



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**WEST AFRICA**

## FACT SHEET

### Regional Agriculture Partner: The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)/Communauté Economique Des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO)



#### ECOWAS Member Countries:

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.



ECOWAS member countries



#### Description:

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria was founded in 1975 with fifteen West African member states. Its mission is to promote economic integration in "all fields of economic activity, particularly industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions, social and cultural matters."

Broadly, ECOWAS undertakes an expansive range of work, including introducing regionally adopted ECOWAS customs forms to streamline the intra-regional travel process, and constructing an 11,000km West African highway network to better link landlocked countries to regional trade and market networks. USAID/West Africa partners with ECOWAS to harmonize regional policies that facilitate trade and promote food security throughout the region.

#### ECOWAP/RAIP:

The ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) is implemented through the Regional Agricultural Investment Plan (RAIP), which is the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) agricultural plan for West Africa. Initiated through ECOWAS and supported by USAID/West Africa, ECOWAP objectives are to encourage competitiveness of farmers in intra-regional and international markets, further food security in the region, and ensure decent incomes for workers in the agricultural sector. ECOWAP has three main objectives:

- Promote strategic products for food security & food sovereignty
- Promote an enabling environment for regional agricultural development
- Reduce food insecurity and promote sustainable access to food

The ECOWAP vision is that of "a modern and sustainable agriculture, based on effectiveness and efficiency of family farms and the promotion of agricultural enterprises through the involvement of the private sector."



### USAID-Supported Activities in Implementing ECOWAP:

Supporting ECOWAS efforts through the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS, French acronym), USAID provides funding for the implementation of the regional ECOWAP plan. USAID support for the implementation of ECOWAP includes:

- Building the capacity of the ECOWAS Regional Agency for Food and Agriculture (RAAF).
- Incorporating nutrition, risk management, climate change and resilience into the ECOWAP/RAIP.
- Integrating emerging priorities in the National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIP) of each member state.
- Advocating for policies encouraging agricultural intensification, market regulation and social safety nets.
- Supporting new initiatives focused on increasing agricultural productivity and resilience, such as the strategy for sustainable rice production and the “Zero Hunger Initiative.”
- Promoting Food Across Borders by providing support to establish conditions in the economic and regulatory environment that will substantially and sustainably increase intra-regional trade across West Africa.

