



A teacher feeds hens in the school at Barnera, Burkina Faso. Photo : Pablo Tosco

ECOWAP: A FRAGMENTED POLICY

Development partners and regional institutions should address leadership and coordination issues in order to build a common agricultural policy for West Africa

Ten years after the launch of the ECOWAS policy on food and agriculture, which sought to channel efforts in the sector, coordination remains a serious challenge. Several regional initiatives compete with each other, at the political and the project levels, with the complicity of certain development partners. By imposing their own intervention frameworks, development partners often weaken regional authorities and breach their own commitments on aid effectiveness.

SUMMARY

Following the global food crisis of 2008–9, the regional process that was launched between 2009 and 2011 gave real impetus to ECOWAP, the Regional Agricultural Policy adopted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) back in 2005. In 2009, the signature of the Regional Partnership Compact for the Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme in West Africa (ECOWAP/CAADP) rallied key actors around common commitments, particularly those linked to the application of the principles of leadership, alignment and coordination to all regional interventions in the food and agriculture sector.

This agreement was followed by the adoption of the Regional Agricultural Investment Programme (RAIP) in 2010, which shaped regional agricultural policy, and the creation of the institutional framework for steering, executing and financing RAIP. This framework is composed of the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF) and the Regional Food and Agriculture Development Fund (ECOWAPDF) as well as several consultative bodies. At the same time, ECOWAS was steering similar processes in member countries, with the aim of formulating national agricultural investment plans (NAIPs). ECOWAS thereby showed its leadership in steering the initiative as well as its commitment to operationalize ECOWAP, while at the same time pushing development partners to put the principles of aid effectiveness into practice.

Unfortunately, six years later the outcome seems quite stark. As the ECOWAS Memorandum on the activities carried out in 2011–12 rightly highlighted, ‘the move from multiple programmes and projects to an integrated approach within a coherent policy constitutes an extremely complex exercise’. This exercise is made even more difficult by the fact that not all stakeholders take part in coordination efforts, while others go as far as to promote and finance parallel intervention frameworks, as is largely the case in the region.

From the L’Aquila Food Security Initiative promoted by the G8 in 2009 to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 (including objective 2: the elimination of hunger by 2030) and the adoption by the Committee on World Food Security of the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA), international initiatives have underscored the leadership of countries or regional institutions and the alignment of development partner interventions with existing frameworks and policies. Yet the existing institutional framework seems unable to channel the initiatives of international donors, and RAIP is far from representing a reference framework for agricultural and food interventions in the region.

Several largely interrelated factors may explain this situation. First, ECOWAS went back on all its financial commitments in the food and agriculture sector to address other pressing priorities around security and health. Consequently, although the regional fund was created, it has never been financed, and without financial investment, ECOWAS has lost part of its capacity to spearhead the activity of development partners.

Furthermore, RAAF remains a young structure with an insufficient team and is yet to exert influence. There is a view, largely shared by development partners, that it does not yet have sufficient autonomy vis-à-vis the ECOWAS Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources. It does not offer sufficient guarantees to manage the funds or have the capacity to manage large-scale projects. While several donors are

providing their funds through other regional institutions, ECOWAS and the RAAF find themselves unable to coordinate all the projects, some of which are weakly aligned with the guidelines or the institutional framework of ECOWAP.

Certain institutions that donors consider to be less restrictive are experiencing a new upswing. This is the case for CILSS (Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel), for example, which has been implementing a growing number of regional programmes financed by development partners in recent years. Recent conventions signed with non-traditional CILSS donors (the World Bank, African Development Bank, and Islamic Development Bank) currently account for several hundred million dollars. Despite the fact that CILSS is supposed to act as the 'technical arm' of ECOWAS in the implementation of ECOWAP, ECOWAS bodies are not involved in the design of numerous regional programmes implemented by CILSS. Faced with this *fait accompli*, they can only integrate these projects as contributions to the implementation of ECOWAP after the event, even if the direction, the scope of the intervention, or the institutional provisions do not necessarily correspond to those defined by ECOWAS.

For its part, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) adopted a new 10-year Programme for Agricultural Transformation for Food Security and Nutrition (PCD-TASAN) in 2014 (with a certain delay in relation to the revision of ECOWAP). This programme calls for a 'paradigmatic shift' in the agriculture sector, having noted the failure of previous approaches, such as the implementation of NAIPs. The provisional programme formulation report, which provides a detailed account of all the component projects, makes almost no mention of the RAIP adopted by ECOWAS in 2010, although it largely covers the same intervention areas.

In a context that is already deeply fragmented, development partners are exacerbating rather than helping the situation. The ECOWAP Group that was supposed to bring together key development partners at the regional level through a coordination mechanism is not succeeding in playing a convening role. Since the main donors in the region are largely absent from meetings, participation falters; those who do participate do not always have the information and/or the necessary mandate to involve their institutions in real coordination efforts.

The intervention mapping exercise conducted within the framework of the ECOWAP Group constitutes a first effort in the quest for greater transparency. Nevertheless, almost 90 percent of the programmes recorded in the 2013 database do not specify which of RAIP's three objectives they contribute to; rendering any coordination effort (beyond a mere information exchange) difficult. The ordinary analytical work that would normally allow collective needs assessments or reviews or common instructions has not been carried out.

Finally, the mapping provides only a partial picture of regional investments since it does not systematically include programmes that are implemented without a direct link to ECOWAS. This highlights the weak links that exist between the ECOWAP Group and other groups of technical and financial partners (TFP) working in the food and agriculture sector in the region, whether with WAEMU or CILSS. Even if all coordination and alignment efforts are commendable in principle, it seems highly problematic that there is so little coordination and no overall supervision.

There are also some questions over the coherence and legitimacy of these different groups, given that some of the largest regional donors such as the World Bank or the

European Commission (EC) are represented at CILSS but do not participate (or no longer participate) in ECOWAP Group meetings.

In this complex institutional context, certain international initiatives or initiatives promoted by development partners add confusion, by promoting new spaces for coordination and programming. The commitment by ECOWAS countries to formulate their 'national resilience priorities' (NRPs) within the framework of the Global Alliance for Resilience (AGIR) - Sahel and West Africa is an example of this, since its timeframe was more aligned with the programming of the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) than with upcoming revisions of the NAIPs and RAIP. Even if countries that have developed NRPs have based it on their NAIP, most actors involved remain unclear about how future national agricultural investment programmes will function.

The World Bank's Sahel Initiative and the Regional Sahel Pastoralism Support Project (PRAPS), which is one of the initiative's five main components, provides another illustration of the difficulties involved in aligning programmes implemented by development partners with those of the RAIP. PRAPS includes two countries from outside ECOWAS (Chad and Mauritania) as well as Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, and it makes reference to the Nouakchott Declaration adopted on 29 October 2013 by six Heads of State and Government at the initiative of the World Bank, in what constitutes a political framework primarily elaborated for the occasion.

