



Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources

Accelerating ECOWAP/CAADP implementation

Regional Offensive for local milk value chains promotion in West Africa

Regional workshop to capitalize national and regional experiences, validate the concept note and reference studies of the milk offensive and define the broad lines of the regional implementation strategy

Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), 24-26 July 2019

Final report

In collaboration with:



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FII•



And the technical facilitation of Hub Rural



I. Introduction

1. The regional workshop to capitalize on national and regional experiences, validate the concept note and baseline studies of the milk offensive and define the broad lines of the regional implementation strategy was held from 24 to 26 July 2019 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, at the invitation of the ECOWAS Commission.
2. The Offensive intends to give shape to the vision of a "***West Africa that is emerging amongst the dairy basins of the African continent and is gradually increasing its contribution to regional trade in dairy products of community origin.***"
3. The aim of this struggle for the emergence of a sustainable, productive and competitive West African milk sector is to ***increase twofold the region's milk production*** by the year 2030.
4. To this end, ECOWAS opts for a participatory and inclusive approach focused on supporting grassroots initiatives through an investment programme derived from the implementation strategy of the ECOWAS Offensive for the promotion of local milk value chains and focused also on removing all the major constraints or challenges that actors in the sector (producers, collectors, processors, distributors, and others) face throughout the Community.
5. Therefore, all state and non-state actors in the milk sector were invited to the workshop. In addition to the ECOWAS Commission, through the Department in charge of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources, the following stakeholders effectively took part in the workshop:
 - Regional institutions: UEMOA, CILSS
 - Member States: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana and Togo;
 - Regional professional organisations: ROPPA, RBM, APSS and AFAO/WAWA;
 - Non-governmental organisations: OXFAM, CARE and SNV;
 - Technical and scientific cooperation institutions: CORAF/WECARD, HUB-RURAL, SWAC/OECD Secretariat, FAO and CIRAD;
 - Technical and Financial Partners: EU, AFD, DDC.
6. Mini-dairies from the host country, including those from Fada-Ngourma, Bittou and Ouagadougou, also actively participated in the workshop.

II. Objectives of the workshop

7. The overall objective of the workshop was to define the broad lines of the regional strategy and the priority support programme (investment programme) for the implementation of the Offensive for the Promotion of Local Milk Value Chains. Specifically, the workshop focused on:
 - a. Take stock of milk production in each of the fifteen ECOWAS countries;
 - b. Review and validate the concept note of the Local Milk Promotion Offensive;
 - c. Review and validate the baseline studies carried out with financial support from OXFAM, CARE and RBM and which is based on the UEMOA action plan;

- d. Define the guidelines (objectives, areas of intervention, main activities, principles of intervention) of the regional strategy and the priority programme of implementation
Repetition
- e. Define the roadmap for the rest of the process.

III. Expected results

8. The expected workshop outputs are as follows:
 - a. An inventory of the dairy sector in the fifteen ECOWAS countries;
 - b. The Local Milk Offensive concept note reviewed and validated;
 - c. Baseline study results reviewed and validated;
 - d. Guidelines defined for the development of the regional strategy and implementation programme of the Milk Offensive;
 - e. The roadmap for finalizing the development and validation process of these two instruments for the implementation of the Milk Offensive defined.

