

Producer Organisations and the ECOWAP development process.

The place of POs in the dialogue. Their role. Proposals to be put forward.



The work presented in this brochure is the product of the reflection, dialogue and planning days organised by Oxfam International in Dakar in November 2009.

List of Acronyms used

AOPP:	Association des Organisations Professionnelles Paysannes [association of professional farmers' organisations]
AProCA:	Association des Producteurs de Coton Africains / Association of African Cotton Producers
CAADP:	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CET:	Common External Tariff
CNCR:	Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux [national council for rural dialogue and cooperation]
CNOP:	Coordination Nationale des Organisations Paysannes [national coordination for farmers' organisations]
CPF:	Confédération Paysanne du Faso [farmers' confederation of Burkina Faso]
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
EPA:	Economic Partnership Agreement
JDPC:	Justice, Development and Peace/Caritas
LOA:	Loi d'orientation Agricole [agricultural outline act]
NEPAD:	New Partnership for African Development
ODA:	Overseas Development Aid
PFPN:	Plate Forme Paysanne du Niger [farmers' platform of Niger]
PNIA:	Programme National d'Investissement Agricole [national agricultural investment programme]
PO:	Producer Organisation
POSCAO:	Plateforme des Organisations de la Société Civile d'Afrique de l'Ouest [West African Platform of Civil Society Organizations]
PRIA:	Programme Régional d'Investissement Agricole [regional agricultural investment programme]
RBM:	Réseau Billital Maroobé (network for livestock farmers and pastoralists)
ROPPA:	Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et de Producteurs d'Afrique de l'Ouest [network of farmers' and producers' organisations of West Africa]
TFP:	Technical and financial partner

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Agriculture, a sector long overlooked

➤ Left behind by development aid and national funding

Over the last decade, agriculture has been the poor cousin of overseas development aid and government investment policy. While other activity sectors have seen a relative increase in resources, allocations to agriculture have scarcely budged in 10 years.

The structural adjustment policies of the 1990s and the relative disinvestment in the productive sector have meant that, despite its relatively sizeable contribution to the GDP, agriculture has not been able to play a real role in combating poverty and improving people's living conditions.

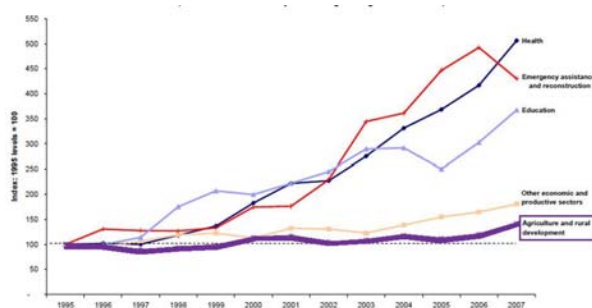


Figure 1: Growth in ODA commitments to selected sectors in sub-Saharan Africa (Source: OECD)

➤ The 2008 food crisis, a wakeup call for the international community

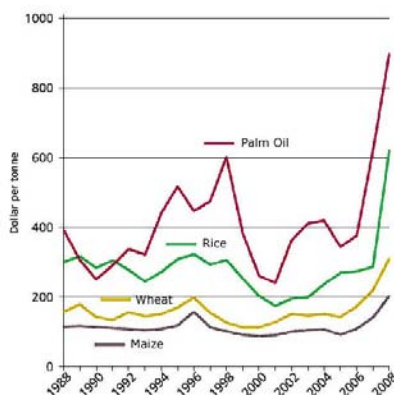


Figure 2: Global prices of agricultural foodstuffs in constant dollars– base year 2000 (Source: CIRAD based on IMF)

The situation underwent a brutal turnabout with the food crisis in 2008. Suddenly, the international community and governments became aware that markets alone could not guarantee national food security and that it was imperative to boost support for local production.

The riots that erupted in many towns and cities around the world reminded us that agriculture is not just a rural issue, but also touches on the challenge of national food sovereignty and affects all populations, both rural and urban.

➤ Collective realisation of the urgency of refocusing on agriculture

State responses to deal with crisis were not long in coming. In each country, plans are being put in place to revive agriculture and support production and consumption: subsidies for inputs, seed distributions, elimination of import duties, etc.