More generally, the multitude of multi-actor platforms as a result of global initiatives or initiatives promoted by donors since 2009, which were supposed to ensure inclusive dialogue and participation, raises the question of whether there is a real will on the part of actors to streamline the multi-layered coordination frameworks that currently serve the region poorly.¹

It is essential for the first 10-year review process of ECOWAP to bring about a strong political commitment shared by all actors for a single common agricultural policy in West Africa. In order to achieve this, all regional actors (institutions and regional organizations, Member States, development partners, the private sector and civil society groups) must work together to:

- Adopt a single regional policy for the agriculture, food security and nutrition sector, which allows effective alignment of the objectives and formulation exercises of different regional organizations and of all the development partners involved in the sector;
- Rationalize the mandates and resources of regional institutions to allow effective coordination of their efforts and complementarity of their actions in the implementation of this common policy;
- Strengthen the regional institutional framework adopted by ECOWAS in 2010 and align the interventions of development actors with it in order to allow ECOWAS to play its full role in both the financing and implementation of regional programmes;
- Ensure effective coordination of development partner interventions by streamlining existing coordination mechanisms and promoting thematic groups that allow them to advance their programmatic, institutional and financial alignment within the political and institutional regional framework.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 2008–9 food crisis, almost every year has witnessed the international launch of a new initiative in the field of agriculture, food security and nutrition. This was the case with the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI) adopted at the G8 summit in 2009. The following year saw the launch of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, currently supported by 55 countries; a year after that, the G20 Action Plan on Food Price Volatility and Agriculture was agreed by agriculture ministers meeting in Paris, with a view to supporting the creation of emergency food reserves. In 2012, the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (NASAN) was adopted by the G8 at Camp David for 10 countries, 6 of which were West African. In the same year, two alliances focused on resilience were launched: the Global Alliance for Resilience (AGIR) - Sahel and West Africa; and Supporting Horn of African Resilience (SHARE). The Zero Hunger Challenge, promoted by the UN Secretary-General, was also established. Finally, in June 2015, the G7 Elmau Declaration also included a commitment on food security. In September, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, which seeks to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, was adopted by Heads of State and Government during the UN General Assembly.

The majority of these initiatives directly target the African continent or certain regions or groups of countries within it; West Africa is often a key beneficiary. It is clear therefore that the agriculture and food security sector, forgotten for decades, is now back on the international aid agenda. For their part, African countries have reiterated (during the African Union Summit in Malabo in June 2014) their commitment to invest at least 10 percent of national budgets in agriculture.

Finally, apart from these global frameworks and commitments, there are also numerous initiatives on agriculture, food security and nutrition led by bilateral and multilateral actors, each highlighting both the leadership of certain countries or regional institutions and the alignment and coordination of development partner interventions with existing policies and frameworks. In this respect, the most recent example of commitments made by donor countries in the international arena is the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA) adopted by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in October 2015. Principle 7, 'Strengthen country ownership, participation, coordination and stakeholder buy-in and accountability', sets out the measures needed to strengthen national policies and the multiparty platforms managed by countries in order to coordinate and harmonize the support provided by development partners.

In West Africa, the 2008–9 food crisis and the international summits devoted to re-launching agriculture and the fight against hunger (World Food Summit and G8 AFSI) were the triggers that allowed the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to give new impetus to the regional agricultural policy introduced in 2005 (ECOWAP). The stakes were high, since political guidelines defined by ECOWAS had to be translated into action plans with the power to convene those Member States, regional institutions and development partners that were theoretically ready to align themselves with the intervention frameworks defined by national and regional authorities.

Despite the repeated commitment of development partners to invest in processes steered by countries and to implement aid effectiveness principles, the multiplication of international initiatives in the agriculture and food security sector generates important tensions for the actors present in the region. The initiatives are not well aligned, either with one another or with ECOWAP, particularly in terms of the priority focus or type of agricultural model supported. They are often accompanied by funding or prospective funding, and hence run the risk of draining capacities and energies that could instead be applied to formulating other exercises or coordination mechanisms.

This report is part of a series of documents published by Oxfam in West Africa since 2009 on the effectiveness of aid in the agriculture and food sector. The most recent report (2011), *Aid Coordination: myth or reality?*, offered a series of recommendations for technical and financial partners in the region to support the operationalization of ECOWAP by strengthening regional bodies created for its implementation. The study proposed a gradual pathway for development partners to align their support at the programme, institutional and financial levels, as well as concrete steps to overcome political and organizational deadlocks on the road to improved coordination.

Four years on, this report reviews recent achievements by concentrating on the processes and mechanisms, rather than on the final impact of the initiatives implemented in the field. It does not seek to judge a programme on the basis of the funding invested in a particular theme, but sheds light on *how* it fits into the existing frameworks (programmatic, institutional, financial), hence contributing to strengthening regional institutions so that they can elaborate, implement and finance effective public policies in the near future.

LEADERSHIP, ALIGNMENT AND COORDINATION: COMMITMENTS FOR STRUCTURING ECOWAP

Since the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey in 2002, each of the high-level fora on aid effectiveness organized by the international community has added an extra commitment in the realm of coordination, leadership and aid alignment (see Annex 1).

Even if the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) do not officially bind partners to the actions they undertake at the regional institutional level, these commitments are incorporated in the Regional Partnership Compact for the Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme in West Africa (ECOWAP/CAADP) (see Box 1). This agreement was adopted by all stakeholders in Abuja² in November 2009; each category of actor, represented by a regional leader, committed to a certain number of concrete points.

With this agreement, ECOWAS reasserted its regional leadership in the implementation of ECOWAP. ECOWAS pledged to mobilize all the resources at its disposal (principally financial) to ensure uptake by technical and financial partners and to make sure that all investments allow the organization to meet the objectives of its mobilizing programmes. For their part, development partners have undertaken to align, harmonize and coordinate all their regional support for agricultural development and food security with ECOWAP's orientations, objectives, principles, programmes and actions, while increasing their support for its implementation. In order to realize these commitments, Member States and development partners committed themselves to setting up a mechanism linked to ECOWAP's institutional and financial facility to coordinate and manage aid.

Box 1: Leadership, alignment and coordination: what the 2009 Regional Partnership Compact states

Common commitments of ECOWAS and technical and financial partners

- 38- Establish a mechanism for the coordination and management of aid within the framework of the institutional and financial facility of ECOWAP/CAADP.
- 41- Define, adopt and set up a joint monitoring-evaluation mechanism for the results of their support to the regional policy (products, effects and impacts).

Commitments of the ECOWAS Commission

- 42- Mobilise all the means at its disposal to achieve the specific objectives and expected results of its mobilising programmes, which constitute a key phase of the implementation of ECOWAP/CAADP.
- 45- Ensure that public and private investments made by non-signatory actors respect the guidelines of ECOWAP/CAADP.
- 48- Co-finance, drawing from the resources of the ECOWAS Commission, a mobilising and convening programme for at least 15% of its annual cost, for the whole of the 5 next years.
- 50- Give full account of its own and external resources mobilised for the implementation of ECOWAP/CAADP.

Commitments of technical and financial partners

51- Align, harmonise and coordinate all regional supports related to agricultural development and food security with the guidelines, objectives, principles, programmes and actions of ECOWAP/CAADP, in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Action Plan.

