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Accelerating the ECOWAP/CAADP implementation

Regional Offensive for sustained recovery of rice production in West Africa



Meeting of the Regional Monitoring Group of the
technical and financial feasibility study
(Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 27-28 January 2013)

With the support of:



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Introduction

1. At the initiative of the ECOWAS and HUB RURAL was held, on 27 and 28 January 2014 in Ouagadougou, the third meeting of the Technical Monitoring Group of the technical feasibility study of the Regional Offensive for sustainable and sustained rice production in West Africa.
2. Took part in the meeting : the ECOWAS Director of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Executive Director of the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food; a representative of the Agriculture Directorate of UEMOA; the HUB RURAL Executive Director and his Communication Officer; representatives of AfricaRice, CORAF/WECARD; the President and the Coordinator of the Regional consultative framework of Rice Producer Organizations of ROPPA; GIZ and USAID representatives; the Director of IPRI Regional Office for West and Central Africa; and the national coordinator of the Upland Rice Project and focal point of NRDS in Burkina Faso.

I. Objective and expected outcomes of the meeting

1.1 Objectives of the meeting

3. The meeting's objectives were to:
 - a) Analyze the results of the feasibility study of the regional offensive for sustainable and sustained recovery of rice production in West Africa;
 - b) Make recommendations towards improving the results of the study, where necessary;
 - c) Define a roadmap for the finalization and validation of the feasibility study.

1.2 Expected results of the meeting

4. Three results were expected at the end of the workshop:
 - a) The results of the feasibility study of the regional offensive for sustainable and sustained recovery of rice production in West Africa are analyzed by participants;
 - b) The logical framework of the programme to support the implementation of the Offensive is analyzed ;
 - c) A roadmap for the completion and validation of the programme is defined.

II. Conduct of the meeting.

2.1 Opening ceremony

5. The opening ceremony was marked by five speeches delivered respectively by the HUB RURAL Executive Director, the GIZ representative, the USAID representative, the representative of UEMOA and the ECOWAS Director of Agriculture and Rural Development.

- a. The Executive Director of HUB RURAL welcomed participants before presenting the objective of the meeting which is to analyze the final document of the feasibility study presented by GFA Consulting. He then drew the attention of participants to the need to leave the meeting with the skeleton of a programme that best capitalizes the results of the feasibility study, ongoing experiences and the orientations of the regional agricultural policies.
- b. The GIZ representative said he was honoured to attend this meeting. He recalled the efforts of his institution to assist ECOWAS in its actions and more specifically in the formulation of a programme to support the regional offensive for sustainable and sustained recovery of rice production. He also informed participants of recent political developments in Germany, which could be an opportunity to increase financial assistance from the German Federal Government to the sector of agricultural and rural development.
- c. Speaking next, the USAID representative reaffirmed the option taken by his institution to systematically align its interventions in the region on the ECOWAP/CAADP guidelines. Therefore, all initiatives relating to agricultural development are of particular interest to USAID.
- d. After he has conveyed the greetings from the Commissioner for agriculture, the UEMOA Agriculture Director stressed the importance of rice in the Union's agricultural policy. He recalled the projects that UEMOA has already initiated to promote the rice sector in the eight member countries of the Union. This participation is part of the search for synergies between the programme being developed and the action plan of UEMOA for the development of the rice value chain.
- e. Officially opening the meeting, the ECOWAS Commission Director of Agriculture and Rural Development first thanked the GIZ and USAID for the assistance they provide to the region as part of the implementation of the agricultural policy, i.e., the ECOWAP/CAADP. He then highlighted the tandem formed by ECOWAS and UEMOA in the context of the promotion of the regional rice economy, before stressing the importance that the Heads of State attach to the implementation of this programme. He then invited participants to pay sustained attention to the proceedings to arrive at a regional programme structure that matches the ambitions of the regional leaders.

2.2 Analysis of the programme to support the implementation of the regional offensive for sustained recovery of rice production

HUB RURAL presented the draft programme to support the implementation of the regional offensive for sustained recovery of rice-growing. The project analyses the current context of the development of rice production in West Africa: strong growth in consumption, sustained increase in production and productivity in recent years, persistence or surge in imports. The programme is based on the ambition of achieving complete self-sufficiency in rice in the region by 2025. To that end, it will be necessary to have an additional average production of 1 million tonnes of milled rice per annum, which requires substantial investment in seeds, fertilizers, technology transfer, equipment, facilities, etc.

6. The programme's goal is to support initiatives and strategies aimed at developing the rice value chains to modernize production systems, facilitate regional trade in order to reduce ECOWAS Member states' food dependency on rice. It focuses on four areas of intervention: (i) increase rice production, sustainably (ii) enhance local rice production, (iii) promote the local rice regional market, (iv) improve the rice development environment.
7. The discussions that followed this presentation focused on the different parts of the programme. They improved the form and content of the proposed programme. Participants made the following recommendations.

8. On the context, participants recommended:

- a. Further modelling scenarios of assumptions underlying the programme: (i) an increase in production achieved through improved productivity, (ii) an increase in production from an increase in harvested area, (iii) increase in production combining productivity and increased areas;
- b. Take into account the effects of urban growth in the estimation of the evolution of consumption ;
- c. Highlight the three blocks of socio-economic reality in West Africa: UEMOA, CILSS and ECOWAS to facilitate decision making by managers of these institutions..

