



ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS



WASP/PSAO

Contribution to the Implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Seed Regulation



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS regulation is to implement harmonized rules governing quality control, certification and marketing of plant seeds and seedlings in the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS region to expand seed trade across borders. However, this objective had not been effectively accomplished due to the delay in the establishment of a coordinating body, namely the West Africa Seed Committee as stipulated in the Regulation since its adoption by CILSS in 2006, ECOWAS in 2008 and UEMOA in 2009. As a result, Member States, sometimes with the support of Development Programs and Donor Agencies had developed regulations that are mostly in disharmony with Regional Regulation. This created enormous differences among Member States in the approach of implementing the regulation, which resulted in vast differences in the contents of the national seed regulations with improper implementation procedures. Realizing this, the ECOWAS Commission confided to CORAF/WECARD in 2013, the establishment of the WASC/COASem 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.

Awareness-raising and advocacy effort by the WASP Policy Task Force helped sensitize National Competent Authorities (NCAs) of the target Member States, on the Regional Harmonized Seed Regulations. Furthermore, training and coaching missions with consultative roadmaps developed for each Member State on the steps to carry out seed policy reforms facilitated the implementation of the regulation.

Through the intervention of WASP and partners, the countries have been assisted to implement the Regulation using a more harmonized approach, which has resulted in a remarkable increase in implementation from 41% to 77% between 2013 and 2015; it is worth to note that the yearly supply of certified seeds of the major cereals and legumes also increased from 182,000 MT to 372,000 MT (103%) within the same period. Using the regulation, CORAF/WECARD coordinated a regional operation to mobilized seeds to support Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea which were affected by the Ebola epidemic. The official launching of the Regional Committee (WASC/COASem-CRSU) by the CORAF/WECARD WASP and the First Statutory meeting of the WASC/COASem-CRSU thereafter, in Abidjan on 3rd and 4th August 2015 marked a significant milestone of the WASP towards boosting the implementation of the ECOWAS Regulation using a more harmonized approach. This is expected to further open the seed market, attract more investment and accelerate the production, marketing and use of quality seeds to further improve agricultural productivity in the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS region.

Despite the progress made, challenges still exist in cross-border seed trade, which came to bear during the recent operation to mobilize seeds from the regional to support countries which were affected by the Ebola epidemic. Thus more work still remain to be done, particularly in the cross-border seed trade.

ACRONYMS

AGRA	Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa
AFSTA	African Seed Trade Association
AfricaRice	Africa Rice Centre
ASIWA	Alliance for Seed Industry in West Africa
AVRDC	World Vegetable Center
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program
CILSS	Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse
CORAF/WECARD	West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development
CORAF	Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricoles
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECOWAP	ECOWAS Agricultural Policy
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
INSAH	Institut du Sahel
ISU	Iowa State University
NARIs	National Agricultural Research Institutes
NARS	National agricultural research systems
NASC	National Agricultural Seeds Council, Nigeria
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSC	National Seed Committees
NSS	National Seed Service
NSTAs	National Seed Trade Associations
ROPPA	Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et de Producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
UEMOA	Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WECARD	West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development
WA	West Africa
WAAPP	West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program
WASA	West Africa Seed Alliance
WASP	West Africa Seed Program

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Evolution of the Seed System in Africa

The evolution of the seed industry in Africa was stimulated by changes in research and development approaches. Three major phases of this evolution could be noted: (i) Pre-independence to 1980s, when the provision of seeds was state-managed and crop varieties mainly came from the national research institutions and the Consultative Group for International Agricultural (CGIAR) centres (ii) 1980 to 1990s, when the seed sector was liberalized and privatized; (iii) 1990 to present, with increased role of the private sector in both the formal and informal seed sector, including the involvement of multi-national companies, farmer groups and cooperatives. Support to seed industry development in terms of high level capacity development and infrastructure was donor supported, particularly from the governments of USA, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, France, etc. (Beye and Wopereis, 2014).

