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**REGIONAL MEETING ON THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND
THE EPA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Accra, Ghana

2-4 February 2009

FINAL REPORT

4 February 2009

I. INTRODUCTION

1. A meeting on the Community Development Programme (CDP) and the EPA Development Programme (EPADP) was organised in Accra, Ghana, from 2 to 4 February 2009 by the ECOWAS Commission in collaboration with the UEMOA Commission. The meeting was a follow-up to two others held in Dakar and Abidjan since the launch in May 2008, in Ouagadougou, of the formulation of the CDP.
2. The Accra meeting was devoted to the launch of the regional segment of the CDP and the validation of the EPADP document. It offered an opportunity for an exchange of views on the preliminary reports presented by the consultants, examine the organisational framework of the CDP, examine the EPA Development Programme (EPADP) and adopt a roadmap for the preparation of the operational plans of the EPA development programme at national and regional levels.
3. The following Member States of the West Africa region were represented:
 - Republic of Benin
 - Burkina Faso
 - Cape Verde
 - Republic of Cote d'Ivoire
 - Republic of The Gambia
 - Republic of Ghana
 - Republic of Guinea
 - Republic of Guinea Bissau
 - Republic of Mali
 - Republic of Niger
 - Federal Republic of Nigeria
 - Republic of Sierra Leone
 - Republic of Senegal
 - Togolese Republic
4. Representatives of regional organisations (ROPPA, ENDA, FOSCAO, NEPAD, UNECA, FOPAO, EBID, BOAD, CORAF, CAMES, REPAD, FCAO, ODEAO, OTUWA, CIAO, OATUU), ILEAP and Hub and Spokes national adviser also attended the meeting. Furthermore, the consultants responsible for preparing the Community Development Programme were present at the meeting.

5. The list of participants is attached as an annex.

II. OPENING CEREMONY

6. The opening ceremony was marked by speeches delivered by Prof. Bamba, Commissioner for Macroeconomic Policies at the ECOWAS Commission, and Dr. John-Hawkins Asiedu, Deputy Director, Import/Export Division of the Ministry of Trade & Industry of Ghana, representing the Ministry.

7. After welcoming the participants, Prof. Bamba recalled the objectives of the workshop, namely, launching of the regional segment of the CDP and validation of the EPADP document.

8. In his address, the representative of the Ministry of Trade & Industry of Ghana welcomed all the participants to Ghana, and expressed the hope that the discussions would be fruitful and make it possible for significant progress to be made in the formulation of the CDP and an EPA Development Programme.

III. ELECTION OF BUREAU

9. The meeting elected the following bureau:

- Chairman - Federal Republic of Nigeria
- Rapporteurs - Republic of Senegal
 Republic of Ghana

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

10. The proposed agenda was adopted and is attached as an annex.

V. CONDUCT OF THE WORKSHOP

5.1. Community Development Programme

5.1.1. Presentation of the CDP formulation process

11. The CDP Coordinator started his presentation by recalling the paradox in which the West Africa region finds itself: a region lagging behind in the development

process and with countries ranked among the poorest in the world, despite its huge natural resources and its over 250 million inhabitants. If this trend is to be reversed, coherent development strategies must be designed and the regional integration process consolidated. The CDP is part of this process. All stakeholders (Ministries, Private Sector, Civil Society, etc) in the States should take ownership of this programme and contribute actively to its implementation. Its preparation is not the responsibility of the ECOWAS Commission alone, but the responsibility of all stakeholders in the region.

12. The presentation gave the background to the CDP, which is part of the implementation of the Vision 2020 formulated by the Authority of Heads of State and Government in 2006 and aims to formulate a coherent regional action programme that can translate this vision into reality. The global strategy of the CDP emanates from the main objectives underlying this vision, especially the transition from an ECOWAS of States to an ECOWAS of People.
13. Based on this global strategy, a set of strategic axes was proposed, namely, “interconnection” of the Populations, States, Markets, Transport Infrastructure, Information & Communication, Energy & Water, Financial & Monetary technologies.
14. The CDP also serves as a platform for in-house collaboration at the ECOWAS Commission, and collaboration with Member States, sub-regional organisations (SRO) and development partners. The expected impacts comprise in particular: involvement of all stakeholders, poverty alleviation, sustained economic growth and achievement of a competitive and viable economic union.
15. The presentation also stressed the importance of the institutional framework for the preparation of the CDP. The framework proposed comprises of the office of the coordinator attached to the Cabinet of the ECOWAS Commissioner in charge of Macroeconomic Policies, the In-house Technical Committee (ITC), an in-house multidisciplinary structure at the ECOWAS Commission, and the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) comprising, as of when required, the National Economic Policy Committee (NEPC)/ National Coordination Committee (NCC), civil society, sub-regional organisations and development partners.
16. Four major stages of the preparation of the CDP were proposed, namely: (i) sensitisation and capacity building; (ii) inventory of existing programmes; (iii) prioritisation and planning of programmes, with a view to obtaining a framework

consistent with the vision and the adopted strategic axes, and, lastly, (iv) donors' meeting.

