



CORAF/WECARD's Contributions to the implementation of ECOWAP



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Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------|--|
| ARI | Advanced Research Institution |
| AU | African Union |
| CAADP | Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program |
| CAP | Common Agricultural Policy of Central Africa |
| CAAPP | Central Africa Agricultural Productivity Program |
| CEMAC | Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale |
| CGIAR | Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research |
| CILSS | Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse au Sahel |
| CMP | Change Management Process |
| CORAF/WECARD | Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricoles/ West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| DONATA | Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa |
| ECCAS | Economic community of Central African States |
| ECOWAP | Economic Community of West African States Agricultural Policy |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| ES | Executive Secretariat |
| FAAP | Framework for African Agricultural Productivity |
| FARA | Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa |
| IARC | International Agricultural Research Centre |
| IAR4D | Integrated Agricultural Research for Development |
| IP | Innovation Platform |
| MDTF | Multi Donor Trust Fund |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| NAIS | National Agricultural Innovation System |
| NARI | National Agricultural Research Institute |
| NARS | National Agricultural Research System |
| NCoS | National Centre of Specialization |
| NEPAD | New Partnership for Africa's Development |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| OP1 | CORAF/WECARD first five-year Operational Plan (2008-2013) |
| OP2 | CORAF/WECARD second five year Operational Plan (2014-2018) |
| REC | Regional Economic Community |
| RAILS | Regional Agricultural Information and Learning System |
| RCoE | Regional Centre of Excellence |
| S3A | Science Agenda for Agriculture in Africa |
| SCARDA | Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa |
| SP | Strategic Plan |
| STC | Scientific and Technical Committee |
| UEMOA | Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WAAPP | West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program |
| WB | World Bank |
| WCA | West and Central Africa |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY..... | 3 |
| 1. INTRODUCTION..... | 5 |
| 2. OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS OF THE ECOWAP | 5 |
| 3. CORAF/WECARD'S PROFILE & ALIGNMENT OF SP AND OP TO ECOWAP/CAADP | 6 |
| 3.1 CORAF/WECARD Profile..... | 6 |
| 3.2. Alignment of CORAF/WECARD SP and OPs to the ECOWAP | 6 |
| 4. CORAF/WECARD'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESULTS OF ECOWAP/CAADP..... | 8 |
| 4.1. Delivery of Results of the SP & OP..... | 8 |
| 4.2. Implementing the CORAF/WECARD's Core Functions..... | 8 |
| 4.2.1. Coordination of NARS..... | 8 |
| 4.2.2. Strengthening the Capacity of NARS and their partners..... | 8 |
| 4.2.3. Advocacy | 9 |
| 4.2.4 Knowledge Management | 9 |
| 4.3. Delivery of Program and Project results | 9 |
| 4.4. Highlights of WAAPP Program..... | 11 |
| 4.5. Highlights of the West Africa Seed Program | 11 |
| 4.6. CORAF/WECARD's contribution to the implementation of the RAIPs and NAIP | 12 |
| 4.7. Challenges in the Implementation of the RAIP & NAIPs..... | 13 |
| 5. NEW CHALLENGES FOR A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN WCA | 14 |
| 5.1. Food Security Challenges | 14 |
| 5.2. Sustainable Agricultural Transformation | 15 |
| REFERENCES | 16 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents the key outputs and outcomes of the contributions of CORAF/WECARD through implementation of its Strategic Plan (SP) and Operational Plans (OP1 & OP2) to the ECOWAP/CAADP agenda in West Africa. The aim of the ECOWAP is to ensure food security for a population which is expected to double by 2030, and which rely primarily on the potential agricultural production and trade flows in the region. As the technical arm of the ECOWAS Commission (regional focal institution for the implementation of CAADP in West Africa), CORAF/WECARD was mandated to implement CAADP Pillar IV (technology generation, dissemination and adoption) with a special task as lead institution of the ECOWAP thematic area 2 on sustainable management of agricultural holdings/farms. By reviewing and revising its SP and OP, CORAF/WECARD first of all aligned its strategy and interventions to support and implement the ECOWAP/CAADP agenda. Within the last decade (2005 – 2015) CORAF/WECARD has been a strategic player in the implementation of the flagships programmes and projects of the ECOWAP/CAADP and has delivered outputs and outcomes to the result statements of the ECOWAP, NAIPs and RAIPs, as well as structural reforms committed at regional and national levels.

The implementation of the CORAF/WECARD SP and the first OP (2008-2013) has contributed enormously to the implementation of NAIPs and the RAIPs. CORAF/WECARD is successfully coordinating a set of research projects aligned to regional plans and frameworks notable ECOWAP/CAADP. These regional projects were designed through regional consultations with multi-stakeholders to identify regional priorities and using competitive and commissioned funding mechanisms with a strong potential to contribute to the ECOWAP/CAADP 6% growth target for AgGDP. In the West Africa sub-region, in particular, this coordination role has been well integrated into regional frameworks (ECOWAS Agricultural Policy- the ECOWAP).

Partnerships were forged and strengthened with key technical and development partners including (i) advanced research institutions such as CIRAD, CSIRO, Carnegie Institute of Washington, and IRD; (ii) CGIAR centers such as AfricaRice, IITA, ICRISAT, ICRAF, ILRI, IFPRI; (iii) regional institutions such as CILSS, CIRDES, WASCAL; (iv) development partners such as EU, USAID/WA, AusAID, DFID, the World Bank, CIDA, IDRC, and CTA.

The ECOWAP/CAADP frameworks and FAAP principles in West Africa have been better understood through sensitization meetings and the implementation of MoUs underlying the new IAR4D paradigm with partners having a shared interest in agricultural development, leading to (i) increased contribution of skills and strengths of stakeholders, especially NGOs, to agricultural productivity operations, (ii) all categories of stakeholders empowered to formulate and respond to their needs for innovation, and end-users empowered to set priorities, establish work programmes, make decisions and deliver on productivity and entrepreneurship.

Revisions of the Strategic Plan of some National Agricultural Research Institutions (NARIs) has been done to make them coherent with the CORAF/WECARD Strategic Plan, either directly or through the development of CAADP national country compacts. As of now, all countries of the ECOWAS have signed the ECOWAP/CAADP compact and most of them have developed National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs).

The establishment of multi-institutional innovation platforms with integrated value chain approach, ranging from formally established platforms to transient platforms, which respond to, and are based on specific demands, and encourage the interaction of diverse stakeholders' groups in the research process, including farmers and their organizations, non-conventional partners, particularly NGOs and the private sector, while putting farmers and end-users at the centre.