After institutionalization of the structural adjustment program in the late 1980s, the public sector role in the seed sector diminished gradually as the private sector role including small and medium enterprises, progressively grew in the production and marketing of certified seeds. Plant breeding to develop and release new crop varieties was and is still dominated by public research institutions, mainly the National Agricultural Research Institutions (NARIs) backed by the CGIAR principally AfricaRice, IITA, ICRISAT and the World Vegetable Center (AVRDC). Government facilities (for conditioning, drying and storage), inherited before the structural adjustment program, were offered for services to the private sector. In the course of time, the multi-national companies, including Pioneer Hi-Bred and Monsanto, companies in South Africa, etc., increasingly showed interest, which resulted in the establishment of their bases in countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria, while the local companies and enterprises continue to experience significant growth.

1.2. History of Seed Policy Reforms in West Africa

The processes of developing a harmonized regional seed policy in the Sub-Saharan Africa started at Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, in November 1998, with the support of FAO. Consequently, the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions as well as the CILSS Executive Secretariat have been involved in a process of reflection and concerted sub-regional exchange, to harmonize provisions of the seed regulation. The various workshops that had taken place for that purpose, have resulted in the formulation of seed regulations harmonizing the rules governing Quality Control, Certification and marketing of Plant Seeds and Seedlings in the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS zone, adopted by the organizations' authorities, according to their own procedures (2008 for ECOWAS, and 2009 for UEMOA, preceded in 2006 by the Framework Convention on Plant Seeds and Regional Consultative Framework for CILSS). The harmonized regulations focus on three thrusts:

- Plant Variety Registration in the national versus regional catalogues;
- Seed Quality Control and Certification, including Accreditation;
- Seed Import/Export, including Quarantine.

1.3. Objectives of the Regulation

These objectives include: (i) the local production of quality seeds is facilitated, (ii) the seed marketing within the sub-region is facilitated, (iii) the farmers' timely access to quality seeds is increased, (iv) a favorable policy environment for the emergence of a strong private sector is created, (v) the farmers' choice of new plant varieties is widened, and (vi) the public-private partnership in the delivery of quality seeds is strengthened.

2. EFFORTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGULATION

The ECOWAS Commission found it necessary to put in place systems to support the implementation of the seed regulation by its Member States, through regional programs and projects. The reform was characterized by the following features:

- Clear definition of the roles of stakeholders including research, private seed enterprises and national technical services;
- Partnerships to support regional and national seed programs/projects, forged with development partners, including USAID, World Bank, FAO, EU, JICA, AGRA, Syngenta Foundation, etc.,
- Priority commodities and interventions to accelerate socio-economic growth and impact on food security and poverty reduction, provided, through evidence-based options and data;
- Organization of the improved seed system, in responding to the growing needs for quality seeds, maintained through projects and programs implemented at the regional and national levels;
- Stakeholders in the seed sector were sensitized, which led to the appreciation of the importance of quality seed in improving agricultural productivity and food security, as well as increased income. The understanding of these stimulated governments and the private sector to adopt the harmonized seed regulation;
- The seed policy reforms created initial favorable conditions necessary to ensure the regular supply of certified seeds in quantity and in quality to farmers who constitute 60-70% of the population in the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS region.

3. INITIAL CHALLENGES AND REMEDIAL MEASURES

These objectives had not been effectively accomplished due to, inter alia, a lack of the statutory coordinating body, the West Africa Seed Committee (WASC/COASem) as stipulated in the ECOWAS Executive Regulation 01/06/12.

As a result, Member States, sometimes with the support of Development Programs and Donor Agencies had developed regulations that are mostly in disharmony with Regional Seed Regulation. Due to lack of guidance, stakeholders found it difficult to understand and apply the Regulation. This resulted in vast differences in the contents of the national seed regulations with improper implementation procedures.

