



ECOWAS Commission
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources
Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development

REGIONAL ACTION PLAN (2020 – 2025) TO ACCELERATE THE ECOWAS RICE OFFENSIVE

...Towards Achieving Rice Self-Sufficiency in West Africa by 2025

DECEMBER 2020

REGIONAL ACTION PLAN (2020 – 2025) TO ACCELERATE THE ECOWAS RICE OFFENSIVE

December 2020

This Action Plan of the Regional Rice Offensive was produced within the framework of the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) in line with the continental agenda, Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). Its objective is to accelerate the implementation of the “Rice Offensive” which was initiated in 2014 as an instrument to deliver on its promise of a self-sufficient West Africa in the rice sector by year 2025.

The Rice Offensive is a ten (10) year strategic Plan. The year 2019 marked the fifth year and first half of launching the initiative. This prompted a mid-term review by the ECOWAS to assess the status of its implementation in the region. The methodology consisted of a general survey, regional consultative meetings, and reviews. The general survey on the status of rice sector development in the ECOWAS Member States in relation to the Offensive was conducted in December 2019 and January 2020 by the Coalition for Africa Rice Development (CARD) Secretariat on behalf of ECOWAS to generate empirical information.

This was followed by the first regional consultative meeting of Member States, key actors and stakeholders, which took place at the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja on the 4th and 5th of February 2020. At this meeting, the status of implementation of the strategy was assessed, individual Member State’s progress in rice production and value chain development were presented, as well as an overview of existing initiatives, new trends and successes in the region’s rice sector. Finally, major constraints in the rice value chain that hampered the achievement of set goals were identified, and urgent solutions to stem the trend of over-reliance on imports while improving domestic rice production and competitiveness were recommended. The outcome of the review and the resulting recommendations that formed the basis for this Action Plan will help in charting the way forward to attain self-sufficiency in the region’s rice production in the next five (5) years.

The initial draft of the Action Plan was presented to all key actors and stakeholders on the 13th of October 2020 at the second regional meeting that held virtually, and there it was validated and adopted. Hence, this Action Plan was prepared and finalized based on the i) analysis of the information contained in the various questionnaires, which were administered to ECOWAS Member States during the survey, ii) status of the rice sector in relation to the Rice Offensive in each of the ECOWAS Member States as presented at the consultative meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, iii) review, experiences shared and recommended actions made by all actors and relevant stakeholders at both regional meetings, and iv) comments preceding and during the virtual validation workshop to generate this robust outcome.

The formulation process of the rice action plan was participatory and inclusive, involving the key actors and all the relevant stakeholders in the rice value chain in West Africa. Importantly, it benefited tremendously from the ECOWAS Commission and its Member States, technical and financial partners, institutions of technical cooperation, research organizations, inter-professional bodies and associations, farmer-based organizations, and the private sector. The comments provided by CARD, CARI, AfricaRice, Grow Africa and various experts on the initial draft are duly acknowledged.

This document was produced as part of the implementation of ECOWAP 2025 and the 2020 Annual Work Plan of the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development of ECOWAS (DARD).

The formulation process and preparation of this document was solely coordinated by the DARD, under the supervision of its Director, Alain Sy Traoré, with the support of partners and stakeholders. The following experts contributed to its preparation:

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ECOWAS strategic document for the implementation of Decision A/DEC.11/01/05 adopting the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) in accordance with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) expose inclusive and iterative work results. They are published for reference, information and exploitation to ECOWAS citizens and Member States, public, private, national, regional and international non-state actors.

Comments on this document may be sent to the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development of ECOWAS, by mail or e-mail.

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THE DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF ECOWAS (DARD)

Under the supervision of the Commissioner in charge of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources of ECOWAS, the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development, based in Abuja (Nigeria) is one of the five (5) constituent directorates of the Department.

Mandate

In accordance with Article 25 of ECOWAS revised treaty on Agricultural Development and Food Security, the mission of the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development is to implement the Decision A./DEC.11/01/05 adopting ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) and all decisions of ECOWAS steering, governance and decision-making bodies in the Agriculture and Food sector.

More specifically, its missions are to:

- a. Define, harmonize, adopt and monitor the implementation of policies, strategies, action plans, initiatives and regulations in agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector (ASPF),
- b. Define, harmonize and monitor the implementation of regional strategies and initiatives in Rural Development (land and agricultural infrastructure),
 1. Contribute to ensure Sanitary and Phytosanitary Security, Food and Nutrition Security,
- c. Ensure regional coordination of Development and Applied Research in the ASPF sector,
- d. Ensure the regional structuring of ASPF sectors and contribute to trade negotiations in the ASPF sector,
- e. Facilitate the harmonization of ASPF Information Systems and early warning systems,
- f. Negotiate and mobilize external financial resources for the implementation of projects, programs and initiatives in the ASPF sectors, and
- g. Develop and ensure regional and international cooperation with agricultural technical cooperation institutions and ASPF technical and financial partners.

Foreword



Evidently, rice has become the largest source of calories and food for more than 360million people in West Africa and has seen consistent increase in demand due to rapid urbanization and the changing consumer behavior in the past decade. The local production of rice covers only 60% of current demand largely because of historically poor yield growth that has not matched the increasing population growth. Increasing domestic rice production to satisfy the growing rice consumption and reduction of rice import has been a top priority for every West African government, decision makers, key rice stakeholders, and the private sector, which have in turn devoted significant resources toward that goal. However, rice self-

sufficiency ratio was 60% in 2018 while the populations' consumption needs are still essentially augmented through imports, owing to largely insufficient domestic production. This constitutes a strategic issue of prime importance for the region's economy that aims to attain self-sufficiency in rice production by year 2025.

In mitigating the structural factors constraining rice self-sufficiency in West Africa, the implementation of the “Rice Offensive” strategy of ECOWAS, which was launched in 2014 as one of the flagship programs to operationalize the ECOWAP in line with CAADP, needs to be accelerated within the framework of sustainable development. This realization prompted ECOWAS to take steps through regional meetings and reviews in order to find a way forward and foster new orientations irrespective of the individual context across West Africa in the face of new trends and challenges in the rice sector.

Consequently, the policy recommendations from the meetings, survey analysis and rice sector assessment in the Member States were articulated and harmonized to develop this Action Plan to fast track the implementation of the Rice Offensive strategy.

I wish to express my appreciation to the ECOWAS Member States, our technical and financial partners, the private sector and all stakeholders who shared their experiences and gave insights in charting the way forward. To successfully achieve the desired outcome will require a concerted effort and an effectively coordinated synergy of actions from all rice stakeholders in the region.

It is therefore my appeal that all partners in the region and stakeholders will continue to support the ECOWAS Commission in her quest for rice self-sufficiency in West Africa by year 2025.

Sékou SANGARÉ
Commissioner
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources
ECOWAS Commission

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AfricaRice	Africa Rice Centre/ <i>Centre Africain pour le Riz</i>
AGRA	Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa
ARAP	African Rice Advocacy Platform
ARICA	Advance Rice for Africa
BIDC/EBID	<i>Banque d'Investissement et de Développement de la CEDEAO</i> /ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
BOAD	<i>Banque Ouest Africaine de Développement</i> /West Africa Development Bank
BOA	Bank of Agriculture
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program
CARD	Coalition for African Rice Development
CARI	Competitive African Rice Initiative
CET	Common External Tariff
CILSS	<i>Comité permanent inter-État de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel</i> (Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel)
CORAF	West African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CTA	<i>Le Centre Technique De Coopération Agricole Et Rurale</i> /Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation
DAENR	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources
DARD	Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECOWAP	ECOWAS Agricultural Policy
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IWMI	International Water Management Institute
JAK-F	John Agyekum Kuffour Foundation
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
NAIP	National Agricultural Investment Program
NARIs	National Agricultural Research Institutions
NERICA	New Rice for Africa
NRDS	National Rice Development Strategies
PPP	Public-Private-Partnerships
RIFAN	Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria
ROPPA	<i>Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et des Producteurs agricoles de l'Afrique de l'ouest</i> /Network of West African Farmer and Agricultural Producer Organisations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SARS-CoV-2	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2
ToT	Training of Trainers

Executive Summary

Agriculture plays a fundamental role in the economic wellbeing of nations and particularly in Africa where it is the main economic activity of 60 percent of the population. Its potential to stimulate economic processes by securing food through production and reducing poverty by creating wealth through the employment it generates, serves as the implement for delivering on Africa's promise of a sustainably developed continent that can feed itself. The food crisis of 2008 that resulted in widespread food insecurity and malnutrition in the continent and by extension in West Africa, necessitated the development of a sustainable strategy to prevent such occurrence in the future. The ECOWAS rice strategy “Rice Offensive” was launched in 2014 with the aim of engendering a **sustainable and sustained revival of rice cultivation in West Africa** and to provide support for the National Rice Development Strategies of Member States towards achieving rice self-sufficiency by 2025. The strategy aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 1 and 2, CAADP, ECOWAP, the RAIPs-FNS and NAIPs-FNS. Within the region, the total production of rice in 2017 reached 14.2 million MT¹ while the domestic demand was 23.5 million MT². In the same year, consumption of rice was 15.86 million MT³, and this is expected to increase to 22 million MT by 2025. West Africa is far from being self-sufficient in meeting its rice demand needs. The deficit in its rice supply chain has been met through massive imports from Asia for more than four decades.

Clearly, the region has experienced rice insufficiency over the years due to several factors including rising population growth, dietary changes and insufficient yield on existing land. Most of ECOWAS Member states have lagged below the average 60% regional self-sufficiency ratio and none has reached the 100% targeted ratio to become fully self-sufficient in rice. However, there has been a relative progress in West Africa since the “Rice Offensive” was launched in 2014, and it is a reflection of (1) individual countries making significant efforts; for instance, in 2017 Mali reached 88% rice self-sufficiency, closely followed by Nigeria (72%), Sierra Leone (69%) and Guinea (66%), (2) Innovations and Research & Development playing a key role, with sustained efforts from regional initiatives such as CORAF, AfricaRice, and others, and (3) regional coordination that is essential to obtain common goals, build collaboration and linkages between the multi-stakeholders in the rice value chain and innovation system for mutual benefits in the region.

The year 2019 marked the fifth year of implementation of the Rice Offensive initiative and its impact on the rice sector was appraised. The key questions that were posed included: Is the strategy meeting its set-out objectives? Were countries implementing their individual National Rice Development Strategies (NRDS) in line with the regional Rice Offensive? Are there new issues and challenges in the rice sector that need to be considered in the process? And what should be the next step to actualize this vision of attaining rice self-sufficiency by 2025? As a result, a regional consultative workshop organized by ECOWAS in Abuja on the 4th and 5th February 2020 led to the assessment of the implementation status of the strategy, the situational appraisal of rice sector

¹ Milled Equivalent

² Rice demand is defined as the total volume of rice used for seed, food consumption, feed, stock and other uses in the country or region - ECOWAS Rice Fact Book, 2019

³ Rice consumption is defined as the total volume of rice consumed as food by people in individual countries or for the region. The margin observed in the amount of rice consumed as food and the region's domestic demand in the same year (2017) is attributed to other form of utilization as highlighted in reference 2 above.

development in individual Member States, identification of challenges hampering the sector, while also recognizing new trends and success stories from which lessons are being learnt. The policy learning will enrich the current process and future programs, and it helped in the formulation of solutions and charting a new pathway for achieving the target by 2025. The projections for self-sufficiency were made with due consideration for the binding parameters. We concluded that achieving rice self-sufficiency in 2025 requires an increasingly sustained efforts in production and productivity levels that meet the pace of the population growth. Consequently, the regional value addition to catalyze country level rice sector development were identified under six strategic pillars as follow:

- 1) Policy and Regulatory measures to render the rice sector competitive,
- 2) Finance and Public Private Partnership (PPP) mechanism,
- 3) Knowledge sharing and management (including Digitization for an improved RVC in the region),
- 4) Efficient Trade and Marketing Systems along the Rice Value Chain in West Africa,
- 5) Coordination of National inter-professional organizations, and
- 6) Coordination and Management of the Action Plan.

The policy and regulatory measures to be taken are intended to render the rice sector more productive and competitive. This will be done by supporting the effective operationalization of rice policies and strategies at the regional and national levels and orienting these regulations toward addressing challenges relating to barriers that hinder marketing of agri-inputs and outputs, increasing locally produced rice and thereby reducing the influence of the international market and imports on the markets. These measures will include providing support for the implementation of existing agricultural inputs regulations adopted by the countries and promotion of policy incentives measures for the rice sector, while also formulating additional regulations where needed.

In financing the rice sector, ECOWAS will continue to leverage on Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) and partners' support to unlock the potential of the rice sector in the economy. ECOWAS will facilitate the creation of an enabling environment to increase access to market and profitability in the rice value chain to attract more investment. Best practices of Public-Private-Partnership arrangements such as the one adopted by the Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria (RIFAN) and other models in the region and elsewhere will be consolidated and up-scaled alongside successful examples of subsidy models, tax reduction and credit systems. All this coupled with a strong financial resource mobilization system and contribution from partners and stakeholders will be engendered within this framework. An appropriate advocacy mechanism will be adopted to promote successful models for financing the rice sector.

Knowledge management tools and approaches will be appropriately deployed to establish the regional rice-based knowledge sharing and management system, strengthen the extension system to disseminate productivity boosting technologies while facilitating access to technological and market information for value chain actors. Effective and adequate use of knowledge will help provide solutions to most of the constraints in the rice production system through improved access to technology, agri-inputs, machinery, finance and market. To mitigate the risks associated with climate change such as drought, dry spells, floods, high temperatures and invasive pests; more effort will be devoted to the promotion of climate smart agricultural practices, the



dissemination of new rice genetic materials tolerant to the existing and emerging stresses, increased use of lowlands and irrigated areas and upscaling soil water management best practices, pest and disease control to increase the grain yield from the present 2.2 MT/ha to at least 3.8-4.0 MT/ha to achieve the target set.

With regards to trade and marketing, ECOWAS and its Member States will take the necessary steps to harmonize tariffs, regulate rice imports and structure the regional market through:

- the review of the Common External Tariff (CET) and harmonization of safeguard measures,
- promotion of norms and quality standards along the entire value chain
- support for the establishment of a sub-regional rice commodity exchange system,
- strengthening cross-border cooperation on rice trade,
- promotion of market information system, and
- reinforcing intra-regional rice trade among the ECOWAS Member States.

The national inter-professional organizations will be effectively coordinated, oriented, and strengthened to drive the upscale of agricultural technologies and innovations by capitalizing on their capacities and resources. Better involvement and empowerment of women and youths in the rice sector will be supported. The most impactful models for clustering farmers in the rice systems will be promoted to enhance farmers' access to technology, inputs, market, and credit. The SMEs within the rice value chain will be assisted to adopt models of robust business plans.

And finally, ECOWAS will facilitate the coordination and management of the action plan. From the validation of this new Rice Action Plan to mapping of projects, programmes and initiatives in the rice sector to foster synergy and eliminate overlapping of functions. To effectively manage this action plan, a technical coordination unit will be established, and the regional multi-stakeholder rice task force will be revamped and supported for the implementation rice offensive under the overall leadership of ECOWAS. ECOWAS will coordinate regional organizations alongside projects and programs to support the implementation of the action plan with a strong monitoring and evaluation system.

A budget of **US\$ 43,097,000** will be required to implement these accelerated strategic actions over a five-year period from 2020 - 2025.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. Agriculture stands as the main economic activity in the African continent serving as a major source of employment to majority of its population and agricultural development strategies have been paramount in West Africa in recent times. This is evidenced by national and regional governments efforts at promoting essential crops and cereal production in a bid to ensure food and nutrition security, and contribute to national implementation of the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development goals 1 and 2. In 2019, the global grain production was 2.8 billion MT and rice emerged as the world's third most-produced cereal (728 million MT) after maize (1.12 billion MT) and wheat (732 million MT) based on volume⁴. Cultivated in more than a hundred countries on a total harvested area of approximately 163 million hectares in 2019 alone, it is regarded as the daily staple source of calorie for 3.5 billion people globally. West Africa represents the largest populated sub-region on the African continent with the advantage of possessing large arable land that holds great potential for its agricultural development agenda.
2. Rice has become the fastest growing food source in West Africa, having shifted from being a special treat meal to a regular staple food in most homes. Rice production has gained momentum in West Africa, with production increasing from 9.65 million MT in 2012 to 14.2 million MT⁵ in 2017⁶. The sub-region of West Africa produced an estimate of 56% of the total rice cultivated in Africa in 2018 alone⁷, indicating its increasing array of agricultural and cropland in the last few years. However, total rice demand in West Africa continues to grow at a rate higher than production and it far outstrips the supply possible from local production. Rice consumption in the sub-region grows by 3.0% per year as population grows by 2.73% annually⁸; equally, the yield growth of 1.03% per annum (2003-2017) does not match the population growth rate of 2.73% per annum in the same period. The local production only covered about 60% of domestic demand of over 23 million MT in 2017⁹. The increase in demand has been attributed to the increasing population, rapid urbanization and changes in consumer behaviour. This trend over the years has led to an increase in importation of foreign rice from majorly Asian countries by ECOWAS Member States to meet the deficit.
3. The central place occupied by rice in the cereals and food systems of the West African population cannot be overemphasized. After the independence era, rice consumption in African countries expanded rapidly. This expansion continues because of both its relatively low caloric cost for a large segment of the population, the ease of its cooking by families especially in cities, and population growth. It is both a strategic and political crop and no less the main source of calorie of cereal origin (11% in 1961, more than 27% since 2009¹⁰).