The setting up and the formalization of the West and Central Africa Network of Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (RESCAR-AOC) whose mandate is to contribute to Effective agricultural and rural advisory services mobilized in line with demand to facilitate sustainable development in West and Central Africa. This emerging platform focuses mainly on facilitating stakeholders' access to knowledge, best practices, agricultural innovations and strengthening actors' skills necessary for the sustainable transformation of their activities. The immediate outcomes of the change management process has been alignment of some NARS strategies to that of CORAF/WECARD and the signing of the ECOWAP/CAADP compacts which will facilitate the achievement of the CAADP target of 6% annual growth for agricultural GDP.

The WAAPP program since 2007, has become CORAF/WECARD's innovative approach to bringing back to the region's public policy agenda, the issue of appropriately funding and the use of state-of-the-art technologies in

agricultural productivity for wealth creation and food security in West Africa. As at now, nine (09) National Centers of Specialization (NCoS) have become operational since WAAPP became effective in 2007. Under the aegis of CORAF/WECARD these centres are in the process of evolving to Regional Centers of Excellence (RCoE). WAAPP is indeed a model for sustainable funding of agriculture, regional integration and cooperation in agriculture. It is open to all stakeholders along the priority commodity value chains. Furthermore, it facilitates intra and inter mobility of actors (researchers) and technologies and a framework for facilitating the valorization of the research results of the NARS and CGIARS in the NAIPs.

The West Africa Seed Program (WASP) funded by USAID/West Africa under and the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP) and the World Bank, supports ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) and CAADP to formulate seed regulations and supply quality planting material to producers. The program also supplied seeds for basic food stuffs for the “Ebola” affected countries in West Africa to curb food crisis. The Alliance for Seed Industry in West Africa (ASIWA) was launched to serve as a sustainable, inclusive, effective platform to facilitate consultation and dialogue among West African seed industry actors. In addition, it enables expanded cooperation between public and private seed stakeholders, and drives collaborative learning to expand production, supply and use of quality seed in West Africa.

CORAF/WECARD played active roles in the signing of 13 NAIPs compacts including, (i) contributed to the development of three Flagship Programmes of the RAIP, (ii) played key roles in validating and signing the technical and financial compacts of the RAIP in October and November, 2009, respectively, (iii) developed and submitted a project to ECOWAS for funding that should contribute to the implementation of two out of the three Flagship Programmes of the RAIP, and (iv) lead consultations aimed at developing a framework for post-compact development of NAIPs.

The design and implementation of the NAIPs and RAIPs, an innovative and strategic agricultural development planning process under the ECOWAP/CAADP, has some strengths, weaknesses and challenges in the ECOWAS member states. A key strength is CORAF/WECARD’s coordination of NARS with a focus on ECOWAP/CAADP agenda and increasing FAAP-compliant programme support around identified regional priorities, encouraging common planning horizons, and encouraging common financial and administrative systems. An important weakness is the ECOWAP/CAADP processes required dedicated personnel with adequate skills and competences to deliver the results. While in the process some aspects of the exercise, especially the simulation of development scenarios, require technical skills that are not always easily mobilized.

CORAF/WECARD’s SP and OPs are aligned to the ECOWAP/CAADP which places agriculture, food and nutrition issues back in the centre of national, regional and international concerns. The SP and OP have been designed as a response to the agricultural and food issues in West and Central Africa and the focus is on transforming agriculture in WCA. A number of priority domains and strategies of interventions have been identified as key drivers of the transformative agenda for agriculture in West and Central Africa. Cross-cutting issue such as climate smart agriculture, gender, youth entrepreneurship, nutritional security, sustainable financing mechanism of agricultural research and advisory services are becoming key levers to the transformation agenda.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper has been prepared within the framework of CORAF/WECARD's contributions to the implementation of ECOWAP/CAADP in West Africa. As the technical arm of the ECOWAS Commission, CORAF/WECARD was mandated to implement CAADP Pillar IV (technology generation, dissemination and adoption) in the ECOWAS member states. Within the framework of an Annual Management Contract signed in July 2008 between the ECOWAS Commission and CORAF/WECARD, the later became the lead institution supported by IFDC in the implementation of activities under the theme on sustainable development of agricultural holdings (farms) under the Regional Agricultural Investment Plan (RAIP). Today we are 10 years in the implementation of ECOWAP/CAADP and the ECOWAS Commission has deemed it necessary to conduct an initial assessment of the achievements, to identify the gaps or necessary reforms in the light of the results achieved and lessons learned, limitations observed and new challenges facing agriculture in the region and prospects for the future.

The overall objective of the paper is to present highlights of the results of the implementation of the CORAF/WECARD Strategic Plan (2007 – 2018) and its two-phased five-year-Operational Plans during the last decade (2005-2015). Furthermore, it explores the contributions of CORAF/WECARD to the result statements of the ECOWAP, NAIPs and RAIPs, as well as structural reforms committed at regional and national levels. The analyses of the strengths and weaknesses of NAIP and RAIP, and proposals for debate with multi-stakeholders involved; challenges likely to be faced by regional agriculture and food security over the next decade, and the main priorities that should be retained to address these challenges; and finally the priority levers for a sustainable transformation of agriculture are discussed.

The paper is presented in five sections. The first section is the introduction which describes the context and states the rationale of the paper. Section two is an overview of the strategic orientations and focus of the ECOWAP/CAADP in West Africa. Section three of the paper presents an overview of CORAF/WECARD, the review and revision of its Strategic Plan (SP) & Operational Plan (OP) as a responds to adequately address issues and challenges of agricultural research and development presented in the ECOWAP document. The fourth section of the paper examines the contributions of CORAF/WECARD in the implementation of ECOWAP/CAADP, RAIPs, and the NAIPs as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the processes. Section 5 of the paper synthesizes key challenges for food security in the near future and the priority levers for a sustainable agricultural transformation in the sub-region.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS OF THE ECOWAP

The ECOWAS commission as a regional focal agency for the implementation of CAADP in West Africa adopted its agricultural policy known as ECOWAP - a unique and unifying framework for programming and implementing strategic interventions for the development of the agricultural sector in West Africa. The aim of the ECOWAP is to ensure food security for a population which is expected to double by 2030, and which rely primarily on the agriculture potential production and intra and inter regional trade flows in the region. The strategic vision is "a modern and sustainable agriculture, based on the effectiveness and efficiency of family farms and promotion of agri-businesses through the involvement of the private sector; "productive and competitive in the intra-community market and international markets and to ensure food security and provide decent incomes for its inhabitants.

