



Food Across Borders:

Improving Food Security Through Regional Trade In West Africa

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Accra, Ghana



USAID | **WEST AFRICA**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Conference Proceedings

► English version

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► Acronym List

AAFEX	Association Africa Agro Export
ATP	Agribusiness and Trade Promotion Project
CET	Common External Tariff
CIC-B	<i>Comité Interprofessionnel des Céréales au Burkina Faso</i>
CILSS	<i>Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel</i>
CIR-B	<i>Comité Interprofessionnel du Riz du Burkina</i>
COFENABVI AO	<i>Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail/Viande des Pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest</i>
CPC-Togo	Cereal Producers' Confederation of Togo
CTA	Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
EDCPM	European Center for Development Policy Management
ECOWAS	ECOWAS Agricultural Policy
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ETLS	ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations)
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FUPRO	Federation of Producers' Unions of Benin
GNP	Gross national product
GRIB	Ghana Rice Inter-Professional Body
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IRTG	Improved Road Transport Governance Project
LARES	Laboratory for Regional Analysis and Social Expertise
MELS	<i>Meunerie et Emballage de Légumes Secs</i>
MIS	Market information systems
NAFASO	Neema Agricole du Faso
OPA	<i>Observatoire des Pratiques Anormales</i> (Road Transport Observatory)
ROPFA	Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa
RECAO	West African Agricultural Chambers Network (Réseau des Chambres d'Agriculture de l'Afrique de l'Ouest)
SPS	Sanitary/phytosanitary
WAEMU	<i>Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine</i>
UOFA AO	Union of Poultry Industry Organizations of West Africa
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value-added tax
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WAGN	West African Grains NetworkIntroduction

► Introduction

West Africa's trading environment remains in many ways inhospitable to regional trade in locally produced staple commodities. Obstacles inhibiting the free movement of staple commodities include seasonal bans and restrictions, export permits, irregular acceptance of phytosanitary and other certificates, and corruption at checkpoints. Freer trade would boost food security by allowing staples to move easily from supply to deficit areas and would generate income for the region's farmers as they find wider markets for their products. Better trade conditions would also eventually reduce informal, "unofficial" trade, leading to more professional value chains and improved ability by governments to track potential revenues and understand production and food security situations.

Evidence worldwide tells us that investing in agriculture—which now accounts for only 35 percent of West African gross domestic product but employs 60 percent of its population—is the best approach for generating sustained and rapid pro-poor growth. Given West Africa's diversity of agro-ecologies, regional trade has always been important for the region's population to meet its food security needs; in fact, West Africa is a region of countries that are interdependent on each other for food security. In 1990, the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) was fully launched to support further integration of the West African states through free movement of goods and persons across the region.

Now, in 2013, food security and economic growth, two keystones of resilience, will be realized only if constraints to free movement of the region's staple commodities—livestock, maize, millet, sorghum, cowpea, onions, and others—are lifted. Producers must be able to take advantage of markets across borders, consumers must be able to buy food transported efficiently and at low cost, and processors must be able to make investments that capture the advantages of regional economies of scale.

Hosted by the Economic Organization for West Africa States (ECOWAS) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with technical and financial support from USAID's Agribusiness and Trade Promotion project, the conference "Food Across Borders: Improving Food Security through Regional Trade in West Africa" brought together the region's stakeholders in food security and regional trade: ministers, government officials, regional organizations, business associations, regional trade companies, farmer associations, financial institutions, and development partners. The participants developed a roadmap for improving food security through regional trade in staple commodities, leading to benefits for millions of West Africans.

The three-part conference brought together public and private sectors to first understand the current contribution of regional trade to food security, and then ignite debate on obstacles and opportunities and forge a roadmap for improvement. The three parts, and their results, included:

- **Forum for Private Sector Action:** Private sector actors discussed common concerns impeding free movement of goods in the region and develop a priority list of actions to reduce trade barriers. The output of the efforts was the identification of specific action needed in five areas of work. Concurrently, public sector actors met to discuss the same issues, from their point of view.
- **Public-Private Dialogue:** Both public and private sectors discussed the importance and ramification of a regional, rather than national approach to food security. The dialogue resulted in the adoption of the Accra Agenda, which includes both the commitments of the diverse stakeholders to action, as well as specific actions identified for true change to occur.
- **Business Fair:** Information exchange, relationship-building and exhibition by private sector partners, including producer groups, traders, processors, transporters, banks and insurance providers. In all, 31 exhibitors representing producers, traders, processors, input and service providers, transporters and others participated in this networking and publicity event.

In all, over 270 participants participated in this colorful, unique event that brought together a diverse spectrum of actors working in regional trade in staple commodities in West Africa, as well as those in a position to advance trade and regional integration. These proceedings include summaries of the conference presentations and discussions, as well as the main results of the conference. They will hopefully contribute to discussion, debate, and actions on improving conditions for regional trade in West Africa – and thereby its food security.

► Forum for Private Sector Action (Day 1)

THE DAY'S CHALLENGE: DEFINING PRIORITY ADVOCACY ACTIONS TOGETHER

Overview

The Forum for Private Sector Action brought together a multitude of regional trade actors, from small to large, across value chains: from production to processing, from transport to finance. Many had been involved in advocacy efforts before—including in the context of the USAID ATP projects—and there had been isolated successes.



Checking in: Nathalie Kalenga of Abt's USAID's ATP projects registers a participant, Alain Sy Traore, Acting Director of Agriculture for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

What was lacking is a regionally developed, regionally validated advocacy agenda, with an action plan to put it in place and with close monitoring by all actors. The USAID ATP projects have facilitated the development of regional advocacy plans for six value chains: maize, rice, livestock, millet/sorghum, poultry, and onions. These advocacy plans, together with those developed in the context of other projects or efforts, formed the basis of the challenge for the working groups that met during the Forum for Private Sector Action. In addition, prior to this Forum, many regional trade actors had already met in groups or individually with the USAID ATP projects to discuss components of an advocacy agenda and to brainstorm about the components of an action plan to resolve decades-old barriers to trade in the region.

Forum participants had access to specific information on a multitude of constraints and the ways in which they impinge upon regional trade in staple commodities—information that was assembled prior to the conference. The challenge of the Forum was to develop an action agenda for advocacy, focusing on improved policies and practices that will truly enable the free movement of staple goods in the region. In particular, Forum participants focused on the following questions:

- What are the most important priorities for action now?
- How can progress best be achieved?
- Who are the actors and what should they do?

Structure

Although the Forum for Private Sector Action was designed primarily for private sector participants, a number of public officials interested in the day's agenda also joined in. The Forum was moderated by **Mr. Graeme Frelick**, Senior Consultant, Training Resources Group. After a brief opening, four private sector representatives who are active in regional trade issued their own calls to action, outlining what needs to be done to improve regional trade, and thereby food security. Attention then focused on ECOWAS, which provided its perspective on why barriers to trade still exist, and on a USAID ATP representative, who outlined the barriers that have been most troublesome to the projects' partners over the last four years. Finally, in the last panel of the morning, two traders described the preparations that their associations made for the conference, and an international business development consultant explained the greatest business and investment opportunities missed due to the lack of regional integration, drawing on interviews with 40 businesses about their need for more free trade.

The private sector participants then divided into five working groups to discuss five long-standing constraints to trade identified by USAID ATP during the course of the projects' work. A sixth group, consisting of public sector officials, also discussed these constraints. All participants received a packet of briefs that provided specific information on the five constraints, including how they impinge on regional trade in staple commodities. Working group participants shared varying perspectives on what could be done, considered how progress could be best achieved, and selected "top solutions" that could make the most difference in the immediate term and the long run. These top solutions were presented to the plenary. During subsequent discussions, clarifying revisions were made. These presentations and discussions are presented in the following.

Setting the stage: Call for action

Moderator: **Mr. Graeme Frelick**, *Senior Consultant, Training Resources Group*

Presenters: **Mr. Alain Sy Traoré**, *Acting Director of Agriculture and Rural Development, ECOWAS*; **Dr. Candace Buzzard**, *Head of the Economic Growth Team at USAID/West Africa*

Panelists: **Mr. Soumaïla Sanou**, *President, Comité Interprofessionnel des Céréales au Burkina Faso (CIC-B)* ; **Mrs. Adja Velegda**, *CEO, Groupe Velegda*; **Mr. Rohit Raj**, *Director for Fertilizer for West Africa, Olam International*; **Mr. Ziad Hamoui**, *Executive Director, Tarzan Enterprise Limited, and President, Borderless Alliance*

Mr. Alain Sy Traoré, Acting Director of Agriculture and Rural Development, ECOWAS, thanked those who had organized the conference; the USAID ATP project, which has had a real and rare partnership with ECOWAS. He also expressed his gratitude to those who are working for regional integration, to USAID, to the economic operators who face challenging conditions, and to the high-level officials who took their precious time to participate. He reminded everyone that the issues are complex, but that objective of the Forum was to identify innovations and solutions for presentation to decisionmakers. Mr. Traoré pointed out that there was no opening ceremony or protocol for this part of the Conference because the intention was to get to work quickly.

Dr. Candace Buzzard, Head of the Economic Growth Team at USAID/West Africa, emphasized how proud USAID was to co-sponsor the conference with ECOWAS. She particularly welcomed the private sector participants and stressed that it is they who are making a difference to food security in the region.

The four panelists then presented their experiences in regional trade.

Mr. Soumaïla Sanou, President, *Comité Interprofessionnel des Céréales au Burkina Faso (CIC-B)*, introduced his organization, its interprofessional orientation, and its mission to increase productivity and address constraints to agriculture and commerce. He then examined the wide range of constraints limiting regional trade, including poor productivity caused by low use of improved varieties, lack of water conservation, lack of storage facilities, and poor road infrastructure that leads to inefficient distribution networks.

Mrs. Adja Velegda, CEO, Groupe Velegda, a cereal export/import company in Burkina Faso, lent support to Mr. Sanou, stating, "If there is not enough production, there cannot be trade." She lamented the many difficulties in cereals trading, including unofficial costs and non-harmonization of documents from one border to another. Customs, police, and gendarmes say cereals cannot move without documents, and take advantage of the many uncertainties regarding the kinds of documents needed for cereal trade. "There are costs that you cannot explain when you are trying to trade," Mrs. Velegda stated. Insufficient warehousing is another problem negatively affecting trade. She ended by lamenting the problem of poor quality, including the lack of acceptance of specific quality standards for important traded crops such as millet and sesame. Mrs. Velegda emphasized the need for those involved in regional trade to collaborate, since their efforts are linked.

Mr. Rohit Raj, Director for Fertilizer for West Africa, Olam International, introduced his company, saying it works in 65 countries around the world, including in 25 in Africa. Olam has large investments in West Africa in trading and processing foods such as rice, cocoa, cashew, and cotton. The company works at all stages of the value chain. Its business model is based on being close to the farm gate and on working upstream, midstream, and downstream; it believes in free trade across the region. Mr. Raj sees West Africa as being at a tipping point where trade channels are starting to evolve to become more structured and formal, a phenomenon seen in Latin America and Asia not so long ago. These regions, therefore, offer a base for learning. Although West Africa's potential is immense, so are its challenges, including trade distortions, lax enforcement, lack of level playing fields, high duties, misaligned regulatory frameworks, and tax evasion. He called on everyone, especially the private sector, to come together to push for a more viable, attractive regional market. Mr. Raj finished by quoting Henry Ford: "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, and working together is success."

Mr. Ziad Hamoui, Executive Director, Tarzan Enterprise Limited, and President, Borderless Alliance, opened his address by stating that West Africa is at a historic crossroads: there is impressive growth, but the region continues to import most of what is used. Even though its lands are fertile and available, food security remains

"It takes an average of 43 documents to transport goods from Abidjan to Lagos, and there are so many checkpoints, the average speed is only 7 km per hour."

Ziad Hamoui, President, Borderless Alliance

elusive. The vast red tape associated with regional trade is not necessary for trade or security reasons. He stressed that the region cannot just continue to wish for change—it has to turn its rich potential into reality and come up with solutions, with the public and private sectors working together. Mr. Hamoui then introduced Borderless Alliance as an evidence-based advocacy organization that has showed that advocacy efforts can work. For example, following the publication of the 17th report by the *Observatoire des Pratiques Anormales* (OPA), to which Borderless contributes, the Minister of Security in Togo decided to abolish all checkpoints. As a result of the inauguration of Border Information Centers, a 50 percent reduction has been noted in crossing times at those borders. Borderless Alliance is looking for an extensive membership and for broader funding support and sustainability, collaboration, and information exchange. Mr. Hamoui ended by urging, “The time for action is now—let’s seize this opportunity!”

Efforts toward regional integration: Why are there still barriers to trade in staple commodities in West Africa, despite signed trade agreements?

Presenter: **Mr. Salifou Tiemtoré**, *Director of Customs, ECOWAS*

Mr. Salifou Tiemtoré, Director of Customs, ECOWAS, recognized the existence of diverse barriers and obstacles to regional trade: transit taxes, fees and charges that are not explained or provided for in any instrument, non-tariff barriers, non-compliance with and lack of knowledge of trade protocols and finally—lack of will to implement them. An important issue contributing to these obstacles is the lack of regional trade policy, which needs to be tackled soon. Additionally, there are no mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation at the field level or for ECOWAS to intervene when there is non-compliance with regional protocols.

Agricultural trade has been a matter of interest to ECOWAS since the first protocol in 1970. On January 1, 2000, the ECOWAS free trade area went into effect, bringing about the free movement of agricultural and industrial products in the community. However, the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS), the main regulatory instrument governing the free trade area, has not been effectively implemented by member states and only a few countries timidly apply community rules. Continuing practices include (1) non-tariff barriers put in place by certain member states; (2) non-compliance with community texts by certain member states; (3) illegal “transit taxes” on goods covered under the scheme, in certain countries; (4) entry restrictions on certain community products; and (5) a lack of harmonization of value-added taxes (VAT) within the region. While the commissions of both ECOWAS and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU, i.e., WAEMU [*Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine*]), are taking action to solve problems relating to ETLS implementation, there is a continued need to (1) put in place a national and regional mechanism regulating trade in agricultural products, such as conflict and complaint management; (2) institute an ECOWAS award to reward countries that best apply community agricultural trade rules; (3) reinforce the action partnerships with the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), USAID, ECOWAS, and private sector operators to improve the conduct of trade within the community; (4) construct joint posts with support from the European Union to facilitate and reduce the cost and number of border checkpoints; and (5) put in place a quality program at the ECOWAS level.

Constraints to regional trade: Some significant barriers and their impact

Presenter: **Dr. Seydou Sidibé**, *Deputy Chief of Party, USAID ATP and Abt Associates*

Dr. Seydou Sidibé, Deputy Chief of Party, USAID ATP and Abt Associates Inc., highlighted the significance of the many constraints to trade that USAID ATP’s regional and national partners in livestock and cereals have to live with every day. The following constraints were chosen as targets for this conference based on studies conducted by the projects and reflections with partners: (1) road harassment, (2) export restrictions, (3) certificates of origin, (4) veterinary and phytosanitary certificates, and (5) VAT. These constraints—including

the relevant ECOWAS policies, the gaps between the policies and reality on the ground, the costs of these gaps, and possible ingredients for successful reform—are briefly highlighted below.

Constraint 1. Road Harassment

The policy. According to agreements signed by all 15 ECOWAS member states, particularly the ETLS, West Africans have the right to trade many goods freely across borders, provided that they follow certain agreed-upon procedures.

The gap between policy and reality. Checkpoints, delays, and bribes are among traders' top issues for advocacy and reform. The Improved Road Transport Governance (IRTG) project, a USAID-WAEMU initiative covering six major West African trade corridors, shows an abundance of checkpoints, delays, and bribes (www.borderlesswa.com), a situation that is self-perpetuating. Officials take advantage of individuals' ignorance about their rights. Truckers carrying perishables do not know that these goods should pass easily and quickly across borders, rendering them easy targets for intimidation and bribery. The complexity and lack of transparency of rules and regulations governing cross-border trade encourage harassment and illegal behavior by officials as well as opportunism by traders. Efforts led by WAEMU, ECOWAS, USAID, Borderless Alliance, and others have made some progress, but road harassment persists, as recent reductions in official checkpoints are accompanied by an apparent rise in unofficial checkpoints operated by various transport unions.

The costs and who pays. Road harassment discourages regional trade, prevents the development of modern, official regional trade, and raises the cost of food every day in West Africa. Traders and transporters get discouraged and some feel that if they must pay bribes, they have less incentive to maintain their vehicles to legal standards, keep their loads to legitimate weight restrictions, or secure appropriate licensing and paperwork. While truckers pay in cash and time, these costs are passed on to the consumer eventually.

Constraint 2. Export Restrictions

The policy. West African countries have made various commitments to eliminate export restrictions and support free trade in the region. Examples include Article 3 of the ECOWAS treaty of 1993 (vision of a common market including “the removal of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, service and capital”); Article 35 of the ECOWAS treaty (a 10-year goal of establishing a customs union and removing restrictions and prohibitions to trade); and the WAEMU Treaty of 2003 (where the signatories say they will abstain from creating new export restrictions and work together to gradually reduce existing restrictions). Both ECOWAS and WAEMU have trade liberalization programs to introduce improved laws and regulations in support of free trade (ETLS and the WAEMU Community Preferential Tariff).

The gap between policy and reality. National- and local-level policymakers commonly impose seasonal export restrictions when pre-harvest estimates suggest a smaller crop than in the previous year—as has happened in recent years in Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Senegal, and Togo, among others. A USAID ATP study found export restrictions can take many forms, including: blanket official restrictions (no set time limit); seasonal official restrictions (time limit specified); unofficial, but real restrictions (traders turned back from borders); administrative restrictions (regional governor's approval required for livestock exports or Certificate of Origin used as quantitative restriction). Once in place, export restrictions are often not dismantled or even re-examined, which allows for continued harassment. National and local policymakers who impose export restrictions state that they are helping improve food security, yet these measures are not effective.

The cost and who pays. Export bans mean that farmers and traders can sell only within their own country, and that processors' supply areas are limited to their own country, even if farmers can get a better price across the border. Seasonal restrictions on cereals block trade during the most important marketing periods of the year, substantially reducing regional trade or creating further incentives for road harassment, even for nationally produced products. They also introduce unpredictability to trade. Export restrictions also discourage those who might otherwise consider expanding operations by taking advantage of regional markets for supply and for processed products. In the short run, export bans may make it easier for a country to feed its urban consumers,

but by decreasing farmers', processors', and traders' incentives, the result is lower food availability and lower overall economic growth. Traders often find a way to get around the restrictions, usually by bribing complicit authorities—which further drives up the cost of food.

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Constraint 3. Certificates of origin

The policy. Certificates of origin document a commodity's country of origin and help customs officials determine applicable tariffs. As part of its effort to promote free trade and make food more readily available to all citizens, ECOWAS has eliminated tariffs on food and, in 2003, eliminated all requirements for certificates of origin on food products.

The gap between policy and reality. Traders of basic staple foods within West Africa are routinely asked by customs authorities to produce a certificate of origin; some countries actually require these certificates. Traders arriving at a border without a certificate of origin may be forced to pay the full range of import-related charges as if their product were coming from outside the ECOWAS region. Asking for a certificate of origin gives authorities an additional chance to block trade. Customs agents respond that in the absence of a certificate of origin accompanying a shipment, how can they know if the goods are of community origin and therefore eligible for duty-free treatment?

The cost and who pays. Demanding unnecessary certificates of origin raises transaction costs in terms of both time and money, creating a disincentive to trade and also to production. Traders are most immediately affected by this documentation requirement, wasting time visiting the local chamber of commerce or city hall and paying a fee. Processors may be affected if this requirement raises the delivered cost of required raw materials. Ultimately, it is consumers who suffer from final higher prices.

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Constraint 4. Veterinary and phytosanitary certificates

The policy. Countries routinely issue sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) certificates to show animals and plants have been inspected and are free of diseases that could affect public health. To facilitate regional trade, ECOWAS countries have signed bilateral technical agreements establishing recognition of mutual equivalence of SPS certificates, which means each country agrees to accept the certificates issued by its neighbors. Thus, SPS certificates issued by the country of origin are officially valid throughout the region.

The gap between policy and reality. Across the ECOWAS region, agriculture and livestock officials at the borders require traders to obtain duplicate phytosanitary and veterinary certificates. When traders arrive at the border, authorities in the importing country regularly insist on issuing a national certificate, or else ask for a side payment or "gift" to put their national stamp on the original document even though SPS certificates are supposed to be issued free of charge. The non-recognition of mutual equivalence of SPS certificates affects every shipment, adding costs in terms of time and money.

The cost and who pays. Non-recognition of mutual equivalence of SPS certificates affects every shipment, adding costs in terms of time and money. USAID ATP found some cereals traders pay up to \$20 extra at each border crossing for the duplicate document on cereals shipments, wasting 10-30 minutes waiting for these documents to be prepared. Ultimately consumers end up paying more. Eliminating duplication would also free up SPS authorities' time, allowing them to focus on inspecting the products crossing the border.