IV. Opening ceremony

9. The opening ceremony was facilitated by the ECOWAS Commission's Director of Rural Development, Mr Alain SY TRAORE. It recorded five (5) speeches delivered respectively by (i) Mrs Khady Fall TALL, President of WAWA, representing the regional networks of Producer Organisations (RPOs), (ii) Mr Roger Patrick MILIMONO, Minister of Livestock and Animal Production of the Republic of Guinea, (iii) Mr Hans-Christian BEAUMOND, Head of Cooperation in the fields of Rural Development and Environment at the EU Delegation in Burkina Faso, (iv) Mr Sékou SANGARE, ECOWAS Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources and, (v) Mr Sommanogo KOUTOU, Minister of Animal and Fisheries Resources of Burkina Faso, Chairing the opening session.
10. In her statement, **Mrs Khady Fall TALL**, first thanked all the regional and national authorities as well as the representatives of the various countries present. She then stated the importance that the producers' organisations have attached to this local milk initiative since the beginning of the alliance initiated in 2016 in Abuja. She also stressed the importance of the dairy sector in strengthening the resilience of households of pastoralists and herders who derive a substantial share of their income from this sector. In addition, she drew attention to the increasing imports of dairy products, which aggravate the region's trade deficit. In this regard, she also stressed the quality of imported products, while noting that "**it is not all that is white that is milk**". Moreover, she pointed out that the milk offensive, launched by ECOWAS, comes at the right time to support the African Union's ambition to accelerate the industrialization of the milk sector on the whole continent, to ensure food and nutrition security in Africa.
11. The Guinean Minister of Livestock and Animal Production, **Mr Roger Patrick MILIMONO**, thanked his Burkinabe counterpart for having associated him with the event, thus allowing him to take advantage of a mission to Burkina Faso and Niger, to demonstrate Guinea's full commitment to this very timely Offensive launched by ECOWAS for the development of the local milk sector. He went ahead to remark that he will pay special attention to the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop that will certainly fuel the development process of the milk sector in Guinea.
12. In his speech, **Mr Hans-Christian BEAUMOND**, representative of the EUD to Burkina

Faso, expressed the European Union's strong support for the development of the West African dairy sector, while recalling, by way of illustration, the meeting held in Brussels in April 2019, which questioned the modalities of EU support. He quoted the theme of the meeting, "The Local Milk Value Chain in West Africa: what support for which sector? What will be European contribution towards the development of the local milk value chain in West Africa?" He stated that the challenge for West Africa is to support the development of the milk sector while continuing to meet the urban demand for dairy products in West Africa. He recommended that the challenge will require the collaboration of the different stakeholders, for the intensification of production, the improvement of the marketing system and the promotion of an enabling business climate. States, multinationals and local producers are therefore called upon to promote a win-win partnership for the socio-economic development of the region.

13. In his welcome address, **Mr Sékou SANGARE**, the ECOWAS Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources, first conveyed a fraternal greetings of His Excellency Dr Jean-Claude Kassi BROU, President of the ECOWAS Commission, to His Excellency, Mr Roch Marc Christian KABORE, President of Burkina Faso, to his Government and to all the people of Burkina Faso for their ever renewed support. Commissioner SANGARE also greeted all the delegates and participants who have come to contribute to the workshop discussions. He stressed the importance of milk in the socio-economic development of the region and noted, in particular, its contribution to people's food and nutrition security, its contribution to household wealth and job creation. He regretted, however, that the sector's performance still does not allow the region to reverse the growing trend of milk imports, which are increasingly widening the region's trade deficit. He therefore reiterated the ECOWAS' political will to address this worrying situation by launching an "Offensive for the promotion of local milk value chains in the community area", as part of a commitment including a rice offensive, a regional food security reserve, an ECOWAP/CAADP stakeholder capacity building strategy (regional agricultural policy), and regional strategy for youth employability in the agro-forestry-pastoral and fisheries sector. Thus, he urged participants to contribute to the definition of the broad lines of the Milk Offensive implementation strategy, so as to arrive at the definition of concrete investment programmes, which alone can guarantee the effective development of the milk sector in West Africa.
14. In his opening remarks, **Mr Sommanogo KOUTOU**, Minister of Animal and Fisheries Resources of Burkina Faso, first noted the highly strategic importance of the event, which justifies the special mobilization. He strongly thanked the participants for having accepted to come for the meeting in Ouagadougou, while transmitting the message of welcome and pleasant stay of His Excellency, Mr Roch March Christian KABORE, President of Burkina Faso, Mr Christophe Joseph Marie DABIRE, Prime Minister, members of the Government and all the people of Burkina Faso. He also commended the presence of his colleague, Mr Roger Patrick MILIMONO who has been kind enough to grace the opening ceremony with his presence and pledged to support the Milk Offensive. He expressed his thanks and warmest congratulations to the ECOWAS Commission "under the able leadership of President Jean-Claude Kassi BROU". He assured the workshop organisers and participants that the issue of the offensive is well understood, highlighting the growing consumption of milk, in the context of high population growth, changes in food consumption patterns and

nutritional requirements. He also said he is certain that all the governments of the sister countries will be mobilised around the Offensive implementation strategy that will result from the workshop. Minister S. KOUTOU took the opportunity to share the rich experience of Burkina in her efforts to develop the milk sector for the benefit of local stakeholders and the people of Burkina Faso. Thus, he assured that his country is poised to defend fearlessly the "Consume our local milk" concept. He also commended the strong involvement of professional organisations and the private sector alongside the government. While wishing the ECOWAS initiative a success, he declared the workshop open.