17. According to the indicative time-table, the CDP formulation process should last eighteen months. This can be achieved only through a participatory approach and the commitment of all stakeholders.

5.1.2. Summary of discussions

18. The presentation aroused the interest of the majority of the participants. The presenters commended the initiative taken to prepare a CDP and the opportunity given to the different national stakeholders to express their views and to contribute to this important endeavour. In particular, during the discussions, the participants stressed the need for the programme to incorporate:

- free movement of goods and persons;
- support to the private sector, the engine of growth and wealth creation;
- environmental issues;
- economic governance.

19. Several presentations stated the need for a clearer definition of the objectives and of the expectations of the populations by 2020, the role of stakeholders, and in particular the State. The issue of power-sharing at national and regional levels was raised. On this issue, the response was that the CDP should be coherent with the national frameworks and comply with the principle of subsidiarity.

20. The programme should also be accompanied with a good communication plan to enable the population to be informed on the actions undertaken. Liaison structures should equally be set up in the States to ensure that information from the national level gets to the regional level and vice versa. Likewise, it was suggested that the strategic choices be first validated before moving further to the definition of projects and programmes.

21. Discussions also centred on the seven (7) strategic axes proposed. On this point, it was proposed to take account of other important challenges for the region and translate them into strategic axes. These mainly are: food security, private sector development, research & innovation, technology, the environment and natural resources.

22. The question of the financing of this programme was raised. On this issue, it emerged that the region should contribute significantly to its financing, with the support of the development partners.

5.1.3. Reports from national consultants

23. Eleven national consultants presented the substance of their preliminary report, except Cape Verde, Gambia and Ghana which were unable to attend.

5.1.3.1. *Guidelines issued the Consultants*

24. A brief presentation of the terms of reference was made to enable all the participants to have a good understanding of the orientations issued to the national and regional consultants. Recommendations for improvement were made and will be included in the final ToR.

25. The consultants should work in collaboration with the States, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholder. The office of the programme coordinator will be responsible for improving collaboration with the consultants.

5.1.3.2. *Summary of consultants' presentations*

26. Generally, regarding the diagnostic analysis, the statements focused on the constraining factors and common effects of the economic performances in all the countries. It emerged from almost all the presentations that the actual growth of the countries was insufficient in relation to the minimum required for a significant reduction in poverty. Emphasis was also placed on the dominant role of the primary sector and, to a lesser extent, the tertiary sector in national production and employment. Unfortunately, the principal sector in most countries is characterized by low productivity and enfolded most of the people living in precarious conditions. Thus, the diagnostic analysis of the economies demonstrated that in many countries, despite the economic potential of the States, the region tragically remained in a situation of poverty with the corollary of human development among the weakest in the world, an underperforming educational and health system, limited socioeconomic infrastructures and weak economic governance.

27. The States' responses to these challenges as set out in national development strategies were described by the consultants. With the exception of a few

variants, these responses generally arise from a global vision as defined in the strategic axes, which are the basis of projects and programmes.

28. Thus, in a number of countries, national development strategies as presented, make reference to Vision 2025 documents, which is the case of:

- Benin ALAFIA 2025 « *In 2025, Benin is a beacon country, well governed, united and peaceful, with a prosperous and competitive economy, rich culture and social welfare* ». This global strategy is defined in 8 strategic orientations, 37 options and 191 strategic axes;

- Burkina 2025 « *Burkina Faso, a united, progressive and just nation whose respect is consolidated on the international scene*. This Vision is defined in 15 strategic objectives, 34 strategic axes and at least 145 actions priority actions;

- Côte d'Ivoire 2025 « *Côte d'Ivoire in 2025 is a strong nation that will have confirmed its progress on the path to national unity for having been faithful to its tradition of dialogue and friendship between its socio-cultural components.(...) Economic development as a cement of national unity is expressed through the pride felt by Ivoirians to live in joy and shared happiness* » ;

- Guinée Bissau 2025 through sufficiently revealing the Creole theme of *Djitu Ten* (possibilities exist) which consists in the rational valorization of the efforts and domestic potentialities of the country to transform it into a modern State;

- Mali 2025 aims to « *combine wisdom, authenticity and dynamism to make Mali a prosperous, efficient and modern nation. The people would have succeeded in resolutely taking its own destiny in its hands to remain a people united in rich diversity with a common goal and with an unshakeable faith in its future* » ;

- Sierra Leone 2025 which aims at « *creating a tolerant, stable secure, well-governed society based on democratic values, with a competitive private sector as an engine of economic development with the actual participation of national stakeholders; creating the conditions of a high level of life for Sierra Leoneans; ensuring sustainable exploitation and effective use of natural resources while*

ensuring environmental preservation; and turn Sierra Leone into a nation of science and technology».