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Constraint 5. VAT

The policy. In principle, ECOWAS countries agreed to exempt basic staple foods from VAT on intra-regional trade through the Additional Act on VAT in 2009, which exempts all agricultural and livestock staple foods and inputs from VAT. However, the Act has not come into effect, as the countries have not yet agreed on the annex with the specific list of products. The WAEMU countries have had a common VAT policy since 1998, with most countries applying an 18 percent rate (Niger at 19 percent), exempting most basic staple foods (but notably

not live animals). Furthermore, WAEMU's "common policy" permits countries to apply VAT on agricultural products if the national government chooses, although the tax has to be applied uniformly on all commercial products, whether imported or domestically traded.

The gap between policy and reality. Although ECOWAS countries have agreed to exempt basic staple foods from VAT on intra-regional trade, they have yet to implement that goal. For WAEMU countries, VAT collection has become an important source of revenue. The result has been substantial confusion among traders, freight forwarders, truckers, and border officials regarding whether VAT should be applied on intra-regional trade in basic foodstuffs. For example, VAT is collected in Senegal on imports of livestock and cereals at one border crossing, and traders report having to pay VAT to import cereals into Burkina Faso and Mali. In addition, application of VAT is inconsistent: e.g., traders bringing livestock from Mali and Burkina Faso into Senegal must pay VAT at the border, yet no VAT is collected on sales in the Dakar market. This has the equivalent effect of a tariff, giving unfair advantage to national producers and violating WAEMU rules on VAT neutrality. WAEMU's policy on VAT application is illogical in at least two respects. First, fresh meat—a value-added product—is exempted while raw material (live animals) is not. Second, a high VAT rate is usually reserved for luxury items (such as jewelry), yet here, an 18 percent rate may be applied on basic food staples.

The costs and who pays. The present VAT system allows countries to apply a disguised border tax, which also increases the incentives for smuggling. Traders must pay if they do not know the rules or if customs agents force them to pay. For traders, paying 18 percent can mean the difference between turning a profit and losing money on a shipment. Eliminating VAT on intra-regional trade would increase the incentives for staple foods to flow across borders, lowering costs for end-consumers. Producers would benefit, as increased trade would expand aggregate demand for their products.

What has been done to date: Basis for today's effort

Panelists: **Mr. Lionel Guezodje**, *President, Federation of Producers' Unions of Benin (FUPRO-Benin)*; **Mr. Timbila Thomas Sawadogo**, *Deputy Secretary General, Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail/Viande de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (COFENABVI AO)*; **Dr. Mima Nedelcovych**, *Partner, Schaffer Global Group*

The work carried out by the Working Groups during the Forum for Private Sector Action was not a stand-alone effort. It was preceded by private sector actors working together to define agendas and set up collaborative frameworks to advance these agendas. In addition, before the conference, USAID ATP conducted a study to assess the opportunities missed in investment and business due to the lack of regional integration in West Africa, and to predict what those opportunities might be if regional integration was to advance. These efforts are presented below.

Mr. Lionel Guezodje, President, Federation of Producers' Unions of Benin (FUPRO-Benin), described the efforts of actors in the cereals sector who have been working together since 2008/2009 to promote free movement for cereals products. They are now putting together the West Africa Grains Network (WAGN). Cereals sector actors from eight of the 15 West African countries (Benin, Niger, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Togo, Mali, and Ghana) have formed committees and in some cases interprofessional associations. A working group was formed in October 2012 to develop WAGN's strategic plan and other statutory documents; some of its members participated in a study visit to East Africa, where they were inspired by the East Africa Grains Council and its advocacy and other activities across the entire value chain. WAGN is expected to be formally registered after its general assembly in March 2013. The Food Across Borders conference and its agenda were discussed during the WAGN preparations.

Mr. Timbila Thomas Sawadogo, Deputy Secretary General, *Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail/Viande de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (COFENABVI AO)*, explained the confederation's scope and vision. The organization aims to become the leading confederation for the livestock/meat sector in West Africa, in order to improve food security and promote economic development. COFENABVI AO prepared an advocacy agenda for the conference during its general assembly in Abidjan in early December 2012, motivated by the fact that every day, those who export livestock in trucks are affected by the many constraints addressed by

this conference. Road harassment impacts livestock traders in particular, as transporting live products makes them especially vulnerable. In past years, the confederation has, with support from USAID ATP, helped national federations in each country with their advocacy efforts. Advocacy work has dealt with road harassment in Burkina Faso and VAT in Mali. Livestock actors have also worked to understand the correct application of certificates of origin. Unfortunately, many livestock value chain actors are not aware of regional regulatory instruments and the rights they confer to people. To address this problem, COFENABVI AO is bringing them together to raise awareness and provide training.

Dr. Mima Nedelcovych, Partner, Schaffer Global Group, described his pre-conference study of the ways in which constraints to trade were affecting opportunities for private investment in four staple food value chains, especially in value-added products/processing. He interviewed 40 key actors in each of the four sectors (maize, millet/sorghum, rice, livestock/meat) in Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana. He provided background by considering the following points. First, Africa is part of the world market, and it must become competitive or the world will leave it behind. Second, to be competitive, West Africa must scale up to benefit from economies of scale. Third, to scale up, it is important for businesses to operate within a large market—this provides the benefit of many consumers and eliminates the need to replicate operations in many small markets. Key conclusions of Dr. Nedelcovych's study included: (1) If we believe that farming is a business, and that private agricultural investment is the engine of growth, the right conditions need to be established for investors to enter by increasing market size. (2) The main condition to tackle is uncertainty—it is the poison pill for investment. Known risks, on the other hand, can be mitigated by businesses. (3) Efficiencies of scale cannot work if markets are small, since companies cannot afford to replicate their operations in many small markets. (4) The total disrespect of rules regarding regional trade and non-application of the Common External Tariff (CET) within the ECOWAS space make business decisions difficult. Dr. Nedelcovych ended by stating that the call for action is both simple and complex: "To support the private sector and both national and international investment, there is a need to get serious about making West Africa a true common market—this is where the opportunities really come in."



Working group: Jules Sombié of Abt's USAID ATP projects speaks at the group that tackled the problem of road harassment—trucks carrying staple crops halted and asked for bribes at borders and other checkpoints. Other working groups focused on export restrictions, value-added tax, and non-acceptance of regional veterinary and food safety certificates.

Working groups: Define priority advocacy actions to promote free movement of staple commodities in West Africa and develop an action Agenda

Conference participants divided into six working groups—five groups for private sector participants and a sixth for those members of the public sector attending Day I of the conference. The groups discussed the persistent constraints to trade identified by USAID ATP partners over the past several years, and assessed potential solutions to these constraints according to three criteria:

- Likelihood of success
- Short-term impact
- Potential for long-term significant improvement

The constraints and group representatives were as follows:

- Working Group 1: Road harassment—Group representative: Mr. Ziad Hamoui, Executive Director, Tarzan Enterprise Limited, and President, Borderless Alliance
- Working Group 2: Export restrictions—Group representative: Mr. Ayéfoumi "Salif" Olou-Adara, President, CPC-Togo
- Working Group 3: Certificates of origin—Group representative: Mrs. Adja Velegda, Groupe Velegda
- Working Group 4: Phytosanitary and veterinary certificates—Group representative: Dr. Mamadou Camara, COFENABVI AO
- Working Group 5: VAT—Group representative: Mr. Rohit Raj, Director for Fertilizer for West Africa, Olam International

- Working Group 6: The public sector’s perspective on all constraints—Group representative: Stephen Blankton, Government of Ghana

Participant lists of each working group are included in Annex 4.

Report to the Plenary

Representatives of each working group summarized their group’s discussions and presented solutions identified as most worthwhile. The top solutions selected by the private sector working groups are shown in the table below:

Private Sector Working Groups

Group	Top Solutions
Road Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and expand use of hotlines. Move toward eventually establishing road governance call management centers. • Increase the number of Border Information Centers to provide information and assistance to traders and transporters. • Engage in high-level advocacy to improve enforcement, including sanctions. Present specific proposals to ministers involved in the region trade, both directly and through ECOWAS, WAEMU, and the Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS). • Remove unofficial and illegal checkpoints. • End demands for unnecessary documentation at border crossings. • Take concrete measures to sanction officials who do not comply with official regulations and reformed procedures.
Export Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize a campaign to eliminate all export restrictions on food products currently in place. At the same time, promise not to reinstitute export restrictions on basic staple foods. • Hold public and private forums to address the effects of export restrictions on food security. • Note: there is an important issue regarding responsibility: organizations at the national and regional level need to take up the problem seriously to discuss and negotiate with governments, supported by development partners in the agricultural sector.
Certificates of Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train the public sector about proper border procedures for basic staple foods. • Instruct border officials to accept veterinary and phytosanitary certificates as proof of the community origin for basic staple foods. • Require that all documentation be reviewed at one border enforcement/control point (not agreed upon by all in group).
Veterinary and Phytosanitary Certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize policies, procedures, and forms throughout ECOWAS; make the forms available in the three official ECOWAS languages; and monitor implementation, with periodic reporting. • Develop a reference document about proper procedures for issuing of veterinary and phytosanitary certificates. • Establish an ongoing dialogue between the public and private sectors to reduce the problems impeding the development of agricultural and livestock value chains. • Inform and continually train stakeholders in trade laws, rules, and regulations

Group	Top Solutions
VAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize the ECOWAS/WAEMU regional VAT framework and ensure effective implementation (in tandem with certificates of origin) • Disseminate regional and national VAT-related legal texts to the private sector in West Africa. • Complete the Annex of the ECOWAS Additional Act relating to the list of basic staple foods (including livestock) eligible for exemption from VAT.

Public Sector Working Group

Although the public sector representatives attending Day I of the conference did not participate in the working groups in any official capacity, their top solutions were also presented to the plenary:

Topic	Solutions
Overall	Harmonize, regularize, and update texts/regulations.
Road Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up systems to punish countries that do not properly apply the regulations. Create index that compares countries' performance; make this available to donors so they can adjust assistance. • Make systems to identify abuses and create mechanisms (e.g., victim hotlines) so people can document, protest and fight harassment. • Use media to pressure public sector to address problems: identify specific instances of problems and provide a forum for putting pressure on individuals. Use social media. • Institute team approach at the border with a team leader who manages the different groups (customs, police, etc.) and guards against corruption of that team. • Provide agents with training on regulations and adequate/ timely compensation. Put in place metrics for agents showing whether systems are improving; reward those who perform best. • Make borders cashless systems, with payments done electronically, so no money changes hands at borders or checkpoints. • Make and disseminate a "Community Guide" for transporters that contains the laws and regulations for them to follow.
Export Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make information systems (national and regional) better so governments are not so afraid of being food insecure. • Propose sanctions that would have to be instituted by ECOWAS and WAEMU against countries that create export restrictions as these are illegal according to the current regulations and countries have agreed not to do this.
Certificates of Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide targeted public education to traders and sanctions against those who try to impose the need for certificates of origin that are not necessary.

Topic	Solutions
Veterinary and SPS Certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place enough labs with harmonized processes and standards so that certificates from each lab are accepted across the region. Standardize the certificates and make them bilingual. Require phytosanitary certificates for only a limited number of products that need to be rigorously tested and watched. Analyze the risk before requiring the SPS or veterinary certificate. Issue circular letters instructing border officials on mutual recognition of certificates Harmonize policies and forms—in bilingual fashion—among WAEMU and other ECOWAS member states Train border officials in SPS testing and monitoring
VAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise that VAT is not required on raw product so that this can be understood.

Discussion

These presentations were followed by comments and opinions from the group as a whole. The points coming out of the discussion, as expressed by the participants, are grouped below by theme:

The issue of the responsibilities of the public and private sectors:

- There are similarities and synergy between what the public sector and private sector said. The question is in the implementation/execution of these solutions.
- The public sector needs to show that they have the political will to improve the environment for the private sector.
- It is confusing for countries to sign protocols and accords if they are not ready to implement them. Are the countries ready, or not? WAEMU and ECOWAS are blocking commerce by not doing adequate analysis before recommending that these accords be signed.
- Illegal payments are made paid by the private sector and accepted by the public sector. The public sector would be happy to give rewards to whistle-blowers; the private sector was encouraged to stop making illegal payments.
- At the beginning of the day, the private sector felt that it bore 100 percent of the burden for addressing the problems, but by the end of the day, private sector representatives heard that the public sector was much closer to them than they thought. “We all share these problems.”

Solutions to specific constraints:

- Export restrictions: Export restrictions should *not* be eliminated gradually. The choice should be clear: eliminate the restrictions or do not. Export restrictions should not be allowed, period. Sanctions should be imposed on countries that impose them.
- Certificates of origin: The protocol is clear that there should be no certificate for unprocessed products, but at the border, customs officials demand the certificate of origin thinking it will determine whether the goods are of community origin. One way to resolve this contradiction could be to reinstitute the certificate of origin requirement, or for another document, such as a sanitary/phytosanitary (SPS) certificate, to provide essentially the same information as a certificate of origin. Sometimes border officials use the certificate of origin as a pretext to stop trucks. The certificate of origin helps community products get tax-free treatment at the border.
- Phytosanitary/veterinary certificates: This working group’s proposal was that a network be created of the existing laboratories to issue a common SPS certificate.
- Mixed transport: It is forbidden but often used because there is a lack of specialized trucks to separate people from animals. This is an important question that must be addressed.
- One-stop shop: (1) One-stop shops should not be at the border, but in the city and (2) Instead of one-stop-shops, joint border posts are needed.

The role of media:

- It is surprising not to hear much about role of media and social media.
- The issue of the media is very delicate—it can provoke the border officials, who can retaliate by saying they suspect people of smuggling. It is difficult to call on someone at the top to discipline those below. The “booty” is shared among various levels. The problem is difficult to solve, because the money is “travelling up.”



Press briefing: Marc Atouga, ECOWAS Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources, and Candace Buzzard, Regional Agricultural Director for USAID/West Africa, lay out expectations for the conference for media from around the region.

After the plenary session ended for the day, Mr. Frelick, the facilitator, met with the group representatives and note-takers to discuss how the solutions would be summarized for presentation to the larger group at the beginning of the Public-Private Sector Dialogue on Day 2 of the conference.

► Public-Private Dialogue (Day 2)

In many ways, West Africa's trading environment remains inhospitable to regional trade in staple commodities produced within the region. Constraints to regional trade include seasonal bans and other types of export restrictions, corruption along borders and roads, and poor infrastructure on key routes. Improved conditions for regional trade would have profound multiplier effects on various areas of development in the region, most notably on food security (as food would flow from surplus to deficit areas), on incomes (by creating larger markets for the region's farmers), on private investments (through better and more predictable business conditions), and finally, on government revenue (by limiting the most common regional trade type—informal and through “the bush”). The Public-Private Dialogue highlighted current constraints, assessed solutions, and sought consensus between the public and private sectors on the way forward. The focus was on constraints that impinge on the free movement of staple goods in the region and on actions to facilitate free movement through improved policies and practices.

WELCOME AND OPENING

Moderator: **Dr. Yamar Mbodj**, *Executive Director, HubRural*

Dr. Yamar Mbodj, Executive Director, HubRural, introduced the Public-Private Dialogue of Days 2 and 3 as an opportunity for the private and public sectors to discuss and develop operational solutions for staple commodities to flow from deficit to surplus areas. From such discussions, he said, the private sector will win, the public sector will win, and all stakeholders will win.

Opening ceremony

Presenters: **Hon. Hamid Ahmed**, *Commissioner for Trade, Industry and Mines, Free Movement and Tourism, ECOWAS*; **Hon. Gene Cretz**, *Ambassador of the United States to Ghana*; **Mr. Tom Gambrah**, *General Manager, Premium Foods*.

Hon. Hamid Ahmed, Commissioner for Trade, Industry and Mines, Free Movement and Tourism, ECOWAS, opened his address by explaining that the President of ECOWAS had designated Marc Atouga, Commissioner for Agriculture, Water and Environment, and himself to work on the conference and welcome everyone on his behalf, recognizing that everyone's presence underlines the importance of trade and food security. He thanked USAID for its cooperation with ECOWAS on this important topic. Food security needs to be a priority topic in countries where 60 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and when focusing on food security, it is important to focus on agriculture. Commissioner Ahmed stated that the constraints to free movement of goods and services are very complex and involve many rules and a diversity of players with sometimes contradictory interests. Most important is the free flow of food, based on the protocol of free movement of people and goods, especially raw materials. Free flow is currently impeded by various regulatory issues and value chain actors experience harassment as they trade. He said the ECOWAS Commission must get more actively involved, working with credible professional organizations. The ECOWAS Commission will not relent in its efforts, with partners, to bring appropriate solutions to enhance regional trade for food security, an important concern of both ECOWAS and WAEMU.

Hon. Gene Cretz, Ambassador of the United States to Ghana, started his speech by acknowledging the crucial role that regional trade plays in West Africa's food security. He then emphasized the role that regional trade can play in ensuring the long-term resilience, health, and prosperity of the region's 300 million residents. The U.S. Government has worked to strengthen regional trade through support to ECOWAS, the USAID ATP projects, the West Africa Trade Hub project, and other initiatives. Ambassador Cretz pointed out that food security efforts have often emphasized helping people grow their own food, even though it is possible to be food secure without growing any of your own food, as long as food is available on the market and you have money to buy it. Most participants of the conference are testimony to this, Ambassador Cretz pointed out. This is where regional trade comes in: West Africa can grow diverse crops, but food needs to move from surplus to deficit areas. Ambassador Cretz then listed six important approaches that various parties can use to ensure better access to essential foods:

 **@USEmbassyGhana** 30 Jan
Goods should move freely but according to sensible rules of commerce, from one country to another - #AmbCretz. #foodtrade

- Work with ECOWAS and national governments to enforce existing policies
- Explore existing alliances with the private sector and look to form new ones
- Work with technical experts and governments to set quality standards for food commodities
- Build alliances that combine competitiveness and social responsibility
- Work together to reduce post-harvest losses
- Continue to foster modern business practices in the agriculture and transport sectors



Ambassador arrives: Marjatta Eilittä, director of Abt's USAID ATP projects, escorts U.S. Ambassador to Ghana Gene Cretz to the podium, where he later delivered opening remarks

The Ambassador finished by saying that although much remains to be done to realize the potential of regional trade to increase food security and economic development in West Africa, this conference is designed to help chart the way forward by giving participants the chance to hammer out an action agenda by the end of their time together.

Mr. Tom Gambrah, General Manager, Premium Foods, opened by saying that this conference is the time and place to stop dwelling on problems but instead look for solutions. He emphatically stated, "There should be no poverty and hunger in West Africa," and the audience agreed by strong applause. "We should be ashamed when poverty claims children and adults," he argued. Agriculture is the key to change, since it is the economic activity from which most people get income.

Mr. Gambrah put forth a vision for change—a *private agricultural sector whose production guarantees food security and eliminates the disease of poverty*. He then proposed solutions—a "to-do list"—to make this vision a reality "in the near future, not in the next century or next decade." The list was addressed to four audiences: ECOWAS officials, presidents and their ministers of agriculture and trade, the private sector in agriculture, and development partners and civil society.

- *ECOWAS*. There is more to be done on the ETL; Mr. Gambrah asked ECOWAS to get presidents to do more than pay lip service to trade problems, since they alone can break the cartel-like structures that impede food from moving from surplus areas to deficit areas. ECOWAS and presidents should also support organizations like WAGN.
- *Presidents and ministers*. Presidents and ministers should support business opportunities for the private sector, including smallholders; promote programs aimed at young people; develop infrastructure and public-private partnerships; and put a stop to practices that hamper regional trade.
- *Private sector*. Members of the private sector in agriculture need to work together, since they have the same goal. WAGN offers an example where all cereal actors are working together and working hard to make success a reality.
- *All participants*. Civil society and development partners need to make sure that governments stay focused on trade issues, and the entire audience needs to think of ways to keep the momentum of this conference going.

Mr. Gambrah vowed that "We are only digging our graves, and paying for it too, if we leave here in the next few days and don't advocate for change. If we don't actively take part in implementing solutions, we will be the problem." He ended by pleading, "What are you going to do about the vision? What is our ultimate responsibility? Let's please not go back to business as usual!"

Keynote address—Building the New West Africa: Food security and prosperity through regional integration

Presenter: **Hon. Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio**, *President, Institute for Panafican Strategies*

Hon. **Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio**, former Senior Minister, Foreign Affairs, Republic of Senegal, and current President, Institute for Panafican Strategies, began by thanking all for their attendance. He then inspired the audience to think of the heroes that all nations have, including the heroes that symbolize the greatness of the African continent. He recalled his own candidacy for the presidency of Senegal and the important themes of

Agribiz Africa 30 Jan

"Being the largest agricultural production zone in Africa, West Africa has the means to achieve its food security ambitions"
- Hon. Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio,
President of PanAfrican Institute of Strategies, Senegal

135 people saw this post

feeding, educating, and healing. Agriculture needs to be put at the heart of efforts to create the United States of Africa, Minister Gadio said, as in N'Krumah's vision of pan-Africanism, and to build a new West Africa. Regional economic communities were adopted as a strategy for integration and later political unification. Since economic solutions were put first, he argued, it was a case of putting the cart before the horse.