⁴ USDA

⁵ Rice production is captured here as the milled equivalent

⁶ ECOWAS Rice Fact Book, 2019

⁷ FAOSTAT accessed on the 1st September 2020

⁸ World Rice Outlook, 2016 and ECOWAS Rice Fact Book, 2019

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ FAOSTAT

Indeed, the food crisis of 2008 caused by soaring commodity prices revealed that rice has become a strategic product that needs to be promoted to improve people's food and nutrition security in the region. The international rice market is itself a surplus market where prices often fluctuate upwards. This availability favours imports to offset consumption deficits and strong demand in West Africa, forcing higher foreign exchange expenditures that negatively affects public financial reserves, the balance of payments and to the detriment of investment in local agriculture.

4. According to the ECOWAS Rice Factbook (2019), consumption of rice in West Africa was 15.86 million metric tonnes in 2017 and is projected to grow to 22 million metric tons by 2025 based on the trends in the last five years. This is close to a 40% increase between 2017 and 2025 with per capita consumption equally expected to rise from 43kg in 2017 to 49kg in 2025¹¹. Similarly, rice gained market share from local cereals such as maize, sorghum and millet even in the Sahel, their traditional areas of consumption.
5. Rice cultivation in West Africa is of varied production systems within the ecosystem and is conventionally classified as irrigated, rain-fed, mangrove or deep-water. Apart from lowlands and irrigated areas, productivity has been low due to some factors. Consequently, rice production and productivity has been encouraged through public investments in hydro-agricultural development, research, extension, use of improved seeds, fertilizer, herbicides, training and organization of farmer. In 2017, over 10 million hectares of land was harvested and 21,280 million metric tonnes yield output¹² compared to about 5million hectares and 15,973 million metric tonnes in 2007. Unfortunately, rainfed rice still accounts for a large share of regional production and its increase is to the detriment of natural resources, particularly the soil, whose deforestation and declining fertility give rise to increasingly short fallows.
6. Although qualitative and quantitative improvement has been witnessed in the rice sector in the region, yet West Africa's rice self-sufficiency ratio stands at 60%¹³. Notably among the Member States, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Cote d'Ivoire have achieved 88%, 72%, 69%, 66%, 59% and 52% self-sufficiency in rice production respectively, and the remaining countries fell below 50%. The gap between supply and domestic demand for rice has persisted leading to massive importation of foreign rice from the international market, which was estimated at over 9.5 million MT in 2017.

1.1 ECOWAP/CAADP

7. The issue of ensuring food and nutrition security in the region is long standing and a recognition of the need to achieve food sovereignty, coupled with a high level of commitment to solve the food insecurity and poverty challenge, led the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to adopt the

¹¹ ECOAGRIS in ECOWAS Rice Fact Book, 2019

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) in 2005 as an instrument for the coordination of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in West Africa through the Regional Agricultural Investment Plan for Food and Nutrition Security (RAIP-FNS) and the National Agricultural Investment Plan for Food and Nutrition Security (NAIP-FNS).

8. The NAIP-FNS addresses the concerns and priorities for agricultural development in each country while RAIP-FNS complements the NAIPs, by addressing the regional dimensions, managing interdependencies between countries and organising their cooperation on common issues. RAIP-FNS has identified under its first specific objective, the promotion of five strategic commodities, namely rice, maize, cassava, livestock and meat, and fish products. It aims at achieving, in the short and medium terms, food security of the people, through substantial increase in production. It also aims to achieve in the long term, food sovereignty through the reduction of food imports from outside Africa, while ensuring the promotion and full integration of the regional market.

1.2 Regional Rice Offensive

9. The global food crisis of 2008 was the wake-up call to the reality of food insecurity in the region, and it served as the catalyst that spurred the region into definite and targeted actions that will foster sustainable agricultural development. It should be noted that agriculture is high on the ECOWAS Regional Security agenda among other eight sectors. Therefore, in a bid to avert the adverse effects and recurrence of such crisis, the ECOWAS Commission initiated the “Regional Offensive Strategy” for selected agricultural commodities as part of the encompassing approach to accelerate the implementation of its agricultural policy (ECOWAP/CAADP) in the sub-region. It is a key mechanism put in place to intensify the fight against hunger by contributing to the promotion of strategic products for food security and sovereignty in the West Africa.
10. As a result, the ECOWAS “Rice Offensive” was launched in 2014 and aimed at a sustainable and sustained revival of rice cultivation while supporting the National Rice Development Strategies (NRDS) of Member States to achieve rice self-sufficiency by 2025 in West Africa. Its objectives contribute to ECOWAP in achieving rice self-sufficiency, facilitating Member States to become rice exporters, achieving food and nutrition security, and finally, achieving economic development of the Rice Value Chain in the ECOWAS region by 2025.
11. The ‘Rice Offensive’ was planned for ten (10) years with a target of a 5.6% annual rate of increase in rice production to outstrip an anticipated 4.4% annual rate of increase in consumption¹⁴. Four areas of intervention were identified to address the main challenges facing the regional rice economy. These strategic axes were aimed at supporting actions defined by the national and regional strategies, in order to maximize the expected results. They are presented in Table 1.1

¹⁴ ECOWAS Regional Rice Offensive Document 2015.

Table 1.1: The Four (4) Strategic Axes of Rice Offensive

Axes	Activities	Expected Results	
1.	Sustainably Increase Rice Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of seed production • Support seed certification • Facilitate producers' access to improved seeds. • Make fertilizer distribution network denser. • Improve access of rice growers to fertilizers • Promote irrigation for rice growing purposes • Facilitate the development of small-scale irrigation schemes in the major production basins. • Adopt and disseminate material and equipment • Facilitate access to rice growing agricultural machinery and equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality seeds are available in sufficient quantity. • Access to fertilizers is facilitated • Rice production is secured by irrigation development at different scales. • Access to material and equipment is facilitated
2.	Process and Promote Local Rice Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalize on best practices in rice processing method and technology. • Facilitate the adoption of good processing practices • Promote the installation of modern processing units in large production areas. • Establish incentives for private investment • Promote public-private partnership at different levels • Accelerate local rice standardization • Support the large production areas' product quality labeling • Develop a communication system for the consumption of local rice. • Encourage initiatives that promote local rice consumption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative processing technologies and processes are adopted and disseminated • Processing methods are modernized • Local rice is normalized and standardized • Consumption of local rice is promoted.
3.	Promote the Regional Local Rice Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the regulatory framework of regional rice trade. • Conduct CET impact studies on the regional rice market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate structural reforms are carried out • Trade facilitation actions are promoted.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance local rice storage capacity. • Promote a regional stock exchange of local rice. • Support the emergence and operation of multi-stakeholder consultation frameworks. 	
4.	Improve the Rice Development Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the capacity of rice research. • Develop an information and decision support system. • Improve rice statistics. • Strengthen the capacity of national and regional stakeholders. • Gender mainstreaming in programme activities. • Integrate the environmental dimension and management of greenhouse gas emissions into the programme. • Implement and operate the steering committee. • The Programme management unit is functional. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacity of institutions and regional actors are strengthened • Gender and environmental aspects are considered • The program is well managed

12. The year 2019 marked the fifth year and the first half of the implementation of Rice Offensive, and the impact on the region's rice sector needed to be appraised. Therefore, a regional consultative meeting of stakeholders was organized at the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja on the 4th and 5th of February 2020 with the aim of assessing the status of implementation of the strategy, evaluating the status of rice sector development in individual Member States while also recognizing new trends and success model stories that need to be considered in the process, identifying challenges that hampers the achievement of the set objectives, and finding solutions for strategic actions to achieve the self-sufficiency target in the next five (5) years.

13. This meeting was organized by ECOWAS with the support the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) and the Competitive African Rice Initiative (GiZ-CARI), in partnership with other key actors and stakeholders. The key actors included the ECOWAS Member States, development partners, farmer-based organizations, inter-professional bodies and the private sector. Consequently, the meeting achieved its objectives with the status of individual country's progress in rice production and value chain development assessed, an overview of all regional initiatives and success stories were provided and shared, and the roadmap to accelerate the implementation of regional rice offensive for self-sufficiency in the next five years was charted.

14. As a conclusion from the consultative meeting, it was determined that there is an urgent need to develop a Regional Action Plan that will accelerate the implementation of the Rice

Offensive for the next five years (2020 – 2025). The subsequent sections of this document discuss the issues and challenges related to West Africa's rice economy, future course of actions as well as the planned strategic actions to drive the actualization of the rice self-sufficiency goal and attaining zero import by 2025.

1.3 Issues and challenges related to the transformation of West Africa's rice economy

15. The increasingly important role rice plays in the region's agricultural economy and food systems is more evident today than the years before. Its ability to generate employment and income in all segments of the value chain for the benefit of young people and women (also in both rural and urban areas) and fight against income poverty; combined with the steady increase in demand for rice markets, and the limited purchasing power of urban consumers, all give rice a high social and political economic sensitivity in West African countries. The strategic planned action document for West Africa reviews three main challenges and other emerging issues facing rice productivity among Member states:
 - a. The first is the intensification of production systems sustainably and substantially to increase the volume of domestic supply. According to AfricaRice (2018), only 8% of the region's irrigable land is being utilized while the remaining 92% viable irrigable land is left unutilized. This system is unsustainable given the commitment to develop irrigable land for agriculture in West Africa. As a result, there are significant productivity margins to be reaped at the level of all the production systems, particularly on the sites of the old projects in the course of rice development (hydro-agricultural development companies, etc.) and this covers rain fed systems, lowlands and plains, irrigated or not. In this respect, the dissemination of good agricultural and agronomic practices and the development of agricultural entrepreneurship as part of the capacity building of farmers are essential.
 - b. The second challenge is the grouping of paddy production offers, the adoption and dissemination of adapted and profitable transformation processes (economically, financially, socially and environmentally), as well as access to credit for farmers and processors/mills to improve the competitiveness of local rice. Paddy offers are highly fragmented and result in additional costs and lost time in collection operations. Rural service infrastructures (bridges and roadways) are in poor condition with no appropriate means of transport. The storage infrastructure is inadequate and most of the paddy shelling equipment is old steel mills that do not separate the rice seed from the rich oil and other nutrients. Large, modern hulling units currently process less than 15% of the region's total paddy production. The quality of husked rice is very heterogeneous and sometimes incorporates impurities that reduces its price / quality competitiveness in many markets of the States in the region. Thus, there is an important stake of modernizing the equipment for parboiling, shelling and polishing with high benefits in terms of improvement of the quality of milled rice, the recovery of the rice bran, and improving the competitiveness of the end product.
 - c. The third issue concerns the marketing / distribution of local rice in the domestic markets of the region. At this level, there is still the issue of the tariff instruments to

be deployed at the borders – the initial tariff rate of 10% of the CET is considered insufficient and has been recommended for upward review to 35% in the 5th band, where rice will be regarded as one of the special commodities of economic importance in the region. Although the recommendation and the review of tariff is yet to become operationalized in the Member States, it will however encourage productive investment, on the one hand and facilitate the mechanisms for the regulation of the internal market (incentive measures for the distribution of local rice in the markets, establishment of multi-stakeholder consultation framework, access to credit by distributors), on the other hand. This dimension is also related to that of improving the overall business environment of the rice economy in all segments and it involves issues of governance, gender, economic, social and environmental impact.

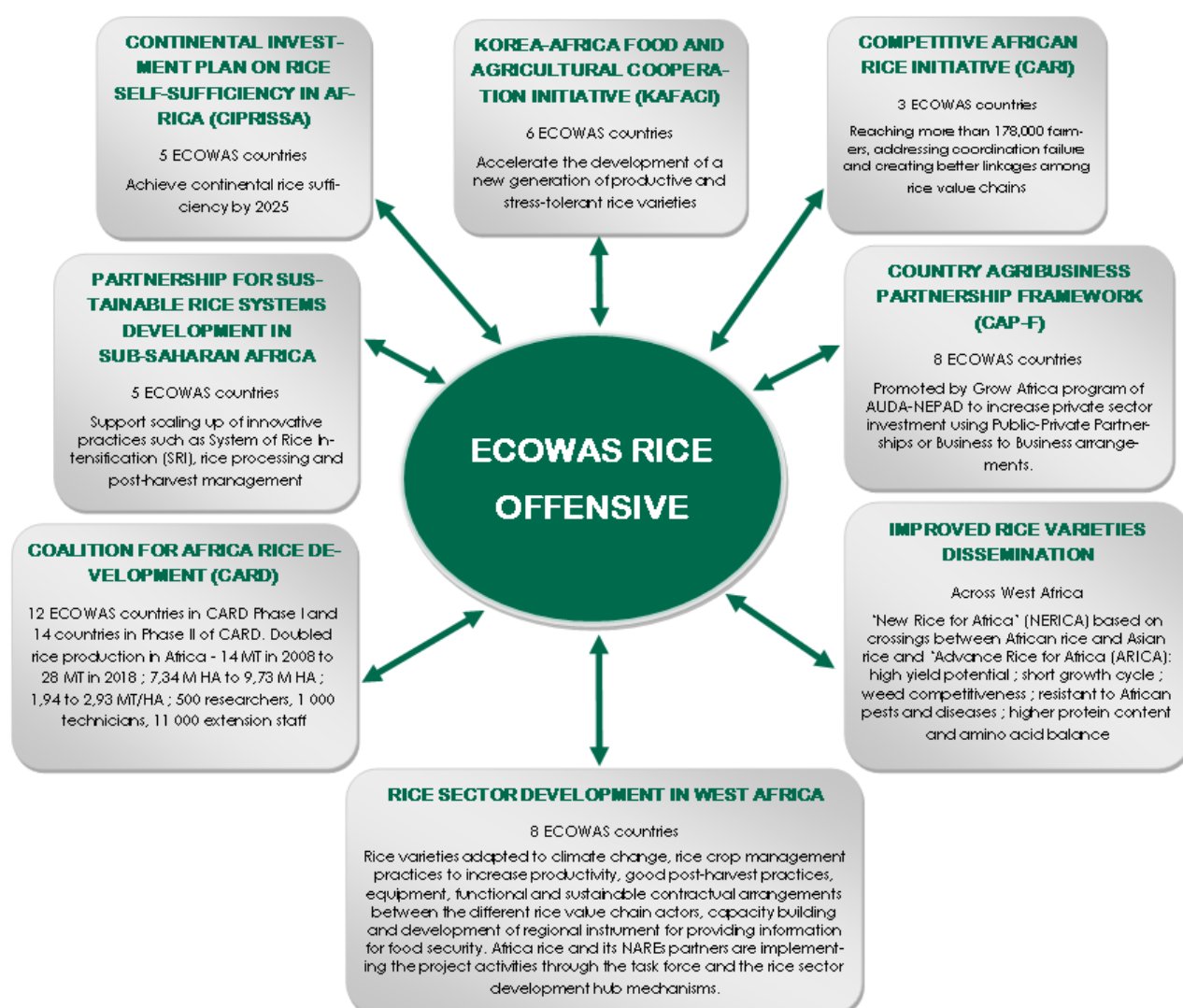
- d. Aside the above listed challenges, other key challenges identified during the consultative meeting as impediments to efforts in attaining self-sufficiency and active implementation of the rice offensive at both national and regional levels respectively include: inadequate supply of and use of good quality agri-inputs; non-mastery of water management practices; the adverse effects of climate change that causes flooding in some areas leading to loss of crops and drought in other places resulting in low productivity; inadequate mechanized equipment adapted to farmers' circumstances; unreliable source of energy for agro-industry; inadequate access to finance; competition in international trade and non-mastery of the trade norms and standards; insufficient capacity and inadequate genetic materials to adapt to climate change and to build resilience; weak engagement of the private sector in the commodity value chain; weak capacity of the inter-professional bodies to fully capitalize on the opportunities that the value chain offers and importantly, poor resource mobilization strategies to implement the rice offensive.
- e. Over the last ten years, a new issue, considered crucial to ensure the sustainable development of the rice sector, is that of the economic model capable of building partnership relationships between all the actors evolving in all segments of the industry. Indeed, the 2008 crisis highlighted the weaknesses of traditional production systems characterized by the omnipresence of the state in the various links: from the supply of inputs to the marketing of the finished product, through extension and processing. The modern private agri-food sector was largely absent from the farming systems, which are mostly dominated by small family farms sometimes backed by cooperatives and other public and par public offices. This system is considered the source of the three main challenges and other issues discussed earlier.
- f. Most recently, the global pandemic related to the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) that causes the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has not only ravaged all nations of the world but greatly impacted all sectors of the economy in an unprecedented manner. The agricultural sector was worst hit by this occurrence and the rice sector was not excluded from its devastating effect in terms of production, processing, marketing, and trade. In West Africa, both rice production and processing have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. While most

rice producers had huge challenges in accessing inputs – seeds, fertilizers and pesticides due to various lockdown measures and the reluctance of many actors along the value chain to travel, processors operated below the capacity of their processing facilities as a result of decline in domestic and export trade of milled rice, as well as limited availability of paddy rice due to logistic disruptions. Further compounding the challenges posed by the pandemic in the rice industry is the attendant problems of border closure and restriction of vehicle movement across their borders that impacted intra-regional rice marketing and trade, even though food items were categorized as essential commodities during this period.

