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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER – INFORMATION CAMPAIGN PROJECT

N°1 - June 2018

The present newsletter is one of the products related to the activity of implementing an interactive device of information and communication as part of the project to design and set up a campaign addressed to producers and companies of agro-alimentary processing in the framework of the project to create the Regional Food Security Reserve (Réserve Régionale de Sécurité Alimentaire - RRSA) in West Africa (ECOWAS). The project will be henceforth designated in this newsletter as the "Information Campaign Project". The newsletter is structured in three main parts: an introductory section, followed by a section entitled " Information Campaign Project's activities and achievements" which presents a summary of all the information - published contents and materials produced by the project, and a third part, "Knowing the institutional markets", that offers resources related to all the topics covered by the project.

Write to us if you want to share other interesting resources on these topics; they can complete this newsletter or be used in future issues!

Good reading!

For the Information Campaign Project implementation consortium, the Inter-réseaux Développement Rural team (inter-reseaux@inter-reseaux.org)

Sommaire

1. Introduction..... 2
2. Activities and achievements..... 3
3. Knowing institutional markets 4

1. Introduction

⇒ A brief overview of the Regional Food Security Reserve (RRSA)

During the forty-second Summit of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS member countries, the Regional Food Security Reserve (RRSA) was created on February the 28th, 2013. It constitutes the third line of defence to prevent and manage food crises. It is complementary to local stocks (the first line of defence at the village and community level) and national food security stocks (second line of defence) held by the states.

The RRSA complements the efforts of member states to provide fast and diversified food and nutrition assistance; the RRSA also expresses regional solidarity with member states and affected populations through transparent, equitable and predictable mechanisms; RRSA is finally contributing to food sovereignty and the political, economic and commercial integration of West Africa.

The RRSA consists on a physical reserve (for 1/3) and a financial reserve (for 2/3). The RRSA's interventions essentially consist on gratuitous loans or transfers of food or financial resources. For the physical reserve, four regional storage sub-areas have been selected: East, Center, Atlantic West and Atlantic Gulf. The storage and maintenance of food is entrusted to national public food safety storage companies on the basis of service delivery agreements on behalf of ECOWAS. Seven national storage structures are currently involved: SONAGESS in Burkina Faso, NAFCO in Ghana, OPAM in Mali, OPVN in Niger, FRSD in Nigeria, CSA in Senegal and ANSAT in Togo. The warehouses declared compliant and able to receive the products from the RRSA represent a capacity of 54 600 tons.

As part of its operationalization, the RRSA made a first purchase of 11 178.5 tonnes of cereals (millet, maize, sorghum, rice) stored in Yendi (Ghana), Dedougou (Burkina Faso), Dosso and Zinder (Niger), and Gombe (Nigeria). Subsequently, the RRSA is now receiving 15,691 tonnes of maize, sorghum, millet and rice as part of a second purchase. This stock comes from an international bidding process N°ECW/DAERE/ARAA/RRSA/2016 AO/02 launched in November 2017 for a total quantity of 21,000 tons. These products will be stored in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. The results of the bidding can be found at this link: <http://araa.org/sites/default/files/call-tender/R%C3%A9sultats.pdf>

⇒ The objectives of the information campaign project

For the constitution of the RRSA's physical stock, the ECOWAS intends to prioritize supply from West African cereal producers and cereal products processors through institutional purchases, in order to better structure the demand for cereals and to improve the income of West African producers. The organization even negotiated and obtained from its lenders the stratification of the lots and a regional preference which consists on preferring the financial offer of a West African supplier, with a margin of 15% more compared to a non-Community one. Despite this preferential regime, there has been a low participation of cereal producers and grain products processors from West Africa in the first two bidding processes.

It is in response to the challenge of access to the institutional markets of producer organizations and cereal processors that the following objectives have been fixed for the information campaign:

- Improve the access of these actors to information and bidding processes;
- Inform them and make them aware of the RRSA's supply terms and conditions to participate in the ARAA's bidding processes, by respecting the quality standards of cereals in force within the ECOWAS ;
- Strengthen their technical capacity to respond to bidding processes.

Source: « *Le stock physique de la Réserve Régionale prend forme* », article appearing in the web of the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (ARAA), February, the 26th 2018 <http://araa.org/fr/news/le-stock-physique-de-la-r%C3%A9serve-r%C3%A9gionale-prend-forme>

2. Activities and achievements

⇒ Start-up workshop

On the 5th and 6th July 2017, the start-up workshop of the *information campaign* project was held in Ouagadougou. This workshop was attended by (i) representatives of organizations producing and marketing cereals; (ii) representatives of organizations processing cereals (especially for enriched flour); (iii) representatives of the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food and the Spanish Agency for Cooperation for Development (AECID); (iv) representatives of the World Food Program (WFP) Project P4P (Purchase for Progress), and (v) members of the project implementation consortium. After two days of exchanges between the different participants, several ideas and experiences were expressed on how to improve the access of farmer and processing organizations to the RRSA. The POs obtained a broad overview of the requirements and procedures for access to the reserve, and presented the most common difficulties encountered against this access.

