, seeds), rehabilitation of irrigation schemes, extension services, (ii) reduce food cost through tax and tariff measures, price fixing and control, interventions on markets and operations focused on vulnerable populations.
23. The DAEWR has developed, during the first years of implementation of the ECOWAP, an ongoing dialogue with producers' organizations, especially with their regional networks. It supported their structuring work and implementation of their action plans. ROPPA, which unifies the majority of producer organizations organized in national coordinating bodies, and the BilitalMaroobé Network and APESS (in the fields of livestock and pastoralism) are the major agricultural organizations partners of ECOWAS, together with the Regional Network of Chambers of Agriculture (RECAO).
24. The Commission provides support for the organization of emerging networks, particularly in the fisheries sector, with REPAO. Support is also provided to certain products, such as Shea butter, with the Global Shea Butter Alliance; cashew, with ACA, through the African Cashew Alliance, and ECOWAS TEN (Expect Initiative) which focuses on mango and palm oil.
25. Trade issues are a fundamental dimension of ECOWAP both in terms of regional trade promotion and ECOWAS border policy. These projects fall under the Department of Trade but rely on an ongoing dialogue with the departments responsible for sectoral policies. The DAEWR played a major role in integrating agricultural issues into trade policies, including: (i) as part of the EPA negotiations, with the ranking of most agricultural products in the category of sensitive products to prepare an offer for market access that meets expectations of stakeholders in the sector, and (ii) in connection with the extension of the CET to all ECOWAS countries, with two important achievements: the creation of the fifth tariff band, on the one hand, and products reclassification, on the other hand. A compromise was found for most agricultural and food products. Improvements still need to be sought on certain strategic products such as rice and some processed goods considered as raw materials (e.g., milk powder).
26. The PAN-SPSO programme, carried out by AU/IBAR and focusing on improving the participation of African countries in standardization bodies (IPPC, OIE, CODEX and SPS/WTO), is also part of the ECOWAS initiatives to improve the business environment of agro-food sector stakeholders.

#### 4.2 Implementation of the Accra Ministerial Committee decisions

27. The different projects above fall within the spirit of the Accra Ministerial Committee's decisions on the ECOWAS Commission's assistance to Member States and implementation of the various components of the RAIP.

28. However, a series of activities were conducted within the framework of the implementation of the Accra decisions.

#### 4.2.1 Under the institutional arrangements

29. Implementation of recommendations of the Ministerial Committee regarding the institutional mechanism has focused mainly on two important aspects: (i) activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of institutions and, (ii) preparation of technical files to ensure proper functioning of the supervisory statutory bodies envisaged.
30. Under the capacity building of institutions responsible for managing and implementing the regional policy, the following activities were conducted:
- Initiation of the project to strengthen the capacity of the Commission, including the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to implement ECOWAP. This project is financed by CIDA and the Spanish Cooperation. It aims at strengthening the capacity for action of the Department with human resources and appropriate working tools.
  - Implementation of the TCP/FAO-ECOWAS project, financed by the Spanish Cooperation, that aims at building the capacity of the Commission via the Regional Food and Agricultural Agency (ReFAA) and the States in formulating “bankable” projects.
  - Formulation of a capacity-building project for piloting, coordination, implementation and monitoring-evaluation of ECOWADF/CAADP, submitted for funding by the MDTF (FS) at the World Bank. This project has just been funded for 4 years;
  - Publication of the proceedings (August 2011) on the establishment of the Regional Food and Agriculture Agency, and the Food and Agriculture Advisory Committee, in pursuance of the commitment by the Commission, the States, the technical and financial partners and agricultural socio-professional organizations, at the signing of the regional Compact.
  - Ongoing development of basic documents of the overseeing bodies: a practical guide on the establishment and operation of the Food and Agriculture Advisory Committee and the Inter-Departments Committee for Food and Agriculture; the procedures handbook and the methodological guide for the operation of the Regional Food and Agriculture Agency.
  - Establishment of the Regional Food and Agriculture Agency, through:
    - Provision of site and office space within EBID in Lome;
    - Recruitment of agents (definition of job profiles of managers and staff, publication of calls for applications).

