



Press Release



Stakeholders of the Region to discuss the Operationalization of the Regional Food Security Reserve

Bamako, 8 May 2018, As part of the operationalization of the Regional Food Security Reserve in West Africa, the ECOWAS Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF) organizes a series of workshops at Massaley Hotel, Bamako, Mali, this week, from 7 to 11 May 2018. They are an integral part of the activities of the Food Security Storage Support Project in West Africa with the financial contribution of the European Union amounting to 56 million euros.

"With complementary objectives, these workshops seek solutions to support ECOWAS in the implementation of its Regional Food Security Storage Strategy based on complementarity / subsidiarity between three lines of defense to face food and nutrition crises that have become structural in the region", Mr. Salifou Ousseini, Executive Director of RAAF, explains.

These three lines are local stocks, national stocks and a Regional Food Security Reserve under construction by ECOWAS since 2013.

Throughout the week, participants will exchange views on the storage of the Regional Reserve's products as well as on specific activities of the Stocks Info Unit of the Reserve Management Technical Unit.

The first workshop, which started and ended yesterday, May 7, 2018, aimed to capitalize on the operations of the implementation experiences of the reception, storage and maintenance of the products of the Regional Food Security Reserve. Specifically, it made it possible to: (i) interact with the national storage bodies and partners on the obligations of each contracting party in the context of the reception, storage and maintenance operations of the products of the Reserve, (ii) review the tools for monitoring operations with national storage bodies, (iii) discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of products reception, storage and maintenance operations, (iv) summarize good inventory management practices and (v) make

recommendations towards improving the quality of storage services for the Regional Reserve's products.

The objective of the second workshop (8-9 May 2018) is to present to all stakeholders and to validate the Capitalization Study on Good Practices relating to Food Security Stocks Management. Experiences in managing food security stocks at country levels will be capitalized to facilitate the development of guidelines for a Regional Code of Conduct on good inventory management practices.

Finally, the third workshop (10-11 May 2018) will take stock of the functioning of the Stocks Info-Unit of the Reserve Management Technical Unit and its contribution in supporting decision-making for the operation of the Regional Food Security Reserve. Participants will also discuss trends in the current food situation and food outlook in the countries and take stock of the support of the Food Security Storage Support Project in West Africa to the implementation of contingency plans.

As a reminder, the Regional Food Security Storage Strategy is based on three complementary lines of defense: (i) the first line concerns local stocks, generally set up and managed by local organizations or decentralized communities, (ii) the second one is based on national security stocks managed by the States or co-managed by the States and their financial partners, (iii) the third line is the Regional Food Security Reserve which is complementary to the first two.

"Like many other ECOWAS countries, Mali remains committed to supporting this regional initiative, as expressed through the availability of storage warehouses offered by the Office des Produits Agricoles du Mali (OPAM) for the reception, storage and maintenance services for the products of the Regional Reserve," Mr. Lamine Dembélé, Secretary General of the Malian Ministry of Agriculture, reassures.

In short, the conclusions and recommendations that will emerge from these three workshops will allow ECOWAS to better monitor the implementation activities of the support project on the one hand, but also to particularly focus on the other hand, on the appropriation of the Regional Reserve by all actors, the capacity of the region to face food and nutritional crises that have become recurrent in the region and the sustainability of this regional solidarity and integration mechanism.

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