These interventions, nevertheless, remain emergency measures, put in place in haste, without consultation between States or within States with the stakeholders, particularly POs. Disconnected from the grassroots issues that handicap agricultural development (land tenure insecurity, imbalance within value chains, poorly organised markets, unfavourable trade context, etc.), these measures do not push agriculture into a long term dynamic and are only a very partial response in light of the challenges to be met.

2000 – United Nations Summit: Reduce poverty and hunger rates by half in developing countries.

2003 – NEPAD: Achieve an agricultural growth rate of 6%

2004 – Maputo Summit: Commitments by AU Heads of State to dedicate at least 10% of their national budget to agriculture within 5 years

2008 – Regional offensive of the Conference of Heads of State for food production and against hunger

Figure 3: International commitments

An African response: ECOWAP/CAADP

➤ Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)

CAADP is a collective vision of the African continent, adopted in 2003, which places agriculture at the heart of a food security and poverty reduction strategy. With a stated objective of 6% growth in agricultural productivity and financial commitments of at least 10% of national budgets, the aim of CAADP is to provide a foundation for policies developed at the national level, and subsequently at the regional level.

To this purpose, it offers States a common methodology based on a diagnosis of the situation, an analysis of obstacles, identification of sources of growth and their impact on poverty reduction, and an estimate of financial needs

➤ ECOWAP: a regional branch of CAADP

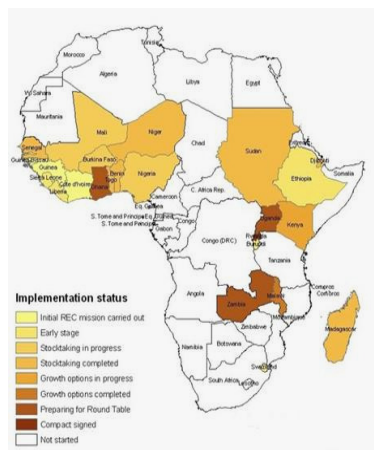


Figure 4: Country progress in the implementation of national investment plans

In West Africa, ECOWAS has taken ownership of CAADP and has translated it into a regional policy, ECOWAP, which is based on three main strategic thrusts:

- Drafting regional and national investment programmes (PRIA/PNIA);
- Implementing an intra-community trade regime (reducing regional internal trade barriers); and
- Adapting the external trade regime to promote development of internal agricultural production (creation of a 5th CET tariff band, re-categorising certain products, EPA negotiations).

Although far from perfect with regard to the many expectations it creates, ECOWAP represents nevertheless the first successful implementation of a regional agricultural policy in Africa. The West Africa bloc is, in fact, ahead in the process, although problems still persist.

➤ Gradual construction process at each country level

The strategy for drafting ECOWAP relied on the mobilisation of member States and their internal competences.

Once the priorities had been defined at the regional level with the PRIA, each State was to prepare and develop PNIAs in several stages and in conjunction with all actors concerned:

- Creation of a steering committee and a technical committee;
- Review and analysis of sources of growth;
- Elaboration and signing of the Compact;
- Implementation by governments and technical and financial partners.



Figure 5: Process for drafting PNIAs

➤ Programming at several levels

The 4 CAADP pillars served as a reference point for the identification of priorities for the PRIA. Each of the 6 priority themes was then assigned to a qualified regional institution, which was put in charge of defining programmes for implementation. This work provided a methodological foundation for the drafting of the PNIA.

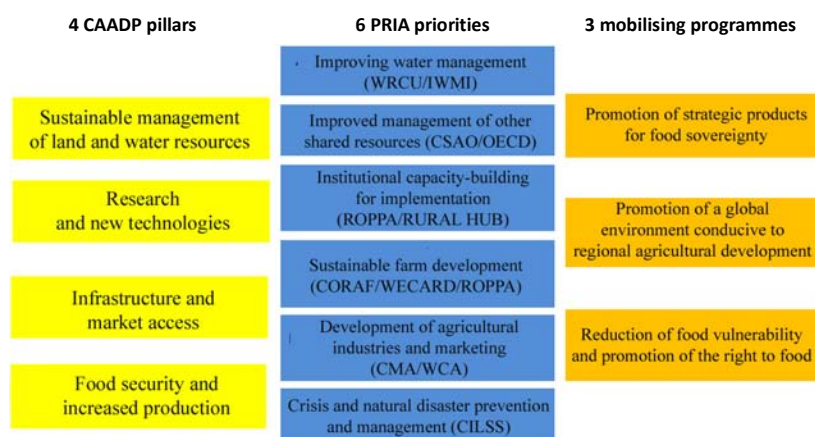


Figure 6: The 4 CAADP pillars, 6 PRIA priorities and 3 mobilising programmes

Mobilising programmes were subsequently drafted with the aim of federating the regional and national priorities into a common vision. They also combine an investment based approach with a state policy approach, whilst covering the key issues developed in the 6 PRIA sub-programmes and in the Regional Offensive adopted by the Heads of State in 2008.

