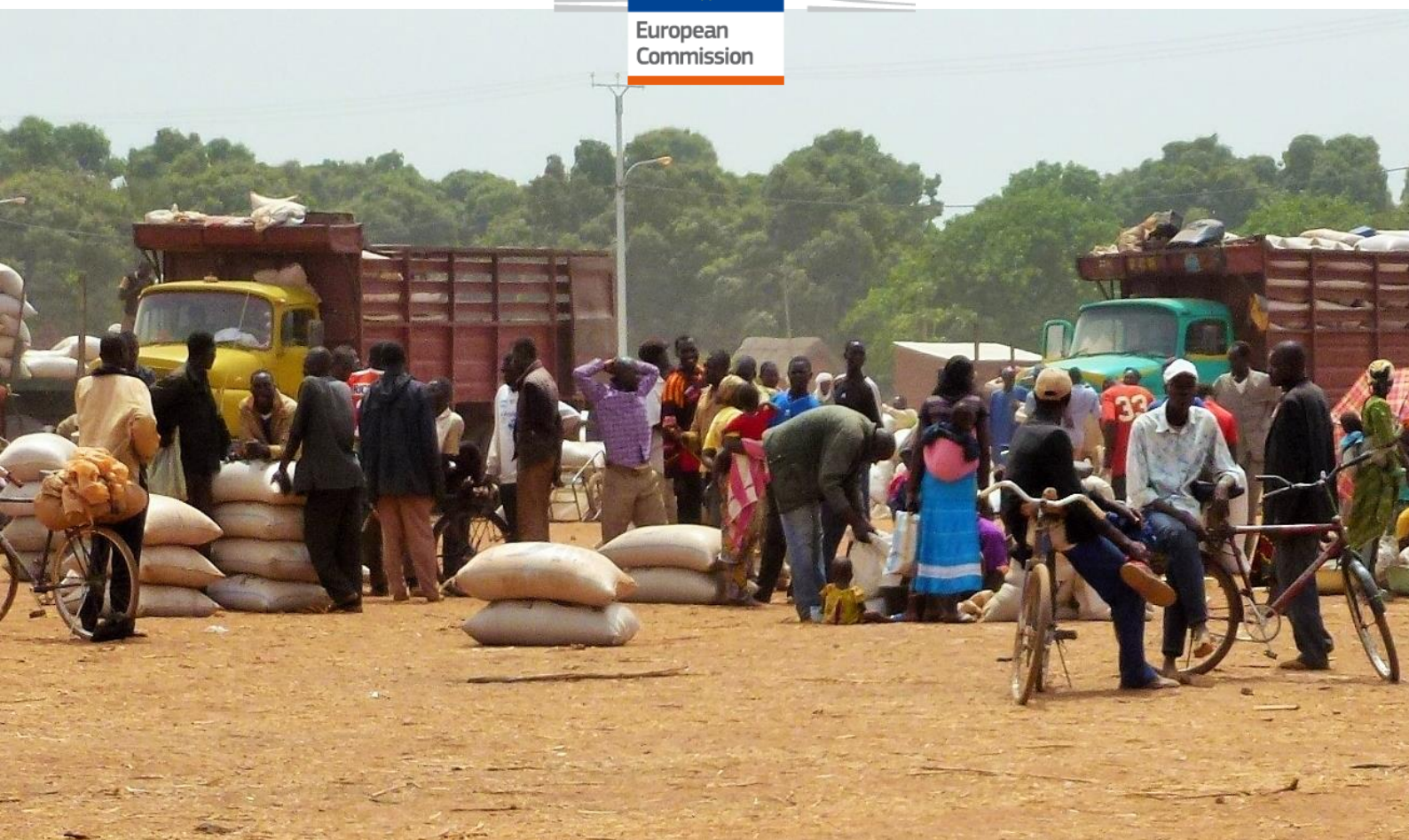




European  
Commission



# External Evaluation of the European Union's Cooperation with the West Africa Region (2008-2016)

## Final Report Volume I - Main Report

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Cooperation and  
Development

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*Evaluation carried out on  
behalf of the European Commission*



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# List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

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ACP	Africa, Caribbean, Pacific
ADB	African Development Bank
AFD	<i>Agence française de Développement</i>
AfIF	African Investment Facility
AFISMA	African-led International Support Mission in Mali
AFRITAC	African Regional Technical Assistance Centre
AGIR	<i>Alliance globale pour la résilience / Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative</i>
ATIF	EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund
ALG	<i>Autorité du Liptako Gourma</i>
AMIF	<i>Fonds asile, migration et intégration</i>
AP	<i>Aire(s) protégée(s)</i>
APD	<i>Aide publique au développement</i>
APESS	<i>Association pour la Promotion de l'Élevage au Sabel et en Savane</i>
APF	African Peace Facility
APRM	<i>African Peer Review Mechanism</i>
APSA	<i>African Peace and Security Architecture</i>
AQMI	<i>Al Qaïda au Maghreb islamique</i>
ARTP	Across the river - a transboundary peace park for Sierra Leone and Liberia
AU	African Union
BCEAO	<i>Banque centrale des États d'Afrique de l'Ouest</i>
BCG	<i>Bureau de coordination générale du PAPE (au niveau UEMOA)</i>
BID	<i>Banque islamique de développement</i>
BIDC	<i>Banque d'investissement et de développement de la CEDEAO</i>
BIT	<i>Bureau international du travail</i>
BOAD	<i>Banque ouest-africaine de développement</i>
CA	Contribution Agreement
CAD-OCDE	<i>Comité d'aide au développement - Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques</i>
CAE	<i>Communauté d'Afrique de l'Est</i>
CCI	Chambers of Commerce and Industry
CEEAC	<i>Communauté économique des États d'Afrique centrale</i>
CEMAC	<i>Communauté économique et monétaire d'Afrique centrale</i>
CEN-SAD	<i>Communauté des États sahélo-sahariens</i>
CEREEC	<i>Centre pour les énergies renouvelables et l'efficacité énergétique dans la CEDEAO</i>
CET	Common External Tariff
CFA	<i>Communauté financière en Afrique</i>
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CH	<i>Cadre Harmonisé</i>
CILSS	<i>Comité inter-États de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sabel</i>
CITES	Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species

COFO	<i>Commissions foncières (Niger)</i>
COHESION	Civic Ownership for Human rights Enforcement, Stability Improvement, Organisation and Networking (COHESION) in the Mano River Union
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COP	<i>Conférence des Parties</i>
COPAN	Consolidation of Protected Area Network (Banque Mondiale)
CRIMGO	Critical Maritime Routes Gulf of Guinea
CRIS	Common Relex Information System
CSAO	<i>Club du Sabel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (OCDE)</i>
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSO-LA	Civil Society Organizations – Local Authorities
CSSA	<i>Cadre Sectoriel pour Sécurité Alimentaire du CILSS</i>
DCET	<i>Direction du comité exécutif sur le terrorisme (Nations unies)</i>
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DECISIPH	<i>Droits, Egalité, Citoyenneté, Solidarité Inclusion pour les Personnes Handicapées en Afrique de l'Ouest</i>
DG	Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development
DEVCO	
DG ECHO	Directorate General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DG HOME	Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs
DG TRADE	Directorate General for Trade
DMRO	Duly-mandated regional organisation
DSP	<i>Document de stratégie pays</i>
EAMR	External assistance management report
EASA	European Aviation Safety Agency
ECOMIB	Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Mission in Guinea Bissau
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Cease-fire Monitoring Group
ECOSHAM	Standard Harmonisation in the ECOWAS region
ECOWAFD	ECOWAS Agriculture and Food Development Fund
ECOWAP	ECOWAS Agricultural policy
ECOWARN	ECOWAS Warning and Response Network
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPDM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EDF	European Development Fund
EEAS	European Union External Action Service
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EJF	Environmental Justice Foundation
ENRTP	Thematic programme for environment and sustainable management of natural resources including energy
ENV	Programme thématique « environnement » (instrument de coopération au développement)
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement



EQ	Evaluation Question
ERERA	ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority
ERM	Early Response Mechanism
ERSUMA	Ecole Régionale Supérieure de Magistrature
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
EUTF	EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
EXPAN	Expansion of Protected Area Network (World Bank)
FAA	<i>Force africaine en attente</i>
FBCF	<i>Formation Brute de Capital Fixe</i>
FCPN	Food Crisis Prevention Network
FCWC	Fisheries Committee for the West Central of Gulf of Guinea
FDA	Forest Development Authority - Government of Liberia
FER	<i>Fonds d'entretien routier</i>
FEWACCI	Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FOOD	Food Security Thematic Programme
FOSCAO	<i>Forum de la Société civile d'Afrique de l'Ouest</i>
FPI	Service for Foreign Policy Instruments
FSIS	Food Security Information System
FTA	Free Trade Area
GAM	<i>Groupe d'apprentissage mutuel</i>
GCCA	Global Climate Change Alliance
GDT	<i>Gestion durable des terres</i>
GEMDEV	<i>Groupement d'Intérêt Scientifique pour l'Etude de la Mondialisation et du Développement</i>
GIABA	Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing in West Africa
GIZ	German agency for international cooperation
GNI	Gross National Income
GoWAMER	<i>Programme Gouvernance, politiques de gestion des ressources marines et réduction de la pauvreté dans l'écorégion WAMER</i>
GPGC	Global Public Goods and Challenges
GRNP	Gola Rainforest National Park
HDI	Human Development Index
HEA	Household Economy Approach
HIP	Humanitarian Implementation Plan
HIV-AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus - Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
HUM	Thematic Programme « Human Development »
I	<i>Indicateur</i>
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
IDE	<i>Investissements Directs Etrangers</i>
IFC	International Finance Cooperation

IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IIRA	Indice de l'intégration régionale en Afrique
IL	Intervention Logic
IMET	Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IoS	Instrument of Stability
IOV	<i>Indicateurs objectivement vérifiables</i>
ITC	International Trade Center
IUU	Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
JC	Judgement criteria
JTSSSTC	Joint Technical Secretariat (ECOWAS and WAEMU)
LAB	<i>Lutte anti-braconnage</i>
LC	<i>Laboratoire Citoyennetés, opérateur</i>
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MAG	<i>Malnutrition aiguë globale</i>
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (fisheries)
MEGC	<i>Modèle d'Equilibre Général Calculable</i>
MESA	Monitoring of Environment and Security in Africa
MIDWA	<i>Dialogue sur les migrations pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest</i>
MIGR	Thematic Programme "Asylum and Migration"
MINUSMA	<i>Mission des Nations Unies au Mali</i>
MISMA	<i>Mission internationale de soutien au Mali sous conduite africaine</i>
MME	<i>Partenariat pour la migration, la mobilité et l'emploi</i>
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force
MRU	Mano River Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIP	National Indicative Programme
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHADA	<i>Organisation pour l'harmonisation en Afrique du Droit des Affaires</i>
OIF	<i>Organisation de la Francophonie</i>
OMD	<i>Objectifs du millénaire pour le développement</i>
OMS	<i>Organisation mondiale de la santé</i>
OMVS	<i>Organisation de mise en valeur du fleuve Sénégal</i>
ONU	<i>Organisation des Nations Unies</i>
OSCAF	<i>Organisations de la Société Civile en Afrique Francophone</i>
OTC	<i>Obstacles Techniques au Commerce</i>
PACCIR	<i>Projet d'Appui à la compétitivité du commerce et à l'intégration régionale de l'Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine</i>
PACIR	<i>Programme d'Appui au Commerce et à l'Intégration Régionale (Côte d'Ivoire)</i>
PADSP	<i>Programme d'Appui au Développement du Secteur privé (Burkina Faso)</i>
PAG	<i>Plan d'Aménagement et de Gestion (d'un parc national)</i>
PANA	<i>Plans nationaux d'adaptation aux changements climatiques</i>

PAPE	<i>Programme d'appui aux parcs de l'Entente</i>
PAPED	<i>Programme APE pour le Développement</i>
PARCI	<i>Programme régional d'Appui à la Régulation du Commerce Informel</i>
PAU	<i>Politique agricole de l'Union (UEMOA)</i>
PAULAB	<i>Plan d'Action d'Urgence de Lutte Anti. Braconnage</i>
PCAE	<i>Politique commune d'amélioration de l'environnement</i>
PCD	<i>Programme Commun de Développement</i>
PCJ	<i>Postes de contrôles juxtaposés</i>
PER	<i>Programme Economique Régional</i>
PFM	Public Finance Management
PIB	<i>Produit intérieur brut</i>
PIDA	<i>Programme de développement des infrastructures en Afrique</i>
PIRC	<i>Programme intégré de renforcement des capacités</i>
PME	<i>Petites et Moyennes Entreprises</i>
PNIA	<i>Programmes nationaux d'investissement agricole</i>
PNUD	<i>Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement</i>
PPP	<i>Partenariat public-privé</i>
PRCM	<i>Partenariat Régional pour la Conservation de la zone côtière et Marine en Afrique de l'Ouest</i>
PREGEC	<i>Prévention et gestion des crises alimentaires</i>
PRIA	<i>Programme Régional d'Investissement Agricole</i>
PRP	<i>Plans Résilience Pays</i>
PSQAO	<i>Programme de soutien à la qualité en Afrique de l'Ouest</i>
RAAF	Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (ECOWAS)
RBM	<i>Réseau Bilital Maroobé</i>
RBT-W	<i>Réserve de la biosphère transfrontalière du W</i>
REC	Regional Economic Community
RG	Reference Group
RIP	Regional Indicative Programme
RO	Regional Organisation
RRSA	<i>Réserve Régionale de Sécurité Alimentaire</i>
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SANAD&R	Sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle, agriculture durable et résilience
SAP	<i>Systèmes d'alerte précoce</i>
SDA	<i>Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement</i>
SE4ALL	Sustainable Energy for All
SFI	<i>Société Financière Internationale</i>
SIASA	Supporting the improvement of air safety in Sub-Saharan Africa
SLE	<i>Schéma de Libéralisation des Echanges</i>
SMART	Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool
SPS	<i>Normes Sanitaires et Phytosanitaires</i>
SRCF	Sub-Regional Commission on Fisheries
SSC	Strategic Steering Committee
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition

TA	Technical Assistance
TFA	Trade Facilitation Agreement
TFP	Technical and financial partner
TNCB	Trade negotiations capacity Building
TOFE	<i>Tableau des Opérations Financières de l'Etat</i>
TOR	Terms of reference
TRAQUE	Trade related Assistance and Quality Enabling Programme (Ghana)
TWG	Technical Working Group
UICN	<i>Union internationale pour la conservation de la nature</i>
UMA	<i>Union du Maghreb arabe</i>
UNFCCC	Conferences of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNIDA	<i>Association pour l'Unification du Droit en Afrique</i>
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	Dollar (USA)
VAT	Value-Added Tax
WACAP	West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WAGP	West African Gas Pipeline
WAMER	West Africa Marine Eco-region
WAP / WAPO	<i>Parcs W, Arly, Pendjari / Oti -Kéran - Mandouri</i>
WAPIS	West Africa Police Information System
WAPP	West African Power Pool
WB	World Bank
WCS	World Conservation Society
WEF	World Economic Forum
WTO	World Trade Organisation
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
ZMOA	<i>Zone Monétaire d'Afrique de l'Ouest</i>

# Map of the West Africa Region





# Summary

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## Purpose of the evaluation

This report presents the external evaluation of the European Union's (EU) strategy of cooperation with the West Africa region and of its implementation over the period 2008-2016. Its main objectives are: i) to provide both the EU institutions and a broader audience with an independent and global analysis of EU's past and present cooperation relations with West Africa; and ii) to identify the key lessons and make recommendations with a view to improving current and future strategies, programmes and activities of the EU. These recommendations relate to the time frame up to 2020, which is the end of the period covered by the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) of the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF). They also provide food for thought on regional cooperation strategy post-2020.

## Evaluation methodology

Based on a reconstitution of the intervention logic highlighting causal relations between planned activities, expected results and pursued impacts, the evaluation team formulated eight evaluation questions (EQ) and associated evaluation criteria and objectively verifiable indicators. The evaluation grid is structured around three cross-cutting issues – relevance of the strategy to the context and its evolution (EQ 1); intervention means and approaches (EQ 2); coordination, complementarity and coherence (EQ 8) – as well as issues concerning five sectors – peace, security and regional stability (EQ 2); regional economic integration (EQ 3); interconnection: transport and energy (EQ 4); food security and nutrition (EQ 5); sustainable natural resource management (EQ 6).