52- Promote the effectiveness of regional aid for agriculture and food security in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration and ensure that commitments at the national, regional and international level are coherent.

53- Increase their support to the implementation of ECOWAP/CAADP.

54- Improve the foreseeability of aid through a multi-year programme for technical and financial supports and favour the establishment of multi-yearly conventions to be renegotiated on a yearly basis in order to take the changing context into consideration.

Commitments of professional agriculture sector organizations

57- Actively participate in different coordination processes related to the implementation of ECOWAP/CAADP.

58 - Take part in the mobilisation of financial resources for the development of the agriculture sector.

59 - Participate in monitoring-evaluation activities of ECOWAP/CAADP.

As a follow-up to the signature of the Regional Partnership Compact, the Regional Agriculture Investment Programme (RAIP), adopted in 2010, is structured around three objectives. This regional programme, elaborated through an inclusive process, should allow all actors (notably development partners) to align themselves with common axes and a common framework. The setting up of thematic task forces at the regional level is designed to accelerate its implementation, while guaranteeing exchange and coordination frameworks for all stakeholders. The task force on regional food security reserves (one of the most active) allows for the elaboration of a regional stocking strategy to be adopted by ECOWAS, establishing a consensus on the objectives, institutional anchoring, composition and functioning of this new regional intervention instrument.

In 2011, regulatory documents were issued for the creation of the regional institutional arrangement comprising the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food³ (RAAF) and the Regional Food and Agriculture Development Fund⁴ (ECOWAPDF), complemented by the Consultative Committee and the Inter-departmental Committee.⁵ According to the regulations, this mechanism is in charge of steering, executing and financing RAIP. In accordance with the nature of the commitments on aid effectiveness, the regional fund, hosted by the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID), is supposed to allow the mutualization of funding from ECOWAS and development partners for the implementation of the regional programme. Nonetheless, it is foreseen that certain contributions remain earmarked (at least initially) so that partners can maintain a certain level of control over their use. In this mechanism, the RAAF is the agency responsible for technical steering and for the proper implementation of regional programmes. Hence, it does not have the mandate to implement projects, but to steer the implementation of mutualized funding through different financial instruments linked to the regional fund: call for projects, subsidies for actors or concrete actions, deployment of regional food security reserve and others.

Finally, the ECOWAP Group was created in April 2010 by development partners with the support of Spanish Cooperation. This group sought to bring together the main development partners at the regional level with the aim of supporting the implementation of agricultural policies through improved coordination and alignment of aid to the sector.⁶

In 2011, everything was theoretically in place to allow for the operationalization of the

programmes constituting ECOWAP, while at the same time building or strengthening regional ECOWAS institutions in a coordinated manner to ensure that they could steer the implementation of the region's common agricultural policy. However, putting this mechanism into practice is proving difficult and complex, since ECOWAS and numerous other partners will not invest the necessary funds in the newly created bodies.

IMPLEMENTING ECOWAP: LIMITED LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

In 2009, the context seemed favourable for the emergence of ECOWAP as the main convergence hub of agriculture and food security efforts in the West African region, since ECOWAS had convened most of its development partners. However, the situation seems less clear today. The institutional structure is struggling to gain traction and impose itself as the coordination framework, while the group of development partners that was constituted to support its implementation seems to have lost its focus.

An institutional arrangement struggling to take off

The lack of balance that exists between the technical and financial contributions of development partners and those of ECOWAS severely limits the latter's capacity to lead the evolution of the donors' forms of intervention. At present, ECOWAS is far from playing the leadership role it was intended to on regional agricultural and food security issues.

Financial and technical issues affecting the leadership of ECOWAS

Despite repeated announcements, only a small fraction of the resources pledged by ECOWAS to implement programmes or finance the new institutional system has actually been disbursed. The serious security and human crises in the Sahel (notably in Mali and Nigeria) and in neighbouring countries (the Ebola epidemic) have strained the budget of the Commissions for several years. As a result, expenditure for implementation of RAIP has been almost exclusively covered by development partner funding, which has also paid for an important part of the expenses associated with the functioning and staff costs of the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development and the RAAF. ECOWAS also reneged on its \$80m commitment for 2014 programmes, and the regional fund remains non-existent to date.

Even beyond these expenses, certain partners criticize the weakness of human resources and the techniques used for global planning or dedicated to the particular projects that ECOWAS is supposed to manage. According to certain observers, the weak technical capacity of ECOWAS staff explains the absence of work carried out to convert the RAIP into annual operational plans required for the completion of common planning exercises and for a better alignment of development partners on the specific objectives of the RAIP.

As the ECOWAS Memorandum on the activities carried out in 2011–12 rightly highlighted, 'the move from multiple programmes and projects to an integrated approach within a coherent policy constitutes an extremely complex exercise'. Without relying on the bodies it has created, implementation of ECOWAP follows the path of projects managed by donors, constrained by the difficulties of coordinating multiple interventions.

This situation calls into doubt the will of numerous development partners to address this situation, since only a limited number are involved in strengthening the mechanisms of ECOWAS (particularly the RAAF), while others prefer to circumvent them.

Is the creation of the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food a factor for increased leadership and coordination?

One of the objectives of the creation of the RAAF – albeit not stated officially – was to overcome administrative burdens that weigh heavily on ECOWAS. The agency was supposed to enjoy sufficient autonomy and administrative and financial rigour to allow development partners to work through it as an intermediary with ECOWAS. However, at least until now, few development partners have chosen to support or implement programmes supervised by the RAAF. The great majority of donor funding is still being channelled through other institutions or regional organizations, without necessarily having links or supervision assured by the ECOWAS Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development or the RAAF, or directly through the units of autonomous projects.

There is a commonly held view, largely shared by development partners, that none of the three bodies – ECOWAS, the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) (which hosts the regional fund), or the RAAF – is currently able to offer sufficient guarantees for managing funds in conformity with international standards of transparency and control of financial flows. They do not consider the organizations or staff to have sufficient technical and administrative capacity to manage or supervise large-scale projects.

Numerous development partners also question the autonomy of the RAAF vis-à-vis the Commission, at the political and the administrative and financial levels, since its executive director has the authority to approve only small amounts.

It is undeniable that projects where the management or implementation rests with the RAAF – such as the Regional Food Security Reserve (RFSR), the Regional Programme in Support of Food and Nutrition Security in West Africa (PASANAO), and projects funded by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) – face important delays or even major difficulties. PASANAO, financed by the French Development Agency (AFD), has only managed to implement activities in a timely manner by maintaining a project team hosted by the RAAF. In contrast, RFSR (see Box 2) illustrates the difficulties and tensions that affect a large-scale regional programme managed by ECOWAS.

