



ECOWAS COMMISSION  
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LA BANQUE MONDIALE  
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FSRP West Africa Food System  
Resilience Program

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Selection of an individual consultant to capitalise on the experience of storage and maintenance of stocks of the Regional Food Security Reserve with national storage structures**

**October 2023**

## I. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The food security situation in West Africa has deteriorated sharply in recent years. Acute food insecurity is on the verge of reaching its highest level for 10 years<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, analysis of the Harmonised Framework shows that over the period March to May 2023, almost 32.5 million people are classified as being in crisis or worse in all 17 countries of West Africa and the Sahel, including almost 17.7 million in Nigeria, over 2.4 million in Niger and almost 2.2 million in Burkina Faso. The analysis also reveals that more than 1.3 million people are in emergency (Phase 4), including nearly 470,000 in Nigeria and more than 291,000 in Burkina Faso. **In particular, 22,480 people in the Sahel region of Burkina Faso are in Catastrophe (Phase 5).** Estimates project that 42.5 million people in the Sahel and West Africa will need emergency food and nutritional assistance in June-August 2023. Similarly, the already worrying nutritional situation has deteriorated sharply: 16.5 million children under the age of 5 will face acute malnutrition in 2023, including 4.8 million children suffering from the severe debilitating form<sup>2</sup>. Survey results also show global acute malnutrition exceeding the alert threshold (GAM >10%) in several localities in Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Niger and Senegal.

This situation is the result of a combination of structural factors (demographics, poverty) and cyclical shocks, the main ones being agro-climatic shocks, persistent insecurity in the Sahel and in the Lake Chad basin, inflation and the volatility of agricultural commodity prices in certain countries, and more recently, the health crisis linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In view of the multiplication and diversification of shocks (insecurity, climatic shocks, rising food prices, population movements, herd movements, etc.) that the region is facing, in an international context that is also seeing an increase in areas of tension and exceptional climatic events that are putting increasing strain on the response capacity of the international humanitarian community, it is vital that the region succeeds in putting in place mechanisms to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable households and communities

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<sup>1</sup> <https://fr.wfp.org/communiqués-de-presse/linsecurite-alimentaire-et-la-malnutrition-en-afrique-de-louest-et-centrale>

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.un.org/fr/story/2023/04/1134332#:~:text=The%20availability%20of%20food%20commodities,availability%20is%20a%20major%20concern>

so that they have a better capacity to cope with future shocks and to preserve and/or restore their livelihoods.

Food security stocks act as safety nets and form part of the arsenal of social protection tools targeting the most vulnerable populations. The effectiveness of food stocks has made them one of the leading instruments for responding to food crises at various levels (local, national, regional).

Since 2012, ECOWAS has had a regional storage strategy. It is in line with the threefold vision of ECOWAP/CAADP to act on production, markets and price volatility, and is based on the following pillars: (i) food security storage to meet the needs of vulnerable populations in the event of a short-term food crisis; (ii) interventions (broader than storage alone) to improve the functioning of markets and reduce price volatility; (iii) social food security nets for populations with structural livelihood deficits.

The regional storage strategy is based on the complementarity of three levels of storage ("lines of defence"): (i) local stocks, generally held by producer organisations; (ii) national security stocks managed by the States, and finally, (iii) the Regional Food Security Reserve (RRSA) managed by ECOWAS and created by means of an Additional Act to the ECOWAS Treaty, by the Heads of State in 2013.

The Regional Food Security Reserve was set up to provide a sovereign instrument for managing food crises, in support of the fifteen ECOWAS Member States, Chad and Mauritania. It has three specific objectives: (i) to complement the efforts of Member States to provide rapid and diversified food and nutritional assistance; (ii) to express regional solidarity with the Member States and populations affected through transparent, fair and predictable mechanisms; and (iii) to contribute to food sovereignty and the political, economic and commercial integration of West Africa. The Reserve is a flagship regional instrument for supporting national capacity to prevent and manage food crises and reduce the vulnerability of poor rural and urban populations. It is made up of a physical reserve representing one third (1/3) and a financial reserve representing two thirds (2/3).

To implement the regional storage strategy, the ECOWAS Commission received initial funding from the European Union through the "Support Project for Food Security Storage in West Africa", designed as a pilot phase and implemented from 2016 to 2021. This project has made significant progress.

The Reserve now has a clear governance and regulatory framework. It has been able to build up a capital of almost 40,000 tonnes of cereal stocks (maize, sorghum, millet and rice) and has intervened to support the countries of the region during food and nutrition crises. Most countries have national strategies and harmonised storage procedures.