For the purposes of this evaluation, the evaluation team has consulted more than 470 documents, interviewed almost 340 people and examined some 21 projects in greater detail. Field missions were conducted in two phases (November 2017 and January 2018) in 11 West African countries. Finally, an online survey was conducted with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) of West Africa as well as with the Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FEWACCI).

## Background information

The geographical scope of this evaluation covers 16 countries: the 15 Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo) together with Mauritania. Eight of the 15 ECOWAS Member States also belong to the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo). ECOWAS and WAEMU are the two duly-mandated regional organisations (DMROs) for the negotiation and signature of the RIPs.

During the period under review, the region enjoyed rapid economic growth, at least until 2014. Over the same period, several West African countries experienced serious crises of various types: food (Sahelian countries), health (Ebola crisis in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone), political (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and others) and security issues (Sahelian

countries, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria, among others). Some 40 years after the creation of ECOWAS and 20 years after that of WAEMU, West Africa is one of the African regions where regional integration is most advanced, in particular in terms of the free movement of people and financial and macroeconomic integration. During the period under review (2008-2016), a major discrepancy was nevertheless observed between West African leaders' ambitions for regional integration and what was actually achieved (trade liberalisation scheme, transport regulation, foreign trade policy, etc.).

### **EU – West Africa cooperation**

The cooperation strategy for the 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF) (2008-2013) was founded on two focal sectors: i) regional integration, competitiveness and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA); and ii) political governance and regional stability. At the end of the mid-term review (end 2011), some funds were reallocated to the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund (AITF) to contribute to the “Sustainable Energy for All” initiative. The 11<sup>th</sup> EDF (2014-2020) strategy is structured around three focal sectors: i) peace, security and regional stability; ii) regional economic integration and support for trade and the private sector; and iii) resilience, food security and nutrition and natural resource management. In both West Africa and the other ACP regions, the programming and implementation of the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF RIP were accompanied by several institutional changes aimed at making regional cooperation more effective, including the diversification of implementation stakeholders, an increase in the funds allocated to blending, and the implementation of regional cooperation strategy steering committees.

Throughout the period under review (2008-2016), regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa represented a total commitment of €1,164 million. The regional EDF provided 76% of this sum, while the regional programmes of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (€110 million), the African Peace Facility (€53 million) and the budget of the European institutions [thematic budget lines FOOD (€43 million) and Instrument of Stability/Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (€33 million)] supplied the remaining 24%.

### **Conclusions**

#### Overall conclusion:

At the beginning of the period under review (as in the previous period), regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa reflected the integration model at work within the EU, i.e. a law-based approach. Through failure to give adequate consideration to the political, social and economic factors impeding such an approach, EU-West Africa regional cooperation yielded few lasting outcomes. The doubling of the regional envelope between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> EDFs has more to do with the stakes involved in the negotiation of a free-trade agreement (EPA) between the two regions than with regional cooperation performance. Similarly, the further doubling of the envelope between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> EDFs is mainly the result of factoring in new interdependencies between the two regions (notably in security and migration) than to the achievement of any significant progress in regional cooperation and integration within the West African space. Despite the improvements made in the governance of EU-West Africa regional cooperation since the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF, the two partners' lack of common policy directions in terms of



their vision of regional integration or the practical outworking of their partnership is weighing on their cooperation today.

Conclusions by evaluation criteria:

***Relevance:***

**C1. The vision underlying regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa is far less clear now than it was ten years ago. This reflects the tension between the principles underlying the Cotonou Agreement and the priorities of the recent Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy for the European Union.** The 10<sup>th</sup> EDF cooperation strategy was founded on a relatively clear regional integration project involving support for liberal economic integration through the implementation of a customs union and the negotiation of a free-trade agreement with the EU; a strengthening of ECOWAS's role in consolidating peace and security; and support for regional cooperation actions aimed at handling interdependencies or common problems such as protected cross-border areas and the prevention of food crises. Since then, the picture has become blurred on two (interlinked) levels: on the one hand, in both Europe and West Africa, the consensus among leaders as well as public support for regional integration projects has weakened. On the other hand, to assert its common foreign and security policy, the EU is keen to more effectively defend its interests and protect its security, which affects the orientations (and conditions) of its development cooperation policy. These shifts in EU policy have had repercussions on its cooperation with West Africa due to interdependencies between the two regions. This situation is no longer in line with the texts currently governing regional cooperation (Cotonou Agreement, 10<sup>th</sup> EDF and 11<sup>th</sup> EDF RIPs) and is affecting the conditions of the dialogue with the two DMROs. These two factors mean that the different stakeholders within the European institutions and the West African DMROs are keenly aware of the somewhat unclear course currently guiding cooperation between the two regions. This being so, there is a pressing need to set up a fresh regional integration project, in which the stakeholders (the EU and the West African partners) fully agree on the objectives and scope.

**C2. Regional cooperation focused on the main integration challenges facing West Africa although for several key programmes, the theories of change have displayed major flaws** due to: i) program design weaknesses (objectives and results sometimes too ambitious, as well as insufficiently developed risk monitoring and mitigation hypotheses and measures); ii) the wide thematic scope covered by regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa as a whole. While the two DMROs have very ambitious mandates and roadmaps by comparison with their human and financial resources, EU cooperation has not helped to define priorities or focus regional cooperation on a limited number of fields, sub-fields or actions.

**C3. Regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa has adapted to the changing context**, first by putting greater emphasis on preventing and managing food crises and second, by using a range of instruments or programmes (EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, African Peace Facility and thematic budget lines) to adapt to the increasing number of crises affecting West Africa during the period under review. This increase in the number of regional cooperation tools has had a cost in terms of coherence, complementarity and synergies between the different measures, particularly in the “peace and security” sector. Furthermore, **the EU's regional**

**cooperation has failed to learn from previous interventions.** In particular, the reasons for failing to achieve the expected results have not been analysed in depth, so continue to weigh on the effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the interventions.

***Effectiveness:***

**C4. A large number of the expected outputs of EU regional cooperation were obtained.** This support helped make significant headway in raising awareness of issues that require concerted action at regional level, such as the elimination of road vehicle overloading, sustainable land management and the protection of cross-border natural resources. It also smoothed the way for developing common methodologies for use by all West African countries in such fundamental areas as public finance management or the prevention of food and nutrition crises. Lastly, EU support facilitated the drafting and adoption of policies that were essential for strengthening regional integration, especially as regards the free movement of goods and people, the establishment of a customs union and the definition of regional quality standards. **However these positive contributions are not generally translated into the effective application of community rules by West Africa states, or investments to meet the needs identified at regional level.** Numerous factors explain this low level of effectiveness, in particular: i) programme designs, most of which favour a rights-based approach without paying sufficient attention to the analysis of stakeholders' coalitions in favour, or not, of furthering regional integration; ii) the lack of importance accorded to regional issues in the national policy dialogue conducted by the EU; and iii) the difficulties or weaknesses encountered in regional cooperation management.

***Efficiency:***

**C5. During the period under review, the efficiency of the regional cooperation programmes, though difficult to measure, was somewhat mixed.** Poor performance, in particular with regard to the implementation schedule, results of flawed programme designs, a lack of ECOWAS and WAEMU organisational and managerial capacities to implement or manage the actions falling under their responsibility and an absence of genuine coordination between these two regional organisations. For certain regional programmes, absence or delayed mobilisation of the counterparties owed by the two regional organisations contributed to undermining efficiency.

***Impact and sustainability:***

**C6. Sustainability of the EU's regional cooperation actions is generally weak, irrespective of the sectors. Reasons are mainly superficial ownership by the various West African stakeholders concerned,** the lack of capacities among the non-state actors (civil society organisations, private sector, etc.) to more actively contribute to formulating and monitoring regional policies, lack of capacity of the regional organisations to fulfil their mandates and flaws in the capacity-building actions' design and implementation. While ECOWAS and WAEMU are still officially the co-pilots of regional cooperation strategy, it appears that during the period under review, this function gradually lost substance (responsibility being shared between the two DMROs and the EU).

**C7. With regard to specific impacts, the contribution of EU regional cooperation – where it can be evaluated – to the observed progress or the limitation of deterioration of the situation was weak.** With regard to most of the impacts targeted by

the EU's cooperation strategy, the regional situation deteriorated during the period 2008-2016. The EU's regional cooperation was either weak or non-existent. This lack of contribution to development results, including in the areas in which EU regional cooperation has long been focused, reflects the intensity of the constraints weighing on the process of regional integration in West Africa as well as intervention design failures (including the lack of means allocated to pursued goals), implementation delays, lack of coherence between interventions and a lack of continuity in EU cooperation on certain themes.

***Coordination and EU added value:***

**C8. There was little “natural” added value of the EU in terms of support to regional integration.** Although the EU allocated substantially higher sums to regional cooperation, its actions were poorly coordinated with its Member States' regional actions (except in the field of food security) and with those of other technical and financial partners. The EU developed few complementarities or synergies between cooperation actions at regional level and those at national level. Overall, the EU's regional cooperation has lacked visibility both in the regional organisations' communications and in those of West African states. Finally, very limited use was made of the expertise and experience available within the European institutions to formulate, implement and monitor regional policies.

***Complementarity and coherence:***

**C9.** Within and between the cooperation sectors, **complementarity, coherence and synergies were globally weak**, due to the fragmented support and insufficient coordination and dialogue within the EU (in particular between the regional and national European Union Delegations). These findings are reinforced, at the end of the period, by the delegation of programme execution to different implementing agencies and the introduction of new instruments (such as the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa). With regard to the interactions between regional cooperation strategies and other EU policies, the results differ from one sector to another.

***Cross-cutting issues:***

**C10. The effective incorporation of cross-cutting issues (gender equality, human rights, HIV-AIDS, the environment) into EU regional cooperation actions was weak.** The internal EU mechanisms for incorporating these aspects into the operations were reinforced and standardised, although this gave rise to a mechanical approach which, in addition with the absence of in-depth socio-economic analyses, do not allow these problems to be grasped correctly upstream of the operations. Furthermore, the mechanisms were not followed by sufficient measures during the implementation of the interventions.

***Capacity building:***

**C11. EU regional cooperation allocated considerable resources to capacity building for stakeholders, and in particular the DMROs. Support in this area was deployed without an in-depth initial diagnostic and, barring a few exceptions, achieved very little.** When positive results were observed, they primarily relate to individuals and/or tools, with major doubts remaining as to the skills acquired within the organisations and thus their institutional sustainability. This problem is exacerbated by the increasing number of regional cooperation organisations and/or initiatives. The lack of robust theories of

change on which regional programmes were founded once again serves in part to explain this situation (assumptions insufficiently examined with regard to the specific roles of regional organisations vis-à-vis the states and other stakeholders).

## Recommendations

### General recommendations:

**R1. Pursue regional cooperation with West Africa beyond 2020** (end of the current 11<sup>th</sup> RIP). With this in mind, and in close connection with the “post-Cotonou” considerations, this would involve preparing a joint communication (European Commission and European External Action Service – EEAS) to the Council and the Parliament on the topic of regional integration in developing countries. In connection with the preparation of this communication, a specific review of the regional cooperation should be organised with the West African stakeholders (regional organisations, member states and non-state actors). This review would, in particular, deal with operational multi-country cooperation by examining the circumstances and circumstances in which these display significant advantages compared to cooperation at regional level.

**R2.** Within the framework of knowledge-management policy adopted by the Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO), **organise regular stocktaking processes for each major theme of regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa.** These processes would be fostered upstream by political economy analyses with a view to ensuring a better understanding of the political and economic obstacles to enhanced regional cooperation and integration in West Africa in the different sectors of activity.

**R.3. Pursue improvement of the institutional organisation within the European institutions related to steering and monitoring of regional cooperation with the West Africa region** i) by strengthening the staff dedicated to these issues (within the unit responsible for West Africa, the European Union Delegations (EUDs) to Nigeria and Burkina Faso and other EUDs in charge of regional programmes), ii) by improving consultation and coordination between the two EUDs with a regional mandate and with the other EUDs in West Africa and finally, iii) by improving the PAGODA negotiation process (with the agencies of the EU member states and with the international organisations) in order to ensure true convergence of views and to achieve a reduction in implementation costs.

**R4. Strengthen the importance of regional issues in the policy dialogue conducted by the EU with each member state of ECOWAS (and WAEMU)** and examine the feasibility of allocating additional financial envelopes that would be granted to each country in the region (for example in the form of a top-up in a budget support operation), providing that all of them have complied with or implemented regional commitments. This type of incentive would be particularly suitable for economic integration sectors (including transport and energy).

**R5. As part of implementing the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF RIP, improve the coherence and synergies between the different interventions,** in particular in “regional economic integration” and “peace and security” sectors.

**R6. Support ECOWAS in developing its tools and capacities for monitoring and evaluating regional integration** in order to increase its legitimacy vis-à-vis its member

states in steering the regional integration process and to be more credible in its dialogue with technical and financial partners. To complement this support, the “monitoring and evaluation culture” should be strengthened in the EU’s regional cooperation programmes.

**R7. Strengthen the incorporation of cross-cutting issues when formulating and implementing regional actions** on the basis of in-depth socio-economic analyses.

**R8. Improve the relevance and coherence of the capacity-building strategies and approaches** (individual and institutional) when formulating and implementing regional actions. This should concern not only the DMROs but also the other stakeholders (currently or potentially) playing a key role in the regional integration process.

Sector-specific recommendations:

*Regional economic integration:*

- Help to relaunch the process of regional economic integration by supporting a dual dynamic: one involving the Member States, the other involving groups (private sector, civil society, etc.) that transcend strictly national interests.
- Give greater consideration to the inclusiveness and sustainability of the growth processes when drawing up economic integration processes and thereby fall into line with the New European Consensus on Development from 2017.

*Transport:*

- Combine the pursuance of blending operations on regional corridors with a regional programme aimed at promoting the gradual alignment of national policies on regional directives concerning the liberalisation and professionalisation of the transport industry, the facilitation of transport and efforts to eliminate overloading and abnormal practices. To achieve this alignment, special-interest platforms should be set up to enable the countries in the region to exchange information and ideas, and national and regional policy dialogue should be more closely linked.

*Energy:*

- Continue investing in regional interconnection through blending, and strengthen the ties with the initiatives carried out using NIP funding, to make sector governance more open, more efficient and more transparent about prices.

*Food and nutrition security, sustainable agriculture and resilience:*

- Conduct political economy analyses (cf. R2) on themes specific to the sector.
- Apply the recommendation regarding additional financial allocations (cf. R4) to themes specific to the sector, in particular eliminating the constraints on cross-border seasonal migration, or harmonising and rationalising information systems.
- Given the tendency of regional institutional systems in the sector to expand and multiply, encourage the ROs to coordinate their initiatives, and guide the reform processes under way towards a rationalisation of institutional systems;
- Actively contribute to the coordination among TFPs by playing a strong role in supporting regional leadership.

*Environment and climate change:*

- In efforts to protect environment and to attenuate the populations' vulnerability to climate change, add a "bottom-up" approach to the current "top-down" normative approach, through a number of actions that complement each other.



# Résumé

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## Les objectifs de l'évaluation

Ce rapport présente les résultats de l'évaluation de la stratégie de coopération de l'Union européenne (UE) avec la région Afrique de l'Ouest, ainsi que sa mise en œuvre au cours de la période 2008-2016. L'évaluation a pour principaux objectifs de : i) rendre compte et fournir aux institutions de l'UE, ainsi qu'à un public plus large, une évaluation indépendante et globale des relations de coopération et de partenariat passées et présentes de l'UE avec l'Afrique de l'Ouest ; ii) identifier des leçons clés et formuler des recommandations en vue d'améliorer les stratégies, les programmes et les activités, actuelles et futures de l'UE. Ces recommandations portent jusqu'en 2020, terme de la période couverte par le programme indicatif régional (PIR) du 11<sup>ème</sup> Fonds européen de développement (FED). Elles permettent aussi d'alimenter les réflexions relatives à la stratégie de coopération régionale post 2020.

## La méthodologie d'évaluation

A partir de la reconstitution de la logique d'intervention, mettant en évidence les relations causales identifiées entre les activités prévues, les résultats et impacts attendus, l'équipe d'évaluation a formulé huit questions d'évaluation et les critères de jugement qui y sont associés, mesurés par des indicateurs objectivement vérifiables. La grille d'évaluation comprend trois questions de portée générale : Adéquation de la stratégie au contexte et à son évolution (QE 1) ; Moyens et démarches d'intervention (QE 2) ; Coordination, complémentarité et cohérence (QE 8) et cinq questions sectorielles : Paix, sécurité et stabilité régionale (QE 2) ; Intégration économique régionale (QE 3) ; Interconnexion : transport et énergie (QE 4) ; Sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle (QE 5) ; Gestion durable des ressources naturelles (QE 6).