V. Work progress and results

15. The workshop was facilitated by the HUB RURAL Executive Director, Dr Yamar MBODJ. It was conducted in 5 series, respectively on: (i) capitalization of the experiences of countries, RPOs and NGOs represented at the workshop, (ii) sharing of milk sector study results in West Africa, (iii) presentation of the Milk Offensive concept note and the scoping note on its implementation strategy and priority programme definition process, (iv) definition of the guidelines of the strategy and priority programme for the Milk Offensive implementation by amending and complementing the proposals contained in the concept and scoping note, (v) validation of group work results, in plenary.

5.1. Address of AFD's Director General for the Grand Sahel

16. On 25 July, **Mr Philippe CHEDANNE**, AFD Regional Director for the Grand Sahel, made an address to participants, at the opening of the meeting. On behalf of the ECOWAP Partners Group that AFD is coordinating, he thanked ECOWAS and particularly its Commissioner in charge of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources Department, **Mr Sékou SANGARE** who kindly sent him the invitation to take part in the workshop. Then, he reminded participants that AFD, and more generally French assistance, has always supported the livestock sub-sector and the milk sector, specifically (e.g. support to the *laiterie du Berger*, Tibiski and Niger amongst others). He also indicated that this workshop is important for AFD and all the TFPs, particularly in the ECOWAP Group, because of the importance of this sector in the sub-region where funding is not really the problem because the funds have been announced. The most important issue, he said, is what to do with the funds thus announced and with whom? He also indicated that the aim of the AFD's Regional Directorate - a new structure headquartered in Ouagadougou – is to provide support to National Agencies in the G5 countries and in Senegal. The Regional Directorate intends to renew, renovate and strengthen its regional approach with institutions including ECOWAS and UEMOA, specialised regional institutions such as CILSS as well as professional associations and the private sector. He further said that AFD, together with the other donors, will pay serious attention to the workshop's outcomes for the follow-up, particularly in terms of funding. Finally, he stressed above all the "what and how to do it" decisively. Regional and national institutions and organisations must play their role in an environment characterised by the deployment, in recent years, of dairy industries in order to differentiate between the efforts that have already been made and those to come on this sector.

5.2 Sharing and capitalizing on the actors' experiences.

17. The **10 countries** represented at the workshop described the national situations of the milk sector along the value chain: production, collection, processing and distribution. The milk sector is roughly at the same level of development in the countries that shared their experiences, namely **Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo**. This level of development is mainly due to (i) a significant productive potential (significant livestock), (ii) a collection system that has been little or not developed at all, (iii) the public authorities' determination to support the sector through actions in livestock health and feed, zoo-technical and veterinary services, financing and taxation, (iv) the presence of local mini-dairies, medium-sized local milk processing entities and large foreign dairy enterprises (v) a more or less extensive distribution network with the use of large retail outlets, shops and itinerant trade, (vi) the gradual introduction of specific policies and programmes dedicated to the development of the sector, with a view to increasing intensification of milk production and supporting the collection and processing of local milk. The state of the dairy economy is characterised in all these countries by a gradual increase in milk powder imports:
18. The experiences shared by **Producer Organisations and NGOs** mainly focused on the promotion of innovation platforms in support of all links (production, collection, processing and distribution) of the milk sector:
 - Oxfam's presentation focused on the objectives, results, conclusions and recommendations of the "My milk is local" campaign. This is a campaign that aims at defending and promoting local milk with a view to bringing about a change in regional trade and fiscal policies, the eating habits of citizens and the practices of dairy multinationals based in West Africa. The actors in the sector, their representative organisations and their allies in this campaign have conducted a series of studies, meetings and workshops to consolidate their policy recommendations, the main conclusions of which can be summarized as follows: the local dairy industry is historically competing with imports of European dairy products, including whole milk and skim milk powders, (ii) the competitiveness of European powders and blends is linked to European agricultural and trade policies (export subsidies) . The current trade framework, and particularly the Common External Tariff, hampers the development of the local milk sector, (iii) it is possible, by modifying both the regional trade policy (compared to the current CET: + 5% for whole milk powder and + 30% for skim milk-vegetable fat blend) and national tax policies (removal of VAT on dairy products made from local milk) to provide a growth area for the local dairy sector and its actors, (iv) the revision of the CET on the rise and the abolition of VAT must nevertheless be accompanied by complementary policy measures, (v) local collection must be encouraged by putting in place a proactive policy combining measures and support programmes for collection by States and ECOWAS, (vi) welcoming dairy companies and granting them tax benefits be conditioned to the firms' commitments in terms of local milk collection and agro-pastoral models to be supported, (vii) the mixture of skimmed milk and vegetable fat (VF) is often labelled in a non-transparent manner, whereas this cannot be considered a dairy product and consumers need to be informed,

