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Department Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources

ECOWAP/CAADP Process

**Support Strategy for Youth Employability in the Agro-Sylvo-Pastoral and
Fishery Sector Towards Combating Rural Exodus and Uncontrolled
Emigration in the ECOWAS Region**

**Regional Workshop on the Sharing of Youth Employability
Experience and Initiatives in the Agro-Sylvo-Pastoral and
Fisheries Sector
(Cotonou, Benin, from 5 to 7 November, 2018)**

Concept Note and Agenda

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Et :



1. Background and Rationale

1. The increase in the demographic weight of the youth is one of the major trends of the socio-economic situation of all West African countries. This weight is currently estimated at 33% of the total population of the region, considering the youth as individuals within the 15-35-year-old age bracket (AfDB, 2018).
2. However, the participation of this driving force to the economic and social development process of these countries, and therefore, the Regional Economic Communities which they constitute (ECOWAS AND UEMOA), is highly limited by massive unemployment. Indeed, out of 3,000,000 young people making their way into the regional job market every year, only 900,000 persons gain access to a stable and decent employment (AfDB, 2018). Thus, the regional youth population in a precarious situation increases by 2,100,000 individuals every year.
3. In the absence of an industrial sector that is adequately consistent and dynamic, the regional economic growth, which is mainly driven by raw material exports and by services, does not create adequate employment to absorb the unemployed or under-employed youth. This low capacity for the economic integration of young people through growth culminates in dynamics such as the acceleration of rural exodus and huge illegal emigration; which situation seriously disrupts the socio-economic balances of the countries and puts the very lives of the youth in jeopardy.
4. These disruptions, among others, lead to the deprivation of the rural communities of their life blood, accelerated urbanization through the development of slums, increase in juvenile delinquency, recourse to risky emigration practices (crossing the desert, ocean and sea), the worsening of human trafficking on the routes of this illegal emigration and recruitment into terrorist groups.
5. For the youth who resist these various temptations, integration through itinerant trading is the most accessible alternative. Apart from the low incomes that it generates, this informal economic activity centers mainly on imported commodities which highly undermine the viability of local SMIs and SMEs.
6. In the face of all these socio-economic consequences caused by the massive youth unemployment, the countries are exploring various levers and facilities for improved access by the youth to stable and decent income-generating jobs. These initiatives often target the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector in view of its importance in the national economic and social development strategies mainly focused on poverty alleviation and improvement in food and nutrition security.
7. However, though potentially, it provides opportunities for job-creation that the youth can take advantage of, the development of this sector is highly impeded by low productivity, excessive dependence on rainfall patterns and poor development of factor markets and products.
8. The agricultural policies, both regional and national, are attempting to address these constraints to make this sector, which employs a greater proportion of the active population in the region, an instrument of inclusive economic growth, with the full participation of women, the youth and other vulnerable social groups.
9. In West Africa, ECOWAS has since 2005 launched a regional agricultural policy (ECOWAP) linked to the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). After a first generation covering the period from 2005 to 2015, the ECOWAP/CAADP now has a second generation of agricultural investments and food and nutrition security programmes (PRIASAN at the regional level and PNIASAN at country level) based on the Malabo commitments.
10. This second generation of operational instruments on regional agricultural policy explicitly takes charge of the issue of youth unemployment. Indeed, the economic inclusion of these young

people in the sector is highlighted in the first specific objective PRIASAN seeks to *"contribute to enhancing the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries productivity and production via diversified, intensive, sustainable production systems and incorporating technologies for the reduction of post-harvest losses"*. Apart from the development of the value chains and strengthening of production systems, the scope of action of this specific objective concerns *"the change of image of the sector and its attractiveness, particularly to encourage the youth to acquire quality vocational training and to take to agriculture, whether at the production level or upstream and downstream levels"*.