Au cours de cette évaluation, plus de 470 documents ont été consultés, 340 personnes ont été interviewées et 21 projets ont été examinés plus en détail. Les missions de terrain se sont déroulées en deux phases (novembre 2017 et janvier 2018) dans 11 pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest. Enfin, une enquête en ligne a été réalisée auprès des Chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie (CCI) de l'Afrique de l'Ouest ainsi que de la FEWACCI (*Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce and Industry*).

## Informations contextuelles

La région concernée par cette évaluation couvre 16 pays, soit : les 15 pays membres de la Communauté économique des Etats d'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO ; Bénin, Burkina-Faso, Cap Vert, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambie, Ghana, Guinée, Guinée Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sénégal, Sierra Leone et Togo) plus la Mauritanie. Parmi les 15 pays membres de la CEDEAO, 8 appartiennent également à l'Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine (UEMOA ; Bénin, Burkina-Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinée Bissau, Mali, Niger, Sénégal et Togo). La CEDEAO et l'UEMOA sont les deux organisations régionales dûment mandatées (ORDM) pour la négociation et la signature des PIR.

Durant la période évaluée, la région a connu un taux de croissance économique élevé, tout au moins jusqu'en 2014. Dans le même temps, plusieurs pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest ont

connu de graves crises de diverses natures : alimentaires (pays du Sahel), sanitaires (épidémie Ebola en Guinée, Liberia et Sierra Leone), politiques (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali...) et sécuritaires (pays du Sahel, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria...). 40 ans après la création de la CEDEAO et 20 ans après celle de l'UEMOA, l'Afrique de l'Ouest est l'une des régions du continent africain où l'intégration régionale est la plus avancée, notamment en termes de libre circulation des personnes et d'intégration financière et macroéconomique. Cependant, au cours de la période évaluée (2008-2016), il est constaté un décalage important entre les ambitions affichées en matière d'intégration régionale par les dirigeants d'Afrique de l'Ouest et la concrétisation effective de ces ambitions (schéma de libéralisation des échanges, réglementation des transports, politique commerciale extérieure...).

### **La coopération UE – Afrique de l'Ouest**

La stratégie de coopération pour le 10<sup>ème</sup> Fonds européen de développement (FED) (2008-2013), reposait sur deux secteurs de concentration : i) l'approfondissement de l'intégration régionale, l'amélioration de la compétitivité et l'Accord de Partenariat Economique (APE) et ii) la consolidation de la bonne gouvernance et de la stabilité régionale. A l'issue de la revue à mi-parcours (fin 2011), une partie des fonds ont été réaffectés à l'*African Infrastructure Trust Fund* pour contribution à l'initiative « énergie durable pour tous ». La stratégie relative au 11<sup>ème</sup> FED (2014-2020) est structurée autour de trois secteurs de concentration : i) Paix, sécurité et stabilité régionale ; ii) Intégration économique régionale, aide au commerce ; iii) Résilience, sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle et ressources naturelles. La programmation et la mise en œuvre du PIR 11<sup>ème</sup> FED se sont accompagnées, en Afrique de l'Ouest comme dans les autres régions ACP, de plusieurs changements institutionnels qui visent à améliorer l'efficacité de la coopération régionale : diversification de la gamme des acteurs d'exécution, augmentation des montants alloués aux mécanismes de financement mixte (*blending*), mise en place de comités de pilotage des stratégies régionales de coopération.

Pour l'ensemble de la période évaluée (2008-2016), la coopération régionale UE-Afrique de l'Ouest représente un volume total d'engagement de 1 164 M€, dont 76% provenant du FED régional et 24% des programmes régionaux du Fonds fiduciaire d'urgence (110 M€), de la Facilité africaine pour la paix (53 M€) et du budget des institutions européennes [ligne thématique FOOD (43 M€) et Instrument de Stabilité/Instrument contribuant à la Stabilité et la Paix (33 M€)].

### **Les conclusions**

#### Conclusion générale :

Au début de la période évaluée, la coopération régionale entre l'UE et l'Afrique de l'Ouest était marquée (à l'instar de la période précédente) par une projection du schéma d'intégration à l'œuvre au sein de l'UE, c'est à dire une approche basée sur le droit. En raison notamment d'une faible prise en considération des facteurs politiques, sociaux et économiques qui font obstacle à une telle approche, la coopération régionale UE – Afrique de l'Ouest a abouti à peu de résultats durables. Le doublement de l'enveloppe régionale entre le 9<sup>ème</sup> et le 10<sup>ème</sup> FED est lié aux enjeux de la négociation d'un accord de libre-échange (APE) entre les deux régions plutôt qu'aux performances de la coopération régionale. De même, le nouveau doublement survenu entre le 10<sup>ème</sup> et le 11<sup>ème</sup> FED repose



davantage sur la prise en compte de nouvelles interdépendances entre les deux régions (sécurité et migration notamment) que sur l'obtention de résultats significatifs en termes de progression de la coopération et de l'intégration régionales au sein de l'espace ouest-africain. Malgré les améliorations apportées, depuis le début du 11<sup>ème</sup> FED, à la gouvernance de la coopération régionale entre l'UE et la région Afrique de l'Ouest, cette coopération souffre aujourd'hui d'un déficit d'orientations communes aux deux partenaires, tant en termes de vision de l'intégration régionale que de modalités de partenariat.

Conclusions par critères d'évaluation :

**Pertinence :**

**C1. La vision qui sous-tend la coopération régionale entre l'UE et l'Afrique de l'Ouest s'exprime aujourd'hui de manière nettement moins claire qu'il y a dix ans. Cela reflète les tensions entre les principes qui fondent l'Accord de Cotonou et les orientations de la récente stratégie globale de l'UE en matière de politique étrangère et de sécurité.** La stratégie de coopération 10<sup>ème</sup> FED reposait sur un projet d'intégration régionale assez clair : soutien à une intégration économique de type libéral à travers la mise en place d'une Union douanière et la négociation d'un accord de libre-échange avec l'UE, renforcement du rôle de la CEDEAO en matière de consolidation de la paix et de la sécurité, soutien à des actions de coopération régionale visant à traiter des interdépendances ou des problèmes communs, tels que les aires protégées transfrontalières, la prévention des crises alimentaires. Depuis, le tableau s'est brouillé à deux niveaux (liés entre eux) : d'une part, en Afrique de l'Ouest et en Europe, les projets d'intégration régionale sont moins consensuels (parmi les dirigeants) et suscitent guère d'adhésion de la part des opinions publiques. D'autre part, dans le cadre de l'affirmation de sa politique étrangère et de sécurité commune, l'UE veut mieux défendre ses intérêts et préserver sa sécurité, ce qui a des conséquences sur les orientations (et les modalités) de sa politique de coopération au développement. Cette évolution du positionnement de l'UE se manifeste dès à présent dans sa coopération avec l'Afrique de l'Ouest du fait des diverses interdépendances qui lient les deux régions. Cette évolution se trouve en décalage avec les textes régissant actuellement la coopération régionale (Accord de Cotonou, PIR 10<sup>ème</sup> FED et 11<sup>ème</sup> FED), ce qui pèse sur le dialogue avec les deux organisations régionales dument mandatées (ORDM). Ces deux éléments conduisent à ce que les différentes parties prenantes, au sein des institutions européennes et des ORDM d'Afrique de l'Ouest, ressentent fortement l'existence d'un flou sur le cap qui guide aujourd'hui la coopération entre les deux régions. Dans ce contexte, l'absence de refondation d'un projet de coopération régionale, dont les objectifs et le périmètre serait réellement partagé entre les parties prenantes (l'UE et les acteurs d'Afrique de l'Ouest), se fait ressentir de manière aiguë.

**C2. La coopération régionale a porté sur les principaux défis d'intégration auxquels l'Afrique de l'Ouest est confrontée, mais pour plusieurs programmes importants, les théories du changement ont présenté de fortes lacunes, qui sont dues : i) à des problèmes de conception des interventions sectorielles (au niveau des objectifs et des résultats parfois trop ambitieux, mais aussi des hypothèses et mesures d'atténuation et de suivi des risques trop peu développées) ; ii) à la trop grande ampleur du champ thématique couvert par la coopération régionale UE – Afrique de l'Ouest dans son ensemble. Les deux ORDM ont des mandats et des feuilles de route très ambitieux au regard des ressources**

(humaines et financières) dont elles disposent ; et la coopération de l'UE n'a pas contribué à définir des priorités, à concentrer les interventions régionales sur un nombre limité de domaines / sous-domaines / actions.

**C3. La coopération régionale UE – Afrique de l'Ouest s'est adaptée à l'évolution du contexte** en mettant, d'une part, davantage l'accent sur la prévention / gestion des crises alimentaires dans le domaine « sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle » et, d'autre part, en mobilisant une gamme d'instruments ou programmes (fonds fiduciaire d'urgence, Instrument contribuant à la Stabilité et la Paix, Facilité Africaine pour la Paix et lignes thématiques) pour faire face à la multiplication des crises de divers types auxquelles l'Afrique de l'Ouest a été confrontée durant la période évaluée. Cette multiplication des outils de coopération régionale a cependant un coût en termes de cohérence, complémentarité et synergies entre les différentes interventions, notamment dans le secteur « paix et sécurité ». Par ailleurs, **d'une période à l'autre, la coopération régionale de l'UE n'a pas suffisamment tiré les enseignements des interventions antérieures.** En particulier, les causes de la non obtention de certains résultats n'ont pas été analysées en profondeur ce qui a pesé sur l'efficacité, l'efficience, la durabilité et l'impact des actions menées.

#### **Efficacité :**

**C4. Une grande partie des produits attendus des appuis régionaux de l'UE ont été obtenus.** Ces appuis ont contribué à des avancées significatives en termes de prise de conscience de problèmes nécessitant une action concertée à l'échelle régionale, tels que la lutte contre la surcharge routière, la gestion durable des terres ou la protection des ressources naturelles transfrontalières. Ils ont également favorisé le développement de méthodologies communes à l'ensemble des pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest dans des domaines de première importance comme la gestion des finances publiques ou la prévention des crises alimentaires et nutritionnelles. Enfin, les appuis de l'UE ont facilité l'élaboration et l'adoption de politiques essentielles pour l'approfondissement de l'intégration régionale, en particulier en ce qui concerne la libre-circulation des biens et des personnes, la constitution d'une Union douanière et la définition de normes régionales de qualité. **Cependant ces contributions positives ne se sont généralement pas traduites par l'application effective des règles communautaires par les pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest ou la réalisation d'investissements répondant aux enjeux identifiés à l'échelle régionale.** Les facteurs explicatifs de cette faible efficacité sont multiples, en particulier : i) la conception des programmes qui, pour la plupart, privilégient une approche par le droit sans accorder suffisamment d'attention à l'analyse des coalitions d'acteurs favorables ou défavorables à l'avancée de l'intégration régionale ; ii) la faible place accordée aux questions régionales dans le dialogue sur les politiques que l'UE conduit au niveau national et iii) les difficultés ou faiblesses rencontrées dans les modes de gestion de la coopération régionale.

#### **Efficience :**

**C5. Au cours de la période évaluée, l'efficience des programmes de coopération régionale, bien que difficile à mesurer, s'avère mitigée.** Ces mauvaises performances en particulier en termes de respect des calendriers d'exécution, résultent de lacunes dans la conception des programmes, du manque de capacités, principalement organisationnelle et de gestion, de la CEDEAO et de l'UEMOA pour exécuter, ou faire exécuter, les actions dont elles ont la responsabilité et de l'absence de réelle coordination entre ces deux

organisations régionales. Pour certains programmes régionaux, la non-exécution (ou l'exécution avec retard) des contreparties dues par les deux organisations régionales ont contribué à affaiblir l'efficacité.

### ***Impact et durabilité :***

**C6. La durabilité des actions de coopération régionale de l'UE est globalement faible, quel que soit le secteur considéré, en raison principalement d'une appropriation superficielle par les différents acteurs d'Afrique de l'Ouest concernés**, du manque de capacités des acteurs non étatiques concernés (OSC, secteur privé...) pour contribuer plus activement à l'élaboration et au suivi des politiques régionales, du manque de capacité des organisations régionales pour exercer les mandats qui leur sont confiés par leurs Etats-membres et des lacunes dans la conception et la mise en œuvre des actions de renforcement des capacités. Si la CEDEAO et l'UEMOA sont toujours formellement les co-pilotes de la stratégie de coopération régionale, il apparaît que durant la période évaluée, elles se sont trouvées progressivement marginalisées dans l'exercice de cette fonction (les responsabilités de cette évolution étant partagées entre les deux ORDM et l'UE).

**C7. Au niveau des impacts spécifiques, la contribution, lorsqu'elle a pu être évaluée, de la coopération régionale de l'UE aux progrès constatés ou à la limitation de la dégradation de la situation a été faible.** Pour la plupart des impacts visés par la stratégie de coopération de l'UE, la région a connu une dégradation de sa situation au cours de la période 2008-2016. Le niveau de contribution de la coopération régionale de l'UE est soit nul, soit faible. Cette absence de contribution aux résultats de développement, y compris dans des domaines de concentration de la coopération régionale de l'UE depuis de longues années, reflète l'intensité des contraintes qui pèsent sur le processus d'intégration régionale en Afrique de l'Ouest mais également des carences dans la formulation des interventions (dont l'inadéquation des moyens alloués aux objectifs poursuivis), des retards dans les calendriers d'exécution, des problèmes de cohérence des interventions et le manque de continuité des appuis de l'UE sur certaines thématiques.

### ***Coordination et valeur ajoutée de l'UE :***

**C8. La valeur ajoutée « naturelle » de l'UE en matière d'appui à l'intégration régionale s'est peu manifestée.** Alors que l'UE a alloué des montants importants (et en forte croissance) à la coopération régionale, son action a été faiblement coordonnée avec les actions régionales de ses Etats-membres (excepté dans le secteur « sécurité alimentaire ») et avec celles des autres partenaires techniques et financiers. L'UE a développé peu de complémentarités ou de synergies entre les actions de coopération de niveau régional et celles de niveau national. La coopération régionale de l'UE a été en général peu visible, que ce soit dans les actions de communication des organisations régionales ou dans celle des Etats d'Afrique de l'Ouest. Enfin, elle a fait très peu appel à l'expertise et à l'expérience dont disposent les institutions européennes en matière de formulation / mise en œuvre / suivi de politiques régionales.

### ***Complémentarité et cohérence :***

**C9. Au sein des secteurs de coopération, et entre ceux-ci, la complémentarité, la cohérence et les synergies ont été globalement faibles,** en raison de la fragmentation des appuis et d'une coordination et concertation internes à l'UE insuffisantes (notamment entre Délégations de l'Union européennes – DUE – régionales et nationales). Ces constats

sont renforcés en fin de période, avec la délégation de l'exécution des programmes à différentes agences d'exécution et la mise en place de nouveaux instruments (tel que le Fonds fiduciaire d'urgence). Pour ce qui concerne les interactions entre la stratégie de coopération régionale et d'autres politiques de l'UE, le bilan est variable d'un secteur à l'autre.

### **Questions transversales :**

**C10. La prise en compte effective des dimensions transversales (genre, droits de l'homme, VIH-SIDA, environnement) dans les actions de coopération régionale de l'UE a été faible.** Les mécanismes, internes à l'UE, de prise en compte de ces dimensions dans les interventions ont été renforcés et normalisés. Cependant, cela a engendré une standardisation de l'approche qui ne compense pas l'absence d'analyses socio-économiques approfondies, permettant d'appréhender correctement ces problématiques en amont des interventions. Par ailleurs ces mécanismes n'ont pas été suivis de mesures suffisantes au niveau de la mise en œuvre des interventions.

### **Renforcement des capacités :**

**C11. La coopération régionale de l'UE a accordé des moyens importants au renforcement des capacités des acteurs, en particulier les ORDM. Les appuis dans ce domaine ont été menés sans un diagnostic initial approfondi et, sauf quelques exceptions, ont abouti à peu de résultats.** Lorsque des résultats positifs sont notés, ils concernent principalement des individus et/ou des outils, avec des interrogations fortes sur l'appropriation des acquis au sein des organisations et, en conséquence, sur leur durabilité institutionnelle. La multiplication des organisations et/ou initiatives de coopération régionale accentue cette difficulté. Le manque de robustesse des théories du changement sur lesquelles reposent les programmes régionaux constitue, une fois de plus, l'un des facteurs explicatifs de cette situation (hypothèses insuffisamment approfondies en ce qui concerne les rôles spécifiques des organisations régionales vis-à-vis des Etats et des autres parties prenantes).