➤ Financial instruments and policy tools

The three major federating and mobilising programmes thus cover the components of the Offensive defined by the Heads of State in 2008, the main directions of ECOWAP and the CAADP pillars:

❶ Promotion of regional products strategic for food sovereignty

This involves promoting local products with significant production potential, which are however imported on a large scale. The aim of developing local production is to replace imports in meeting the food needs of the population. The main products involved are rice, maize, cassava, meat and milk.

❷ Promotion of an environment conducive to regional agricultural development

This programme is of a more general nature and takes into account changes in the economic, trade and physical agricultural environments. It requires strong coordination between institutions and comprises dimensions such as human and institutional capacity building, as well as policy steering and monitoring via information mechanisms and decision-making aids.

❸ Reducing food vulnerability and promoting sustainable access to food

Production development assumes better remuneration for industry actors, which could lead to a price increase for the most vulnerable consumers. It is essential therefore to put in place safety nets both in rural and urban milieus, so as to guarantee equal access to food for all.



Tailoring dialogue to the different Producer Organisations

➤ ROPPA's active participation at the regional level

ROPPA played a prominent role in the ECOWAP development and implementation process. During the preparation of the PRIA, ROPPA participated in the drafting of the 6 priority directions. It was also the lead agency for priority number 6 (capacity building and development) and participated actively in priority 3 in collaboration with CORAF (sustainable development of farms). Babacar Ndaw, of ROPPA, reviewed this process.



What role did ROPPA play in the ECOWAP development process?

Since 2003, we have been deeply involved in preparing ECOWAP and this is a great source of pride to ROPPA. ECOWAP is our “baby” to some extent. Since 2007, we have been working to ensure that the PRIA is in line with PO expectations, and we have managed to gain acceptance for the 6 priority directions that we proposed. Once this framework had been finalised, we did our utmost to ensure that the platforms could take an active part in the debates, at the national level, each in its respective country.

Do you think you achieved this objective?

Despite the efforts made by ROPPA to help the national platforms to participate in the PNIA process, we lacked sufficient human resources to be able to offer them adequate support in terms of capacity building. We would have liked to have done the same as we did during the ECOWAP development process. However, we were not really given any help in that sense, either by the NGOs, or by partners in development, or by ECOWAS itself, which concentrated its support on the member States.

What are the next essential stages?

We would like to see common commitments made on both sides and for a clear role to be assigned to the POs in policy monitoring-evaluation, in addition to their role in implementation. This will require the creation of observatories to evaluate real policy impact. We are already considering the concrete steps to be taken to set up observatories on family-run farms and markets.

➤ A lack of dialogue with national platforms



“We find it hard to take part in the development of the PNIA, when we disagree with the President on the very idea of what

an agricultural policy should be. In our view, the GOANA (grand agricultural offensive for food security) and the REVA plan (return to agriculture) are not appropriate responses to farmers’ needs. Furthermore, we are often put in difficult situations, like today with the plan to unionise farmers, which seeks to exclude the CNCR... Under such conditions, it is hard for us to move from a defensive position to a more proactive one”. Marius Dia, Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux – CNCR, Senegal



“In Mali, we have worked very hard on the preparation of the agricultural outline act (LOA), but we still need to strengthen our dialogue with the

State and donors. We also need to work in close collaboration with all of our member organisations and increase dialogue at the national level, so as to strengthen our capacities at the local level. With the current decentralisation programmes, Regions effectively have growing control over agricultural development issues.”

Bakary Diarra, - Association des Organisations Professionnelles Paysannes – AOPP, Mali



“The success of a policy depends on the quality of participation by the actors involved. Where the actors’

involvement is limited or half-hearted, then the policy itself risks failure. As a producers’ organisation, we are not experts on the most cutting-edge issues, but we have concerns that we can get across with the help of our partners, so that they can be taken into account. However, to achieve that, we need to be given the minimum amount of time required for real dialogue.”

