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UEMOA COTTON COMPETITIVENESS ACTIVITY

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cotton is a key livelihood source for many farmers in West Africa, with the region representing one of the most important sources of cotton exports in the world. In the “C-4” countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali), cotton provides 3 percent to 10 percent of the national gross domestic product. Grown in rotation with cereals and legumes, cotton represents the primary source of income for many farmers in a region characterized by food insecurity. The West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) Cotton Competitiveness (UCC) Activity is a new partnership that aims to address these challenges. The first grant from USAID to UEMOA, this support will provide much-needed resources to enable UEMOA to implement its “Cotton Agenda” in the region. Through this new partnership, UEMOA will be better equipped to lead the development of a more productive and competitive cotton sector in West Africa by establishing a regional stakeholder platform that will develop priorities for West African cotton, promote strategic cotton sector partnerships, and identify improved strategies for food security. Furthermore, the UCC grant will aid UEMOA to establish policies and practices in the cotton sector that promote women’s participation in, and benefits from, cotton sector development.

SOME PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- Organize workshops on soil fertility and improved technologies for improving input use for better yields of cotton and rotational crops.

- Develop regional cotton policy priorities that will serve to ensure improved competitiveness of West African cotton through improved yields and quality.
- Convene technical experts and policy-makers to outline priorities in certification, branding and quality control that will bolster the competitiveness of West African cotton on the market.
- Lead dialogues among regional and national partners to outline strategies needed to address food security in cotton-growing communities.
- Ensure cotton sector policy discussions emphasize women’s empowerment and participation in the sector.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- A regional platform will be established for stakeholders to share best practices, technologies and innovations to increase productivity;
- Partnerships in the cotton sector will be institutionalized;
- Regional policies and practices will promote women’s participation in the cotton sector.

UCC ACTIVITY’S ROLE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL FEED THE FUTURE INITIATIVE

Feed the Future is focused on foundational improvements to food economies that will support farmers in the long term. In line with these aims, the UCC Activity will convene key decision-makers and technical experts to dialogue on food security challenges in cotton-growing areas and outline strategic actions that will help farmers to achieve greater productivity in rotational crops including cereals and legumes.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

GOAL

Support UEMOA’s strategy to build a more competitive and productive cotton sector in West Africa.

LIFE OF PROGRAM

2016 – 2020

TOTAL USAID FUNDING

U.S. \$1.2 million

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, with results impacting all cotton-growing member states of UEMOA and ECOWAS.



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