

Ecowap news

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Ms Massandje Touré-Litsé

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Editorial

Dear Partners,

Despite the various efforts made by the ECOWAS Member States, the development of the agriculture and food sector remains a major challenge in West Africa.

The Team that ran the ECOWAS Commission from March 2018 to June 2022 channelled their support to Member States towards strengthening agricultural productivity, controlling diseases of agricultural produce and combating plant pests in order to (i) cover the agricultural needs of the populations, (ii) produce better while taking into account climate change, (iii) ensure good management of agricultural inputs and (iv) improve governance, coordination, monitoring-evaluation and performance measurement and accountability frameworks. In response to the humanitarian challenges arising from security and health crises, the regional solidarity and support mechanism for States has been fully operational through the Regional Food Security Reserve.

The new Management of the Commission, which took over in July 2022, is continuing the fight for a modern and prosperous agriculture that will free populations from food and nutrition insecurity by 2030. In this perspective, its work programme rests on the guiding principles of the new ECOWAS Vision, which aims to build "a fully integrated Community of people in a peaceful and prosperous region with strong institutions, respectful of fundamental freedoms and working towards an inclusive and sustainable development" by 2050.

With the reforms undertaken within the Institution, the ECOWAS former Department in charge of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources was merged into a new and larger Department called the Department in charge of Economic Affairs and Agriculture.

Considering the size of the new Department, the quarterly newsletter "News from the Department" that you have been receiving, seeks to narrow its focus further down to concentrate on the Regional Agricultural Policy. It will therefore be called **ECOWAP News** from now onwards.

In the following lines, you will be reading about current and/or future initiatives being implemented with the support of partners to sustainably reduce food and nutrition insecurity through strengthening the resilience of food systems, promoting good agroforestry and fisheries practices, and strengthening institutional and organisational capacities in the areas of resilience, food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture.

I wish to extend my warmest greetings to you and express my commitment to continue the dubious battle undertaken by my predecessor with you towards improving the living conditions of our rural and urban populations.

I thank you in advance for your support and advice.

Ecowap News

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Addressing Food and Nutrition Insecurity: ECOWAS Provides Food Grains to Niger and Burkina Faso

Despite the various efforts made by Governments and development partners, the food and nutrition situation in the Region remains globally alarming especially in the Sahel, and particularly in Burkina Faso and Niger where food and nutrition insecurity affects approximately 3,454,000 and 4,402,400 people respectively. Affected people are classified as being in crisis or worse. The situation is deteriorating year after year due to the numerous crises the region is facing.



On behalf of the former President of the ECOWAS Commission and following requests received from Burkina Faso and Niger, former ECOWAS Commissioner Sékou Sangaré in charge of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources availed on 24th June 2022 4023 tonnes of food grains to the Republic of Niger to support the Government's efforts in controlling the difficult food situation of the most vulnerable populations.

This expression of regional solidarity by the 14 other

ECOWAS Member States to the people of Niger is the fifth one. It comes after those of 2021 with 7,598 tonnes of cereals and 205 tonnes of enriched flour and that of 2018 with 6,528 tonnes of cereals in the form of a loan and that of 2020 with 473 tonnes of cereals in the form of a donation from ECOWAS and its partners in response to Covid-19.

In Burkina Faso, Commissioner Sangaré also formalised on 22nd June 2022 the handover of 6 402 tonnes of foodstuffs consisting of rice, maize, sorghum and millet which took place on 17 June with the former President of the Commission, His Excellency Mr Jean Claude Kassi Brou, to support the actions of the Government of Burkina Faso in dealing with this year's difficult food situation. This is the fourth intervention of the Regional Food Security Reserve in Burkina Faso after the one in 2018 with 4303 tonnes of food grains in the form of a loan and the ones in 2020 with a total of 954 tonnes of cereals in the form of a donation from ECOWAS and its partners in response to Covid-19.

The quantities of 4023 and 6402 tonnes of food grains availed respectively to Niger and Burkina Faso will be replenished grain for grain by each of the two governments as soon as possible, thus enabling the ECOWAS Commission to continue to provide food grains whenever possible to any Member State in need.