Eric Ouedraogo, Confédération Paysanne du Faso – CPF, Burkina Faso

Efforts at consultation and coordination to be pursued

➤ New areas of influence for POs

Although dialogue during PNIA preparation was not satisfactory from the standpoint of the POs, it seems that new opportunities for dialogue are found in the ECOWAP institutional implementation system:

The **ECOWAS Advisory Committee**, on which POs will be represented and which will be responsible for choosing projects for funding via the West Africa Agricultural Development Fund (ECOWADF);

The **Regional Food and Agriculture Agency**, which will be in charge of implementing the mobilising programmes and of delegating certain activities to regional institutions and professional organisations.

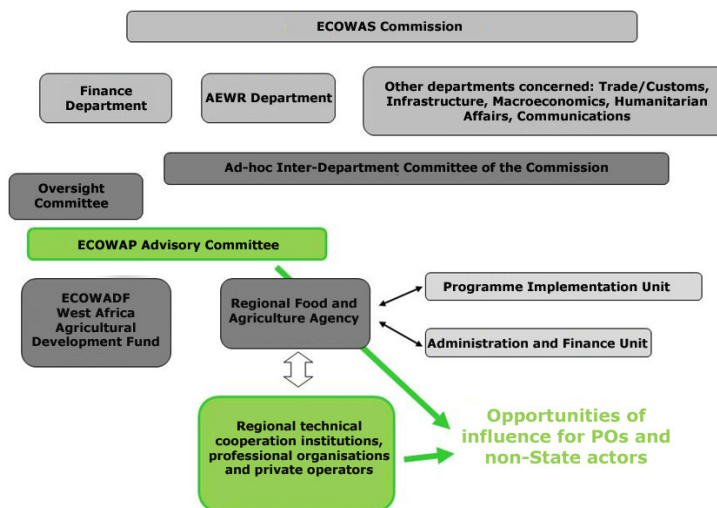


Figure 7: ECOWAP institutional implementation system

➤ A dialogue to be rebuilt with States and technical and financial partners



Florence Lasbennes*, Where do we stand in terms of donor intervention coordination?

Whilst POs are in a phase of dialogue with the States and ECOWAS in order to define the investments to be made under the PNIAs, donors are faced with a tremendous challenge with regard to harmonisation and coordination. In each country, groups have been set up to coordinate the technical and financial partners involved in the agricultural sector, and a lead has been designated. However, at the regional level, we are just beginning to set in place a coordination mechanism for the partners.

What difficulties do you face?

In many countries, technical and financial partners have begun to make huge efforts to move away from a piecemeal, project-based approach and towards more organised action. In addition, the techniques used for harmonisation and dialogue with the States, civil society and POs still need to be improved to ensure that they culminate in coordinated and consistent actions. The aim is to increase the effectiveness of aid with a view to food security. POs and other civil society actors will have an important role to play in the process of evaluating the actions being carried out, and the mechanisms for that still need to be put in place.

What new challenges must POs meet?

To ensure that the actions undertaken are truly beneficial, it is important to make POs stakeholders in the agricultural development partnerships that are being rebuilt. Dialogue must be enhanced not only between the States and technical and financial partners; rather, it should also be opened up to include representatives of producers and civil society. This does not apply to ECOWAP alone; it cuts across all levels of dialogue, including at the international level, where the reforms currently in progress, such as that of the Committee on Food Security, offer opportunities to draw civil society and economic actors back into the debates.

*Florence Lasbennes is involved in the coordination of the United Nations High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis.

What shall be the role of Oxfam and its partners?

➤ An intervention framework based on 3 pillars

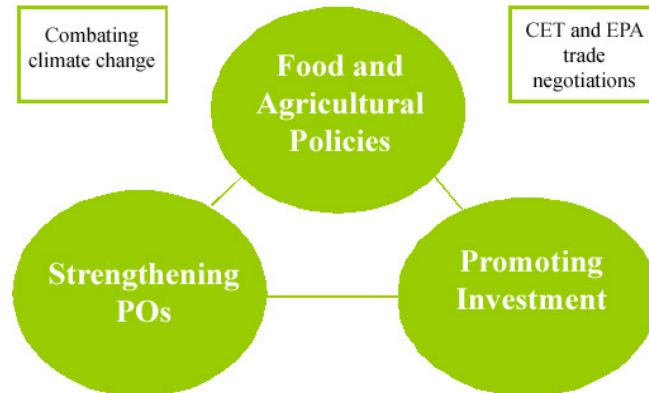


Figure 8: Intervention areas for the Economic Justice Campaign

For the past two years, Oxfam's Economic Justice Campaign in West Africa has centred on agricultural policy development, based on strengthening POs and on advocacy activities to increase investments in agriculture.