The Regional Agricultural Policy, the ECOWAP, adopted by the ECOWAS Heads of State and Governments in 2005 in Accra is, therefore, an instrument for the implementation of CAADP in West Africa. It is the guiding framework for implementation of the priority programmes of the agriculture component of AU/NEPAD/CAADP. The ECOWAP as a mechanism ensures the harmonization and integration of the objectives through various strategies and programs in the countries and other intergovernmental organizations of the sub region. Thus, it is the reference framework which specifies the principles and the objectives assigned to the agricultural sector, the orientations and the axes of interventions for agricultural development through which the sub region can leverage its agricultural potential to ensure productivity, competitiveness of the agricultural sector to achieve the CAADP target of 6% average annual growth of AgGDP.

The strategic domains of intervention of the ECOWAP include the following: (i) the development of the agricultural sector and the promotion of markets; (ii) prevention and management of food crises and other natural disasters; and (iii) institutional strengthening. The ECOWAP has placed agriculture and food issues back in the centre of national, regional and international concerns, and the 2008 global food crisis has demonstrated the relevance of this regional policy which is oriented towards food sovereignty. Thus, the mobilization of all stakeholders for its full operationalization made it possible to (i) define the institutional framework and financial mechanisms; (ii) turn the policy

and CAADP pillars into national agricultural investment programmes (NAIP) in each country, supported by the RAIP at the regional level; (iii) engage all stakeholders around common principles within the framework of the signing of the regional compact.

3. CORAF/WECARD'S PROFILE & ALIGNMENT OF SP AND OP TO ECOWAP/CAADP

3.1 CORAF/WECARD Profile

The West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD) was established in 1987 as the Conference of Heads of African and French Agronomic Research Institutions. In 1995, it widened its coverage to include English- and Portuguese-speaking countries of West and Central Africa. Its member institutions of the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) are situated currently in 23 countries in WCA. CORAF/WECARD intervenes in these countries covering a total land area of 12.3 million km² with a total population of about 433.2 million inhabitants out of which 74 % are engaged in agriculture. The average proportion of people living on less than US\$ 1.25 a day in the area of intervention of CORAF/WECARD is estimated at 48.5 %¹ – ranging from 10 per cent in Cameroon and Gabon, to 80 % in Liberia. This figure is however declining in all countries in the region. Food demand is projected to increase by about 60 to 80 %. Average yield gap across key commodities has been relatively high and estimated at 75 %. Average economic growth rate is estimated at 7 %.

CORAF/WECARD's strategic vision and mission is to achieve sustainable improvements to the productivity, competitiveness, and markets of the agricultural system in West and Central Africa by meeting the key demands of the sub-regional research system as expressed by target groups. The role of CORAF/WECARD is to promote sub-regional cooperation, create synergies and reduce duplications, mobilize resources, and generate common solutions to agricultural research and development problems leading to the transformation of agriculture in WCA. This is achieved through the achievement of its four core functions, namely, coordination of NARS, Capacity Strengthening and coordination, Advocacy and Knowledge Management

3.2. Alignment of CORAF/WECARD SP and OPs to the ECOWAP

By reviewing and revising its Strategic Plan (2007-2016) and its first-five-year Operational plan (2008 – 2013) following the principles, targets, and focus of the CAADP and the guidelines for implementing it provided by the FAAP, as well as those of the agricultural policies of the regional economic communities in WCA (ECOWAP, PAU, and CAP) of the ECOWAS, ECCAS, UEMOA and CEMAC, CORAF/WECARD thus laid the foundations for sustainable transformation of agriculture in West and Central Africa. This was a result of a very highly participatory development process and remarkably supported by a wide range of multi-stakeholders in agricultural research and development, and the plans outline the strategy and mechanisms by which CORAF/WECARD intends to provide an appropriate response to the various interlinked challenges facing agriculture in the sub-region.

Based on achievements and lessons from implementation of the first Operational Plan (2008 – 2013), the second Operational Plan (2014 – 2018) has been developed through consultations with CORAF/WECARD's broad based multi-stakeholders who, in the process, examined the continued relevance of the Strategic Plan (SP) as well as the main findings and recommendations that emanated from evaluations of the OP1 (2008-2013). Major recommendations from these consultations included the extension of the period covered by the SP to 2018, so as to accommodate the delay incurred between its adoption in 2007 and the beginning of its implementation in 2008, through the OP1; and frame the OP2 accordingly to cover the period from 2014 to 2018. The consultations confirmed the validity of the main objectives, structure, and priorities of the SP, the Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D) approach which remains the basic framework for the OP2. The OP2 is fully coherent with the latest orientations of CAADP, including the Malabo Declarations in June 2014, the Science Agenda for Agriculture in Africa (S3A) and the agricultural policies of the RECs (ECOWAP, PAU, and CAP)

¹ MDG report 2014

The second Operational Plan (OP2) focuses on: (i) playing a stronger role in facilitating the institutional and policy development of National Agricultural Innovation Systems (NAIS), (ii) ensuring the establishment of clearer frameworks and incentives, which will facilitate the adequate management of the implementation of research for development projects in line with the regional agenda, by stakeholders at the national level, (iii) paying greater attention to advocacy geared toward influencing policies both at the national and regional levels, and (iv) giving high priority to the consolidation of instruments that play a critical role in facilitating access to information on new and existing technologies and to market opportunities, by key stakeholders including producers, the private sector, and NGOs. In addition, the OP2 introduces a programmes and themes approach, which identifies three priority themes corresponding to key challenges facing agricultural transformation in the sub-region. These themes are linked to increasing the resilience of households and systems to respond to a wide range of biological, social, environmental and political challenges. CORAF/WECARD by revising its SP & OP took into account the AU-NEPAD/CAADP and the ECOWAS/ECOWAP. This is abundantly clear from the vision of CORAF/WECARD, which is: "a sustainable reduction in poverty and food insecurity in West and Central Africa (WCA) through an increase in agricultural-led economic growth and sustainable improvement of key aspects of the agricultural research system". Under its new SP & OP, CORAF/WECARD has implemented an organizational structure that allows it to respond to agricultural research and development questions addressed by the ECOWAP through five results:

- Result 1: Increased use of appropriate technologies and innovations in WCA
- Result 2: Increased uptake of strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets
- Result 3: Enhanced institutional and human capacity in agricultural research and development
- Result 4: Demand for agricultural knowledge by target clients facilitated and met
- Result 5: Result delivery effectively managed by CORAF/WECARD