11. Since the PNIASAN is properly aligned to the PRIASAN, they also take charge of the issue of youth unemployment in this dual agenda of improving the sector performance through modernization of its production and exchange systems, and facilitating the economic integration of the youth in keeping with other categories of producers in the value chain of the sector. In all the cases, the countries have put in place different frameworks to facilitate access for youth employment in the sector. For instance, in Nigeria, mechanisms for vocational training of the youth coupled with support for the promotion of small and medium-sized agricultural enterprises, have been established. In Benin, Funds for the promotion of agricultural entrepreneurship have been instituted for the youth. In Guinea also, the strategy consists of training leading to the establishment of the trainees. In Mali, the youth are supported to design projects towards the creation of businesses which then become eligible for funding. In Togo, the strategy mainly proposed is one of promoting micro and small rural enterprises in promising sectors. In Senegal, it involves a dual approach of establishing vocational training centers and promoting inclusive agricultural farms. In a nutshell, all the ECOWAS Member States are developing initiatives to facilitate access for youth employability in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector.

12. The strategies contributing to the reduction of youth under-employment or unemployment can thus be achieved through strengthening their employability. As proposed under the PRIASAN, this approach comprises a dual action (i) improving the potential of the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector, and (ii) developing the technical and vocational capacity of the youth. Thus, it includes: (i) enhancing opportunities for employment in the production, processing and distribution of goods and services components of the sector, and (ii) assisting the youth to take advantage of these opportunities for the acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills. Furthermore, as stipulated in the PRIASAN, the upstream value chains, factor markets (inputs and equipment) to be precise, must also be developed along the lines of this dual process of creating the potential for employment and developing the capacity for integration.

13. ECOWAS intends to formulate and implement a regional strategy specifically dedicated to the strengthening of youth employability in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector in West Africa with the aim of addressing the rural exodus phenomenon and the uncontrolled emigration. The concept note for the above-mentioned strategy, produced with the technical assistance of Hub Rural, provides for the holding of a regional workshop for the sharing of experiences on the subject matter. This concept note for the workshop successively explains the set objectives, the expected deliverables, the targeted participants, the approach adopted and the proposed tentative agenda

2. Workshop Objectives

2.1. Final Objective

14. The regional workshop for the sharing of experience and initiatives on youth employability in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector has the final objective of *obtaining the necessary*

data and information for ECOWAS to produce a capitalization and guidance document in this thematic area.

15. The objective of the workshop is to have a good understanding of the initiatives (financial facilities, major actions, projects and programmes) implemented in the countries to address the issues of under-employment, rural exodus and uncontrolled emigration among the youth in the rural communities. The workshop will be used to make the most out of the lessons and best practices among all the relevant initiatives.

16. Specifically, it will consist of:

❖ Documenting the socio-professional situation of young people in the countries

18. A good understanding of the socio-professional situation of the youth at the national level must result in an effective assessment of the relevance, consistency, effectiveness and efficiency of integration arrangements in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector.

19. This situation can be assessed, among others, by using the yardstick of (i) training profiles, (ii) the extent of youth under-employment and unemployment, (iii) job profiles, and (iv) youth migration dynamics. A gender analysis (distinction between young men and young women) is highly desirable in this analysis.

❖ Documenting the experience of broadening employment opportunities for the youth in the sector

20. A good understanding of the measures taken by the countries to address unemployment in the rural communities, offering the youth employment opportunities in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector must assist in properly appreciating the potential impact of national initiatives on youth unemployment, of which the scale is currently deemed by all as too high.

21. These measures ordinarily include (i) investments (farms, developed areas, agropoles, multi-purpose platforms, etc.), (ii) subsidies for inputs, equipment and other factors of production, (iii) public offers for support and advisory services (transfer of technology, market information, , equipment and other facilitations), and (iv) support for organizational strengthening (inter-professions, cooperatives and other collaborative and self-help professional groups) and (v) especially a funding mechanism for youth-initiated projects (men and women) .

❖ Documenting skills development experiences and the capacity for youth integration into the sector

22. A good understanding of the modalities for developing the capacity of the youth for the development of employment opportunities created in the sector must pave the way for a better assessment of the adaptation of the courses and curricula towards the needs of the sector in terms of production, processing and marketing, delivery of various services (information, financing, insurance, communication, management, etc.).

23. The modalities for capacity building can be assessed according to (i) their type (continuing or initial training), (ii) their duration (short, medium, long term), (iii) their scope (general or specialized education), (iv) their products (job profiles), and their effectiveness (rate of integration of beneficiaries).