Box 2: Regional Food Security Reserve (RFSR): relevance and implementation challenges

The Regional Food Security Reserve enables ECOWAS to act on the regional dimension of food insecurity by supporting and strengthening warning mechanisms. This regional intervention tool has been devised to complement national actions, while at the same time encouraging the coordination of initiatives at different levels. In this respect, the RFSR promotes coherence and regional integration. It is also by far the largest programme hosted by ECOWAS. Hence, it has potential to support the development of ECOWAS and the broader regional architecture, since the financial reserve should be hosted by the regional fund

Unfortunately, the project has suffered numerous delays, partly due to the complex institutional set-up,⁷ limited technical and human capacities in the RAAF and the Commission for Agriculture, financial disengagement on the part of ECOWAS, as well as conflicts of interest and burdensome procedures (whether on the part of development partners or ECOWAS). Although the feasibility study was adopted at the end of 2012 by the relevant ECOWAS statutory bodies, it remains pending until the end of 2015, when RFSR staff take up their posts.

These delays constitute a real risk to the implementation of the project, most notably to ECOWAS's capacity to mobilize funds in a more permanent manner. This is even more problematic given that ECOWAS has failed to raise the \$24m of co-funding it had previously announced. The RFSR strategy adopted by ECOWAS currently relies entirely on a project financed by the European Union (EU) (€56m). Not only does this situation affect the sustainability of the project, it also increases the risk of it being influenced by the constraints of international donors, whether as a result of the procedures used or of the recruitment of the reserve team, which will depend on external funds. Finally, it is more generally about the capacity of the regional agency to convince development partners of what is really at stake.

At the operational level, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), AECID and AFD have financed all the current management and staff of the RAAF until recently, since ECOWAS had pledged to take over after a couple of years of external funding. Although this initial external funding was probably necessary, certain observers regret that development partners and ECOWAS could not have jointly elaborated a plan to strengthen the capacity of the RAAF. Such a strategy could have defined medium-term objectives, to which ECOWAS partners could contribute over time in order to build the management capacity required for the agency to take off. In the absence of a shared plan, there is a risk that partners will prioritize funding certain posts only that respond to short-term project management needs, without strengthening the organization's overall planning capacities, which would be required to steer policy.

Nevertheless, a small number of development partners have tried to take maximum advantage of existing leeway in their procedures to support capacity building and leadership in the RAAF. For example, AECID has supported a project promoting social safety nets. To ensure effective procedures and implementation, it was agreed that project funds would be held in an ECOWAS account and an agreement signed for the partial transfer of funds to an account managed by the RAAF based on requests for specific activities in the preparation and implementation stages (for example, to fund a call for proposals or a specific activity).

Box 3: Common steering committee meetings: first signs of operational coordination

At the end of February 2015, ECOWAS took the initiative with other donors and organised joint steering committee meetings for the AECID programmes on social safety nets, the AFD programme supporting food security (PASANAO) and the Regional Food Security Reserve. This exercise allowed a shared review of ongoing activities in order to rationalize the direction of the programme and improve coordination between projects and global programming, thereby avoiding overlaps and the risks of double funding. This was followed by the RAAF's annual orientation committee, which allows an exchange between ECOWAS and its main partners on how the RAAF is to be used and, to a certain extent, to harmonize practices.

According to those involved, the geographic proximity of the AECID and AFD representatives (both organizations share the same offices) allows an informal information exchange as well as some sharing of practices. This has, for example, allowed them to determine common procedures for calls for project proposals launched recently.

It is important to remember that it was not foreseen for the RAAF to supervise projects; its role was to steer the implementation of mutualized financing in the Regional Food and Agriculture Development Fund. However, in the absence of this fund, each development partner continues to intervene with individual projects. The RAAF therefore finds itself in a de facto supervisory role, instead of managing ECOWAP as was originally intended. While certain partners supporting the RAAF see this situation as transitory and consider that the agency must progressively acquire experience in project management before becoming a delegated manager, other observers fear that this situation may continue, allowing other development partners to maintain a project approach while working more directly with ECOWAS.

THE ECOWAP GROUP IS UNCONVINCING

Constituted in 2010 and spearheaded by the Spanish Cooperation, the ECOWAP Group was initially welcomed as a useful and innovative initiative. One of its main achievements has been the development of a database featuring all the projects and programmes financed at the regional level in the agriculture, food security and nutrition sector. However, the group's functioning and results are now being questioned on several accounts:

- **Participation is now faltering:** the most important donors in the region (the European Commission (EC) and the World Bank) do not attend meetings and the group is smaller than it was when it was created. While there are some practical explanations for this disaffection (in that certain donors lack regional representation in Nigeria or specific competencies on the subject), their absence illustrates the low priority given to coordination issues;
- **Participation is not institutionalized:** the level of involvement of development partners in coordination exercises depends on the individuals working for those institutions. From this point of view, the high turnover of staff in cooperation institutions does not facilitate long-term involvement, since the people who participated in the initial phases are always more engaged than their successors;
- **Staff that do participate have insufficient mandates:** beyond the question of participation there is the issue of the degree of information, knowledge and mandate that participants have when it comes to taking decisions that tie their organizations to certain commitments. Quite often, important decisions in terms of transparency,

coordination or alignment (notably assessments or common programming) can only be taken by headquarters, and the staff who can take such decisions rarely join ECOWAP Group meetings;

- **Facilitation and secretariat roles should be rotated to encourage wider engagement:** although the leading role taken by the Spanish Cooperation has been largely welcomed (as well as its efforts to secure the coordination and secretariat of the group), some have criticized the lack of rotation of the leading partner, which has prevented another partner assuming responsibility for coordination at the regional level. However, it seems that no other partner has shown an interest in taking over this coordination role.

The mapping of interventions carried out within the framework of the ECOWAP Group can be considered as a first step towards transparency, which is important and necessary in order to advance in terms of coordination and alignment on a common programme. However, this work remains unfinished:

- **The Group's mandate and the scope of the projects taken into account are insufficient:** a large number of programmes or initiatives are implemented in the region without a direct link with ECOWAS; they are not systematically included in the database, which therefore gives only a partial picture of the investments made at the regional level.
- **The level of detail is low:** out of the 97 interventions included in the database (last updated in April 2013), almost 90 percent do not specify the results the intervention contributes to of the three specific objectives of the RAIP; this renders all coordination efforts impossible beyond merely an exchange of information. Most of these projects are only developed in some countries belonging to ECOWAS; sometimes the list of countries is not even specified.
- **Dearth of analysis of the data that have been collected:** there has been no shared analysis of the database to allow for collective identification of gaps or to devise reviews or strategies.
- **Absence of an update of the process:** it seems that the database has not been regularly updated and therefore only provides a snapshot; a real coordination effort would require a regularly supported process. It is undeniable that such work is painstaking and the human and financial resources dedicated to it so far have undoubtedly been insufficient. Finding the data in each agency or regional delegation of development partners can be difficult, and the overall donor visions and strategies are sometimes only available at the headquarters level, while certain representatives sometimes have little interest in coordination work.

The regional group had the ambition to convene all the actors and the interventions contributing to the implementation of ECOWAP. In this respect, it implied a certain streamlining of the coordination spaces that existed at the regional level.

Nevertheless, the ECOWAP Group currently seems to be considered more as the 'group of ECOWAS partners' in the same way that there is a group of partners of other regional organizations. Moreover, it is difficult to see how the ECOWAP Group will take on any additional functions, given that a considerable proportion of projects are directly financed by other regional institutions that have no links to ECOWAS, hence funding opportunities lie elsewhere.

