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Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food

RAAF

**ACTIVITY REPORT 2021
OF THE REGIONAL AGENCY FOR AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD (RAAF)**

January 2022

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
ANSAT	Agence Nationale de Sécurité Alimentaire du Togo
APESS	Association pour la Promotion de l'Élevage au Sahel et en Savane
ARAA	Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food
EBID	ECOWAS Investment and Development Bank
BOAD	West African Development Bank
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
CILSS	Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
CRA	: Regional Agrhymet Centre
CSA	Food Security Commission
SDC	Directorate for Development and Cooperation
ECOWAP	ECOWAS Agricultural Policy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FSS	Social safety nets
NAFCO	National Food Buffer Stock Company
OPAM	Office des Produits Agricoles du Mali
OPF	Professional Dairy Organisations
OPVN	Office des Produits Vivriers du Niger
PASANAO	Food and Nutritional Security Support Programme in West Africa
CAADP	Detailed Programme for the Development of Agriculture in Africa
NIPA	National Agricultural Investment Plan
PRAOP	Regional Support Programme for Professional Organisations and Peasant Farmers
PRIA	Regional Agricultural Investment Programme
PTBA	Work Plan and Annual Budget
ROPPA	Network of Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa
RPCA	Food Crisis Prevention Network
RRSA	Regional Food Security Reserve
SONAGESS	Société Nationale de Gestion de Stock de Sécurité
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme
EU	European Union
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

SUMMARY

From its inception to the present day, the RAAA's activities have been carried out on the basis of two three-year plans structured mainly around two outcomes: i) institutional and organisational capacity building and contribution to the ownership and management of projects and programmes contributing to the operationalisation of ECOWAP.

From the point of view of internal efficiency, the Agency has succeeded in establishing its institutional and organisational foundations around three Divisions (Technical Operations Division, RRSA Division and the Administration and Finance Division). To ensure the proper functioning of the whole institutional and organisational set-up, the Executive Board has implemented three important instruments:

- Equipping the Agency with essential management and accountability tools (administrative and financial management manual and tools, project cycle management manual, monitoring-evaluation manual, internal regulations, implementation of the SAP accounting system, application of IPSAS standards in the RAAA's accounting system, ongoing ISO 9001 certification, RRSA governance bodies and management tools, website www.araa.org , the MESECOPS monitoring-evaluation platform, etc.) These tools have strengthened the Agency's credibility with regional and international partners.
- The strengthening of the coordination of projects and programmes under its supervision, through the organisation of quarterly meetings, meetings of the projects' technical committees, steering committees, the ARAA steering committee as well as the sharing of experience through ECOWAP meetings or learning events such as the international conference on proximity storage and the international seminar on social safety nets.) Periodic meetings and periodic reports produced by the projects have strengthened communication between the different parties, facilitated the flow of information, the sharing of experiences and, above all, collaboration between the different officials.
- The strengthening of relations with regional technical institutions, regional farmers' organisations and other regional actors to whom the implementation of certain major programmes has been delegated.
- Strengthening the legal handling of RAAA files: since April 2019, the RAAA has had a legal adviser to review agreements, contracts and opinions on current files. His presence has accelerated the processing of funding agreements, contracts and legal opinions that were previously submitted to Abuja, thus reducing the time needed to process files and sign agreements and contracts.

In terms of external effectiveness, the Agency is now known on the regional scene and by national partners, through three types of actions it has developed:

- Capacity building of regional and national actors, through the organisation of dedicated training sessions on innovative themes ranging from climate change, to social safety nets, to the costing of agricultural development plans and programmes, and to project engineering in the framework of support to countries and regional actors for resource mobilisation. These cascade trainings (trainers at the regional level and practitioners at the national level) are creating a critical mass of resource persons in each country who are able to respond to various intervention needs. Through this training, the Agency is implementing one of its essential missions, which is to ensure that regional actors implement programmes and projects that contribute to the operationalisation of ECOWAP/SADC. In this regard, the RAAA systematically trains project leaders on administrative and financial management tools, procedures and the project management and monitoring manual.
- The certification of the accounts of each year by the audits of the accounts composed of internal resources and external resources of the projects and programmes and all other initiatives were certified without reservation by the audit of the Auditor General's office and project-specific audits. For example, in 2021, the audit of the Office of the Auditor General (2018-2020) covered all areas: administration, finance and accounting, human resources, IT, project and programme performance (the whole project cycle). Composed of the courts of auditors of the member states (Ghana, Burkina and Senegal) as well as ECOWAS internal auditors and resource persons, the audit took place from 26 September to 30 October 2021 at the RAAA. Ten specific audits of regional projects were also carried out without reservation in terms of accounting and financial management. These were PRAOP, FSS, PACBAO, RRSA AECID, RRSA AFD, PEPISAO, PAE/PAIAD, GCCA+, SYRIMAO and the RAEA own resources account. Also, in the field, audits were carried out in the framework of the closure of the stock project (ROPPA, APESS, ROAC and RBM audits) and of the projects from the

FSS PAs (ZOA, SONGTAABA, RADIG, CERAI, CONEMUNDE, HKI, APSS, AFAO) bringing the total number of audits carried out in the course of the year 2021 to 23 All the Expenditure certified as compliant with TFP and ECOWAS procedures, reinforces the internal and external credibility and operational coordination capacities of the RAAA.

- The launch and monitoring of the implementation of concrete projects carried by regional and national institutions. These projects and programmes, through the process of their allocation (calls for proposals) and the close monitoring of the RAEA, have created a solid social capital for ECOWAS in general among the grassroots actors and for the Agency in particular. These pilot projects, which essentially address the resilience of rural populations, contribute to the operationalisation of the regional agricultural policy and the realisation of its objectives and ambitions on the ground. This is a significant step forward in the involvement of regional and national actors in the implementation of the regional agricultural policy.
- The management of some major projects, concretising one of the region's major initiatives: the Regional Food Security Reserve. Indeed, the project to support the implementation of the regional food reserve has met with a very favourable response on two aspects. The first is related to the constitution of a physical food security stock of 36,008.77 tonnes. This capacity makes it possible to cover the emergency needs (for one month) of more than 2,500,000 people, which represents 111% of the project target and 63% of the PRIASAN target (4 million people). This response capacity allowed for 10 interventions as part of the implementation of the countries' national response plans. The RRSA's products have made it possible to implement several social safety net instruments for the benefit of the food insecure population (Phase 3 and beyond of the CH). These include sales at moderate or subsidised prices (-30 to -40% of average prices) in Burkina Faso and Niger, free distribution to the vulnerable population in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria, assistance to malnourished children in Niger and support to school canteens in Ghana.

In addition to the RRSA, projects and programmes under the coordination of the RAAA have also strengthened the region's capacity in terms of knowledge, resource mobilisation and technologies or tools on agro-ecology in West Africa, social safety nets, climate change, transhumance and pastoralism, capacity building of RPOs, livestock marketing.

But as one might expect, the performance of the RAAA, particularly the level of achievement of its objectives, could have been better if the Agency had not been confronted with a crucial problem: that of insufficient financial resources at its disposal. In fact, the RAAA has suffered from the non-functioning of the ECOWAS funding mechanism: the Regional Agriculture and Food Fund, which ECOWAS had planned to institutionalise in support of agricultural policy implementation. The non-operationalisation of ECOWADF has had consequences for the functioning and performance of the RAAA. Firstly, it has not allowed it to implement the first generation of major ECOWAP mobilising programmes, notably PRIAP, PARMAO and other major initiatives (rice offensive, deep urea placement, promotion of village hydraulics, promotion of village poultry farming, etc.) that it included in its first plan. Secondly, it has confined the Agency's actions to the implementation of partners' 'programmes', with a strong focus on those related to strengthening the resilience of populations.

Other gaps in programme implementation are attributable to insufficient human resources. Indeed, some positions in the organisational chart could not be filled in all divisions.

In 2021, the 2021 budget of USD 31 467 155 (UA 22 483 123) was implemented at 76.72%, i.e. USD 24 141 621 (UA 17 249 066) in expenditure.

INTRODUCTION

The Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF) whose mandate is "to ensure the technical execution of regional programmes and investment plans contributing to the operationalisation of the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy, relying on regional institutions, organisations and actors with proven competencies", was created by Regulation C/REG.1/08/11. The official launch of the Agency took place in Lomé on 27 September 2013.

During the year 2021, the RAAA provided coordination and/or fiduciary management for 20 regional projects/programmes or initiatives.

These projects/programmes and initiatives contribute to the achievement of the results of the four specific objectives of the Regional Programme for Agricultural Investments and Food and Nutritional Security (PRIASAN) which are

- a. SO1. "Contribute to increasing productivity and agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries production through diversified and sustainable production systems, and to reducing post-production losses";
- b. SO2. "Promote contractual and inclusive agricultural and agri-food value chains oriented towards regional and international demand, with a view to regional market integration";
- c. SO3. "Improve access to food, nutrition and resilience of vulnerable populations";
- d. SO4: "Improve the business environment, governance and financing mechanisms of the agricultural and agri-food sector".

As a reminder, for the year 2021, an Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) was approved by the RAAF Steering Committee, held by video conference in March, and 2021 by the statutory bodies of ECOWAS (CAF and Council of Ministers) from November to December 2021.

On the basis of this programme, the main achievements can be summarised into two main strands: (i) Administration and (ii) Investment or programme.

The analysis presents the main achievements during the year after 2021, assessing the overall performance of the sector by strategic objective.

I. ADMINISTRATION COMPONENT

The activities programmed under this component concern: i) the operation and equipment of the agency's premises; ii) participation in internal ECOWAS meetings iii) report production, iv) procurement; and v) ISO certification.

The main achievements in relation to these activities are as follows:

I.1. Operation

As in previous years, the operating expenses were mainly related to the translation of documents into ECOWAS working languages, the production and printing of documents, insurance, fuel for vehicles, maintenance of the building, computer equipment and vehicles, guarding of the headquarters, electricity works and various other expenses (repair works, electricity, internet)

I.2. Strengthening the operational capacity of the RAAF

Through the support of the projects, certain transversal and common functions have been strongly reinforced. These are Communication, Monitoring and Evaluation, Administration and Accounting. At the technical level, technical assistants were mobilised to strengthen the operational capacities of the RAAA.

This support also allowed for the capacity building of agents as well as the continuation and/or improvement of technical and financial management tools for projects.

I.3. Audits and certification of the RAAF accounts

During the period under review, the RAAF underwent three types of audit:

- Specific audits of projects and programmes, these audits concerned the projects managed by the RAAF and the field micro-projects that the Agency finances. A total of ten (21) audits were carried out on all projects and programmes (9) and field micro-projects (12);
- The general audit of all the funds managed by the RAAF. This audit, also known as an auditor's report, was carried out on the accounts for 2020 and 2021 by the firm PWC. The 2021 accounts will be carried out in 2022.
- And the audit carried out by the Office of the Auditor General on the accounts for the years 2018 to 2020.

All of these audits went well and the accounts were certified without reservation.

During the period under review, the three projects were closed in accordance with the financing agreements and the closing audits carried out. While waiting for the final audit report of the Auditor General, who appreciated the quality of work within the RAAF and diagnosed some challenges to be addressed, one of the main recommendations remains the strengthening of the operational capacities of the RAAF at all levels by providing it with the minimum staff in accordance with the new organisation chart of the RAAF and the Lomé service pool, whose internal services (Finance, Administration, IT) are shared with other ECOWAS agencies and representations;

I.4. Production of reports

All required reports and activity programmes were prepared and transmitted to the Commission and partners. These include activity and financial reports (quarterly, half-yearly and annual as well as specific reports), activity programmes and budgets (quarterly, half-yearly and annual) of the RAAF as well as all projects and programmes under its coordination.