29. In the other countries, there was no mention of a clearly- announced long-term Vision. Nonetheless, in Guinea, La vision 2010 could be adapted to make it attainable by 2025 with 5-year objectives: economic recovery and consolidation as the basis of growth; creation of two-digit basis of growth; consolidation of the sustainable development bases; consolidation of development with a view to rendering it irreversible.
30. In Niger, the poverty reduction strategy is the sole reference framework as far as the country's economic, financial and social policies are concerned. It aims at improving the level and conditions of living of the poor populations and reducing poverty from the current 63% to less than 50% in 2015.
31. In Senegal, five (5) major documents form the basis of the strategic orientations in a short and middle term: the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP2), the Accelerated Growth Strategy, (AGS), the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), the Integrated Framework for the Great Agricultural Offensive for Food and Abundance (GOANA).
32. Liberia has no long-term development strategy. The PRSP is the only strategy known, which is however short term since the national authorities are more concerned about the implementation of emergency measures for handling the long crisis that has bedevilled the country.
33. Nigeria's development strategy are the NEED I & II (National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy), which describes a set of objectives to be attained by 2020, and the 7-point Agenda of the current administration. These strategies are aimed at attaining good governance, a dynamic but stable and rapidly growing economy, as well as environmental sustainability.
34. Togo's strategic development is based on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

5.1.3.3. Summary of the discussions

35. The discussions following the consultants' presentations mainly centred on the need for programme harmonization, information, and conformity to the studies carried out with the terms of reference. In relation to the latter point of view, it

was pointed out that some countries' reports were not in keeping with the study requirements.

36. In specific terms, the following issues were raised :

- the need to bring out the programmes under preparation or under implementation within the community ;
- the need to bring out the actions envisaged by each country and their attainment at regional level. On this point, the consultants could take inspiration from what was done during the preparation of the ECOWAS Agricultural policy where each country was asked to draw up an agricultural investment programme whose regional aspects were adopted by the Commission.

37. Furthermore, the presenters raised the need to analyze the strength-weaknesses/ opportunities-threat of conducting an improved strategic planning. Emphasis was laid in most of the presentations on the partial nature of the aid-for-trade aspect, which however, is significant aspect in the CDP. It is therefore important to ensure coherence between the CDP and EPADP. From this viewpoint, the CDP and EPADP consultants should work in close collaboration.

38. The question as to how to put all the criteria listed in a coherent framework with a view to obtaining a coherent community programme was the subject of discussions, especially the criteria for the classification of projects and programmes. Although the natural criterion appears to be the programmes' capacity to significantly reduce poverty, more detailed discussions on the theoretical basis of the CDP could be carried out.

39. Other more administrative concerns were raised. Relating to the fact that in some countries and government authorities were not informed of the existence of the work of the national consultants. On that point, it was recommended that efforts be made to ensure fluidity of information between the stakeholders. The consultant should work in close collaboration with the national stakeholders.

5.2. EPA Development Programme

40. The EPADP was presented jointly by the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions.

5.2.1. Presentation summary

41. The presentation on the EPA DP focused on the preparation of the programme and its content. The presentations indicate that the EPA development programme is a West African region initiative to respond to the objective of making the EPA a real tool for development. The EPADP is based on three key value chains, namely, agri-food, cotton textile/clothing, tourism (in link with the capacity building initiative in the NEPAD framework and with sensitive products). The scopes covered by EPADP concern: strengthening opportunities (sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures, standards, trade facilitation, competitive production, value chain Europe-WA); the reduction of negative effects (tax reforms & tax compensations, social issues, macro-economic stability); implementation (capacity building, growth of intra-ECOWAS and ECOWAS-EU trade flow, effects induced by the investments expected from the programme, enhancement of competitiveness, relative impact on state finance).
42. EPADP is aimed at responding to the considerable structural problems of the region's economies according to five (5) major axes. They are: (1) diversifying and increasing production capacities (2) developing intra-regional trade and facilitating international market access; (3) improving and strengthening trade-related infrastructures; (4) making indispensable adjustments taking into account the other trade-related needs; (5) implementation and monitoring-evaluation of the EPA by the WA.
43. As regards the programme formulation process, it was indicated that the approach involved the region's major stakeholders as well as the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions. Consultations took also place with the European party.