#### 4.2.2 Under the financing mechanism

31. Several activities contributing to the operationalization of the ECOWADF Regional Fund were undertaken. The first activity was the publication, in August 2011, of the decree establishing the Regional Fund for Food and Agriculture. The second one was focused on the development of terms of reference for the study on the detailed procedures of the Regional Fund for Food and Agriculture. The process of initiation of the study itself is engaged.



32. On a different level, the Fund was established with the ECOWAS Commission's own resources in the amount of US\$ thirty-eight (38) million. Steps are undertaken with the financial partners so that they supply the ECOWADF with their contributions as part of the commitments they have made at the signing of the regional Compact.

#### 4.2.3 Under accelerating the implementation of the RAIP

33. Several initiatives were launched to accelerate the implementation of the Regional Agricultural Investment Plan (RAIP). These are mainly :
- (i) Establishment of Task Forces and phasing of their work on the detailed formulation of regional programmes. The degree of progress varies depending on the themes:
    - a. The Task Force on food security storage has completed and submitted the feasibility study on the establishment of the regional reserve ;
    - b. The Task Force on institutional strengthening has concentrated its work on capacity building of producers' organizations, in the preparation of a programme submitted to the European Commission. This programme has just been selected and will receive funding for the next five years ;
    - c. Task Forces on : (i) support for production; (ii) market reduction and storage; (iii) support for the establishment of safety nets; (iv) promotion of value chains and inter-professions (especially around the poultry sector - UOFA) are being installed and should discuss the proposed regional programmes by the end of 2012;
    - d. The Task Force on Land continues its work to provide the region with a framework for convergence and implementation of harmonized land policies. The technical study has just been completed and will be submitted very shortly to the validation of the regional stakeholders.
  - (ii) Support initiatives to establish regional inter-professions in the following sectors: (i) seeds, around the Seeds Alliance, led by CORAF/WE CARD; fertilizers whose stakeholders are being identified, (iii) livestock and meat (COFENABI initiated a process of alliance with the other countries, non-members). To these initiatives can be added the ECOWAS assistance for the establishment of platforms for a technical dialogue inside value chains, within ROPPA. The Regional Consultation Framework of the Rice Producers' Organizations is already functional. The process for the livestock-meat and maize sectors is underway.
  - (iii) Initiation and implementation (in collaboration with ROPPA) of a training programme for Young Agro-Entrepreneurs. The programme covers the period 2011-2015. It is run by the SONGHAÏ Centre, based in Ouando (Benin). It consists of an annual allocation to train, every year, thirty young agricultural entrepreneurs.

## 5 The 2013-2015 prospects

### 5.1 A challenge: enhancing coherence and impact

34. Moving from many programmes and projects to an integrated approach within a coherent policy is an exercise of extreme complexity. This work has been gradually undertaken since the adoption of the policy with the first action plan, in 2005. It tried to reposition existing programmes as initial actions or programmes of first generation. The adoption of the RAIP, which is structured around three specific objectives, was a second step in this process. Its operationalization is still ongoing. The main programmes allowing for its full implementation are being developed and should be finalized with a view to practical implementation early

2013. It is the same for the three main regional instruments on production intensification, market regulation of key strategic products and food security of vulnerable populations.