These results are being generated through six programs that are consistent with the thematic areas of the ECOWAP/CAADP as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Alignment of CORAF/WECARD SP & OP with Thematic Areas of Intervention of the ECOWAP/CAADP

| ECOWAP/CAADP Thematic Area | OP1 (2008 -2013) Programs | OP2(2014-2018) Programs | OP2 Priority Themes |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1.Integrated Management of Natural Resources | Program 4 : Natural Resource Management | Program:3 Natural Resource Management | Theme3 : Sustainable Agriculture |
| 2.Adaptive Management of Appropriate Genetic Material | Program1. Livestock, Fisheries & Aquaculture Program 2. Staple Crops Program 3. Non Staple Crops Program 5. Biotechnology & Biosafety | Program 1. Livestock, Fisheries & Aquaculture Program 2. Crops Program4 :Biotechnology & Biosafety | Theme 1: Food, Nutrition & Health |
| 3.Sustainable development of Value Chains and Markets | Program 6. Policy, Markets and Trade | Program 5. Policy, Markets and Trade | Theme 2 Markets & Trade |
| 4. Policies for Sustainable Agriculture | Program 7. Knowledge Management | | |
| 5. Capacity Strengthening | Programme 8. Capacity Strengthening & Coordination | Program6 : Capacity Strengthening & Coordination | Theme 2 Markets & Trade |

4. CORAF/WECARD'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESULTS OF ECOWAP/CAADP

4.1. Delivery of Results of the SP & OP

The implementation of the SP and the first OP (2008-2013) has contributed enormously to the implementation of NAIPs and the RAIPs. These programs/projects are derived from:

- Thematic priorities of the countries identified through a participatory process for the identification of regional priorities followed by joined definition and validation by agricultural commodity value chain stakeholders under the supervision of CORAF/WECARD;
- Partnership programs at the continental level with FARA, such as the following projects: SCARDA, PSTAD (DONATA& RAILS), SABIMA, SSA – CP, SYNGENTA, AfricalInteract, etc...
- partnership programs at regional level with ECOWAS Commission such as the projects of the Biotechnology and Biosafety Action Plan and the elaboration of the WAAPP;
- Programs with Scientific or Technical and Development partners such as DFID, USAID, IDRC, Multi-donor Trust Fund (EU & Canada), AusAID/CSIRO/DFAT, IFDC CIRAD and, IFPRI.

These projects have been implemented either through a competitive call for project proposals or either through commissioned projects to the specialized centres in the priority area addressed and also based on the principle of subsidiarity (Base Centres, the Centres of Excellence, the Research Poles and other groups of actors whose skills are deemed necessary, such as FBOs, NGOs and the private sector). These projects have generated the following achievements which are presented under Core Functions of CORAF/WECARD and results of the OP.

4.2. Implementing the CORAF/WECARD's Core Functions

4.2.1. Coordination of NARS

- CORAF/WECARD is successfully coordinating a set of research projects aligned to regional plans and frameworks notable ECOWAP/CAADP. These regional projects are designed through regional consultations with all stakeholders to identify regional priorities and using competitive and commissioned funding mechanisms with a strong potential to contribute to the ECOWAP/CAADP 6% growth target for AgGDP. In West Africa in particular, this coordination role has been well integrated into regional frameworks (ECOWAS Agricultural Policy- the ECOWAP).
- Partnerships have been forged and are continuously strengthened with key technical and development partners including (i) advanced research institutions such as CIRAD, CSIRO, Carnegie Institute of Washington, and IRD; (ii) CGIAR centers such as AfricaRice, IITA, ICRAF, ICRISAT, ILRI, IFPRI; (iii) regional institutions such as CILSS, CIRDES, WASCAL; (iv) development partners such as EU, USAID/WA, AusAID, DFID, the World Bank, CIDA, IDRC, and CTA.
- Revision by some National Agricultural Research Institutions (NARIs) of their own Strategic plans to make them coherent with the CORAF/WECARD Strategic Plan, either directly or through the development of CAADP national country compacts. As of now, all countries of the ECOWAS have signed the ECOWAP/CAADP compact and most of them have developed National and Regional Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs).
- The organizational and programmatic changes prescribed in the revised CORAF/WECARD Strategic and Operational plans were facilitated by the establishment of a change management process. This process resulted in key changes within CORAF/WECARD, notably (i) the establishment of a programmatic approach for implementing the OP, articulated around the subsidiary and IAR4D principles and the innovation systems and value chain approaches, (ii) a better understanding of the CAADP and FAAP principles at regional levels, and (iii) the establishment of sound governance systems and policies.

4.2.2. Strengthening the Capacity of NARS and their partners

- CORAF/WECARD has fulfilled this role in a number of complementary ways: helped pool regional resources through multi-country research projects; it has developed a database of expertise in the region; and upgraded capacity at NARS to contribute better to regional priorities.

- Capacity building efforts at national level has also had a number of complementary dimensions. Training programmes in both technical and soft skills have been organized. Institutional development aspects have also been tackled to a limited extent through SCARDA and Change Management Trainings. The use of innovation platforms in all projects has contributed to national capacity development, although there is further institutional and policy strengthening needed to sustain this approach as an effective way of doing business unusual.
- Establishing multi-institutional innovation platforms with integrated value chain approach, ranging from formally established platforms to transient platforms, which respond to, and are based on specific demands, and encourage the interaction of diverse stakeholder groups in the research process, including farmers and their organizations, non-conventional partners, particularly NGOs and the private sector, whilst putting farmers and end-users at the centre.
- The focus now is on the development of National centres of Specialization (NCoS) and their evolution to Regional Centres of Excellence (RCoE) as a way of pooling research expertise and reducing duplication of research efforts. Considerable institutional development is needed in order to operationalize this vision.

4.2.3. Advocacy

- CORAF/WECARD has been highly successful in establishing itself as a recognized and credible regional tool. This is evidence by: (i) Successful advocacy for donor funding based on the strength of its Strategic and Operational Plans and its credibility within its regional constituency of research and development stakeholders; (ii) A database of information is available on agricultural research in West Africa; (iii) Successful advocacy for the adoption of IAR4D as a guiding framework for CORAF/WECARD projects; (iv) Establishment of a considerable portfolio of 217 innovation platforms as a source of experimental learning, (v) Analyzing the state of R&D in terms of human, infrastructure and financial investment, and (vi) Initiating dialogue with countries for the Sustainable funding mechanism of R&D and Advisory Services.

4.2.4 Knowledge Management

- CORAF/WECARD has established dedicated knowledge and capacity development programmes. This has been used to coordinate both specific capacity development programmes such as SCARDA and DONATA (both part of continental level initiatives coordinated by FARA), as well as capacity development support across projects. Notably, significant efforts have been made in training programmes on IAR4D in support of the implementation of innovation by projects. Key tools deployed have been websites, workshops, and training programmes. In addition, innovation platforms have provided an opportunity for experiential learning for project implementers, their partners and other stakeholders. Future plans for mentoring these innovation platforms will strengthen the experiential learning associated with them and under OP2 IAR4D and Innovation Platforms will be institutionalized at the NARS level to leverage impact at scale.