(viii) institutional purchases should be encouraged as they can act as stepping stones in the development of local dairy-based enterprises, (ix) All actors agree that women play a pivotal role in the local dairy sector and that this must be recognized and strengthened. A number of recommendations have also been addressed (see presentation in the link at the end of the report) to (i) ECOWAS and the West African States, (ii) the private sector (iii) European policy makers.

- The six (6) Innovation Platforms promoted by **APESS** in various countries seek to extend dairy production throughout the year by improving the availability of feed in the dry season (hay storage). These platforms also support collection networks for greater mobility and capacity to increase flows. The processing units are also supported to improve the processes and the quality of the products.
 - **CARE's** Fresh Milk 3.0 platform experience places particular emphasis on the potential for mobile phone use in facilitating trade in milk (collection, processing) and inputs (livestock feed, in particular) for pastoralists and their families (wives, children), rural collectors, processors, distributors (local shopkeepers) and village customers.
 - The experience shared by **AFAO/WAWA** is particularly relevant to the training of women processors who are mainly responsible for this activity in the West African dairy industry. The technical training in question covers a variety of products, including yoghurt and cheese, and also extends to the preservation of products. It leads to material support for women to promote processing units that make use of training outcomes.
 - The experience shared by **ROPPA** focused on supporting mini-dairies promoted by family farms. It mainly covered training on production techniques, management of collection and processing units, marketing of products as well as material support (equipment, packaging, etc.). The main objective of this support is to secure both the supply of local milk and the markets (outlets) for mini-dairies, as part of the promotion of local human resources (especially young people and women).
 - **SNV's** experience is that of strengthening the commercial capacities of the dairy industry stakeholders and the promotion of climate-smart dairy value chains (Smart Dairy Value Chains). As a result, market-based solutions are preferred. The development of basic infrastructure also remains a central concern of the experience as well as the establishment of appropriate financial instruments and the provision of jobs to young people and women.
19. **CORAF's** presentation focused on: (i) CORAF's three areas of intervention, the first of which (Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition) takes into account the milk sector; (ii) the types of support provided to producers, including inputs, live animals, milk preservation equipment suitable for the rural area and equipment for transporting milk from milking sites to mini-dairies, including tricycles; (iii) the nine regional specialisation centres, including the livestock breeding centre in Niger; (iv) support for the processing and marketing of dairy products; and (v) the development of the agribusiness platforms, with the creation of platforms including <http://neyat.org>,

<http://agripreneurtv.coraf.org/#openModa> and MITA for the facilitation of electronic commerce.

5.3 Sharing CIRAD's study results.

20. The study identifies three factors determining the evolution of the milk sector in West Africa: population growth, the level of poverty as well as the seasonality and variability of rainfall. It highlights a differentiated evolution of consumption according to countries, rural and urban areas, and the nature of outlets (mass markets versus niche markets). The study also reveals an overall milk production deficit, leading to a gradual increase in imports. It also shows the diversity of dairy species from cow to camel, goat and sheep. The study also highlights four major changes underway: the expansion of rural collection basins and mini-dairies, the emergence of dairy farms, increased imports of fat milk (fat filled, blend) and the development of industrial dairies. With regard to the position of the West African dairy industry, the study illustrates the very low participation of the region in global milk trade. It also highlights the low level of per capita consumption compared to the rest of the world. In short, it stresses the dominance of East and North Africa in African dairy production.