The campaign's crosscutting approach helps it to deal with issues as a whole, also focusing on changes in the agricultural sector's trade and natural environments.

➤ Significant progress

Since December 2008, progress has been made in:

- The organisation of national facilitation work with PO partners in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger (national consultations in preparation for the food summit, to prepare the LOA in Burkina Faso, etc.);
- The completion of 6 studies on TFP coordination and follow-up on budgetary commitments to agriculture in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Ghana;
- The continuation of the work on trade issues (writing a memo with ROPPA to the Heads of State on the CET, support for POSCAO on EPA negotiations);
- Developing expertise on food security;
- Initiating action on climate change issues (AVSF & Enda Tiers Monde).

➤ Areas where more can be done

On the other hand, some subjects have only been dealt with partially or inadequately:

- Support for POs in the process of drafting PRIA/PNIAs;
- Programming of capacity building for POs;
- Achieving momentum in the agricultural campaign;
- Strengthening work at the regional level with ROPPA;
- Linking agricultural and trade issues;
- Pursuing communication work with journalists.



In Nigeria, the campaign on agriculture stood on 4 pillars:

- Investment in agriculture
- Support for small-scale farmers
- Creating an enabling environment
- Promoting the role of women

A consortium based on POs and a network of international NGOs (including Oxfam) was formed to federate small-scale producers in 24 Nigerian states and make their voices heard.

The POs have now created a national technical committee responsible for monitoring state policies and budgets allocated to agriculture as well as their impact.

Working objectives in partnership with the POs confirmed for 2010

The working strategies were defined and confirmed for 2010 and focus on 3 objectives:

➤ Implementation of national and regional agricultural policies



1. The citizens of West Africa know and take ownership of regional and national agricultural policies.
2. POs and CSOs take part in and make a significant contribution to PNIA and the three regional mobilising programmes.
3. ECOWAP remains a reference framework for other policies (EPA, CET, ECOWAS economic policy, WTO).

Some of the actions to be put in place:

- Training leaders on PNIA and ECOWAP
- National awareness raising and training sessions for grassroots POs and civil society
- Communication campaign on ECOWAP
- Media strategy for the general public on the right to food
- Field visits and experience sharing
- Studies and formulation of proposals

➤ Strengthening Producer Organisations



4. Strong PO presence, with members who are well trained and informed (at all levels) on the current policy processes and their stakes for agriculture.
5. Women's leadership in agriculture is strengthened.

Some of the actions to be put in place:

- Supporting the development of an internal communication strategy for POs
- Writing of a quarterly campaign bulletin
- Support for PO strategic planning
- Consultation between the 4 regional networks (APROCA, ROPPA, RBM & RECAO)
- Identifying and supporting women leaders

➤ Investments in the agricultural sector



6. States invest at least 10% of their own resources in PNIA implementation, focusing on family-run farms for food security.
7. States develop a legal framework ensuring transparency and equality in natural resource access and control.
8. TFPs coordinate their actions and funding to support the drafting and implementation of the PRIA and PNIA.

Some of the actions to be put in place:

- Studies on budgets allocated to agriculture and their impact
- Capacity building for such monitoring
- Monitoring committee on land grabbing in the three countries
- Regional workshop on land grabbing, information and advice
- Workshop on TFP coordination

Stakeholder comments

"This is an ongoing battle, we must not be judged on current results because we have only just begun and are still fighting." Mady Sissoko, CNOP, Mali



"We are open to all proposals from the POs arising from this workshop and we are very interested in any contributions which will improve the process underway". Yamar Mbodj, ECOWAS agricultural advisor.