4.3. Delivery of Program and Project results

The key achievements of the OP1 as viewed under the four result areas are summarized as follows

Result 1: Increase use of appropriate technologies and innovations

Under this result, the target was 15 technologies/innovations. The achievements largely exceeded (211)². The over achievement was due to the fact that OP1 targeted 5 projects per program (a maximum of 40 projects) but more projects were actually implemented (58) than planned because the demand from stakeholders was higher than anticipated.

Under this result, it was also planned to develop at least 60 multi-stakeholder partnerships and mechanisms for the development of appropriate technologies and innovations. More than 315 partnerships were actually formed around the competitive and commissioned projects. The explanations given above for exceeding the target hold for this target too. The use of Innovation Platforms (IPs) also provided an efficient approach, which resulted in exceeding the planned target.

² This is the figure for FTF+WAAPP

Result 2: Increased uptake of strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets

Twenty (20) strategic policy options were planned under OP1 to be proposed/recommended and advocated to decision makers at regional and national levels. Ninety-eight (98) "strategic options" were actually generated during OP1 under CORAF/WECARD's eight programmed. Out of these options, more than 20 were actually implemented, exceeding the 50 % target value. Under this result, it was planned to establish 15 functional multi-stakeholder partnerships and mechanisms for the development of policy, institutional and market options. By the end of OP1, more than 50 functional policy platforms were established and functional.

Result 3: Enhanced Institutional and human capacity for agricultural research and development

The evaluation of the Change Management Programs (CMP) indicated that 80% of the needs identified were met through the training of CORAF/WECARD stakeholders in various areas. The outcomes of these CMP were the tools to respond to the change associated with the new OP and SP.

Prior to the implementation of Programs, scoping studies were conducted to identify priority intervention areas, including sets of capacity strengthening needs of stakeholders along the commodity value chains. In response to the capacity strengthening needs, various training activities were organized, targeted at various stakeholders in diverse areas. The 50% targeted capacity building needs of projects' stakeholders were exceeded; the achievement was above 80%.

Capacity of NARS in both technical and soft skills, were strengthened through various training programs via the implementation of regional initiatives such as Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA), Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UNIBRAIN), Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa (DONATA), Regional Agricultural Information and Learning System (RAILS), West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP), competitive and commissioned projects. By the end of 2013, more than 500 post-graduate students had been trained under these projects in different areas.

Ten (10) institutions in the NARS were equipped with tissue culture, molecular biology, agro-processing, ITC and means of transport to enhance their research capabilities. In the view of strengthening regional research cooperation, creating synergies and building research teams around strategic thematic areas, nine NCoS were established to complement the five existing Base Centers.

In terms of Advocacy for resource mobilization, a strategy was developed and implemented which resulted in the mobilization of the resources over and above the resources needed for the implementation of OP1. By the end of 2013, the partnerships and mechanisms for operating the IAR4D paradigm had exceeded the planned target of 30%.

CORAF/WECARD developed a specific strategy with focus on the institutionalization of Gender. The Concept Notes and Proposals of the projects were screened to conform to the targets of the Gender Strategy. In addition, capacity of CORAF/WECARD staff and stakeholders were strengthened. Within the context of this strategy, National Gender Action Plans were developed and implemented in 13 WAAPP countries. An evaluation of this plan clearly showed that 38% of women were reached compared with the 40% target.

Result 4: Demand for agricultural knowledge from target clients facilitated and met.

Under OP1, CORAF/WECARD has established more than 90 functional IPs in 22 countries in WCA through which, the demands of stakeholders were assessed, analyzed and satisfied. As complements to the IPs, many other tools were used, among which were:

- (i) A regional database on achievements made in agricultural research and development containing information on scientific publications, new technology, best practices, directory of researchers, and projects.
- (ii) A Market Innovations and Agricultural Technologies (MITA) electronic platform, which collects and makes available information on relevant, already existing but not widely known or used technologies in WCA countries.
- (iii) Partnerships with other regional knowledge management programmes such as ECOAGRI (ECOWAS) and RAILS and Africa Adapt (FARA). This led to achievement over and above the targets: 40% increase in satisfying client needs; 40% increase in the numbers of stakeholder groups forming alliances for joint learning, knowledge and information sharing; 30% increase in the numbers of users including vulnerable/disadvantaged stakeholders able to successfully.

- (iv) To address the issue of youth employment which is paramount for West Africa sub region, CORAF/WECARD initiated a project "Support to the launching of knowledge for youth employment through the Web Channel" to increase the use of research results through internet. A total of 15 films to promote the technologies were produced in English and French. These have been viewed by more people 10.000 people on social media.
- (v) Moreover CORAF/WECARD has supported the emergence of the West and Central Africa Network of Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (RESCAR-AOC) whose vision is to "Effective agricultural and rural advisory services mobilized in line with demand to facilitate sustainable development in West and Central Africa".

4.4. Highlights of WAAPP Program

CORAF/WECARD under the leadership of ECOWAS Commission is facilitating the implementation of the WAAPP model as a viable and sustainable financing mechanism for agricultural research and development. Promoting sustainable investments and attracting requisite funding to accelerate economic growth require the establishment and recognition by policy makers and development partners of a robust model that identifies priority areas for investment that have potential impact in the agricultural sector and the economy of the region as a whole. The WAAPP presents an innovative and sustainable model for investment in agricultural research for development. Under the regional coordination of CORAF/WECARD the WAAPP addresses the key questions of agricultural productivity based on regional integration, while taking into account the diverse economies, underlying constraints, and opportunities of the agriculture sector of individual countries.

This integrated spatial and economy wide model recognizes the importance of (i) focusing investments around priority agricultural subsectors of individual countries with the greatest potential to stimulate productivity and achieve overall growth and poverty reduction goals in the region, and (ii) establishing mechanisms that creates spillovers effects for a wider and accelerated impact on regional economic growth. The model integrates (i) policy issues that create a favorable environment for the dissemination and adoption of technologies and innovations, (ii) human and infrastructural resources to strengthen the contribution of agricultural research to development, (iii) national and regional funds for developing mechanisms to accelerate the dissemination and adoption of technologies, and (iv) instruments (Information and Communication systems, Management (Fiduciary and Administrative) Systems, Monitoring and Evaluation Systems) to facilitate the delivery and dissemination of results.

As of 2013, Heads of State and senior policy makers have embraced WAAPP and it is operational in 13 of the 15 ECOWAS member countries and it is worth noting that the number of technologies released by WAAPP's NCOs continued to rise over the years. By 2015, the number of technologies surpassed the program's target of 83 to 113 productivity enhancing technologies. Similarly, the number of hands-on beneficiaries surpassed the Program's target of 1,426,360 to 4, 564, and 750. These are indications of the enormous and effective efforts of all components of the Program implementation, justifying the investments being deployed in the generation and use of technologies in agricultural productivity. As of today, nine National Centres of Specialization (NCoS) are operational and under the aegis of CORAF/WECARD, these centres are being supported to evolve to Regional Centres of Excellence (RCoE) to strengthen relevant partnerships for more efficient and effective delivery of technologies and innovations.