9. On the opportunities, the participants suggested adding:

- a. Recognition of the region as a potential breadbasket of Africa for rice;
- b. Productivity gain that agricultural research helps garner.

10. On the specific objective, the participants suggested rewording the title so as to obtain two specific objectives taking into account the four areas of intervention of the programme.

11. On axis 1 (Sustainably increase rice production), the participants recommended the following:

- a. Take into account ongoing initiatives in the region as regards seeds (ECOWAS/USAID/CORAF under the WASP, UEMOA initiatives) and fertilizers (ECOWAS/USAID/IFDC under the WAFP);
- b. Capitalize good practices on seeds, fertilizers, equipment, facilities, etc.
- c. Move from three to four results: (i) seeds (ii) fertilizers, (iii) water control, (iv) adapted equipment and materials;
- d. Propose measures to encourage investment in regional fertilizer production;
- e. Take into account the initiatives announced by the World Bank in the sector of irrigation.

12. On axis 2 (*Enhance local rice production*):

- a. Rework the axis as follows: **Transforming and enhancing local rice production**;
- b. Add a result on marketing and communication around the local rice to promote its consumption by the local populations.

13. On axis 3 (*Promote local rice regional market*):

- a. Specify that the programme will contribute to the definition of specific safeguard measures for rice.

14. On axis 4 (*Improve the rice development environment*):

- a. Provide for an action to strengthen the capacity of units to implement national rice development strategies;
- b. Establish a mechanism to assist countries in mobilizing the resources needed to implement NRDSs;
- c. Specify the types of information to promote: (i) market information system, (ii) information, monitoring and decision support system;
- d. Insist on youth employment in gender mainstreaming;
- e. On the environmental dimensions, emphasize the need to promote integrated production systems that are more conscious of environmental protection.

15. On the implementation mechanisms:

- a. Consider Non Governmental Organizations in the list of institutions and actors responsible for the technical execution of the programme;
- b. Define a funding mechanism involving a contribution of the States in mobilizing resources for the implementation of their NRDS: transferring a certain percentage of revenue from the various taxes and duties on rice over a number of years.

16. On the economic and financial evaluation:

- a. Limit the ambition to assessing economic and social impacts focusing on the following indicators: trade balance, foreign exchange savings, contribution to GDP, youth employment, income generation, contribution to food and nutrition security, etc.

17. On safeguard measures:

- a. Add the implementation of the fertilizer strategies and the directives on seeds;
- b. Define specific safeguard measures for rice in the context of the implementation of the new CET (common external tariff);
- c. Strengthening development efforts of the other strategic food crops

2.3 Defining a roadmap for the finalization and validation of the programme to implement the rice offensive

18. The participants identified the following as part of the roadmap:

- Transmission of Monitoring Group report to UEMOA and ECOWAS: 3 February 2014;
- Collection of experiences, strategies and initiatives that can be capitalized in the programme: 3 February 2014;
- Collection of the other contributions from IFPRI and AfricaRice on modeling elements/estimates: 8 February 2014;
- Production and transmission by IFPRI and AfricaRice of prospective analysis notes on rice in West Africa: 8 February 2014;
- Writing a detailed draft programme, based on the logical framework adopted: 14 February 2014;
- Transmission of the detailed draft programme to members of the Monitoring Group for reviews and amendments: 17 February 2014;
- Collection of reviews and amendments of Monitoring Group members : 21 February 2014;
- Preparation of a revised version of the detailed draft programme: 28 February 2014;
- Transmission of the revised version of the detailed draft programme to members of the Task Force in view of the Cotonou meeting: 14 March 2014;
- Organization of the regional Task Force to validate the draft programme: 24-26 March 2014;
- Presentation of the programme at the next ECOWAS official meetings: before the end of 2014.

2.4. Closing ceremony

19. The closing ceremony registered four speeches:

- a. Speaking first, the GIZ representative expressed satisfaction with the work done by the workshop participants. He praised the ECOWAS and UEMOA commitment and the professionalism of HUB RURAL. He welcomed the roadmap that was adopted and which will make it possible to get, in the short term, a programme in line with the expectations of actors in the region.
- b. The USAID representative said he was impressed by the dynamism of HUB RURAL to coordinate all the ongoing initiatives in the region. The dynamism of HUB RURAL helped advance many programmes. He then expressed the availability of USAID to explore ways to assist HUB RURAL in strengthening its capacity to coordinate the initiatives of all actors in the region.

- c. The UEMOA representative also expressed satisfaction with the quality of the work well done. The discussions at the two-day workshop helped to advance the process of formulation of the "Rice Offensive" programme. UEMOA remains mobilized and will not bargain its contribution to the satisfactory conclusion of the programme.
- d. The Director of the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food first praised the Task Force approach that ECOWAS has institutionalized to conduct its major issues. He encouraged ECOWAS to continue in that approach as it yields good results.
- e. In his closing remarks, the ECOWAS Director of Agriculture and Rural Development thanked participants in general, the GIZ and USAID representatives and the Upland Rice Project Coordinator for their outstanding contribution to the workshop. He then invited UEMOA to join ECOWAS to explore ways and means to strengthen the capacity of HUB RURAL in its mission to ensure consistency and synergies of initiatives undertaken by the various actors in the region.

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