Controlling and Eradicating Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) by 2030: ECOWAS takes the Lead in West Africa

Progressive mass vaccination campaigns against PPR under the leadership of the ECOWAS Commission aim at covering all the 15 Member States in the long run, as part of the control and eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants and other priority animal diseases.

Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) is a contagious viral disease. It threatens 80% of global livestock of sheep and goats and kills up to 90% of the animals it infects. It prevails in more than 70 countries worldwide. Its occurrence in West Africa is an animal health emergency due to its rapid spread, the important economic losses it causes and its direct impact on food and nutrition security, specifically on women and other vulnerable groups.

In response to this scourge, the ECOWAS Commission, through its Regional Animal Health Centre (RAHC), developed a regional strategy for the control and eradication of the disease. With the financial support of the Swiss Cooperation, it organised a first coordinated mass vaccination campaign against RPP in December

2019 in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

This campaign reached over 1,600,000 small ruminants.

The 2022 vaccination campaign, launched on 10th June 2022 in Aboisso, Côte d'Ivoire, is the second round of the process with nearly 5 million doses of vaccine and extends to five other countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau and Senegal.

ECOWAS is also involved in sharing knowledge and experience with peers in the prevention and management of transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses.

The various actions undertaken by the ECOWAS



Commission and its partners, notably the Swiss Cooperation, have highlighted that (i) an effective and cheap vaccine is available in the region and (ii) the inoculation of one dose of vaccine can provide long-lasting immunity.

The global goal of controlling and eradicating PPR by 2030 is therefore achievable in West Africa given that PPR can be diagnosed effectively, and reliable, affordable and high-quality vaccines produced in the region.

The response will be continued through regional approaches to disease control and eradication involving consolidation of achievements, coordinated mass vaccination campaigns, active epidemiological surveillance, strengthening of veterinary service delivery, capacity building of human and veterinary services, and rigorous monitoring and control of actions.



Sustainably Reducing Food Insecurity: ECOWAS, CILSS and CORAF Launch the West Africa's Food System Resilience Programme

With financial support from the World Bank and other development partners including the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP) and the Global Risk Financing Facility (GRiF), ECOWAS, CILSS and CORAF launched on June 15th, the West Africa's Food System Resilience Programme (FSRP).

Under the leadership of the ECOWAS Commission, CILSS and CORAF, the FSRP aims at increasing the Region's capacity to face food insecurity through a regional systemic approach. This innovative programme will simultaneously boost agricultural productivity through a climate-smart agriculture, promote value chains and intra-regional trade and build regional capacities for agricultural risk management.

The first phase of the programme (2022-2026) will be implemented by the three regional organisations, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Togo. This phase will cost more than 330 million US dollars. A second phase to be approved by the Board of Directors of the World Bank for an amount of 315 million US dollars that will include Chad, Ghana and Sierra Leone and a third phase are being finalised.

Throughout the implementation of the first phases, the Programme will benefit other countries through spill over effects. Eventually, the Programme aims to achieve full regional coverage.

"Addressing the challenges of food security requires the contributions, alignment and support of all partners, as agriculture is the main driver of West Africa's development. As such, the ECOWAS Commission is committed to increasing its support to its Member States in this dubious battle and to particularly strengthen the capacities of the Regional Food Security Reserve towards alleviating the

suffering of vulnerable populations," Mr Brou, former President of the ECOWAS Commission, explains.

In addition to upgrading national and regional food crisis prevention and management systems, the FSRP countries and regional institutions will work together to build strong agricultural and hydrometeorological information services.

Besides, the FSRP will facilitate increased trade across key corridors and support the development of strategic value chains and sub-regional integration.



Improving Livestock/Meat Trade in West Africa: A Priority Objective of the Regional Agricultural Policy

In West Africa, the livestock and meat marketing sector is undergoing major changes. To meet the growing demand for meat, particularly from large urban centres, incentive policies are being put in place and livestock farmers are organising themselves.

To support this momentum, ECOWAS has been implementing since 2018, with the financial support of the Swiss Cooperation, the Programme to support the marketing of livestock/meat in West Africa (PACBAO).