16. In a bid to address the aforementioned challenges, and in line with the economic model to be promoted to boost the rice sector in West Africa, it seems important to ensure inclusivity in the partnership structure of all groups of professional actors in rice production and consumption; this is essential in the structuring of value chains. This inclusivity is crucial to effectively facilitate participation of everyone in the creation of value addition to the sector and to mitigate the numerous constraints concerning:
 - a. The difficulties that predominantly confronts small producers, such as; gaining access to good quality inputs at a good price and on time, campaign for credits at attractive rates, and ensuring a lucrative price for paddy,
 - b. The arduousness of work in family farms, the non-development of irrigation, the low technical and entrepreneurial training of farmers, especially young people and women,
 - c. The difficulty for mills to access land for the establishment of agro-industrial cores including industrial sites and if necessary, an agricultural perimeter,
 - d. The implementation of local storage facilities and modern paddy processing units to minimize post-harvest losses, improve the quality of the finished product and make it more competitive at the local and regional market,
 - e. Difficulties in regular supply of mini and large paddy rice mills to ensure full utilization of their installed capacity and return on investments,
 - f. The fluidification of the local and regional market that is still subject to obstacles whose lifting suggests appropriate measures at borders and within countries,
 - g. Inadequate public funding in a sector such as agriculture and by extension the rice industry, despite the commitments of Maputo and Malabo. The achievement of the 2025 targets set by ECOWAS and SDG 2 to eliminate hunger in 2030 now requires, on the one hand, improving the quality of public investment in the sector and on the other, mobilize private investment and build a sustainable partnership at the local level based on trust and mutual respect for the benefits of each actor.

1.4 Initiatives in the West African Rice Sector

17. Numerous initiatives have been proposed to boost domestic rice production in the West Africa region. Indeed, both the regional institutions and the states have adopted strategies aimed at achieving rice self-sufficiency with deadlines ranging from 2020 to 2025. At the country levels, fourteen (14) of the Member States have national rice development strategies designed to operate within a ten-year frame (2008 – 2018). And for all of them, these are being reviewed with the second generation of strategies (NRDS-2) under preparation with the exception of Benin and Togo who have completed the process of review and have published their NRDS-2 to function from 2019 – 2025 and 2019 – 2030 respectively. Many of them are putting restrictions on the importation of rice to enable the development of the local rice value chains. These are key mechanisms put in place to revamp rice production and significantly reduce rice importation by the year 2025 in the region. Hence, the "Rice Offensive" has become the reference for many initiatives by states and development partners, as shown in the diagram below (figure 1.1):



*Only the regional initiatives and programmes that operate in more than two ECOWAS countries have been captured here.

Figure 1.1: Regional Initiatives supporting the ECOWAS Rice Offensive 2014 – 2019

1.5 Plan of Action

18. In the section that follows, we give a summary of the important aspects of the strategic plan of action for the acceleration of the implementation of the Regional Rice Offensive

- i. **Approach:** As discussed in the introduction, there is a need to reorientate our strategy for the rice sector development in West Africa. This plan of action for increase in production and competitiveness of the West African rice, is based on:
 - a. The analysis of the information contained in the various questionnaires, which were administered in the months of December 2019 and January 2020 by the CARD Secretariat on behalf of ECOWAS.
 - b. This analysis made it possible to draw a summary report giving an overview of the rice value chain in the ECOWAS region in relation to the Offensive.
 - c. The overview of rice sector status presentations of the ECOWAS Member States at the consultative meeting held on the 4th and 5th February 2020.
 - d. The review and experiences shared during the consultative meeting of all actors and relevant stakeholders in the West African Rice Sector while keeping in view all the recommendations, and
 - e. The comments preceding and during the rice action plan validation workshop held virtually on the 13th October 2020 to generate a more robust Plan.
 - f. The participants at the Rice Action Plan Validation Workshop include: the ECOWAS Commission and its Member States, technical and financial partners, institutions of technical cooperation, research organizations, inter-professional bodies and associations, farmer Based organizations, and the private sector.

Overall, the process of developing the rice action plan was participatory and inclusive, involving the key actors and all the relevant stakeholders in the rice value chain in West Africa.

- ii. **Important Feature of the plan:** The document does not only contain the technical and scientific aspects of the proposed plan, but also organizational, financial, managerial, and other details that are necessary to get the plan of actions initiated and operationalized. We hereby present the planned actions to drive the region's rice self-sufficiency agenda and its targets for 2025.

2.0 Orientation for Future Actions

2.1 Contributions from Regional Partners

19. To achieve the set target by 2025, partners from GIZ - CARI, CARD, AGRA, RIFAN and ECOWAS shared their strategies in addressing the challenges confronting the rice sector. The enormous resources in West Africa (land, water, and youthful manpower to name a few) gives the region a comparative advantage over other regions in Africa with regards to the production of rice for consumption or exportation. The increasing demand was noted to have emerged from the rising population, urban migration, change in dietary habits, among others. Although the rice sector has experienced growth, consumption still exceeds production.
20. Land expansion associated with increased production underscores the predominant nature of rice farming in most of the West African countries and this buttresses the need to give priority to crop intensification to improve both crop productivity and production. Small scale farmers at the heart of production need credit and subsidy as well as user friendly modernized technologies and innovations. The need for the Member States to re-launch massive investment in the rice sector using PPP was stressed with the examples given in Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Burkina Faso.
21. The need to persuade the private sector and the youth of the enormous opportunities in the agricultural sector including rice was emphasized. The success story of Nigeria where the Rice Federation of Nigeria has facilitated the creation of job opportunities for about 12 million members working in the rice value chain under contractual and PPP arrangements needs emulation. Thus, the effective collaboration between the public sector and Inter Professional Bodies was regarded essential for job creation and increased production.
22. Emergence of small, medium and large-scale rice processing enterprises in the region to re-dynamize the rice sector was noted. Restructuring the domestic and regional markets, regulation of imports and investment in infrastructure (irrigation, processing and market) and promotion of market standards and food safety are of utmost importance and need attention moving forward.
23. The models and the case studies from the regional institutions represent an enormous capital that will provide support for the implementation of the rice offensive during the next five years. Unifying these organizations in a consortium and anchoring them to ECOWAS and its Member States will contribute to accelerating the implementation of the Rice Offensive. Also, to be noted is that these organizations bring capital in the form of:
 - GIZ - CARI's model on targeted training-the-trainer in GAP and Agri-Business management along the value chain and linking value chain actors to matching grants to amplify impact;
 - AfricaRice's portfolio of farmer friendly technologies along the rice value chain, a model for engaging the value chain actors to upscale adoption and the extensive knowledge of the rice sector;

- IPAR’s knowledge in regional and international trade norms and standards in regularizing import – export and promoting domestic production;
 - GrowAfrica’s case study outcomes to improve agri-businesses; explore opportunities for investment along the rice value chain (attraction of local and foreign investments); increase market access and risk management;
 - IFPRI support to Member States in the prioritization of commodities and areas of focus and the development and implementation of the National Agricultural Investment Programs.
 - CARD – Value chain analysis; national imports and consumption trends and price competitiveness, as well as the support provided for the NRDS in the Member States.
24. These innovations, models and knowledge alongside those of AGRA, CORAF and other organizations, if synergized constitute a regional asset to enhance impact.

2.2 Considerations for Member States, 2020 – 2025

25. Most Member States have developed policies and national strategies to support rice sector development and are being implemented with support from technical and financial partners and bilateral projects. This lays the grounds and provides an opportunity for an accelerated growth in the rice sector in the coming years. Whilst all the ECOWAS Member States import rice and are showing growth in domestic production, there are marked differences between countries making significant advances (notably Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Ivory Coast) and those lagging.
26. The emergence of small, medium and large-scale milling enterprises, inter-professional bodies and PPP arrangements in these countries constitute a driver for success and this needs to be emulated for up-scaling. Success stories and successful models in the stronger rice producing/processing countries, particularly in Asia, will need to be adopted and promoted regionally. In becoming more competitive, infrastructure development with focus on (land development and preparation, irrigation, planting, harvesting, processing and storage) alongside the promotion of grain quality standards will need to be strongly supported while adopting productivity enhancing innovations for crop intensification.
27. To coordinate and facilitate country level rice development agenda, six strategic pillars were identified and agreed upon at the regional consultative meeting to drive and accelerate the implementation of the Rice Offensive for the next five years (2020 – 2025). The six pillars are presented in figure 2.1.



Figure 2:1 The Six Strategic Pillars for Accelerated Implementation of Rice Offensive

28. These strategic six pillars have been rolled out into an Action Plan that embraces the outcomes from the consultations, survey, plenary presentations, group work and discussions to chart the roadmap in the short-, medium-, and long term. This is expected to positively impact the region’s rice sector. The various components of the Action Plan align with the original purpose of the Regional Rice Offensive and the four axes identified as its areas of intervention as highlighted in Table 2.1. However, there are new insights and approaches to the implementation of the activities as detailed in Section 3. The activities alongside the timelines and organizations to fast-track the implementation of the Rice Offensive Strategy in achieving its objective within the timeframe (2020 – 2025) are presented in Table 3.1.

Table 2.1: The Six (6) Components of the Action Plan aligning with the Four (4) Axes of the Rice Offensive.

Regional Rice Offensive Four Axes		Rice Offensive Activities	Rice Action Plan Six Components
1.	Sustainably Increase Rice Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of seed production • Support seed certification • Facilitate producers' access to improved seeds. • Make fertilizer distribution network denser. • Improve access of rice growers to fertilizers • Promote irrigation for rice growing purposes • Facilitate the development of small-scale irrigation schemes in the major production basins. • Adopt and disseminate material and equipment • Facilitate access to rice growing agricultural machinery and equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component 1 on Policy and regulatory measures to render the rice sector more productive and competitive addresses the issues support and measures for availability and access to quality Seeds, Fertilizer and Pesticides. • Component 2 deals with Finance and public private partnership to boost rice sector development. One of the activities addresses support and facilitation of a more conducive investment environment such as tax reduction on agri-inputs – notably fertilizers, pesticides, machinery and equipments. • Component 3: Some of the activities include dissemination of knowledge management tools on irrigation schemes and access to agri-inputs; and special advocacy mechanisms targeting Member States to increase investment in the expansion of irrigation schemes under the major activity of promoting climate smart agriculture. • Component 5: Successful irrigation models for clustering farmers is to be promoted as an activity under this component that deals with the Coordination of regional inter-professional organizations.
2.	Process and Promote Local Rice Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalize on best practices in rice processing method and technology. • Facilitate the adoption of good processing practices • Promote the installation of modern processing units in large production areas. • Establish incentives for private investment • Promote public-private partnership at different levels • Accelerate local rice standardization • Support the large production areas' product quality labeling • Develop a communication system for the consumption of local rice. • Encourage initiatives that promote local rice consumption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component 1 on Policy and regulatory measures to render the rice sector more productive and competitive has the support and promotion of policy incentive measures to facilitate private sector interest and investment as one of its proposed activities. • Component 2 addresses a wide spectrum of issues on Finance and Public Private Partnership mechanisms to boost rice sector development along the rice value chain (production, processing, inputs etc.) • Several of the activities outlined in Component 4 that addresses the issue of Efficient Trade and Marketing Systems along the Rice Value Chain in West Africa, deal with the development of quality standards, promotion of branding and labelling of locally produced rice and the support of the definition and implementation of regional standardized quality of rice.

3.	Promote the Regional Local Rice Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the regulatory framework of regional rice trade. • Conduct CET impact studies on the regional rice market. • Enhance local rice storage capacity. • Promote a regional stock exchange of local rice. • Support the emergence and operation of multi-stakeholder consultation frameworks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component 4 addresses a whole range of issues on Rice Trade and Marketing Systems along the Rice Value Chain in the region. Major activities include the following: the review of the CET on rice to the 35% band and support of its effective implementation in the Member States; the harmonization of safeguard measures; the support for the establishment of a sub-regional Rice Commodity Exchange System; and the promotion of rice trade tools and mechanisms to facilitate cross border cooperation among the ECOWAS Member States. • Component 5 addresses the support for establishment and coordination of national and regional inter-professional organizations. A multi-stakeholder platform that mobilizes national and regional level capacity by engaging farmer organizations, processors and the private sector for greater impact in scaling up agricultural technologies, innovations and best practices within the shortest possible time through partnerships, consultations and linkages.
4.	Improve the Rice Development Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the capacity of rice research. • Develop an information and decision support system. • Improve rice statistics. • Strengthen the capacity of national and regional stakeholders. • Gender mainstreaming in programme activities. • Integrate the environmental dimension and management of greenhouse gas emissions into the programme. • Implement and operate the steering committee. • The Programme management unit is functional. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several of the activities outlined in Component 6 that deals with the Coordination and Management of the Action Plan addresses some of the issues in Axes 4. These include mapping of the projects, programmes and initiatives in the rice sector for better coordination, prevention of overlapping of functions and fostering synergy; strengthening of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system for development of tools and data collection templates to track and validate results. • Also addressed within Component 6 is the establishment of a functional coordination unit for the Rice Action Plan to accelerate the implementation of the rice offensive. • Activities in Component 3 addressed the promotion of climate smart agricultural practice that promotes rice production in a most sustainable manner by integrating the environmental dimension. • Likewise, Component 3 deals with dissemination of knowledge management mechanisms to support information sharing for the improvement of the rice sector. Equally, market information system is one of the activities highlighted under Component 4 on support for efficient rice trade and market information system in West Africa. • Component 5 outlines the support and advocacy for better involvement and empowerment of women and youth in the rice sector.

3.0 The Strategic Rice Action Plan

29. The strategic components presented in this section are hinged on the six pillars identified for regional level intervention at the consultative meeting for the acceleration of the implementation of the regional rice offensive. This section on Activity Plan and Budget provides spaces for deliverables, responsible organizations, resources needed, budget and timelines for delivery with details in Annexes 1 and 2. Key activities, actions and their expected outcomes are outlined as follows:

3.1 Policy and Regulatory measures to render the Rice Sector more productive and competitive

30. The regulatory measures are intended to render the rice sector more productive and competitive. Such measures include orienting national and regional rice policies and regulations to address challenges relating to barriers that hinder marketing of agri-inputs and outputs, increasing locally produced rice and reducing the influence of the international market and imports on the domestic and regional markets. These will improve the business environment for increased investment.