Realizing this, the ECOWAS Commission has negotiated and obtained from the USAID Mission in West Africa, the financing of a seed program for West Africa (West Africa Seed Program, WASP), to support the implementation of the Community seed regulations, coordinated by CORAF/WECARD. The program aims at increasing the availability of seeds from a current rate of 12% to 25% at the end of the five year project (2012-2017). The activities are fully implemented in seven countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal), and cover all 15 Member States of ECOWAS (plus the two CILSS members which do not belong to ECOWAS, i.e. Mauritania and Chad) in the implementation of the Community Seed Regulation.

In the context of the implementation of WASP, with regards to the skills displayed in the program, the ECOWAS Commission decided, through the memorandum No. ECWREL/010/CAER/E43/13/fne, dated March 27 2013, to entrust the CORAF/ WECARD with the coordination of the implementation of the National Seed Committees (NSC) in the 17 ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS countries and the management of the Executive Secretariat of the West Africa Seed Committee (WASC/COASem), for a period of five (05) years.

4. CORAF/WECARD's FACILITATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SEED REGULATION

In the implementation of the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) within the framework of CAADP, ECOWAS designated also CORAF/WECARD, through a MoU signed in 2005, as its Technical Arm for the agricultural research and development agenda. In a similar vein, the UEMOA Commission, CEMAC and CILSS signed MoU with CORAF/WECARD in 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively. Within this context, CORAF/WECARD as a Sub-Regional Organization under the continental umbrella of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) is

implementing the CAADP Pillar IV (Improving Agriculture Research, Technology Dissemination and Adoption) with the objective, Broad-based agricultural productivity and markets sustainably improved for target groups in West and Central Africa. Recognizing the complexity and the multi- sector nature of the seed industry, CORAF/WECARD embarked in the use of a consultative and inclusive approach within the context of Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D), which is central to the organization's strategic plan 2007-2018.

4.1. Organization of the Seed System in West Africa

The seed system is structured to respond to the ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS Agricultural Policies and in this regard the CAADP, in improving agricultural productivity with a specific objective, availability and use of quality seeds improved. To achieve this objective, WASP is being implemented through four axes as follows: (i) an Alliance for Seed Industry in West Africa (ASIWA) established and effectively coordinated and sustained, (ii) ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS Seed Regulations effectively implemented to facilitate the seed trade amongst the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS region, (iii) Production and supply of breeder seeds of climate-smart new genetic material increased, and (iv) Supply of foundation/certified seeds by the private sector increased.

Table 1: Mobilization of Global Partnership for Seed Industry Development

1. Alliance for a Seed Industry in West Africa(ASIWA)		
RegionalPartners	National Partners	International Partners
ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, Hub Rural, CORAF/WECARD, FARA, AGRA, Universities, Private Sector, Seed Trade Associations (AFSTA), Farmers' Based Organizations (FBOs), ROPPA, RECAO, etc.)	National Seed Systems: (NARS, Ministries of Agriculture, Quality Control and Certification Services, Universities, etc.) Private Sector, , NSTAs(AFSTA), FBOs (ROPPA, RECAO)	Private Sector, Seed Financial Partners (including USAID, DFAT, DFID, World Bank, Syngenta Foundation, Monsanto, etc.) CGIAR (ICRISAT, IITA, AfricaRice, World Vegetable Center) Other International Organizations and Universities (FAO, ISTA, ISU)
2. Regional Seed Regulations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, NARS, NSTAs/AFSTA, ROPPA,FAO, SeedSMEs ▪ ISU, Quality Control & Certification Agencies, ISTA, SyngentaFoundation 		
3. Breeder Seed Supply		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NARIs, CGIAR (IITA, AfricaRice, ICRISAT), and SeedCompanies& Initiatives 		
1. Private Sector and Agri-business Development		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NSTAs/AFSTA, ▪ PrivateSector, NSS, ▪ Quality Control and Certification, ▪ Laboratories, ▪ ROPPA, RECAO, ▪ AGRA 		

4.2. CORAF/WECARD-WASP Approach in the Implementation of the Seed Regulation

To effectively implement the regulation, CORAF/WECARD constituted a Seed Policy Task Force, led by CILSS. At the beginning of each year, CILSS writes to all the Ministers of Agriculture in the 17 Member States, soliciting their needs for the implementation of the regulation with respect to the elements in Table 2. Based on responses, concept notes and agenda are developed and shared with the countries. The Task Force then develops a regional calendar to systematically carry out missions to the countries to train and coach them in the correct application of the provisions in the regulation. The Task Force has developed the necessary documents and tools that are used for training and coaching in guiding the correct implementation of the regulation (Table 3).