Agriculture is critical in meeting the vital human need for food, which comes before other needs. To attain food security and prosperity, integration is key. The area of food security can prove what ECOWAS can do; integration in other areas will follow. To achieve development in the region, ECOWAS has only three urgent responsibilities: act and implement decisions, act and implement decisions, act and implement decisions. In a workshop eight years ago: the subjects were almost word-for-word the same as those discussed in this conference.

We should remember that there is already a common agricultural policy (ECOWAP); what is needed now is implementation, political will, and leadership. Only 50 years ago, the gross national product (GNP) of countries like Korea was similar to those in West Africa, but today, there are vast differences. To improve, we need to facilitate transport, eliminate the barriers to trade, loosen the restrictions on exports, and help resolve conflicts. At heart, all of these initiatives are about food security, as the region is only 50 percent food secure today. The population of Africa is forecast to double to 2 billion inhabitants in 50 years. There will be a race for food. West Africa's conditions are good for agricultural production, but we have to become the locomotive.

We should commit Africa to achieve the objectives of the founding fathers, and move toward a federation of West African states. Imagine an ECOWAS with a single currency, a common citizenship, common defense and diplomacy, and a common definition of external trade. This is not a utopian vision, because utopia is something that does not exist. This is a real possibility. The other continents are aging; the only really young continent is Africa. With oil, Africa has the means. It has the ambition. With regional and continental unity, it has the potential, especially if it can overcome food insecurity.

Minister Gadio finished by reminding the audience of his creed to feed, educate, heal, and free Africa, and of his hope that it will also be the creed of the participants.

What has to change?

Voices from the Field (video presentation)

In advance of the conference, the ATP staff interviewed dozens of West African economic operators engaged in regional trade in Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger and Togo. Traders, truckers, business owners and policymakers talked about the constraints they face in their everyday business and the changes they want to see. Interviewees vented frustration with several of the issues being addressed at the conference, including road harassment and lack of regional integration, while pointing to some a few signs of progress. Excerpts follow:

Ibrahim Acheampong, Onion trader, Ghana

The major challenge I face in my trade is the harassment by the police on the corridor. Between Bawku and Techiman in Ghana, there are too many police checkpoints on the road and they take a lot of money from us. They take advantage of the fact that some goods like onions perish very fast and therefore demand exorbitant amounts from you, knowing very well that you would not want to be detained for long periods for your goods to perish.





Mamoudou Hassane, *Technical Advisor, Food Security Directorate, Niger*

In some places where paperwork should only take five minutes to finish, it can sometime take up to two, three or four hours. There are also all these instances of humiliation and frustration. We even heard of cases of people being locked up at borders, physically harassed in order to humiliate them. And all the bribes also contribute to the persistence of this problem.



Soumaila Sanou, *President Comité International des Céréales du Burkina Faso*

As in all member countries of CILSS, there are policies in place regarding food security and regional trade. But it must be noted that these policies are not respected in each country because of difficulties encountered by all.



Tom Gambrah, *Premium Foods, Ghana*

What we encounter is so much informal trade, there's nothing structured, and so the quality is inconsistent, as well as the volumes.



Traore Aboukar, *cattle importer, Côte d'Ivoire*

Difficulties are lessening thanks to the efforts from the government and COFENABVI and all the work on the roads to enable all members of an organization to import cattle at a lower cost. Therefore, there are less difficulties but we are asking people to make an effort to end the road harassment issues that still exist.



Hanna Tetteh, *Former Minister of Trade and Industry, new Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ghana*

I think that yes, there is opportunity, but there is also a lot of work to be done to ensure the right conditions are created for our farmers to be able to see it as an opportunity and step up to the plate.

Action agenda

A summary of action items identified during the Forum for Private Sector Action on Day 1 was presented. Tom Gambrah of Premium Foods introduced the previous day's work by saying that everyone is frustrated by the current situation because they are living the problems. He explained that since there are so many problems to tackle, it was decided that focus should now be on five key problems that should be solved first, one at a time. Mr. Gambrah then presented a summary of the solutions developed by each of the five working groups.

Framing the dialogue: How does regional trade benefit food security?

Presenter: **Dr. Niama Nango Dembélé**, *Assistant Professor, Michigan State University*

Dr. Niama Nango Dembélé, Assistant Professor, Michigan State University, opened by stating that trade has great potential to contribute to food security, yet that potential cannot be realized without a larger market, a market that must also generate jobs for the region's youth. Youth cannot all work in agricultural production, and therefore, jobs need to be developed at various stages of the value chain. Population growth, urbanization,

and economic growth are changing the demand for food. Demand for food is not just in urban areas—50 to 60 percent of producers are also net buyers. The demand for millet, sorghum, maize, rice, and yams is expected to double from 2010 to 2050. For millet, sorghum, and maize, for example, this means increases from 30 to 60 million tons per year. Maize will continue to increase in importance for both human consumption and poultry.

There will be an important change in the concept of food security. Rather than relying on food grown at home, people will increasingly rely on markets to supply their food needs. Large increases in production will be needed, and economic growth can serve as a motor for increasing production. Food sovereignty, a concept that has been important for about a decade, emphasizes the autonomy of decision-making on food security issues. It should be sought not at the national level, but at the regional level.

Dr. Dembélé then presented a conceptual model of how increased intraregional trade affects food security. Increases in trade—stemming, for example, from a reduction of trade barriers and improved infrastructure, information availability, and use of health-related controls—will have many beneficial impacts, due to the introduction of economies of scale. In the current situation, investors find it hard to achieve economies of scale because they operate in small, national markets. As trade expands, there are changes at the household level, including increasing intensification of production, more off-farm employment, expansion of agricultural lands, and increased investment. These changes, in turn, lead to an increased and more stable food supply, an increase in price stability, and possible decreases in prices. They will also lead to improved incomes and a more diverse array of food options, thus allowing for improved nutrition.

Finally, Dr. Dembélé emphasized the fact that trade helps countries weather shocks, citing research in Zambia showing that when the country allowed regional trade to take place, food prices increased less during production shortfalls and prices fell less during years with bumper crops than when borders were closed. Better nutrition and higher incomes resulting from trade also increase resilience.

Dr. Dembélé concluded by recommending important key elements for regional trade to achieve its potential: the creation of frameworks for public-private cooperation, more conditionality for regional funding, and better dissemination of regional information.

Opportunities missed or seized in ECOWAS: Trade barriers' effects on agribusiness investment

Presenter: **Dr. Mima Nedelcovych**, Partner, Schaffer Global Group

Dr. Mima Nedelcovych, Partner, Schaffer Global Group, described the impact of trade barriers on agribusiness investment in the ECOWAS region. His conclusions were based on 40 interviews with diverse actors in four value staple chains: maize, millet/sorghum, rice, and livestock/meat. He focused on investment opportunities that have been and continue to be missed, and on those that would be seized if conditions for investment did become favorable. Dr. Nedelcovych argued that while Africa is already part of the broader world market, it needs to become competitive and it will only do so if it develops economies of scale. Only greater economies of scale will provide sellers with larger markets and give processors access to affordable raw materials.

Dr. Nedelcovych then gave a brief overview of the value chains he assessed. He emphasized the quality of raw materials as a key constraint for maize processors; free movement of packaged millet/sorghum products as constraint to development of processing industry for these crops; a false notion of the need for national self-sufficiency in rice as a factor discouraging development of comparative advantages; and the vast potential of the livestock sector—with clearly delineated production and consumption areas—to profit from regional integration, with modernization key to progress at every stage.

Dr. Nedelcovych's study included several key conclusions. First, successful agriculture and agro-processing investments need large markets if they are to capitalize on the large investments needed for processing facilities.

“Conditions of uncertainty are the poison pill for investment. Seasonal bans are a type of uncertainty.”

*Mima Nedelcovych, Partner,
Schaffer Global Group*

He pointed out that processing is a key link, since it provides a buyer for the producers of raw materials and makes it possible to move more products from producers to markets. Second, businesses need certainty: they will leave or not even consider a market if certainty is absent. For example, processors need the certainty of a constant supply of raw materials. Export bans, or the possibility of export bans, take away that certainty. Third, small markets and country-focused food security plans create disincentives for increasing production.

In conclusion, Dr. Nedelcovych asserted that the ECOWAS common market is not operational in many ways, especially in the non-respect of the CET and the use of internal tariffs, which invite corruption. Given current trade barriers, businesses have adapted by adopting national business models and avoiding cross-border procurement and marketing. This means current businesses are less efficient, invest less, and make less money. Therefore, the lack of enabling environment for regional trade results in many missed opportunities and hurts food security and economic development.

FOOD SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA

Food insecurity is prevalent in every country in West Africa. While malnutrition rates are higher in the Sahel, childhood malnutrition and stunting rates remain surprisingly high in many coastal countries, such as Ghana, where the childhood underweight rate is 13 percent and stunting is 23 percent. Population dynamics are a major driver of future food security in West Africa: the 2010 population of 317 million is expected to grow to over 400 million by 2020, and to 500 million sometime after 2030. West Africa is experiencing rapid urbanization. By 2020, the current rural-urban ratio of 60:40 will have reversed, and only 40 percent of the region's population will reside in rural areas. West Africa's population will also continue to be extremely young—today, 60 percent are below the age of 20, and soon the youths of today will be the working people of tomorrow, searching for employment in an increasingly competitive economy. Other drivers of future food security include changes in productivity and profitability of key agricultural crops, changes in other income-generating activities, and climate change.

This session described the food needs and drivers for West Africa's food security now and in the future, and analyzed the most effective ways to meet upcoming food security needs, with a clear eye toward building resilience.

West Africa's food security outlook to 2025

Presenter: **Dr. Bio Goura Soulé**, *Researcher at the Laboratory for Regional Analysis and Social Expertise (LARES)*

Dr. Bio Goura Soulé, Researcher at LARES, presented an analysis of food security in West Africa up to the year 2025, when the region is expected to have a population of 400 million, 53 percent of which will be urban. Dr. Soulé explained that food needs will increase, even as the region is likely to be confronted with recurring crises. He talked about three major characteristics of the region's food security situation. First, over the past 30 years, the increases in cereal and overall agricultural production have been greater in West Africa than in the rest of the world. Second, increased disposable income has led to a significant (44 percent) increase in daily caloric consumption between 1980 and 2007. Third, malnutrition and hunger persist, but their rates have fallen.

Dr. Soulé then spoke about the causes of food insecurity in West Africa, emphasizing geographic and economic inaccessibility; changing, variable weather patterns; demographic changes, including population growth; market obstacles such as price instability and diminishing purchasing power; and conflicts. The outlook for food security for the next dozen years will, Dr. Soulé affirmed, be favorable. What will be important is to pay attention to those products that continue in deficit, especially rice—the “Achilles heel of West Africa.” As demographics change, market reforms need to accelerate, while at the same time the region's leadership should strengthen initiatives to foster resilience and support vulnerable households. Dr. Soulé finished by arguing that while social protections are currently in place for the elites, governments must realize the importance of extending them to the broader population.

Panel discussion: How can we meet the region's food security needs in the future?

Panelists: **Ms. Jeske van Seters**, Deputy Programme Manager, Food Security, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM); **Mr. Philip Heinrigs**, Economist, Club du Sahel; **Mr. Moussa Cissé**, Director, Regional Program to Support Market Access, Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS); **Mr. Jean-Marie Ackah**, President, Union of Poultry Industry Organizations of West Africa (UOFA AO); **Mr. Kalilou Sylla**, representing **Mr. Djibo Bagna** from the Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa (ROPPA); **Dr. Bio Goura Soulé**, Researcher, LARES

Ms. Jeske van Seters, Deputy Programme Manager, Food Security, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), laid out three key elements for efforts to strengthen food security: (1) appropriate policies, (2) implementation of those policies, and (3) political will for implementation. She noted that ECOWAP is a powerful tool for strengthening food security—a tool that doesn't exist in other parts of Africa—but that it is important for ECOWAP to not only cover investment but also address policy and policy reform. Agricultural policy alone, however, will not strengthen food security, as policies in other areas are also important. As an example, Ms. van Seters cited the ECOWAS strategy for aid for trade, which could help strengthen trade in food products. She maintained that at the policy level, what is lacking is the implementation of policies to promote food security. The policies and rules are there, but they are not being implemented, often due to factors such as lack of political will, financial shortfalls, and insufficient capacity. To improve the implementation process, Ms. Van Seters is eagerly waiting for the ECOWAS regional agency for agriculture and food to initiate its efforts. Finally, political will is also often missing. To create political will, different actors, each with their roles, need to be involved. She was encouraged to see so many private sector representatives at the conference, and engaged in dialogue with the public sector. Ms. Van Seters finished by stating: "Getting together is a beginning; talking is good; staying together and working together is success." The goal, she noted, is to stay together and work together after this conference.

Mr. Philip Heinrigs, Economist, Club du Sahel, discussed population growth and urbanization trends, which the Club du Sahel has studied and documented. These trends are leading to the emergence of large and continuously growing urban markets that need investment. Investments have not been substantial over the last few years, and have mainly focused on agricultural development, especially targeting production. This is helpful, but markets (both traders and prices) also need to be targeted, as do "soft" elements such as information. Mr. Heinrigs pointed out that investments in these aspects of markets, while challenging, are important, and although they are expensive, they are cheaper than investing in big infrastructure projects.

Mr. Moussa Cissé, Director, Regional Program to Support Market Access, *Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel* (CILSS), discussed the importance of markets, road infrastructure, storage, and market information for food security in the region. CILSS has been involved in advancing work on these important elements for many years. Mr. Cissé described the crucial contributions of road infrastructure and emphasized the need to encourage trade development and strengthen capacity, especially among actors who are dynamic but need support in various areas. In particular, he noted the importance of developing contacts among economic operators across West Africa, pointing out that CILSS has made efforts in this area. Mr. Cissé ended by saying that he is full of optimism about the market investments he has seen taking place, and believes we all should be optimistic about the developments in the region.

Mr. Jean-Marie Ackah, President, Union of Poultry Industry Organizations of West Africa (UOFA AO), stated that to ensure food security, we must continue to promote the growth of agriculture in its broadest sense, including in livestock. To support such development, he argued, countries need to put in place fiscal, financial, and applied research policies that will improve productivity. Production *must* increase in order to ensure food security for a growing population. Mr. Ackah also discussed the need to expand the regional market and develop agro-industry to feed West Africa's population, which is expected to reach 400 million in the coming decades. It is vital to see development not only from the perspective of the farmer, but also from the perspective of the processor. There is not, he stated, competition between small farming and agro-industry—instead, there is complementarity.

"Most of all, the conference stood out by its many private sector participants, who represented farmers as well as food processors, ranging from small to large companies, allowing for a genuine public-private dialogue.."

Jeske van Seters, Deputy Programme Manager, Food Security, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)

[source: ECDM Talkingpoints]

Mr. Kalilou Sylla, representing Mr. Djibo Bagna from the Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa (ROPPA), opened by disagreeing with the argument that population growth leads to food insecurity. He posited that the idea of comparative advantage is false. Food produced in Europe and America is less expensive, he argued, because it is subsidized. Mr. Sylla maintained that we need to intervene in the market, since subsidies are a reality and imported products are subsidized. He stated that the tendency across the world is for any food product's first market to be the market where it is produced—this is why ROPPA supports food sovereignty. Although regional markets are important, they, like all markets, must be regulated by a regulatory authority. West Africa has regulatory instruments through ECOWAS and WAEMU, but what is missing is an overall authority managing them. Mr. Sylla argued that the regulations need to be harmonized and the texts made available.

Dr. Bio Goura Soulé, Researcher, LARES, talked about the critical role that demography plays in production. As the population of West Africa grows in the coming decades, all countries in the region will need to increase productivity, which is currently among the lowest in the world. Even with increased productivity, feeding the growing population will continue to be challenging. Dr. Soulé also commented on assistance schemes to poor smallholders, saying that they do not make a wide impact among the majority of farmers. Instead, it will be important to increase involvement in other aspects of value chains. In West Africa, for example, there is extensive production of millet and sorghum, but the greatest yield increases have been in maize, which is a regional product in great demand. Dr. Soulé closed by reiterating his belief in the importance of food sovereignty, but considered in the regional context.

Discussion

Questions and comments for the panel, and their answers, brought out the following points, by category.

Larger questions and issues as we tackle food insecurity:

- We need to respect the interests of all actors, ranging from those in family agriculture to agro-industry, rather than seeing each other as opponents.
- How does chronic hunger fit in with our discussion on food security and trade? For example, Benin has seen significant increases in chronic food insecurity, and therefore stunting, in children. What can be done?
- Since more of the population will be living in urban centers in the coming decades, what should be done (such as policies) to encourage production?
- Bio-fuels affect food security. What about a regional exchange for staple food products, as opposed to cash crops?

Important investments and issues for food security:

- Many African leaders have invested in processing: Nkrumah in Akosombo Dam, which lowers the cost of electricity, Houphouët Boigny in developing the agro-industrial sector. What investments is this generation of leaders contemplating?
- Water is a key constraint in improving production and food security.
- Non-wood forest products deserve attention.
- Nigeria imports 2-3 million tons of rice annually; a first step would be to substitute for imported rice.

Specific constraints to regional trade:

- Logistics and transport affect food security. If we had better trucks and if people could get loans for trucks, it would also help address the backhaul problem.
- Small agro-processors' products are subjected to 20 percent VAT, which makes them too expensive for the population to buy. The VAT is an internal tax that is killing us. Many of the processors are women. People have struggled for about 30 years to add value to production, but today we are at the same level as we were then. Why? Because we are taxed; because of that we cannot meet our targets.

REGIONAL TRADE IN STAPLE COMMODITIES IN WEST AFRICA

Trade has always existed in West Africa. It builds on differences in agro-ecological conditions and, therefore, comparative advantages in production: maize is produced in humid areas, millet and sorghum in dry zones, and livestock in sub-humid to arid locations. Although statistics do not fully capture the reality, it is clear that current regional trade volumes are substantial. Regional trade is providing important markets for the region's producers and processors—and improving food security.

By working closely with business associations, USAID ATP has collected data on regional trade in focal value chains since 2009; starting in January 2013, this data collection was taken over by CILSS. In September–November 2012, USAID ATP reassessed trade flows in West Africa, including along many previously unmonitored corridors, to better understand and estimate the movement of agricultural goods in West Africa. The data collected since 2009—plus the 2012 assessment—was compared with data from government and other sources, in order to describe the extent of West African trade flows; the results were presented and discussed in this session.

Assessment of volume and value of regionally traded staple commodities

Presenter: **Dr. Henri Josserand**, *consultant*

Dr. Henri Josserand, consultant and lead author of a USAID ATP study that assessed the volume and value of regionally traded staple commodities, presented the results of his work. The study analyzed data from different sources to try to paint a picture of regional trade in staple commodities, which is a poorly understood topic. The sources used for the study included:

- Data collected by USAID ATP partners between 2009 and 2012 on livestock, maize, millet/sorghum, rice, and onion in almost 50 markets along selected trade routes linking nine countries in the central corridor of West Africa
- USAID ATP's October 2012 survey of nearly 60 markets on the commodities listed above, with some additional data on cowpea, in those nine countries as well as Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia
- CILSS/Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) data
- United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) data sets on official trade statistics

The combination of trade data and market surveys, further validated by other reports and studies on regional trade, provides a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of regional trade flows. The study highlighted the fact that official statistics significantly underestimate trade volumes of the region's main staple foods. This has profound impacts on our assessment of regional dynamics, Dr. Josserand argued: underestimating size of trade means underestimating the importance of trade to food security.

Dr. Josserand's analysis indicated that official statistics probably capture one-quarter to one-third of actual livestock trade, which he estimates to be at least \$800 million per year for the entire West African region. For the other commodities studied, the analysis indicates that actual trade flows are greater and more diverse than generally recognized.

These findings have significant food security implications, especially for countries with chronic or frequent food supply deficits. Current policies (based on incorrect data) are causing countries to devote insufficient attention and resources to regional trade. In looking at the maize trade, he found that a striking number of countries export very large volumes to Niger. USAID ATP had documented over 240,000 tons of maize exports to Niger per year, whereas official statistics registered only an average of 41,000 tons per year.

Dr. Josserand also discussed trends and future drivers for trade, pointing out that trade patterns shift over time, depending on economic growth, security, and an area's openness to trade. Traders have naturally been less likely to go to areas where they feel insecure or are harassed. Countries that play their regional integration cards better than others will be the winners. Looking ahead to the year 2030, West Africa is the region of the

“Trade can shift over time. It depends on economic growth, security, and an area's openness in trade. In areas where traders are harassed, traders will no longer go there. There are countries that play their integration cards better than others. These countries are the winners.”