5.4 Group work

21. The participants were divided into two working groups, with a mandate to take into account the capitalized information (experiences of States and non-state actors, results of the study) to:
- Analyse and amend, as necessary, the orientations (vision, purpose, objectives, expected results/effects, components) proposed in the concept note of the Offensive and scoping note of the process for defining the strategy and priority programme for its implementation;
 - Propose relevant, operational actions;
 - Suggest the stakeholders in the implementation of the proposed actions.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

22. The conclusions of the workshop focused on the validation of the results of the group work on the ECOWAS Local Milk Offensive implementation strategy guidelines.
23. The guidelines adopted are as follows:
- 1) **Vision:** A West Africa that is emerging amongst the dairy basins of the African continent and gradually increasing its contribution to regional trade in dairy products of community origin;
 - 2) **Goal:** Increase by twofold dairy production in the region, by 2030;
 - 3) **General objective:** Contribute to the promotion of strategic products for food security and food sovereignty in West Africa;
 - 4) **Specific objective:** Support all initiatives and strategies for local milk value chains development in the ECOWAS region;
 - 5) **Expected results/effects:**
 - R1: Regional production of fresh milk doubled by 2030;

- R2 : At least 25% of the volumes of milk processed by the different categories of dairy industries should come from local livestock;
 - R3 : Taxation and other trade defence measures on milk and milk products and regulatory standards (non-tariff barriers) are incentives for the development of local milk value chains;
- 6) **Strategic areas of intervention and components:**

Strategic areas	Components
A1. Improve the productivity of local breeds	A1.1. Securing livestock feeding and watering
	A1.2. Improvement of animal health
	A1.3. Genetic improvement of local breeds
A2. Improve the collection and processing of local milk	A2.1. Promotion of multi-service centres for the collection and preservation of milk
	A2.2. Promotion of local milk processing units
	A2.1. Setting up of infrastructures and equipment to support collection (access works, energy, multi-service centres, communication equipment)
	A2.2. Promotion of an adapted industrial tool based on an adequate system and means of transport and distribution
A3 : Improve market access for local dairy products	A.3.1. Improve the competitiveness of local dairy products
	A3.2. Improve the distribution and consumption of local dairy products
A4 : Promote an enabling environment for the promotion of local milk value chains	A4.1. Establishment and application of incentives for the development of the local dairy sector
	A4.2. Promotion of inclusive business models along value chains,
	A4.3. Capacity building and professionalization of value chain actors

24. The group work also made it possible to determine the main actions associated with the various components mentioned above. They will be taken into account in the formulation of the strategy document.

25. The workshop recommended that, for each main action selected, precision be made of the scale (regional, national, local, etc.) and the managers and stakeholders for its effective implementation.

26. The workshop stressed the need for action programmes on (i) support to farms and mini-dairy farms, (ii) incentives for local milk collection by industrial dairies, (iii) support rural collection, and (iv) take comprehensive measures to support the sector.

27. Finally, the workshop validated the roadmap below for the remainder of the regional strategy formulation process, and the definition of the priority programme to support the implementation of the Local Milk Offensive.

Expected outputs	Activities to be carried out	Timeline
Expected output 1. A Regional Workshop is organised to (i) capitalize national and regional initiatives, and validate the baseline study, (ii) validate the broad lines of the regional strategy and priority programme to support the	<p>Preparation of the workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>Holding the workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate the broad lines of the strategy and priority programme to support the implementation of the Offensive. • Adopt the roadmap for finalizing the process • Draft the summary of the workshop conclusions and recommendations 	June -July 2019

Expected outputs	Activities to be carried out	Timeline
implementation of the milk offensive		
Expected output 2. A regional strategy and priority programme for the development of the local milk sector are developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the formulation of the strategy and the priority programme • Share and amend the first draft of the strategy and priority programme with members of the technical committee. 	August-September 2019
Expected output 3. A regional workshop is organised to validate the strategy	<p><u>Preparation of the workshop</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the terms of reference and agenda of the workshop. • Make a complete list of participants. • Prepare and send invitation letters with working papers (workshop ToRs, draft strategy documents and priority programme for the implementation of the Offensive). <p><u>Holding the workshop</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise moderation of plenary sessions and working groups. • Validate the regional strategy and the priority programme for the implementation of the Offensive. • Prepare a summary of the workshop conclusions and recommendations 	October 2019

