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CÔTE D'IVOIRE

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Focus on West Africa

ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP)

**Instrument to improve the agri-food value chain in
West Africa towards sustainable food security:
Ongoing challenges and Outlook**



ECONOMIC COMMUNITY
OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

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Presentation outline

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- II. ECOWAP achievements
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Overview

Economic Community of West African States(ECOWAS) :
15 Countries,

Area : 5 114 240 km²

Population (2019) : 391,434 million inhabitants

Annual population growth : 2.7%

Population density : 63.75 inhab/km²

Urban population (2015) : 47% or 165 million inhabitants

Life expectancy : 57.0 years

Gross Domestic Product : 614,261 billion euros

GDP per capita : 1 588 euros

GDP growth : 6.5 %

Part of agriculture in GDP : 30%





Introduction

- ❑ At the meeting held in January 2005 in Accra, Ghana, the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government adopted the regional agricultural policy, named ECOWAP, after two years of negotiation between the Member States and socio-professional actors.
- ❑ ECOWAP is the policy platform for directing and supporting the desirable transformation of the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sectors of the 15 Member States in line with the key continental guidelines adopted by the African Union in the framework of NEPAD.



□ Vision

To enable modern and sustainable agriculture, based on the effectiveness and efficiency of family farms and the promotion of agricultural enterprises through the involvement of the private sector;

□ Objectives

- To contribute in a sustainable way to the fulfilment of the population's food needs, the economic and social development and the reduction of poverty in the Member States, as well as the reduction of inequalities between territories, areas and countries;
- To ensure the food security of the West African rural and urban population and the sanitary quality of agriculture products;
- To reduce dependence on imports;
- To promote fair economic and commercial integration of farms into national, regional and international markets;

I- Vision-Objectives and Focus Areas (2)

- To develop human capacity, create jobs and secure income upstream and downstream of production;
- To help to provide West African agriculture with appropriate financing mechanisms for the diversity of farms and sectors.

Focus areas

- Improvement of the productivity and competitiveness of agriculture;
- Implementation of an intra-community trade regime based on the principle of a free trade area;
- Adaptation of the external trade regime to the specificities of agricultural products.

II- ECOWAP Achievements (1)

The implementation of ECOWAP is based on two main pillars:

- The 15 National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs)
- The Regional Agricultural Investment Programme (RAIP).

This policy has led to key achievements.

II- ECOWAP Achievements (2)

❑ Increasing internal and external resource mobilization for agriculture

- West African countries allocate about 5% of their public budget to agriculture against a target of 10%;
- Technical and financial partners have contributed between 300 and 350 million dollars to the financing of the NAIPs between 2010-2015.

❑ Increasing agricultural production

- Agricultural production, notably cereals, has increased significantly in the region. The most important increases were observed for rice (+95%) and maize (+130%). For example, regional paddy rice production has risen from 8 million tons in 2007 to 15.8 million tons in 2013.
- A significant increase in cattle and small ruminants +85%, pork +59% and poultry +48%.



II- ECOWAP Achievements (3)

❑ Increased trade between countries in the region

- Trade in agricultural products has increased significantly in recent years. The Sahelian countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger) supply the coastal countries (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Togo) with livestock and dry cereals, while the coastal countries export fishery products and cereals such as maize, roots and tubers to the Sahelian zone;
- The implementation of a Customs Union with a Common External Tariff (CET) and the Regional Programme to Support Market Regulation (RPSMR) are among other ECOWAS initiatives that have improved the commercial and normative environment for actors in the agri-food sector.

❑ Improvement of food and nutrition security

- The establishment in 2013 of the Regional Food Security Reserve (RFSR) is certainly one of the main achievements for the region. It is based on a physical stock of 42,000 tons of cereals, stored in the warehouses of national storage structures;





II- ECOWAP Achievements (4)

- Since its creation, it has intervened 12 times in four countries facing crises on the basis of eligibility criteria. It has provided 26,000 tons of cereals to 1,734,000 people during one month;
- The " Zero-Hunger Initiative " to end hunger and malnutrition by 2025. This is a framework for governance reform to address the full range of food and nutrition security issues.

❑ Setting up of institutional and governance arrangements

The implementation of ECOWAP is based on an institutional mechanism made up of different bodies for guidance, steering, decision-making, financing and monitoring and evaluation.

- The Regional Agriculture and Food Fund (RAFF), created in 2011 as well as the Regional Agriculture and Food Agency (RAFA) are among the main pillars of the overall institutional and financial framework of the ECOWAS regional agricultural policy.