Henri Josserand, Consultant

world that will grow fastest. Urbanization trends are well established and secondary cities will be growing and getting closer together. The number of people fully engaged in agricultural production is, however, forecast to remain constant, meaning that the increase in population will be non-agricultural. Although incomes will vary, they are generally rising everywhere. There will be larger concentrations of people with greater buying power in both urban and rural areas, as food processing becomes a major source of employment in rural areas. This will increase effective demand for food and other agricultural products, leading to an increase in the price of these commodities relative to non-agricultural products. This is a necessary condition for the intensification of agriculture in the region. Dr. Jossierand also predicted that agriculture will become more specialized, by location.

As a result of greatly increased demand for agricultural products, there will be an explosion in regional trade; to perhaps four times what it is today. The pressures to trade will have to lead to the elimination of trade barriers; this level of trade will not be possible with the current obstacles. At the same time, higher food prices will mean that the poor will have even more difficulty feeding themselves and will need effective social protection.

These dynamics will induce changes and tensions, such as large population movements within the region. The West African populations will act and react to these changes. Dr. Jossierand finished his presentation with a challenge: will governments and their institutions, as well as the general public, wisely accompany and facilitate transitions rather than try to stand in the way and be swept aside?

Panel discussion: What are the future drivers and prospects for regional trade in staple commodities?



Distinguished speakers: The Honorable Hannah Tetteh, Ghana's Minister-designate for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (hands up in center), takes part in a panel discussion on prospects for regional trade in staple goods. The panel also included (from left), Abdal'Azeem McCalla of Dantata Foods of Nigeria, Marie-Andree Tall of FRUITALES, a fruit processing company in Senegal, and El Hadj Issaka Sawadogo, chairman of COFENABVI, a regional livestock organization based in Cote d'Ivoire.

Panelists: **Hon. Hanna S. Tetteh**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Republic of Ghana; **Mrs. Marie-Andrée Tall**, President, Association Africa Agro-Export (AAFEX); **Mrs. Adja Velegda**, CEO, Groupe Velegda; **Mr. Issaka Sawadogo**, President of the Board of Directors, COFENABVI AO; **Mr. Abdal'Azeem McCalla**, Group General Manager, Dantata Foods & Allied Products; **Dr. Jean-Christophe Maur**, Senior Economist, Africa Vice Presidency, World Bank, **Mr. Louis-Philippe Dieckett-Aut**, Regional Economic & Customs Affairs Manager, Central and West African region, Nestlé

Hon. Hanna S. Tetteh, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Republic of Ghana, arrived at the conference having just completed her tenure as Minister for Trade and Industry and having been sworn into her new post that very morning. She opened her remarks by stating that the conference discussions are very important and timely, including the assessment of the drivers of regional trade and the questions raised about it, as led by Dr. Jossierand and others. Minister Tetteh emphasized the huge opportunities inherent in these discussions and emphasized that conferences like this are an opportunity to talk not only about problems, but also about actions to remedy them.

West Africa is not recording as much trade as it is actually conducting—that shows that more must be done within the framework of ECOWAS. Mechanisms need to work. Minister Tetteh said that while requirements for trading foodstuffs exist, we complicate things unnecessarily; the framework agreed-upon long ago now has to be implemented. Since ECOWAS was founded in 1975, Minister Tetteh argued: “We’ve been very good at identifying problems, but not very good at implementing what is needed. We need to stop talking about problems and take action.” For example, although we know there are “absolutely no duties” on agricultural products traded across borders, trucks sit at border crossings, sometimes for days, sometimes able to trade, sometimes not. Francophone countries have been able to integrate faster than Anglophone countries because of their common currency.

One possible solution, Minister Tetteh said, may be to use a virtual currency for trade. Other ideas include a commodities exchange and warehouse receipts program, which Ghana has been working on and which hopefully will continue to be high on the agenda. In addition, it will be important to eliminate corruption—there is agony

due to bribery and corruption, and mechanisms to make them impossible or unnecessary are needed. Informal trade thrives because formal trade is so difficult. Minister Tetteh, in her new post, will be working with ECOWAS on these problems, as “our prospects depend on our ability to dismantle the structures that foster corruption and impede efficiency.” Other important areas for regional cooperation include regional alternatives to road transport, such as rail and sea transport, through public-private partnerships. Minister Tetteh concluded by saying, “If we depend on others to feed us, we’ll be even worse off.” She expressed her wish that by end of the conference, concrete steps will be identified to increase commodity trade.

Mrs. Marie-Andrée Tall, President, *Association Africa Agro-Export (AAFEX)*, opened by saying that for several years, the ECOWAS states have been working to eliminate impediments to trade. The main obstacles are often identified as inappropriate national regulatory instruments, harassment of drivers along the corridors, and problems with customs/tariffs at different borders throughout the region. For years, ECOWAS countries, as well as institutions supporting the private sector, have tried to reduce these constraints. If these measures have not succeeded, it is because there are more influential factors affecting regional trade. There must be an available supply that is exportable beyond the national market—a supply that is of sufficient quantity and quality, that is affordable to consumers. In addition, with galloping urbanization and a growing middle class, eating habits are changing. Food is less-often prepared and eaten in the home.

The association Mrs. Tall represents, AAFEX, believes that the future lies in the trade of processed products. In contrast to locally processed products, food products from Europe, the Maghreb, and Middle East move fairly easily throughout West Africa. These imports prove that there is strong demand that is not satisfied by the limited local supply.

Processed foods have certain advantages: they are easier to transport and store and there is a smaller risk of spoilage. Therefore, there is enormous potential to increase trade in these products. Processing firms exist in every country, and it is important to note that there are many women developing small processing businesses.

Mrs. Tall called for the public sector to give more support to the processing of agricultural products, not support for the big firms that already have the ear of high-level officials, but for the small businesses that need modern equipment and the results of applied research, since products suitable for future are likely to be different than those consumed today. There is also work to be done on quality standards, warehousing, and modernization of the firms themselves, as well as on tax codes adapted to small businesses that use local materials. Mrs. Tall concluded by saying that the members of AAFEX have started to work together to serve the 300 million consumers in West Africa, and eventually elsewhere in Africa.

Mrs. Adja Velegda, CEO, Groupe Velegda, started by saying that the conference is interesting because all the actors are present, have been listening to each other, and have the same ambitions. Mrs. Velegda emphasized the importance of increasing production, given the growing population. Working on local cereals such as millet is not easy at all, as production is very low and dependent on rains. Doing business at the borders is very difficult. There are problems with phytosanitary certificates and certificates of origin. There are no freight forwarders, no one-stop shops. Officials take illegal payments from those who do not have documents. Promoting free movement of goods and persons would mean that “everyone will win,” as origins and quantities would be known. Mrs. Velegda ended by saying, “I hope ECOWAS is taking notes: everyone knows the problem.” She suggested that requirements be communicated in local languages to make sure all will know them.

Mr. Issaka Sawadogo, President of the Board of Directors, COFENABVI AO, began by describing the problems that livestock traders face with border agents, police, and gendarmerie: traders who slip 2,000 or 3,000 francs into their documents pass right away, whereas others who have all the right documents are harassed. He said, “You can call ECOWAS, but that will not help you right away. In the meantime, you are there with your truck of livestock and the agents won’t let you pass. Then you wait and your livestock can’t be watered and fed and start to die.” Mr. Sawadogo called for ECOWAS to establish a task force to deal with these problems, as “otherwise you will have a thousand conferences for a hundred years, and nothing ever gets done.” Mr. Sawadogo listed other priority problems, such as lack of refrigerated trucks for fresh meat; the problems of trading in a bilingual region; and security issues in Nigeria, an important destination for cattle. There are also problems with traders who still carry large sums of cash, exposing them to crime, including murder, as had just recently happened. It would be better to send money through a bank, even if it means waiting a month, and stay

 **Agribiz Africa** 30 Jan

“There is so much informal trade across our borders because formal trade has been rendered very difficult”

-Hon Hanna Tetteh, Min. for Foreign Affairs, Ghana, addressing participants at FAB conference

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Nana Darko Hon Minister asking the commitment of the other member states. This will be the only way for a successful advocacy. Unifying our trade legislation; a good point.

January 30 at 11:55am · Like

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alive. Mr. Sawadogo concluded by congratulating ECOWAS for what it has done while emphasizing that there is much more to accomplish.

Mr. Abdal'Azeem McCalla, Group General Manager, Dantata Foods & Allied Products, started by briefly introducing Dantata as a trader of cereals, maize, and livestock. The future of trade, he argued, hangs in the balance and depends on how issues are addressed. Mr. McCalla re-emphasized some of the most important problems, such as a lack of political will and a central coordination organization, obstruction by police and customs, and the high cost of intra-regional transportation. If these issues become priorities for action, there would be a blossoming of trade. Mr. McCalla described the opportunistic nature of business people as a solution—if the government creates an enabling environment, businesses will take advantage of it.

Looking at the drivers of future growth, Mr. McCalla said Dantata is paying attention to trends, and sees that population growth will increase the demand for staple foods and that a period of economic growth is coming, with Nigeria being the largest importer and exporter. In terms of structural drivers, transport infrastructure affects Dantata directly. The benefits of a railway system are common knowledge, as is the fact that the cost of road transportation in the region is very expensive.

Mr. McCalla then recounted a trip to Mali in December 2011 to sign contracts for cattle trade to Nigeria. Since then, he said, his firm has not been able to find a truck to take the cattle, because truckers say they do not know the route or their costs are too high, especially since they have to come back empty. Mr. McCalla suggested that subsidies might help offset the expensive cost of transport across the region. He ended by listing other problems affecting trade, such as those related to the ease of payment and collection, environmental challenges, and political situations.

Dr. Jean-Christophe Maur, Senior Economist, Africa Vice Presidency, World Bank, began by saying that he welcomed Dr. Josserand's study, as decision-makers need to "know reality before making decisions." The first point he drew from Dr. Josserand's presentation related to the vitality of the food trade. There is even more trade than he thought, he said, and also more potential for trade. The study also showed the large share of informal trade. The constraints discussed in the conference create extra costs for traders and drive them into informal trade. It is inefficient to have two-thirds or three-quarters of the trade be informal, as the study suggests.

A second point Dr. Maur drew from the study is that this informal trade occurs despite national policies to restrict imports and exports; these policies are therefore ineffective. The logical conclusion is perhaps to develop other policies. A third and final point brought out by Dr. Josserand's study is that there are complementarities between the surplus and deficit areas, and these complementarities should be furthered through regional integration.

In terms of the outlook for the future, Dr. Maur said that he is more optimistic about food prices than Dr. Josserand, since he thinks food prices are not likely to increase greatly due to economies of scale and improved technologies from regional integration. At the same time, he is less optimistic than Dr. Josserand about pressures from rising demand leading to liberalization: just because the market is bigger does not mean it will become more liberalized. Based on a 2011 study carried out by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), which suggested that price volatility is higher when markets are not integrated, he expects West Africa's integration to reduce price volatility, but he also noted that some volatility linked to international markets will remain. It will therefore be important for countries to work together on joint responses to price shocks; volatility shocks will be greater if countries pursue national policies.

Finally, there is a need for regional public goods because countries are too small to afford certain public goods at the national level. These include grain banks; commercial infrastructure such as finance and insurance; and a market for inputs, fertilizer, seeds, and cultivars. Concrete political actions are needed to create this infrastructure; one cannot just rely on pressure from the market. Regional institutions are needed to coordinate creation and use of these public goods, and to provide specialized expertise on standards, transport, and other complex technical issues. Dr. Maur concluded by saying that regional institutions need to play an oversight role, monitor enforcement of policies, and create transparency so that member countries can monitor what their neighbors are doing.

Mr. Louis-Philippe Dieckett-Aut, Regional Economic & Customs Affairs Manager, Central and West African Region, Nestlé, outlined what he sees as requirements for the future. First, there is a need to resolve the enormous problems producers have with storage. Second, governments need to establish emergency response mechanisms to deal with calamities. Third, an action plan is needed to deal with conflicts, in order to reduce the suffering of the population. Fourth, product quality needs to be improved to protect consumers' health and to provide good-quality raw materials for processing. In addition, there is a need to protect the quality of products during transport, since even good-quality products can deteriorate during transport. Improved quality will minimize processors' needs to import from Europe. Finally, new policies are needed to support food security, such as policies to keep all the land from being used for cash crops.

Discussion

Conference participants, as well as panelists, raised the following points:

Questions and comments

Free trade is needed for food security and to fight malnutrition.

- Two years ago, a delegation to ECOWAS in Abuja talked about all these points and made an advocacy plan, but the same problems are still being discussed. Everything that is being said has already been said; everything that has not been said has also been said. Free movement of goods needs to be implemented. Another problem affecting processors of local products is the VAT that is applied to these products, which makes it hard for them to compete. More favorable treatment for locally processed foods would be appreciated. Unprocessed products can't be eaten raw—they must be processed.
- In his response to various comments, Commissioner Ahmed said ECOWAS will take into account the problems people are citing. Informal trade is a strategy for avoiding taxes—it is not spontaneous. The business person calculates all the costs of operating formally and decides to set up at the side of the street. The small consumer has little purchasing power, so a businessman cannot charge a lot, which leads him to operate informally because otherwise the costs are too high.
- A question for the ministerial representatives focused on the commitment of ECOWAS and WAEMU to eliminate restrictions on backhaul, restrictions that are keeping transport expensive. A companion question for informal traders focused on their commitment to adhering to at least a minimum set of requirements, which would give the private sector more leverage to engage with public sector representatives and hold them accountable.
- It has long been thought that it was important to improve agricultural production, but now there is recognition that industry also needs to be developed. To do this, national policies and ECOWAS policies need to be coordinated.
- The Burkinabé Shippers Council had problems finding trucks, so it created an electronic platform to coordinate demand and supply of transport. The council invited federations to talk with the founders about this.
- More realistic indicators be established for ECOWAS and member states to monitor implementation of various actions. These indicators need to take into account what is happening on the ground.



Participant question: Fadima Siby Mariko of UDOCAL, a cereal processing firm in Mali, questions panelists on the problem of paying bribes to cross borders.

Responses by the panel members:

- Dr. Jossier responded to comments on his presentation, beginning with the concept that obstacles would collapse under the pressure of growing markets. He said that increases in buying power would create strong demand for food, and that social and political factors will come into play. He commented on the many references to political will by saying that he believes governments do not automatically do what is in the interest of everyone. They react to pressure, and people need to advocate for change. Advocacy will only

“We in the private sector need to play our role, otherwise we cannot demand anything of the politicians.”

*Marie-Andrée Tall, President,
Association Africa
Agro-Export (AAFEX)*

grow as the population grows. Finally, the region will have to do more with fewer producers, which means greater intensification of production and more processing.

- Mrs. Tall, in a response to participants, said, “We in the private sector need to play our role, otherwise we cannot demand anything of the politicians.”
- Mr. McCalla made a suggestion to use cameras to catch agents demanding illegal payments.
- Minister Tetteh, in response to various comments, said, “ECOWAS regulations don’t implement themselves,” and that they have to be implemented at the country level. She asked how committed countries are to ECOWAS, responding that she could only answer for Ghana, which is first committed to national interest and business. The high turnover among ministers in various countries is an important obstacle to efforts such as the CET, Minister Tetteh maintained, since each new minister needs time to learn the agenda. She concluded by saying, “If you want an ECOWAS protocol to work, businesses need to lobby—I encourage you to lobby.”

SUPPORTING EVENTS

Side events provided a chance to discuss and learn about new initiatives relevant to regional trade.

Announcing the launch of the West Africa Grains Network

Facilitators: **Mr. Soumaïla Sanou**, *President, CIC-B*, and **Mr. Tom Gambrah**, *General Manager, Premium Foods*

With support from USAID ATP and leadership by CIC-B, actors in the cereals sector began efforts to collaborate on a regional level in 2009. In October 2012, at a meeting of cereals sector participants, a working group of representatives from nine countries was given authority to take necessary steps to form WAGN to promote regional trade and improve the trading environment. During this side event, the working group described the network's areas of intervention and objectives, discussed findings from the East African study tour, and announced that the network would be formally constituted in March 2013. Participants in the side event expressed their views on various topics such as the sustainability of WAGN, services to be provided, and the role of the private sector, as well as country representation and membership.

Linking Borderless Alliance with value chain associations

Facilitator: **Mr. Ziad Hamoui**, *President, Borderless Alliance*

Borderless Alliance is a private sector advocacy organization campaigning for regional integration and the removal of trade and transport barriers in West Africa. Approximately 20 representatives of various private sector value chain associations (COFENABVI AO, GAPTO, etc.), private sector firms (such as DHL Global Forwarding), and the public sector attended the event. Participants discussed the advocacy priorities of regional agricultural associations and their members, in order to align them with those of Borderless Alliance. Mr. Hamoui introduced the Alliance and its members, which include ports, producers, and other economic actors. The organization has been inaugurated so far in six countries; it works in those countries to engage local authorities, following the principal of "think regionally but act locally." The Alliance also targets sectors that often operate informally. Mr. Hamoui explained steps taken to inform and to facilitate advocacy, such as hotlines to report problems, which are already operational and proving effective.

Discussion centered on how Borderless Alliance selects priorities for its advocacy agenda. There was concern by some attendees who are already members of the Alliance that their views are not reflected in the Alliance's agenda. Mr. Hamoui responded that the priority of the Alliance is to serve its members, and indicated that the organization is working hard to incorporate the interests of all parties. He explained, however, that internal communications and administrative procedures are still evolving, since the Alliance is new. He expressed a desire to sit down with member organizations to create advocacy plans to ensure that their priorities are reflected in the Borderless Alliance agenda.

Market information systems for regional trade

Facilitator: **Mr. Vincent Fautrel**, *Senior Programme Coordinator, the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA)*

This side event offered a chance to discuss market information systems and their potential in West Africa. Access to timely and accurate market data is a priority for producers marketing their products and for those developing agricultural and food policies. A number of organizations and companies are implementing new business models that include information services. Telecom operators are increasingly in search of value-added services for their clients; they are collaborating with market information systems (MIS) providers. The discussion revolved around ways in which MIS can be a tool for promoting regional agricultural trade, the types of information needed by economic actors, information gaps, and the specific roles of each actor. The following recommendations were adopted during the discussion:

- Associations need to resolve the question of viable business models.
- Market information systems need to be developed for specific purposes, with associations in place to gather and channel information for MIS.
- Value chain suppliers could provide an alternative to MIS and offer an efficient way to disseminate information.

How to make finance work for regional trade

Facilitators: **Mr. Kojo Osae-Addo**, *Consultant, USAID ATP*, and **Mr. Constantin Abarbieritei**, *Division Vice President, International Economic Growth, Abt Associates Inc.*

Panelists: **Ms. Mirabelle Moreaux**, *Investment Officer, Injaro Agricultural Capital Holdings Ltd.*; **Ms. Barbara Ghansah**, *Loan Officer, Root Capital*

This event focused on trade financing and payment issues for companies engaged in trade, with a particular emphasis on the needs of the small producers and processors who were in attendance. In introductions, Ms. Ghansah explained that Root Capital provides loans to groups in rural areas, including trade financing for exports. Ms. Moreaux explained that Injaro is a venture capital company with \$17 million to invest, aiming to both achieve a return on investment and make a social impact, such as job creation and support for good corporate governance. Mr. Abarbieritei commented that there is often a need to facilitate the financing process, which is what Abt Associates does under many of the projects it implements. Discussion focused primarily on the ways in which Root Capital and Injaro do their financing.

- Ms. Ghansah said that it generally takes Root Capital about 4-6 weeks to make an assessment, once it has a complete package of information. Business development services are part of the lending package it provides; this helps make the loans work. The firm's services are not too different from the banks, but it helps companies that could not be helped by banks, perhaps because of collateral requirements. Root Capital specializes in the agricultural sector and can be more flexible in structuring financing to suit the needs of businesses. For example, it can take a sales contract as collateral as long as the buyer is willing to pay the bank directly. Root Capital usually lends working capital to borrowers first and lets them develop a track record before taking out larger loans for capital investment. If a company has already shown an ability to manage working capital, it is possible in some cases to proceed right to investment capital. Root Capital either needs to see a company's accounts or work with the company to put together the basic financial information if the accounts are not complete. The firm normally restricts the amount it lends to \$500,000, and it calls on partner institutions if a borrower needs more.
- Ms. Moreaux explained that Injaro provides technical assistance once it decides to work with a company. The cost for assistance is based on a sliding scale, with the borrower bearing more of the cost over time. It takes at least six months before Injaro makes a decision about investment because it needs to understand the business as much or more than the owner and see how it can add value. "We would have a member on your board and we would call you every month to find out what is happening. We would be involved in the strategic questions more than day-to-day," Ms. Moreaux said. When asked about co-investors, she said that Injaro has not yet had any co-investors.