5.2.2. Synthesis of the discussions

44. The presentation of EPADP equally aroused interest on the part of the participants. They wondered about the relationship between the CDP and EPADP. The latter is already far advanced and part of the first, which is still in its incipiency. On this point, the response was that EPADP was sufficiently flexible to take due account of the CDP. The meeting called for coherence between the two programmes.
45. The question of EPADP financing was raised. The amount of 9.5 million Euros indicated as the estimated cost was deemed inadequate. On that point, it was indicated that the amount given was not the total cost of the entire adjustment measures which were being discussed with the EU. The cost only concerns the financing of some priority activities of the first 5-year phase.

46. The concerns also centred on the need to include in the EPA between the West African region and the EU precise measures on a number of commitment to be taken by the EU.
47. The specific issue of cotton and its consideration in the EPADP was tackled. On this point, a larger processing of the product in the region was envisaged. The development of this sector occupies a pride of place in the EPADP since it constitutes one of the three value chains adopted.
48. The participants expressed concern about the number and choice of value chains. The Workshop therefore recommended that the programme remain open on this issue to enable new value chains to be included as necessary.
49. The participants stressed the strengthening and promotion of the private sector, which is an essential link in the wealth creation. They also emphasized the need for human resource training.
50. It was highly recommended that the choices made should not be realized to the detriment of food security of the populations. Generally, EPADP should contain a social protection net.
51. Some participants emphasized the specific needs of their countries, especially in the area of infrastructure. The meeting decided that these needs should be specified in the definition of the programme at national level.
52. Furthermore, the workshop made substantive observations and on some statistical data which will be taken into account in the finalization of the programme document.
53. The Workshop validated the EPADP framework document subject to the consideration of the observations and recommendations. The final version of the programme document will be submitted to the next meeting of the EPA Ministerial Monitoring Committee.
54. The States and the stakeholders involved were called upon to forward to ECOWAS Commission, in writing as soon as possible, any possible additional observations to enable the programme to be finalized within the deadline prescribed in the Roadmap.

55. The states were asked to communicate to ECOWAS Commission their national EPADP operational plans in keeping with the format that would be transmitted by the Commission.

56. The Workshop agreed to a Roadmap for taking account of the observations as well as the elaboration of operational plans at national and regional levels, subject to agreement on timing.

N°	STEPS	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
I	Adoption of EPA-DP framework subject to comments being taken into consideration	Member States and concerned organisations delegates	04/02/09
II	Consideration of comments and amendments	ECOWAS Commission	20/02/09
III	Sending the Operational plan templates to Member States	ECOWAS COMMISSION	06/02/09
IV	Preparation of national operational plans	Member States	06/02/09
V	Receipt by ECOWAS of all national operational plans	Member States & ECOWAS Commission	09/03/09
VI	Submission to the MMC	ECOWAS Commission	End of March

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants formulated the following recommendations

6.1. Recommendations to the CDP consultants to:

- complete the studies as soon as possible in line with the terms of reference;
- work in collaboration with the EPADP and RAIP.
- work in collaboration with all stakeholders (technical ministries, private sector, civil society, etc.) and regularly inform them about the process

6.2. Recommendations to regional organisations to:

- participate actively in the preparation of the CDP;
- serve as a link with the other regional organisations that did not attend the meeting;
- use the channels at their disposal to raise awareness of the CDP and EPADP process both among the populations and among government authorities.

6.3. Recommendations to Member States to:

- design long-term development strategies;
- raise citizens' awareness of the CDP and EPADP;
- encourage citizens to own the CDP and EPADP.

6.4. Recommendations to the ECOWAS Commission to:

- assist Member States in the preparation of national strategies;
- carry out awareness- raising activities in the region;
- encourage Member States to own the CDP and EPADP.

VII. CLOSING SESSION

57. The Commissioner in charge of Trade, Customs and Free Movement thanked the bureau, as well as the participants, for the quality of their inputs and for the frank atmosphere that had prevailed throughout the deliberations. He wished them safe journey back to their respective countries and then declared the meeting closed.

DONE AT ACCRA, THIS 4TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2009.

PROFESSOR MIKE KWANASHIE

Chairman

VOTE OF THANKS

The participants at the meeting express their gratitude to His Excellency J.E. ATTA-MILLS, President of the Republic of Ghana, to the Government and People of Ghana for the generous hospitality and excellent welcome extended to them, and for the excellent facilities made available to them that ensured the success of the meeting.