I.5. Procurement

Goods, works, and services were procured in accordance with the procedures in place for the operation and activities of the projects and programs

These acquisitions mainly concerned stocks, computer equipment, office supplies and intellectual services.

The Agency has invested in analysing the delays recorded on past contracts in order to assess the constraints relating to the implementation of activities and the causes of the delays observed. This analysis showed that the main issues were delays and the actors who contributed to these delays.

I.6. ISO certification process

The certification process is a long process that the RAAF has started with the support of the stock project. One of the steps is to have a procedures manual. Once this step was completed, the RAAF invested in training the staff in charge of conducting the certification process. Thus, a team went to Paris for training provided by AFNOR experts. Following this training, a schedule for the implementation of the RAAF certification process was drawn up. The RAAF thus hired a consultant to accompany it through the process up to **and including** the certification of the RAAF in the field of calls for proposals. The consultant's support is structured around five points listed below:

- Diagnosis and action plan
- Training and awareness raising
- Documentation compliance
- Assessment of system conformity
- Preparation for the certification audit.

The consultant charged with accompanying the RAAF in the certification process provided the following deliverables:

- The diagnostic report
- Training of staff in charge of the certification process

The following three deliverables are under development:

- Compliance of the documentation;
- The assessment of the conformity of the system;

- Preparation for the certification audit.

As a reminder, the consultant was recruited with funds from component 5 of the "West Africa Food Security Storage Support Project". The end of the project did not allow for the funding of the last three deliverables of the consultant. Therefore, the RAAF is looking for other sources of funding to allow the certification process to continue.

I.7. Processing of legal files

Since April 2019, the RAAF has had a legal adviser for the review of agreements, contracts and opinions on current cases. His presence has accelerated the processing of funding agreements, contracts and legal opinions that were previously submitted to Abuja, thus reducing the time needed to process the files and sign the agreements and contracts. The processing of these contractualisation files makes it possible to validate the process and content with regard to ECOWAS procedures and regulations or those agreed with the partners. The advice covers all formal and substantive legal issues involving any legal liability of the RAAF vis-à-vis its partners and service providers in order to avoid possible litigation or mitigate the risks, and to propose legal solutions to safeguard the interests of the RAAF.

During the year 2021, all the agreements resulting from the calls for proposals were reviewed, which led to their signature by the President of the Commission. As part of the monitoring of project activities in the field, recommendations were made following the observation of difficulties in the legal aspects of the implementation of some projects. These recommendations aim to find solutions to the difficulties noted in order to avoid possible litigation in the execution of the agreements signed between the RAAF and the project holders.

I.8. Personnel management

The RAAF staff is managed in accordance with the ECOWAS Staff Regulations. Individual performance 2020 was assessed in and 2021 performance agreements for 2021 were defined and forwarded to the ECOWAS Commission.

For the implementation of projects and programmes, the RAAF uses contractors for a period of 6 to 12 months. Renewal of the consultants' contracts is subject to an evaluation of their performance in the previous period.

In accordance with the Council of Ministers' decision on staff conversion, the eight people who were able to be converted to permanent staff have satisfactorily completed the evaluation of the one-year probationary period. The files of the reserve division are still being processed.

I. PROGRAMME COMPONENT

The activities programmed under this strand concern: i) the organisation of project and programme steering committees and the Agency's steering committee, ii) the Agency's participation in meetings related to its mandate, iii) the development of management and communication tools, and iv) the coordination of projects and programmes.

The main achievements in relation to these activities are as follows:

I.1. Organisation of the project steering committees and the ARAA steering committee

The RAAF Steering Committee and the Steering Committee of the projects/programmes of the three IGOs (CILSS-ECOWAS-UEMOA) were organised from 22 to 31 March 2021 and enabled the validation of the 2020 activity reports and the 2021 activity programmes. They also enabled the strengthening of coordination and synergies between projects. The Steering Committees were held online and the projects were grouped into eight (08) themes for better coordination and synergy between the implementing stakeholders in order to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions on the ground in the Member States. Some twenty Projects / Initiatives / Programmes totalling a cumulative funding of over US\$ 200 million (External Funding) under the direct coordination of the RAAF cover the sectors of (i) Livestock, Transhumance and Pastoralism, (ii) Fisheries and Aquaculture, (iii) Agricultural Productivity and Competitiveness, (iv) Adaptation of Agriculture to Climate Change, (v) Pesticide Management, Plant Pest Management and SPS, (vi) Resilience, Food and Nutritional Security, (vii) Institutional and Organizational Capacity Building

I.2. Organisation of the technical committee for monitoring projects and programmes

In accordance with the RAAF's mandate to ensure the technical execution of regional investment plans and programmes, a Steering Committee is held annually for each project to validate the annual activity report, approve the work plan and budget (WBP) for the following year and make recommendations. A Monitoring Committee of the said projects and programmes has been set up in order to ensure the good progress of the implementation of the activities of these projects and programmes, it will be chaired by the ECOWAS Director of Agriculture and Rural Development (DADR). In 2021, the technical monitoring committees were held in Accra and those of each of the projects were held by video-conference making it possible to review the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Steering Committee of 2021 for each project and of the overall coordination at the RAAF level; to examine the progress of the activities of the 2021 AWP; to review the difficulties encountered and provide guidance for their proper implementation and to formulate recommendations for the proper implementation of the activities

In addition to these technical monitoring committees, quarterly monitoring meetings are also organised under the chairmanship of the Executive Director. The aim is to identify difficulties in order to find appropriate solutions for the proper implementation of projects and programmes.

I.3. Participation in ECOWAP meetings

The RAAF represented the Commission or participated in or contributed to the organisation of several national, regional and international meetings as well as internal Commission meetings.

At the level of ECOWAP's coordination and governance mechanism, as the agency responsible for ensuring the technical implementation of regional programmes and investment plans contributing to the operationalisation of ECOWAS agricultural policy, the RAAF has contributed to the organisation of several meetings:

- The International Conference on Food Security Storage;
- The international seminar on experience sharing on social safety nets.

All the meetings led to additional funding from donors for the continuation of activities for the implementation of projects and programmes with tangible impacts on the population.

I.4. Implementation of management and communication tools

During the year 2021, the Agency ensured the continued deployment of monitoring and evaluation tools, the continued deployment of SAP (integrated management software) within the RAAF and the development and dissemination of communication and visibility tools.

At the monitoring-evaluation level, the MESECOPS monitoring-evaluation database is being progressively deployed: coordinators as well as project and programme monitoring-evaluation focal points have been trained in the use of the platform (at the level of the RAAF as well as at the level of projects resulting from calls for project proposals). The information on indicators, although currently timid, will continue to be collected during 2021. The quarterly monitoring meetings were held and provided an opportunity to report on the implementation of activities and the recommendations of the steering committees. At the level of the projects of the calls for project proposals, supervision missions were organised with the PATAE, GCCA+, PACBAO, RRSA holders in order to ensure the good implementation of the activities and guarantee the expected impact on the populations.

It is worth noting the effective and progressive involvement of the ECOWAS National Offices (in the countries) and the PNIASAN focal points in the monitoring of field projects. In addition, there are the internal and external evaluations of projects and programmes, the elaboration of the PTBA 2022 of the RAAA and of projects and programmes, the validation of quarterly activity reports and programmes, the monitoring of the implementation of recommendations as well as the processing of requests from projects and programmes.

As for SAP, capacity building of the RAEA team continued. The RAAF now uses SAP and IPSAS in its accounting and financial management systems for projects and programmes. Reports are regularly produced and submitted on time.

In addition to the usual communication/visibility activities (press releases, press articles, media coverage, etc.), the highlight of Araa's communication in 2021 was, without being exhaustive, the communication on the capitalisation and sharing of experiences of food security storage support projects and pilot projects for social food and nutrition security nets in West Africa. This capitalisation was strongly supported by the production and dissemination of video clips (08), evaluation and capitalisation sheets (08), notes for decision-makers (01) and thematic kakemonos (08) on food security storage, social safety nets and the integrated regional fruit fly management system.

The highlight of the event was the digital and audiovisual communication highlighting the results, impact and behavioural change observed on the ground.

It should also be noted that the Communication Department played an active role with the Communication Directorate of the Ecowas Commission in (i) the process of deploying the Graphic Charter of the Ecowas Commission, (ii) the process of defining the new Ecowas Communication Policy and (iii) the redesign of the Ecowas Commission website. Araa is thus making a strong contribution to the overall communication of Ecowas.

Finally, it should be noted that the Communication Department of the African Development Bank maintains excellent relations of collaboration and synergy of actions with the communication officers of the various institutions, agencies and permanent representations of Ecowas.

I.5. Coordination of projects and programmes

In 2021, the RAAA coordinated regional projects and programmes. Other projects and initiatives are also being implemented by the Department's Directorates (DADR, CRSA, CCRE and DE) with fiduciary management provided by the RAAA. All the projects, programmes and initiatives contribute to the achievement of the results of the four specific objectives of the ECOWAP 2025 Strategic Orientation Framework:

- a. SO1. "Contribute to increased productivity, agro-sylvo-pastoral, and fishing production through diverse and sustainable production systems, as well as reduced post-production losses";
- b. SO2. "Promote contractual and inclusive agricultural and agri-food value chains oriented towards regional and international demand, with a view to regional market integration";
- c. SO3. "Improve access to food, nutrition and resilience of vulnerable populations";
- d. SO4: "Improve the business environment, governance and financing mechanisms of the agricultural and agri-food sector".

These projects, entrusted to the RAAF by the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), have an overall cost of more than USD 150 million. They focus on Specific Objective 3, "Improving access to food, nutrition and resilience of vulnerable populations" and Specific Objective 4, "Improving the business environment, governance and financing mechanisms of the agriculture and agri-food sector". Future projects will cover the first two to a greater extent.