31. Farmers' access to quality certified seeds and other inputs will be improved by fast-tracking the harmonization and implementation of the regulations governing the marketing and use of agri-inputs. The emergence of small, medium and large-scale rice processing enterprises and upgrading of milling units will require the promotion of industrial best practices, grain quality and food safety standards in conformity with regional and international trade standards. Regulation of imports alongside reforms relating to import tax will be harmonized and reinforced to achieve competitiveness. The goal of the policy and regulatory measures is to attain world market competitiveness (in quality and in price) in West Africa. These measures are expected to motivate all the actors in the rice value chain, and especially the private sector to invest in the rice sector. The objectives are to: (i) Support the effective operationalization of rice policies and strategies at the National level, (ii) Support the implementation of the Existing Agricultural Inputs Regulations adopted by the countries for the rice sector, (iii) Initiate, develop and implement additional regulations to boost the RVC in West Africa, and (iv) Support and promote policy incentives measures. The activities, deliverables, budget and timeline to be carried out are provided in Annex 1 and are outlined as follows:

3.1.1 Support the effective operationalization of Rice Policies and Strategies at the National Level (Policy Watch): Most ECOWAS Member States have developed rice development strategies and related policies. However, the operationalization of these frameworks has been a challenge in some countries, which has adversely affected the growth in the rice sector. ECOWAS, in collaboration with Partners will support Member States with capacity development and provide guidance to effectively operationalize the regional and national rice strategies. This support includes capacity to develop concept notes for financing activities in the rice value chain. Yearly review of the status of the implementation of these policies and strategies will be held at regional levels; in addition, backstopping missions will

be carried out to countries that are deemed slow in implementation. The required budget for this activity is estimated at **US\$ 900,000**.

- 3.1.2 Support the implementation of the Existing Agricultural Inputs Regulations adopted by the Countries for the rice sector:** Optimum use of agri-inputs (seed, fertilizer and pesticide) will be an efficient way of achieving the regional self-sufficiency target. Access to these productivity-enhancing inputs however remains a major constraint. To bridge the 40% rice self-sufficiency gap in the region, increase in crop yield will be paramount from the current level of 2.3mt/ha to 3.80mt/ha and will contribute to achieving the target by 2025. An effective use of agro-chemicals, particularly fertilizer, pesticide and good quality seeds will positively impact rice production. Therefore, ECOWAS aims to vigorously pursue the adoption and effective implementation of the harmonized regulations governing the use of seed, fertilizer and pesticide. To achieve this ECOWAS will coordinate and engage Member States in dialogue and regional consultative meetings to support an effective implementation of existing agricultural inputs regulations. The required budget for this activity is estimated at **US\$ 400,000**.
- 3.1.3 Initiate, develop and implement additional regulations to boost the RVC in West Africa:** The agricultural landscape experiences several variations due to changes in climatic conditions, policy environment, market dictates and new trends in farming requirements. Hence, the need to identify gaps and formulate additional but relevant regulations that will address issues as they emerge to advance the rice sector in the Member States. ECOWAS will explore the development of additional regulations following a gap analysis to establish the need areas in the region. In addition, regional meeting will be organized to validate the new regulations. The required budget for this activity is estimated at **US\$ 300,000**.
- 3.1.4 Support and promote policy incentives measures:** Governments can hinder private sector participation through several policy barriers. Therefore, the existence of adopted rice policies or strategic plans that promote agricultural inputs and trading in most of the Member States provide the road map for the development of the rice sector; and the policy incentives such as tax breaks and tariff reliefs are measures that dictate the course of action that will facilitate the interest and especially, the participation of the private sector in the rice value chain. ECOWAS, in collaboration with partners will promote and support the implementation of measures aimed to involve more of the private sector actors in the rice system in the Member States. An effective advocacy approach will be implemented to ensure regional adoption thereby reducing various unauthorized barriers and disincentive actions that might hamper investment from the private sector and reduce both competitiveness of the sector and by extension, regional trade. Some of the activities that will be carried out include holding a regional consultative meeting to evaluate and promote appropriate rice policy incentive measures in West Africa. The required budget for this activity is estimated at **US\$ 600,000**.



3.2 Finance and Public Private Partnership Mechanism to boost Rice Sector Development

32. As the ECOWAS and its Member States continue to leverage on partnership support to unlock the potential of the rice sub-sector and ECOWAS is aware that the Member States, farmers and the private sector are major investors in the agricultural sector. Therefore, creating an enabling environment to increase access to market and to increase profit margins will be an incentive for innovative investment by farmers and the private sector. Isolated successes of best practices of PPP arrangements such as the one adopted by RIFAN, as well as models from other countries like Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali, Senegal and Asia, will be scaled up. Successful subsidies and credit systems in the region and elsewhere will be consolidated and replicated. ECOWAS will advocate its Member States to re-launch massive investment in the rice sector using the PPP approach with the national inter-professional bodies being at the centre. The goal of this component is to infuse massive financial capital and investment into the development of the rice sector in West Africa. The specific objectives are to: (i) support the development of PPP models within the rice value chain, (ii) facilitate a more conducive investment environment, (iii) promote successful finance and incentive models and (iv) develop an advocacy mechanism to persuade Member States to adopt successful models. Activities, deliverables, budget and timeline to be carried out are provided in Annex 2 and are outlined as follows:

- 3.2.1 Encourage and support the development of sustainable Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) within the rice value chain:** ECOWAS will commission a consultant to assess the economic viability of the existing PPP models in the ECOWAS region and beyond, out of which sustainable models will be developed to suit the ECOWAS region. The PPP arrangement will be expected to put the private processors at the centre, with contractual arrangement within the rice value chain: farmers with agri-input suppliers and off-takers; off-takers with processors; processors with wholesalers and value chain actors with financial institutions. This activity will be facilitated by: (i) recruiting a consultant to carry out a study to select models, (ii) organize a validation and annual review workshops and (iii) monitor the implementation of the models. It will require a budget estimated at **US\$ 1,390,000** for its implementation.
- 3.2.2 Facilitate and encourage a more conducive investment environment** (e.g. tax reduction on agricultural inputs and access to agri-inputs, notably fertilizers and pesticides) for the rice sector to thrive: Access to agri-inputs such as fertilizers, quality seeds and pesticides, machinery and equipment that are adapted to the circumstances of rice farmers in West Africa is low. This can be improved through tax harmonization and reduction, and incentives to create favorable environment that will facilitate the importation of these essential agri-inputs, machinery and equipment. ECOWAS and its Member states will update their frameworks for tax reduction based on past experiences, current realities and the urgency to achieve crop production targets. Also, Member States will be engaged and influenced through advocacy to create conducive environments for sustainable investment in the rice sector. The ECOWAS Commission and its relevant departments will work with Partners – EBID, BOAD, ARAP and Member States. The required budget for this activity is estimated at **US\$ 945,000**.

- 3.2.3 Promote successful finance and incentive models in the region:** In most of the ECOWAS Member States, many subsidy models are either ongoing or had been implemented in the past to relieve farmers of high cost of agri-inputs, machinery and equipment. Going forward, it will be necessary to carry out a rapid study to assess the models, determine the successes and challenges, as well as the impact of their implementation. A consultant will be engaged to carry out this study in select Member States to recommend a consolidated model that is effective, efficient, and impactful. The study's outcomes are expected to be validated by ECOWAS, its Member States, and Partners. ECOWAS will develop a common advocacy mechanism to ensure that Member States adopt the agreed model of financing. The required budget for this activity is estimated at **US\$ 810,000.**
- 3.2.4 Establish Financial Resource Mobilization system and contribution from Partners and Stakeholders:** Financial resources that are committed to the rice sector will be valued and determined to be investments in the sector. More importantly is an effective coordination mechanism to provide strategic leadership, supported by a robust monitoring and evaluation system highlighted under Component 6, coupled with a strong financial management and resource mobilization strategy. ECOWAS is already providing direction through the Rice Offensive Strategy, which is being supported by this Strategic Action Plan to speed up its implementation. The structured coordination systems will also serve as advocacy platforms to mobilize additional financial resources to meet budgetary gaps. This approach will help to efficiently harness the human and financial resources in the region to achieve the set goal by 2025. Appropriate evaluation of regional institutions and mechanisms to facilitate resource mobilization for rice development will be ensured while partners and stakeholders will be mobilized for sustainable financial contributions towards rice self-sufficiency in the region. Collaboration and networks of national, regional, and multinational development banks for the development of the RVC through regional consultations will be facilitated by ECOWAS and the Regional Rice Task Force will be mobilized to co-drive these efforts. ECOWAS will work with Partners, ARAP, AfDB, EBID, stakeholders, including Member States to implement this activity. A resource mobilization system should be established, and it will serve as a catalyst for sustainability during and after the program's lifetime. The required budget for this activity is estimated at **US\$ 2,825,000.**
- 3.2.5 Support access to bank finance and credit by rice farmers and the private sector:** One of the most critical constraints on the adoption of technologies and innovations is access to bank finance and credit by farmers and the private sector. Nevertheless, some successful financing vehicles are emerging in some Member States such as Nigeria. This has contributed to Nigeria's success in accelerating rice production in recent times. The bank financing system for the rice value chain in Nigeria is therefore considered a success story. Also, the need to support the setting up of an agricultural insurance scheme at the regional level is key in mitigating agricultural risks that may negatively impact the rice sector in Member States. ECOWAS will provide support for Member States and financial institutions to adopt successful rice financing models. The need to develop an advocacy mechanism to persuade Member States to adopt successful models is key for financing the rice sector. In this regard, learning events will be organized for the Member States with exchange and



experiences shared from Nigeria, other countries on the African continent, and in Asia where successful rice sector financing models exist. This activity will involve ECOWAS, ARAP, BOAD, EBID, selected financial institutions from Member States, the private sector and Farmers' Organizations and commence by year 2021. It will require a budget estimated at **US\$ 3,570,000** for the implementation of this activity.

Box 1: Successful PPP Model from the Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria

Public-Private-Partnership arrangements adopted by the Rice Farmers' Association of Nigeria (RIFAN) was acclaimed very useful. This model puts the private sector association RIFAN comprising 12.2million membership at the centre and anchored to agri-input suppliers, rice mills and the market. Access to finance is ensured through partnership arrangement between RIFAN and the Bank of Agriculture (BOA) which empowers the Association to establish contracts with the farmers for the supply of paddy to the private rice mills and with agri-input companies and associations for farmers' acquisition of fertilizers and seeds.

The model provides strong linkages along the rice value chain and addresses major constraints related to inadequate access to finance and markets. This has resulted in Nigeria's success in accelerated production of milled rice to the current level of 80-90% of national requirement. Furthermore, many small and large rice processing companies have emerged in Nigeria, acclaiming the country on the trajectory to achieving self-sufficiency in rice production in the nearest future. This success has made Nigeria a leading example in the region with respect to upscaling rice production, processing and marketing.

3.3 Knowledge Sharing and Management

33. Information on the entire rice value chain, from new genetic materials to production and processing technologies and innovation, through market information to consumer preferred products, abounds in various forms and at various sites. However, this information is not easily accessible to farmers and the private sector who need them the most. Research-Extension system has been woefully underfunded by national governments and has therefore become weaker. If the region is to improve on current rice productivity, then, rice-based technologies and innovations would require a strong dissemination and extension system.
34. In this regard, ECOWAS will engage a Knowledge Management Specialist who will be responsible for this component. The goal of this component is to increase stakeholders' use of knowledge and information to improve rice productivity and market access. Objectives are to: (i) establish a regional rice-based knowledge sharing and management system, (ii) strengthen the extension system to disseminate productivity boosting technologies (iii) promote and disseminate knowledge management tools and (iii) support the dissemination of market information. Activities, deliverables, budget and timeline to be carried out are provided in Annex 3 and are outlined as follows:

- 3.3.1 Establish and Strengthen regional rice-based knowledge sharing and management system:** The importance of knowledge management in facilitating access to information for the achievement of the targets under the Rice Offensive Program will require a specialized unit focused on rice. ECOWAS in consultation with partners (including AfricaRice, GIZ – CARI, CARD, AGRA, IFPRI, CTA, and ARAP) will explore the options of either strengthening the ECOWAS knowledge management system or identifying a partner with comparative advantage to manage rice-based knowledge for the benefit of the rice value chain actors in West Africa. The establishment of the system must be finalized by end of 2021 and the budget to engage a Knowledge Management Specialist for five years and to equip his/her Unit will amount to **US\$ 1,840,000**.
- 3.3.2 Promote and disseminate knowledge management tools** (e-learning, agric-digital, training of trainers (ToT), books etc.; success stories of research, innovation, technologies, and extension services): The appropriate use of modern knowledge management tools and approaches will be promoted to facilitate access to knowledge by rice value chain actors. This will help provide solutions to most of the constraints in the rice production system, which include inadequate access to technology, irrigation techniques, agri-inputs, machinery, finance, equipment, and markets. The use of appropriate ICT tools and communication systems will ease access to information for many farmers, private operators, stakeholders, and partners. ECOWAS will explore the most efficient tools, including but not limited to e-learning, Web TV, Mobile Apps, agric-digital, mass media, programs on the local radio stations, Training of Trainers (ToT) manuals, extension materials to communicate useful information. The information will include success stories on rice-based technologies, climate smart innovations, appropriate inputs, bank financing models, prices of inputs and equipment, post-harvest needs, market information, opportunities and the profitability along the rice value chain. Partners involved are Member States, AfricaRice, CORAF, GIZ – CARI, CARD, AGRA and CTA. The budget required to: (i) engage the consultants to conduct studies and ICT expert, (ii) develop the knowledge management tools and promotional programs and materials, (iii) build capacity and train national knowledge management focal persons and value chain actors, and (iv) establish a virtual library and online training facilities is **US\$ 3,575,000**.
- 3.3.3 Promote Climate-Smart Agricultural Practices:** The prevalence of climate variability and the associated risks such as drought, dry spells, floods, high temperatures and invasive pests continue to erode productivity gains made over the years. To mitigate these risks, ECOWAS in collaboration with AfricaRice, CORAF and the National Agricultural Research Institutions (NARIs) will facilitate the release and dissemination of new rice genetic materials that are resilient to climate variability, and tolerant to the existing and emerging stresses (e.g. the NERICAs, the ARICAs, Sahel varieties). In addition, weather plays a significant role in agricultural production with a profound impact on crop growth, development, and yields, hence, access to climate information is essential and will be supported. Following, promoting climate-friendly best practices for rice is crucial. The Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) provides the platform through which



these activities are sustainably implemented. The SRP standards require training to effectively drive sustainability in rice production without compromising rice yields. The increased use of lowlands and irrigated areas, upscaling of best practices in soil water management, and pest and disease control for the production of rice will result in massive increase in grain yield. AfricaRice, CORAF and the NARIs will support ECOWAS in the packaging of resilient technologies and innovations for dissemination across the region. ECOWAS will develop a special advocacy mechanism targeted at Member States to increase investment in the expansion of lowlands and irrigation schemes (along the Niger, Senegal, Volta and Mano Rivers). This activity will require an estimated budget of **US\$ 1,170,000** for its implementation.

- 3.3.4 Strengthen the extension system to disseminate productivity boosting technologies and efficient post-harvest practices:** Considering the current weak extension system, the promotion of proven and innovative approaches to accelerate the adoption of technologies and best practices will be critical for rice production and post-harvest practice. These could revolve around the Innovation Platforms (Ips) and Technology Hubs being promoted by AfricaRice. Thus, the Research-Extension-Farmer Liaison system will need to be rekindled to support the delivery of rice system technological information to end users. The annual district and national review and planning following field trials, demonstrations, and farmer field schools will be improved. Effective indigenous knowledge and practices, and farmer-to-farmer technology transfer system will be promoted. The use of elite medium to large scale commercial farmers to extend technologies to thousands of small-scale anchored farmers under the nucleus farming and out-grower scheme will be encouraged. Furthermore, agri-input enterprises and dealers would be trained to deliver accurate extension advice to farmers who approach them for agricultural information, and the input companies would be encouraged to support the establishment of field demonstrations. This task will span through the project life but should commence by 2021. Partners involved are Member States, AfricaRice, CORAF, GIZ – CARI, CARD, AGRA, CTA and ARAP. The required budget for this activity is estimated at **US\$ 2,460,000**.

3.4 Efficient Trade and Marketing Systems along the Rice Value Chain in West Africa

35. The goal of this component is to promote, support and strengthen rice trade and marketing in West Africa. The regional market which is expected to grow from 14.2 million MT in 2017 to 24 million MT by 2025 offers a great opportunity for investment and to increase intra-regional trade among the ECOWAS Member States while reducing imports. However, it has been observed that rice importation increased by 115% between 2008 and 2018 (from 5.1 million tons to 10.9 million tons) in West Africa. Reducing rice importation and increasing intra region production, will require targeted efforts to address the critical bottlenecks. These include the differences in the tariff protection system, custom duties, and other taxes across countries, as well as smuggling through country borders. Non-competitiveness of the locally produced rice has been the result of (i) substandard quality of milled rice and (ii) high transaction costs (transport & logistics costs, harassment, illegal payments), all of which hinder regional market development.