## **Les recommandations**

### **Recommandations transversales :**

**R1. Poursuivre la coopération régionale avec l'Afrique de l'Ouest au-delà de 2020** (terme de l'actuel 11<sup>ème</sup> PIR). Dans cette perspective, et en lien étroit avec les réflexions relatives au « post Cotonou », il s'agirait de préparer une communication conjointe (Commission européenne et Service européen pour l'action extérieure – SEAE) au Conseil et au Parlement sur le thème de l'intégration régionale dans les pays en développement. En lien avec la préparation de cette communication, un bilan spécifique de la coopération régionale devrait être organisé avec les acteurs d'Afrique de l'Ouest (organisations régionales, Etats-membres et acteurs non étatiques). Ce bilan porterait notamment sur les coopérations fonctionnelles multipays, en examinant dans quelles circonstances (et à quelles conditions) celles-ci présentent des avantages significatifs vis-à-vis de la coopération à l'échelle de l'ensemble de la région.

**R2.** Dans le cadre de la politique de gestion des connaissances de la Direction générale « Développement et Coopération » (DG DEVCO), **organiser de manière régulière des processus de capitalisation par grands thèmes de la coopération régionale UE – Afrique de l'Ouest.** Ces processus de capitalisation seraient alimentés, en amont, par des

travaux d'économie politique afin de disposer d'une meilleure connaissance des obstacles politiques et économiques qui pèsent, dans les différents secteurs, sur l'avancée de la coopération et de l'intégration régionale en Afrique de l'Ouest.

**R.3. Poursuivre l'amélioration de l'organisation institutionnelle, en interne aux institutions européennes, relative au pilotage et au suivi de la coopération régionale avec la région Afrique de l'Ouest** i) en renforçant les effectifs dédiés à ces questions (au sein de l'unité chargée de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, des DUE du Nigeria et du Burkina Faso et des autres DUE en charge de programmes régionaux), ii) en améliorant les concertations / coordinations entre les deux DUE ayant un mandat régional et avec les autres DUE en Afrique de l'Ouest et, enfin, iii) en améliorant le processus de négociation des conventions PAGODA (avec les agences des Etats membres de l'UE et avec les organisations internationales) afin de s'assurer de l'existence d'une réelle convergence de vues et de parvenir à une diminution des coûts d'exécution.

**R4. Renforcer la place des questions régionales dans le dialogue sur les politiques mené par l'UE avec chacun des Etats-membres de la CEDEAO (et de l'UEMOA)** et examiner la faisabilité de l'allocation d'enveloppes financières supplémentaire qui seraient accordées à chacun des pays de la région (sous forme, par exemple, de *top up* d'un appui budgétaire) à la condition que tous aient respecté ou mis en œuvre des engagements régionaux. Ce type d'incitation concernerait plus particulièrement le domaine de l'intégration économique (y compris les transports et l'énergie).

**R5. Dans le cadre de l'exécution du PIR 11<sup>ème</sup> FED, améliorer la cohérence et les synergies entre les différentes interventions**, en particulier dans le secteur « intégration économique régionale » et le secteur « paix et sécurité ».

**R6. Appuyer la CEDEAO dans le développement de ses outils et capacités de suivi-évaluation de l'intégration régionale** afin de lui permettre d'être plus légitime, vis-à-vis de ses Etats-membres, dans le pilotage du processus d'intégration régionale et davantage crédible dans le dialogue avec ses partenaires techniques et financiers. En complément à ces appuis, renforcer la « culture du suivi-évaluation » dans les programmes de coopération régionale de l'UE.

**R7. Renforcer la prise en compte des dimensions transversales lors de la formulation des interventions régionales et de leur mise en œuvre** sur la base de d'analyses socio-économiques approfondies.

**R8. Améliorer la pertinence et la cohérence des stratégies et démarches de renforcement des capacités** (individuelles et institutionnelles) lors de la formulation des interventions régionales et de leur mise en œuvre. Cela devrait concerner non seulement les ORDM, mais également les autres acteurs jouant (actuellement ou potentiellement) un rôle important dans le processus d'intégration régionale.

#### Recommandations sectorielles :

##### *Intégration économique régionale :*

- Soutenir la relance du processus d'intégration économique régionale en appuyant une double dynamique : l'une au niveau des Etats Nations, l'autre au niveau de groupes (secteur privé, société civile...) qui transcendent les intérêts strictement nationaux.

- Mieux prendre en compte les dimensions d'inclusivité et de durabilité des processus de croissance dans l'appui aux processus d'intégration économique, et ainsi s'aligner sur le nouveau Consensus européen sur le développement de 2017.

*Transport:*

- Associer la poursuite des opérations de blending sur les corridors régionaux à un programme régional qui vise à promouvoir l'alignement progressif des politiques nationales sur les directives régionales en matière de libéralisation et de professionnalisation des métiers du transport, de facilitation des transports et de lutte contre la surcharge et les pratiques anormales. Cet alignement est à rechercher par des plateformes thématiques d'échanges entre les pays de la région et par une plus forte articulation entre le dialogue sur les politiques aux niveaux national et régional (cf. R4).

*Énergie:*

- Poursuivre l'investissement dans l'interconnexion régionale par le recours au blending, en renforçant les liens avec les actions engagées sur PIN pour faire évoluer la gouvernance sectorielle vers plus d'ouverture, d'efficacité et de transparence sur les prix.

*Sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle, agriculture durable et résilience :*

- Conduire des travaux d'économie politique (cf. R2) sur des thèmes spécifiques au secteur.
- Appliquer la recommandation relative à des allocations supplémentaires (cf. R4) à des thèmes spécifiques au secteur, notamment la levée des contraintes à la transhumance transfrontalière ou l'harmonisation / rationalisation des systèmes d'information.
- Compte tenu du caractère foisonnant des dispositifs institutionnels régionaux dans le secteur, encourager la coordination entre OR et accompagner les processus de réforme en cours vers une rationalisation des dispositifs institutionnels.
- Contribuer activement à la coordination entre PTF, en s'inscrivant de manière affirmée dans une démarche d'appui à un leadership régional.

*Environnement et changement climatique :*

- En matière d'actions environnementales et d'atténuation de la vulnérabilité des populations au changement climatique, compléter l'approche normative actuelle (« descendante ») par une approche « de bas en haut », à travers plusieurs actions complémentaires entre elles.

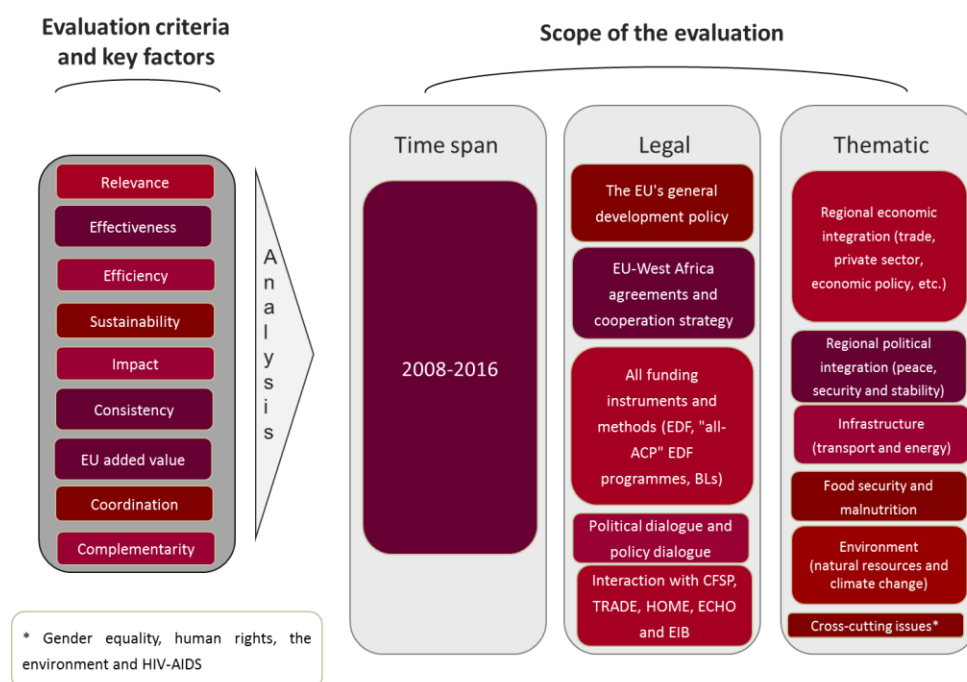
# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The study consists in evaluating the European Union's (EU) strategy of regional cooperation with the West Africa region, and its implementation during the period 2008-2016. The study's **main objectives** are as follows: i) Report on and provide an independent, overall evaluation of the EU's past and present cooperation and partnership relationships with West Africa (overarching objective) for the EU institutions (European Commission, European External Action Service, European Parliament, etc.) and for a broader audience; ii) Identify the key lessons and draw up recommendations to improve the EU's current and future strategies, programmes and activities (learning objective). These lessons and recommendations concern the EU's regional cooperation with West Africa through to 2020, the end of the period covered by the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) of the 11th European Development Fund (EDF). They will accordingly feed into post-2020 regional cooperation strategy.

The **scope of the evaluation** covers the EU's strategy of regional cooperation with the West Africa region, and its implementation during the period 2008-2016. Figure 1 below summarises the scope of the evaluation.

**Figure 1: Diagram of the scope of the evaluation**



The region concerned by this evaluation spans **16 countries**: the 15 Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)<sup>1</sup> and Mauritania<sup>2</sup>. Eight of the 15 ECOWAS Member States also belong to the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)<sup>3</sup>. **ECOWAS** and **WAEMU** are the two duly mandated regional organisations (DMROs) for the negotiation and signature of the RIPs.

<sup>1</sup> Benin, Burkina-Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

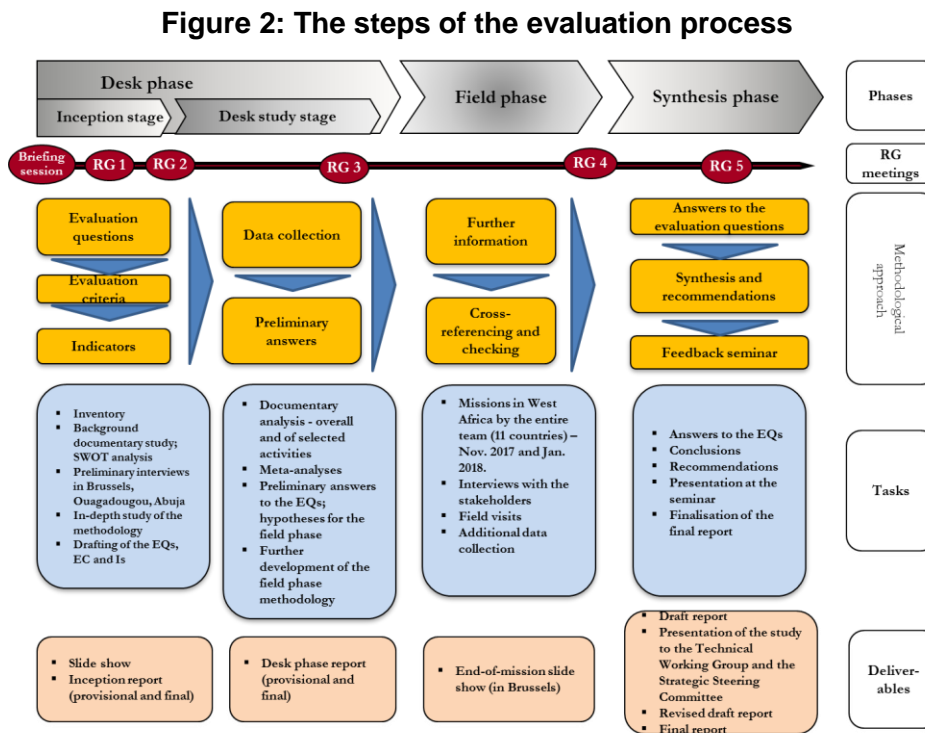
<sup>2</sup> Mauritania withdrew from ECOWAS in 1999 but mandated it to negotiate and implement the 10th and 11th EDF RIPs.

<sup>3</sup> Benin, Burkina-Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

## 1.2 Evaluation methodology and process

### 1.2.1 Evaluation process<sup>4</sup>

The evaluation was carried out in three phases, with one or more deliverables (reports, presentations) produced for each phase. Figure 2 below presents the sequences of steps in the process.



### 1.2.2 Evaluation methodological approach

The methodological approach, in line with EU methodology, must enable those involved to collect accurate, useful information and carry out rigorous analyses in order to arrive at judgements and answers to the eight evaluation questions<sup>5</sup>. First of all, it consisted in preparing the evaluation framework, then defining suitable methods for collecting and analysing information.

#### Definition of the evaluation framework

The structural definition stage was devoted to drawing up the evaluation framework. This consisted in setting out the rationale and intervention logic of EU-West Africa cooperation strategy for the period under review. The theories of change underpinning the EU-West Africa regional cooperation strategies for the 10th EDF and 11th EDF periods were presented in the inception report. Annex 8 presents the consolidated diagram for the entire period evaluated, along with the diagrams of the sector intervention logics (IL). The representation of the IL served as a basis for drafting the evaluation questions (EQs) and the judgement criteria (JC). The eight questions were approved by the reference group (RG), which led the evaluation and commented on and approved the reports at each stage. Each EQ consists of several JC, which are assessed against objectively-verifiable indicators (OVIs). The evaluation matrix (shown in

<sup>4</sup> A more detail description of the methodology and the instruments used is provided in Annex 4.

<sup>5</sup> To a large extent, the tools used refer to the methodology developed by the EU departments. See: [https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/evaluation\\_guidelines/](https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/evaluation_guidelines/).



Annex 1) was used to identify the data associated with the JC and indicators, and search for them during the successive phases. The answers to the five sector EQs (EQs 2 to 6) are based on a contribution analysis, the procedure for which is presented in Annex 4.

### **Data collection and analysis process**

By comparing the information between different levels and between different contacts working together for various reasons within the same process or intervention, and investigating the discrepancies and contradictions between the data and opinions collected, it was possible to cross-check the information by triangulation. This process, without claiming to be exhaustive, was intended to report the various judgements made on the EU's regional cooperation strategy with West Africa while ensuring a certain depth in the conclusions.

- An **extensive document base** was used during the kick-off phase and added to during the desk phase and the field phase<sup>6</sup>, and a series of individual and collective interviews was conducted at the various stages of the study<sup>7</sup>.
- The **inventory of EU-West Africa cooperation** was drawn up by examining the information contained in the *Common Relex Information System* (CRIS) and *Data Warehouse* databases (see Annex 9). Based on the inventory of EU-West Africa cooperation projects, the evaluation team conducted a thorough study of an illustrative selection of interventions (i.e. examining documents, conducting interviews and, if applicable, visiting sites). The chosen sample contains 21 interventions (see list in Annex 4).
- The **field missions** were conducted in two phases in 11 West African countries: i) the countries in which the two DMROs have their headquarters (Nigeria and Burkina-Faso, analysis of all of the sectors and EQs of a general nature) and ii) nine other West African countries, selected from the list of the 16 countries covered by the study: Benin (energy), Côte d'Ivoire (economic integration), Ghana (energy, economic integration), Guinea-Bissau (peace and security), Mali (peace and security), Mauritania (peace and security), Niger (food security, natural resource management), Senegal (economic integration, peace and security) and Togo (food security).
- The project conducted an **online survey** of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) in West Africa, as well as of the FEWACCI (Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce and Industry) and several other federations of entrepreneurs or business groups, in order to collect and analyse the private sector's viewpoint on trends in regional economic integration over the last 10 years.

The data analysis process was carefully designed to guarantee credible conclusions and robust analysis (see "Evidence Matrix" in Annex 2). It was underpinned by successive summaries to consolidate the **chain of reasoning** (indicators, JC, EQ). To complete EQs 1, 7 and 8 (which are the three general EQs), the information contained in the "evaluation matrix" (Annex 1) comes from sources (documentation and interviews) used in the sector EQs.

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<sup>6</sup> 473 documents were consulted. See full list in Annex 6.

<sup>7</sup> 340 people were interviewed. See list of people interviewed in Annex 5.