A REGIONAL POLICY THAT REMAINS DEEPLY FRAGMENTED

While ECOWAS is encountering significant difficulties operationalizing ECOWAP, other regional institutions in the agriculture and food security sector are experiencing a new impetus. The region is divided into three poles – ECOWAP, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) – all of which are engaged in defining policy guidelines and in the mobilization and implementation of funding from technical and financial partners (TFP) in the field of agriculture, food security and nutrition.

In this fragmented institutional landscape, development partners tend to complicate matters further instead of supporting efforts to streamline assistance. Some rely on one institution or another depending on their needs and operational strategies, while others promote new intervention frameworks or other programming exercises within existing arrangements.

THREE COMPETING REGIONAL POLES

Since ECOWAS and WAEMU are both concerned with promoting regional integration, the agricultural and food programmes they adopt have the legitimacy of eight countries that belong to both. It is therefore crucial to have coordination of regulations, strategies and sectoral action plans in order to avoid these programmes stalling. Although CILSS is not pursuing regional integration, it has very similar governance bodies (a Council of Heads of State and Government, a Council of Ministers), a specific scope for action⁸ and a work programme of its own. Besides, CILSS was the first of the three institutions to produce a strategic framework for the fight against food insecurity in the region in 2000, before the Agricultural Policy of WAEMU (adopted in 2001) and ECOWAP (adopted by ECOWAS in 2005).

CILSS–ECOWAS: an unfinished roadmap

The key aspects of the relationship between CILSS and ECOWAS were endorsed in 2006 with the signature of an agreement that made CILSS the ‘technical arm’ of ECOWAS. This scenario, largely supported by CILSS partners, was adopted by the conference of Heads of State and Government, which called on CILSS to ‘undertake the necessary steps in the direction of ECOWAS with the goal of making CILSS an institution specialized in rural development, fight against desertification, natural resource management and climate change, at the disposal of all inter-African integration organizations, while preserving its identity, autonomy and specificity’.⁹

This formulation, coupled with the composition of CILSS (which has two members, Chad and Mauritania, that are not members of ECOWAS), largely explains the difficulties in this institutional rapprochement. Indeed, on the one hand, CILSS plays the role of ‘technical arm’ of ECOWAS when asked to, but preserves its capacity to act autonomously to serve its Member States that do not belong to ECOWAS. The 2020 CILSS strategic plan expresses great ambitions, since it is a question of the institution developing ‘a central role... not only in the conception of policies, but also in the implementation of food security and sustainable development at the regional level and

national plan...’, leading CILSS to become ‘the privileged support of development partners and States’.

Following this logic, the strategic plan identifies rivalry with other inter-governmental organizations as one of the ‘main challenges’ ahead, and calls on the institution ‘to restore, consolidate and defend its leadership’.¹⁰ These dispositions do not easily lend themselves to coordination.

Development partners largely perpetuate this situation. Even if they regularly remind the CILSS, through their leader, of the importance of a rapprochement with ECOWAS, the slowness of this process does not call into question their financial support. On the contrary – in 2015, the USAID representative (current leader of the TFPs in CILSS) recalled the precarious financial situation of CILSS, since 94 percent of its budget was covered by partners,¹¹ while at the same time announcing that USAID would move towards a five-year plan to facilitate the implementation of the CILSS work plan. In a recent interview, the executive secretary of CILSS highlighted that although it had encountered some difficulties a few years ago, the institution is ‘receiving new impetus, especially with the coming into play of the World Bank, ADB, IDB and traditional friends such as the EU, USAID, French Cooperation, Canada and FAO’s technical cooperation’.¹²

Several factors seem to converge to explain this situation. The internal reforms undertaken by CILSS, coupled with efforts to ensure the repayment of delayed contributions by several Member States, have certainly allowed the institution to become more attractive. However, it seems that certain cooperation agencies or development banks have more pragmatic considerations and rely on CILSS in order to avoid depending directly on ECOWAS or on the ECOWAP framework, thereby executing their funding with the least possible alignment and harmonization constraints. Many hold a double discourse, deploring the existing overlap between CILSS and other regional institutions and the lack of effectiveness that this situation represents, while at the same time committing more and more funding through CILSS.

WAEMU–ECOWAS: a discourse on convergence but little evidence of it in practice

Despite the creation of the WAEMU-ECOWAS coordination framework on agriculture – a relatively institutionalized mechanism – the recent adoption by WAEMU of the *Programme Communautaire Décennal de Transformation de l'Agriculture pour la Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle dans l'espace WAEMU* (PCD-TASAN) illustrates the difficulties that persist in terms of improved coordination. According to a preliminary report,¹³ the programme was designed on the basis of analysis of previous initiatives in the sector, including the NAIP. Its conclusion is clear: ‘the weaknesses of policies and strategies implemented [until now]... explain the weak performances registered in the field of agricultural development and food and nutrition security’. The PCD-TASAN hence proposes a ‘change in paradigm’, promoting a new concept of clustering family farms in order to improve their integration in the agricultural sectors.

This provisional report describes the programmes and their component projects in detail, as well as the activities and expected outcomes for each. Yet these programmes make almost no mention of the RAIP mobilization programmes adopted by ECOWAS, although to a large extent they cover the same domains. For certain projects, the approach being taken even contradicts that of ECOWAS.

This is the case with one of the key topics of the regional ECOWAS programme. After listing the different stocking initiatives foreseen or existing at the regional level, the document seeks to engage with the Regional Food Security Reserve by financing the PREPARE initiative, which is different to that of ECOWAS. The document notes that ‘due to the level of preparation and the relatively low cost of this project in comparison with the setting up of the regional reserve, the Commission will give priority to the PREPARE initiative which was the object of a feasibility study with a cost-benefit analysis’. To complicate matters further, it would seem that the PCD-TASAN was elaborated with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) within the framework of the Zero Hunger Challenge implemented by ECOWAS. Hence, it is with funding allocated to ECOWAS that FAO supports a project that runs counter to the Regional Food Security Reserve project. Yet the three institutions ECOWAS, WAEMU and CILSS are allies in the governance bodies of the same Regional Reserve.

THE MYRIAD COORDINATION FRAMEWORKS CONSTRAINS THEIR EFFECTIVENESS

As a result of the large number of regional institutions and the numerous global initiatives launched on agricultural development and food security issues, multi-actor networks and dialogue and coordination mechanisms have multiplied across the region.

A development partner group for each?

Many of the TFPs that lend their support to institutions and regional organizations such as WAEMU, CILSS or the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (WECARD) also gather in ‘TFP groups’, which allow common positions to be shared with Member States and with the steering bodies of these organizations.

Another example is the CILSS partner group based in Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, which meets several times a year to discuss key issues related to the implementation of programmes or CILSS policies. Under the auspices of the group leader (a position currently held by the USAID representative), this partner group makes it possible to agree common positions and coordinate interventions between Member States and CILSS steering bodies.