Local storage organisations have made a major effort to codify their best practices and strengthen their management capacities. Food security information systems have been strengthened, enabling the development of decision-making tools for better stock management at all three levels.

For the management of cereal stocks in the Reserve, the ECOWAS Commission relied on national structures in charge of managing national stocks. Stock management contracts were put in place following a competitive process with five (05) structures, namely the Société Nationale de Gestion du Stock de Sécurité Alimentaire (SONAGESS) in Burkina Faso, the National Food Buffer Stock Company (NAFCO) in Ghana, the Office des Produits Agricoles du Mali (OPAM) in Mali, the Office des Produits Vivriers du Niger (OPVN) in Niger and the Food and Strategic Reserve Department (FSRD) in Nigeria.

The main responsibilities of storage structures are :

- The provision of storage facilities that comply with standards
- Receiving cereals ;
- Cereal storage ;
- Stock maintenance and conservation ;
- Reconditioning, if necessary ;
- The provision of stock at the request of ECOWAS.

The reserve mobilised a total storage capacity of 45,500 tonnes, including :

- 7,500 Tonnes in Ouagadougou and Dédougou in Burkina Faso;
- 3000 tonnes at Yendi and Tamale in Ghana;
- 11,000 tonnes in Bamako, Koutiala, Ségou and Sikasso in Mali;
- 14,000 tonnes at Birnin Konni, Dosso, Maradi and Zinder in Niger;
- 10,000 tonnes in Kano, Nigeria.

From now on, the challenge for ECOWAS is to adapt the RRSA instruments on the basis of the experience gained and to prepare a second stage in the deployment of the regional storage strategy. This should enable this regional instrument, whose relevance and

effectiveness have been proven during the first phase, to step up a gear so as to have the capacity (physical stock and financial reserve) to truly fulfil its role as a third line of defence in the event of a shock affecting the ability of the region's populations to feed themselves. To this end, ECOWAS is receiving support from the World Bank through Component 3 of the West African Food System Resilience Programme (PRSA/FSRP).

The West Africa Food System Resilience Programme (PRSA/FSRP) has been initiated as part of the implementation of the region's commitments. Its development objective is to increase preparedness for food insecurity and improve the resilience of food system stakeholders, priority landscapes and value chains in the Programme areas.

The first phase of the Programme covers four (4) countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Togo) and regional actions led by ECOWAS, CILSS and CORAF. The Programme is financed by the World Bank at a cost of approximately 570 million dollars over a period of five (5) years. It is organised around the following five (5) components:

**Component 1 (managed by CILSS): Digital advisory services for the prevention and management of agricultural and food crises** whose main objectives are: (i) to improve decision support systems with demand-driven information services in order to increase the effectiveness of agricultural and food crisis prevention and management, by integrating data and leveraging science, innovation and cutting-edge technologies; and (ii) to strengthen regional capacity and institutional sustainability, as well as capacity to adapt to climate change.

**Component 2 (managed by CORAF): Sustainability and adaptive capacity of the productive base of the Food System** whose main objectives are: (i) to strengthen national and regional agricultural research systems; (ii) to strengthen the policy environment for landscape governance (inclusive multi-sectoral policies and regulations to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation); and (iii) to create/strengthen landscape units under integrated management capable of sustainably achieving multiple objectives (food production, provision of ecosystem services, protection of biodiversity and improvement of local livelihoods).

**Component 3 (managed by ECOWAS): Regional food market integration and trade** whose main objectives are: (i) to support the preparation and implementation of sound regional regulations and policies to facilitate trade in agricultural goods and inputs within and across national borders in West Africa through the main corridors, (ii) to consolidate the food reserve system; and (iii) to

support the development of strategic regional value chains, with the potential for tangible positive impacts on regional food security and nutrition.

**Component 4:** This is the **Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC)**, which is a mechanism for financing eligible expenditure in the event of an emergency precipitated by a natural disaster. Activating this component enables funds to be disbursed quickly to reduce damage to infrastructure, ensure business continuity and recover more quickly from a disaster. Following a major disaster, the affected participating country can ask the World Bank to channel resources from other PRSF components to the CERC. As a condition of disbursement, an Emergency Response Manual (ERM) will be developed for each country, stipulating fiduciary, safeguard, monitoring and reporting requirements related to the use of CERC, as well as any other essential coordination and implementation arrangements.