Table 2: Measures to be undertaken by Member States in Implementing the Seed Regulation

1. Publication of the Regulation in national official Gazette	3. Adaptation of Procedures Manuals for 3.1. Variety release and registration 3.2. Seed Quality control and Certification 3.3. Phytosanitary Certification
2. Review of national seed regulatory frameworks: 1.1. Decree instituting national catalogue of species and plant varieties; 1.2. Decree creating the National Seed Committee; 1.3. Decree on seed technical regulation relating to production, quality control and certification; 1.4. Decree creating a seed sector support funds	4. Capacity Strengthening in: 4.1. Human resources (Variety Release, Seed Quality Control & Certification, and Phytosanitary Certification) 4.2. Material resources (Lab equipment, infrastructures, etc.) 4.3. Financial resources (to operate)

Table 3: List of documents and tools for the Implementation of the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS Regulation

SN	Title of Document	French	English
1	ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS Regulation	Y	Y
2	Executive Regulation For Variety Release	Y	Y
3	Executive Regulation for Quality Control and Certification	Y	Y
4	Executive regulation for import and export	N	N
5	Procedures manual for variety release	Y	Y
6	Procedures manual for seed quality control and certification including accreditation	Y	Y
7	Procedures manual for import and export	N	Y
8	Executive regulation on the organization of the West Africa Seed Committee	Y	Y
9	Software which facilitates the management of catalogue data	Y	Y



Training on Seed Quality Control & Certification,
in Guinea Bissau



IT Data Management training for three (03) Catalogue
Managers from Benin, in Bamako

4.3. Harmonization of the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS Harmonized Seed Regulations

In advancing the harmonization process, a meeting of Consortium of Partners of the WASP held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on 13th and 14th December, 2013, recommended the organization of a consultative process, which will lead to the use of a common approach in implementing a common seed regulation for the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS region. With this background, two working sessions were organized at the Head Office of the UEMOA Commission, on 31st January and 27th November, 2014, among UEMOA, CILSS and ECOWAS (represented by CORAF/WECARD). These working sessions resulted in an agreed recommendation and a roadmap to establish one unique Regional Seed Committee ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS (WASC/COASem & CRSU), in charge of assisting the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions and the Executive Secretariat of CILSS in the implementation of the Harmonized Regional Seed Regulation.

During 2013, CORAF/WECARD carried out a scoping study in the region to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and best practices available in the sub-region for the Establishment of the WASC/COASem and strengthening the National Seed Committees (NSCs) in the implementation of the regulations. The outcomes of the study were used to elaborate an Action Plan for the Establishment and the implementation of the Common Regional Seed Committee ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS (WASC/COASem & CRSU). The Action Plan was validated in Lome, Togo, in May, 2014, by the regional seed system stakeholders, including the ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS, and launched in Abidjan, on August 3 and 4, 2015, with the full participation of these regional stakeholders. These include the Chairpersons/Representative of the NSCs, and the Heads of the Seed Quality Control & Certification and Regulatory Agencies, nominated by the respective Ministers in charge of Agriculture from the Member States, Hub-Rural, AFSTA, ROPPA, AfricaRice, IITA, ICRISAT, CORAF/WECARD, etc.

The Regional Seed Committee ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS (WASC/COASem & CRSU) held its first statutory meeting and adopted its rules of procedure, in Abidjan, on August 4, 2015.