Mr. Abarbieritei pointed out that it is an important challenge to choose the right funder and type of funding for a company's needs and that business development service providers help with this. Donors who provide business services for free can create expectations. The question becomes: How can donors wean the market off the free services?

BUSINESS FAIR

The Food Across Borders conference also hosted a regional Business Fair to build relations among trading partners. The focus was less on deal-making, and more on information-exchange and the establishment of contacts for future endeavors. In all, 31 companies and associations represented production, processing, input and service provision, including banking and logistics:

Associations in production, trading and processing:

Association Afrique Agro-Export (AAFEX)

Association des Transformateurs de Céréales Locales (ATCL)

Centrale des Producteurs de Céréales Faso Jigi/PACCEM

Centrale des Producteurs de Céréales du Togo (CPC Togo)

Conseil pour l'Action et la Solidarité des Paysannes au Niger (CASPANI-Yarda)

Comité Interprofessionnel des Céréales au Burkina Faso (CIC-B)

Comité Interprofessionnel du Riz du Burkina (CIR-B)

Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail/Viande des Pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (COFENABVI AO)

Fédération des Unions de Producteurs du Benin (FUPRO)

Ghana Rice Inter-Professional Body (GRIB)

Réseau des Transformatrices de Céréales du Burkina Faso

Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria (RIFAN)

Union des Coopératives du Vivrier des Savanes (UCOVISA)

Trading and processing companies:

Ets Velegda B. Maimounata

Meunerie et Emballage de Légumes Secs (MELS)

Neema Agricole du Faso (NAFASO)

Olam Ghana Ltd.

Premium Foods Ltd.

Rose Eclat

Société Ivoirienne des Production Animales (SIPRA-IVOGRAIN)

Société d'Exploitation des Produits Alimentaires (SODEPAL)

Input and service provision :

AGRIPRO International

Bank of Africa-Ghana Limited

Esoko Networks

United Bank for Africa (Ghana) Limited (UBA)

Wienco Ghana Limited

Yara Ghana

Logistics companies:

DHL Global Forwarding

Partners:

Borderless Alliance

Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA)



Business fair: Henri Jossierand— presenter of a paper showing that trade in staple food commodities is close to three times that of official estimates—examines West African agricultural products at an exhibit that featured 23 processors, traders, transporters and financing institutions from around the region.

The Business Fair opened on the evening of January 28, 2013, and continued throughout the ensuing three days of the conference, during coffee and lunch breaks, and immediately before and after daily sessions. A leaflet was available for the participants which gave a brief company profile and contact information for all exhibitors (see Annex 3). Reviews by the exhibitors themselves were generally favorable. Most felt that the business fair provided a good opportunity to communicate with many people and establish networks. At least two cereal traders met potential suppliers of cereals, while another trader met potential suppliers of fruits, tomatoes and onions.

RECAP OF PREVIOUS DAY AND DISCUSSION OF TODAY'S OBJECTIVES

Presenter: **Dr. Candace Buzzard**, *Regional Agriculture Director, USAID/West Africa*

 **Agribiz Africa** 31 Jan

"Both the private sector and the public sector share a common belief that a regional approach to foodsecurity will bear greater fruits than short-term nationalistic approaches"

- Dr. Candace Buzzard summing up FAB conference activities for the first two days

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Dr. Candace Buzzard, Regional Agriculture Director, USAID/West Africa, recapped the previous two days' activities and results, observing that there is less that divides the public and private sectors than there is that unites them. Both the private and public sectors share a sense that the regional framework for trade in staple food products is sound, while implementation is weak. Both sectors recognize that countries need to adopt national laws consistent with the spirit of the protocols. During the first two days, the private sector highlighted the challenges it confronts daily and outlined active roles for itself in finding solutions. The role of the media was underscored, to inform the public about problems and efforts to solve them.

Dr. Buzzard recalled Dr. Gadio's urge for everyone to be inspired by the pan-African dreams of the continent's founding fathers and move toward a federation of West Africa. The previous days' sessions clearly presented how the private sector reacts to constraints and emphasized certain recurring themes, such as the need to achieve economies of scale through trans-boundary actions. Finally, these sessions also described how informal trade helps feed West Africa.

Dr. Buzzard concluded by saying that she felt the participants were beginning the third day of the conference with a shared sense of pride and renewed commitment, and that she hoped that concrete steps to move forward would be developed during Day 3.

Regional Trade and Food Security in West Africa

Clearly, regional trade will be key to meeting tomorrow's increasing food needs and building the resilience needed for future food systems.

"Regional food markets and trade are crucial to West African food security. With changes in settlement patterns, particularly the ratio between urban and rural populations, and the growing proportion of nonproducers in agriculture, markets have come to play an essential role in supplying food to West African households... There is a need to consider the regional and informal dimensions of trade when designing food security strategies."

West African Futures, No. 5, Club du Sahel and West Africa.

The morning session examined the relationship between food security and trade. It first highlighted a case study on Niger, a country that is very poor, food insecure, and vulnerable to environmental and anthropogenic risks. Niger also has an extensive, well-documented history of regional trade, with imports covering 20 to 40 percent of its basic food needs, and with some significant exports, such as livestock, cowpea, and onions. Understanding how Niger deals with regional trade and food security issues can provide valuable lessons for the whole region. After a report of food security and trade in Niger, a panel assessed the link between food security and regional trade in the region, focusing on the collective responsibility to improve food security through regional trade.

Regional trade and food security in Niger

Presenter: **Mr. Roger Blein**, *Director, Bureau Issala*

Mr. Roger Blein, Director, Bureau Issala, presented a case study on Niger, which provides pertinent insights and lessons about the importance of trade in assuring food security. Niger presents a paradox, in that it is the country that is both most integrated with the region and most dependent on the region. At the same time, it has put in place public policies based on national food self-sufficiency.

Mr. Blein described the succession of Niger's food security crises, which have struck the country on average once every two years in the last decade, despite the lack of severe drought. Every year, 2 to 3.5 million Nigeriens are vulnerable and need assistance; 40 percent of children in the country are chronically malnourished, which affects their physical and intellectual development. Although food security in Niger, like elsewhere, depends on various factors, food security crises are crises of access, above all.

Mr. Blein then turned to the link between food security and markets, saying that it is false to think that people should grow all they need to eat. For example, livestock producers only produce meat and milk. This agropastoral culture is very linked to the market: more than 60 percent of food in Niger comes from the market and the regional market plays a vital role in stabilizing the country's food supply. Mr. Blein argued that the regional market is the first line of defense when crises hit, even before international aid and humanitarian assistance, and Nigeria's policies have a fundamental impact on food security in Niger.

In fact, in West Africa there is probably no country more integrated within the regional market than Niger. Niger exports cereals to Nigeria; livestock to Nigeria (and some to Benin); cowpea to Nigeria, Benin, and Ghana; onion to Ghana, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, and Togo; and peppers and tiger nuts to Nigeria. Mr. Blein estimated that Niger exports \$400 to \$500 million in livestock, onions, beans, peppers, sesame, and other products to Nigeria and other neighbors. Its products are well-positioned and markets for them are growing, although competition for some products (such as livestock and onion) is tough in certain markets.

Because of wide variations in its own grain production, imports of cereals from Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, and elsewhere in the region vary between a few hundred thousand to over a million tons per year. In all, 40,000 to 60,000 trucks cross the border each year—a colossal amount of trade. While the regional market increases food availability and diversity in Niger, Mr. Blein pointed out that it also is associated with some risks, including the risk of border closures and conflicts, such as the ongoing conflict in Mali.

In defining future directions for Niger, Mr. Blein contended that demographics will continue to play an important role: in 2030, Niger is projected to have a population of 30 million (double what it is today), and perhaps 45-50 million in 2050. Those who know the country, he said, ask how such a large population can be cared for. Mr. Blein argued that policies being made now—with an outlook of 10 to 15 years—need to account for this population growth. The country will continue to face uncertainties related to migration and remittances, changes in weather patterns, and the frequency and size of food shocks. It can respond to the challenges through its agricultural and trade policies and by redistributing the wealth created from its mineral resources. Regionalization of food crisis management is also needed.

Importantly, to handle all these future challenges will require Niger, as well as the entire region, to specialize and move toward closer integration. Mr. Blein concluded, "Niger cannot be food secure in a national context; it cannot be food secure without regionalization." In the future, Niger also must also create value-added products, become more efficient, and develop better market information systems to better inform actors and decisionmakers. Today, the framework for managing crises in Niger is heavily locally focused. Niger also has a policy of "Nigeriens feed Nigeriens"—a popular idea that appears very risky in the Nigerien context.

Mr. Blein finished his presentation with a brief review of regionally valid actions arising out of the Niger experience. All West African countries need to discuss with neighboring countries what their comparative advantages are and how they will invest. Each country should not conduct the same research and produce the same products. ECOWAS is establishing regional food reserves, but it will need to foster a better sense of collective responsibility in order to make each country more food secure. Finally, it is also important to develop more supply instruments to manage the interface between world and regional markets and reduce price volatility.

"Niger cannot be food secure in a national context, it cannot be food secure without regionalization."

Roger Blein, Director, Bureau Issala

Discussion

After Mr. Blein's presentation, participants made a variety of comments and asked questions, including the following, grouped by topic.

Demand and supply:

- In most of our countries, we distinguish between demand and supply. We have not talked yet about demand itself. We have not talked about what products are in demand, what people want. This is an important element.

Production, processing, and transportation:

- In addition to talking about trade, we need to talk about the costs of increasing production. The region has rivers and river basins, which lend themselves to irrigation, but this costs money. It would be quite expensive to increase the production of rice alone.
- We need more emphasis on processed products. We have talked more about agriculture than processing; we need to better promote our local processed products.
- Several people mentioned processing. We see same trend as in other countries: urbanization accompanied by changes in what people eat: maize and rice replace millet and sorghum. It's not just replacing traditional cereals with new ones, because the new ones are easier and quicker to prepare. There are different paths to increase processing: we can head down a road to more processing (big mills, etc.) but little additional employment, or we can rely on artisanal transformation that employs lots of people right out of school.
- With 60,000 trucks going into Niger each year, we can see the value. But there are not very many professional truckers in West Africa. We cannot have effective trade without them.
- Mme. Velegda commented that customs officials are blocking traders' trucks.

Malnutrition, hunger, food security, food self-sufficiency, and food sovereignty:

- Do you really think we can master hunger in our region? What can we really do to eliminate this problem that penalizes our population?
- The first famine alert was in 1985. Even though the region is an excellent producer of cereals, malnutrition rates stay high.
- Malnutrition is a real problem, and has existed in Mali for years. The problem is a lack of education about nutrition. We need to start with educating children on how to eat.
- We need to touch on the issue of food security, not just look at trade. We talk about trade as if its link with food security is self-evident. But we have seen increased child malnutrition over the last 15 years. Maybe this is accompanied by a decline in trade, but if we've seen trade going up and malnutrition going up, then we need to reexamine link between food security and trade.
- How can we get decision-makers to prioritize food security instead of food sovereignty?
- On the question of food sovereignty: does the region have the resources to assure food sovereignty in coming years? Everyone says yes. But there is great danger in following a national approach to this. For example, if a country subsidizes rice fertilizer to make rice cheaper, it might not want consumers in neighboring countries to reap the advantages.
- Not everyone saw a paradox in Niger's plan for food self-sufficiency.

Trade and comparative advantage:

- What about the data about the various countries that import onions from Niger? Is there a deficit or surplus? In Ghana, USAID helped collect data, but in September 2010, the Agency withdrew from the onion value chain. Data showed that in 2010, Ghana imported \$42 million in onions, but this is only a part of what was really imported. If we want real data, we need to work with focal points in the country.
- In 2012, the WFP, in response to the food security situation in parts of the Sahel, purchased many tons of cowpea from Niger. Most was exported to other countries in region, such as Mauritania. The WFP also purchased cowpea from Groupe Velegda in Burkina Faso. The point is that even though you have food insecurity in certain countries, you can have a comparative advantage and therefore exports in certain products. If a country like Niger has a comparative advantage in cowpea, what is being done to encourage production of this product? Is there a way to encourage countries to improve production of commodities where they have a comparative advantage? With high levels of malnutrition in the region, what can be done to facilitate transformation of locally grown products into nutritious foods to be consumed in region instead of waiting for these products to be imported?

- Agro-pastoral products, not uranium, are Niger’s biggest exports. Niger exports rice to Nigeria, where in certain times of year, it has a competitive advantage in rice compared to its neighbors. The problem is one of accessibility and household purchasing power. Rice goes to the most viable market; not necessarily to the households. They can’t buy it.

Response by the presenter:

Mr. Blein said he agreed with those who had said trade is not the only dimension of food security, but he also emphasized that much work must still be done to be sure that trade makes a strong contribution to food security. He said he considers Niger an interesting case because it has tried to treat hunger and child malnutrition in a very systematic way. Despite these efforts, however, there has not been much progress in reducing acute and chronic malnutrition.

Panel Discussion: What actions need to be taken to improve West Africa’s food security through regional trade? Who does what?

Panelists: **Dr. Marc Atouga**, *Commissioner for Agriculture, Water and Environment, ECOWAS*; **Mr. Ibrahima Diémé**, *Commissioner for Rural Development, Natural Resources and the Environment, WAEMU*; **Hon. Hamid Ahmed**, *Commissioner for Industry and Mines, Free Movement and Tourism, ECOWAS*; **Mr. Nebnoma Sawadogo**, *President, RECAO*; **Mr. Abel Gbetoenmon**, *Chairman of the Board, Africa Performance Agency*

Dr. Marc Atouga, Commissioner for Agriculture, Water and Environment, ECOWAS, opened by addressing questions about the roles and responsibilities of ECOWAS and others. Although it has been officially agreed that trade in agricultural products will be free from all constraints and taxes among the member states of both ECOWAS and WAEMU, 20 to 30 years after those agreements, harassment continues, tax collection continues, and actors complain. “We’re here to address this,” he said. “We are all involved. Everyone has a role.” He reiterated that food security is both an individual and a collective responsibility. Production cannot be done by everyone everywhere. There are production zones and consumption zones, surplus zones and deficit zones. “If we want to ensure food security for the whole region, we need trade.” He went on to state that those countries that do not have a comparative advantage to produce a product are better off importing—pointing out that this is “simple and complex at the same time.” Dr. Atouga described the paradox of current pursuits vs. reality: “We have reflexes for self-sufficiency, but no country, even the most developed, is 100 percent self-sufficient.” He emphasized that ECOWAS’s main responsibility is to produce the regulatory instruments to facilitate trade. ECOWAS works for the member states and there is a “gentlemen’s agreement” that after ECOWAS develops regulatory instruments and publishes them in its official journal, states will integrate them into their laws and diffuse the information. He said countries need to provide information on these policies, perhaps through leaflets that can be shown to officials who ask for money. He urged the mass media—public and private TV, radio stations, and others—to be proactive, saying their role is to diffuse information that will help people demand their rights. Dr. Atouga concluded by saying that ECOWAS has a role in monitoring to determine whether the instruments it passed have been effectively put into practice.

“We have reflexes for self-sufficiency, but no country, even the most developed, is 100 percent self-sufficient.”

Marc Atouga, Commissioner for Agriculture, Water and Environment, ECOWAS

Mr. Ibrahima Diémé, Commissioner for Rural Development, Natural Resources and the Environment, WAEMU, focused on the work of the WAEMU Commission, saying those at WAEMU are workers of the member states. He outlined several WAEMU activities in member states, such as those in the *Office du Niger* in Mali. He also discussed accords with each member state to manage funds to respond to climate change, talked about facilitation of input availability; described signed agreements with members on topics such as certified seeds and fruit fly control; and expressed support for warehouses and investments in water management. Cooperation with other regional and international partners takes place through joint technical services and initiatives in various stages of advancement, such as regional exchange for staple foods and information systems for cotton, fishing, and agriculture. Mr. Diémé described WAEMU’s participation in OPA and other transport work, including a convention with Côte d’Ivoire on economic issues that covers the corridor between Côte d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso. The Regional Fund for Agricultural Development has been in operation since 2012 and includes capacity building support to such associations as ROPPA, the West African Agricultural Chambers Network (known as RECAO), and COFENABVI AO. Finally, as a response to recurring food crises, Mr. Diémé

reported on the formation of a high commission presided over by the President of Niger to address food crises; this group has had four meetings to date.

 **@Agribiz_Africa** 31 Jan
Need to intensify efforts at educating
all regional trade actors on the laws,
rights & responsibilities -ECOWAS'
Hamid Ahmed #foodtrade

Hon. Hamid Ahmed, Commissioner for Industry and Mines, Free Movement and Tourism, ECOWAS, opened by saying that he would be answering conference participants' question—"What is ECOWAS going to do for us?" He said that road harassment is a problem that people have been trying to solve for decades; it is now part of the system. Those wanting to engage in trade need to study the environment and build harassment into the cost of doing business.

Commissioner Ahmed argued that the real problem comes down to production—there is not enough production because people do not have the means to produce. Too much is asked of civil servants, and there is an emerging class that wants things to be too easy. Some people want to take away the VAT, but the states cannot do that. Commissioner Ahmed repeated, "We are used to things being too easy," and cited what Asians have done despite their challenges, saying "they work like ants while we sleep."

In terms of ECOWAS's role, the Commissioner agreed that texts liberalizing trade are not well known or diffused and that there are no sanctions, and said ECOWAS could help with dissemination so that people know the regulatory instruments and understand their rights and responsibilities. ECOWAS will try to get people on the ground at checkpoints to sensitize the police, customs agents, and gendarmes about the instruments. Those agents are there to serve the public and should be brought into the discussion.

He went on to say that different types of statistics are false. For example, value-addition provided by women working at home is underestimated, as is the value of all the micro-transactions of individuals living along the border who trade from one side to the other. According to a study that he conducted, trade between Niger and Nigeria is underestimated by 260 percent. Therefore, better statistics are needed to make decisions.

Commissioner Ahmed finished by discussing trade policies. He agreed that there are some policies that are not implemented or at least not implemented well, but said what is also important is that parts of trade policy are not well-defined. Future work needs to take into account all the issues raised at this conference.

Mr. Nebnoma Sawadogo, President, RECAO, opened by giving background about his organization. It was established in 2001 with a mandate to represent, support, communicate, and train. Regional decisions don't always involve RECAO, which emphasizes the need to harmonize regulatory instruments and eliminate customs barriers to trade immediately. Mr. Sawadogo called for adequate support, through basic farm implements, to help producers produce and family farms modernize. This could be accomplished through a guarantee fund to help producers get credit at low interest rates. There is also a need to consider introducing agricultural insurance and to identify and manage growth poles that are important for job creation. Mr. Sawadogo concluded by emphasizing the importance of mobilizing internal resources to reduce reliance on donor support, and lamented land grabbing and loss of agricultural land.

Mr. Abel Gbetoenonmon, Chairman of the Board, Africa Performance Agency, said he was at the conference as a representative of the citizens and of civil society, and as an economic journalist. Mr. Gbetoenonmon signed the ECOWAS pact on behalf of civil society, and was expressing "the cry of the citizens of West Africa." He lamented the fact that 80 percent of production comes from outside the region, calling the region "sick." He then went to outline and discuss possible solutions. First, to achieve food security, policies should be consistent. Some national policies do not reflect the texts of the regional institutions. At the regional and national levels, there are measures that need to be taken. A lot has been achieved at the regional level, but it has not been translated into the national policies, and national laws themselves contradict each other. The different ministers need to work together, especially in agriculture, trade, and industry. To feed the cities of tomorrow, both industry and agriculture must be developed together. Second, Mr. Gbetoenonmon spoke of the need to develop mechanisms to facilitate trade, as "it is not good that it's easier to trade with France than Nigeria," and cited the plight of a West African trader who has to cross three borders, with all the barriers, before reaching the target market. The focus needs to be on ways to break down barriers. Third, when planning for the next 30 to 40 years, transport, logistics, and security must be treated together. Development of rail is vital—in the fifty years since independence, West Africa has not added a kilometer of rail; today, a train is needed from Abidjan to Lagos. Fourth, information is needed, not just saying that what ECOWAS and WAEMU have done is good, but also including documentaries to assess the work of these organizations and to expose what is happening at the border. There is a need to raise awareness and have structured dialogue so that people learn to be efficient advocates. Mr. Gbetoenonmon concluded by saying that the new phenomenon of non-state actors, such as producer organizations, involved in trade is to be encouraged. They are partners of ECOWAS and WAEMU

on all of these issues.

Dr. Atouga wrapped up the panel, returning to the question of everyone's roles and responsibilities. Making food available is not simple, but all actors along the chain, from production to market, must play their role. People must also have the income required to access food and it must be of reasonable quality. He reaffirmed ECOWAS' commitment to better diffusion of the information needed to improve trade flows, and asked the private media to assist in this process and civil society to organize for advocacy since no government would attend to problems without advocacy. He ended by affirming "We—ECOWAS and WAEMU—can work with you on this. We need your collaboration and the participation of mass media."