### **Limitations of the evaluation**

Despite striving to balance the successive phases and optimise the allotted time, the evaluation exercise has several limitations, in particular:

- **The challenge of correctly defining the scope of the evaluation:** Given the broad definition of the notions of regional cooperation and regional integration, it was no easy task to decide which interventions to include in this evaluation. The problem was twofold: define the selection criteria for the projects to be considered, and identify the interventions. Annex 4 (Section 4.4.4) presents the choices made to select the portfolio of interventions that was examined.
- **The availability and quality of information:** Since the evaluation had neither the means nor the intention of collecting large quantities of primary data in the field, it is largely based on the analysis of the existing documentation. The quality of the analysis therefore depends in particular on the existence of evaluation reports on the projects under examination, regional statistics, or the availability of documented, reliable information about the political dialogue (and policy dialogue) between the EU and the regional organisations. To ensure that the information was complete, of good quality and credible, the evaluation team drew on a wide variety of sources (reports, interviews and field visits) and cross-checked the data collected. In addition, information about the beginning of the evaluation period is generally more fragmentary and difficult to obtain. The witnesses are no longer on site or have changed position. To offset this difficulty, the evaluation team made a point of collecting information from a variety of institutional sources and contacts that also covered the beginning of the period<sup>8</sup>. With regard specifically to the analysis of the coherence between interventions stemming from the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and those conducted as part of development cooperation, this analysis was limited by the confidential nature of a number of documents concerning CFSP interventions.
- **The fact that accomplishment of the 10th EDF RIP has fallen behind schedule:** The strategy contained in the 10th EDF RIP (2008-2013) and its implementation are, in principle, the "core" of this evaluation. However, for various reasons, most of the funding decisions for the projects that come under this RIP were made very late (in 2013 and 2014). Moreover, in several cases, there were further delays in carrying out the interventions<sup>9</sup>. As a result, it was possible to assess the effects of only a limited number of the interventions carried out under the 10th EDF RIP. To offset this difficulty, the choice of interventions for a more in-depth analysis during the field phase took their degree of accomplishment into consideration. The choice also factored in those 9th EDF RIP projects that were carried out to a significant extent during the period under review.
- **The challenge of assessing outcomes and impacts:** patchy monitoring and evaluation (no OVI and/or baseline situation, limited number of monitoring exercises and external evaluations) or even, in some cases, a complete lack of provisions for monitoring and evaluating EU regional cooperation interventions made it difficult to appraise the outcomes and impacts of regional cooperation. This difficulty was heightened by the lack of any review of the regional integration process or of its outcomes and impacts in the sub-region's States and populations. Against this backdrop, the present report has set out to qualify, as accurately as possible, the "soundness" of the judgements made in response to each question.
- **The challenge of a comprehensive approach intended to encompass the interactions and synergies among the interventions:** As for any strategic evaluation, the judgement made on the outcomes achieved by EU cooperation had to be careful not to be based on a

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<sup>8</sup> Interviews of people formerly in charge of regional cooperation with West Africa.

<sup>9</sup> Signature of programme quotations, service contracts, delegation agreements.

mere sum of the outcomes achieved by each intervention, but strive instead to take into account the interactions and synergies among interventions.

### **1.3 Organisation of the final report**

The report is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 (this introduction) presents the evaluation's objectives and methodology. Chapter 2 provides a brief description of West Africa's economic, social and political context and the regional integration process in which the region is involved. Chapter 3 sums up the cooperation between the EU and West Africa. Chapter 4 presents the answers to the eight evaluation questions. Chapter 5, the final chapter, contains the conclusions and recommendations arising from the evaluation.

The stipulations in the terms of reference concerning the length of the main report (70 pages) and the baseline group's request for a narrative that is easy to read precluded the provision of evidence or even examples for each of the conclusions set out in the main report. The annexes (divided into two volumes) accordingly contain more in-depth information about Chapters 1 to 4 of the report.



## 2. The context of the West Africa Region

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### 2.1 Changes in the political, economic and social situation during the period under review<sup>10</sup>

Over and above the diversity of their national development issues, the 16 countries making up the region concerned by this evaluation face a number of common challenges:

**Steep population growth, which has resulted in the question of the young generations' access to decent employment assuming unprecedented proportions.** The region is characterised by steep population growth, a primarily young population and growing urbanisation. The question of access to decent employment for the young generations has taken on unprecedented proportions. This situation stems from the fact that growth in the sub-region is essentially fuelled by public investment, in non-labour-intensive sectors, with no strengthening of economic structures and competitiveness factors, and with a heightening of vulnerabilities. It can also be explained by the almost total lack of suitable technical and vocational training establishments<sup>11</sup>.

**Insufficiently diversified economies, most of which depend on a small number of commodities** (oil, cocoa, cotton, etc.). Fluctuations in the global prices of these commodities, which were particularly marked during the period under review, are weakening the economic and social situation of the West African countries. During the period under review, the region enjoyed brisk economic growth, at least up until 2014. In spite of a lengthy period of growth resulting in improved per capita incomes, the social situation is still precarious and poverty levels remain worrying throughout the period under review: the standard of living as measured by the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita remains low at 2.300 USD per person per year<sup>12</sup>. In 2014, over 70% of the sub-region's population lived on less than 2 USD per day. The average Human Development Index (HDI) for West Africa in 2014 was 0.461, as against 0.524 for the African continent as a whole<sup>13</sup>.

**The populations' aspiration to more transparent management of public affairs and stronger democracy, which is often thwarted by the practices of the powers in place.** The majority of the countries in the sub-region are free of open conflict and, in several countries, recent developments have been marked by a relative expansion of democratic spaces (increase in political involvement and increasingly credible elections). According to Ibrahim Index data for the period 2008-2015<sup>14</sup>, West Africa has made greater progress than the entire African continent on Safety & Rule of Law, civil society Participation & Human Rights. In several countries, though, election periods are still frequently associated with an increase in protests and sporadic tensions (demonstrations against the high cost of living, pre- or post-election crises) are a reminder of the risks of toppling into situations of open crisis. Moreover, while civil society organisations are becoming increasingly active, they are facing tighter restrictions on their activities.

**The proliferation of security threats and political conflicts, which pose a real challenge to efforts to improve the governance of public action at both national and regional level.**

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<sup>10</sup> Annex 7 of the report presents a more complete version of this contextual analysis. Sector contextual analyses are also presented in the introduction to each of the answers to the sector EQs.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Regional integration in West Africa, 2013.

<sup>12</sup> The global per capital average is 14 301 USD (in purchasing power parity 2011).

<sup>13</sup> UNDP, Africa Human Development Report 2016

<sup>14</sup> 2015 is the latest year available.

Several West African countries have experienced major crises of various types: food (Sahelian countries), health (Ebola crisis in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone), political (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and others) and security (Sahelian countries, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria among others) issues. The return to relative stability in a number of countries coexists with the rise of new threats and forms of confliction, which feed on the fragility of national and regional security institutions. During the period under review, the most heated conflicts concerned, in succession, the Manoir River area, the Gulf of Guinea and currently the Sahel.

**The increased frequency of food crises, which is the combined result of climate events and economic growth that is insufficiently strong and inclusive in a context of keener competition for access to productive resources** (land, water and pastures). Throughout the period under review, the region's populations continued to suffer from frequent, severe food crises. Over and above the food crises induced by "natural" causes, there has been a sharp increase in the prevalence and severity of anthropogenic food crises since the early 2000s, particularly in the Sahel zone. Moreover, the available data indicates that the levels of acute malnutrition (emaciation, the prevalence of which is affected by the prevailing circumstances) remain high<sup>15</sup> in the majority of countries in the region. Even so, infant mortality has declined sharply, probably due in part to more effective responses to the crises and in particular to the greater coverage and efficacy of the treatment of severe acute malnutrition in the region. The available data<sup>16</sup> shows a steady decline in the incidence of undernourishment in the region and in most countries.

## 2.2 Regional integration policies and strategies

As soon as West African countries became independent, and even before<sup>17</sup>, their political leaders voiced their attachment to regional integration, seen as an essential lever for developing an area whose internal divisions were the legacy of its colonisation. This political decision led to the creation of **numerous inter-governmental organisations for regional integration or technical cooperation**. Through its two main regional organisations, ECOWAS and WAEMU, West Africa gradually strengthened its political and economic integration. However, one of the features of the sub-region's integration process is the existence of several interstate organisations in charge of cooperation and regional integration, whose geographic scope and sector mandates intersect but do not completely coincide.

In the area of **regional economic integration**, during the period under review, ECOWAS made considerable progress in the free movement of people and financial and macroeconomic integration. On the other hand, there was limited uptake of ECOWAS policies on trade, economic and monetary cooperation, energy and social development. ECOWAS-WAEMU coordination is also a major stake in the bid to step up the synergies between their respective programmes: the two organisations have very similar mandates and the degree of cooperation between them varies widely with the subject area; moreover, the fact that the African Union (AU) appointed ECOWAS to be a Regional Economic Community (REC), or key building block, was rather unpopular with WAEMU, and with the other organisations in the sub-region.

There are currently several organisations and initiatives operating in West Africa **to promote peace, security and stability**. Whereas, for the first 15 years of its existence, ECOWAS refrained from becoming involved in security issues, which it saw as the prerogative of the

<sup>15</sup> Frequently exceeding emergency levels: 15% of children under the age of five suffer from acute malnutrition

<sup>16</sup> FAOSTAT, Atlas *Household Economy Approach* (HEA) 2014, World Development Indicators.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. the commitment of the Ghanaian president K. N'Krumah and the president of the Republic of Guinea, A. Sékou Touré, to Pan-Africanism as early as the 1940s and to the plan for post-independence integration by signing the "Conakry Declaration" in April 1959, in which they commit their countries to consolidating the Union thus formed, while at the same time expressing their support for the cause of African unity.

States<sup>18</sup>, its scope of action has gradually been expanded to include maintaining regional stability and promoting peace. According to the report of the International Crisis Group (ICG), ECOWAS now has the most highly-developed peace and security architecture on the African continent and has been able to put it into practice on many occasions (Guinea, Mali, Togo, Guinea-Bissau, Niger). This period has also seen the intervention/creation of other institutions in the security field. WAEMU's peace and security policy was defined in May 2011 with the aim of making the Union an area of stability, security and peace propitious to the development of economic activities<sup>19</sup>. The G5 Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Chad), which was created in 2014, aims to secure the conditions for development and security in the area occupied by its member countries. At their second summit meeting (November 2015 in N'Djamena), the G5 Sahel heads of state decided to create a sub-regional defence college, a defence and security committee and a platform for cooperation on security matters<sup>20</sup>. Lastly, to address the threat posed by the Boko Haram terrorist movement, Benin, Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria established the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF)<sup>21</sup>, which is formally linked to the Lake Chad Basin Commission.

### 2.3 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to regional integration in West Africa

Over 40 years after the establishment of ECOWAS and 20 years after that of WAEMU, the reality on the ground falls far short of the regional integration goals adopted at the outset by the West African leaders. The main reason for the discrepancy lies in the development hurdles at national level (inadequate infrastructure, lack of technical and managerial qualifications, difficulty obtaining credit, etc.), particularly difficult socio-political conditions and the instability of several West African countries (with major socio-economic consequences). It also reflects a number of difficulties facing the region, including:

- structural asymmetry among the region's States;
- the coexistence of interstate organisations in charge of regional integration but with differing geographic and sector mandates, resulting in duplications that lead to non-concerted or even contradictory initiatives and/or tensions;
- little commitment to and involvement in regional integration on the part of the Member States;
- a lack of interest in formal regional integration on the part of the populations;
- little consideration for "bottom-up integration"<sup>22</sup> in regional organisations' strategies and policies;
- the shortage of institutional and financial capacities in the regional organisations (ROs).

The figure on the next page sums up the points made in the previous pages, highlighting West Africa's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats when it comes to stepping up regional cooperation and integration.

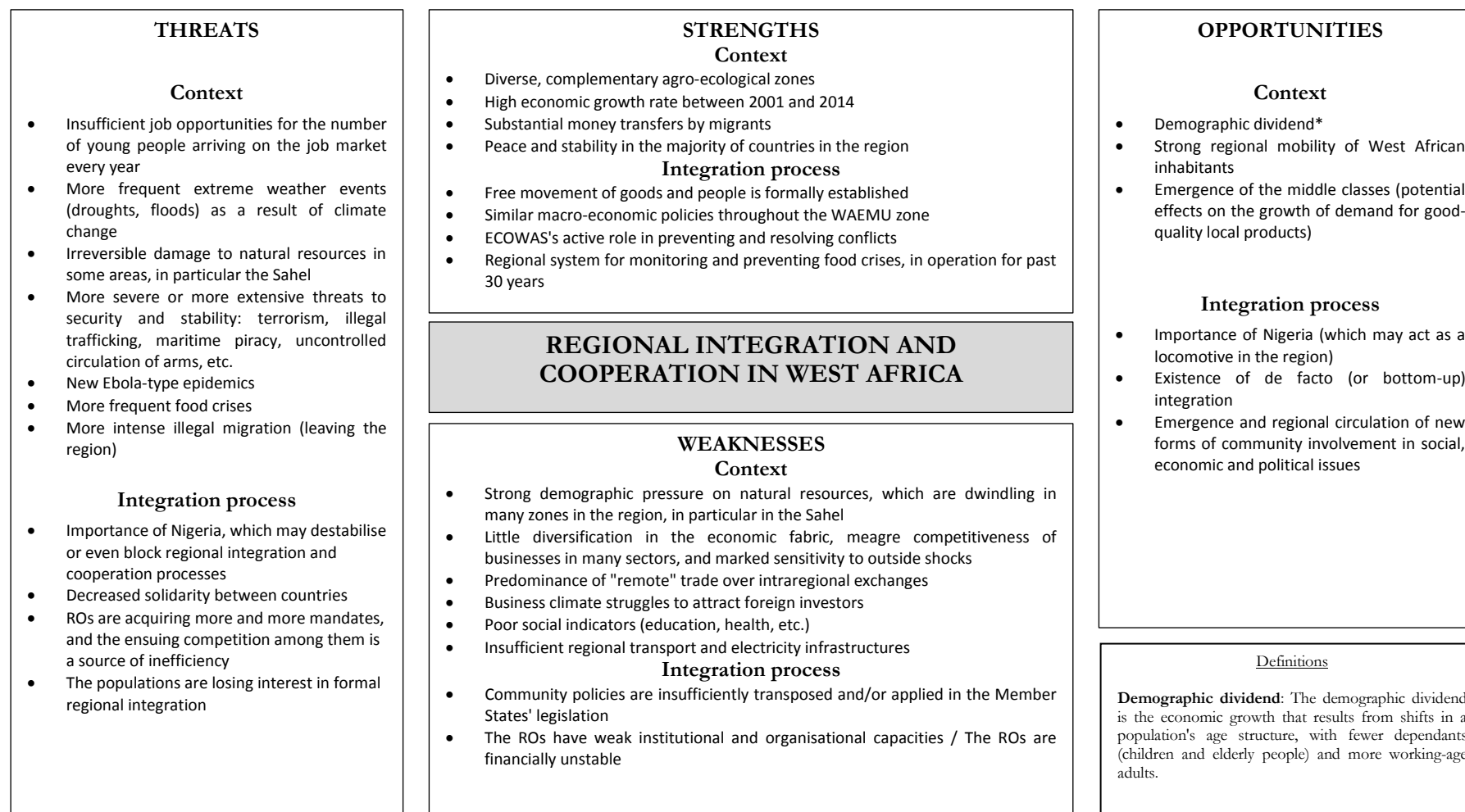
<sup>18</sup> ECOWAS' founding treaty (1975) laid down the norm of non-intervention in Member States' internal affairs.

<sup>19</sup> The EU's regional cooperation strategy does not include support for WAEMU in the area of peace, security and stability.

<sup>20</sup> In 2017, the G5 Sahel deployed a joint force to address the threat of Islamic terrorism and combat trafficking in drugs, arms and migrants.

<sup>21</sup> In English: *Multinational Joint Task Force* (MNJTF).

<sup>22</sup> This expression encompasses cross-border trade flows (short-distance or long-haul), many of which are not included in customs statistics, along with the many social or cultural links forged between people living in neighbouring countries.

**Figure 3: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of regional integration and cooperation in West Africa**



## 3. Key factors in EU regional cooperation in West Africa

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### 3.1 Development of cooperation strategies

#### 3.1.1 Brief historical background

Since the signature of the first Lomé Convention in 1976, regional cooperation has been a major component of the partnership between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). Among the ACP regions, West Africa has always received a large share of EDF's regional funding.