Although all coordination and alignment efforts are commendable in principle, it seems problematic that there is such little effective coordination and no overall supervision. This seems even more noticeable since certain institutions are supposed to act as ‘technical arms’ of ECOWAS for the implementation of ECOWAP. Furthermore, the fact that some of the most important regional donors such as the World Bank and the EC are not represented in the ECOWAP Group but are included in the CILSS partner group raises questions of coherence and legitimacy for these different coordination structures.

More generally, the multiplication of multi-actor platforms as a result of global initiatives or of initiatives promoted by donors since 2009, which were supposed to ensure inclusive dialogue and participation, calls into question whether there is a real will to address the much-criticized multi-layered coordination frameworks that exist in the region.

A plethora of resilience initiatives outside the ECOWAP framework

The issue of resilience illustrates the confusion and difficulty involved in coordinating regional initiatives. There are three 'poles' that currently support projects and programmes on resilience, only one of which is part of the ECOWAP framework. In fact, the champions of resilience initiatives often rely on the multi-sectoral aspect of the concept to distance themselves from the ECOWAP framework of agricultural investment.

The first of the three 'poles' is constituted by AGIR, which has sought to become the hub of all resilience-related initiatives by defining a common objective for the eradication of hunger in 20 years. At the regional level, AGIR members gather at the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA), moderated by the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This platform has been chosen as the coordination space to convene the largest possible number of actors, taking advantage of its regular, well-established meetings. The EC remains by far the most active partner in AGIR, alongside certain Member States. Apart from the EC, USAID is also an important member of the alliance, while also supporting other platforms such as the G5, which seek to reaffirm a certain leadership on questions of resilience, or the West African Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture, a rural hub initiative funded by USAID.

Three development banks (the World Bank, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB)), all with multi-country programmes promoting resilience in countries of the Sahel, constitute the second pole of resilience initiatives. All three rely on CILSS to implement their programmes, while safeguarding a certain level of autonomy from the institution and without any extensive coordination. While the World Bank shares information on its activities with members of AGIR and is represented in key meetings, the Bank does not seem to show a real will to coordinate with AGIR. Nevertheless, it finances a \$248m programme promoting resilience among pastoral communities in six Sahelian countries, as well as an irrigation programme. The World Bank is also a very important partner in social safety net programmes in numerous countries of the region. The AfDB and the IDB remain largely absent from AGIR, despite implementing major programmes in the Sahel. AfDB funding was approved in October 2014 for a total of CFA120m under the auspices of CILSS.¹⁴

A third pole, more centred on food security and social safety nets, could be called the 'Lomé pole'. It groups a series of activities that are not necessarily coordinated among them, but which draw from ECOWAS strategies and institutions. For example, an AECID programme and an AFD programme (PASANAO) have both developed calls for project proposals on the promotion of social safety nets in the region. These two projects fall within the Regional Support Programme for Social Safety Nets (PRAFNSS) adopted in 2013 and are hosted by the RAAF. Although the two development cooperation actors exchange information and increasingly coordinate their interventions, they have few links with the prioritisation process launched by AGIR, or with the World Bank and other development banks. Neither do they have links with a third project based in Lomé and managed by FAO: the Zero Hunger project, which draws from the strategy with the same name adopted in 2012 by ECOWAS with the key objective of eliminating hunger before 2025. This objective is in line with the ECOWAS strategic orientation note but differs from the goal set by AGIR of ending hunger by 2032.

Ongoing reflections about the opportunity to create a taskforce on social safety nets raise the question of which would be the most legitimate and effective space for dialogue and coordination – the RPCA, the CILSS group of TFPs, or the ECOWAP Group. In any case, it seems that for the time being, none of these structures have succeeded in addressing the multi-layered institutional complexity of these programmes and of the frameworks promoting resilience, or even of one of its pillars.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN DONORS DEVELOP THEIR OWN INTERVENTION FRAMEWORKS?

As the representative of one development partner noted, the timing of budgetary planning exercises is always a problem: donors' programming schedules are not aligned with ECOWAS planning exercises, nor those of other partners, despite the fact that they all need a framework for their interventions.

The process of setting up AGIR promoted by the EC and the formulation of the World Bank's Regional Sahel Pastoralism Support Project (PRAPS), described below, both illustrate these difficulties, although they are not the only examples.

Formulating 'national resilience priorities': an exercise that strongly resembles new programming

AGIR was portrayed in reference documents as an initiative devised by regional institutions, under the leadership of ECOWAS and WAEMU, and with the technical support of CILSS. Nonetheless, it is undeniable that the EC has played an essential role in its launch. This is clear if we consider the Commission's communication to the European Parliament and the Council in October 2012, *The EU approach to resilience*,¹⁵ which devoted a chapter to 'AGIR Sahel: the EU Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative' before the signature of the Ouagadougou Declaration in December that year.

In this document, the EC insisted on the need to build the initiative 'based on existing regional strategies and strengthening them'. An important phase in this process was the integration of AGIR in the Zero Hunger Initiative, adopted in 2012, by ECOWAS. This has avoided AGIR developing in a parallel process to ECOWAP and the NAIP at the national level. Nevertheless, this will not prevent the two initiatives from following different objectives, with AGIR seeking to eliminate hunger by 2032 while Zero Hunger sets this same goal for 2020. Furthermore, the geographic scope of AGIR goes beyond the region, since it includes Mauritania and Chad as well as the 15 Member States of ECOWAS.

For many observers, the EC's promotion of AGIR had the main objective of allowing it to re-engage in the agriculture and food security sector, from which it had been largely absent both at the regional and national levels, and take on a new central role in the coordination of activities. Other internal concerns are regularly highlighted, such as the need to better coordinate humanitarian aid and development interventions managed by the EC's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO) and DG Development and Cooperation (DEVCO) in the region. It was also a way for the EU to avoid relying directly on ECOWAP's political framework to implement its interventions, given that it was not altogether comfortable with some of the positions adopted – namely the stated objective of food sovereignty and the subsequent tariff protection.

Despite the EC's denials, the commitment of ECOWAS countries to formulate their national resilience priorities (NRPs) closely resembles a programming or planning exercise. In fact, it fits more into the timeframe of the programming of the 11th European Development Fund (EDF), the EC's main intervention instrument in the region, than into the upcoming revision of the NAIPs and RAIP, following the ECOWAP+10 process.

Since the AGIR timeframe is 20 years, the initiative has been segmented into five-year plans. The NRP formulation process has been defined by the alliance, with each country expected to follow a common methodology while at the same time adapting it to its own context. The proposed methodology involves appointing a multi-actor, multi-sectorial platform, responsible for steering the process of reviewing existing policies and programmes. The final result will be NRP plans, including the budgets to be mobilised by states with the support of development partners.

Of 17 Sahelian and West African countries, 16 are currently involved in formulating their NRP plan.¹⁶ The EC is the main donor behind the initiative, since 14 of the 15 ECOWAS Member States have integrated food and nutrition security in the focal sectors of their national indicative programme. Furthermore, a budgetary envelope has been dedicated to the regional indicative programme of the EDF. Although countries that have produced their NRP plan have based it on the NAIP arrangements and the content of their programme (in an attempt to fill gaps in the area of resilience), how these fit with future national agricultural investment programmes remains unclear.

The multiplication of intervention frameworks in the Sahel: a new layer for a multi-layered institutional structure?