Discussion

Several audience members responded to the panel discussion, focusing in particular on road harassment:

- OPA had been working on harassment for years, but ECOWAS focal points don't have any grasp of reality.
- The amount of the illegal payments varies, so businesses cannot build them into the budget. "There are false fees—it's a reality. But they are 15,000 FCFA one time and 25,000 FCFA the next. They should be fixed false fees! Businesses need certainty."
- Businesses adapt to the cost of harassment, but the costs should be eliminated. "ECOWAS makes the rules, but who is implementing them?" The states should be sanctioned.

The ECOWAS Commissioners responded. Commissioner Ahmed said he had proposed various solutions to the problem but ECOWAS does not have the financial resources to go to the field. He then stated, "We can help you do it." He said ECOWAS would recommend a commission of arbitration and sanctions, which would provide a more disciplined and strict way of addressing the problems. Taking the problem from a different angle, Dr. Atouga asked, "Why do you make illegal payments? If you pay them, they continue. They can't be the corrupted without corruptors. If you refuse to pay, they'll stop."

In response to that challenge, a businesswoman explained how she and others try to refuse, but often have no choice. She gave an example of agents at one border insisting on documentation that was not required, detaining 25 trucks with cowpeas for two to three days waiting for payment of taxes that were not legally required. She tried to appeal to a supervisor in vain and ended up making a payment for each truck.

Finally, Mr. Diémé, the WAEMU Commissioner, commented on the issue of cooperation between regional institutions. The ECOWAS and WAEMU Commissions have shown their commitment to work together, as they did in June 2012 in Brussels, and the two organizations have complementary expertise. The framework is there, and at the time of last year's crisis, funds were given to each member state. Mr. Diémé reiterated that political will is not lacking.

PRIORITIES AND MODALITIES FOR FAR-REACHING CHANGE

Moderator: **Hon. Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio**, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Senegal, and President, Institute for Panafrikan Strategies

Accomplishing far-reaching change will require participation by all: national governments, regional organizations and institutes, the private sector, civil society, and the media. It will require a commitment to change and specific actions to address current constraints. It will also require a consensus on the need to accomplish progress within a specific timeline, with all actors taking responsibility to ensure progress.

During this session, the private sector will advocate for specific actions; next a discussion with national and regional decision-makers focused on actions to take after the conference.

The moderator, **Hon. Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio**, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Senegal,



Conference discussion: Co-facilitator Yamar Mbodj, Executive Director of HubRural of Senegal, talks over proceedings with Abt's Deborah Dangay and Sally Cameron, conference recorders.

and President, Institute for Panafrikan Strategies, began the session by inviting a panel of high-level government representatives from Liberia, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria to join him on the platform to hear a summary of the conference thus far and to dialogue with the participants.

Summary of conference highlights: Briefing for decision-makers

Presenter: **Dr. Yamar Mbodj**, *Executive Director, HubRural*

Dr. Yamar Mbodj, Executive Director, HubRural, provided a summary of the main points of the conference during Days 1 and 2, reviewing the main findings and conclusions, points of consensus, reflections about the future, and his recommendations. The findings included updated information on trade flows showing that trade in agro-pastoral products is greater than generally recognized but still below the region's potential. The conference also helped participants better understand the role of trade in food security, highlighted constraints experienced by traders, showed how constraints impede the expansion of trade and make food less affordable to the poor, and finally, explained how the constraints make agriculture and agribusiness less profitable and limit incentives for investment in increased productivity.

Dr. Mbodj indicated that a broad consensus had been reached on several major points, including the role of regional trade in increasing the size of markets, stimulating production, and assuring food security and nutrition. He said there is also consensus that while regional institutions have made an important effort to provide West Africa with policies and common regulatory instruments, they are often ignored or used as a pretext for demanding illegal payments. This observation is not new, but calls into question the effectiveness of previous work to address the problem. At the same time, it is worth noting that the array of actors and the public-private dialogue itself has significantly evolved over the last few years. New initiatives have been taken by the private sector (by Borderless Alliance and others) to facilitate trade and structure value chains.

Next, Dr. Mbodj provided an outlook for the future, saying that the region was on the cusp of important changes. These include the end of a demographic transition that has seen growing urbanization and an increase in secondary cities that will serve as trading centers, a population expected to reach 450 million by 2030, a market that must provide for both urban and rural households, and an emerging and larger middle class that consumes more rice, maize, animal protein, vegetables, and processed products. These changes present an opportunity for the transformation of agriculture and a fourfold increase in regional trade by 2030. Future risks must not be underestimated, however. The security question is unavoidable, along with the question of how to reconcile security issues with the lifting of trade barriers. There are also migration pressures, instability in international markets, and impacts of climate change to consider.

Dr. Mbodj's recommendations included accelerating the formation of a common regional market by respecting regulatory instruments, documenting the importance of the market for food security in each country and the region, developing advocacy in each country and structuring the public-private dialogue on a scale that will lead countries to respect their regional commitments, and providing the region with an integrated trade policy. He recommended setting up a way to implement and monitor the recommendations from the conference: (1) at the level of the private sector and civil society: inform actors, develop a way to monitor respect of regulatory instruments, and develop advocacy at the national and regional levels; (2) at the level of states and regional institutions: include respect of regional regulatory instruments as part of a review of government leaders by their peers, pilot a regional task force responsible for stimulating reflection on the implications of regional changes for trade policy, agricultural policy, and food security; and (3) at the level of all actors, put in place a public-private-civil society task force for the immediate implementation of recommendations from the conference. This task force will need to prepare a detailed action plan, intervention strategy, and mechanism for monitoring and evaluation.

Private sector advocacy: Priority actions for removing constraints to regional trade

Presenters: **Mr. Tom Gambrah**, *General Manager, Premium Foods*; **Mr. Steven Brighton** *from the Government of Ghana*

Mr. Tom Gambrah, General Manager, Premium Foods, introduced himself and said he had the honor to have

 **Agribiz Africa** 31 Jan

Public Sector Group on Export Restrictions: Prescribe sanctions to be enforced by ECOWAS and WAEMU against countries that engage in export restrictions that are illegalized

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been selected to present the results of the private sector's analysis. He said the primary reason for the conference was to underscore the constraints faced by the private sector and outline solutions that the private and public sectors could undertake together. He presented the priority actions developed by the five private sector groups on Day 1; these actions are presented under Day 1.

In addition, **Mr. Steven Brighton** from the Government of Ghana presented a summary of the work of the public sector representatives who had taken part on Day 1. He said that after two days of further deliberations, much had been said to buttress points made on the first day and that his group's overall recommendation was to harmonize, regularize, and update the regulatory instruments; these actions are also presented under Day 1.

PANEL DISCUSSION: Dialogue with regional and national decision-makers: Commitments, timelines, and mutual accountability to galvanize regional trade for improved food security

Panelists: **Bini Kouassi Kouman**, *Inspector, Ministry of Agriculture, Côte d'Ivoire*; **Barou Oumar Ouedraogo**, *Chef de Division Organisation et Suivi au Secretariat Executif du Conseil National de Sécurité Alimentaire, Burkina Faso*; **Moses M. Zinnah**, *Deputy Minister for Planning and Development, Liberia*; **Sunday Uhieni**, *Coordinator for Ethics and Values, Presidency, Nigeria (previously Ministry of Agriculture)*; **Hon. Abdoulaye Bandé**, *Minister of Agriculture, Senegal*

The moderator ensured that a cross section of the audience had a chance to ask questions and advocate for particular issues. Issues below are discussed under themes.

What will be the actions of the public sector as a follow up to this conference?

Several audience members asked questions similar to this one: "As actors we have proposed solutions. We want to put in action these solutions. What are you going to do so that these recommendations are put into practice?"

The responses included:

- Representative from Senegal said that open borders can inspire producers to increase production. At the same time, he said that the question of trade in agricultural products is not just a matter for the Ministry of Agriculture, but also for the ministries of trade, finance, and security. He recommended that advocacy target all those ministries.
- The representative from Liberia agreed that trade and agriculture ministers need to work together. He emphasized the role of trade in food security and the role of food security in peace and conflict reduction. He assured the audience that these topics would be included in his report to the Liberian ministers of agriculture and trade and that they would also be brought to the level of the President.
- The representative of Burkina Faso said his country also recognized the importance of the topics of the conference.
- The representative of Nigeria called road harassment an indictment of the government and said that the private sector had the responsibility of blowing the whistle. Likewise, he said that the private sector should not cooperate with criminals along the road. He affirmed that the President of Nigeria is conscious of these problems and that the government representatives will take the resolutions of the conference back and make sure they are incorporated into their plans. He said, "We hope to redeem some of the integrity of the public sector that has been challenged by this conference." He concluded by saying that problems arise when there is too much cash changing hands and suggested moving to cashless mechanisms.
- Finally, the representative of the Côte d'Ivoire government explained that his country depends in large part on products from Burkina Faso and Niger and outlined actions that Côte d'Ivoire has taken to address road harassment, including placing sanctions on the behavior of police, customs agents, and gendarmes.

"We hope to redeem some of the integrity of the public sector that has been challenged by this conference."

Sunday Uhieni, Coordinator for Ethics and Values, Presidency, Nigeria

Are sanctions for governments possible?

Other questioners raised similar questions about governments accepting their responsibility to apply the protocols and crack down on abuses. One questioner asked the officials what they thought about setting up sanctions for governments that did not apply the protocols.

In general, the government representatives on the panel did not think punitive sanctions would be constructive, but thought some sort of peer review mechanism might make sense, including an opportunity to learn what is working well in different countries. If this sort of information were published, it could affect business decisions and create a ripple effect.

Final words

Mr. Atouga from ECOWAS said he wanted to reassure everyone about what he said in the morning when he asked why traders did not refuse to make illegal payments. He said he was given the answer and he understands the difficulties. He wanted to make the point that everyone has responsibilities. He said ECOWAS's main responsibility is to make sure the regulatory instruments are in place; the state's main responsibility is to apply the agreements that they approved. He also feels that actors should refuse to pay. At the same time, if the instruments are not working, it is important to check with the states to determine why. He concluded: "I'm not trying to put all the responsibility on the states; we need to sit down together and work out solutions."

Dr. Gadio proposed that the documents presented this afternoon be adopted as official recommendations of this conference and that a task force be created to address these issues. He said it also might be useful to consider a mechanism like one used by the African Union, whereby states are provided with a confidential report showing the areas where their country has not conformed to the regional protocols. He also mentioned the idea of an observatory that would assemble complaints about failures to apply trade instruments and report to heads of state on violations in a way that would remind them of the agreements their countries had made and where they were not in compliance.

The Accra Agenda

Facilitator: **Mr. Graeme Frelick**, *consultant, Training Resources Group*

Mr. Graeme Frelick read a draft document, which was also distributed to the audience, summarizing the findings and recommendations of the conference.

He asked the audience if they were generally in agreement with the document. There was general agreement, but a handful of people indicated reservations, including about:

- Language that implied a moral judgment in one section, especially in the French version
- The proposed roadmap, which had not been broadly discussed and was too ambitious
- The wisdom of having the private sector lead a task force to take the next steps, since ministers will need to follow up

The organizers indicated that everyone's concerns would be taken into account in a revision of the document, including roles of each partner. The revised version was sent to the participants by ECOWAS and USAID, and its most significant commitments are described below.

Main conclusions of the Accra Agenda

The Accra Agenda outlines three various ways in which the participants agreed to accelerate the creation of the regional common market by acting together on various levels, including:

- Ensure good communication of current regulations among different target audiences (border officials, economic operators, and professional organizations) by involving the media at all levels (local, national and regional);
- Ensure compliance with regulations, which outline specific responsibilities of public institutions at the national and regional levels, and of the various categories of operators and their associations and professional organizations;
- Better document the importance of regional markets to the food security of each country and the region;
- Develop advocacy plans in each country and structure the public-private dialogue at the country level to encourage states to comply with the commitments they made at the regional level;
- Develop an integrated trade policy for the region.

 **@USEmbassyGhana** 31 Jan

Thank you USAID we are pleased you continue to partner with us. ECOWAS Comm. Atouga @agribiz_Africa #foodtrade

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The Agenda also refers to the need to commit specific actions for key issues, as agreed to by the conference participants, and presented under Day 1.

Finally, the Accra Agenda outlines the following commitments which were made by the participants at the conference:



Food Across Borders:

Improving Food Security Through Regional Trade In West Africa

January 29-31, 2013
Accra, Ghana

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- The public and private sectors are committed to work together to fight against constraints and road harassment;
- ECOWAS, USAID and ATP are committed to disseminate the Accra Agenda;
- States commit to sharing the results of the conference at the national level and to continue the dialogue with the private sector;
- ECOWAS and WAEMU commit to harmonizing regional regulatory texts;
- ECOWAS agrees to revise the 1979 text on the free movement in order to adapt to the current realities and to take the necessary steps for its implementation after revision;
- Participants commit to the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Task Force, which will include the private and public sectors and the civil society, to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the conference.
- Finally, the Task Force, and in particular the states, ECOWAS and WAEMU, commit to examine the feasibility of the proposal to establish a "Joint Platform of governments, ECOWAS and the private sector to expose irregular practices in the countries of the region."

Finally, the agenda adopted short and medium-term actions as next steps, including dissemination of the Accra Agenda and other documents of the conference; the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Task Force including private and public sectors and civil society, to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the conference; and the establishment, at CILSS, of a trade monitoring system that will produce documents on trade in agro-pastoral products.

CLOSING CEREMONY

The following individuals all provided words of thanks and final comments:

- Dr. Marjatta Eilittä, Chief of Party, USAID ATP, Abt Associates Inc.
- Mr. Timbila Thomas Sawadogo, Deputy Secretary General, COFENABVI AO, on behalf of the private sector
- Ms. Carleene Dei, Acting Mission Director, USAID/West Africa
- Dr. Marc Atouga, Commissioner for Agriculture, Water and Environment, ECOWAS

Dr. Atouga ended the conference by saying, "I speak to those who trade the products. We are grateful for what you do every day and recognize all your ordeals along the road. The battle is not won in advance, but only after we have fought it, each from our own side."

► Annex 1: Accra Agenda

Regional Conference on the Free Movement of Staple Commodities in West Africa Accra, January 29-31, 2013 Main Conclusions, Recommendations and Perspectives (Accra Agenda)

[Translated from a French original]

1. INTRODUCTION

The regional conference "Food Across Borders: Improving Food Security Through Regional Trade in West Africa" took place between 29 and 31 January, 2013, at the Alisa Hotel in Accra, Ghana. This was a joint ECOWAS and USAID initiative.

The objective of the conference was to promote dialogue between the public and private sectors and to identify measures to reduce constraints to regional trade in staple commodities, paving the way to improve food security for millions of West Africans. It brought together the main stakeholders involved in regional trade and food security in West Africa.

Participants to the conference included:

- The Minister of Agriculture of Senegal and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana;
- The ECOWAS Commissioners in charge of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources, as well as Trade, Mining, Industry, Customs and Free Movement;
- The WAEMU Commissioner in charge of the Department of Food Security, Agriculture, Mines, and Environment;
- The Ambassadors of the United States to Ghana and Togo as well as the Ambassador of the Republic of Senegal to Ghana;
- The Deputy Executive Secretary of CILSS;
- The Secretary General of the Ministry of Commerce of Senegal, the Cabinet Director of the Ministry of Trade of Côte d'Ivoire, and the representative of the Ministry of Commerce of Nigeria;
- Representatives of the Ministers of Agriculture of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia;
- The President of the Pan African Institute for Strategies, conference keynote speaker and facilitator of the public - private sector dialogue;
- Representatives of institutions of regional technical cooperation (CILSS, Hub Rural, CORAF / WECARD);
- Representatives of organizations and socio-professional organizations and the private sector involved in the commodity sectors in West Africa.

2. PROCEEDINGS

The conference, organized by ECOWAS and USAID/West Africa and facilitated by Hub Rural and the USAID Agribusiness and Trade Promotion (ATP) Project, lasted three days and included (i) the Forum for Private Sector Action on the first day, and (ii) the Public-Private Dialogue on the second and third days.

The conference included plenary sessions (papers, working groups and panel discussions), side events, and thematic events. Throughout the duration of the conference a Business Fair showcased food products, allowing participants to interact and network with organizations and stakeholders from different countries engaged in regional trade.

Several papers were presented, which helped orient the working groups and initiate discussions among participants. The list of papers and side events is provided in the conference program (see Annex 3).

3. PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The presentations and ensuing discussions led to a set of findings, the identification of market trends for regional staple commodities, and the development of a broad consensus. Strong commitment from the various stakeholders, including

the private sector, governments and regional economic communities (ECOWAS, WAEMU) and the technical and financial partners were noted. Similarly, important recommendations were made.

Main Findings

Current figures on the main trade flows in staple commodities, along with estimates of the volume and value of trade, demonstrate that trade in staple commodities is growing strongly in the region. However, it still remains well below the regional potential due to the challenges of moving goods from production areas to consumption centers.

The discussions helped develop a better knowledge of the regional trade dynamics, both the factors affecting trade, as well as the important role of trade in the different dimensions of food security (availability, access, utilization and stability). The conference demonstrated that the actual volumes of regional trade are far higher than those reported by official statistics, which underestimate the contribution of staple commodities to regional trade. The discussions highlighted the strong interdependence of agro-pastoral and food economies and the crucial role played by regional trade in meeting food needs.

Constraints faced by regional traders were also highlighted, including: road harassment, export restrictions, the requirement of certificate of origins at the border, the non-recognition of sanitary and phytosanitary certificates, as well as the application of Value Added Tax (VAT). Each of these aspects was considered by a working group whose recommendations are in Annex 1.

Formal, and in particular, informal barriers limit the expansion of trade and hinder accessibility of many poor consumers to food products by causing increases in the final price of products. Similarly, these constraints reduce the earnings of producers, thus limiting their ability to invest in improving productivity.

Finally, constraints to trade create a climate of uncertainty that is detrimental to investment by different actors along the value chains.

Regional Trends and Perspectives

Participants recognized that the region is on the verge of major changes, including the following:

1. High population growth continues to be a challenge in the region, although it has slowed in some countries;
2. Trends show a redistribution of population due to urbanization and the rise in importance of secondary cities. These cities are hubs that are connected across borders and are increasingly linked by transnational communication channels;
3. Food demand is influenced simultaneously by population growth and urbanization; by 2030, the region will have to feed more than 450 million people, more than half of whom will live in cities;
4. The market is expected to play an even greater role as a source of food for urban and rural households. However, the market alone cannot improve food availability; it is also necessary to improve production and productivity;
5. Urbanization and the emergence of a large middle class are accompanied by changes in diet, in particular the rise in importance of rice and maize, animal proteins (meat and milk) and vegetables. The increasing segmentation of the market is accompanied by a very strong demand for processed and quality products;
6. Processing will be increasingly important in the future, especially a modern artisanal sector or small-scale industrial sector, which can create many jobs and engage some of the workforce that formerly worked on farms, while improving the competitiveness of processed food products in the local, national and regional markets;
7. The volume and value of regional trade is expected to increase by more than four times by 2030.

Moreover, these regional changes will occur in a context of higher international prices, which will likely favor overall production in the region, but pose challenges for consumers. West African agricultural products don't compete well with imports, particularly if those products were subsidized by their originating countries.

1. Participants recognized that these perspectives represent a tremendous opportunity to transform economic growth through agriculture in West Africa.
2. While there are tremendous opportunities, the conference recognized that the challenges should not be underestimated:
3. Security problems in West Africa have been a recurring reality for many years. Creative methods need to be established for the region to address security issues while at the same time removing constraints to trade; both security and trade are public priorities.
4. Migratory pressures within the region persist, which can lead to displacement and conflict.
5. International market instability and price volatility exist within a context of market uncertainty which is affected by, among others, global population growth, changes in food consumption, and competition over agricultural resources for food and energy.

6. Climate change impacts various ecosystems in West Africa, and also throughout the world's large food production basins.
7. There is a high incidence of malnutrition, which highlights importance of food quality and safety.

Consensus

The conference participants underscored the important role of regional trade to expand and contribute to better functioning markets, boost production and help ensure the food and nutritional security of the population.

The conference drew attention to the importance of considering evidence-based analysis of national agro-pastoral and food economies, and to consider the associated regional aspects and interdependencies, in order to formulate and implement relevant and efficient public policies.

Participants recognized that considerable effort has been made by regional institutions (e.g., ECOWAS, WAEMU, CILSS) to provide West Africa with common policies and regulations, designed in the context of extensive consultation with various actors and professional organizations. They welcomed the efforts of ECOWAS, WAEMU and CILSS in the prevention and management of food crises and the implementation of programs in the fields of agriculture, water control, trade, energy, and infrastructure.

Representatives of the public and private sector recognized that it is the implementation of regulations regarding the free movement of people and goods that poses problems. Instead of regulating trade and the practices of various economic agents as intended, these rules are misused by many to provide a pretext for illegal payments.