⇒ Development of a communication strategy

The communication strategy of the information campaign project is the result of collaborative work. Indeed, the process of developing the communication strategy took place in two stages (i) a limited consultation of farmers' organizations in Burkina Faso and (ii) a technical meeting of the project implementation consortium with ARAA. At the end of these two phases, a project's communication strategy document was developed and validated. This document is organized into two main parts, namely: the overall communication strategy of the campaign, and the communication activities and channels of the strategy. The first part presents the communication context of the institutional markets' actors and the objectives and targets of the project's communication strategy; while the second part describes the activities and channels, their contexts, goals, approaches, implementation actors, etc. Among the channels to be put in place as part of this project, and highlighted in the communication strategy, is the project website. Currently under construction, this website aims, on the one hand, to improve the visibility of the project and promote the different media produced in the context of the project; and, on the other hand, to make available to POs and processors a virtual resource centre for the consultation of information and capacity-building materials.

⇒ Implementation of an online self-assessment system allowing organizations to identify their capacity building needs in the context of institutional markets in general, and those of the RRSA supply in particular.

At the project's start-up workshop in July 2017, a first version of the self-assessment form for producer organizations in the project countries was tested by both the grain organizations and the processing organizations. With the inputs of the different participants, changes were made to the form, and the improved versions were put online. The self-assessment form will remain online until the end of the project thus allowing new organizations to self-evaluate when needed. The self-assessment form (PDF version) can be viewed at this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/home/P16/4%20Produits/Auto%C3%A9valuation?preview=Formulaire+Auto%C3%A9valuation+V6-FR.pdf>

⇒ Identification and mobilization of grain organizations and processing organizations able to supply the RRSA

The information campaign project has initiated a census of producer organizations in West African countries (ECOWAS Area) that could potentially supply the RRSA. At the end of this census, 147 grain organizations were identified in the 14 countries of the region. Contacts were established with these organizations via phone calls, emails and meetings, to explain the purpose and goals of the project, and also to invite them to complete the self-assessment form set up by the project. Regarding processing organizations, 66 organizations were identified in the countries covered by the project

⇒ Design of a database of grain organizations

The information campaign project has set up a database of organizations that can supply the RRSA. This database was designed according to the information collected through the self-assessment forms and separating organizations with not-for-profit sales purpose (not eligible to be providers) from those with this objective. It should be noted that this information has also allowed us to classify organizations according to their ability to respond to institutional markets. This has cleared the group of *Market ready* organizations, that is, ready to respond to bidding processes; and to target the others organizations that need concrete support in different areas. The database will allow making contact with these different organizations to provide them with the necessary information related to the RRSA.

⇒ Preparation of a concept note on institutional markets

A summary note entitled "Institutional Food Markets in Africa: Which trends and which contributions to development" was drafted. It focuses on the development and implementation of institutional markets in Africa, as well as the major developments they have experienced along with the actors involved. Based on the lessons learned from different experiences in the field, this note highlights the contribution of institutional markets to development issues such as food and nutrition security and poverty reduction.

3. Knowing institutional markets

⇒ Food institutional markets in Africa: which trends and which contributions to development

Inter-réseaux, June 2018

Since the early 2000s, institutional markets have increasingly emerged as a mechanism that can significantly contribute to development goals such as food and nutrition security or poverty reduction. More specifically, they are often used as tools to promote certain agricultural production systems, including family farming or agro-ecological practices. This concept note reviews the development and implementation of institutional markets in Africa, the major developments they have undergone and the actors involved in them. Finally, from the lessons learned from different experiences in the field, it questions the contribution of institutional markets to development issues.

To download the concept note: <http://www.inter-reseaux.org/publications/bulletins-de-synthese/article/les-marches-institutionnels?lang=fr>

⇒ Food stocks feedback: The second issue of the ECOWAS Regional Food Security Reserve Newsletter

Araa, June 2018

In this second issue of the Quarterly Information Newsletter of the ECOWAS Regional Food Security Reserve, the main elements discussed are related to the monitoring of stocks in the Regional Reserve; the reception of new stocks by the physical component of the Regional Reserve; the contribution of the ECOWAS Commission in the fight against food and nutrition insecurity in the North Eastern States of Nigeria; the role of national storage structures, the private sector and POs in the supply and storage of the physical component of the Regional Reserve; the further strengthening of countries in the settlement of the regional agricultural information system platform (ECOAGRIS); and the elaboration of a Results-Oriented Monitoring system regarding the implementation of the Regional Reserve Support Project.