36. Hence, ECOWAS and its Member states are poised to improve the harmonization of tariffs and the regulatory framework to address the issue of rice imports. The regional market will be structured through (i) the establishment of mechanisms that will induce importers to source certain quota of local rice, (ii) promote the development of quality standards along the entire value chain (iii) formalize a robust mechanism which ensures fair and transparent prices (iv) target and tailor processed products to consumer preferences, (v) Support the establishment of a sub-regional rice commodity exchange system, (vi) Support cross-border cooperation on rice trade and (vii) Promote intra-regional rice trade among the ECOWAS Member States. Activities, deliverables, budget, and timeline to be carried out are provided in Annex 4 and are outlined as follows:

- 3.4.1 Review the CET on rice to the 35% band and oversee its effective implementation in the Member States:** To facilitate intra-regional trade in rice, the differences in CET will be addressed. The ECOWAS Department of Trade, Free Movement and Customs will work with the Ministries responsible for Trade and Regional Integration in Member States to review and harmonize the CET on rice, bringing it to 35% across the region. Guidelines on the application of CET, indicating regional and international tariffs for rice marketing will be developed and made available by 2022. ECOWAS will develop the guidelines and engage Member States at a consultative meeting to validate the guidelines. Effective implementation will be ensured through backstopping missions, annual reviews, and ministerial meetings. The required budget for this activity is estimated at **US\$ 610,000**.
- 3.4.2 Harmonize safeguard measures (tariff and non-tariff barriers, etc.):** Various Member States have different tariffs for similar commodities, and whilst rice commodity attracts tariffs in some countries, the same rice commodity may not attract tariff in other countries. Thus, the existence of disharmony in the tariff systems constitutes a barrier to regional trade. Therefore, ECOWAS will organize a meeting to engage the Ministries in charge of Trade and Regional Integration in the Member States to examine the different tariff systems in the region and develop guidelines and instruments for a harmonized system. Subsequently, this will be adopted by the ECOWAS Council of Ministers. There is also the challenge of the acceptance of rice produced and marketed in the Member States that is mostly sub-standard in quality. To increase rice production and reduce preference for rice imports, there is need to improve both the quality and price of locally processed rice to ensure competitiveness. In this regard, technical manuals that will guide farmers and processors on the steps to take and equipment needed to attain rice grain quality required for the popular food preparations in the region will be developed and shared. A web-based portal will be established on rice quality standards. This activity includes actions to promote branding and labelling, development, and implementation of rice standards to meet physical and social requirements. The national focal persons will be trained at the regional level to build their capacity as trainers to train the relevant stakeholders in Member States. Laboratories of regional importance will be upgraded to support the program. The relevant departments at ECOWAS such as Department of Trade, Free Movement and Customs, and Agriculture will work closely with Member States and the private sector to ensure that this activity is successfully implemented. The budget required to: (i) constitute and engage grain quality working group to develop and support the



definition and implementation of regional standardized quality for rice, (ii) promote regional rice branding and labelling to facilitate better marketing and trade relationship among Member States (iii) undertake training, hold workshops and organize review meetings, (iv) promote trade norms and standards at regional and international levels, (v) upgrade rice grain quality laboratories in Member States, and (vi) organize joint monitoring will amount to **US\$2,350,000**

3.4.3 Support the establishment of a sub-regional Rice Commodity Exchange System: ECOWAS and UEMOA have initiated the development of a regional commodity stock exchange that provides useful market information (quality standards, guaranteed prices, etc.) and a platform for marketing various commodities. ECOWAS will designate a centre of excellence that is specific for rice commodity exchange and strengthen it to operate the system on their behalf, and this is expected to be operational by first quarter of 2022. Key implementing organizations will be ECOWAS (Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and the Department of Trade, Free Movement and Customs; the inter-professional organizations and farmers organizations such as ROPPA. The budget required will be used to engage and strengthen an existing firm to develop and manage the Regional Commodity Exchange system for a period 5 years at a cost of **US\$ 915,000**.

3.4.4 Support, develop and promote rice trade tools and mechanisms to facilitate cross border cooperation among the ECOWAS Member States: While some Member States such as Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea, Mali and Nigeria are making significant strides in achieving self-sufficiency in the rice sector, it is evident that some countries are lagging behind. ECOWAS has the responsibility to coordinate and support all Member States to achieve the objectives of the Rice Offensive initiative. The enormous capacity recorded in Mali and Nigeria, particularly Mali being a Regional Centre of Excellence for rice can be leveraged upon to rapidly expand rice production for regional market. Support for Member States with such comparative advantage to do more for the regional market, while encouraging the others to catch up. However, barriers at national borders continue to be a hindrance in opening the regional trade. Smuggling through the borders also distort the regional effort and statistics on imports vis-à-vis intra-regional trade in rice. ECOWAS will develop and promote an innovative advocacy system that will engage Ministries in charge of Trade and Regional Integration and border officials to facilitate a better cross border trading. ECOWAS in collaboration with CILSS, the Borderless Alliance and relevant Ministries will be key stakeholders to lead the effort to bring improvement to cross-border trade. It is expected that an effective advocacy mechanism to soften boarder restrictions will be developed and implemented by Member States. ECOWAS will advocate for Member States to adopt a quota system for rice purchase with an agreed quota for rice imported outside the region and rice produced within the region. In all, the budget required will be used to (i) develop and promote an advocacy tool regionally (ii) develop an advocacy mechanism for intra-regional trade, (iii) develop a justifiable national and regional quota system (iv) hold a regional validation meeting to validate these proposals and (v) hold yearly review and monitoring meetings. The estimated cost for implementing this activity is **US\$ 1,350,000**



3.4.5 Support and Promote Market Information System (Agriculture is Business): Market information required by rice value chain actors and stakeholders will include: types of genetic material and their acceptability, prices of agri-inputs, quality and quantity standards, grades and prices for marketing, location of production, access to transport, as well as information on off-takers, processors, financial institutions, bank interest rates, among others. A regional rice-based market information and management system developed will ensure that relevant information is systematically collected, synthesized, and presented in a timely and acceptable format. It will be expected that information will also be communicated in local languages to enhance impact. ECOWAS will operate a rice market information portal on its website and facilitate the organization of annual rice fairs and learning visits to promote best practices and innovations in the rice sector. This system will involve ECOWAS, Member States, AfricaRica, Member States, GIZ - CARI, CARD, AGRA, IFPRI, CTA, and other Partners. The budget for: (i) the webpage development; (ii) information collection and management, (iii) Annual Fairs and Exhibitions and (iii) Learning visits and events will amount to **US\$ 5,465,000**.

3.5 Coordination of the National and Regional Inter-Professional Organizations

37. The goal is to mobilize national and regional level capacity for greater impact within the shortest possible time. In scaling up agricultural technologies and innovations, farmers, processors, and private sector have the capacity, resources, linkages, and the mindset to bring these to realization. The achievement of the Rice Offensive target will therefore be driven through strong engagement of the Farmer Organizations and the Private Sector by partnering and strengthening their organizational capacities for growth. ECOWAS will put mechanisms in place to ensure that this is fully achieved. The goal is to mobilize national level capacity to up-scale rice production and marketing within the shortest possible time. The objectives are to: (i) support the implementation of measures to engage private sector actors in the rice system, (ii) support the coordination of national inter-professional organizations, (iii) promote successful models for clustering farmers, (iv) engage the inter-professional organizations to promote an improved involvement of and support the empowerment of women and youth in the rice sector, (v) promote the adoption of robust business plans among SMEs in the rice value chain and (vi) promote best prices in the rice value chain (in the light of tariff and tax reductions, and competition with imports). Activities, deliverables, budget, and timeline to be carried out are provided in Annex 2 and are outlined as follows:

3.5.1 Support the establishment and coordination of national and regional inter-professional organizations: Effective coordination of strong inter-professional bodies at the regional and national levels will be essential for long term sustainability of the Rice Offensive Program beyond 2025. Well structured, strengthened and coordinated inter-professional groups such as Agri-Inputs Associations, strongly linked to farmer associations and financial institutions can be a vital asset to ensure sustainable supply and use of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, which are central to sustainable improvement of rice productivity and production. The inter-professional associations at the national and regional levels are well positioned to ensure that agri-input



association, groups, and dealers are strengthened and linked to farmers, processors, and sources of credit. Thus, ECOWAS in collaboration with the existing inter-professional bodies and Member States will facilitate the establishment of a regional level inter-professional organization while strengthening the national level organizations where it exists and support its establishment where it is nonexistent. A framework for the functioning of national and regional inter-professional platforms will be developed and implemented. This will be private sector led with support from ECOWAS, ITS Member States, and partners such as IFAD and the World Bank. The budget of **US\$ 1,310,000** is required for (i) the engagement of a consultant to develop a proposal to establish the regional level inter-professional organizations and strengthen the national ones; (ii) develop and implement advocacy approaches to attract the private sector enterprises, (iii) support the position of a Regional Coordinator, (iv) equip his office and (v) hold regional and national coordination meetings.

3.5.2 Promote successful models for clustering farmers: Over the years, various models have evolved to cluster rice farmers to facilitate technology transfer, access to credit and to the input and output markets. Farmers have been clustered, particularly around large inland valleys and irrigation schemes developed by previous and ongoing projects. This has facilitated the adoption of technologies and innovations, aggregation of paddy rice, the installation of processing facilities to mill the paddy rice and access to market. In other instances, farmers are clustered by anchoring them to nucleus farmers who provide services and transfer best practices to the farmers. Although the various models have their peculiarities, these will be analyzed to highlight the advantages in improving rice productivity, competitiveness, and impact, and thereby help to inform stakeholders in decision making. Selected model(s) will therefore be adopted (based on the outcomes of the analysis of national clusters) and implemented by the Member States commencing in 2021. The budget required to hire a consultant to (1) carry out the analysis, and (ii) propose best models for rice clusters/hubs and irrigation schemes for adoption is estimated at **US\$ 550,000**.

3.5.3 Support better involvement and empowerment of women and youths in the Rice Sector: The rice industry is a conglomerate of several actors along the entire value chain and it does not only hold a great potential for the involvement of women and young people but also presents a wide range of opportunities for their empowerment. In all the rice production systems (preparation of lowlands, planting, weeding, harvesting), and post-harvest operations (harvesting, winnowing, etc.), processing activities (rice parboiling, cleansing and sorting products obtained from processing) and marketing, women and young people are represented. Despite this fact, their roles are not visible and not adequately documented or commensurately rewarded. Therefore, the integration of women and youth should be mainstreamed in the implementation of the activities outlined in the Action Plan and the inter-professional organization will provide the platform to ensure inclusivity of all actors along the rice value chain. The budget of **US\$ 3,290,000** required for this activity will cover the following tasks: i) Advocacy to promote better involvement of women and youths in rice sector, ii) Promotion of gender friendly technologies and innovations and access to production factors, and iii) Support the training of women and young people in the various activities of the rice chain.



3.6 Coordination and Management of the Action Plan

38. The goal is to mobilize the capacity of regional partners to boost the impact of the ECOWAS Rice Offensive program. ECOWAS recognizes the value of partnership and collaboration and the complementary role they play in achieving the Rice Offensive objectives. Currently, ECOWAS works with regional partners such as AfricaRice, GIZ - CARI, CARD, AGRA, IFPRI, ROPPA, CORAF, IPAR, CILSS and Hub Rural. ECOWAS trusts that effective coordination of these regional organizations alongside development projects and programs can create significant synergy to boost impact. The goal is to effectively harness the capacity of regional level interventions as added value to national initiatives through ECOWAS leadership. This component will require the effective operations of the rice multi-stakeholder task force and a functional coordination unit. Hence, the objectives are to: (i) ensure the effective coordination and management of all the technical activities of the rice offensive action plan, (ii) map out the various projects, programs and initiatives in the rice sector, (ii) organize periodic meetings for coordination of the various projects, programs and initiatives and (iii) establish a Monitoring and Evaluation System. The activities below have therefore been outlined to that effect:

3.6.1 Coordinate the Implementation of Rice Offensive Action Plan: This newly validated strategic action plan developed for the acceleration of the Regional Rice Offensive in the next five (5) years (2020 – 2025) must be well coordinated for effective implementation. This requires a concerted effort for which ECOWAS will play a central role by engaging all the 15 Member States and bringing all critical actors within the rice value chain together, to adopt and implement the action plan. Also, and most importantly, is to engage the development partners and donors that will ensure the implementation of the outlined activities through their technical and financial support. More importantly is the effective management of the Action Plan for which the following targeted actions will be implemented: i) establishment of a coordination unit, ii) revamp and support the regional multi-stakeholder rice task force for the implementation rice offensive under the leadership of ECOWAS. This requires a budget of **US\$ 2,610,000**.

3.6.2 Mapping of the projects, programmes and initiatives in the rice sector for better coordination, prevention of overlapping of functions and foster synergy: There exists several donor projects, programs and initiatives working in ECOWAS Member States to promote rice production. These entities are resourceful and when hinged to the Rice Offensive initiative, will contribute immensely to the achievement of the set objective. ECOWAS in collaboration with its Member States will support a survey map of these entities and anchor them to the Rice Offensive initiative. A database of these projects, programs and initiatives will be developed and a networking mechanism established. This activity is expected to be rolled out by 2021 for effective coordination. The budget for (i) hiring of Consultants (ii) recognizance missions to the locations of the projects, programs, initiatives and (iii) the development of a database amounts to **US\$ 940,000**.

- 3.6.3 Organize periodic meetings for coordination of the various projects, programs and initiatives:** To share experiences and best practices among the identified projects, programs and initiatives, it is imperative for ECOWAS to organize regular coordination meetings annually, back-to-back with the annual review and planning workshop. This is to ensure synergy at the regional level and avoid duplication of efforts across the region. It will also foster experience sharing, learning experiences and networking among the projects to bring advancement to the rice sector. Member States will be supported through coordination meetings that will be held every two (2) years at the regional level. The budget for missions, coordination at the regional levels for 5 years amount to **US\$ 450,000**
- 3.6.4 Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System:** Regarding the numerous actions outlined to support the achievement of the Rice Offensive objective and the stakeholders involved, ECOWAS will strengthen its Monitoring and Evaluation system to manage data and results. This will also help to regularly track achievements and challenges to effect corrective measures. ECOWAS will engage an M&E Expert Officer who will develop tools and data collection templates to track and validate results. The following are the accompanying task: *Organization of Annual Review and Planning Meetings; Development and sharing of periodic reports and success stories, and Carrying out adoption, socio-economic and impact assessment studies to robustly evaluate the Rice Offensive after 10 years of implementation.* The budget for the M&E (position, equipment, software, consumable, results tracking and socio-economic studies) amounts to **US\$ 2,266,000.**



Table 3:1 Rice Action Plan: Components, Activities and Tasks for ECOWAS for the year 2020 - 2025

Components	Proposed Regional Activities (2020 – 2025)	ECOWAS Actions/Tasks	Expected Results
1.0 Policy and Regulatory measures to render the Rice Sector more productive and competitive	1.1 Support the effective operationalization of Rice Policies and Strategies at the National Level	1.1.1 Annual forum to review of the status of the implementation of the policies and strategies (NRDS) in line with the RAP will be held at the regional level.	a. Annual regional review meetings are held with Member States.
	1.2 Support the implementation of the Existing Agricultural Inputs Regulations adopted by the Countries for the rice sector.	1.2.1 Coordinate and engage Member States in dialogue for the effective implementation of existing agricultural inputs regulations.	a. Existing agricultural inputs regulations are effectively implemented
	1.3 Initiate, develop and implement additional regulations to boost the RVC in West Africa	1.3.1 Explore development of additional regulations following a gap analysis to establish the need areas in the region. 1.3.2 Regional meeting is organized to validate the new regulations.	a. Additional but relevant regulations are introduced to Member States for the advancement of the rice sector. b. New regulations are validated
	1.4 Support and promote policy incentives measures	1.4.1 Regional consultative meeting to evaluate and promote appropriate rice policy incentive measures in WA.	a. Meetings are organized and consultative summary reports available in French, English and Portuguese
2.0 Finance and Public Private Partnership Mechanism to boost Rice Sector Development	2.1 Encourage and support the development of sustainable Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) within the rice value chain.	2.1.1 Assessment of the economic viability of the existing PPP models in the ECOWAS region and beyond to aid planning.	a. Existing PPP models in West Africa are assessed and documented (EN/FR/PT) as reference for building viable partnerships in the region.
		2.1.2 Identify and develop suitable PPP models within regional and national contexts. (2.1.1 and 2.1.2 will require hiring of consultants to implement the activities).	b. Suitable PPP models that fits the context and exact needs of Member States in the region are identified.
		2.1.3 Organize a biannual meeting to engage all relevant stakeholders in the public and private sectors for the purpose of triggering profitable	c. Assessment report and recommendations is produced in the three languages.