4.4. Outcomes of Interventions

The baseline for implementation of the seed policy reforms in the 17 States of the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS, as in 2012 formed the basis for analysis in terms of progress. The progress noted in seed policy reforms has been made possible by the following two catalytic factors, which created momentum for actors in the various countries:

- Awareness-raising and advocacy effort by the WASP Policy Task Force, through correspondence, having facilitated National Competent Authorities (NCAs) of different targeted Member States, on the Regional Harmonized Seed Regulations;

- Explanation and clarification missions and sharing the roadmap on steps to be followed to conduct policy reforms of the Regional Harmonized Seed Regulations. Ultimately, these actions and missions have elicited from NCAs of targeted Member States, requests for the Task Force to assist in the conduct of seed policy reforms enacted by the Regional Harmonized Seed Regulations.

The lessons learnt are that success happens on clear methodological approaches. When NCAs are aware of the provisions of the Regional Harmonized Seed Regulations, understand its purpose and implementation, they will be willing to be supported in the conduct of policy reforms. The state of policy implementation in ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS region due to the interventions of the WASP as at September 2015 is presented in Table 4 and Figures 1a and 1b.

Through the intervention of WASP and partners, the countries have been assisted to implement the Regulation using a more harmonized approach, which has resulted in a remarkable increase in implementation from 41% to 77% between 2013 and 2015 (Fig. 1a). 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 (100%; Fig 1b). These are followed by Nigeria and Togo with 11 elements (92%) being addressed, Cote d'Ivoire and Mali with 10 (83%), and then 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%).

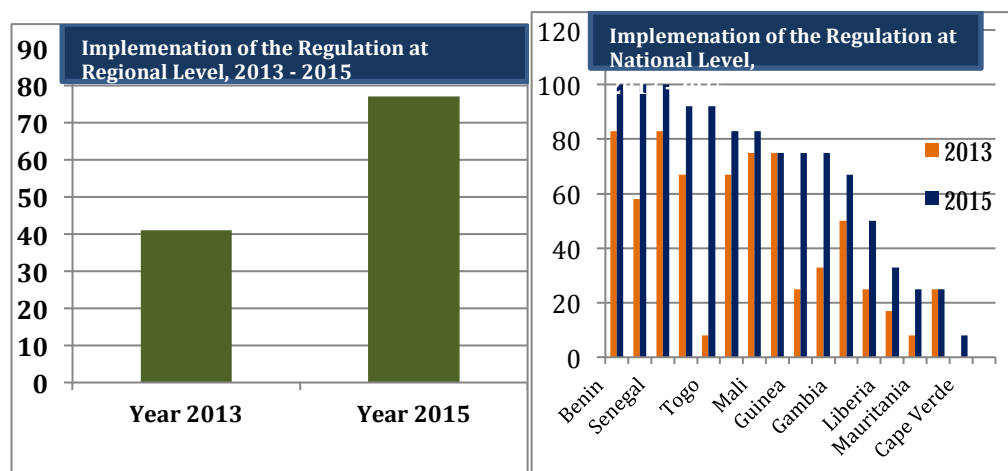


Fig 1a: Implementation of the Seed Regulation at regional Level Fig 1b: Implementation of the Seed Regulation at National Level

4.5. The Establishment of the Regional Seed Committee

The Purpose of WASC/COASem-CRSU: The mission of the Regional Seed Committee (WASC/COASem-CRSU) is "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.

- **Launching the WASC/COASem-CRSU:** The official launching of the Regional Committee (WASC/COASem-CRSU) and its First Statutory meeting held in Abidjan on 3rd and 4th August 2015 therefore marked a significant milestone to boost the implementation of the Regulation. This is expected to further open the seed market, attract more investment and to accelerate the production, marketing and use of quality seeds to improve agricultural productivity in the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS region.