PACBAO aims to find sustainable solutions to the concerns of stakeholders in the sector, which include (i) the mismatch between the supply of livestock and meat and regional demand, (ii) the very high cost for conveying livestock from breeding areas to consumer markets and (iii) the funding constraints faced by private stakeholders.

The multiple actions undertaken by the ECOWAS Commission and its partners, in particular the Swiss Cooperation, focused on (i) building operational capacities of ECOWAS through the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Regional Animal Health Centre and the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food, on expertise in tools development, operational technical support, communication/visibility, accounting and forthcoming installation of two training centres on meat and butchery professions and (ii) providing institutional support to the Confederation of National Federations of the Livestock-Meat Sector of West Africa (COFENABVI-WA).

The programme also funded development initiatives and innovations in three areas, namely (i) intensification of quality slaughter animal production, (ii) modernisation of livestock and meat trade and (iii) strengthening of business links between actors along the chain.

A total of 16 field projects with a total cost of more than CFAF 1.5 billion over two years are being implemented in 11 countries and cover various areas of the chain, ranging from genetics, production improvement, breeding and marketing, to organising the production chain, increasing meat availability, fattening, intensifying fodder cultivation, improving producers' income, processing and livestock insurance.

The programme, which ends in June 2023, works in close collaboration and synergy with other regional initiatives such as PRAPS, PREDIP, PEPISAO and PRIDEC.



Controlling Fruit Fly in West Africa for a flourishing horticultural Sector

The objective of sustainable fruit fly control is achievable in West Africa as fruit flies can be monitored, warning given to producers, and efficient and affordable control technologies produced in the region.

Since 2008, the horticultural sector in West Africa has been confronted with the major problem of fruit flies, which destroy 50 to 80% of fruit production. These crop pests have a negative impact on the entire sector. The challenge is to develop more relevant, affordable and accessible technologies.

To provide an appropriate response to the scourge, the ECOWAS Commission, through its Department for Economic Affairs and Agriculture, initiated a regional plan aimed at sustainably controlling this invasive pest in West

Africa. With the financial support of the European Union and the French Development Agency (AFD), a Project to support the regional control plan was implemented (2014-2019) with a surveillance, monitoring and warning system that covered 11 of the 15 ECOWAS countries. A second phase to support the pest management plan, entitled "Innovative Regional Fruit Fly Management System in West Africa - SyRimao", was launched in 2020 for a period of four years. It is funded by the same partners to consolidate and amplify the achievements of the first phase in the 15 Member States.

The various actions undertaken by the ECOWAS Commission and its partners have made it possible to highlight (i) the regionalisation of the research programmes of the National Centre for Seeds and Fruits and Vegetables of Bobo-Dioulasso/Burkina Faso (CNS-FL) and its progress towards a regional centre of excellence, (ii) the existence, at the level of the CNS-FL, of tools to support the sovereignty of the sub-region in monitoring its territory in terms of diversity for rapid action in case of pest invasion and (iii) the development of two control technologies based on plant extracts and by-products of local plant processing.

The two technologies have shown their biological effectiveness against fruit flies in the field. The first formula, developed in Senegal, is an essential oil from a shrub. It is a male attractant for fruit flies, particularly the genus *Bactrocera* and some *ceratitis*. It can be used as a replacement for the synthetic methyl-eugenol previously used, as an attractant in the monitoring system essential for all mango exports. It is also effective in a "mass trapping" control method with a pesticide-free trap. The second formula, developed in Burkina Faso, is derived from brewers' grains. It has been tested as a food attractant against all species of fruit flies, especially females.

The response will continue through the CNS-FL, which is planned to become a centre of excellence. This centre will continue to regionalise its activities as well as its role, i.e., coordinating research at the regional level.

The response will also be on a large scale through the

homologation of the technologies developed, the production of educational tools and the training of producers.

It will be completed by the perpetuation of the monitoring system, the facilitation of the use of technologies and the creation of technology production units (startups).