On analysis, the following trends can be seen in the content of EU-West Africa regional cooperation from 1976 to date: the transport sector was an important sector between 1976 and 2013; economic integration has been an important sector since 1996; consolidating good governance and regional stability has been a priority since 2008; environmental protection was a leading sector from 1986 to 1996, then was dropped from the agenda priorities before once again becoming a focus area from 2014; the same applies for rural development, which was one of the top-priority sectors from 1976 to 1985, then was assigned lower importance before once again being classified in a focus area, this time under "food security".

#### 3.1.2 Rationale behind regional cooperation

The rationale behind the EU's regional involvement in West Africa stems from a number of texts: texts that establish or legally bind European institutions (the Maastricht Treaty, the Treaty of Lisbon and the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement); texts that define the EU's foreign policy directions in developing countries (the EU's strategy for Africa, 2005; the European Consensus on Development, 2005; Commission report entitled "Regional integration for development in ACP countries", 2008; Agenda for Change, 2011; Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel, 2011; A Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy for the European Union, 2016; New European Consensus on Development, 2017 and, lastly, the regional cooperation strategies of the 10th and 11th EDF RIPs.

The conclusion of the 2008 report highlights the importance of regional integration for all of the EU's cooperation and development policies: ***"Regional integration should become a fundamental tenet of EU development policy and EU-ACP relations. It is an essential vehicle for more political stability. It is a vehicle for accelerated growth through coordinated structural reforms and gradual trade opening. Regional integration is therefore an essential driver for reaching the Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty in ACP regions."***<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Communication from the Commission of the European Communities, "Regional integration for development in ACP countries", COM(2008) 604 final, page 11.

### 3.1.3 Theory of change

#### Regional cooperation strategy defined while programming the 10th EDF:

The EU and the two DMROs (ECOWAS and WAEMU) selected two focal sectors for the 10th EDF<sup>24</sup> implementation period:

- Deeper regional integration, improved competitiveness and the EPA; this first focal sector represented 70% of the RIP envelope (i.e. €418m);
- Consolidation of good governance and regional stability; this second focal sector represented 20% of the region's envelope (i.e. €119m)<sup>25</sup>.

#### Development of the 10th EDF strategy:

At the mid-term review of the 10th EDF RIP in late 2011, only 5.24% of the initial envelope had been allocated. The main reason for this poor performance was i) the tardy finalisation of the roadmap for regional integration between ECOWAS and WAEMU, ii) a desire to change the planned method of implementation, namely the contribution agreement (CA)<sup>26</sup>, and iii) the institutional complexity of implementing regional cooperation (two regional organisations and two EUDs in charge of regional cooperation)<sup>27</sup>. To make up for the delay, the mid-term review identified actions to be taken by the end of 2013 and proposed to re-allocate €142m to the *African Infrastructure Trust Fund* for its contribution to the "sustainable energy for all" (SE4ALL) initiative.

#### The 11th EDF regional cooperation strategy:

The 11th EDF RIP revolves around three priority areas<sup>28</sup>:

- Peace, security and regional stability;
- Regional economic integration and support for the transport and energy sectors;
- Resilience, food and nutrition security and natural resources.

In both West Africa and the other ACP regions, the programming and implementation of the 11th EDF RIP were accompanied by a number of institutional changes aimed at making regional cooperation more effective. They included diversifying the range of implementation stakeholders to allow national authorities and regional organisations other than those duly mandated to have direct access to the EDF's regional funds; raising the amounts allocated to blending (i.e. mixed regional financing mechanisms combining grants and loans); setting up steering committees for regional cooperation strategies<sup>29</sup>.

#### Consolidated intervention logic:

Figure 4 presents the consolidated intervention logic of the 10th and 11th EDF RIPs<sup>30</sup>. It summarises the chain of expected outcomes for each of the five main sectors of EU-West Africa regional cooperation: peace, security and stability; economic integration; interconnection (transport and energy); food and nutrition security, and, lastly, the environment.

<sup>24</sup> See: European Commission. ECOWAS. WAEMU. European Community-West Africa: Regional Strategy Document (68 p) and Regional Indicative Programme 2008-2013 (53 p). November 2008.

<sup>25</sup> The remaining 10% (i.e. €60m) were allocated to programmes outside the focal sector: the environment, RIP monitoring and management, and non-State actors.

<sup>26</sup> This reconsideration stemmed from the negative conclusions of the audits of the contribution agreements granted under the 9th EDF RIP.

<sup>27</sup> European Commission departments. Conclusions of the mid-term review of the Regional Strategy Document and the West Africa RIP for 2008-2013. 2012, 6 p.

<sup>28</sup> European Commission. ECOWAS. WAEMU. European Union – West Africa: Regional Indicative Programme 2014-2020. 49 p. July 2015.

<sup>29</sup> Called the Strategic Steering Committee (SSC) in West Africa.

<sup>30</sup> Annex 8 sets out the process involved in drawing up the intervention logic, along with the sources used to establish the underlying hypotheses of regional cooperation strategy.

For these five sectors, the regional cooperation intrants are of the same type. They include high-level political dialogue, sector-specific policy dialogue, the provision of technical assistance, the conduct of training initiatives and, of course, financial support (stand-alone grants and grants combined with loans).

The expected outputs (the first link in the chain of results) of supplying these inputs are similar from one sector to another. The main ones are: i) the regional organisations are more capable of drawing up and implementing regional policies, ii) the national stakeholders (governments, public services, professional bodies, etc.) are more skilled at applying regional policies, and iii) regional transport and energy infrastructures have been built.

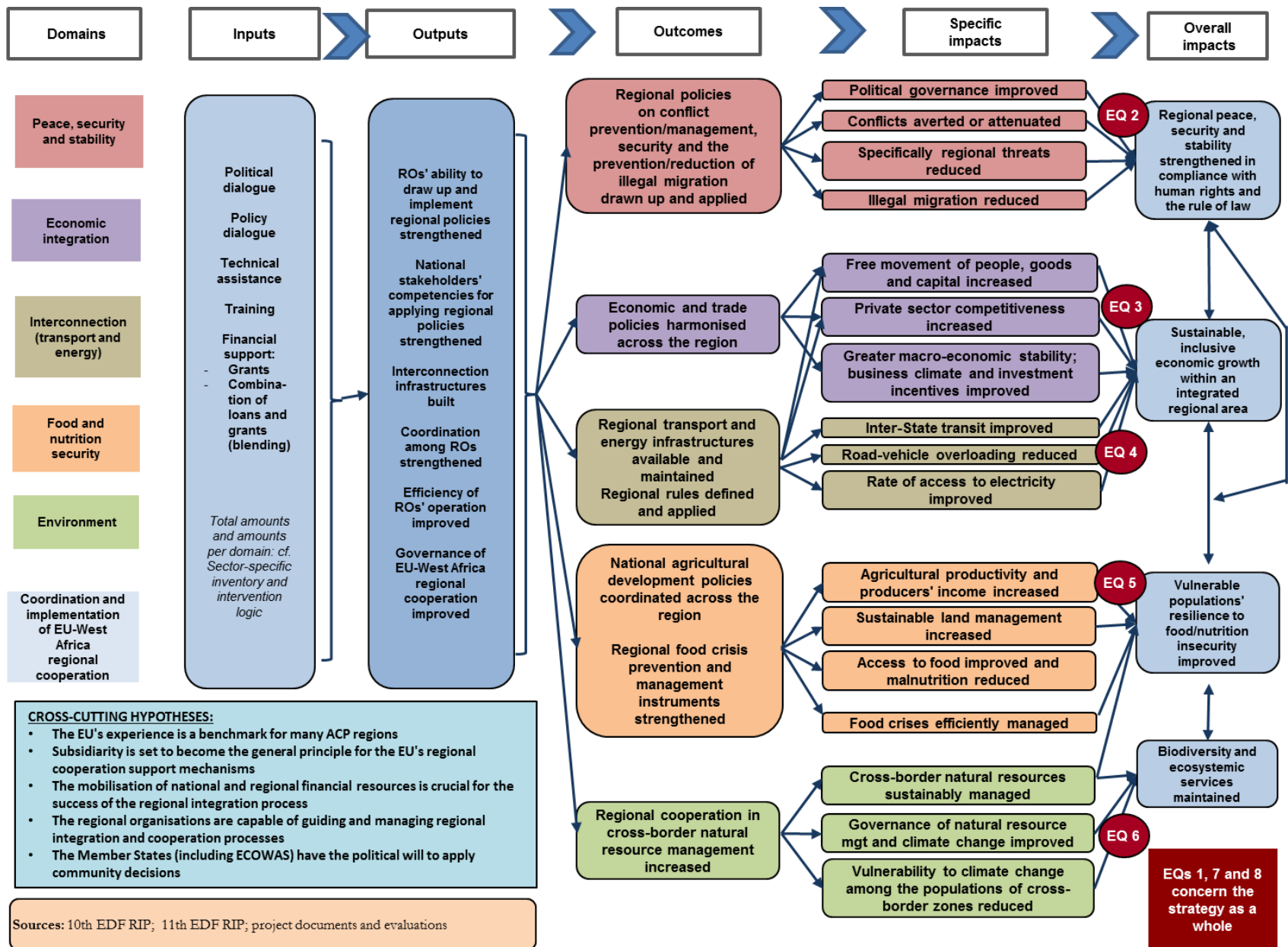
The outcomes (second link) are specific to each sector and concern the effective development and application of policies, strategies, rules and regional institutional systems to the issues in each domain.

The specific impacts (third link) are also specific to each sector. These impacts serve as a basis for structuring each of the sector EQs (EQs 2 to 6), while the analysis sets out to assess to what extent regional cooperation helped achieve them.

Lastly, the global impacts (fourth link), which capture the ultimate purposes of EU-West Africa cooperation, are the combined result of the specific impacts aimed for in each sector.

The content of the "specific impacts" and "global impacts" columns shows that EU-West Africa regional cooperation has ambitious objectives. To achieve these objectives, a number of strong hypotheses must be fulfilled: i) the countries and the regional organisations have made effective use of the financial resources necessary to implement regional policies; ii) the DMROs have sufficient capacities to guide and direct the process of regional integration and cooperation; and iii) the DMROs' Member States are determined to apply the decisions made at regional level; iv) the European experience is a relevant reference in regional integration, and v) the principle of subsidiarity has been applied in all EU support mechanisms for regional cooperation.

Figure 4: Intervention logic diagram 2008-2016



### 3.2 Inventory of EU-West Africa regional cooperation<sup>31</sup>

Because of the many meanings given to the term "regional cooperation" (which makes it difficult to collect exhaustive information about this type of cooperation), the evaluation used **the following criteria to draw up the inventory** of EU-West Africa cooperation<sup>32</sup>:

1. Be part of the programming of the 10th or 11th EDF RIPs;
2. Be part of the programming of the 9th EDF RIP, have been carried out to a significant extent after 2007 and have been continued in the 10th EDF;
3. Be implemented in close coordination with, or under the auspices of, a regional organisation in West Africa, though without being part of a RIP<sup>33</sup>.
4. Involve several countries in the region in a bid to more efficiently manage common problems, share natural resource management and/or achieve scale economies<sup>34</sup>.

Two types of financial commitment have been used to estimate the amounts corresponding to this inventory: i) funding decisions made between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2016 (10th and 11th EDF RIPs<sup>35</sup>); and contracts concluded between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2016 with entities that are conducting (or have conducted) regional cooperation actions that meet criteria 3 and 4 presented above.

Using this method, **the total value of the interventions** included in this evaluation comes to **€1,164,288,604**.

**The main sectors covered** by this regional cooperation are: infrastructure (40% of the total amount), the "peace, security and stability" sector (19%), the treatment of food and health crises (17%)<sup>36</sup>, food security and agricultural development (10%) and regional economic integration (7%).

An analysis of the **distribution by instrument or programme** shows that the regional EDF predominates (€890m, or 76% of the total). Next in line are the regional programmes run by the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (€110m), the African Peace Facility (€53m), the FOOD thematic line (€43m) and the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (€33m).

<sup>31</sup> For a fuller presentation of this inventory, see Annex 9.

<sup>32</sup> To be included in the inventory, an intervention must meet at least one of these criteria.

<sup>33</sup> An example is when the AU appointed human rights observers in Mali with funding from the African Peace Facility in an initiative conducted in coordination with ECOWAS.

<sup>34</sup> This fourth criterion is designed to prevent projects being considered regional if, although they are classified as regional in the CRIS database, in fact they simply juxtapose similar initiatives conducted in several neighbouring countries, without any real regional cooperation.

<sup>35</sup> Including transfers to the AfIF and regional emergency trust fund projects adopted before the end of 2016.

<sup>36</sup> For the most part, these are transfers from the RIP envelope to ECHO to bring in emergency and relief measures.



## 4. Answers to the evaluation questions

### 4.1 EQ 1 – Appropriateness of the strategy for the context and its subsequent changes

#### Field covered and sector intervention logic:

The question concerns all of the sectors covered by EU regional cooperation with West Africa in the period 2008-2016. It aims to examine the relevance and coherence of the regional cooperation strategy. Relevance is analysed first of all by considering the strategy's appropriateness for the regional context (and its subsequent changes) and its consistency with European development policy guidelines. The analysis is then rounded out by examining any differences of viewpoint (on certain themes) between the EU and its regional partners in West Africa. The analysis goes on to consider the manner in which the instruments either complement each other or work in synergy<sup>37</sup> (in relation to the cooperation strategy's objectives), and how the principle of subsidiarity applies<sup>38</sup>.

#### Answer to the question:

#### EQ 1

*To what extent is the cooperation strategy appropriate to the features of regional integration in West Africa and to developments in the regional context and in the EU's policy priorities?*

The fields covered and the objectives pursued by EU regional support are very relevant, given West Africa's features (little diversification of the economic fabric and intra-regional trade, growing threats to security and stability, more frequent food crises, etc.) and the need for regional integration to overcome these challenges.

However this relevance was not fully apparent during the period under review because of a combination of factors, and in particular: the difficulty of setting a clear course in regional economic integration; the tendency to transfer the European model of integration by law, without giving sufficiently attentive consideration to the political and economic obstacles to progress in regional integration; failure to prioritise the actions to be conducted at regional level; insufficient coordination between support for multi-country cooperation (which the diversification of security threats is making increasingly necessary) and support for a more comprehensive integration process at ECOWAS level.

On the other hand, during the period analysed, the EU's conception of the role of development cooperation, particularly in West Africa, has changed because of the various interdependencies linking it to the region. This change in the EU's position, which can already be seen on the ground, is at odds with the texts that still govern regional cooperation (Cotonou Agreement), and this is disrupting dialogue with the two DMROs.

<sup>37</sup> Two actions are complementary when they work towards a common objective by distributing their fields of intervention (on a thematic, geographic or other basis). The notion of synergy implies that two actions are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

<sup>38</sup> The principle of subsidiarity gives precedence to a lower level of decision-making (and action) unless the higher level can act more efficiently.

#### 4.1.1 Analysis of the degree of understanding of the regional context and of whether the lessons from the past have been factored into strategy formulation<sup>39</sup>

The EU's regional cooperation strategy<sup>40</sup> is well suited to West Africa's situation. The extent of the common challenges facing the countries in this region calls for tighter regional integration in several key domains (see the chapter on "context" above). However, the EU's strategy has three weak points in terms of consideration for the socio-political features of regional integration in West Africa. The first is a lack of analysis of the mechanisms, determinants and stakeholder interactions that could account for the very low ownership of regional policies and regulations by ECOWAS and WAEMU Member States. Because of this, whereas the EU has always focused on supporting regional integration by law (like the construction of Europe), regional cooperation strategy does not contain any approach likely to result in an effective application of regional policies by the West African States. The second weak point is a failure to sufficiently factor in the economic, political and diplomatic importance of Nigeria. The third difficulty is the EU's failure to make a choice among the many regional organisations and the layering of their mandates. There is also a problem of measurement: it is impossible, from the official data, to obtain an accurate understanding of the reality of regional integration (especially in trade and migration). This undermines the relevance of the initial diagnoses and the evaluation of the outcomes obtained.

The formulation and implementation of regional cooperation strategy has taken little heed of the lessons from the past. For example:

- The "enhanced functional cooperation" (between regional and national stakeholders, public and private stakeholders and civil society) identified in the RIP as a means of improving EU support mechanisms has not been tested.
- Even though the DMROs' implementation of the 9th EDF encountered numerous difficulties, the 10th EDF RIP provides for doubling the envelope (from €235m to €597m) and gives precedence to the use of contribution agreements. The reasons for this decision are lie essentially in the context of the EPA negotiation, since the EU wanted the negotiation to create the conditions for DMRO support.
- Several recommendations from the previous evaluation (2008<sup>41</sup>) and the Court of Auditors report (2009<sup>42</sup>) have not been applied, notably those concerning the improvement of monitoring and evaluation systems, a more marked prioritisation of support mechanisms and a better connection between the NIPs and the RIPs.