Table 1 Alignment of projects and programmes with PRIASAN outcomes and ECOWAP specific objectives

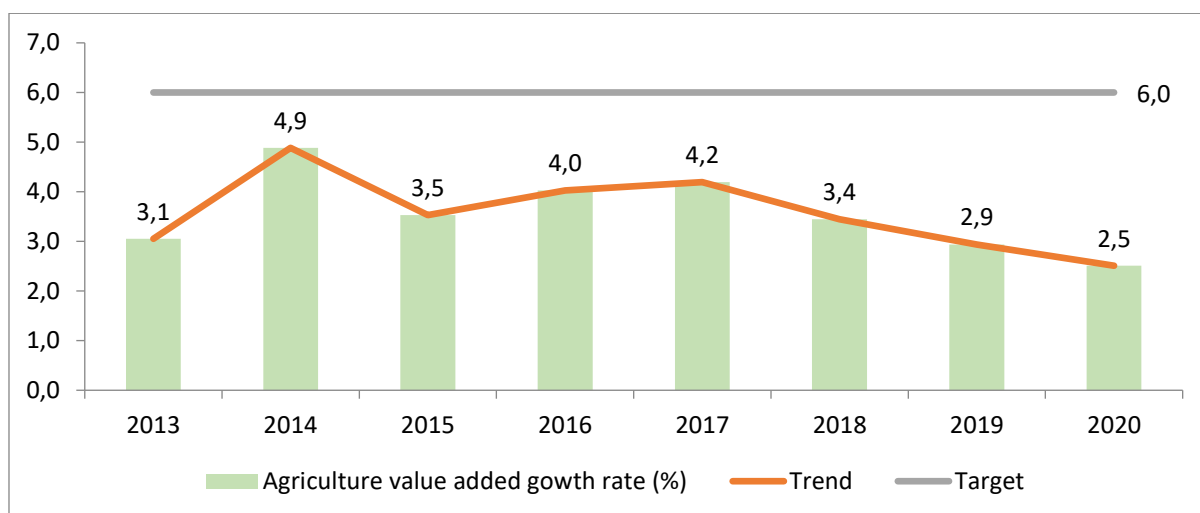
Specific objectives of ECOWAP	Projects/programmes
SO1. "Contribute to increasing productivity and agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries production through diversified and sustainable production systems, and to reducing post-production losses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programme to support Agroecology Transition in Sahel and West Africa (PATAE) 2. Support project for the dissemination and implementation of good practices for sustainable agricultural intensification 3. Global Climate Change Alliance-West Africa (GCCA+) project 4. Regional project "Promotion of climate-smart agriculture in West Africa 5. Project to Support the Control and Eradication of small ruminants peste and River Valley Fever Diseases in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (PPR), implemented by CRSA
SO2. "Promote contractual and inclusive agricultural and agri-food value chains oriented towards regional and international	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programme d'appui à la Commercialisation du bétail en Afrique de l'Ouest (PACBAO)

Specific objectives of ECOWAP	Projects/programmes
demand, with a view to regional market integration	2. Innovative Regional Fruit Fly Management System in West Africa (SyRIMAO)
SO3. "Improve food and nutrition security and resilience of vulnerable populations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ECOWAS Regional Agricultural Policy Support Project (ECOWAP/CAADP), Social Nets, funded by AECID; 2. West Africa Food Security Storage Support Project (ECOWAS Stock Project) - EU funding; 3. African Union Border Programme (AUBP) between Benin & Togo/Financing GIZ;
SO4: "Improve the business environment, governance and financing mechanisms of the agricultural and agri-food sector".	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regional support programme for FBOs in the framework of the implementation of ECOWAP (PRAOP/ECOWAP) /Funded by SDC; 2. Integrated and Secure Livestock and Pastoralism Programme in West Africa (PEPISAO) - AFD financing; 3. Regional support project for pastoralism in the Sahel (PRAPS) 4. TCP FAO - capacity building of the RAAF with AECID funding; 5. Support to the FIRST project (Impact, Sustainability, and Transformation for Food and Nutrition Security) - TCP/FAO/Financing FAO; 6. Preparation and monitoring facility for livestock development projects within the framework of PRIDEC (FAPS)/AFD financing; 7. Strengthening the monitoring and impact analysis of COVID on food security (TCP-FAO) /Funding FAO; 8. AfDB support to the launch of the Detailed Strategic Framework for the Development of a Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector (CSD DPAD) / AfDB financing; 9. Programme to support the improvement of governance for resilience and food and nutrition security PAGR SANAD; EU funding; 10. The special programme Regional Agriculture and Food Fund (RAFF);

I.5.1. SO1. "Contribute to increasing productivity and agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries production through diversified and sustainable production systems, and to reducing post-production losses

The increase in agro-sylvo-pastoral and fishing production and productivity, assessed through the evolution of the sector's value added, shows a downward trend over the last five years (2015-2019). The rate of increase in agricultural value added remains below the Maputo target of at least 6% annual growth in the sector.

Figure 1 Evolution of the rate of increase of the sector's value added

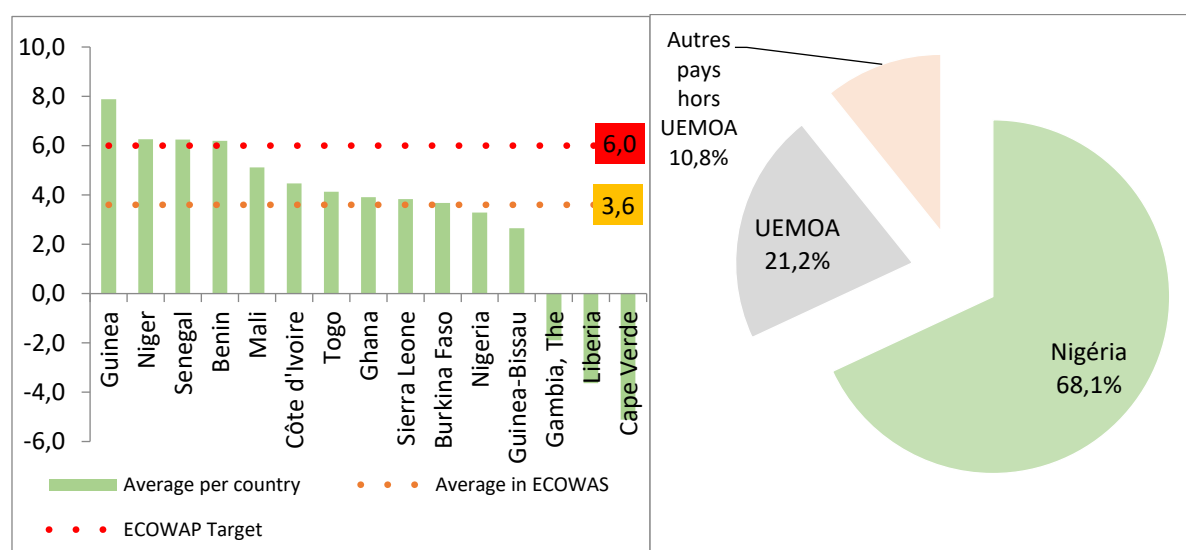


Source: Based on the ReSAKSS database, 2021

A comparative analysis between countries shows that five countries (Benin, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Senegal) were able to achieve an average growth rate in agricultural value added equal to or greater than the 6% target over the period 2013-2020. In addition to these five countries, six countries (Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso) have an average growth rate above the ECOWAS average. The countries to which particular attention should be paid are Nigeria, Guinea Bissau, Gambia, Liberia and Cape Verde, which have below-average (Nigeria and Guinea Bissau) and negative (Gambia, Liberia and Cape Verde) growth rates in agricultural value added.

The relatively small increase in Nigeria's agricultural value added compared to other countries is mainly due to its weight (over 68% of total ECOWAS production in 2019).

Figure 2 Average growth rate of the value added and weight of countries in the overall value added of ECOWAS



Source: Based on the ReSAKSS database, 2021

The growth of the sector's value added and its variability is under the adverse effects of climate change as well as the low level of consistent investment in the sector. In order to contribute to improving the level of growth in the sector, several projects and programmes have been developed and implemented and are being coordinated by the RAAF or the RAHC:

- The West African Agroecology Programme (PAE);
- Global Climate Change Alliance-West Africa Project (GCCA+ or GCCA+);
- Regional project "Promotion of climate-smart agriculture in West Africa".

- Project to Support the Control and Eradication of small ruminants peste and River Valley Fever Diseases in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (PPR), implemented by CRSA

I.5.1.1. Agroecology programme in West Africa

Within the framework of the implementation of its Common Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP), Ecowas has launched a Regional Agroecology Programme (RAP) in its 15 Member States aimed at the "Promotion and Dissemination of Agroecology and Ecologically Intensive Agriculture for the Resilience of Populations to Food Insecurity and Climate Change in West Africa". Two (2) projects are already underway to operationalise this programme,:

- The Support Project for the Agroecological Transition in West Africa (PATAE), financed by the French Development Agency (AFD) to the tune of 8 million euros and started in July 2017; and
- The Support Project for the Dissemination and Implementation of Good Practices for Sustainable Agricultural Intensification (PAIAD), funded by the European Union to the tune of 8.2 million euros and started in March 2020.

The two projects are structured into five components in the agro-ecology programme and are as follows

- Component 1: Local actors' support for the agro-ecological transition
- Component 2: Agro-ecological intensification and sustainable agriculture training and capacity building
- Component 3: Advisory support and extension of technological innovations for sustainable agricultural intensification adapted to the production methods of small-scale farmers
- Component 4: Exchanges, capitalisation and contribution to the development of public policies for agroecological intensification;
- Component 5: Programme Coordination and Management

Under Component 1, "Support to agro-ecological transition for local actors", the year 2021 was marked by the continued implementation of 15 pilot micro-projects (with an AFD grant of 4,469,209 Euros) on agro-ecological practices covering Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Togo. The projects combine their interventions at 3 levels: i) the strengthening of agroecological practices at the level of family farms, ii) the Natural Resource Management (NRM) approach at the level of terroirs, iii) support for the marketing and valorisation of agroecological products. These good practices and experiences from the field projects directly affect about 28,139 farmers, including 11,759 women and 1,695 young people.

Under component 2, "Training and capacity building for agro-ecological intensification and sustainable agriculture", the main achievements are the ongoing diagnostic study of training centres with a view to supporting the institutional development of 12 centres and the training offers of the Ecoles Supérieures d'Agriculture (ESA) and Etablissements de Formation Technique et Professionnelle (EFTP). The preparatory phase of the Mooc Agroecology adapted to Africa, under construction by SupAgro-Montpellier and which will be open to students, agricultural professionals, teachers, researchers, etc. in the region has also started.

Under Component 3, "Support-advisory and extension of technological innovations for sustainable agricultural intensification adapted to the modes of production of small agricultural producers", the study on the diagnosis of partnerships between Professional Agricultural Organisations (PAOs), Research Centres and Training Centres and the extension and support-advisory structures is underway.

Under component 4, "Exchange, capitalisation and contribution to the development of public policies for agroecological intensification", the main achievement was the start of the implementation of the communication strategy and plan with the production of some communication tools and the collaboration with 3AO for the organisation of regional consultations, The organisation of a regional platform on agro-ecology and sustainable agriculture, and advocacy for the inclusion of agro-ecology in public policies, continued, as did the organisation of an international seminar in Senegal on the theme "Investing in the training of producers is building the future" with 3AO and the International Network for Agricultural and Rural Training (RIFAR). Several themes were discussed, including the construction of training demand - the financing of training - agro-ecology in training - the influence of public policies for the promotion of ecologically efficient agriculture, etc.

Regarding component 5, "Programme Coordination and Management", the organisation in Dakar of the launch of the EAP and the training of the National Correspondents, 3AO coordinator and accountants in administrative and financial management procedures as well as in the use of the MESECOPS monitoring-evaluation platform for ECOWAS projects.

I.5.1.2. Global Climate Change Alliance-West Africa (GCCA+) Support Project

In addition to the PATAE, the GCCA+ West Africa project, implemented by Expertise France with a budget of 12,100,000 euros over five years is helping to strengthen the capacities of West African regional institutions in order to contribute to the regional effort to implement the Paris Agreement. This agreement aims to contain the rise in the average temperature of the planet to well below 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels and to continue action to limit the rise to 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial levels, on the understanding that this would significantly reduce the risks and effects of climate change.

The following activities were carried out in 2021:

Under Outcome 1 - ECOWAS and its specialised bodies are strengthened on climate issues, including international negotiations and implementation of the Paris Agreement:

- setting up and running the interdepartmental environment committee (CIDE), the GRANIC (4 senior West African experts)
- support for ECOWAS' active participation in COP26 in Glasgow:

Under the outcome 2 - Regional and national (ECOWAS/CILSS) strategies and priorities strengthened to integrate climate and PA implementation

- the development of the ECOWAS Regional Climate Strategy (RCS);
- The capitalization of the NDCs "History of NDCs in West Africa" programmed to share and encourage actions for the implementation of the Paris Agreement by ECOWAS Member States, which allowed the publication of the first review in May 2021;
- The pilot support to country NDCs has been fully implemented for Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and Liberia. The assistance to Togo is at 70% completion and will be completed in early 2022.