To download the newsletter:

<http://araa.org/sites/default/files/news/pdf/Bulletin%20num%C3%A9ro%20de%20la%20R%C3%A9serve%20R%C3%A9gionale%20FR%20mars%202018.pdf>

⇒ Operationalization of the Regional Food Security Reserve (RRSA): Exchanges between the actors of the region

ARAA, May 2018

As part of the West African Regional Food Security Reserve's operationalization, the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (ARAA) organized a set of three exchange workshops at the Massaley hotel in Bamako, Mali, from May the 7th to the 11th, 2018. They are an integral part of the activities of the West African Food Security Storage Support Project, which the European Union is funding for € 56 million. "With complementary objectives, these workshops are part of the search for solutions to support ECOWAS in the implementation of its regional food security storage strategy based on complementarity / subsidiarity between three lines of defence to cope with food and nutrition crises that have become structural in the region, "explains Mr Salifou Ousseini, Executive Director of the ARAA.

Access the article on the ARAA website: <http://www.araa.org/fr/news/les-acteurs-de-la-r%C3%A9gion-discutent-de-l%E2%80%99op%C3%A9rationnalisation-de-la-r%C3%A9serve-r%C3%A9gionale-de-s%C3%A9curit%C3%A9>

⇒ **Food stocks feedback: the first issue of the newsletter of the ECOWAS Regional Food Security Reserve**

Araa, December 2017

The first issue of the newsletter of the ECOWAS Regional Food Security Reserve is available. It focuses on the implementation of the project of the Regional Food Security Reserve supported by the European Union. Specifically, this newsletter covers a variety of topics, including news related to food stocks at the regional level, ECOWAS intervention in the form of regional solidarity in Nigeria's north-eastern states during food and nutrition crises, national storage policies, effective agricultural information systems, food security contingency plans, the code of good practice for storage, and the information campaign for agricultural producers.

To download the newsletter:

http://araa.org/sites/default/files/news/pdf/Bulletin%20d%27information%20de%20la%20RRSA-No1-%20D%C3%A9cembre%202017_FR.pdf

⇒ **ROPFA-PAFAO Forum: discussion summary n ° 4 "institutional purchasing"**

CFSI, Fondation de France, ROPFA ; December 2016.

This summary presents the testimonies of actors after the interventions of the participants in the ROPFA-PAFAO discussion forum. The evidence shows that in West Africa, institutional purchases of local products are gaining momentum, including changes in World Food Program (WFP) procurement procedures to partly source supplies locally; the constitution by some States (Benin, Mali, Niger, Togo) of buffer stocks for basic foodstuffs; and the creation of a sub-regional reserve of ECOWAS. Some feedback from institutional orders honoured by producer organizations reports some positive ripple effect but that this situation hasn't still become standard as the conditions for family farms to benefit from them are rarely met.

To download the summary <http://www.alimenterre.org/sites/www.cfsi.asso.fr/files/1045-discu-4-synthese-achats-institutionnels-vf.pdf>

⇒ **Structured Demand Markets and Smallholders: relevance and access.**

SNV, February 2016.

The paper presents, among other things, an analysis of the strategic food reserves in three countries: the National Food Regulator Stock Company (NAFCO) and the grain banks in Ghana; Kenya's Strategic National Reserve of Cereals and Agricultural Products; and the Office of Agricultural Products of Mali (OPAM) and the grain banks in Mali. The paper demonstrates that the volume of goods demanded by these reserves, and the market share they represent, can be attractive markets for smallholders. Grain banks in Ghana and OPAM in Mali are in pole position to buy from smallholders. However, the infrastructure to link smallholders to strategic food reserve is still in its early stages. While most of the reserves refer to smallholders in their objectives, poor management, limited financial and logistical capacity and a lack of systems to monitor direct supply form smallholders inhibit the formation of meaningful links with smallholders.

To download the report:

http://www.snv.org/public/cms/sites/default/files/explore/download/structured_demand_spreads_digital_french.compressed.pdf

⇒ **Reference websites: Africa Public Procurement portal: access by country**

The website www.marchés-publics-afrique.com presents the information and contents related to the law of the public order and the rules applicable to the African tenders. Specifically, it presents in each country the regulations in force concerning public markets, the current state of public procurement, standard bidding documents etc.

To consult the site: <https://sites.google.com/a/marches-publics-afrique.com/marches-publics-africains/>

This newsletter was produced by Inter-réseaux as part of the project for the design and implementation of a campaign addressed to producers and agro-food processing companies as part of the project to create the Regional Food Security Reserve (RRSA) in West Africa (ECOWAS). We thank all the organizations and individuals who helped us to identify, collect and present the various resources listed in this newsletter.

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