4.5. Highlights of the West Africa Seed Program

The West Africa Seed Program (WASP) is a five-year programme funded by USAID/West Africa under the United States Government's Feed-the-Future (FtF) to contribute to sustainable improvement of agricultural productivity in the West Africa sub-region, which responds to the strategic objective of CORAF/WECARD and for that matter the CAADP, the ECOWAP and the PAU-UEMOA. The specific objective of the WASP is to increase availability and Use of Quality Seeds. The program results are delivered through four axes: (i) Alliance for Seed Industry in West Africa (ASIWA) effectively coordinated and sustained, (ii) ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS Seed Regulation effectively implemented to facilitate seed trade amongst its member states, (iii) Supply of breeder seeds of standard quality by NARS Seed Units increased and (iv) Supply of Foundation/Certified seeds by the Private sector increased. Some key results are presented as follows:

The extensive stakeholder consultations launched the ASIWA and it was thus adopted by national, regional and international stakeholders as: (i) a convening point for seed sector stakeholders, a communication hub and a market facilitation and industry development platform and (ii) a sustainable, inclusive, effective platform to facilitate consultation and dialogue among West African seed industry actors, enable expanded cooperation between public and

private seed stakeholders, and drive collaborative learning to expand production, supply and use of quality seeds in West Africa.

The ECOWAS Commission confided to CORAF/WECARD in 2013, the establishment of the West Africa Seed Committee COASem/WASC to carry out its mission and functions and to coordinate the National Seed Committees (NSCs) in the 17 ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS countries for a provisional period of five years. The COASem/WASC was launched in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on August 3, 2015 followed by its First Statutory Meeting with the following outcomes among others:

- A common ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS Regional Seed Committee (WASC/COASem & CRSU) was established, to carry out its mission "to assist the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions and CILSS Executive Secretariat, in the implementation of the Regulation in force, related to Quality Control, Certification and Marketing of Seeds and Seedlings, in view of contributing to the development of the seed sector in Member States"
- The cooperation among the Regional Policy Institutions (ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS) is reinforced, through a concluded agreement to implement the common Regional Seed Committee mentioned above, for the 17 countries in the region (15 ECOWAS Member States + two (02) CILSS Member States, i.e. Mauritania and Chad)
- The high interests expressed by international, regional and national partners, in the launching event of the Regional Seed Committee (WASC/COASem & CRSU) events, signified partners' desire to see the regional seed industry develop and the Regional Seed Regulation implemented to open regional seed market. In strengthening the capacity of the seed system, 750 seed quality control and regulatory agencies, 1000 Small and Medium Enterprises and 830 plant breeders/technicians have been trained and provided with the necessary tools and equipment since 2013. WASP/WAAPP directly supported 37% of the total breeder seed and 34% of foundation seeds produced in the region yearly. These seeds were produced from new climate-smart varieties of maize, rice, sorghum/millet and cowpea and supplied to private sector enterprises and companies through Public-Private-Partnership arrangements. Ninety seed enterprises/companies benefited in 2014 and 150 in 2015. Furthermore, through the WASP/WAAPP activities in promoting the use of certified seeds for adoption, direct support to ROPPA to up-scale seed marketing and the establishment of an electronic web seed marketing platform www.wasix.net seed supply and use in the region has been boosted.
- Through the intervention of WASP and partners, mostly the WAAPP countries have been assisted to implement the Regulation using a more harmonized approach; this has resulted in a remarkable increase in implementation from 41% to 77% between 2013 and 2015. Presently, countries that have made significant advances in the implementation of the Regulation are Benin, Burkina Faso and Senegal and are currently addressing 12 out of the 12 elements. These are followed by Nigeria and Togo with 11 elements (92%) being addressed, Cote d'Ivoire and Mali with 10 (83%), and Ghana and Guinea, 9 (75%). Countries with moderately low levels of implementation are The Gambia and Sierra Leone (50%). Liberia, Chad, Mauritania, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde are considered very low (less than 33%).

The outcome of the interventions is increased supply and use of certified seeds of the major cereals and legumes from 182,000 MT to 372,000 MT (103%) within 2012/13 and 2015.

As a response to the Ebola outbreak in the sub-region, discussions and consultations were held to strategize on mobilizing 12 crop seeds to the three EBOLA stricken countries- Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Modalities and arrangements in collaboration with the World Bank funded project- the WAAPP and seed movements were under the supervision of the WASP programme. The total supply of certified seeds from the operation is given as 5,025, part of which was supported with funds provided to the countries by the World Bank and a second part through CORAF/WECARD. A total of 240,000 farm families have so far benefited, 48% being women. Crop harvest has started and it is expected to curb the widespread famine which was experienced as a result of the Ebola epidemic. Currently, about 6,500 tons of certified seeds are under production in the three target countries for supply to over 300,000 additional beneficiaries during the 2016 cropping season.

4.6. CORAF/WECARD's contribution to the implementation of the RAIPs and NAIP

CORAF/WECARD, as the lead Institution of the thematic 2 on sustainable management of agriculture and farm holdings led the preparations and design of the development of the investment programs. The NAIPs represent visions, ambitions, and the priorities of the countries in agricultural research and development. The RAIP consists of a first generation of three mobilizing and unifying programs, built with a perspective to get significant results in the short and

medium term (by 2014), which complement or support the NAIP. These programs correspond to a selection of strategic priorities that meet the urgent needs created by the new international and regional situation. They are focused on a limited number of key issues, critical to stimulate and lead a decisive and massive West African agricultural sector transformation. They also seek to meet a feasibility criterion which takes into account human and institutional capacities available for their implementation and financial budgets. The unifying nature of the programmes is expressed at the levels of (i) the common vision of national and regional priorities; (ii) the approach by investment and public policy instruments (regulations, incentives, etc.); and (iii) common approaches developed in different sub key issues programs from Regional Investment Programs (PRIA).

CORAF/WECARD played active roles in the signing of 13 NAIPs compacts including (i) contributed to the development of three Flagship Programmes of the RAIP, (ii) played key roles in validating and signing the technical and financial compacts of the RAIP in October and November, 2009, respectively, (iii) developed and submitted a project to the ECOWAS for funding that should contribute to the implementation of two out of the three Flagship Programmes of the RAIP, and (iv) lead consultations aimed at developing a framework for post-compact development of NAIPs. Support was also provided in reviewing the NAIP of 13 countries in WA, in collaboration with FARA, to ensure their conformity with ECOWAP/CAADP principles and improve their quality.