**Component 5 (managed by ECOWAS):** this component concerns the **management of the Programme**, which will delegate the technical work under components 1 and 2 to the relevant mandated organisations (mainly CILSS for component 1 and CORAF for component 2). Component 5 will ensure effective management of the Programme and careful monitoring of performance and impact.

The PRSF's support for the Regional Food Security Reserve focuses more specifically on :

- Strengthening the RRSA's tools and capacity to respond to food and nutrition crises
- Support for the first (local and community storage) and second lines of defence (national food security stocks) by harmonising storage approaches across the region.
- Governance, coordination of the Regional Food Reserve and monitoring and evaluation of its operations.

This mission is part of the process of strengthening the RRSA's tools and capacity to respond to food and nutrition crises, as set out in component 3 of the West Africa Food System Resilience Programme (PRSA/FSRP).

## **II. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES**

The aim of the mission is to capitalise on the experience of storing and maintaining stocks of the Regional Food Security Reserve with national storage structures and to validate the findings and recommendations at a regional workshop.

Specifically, this will involve :

- Review the stock management procedures of countries with national storage structures and of other national and international organisations that hold stocks in response to food and nutrition crises;
- Carry out an in-depth analysis of the Reserve's stock management process by the national storage structures in the light of the management contracts signed with them, the Reserve's procedures manual and international standards;
- To make proposals and recommendations for improving the management of the Reserve's stocks.

### **III. DELIVERABLES**

The mission is expected to produce a document capitalising on the experience of storing and maintaining stocks of the Regional Food Security Reserve with the national storage structures, including :

- An inception report detailing the proposed methodological approach and the steps to be taken to achieve the expected results;
- A review of stock management procedures in countries with national stockholding structures and other national and international organisations that hold stocks in response to food and nutrition crises;
- An in-depth analysis of the stock management process for the Reserve by these structures;
- Proposals for improving stock management at the Reserve.

Deliverables must be submitted to the Agence Régionale pour l'Agriculture et l'Alimentation (ARAA) located at Boulevard de la Paix, 83 rue Pâturage, Lomé (Togo) to the Executive Director in electronic form at the following addresses: [araa@araa.org](mailto:araa@araa.org), with a copy to the Head of the Regional Food Security Reserve Division in accordance with the timetable to be agreed at the study launch meeting.

The final version of the deliverables must be in French and English.

## **IV. METHODOLOGY**

The methodology will be based on the following broad outlines:

- A scoping session with the ARAA technical team;
- An inception report including the proposed methodological approach and an updated timetable;
- A literature review ;
- Data collection from national storage structures involved in the storage of products from the Reserve. Data will be collected remotely and through field visits to the 5 countries where the RRSA has stocks (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Nigeria) ;
- Processing and analysis of the data collected from national storage structures; Drafting of the provisional report and presentation at a validation workshop;
- Presentation of the results of the study at the validation workshop ;
- Amendments taken into account and final report produced.

## **V. CONSULTANT'S TASKS**

As part of the assignment, the chosen consultant will have to :

- Take part in a scoping meeting with the RAAA's technical experts;
- Propose an inception report including the proposed methodological approach and an updated timetable;
- To make contact with the national storage structures involved in the management of the Reserve's stocks in order to collect data on the whole process of managing the Reserve's stocks. The data will be collected remotely and through field visits to the 5 countries where the RRSA has stocks (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Nigeria);
- Carry out an analysis of management in the light of the management contracts signed with the national storage structures and international standards. The analysis should at least take into account the following aspects:
  - The infrastructure made available to the Reserve (shops and equipment),
  - Security arrangements ;

- Management and monitoring tools and management staff ;
  - Receiving stock (including quality and quantity control),
  - Quality management during storage/stock maintenance (frequency, quality of products used, implementation of treatments);
- Make proposals to improve stock management at the Reserve.
  - Present the provisional study report at the validation workshop to be organised by the RAAA and produce the workshop report;
  - Take account of the comments made at the validation workshop and submit the final report.

## **VI. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**

The consultant must have at least a 5-year university degree in agronomy, agro-economics, economics, management, logistics or any other equivalent qualification.

They must have the following experience and skills:

- At least 10 years' experience in stock management, including at least 5 years' experience in food security storage;
- Good knowledge of the food security sector in West Africa;
- Ability to collect and process data;
- Have carried out at least two (2) experience or best practice capitalisation assignments;
- Excellent written and spoken command of one of the three ECOWAS languages. Fluency in a second language would be an asset.

## **VII. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The duration of the assignment is 30 man-days from the signing of the service contract and according to the order of services provided.