Participants recognized that most difficulties identified are not new. They questioned the relevance of the solutions that have been advocated to date. They recognized that progress must be made on both sides, by governments (states and intergovernmental bodies) as well as by private operators.

Participants recognized that the landscape of stakeholders and the degree of public - private dialogue has changed profoundly in recent years. New private sector initiatives are taking concrete actions to ease trade, organize and structure value chains (e.g., Borderless Alliance).

Finally, participants made new commitments to improve regional trade and proposed important steps to monitor actions taken by states and intergovernmental structures.

4. ACCRA AGENDA ON THE FREE MOVEMENT OF STAPLE COMMODITIES

The Food Across Borders conference held from January 29 to 31, 2013, led to recommendations and specific commitments, and identified the next steps for actions to be implemented by the public and private sectors in efforts to address the constraints to regional trade in staple commodities.

Proposals

The participants agreed to accelerate the creation of the regional common market by acting together on various levels, including:

1. Ensure good communication of current regulations among different target audiences (border officials, economic operators, and professional organizations) by involving the media at all levels (local, national and regional);
2. Ensure compliance with regulations, which outline specific responsibilities of public institutions at the national and regional levels, and of the various categories of operators and their associations and professional organizations;
3. Better document the importance of regional markets to the food security of each country and the region;
4. Develop advocacy plans in each country and structure the public-private dialogue at the country level to encourage states to comply with the commitments they made at the regional level;
5. Develop an integrated trade policy for the region.

In addition, the private and public sectors discussed the following topics for which specific actions were recommended. The details are contained in the annex. These are:

- Road harassment

- Export restrictions
- Certificates of origin
- Veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary certificates
- VAT application

Commitments

The following commitments were made by the participants at the conference:

- The public and private sectors are committed to work together to fight against constraints and road harassment;
- ECOWAS, USAID and ATP are committed to disseminate this document;
- States commit to sharing the results of the conference at the national level and to continue the dialogue with the private sector;
- ECOWAS and WAEMU commit to harmonizing regional regulatory texts;
- ECOWAS agrees to revise the 1979 text on the free movement in order to adapt to the current realities and to take the necessary steps for its implementation after revision;
- Participants commit to the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Task Force, which will include the private and public sectors and the civil society, to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the conference.
- Finally, the Task Force, and in particular the states, ECOWAS and WAEMU, commit to examine the feasibility of the proposal to establish a "Joint Platform of governments, ECOWAS and the private sector to expose irregular practices in the countries of the region."

Next Steps

The agenda adopted by the participants is based on three (3) categories of actions to be implemented in the short and medium term, actions that involve all stakeholders: policy makers, the private sector, civil society and socio-professional organizations.

The **first action** is the dissemination of this document and other documents of the conference. The completion of this activity lies with ECOWAS and WAEMU with technical and financial support of the ATP project. This activity must take place no later than the end of February 2013.

The **second action** is to establish the multi-stakeholder Task Force: private - public sector and civil society, to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the conference. This action has two main activities:

- The establishment of the Task Force by the end of March of 2013. ECOWAS and WAEMU have the responsibility for carrying out this activity with technical support from CILSS and Hub Rural.
- Ensure the operation of the Task Force starting in April 2013, with rules and procedures, an action plan, a mechanism and indicators for monitoring implementation. Responsibility for this activity rests with ECOWAS and WAEMU with technical support from CILSS and Hub Rural, and the financial support of technical and financial partners.

In addition, as a **third action**, by the end of March 2013, a trade monitoring system that will produce documents on trade in agro-pastoral products (values and volumes) will be institutionalized within the CILSS. Systems and additional tools necessary to monitor and implement the recommendations of the conference will be developed by the Task Force, including the possible establishment of an observatory to document barriers and produce documents to help in decision making.

Accra, April 5, 2013

Signed:

Dr. Marc Afouga, ECOWAS Commissioner in charge of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources

Mr. Ibrahima Dieme, WAEMU Commissioner in charge of the Department for Food Security, Agriculture, Mines, and Environment



**Dr. Candace Buzzard, Director of
Agriculture, USAID West Africa**



**Mr. Tom Gambrah, General Manager, Premium
Foods (Private Sector Representative)**



**Mr. Abel Gbetoenonmon, Chairman of the Board,
Africa Performance Agency
(Representative of POSCAO, the Civil Society)**

► Annex 2: List of Attendees

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SOUMARE	Boubacar	Secrtaire Executif	Union de Cooperatives Agricoles (Faso Jigi/Paccem)	Segou (Mali) BP 351	00223 2132 1177/ 00223 79318577 / 65 85 92 17	boubasouma2003@yahoo.fr	Mali
SY	Cheikh Ahmed T.	Reporter	Groupe Raceco		221776445195	raceco@arc.sn/ ibousoumare50@gmail.com	Senegal
TACK	Stephanie	West Africa Food Security Coordinator	Peace Corps			stack@peacecorps.gov	Benin
TALL	Marie-Andrée	Presidente	Association Afrique AgroExport (AAFEEX)	BP 22064 Dakar, Senegal	(221) 33 860 4252/ (221) 77 637 0890	matal@orange.sn	Senegal
TAMINI GNISSIPOMI	Berthé	Presidente Section Ouaga	RTCF	N/A	(226) 70 29 66 47	N/A	Burkina Faso
TASSEMBEDO	Asseta	Presidente Nationale	Resau des Transformation de cereales du FASO	01 BP 1354 Ouagadougou 01	(226) 70 73 50 79	N/A	Burkina Faso
TETTEH	Hanna	Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ghana Government				Ghana
TEYSSIER	Joel	Charge de l'animation reseau	Inter-réseaux Développement rural	32 Rue Le Peletier 75009 Paris	33 (0)1 42 46 11 56	joel.teyssier@inter-reseaux.org	France
TIEMTORE	Salifou	Directeur des Douanes CEDEAO	ECOWAS	ECOWAS Commission, Abuja	234 805 6267 990	saliftiemtore@yahoo.com	Nigeria
TOURE	Barry Mariam Rosemonde	Responsable	ROSE ECLAT	01 BP 3321 Ouagadougou 01	00226 50 43 2236/ 00226 70 24 9410	rose_eclat@yahoo.fr	Burkina Faso
TOURE	Serge	Responsible Commercial	SIPRA	04 BP 1664 Abidjan 04	00225-23530053/55 00225-47494243	sergetoure@sipra.ci	Cote d'Ivoire
TRAORE	Alain Sy	Directorate Agriculture	ECOWAS			syalaintraore@yahoo.fr	Nigeria
TREMBLAY	Laval	Sr. Food Security and Agricultural Policy Advisor	Programme-Support Unit, Canadian-International-Development Agency	38 Independence Avenue-Accra	30 7011 729 / 244 33 11 25	laval.tremblay@psu-ghana.org	Ghana
UGOH	Sunny	Directorate Communication	ECOWAS	101 Yakubu Gowon Crescent Asokoro Abuja	(234) 803 659 1265	sugoh@ecowas.int	Nigeria

Last Name	First Name	Position	Organization	Address	Telephone	E-mail	Country
UHIENE	Sunday Ekele	CAADP nigeria national coordinator	Office of the special adviser to the president on ethics and values	2nd floor federal secretariat winga, abuja	(234) 803 228 8436	sundayuhiene@gmail.com	Nigeria
UMAR	Lawal	Agriculture Portfolio	African Development Bank	No.1 Dr. Isert Road 7th Avenue – Ridge Accra		LUMAR@AFDB.ORG	Ghana
UMAR	Abubakar Garba	Administrative secretary	Rice Farmers association of nigeria	Suite 586 Wvod Shopping Complex-Abuja	(234) 803 696 5939	rifan00zabuja@gmail.com/ agumar01@yahoo.com	Nigeria
VAN SETERS	Jeske Katrien	Deputy Program Manager	ECDFM	Onze Lieve Vrouweplein 21 6211 HE Maastricht	(31) 43 350 2900	jvs@ecdpm.org	the Netherlands
VAN WENSREEN	Monica	Food Security Partnerships Advisor	Austlian Agency for International Development	Australian High Commission, PMB60, KIA-Accra	(233) 203 216 400/ (233) 544 313 898	monica.vanwensreen@ausaid.gov.au	Ghana
VELEGDA	Maimounata Adja	Présidente	Groupe Velegda (WAGIN)			velegda@faseonet.bf	Burkina Faso
WEBBER	C. Martin	ATP/ Executive Vice-President, J.E. Austin Associates	J.E. Austin Associates, Inc	Suite 1 100 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201	1 70388419841	mwebber@jeaustin.com	United States
WENSREEN	Monica		Australian Government Overseas Aid Program				
WHITEHEAD	Robert	United States Ambassador to Togo	United States Ambassador to Togo	Lome			Togo
YEBOAH	Thomas	Procurement Officer	World Food Programme	PO Box 1423, Accra	244731258/ 244731258	thomas.yeboah@wfp.org	Ghana
YEDAN	Yaya	CBC Country Representative	Burkina Shipper Council	PO Box TT 523 Tema	233 202392/ 233 20 8163016	yedanyaya@yahoo.fr	Ghana
ZHOU	Yuan	Head of Research and Policy Analysis	Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture	Schwarzwalddallee 215 4058 Basel	(41) 61 323 8377/ +41 79 558 0946/+41 61 323 7388	yuan.zhou@syngenta.com	Switzerland
ZINNAH	Moses Moroe	Deputy Minister for Planning and Development	Ministry of Agriculture Liberia	Somalia Drive, Gardnersville, Monrovia	(231) 886 420 955	mmzinnah57@yahoo.com	Liberia
ZOUNDI	Simone	Présidente et Directrice	Societe d exploitation des produits alimentaires	01 BP 1749 Ouagadougou	(226) 50 36 10 82/(226) 70 23 11 56	sodepall@faseonet.bf	Burkina Faso

► Annex 3: Business Fair Participants and Company Profiles

AAFEX (Association Afrique Agro-Export) (Stand 19)

BP 45028 - DAKAR, Sénégal

(221) 33 867 94 80

se@aafex.com; www.aafex.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: El Hadj A. DIACK, eadiack@aafex.com

Location/localisation: Sénégal, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Bénin, Togo, Nigéria, Mauritanie, Guinée, Niger.

Company Profile: AAFEX is an association of over 80 food and commodity export companies from 16 African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo).

Profil de l'Organisation: AAFEX est une association de plus de 80 entreprises africaines originaires de 16 pays d'Afrique (Bénin, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Comores, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambie, Ghana, Guinée Conakry, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Ouganda, Sénégal et Togo).

AGRIPRO International (Stand 30)

20 Koi Street, Ako-adjai Park, OSU, Accra, 0000 Accra, Ghana

hp://www.buzzedison.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Edison Gbenga Ade, +233 263118965, buzzedison@gmail.com Location/localisation: Ghana

Company Profile: AGRIPRO is a consulting firm for the agribusiness industry in Africa and connects investors with agribusiness entrepreneurs. Its mission is to increase the capacity, productivity and profitability of agribusiness entrepreneurs and link them with investors.

Profil de l'Organisation: AGRIPRO est un cabinet de conseil pour l'industrie agro-alimentaire en Afrique et met en relation les investisseurs agro-industriels et les entrepreneurs. Sa mission est d'accroître la capacité, la productivité et la rentabilité des entrepreneurs agro-alimentaire en les liant avec des investisseurs.

Association des Transformateurs de Céréales Locales (ATCL) (Stand 15)

10, rue Escarfait x rue Moussé Diop – Dakar, Sénégal

(221) 33 842 94 17, (221) 823 06 54

atcl2006@orange.sn - kumba@orange.sn; kumbasn@gmail.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Mme Deme-Diagne Aissatou, President; Mme Diop Awa Diagne, Permanent Secretary /Secrétaire permanente

Location/Localisation: Dakar, Sénégal

Company profile: ATCL's mission is to solve marketing and processing problems in local cereal value chains to improve food security, fight poverty, and create jobs, especially for women. Its members now provide the bulk of locally-processed cereals sold in Senegal.

Profil de l'Organisation: La mission d'ATCL est de résoudre les problèmes de transformation et de commercialisation des céréales locales pour améliorer la sécurité alimentaire, de lutter contre la pauvreté par la création d'emplois, en particulier pour les femmes. Elle assume aujourd'hui l'essentiel de la transformation des céréales locales vendue au Sénégal.

Bank of Africa Ghana Limited (Stand 11)

C131/3 Farrar Avenue, Adabraka, P. O. Box C1541, Cantonments, Accra, Ghana

www.boaghana.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Kofi Fumey

Location/localisation: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Democratic Republic Of Congo, Djibouti, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda

Company Profile: BOA-GHANA is a commercial bank, offering financial products and services in the retail, SME and corporate banking sectors. The BOA Group owns three leasing companies, a housing finance company, a stock brokerage, two investment companies and an IT subsidiary.

Profil de l'Organisation: BOA-GHANA est une banque commerciale qui offre une large gamme de produits et services financiers aux secteurs de détail, PME et Corporate Banking. Le Groupe BOA possède trois sociétés de crédit-bail, une société de financement au logement, une société de courtage et d'actions, deux sociétés d'investissement et une filiale technologies de l'information.

Borderless Alliance (Stand 8)

Jubilee House, Osu, Accra (233) 302 773 393

info@borderlesswa.com www.borderlesswa.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Suzanne Ngo-Eyok, sngoeyok@watradehub.com Location/localisation: Accra, Ghana

Company Profile: Created by a group of private sector stakeholders, the Borderless Alliance aims to increase trade in West Africa by advocating for the harmonization of trade rules and creating an environment that reduces the time and costs of conducting business in the region.

Profil de l'Organisation: Créée par un groupe d'intervenants du secteur privé, l'Alliance Borderless vise à accroître les échanges commerciaux en Afrique occidentale en préconisant l'harmonisation des règles de commerce, et la réduction des retards et des coûts de réalisation des affaires.

Conseil pour l'Action et la Solidarité Paysannes au Niger (CASANI-Yarda) (Stand 23)

BP 899 Niamey/Niger
(227) 96228573, (227) 94245257
caspani.op@gmail.com
www.caspani.op

Contact person/personne à contacter: Amadou Ousmane dit Belko, belkobar5@gmail.com

Location/localisation: Niamey, Niger

Company Profile: Caspani is an umbrella organization that groups Niger's farmer organizations. Its objective is the organization and implementation of economic, commercial, social and cultural activities for its members.

Profil de l'Organisation: Caspani est une organisation paysanne faitière du Niger dont un des objectifs est l'organisation et la mise en œuvre des activités économiques, commerciales, sociales et culturelles de ses membres.

Comité interprofessionnel des céréales du Burkina Faso (CIC-B) (Stand 26)

11 BP 1837 CMS Ouagadougou 11, Burkina-Faso

(226) 5034 0634 / Fax (226) 5034 0634

Contact person/personne à contacter: M. Soumalia SANOU, Président, cicb@fasonet.bf Location/localisation: Burkina Faso

Company Profile: CIC-B is an inter-professional committee of the cereal and cowpea sectors in Burkina Faso. It includes producers, traders, transporters, processors and private companies. CIC-B seeks to remove the obstacles to development of the cereal and cowpea sectors.

Profil de l'Organisation: Le CIC-B est un comité interprofessionnel des filières céréales et niébé du Burkina-Faso. Ses membres sont des producteurs, des commerçants, des transporteurs, des transformateurs et des sociétés privées d'intrants et d'équipements agricoles. Le CIC-B vise à éliminer les obstacles au développement des secteurs des céréales et du niébé.

Comité interprofessionnel du riz du Burkina (CIRB) (Stand 21)

BP 2442 Bobo Dioulasso porte no. 6570 boulevard de l'Indépendance (226) 20 98 63 90

cirb01@yahoo.fr; www.cir-b.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Berthe Lancina, cirb01@yahoo.fr Location/localisation: Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso

Company Profile: CIR-B provides a framework for cooperation among stakeholders in the rice sector, including producers, processors, traders (rice, inputs and equipment) and transporters. Its main objective is the economic and social development of its members.

Profil de l'Organisation: CIR-B est un cadre de concertation des acteurs de la filière riz que sont les producteurs, les transformateurs, les commerçants (riz, intrants, matériel) et les transporteurs. L'objectif principal du CIR-B est de contribuer au développement économique et l'environnement social de riz au Burkina Faso.

Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail/Viande des pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Stand 10)

08 BP 38 Abidjan 08, Côte d'Ivoire

(225) 22 44 42 42, (225) 22 44 17 35 / Burkina (226) 78 88 36 62, (226) 70 63 36 52

Contact person/personne à contacter: Mamadou BAMBBA, Secrétaire Général Adjoint, apuma_ci@yahoo.fr

Company Profile: COFENABVI AO links African livestock and meat professionals with the rest of the world. It provides technical, scientific, and intellectual support for actions initiated by structures and organizations seeking the development of the livestock sector in West Africa.

Profil de l'Organisation: COFENABVI AO met en relation les professionnels africains des filières bétail et viande avec le reste du monde. Il apporte son appui technique, scientifique et intellectuel aux actions initiées par d'autres structures et organismes visant le même objectif.

Centrale des Producteurs de Céréales du Togo (CPC Togo) (Stand 24)

BP 20043 - Lomé, Siège Social à Tsévié

(228) 22431165, (228) 90114452, (228) 90051708

cpctog@yahoo.fr

Contact person/personne à contacter: Yakouba NAGNANGO, nagnango@yahoo.fr Location/Localisation: Togo

Company Profile: CPC Togo is a national cooperative of cereal producers. It builds its members' capacity to improve production via the introduction of new technologies. It provides third-party representation for members. It chairs the CIC-T and is a member of WAGN, CTOP and ROPPA.

Profil de l'Organisation: CPC Togo est une coopérative nationale des producteurs de céréales. Elle renforce les capacités de ses membres à améliorer la production par l'introduction de nouvelles technologies. Il fournit des tierces représentations pour ses membres. Elle préside le CIC-T et est un membre du ROAC, CTOP et le ROPPA.

Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) (Stand 6)

Agro Business Park 2 - NL - 6708 PW WAGENINGEN, Pays-Bas (31) 317 467 100

cta@cta.int; www.cta.int/

Contact Person/personne à contacter: Vincent Fautrel, fautrel@cta.int

Company Profile: CTA is a joint international institution of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States and the European Union (EU). Its mission is to advance food and nutritional security, increase prosperity and encourage sound natural resource management.

Profil de l'Organisation: Le CTA est une institution internationale conjointe des Pays ACP (Afrique, Caraïbes et Pacifique) et de l'Union Européenne (UE). Sa mission est de promouvoir la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle, d'accroître la prospérité et d'encourager une saine gestion des ressources naturelles dans les pays ACP.

DHL Global Forwarding (Stand 4)

No. 53, Patrice Lumumba Road, Airport Residential Area

PO Box DTD 36 Accra-Cantonments

Contact person/Personne à contacter: Seynabou.Seye@dhl.com; Alfred.AChiampong@dhl.com; Ruben.Ackah@dhl.com

Location/Localisation: Angola, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville; Cote d'Ivoire; Democratic Republic of Congo; Gabon; Ghana; Nigeria; Senegal; Mali; Niger; Benin; Togo; Guinea; Liberia; Sierra Leone; Gambia; Mauritania; Guinea Bissau; Equatorial Guinea; Central African Republic.

Company Profile: DHL Global Forwarding (DGF) is a business unit of DHL Logistics Ghana specializing in airfreight, ocean freight and project logistics. DGF is committed to providing effective logistics solutions to companies and governments across all sectors of the economy.

Profil de l'Organisation: DHL Global Forwarding (DGF) est une filiale de DHL Logistics Ghana spécialisée dans le fret aérien et maritime et la logistique. Elle fournit des solutions logistiques efficaces aux entreprises et aux gouvernements dans tous les secteurs de l'économie

Faso Jigi/PACCEM (Stand 25)

Immeuble BDM SA; BP 351 Ségou, MALI (223) 21 32 11 77

fasojigi_paccem@orangemali.net

Contact person/personne à contacter: Bou bacar SOU MARE, Secrétaire Exécutif, boubasouma2003@yahoo.fr, (223) 65 85 92 17 / (223) 79 31 85 77

Location: Ségou, Mali

Company Profile: Faso Jigi /PACCEM is a union of agricultural cooperatives that sells the surplus grain of its members. The organization markets rice, millet, sorghum, maize and onions (shallots). It is made up of 140 cooperatives with a total of 5,600 members.

Profil de l'Organisation: Faso Jigi/PACCEM est une union de coopératives agricole qui commercialise les excédents céréaliers de ses membres. Les produits que l'organisation commercialise sont le riz, le mil, le sorgho, le maïs et l'oignon (échalote). Elle compte 5 600 membres et 140 coopératives.

Ghana Rice Inter-Professional Body (Stand 22)

grib@vodafone.com.gh

Contact person/personne à contacter: Imoro Amoro (President), Paa Kwesi Forson paakwesipk@yahoo.fr

Company Profile: The Ghana Rice Inter-professional Body seeks to build a competitive local rice sector in Ghana. Its mission is to drive the growth of the local rice sector by building the technical and managerial capacity of its members and by improving the policy environment.