"We are against anything that is not in the farmers' interests. On this ROPPA stands firm." Babacar Ndaw, ROPPA

"If you are not being listened to today, keep on trying to increase impetus and energy within your POs, and you will be heard tomorrow. You have a big role to play, and the success of ECOWAP depends on it." Ousmane Badiane, director of IFPRI Africa

"We rely on the knowledge and experience of the POs to feed into our reflection and we are waiting for your contributions. The advocacy actions you are carrying out have a real impact on our work." Matt Cousins, United Nations High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis



"What we want to do is to position ourselves as a support for civil society organisations and producer organisations and not just as an ordinary NGO." Eric Hazard, Oxfam International

"Campaigns in the field should feed into the global campaign, and not vice versa. We need to base ourselves on successful experiences to capitalise on them and move forward."

Fousseyny Diabaté, Manager, Oxfam GB/America Cotton Programme

"In Nigeria, when we talk about agriculture, there are big fish and small fish. In our country we have very good policies; the problem is that they are not accessible to the small-scale producers." Iliya Abui Yohanna, CBD, Nigeria

"We need to base our advocacy on concrete action. How can we organise ourselves so that information is passed along and producers can be mobilised from the grassroots up?"



That is an issue we need to continue working on." Bakary Diarra, AOPP, Mali

"Within the ECOWAP institutional system, there are real opportunities for dialogue which the POs should take advantage of to fully play their role." Christophe Lesueur, Rural Hub



Our partners' websites

Réseau des Organisations paysannes et de producteurs d'Afrique de l'Ouest

www.roppa.info

Association des Producteurs de Coton Africains / Association of African

Cotton Producers - AProCA

www.aproca.net

Association des Organisations Professionnelles Paysannes – AOPP, Mali

www.aopp-mali.org

Coordination Nationale des Organisations Paysannes – CNOP, Mali

www.cnop-mali.org

Confédération Paysanne du Faso – CPF, Burkina Faso

www.cpf.bf

Justice, Development and Peace/Caritas – JDPC, Nigeria

<http://jdpccaritasnigeria.org>

Send Foundation, Ghana

www.sendwestafrica.org

Convention on Biological Diversity, Ghana

<http://gh.chm-cbd.net>

Ghana Trade and Livelihood Coalition, Ghana

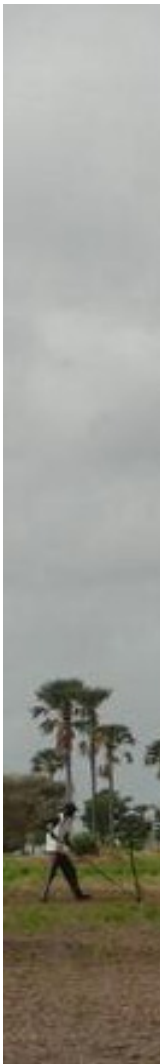
www.gtclghana.org

A shared vision and a common declaration

Food sovereignty is a common interest that must posit the right to food as a fundamental principle. It is a goal that must be included on the political agenda, for it affects all actors and not producers alone.

The establishment of ECOWAP was an apt response to this challenge, and has demonstrated the will to include civil society actors. However, the effective participation of producer organisations in the development of agricultural investment programmes has not really materialised and priority has been given to national programmes, rather than to a regional vision.

In light of the foregoing, Oxfam's partner producer organisations, at the outcome of the workshops on 2, 3 and 4 November 2009, expressed themselves in the form of a declaration.



- Considering that agriculture and food are closely linked to trade issues and natural resource management;
- Considering that the local, national, regional, continental and international levels of governance must be organised in a consistent structure;
- Considering that the cooperation policies implemented by the States cannot be dissociated from their trade and external policies;
- Considering that all regional bodies and institutions must improve coordination of their actions;
- Considering that all stakeholders (States, technical and financial partners, POs) must improve the quality of their dialogue;
- Considering that ECOWAP is only in the early stages of its development and that joint efforts must be pursued to complete the process.

The producer organisations recommend:

- Strengthening opportunities for dialogue with POs within ECOWAS bodies and improving foresight in the process so as to facilitate their participation;
- Validating a monitoring-evaluation system that includes POs and helps to measure the impact of programmes so that they may be reoriented if necessary;
- Working to ensure that the political instruments proposed by ECOWAS reflect a true regional consensus;
- Ensuring capacity building for POs based on a facility whose outlines still need to be defined and which will be based on all levels (local, national and regional);
- Helping POs to equip themselves with new tools to strengthen their role in the process;
- Improving TFP coordination whilst maintaining the goal of increasing budgetary aid, with a view to good development aid governance;
- Harmonising criteria for evaluating donor policies, so as to integrate the coordination efforts already made.



Thank you to all of our partners