		partnerships along the rice value chain.	d. Meetings are organized and summary reports available in French, English and Portuguese
	2.2 Facilitate and encourage a more conducive investment environment (e.g. tax reduction on agricultural inputs and access to agri-inputs, notably fertilizers and pesticides) for the rice sector to thrive.	2.2.1 Engage and influence Member States through advocacy to create conducive environments for sustainable investment in the rice sector.	a. Members States are engaged and investment environment in the region is improved.
	2.3 Promote successful finance and incentive models in the region.	2.3.1 Develop an advocacy mechanism to persuade Member States to adopt successful incentive models and models for financing the rice sector through learning workshops.	a. Workshop is organized biannually, and Member States are enlightened to adopt successful models.
	2.4 Establish Financial Resource Mobilization system and contribution from Partners and Stakeholders	<p>2.4.1 Evaluate regional institutions and mechanisms to facilitate resource mobilization for rice development. This will be carried out through active evaluation process to generate baseline information for engagement.</p> <p>2.4.2 Mobilize partners and stakeholders for sustainable financial contributions towards rice self-sufficiency in the region.</p> <p>2.4.3 Facilitate collaboration and networks of national, regional, and multinational development banks for the development of the RVC through regional consultations.</p> <p>2.4.4 Mobilize the Regional Rice Task Force to co-drive the efforts in 2.4.1, 2.4.2, and 2.4.3</p>	<p>a. Regional institutions and mechanisms for sustainable resource mobilization are identified and engaged.</p> <p>b. Proposals and Concept Notes are developed for partners and stakeholders' contributions</p> <p>c. Funding Partners and development banks are mobilized.</p> <p>d. The Regional Rice Task Force is mobilized.</p>

	2.5 Support access to bank finance and credit by rice farmers and the private sector.	<p>2.5.1 Facilitation of access among small and medium-sized enterprises along the RVC to reliable sources of affordable finance and successful models of financing through annual learning workshops.</p> <p>2.5.2 Advocate and build the capacity of Member States to identify and access finance for rice development in their respective countries.</p>	<p>a. Workshops to facilitate access to finance among the SME(s) along the RVC is achieved.</p> <p>b. Capacity of Member States to identify and access finance is enhanced</p>
3.0 Knowledge Sharing and Management (including Digitization for an improved RVC in the region)	3.1 Establish or Strengthen regional rice-based knowledge sharing and management system	3.1.1 Promote the establishment of a viable and effective regional knowledge management system in the rice sector.	a. A vibrant knowledge management system is strengthened
	3.2 Promote and disseminate knowledge management tools (e-learning, agricultural, training of trainers (ToT), books etc.; success stories of research, innovation, technologies, and extension services).	<p>3.2.1 Actively support the production and dissemination of appropriate knowledge management tools for the purpose of boosting production and productivity of the rice sector.</p> <p>3.2.2 Production of thematic series on different tools and mechanisms to enhance learning and knowledge sharing.</p> <p>3.2.3 Leverage on ICT tools and support the development of additional ICT tools for the advancement of the rice sector. This include better utilization of existing ICT platforms and developing new ones.</p>	<p>a. Fact sheets, Manuals, Guidance notes and books are produced in the three languages of ECOWAS – English, French and Portuguese.</p> <p>b. Thematic series on the RVC are produced (For example series on – Contract Farming Systems in the Rice Value Chain in West Africa; The PPP Economic Models; Best Practices in the West African Rice Sector (Case studies and Success stories etc.).</p> <p>c. ICT Expert is engaged</p> <p>d. Use of E-learning, Web TV and Mobile Apps is better enhanced and new tools developed for the rice sector.</p> <p>e. Capacity building and Online Training facilities established.</p>

	<p>3.3 Promote Climate-Smart Agricultural Practice to boost rice production and productivity</p>	<p>3.3.1 Advocate for precise application of Climate Smart Agricultural practices in rice production. This include support for new rice genetic materials tolerant to the existing and emerging stresses of pests and diseases, upscaling soil water management best practices, pest and disease control, and SRP training to sustainably produce rice in the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Regional dissemination workshop is facilitated. b. Advocacy mechanism is engendered. c. The release and dissemination of resilient technologies and innovations across the region is facilitated. d. New planting materials are released in the region. e. Rice farming is intensified and massive increase in rice grain yield is attained. f. SRP is adopted and Member Statea are trained. g. The increased use of lowlands and irrigated areas for the production of rice is achieved. h. Member States are trained in SRP Standards.
	<p>3.4 Strengthen the extension system to disseminate productivity boosting technologies and efficient post-harvest practices.</p>	<p>3.4.1 Engage Member States through dialogues and meetings to encourage the effective and wide use of extension system.</p> <p>3.4.2 Facilitate the regional training of extension workers on dissemination of new technologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Regional learning events are organized to share knowledge and experiences on best practices and new techniques of extension services. b. Extension Experts are engaged c. Built capacity of extension personnel in relevant departments and agencies of Member States. d. Train National Focal Persons / Value Chain Actors e. Training tool guide and materials are developed and

			produced in English, French and Portuguese
4.0 Efficient Trade and Marketing Systems along the Rice Value Chain in West Africa	4.1 Review the CET on rice to the 35% band and oversee its effective implementation in the Member States.	4.1.1 Engage Member States in dialogue for the adoption and effective implementation of the ECOWAS CET. 4.1.2 Biannual monitoring of Member States on the implementation of the CET.	a. The ECOWAS CET is fully implemented
	4.2 Harmonize safeguard measures (tariff and non-tariff barriers).	4.2.1 Develop and support the definition and implementation of regional standardized quality for rice. 4.2.2 Promotion of regional rice branding and labelling to facilitate better marketing and trade relationship among Member States. 4.2.3 Promote trade norms and standards at regional and international levels. 4.2.4 Organize review and validation meetings for items 4.2.1 and 4.2.2	a. A regional standard is established for rice quality among the Member States b. Agreed ECOWAS branded rice (ECORICE) is achieved. c. At least three review and validation meetings held between 2021 -2025
	4.3 Support the establishment of a sub-regional Rice Commodity Exchange System	4.3.1 Facilitate and support the establishment of a regional rice commodity exchange system through active engagement with the Member States.	a. Regional Commodity Exchange system is established and operationalized.
	4.4 Support, develop and promote rice trade tools and mechanisms to facilitate cross border cooperation among the ECOWAS Member States	4.4.1 Encourage the adherence of Member States to physical & social requirements dictates for effective regional rice trade.	a. Cross border trade and cooperation is strengthened among Member States. b. Annual consultative meetings are organized to monitor the implementation of agreed plans c. An advocacy mechanism to soften boarder restrictions implemented by Member States

			d. A quota system adopted by Member States to purchase an agreed percentage of rice imports in- countries and within the region
	4.5 Support and Promote Market Information System (Agriculture is Business)	4.5.1 Develop advocacy mechanism through consultations to foster appropriate networking and cross border trade relationship among Member States. 4.5.2 Initiate Market surveys and analysis to engender 4.5.3 Advocate and build the capacity of Member States to identify and access finance for rice development in their respective countries. 4.5.4 Facilitation of access among small and medium-sized enterprises along the RVC to reliable sources of affordable finance and successful models of financing through annual learning workshops.	a. A Consultant (agricultural market expert) is engaged to carry out the Market survey and analysis. b. Detailed analytical report produced in the ECOWAS languages. c. Website for market information d. Capacity building on access to finance is facilitated. e. Member States are empowered to identify and access finance. f. Biannual Learning Workshop for SME(s) along the RVC g. Annual Fairs and Exhibitions
5.0 Coordination of the National Inter-professional Organizations	5.1 Support the establishment and coordination of national and regional inter-professional organizations.	5.1.1 Advocate for the establishment of Inter-professional Organizations in all the Member States where it is absent and at the regional level.	a. A Framework for the establishment and functioning of national and regional inter-professional platforms developed and promoted in the Member States. b. Position of a Regional Coordinator is supported. c. Coordination Meetings held.

	5.2 Promote best practices and successful models for clustering of farmers.	5.2.1 An evidence-based clustering of farmers proposed and implemented to enhance the rice sector development in the Member States.	a. Expert is consulted to carry out the Gap Analysis. A model developed (based on analyses of national clusters) and implemented by Member States
	5.3 <i>Support better involvement and empowerment of women and youth in the Rice Sector</i>	5.3.1 Advocacy to promote better involvement of women and youths in rice sector. 5.3.2 Promotion of gender friendly technologies and innovations and access to production factors. 5.3.3 Support the training of women and young people in the various activities of the rice chain.	a. Involvement of women and youths in rice sector is better promoted. b. Gender friendly technologies and innovations are promoted. c. Access to production factors is enhanced. d. Women and young people in the various activities of the rice chain are trained and supported.
6.0 Coordination and Management of the Action Plan	6.1 Coordinate the Implementation of the New Rice Action Plan	6.1.1 Engage all the 15 Member States, critical actors and stakeholders via regular regional meeting for effective implementation of the new rice action plan. 6.1.2 Revamp and Support the Regional Multi-stakeholder Rice Task Force 6.1.3 Establish a Technical Coordination Unit for the Rice Offensive	a. The Rice Offensive Action Plan is well managed and implemented. b. The Regional Rice Task Force is revamped c. A Technical Coordination Unit is established.
	6.2 Mapping of the projects, programmes and initiatives in the rice sector for better coordination, prevention of overlapping of functions and foster synergy.	6.2.1 Carry out survey to map the projects, programmes and initiatives of the rice sector in the region. This task will require the services of consultants.	a. Regional and national database of projects, programs, initiatives developed.
	6.3 Organize regular meetings for coordination of the various ongoing projects.	6.3.1 Coordinate the various regional rice programmes and projects through regular regional engagements and consultations.	a. Three (3) regional coordination meetings

	<p>6.4 Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation system.</p>	<p>6.4.1 Train and retrain of personnel to build capacity for effective Monitoring and Evaluation of the Rice Action Plan.</p> <p>6.4.2 Organize Annual Review and Planning Meetings and Ministerial Meetings to validate documents</p> <p>6.4.3 Carry out adoption and impact studies</p> <p>6.4.4 Develop and share periodic reports and success stories on the Implementation of the Rice Action Plan.</p>	<p>a. M&E Officer engaged; equipment provided; tools; data collection template developed</p> <p>b. Summary and Conclusions of review meetings reported. Five (5) Annual Work Plans and Budget and Annual Reports and One (1) Project Completion Report validated</p> <p>c. Three (3) studies conducted (socio-economic; adoption & impact)</p> <p>d. Three (3) Regional biannual reports produced in three languages (English, French and Portuguese) with success stories.</p>
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39. The summary budget for the implementation of the six strategic components of the action plan highlighted above is given in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Summary of Indicative Budget for the Implementation of the Regional Rice Action Plan

Action		Cost (USD)	Percent
Component 1	Policy and Regulatory measures to render the Rice Sector more productive and competitive	2,410,000	5.59%
Component 2	Finance and Public Private Partnership Mechanism to boost Rice Sector Development	9,540,000	22.14%
Component 3	Knowledge Sharing and Management (including Digitization for an improved RVC in the region)	9,045,000	20.99%
Component 4	Efficient Trade and Marketing Systems along the Rice Value Chain in West Africa	10,690,000	24.80%
Component 5	Coordination of the National Inter-professional Organizations	5,150,000	11.95%
Component 6	Coordination and Management of the Rice Action Plan	6,262,000	14.53%
Total		43,097,000	100.00%

4.0 Funding and Resource Mobilization

40. Funding and resource mobilization for the implementation of this Regional Rice Offensive Action Plan is planned to be specific and targeted for success. Four (4) main sources of funding have been identified and proposed for the Action Plan and they are: i) ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions that have developed appropriate mechanisms for financing agricultural development programmes, projects and initiatives, namely; the Regional Agricultural Development Fund of UEMOA (FRDA) and the ECOWAS Regional Fund for Agriculture and Food (ECOWADF). Also, these two institutions will support the private sector by facilitating access to funding opportunities in two major regional development and investment banks in West Africa, namely the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) and the West African Development Bank (BOAD) of UEMOA; ii) the 15 ECOWAS Member States; iii) the Technical and Financial Partners of ECOWAS; and iv) the Private sector (entrepreneurs and producers, industrialists, traders and distributors of agricultural inputs and equipment). Private investment is crucial to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the regional offensive.
41. The support for the regional offensive for sustainable and sustained recovery of rice production in West Africa programme requires a significant investment whose mobilization requires the commitment of the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions, Member States, rice farmers, the private sector, the regional and international technical and financial partners. Significant advocacy campaigns to turn the political will for this programme into a budget commitment will be carried out to enlist the interests of all relevant financial stakeholders to invest heavily in the regional rice sector.



5.0 Implementation and Institutional Arrangement

5.1 Institutional Arrangement: Governance, Coordination and Monitoring & Evaluation

42. The mechanisms for the institutional arrangement adopted for the implementation of the Action Plan is very consistent with those established by the regional agricultural policy (ECOWAP), and the implementation involves many stakeholders, and institutions at both regional and international levels. The implementation framework is outlined as follows:
43. **Governance and Political leadership:** This will be provided at the regional level by the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions and at the national level by the fifteen (15) Member States. These two types of institutions have the mandate of defining public policy guidelines. Thereby, they will assume the leadership of the strategy and the programme. The ECOWAP and Management structure will be deployed along with strong stakeholders' engagement (private sector, farmers' organization), statutory bodies, and the Council of ministers.
44. **Coordination among stakeholders and strategies:** The activities of the Rice Action Plan will be coordinated by the ECOWAS Department of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources to ensure synergy, along with consultative bodies including the private sector, civic society, and farmers' networks.
45. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The programming along with the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will be established as part of the operationalization of the ECOWAP. The M&E structure of ECOWAP stem from CAADP all the way to the National levels. The M&E indicators will be designed to monitor and track the progress and success of the Action Plan.

5.2 Technical Implementation of Activities

46. The implementation of many of the activities will be provided by several actors and institutions both at regional and national levels, including a) the 15 Member States, responsible for implementing their various national rice development strategies; b) Socio-professional regional organizations: Regional Consultation Framework of rice producer organizations, ROPPA, WAWA, ROAC, and many other relevant partners; c) Technical cooperation and research institutions, this include national agricultural research systems and specialized Technical Centres; and d) other regional and international financial institutions.



6.0 Conclusions

The ECOWAS rice strategy “Rice Offensive” was adopted in 2015 to curb any reoccurrence of major food crises similar to that of 2008. The consultative meeting held in February 2020 reviewed the status and effects of the programme among member states. The outcomes of the meeting along with the analysis of the general survey conducted and the overview of the status of the rice sector in the 15 ECOWAS Member States are the bases for this Strategic Action Plan. Going forward, ECOWAS and stakeholders will build on experience gained so far from the implementation of the Rice Offensive Strategy. Success stories in rice productivity improvement, private sector engagement, market development, harmonization of regulations, access to finance, and other key areas of the rice value chain will be up-scaled, while capitalizing on the backstopping and catalytic roles that the regional partners play to improve the rice sector. Productivity enhancing innovations to mitigate stresses, particularly those related to climate change will be of high priority to increase the present grain yield from 2.2 MT/ha to at least 3.8-4.0 MT/ha. Intensification of rice cultivation will not only improve yield but will increase productivity thereby improving the livelihoods of the farmers while also preserving the ecosystem.

ECOWAS’ quest to vigorously promote quality standards and competitive pricing is driven by the community’s obligation to improve rice competitiveness at the national, regional and international levels. ECOWAS knows that increased private sector investment will significantly propel growth in the rice sector and as such the Commission will work with Member States to rekindle its effort to create enabling environment through harmonization and reduction of tariffs, implementation of trade and agri-input regulations, and removal of barriers to cross-border trade. Moreover, the establishment of coordination mechanism to effectively engage the private sector and the inter-professional organizations shows ECOWAS’ commitment to adopt the PPP approach to support the private sector to improve their efficiency in the rice value chain. The effective coordination of the regional institutions, projects and programs will harness their potential to create synergy and consequently boost impact.

By strengthening the knowledge management system, existing and new information across the value chain will be better tailored and communicated to target stakeholders in user-friendly forms that will drive transformation in the rice sector. The robust Monitoring and Evaluation system will enable ECOWAS to track results, progress, changes and subsequently make possible the assessment of impacts emanating from the interventions. It is strongly anticipated that these actions will spur the growth in the rice sector to achieve rice self-sufficiency in West Africa.