Profil de l'Organisation: Le *Ghana Rice Inter-professional Body* cherche à construire un secteur du riz local concurrentiel au Ghana. Sa mission est de stimuler la croissance du secteur du riz local par le renforcement des capacités techniques et de gestion de ses membres, et par l'amélioration de l'environnement politique.

Meunerie et Emballage de Légumes Secs (MELS) (Stand 28)

01 BP867 Ouagadougou 01

Hamidou OUEDRAOGO - Directeur Général / hamleba@hotmail.com (226) 50 41 21 02 / Fax (226) 50 35 57 24 / Mobile (226) 70 21 01 41

Contact person/personne à contacter: mels@fasone.bf

Location/localisation: Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Company Profile: MELS is an industrial enterprise that processes maize into flour and fine semolina. The company has the capacity to process 30 MT of maize per day.

Profil de l'Organisation: MELS est une entreprise industrielle de transformation de maïs en farine et semoule fine avec une capacité de 30t de maïs par jour.

Neema Agricole du Faso (NAFASO) (Stand 1)

01 BP 3240 Bobo-Dioulasso 01, BURKINA FASO

(226) 70-31-84-25, (226) 20-98-00-65

nafaso@yahoo.fr; www.nafaso-burkina.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Abdoulaye Sawadogo ; nafaso@fasonet.bf Location/localisation: Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso

Company Profile: NAFASO is a seed company that produces and markets improved seeds (maize, rice, cow-pea, potato, onion and sorghum).

Profil de l'Organisation : NAFASO est une société semencière qui produit et commercialise des semences améliorées (maïs, riz, niébé, pomme de terre, oignon, sorgho).

OLAM Ghana Ltd (Stand 5)

17 Dadeban Road, North Industrial Area, PO box GP 1847, Accra

Contact person/personne à contacter: Rohit Raj, Rohit@olamnet.com, www.olamonline.com Location/localisation: Burkina, Senegal, Ghana, Cote

d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Guinée, Gambie, Libéria

Company Profile: Olam is a global leader in the supply chain management of agricultural products and food ingredients. Olam is currently in 15 in West African countries with sourcing, processing and marketing operations covering a wide range of products (rice, wheat, others).

Profil de l'Organisation : Olam est un des leaders mondiaux dans la gestion de la chaîne d'approvisionnement des produits agricoles et des denrées alimentaires. Olam est présent dans 15 pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest où elle participe à l'approvisionnement, la transformation et la commercialisation d'une large gamme de produits.

Premium Foods Limited (PLF) (Stand 18)

P. O Box KS 5452 Kumasi. On the Kumasi to Lake Bosumtwi Road

Contact person/Personne à contacter: Tom Gambrah, tgambrah@premiumfoods.com tgambrah@yahoo.com; Gladys Sampson, gsampson@premiumfoodsg.com Location/localisation: Kumasi, Ghana

Company Profile: PFL has commercial operations in food processing, grain management, capacity building and R&D. PLF Mills produces maize grits for brewers, maize meal and a fortified corn-soya blend. Its modern mill processes 5 tons of maize per hour.

Profil de l'Organisation : PFL a des activités commerciales dans la transformation des aliments, la gestion des céréales, le renforcement des capacités et la recherche et développement. PLF produit du gruau de maïs pour les brasseries, de la farine de maïs et du mélange fortifié maïs-soja. Son usine moderne traite 5 tonnes de maïs par heure.

Réseau des Transformatrices de Céréales du Burkina-Faso – RTCF (Stand 17)

01 BP 6129 Ouagadougou, Burkina-faso

(226) 50 34 11 39

rtcf.pres@gmail.com; www.rtcf.biz

Contact person/personne à contacter: Guiebéogo Tassebédou Asséta, rtcf.pres@gmail.com Location/localisation: Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Company Profile: The Network of Grain Processors Faso (RTCF) is an association created in 2005 with the support of the NGO APROSSA, Afrique Verte in Burkina Faso. Its objective is to defend the material and moral interests of its members.

Profil de l'Organisation : Le Réseau des Transformatrices de Céréales du Faso est une association créée en 2005 par les transformatrices encadrées par APROSSA, Afrique Verte Burkina. Son objectif est de défendre les intérêts matériels et moraux de ses membres.

Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria (RIFAN) (Stand 20)

Suite 5&6 Wodi Shopping Complex Gwagwalada Abuja Nigeria.

rifan002abuja@gmail.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Alh Abubakar K. Wodi, National President, Abubakar Garba Umar, agumar01@yahoo.com

Location/localisation: Nigeria

Company Profile: RIFAN organizes rice producers, traders and processors in Nigeria, and has members in all 36 states. RIFAN has designed a work plan to boost rice production, processing and marketing. RIFAN partners with organizations such as ADB, BIBA, USAID, WARDA, JICA, etc.

Profil de l'Organisation : RIFAN organise les producteurs de riz, les commerçants et les transformateurs du Nigéria; elle a des membres dans tous les 36 états du Nigéria. RIFAN a conçu un plan de travail pour stimuler la production de riz, de sa transformation à sa commercialisation. RIFAN travaille avec des organisations telles que la BAD, BIBA, l'USAID, l'ADRAO, la JICA, etc.

Fédération Des Unions de Producteurs du Benin (FUPRO) (Stand 9)

B.P. 372 Bohicon BEN IN

(229) 22 51 07 00/ Fax (229) 22 51 09 46 infos@fupro.org / fuproben@yahoo.fr www.fupro.org

Location/localisation: Benin

Company Profile: FUPRO-BENIN is the umbrella organization of farmers' organizations in Benin. It is the interface between farmers and the community of development partners; and between the farmers and the state. It represents and defends the interests of farmers.

Profil de l'Organisation : La FUPRO-BENIN est la structure faitière des organisations paysannes du Bénin. Elle est l'interface entre les producteurs agricoles et la communauté des partenaires au développement et l'Etat. Elle défend les intérêts de ses membres.

Ets. Velegada B. Mamounata (WAGN/ROAC Stand 9)

02 BP 5751 Ouagadougou 02

+226 5033 2930, Fax +226 5030 4701

[hp//www.bm-velegda.com](http://www.bm-velegda.com)

Contact person/personne à contacter: courrier@bm-velegda.com / b.mamounata@lipnfor.bf Location: Burkina Faso

Company Profile: VELEGDA is the number one exporter of shea kernel, shea butter, sesame and cashew nuts in Burkina Faso. With a capital of FCFA 500 million and a turnover of 2.6 billion (2003), VELEGDA is effectively distributing products throughout West Africa and the world.

Profil de l'Organisation : VELEGDA est le premier exportateur d'amande et de beurre de karité, de sésame et de noix de cajou au Burkina Faso. Avec un capital de FCFA 500 millions et un chiffre d'affaires de 2,6 milliards (2003), VELEGDA exporte en Afrique de l'Ouest et dans le monde entier.

Rose Éclat (Stand 27)

01 BP 3321 Ouagadougou 01/121, rue 17.25 Secteur 17(Cissin), Ouagadougou, Burkina-Faso (226) 70 24 94 10 / 50 43 22 36/ 50 36 57 29

www.roseclat.com

Contact person: M me TOU RE-BARRY Rosemonde, rose_eclat@yahoo.fr

Location/localisation: Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Company Profile: Rose Éclat is a fruit and vegetable processing company. Dried mangoes are its main product, but they also dry other fruits and vegetables. Rose Éclat is an organic and natural processor. Its production capacity is 20-25 MT/year. It exports to WAEMU and the EU.

Profil de l'Organisation : Rose Éclat est une entreprise de séchage de fruits & légumes. La mangue séchée demeure le produit phare de Rose Éclat. Rose Éclat a opté pour une transformation biologique et naturelle de ses produits et a une capacité de production de 20 à 25 tonnes par campagne. Rose Éclat exporte vers les pays de l'WAEMU et de l'Union Européenne.

Société Ivoirienne des Productions Animales (SIPRA –IVOGRAIN) (Stand 14)

04 BP 1664 Abidjan 04- République de Côte d'Ivoire/ Yopougon zone industrielle Cote d'Ivoire-. (225) 23 53 00 53/ 23 53 00 55

sipra@aviso.ci www.sipra.ci

Contact person/personne à contacter: M. Serge Touré (225) 47 49 42 43, sergetoure@sipra.ci Location/localisation : Abidjan

Company Profile: SIPRA is the first modern (ISO 9002 certified), integrated poultry company in West Africa. SIPRA produces day-old chicks, manufactures animal feed (poultry, rabbit, fish, pork and beef) and has a modern poultry slaughterhouse.

Profil de l'Organisation : Première entreprise Ouest Africaine intégrée dans l'aviculture moderne et certifiée ISO 9002. SIPRA produit des poussins d'un jour, de poulet de chairs et pondeuses. SIPRA fabrique des aliments pour bétail (volaille, lapin, poisson, porc, bovin) et possède un abattoir moderne de volaille.

Société d'exploitation des produits Alimentaires (SODEPAL) (Stand 29)

01 BP 1749 Ouagadougou 01, Burkina Faso (226) 50 36 80 41 / Mob (226) 70 23 11 56 sodepal1@fasonet.bf / sodepal@cenatrin.bf www.sodepalsa.com www.fiab.bf

Contact person/personne à contacter: Mme Simone Zoundi, Présidente Directrice Générale SODEPAL-SA

Company Profile: SODEPAL is a company specialized in the development enriched products for children and infants, such as flour and biscuits. It attempts to encourage local production by sourcing its raw materials locally in Burkina Faso.

Profil de l'Organisation : SODEPAL est une entreprise spécialisée dans la valorisation des ressources locales, la fabrication de farines infantiles enrichies et la biscuiterie.

Société Koama Industries (Sokindustries) (Stand 13)

Secteur 30, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

(226) 50 37 91 16/76 21 34 28/ 78 63 38 34

sokindustries@fasonet.bf / yackoune@cglobal.net

<http://www.sokindustries.bf>

Contact person/personne à contacter Mr Abdoulaye Koama / abdouk@fasonet.bf

Company Profile: Société Koama Industries (Sokindustries) specializes in the processing of paddy rice (drying, shelling and polishing) and is a producer/miller of maize semolina and couscous. Sokindustries has a production capacity of 33 MT per day.

Profil de l'Organisation : Société Koama Industries est une société industrielle spécialisée dans la transformation du riz paddy en riz blanc (décorticage, étuvage) et du maïs en semoule et coucous. La capacité de transformation est de 33T/ jour.

United Bank for Africa (Ghana) Limited (UBA) (Stand 3)

PMB 29, Ministries, Heritage Towers, Accra, GHANA

Cynthia.eryuo@ubagroup.com; eli.muzzu@ubagroup.com

www.ubagroup.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Catherine Alloh, Legal Dept, UBA Ghana

Location/localisation: Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Benin, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Congo DRC, Congo Brazza, Tanzania, Zambia, Chad and Cameroun.

Company Profile: United Bank for Africa (UBA) is one of Africa's leading financial institutions offering banking services to more than 7.5 million customer accounts across 850 branches in 19 African countries. In Ghana, the Bank has 26 branches throughout the country.

Profil de l'Organisation : United Bank for Africa (U BA) est l'une des plus importantes institutions financières africaines offrant des services bancaires à plus de 7,5 millions de comptes clients à travers 850 agences dans 19 pays africains. Au Ghana, la Banque possède 26 agences réparties sur différentes régions du pays.

Union Des Cooperatives Du Vivrier Des Savanes (UCOVISA) (Stand 16)

+225 36861070/ FAX + 225 36864369 / Mobile + 225 05856582/08686330

ucovisa@yahoo.fr

www.ucovisa.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Mme Jeanne Coulibaly-Sekongo, Mr Emmanuel Sekongo emmanuel@hotmail.fr

Location/localisation: Korhogo, Région du Poro, Côte d'Ivoire.

Company Profile: The Union of Cooperatives of Food Crops (UCOVISA) is an umbrella organization made up of cooperatives that produce and market staple food crops.

Profil de l'Organisation : L'Union des Coopératives du Vivrier (UCOVISA), est une faitière agricole qui regroupe les coopératives productrices de cultures agricoles vivrières en Côte d'Ivoire.

Wienco Ghana Limited (Stand 12)

No. 14, Narku Ipan Road, Airport Residential Area

P.O Box 7593 Accra, Ghana <http://www.wienco.com>

wienco@wienco.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: William Kotey, kotey@wienco.com; Dela Hayford, dela@wienco.com

Location/localisation: Ghana

Company Profile: Wienco Ghana provides solutions to farmers and agricultural enterprises to improve the productivity of their farm operations. Wienco is working with over 50,000 small scale farmers in cocoa, maize, coon and other crops. It provides credit, inputs and training.

Profil de l'Organisation : Wienco Ghana fournit des solutions pour les agriculteurs et les entreprises agricoles afin d'améliorer la productivité de leurs exploitations agricoles. Wienco travaille avec plus de 50.000 petits agriculteurs dans le cacao, le maïs, le coton et d'autres cultures. Elle offre des crédits, des intrants et des formations.

Yara Ghana (Stand 2)

Bostal Avenue #2 , Roman Ridge, Accra / P.O.BOX5258 Accra

www.yaraghana.com

Contact person/personne à contacter: Henry Otoo-Mensah, henry.otoo-mensah@yara.com, Eric Nesta Quarshie, eric.nesta.quarshie@yara.com

Location/localisation: Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire + 150 pays/countries

Company Profile: Yara is a provider of specialist crop nutrition advice to farmers throughout the world and a global leading producer of ammonia, nitrates, NPK, and specialty fertilizers. Yara offers the most comprehensive range of fertilizers in the industry.

Profil de l'Organisation : Yara fournit aux agriculteurs du monde entier des conseils spécialisés dans la nutrition des cultures. Yara est aussi l'un des premiers producteurs mondial d'ammoniac, de nitrates, d'NPK et d'engrais spécialisés.

Esoko Networks (Stand 31)

PMB CT 90

Cantonments – Accra

+233 302 211611

info@esoko.com

www.esoko.com

Contact Person/Personne à contacter: Mark Davies (mark@esoko.com), Enyo Agbenu (enyo@esoko.com) Location/Localisation : 42 Ring Road, Kwame Nkrumah Circle, Accra – Ghana

Company Profile: Esoko provides an information platform for businesses and organizations to collect, manage and distribute agricultural information and profiles. By using mobile phones to collect and distribute critical agricultural information, farmers improve incomes, agribusinesses save time and money, and buyers reduce risk. Esoko can be deployed in any country in the world.

Profil de l'organisation: Esoko fournit une plateforme aux organisations et sociétés pour collecter, gérer et disséminer des informations agricoles par téléphone portable. Esoko peut être déployé partout dans le monde.

► Annex 4: Private Sector Working Group Participant Lists

Group 1: Road Harassment

Facilitator	Jules Sombié	USAID ATP Project
Resource Person	Niels Rasmussen	USAID West Africa Trade Hub Project
Resource Person	Brahima Cisse	USAID ATP Project
Resource Person	Daouda Moussa	USAID ATP Project
Representative	Ziad Hamoui	Tarzan Enterprises, Borderless Alliance
Recorder	Sally Cameron	Abt Associates Inc.
Participant	Yuna Zhou	Syngenta Foundation
Participant	Tamini Berthe	CIC-B
Participant	Tassebedo Asseta	RTCF Burkina Faso
Participant	Sawadogo Sophie	COFENABVI AO – Burkina Faso
Participant	Salihou Guiro	USAID IICEM Project, consultant
Participant	Kina Adama	Commerçant, Burkina Faso
Participant	Djegga Demmon	COFENABVI AO
Participant	Haruna Agesheka	GAPTO
Participant	Klutse Kudomor	Nestle CWA
Participant	Bamba Yacouba	COFENABVI AO
Participant	Gafar Ajao	USAID ATP Project
Participant	Christophe Bruyas	USAID West Africa Trade Hub Project
Participant	Koita Ibrahim	
Participant	El Hadj Garba Issaka	
Participant	Sanoh N'faly	
Participant	Stephen Awuah	
Participant	Carla Demzard	
Participant	Abdou Salamou Nakakale	
Participant	Tanasir Niane	
Participant	Samuel Adjei	
Participant	Berthe Laguciva	
Participant	Ki Philippe de Kassom	
Participant	Alidum Alassani	
Participant	Zoundi Simone	

Group 2: export restrictions

Facilitator	Sola Afelabi	USAID West Africa Trade Hub Project
Group Representative	Ayéfoumi Salif Olou-Adara	CPC-Togo
Resource Person	Christian Amedo	USAID ATP/E-ATP Project
Resource Person	Kossi Dahoui	USAID ATP/E-ATP Project
Recorder	Deborah Dangay	Abt Associates Inc.
Participant	Boubacar Soumaré	Faso Jigi (Mali)
Participant	Berthe Lancina	CIR-B
Participant	Seye Seynabou	DHL Global Forwarding
Participant	Dr. Patrick Nugawela	Consultant, J.E. Austin
Participant	Dieker-Avit Louis-Philippe	Nestlé
Participant	Marie-Andrée Tall	AAFEX—Fruitales
Participant	Patrick Zompo	AAFEX—STFL
Participant	Emmanuel Joseph Mensah	AGRA, Accra
Participant	Alfred Achampong	DHL Global Forwarding
Participant	Mima Nedelcovych	Schaffer Global Group
Participant	Louise Hornel	DFID
Participant	Nebnoma Sawadogo	RECAO (Burkina Faso)
Participant	Jules Keane	Catholic Relief Services
Participant	Sanou Soumaïla	CIC-B
Participant	Thomas Yeboah	IMFP Ghana
Participant	Mouhamadou Lawane Kane	Nouel Senegal
Participant	Hamidou Ouedraogo	MELS/Burkina
Participant	Kadu Aifah	Ghana Grains Council
Participant	Dieudonné Kam	USAID ATP Project
Participant	Justice Lee Adoboe	Ghana News Agency
Participant	Khady Fall Fall	AFAO-WAMA
Participant	Abdoulaye Sawadogo	NAFASO
Participant	Amaria Salia	J.E. Austin
Participant	Kleberte Béné	IMCI Côte d'Ivoire

Group 3: certificates of Origin

Facilitator	Daniel Plunkett	USAID ATP/E-ATP Project
Resource Person	Frank Ofei	Consultant
Resource Person	David Tanenbaum	USAID ATP/E-ATP project
Representative	Rohit Raj	OLAM
Recorder	Sara Miner	USAID ATP/E-ATP project
Recorder	Golda Afidegnon	Charter House
Participant	Kamlesh Jadeja	Crown Agents (UK)
Participant	Fadima Mariko	AAFEX
Participant	Abdou Salamou Nakakale	COFENABVI AO Niger
Participant	Alassani Alidou	COFENABVI AO
Participant	Issaka Ali	USAID ATP/E-ATP Project
Participant	Ismael Ouedraogo	Consultant
Participant	Tamadou Fall Boudou	COFENABVI AO
Participant	Salif Coulibaly	COFENABVI AO
Participant	Boni Roger Felix N'do	COFENABVI AO
Participant	Salif Bikinga	CIR-B (UNTR-B)

Group 4: Sanitary and phytosanitary certificates

Facilitator	Justin Bayili	Borderless Alliance
Resource Person	Seydou Sidibe	USAID ATP Project
Resource Person	Kokou Zotoglo	USAID ATP Project
Representative	Mamadou Camara	COFENABVI AO
Recorder	Christine Ohresser-Joumard	USAID ATP Project
Participant	John Lamb	Abt Associates Inc.
Participant	Labi Dahoal	USAID ATP Project
Participant	Honvoh Garcia	Esoko
Participant	Ndele Yagbaw	World Food Program
Participant	Djaouga Boubacar	USAID ATP Project
Participant	Diallo Boukari	COFENABVI AO
Participant	Koama Abdoulaye	
Participant	Boureima Maimouna	
Participant	Sambo Assane	
Participant	Bikinga Salif	

Group 5: Value-added tax

Facilitator	Georges Dimithe	
Resource Person	Ed Keturakis	Abt Associates Inc.
Resource Person	Yaya Yedah	
Representative	Tom Gambrah	Premium Foods
Recorder	David Ivanovic	USAID ATP Project
Participant	Hamadou Nialibouly	
Participant	Issaka Camara	
Participant	Judith Attiogbe	
Participant	Timbila Thomas Sawadogo	COFENABVI AO
Participant	Saurav Bhuwan	OLAM
Participant	Peter White	USAID ATP consultant
Participant	Abel Gbetoenonmon	Africa Performance Agency
Participant	Debrah Kofi	
Participant	Daouda Diomandé	
Participant	Zinnah Moses	
Participant	Aissatou Deme	ATCL
Participant	Bineta Coulibaly	
Participant	Amadou Ousmane	Caspani
Participant	Gladys Sampson	Premium Foods
Participant	Mariam Toure Barry	Rose Eclat
Participant	Serge Touré	