Immediate outcomes of the events

- The Regional Seed Committee (WASC/COASem-CRSU) established to carry out its mission;
- Cooperation among the Regional Policy Institutions (ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS) reinforced and an agreement to implement a common seed regulation in 17 Member States (15 in West Africa + Mauritania and Chad) concluded;

- The high interests expressed by international, regional and national partners (totaling 120) in the launching of the Regional Seed Committee (WASC/COASem-CRSU) signified partners' desire to see the regional seed industry developed and the Regulation implemented to open up the regional seed market.
- The reaffirmation of National, Regional and International Technical Partners (including Ministries of Agriculture, NARIs, Seed Quality Control and Certification Systems, as well as AfricaRice, IITA, ICRISAT, World Vegetable, AFSTA, ROPPA, Monsanto, GNIS-France, TROPICASEM, IFDC, FAO, UPOV, CTA, AGRA, AfricaSeeds, etc.) to support the regional agricultural policies (CAADP+10, ECOWAP+10 and the PAU), and the Seed Regulation in particular, provides the motivation for continued advancement of the implementation of the Seed Regulation to increase the use of seeds of new genetic materials in the advent of climate change and promote the regional seed trade.
- The pledge for continued support by Financial and Technical Partners (including USAID, the World Bank, Africa Development Bank) to the Agricultural Policies, including the Regional Seed Regulation, provides hope for further support of these partners in the agricultural development agenda in West Africa.



A cross-section of participants at the COASem-CRSU Launching



Directors of Agriculture of the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions



AfDB, USAID/WA and the World Bank were at the Launching

Table 4: Synoptic table for the Implementation of the Harmonized Regional Seed Regulation, September, 2015

Additional Measures to be undertaken by Member States (MS) for the implementation	Targeted Countries													%				
	Benin	Burkina Faso	Capo-Verde	Côte d'Ivoire	Gambia (The)	Ghana	Guinea	Guinea Bissau	Liberia	Mali	Mauritania	Niger	Nigeria		Senegal	Serra Leone	Tchad	Togo
• Publication in MS Official Gazette (2.1)	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	71
• Review of Seed Regulatory Frameworks (2.2):																		
✓ National Seed Law	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	82
✓ Decree instituting a National Catalogue	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	76
✓ Decree establishing a National Seed Committee (NSC)	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	88
✓ Decree creating Seed Sector Support Fund (SSSF)	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	59
✓ Decree on Enabling Technical Regulations (ETRs)	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	76
• Adaptation of Procedures Manuals for (2.3):																		
✓ Variety Release	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	65
✓ Seed Quality Control and Certification	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	47
✓ Phytosanitary Certification	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	35
• Capacity Strengthening on (2.4):																		
✓ Human Resources ¹	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	82
✓ Material Resources ²	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	71
✓ Financial Resources ³	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	76
❖ State in country (%)	100	100	0	92	100	83	83	8	58	83	33%	83	100	100	67	17	100	

¹Through benefiting in at least one training on: (i) Variety Release, (ii) Seed Quality Control & Certification or (iii) Phytosanitary Certification

² Infrastructure and equipment investments

³ WAAPP Funds

5. IMPACT OF SEED POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: SEED USE AND OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED

Between 2009 and 2012, potential demand for seed in seven countries (Ghana, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Niger, Mali and Gambia) for six crops (maize, rice, sorghum, cowpea, soybean and groundnut) increased from 565,000 to 762,676 tons (35%), whilst actual seed supply during the period increased from 35,000 to 99,452 tons (184%; Figure 3; WASA, 2010 and CORAF/WECARD, 2013). Thus the rate of increase in seed supply outstripped the rate of increase in seed demand. This was indeed a positive sign indicating progressive increases in seed supply as the implementation of the seed regulation progressed. It also demonstrated that seed was being used more intensively per hectare compared to its use as a result of expansion of farm lands, a clear indication of improvement in crop productivity. In 2013, the potential demand for seed in 13 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo) was estimated at 1,335,437 (with a value of US\$ 1,713,265,538) whereas actual seed supply stood at 182,035 tons (13.6%) at a value of 214,593,885 (12.5%; Table 5).