II- ECOWAP Achievements (5)

- The ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) is responsible for proposing to the ECOWAS Commission a management mechanism for this Fund;
- Regional governance of food and nutrition security has made significant progress with the strengthening of the regional food crisis prevention and management mechanism;
- The establishment of a regional agricultural information and decision support system which has enabled the harmonization of national legislation and standards in force and helped to strengthen regional integration;
- The creation in 2015 of the West African Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (WAACA), as well as the adoption of the Intervention Framework for Climate-Smart Agriculture.





III- Ongoing challenges (1)

In 2025, the region will have more than 450 million inhabitants. Nearly half of them will live in cities and will meet their food needs through market supplies. Food needs are expected to increase by about 50% between 2015 and 2025.

Land resources are expected to be progressively reduced due to the steady expansion of cultivated areas and livestock. Regional agriculture must invent ways of sustainable intensification that preserve soil, water and biodiversity.

In this context, which has been exacerbated by the health crisis caused by COVID-19, ECOWAS is faced with four major challenges.



III- Ongoing challenges (2)

- ❑ Ensure food security and sovereignty in order to cover the nutritional needs of the region, which will have 450 million inhabitants, in a context of high population growth and urbanization, which confer a central role on markets, particularly regional markets ;
- ❑ Modernize family farms, increase their resilience, reduce their vulnerability and better integrate them into markets, taking into consideration the challenges of employment, environmental and social sustainability, and the fight against poverty, and taking into account the diversity of family farms, their trajectories, their capacities and perspectives, as well as their know-how ;
- ❑ Promote sustainable production system intensification itineraries adapted to climate change (AIC), in a context of highly diverse agro-ecological areas ;
- ❑ Structure and develop efficient, labour-intensive value chains to meet the challenge of employment, based on contractualisation between actors and fair trade relations.



IV- Outlook (1)

To rise the challenges in the implementation of the ECOWAP, the Member States should not only strengthen its collaboration with the traditional group of donors, but also explore and identify areas of interest for cooperation with new Technical and Financial Partners such as Japan in terms of anticipated support and potential partnership.



- ❑ To explore the possibilities of technical and scientific cooperation in the field of agriculture with Japan.
- To explore the possibility of ECOWAS Member States to join the "Council of Industry-Academia-Government Collaboration" which is the carrier of the "Field for knowledge Integration and Innovation (FKII)" initiative created on 21 April 2016 by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan whose main objective is to encourage networking and collaboration between various industries and fields such as private companies, producers, farmers, universities and Research and Development (R&D) institutions.
- Collaboration between the Business-Academica Cooperation Office of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (MAFF) and the ECOWAS authorities in charge of implementing ECOWAP within the framework of this initiative, which brings together 4,000 members with about 300 companies working in fields as varied as research and development, production and distribution of agricultural products, computer services and engineering, could be beneficial to both parties.

- Based on this cooperation, ECOWAS could develop, support and strengthen an agricultural research and development and extension strategy that responds to the diversity of situations and the requirements of productive and sustainable agriculture through an appropriate mechanism (network of centres, institutes or universities, definition of community research and development strategies and programmes, etc).
- ❑ **To establish mutually beneficial public-private partnerships**
- The 15 National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIP) declined into priority projects represent investment opportunities in the agricultural sector for Japanese companies in the ECOWAS region.
- As ECOWAS countries continue to improve their business environment, they could establish partnerships with Japanese investors at both technical and financial levels to improve productivity, processing, storage, preservation, packaging and distribution of agricultural products.

- ❑ Encourage the creation of joint ventures between West African and Japanese SMEs for digital technologies in the agricultural sector.
- Japanese investors who are very interested in applying high technology in the development of the agricultural value chain should sign joint venture agreements with ECOWAS SMEs that advocate smart agriculture to produce high quality and value added goods;
- An improvement in the production capacity and competitiveness of these SMEs as a result of these twinning arrangements would help to achieve an inclusive and sustainable food system;
- A large-scale application of digital technology to agriculture could result in an increase in producers' income (efficiency gains in the application of fertilizers, pesticides, water management, harvesting) and create new professional vocations, with the positive effects that this would have on the shortage of young farmers.



CONCLUSION

In order to continue feeding the populations of the ECOWAS region and Africa in general, ECOWAP is positioned as an instrument for transforming agriculture and strengthening value chains.

To achieve this ambitious goal of eradicating hunger by 2025, ECOWAP must enable member states to double productivity through the use of inputs, irrigation, mechanization and technological innovation.

It should also enable member states to establish inclusive partnerships with foreign investors such as those from Japan to strengthen production value chains for priority agricultural products such as rice, maize, cassava, meat and fish, which have a strong link to smallholder farmers.

Thank you for your kind attention.