CORAF/WECARD contributed to the process of defining mechanisms for facilitating networking of research centers, dissemination of research findings in West Africa, interconnecting universities and research centers, elaboration of a system of equivalence of higher education certificates and diplomas, and promotion of innovation, science and technology in development. CORAF/WECARD has also analyzed the issue of harmonizing the status of research scientists in WA and proposed options.

The support of CORAF/WECARD was solicited by ECOWAS for establishing its Community Development Programme (CDP). The objective of this Programme is to implement the 2020 Vision of the community (from the ECOWAS of States to the ECOWAS of People). In particular, the process of elaborating the Regional Research Policy was launched in the month of September, 2010. CORAF/WECARD took the opportunity of sharing its experience gained in the process of elaborating its Strategic Plan (2007 to 2016) during the meeting. CORAF/WECARD was member of Steering Committee for the elaboration of this regional research policy.

Through the implementation of the WAAPP, CORAF/WECARD facilitated the involvement of research in the NAIPs and vice versa (NARS, CGIAR, advanced). This was initiated during meeting in Dublin to revitalize agricultural production in African initiatives. CORAF/WECARD noted the weak valorization of research results at the level of the NARS and CGIARS by the NAIPs. CORAF/WECARD then proceeded with an in depth analysis of the NAIPs and the outcomes was that the research component was not well defined and budgeted for in the NAIPs. In order to overcome this challenge, CORAF/WECARD in September 2012, organized a workshop of the ECOWAS member countries with the CGIAR with the objective of ensuring alignment of the CRPs (CGIAR) on the CAADP and also ensuring the research component in the NAIPs at country level. Furthermore CORAF/WECARD also forged linkages of the NCoS with the CGIAR during the WAAPP wrap up regional meeting in Freetown- Sierra Leone in April 2013. WAAPP is indeed a model for regional integration and cooperation in agriculture open to all stakeholders along the priority commodity value chains. It facilitates intra and inter mobility of actors (researchers) and technologies and a framework for facilitating the valorization of the research results of the NARS and CGIARS in the NAIPs

4.7. Challenges in the Implementation of the RAIP & NAIPs

The institutional challenges in the design and implementation of the RAIPs & NAIPs include:

- The ECOWAP/CAADP processes required dedicated personnel with adequate skills and competences to deliver the results. Along the entire process the lead institutions encountered challenges ranging from contractual issues and problems of mobilizing local expertise. While in the process some aspects of the exercise, especially the simulation of development scenarios, require technical skills that are not always easily mobilized in every country. ECOWAS has funded most of the operations relating to the formulation of the RAIPs and NAIPs as well as the initial rollout of preliminary programmes. It has received the technical support of IFPRI, FAO and of ReSAAKS/IITA. A group of partners (USAID, DFID, SIDA) has given an additional financial support ;
- Capacity Strengthening: CORAF/WECARD mandate is somewhat difficult to implement due to varying levels of capacity across the NARS

- Poor buy-in of the Programmes (RAIP and NAIPs) by some bilateral, multilateral stakeholders and partners resulting in the persistence of parallel intervention schemes and finally weak overall impact of the Programmes;
- Training is the preferred method of skill development. However, to make use of new skills, and to work effectively within the context of innovation platforms, building alliances that work effectively, there is a need to address the institutional and policy arrangements to support the use of these.
- The sub-region is also characterized by socio-political unrests, food crisis and diseases or pandemics that stifle the pace of implementation of the ECOWAP/CAADP processes. The food crisis in 2008 resulted in countries in the region dealing with two differing and not easily reconcilable concerns in the short term: (i) take advantage of the high prices which offer an historic opportunity for remunerating the labor of food producers and for funding the transformation of West African agriculture; while in the meantime (ii) ensuring access to food for poor communities, be they urban or rural. States tried to combine two types of measures: (i) a cluster of emergency measures aiming essentially at reducing the cost of food; and (ii) targeted measures for boosting agricultural production. They received varied support from NGOs. ECOWAS focused above all on defining a medium-term strategy for a sustainable revitalization and increase in agricultural and food production in the region.
- Missed opportunities for networking across different NARS country groups and regional actors; current M&E systems at the NARS level do not allow for complex queries, cross tabulation, or meta-analysis within the Excel software; there are limited links and relationships between M&E at National and regional and continental levels in Africa for agricultural research & development, and a knowledge management system.

5. NEW CHALLENGES FOR A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN WCA

5.1. Food Security Challenges

The CORAF/WECARD's SP and OPs are aligned to the ECOWAP/CAADP which places agriculture and food issues back in the centre of national, regional and international concerns, and the 2008 global food crisis has demonstrated the relevance of these continental and regional policies which are oriented towards food sovereignty. Among the challenges affecting the West African region, there are: malnutrition, slow economic growth, the weak performance of the agricultural sector, the degradation of the environment, pandemics - HIV-AIDS and malaria, and the problems of governance and conflicts or civil strife. Furthermore, it should be taken into account, new emerging challenges that are opportunities for the region: agricultural biotechnology, biofuels, climate change and the new issue of the "high cost of living". Within the context of these challenges and opportunities, several Governments in the region and their technical and financial partners have made several commitments: (i) in 2000, the United Nations Summit made a commitment to reduce by half poverty rate and hunger in developing countries by 2015; (ii) In 2003 the AU/NEPAD CAADP adopted a 6% average annual agricultural growth rate of AgGDP; (iii) at the heads of State and Government Summit of Maputo in June, 2004, ACP countries committed to allocate within a period of five years at least 10% of the national budget to agriculture; and (iv) in 2006, at the fertilizer Summit in Abuja, increasing the use of fertilizer to 8-50 kg/ha by 2015.

The CORAF/WECARD SP and OP were developed as a response to the agricultural and food issues in West and Central Africa. The WCA sub-region comprises a rich agricultural base spread over a wide range of agro-ecological zones with significant potential for improved agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets which should offset the existing food deficits. Most of the agricultural sector is characterized by small-holder farms with heavy reliance on rain-fed production systems, natural methods of soil fertility maintenance and limited access to markets. Despite challenges resulting from climate change, disease and conflict/post-conflict situations there is, however, enormous potential for agricultural growth in WCA. There is a growing labour force and a widening range of higher yielding technologies/innovations and improved farming systems. The large gaps in achieved and potential yield gaps present opportunities for increasing productivity and making gains for producers. Furthermore, it is estimated that 60% (currently 40%) of the continent's population will live in cities by 2050 and this is creating local markets for agricultural and livestock products, and trade liberalization and globalization is opening up new markets as well. Given this context, raising the output and productivity of the majority of small farmers would raise rural family incomes, improve food security and social and economic wellbeing. It would also lower urban food prices and stimulate the rest of the economy.