Under the outcome 3 – Support to pilot adaptation projects (PP), including solutions based on an ecosystem approach, for capitalisation and scaling up at regional level:

- the continued implementation of and monitoring and evaluation of the 16 pilot projects, which aims to identify the conditions for successful AIC and agroecology that enable adaptation to climate change, as well as the adoption of good practices and solutions to ensure adaptation and limit the risks of maladaptation in the design, selection and implementation of the projects;
- the drafting of a framework note on the capitalisation of the pilot project component.

Under the outcome 4 -Increased strategic dialogue of regional organisations and ECOWAS MS, strengthened negotiation capacities, information sharing and skills results and knowledge on climate action (implemented CILSS/CRA):

- Validation of thesis protocols at the 4 carbon sites (Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger and Ghana);
- Training of national staff and updating of hydro-climatological databases is carried out in Benin, Togo (in addition to the 2019 training), Mauritania, Gambia, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal in November, bringing the total to 13 countries since 2019. The remaining 4 countries will be supported in 2022.

Under Output -5 Strengthened capacity of technical institutes, universities and regional centres to provide training, research and innovation support services in climate-related sectors (implemented by CILSS/CRA & EF Digital learning):

- the closing of the theoretical courses of the second class of the Master in Climate Change and Sustainable Development (CCSD);
- The placement of 23 students including 20 GCCA+AO scholarship holders and 3 private students and with 3 students (Guinea, Niger, Ivory Coast) who were placed in two (2) GCCA+AO and 1 PATAE pilot projects;

- the digitalisation and subsequent launch of the online Master CC course on the integration of CC in public policies in partnership with UNITAR (1500 enrolled and more than 300 certified).

Under outcome 6 -Activities on access to climate finance:

- support for the accreditation of the EBID to the CVF, making it possible to plan for the submission of the EBID's application in early 2022;
- Accompanying the accreditation of the CILSS to the VCF and the ARAA to the FMCA.

I.5.1.3. Regional project to promote climate-smart agriculture in West Africa

As part of the operationalisation of the AIC created on 18 June 2015, ECOWAS in collaboration with the West African Development Bank (WADB) mobilised resources from the Adaptation Fund to finance the regional project for the promotion of climate-smart agriculture in West Africa at a cost of USD 14,000 000.

In general, the project aims to reduce the vulnerability of farmers and livestock breeders to increased climate risks, in particular through the provision of climate services adapted to the needs of producers:

- 60,000 farmers, half of whom are women, have access to agro-meteorological data tailored to agricultural planning.
- Adoption of improved climate-resilient techniques and technologies on 3,000 ha;
- The delimitation of 1,000 km of cross-border transhumance corridors or tracks;
- the construction of 80 water points (BCER) and 20 human-powered boreholes along the secured transhumance corridors.

During the period 2021, the main activities were mainly:

- The development of the procedure manual;
- The ongoing recruitment of the project's regional coordination team
- The first project steering committee and the technical committee
- The lifting of conditions precedent on the first disbursement of the project.

I.5.1.4. ECOWAS Project to Support the Control and Eradication of PPR and River Valley Fever Diseases in Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal (PPR- Control-GLS) in the framework of ECOWAP 2025

In order to support the ECOWAS Commission in the implementation of ECOWAP-2025 in its specific objectives N°1 (Contribute to increasing productivity and agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries production through diversified and sustainable production systems, and to reduce post-production losses" and more specifically the "ECOWAS Strategy for the Control and Eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR)", an agreement was signed in August 2021 between the SDC and the ECOWAS Commission for the financing of the consolidation and extension of the PPR project until 31 December 2022.

The specific objective is to "Strengthen the epidemiological surveillance networks and diagnostic capacities of ECOWAS as well as vaccinate and protect animals in infested areas" with the expected results.

- A joint mass vaccination campaign in the 5 beneficiary Member States (Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Senegal);
- Technical assistance to States to strengthen their capacity for the identification, diagnosis and treatment of transboundary animal diseases;
- Countries and the region are strengthening and coordinating technical and operational capacity for cross-border animal disease prevention and control.
- Activities implemented in 2021.

Following the signing of the agreement between SDC and the ECOWAS Commission the following activities were carried out:

- The elaboration and validation of the 2021-2022 regional and country PTBAs;

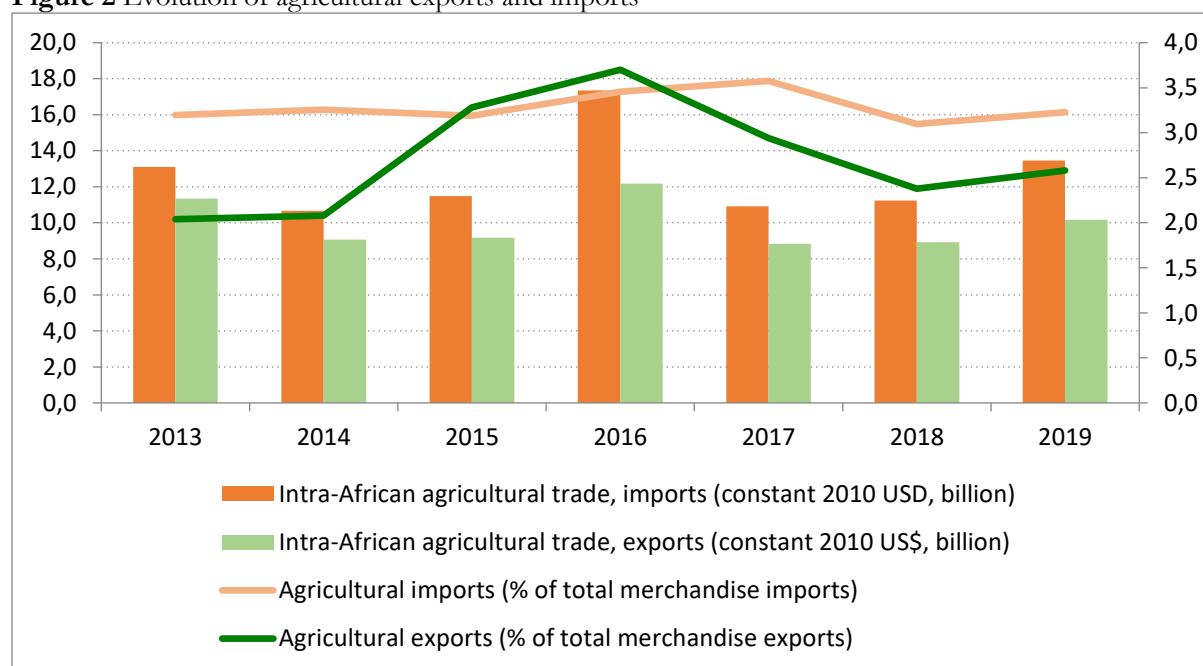
- Procurement of consumables and equipment for immunisation;

The main difficulties encountered were the slowness in the validation of the PTBAs by the authorities of the various countries, with repercussions on the implementation of other activities, as well as the delay in the implementation of other activities prior to the launch of the immunisation campaigns; to this end, the PTBA 2022 was modified to take account of this.

I.5.2. SO2. "Promote contractual and inclusive agricultural and agri-food value chains oriented towards regional and international demand, with a view to regional market integration

The analysis of regional and international demand for agricultural goods shows that West Africa, although an agricultural region, imports more agricultural products than it exports both within Africa and internationally. This situation also demonstrates the dependence of our region on the rest of the world.

Figure 2 Evolution of agricultural exports and imports



Source: From ReSAKSS database, 2020

With a view to strengthening regional and international demand, the "Support Project for the Regional Fruit Fly Management and Control Plan in West Africa" and the "Support Programme for Livestock Marketing in West Africa (PACBAO)" have been developed and entrusted to the RAAA. They aim to contribute to the improvement of market functioning, the reduction of barriers to trade and the creation of gainful employment for youth and women.

It should be noted that the "Project to Support the Regional Fruit Fly Management and Control Plan in West Africa" was completed in 2019 and its achievements are being consolidated by the "Innovative Regional Fruit Fly Management System in West Africa (SyRIMAO)" project.

I.5.2.1. Innovative Regional Fruit Fly Management System in West Africa (SyRIMAO)

In order to build on the achievements of the Project to support the Regional Fruit Fly Management and Control Plan in West Africa (FFMCP) implemented between 2015 and 2019, ECOWAS has set up the Regional Innovative Fruit Fly Management System in West Africa (SyRIMAO), financed by the European Union (7.5 million euros) and the French Development Agency (3.935 million euros).

As a reminder, fruit flies are a key problem in the production and export of fruit and vegetables in West African countries. In 2016, interception of mangoes at the European Union (EU) borders resulted in a loss of approximately €9 million for exporters in the region, representing more than a third of the total export value.

The overall objective of SyRIMAO is to improve the incomes of West African fruit and vegetable producers, particularly small-scale producers, to contribute to food security, poverty reduction and job creation in the sub-region.

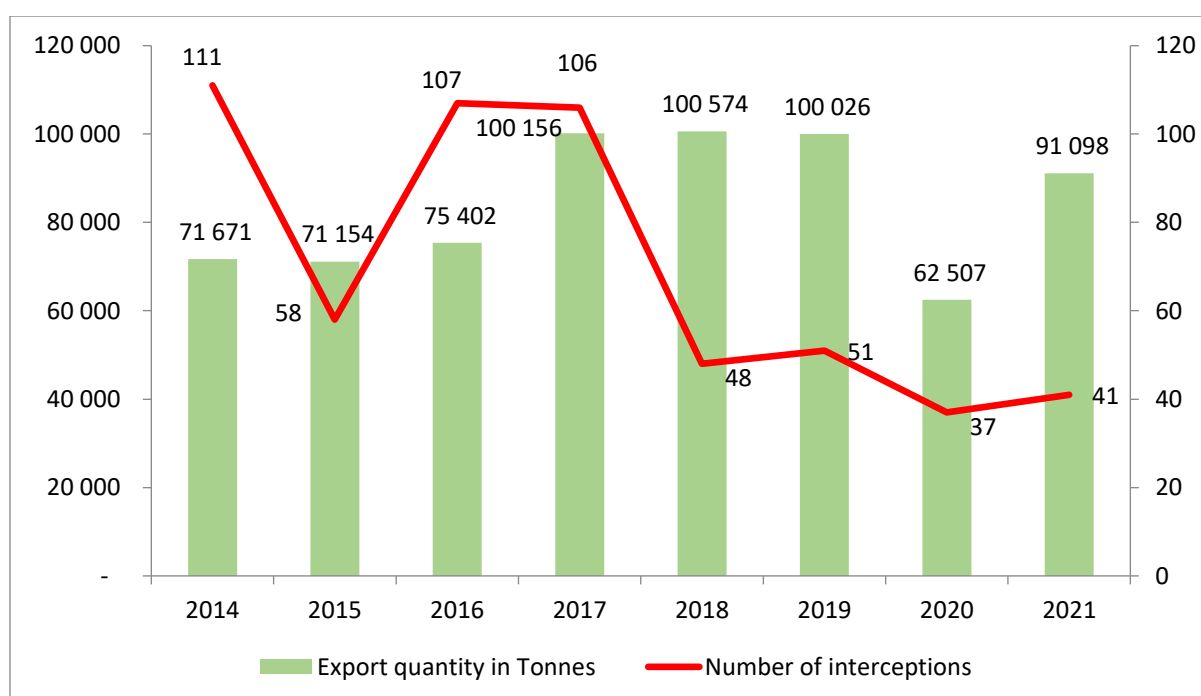
Specifically, it is :

- SO.1: Strengthen regional and national research systems, as well as their coordination, to provide producers with efficient, low-impact control techniques; and
- SO 2: Control losses on fruit and vegetables due to infestation by phytophagous insects, particularly fruit flies, by strengthening the structure of the sector at national and regional levels and by an operational and sustainable monitoring and alert system.

