



***SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR FREE MOVEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN
WEST AFRICA***

“PROGRAM FOOD ACROSS BORDERS (PROFAB)”

recruitment of a consultant to carry out a study on specific problems women
traders face on the abidjan lagos corridor

TERMS OF REFERENCE

November 2016

I. Background of the Study

Trade in agricultural and pastoral products is an important component of the economy of West African States. Indeed, the West African market for farm produce has increased considerably over the last twenty years. It is credited with a value of more than \$ 170 billion in 2010, which is expected to reach \$ 300 billion by 2025 (ESCWA, 2012). According to Bricas et al (2015), between 60% and 90% of farm produce consumed in West Africa now passes through the market. The same authors estimate that the value of domestic trade in agri-food products is higher than that of exports; even in net agro-exporting countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria.

Trade in agro-pastoral products plays a very important economic and social role. They promote the integration of territories and zones by basing their existence on agro-ecological complementarities and exploration of the comparative advantages of the different zones. They form the basis of the formation of market networks, sometimes well structured around the sectors. Trade in agro-pastoral products appears to be the main guarantee of food and nutritional security of the people of the region. They constitute the first defense walls for people in the event of acute food crises and one of the means of strengthening the resilience of the vulnerable population.

However, the development of intra-community trade is confronted with a series of problems which can be grouped into three main categories: (i) infrastructural failures which seriously burden logistics, including costs of product transfer; (ii) fragmentation of economic and trade policies, the existence of disparities in the level of development and the economic stakes of States; (iii) the recurrence of abnormal practices reflected in the persistence of numerous road and administrative harassments, sources of racketeering and corruption. The latter phenomenon is so crucial as to constitute, today, one of the major obstacles to operationalizing the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS). Indeed, the weakness of the administrative and legal apparatus of certain States, the economic difficulties faced by others and the deterioration of the security situation have contributed to the establishment of abnormal practices as genuine constraints to the free flow of intra-Community trade in agro-pastoral products.

It is in a bid to reduce the effects of the latter phenomenon that the Food Across Borders Program in West Africa was initiated by ECOWAS and UEMOA, following a regional conference organized in January 2013 in Accra, Ghana, on the same theme. Indeed, the conference identified five main obstacles to the development of intra-regional trade in agricultural products in West Africa:

- (i) export bans on food products, in particular cereals, which states declare in times of food crises;
- (ii) charging of VAT on farm produce, despite the requirements of the trade liberalization scheme;
- (iii) the non-acceptance of phytosanitary certificates produced by the States;
- (iv) the challenging of the Community origin of certain products; and
- (v) the numerous check points along the corridors by the security forces.

The conference recommended deepening the knowledge of the functioning of the regional market, to develop advocacy actions and to examine appropriate instruments in order to contribute to the formulation of a trade policy in line with the sectoral policies of the region: agriculture and industry, in particular.

The Food Across Borders Program (ProFAB), borne out of the implementation of the recommendations of the Accra conference is aimed at "improving food security, economic growth, resilience and poverty in West Africa through the Integrated Common Market ". Its objective is to contribute to the increase in the value and volume of intra-Community trade in agro-pastoral products by at least five points in five years. Three specific objectives are assigned to this:

- Contribute to a better understanding of the functioning of agricultural trade;
- Improve the effective implementation of agreements on the free movement of agricultural, food and human products in West Africa;
- Contribute to the formulation and implementation of regional policies and strategies to promote trade in agricultural and food products;

II. Rationale for the study

Regional or cross-border trade in agro-pastoral products is driven by many players, more or less structured within market networks. Numerous studies have shown the crucial role played by women in regional trade. According to UNIFEM 2010, and USAID 2000, they account for more than 70% of the actors engaged in commercial, local or cross-border activities in West Africa. Apart from the distribution of live animals, they are present in trade involving all other food products.

The classical literature on cross-border trade in West Africa distinguishes two categories of women involved in cross-border trade.

- The first category is made up of those who find themselves in proximity trade, who are by far more, and who primarily market food crops. The scope of their activities sometimes extends beyond the borders to include certain products such as cereals, roots and tubers, vegetable products (tomatoes, peppers, carrots, etc.), fish of all kinds.
- The second group, which is smaller, is made up of women involved in regional and international trade. Yesterday, it was a race of milking houses for the distribution of manufactured products; today women are entrepreneurs networking with the international market, especially with those of developing countries or with global commercial platforms like Dubai, and they mainly operate in large urban centers. However, in recent years, they have tried to position themselves in the exportation gaps, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by initiatives such as the AGOA (USA) EU's Everything but Arms Initiative. To this end, they have formed a continental association based in Dakar: the Africa Agro-Export Association (AAFEX).