VII. Closing ceremony

25. The closing ceremony, under the facilitation of the Director of Agriculture and Rural Development of the ECOWAS Commission, Mr Alain SY TRAORE, was marked by five speeches:

- On behalf of the RPOs, Mr **Boureima DODO**, RBM Permanent Secretary, thanked all participants for their contribution to the workshop objectives. He recalled the economic, social and strategic importance of promoting local milk and urged all stakeholders in the Offensive's implementation strategy to remain mobilised for the effective implementation of the adopted roadmap. In view of the results, he expressed the hope that the momentum will materialize, in terms of field actions for the effective development of the sector in West Africa.
- The second speech was given by **Mr Philippe CHEDANNE**, AFD Regional Director for the Grand Sahel, on behalf of the ECOWAP Financial Partners Group. He expressed his satisfaction at being involved in this process of critical importance for ECOWAS and congratulated the participants for the results achieved, as they draw very interesting perspectives for this milk offensive and are in close line with the regional strategy that AFD is developing in the Sahel. The aim of this strategy is to develop the potential of the Sahel, including the milk sector, in addition to empowering women and young girls, as well as the prevention of violent conflicts in the Sahel, following a territorial approach. He continued his statement by saying that the AFD he represents is ready to continue the dialogue with all actors in the milk sector and in close coordination with other interested donors, particularly the European Union, according to a Sahel Alliance approach, which seems particularly appropriate in this field. In this respect, he reminded participants that it is essential and fundamental to revise the approaches in terms of financing and programme development methods in order to take into account the major developments observed in recent years. These developments include the establishment and development of a significant industrial fabric in the processing and marketing of milk around urban agglomerations. He went on to point out that it is therefore important to address, in addition to livestock productivity, issues on downstream production where the intervention of States and regional institutions such as ECOWAS remains necessary and fundamental for the establishment of an economic and financial environment conducive to the development of local milk. This requires adopting a business-oriented

approach in a growing market, driven by demand and not by supply. He stated that AFD is ready to support the actors in this process to promote the creation of a coalition of private, public and associative responsible actors by supporting the existing coalition, regardless of its size and organisation. There is therefore an urgent need to work in fragile or conflict zones where this sector brings stability, employment and income for a vulnerable population, he continued.

- The third address was given by **Mr Hans-Christian BEAUMOND**, Representative of the Delegation of the European Union. He was delighted by this meeting which is part of the dynamic around local milk, which has been growing since 2015. He was to see a strong involvement of regional organisations, producers and research institutions, the financing of which will not only allow the development of local milk value chains but also livestock and pastoralism in West Africa. He also reiterated the importance of working at the regional level as it allows to benefit from exchanges of experiences, knowledge and skills of other countries in the region and to participate in regional integration. Like his AFD counterpart, he said that to promote productivity, it is necessary to take into account all other aspects including animal health, genetic improvement and livestock feeding which are critical aspects in West Africa. He also recalled that the African Union has formulated an integrated livestock development strategy that addresses market issues, economic development, food and nutrition security (where the milk value chains development aspect is certainly one of the most important axes). In conclusion, he said that the European Union intends to renew its financial commitment with all the donors, for continuing the Milk Offensive process.
- The fourth speech was delivered by the Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources of the ECOWAS Commission, **Mr Sékou SANGARE**. He reiterated, on behalf of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, his thanks to the Burkinabè authorities for the warm welcome and for all the interest that the Burkina Faso government places on the dairy sector, which made this meeting possible. He also thanked the TFPs, especially the European Union and AFD for their support for the promotion of rural development, and particularly the livestock sub-sector, in our region. He continued by strongly expressing his wish that the conclusions of this meeting could contribute quickly to the finalization of a strategy that will be illustrated on the ground by investment programmes that will be used wherever possible for the promotion of the local milk sector, because milk is a very concrete example that will illustrate the approach to developing all economic sectors for the creation of jobs for young people and women; which will contribute to peace in our region. He continued by expressing his wish that the conclusions of this meeting be available within a short time and that we can have the means to start a new operation in order to be able to establish milk processing units in our rural, urban and peri-urban areas and support existing ones to be more efficient in order to meet the growing demand for milk. He then suggested that the promotion of milk could help develop school canteens and work on improving the nutritional quality of our diet including that of children and pregnant women. Finally, he invited the RPOs to include their professional organisation structuring work in their agenda, and wished participants a safe trip back to their respective families.
- The last speaker was the representative of the Minister of Animal and Fishery Resources of Burkina Faso, **Dr. Mariétou SISSAO**, who first explained the absence of the Minister at this closing ceremony by the fact that he was taking part in the ceremony commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the creation of the Burkina Faso School of Animal Health, She then on behalf of the Minister, reiterated her gratitude for the choice of Burkina Faso to host this meeting. She went on to stress the importance that the Burkinabè government attaches to the milk sector because milk contributes to the economy of the whole family in general and that of women in particular. She also reassured that Burkina Faso is ready to draw on the strategy that will emerge from these reflections, which will be beneficial for all actors as well as for the other ECOWAS member countries. Then the ***Regional workshop to launch the process of defining the strategy to support the implementation of the regional offensive for the promotion of local milk value chains in the ECOWAS region*** was adjourned.

