

Three West African Countries Receive Assistance for Improved Agricultural Productivity Program

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WASHINGTON, March 29, 2007 – The World Bank Board of Executive Directors today approve three International Development Association (IDA) credits* of a total US\$45 million equivalent in support of the first phase of the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP) in three West African countries: Ghana, Mali and Senegal.

The three approved IDA credits will provide the Republic of Ghana with US\$15 million equivalent, the Republic of Senegal with US\$15 million equivalent, and the Republic of Mali with US\$15 million equivalent to generate and disseminate improved agricultural technology in these countries' top priority areas that are aligned with regional priorities, as identified by the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research (WECARD/CORAF). The three countries have committed to provide part of the credit proceeds for a total of US\$3 million equivalent to CORAF to help coordinate the regional project.

The **West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP)** will generate and disseminate improved technologies in the participating countries focusing on roots and tubers in Ghana, rice in Mali and cereals in Senegal.

"The WAAPP will mainly focus on making agriculture more productive and sustainable and promote regional integration initiatives in the agricultural sector. It reflects the Bank's commitment to Africa's regional cooperation in agriculture and will be one of the Bank's key contributions to the implementation of broadly supported agricultural strategies Africa-wide," said **Mark Tomlinson, Director of the Regional Integration Department**.

The food and cash crops whose production the WAAPP sets out to boost provide the greatest contribution to the region's agricultural growth and to producers' incomes. Sustained productivity is critical if the region is to significantly raise agricultural yield, which are so important in meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving extreme poverty by 2015.

"The region's consumers, particularly those affected by extreme poverty, are the ultimate beneficiaries of the WAAPP. Agricultural producers and agribusinesses, as users of the improved technology, are the primary beneficiaries of the program," said **Ismael Ouedraogo, the World Bank Task Team Leader** of the Project.

The WAAPP is a sub-regional program shared by all fifteen member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) – Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

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For more information about this project, please visit [the project website](#)

* The credit is provided on standard International Development Association (IDA) terms, with a commitment fee of 0.35 percent and a service charge of 0.75 percent over a 40 year period of maturity which includes a 10-year grace period.