24. The national technical and vocational capacity building efforts of the youth will be assessed also in accordance with the impact of youth integration on the performance of the sectors in terms of productivity, competitiveness, production and incomes.

3. Expected Results

25. In line with the above-mentioned specific objectives, the expected results of the workshop are four (4):

3.1. First Result Expected: the socio-professional situation of the youth at country level is better appreciated

26. This first product of the workshop will result from the organization of national situational analyses on training, employment, unemployment and youth migrations.

3.2. Second result expected: the national employment creation experiences in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector are capitalized

27. This second product of the workshop corresponds to the matrix of public measures for employment creation opportunities in the sector. The matrix will outline country profiles according to two major measurement categories: (i) the investments (farms, agropoles, platforms, etc.) et (ii) various facilities (subsidies, financing, insurance, advisory support services, research-development, information, etc.)

3.3. Third result expected: national youth training experiences for their economic integration into the above-mentioned sector have been capitalized

28. This third product of the workshop will take the form of a typology of youth training in preparation for their professional integration into the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector.

3.4. Fourth Result Expected: the support needs of countries within the framework of a regional youth employability development programme have been identified

29. This fourth will proceed from the establishment of the status of the expectations of countries, youth organizations and farmers' organizations (FOs) in terms of regional support for their youth employability development efforts in agriculture, livestock, forestry and fisheries.

4. Immediate Deliverables

30. The four products mentioned above will result from the summary of information provided at the workshop by the countries, the youth organizations and other groups working on youth integration initiatives in the rural communities. This summary will be carried out by Hub Rural, after the workshop as part of the process of formulating the capitalization and guidance document.

31. Thus, the only immediate deliverable of the workshop will be the summary of conclusions and recommendations read, amended and validated at the end of the workshop deliberations:

5. Targeted Participants

32. The following are invited for the workshop:

- ✓ The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources of ECOWAS;
- ✓ The Department of Agriculture, Water Resources and Environment of UEMOA;
- ✓ The Regional Technical Institutions (CILSS, CORAF, IITA);
- ✓ The Development Banks (AfDB, BOAD, EBID, ...);
- ✓ The stakeholders developing advocacy (actions, projects, programmes) on youth economic integration in the rural sector in West Africa;
- ✓ Regional Producers', Stock Breeders' Pastoralists' and Fishermen's Organizations (ROPPA, APSS and RBM);
- ✓ Youth Organizations (men and women);
- ✓ National Employment Promotion Agencies;
- ✓ The FAO;
- ✓ The technical and financial partners of ECOWAS.

6. Methodological Approach

33. The deliberations will take place in two phases:

- A first phase marked by presentation of experiences with ensuing discussions to be summarized into conclusions et recommendations;
- A second phase marked by group discussions followed by feedback information on three thematic areas: (i) the preparation of the youth for jobs in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries and agro-food sector; (ii) the public policy measures designed to facilitate youth integration into the sector, with a strong emphasis on the dimensions and nature of the financial facility; (iii) the promotion of youth employment monitoring mechanisms in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector.

34. The conclusions will focus on the evidence (facts deemed to be sufficiently proven), and the recommendations on the additional investigations necessary for a better understanding of the situations and experiences.

6.1. Outline and Contents of the presentations on experiences

35. The presentation will be made by the countries, the agricultural producers' organizations, stock breeders and pastoralists (ROPPA, APESS and RBM), the youth organizations and other youth economic integration advocacy groups in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector.

35. Three series of presentations will be made on (i) the socio-economic situation of the youth in the location under review (region, country, administrative sub-division, local community, etc.) ; (ii) the public measures designed to facilitate youth integration into the sector, and (iii) the actions, projects, youth training programmes for the development of employment opportunities provided by the sector, respectively.

36. The indicative outlines of presentations, designed according to the three thematic areas specified above, are presented in the Annexes.

6.2. Exchanges around the presentations

37. Every series of presentations leads to a general discussion of the theme under consideration (socio-professional situation of the youth, creation of employment opportunities for the youth in the rural sector or training-capacity building of the youth for the development of the targeted opportunities).