VIII. Vote of thanks

We, the participants in *the regional workshop to launch the process of defining the strategy to support the implementation of the regional offensive for the promotion of local milk value chains in the ECOWAS region*, held from 24 to 26 July 2019 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), hereby express our deep gratitude and sincere thanks to His Excellency Mr Rock Marc Christian KABORE, President of Burkina Faso, and to the Government and people of Burkina Faso, for the warm and fraternal welcome we enjoyed during our stay in Ouagadougou, as well as for the facilities made available to us to ensure our safety for a successful workshop.

We are grateful to the European Union for the technical and financial support extended to facilitate the organisation of the workshop.

Workshop Organised at Ouagadougou on 26 July 2019

Annex : list of participants

N°	NOM PRENOM	FONCTION/STRUCTURE	E-mail & TEL.
1.	Jalloh Abdulai	Représentant DE du CORAF	secoraf@coraf.org
2.	Corniaux Christian	Zootechnicien CIRAD	corniaux@cirad.fr
3.	Falltall Khadi	Presidente AFAO	afaowawa@alafaow.org
4.	Maman Sani	Directeur F. Niger	sanifr@yahoo.fr
5.	Yeboah Franklyn	Deputy Director Animal	yeboahfranklyn05@yahoo.com
6.	Yamar Mbodj	Directeur Exécutif du Hub	yamarm@hubrural.org
7.	Abdoulaye Seye	Expert Financement - HUB	abdoulayes@hubrural.org
8.	Soule Bio Goura	Assistant Technique Elevage et Pastoralisme – DADR	soule_goura@yahoo.fr
9.	Alain Sy Traore	Directeur/ Agriculture et Développement	atraore@ecowas.int
10.	M. João Gomes		jgigomes@yahoo.fr
11.	Isatou Savage	Ministry Agriculture of the	isatou_savage@hotmail.com
12.	Oke Adeossi Basile	Chef Service Appui au Développement des	adeossi2basile@hotmail.com
13.	Gnandji a. D.	Directeur des Productions	adjodana@yahoo.fr
14.	Halima Tiousso		yarandobi@gmail.com
15.	Morlu Korsor	Director of Animal	korsor1975@gmail.com
16.	Dodo Boureïma	Secrétaire Permanent RBM	goroubanda@yahoo.fr
17.	Seme Kpassi	Chercheur à PITRA	semejoseh@gmail.com
18.	Seini Mahamadou	Zootechnicien et Expert Suivi Evaluation HUB	seini.mahamadou@hubrural.org
19.	Salifou Ousseini	Directeur Exécutif de	osalifou@araa.org
20.	Wora Salami	Animal Health and Production Unit FAO	ibrahim.worasalami@fao.org
21.	Sekou Sangare	Commissaire /Agriculture Environnement et Ressources	saransekouss@gmail.com
22.	Onyegbule Christiana	Assistant Director (Dairy Value Chain), Dept. Of Animal Husbandry Services , EMABD	christyonyegbule@gmail.com
23.	Tamboura Oumarou	RTBL / Télé	ouaroutamboura265@gmail.com 61304506
24.	Jean Zongo	RTB / Télé	
25.	Traore Maimouna	RTB / Télé	trasherifa@yahoo.fr
26.	Coulibali Adama	RTB / Télé	
27.	Kiendrebeogo	RTB / Radio	kiendre@gmail.com
28.	Sebgo Helene	RTB / Radio	helenesebovjo1983@gmail.com
29.	Sawado Rowuald	RTB / Radio	
30.	Ilboudou	RTB / Radio Rurale	zembende@yahoo.fr
31.	Ouedraogo Rachid	Laiterie de Fada	rachidoueder@yahoo.fr
32.	Zoungrana	Technician	eldouskou@gmail.com
33.	Birba Ludovic	Technicien	birbaludovic@yahoo.fr
34.	Moussa Tambari	Point Focal / Campagne Lait	
35.	Mme WOUROU HABSATOU	Productrice Lait de Chamelle / Membre PI Lait	habsoulaitchamelle@yahoo.fr
36.	Assawadana haaua	Collectif des Femmes RBM	assawadanahaaua@yahoo.fr