Annexes

Annex 1 :

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND INDICATIVE BUDGET BY COMPONENT

COMPONENT 1: Policy and Regulatory measures to render the Rice Sector more productive and competitive								
ACTIVITIES	ACTIONS	INDICATIVE COST (\$)						TOTAL
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
1.1 Support the effective operationalization of Rice Policies and Strategies at the National Level	1.1.1 Annual forum to review the status of the implementation of the policies and strategies (NRDS) in line with the RAP will be held at the regional level.	-	180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	900,000
1.2 Support the implementation of the Existing Agricultural Inputs Regulations adopted by the Countries for the rice sector.	1.2.1 Coordinate and engage Member States in dialogue for the effective implementation of existing agricultural inputs regulations.	-	200,000	-	-	200,000	-	400,000
1.3 Initiate, develop and implement additional regulations to boost the RVC in West Africa	1.3.1 Explore development of additional regulations following a gap analysis to establish the need areas in the region.	-	-	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
	1.3.2 Regional meeting is organized to validate the new regulations. And new regulations are produced in FR/EN/PT	-	-	360,000	-	-	-	150,000
1.4 Support and promote policy incentives measures	1.4.1 Regional consultative meeting to evaluate and promote appropriate rice policy incentive measures in WA.	-	200,000	-	200,000	-	200,000	600,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 1			580,000	690,000	380,000	380,000	380,000	2,410,000

COMPONENT 2: Finance and Public Private Partnership Mechanism to boost Rice Sector Development								
ACTIVITIES	ACTIONS	IINDICATIVE COST (\$)					TOTAL	
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024		2025
2.1 Encourage and support the development of sustainable Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) within the rice value chain.	2.1.1 Assessment of the economic viability of the existing PPP models in the ECOWAS region and beyond; to help identify and develop suitable PPP models within regional and national contexts, and to aid planning. This activity will require hiring of consultants to implement.		580,000		300,000		150,000	1,030,000
	2.1.2 Organize a biannual meeting to engage all relevant stakeholders in the public and private sectors for the purpose of triggering profitable partnerships along the rice value chain.		180,000			180,000		360,000
2.2 Facilitate and encourage a more conducive investment environment (e.g. tax reduction on agricultural inputs and access to agri-inputs, notably fertilizers and pesticides) for the rice sector to thrive.	2.2.1 Engage and influence Member States through advocacy to create conducive environments for sustainable investment in the rice sector.		225,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	945,000
2.3 Promote successful finance and incentive models in the region.	2.3.1 Commission a study to identify finance options that will assist SME(s) (small-scale farmers, cottage mills and processors) along the RVC to increase their capacities.		270,000	180,000				450,000
	2.3.2 Develop an advocacy mechanism to persuade Member States to adopt successful incentive models and			180,000		180,000		360,000

		models for financing the rice sector through learning workshops.							
2.4 Establish Financial Resource Mobilization system and contribution from Partners and Stakeholders.	2.4.1	Evaluate regional institutions and mechanisms to facilitate resource mobilization for rice development. This will be carried out through active evaluation process to generate baseline information for engagement.		250,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	850,000
	2.4.2	Mobilize partners and stakeholders for sustainable financial contributions towards rice self-sufficiency in the region.		250,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	150,000	925,000
	2.4.3	Facilitate collaboration and networks of national, regional, and multinational development banks for the development of the RVC through regional consultations.		150,000		150,000			300,000
	2.4.4	Mobilize the Regional Rice Task Force to co-drive the efforts in 2.4.1, 2.4.2, and 2.4.3		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000
5 Support access to bank finance and credit by rice farmers and the private sector.	2.5.1	Facilitation of access among small and medium-sized enterprises along the RVC to reliable sources of affordable finance and successful models of financing through annual learning workshops.			180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	720,000
	2.5.2	Advocate and build the capacity of Member States to identify and access finance for rice development in their respective countries.		450,000	2,250,000	150,000			2,850,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 2				2,505,000	3,445,000	1,435,000	1,195,000	960,000	9,540,000

COMPONENT 3: Knowledge Sharing and Management (including Digitization for an improved RVC in the region)								
ACTIVITIES	ACTIONS	INDICATIVE COST (\$)						TOTAL
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
3.1 Establish and Strengthen regional rice-based knowledge sharing and management system	3.1.1 Promote the establishment of a viable and effective regional knowledge management system in the rice sector.		504,000	334,000	334,000	334,000	334,000	1,840,000
3.2 Promote and disseminate knowledge management tools (e-learning, agric-digital, training of trainers (ToT), books etc.; success stories of research, innovation, technologies, and extension services).	3.2.1 Actively support the production and dissemination of appropriate knowledge management tools for the purpose of boosting production and productivity of the rice sector.	25,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	625,000
	3.2.2 Production of thematic series on different tools and mechanisms to enhance learning and knowledge sharing.		540,000		540,000		540,000	1,620,000
	3.2.3 Leverage on ICT tools and support the development of additional ICT tools for the advancement of the rice sector. This include better utilization of existing ICT platforms and developing new ones.		458,000	218,000	218,000	218,000	218,000	1,330,000
3.3 Promote Climate-Smart Agricultural Practice to boost rice production and productivity.	3.3.1 Advocate for precise application of Climate Smart Agricultural practices in rice production. This include support for new rice genetic materials tolerant to the existing and emerging stresses of pests and diseases. Upscaling soil water management best practices, pest and disease control, and SRP training of Member States to sustainably produce rice.		240,000	390,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	1,170,000

3.4 Strengthen the extension system to disseminate productivity boosting technologies and efficient post-harvest practices.	3.4.1 Engage Member States through dialogues and meetings to encourage the effective and wide use of extension system.		180,000		180,000		180,000	540,000
	3.4.2 Facilitate the regional training of extension workers on dissemination of new technologies.			570,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	1,920,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 3		25,000	2,042,000	1,632,000	2,022,000	1,302,000	2,022,000	9,045,000

COMPONENT 4: Efficient Trade and Marketing Systems along the Rice Value Chain in West Africa								
ACTIVITIES	ACTIONS	IINDICATIVE COST (\$)						TOTAL
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
4.1 Review the CET on rice to the 35% band and oversee its effective implementation in the Member States.	4.1.1 Engage Member States in dialogue for the adoption and effective implementation of the ECOWAS CET.		250,000					250,000
	4.1.2 Biannual monitoring of Member States on the implementation of the CET.			180,000		180,000		360,000
4.2 Harmonize safeguard measures (tariff and non-tariff barriers).	4.2.1 Develop and support the definition and implementation of regional standardized quality for rice.			150,000	150,000	150,000		450,000
	4.2.2 Promotion of regional rice branding and labelling to facilitate better marketing and trade relationship among Member States.				320,000	150,000	150,000	620,000
	4.2.3 Promote trade norms and standards at regional and international levels.		100,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	700,000
	4.2.4 Organize review and validation meetings for items 4.2.1 and 4.2.2			180,000	180,000	220,000		580,000
4.3 Support the establishment of a sub-regional Rice Commodity Exchange System.	4.3.1 Facilitate and support the establishment of a sub-regional rice commodity exchange system through active engagement with the Member States.		315,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	915,000
4.4 Support, develop and promote rice trade tools and	4.4.1 Encourage the adherence of Member States to physical &		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000

mechanisms to facilitate cross border cooperation among the ECOWAS Member States		social requirements dictates for effective regional rice trade.							
	4.4.2	Develop advocacy mechanism through consultations to foster appropriate networking and cross border trade relationship among Member States.		120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	600,000
4.5 Support and Promote Market Information System (Agriculture is Business)	4.5.1	Initiate Market surveys and analysis to engender			180,000	105,000	90,000	90,000	465,000
	4.5.2	Advocate and build the capacity of Member States to identify and access finance for rice development in their respective countries.		350,000		150,000			500,000
	4.5.3	Facilitation of access among small and medium-sized enterprises along the RVC to reliable sources of affordable finance and successful models of financing through annual learning workshops.		1,575,000	450,000	1,575,000	450,000	450,000	4,500,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 4				2,860,000	1,710,000	3,050,000	1,810,000	1,260,000	10,690,000

COMPONENT 5: Coordination of the National Inter-professional Organizations								
ACTIVITIES	ACTIONS	INDICATIVE COST (\$)						TOTAL
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
5.1 Support the coordination of national inter-professional organizations.	5.1.1 Advocate for the establishment of Inter-professional Organizations in all the Member States where it is absent and at the regional level.		310,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	1,310,000
5.2 Promote best practices and successful models for clustering of farmers.	5.2.1 An evidence-based clustering of farmers proposed and implemented to enhance the rice sector development in the Member States.		250,000	100,000	100,000	100,000		550,000
5.3 Support better involvement and empowerment of women and youth in the Rice Sector	5.3.1 Advocacy to promote better involvement of women and youths in rice sector.		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000
	5.3.2 Promotion of gender friendly technologies and innovations and access to production factors.		180,000	210,000	210,000	210,000	210,000	1,020,000
	5.3.3 Support the training of women and young people in the various activities of the rice chain.		280,000	320,000	320,000	320,000	280,000	1,520,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 5			1,170,000	1,030,000	1,030,000	1,030,000	890,000	5,150,000

COMPONENT 6: Coordination and Management of the Action Plan								
ACTIVITIES	ACTIONS	IINDICATIVE COST (\$)					TOTAL	
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024		2025
6.1 Coordinate the Implementation of the New Rice Action Plan	6.1.1 Engage all the 15 Member States, critical actors and stakeholders through an organized regional meeting to present the new rice action plan for effective adoption and implementation of Rice Offensive.		50,000					50,000
	6.1.2 Establish a Technical Coordination Unit for the effective management of the Rice Action Plan.		514,000	324,000	324,000	324,000	324,000	1,810,000
	6.1.3 Revamp and support the Regional Rice Task Force (RRTF) to co-drive the efforts by ECOWAS		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000
6.2 Mapping of the projects, programmes and initiatives in the rice sector for better coordination, prevention of overlapping of functions and foster synergy.	6.2.1 Carry out survey to map the projects, programmes and initiatives of the rice sector in the region. This task will require the services of consultants.		480,000	204,000	84,000	84,000	84,000	940,000
6.3 Organize regular meetings for coordination of the various ongoing projects.	6.3.1 Coordinate the various regional rice programmes and projects through regular regional engagements and consultations		150,000		150,000		150,000	450,000
6.4 Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation system.	6.4.1 Train and retrain of personnel to build capacity for effective Monitoring and Evaluation of the Rice Action Plan.		334,000	150,000	84,000	84,000	84,000	736,000
	6.4.2 Organize Annual Review and Planning Meetings and Ministerial Meetings to validate documents		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000
	6.4.3 Carry out adoption and impact studies			210,000	210,000		210,000	630,000
	6.4.4 Develop and share periodic reports and success stories on the Implementation of the Rice Action Plan.		50,000		50,000		50,000	150,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 6			1,878,000	1,188,000	1,202,000	792,000	1,202,000	6,262,000

Annex 2 :

**STRATEGIC RICE ACTION PLAN :
TIME FRAME, ORGANIZATIONS RESPONSIBLE AND
EXPECTED RESULTS BY COMPONENTS**

COMPONENT 1: POLICY AND REGULATORY MEASURES TO RENDER THE RICE SECTOR MORE PRODUCTIVE AND COMPETITIVE										
No.	ACTIONS	EXPECTED RESULTS / TARGETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATIONS	PRIORITY TIME FRAME						BUDGET (\$)
				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
1.1 Support the effective operationalization of Rice Policies and Strategies at the National Level										
1.1.1	Annual forum to review the status of the implementation of the policies and strategies (NRDS) in line with the RAP will be held at the regional level.	1. Annual regional review meetings are held with Member States.	ECOWAS Commission, Member States, CARD, GiZ, ARAP and relevant Partners.		180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	900,000
1.2 Support the implementation of the Existing Agricultural Inputs Regulations adopted by the Countries for the rice sector.										
1.2.1	Coordinate and engage Member States in dialogue to identify challenges and find solutions for the effective implementation of existing agricultural inputs regulations.	1. Coordination Meetings are held in 2021 and 2024 2. Existing agricultural inputs regulations are effectively implemented.	ECOWAS, CORAF, ARAP, IFDC, Member States, Partners and Private Sector (ASIWA/ Wafa)		200,000			200,000		400,000
1.3 Initiate, develop and implement additional regulations to boost the RVC in West Africa										
1.3.1	Explore development of additional regulations following a gap analysis to establish the need areas in the region.	1. Expert is consulted to carry out the Gap Analysis through missions in the Member States. 2. Additional but relevant regulations are identified introduced to Member States for the advancement of the rice sector.	ECOWAS, AfricaRice, CORAF, Member States, NARIs, Partners, Farmer Organizations (ROPPA) and private sector.			150,000				150,000
1.3.2	Regional meeting is organized to validate new regulations.	1. New regulations are validated.	ECOWAS, Member States, and Partners.			360,000				360,000

		2. The Regulations are produced in the three (3) ECOWAS languages (EN/FR/PT)								
1.3 Support and promote policy incentives measures										
1.4.1	Regional consultative meetings to evaluate and promote appropriate rice policy incentive measures in WA.	1. Regional meetings are organized (2021, 2023 and 2025) 2. Summary reports are made available in French, English and Portuguese	ECOWAS Commission, Member States, CARD, GiZ, ARAP and relevant Partners.		200,000		200,000		200,000	600,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 1				--	580,000	690,000	380,000	380,000	380,000	2,410,000

COMPONENT 2: FINANCE AND PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP MECHANISMS TO BOOST RICE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT										
No.	ACTIONS	EXPECTED RESULTS / TARGETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATIONS	PRIORITY TIME FRAME						BUDGET (\$)
				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
2.1 Encourage and support the development of sustainable Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) within the rice value chain.										
2.1.1	Assessment of the economic viability of the existing PPP models in the ECOWAS region and beyond; to help identify and develop suitable PPP models within regional and national contexts, and to aid planning. This activity will require hiring of consultants to implement.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agricultural Investment Expert is engaged to identify suitable PPP models that fits the context and exact needs of Member States in the region. 2. Existing PPP models in West Africa are assessed and documented (EN/FR/PT) as reference for building viable partnerships in the region. 3. Assessment report and recommendations is produced in the ECOWAS three languages (French, English and Portuguese). 4. Meetings are organized (2021, 2023, and 2025) and summary reports available in ECOWAS languages. 5. Four (4) PPP models to link actors along the RVC (producers, processors & suppliers) to inputs; technology, finance and markets are developed. 	ECOWAS Commission, Member States, BOAD, Inter-professional Associations, AGRA CARD, GiZ, Grow Africa, ARAP, Private Sector relevant and Partners.		580,000		300,000		150,000	1,030,000

2.1.2	Organize a regional meeting to engage all relevant stakeholders in the public and private sectors for the purpose of triggering profitable partnerships along the rice value chain.	1. Regional Meeting on PPP and Finance Mechanism is organized	ECOWAS, Member States, BOAD, Inter-professional Associations, AGRA, Private Sector and relevant Partners		180,000			180,000		360,000
2.2 Facilitate and encourage a more conducive investment environment (e.g. tax reduction on agricultural inputs and access to agri-inputs, notably fertilizers and pesticides) for the rice sector to thrive.										
2.2.1	Engage and influence Member States through advocacy to create conducive environments for sustainable investment in the rice sector.	1. Advocacy tools such as policy monitoring, policy dialogue and campaigns are deployed. 2. Advocacy capacity of Stakeholders is developed. 3. Member States are engaged in the 2 nd quarter of 2021 and investment environment in the region is improved.	ECOWAS Department of Trade, Free Movement & Customs, EBID, BOAD, Member States, ARAP, Private Sector and Partners.		225,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	945,000
2.3 Promote successful finance and incentive models in the region.										
2.3.1	Commission a study to identify finance options that will assist SME(s) (small-scale farmers, cottage mills and processors) along the RVC to increase their capacities.	1. An Agricultural Finance Expert is hired 2. A study outcome on finance options is developed by the 4 th quarter of 2021 and report produced in the three ECOWAS languages. 3. Study report validated in the first quarter of 2022.	ECOWAS Commission, Member States, Partners and Private Sector (ASIWA/ WAFSA)		270,000	180,000				450,000
2.3.2	Develop an advocacy mechanism to persuade	4. Workshop is organized biannually, and Member States	ECOWAS, Member States, ARAP, AGRA,			180,000		180,000		360,000