38. The objective of such discussions is to put together the proof or evidence (data or facts authenticated and accepted by all the stakeholders) upon which the expected regional strategy will be based.

39. With the moderation by Hub Rural, these discussions will thus constitute the conclusions (proposed proof and evidence) and recommendations (actions to be carried out to improve the quality of data and/or look for the missing data).

40. These conclusions and recommendations will form the validated draft report of the workshop.

6.3. Venue and duration of the workshop

41. The workshop will be held in Cotonou, Benin, from 5 to 7 November, 2018, in accordance with the following Agenda.

7. Draft Agenda

Regional Workshop on Sharing of Youth Employability Initiatives and Experiences in the Agro-Sylvo-Pastoral and Fisheries Sector 5-7 November, 2018		
TIME	ACTIVITIES	ORGANIZATION
Day 1 (5 November, 2018)		
09H00 - 09H30	Opening and presentation of objectives and expected results of the meeting	RAAF
09H30 - 10H45	Presentation of country initiatives and experiences (5 mins), on all the 3 thematic areas: (i) the socio-economic situation of the youth in the location under review (region, country, administrative sub-division, local community, etc.); (ii) public measures to facilitate youth integration into the sector, and (iii) the actions, projects, youth training programmes for the development of employment opportunities provided by the sector	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
10H45 - 11H 00	<i>Coffee Break</i>	<i>RAAF</i>
11H - 12H00	Presentation of initiatives and experiences of ROPPA, APESS, RBM, Youth Organizations and Stakeholders (regional technical institutions, Banks and TFPs)	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
12h00- 13H	General discussion on all the country presentations, FOs (ROPPA, APESS, RBM), youth organizations and other stakeholders (regional technical institutions, banks and TFPs)	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
13H00 - 14H30	<i>Lunch Break</i>	<i>RAAF</i>
14H30 - 15H30		All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
15H30 - 17H30	Group Discussions on (i) the preparation of the youth for jobs in the agro-sylvo-pastoral, fisheries and agro-food sector	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
17H30	Adjournment of proceedings	
Day 2 (6 November, 2018)		
09H00 -1 0H30	Report on Group Discussions on (i) the preparation of the youth for jobs in the agro-sylvo-pastoral, fisheries and agro-food sector	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
13H30 - 10H50	<i>Coffee Break</i>	<i>RAAF</i>
10H50 - 13H00	Group discussions on (ii) public policy measures to facilitate the integration of the youth into the sector with much emphasis on the dimensions and nature of financial facility	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural

Regional Workshop on Sharing of Youth Employability Initiatives and Experiences in the Agro-Sylvo-Pastoral and Fisheries Sector 5-7 November, 2018		
TIME	ACTIVITIES	ORGANIZATION
13H00 - 14H30	Lunch Break	RAAF
14H30 - 15H30	Report of group discussions (ii) public policy measures to facilitate the integration of the youth into the sector with much emphasis on the dimensions and nature of financial facility	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
15H30 - 17H30	Group discussions on (iii) the promotion of youth employment monitoring in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
17H30	Adjournment of proceedings	
Day 3 (7 November, 2018)		
09H00 - 10H30	Report of Group discussions on (iii) promotion of youth employment monitoring in the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
10H30 - 10H50	Coffee Break	RAAF
10H50 - 13H00	General discussions on principles, experiences to be deepened and new adjustments of the roadmap	All participants, moderation by Hub Rural
13H00 - 14H30	Lunch Break	RAAF
14H30 - 15H30	Presentation and discussion and main conclusions of the workshop	Hub Rural (Presentation, moderation) - Discussions: All participants
15H30	Closing of Workshop	RAAF

8. Annex 1: Outline for country presentations

A. Socio-economic situation of the youth

- i. Socio-economic and environmental background of the country
(Brief recall of the following aspects)

- ✚ *Demographic characteristics*
- ✚ *Macroeconomic situation*
- ✚ *Economic and social development strategy*

- ii. Youth Employment
(Detailed Information on the following aspects)

- ✚ *Avenues for the youth without any access to vocational education*
- ✚ *Performance (rate of integration of educated youth)*
- ✚ *Sector-based distribution of youth-jobs (primary, secondary and tertiary sectors)*
- ✚ *Level and youth unemployment profiles*