5.2. Sustainable Agricultural Transformation

In the midst of food crisis and a growing population that will double by 2030, there is urgent need for a sustainable agricultural transformation in West Africa. CORAF/WECARD's OP has been developed based on lessons learned from implementation of the first OP1 and the focus is on transforming agriculture in WCA. The OP2 has adopted a programs and themes approach which addresses very well the issues of poverty, food, health and nutrition security, markets and trade and sustainable agriculture challenges in WCA. A number of priority domains and strategies of interventions have been identified in OP2 as key drivers of the transformative agenda for agriculture in West and Central Africa.

These domains include among others the following: (i) adopting a much better alignment of research themes to those of the RECs agricultural policies and objectives (ECOWAS & UEMOA, ECCAS and CEMAC) which is expected to foster effective collaboration and linkages among various programs in contributing to the delivery of results under a common thematic issue; (ii) striving for sustainable funding mechanisms for long-term success of CORAF/WECARD, which facilitates the process of capacity strengthening of the NARS through regional initiatives, project implementation and establishment of NCoS and their evolution to RCoE; (iii) ensuring that critical, social and environmental issues such as gender, climate change, nutrition and health, and youth unemployment, are adequately addressed in all initiatives, (iv) providing decision-makers with policy options for the improvement of technology markets. In line with the CAADP and the ECOWAP strategies, it recognizes the critical role played by the policy and institutional environment for technology markets. There is thus a need for CORAF/WECARD to analyze the main constraints in this respect and propose measures to promote a more supportive policy and institutional environment at regional and national levels; (v) Institutionalizing the IAR4D and IPs as a strategic collaborative approach for shifting from 'traditional' technology-oriented AR4D practice towards 'new' collaborative and integrated systems-oriented AR4D to leverage impact at scale via up and out-scaling of technologies and innovations; this will require building stronger relationships, interactions and synergies with Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services.

Increasingly, CORAF/WECARD has taken up its role of strategic player in agricultural research and development in the WCA and beyond, through the execution of and involvement in several research and development initiatives that are strengthening the NARS' capacity to effectively deliver agricultural research results that would impact livelihoods of the target groups. The institutionalization of the change management process created the enabling environment for institutional restructuring and strengthening as directed in the Strategic and Operational Plans. The immediate outcomes of the change management process has been alignment of some NARS strategies to that of CORAF/WECARD and the signing of the ECOWAP/CAADP compacts which facilitate the achievement of the ECOWAP/CAADP's target of 6% annual growth for agricultural GDP. WAAPP program has become CORAF/WECARD's dynamic and innovative approach to bring back to the region's public policy agenda on the issue of appropriately funding the use of state-of-the-art technologies in agricultural productivity for wealth creation and food security. CORAF/WECARD is strengthening its strategic alliances and partnership with the Civil Society Organizations and the Private Sector in agriculture to enhance implementation performance of its Second Operational Plan (2014 – 2018) and leverage impact at scale via up and out-scaling of technologies and innovations. CORAF/WECARD is in the process of harmonizing support for the implementation of SP & OP and initiating new phases in its partnerships and strategic alliances with the RECs to source funding internally and also to build a reserve fund to ensure sustainability in implementation of its strategy. The CORAF/WECARD SP and OP are aligned to the ECOWAP/CAADP vision for 2025 and will contribute to the achievement of food sovereignty and poverty reduction.

5.3. Priority levers for consideration to accelerate the sustainable transformation of agricultures in West Africa

The Heads of States and Government of the African Union meeting in June 2014, in Malabo, adopted two Declarations which directly relate to CAADP and Africa's agricultural transformation and food security agenda in the 2015-2025 decade. The goals and targets of the Malabo Declaration on CAADP and commitment to accelerate Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods are: (i) recommitment to the Principles and Values of the CAADP Process; (ii) recommitment to enhance investment finance in Agriculture (Uphold 10% public spending target, Operationalization of Africa Investment Bank); (iii) Commitment to ending hunger by 2025 (at least double productivity-focusing on Inputs, irrigation, mechanization; Reduce PHL at least by half; Nutrition: reduce stunting to 10%); (iv) Commitment to Halving Poverty by 2025, through inclusive Agricultural Growth and Transformation (Sustain Annual sector growth in Agricultural GDP at least 6%; establish and/or strengthen inclusive public-private partnerships for at least five (5) priority agricultural commodity value chains with strong linkage to

smallholder agriculture; (v) Create job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth in agricultural value chains; preferential entry & participation by women and youth in gainful and attractive agribusiness; (vi) Commitment to Boosting Intra-African Trade in Agricultural Commodities & Services; (vii) Commitment to Enhancing Resilience in livelihoods & production systems to climate variability and other shocks; (viii) Commitment to Mutual Accountability to Actions and Results (through the CAADP Result Framework – conduct a biennial Agricultural Review Process

CORAF/WECARD intends to achieve the goals and targets of the Malabo Declarations on CAADP by mainstreaming the following issues in the new generation of NAIPs and RAIPs in ECOWAP+25 processes:

- Developing and promoting adoption of Climate Smart Agriculture as outline in the Bamako Declaration in June 2015
- Mainstreaming gender in all programmes and projects: Actions will be designed so that gender-related barriers to economic growth and poverty alleviation are reduced and the material well-being of men, women, and children is enhanced. Central is the promotion of policies and actions that facilitate equitable access to productive resources by men and women, as well as integrating gender perspectives in its programmes and activities to ensure benefit by both sexes
- Mainstreaming nutrition security and health in all programmes and projects
- Strengthening youth entrepreneurs through incubation in the Regional Center of Excellence and other Base Centers
- Strengthening Regional Center of Excellence for the state of the art Science, Technology and Innovation generation, dissemination and adoption of priority commodities of West Africa
- Setting up effective and sustainable Agricultural and Rural advisory and Extension Services
- Engaging countries and RECs for the development of sustainable and endogenous national and regional financing mechanisms of Agricultural Research & Development and Advisory Services
- Support RECs (ECOWAS & WAEMU) and their member states for the conservation, improvement and sustainable use of the indigenous breeds through the coordination of the West Africa Focal Point for the management of the Animal Genetic Resources (AnGR), hosted by CORAF/WECARD
- Building a strong institutional culture for M&E by assessing and identifying skill gaps and include the development of the necessary skills and competencies in M&E within CORAF/WECARD Secretariat as well as key NARS; and developing a harmonized system for data collection, analysis, storage, reporting
- Maximizing CORAF's coordination mandate by placing more emphasis on strategic coordination and alignment of national and regional action plans, in order to help ensure contributions scientific and technical partners to ECOWAP + 25
- Strengthening a regional web-based, market-driven Knowledge Management system of CORAF/WECARD

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