Ahead of the launching the Alliance for Seed Industry in West Africa (ASIWA) in Abidjan, on August, 2015, the WASP since its inception in 2012, had supported strengthening the capacities of 874 Seed SMEs in techniques of seed production and in agri-business management, marketing, access to credit, etc. The CORAF/WECARD-WASP support to the establishment of the African Seed Trade Association-West Africa (AFSTA-WA) and in strengthening the organizational capacity of the NSTAs and ROPPA has helped the private sector to expand the regional seed market. An electronic seed market platform www.waxis.net created for the ASIWA and a common e-mail address coraf-seed@coraf.org, linking seed sector stakeholders are increasing exchanges of information and experiences and consequently enhancing seed marketing. In effect, "the Seed Sector Alliance spearheaded by the WASP, has taken off in the sub region, with private sector orientation as a convening point for seed sector stakeholders, a communication hub and market facilitation and a seed industry development platform".

In 2015, the supply of certified seeds had increased to 314,000 tons (23.6% of regional need), which also represented 103% increase over the 2013 supply. The value of the 2015 supply stood at US\$ 761,000,000 (44.4% of the potential value; Table 6). These signified a rapid jump in the regional seed sector development, indicating that farmers are increasingly getting access to more quality certified seeds at a fast rate. Furthermore, job creation in the private seed sector is growing fast and seed businesses are increasingly flourishing.

The implementation of the seed regulation facilitated the mobilization of seeds from 10 West African Member States to support Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea for the Post-Ebola Agricultural Rehabilitation Programs, which has so far benefited 240,113 farm families (Table 7). The support is expected to reach 1 million farm families next year through the multiplication of foundation seed supplied into certified seeds. The role of WASP and its partners, in the alliance creation, the implementation of the seed regulation, the support to breeder seed production programs, and in strengthening the private sector, has contributed significantly to these achievements.

Table 5: Potential and Actual Seed Supply in Quantity and Value, 2013

Seed Needs/ Supply	Quantity (tons)	Seed Value (US\$)
Potential Seed Need	1,335,437	1,713,265,538
Actual Seed Supply, 2013	182,035	214,593,885
Percentage exploited, 2013	13.6%	12.5%

Table 6: Potential and Actual Seed Supply in Quantity and Value, 2015

Seed Needs/ Supply	Quantity (tons)	Seed Value (US\$)
Potential Seed Need, 2013	1,335,437	1,713,265,538
Actual Seed Supply, 2015	314,500	761,000,000
Percentage exploited, 2015	23.6%	44.4%

Table 7: Beneficiaries of Certified Seeds Supplied to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea as at August 2015

Country	Beneficiaries			
	Male	Female	Youth (18-30/35 years)	Total
Sierra Leone	40,806	37,694	45,341	78,500
Liberia	63,105	50,328	62,431	113,513
Guinea	29 900	18 200	26 816	48 100
Total	133,811	106,222	134,558	240,113

6. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the ECOWAS-UEMOA-CILSS harmonized seed regulation has significantly advanced in many countries. To some extent, countries where the regulation has been highly adopted have shown good growth in seed industry development and in the supply and use of certified seeds. Continued improvement in the implementation of the regulation will be a priority of the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions, as well as the CILSS Executive Secretariat, in attracting the private sector investment, facilitating cross-border trade and seed use. Countries such as Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde, Sierra Leone, Mauritania and Chad, with low levels of implementation of the Regional Harmonized Seed Regulation will be supported by strengthening their capacities for adoption and implementation. Seeds of leguminous and vegetable crops, which are currently receiving less attention, will be promoted to help increase protein intake in humans and livestock and to improve soil fertility.

Thus, addressing challenges and bottlenecks in the implementation of the regulation will be paramount in the years ahead to improve institutional arrangements, market development, access to capital, capacity strengthening, infrastructural development, access to new germplasm, etc. This will be supported, through the regional and national institutions, governments and partners, to improve market expansion and the growth of the private sector. Improvements in agricultural productivity and farmer access to market will continue to be a paramount on the agenda of the two Commissions (ECOWAS and UEMOA) and CILSS Executive Secretariat, in achieving food security and higher incomes for the citizens.



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