



Summary of the Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative in West Africa' achievements & challenges

The Regional Steering Committee (RSC) of the Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative under the able leadership of the ECOWAS Commission with its Regional Secretariat at our organization was able to achieve the following;

A. Achievements

- i. The organisation of the 1st and 2nd Regional Steering Committee meeting on Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative in West-Africa at the ECOWAS Headquarters, Abuja, and Ibis Hotel, Lagos, Nigeria respectively. An advocacy/courtesy visit to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was carried out at the marge of the Abuja meeting.
- ii. A successful advocacy trip to CORAF/WECARD Headquarters at Dakar, Senegal, to discuss research needs of organic and ecological agriculture in West Africa. This gave birth to the identification of windows of opportunities for funding organic agriculture research in West Africa and possible collaborative projects with CORAF on organic agriculture research.
- iii. Support participation of eighteen (18) strategic stakeholders, including members of our Association to the 4th African Organic Conference.
- iv. Support to the organisation of the 5th West African Organic Agriculture Conference (WAOC) at the University of Ghana, Ghana.
- v. Regional Steering Committee members and Country Lead Organizations meeting at the 5th West African Organic Conference (WAOC) at the University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana on the 15th of November 2019.
- vi. Preliminary mapping of stakeholders of organic and ecological agriculture in West Africa.
- vii. Facilitation of the Ecological Organic Agriculture' Stakeholders meeting on harmonization of Organic Agricultural Standards in West Africa.
- viii. Realization of the maiden edition of the *BioWestAfrica* Newsletter.
- ix. Up-to-date monitoring of Ecological Organic Agriculture activities like the Knowledge Hub in the West African region.

- x. Liaising with the Continental Steering Committee (CSC) through the Continental Secretariat to follow up activities in the region.

B. Challenges

- a. Delay in response of our partners to some issues bothering around the cluster activities,
- b. Insufficient fund for advocacy programmes and expansion of activities to other countries in West Africa,
- c. The nonchalant attitude of some policy makers towards organic agriculture,

C. Lesson learnt

Data collection of relevant information is very key to the success of the initiative. At country level, effort should be made to develop a template for collecting data including number of women, youth and vulnerable among other specific data to each countries.

The West African Secretariat was able to achieve the above mentioned achievements through the strong support of our Association, the donor agency and the Regional Steering Committee under the guidance of the ECOWAS Commission.