37.	Rouamba pascal	Coopération Suisse	pascal.rouamba@eda.adwin.ch
38.	Yaya toure	OXFAM au Mali	ytoure@oxfam.org.uk
39.	Amadou mactar	AT / PAGR - SANAD /	a.konate@agr.com
40.	Mme GARIKO	Uprolait - Trésorière	Koroutoumou.gariko@gmail.com
41.	Nadji toide arnaud	Gold mor – info	nadjitoidearnad@gmail.com
42.	Kone fatima	SE / ROPPA	fatim.kone@roppa-afrique.org
43.	Sage aubague	CT Care DK	serge.aubague@care.org
44.	Merice de belle fon	AFD	mericedebellefon@afd.fr
45.	Domagni kouadjo	UEMOA	ktdomagni@uemoa.int
46.	Diallo adama	Coalition Burkina	bradiallo@hotmail.com
47.	Diaby / diallo	RBM	diabpm91@yahoo.fr
48.	Agondanou	ROPPA	Imelda.agondanou@gmail.com
49.	Sibiri jean zoundi	DIRECTEUR ADJOINT SECRETARIAT CSAO /	SIBIRIJEAN.ZOUNDI@OECD.ORG
50.	Casteran marc	Délégation UE au Burkina	marc.casteran@eeas.europa.eu
51.	Mahamadou	SNV	mbadiel@snv.org
52.	Azara nfon dibie	OXFAM	azara.sanogo@oxfam.org
53.	Dr ALIOU	SS / APESS	iIbrahimaaliou.apess@gmail.com
54.	Sissao marietou	Chef de service lait DGDA /	sissaomarietou@gmail.com
55.	Adama diallo	Chargée de l'Administration et des Finances HUB	diallo87adama@gmail.com
56.	Sehoue georgine	Chargée de Communication	georgine.sehoue@hubrural.org
57.	Mouhamadou	Logisticien HUB RURAL	mouhamadousene15@gmail.com
58.	Sorgho Nobila	Interprète	njcsorgho@gmail.com
59.	Konseibo Désiré	Interprète	konserbodig@yahoo.fr
60.	Zeba alimata . R	Volontaire OXFAM	lilizeba95@gmail.com
61.	S. Linda carmelle	Stagiaire en Com OXFAM	lindadabire@hotmail.com
62.	Seydou kabore		Seydou.kabore@cilss.int
63.	Adama ouedraogo	Volontaire / OXFAM	Adamsouedraogo7@gmail.com
64.	Irma ouedraogo		Irma.diallo@cilss.int
67.	Ibrahim diallo		yvesdiallo@gmail.com
69.	Chedanne philippe	Directeur Régional Sahel	chedannep@afd.fr
70.	Maty ba diao	Coordonnatrice Régionale du	maty.ba-diao@cilss.int
71.	Moussa	Coordonnateur Projet	moussa.assoumane@cilss.int
72.	Yelbi a. Severin	Volontaire OXFAM	yelbiseverin@yahoo.fr
73.	Marc christian	Délégation Union	

**Note : Name no. 5 is,
Email is : yeboahfranklyn05@yahoo.com**