A recent note by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)¹⁷ stressed that the high level of mobilization of the international community around the political, security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel had been preceded by the elaboration of 'Sahel strategies' by many actors, establishing direct links between security, resilience and development. In its note analysing the Sahel initiatives and strategies of 11 multilateral organizations operating in the region, the ECDPM suggests that 'even if the extent of the mobilisation should be welcomed... it raises the question of coordination to ensure a better implementation of its programmes', since each actor approaches the Sahel depending on its own needs, interests and perceptions.

Among these strategies, the World Bank's Sahel Initiative provides another illustration of the difficulty of aligning development partner programmes with those of regional bodies. By combining two dimensions (development and the fight against insecurity), the Sahel Initiative comprises five components. One of these is the Regional Sahel Pastoralism Support Project (PRAPS), which has a \$248m budget and aims to stimulate regional cooperation between Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Chad. By including two countries outside the ECOWAS zone, PRAPS does not make direct reference to the ECOWAS action plan for the development and transformation of livestock, which was adopted in 2010. It is the Nouakchott Declaration adopted on 29 October 2013 by six Heads of State and Government at the initiative of the World Bank that serves as a political framework for the elaboration of PRAPS, with the World Bank hoping that other donors will embrace it. The regional part of PRAPS is managed by CILSS, which is in charge of coordinating its implementation in the different countries.

Although beneficiary countries and the professional organizations of the sector have supported the formulation of PRAPS (recognizing that livestock and pastoralism have long been neglected by donors), this project does not fit well with regional orientations. The ECOWAS action plan makes a strong link between production and consumption areas, between coastal and Sahelian countries, supporting better integration of sectors, a stronger institutional environment and production and animal health frameworks across the region; but PRAPS limits its approach to Sahelian countries. In fact, ECOWAS has not been directly involved in the elaboration of the project, although it did finally send a letter to CILSS expressing its support for the initiative.

Despite the fact that PRAPS is presented as a resilience-building initiative, it has not been incorporated into AGIR as was initially foreseen; this is largely a result of the delay in formulating the NRP of AGIR, which was out of step with the formulation process initiated by the World Bank.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is essential for the first 10-year review process of ECOWAP to bring about a strong political commitment shared by all actors for a single common agricultural policy in West Africa. In order to achieve this, all regional actors (institutions and regional organizations, Member States, development partners, private sector and civil society) must work together to align and coordinate ongoing initiatives. Oxfam puts forward these specific recommendations.

ECOWAS, WAEMU, regional organizations involved in the sector (CILSS, WECARD, etc.) should:

- Make their governance bodies adopt a single common regional policy for the agriculture, food security and nutrition sector, which would allow the effective alignment of their objectives and programming exercises;
- Clarify and streamline the mandates and means of intervention of each institution or regional organization in order to allow coordination of their efforts and complementarity of their actions for the implementation of this common policy;
- Together with development partners, agree to strengthen and empower the regional institutional structure adopted by ECOWAS in 2010 so that it can play a full role in the funding and implementation of regional programmes;
- Set up a regional monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system to assess compliance with commitments to the regional agreement and to align all regional initiatives with the orientations and regional institutional structure defined. Such a mechanism must also allow ECOWAS to ensure that the different actors involved are accountable to populations;
- Respect financial commitments, particularly those adopted by ECOWAS in the past couple of years, to allow the proper functioning of the regional mechanism and the effective implementation of regional programmes, in order to also bring about the compliance of partners;
- Adopt a regional communication strategy that gives visibility to the regional agricultural policy and strengthens the engagement of actors around it.

The Member States of ECOWAS, WAEMU and CILSS should:

- Come to a common understanding in order to adopt a single regional policy for the agriculture, food security and nutrition sector and streamline the mandates and means (human, financial, intervention instruments, etc.) of the different institutions or regional organizations;
- Avoid creating or engaging in initiatives developed outside the framework of this common policy, but streamline existing initiatives and allow for their effective implementation by the corresponding regional institutions and organizations.

Development partners should:

- Support the adoption and implementation of a single regional policy for the agriculture, food security and nutrition sector by the regional institutions;
- Engage in high-level dialogue with ECOWAS and its Member States on the priority given to food and agriculture issues;
- Strengthen the institutional structure created by ECOWAS in a sustainable manner

through a long-lasting engagement in a common and concerted plan to strengthen financial and administrative management of the bodies that constitute this structure (RAAF and EBID in particular);

- Align with this adopted regional institutional arrangement by:
 - i) Systematically favouring the ex-ante signature of a global convention with ECOWAS for regional or multi-country projects or programmes in the agriculture, resilience or food security sector, by involving RAAF in its elaboration and delegating its implementation (in coordination with ECOWAS and RAAF) to the most appropriate regional institution;
 - ii) Funding the regional financial mechanism adopted as much as possible to transfer funds from their projects and even create funds in it from the start;
 - iii) Avoiding the promotion or creation of other programming or funding frameworks outside the existing institutional mechanisms (as was the case with AGIR or the Sahel Initiative).
- Invest in the coordination of interventions in a determined manner (and not only in the coordination of common positions) by:
 - i) Simplifying existing coordination frameworks by reducing their number or creating functional and institutionalized links with other existing groups (ECOWAP Group, CILSS Group, WAEMU Group, etc.);
 - ii) Creating thematic sub-groups that allow concrete work on common diagnostic and programming exercises, on the coordination of interventions, the harmonization of procedures, etc., in accordance with their repeated commitments in the international, regional and national arenas.

Regarding civil society organizations:

During the regional preparatory workshop of the International Conference 'ECOWAP+10 and 2025 perspectives' held in Lomé from 3–7 October 2015, civil society organizations (CSOs) represented by POSCAO (Plateforme des organisations de la société civile d'Afrique de l'Ouest)¹⁸ and Oxfam reviewed the commitments of the regional agreement signed in 2009 and made new recommendations for civil society. Those recommendations complement and strengthen the ones presented here for other stakeholders.

CSOs should:

- Exercise citizen scrutiny of the commitments endorsed by the signatory parties to the regional agreement;
- Ensure that development partners respect their commitment to align, harmonize and coordinate their interventions with the priorities and objectives of ECOWAP or any future common regional agricultural policy;
- Ensure that ECOWAS achieves concrete, measurable results through an adapted monitoring system, and respects its accountability obligations towards the population of West Africa;
- Document the incoherencies, overlaps and conflicts of competence in the implementation of the regional agricultural policy;
- Avoid any initiative, action or commitment that will strengthen the multiplicity of regional programmes and projects that are not coordinated or aligned with regional priorities.

ANNEX 1

From Paris to Busan: growing commitments on aid effectiveness

The Paris Declaration (2005)

In 2005, the signatories to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness committed themselves to implementing 5 key principles:

- Donor harmonization of policies and procedures;
- Donor alignment on development strategies defined at the national level;
- Mutual accountability;
- More attention given to the results of aid for populations, and to measuring results;
- Ownership of development policies.

Apart from compiling a list of intentions, the Paris Forum also devised a scorecard to make development actors accountable for the promises they have made.