SyRIMAO officially started on 1 September 2020. The coordination team took office on 15 December 2020,

Although in the three years 2017, 2018 and 2019, the effects of the PLMF project were already visible through the increase in exports in the region, in 2020 they fell sharply by more than 37% compared to the 2019 season. The number of interceptions has decreased to 37 by the end of 2020 and 41 in 2021.

Figure 3 Evolution of mango exports in tonnes to the EU borders



Source: Based on PLMF project data, 2020

In 2021, the main achievements of the Syrimao are:

Research-Action-Development (RAD) component

- The Technical Committee (TC) has been set up and held its first session to validate the research protocols;
- The five (5) selected research protocols are validated;
- The diagnosis of the entomological laboratory of the CNS-FL is made and the report shared with the administration of the CNS-FL;
- The NSC-FL has met one (1) of the seven (7) performance criteria (regionalisation) to become a centre of excellence;

- One (1) better control option under researcher management is formulated into a finished product and tested in the field.

Component Support to National Public-Private Coordination Structures (NSC)

- Three (3) of the four (4) new countries have completed the procedures for joining the project (Liberia, Niger and Sierra Leone) and 14 out of 15 countries have joined the project (via the signature of their Grant Agreement with ECOWAS) of which 13 have received their first instalment;
- Capacity building on new administrative and accounting procedures and monitoring and evaluation of the project management team in Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone and Senegal are carried out;
- An inventory of partnership opportunities between mango inter-branch organisations and input suppliers is made. A strategy is developed for the implementation of a sustainable financing mechanism for the sector and access to inputs and shared with the National Committees;
- Capacity building for 106 staff of POs, DPVs and border post agents (Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Niger) is carried out;
- The Burkina Faso mango interprofession is supported in the process of setting up a compulsory financial contribution (CFO);
- Two (2) countries (Guinea and Benin) are supported in the development of a roadmap for the structuring of their mango sector.

Surveillance-Watch-Early Warning (SVE) component

- Three (3) countries (Senegal, Mali and Guinea) continued non-stop surveillance with the support of the States and/or with the support of COLEACP during the mango export season;
- Training of super-users from Mali, Guinea, Senegal and The Gambia is carried out;
- Monitoring equipment is being acquired.

Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation (CME) component

- Development, validation and provision of the new project management and procedure manual to the National Committees;
- Validation of the communication plan;
- The organisation of the official launch ceremony of SyRIMAO in Lomé, both virtually and face-to-face;

I.5.2.2. West Africa Livestock Marketing Support Programme (PACBAO)

The Programme to Support Livestock Marketing in West Africa (PACBAO) in ECOWAS Member States is the operational arm of the regional component of PRIDEC and supports regional public action centred on PRIASAN. It is within this framework that the Swiss Confederation has signed a financing agreement of CFAF 2,996,000,000 for a period of 4 years (2018-2021), with ECOWAS to finance a "Support to the reinforcement of the capacities of the ECOWAS Commission for the implementation of the Regional Component of the Regional Investment and Livestock Programme in Coastal Countries (PRIDEC) within the framework of ECOWAP 2025" for the period 2017-2021. The overall objective of the Programme is to develop competitive, regional and inclusive livestock-meat value chains, by enhancing the value of West African pastoral and agropastoral livestock, integrating herders and pastoralists into these value chains under remunerative conditions, and satisfying household demand for meat in the region.

In the course of the year 2021, the project allowed:

At the level of component 1:

- the strengthening of the institutional and operational capacities of ECOWAS, in particular the Regional Animal Health Centre, the Regional Agriculture and Food Agency (RAAF) and the ECOWAS Directorate of Agriculture and Development (DADR), through the recruitment of experts since 2019: seven staff (including a veterinary governance expert, an animal disease surveillance expert at the RAHC, an accountant all made available to the RAHC, and an accountant, support for monitoring-evaluation, project support and communication at the RAAF). With the support of the project, the organisational and operational capacities of the

CRSA, RAAF and DADR have been strengthened. Also, the project has enabled the participation of FOs in regional consultations on livestock and pastoralism issues.

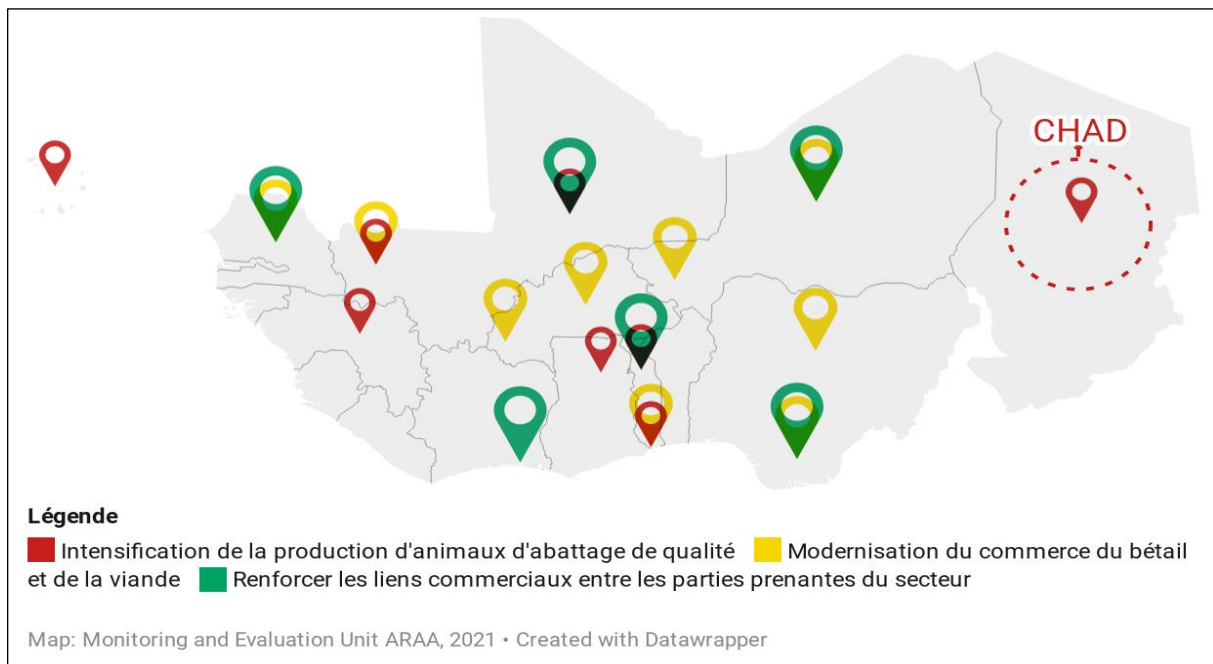
For component 2, COFENABVI-AO has set itself six (06) main challenges:

- Improving the business environment and governance of the livestock-meat sector;
- Improving the competitiveness of products in the value chain;
- Enlargement and consolidation of COFENABVI's institutional and organisational base (extension and partnerships);
- Consolidation of COFENABVI's position in the various forums for dialogue and decision-making in the ECOWAS region and throughout Africa;
- Increased visibility of COFENABVI-AO and national member organisations;
- Strengthening organisational, institutional and managerial capacity through equitable access to information, training and the development of an effective communication system.

During the year 2021, the main achievements are:

- In terms of strengthening COFENABVI's organisational, institutional and managerial capacities, we note: (1) the holding of two sessions of the board of directors (2) the organisational diagnosis of four national federations (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal and Togo), (3) the animation of the website, (4) the increase in the federations' capacities for advocacy, negotiation and networking
- As part of the improvement of the market environment for livestock/meat products and the supply of animal and meat products, actors from Togo and Benin benefited from training on livestock trade and conflict resolution; the federations of these countries carried out a census of actors operating on the markets, while the market management committees received tools to better participate in market management; Young people and women from Burkina Faso, Ghana, The Gambia and Senegal have received technical training in the field of cattle and sheep fattening, meat cutting in order to improve the value of carcasses and the hygiene of meat and meat products; COFENABVI-AO is well advanced in the process of validating its 2022 - 2026 strategic plan
- Overall, the partnership with the SDC, particularly through the implementation of PACBAO, has led to a significant improvement in the governance of COFENABVI AO: the staff of the permanent secretariat has been strengthened, the accounts and bookkeeping rigorously respect the procedures and good practices in the field, many grassroots actors have received professional training, and COFENABVI is more visible.

Under Component 3, the implementation of 16 pilot projects resulting from the call for projects on the marketing of livestock meat was pursued for a grant of USD 3,098,384, which allowed the signing of grant agreements and the start-up of these projects during the first quarter of 2021. These 16 pilot projects include 11 national ECOWAS projects, one Chad project and 3 regional projects covering several countries. The 4 ECOWAS Member States that did not benefit from any project are: Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone. The projects combine their interventions at 3 levels: i) intensification of the production of quality slaughter animals, ii) modernisation of the livestock and meat trade, iii) strengthening of business links between actors along the chain. The capitalisation of good practices from these pilot projects will enable ECOWAS to develop programmes for scaling up the pilot projects in order to have a considerable impact on the lives of the actors in the sector and the West African populations.



At the level of Theme 1: Intensification of quality meat production in Cape Verde (AAN)-Guinea (RADIG)-Chad (AEN)-Ghana (GDCA)-Mali (CRA)-Togo (FENAPFIBVITO), the main achievements are i) the training of actors on fodder production and packaging techniques, (i) training of stakeholders on fodder production, packaging, conservation and use of fodder, methods of collecting fresh and dry crop residues, their conservation and enrichment for use as cattle feed, fatteners, breeding nuclei



At the level of Thematic 2: Modernisation of the livestock and meat trade in Burkina Faso (CAEASA & RECOPA)-Niger (PIK & IP/BVCP)-Nigeria (NANTS)-Togo (FENAPFIBVITO)-Mali (AMEDD)-Senegal (CNMDE), the main focus was on negotiations for the release of livestock tracks and grazing areas, the conduct of procurement processes (construction, equipment, etc.) through the purchase of trade modernisation equipment



In Theme 3: Strengthening business linkages between actors along the chain in Mali (CRA)-Nigeria (NANTS)-Togo (VSF)-Cote d'ivoire (FENACOFBVI)-Niger (IP/BVCP)-Senegal (CNMDE), the main

achievements are facilitating market access, developing new ways of marketing high value-added meat products, and addressing under-exploited consumer segments



A capacity building workshop for the selected project leaders was organised from 22 to 26 February 2021 in Agbelouvé, Togo, as part of the launching of the pilot projects selected through the call for project proposals

This workshop was an opportunity to officially launch the start of the field projects, to strengthen the technical capacities of the project implementers and to allow for a fluid exchange of information between the ARAA, Swiss Cooperation, Backstopping (Cabinet ICI) and the field project implementers.