- iii. Youth migrations
(Detailed Information on the following aspects)

- ✚ *Internal migrations: (rural exodus) scope, constraints, advantages, disadvantages, etc.*
- ✚ *Regional migrations: country of origin and host country, scope, motivations and advantages and disadvantages*
- ✚ *International migrations: origins, destinations, motivations, itineraries, constraints, advantages, disadvantages, etc.*

B. National policy direction or strategy on youth employment

- i. Policy direction/strategies

- ✚ *Objectives*
- ✚ *Expected results*
- ✚ *Operational pillars*

- ii. Types of policy measures established
(Detailed Information on the following aspects)

- ✚ *Nature and importance of investments*
- ✚ *Nature of the Youth Employment Fund (specify the different windows)*
- ✚ *Tax facilities (exemptions, rebates, exceptions, guarantee, payment of interest rate subsidies, etc.)*
- ✚ *Grants and support*
- ✚ *Simplification of procedures*
- ✚ *Others*

- iii. Modalities and experiences for the creation of youth-related jobs in the sector
(Detailed Information on the following aspects)

- ✚ *Institutions and programmes*
- ✚ *Types of investments*
- ✚ *Budgets allocated*
- ✚ *Procedures for the selection of beneficiaries*

- ✚ *Conditions for access*
- ✚ *Performance (number of jobs created).*
- iv. Description of the national vocational training system
(Detailed Information on the following aspects)
 - ✚ *Schools and vocational training sectors*
 - ✚ *Proportion of the youth with access to vocational training*
 - ✚ *Performances (number of trainees on annual basis)*
- V. Other rural vocational training centers (agriculture, stock breeding, forestry, fisheries)
(Detailed Information on the following aspects)
 - ✚ *Specializations and main subjects*
 - ✚ *Spatial capacity, admission requirements, duration of the training,*
 - ✚ *Certificates awarded and the main employment outlets.*
 - ✚ *Number of people trained.*
 - ✚ *Financing modalities*
 - ✚ *Performance (rate of integration of qualified trainees)*

C. Good practices and lessons learned

- I. Good practices
 - ✚ Concerning preparation of the youth
 - ✚ Regarding facilities (policy measures to be put into effect)
 - ✚ Supervisory mechanisms and monitoring of youth integrated/absorbed into the different links of the chain
- II. Lessons learned
 - ✚ Concerning the preparation of the youth
 - ✚ Regarding facilities (policy measures to be put into effect)
 - ✚ Supervisory mechanisms and monitoring of youth integrated/absorbed into the different links of the chain

D. Support expected by the country from the regional level in terms of youth training for integration into the rural sector: (i) *Description of the support needs for youth training for purposes of integration (precise description of measures sought), (ii) Final beneficiaries of the support (precise description of the categories of youth and their location).*

9. Annex 1: Outline for the presentation of Farmers' Organizations (ROPPA, RBM, APSS) and youth organizations.

- I. Specificities on the issue of youth employment in the sub-sectors
- II. Detailed description of experience on youth integration
 - a. Strategy implemented from experience
 - b. Component of programmes /projects
 - c. Modalities for the preparation of the youth

- d. Facilities put into effect to encourage/generate the interest of young people
 - e. Nature of activities
 - f. Duration of the experience
- III. Description of the results achieved
- a. Number of youth integrated
 - b. Effects/ impact on the production systems
 - c. Effects /impacts on the operational systems
 - d. Effects /impacts on the phenomenon of migration (rural exodus) at the level of the experimental zones
- III. Good Practices
- + In terms of preparing the youth
 - + On facilities (policy measures to be put into effect)
 - + Supervisory mechanisms and monitoring of youth integrated/absorbed into the different links of the chain
- IV. Lessons learned
- + In terms of preparing the youth
 - + On facilities (policy measures to be put into effect)
 - + Supervisory mechanisms and monitoring of the youth integrated/absorbed into the different links of the chain
- IV. Support expected from the regional level in terms of youth training for integration into the rural sector: (i) *Description of the support needs for youth training for purposes of integration (precise description of the measures solicited), (ii) Final beneficiaries of the support (precise description of the categories of youth and location*