## 5.2 Three policy priorities

35. The succession of food crises in the region (increasing frequency and magnitude) shows the path that lies ahead for the national and regional policies to be actually able to meet the challenge of food security for all.
36. Factor analysis of these crises shows that the region needs to address even more vigorously all dimensions of food insecurity and crises: increase the availability to meet the growing needs generated by population growth, increase incomes and improve livelihoods of poor households, mainly rural households, while improving their resilience and capacity to deal with hazards, improving the functioning of domestic markets and reduce the consequences of instability in international markets, develop tools for managing risks and crises.
37. These crises do not question the basic guidelines of ECOWAP. The latter addresses the various dimensions of food crises. But they question several aspects of the ECOWAP implementation:
  - a. The institutional and financial capacity of actors in the region to implement all national and regional programmes in a timely manner;
  - b. Determination of key priorities around which to crystallize investment efforts to achieve rapid, massive and sustainable impact;
  - c. Food security governance with a twofold aim:
    - An approach to better understand the specificities of vulnerable populations and zones in different contexts, and to improve integration of populations and their organizations in the identification and implementation of post-crisis strategies;
    - An approach to better articulate the different scales of public action, from the local level up to the regional and international level.
38. It is in this context that the ECOWAS Commission proposes three major policy directions to the Ministerial Committee for the next three years:
  - a. Establish definitively and operate the steering, implementation and financing mechanism of ECOWAP;
  - b. Promote a regional offensive for sustainable and sustained re-launch of rice production in West Africa;
  - c. Promote a reform of approaches to food security and the prevention and management of crises, in the sense of a strong involvement of the population and a response centred on the resilience and sustainable improvement of the living conditions of the poor rural households.

### 5.2.1 Establish permanently the institutional arrangements for the ECOWAP steering, implementation and financing

39. The ECOWAP steering and implementation organs and financial instruments have been defined from a diagnosis of the needs and an analysis of the Department's capacity to implement it.
40. Priority should be to rapidly run the whole mechanism in an articulated, coordinated and coherent manner while ensuring that each organ has the capacity to fulfil its mission and actually does it.

41. To that end, the Commission should:

- a. Publish the formal acts establishing the Inter-Departments Committee for Food and Agriculture;
- b. Finalize recruitment, install the staff of the ReFAA and provide the latter with equipment and material;
- c. Finalize procedures manuals relating to the ReFAA and ECOWADF Regional Fund;
- d. Finalize the operational agreement between DAEWR and EBID;
- e. Finalize the operation guides of the two Committees (FAAC and ICFA);

42. Once these preliminary procedures are completed, the DAEWR has the responsibility to run these organs, according to the rules and missions assigned to each of them. From the end of 2012, it will be necessary to convene the Advisory Committee meeting. This Committee will be consulted particularly on the two initiatives proposed by the Commission, in the event that they would be selected amongst the priorities of the Ministerial Committee. For its part, the Inter-Departments Committee will be solicited on two main issues: (i) finalization of the CET and trade defence instruments; (ii) the implementation of the Regional Food Security Reserve.

43. Member States are invited to set up, in each country, an equivalent mechanism, in order to facilitate the NAIP implementation and ensure perfect coordination with the regional level.

44. In order to quickly make an additional step in coordinating regional interventions, the technical and financial partners are invited to channel most of their resources for the ECOWAP, through the regional fund dedicated to financing that policy.

#### **5.2.2 Accelerate practical implementation of regional programmes and establish the Regional Food Security Reserve**

45. The Task Forces, supported by the Hub Rural, are invited to hasten the preparation of regional programmes and finalize the design of public policy instruments, in the various areas identified in the RAIP.

46. Once adopted by the Ministerial Committee, the project of establishing a regional food security reserve should be quickly implemented under the responsibility of ECOWAS. To that end, the Commission should quickly mobilize the internal and external resources needed. A donor roundtable will take place by the month of October 2012.

#### **5.2.3 Promote two food security initiatives**

47. Two specific position papers are submitted to the Ministerial Committee. The first one deals with the regional offensive to boost rice production on a sustainable basis in West Africa. The second one concerns the regional initiative for a new approach to local-level food security.

48. The aim of the regional offensive for sustainable rice production in West Africa is to crystallize investment efforts and focus public policy instruments on a strategic value chain critical for the overall food security in the region.

49. The regional initiative for a new approach to local-level food security aims at placing the people at the centre of food security strategies, by renewing the food crisis prevention and management systems, and placing the issue of resilience at the centre of priority interventions.

50. Based on the comments and decisions of the Ministerial Committee, the ECOWAS Commission will determine a roadmap to operationalize these initiatives.