Sharing Experience on the Use of Agro-hydroclimate Information towards a more Productive Agriculture

Climate information, especially seasonal and weather forecasts, remains essential data. For planning purposes, climate information should be considered as an agricultural input just like fertilizers, seeds, phytosanitary products, etc.

Following the circular mission of May-June 2022 to operationalise national units in charge of implementing the Regional Project for Promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture in West Africa (CSA Project), the ECOWAS Commission convened a regional workshop (16th - 17th August 2022) of experts and stakeholders, to share experience on the use of agrohydroclimate information and its implications for agriculture.

The objective of the workshop was to serve as a platform for sharing experience on production, dissemination and use of agrohydroclimate information, including agrometeorological forecasts of agricultural seasons, usually called seasonal forecasts, among actors of the five beneficiary countries of the project: Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Niger and Togo.

Indeed, West Africa belongs to the regions of the world which are most vulnerable to effects of climate change. Extreme weather and climate phenomena, such as

droughts, floods, variations of starting dates and end of seasons, and land degradation, are the main realities of negative impacts on agricultural productivity and lives of thousands of households in West Africa.

To respond to this and based on its Regional Agricultural Policy adopted in 2005 and supplemented by its Strategic Programme on vulnerability reduction and adaptation to climate change, ECOWAS launched in June 2015, the West African Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture . The Alliance aims at contributing to efforts in adoption of CSA practices by 25 million households by 2025.

Co-facilitated by experts from the AGRHYMET Regional Centre and ARAA, in the presence of officers from national meteorological services, agriculture, livestock, water resources and producers' organisations from the five project countries, the workshop discussions focused on the project's intervention areas and took stock of the use of agrohydroclimate information and its implications for

agriculture at local level. They also took participants through notions that are as crucial as they are practical for producers.

Such notions are dissemination/use of hydroclimate and agrometeorological information, advice (particularly in the choice of best practices to reduce risks and maximise profits related to the agricultural season) and ownership of information to reduce the most frequent constraints/limitations/difficulties for agriculture.

To facilitate agricultural planning, ECOWAS and its partners will work to timely provide producers with hydro-agrometeorological information and seasonal forecasts before the start of the agricultural and pastoral seasons.



Building Stakeholders' Capacities on the Use of Agroecology Performance Evaluation Tools

Dissemination of agroecological production techniques is key for sustainable development in West Africa. These techniques allow, not only to increase productivity of agriculture, but also to build resilience to the effects of climate change.

While agroecology is gaining interest from a wide range of stakeholders worldwide and in West Africa in particular, one of the major challenges to increasing the adoption of agroecology remains the demonstration of its performance to provide evidence of its potential to make food systems more sustainable and resilient.

Evidence of positive impacts is abundant, but results often remain fragmented in local case studies, isolated experiments or field observations generally based on heterogeneous methods and data.

The Abidjan workshop of July 2022, funded by the German Cooperation (GIZ) and France, contributed to the evolution of agroecology in West Africa by promoting the use of evaluation tools and evidence capable of encouraging and increasing the adoption of agroecological practices. This was a capacity building workshop on the use of the TAPE and GTAE tools.

The Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE), developed by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) with the support of multiple partners, is a comprehensive analytical framework for multidimensional evaluation of agroecological performance.

It has three specific objectives: (i) to strengthen stakeholders' knowledge and empower producers in the collective production and sharing of data and evidence based on their own practices, (ii) to support agroecological transition processes at different scales, locations and timeframes, and (iii) to inform policy makers, development institutions and other stakeholders through the creation of benchmarks for multidimensional agroecological performance.



GTAE is a methodological tool for assessing the conditions for agroecological development and the agroenvironmental and socio-economic effects of agroecological practices and systems. It is meant for development actors and is intended to be an easy-to-use tool with a reliable methodology for the systematic production of references that are currently absent or fragmented, but useful for promoting and supporting the development of agroecology.

Ownership of these tools, through their adaptation to the West African context, will facilitate a better adoption and promotion of agroecological practices in the region.

A working group, including countries and FAO to review some parameters of the TAPE tool with a view to improving it, will be set up as soon as possible under the leadership of the ECOWAS Commission.



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