While this strong presence of women in regional trade is one of the hallmarks of the dynamism of the economy and trade in West Africa, it should not conceal the problems and constraints faced by this category of actors. Indeed, previous works mention a number of challenges:

- difficulty in accessing information to better exploit market opportunities in local and regional markets;
- difficulty in accessing credit to finance business activities;
- persistence of many technical and specific barriers to the expansion of their activities, which constitute barriers to women's commercial activities.

On the other hand, despite the predominant role played by women in cross-border commercial transactions, reliable data and information are not available to carry out appropriate actions that improve the conditions under which they operate.

It is in the light of deepening the knowledge of regional actors, the place and role of women in regional trade in general and in cross-border trade in agro-pastoral products in particular, that this study is being carried out. The aim is to document the gender dimension of cross-border trade in agro-pastoral products in West Africa, based on the analysis of specific cases of trade corridors.

III. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to analyze the role and place of women in cross-border trade activities of agro-pastoral products in West Africa.

Specifically, the study aims to:

- Analyze the role and weight of women in cross-border trade in agro-pastoral products on the main trade corridors: number of women involved in cross-border trade, nature and magnitude (value and volume) of products handled by women, mode of organization and networking, means and strategy of intervention, and value added;
- Document in depth the difficulties they face: material, technical, organizational, institutional and administrative difficulties and other technical barriers they face;
- Formulate strong recommendations in the form of an operational and realistic action plan to minimize barriers to cross-border commercial activities by women.

IV. Expected Results

At the end of the study, the following results are expected:

- the weight of women in cross-border trade, including: (i) an estimate of the number of women involved in cross-border trade in agro-pastoral products, (ii) a comprehensive census of the products on which they are positioned, volumes and value of products subject to transactions managed by women, is available;
- the difficulties encountered by women in cross-border trade, including technical, institutional, administrative and financial constraints and obstacles, are documented in detail;
- recommendations in the form of an action plan are formulated for all stakeholders in regional trade, to improve the conditions of trade for women.

V. Tasks of the Consultant

In the implementation of the ProFAB, emphasis is laid on the role and place of the commercial activities promoted by women and the difficulties they face. In this study, the consultant will perform the following tasks:

- conduct an exhaustive estimate of women engaged in cross-border trade in agro-pastoral and fishery products along the selected corridor;
- identify women entrepreneurs who operate within the trade liberalization scheme;
- determine the socio-economic profile of cross-border trade by specifying the average age and level of education;
- document the organizational forms and strategies of women engaged in cross-border trade;

- document the nature of products, subject of women's transactions, supply basins, collection, consolidation and distribution markets;
- estimate the volume and value of women's transactions;
- estimate the operating account of commercial enterprises of women engaged in cross-border value chains;
- document the difficulties faced by women engaged in cross-border trade;
- document and analyze the specific technical barriers faced in carrying out cross-border commercial activities;
- estimate the socio-economic impact of women in cross-border trade;
- propose an action plan for the implementation of the main recommendations to improve the working conditions of women engaged in cross-border trade in agricultural, pastoral and fishery products.

VI. Methodological Approach

The methodological approach includes:

- A documentary review for which the consultant will produce a succinct synthesis indicating an idea of the dimensions addressed by previous studies;
- Fieldwork including
 - The examination of the archives and registers of the national organizations (Chambers of Commerce and Industry, National Accreditation Committees), cooperative organizations;
 - Interviews with key players in regional trade: women, law enforcement officers (customs, police, gendarmes, phytosanitary services), leaders of transport unions, decentralized financial services, heads of Border Information Centers - BICs (of the Borderless Alliance);
 - direct observations on markets, cross-border areas.

VII. The profile of the consulting team

The team of consultants will consist of two people:

- A Head of Mission, Specialist in Development Economics, with a Ph.D. or Master of Science degree in Economics, Agricultural Engineering or other equivalent degrees. He/She must have at least ten years of experience in analyzing the functioning of regional trade, a good knowledge of the agricultural and trade policies of West Africa and the actors involved in their implementation.
- An Assistant who must be specialized in gender issues, with a university degree in Sociology or any other equivalent qualification. He/She must have good knowledge of a gender analysis tool.

VIII. Duration of study

The duration of the study is 30 days.

IX. Mode of Application

Qualified consulting firms or individual consultants may apply. They must provide:

- A detailed technical proposal;
- A financial proposal covering the cost;
- CVs with an annex presenting a summary of relevant and related work done.

The financial proposal must not exceed \$ 20,000 for the cost of the overall benefit (conducting the study and writing).

Technical and Financial proposals must be sent to: Mrs. Kafui ADJAMAGBO-JOHNSON, Coordinatrice Sous Régionale, Email: wildaf@wildaf-ao.org; wildaf@cafe.tg et wildaf_ao@yahoo.com, by December 23, 2016 at 12 00 noon.

X. Expected Output

The main expected output of this work is a summary report of 30 to 40 pages maximum in English or French. Annexes should include: raw data material, questionnaires and audio elements of the interviews, if applicable.