The Accra Action Programme (2008)

The Accra Action Programme details the commitments of the Paris Declaration in a number of fields, particularly on the use of national systems: 'donors will work without delay to elaborate and share in a transparent manner their plans to honour their commitments within the framework of the Paris Declaration, concerning the use of national systems in all their development aid interventions; to provide their personnel with guidelines on how to use them; to ensure that the incentive measures instituted internally encourage their utilisation. They will finalise these plans as a matter of urgency'.¹⁹

The Busan Partnership Agreement (2011)

Finally, the High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Busan allowed donors to take stock of progress to date and adopt new commitments, broadening the subject to include the effectiveness of development cooperation. Another important step forward was that it engaged new development actors and not just traditional aid actors.

The Busan Partnership rested on four main principles:

- Ownership of development priorities by developing countries, recognizing that developing countries must conceive and pursue their own development;
- Orientation towards concrete results that will allow the eradication of poverty, the reduction of inequalities and to ensure that the necessary resources and capacity are available to advance on these fronts;
- Partnership development open to all;
- Mutual transparency and accountability.

Each stakeholder has finally transformed these common principles into concrete actions and on the basis of differentiated commitments. Thus donors who had supported the agreements in Paris and Accra renewed their commitment to fully implement them, while Southern partners adhered to new commitments voluntarily.

From programme to financial alignment: phases to be followed by development partners

	<i>Programme alignment</i>	<i>Institutional alignment</i>	<i>Financial alignment</i>
<i>Principles</i>	<p>This means aligning interventions with the priorities identified by countries or partners in the region.</p> <p>Programme alignment goes beyond project registration in the spirit or vision of the sectoral policy; it is a question of matching the logical framework of the project with the specific objectives of the investment programme it falls under. By adopting the same monitoring and evaluation (M&E) indicators as the national programme, it becomes possible to measure the project's contribution to global results.</p>	<p>This means transferring the steering, management, implementation and M&E functions of each project or programme to national or regional institutions. Donors abandon their parallel project units covering these tasks and instead align themselves with the country's own structures and procedures. These structures will have been strengthened and equipped with the necessary resources to exercise their functions beforehand.</p>	<p>This means using national (or regional) financial circuits. The predictability of the financial resources allocated by donors must allow the partner country to anticipate payment deadlines, and ultimately foresee mobilization of the resources that will be necessary to pursue interventions in the absence of external financial support.</p>

<i>Rules and procedures</i>	<p>It particularly implies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a detailed and regularly updated inventory of ongoing interventions that allows gaps in areas or funding to be identified (geographic, thematic); - diagnostic and identification missions (shared or joint); - common intervention programming; - common mid-term or final review of interventions; - common identification of capacity-building needs, particularly in steering and M&E, and definition of a common and global capacity-building plan (beyond immediate needs for the implementation of a given programme). 	<p>It particularly implies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the precise identification and common analysis of rules and technical and administrative procedures of the country or regional entity: tools and procedures for control and management, procurement rules, etc. - definition of common standards that are acceptable by both parties; - progressive use of new rules and procedures for mutual learning, implying that a specific time must be reserved for coordination and the resolution of problems (which is vital in these types of programmes on the effectiveness of payments and implementation) 	<p>It implies the same points as for institutional alignment, but this time on budgetary and financial aspects. This alignment requires the creation of a mid-term expenditure framework that allows the provision of M&E of financial flows, whether of budgetary origin or from the TFP.</p> <p>This alignment can be progressive, by sector (allowing earmarking of resources) or global. Furthermore, it can also (from a mutual learning perspective that could be transitional) rely on external banking actors to avoid duplication of funding..</p>
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NOTES

- 1 This is the case with AGIR, for example, which has invested in the RPCA as its main coordination space; with the G8 initiative 'New Alliance for Agriculture and Food Security and Nutrition', and the multi-actor platforms promoted by the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement or other recent initiatives for the Sahel, which multiply their own coordination and programming frameworks.
- 2 CEDERO/ECOWAS 'Pacte régional de partenariat pour la mise en œuvre de l'ECOWAP/PDDAA', Adopté lors de la Conférence internationale sur le financement de la politique agricole régionale de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, Abuja (Nigeria), 12 novembre 2009 <http://agric.comm.ecowas.int/IMG/pdf/Pacte-fr.pdf> (accessed 14 October 2015).
- 3 <http://cidcom.cgeci.org/civ/fr/1/p/767/pdf.do>
- 4 <http://cidcom.cgeci.org/civ/fr/1/p/781/pdf.do>
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Working document, Spanish Cooperation 'Les processus d'intégration régionale de la ECOWAS et la coopération internationale', June 2014 (p. 32).
- 7 Seven funding agreements signed between European Commission, ECOWAS, CILSS, AECID and AFD
- 8 With the integration in 2012 of Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Guinea and Togo, CILSS has 13 members and offers its services to all ECOWAS countries, as well as to Mauritania and Chad (a total of 17 countries).
- 9 CILSS (2014) 'Le rapprochement institutionnel entre le CILSS et la CEDEAO en marche ! 19 July, <http://www.cilss.bf/spip.php?article444> (accessed 14 October 2015).
- 10 CILSS 'Plan Stratégique du CILSS à l'horizon 2020, http://www.agrhymet.ne/portailCC/images/pdf/CILSS_Plan%20Strat%C3%A9gique_Projet_Rapport%20final_version%20synth%C3%A9tique_v1.pdf (accessed 14 October 2015).

- 11 CILSS Newsletter No. 22, '17ème Conférence des Chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement, May-June 2015, http://www.cilss.bf/IMG/pdf/Newsletter_CILSS_mai-juin_2015.pdf (accessed 14 October 2015).
- 12 Interview at OUEST TV in April 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jg24Vknug2l> (accessed 14 October 2015).
- 13 Programme communautaire écnennal de transformation de l'agriculture pour la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle dans l'espace UEMOA (PCDTASAN) rapport provisoire' Working document – 20th November 2014 version.
- 14 CILSS Newsletter 22, May-June 2015.
- 15 European Commission, 'Communication de la Commission au Parlement Européen et au Conseil : L'approche de L'ue sur la Résilience: Tirer les Leçons des Crises de Sécurité Alimentaire', 3 October 2012. http://www.gcca.eu/sites/default/files/catherine.paul/food_security_lessons_from_crises_eu_resilience_approach_com2012586_fr.pdf (accessed 14 October 2015).
- 16 According to the RPCA website. <http://www.oecd.org/fr/sites/rpca/agir/NRP-agir.htm#nrp> (accessed 14 October 2015).
- 17 D Helly, L-A Thérroux-Bénoni, G Galeazzi, I Maïga, F Ouédraogo (2015) 'Stratégie Sahel: l'impératif de la coordination', ECDPM, Institut d'études de sécurité : Note d'analyse 76, March.
- 18 POSCAO was represented by its members Enda CACID (Senegal), PASCIB (Benin), NANTS (Nigeria) and Afrique performance.
- 19 See the Accra Action Programme. <http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/AccraAgendaAction-FINAL-French.pdf> (accessed 14 October 2015).

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