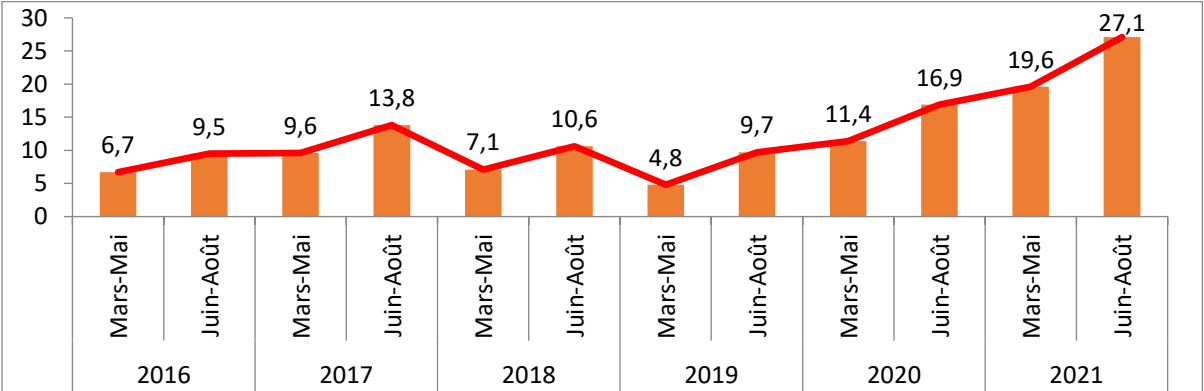
After the start of the projects, in accordance with the monitoring and evaluation system, preliminary evaluation missions were organised in the beneficiary countries with the 16 project leaders. These evaluations made it possible to assess the technical, operational and administrative capacities of the project leaders and to ensure that all of the provisions necessary for the proper implementation of the project were in place. The evaluations also made it possible to formulate recommendations.

I.5.3. SO3. "Improve food and nutrition security and resilience of vulnerable populations".

The analysis of the Harmonised Framework (current situation October-December) of the food and nutrition situation shows that the ECOWAS region, including Chad and Mauritania, is increasingly experiencing food insecurity problems. This food situation is the result of climatic, socio-economic, security and health shocks.

In order to respond to the increasingly worrying food and nutrition situation, the establishment of response instruments such as social safety nets and food security reserves is becoming more necessary.

Figure 5 Evolution of the food insecure population (Phase 3+) current situation (current situation October-December)



Source: Based on RPCA data, SWAC, 2020

In relation to specific objective 3, improving food and nutrition security and the resilience of vulnerable populations, projects have been developed and entrusted to the RAAA.

I.5.3.1. ECOWAS Regional Agricultural Policy Support Project, ECOWAP/PDDAAA

Through a memorandum signed in 2014 between ECOWAS and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), ECOWAS has benefited from a 5 million euro funding from the Spanish Cooperation for the implementation of the Regional Agricultural Policy Support Project (ECOWAP/SADCP) within the framework of the operationalisation of the Regional Programme to Support National Social Security Nets in West Africa (PRAFNSS). ECOWAS co-financing of 10% of the costs of direct transfers to field projects in the area of social safety nets and AECID support have made it possible to finance 19 innovative actions in the 15 member states in the area of social safety nets, the implementation of which covered the period 2015-2021.

These pilot projects have reached more than 53,000 direct beneficiaries, 62% of whom are women, children and the vulnerable population, through the following instruments.

- (i) Food distribution, child development and access to social services;
- (ii) Development of rural households' primary source of income and food security;
- (iii) Improving livelihoods and resilience;
- (iv) The development and testing of targeting methods.

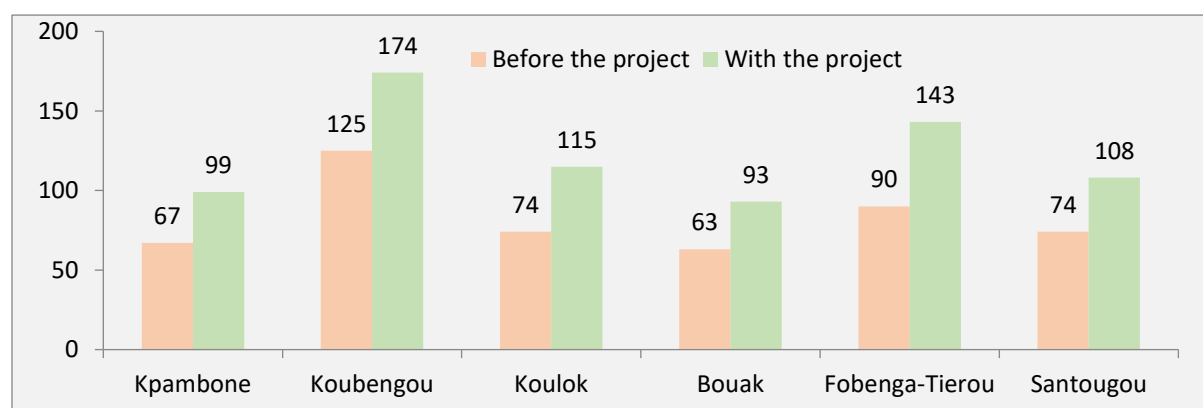
From the analysis of social safety net instruments capitalised and shared during an international seminar on social safety nets held from 19 to 23 November 2021 online and face-to-face in Ouagadougou and attended by 530 people from national and international structures in charge of social safety nets/social protection, it emerged that the one on school canteens received general attention and should be the priority for future interventions on the scaling up of social protection and human capital development.

Indeed, the school canteen models implemented based on the development pillars (integration of education, health/nutrition and agriculture) have led to an improvement in school indicators:

- In Togo, the school canteen pilot project carried out by the NGO Code-Utile has improved enrolment in beneficiary schools (+48% for girls and +22% for boys). Overall, enrolment in all beneficiary schools increased by 34%, the absence rate in schools was reduced and the overall rate of progression to the next grade improved by 14 percentage points.
- In Guinea, the school feeding experimented by the NGO RADIG in the prefectures of N'Zerekoré, Macebta, Lola and Yomou has also led to an improvement in school indicators in the beneficiary schools (an increase in the enrolment rate and a success rate of 10 percentage points).

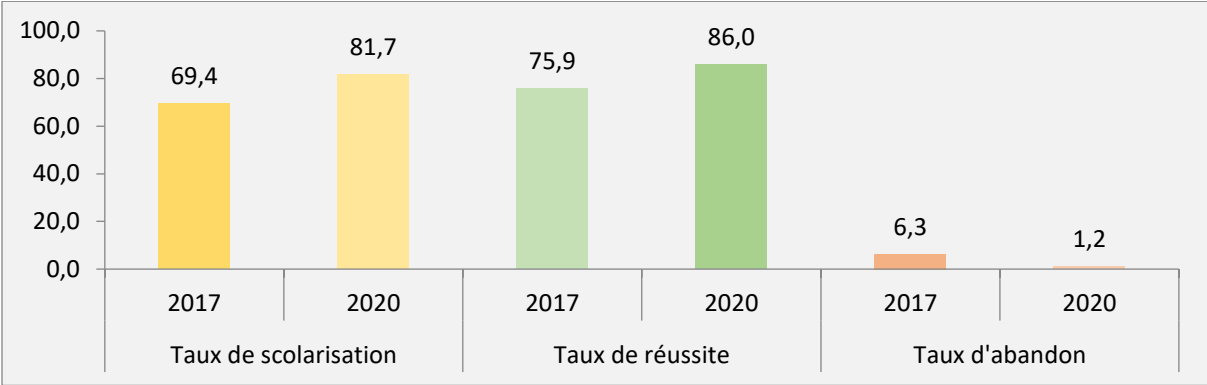
These tangible results on potential human capital led ECOWAS and AECID to agree to continue and consolidate the achievements of the pilot phase by formulating a phase 2 of the project which will focus on an integrated school feeding model at an overall cost of 4 million euros.

Graph 1: Evolution of the number of schools benefiting from school canteens in Togo



In Guinea, the school feeding experimented by the NGO RADIG in the prefectures of N'Zerekoré, Macebta, Lola and Yomou has also helped improve school indicators in the beneficiary schools.

Figure 1: Average enrolment, completion and drop-out rates in beneficiary schools in Guinea



These tangible results of their tangible impact on potential human capital led ECOWAS and AECID to agree to continue and consolidate the achievements of the pilot phase by formulating a phase 2 of the project, which will focus on an innovative school feeding model combining agricultural hydraulics (solar powered water tower) to provide drinking water to school children, the development of agroecological vegetable gardens and livestock farming to enrich the canteens with animal protein.

I.5.3.2. The West Africa Food Security Storage Project (ECOWAS Stocks Project)

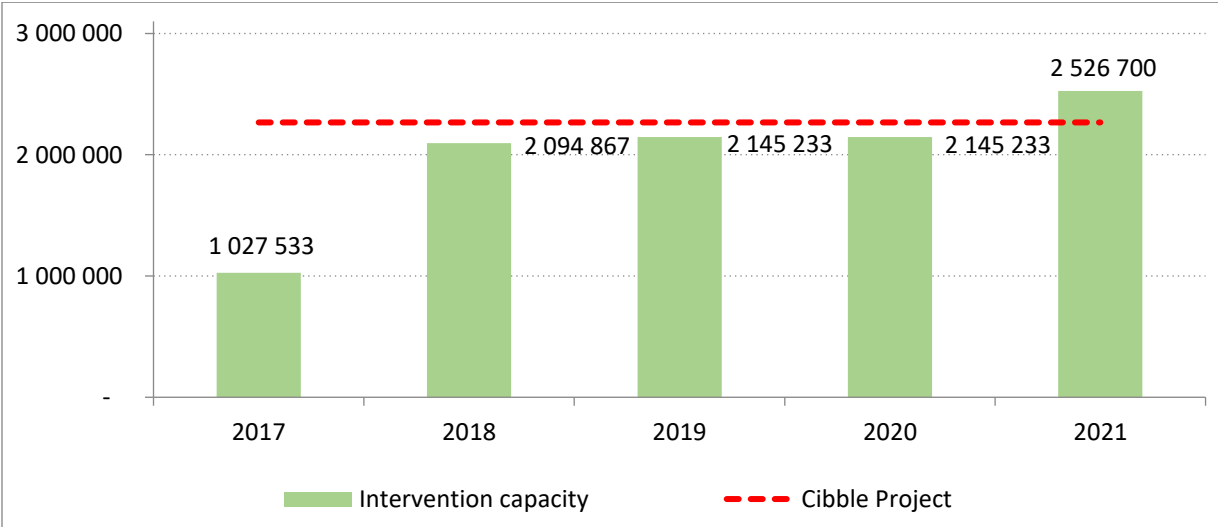
The project is funded by the European Union to the tune of 56 million euros. The duration of the project is planned for 5 years and the project team started work between December 2015 and February 2016. Its objective is to contribute to an effective response to food crises and to strengthen household resilience for sustainable regional food security and sovereignty, through the promotion of emergency food reserve systems at different scales.

Thanks to the financial support of the European Union through the 56 million euros West Africa Food Security Storage Support Project, the ECOWAS Commission has started the operationalisation of the Regional Food Security Reserve, which is materialised by the establishment of the governance and management bodies of the RFSR as well as the procedures related to its functioning.

The main results achieved are:

The Regional Food Security Reserve is functional and has the tools and governance mechanisms to respond to food and nutrition emergencies with a capital of 36,008.77 tonnes. This capacity allows it to cover the emergency needs (for one month) of more than 2,500,000 people, which represents 111% of the project target and 63% of the PRIASAN target (4 million people).