	Member States to adopt successful subsidy and financing models for the rice sector through learning workshops.	are enlightened to adopt successful models.	GiZ, Inter-professional Associations, FBOs, and relevant Partners.							
2.4 Establish Financial Resource Mobilization system and contribution from Partners and Stakeholders.										
2.4.1	Appraise regional institutions and mechanisms to facilitate resource mobilization for rice development. This will be carried out through active evaluation process to generate baseline information for engagement.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultant is hired 2. Regional institutions and mechanisms for sustainable resource mobilization are identified and engaged. 3. Resource mobilization strategy developed and implemented. 	ECOWAS, Member States, EBID, BOAD, AfDB, AGRA, CORAF, Financial Institutions, ECOWAP Donor Group, Partners and the Private Sector.		250,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	850,000
2.4.2	Mobilize partners, the private sector and stakeholders for sustainable financial contributions towards rice self-sufficiency in the region.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposals and Concept Notes are developed for partners and stakeholders' contributions. 2. Hire an Agricultural Finance Strategy consultant 	-do-		250,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	150,000	925,000
2.4.3	Facilitate collaboration and networks of national, regional, and multinational development banks for the development of the RVC through regional consultations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funding Partners and development banks are mobilized. 	-do-		150,000		150,000			300,000
2.4.4	Mobilize the Regional Rice Task Force to co-drive the efforts in 2.4.1, 2.4.2, and 2.4.3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RRTF is actively mobilized 	-do-		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000

2.5 Support access to bank finance and credit by rice farmers and the private sector.										
2.5.1	Facilitation of access among small and medium-sized enterprises along the RVC to reliable sources of affordable finance and successful models of financing through annual learning workshops.	1. Annual workshop to facilitate access to finance among the SME(s) along the RVC is achieved in the first quarter of 2022.	ECOWAS, Member States, ARAP, BOAD AGRA, GiZ, AfDB, FBOs, EBID, Inter-professional Associations & Partners			180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	720,000
2.5.2	Advocate and build the capacity of Member States to identify and access finance for rice development in their respective countries.	1. Regional Training of Trainers in pedagogical modules is carried out. 2. Seed funds is available to train personnel at national level in the 15 Member States. 3. Capacity of Member States to identify and access finance is enhanced.	ECOWAS, Member States, EBID ARAP, AGRA, AfDB, FBOs, Partners, BOAD and Inter-professional Associations		450,000	2,250,000	150,000			2,850,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 2					2,505,000	3,445,000	1,435,000	1,195,000	960,000	9,540,000

COMPONENT 3: KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND MANAGEMENT (INCLUDING DIGITIZATION FOR AN IMPROVED RVC IN THE REGION)										
No.	ACTIONS	EXPECTED RESULTS / TARGETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATIONS	PRIORITY TIME FRAME						BUDGET (\$)
				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
3.1 Establish or Strengthen regional rice-based knowledge sharing and management system										
3.1.1	Promote the establishment of a viable and effective regional knowledge management system in the rice sector.	1. A vibrant knowledge management hub is strengthened 2. A Communication Expert will be hired for five (5) years to administer and manage the knowledge management hub.	ECOWAS, Member States, ECOAGRIS, AGRA, CARD, GiZ, CORAF, IFPRI, FAO, AfricaRice, NARIs and Partners.		504,000	334,000	334,000	334,000	334,000	1,840,000
3.2 Promote and disseminate knowledge management tools (e-learning, agric-digital, training of trainers (ToT), books etc.; success stories of research, innovation, technologies, and extension services).										
3.2.1	Actively support the production and dissemination of appropriate knowledge management tools for the purpose of boosting production and productivity of the rice sector.	1. Fact sheets, Manuals, Guidance notes and books are produced in the three languages of ECOWAS – English, French and Portuguese.	ECOWAS, Member States, CTA, CORAF AGRA, CARD, IFPRI, GiZ-CARI, AfricaRice, NARIs and Partners.	25,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	625,000
3.2.2	Production of thematic series on different tools and mechanisms to enhance learning and knowledge sharing.	2. Consultants engaged to conduct studies 3. Thematic series on the RVC are produced (For example series on – Contract Farming Systems in the Rice Value Chain in West Africa; The PPP Economic Models; Best	-do-		540,000		540,000		540,000	1,620,000

		Practices in the West African Rice Sector (Case studies and Success stories etc.). 4. Reports of studies are validated at the regional level								
3.2.3	Leverage on ICT tools and support the development of additional ICT tools for the advancement of the rice sector. This include better utilization of existing ICT platforms and developing new ones.	5. ICT Expert is engaged 6. Use of E-learning, Web TV, Local Radio Stations and Mobile Apps is better enhanced and new tools developed for the rice sector. 7. Establish a Virtual Library 8. Capacity building and Online Training facilities established.	-do-		458,000	218,000	218,000	218,000	218,000	1,330,000
3.3 Promote Climate-Smart Agricultural Practice to boost rice production and productivity.										
3.3.1	Advocate for precise application of Climate Smart Agricultural practices in rice production. This include support for new rice genetic materials tolerant to the existing and emerging stresses of pests and diseases, upscaling soil water management best practices, and training of Member States in SRP to sustainably cultivate rice.	1. Regional dissemination workshops are facilitated. 2. Advocacy mechanism for appropriate technology transfer is engendered. 3. The release and dissemination of resilient technologies and innovations across the region is facilitated. 4. New planting materials are released in the region. 5. Rice farming is intensified and massive increase in rice grain yield is attained. 6. SRP is adopted and MS are trained.	ECOWAS, AfricaRice, CORAF, CTA, AGRA, CARD, IFPRI, NARIs GiZ-CARI, AfricaRice, FBOs, Member States, ROPPA, FARA, Partners and Private sector.		240,000	390,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	1,170,000

		7. The increased use of lowlands and irrigated areas for production of rice is achieved.								
3.4 Strengthen the extension system to disseminate productivity boosting technologies and efficient post-harvest practices .										
3.4.1	Engage Member States through dialogues and meetings to encourage the effective and wide use of extension system.	1. Regional learning events are organized to share knowledge and experiences on best practices and new techniques of extension services.	ECOWAS, AfricaRice, Member States, FBOs, CTA, CORAF, Private Sector, AGRA, CARD, IFPRI, NARIs, ROPPA, AfricaRice, and Partners.		180,000		180,000		180,000	540,000
3.4.2	Facilitate the regional training of extension workers on dissemination of new technologies.	2. Extension Experts are engaged 3. Built capacity of extension personnel in relevant departments and agencies of Member States. 4. Train National Focal Persons / Value Chain Actors 5. Training tool guide and materials are developed and produced in English, French and Portuguese.	-do-			570,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	1,920,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 3				25,000	2,042,000	1,632,000	2,022,000	1,302,000	2,022,000	9,045,000

COMPONENT 4: EFFICIENT TRADE AND MARKETING SYSTEMS ALONG THE RICE VALUE CHAIN IN WEST AFRICA										
No.	ACTIONS	EXPECTED RESULTS / TARGETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATIONS	PRIORITY TIME FRAME						BUDGET (\$)
				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
4.1 Review the CET on rice to the 35% band and oversee its effective implementation in the Member States.										
4.1.1	Engage Member States in dialogue for the adoption and effective implementation of the ECOWAS CET.	1. The ECOWAS CET is reviewed to 35% and becomes fully implemented	ECOWAS Parliament, ECOWAS Trade, Free Movement and Customs, Member States, FBOs, CARD, GiZ, AfricaRice, and relevant Partners.		250,000					250,000
4.1.2	Biannual monitoring of Member States on the implementation of the CET.	2. Annual consultative meetings are organized to monitor the implementation of agreed plans	ECOWAS, Member States, ECOWAS Trade, Free Movement and Customs,			180,000		180,000		360,000
4.2 Harmonize safeguard measures (tariff and non-tariff barriers).										
4.2.1	Develop and support the definition and implementation of regional standardized quality for rice.	1. A regional standard is established for rice quality among the Member States	ECOWAS Trade, Free Movement & Customs, AfricaRice, CORAF, National Standards Authorities, ARAP, Partners and Private Sector			150,000	150,000	150,000		450,000
4.2.2	Promotion of regional rice branding and	2. Agreed ECOWAS branded rice	-do-				320,000	150,000	150,000	620,000

	labelling in the region to facilitate better marketing and trade relationship among Member States. This will include exhibitions	(ECORICE) is achieved.								
4.2.3	Promote trade norms and standards at regional and international levels.	3. Trade norms and standards are promoted in the region.	-do-		100,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	700,000
4.2.4	Organize review and validation meetings for items 4.2.1 and 4.2.2	4. Atleast three review and validation meetings held between 2021 - 2025	-do-			180,000	180,000	220,000		580,000
4.3 Support the establishment of a sub-regional Rice Commodity Exchange System.										
4.3.1	Facilitate and support the establishment of a regional rice commodity exchange system through active engagement with	1. Regional Rice Commodity Exchange system is established and operationalized.	ECOWAS Trade, Free Movement & Customs, AfricaRice, CORAF, ARAP, Chambers of Commerce, FBOs, Partners and Private Sector		315,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	915,000

	the Member States.									
4.4 Support, develop and promote rice trade tools and mechanisms to facilitate cross border cooperation among the ECOWAS Member States										
4.4.1	Encourage the adherence of Member States to physical & social requirements dictates for effective regional rice trade.	1. Cross border trade and cooperation is strengthened among Member States.	ECOWAS Trade, Free Movement & Customs, Member States, FBOs, AfricaRice, CORAF, ARAP, Partners and Private Sector		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000
4.4.2	Develop advocacy mechanism through consultations to foster appropriate networking and cross border trade relationship among Member States.	2. An advocacy mechanism to soften boarder restrictions implemented by Member States with respect to agreed rules of engagement.	-do-		120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	600,000
4.5 Support and Promote Market Information System (Agriculture is Business)										
4.5.1	Initiate Market surveys and analysis to support a robust information system and engender a vibrant	1. A Consultant (agricultural market expert) is engaged to carry out the Market survey and analysis 2. Detailed analytical report	ECOWAS, Member States, FBOs, Inter-Professional Associations, CORAF, AfricaRice, ARAP, Partners and Private Sector			180,000	105,000	90,000	90,000	465,000

	rice business in the region.	produced in the ECOWAS languages. 3. Website for market information								
4.5.2	Advocate and build the capacity of Member States to identify and access finance for rice development in their respective countries.	4. Capacity building on access to finance is facilitated. 5. Member States are empowered to identify and access finance.	-do-		350,000		150,000			500,000
4.5.3	Facilitation of access among small and medium-sized enterprises along the RVC to reliable sources of affordable finance and successful models of financing through annual learning workshops.	6. Biannual Learning Workshop for SME(s) along the RVC – Producers, Processors, Marketers in each of the 15 Member States 7. Annual Fairs and Exhibitions	-do-		1,575,000	450,000	1,575,000	450,000	450,000	4,500,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 4					2,860,000	1,710,000	3,050,000	1,810,000	1,260,000	10,690,000

COMPONENT 5: COORDINATION OF THE NATIONAL INTER-PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS										
No.	ACTIONS	EXPECTED RESULTS / TARGETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATIONS	PRIORITY TIME FRAME						BUDGET (\$)
				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
5.1 Support the coordination of national inter-professional organizations.										
5.1.1	Advocate for the establishment of Inter-professional Organizations in all the Member States where it is absent and at the regional level.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Framework for the establishment and functioning of national and regional inter-professional platforms developed and promoted in the Member States. 2. Position of a Regional Coordinator is supported. 3. Coordination Meetings held. 	ECOWAS, Member States, IFAD, FBOs, World Bank, ARAP, Inter-Professional Associations, Grow Africa, Partners and Private Sector.		310,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	1,310,000
5.2 Promote best practices and successful models for clustering of farmers in the RVC.										
5.2.1	An evidence-based clustering of farmers proposed and implemented to enhance the rice sector development in the Member States.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expert is hired and consulted to carry out the Gap Analysis. 2. A model is developed (based on analyses of national clusters), disseminated in the Member States for implementation. 	ECOWAS, AfricaRice, CORAF, NARIs, Partners, Farmer Organizations (ROPPA) and private sector.		250,000	100,000	100,000	100,000		550,000
5.3 Support better involvement and empowerment of women and youth in the Rice Sector:										
5.3.1	Advocacy to promote better involvement of women and youths in rice sector.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involvement of women and youths in rice sector is better promoted. 	ECOWAS, AfricaRice, CORAF, Farmer Organizations (ROPPA), private		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000

			sector and other relevant partners.								
5.3.2	Promotion of gender friendly technologies and innovations and access to production factors.	2. Gender friendly technologies and innovations are promoted. 3. Access to production factors is enhanced.	ECOWAS, AfricaRice, CORAF, Farmer Organizations (ROPPA), private sector and other relevant partners.		180,000	210,000	210,000	210,000	210,000	210,000	1,020,000
5.3.3	Support the training of women and young people in the various activities of the rice chain.	4. Women and young people in the various activities of the rice chain are trained and supported.	ECOWAS, AfricaRice, CORAF, Farmer Organizations (ROPPA), private sector and other relevant partners.		280,000	320,000	320,000	320,000	320,000	280,000	1,520,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 5				--	1,170,000	1,030,000	1,030,000	1,030,000	1,030,000	890,000	5,150,000

COMPONENT 6: COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ACTION PLAN										
No.	ACTIONS	EXPECTED RESULTS / TARGETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATIONS	PRIORITY TIME FRAME						BUDGET (\$)
				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
6.1 Validate and Coordinate the Implementation of the New Rice Action Plan										
6.1.1	Engage all the 15 Member States, critical actors and stakeholders through an organized regional meeting to present the new rice action plan for effective adoption and overall implementation of the Rice Offensive.	1. Press Conference is held to present the validated Rice Action Plan to the Member States, key actors, Donor Groups and all relevant financial and technical partners. 2. Action Plan is translated and produced in the three ECOWAS languages (English, French and Portuguese).	ECOWAS Commission, Member States, CARD, GiZ, AGRA and relevant Partners.		50,000					50,000
6.1.2	Establish a Technical Coordination Unit for the implementation of the Regional Rice Offensive Action Plan	3. A Technical Coordination Unit is established 4. A Coordinator is hired to manage the technical coordination unit of the Rice Action Plan for effective implementation. 5. A Policy Advisor is hired 6. A Knowledge and Communication Expert is hired (see Component 3, Activity 3.1 (Action 3.1.1))	ECOWAS Commission, Member States, Regional Partners, ECOWAP Donor Group		514,000	324,000	324,000	324,000	324,000	1,810,000

6.1.3	Revamp and support the Regional Rice Task Force	<p>7. The Regional Rice Task Force is revamped and supported.</p> <p>8. Annual Meetings held to revalidate the activities of the Regional Rice Task Force (RRTF) and strategize on the plan of activities for the implementation of the Rice Offensive.</p>			150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000
6.2 Mapping of the projects, programmes and initiatives in the rice sector for better coordination, prevention of overlapping of functions and foster synergy										
6.2.1	Carry out survey to map the projects, programmes and initiatives of the rice sector in the region. This task will require the services of consultants.	<p>1. Consultants are hired</p> <p>2. Sector mapping / survey is carried out.</p> <p>3. Regional and national database of projects, programs, initiatives developed.</p> <p>4.</p>	ECOWAS, Member States, CORAF, CARD and Partners		480,000	204,000	84,000	84,000	84,000	936,000
6.3 Organize regular meetings for coordination of the various ongoing projects.										
6.3.1	Coordinate the various regional rice programmes and projects through regular regional engagements and consultations.	1. Three (3) regional coordination meetings	ECOWAS, AfricaRice, CORAF, AGRA and Partners		150,000		150,000		150,000	450,000
6.4 Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation system.										
6.4.1	Training and retraining of personnel to build capacity for effective Monitoring and Evaluation of the Rice Action Plan.	<p>1. M&E Officer engaged; equipment provided; tools; data collection template developed.</p> <p>2. National Focal Points are trained</p>	ECOWAS Commission, Member States		334,000	150,000	84,000	84,000	84,000	736,000

6.4.2	Organize Annual Review and Planning Meetings and Ministerial Meetings to validate documents.	3. Summary and Conclusions of review meetings reported. Five (5) Annual Work Plans and Budget and Annual Reports and One (1) Project Completion Report validated.	ECOWAS Commission, Member States		150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	750,000
6.4.3	Carry out adoption and impact studies	4. Three (3) studies conducted (socio-economic; adoption & impact)	ECOWAS Commission, Member States			210,000	210,000		210,000	630,000
6.4.4	Develop and share periodic reports and success stories on the Implementation of the Rice Action Plan.	5. Three (3) Regional biannual reports produced in three languages (English, French and Portuguese) with success stories	ECOWAS Commission		50,000		50,000		50,000	150,000
TOTAL FOR COMPONENT 6					1,318,000	1,188,000	1,202,000	792,000	1,202,000	6,262,000



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