A similar observation can be made for the sectors of cooperation: the formulation of the new interventions did not sufficiently consider the lessons from earlier interventions (see the answers to the sector EQs below).

#### 4.1.2 Analysis of the alignment of cooperation strategy on the priorities of ECOWAS and WAEMU<sup>43</sup>

For the various sectors of cooperation, the EU's regional cooperation strategy is effectively aligned on the policy directions and priorities of the two DMROs. This is logical, since the RIPs are documents signed by both parties. In the "food security" sector, the support mechanisms

<sup>39</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 1-12.

<sup>40</sup> Consolidated 10th and 11th EDF strategy.

<sup>41</sup> Evaluation of the European Commission's regional strategy in West Africa, May 2008.

<sup>42</sup> European Court of Auditors. Effectiveness of EDF support for Regional Economic Integration in East Africa and West Africa, Special Report No. 18/2009.

<sup>43</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 13-19.



introduced during the 10th EDF's implementation period were, in the end, more focused on preventing and managing food crises than expected, due to the succession of several food crises. This reflects a fitting adjustment of strategy implementation to changes in the regional context. Even so, in the "peace and security", "regional economic integration" and "transport" sectors, there were major shortcomings in the design of several major EU-West Africa cooperation programmes<sup>44</sup>. These shortcomings in the sector theories of change consist in defining overly ambitious objectives and deliverables, given the duration of the interventions and the resources allocated, and hypotheses that were ill-suited to the region's situation<sup>45</sup>.

Over and above a strong convergence between the objectives of EU cooperation strategy and those pursued by the two DMROs, more or less deep disagreements surfaced between the two parties with regard to certain matters. In 2012, for instance, during implementation of the 10th EDF RIP, the EU-led AGIR initiative rather disrupted the plans of ECOWAS, which had just adopted the Regional Agricultural Investment Programme (RAIP), the operational version of its agricultural policy (ECOWAP). It was finally in 2016, when the ECOWAP was updated, that resilience issues were given greater consideration by this regional policy. Moreover, the inception of the 11th EDF RIP was marked by the growing importance of the issue of migrations in the EU's internal and external political agenda - an issue that had been a source of tension between the EU and its West African partners. On one hand, West African leaders highlight the importance of intra-regional, orderly migration (which respects the principle of the free movement of people within the ECOWAS area), while the EU leaders' attention was focused on irregular migration. Lastly, the DMROs criticised the transfer of €200m of RIP funding (i.e. 13% of the total envelope) to the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF), the new instrument created in November 2015 and in whose management they were not involved<sup>46</sup>.

#### **4.1.3 Analysis of the alignment of regional cooperation strategy on EU development policy<sup>47</sup>**

The 10th EDF RIP refers to the European Commission's communication on regional integration, published in 2008<sup>48</sup>. While the 11th EDF RIP does not mention this communication, it is nevertheless in phase with the policy directions and action principles defined by the text.

On the whole, the 10th and 11th EDF RIPs are in line with European guidelines on EU cooperation and development policy<sup>49</sup>. However, as regards regional economic integration, the strategies developed by the two RIPs are not completely in line with the European Consensus on Development (2005)<sup>50</sup>, which stresses the importance of supporting inclusive growth and sustainable development processes, including through regional integration and trade support. The two RIPs took a rather "liberal" approach in this sector by implementing the EPA, building the common market, consolidating macroeconomic stability, applying fiscal transition reforms and making production facilities more competitive. There is very little reference to the inclusiveness and sustainability of the growth processes in the two RIPs, nor of the links with poverty-reduction strategies.

At the beginning of the period evaluated, the EU established a strong link between the EPA negotiation and its support mechanisms for regional economic integration, in the belief that these

<sup>44</sup> See the analysis of sector EQs 2-6 below.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. analysis of the previous judgement criterion.

<sup>46</sup> This litigious point became even more so in later 2017 when, at the end of the mid-term review, the EU decided unilaterally to reduce the 11th EDF RIP envelope by €75m and allocate it to the EUTF, among other beneficiaries.

<sup>47</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 20-22.

<sup>48</sup> "Regional integration for development in ACP countries", Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, COM (2008) 604 final.

<sup>49</sup> In particular: "The European Consensus on Development" (2006) and "Agenda for Change" (2011).

<sup>50</sup> Nor with the "New Consensus" adopted in 2017, after the period under review.

two aspects should be mutually reinforcing. Towards the end of the period, from 2014-2015 on, the question of migrations, as mentioned earlier, disrupted the initial programming of the 11th EDF RIP. At the same time, the EU increasingly turned its attention to the security-development nexus when terrorist groups stepped up their action in the Sahel zone. Mainly because of the location of these areas of insecurity, the EU developed regional cooperation actions with entities other than ECOWAS (the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the G5 Sahel).

#### 4.1.4 Analysis of the appropriateness of EU regional cooperation management modes for the regional situation and for the expected outcomes<sup>51</sup>

The appropriateness of the methods and instruments used to manage aid for the priority issues identified varied with the sector. In the "food security" sector, the various instruments used complemented each other quite well: the timing and themes of the FOOD line and the RIP were complementary; synergies between civil society organisations and local authorities (CSO-LA), the FOOD lines and the RIP in capacity development for the various categories of stakeholder concerned<sup>52</sup> by the region's agricultural and food security policy. In the "peace and security" sector, the use of the various instruments was, at the time of programming, appropriate for their respective features (duration, purpose, etc.); during the implementation phase, the complementarity between the instruments was not as strong as expected<sup>53</sup>. Concerning the methods of aid management, the increased use of implementing agencies from the 10th EDF onwards met the objective of speeding up the commitment of funds, but further weakened the strategic management by the EU and the DMROs, as shown by the case study in the "economic integration" sector (cf. box below).

#### Box 1 – Summary of the case study: the use of implementing agencies in the "regional economic integration" sector<sup>54</sup>

The 10th EDF brought in a change of approach to the implementation of programmes on regional economic integration. Because of the difficulties encountered in implementing subsidy contracts concluded with WAEMU and ECOWAS under the 9th EDF, the programme components were assigned to various "implementing" agencies (GIZ, ONUDI - the only agency already involved in the 9th EDF - SFI/BM, CCI and FMI). This approach was continued with the 11th EDF. Though justified primarily by the difficulties encountered in implementing the regional integration component of the 9th EDF, this decision was also motivated by a desire to raise the technical quality of the support mechanisms. Implementation improved slightly (even if significant delays were still observed, especially at start-up) and the supports provided are technically highly appreciated. However, this new siloed approach also effectively distanced the EU and the DMROs from the conduct and strategic management of the activities deployed. Programme cohesion as a whole suffered, since the agencies worked in isolation and were driven, above all, by their own visions of the issues at stake.

A combination of loans and grants, called blending, is a useful instrument, given the scope of the region's infrastructure requirements<sup>55</sup>. Projects eligible for funding by the African Investment Facility (AfIF, now known as the AITF<sup>56</sup>) are those projects submitted by West African States to the financial institutions (mainly EIB, AFD, ADB and KfW). These projects are among those registered in ECOWAS and WAEMU planning documents, and both organisations are invited to sit (as observers) on AITF's board of directors. However, the link between regional policies (especially on transport and energy) and the infrastructures funded by blending has proved to be

<sup>51</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 23-28.

<sup>52</sup> National administrations, regional organisations, agricultural trade bodies, civil society organisations.

<sup>53</sup> See the analysis of the JC 8.3 below.

<sup>54</sup> A full presentation of this case study can be found in Annex 10.

<sup>55</sup> See in particular: *European Commission. Evaluation of Blending. Final Report, December 2016, 126 p.*

<sup>56</sup> AITF: EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund

insufficient. This is mainly due to the fact that the EU's contribution to blending projects is not sufficiently highlighted during policy dialogue at national and regional levels.

#### 4.1.5 Analysis of the application of the principle of subsidiarity in the definition and implementation of EU support mechanisms<sup>57</sup>

Regarding the 10th EDF RIP, although there were consultations on the subject between the EUDs and the headquarters services, the RIP and the NIPs were designed separately. In the 11th EDF, on the other hand, there are some complementary features and synergies between the RIP and the NIPs: i) in the "food security" sector, the RIP focuses more on building the resilience of vulnerable populations, while the NIPs deal more with issues of value chain productivity<sup>58</sup>; ii) in the "environment" sector, EU support mechanisms are concentrated at regional level and no large-scale action is planned at national level; iii) in the "transport" and "energy" sectors, the support mechanisms included in the NIPs concern a handful of countries<sup>59</sup>, while the RIP contains a relatively substantial envelope for funding investments (through blending) and actions to strengthen the sector's governance. As far as implementation is concerned, apart from the campaign to eliminate road vehicle overloading, which is an exception (cf. box below), there have been few synergies between EU cooperation at national level and at regional level. In the "food security" domain, there is potential for synergy in the 11th EDF, but it is too early yet to determine whether it will eventuate.

#### **Box 2 – Summary of the case study: The campaign to eliminate road vehicle overloading<sup>60</sup>**

The campaign to eliminate road vehicle overloading is undeniably a regional issue in West Africa. The landlocked Sahel countries (Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger) have to transit through coastal countries to reach a port. If their lorries are overloaded, they damage the road network of the transit countries without contributing to financing road maintenance. At the same time, port activities depend to a large extent on goods traffic to (and from) the Sahel countries. This means that there is simultaneously interdependence and externalities, which justify common, regional action (in application of the principle of subsidiarity).

Accordingly, the EU has supported the regional action to eliminate overloading through the RIP, while at the same time financing the construction of weighing stations through the NIPs. It has shown great coherence and perseverance throughout the period. And yet, in the period under review, there has been no decrease in overloading, except marginally for extreme overloading. A number of factors can account for this situation: the WAEMU commission did not have the means (incentives or sanctions) to enforce the regional regulations, since the Member States had not given it this mandate; the latter had, for the most part, transposed the EC directives into their national legislation, but only after adjusting the standards, sanctions and time downwards; the few governments that had attempted to apply the regional directives had run into strong social opposition, and traffic had been rerouted to corridors in more lenient neighbouring countries. The political economy of interstate transport therefore proved to be more complex than expected and inadequately taken into consideration. Overloading has, however, emerged as a regional cause.

The relative importance of EU-supported actions in West Africa as a whole and of those involving a small number of countries (i.e. multi-country cooperation) changed during the period under review. At the beginning of the period evaluated, the priority was clearly given to regional integration such as it was defined and led by the two DMROs, ECOWAS and WAEMU. At the end of the period, the focus shifted to multi-country actions, either under the auspices of an

<sup>57</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 28-36.

<sup>58</sup> Moreover, the decrease in the resources allocated to this sector (because of the transfer to the ETF) is partly offset by the fact that 11 of the 16 West African countries have chosen food and nutrition security as one of the focus areas for their NIP.

<sup>59</sup> Three countries included the transport sector in their choice of NIP focus areas. Five countries chose to include energy.

<sup>60</sup> A more detailed description of this case study can be found in Annex 10.

intergovernmental institution (as was the case with support for the G5 Sahel) or at the sole initiative of the EU (the multi-country actions financed by the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa<sup>61</sup>). The EU is leaning towards multi-country cooperation without having carried out any real review of this type of action, even though there is quite a rich pool of experience in the matter in certain sectors (such as the environment, support for civil society or food security). There is little complementarity (in the design and implementation of interventions) between multi-country cooperation actions and the support for the DMROs. Two factors can account for this situation: first, multi-country actions are most often funded by budget lines, whereas the DMROs' support comes from the European Development Fund, and the operational coordination between these two instruments is seldom optimal. Secondly, multi-country actions are directed by the EUD of one of the countries concerned by the actions, whereas the support for the DMROs is handled by EUDs with a regional mandate (Burkina Faso or Nigeria, depending on the case).

## 4.2 EQ 2 – Peace, security and regional stability

### Sector context:

The period under review is marked by a patchwork of political situations, including situations of relative stability (Benin, Ghana, Togo and Senegal) alongside situations of transition (Burkina Faso, Guinea, Niger and Gambia), post-crisis situations (Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Liberia) and tendencies for a level of conflict to take root (Mali and Nigeria)<sup>62</sup>. The region has been confronted with complex crises in which political instability has taken the form of armed rebellions. Between 2008 and 2016, however, it recorded a steeper decrease in cross-border tensions than the continent as a whole. Governments within the region, on the other hand, are increasingly involved in armed conflicts on their national territories. The most distinct deteriorations are seen where governments take part in armed conflicts (Nigeria, Cameroon, Mali, Niger, etc.) or are involved in personal security offences (Gambia). Between 2008 and 2016, violent conflicts in West Africa swung between two and six per year, peaking in 2014 and 2015, mainly because of the situation in Nigeria<sup>63</sup>. A growing number of countries are ratifying human rights conventions, but human rights violations are gaining ground (Mauritania, Burkina Faso) and major restrictions on civil liberties are also being observed (Gambia, Mali).

Lastly, during the period under review, the general context in the region continued to be marked by very worrying security issues and more severe, diverse threats: terrorist movements in the northern parts of the Sahel and in the north-east of Nigeria; human trafficking; illegal trafficking (mainly drugs and arms); maritime piracy; money laundering; cybercrime, etc.

### Field covered and sector intervention logic:

This question relates to the primary focus area of the 11th EDF RIP, namely actions to promote peace, security and stability, including efforts to combat the overall threats to the region. The latter often have dramatic consequences for the West African populations as well as direct repercussions on the EU. Early in the period, EU regional cooperation gave the priority to fighting maritime piracy and drug trafficking; today, however, the main focus has shifted to terrorism and irregular migration. The result has been a large number of interventions (more than 60<sup>64</sup>), covering four subsectors that shape the sector intervention logic<sup>65</sup>: political governance, violent conflicts, threats specific to the region and irregular migration flows. Over

<sup>61</sup> Previously, this was already the case for actions funded by budget lines: the impetus came from the EU.

<sup>62</sup> This classification is taken from Lutumbue, M., Groupes armés, conflits et gouvernance en Afrique de l'Ouest : une grille de lecture, GRIP 27 January 2017.

<sup>63</sup> Uppsala/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, consulted in September 2017.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. the details in Annexes 8 and 9.

<sup>65</sup> See the sector intervention logic diagram in Annex 8.

and above the actions programmed or carried out under the RIPs, this sector's portfolio includes a large number of actions funded by other instruments or programmes: i) the African Peace Facility (APF); ii) the Pan-African Programme funded under the EU's Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI); the Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) programme and the thematic programmes "civil society organisations and local authorities" (CSO-LA), "human development" (HUM) and "asylum and migration" (MIGR); iii) among the thematic instruments: the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Instrument for Stability (IfS)/Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)<sup>66</sup>; iv) election observation missions, managed by FPIs, and v) more recently, the Emergency Trust Fund<sup>67</sup> (EUTF) for Africa. In all, nearly €221 million have been committed in this sector over this period.

### **Answer to the question:**

#### **EQ 2**

*To what extent has EU regional cooperation contributed to peace, security and stability in West Africa?*

The EU's regional cooperation has contributed to positive impacts in electoral diplomacy, increased political involvement, successful mediations, early warnings and peace-keeping operations. Two programmes - the ECOWAS unit for financing and managing peace operations and the Sahel counter-terrorism programme - have had positive effects, notably in terms of sustainable ownership by the beneficiary structures, but the EU has not learned the lessons from them for transfer to other programmes. In matters of maritime security, efforts to combat the threats hanging over the region (money laundering, illicit trafficking, terrorism, etc.) and the prevention of irregular migration, the EU (in liaison with many other stakeholders) has failed to stem the deterioration in the situation that the region has experienced during the period under review. Among the factors accounting for EU regional cooperation's weak impact in these areas, three stand out: i) poor theories of change; ii) the multitude of actions (under different instruments or programmes) addressing the same objectives but with no attempt to work in synergy, and iii) problems of ownership of the many actions by both the beneficiaries and the implementing agencies and EUDs.