Figure 6 Intervention capacity of the regional food security reserve (covering at least one month of emergency needs of the vulnerable population)

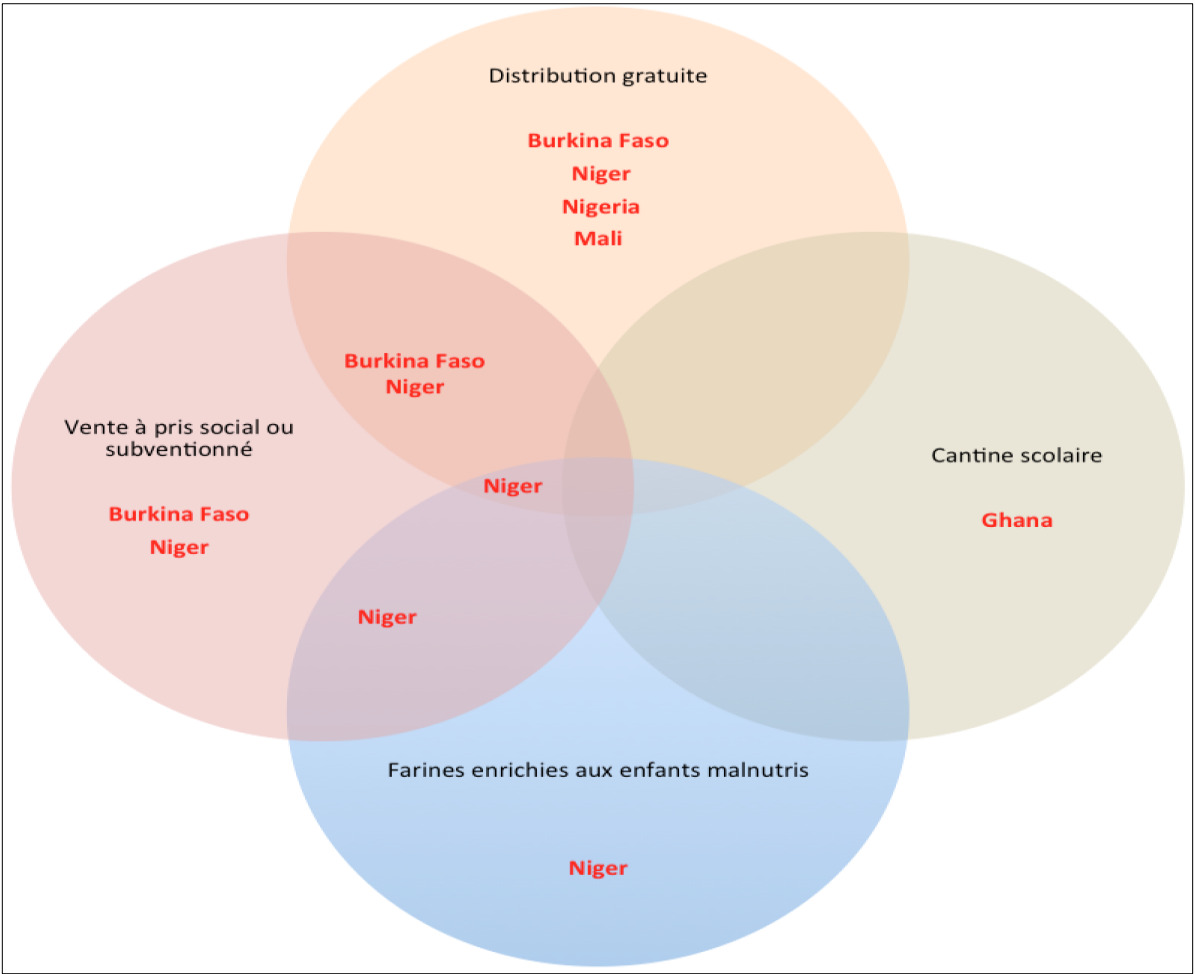


This intervention capacity has enabled 10 interventions in the framework of the implementation of the countries' national response plans. The RRSA's products have made it possible to implement several social safety net instruments for the benefit of the food insecure population (Phase 3 and beyond of the CH). These include sales at moderate or subsidised prices (-30 to -40% of average prices) in Burkina Faso and Niger, free distribution to the vulnerable population in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria, assistance to malnourished children in Niger and support to school canteens in Ghana.

The following table shows the different interventions of the reserve in the different food and nutrition crisis situations in the countries (quantity in tons)

Country	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Burkina Faso	-	4 303	-	954		5 257
Mali	-		2 856	793	7 372	11 021
Niger	-	6 528	-	678 of which 205 enriched flours	7 599	14 805
Nigeria	1 130		5 000	3 999		10 129
S/total	1 130	10 831	7 856	6 424		41 212

The Venn diagram shows the status of use by countries by type of social safety net instrument used.
 Figure 7 Modalities of intervention with vulnerable populations by RRSA beneficiary countries



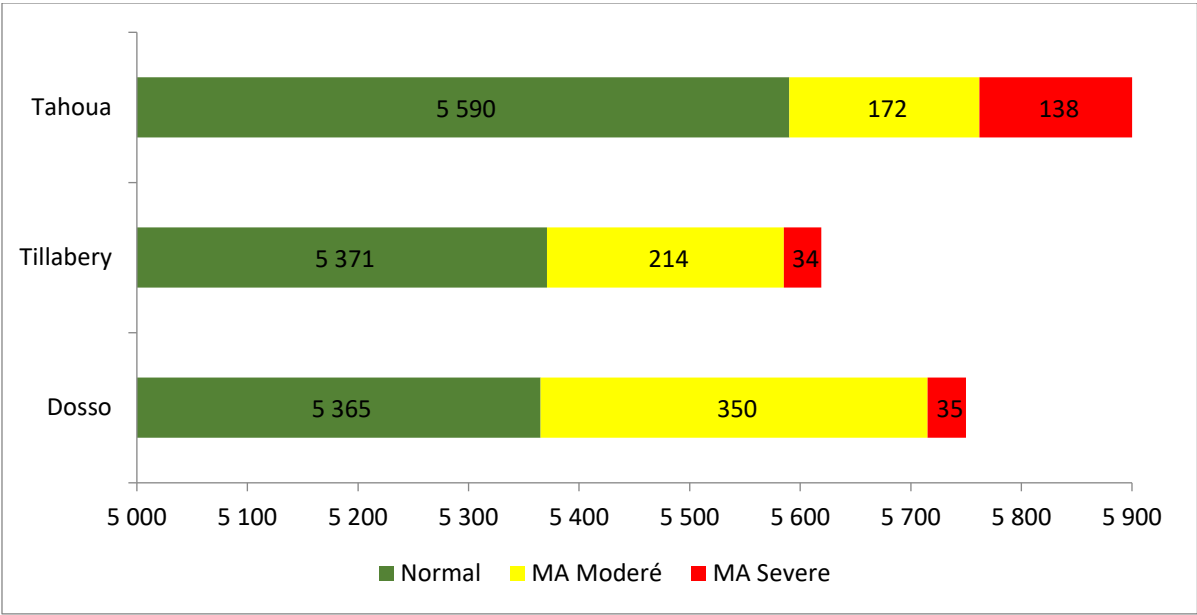
An evaluation of the effects of the interventions (in the form of cereals and nutritional products) of the Regional Food Security Reserve in the beneficiary countries conducted by ECOWAS is underway and will make it possible to identify, in addition to the effects obtained, the specific assets and difficulties linked to

the implementation of RRSA support to the National Response Plans, the importance of RRSA intervention in the NRPs, targeting, financing of the implementation of the intervention (transport, distribution, etc.), visibility/communication, the monitoring and evaluation mechanism implemented by the countries, etc.

The distribution of 205 tonnes of enriched flour in the three regions of Niger (Dosso, Tillabery and Tahoua) where malnutrition is very high enabled 17,269 children aged between 6 and 23 months (58% boys and 48% girls) to be treated over a period of two months, at the rate of one distribution session per month of 6 kg per child.

The operation identified 736 children aged between 6 and 23 months at risk of moderate acute malnutrition (4.26%) and 207 at risk of severe acute malnutrition. The latter were all referred to health facilities according to the management protocol in Niger: "Any child detected in red by the brachial perimeter must be referred to a health facility to receive medical care in addition to the specific notional treatment.

The graph below shows the number of children by brachial perimeter area:



With regard to the development of national storage strategies to be finalised in 2021 (16 out of 17 countries), the project has enabled the countries to once again situate the role of food security storage in the prevention and management of food and nutrition crises and in reducing the vulnerability of populations. After a diagnostic analysis of the food and storage situation, the countries projected themselves to 2025 for the reinforcement of security storage in their policy or strategy, in particular through

- Improving technical stock management operations (conservation, marketing and capacity building of actors);
- Increase storage capacity (physical stock, financial stock and storage infrastructure);
- Promotion of social safety nets (social price sales, free distribution, etc.)
- Strengthening logistics (transport for storage and distribution);
- Improving the information and communication system;
- Strengthening national response or support plans and instruments for the prevention and management of natural disasters and food crises;
- Improving governance (legal, institutional, organisational framework).

At the level of local stocks, with a view to strengthening the capacities of POs, ECOWAS produced in 2020 a local storage memorandum, a charter and a multi-stakeholder framework for local storage to (i) strengthen the capacities of stock managers; (ii) disseminate best practices; (iii) build a framework for

dialogue with national and regional storage institutions, particularly with a view to contractualising relations between the various "lines of defence". They will make it possible to launch the training cycle for local stock managers (regional training of trainers able to provide training in the 17 countries; e-learning platform).

In terms of rapid and appropriate decision-making, based on reliable and independent information, to mobilise the food reserve system to respond to food and nutrition crises, during the period, the project enabled ECOWAS and CILSS to strengthen the harmonised food and nutrition situation analysis tool (the Harmonised Framework). Today, the region and all 17 countries have vulnerability maps on the basis of which countries develop and implement their national response plans to curb the effects of crises. Each year, the tool makes it possible to estimate the population (current and projected) in the food insecurity phase (phase 3 and above), which makes it possible to plan responses.

At the regional level, the information from the CH analyses feeds into the dialogue within the RPCA and enables humanitarian actors and states to plan their interventions. It also feeds into the various decision support notes drawn up by the Stocks Information Unit to inform the decisions of the Management Committee. These decision support notes have enabled appropriate interventions by the RRSA in support of the NRPs of countries (Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria) facing food and nutrition crises over the period 2018-2021.

The decision support notes of the info stock unit enabled the RRSA's interventions during the project implementation period. The RRSA Management Committee took all its decisions (purchases, interventions, technical rotation) on the basis of the analyses and recommendations made in the technical notes of the Info-Stock Unit, which were deemed highly satisfactory by the members of the Management Committee or the Executive Board.

I.5.3.3. The pilot project to support local integration and economic empowerment of women through the establishment of cross-border market gardens between Togo and Benin

Within the framework of the implementation of its regional agricultural policy, ECOWAS is benefiting from funding from the German Cooperation (GIZ) for the implementation of a pilot project to support local integration and the economic empowerment of women through the establishment of cross-border market gardens between Togo and Benin.

This project aims to build a hydro-agricultural infrastructure including two boreholes equipped with solar panels and the development of market gardening sites in a pair of villages on the Togo-Benin border. Among the activities already completed are (i) the project launch workshop involving the national management committees of the Togo and Benin border areas, (ii) the identification of beneficiary villages by the national management committees of the Togo and Benin border areas and (iii) the recruitment of the service provider for the construction of the works. The sites of N'Djakata village (Benin) with an area of 4,496 ha and Doloudè (Togo) with an area of about 5 ha were identified in a participatory manner with all project stakeholders.

This project follows on from the capitalisation of the Socio-Economic Development Programme of the Burkina Faso-Ghana Onchocerciasis Free Zone (OFZ), which aimed to establish, on an experimental basis, a cross-border mechanism enabling cross-border communities in the onchocerciasis free zones of Burkina Faso and Ghana to elaborate consensual development plans for their cross-border territories, to execute them together without taking into account the borders that separate them in order to promote the socio-economic development of their localities, under the aegis of ECOWAS, within the framework of integrated development, poverty reduction and regional food security.

I.5.4. SO4: "Improve the business environment, governance and financing mechanisms of the agricultural and agri-food sector"

Agriculture is a key sector in the economies of West African countries and in household consumption. With a growing population and diverse needs in the face of the effects of climate change and globalisation,

states are stepping up their efforts to improve the business environment, governance and financing mechanisms of the agricultural and agri-food sector.

Within the framework of improving the business environment, governance and financing mechanisms of the agricultural and agri-food sector, ECOWAS has undertaken the formulation and implementation of projects and programmes in addition to the operationalisation of the regional fund:

I.5.4.1. The Regional Support Programme for Professional and Farmers' Organisations in the framework of the implementation of the West African Agricultural Policy (PRAOP/ECOWAP)

After the implementation of phase 2 of the programme, phase 3 of the PRAOP focuses on a very important issue for the West African region, namely, the creation of gainful employment for young people (men and women) in the agri-food value chains, especially that of local milk. Some studies show that the regional labour market offers only 900,000 jobs to the three million (3,000,000) young people who enter it each year. This programme will help reduce the chronic underemployment of young people and protect them from the disillusionment that pushes them towards rural exodus, uncontrolled emigration and membership of criminal groups. Furthermore, the action will contribute to the improvement of financing in the agroforestry sector, given the probable contribution of the young people inserted into the sector to the increase in domestic savings.

The programme focuses mainly on the local milk value chain, which is likely to provide concrete employment opportunities without being the only outlet for young people. Indeed, the local milk value chain has significant potential based on: a large herd, with a significant margin for improving genetic potential and the existence of pastures whose optimal development would allow extensive systems, the main suppliers of milk in the region, to strengthen their productive performance. To this must be added the evolution of eating habits in connection with urbanisation and the rise in living standards, as well as the community's commitment to strongly increasing intra-regional trade in agro-food products through the ECOWAS Local Milk Offensive.

The overall objective of phase 3 is to contribute to reducing rural exodus and uncontrolled youth emigration through their professional insertion in the agro-sylvopastoral and halieutic sectors and in the agri-food value chains in West Africa and Chad.

The specific objective is to improve access of young people (men and women) to decent and remunerative jobs in the local milk value chains in the targeted areas through initiatives led by ECOWAS, the States, socio-professional agricultural organisations and the private sector.

At the end of the programme's implementation, the following results should be achieved:

- Decent and remunerative employment opportunities for young people (men and women) in the local milk sector have increased, thanks to the pilot projects;
- The technical and economic performance of local milk value chains is improved, through increased productivity and milk production of livestock systems, increased volumes of milk collected and processed, and improved market access for local dairy products;
- The conditions for the emergence of efficient local milk value chains that provide employment for young people are improved;
- Funding for PROs' mobilising programmes on youth employability is strengthened
- **technical-economic models for strengthening the employability of young people in the local milk value chain are developed;**
- Young people's abilities to integrate into the technical and economic models of local milk value chains are strengthened, and
- ECOWAS/DADR's organisational capacities are strengthened: strategic steering, resource mobilisation, project implementation.

I.5.4.2. The Integrated and Secure Livestock and Pastoralism Programme in West Africa (PEPISAO)

The project is a continuation of the activities implemented by the World Bank in West Africa within the framework of the Pastoralism and Stability in the Sahel and Horn of Africa (PASSHA) project, and complements the various initiatives in the region in terms of support to livestock and pastoralism. It is implemented in the 15 ECOWAS countries, Mauritania and Chad, for a total duration of 4 years. Specifically, PEPISAO aims to: i) Support a multi-stakeholder dialogue at different levels of governance and encourage innovations; ii) Capitalise, exchange and disseminate initiatives in conflict prevention and management; iii) Build a shared regional vision of ruminant livestock and contribute to the renegotiation of regulatory frameworks.

Under Component 1: "Implementing approaches (tools and capacity building) for conflict prevention and management in identified areas", the main activities implemented are

- Finalisation of the guide to conflict prevention, management and transformation;
 - Training of some 40 magistrates and defence and security force officers on the sensitivity of conflicts over access to resources
 - Organisation of two consultations between POs and RPOs of the Sahelian and coastal countries on the management of pastoralism and transhumance for the purpose of documenting endogenous good practices in conflict prevention and management;
- The Launch of the process of operationalising the observatory of mobile livestock systems in West Africa and the Sahel.

Under Component 2: "Capitalising, exchanging and disseminating initiatives in the field of conflict prevention and management", the main activities implemented concern

- Elaboration of an informative directory of agreements and regulations related to pastoralism in West African and Sahelian states based on twelve (12) criteria;
- Capacity building for some 60 community radio journalists on sensitivity to conflicts over access to natural resources;
- Improving the visibility of the Project through the publication of periodic newsletters.

Under Component 3: "Leading the process of developing the shared regional vision and renegotiating regulatory frameworks", the main activities implemented are

- Finalisation of the study on the socio-economic impacts of mobile livestock systems ;
- Finalisation of three prospective notes on the future of mobile livestock systems;
- Support for the organisation of high-level consultations for a peaceful transhumance ;
- Support to PROs to launch the process of internalising the milk offensive, DADR and CAERE receive various forms of assistance in monitoring livestock-related activities and other concerns..

I.5.4.3. Regional support project for pastoralism in the Sahel (PRAPS)

PRAPS sub-component 1.2: Regional policy integration, regulatory harmonisation and country coordination in animal health management is supported by the RAHC to provide strategic and policy support for regional integration in animal health.

This sub-component is responsible for the following activities: (i) supporting the activities of the regional and sub-regional networks, RESEPI and RESOLAB, (ii) coordinating joint cross-border vaccination campaigns, (iii) preparing NSPs for the eradication of PPR, the control of CBPP in the sub-region, (iv) improving communication and technical exchanges between the Veterinary Services of ECOWAS and UEMOA member countries (v) regional integration of animal health and welfare regulations and sanitary rules for trade between ECOWAS member countries, (vi) strategic commitment to the quality of veterinary medicines and the fight against antibiotic resistance, (vii) human capital development, and (viii) geo-referencing of animal health infrastructures and equipment.

For the implementation of this component, an agreement was signed between the ECOWAS Commission and CILSS on 28 July 2021, the date of entry into force, for a period of six years.

Activities carried out in 2021 and results

Apart from the dated legal provisions related to entry into force, the project implementation activities relate to the following

- The recruitment by the RAAF of the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) staff at the ASRC, namely the coordinator, the technical expert and the accountant is underway. The deadline for applications was 20 December 2021;
- The PTBA for the year 2022 was developed and presented during the World Bank's virtual support mission for PRAPS 2 in December 2021.

I.5.4.4. The regional fund for agriculture and food

It has already been allocated about US\$ 4 million exclusively from the community levy in order to serve as a lever for the mobilisation of external resources from donors. The tools developed by EBID (business plan, procedure manual, resource mobilisation strategy) are being validated with a view to organising a business meeting scheduled for the end of March 2022 to mobilise resources from donors for financing the agricultural sector. In 2022, this Fund will finance pilot projects of the West Africa Initiative for Climate Smart Agriculture and Resilient Supply Chains (WAICSA) in 15 West African countries for which the RAAA will provide technical assistance. This is a blended funding mechanism that will be implemented with a particular focus on climate smart agriculture. WAICSA comprises two facilities: (i) the Financing Facility (minimum 80% of the fund) provides loans, guarantees and equity investments, to smallholder farmers, smallholder organisations and agro-entrepreneurs, directly and through local financial institutions and (ii) the Technical Assistance Facility (up to 20% of the fund) is financed by grants and subsidies from ECOWAS and donors. Financial intermediaries are currently being recruited in the Member States.

As a reminder, in terms of impacts, WAICSA is expected to contribute to improved agricultural yields, socio-economic well-being and climate resilience of smallholder farmers. Depending on the climate-smart agriculture practices implemented, the Fund can convert 185,000 hectares of agricultural land, reaching 90,000 households and contributing to climate change mitigation and ecosystem adaptation.

I.5.4.5. Other ECOWAS capacity building initiatives

Other initiatives have contributed to the strengthening of ECOWAS capacities in policy formulation and monitoring and evaluation at regional and national levels. These include the following initiatives:

- Support to the FIRST project (Impact, Sustainability, and Transformation for Food and Nutrition Security) - TCP/FAO/ Financing FAO;
- Preparation and monitoring facility for livestock development projects within the framework of PRIDEC (FAPS)/AFD financing;
- Strengthening the monitoring and impact analysis of COVID on food security (TCP-FAO) /Funding FAO;
- AfDB support to the launch of the Detailed Strategic Framework for the Development of a Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector (CSD DPAD) / AfDB financing;
- Programme to support the improvement of governance for resilience and food and nutrition security PAGR SANAD; EU funding;

I. FOLLOW-UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS

During the project and programme steering committees coordinated by the RAAF and its steering committee in March 2021, the main recommendations made to the IGOs and their partners mainly concerned the coordination and operationalisation of the RFSR.

To date, 20 are in progress, 4 not completed and 22 fully completed.

Table 3 Status of implementation of recommendations to ECOWAS

Recommendations	Status	Comment
1. Make arrangements for the proper management of stocks beyond May 2021 and pending the mobilisation of new funding to continue supporting the regional food security storage strategy	Realized	Approval by ECOWAS bodies in the RAAF budget of the current costs of stock management in the countries and operation of the RRSA
2. Work to better coordinate the various interventions;	In progress	Implementation of thematic committees, thematic consultations between projects
3. Anticipate and begin to reflect prospectively on the evolution of the RAAF and its functioning;	In progress	SWOT analysis of the RAAF and development of its strategic plan, Performance, Administrative and Accounting Audit 2018, 2019 and 2020
4. Improve the quality of steering committee management to enable projects to show how they contribute to the expectations of the sub-region;	In progress	Conducting STCs in December to allow more time for the thematic committee and for projects to show how they contribute to the policy (outline developed)
5. Continue the capacity building work of the implementing actors, move towards certification or accreditation of these actors in line with the RAAF's mandate;	In progress	Capacity building of actors through PAs, e.g. PASANAO: The QSI company which benefited from the micro-dosers was able to supply 205 tons of nutritional products to ECOWAS
6. Identify new actors to increase and improve the RAAF's intervention capacity;	In progress	Several partnerships have been established: EAP, FSS
7. Make available the audit reports in order to strengthen transparency and satisfy the contractual clauses between ECOWAS and the TFPs;	Realized	The audit reports were forwarded to the ECOWAP Donors' Group
8. Hold project and programme steering committees as soon as possible (in February) and engage in an inclusive reflection with the TFPs on an effective and efficient format for thematic committees	Realized	The steering committees of the projects and programmes are held from 1 to 11 February after an inclusive reflection with the TFPs
9. While waiting for the institutional reform to be completed, particularly on the RRSA, it was recommended that the partners accompany ECOWAS in the implementation of an interim phase of the RRSA support project to preserve the achievements of phase 1 and the formulation of a phase 2 of the food security storage support project in West Africa	Realized	Approval by ECOWAS bodies in the RAAF budget of the current costs of stock management in the countries and operation of the RFSR

II. MAIN CHALLENGES

- Security crisis affecting agricultural production
- Climate change a growing concern
- The health crisis
- The corollary of the above-mentioned crises on food and nutrition security (more than 33.4 million food insecure people (June-August 2022))
- Establishment of response instruments: FRAA, RFSR and FSS
- Insufficient operational staff

III. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Auditor General's audit made the following recommendations:

- Strengthen the operational capacity of staff at all levels;
- Staffing the posts not yet filled in accordance with the new organisation chart of the RAAF and the Lomé service pool whose internal services (Finance, Administration, IT) are shared with the other ECOWAS agencies and representations;
-