#### **4.2.1 Analysis of EU regional cooperation's contribution to improving political governance<sup>68</sup>**

**In the subdomain of mediation/electoral diplomacy**, the main outputs of EU regional cooperation have been the establishment, within ECOWAS, of a Mediation Facilitation Division, an Elders Group and a pool of mediators. These EU support mechanisms played a non-preponderant role<sup>69</sup> in the positive outcomes obtained by ECOWAS in mediating political crises in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia and Guinea<sup>70</sup>. However, this contribution by the EU is undermined by the accumulation of delays in programme implementation, the lack of knowledge-building from one programme to another, the time lapses between RIP projects and APF projects, and, lastly, weak ownership by the beneficiary institutions.

**In matters of electoral assistance and observation, and the promotion of democracy in general**, EU support mechanisms have yielded the expected outputs<sup>71</sup>. Regional cooperation by

<sup>66</sup> Managed jointly by DEVCO and the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI).

<sup>67</sup> The full name is: "Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa".

<sup>68</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 37-52.

<sup>69</sup> A more important factor is the involvement of ECOWAS member countries' political leadership.

<sup>70</sup> On the other hand, ECOWAS has been less successful in handling complex crises such as Nigeria, Guinea-Bissau, Mali (conflict in the north; conflict with the Islamists), Niger and Togo.

<sup>71</sup> More specifically: the planning, implementation and monitoring of electoral activities by the office of the Special Representative of the President of the ECOWAS Commission; the ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions; the launch of one of the first long-term electoral observation missions in Liberia.

the EU (one of ECOWAS's main partners in electoral matters) was an important factor in the outcomes obtained by ECOWAS in promoting democracy, notably through its zero-tolerance policy on anti-democratic practices of accession to power.

**Regarding civil society's role in better political governance**, the main outputs of EU regional cooperation have been capacity development in advocacy, in women's participation in politics, in community radio broadcasting, along with the organisation, in a number of countries, of radio debates and appropriate legal frameworks for ensuring independent information. Although the trend in this subdomain is positive, with numerous examples of local civil society organisations (CSOs) contributing to better political governance (Guinea, 2006; Burkina Faso, 2014; Togo 2010 and 2015), it has nevertheless remained at an experimental stage.

**Overall, EU regional cooperation's contribution to improved political governance** is mixed, and the changes observed in West Africa vary widely<sup>72</sup>. It has made a positive contribution to mediation and a significant contribution in electoral matters and the promotion of democracy.

#### 4.2.2 Analysis of EU regional cooperation's contribution to preventing and attenuating violent conflict<sup>73</sup>

**As far as early warning systems are concerned**, the EU has backed ECOWAS's regional system, which has yielded significant outputs: it observes a broad range of conflicts and is connected to the African Union's Continental Early Warning System, which covers a vast range of relevant indicators per country<sup>74</sup>. EU regional cooperation facilitated the development of this early warning system and in so doing contributed to the use of ECOWARN products by the region's decision makers. During the 2014-2015 crisis in Burkina Faso, for example, the ECOWARN system enabled a rapid response on the part of ECOWAS.

**As far as regional peace-keeping operations are concerned**, EU regional cooperation led to the deployment of the AFISMA (*African-led International Support Mission to Mali*)<sup>75</sup>, ECOMIB (the ECOWAS mission in Guinea-Bissau) and ECOMIG (the ECOWAS mission in Gambia), as well as the establishment of human-rights observers in Mali in a joint African Union/ECOWAS initiative (2013). These EU support mechanisms are a major contribution towards operationalising the ECOWAS Standby Force, the positive outcomes of which were demonstrated by the success of ECOMIG and ECOMIG, in synergy with the political mediation actions conducted by ECOWAS in Guinea-Bissau and Gambia. EU regional support mechanisms also enabled ECOWAS to create the "peace operations finance and management" unit which, through effective capacity development, facilitated the swift deployment of ECOMIB and ECOMIG. This unit is something of an exception in a context where implementation of the EU's regional programmes has, for the most part, been assigned to European implementing agencies, creating a real problem of ownership by the beneficiaries. However, the EU did not capitalise on this positive experience with ECOWAS for its more recent support to the Lake Chad Basin Commission (for the establishment of the MNJTF<sup>76</sup>) and to the G5 Sahel Secretariat (for the creation of the G5 Sahel Joint Force). Additionally, the EU's support for these two institutions gives priority to the military aspects over questions of development and human

<sup>72</sup> See the presentation of the regional context at the beginning of EQ 2, in Chapter 2 and in Annex 7.

<sup>73</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 52-66.

<sup>74</sup> Social fragility, demographic and migratory trends, identity conflicts, tensions over natural resources, political instability, scenarios and strategies for managing possible conflicts.

<sup>75</sup> Then to the transition from the AFISMA to the MINUSMA (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission).

<sup>76</sup> MNJTF: *Multinational Joint Task Force*. Mission in charge of combating Boko Haram.

rights. Lastly, the synergies among the various European peace-keeping programmes, and between these programmes and the CSFP missions, are not apparent<sup>77</sup>.

**As far as governance of the "security" sector is concerned**, EU regional cooperation supported the security sector reform (SSR) in Guinea-Bissau<sup>78</sup> and the implementation of the Algiers peace agreement in Mali. ECOWAS has achieved positive outcomes in this subdomain: in Guinea-Bissau, it has forged itself a place since 2012 as a major stakeholder, in particular opposite the army. The EU's contribution to security sector governance is also underpinned by the CFSP instruments deployed in the region (EUCAP Sahel, EUTM Mali, EUTM Niger, Regional Coordination Cell - RCC), and support for the G5 Sahel Defence College. To date, the synergies between these various EU support mechanisms have not been maximised. As a result, the EU's contribution to the security sector reforms is not optimal, given the substantial sums involved.

**Overall, if we consider the impact on the "prevention and attenuation of violent conflicts"**, the situation in West Africa during the period under review has deteriorated<sup>79</sup>. While we cannot know for sure what crises have been prevented, the relative stabilisation of Gambia and Guinea-Bissau by ECOWAS owes much to the EU's input. There are sufficient examples of successful mediations, early warnings and peace-keeping operations deployed, often with the EU as primary international donor, to plausibly establish the EU's contribution to conflict attenuation. On the other hand, there is no evidence that EU regional cooperation significantly changed the root causes of conflicts. Within the framework of conflicts on the northern borders of the ECOWAS space (Lake Chad and Sahel), where the regional forces' interventions have been criticised for human rights violations, the overall result is mixed: there is little synergy among the instruments, insufficient coordination among the EUDs and a lack of support for the civil components, which could be related to the root causes of the conflicts.

#### 4.2.3 Analysis of EU regional cooperation's contribution to reducing threats specific to the region<sup>80</sup>

**In the field of maritime security**, the main outputs of EU regional support mechanisms have consisted in the installation or operation of coordination mechanisms<sup>81</sup>, capacity development for national and regional administrations, and the adoption of a Code of Conduct for preventing and combating unlawful acts in the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain. In spite of this support, the region's outcomes in maritime security remain limited as yet: in 2016, the Code of Conduct had still not become binding and the maritime safety and security structures were not yet operational. Though some measures had proved effective, piracy remains a wide-spread phenomenon throughout the Gulf of Guinea.

**With regard to the combat against illegal trafficking**, the outputs of EU regional cooperation have consisted mainly in building knowledge on the use of narcotic drugs in the region, the establishment of a regional police information system (managed by ECOWAS), the creation of several regional platforms<sup>82</sup> and support mechanisms<sup>83</sup> for various national entities (police forces in charge of intercepting drug flows, financial intelligence units, bodies charged with combating money laundering and terrorist financing). These EU support mechanisms have

<sup>77</sup> See also Section 8.3 below.

<sup>78</sup> In 2017, however, following staffing changes in the Guinea-Bissau security forces, the EUD requested a halt to activities in support of the security sector reform.

<sup>79</sup> See the presentation of the regional context: Chapter 2 and Annex 7.

<sup>80</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 67-80.

<sup>81</sup> Establishment of the International Coordination Centre by ECOWAS, the ECCAS and the Gulf of Guinea Commission; effective operation of the coordination frameworks between ECOWAS and the ECCAS.

<sup>82</sup> The West African Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (WENDU), the West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors (WACAP) and the Sahel Judicial Platform.

<sup>83</sup> Provision of equipment, training, mentoring, etc.

enabled a number of advances to be made in the region, more specifically an increase in the exchange of information about illegal trafficking, greater control over certain roads used by drug couriers and the structuring of national legal frameworks<sup>84</sup>. However a number of factors curbed the effectiveness of EU regional cooperation: i) malfunctions in the countries' police and court services (anti-trafficking operations are often confined to arresting the offenders, without bothering those responsible for the trafficking); ii) a certain imbalance in the content of the support mechanisms (a focus on capacity development rather than supplying equipment); iii) tension in the collaboration between ECOWAS, the EU and the other technical and financial partners (TFPs) in the domain (the UK and the US), and iv) coordination difficulties among TFPs.

**With regard to the fight against terrorism**, the "Counter-Terrorism Sahel" (CT Sahel) project gave the EU a pioneering role through its involvement in and support for the Sahel countries in this domain. It also acted as a catalyst by bringing EU strategy for the Sahel into operation. Through this project and other interventions, the outputs of the EU's regional support mechanisms consisted in i) the establishment of a G5 Sahel Defence College, which acted as a regional alignment factor<sup>85</sup>, and ii) the upskilling of a set of target stakeholders (judicial authorities, security services), with concrete support for creating specialised anti-terrorist units. During the period under review, the West Africa region recorded a deterioration in the terrorism situation and the few successes obtained were the work of foreign armed forces (the Serval and Barkhane military operations) or multinational armed forces (AFISMA, MINUSMA, MNJTF). The part played by EU regional cooperation in pushing back terrorism therefore proves to be quite minor, even though the EU is a major financier in this domain. Among the factors accounting for this situation, we can observe: the predominance of security and punitive approaches; the low capacity for political dialogue (and policy dialogue) when the action primarily concerns the security component through implementing agencies that are subject to little EU monitoring, heightened by insufficient coordination between the EUDs concerned; insufficient coordination between the services in charge of the various instruments used (IcSP, regional EDF, EUTF, etc.) and in the dialogue with the various regional institutions concerned (ECOWAS, G5 Sahel and Lake Chad Basin Commission). Additionally, some projects, such as the GAR-SI Sahel<sup>86</sup> support project, though recent, raise ownership and efficiency issues.

**Overall, if we consider the impact on "reducing threats specific to the region"**, the changes observed during the period under review are very worrying: an increase in maritime piracy, an extension of terrorism, an increase in illegal trafficking, etc.<sup>87</sup>. The EU, through its regional cooperation, has not managed to help stop the situation from deteriorating (alongside the many other parties involved). One of the reasons for this weak impact lies in the lack of clarity and suitability of the theories of change underpinning the EU's main regional cooperation interventions in this domain<sup>88</sup>.

#### **4.2.4 Analysis of EU regional cooperation's contribution to preventing irregular migration flows, migrant smuggling and human trafficking<sup>89</sup>**

In this domain, the main outputs of EU support mechanisms have been: i) regional dialogue processes on migration; ii) the establishment of a migration information and management centre

<sup>84</sup> For example: adoption of international anti-drug trafficking standards; ratification of the anti-corruption convention.

<sup>85</sup> The G5 Sahel Defence College is now part of the G5 Sahel.

<sup>86</sup> Rapid Action Groups - Monitoring and Intervention in the Sahel. Project funded by the EUTF from 2016.

<sup>87</sup> For further details, see the presentation of the regional context: Chapter 2 and Annex 7.

<sup>88</sup> See the more detailed analysis in the evaluation matrix (summary of Indicator 2.3.5).

<sup>89</sup> This section does not include the promotion of mobility within the West Africa region, which is part of EQ 3. For a more detailed analysis of this section, see: Annex 1, pp. 80-90.



in Mali; iii) capacity development for the States, the ROs and the CSOs; iv) increased border management, and v) the reintegration of returning migrants.

The outcomes obtained in the region, notably based on these EU contributions, have proved to be mixed. The EU support mechanisms have fostered the establishment of a regional dialogue on common approaches to migration issues: all of the countries in the region, except Benin and Guinea, now include migration issues in their development policies. In 2016, however, none of the countries in the region had a comprehensive migration policy in force, so they were neglecting key aspects of migrant protection. On the other hand, EU support mechanisms did not play a decisive role in building capacity to manage regular migration and curb irregular migration. In Niger, for example, where restrictions are applied on the principle of the free movement of people, there has been a reduction in regular migration but an increase in irregular migration to Libya and Algeria. For the region as a whole, while the voluntary returns registered by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), particularly from Libya, are very high, the levels of forced returns from Europe remain modest.

EU regional cooperation's modest contribution to more relevant and more effective national and regional migration policies can be attributed to a combination of factors: i) the relatively recent nature of EU support mechanisms; ii) the scant interest in migration issues in many countries in the region<sup>90</sup>; iii) shortcomings in the design of certain interventions. For example, the main project in this domain (Support to Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa) began without a theory of change, which does nothing to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of such a complex programme; iv) insufficient attention paid to ownership by the national stakeholders. For example, Mali, which is one of the top 10 departure countries for migrants to Europe, has virtually no information whatsoever on the six regional projects in which it is involved<sup>91</sup>. Moreover, in this evaluation, some ECOWAS Member States and certain EU Member States voice concerns about certain ETF projects, due to the slowness of their implementation, their high costs and their lesser appropriateness for the context (by comparison with projects under the RIP or the NIPs).

Trends in irregular migration and migrant vulnerability are stable or in decline. Reducing irregular migration depends as much on national and regional capacities within the ECOWAS area as on capacities in the neighbouring countries (Tunisia, Algeria and Libya). Moreover, while supporting development and employment to reduce migration is still a key approach, its impact will only be felt in the long term. As long as the difference between incomes levels in the departure countries and the arrival countries remains high, migration will continue to be an attractive option<sup>92</sup>. To date, EU regional cooperation has not yet played a key role in stemming irregular migration flows and human trafficking.

### 4.3 EQ 3 – Regional economic integration

#### Sector context<sup>93</sup>

During the period under review, the overall growth rate in the economies in the ECOWAS zone was encouraging, even though it sagged towards the end of the period. The production

<sup>90</sup> The large sums of money transferred by migrants back to their home countries do not encourage West African governments to bring in measures to curb migration to Europe and the Gulf countries.

<sup>91</sup> On top of this, the political dialogue on migration issues has been mishandled. In December 2016, an EU envoy announced (in error, according to the Malian government and a number of observers) that an agreement on forced returns from Europe had been concluded. This provoked a political crisis in Mali and prompted the Malian government to tighten its position.

<sup>92</sup> Michael CLEMENS, *Development Aid to Deter Migration will do Nothing of the Kind*, Refugees Deeply, 31 October 2016

<sup>93</sup> This part is based on the following documentary sources: African Development Bank, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, United Nations Development Programme, *African Economic Outlook 2016*; World Bank, *Doing Business*, 2008 to 2016.

structures, which were dominated by low-added-value business sectors, showed little growth on the whole. The main changes in the GDP structure can be attributed to growth in the services sector, in particular transport and telecoms, whereas the secondary sector makes no real progress except for the construction industry, which was spurred on by the investments made.

Reforms were undertaken in the region to improve the economic climate and boost competitiveness factors, resulting in an upturn in the business climate between 2008 and 2016 in all of the ECOWAS countries except Ghana. However, the deterioration in the macroeconomic climate from 2013 onwards and the slow progress made on certain reforms carried out in the region account for the lack of any significant improvement in the ranking of the countries in the zone. In 2016, the ECOWAS zone had the worst score of the entire African continent in the "Doing Business"<sup>94</sup> ranking and one of the world's lowest scores in the "Global Competitiveness Index"<sup>95</sup>.

At the same time, an analysis of the macroeconomic indicators shows that vulnerabilities are become more acute. This is reflected mainly in the failure to meet convergence criteria, especially when budget deficits are allowed to remain above the thresholds set and are financed, in part, by the use of non-concessional loans, which heightens debt vulnerabilities.

Since 2008, the trend in ECOWAS countries' foreign trade has been generally negative, as evidenced by a downturn in the international investment position of the zone's countries, a trade deficit, lost market share in intra-zone trade and a lack of diversification in export structures. Exports to the ECOWAS zone consistently represent less than 10% of total exports at the end of the period. Local producers' share of the regional market dwindled throughout the period, in particular for primary products. Note that European producers' share of the ECOWAS market has declined and that their products now represent only 30% of imports, while products from Emerging Asia<sup>96</sup> cover nearly 40% of requirements.

### **Field covered and sector intervention logic**

This question concerns the interventions supported by the EU through the 9th and 10th EDF RIPs and aimed at reinforcing regional economic integration with a view to speeding up development of the productive sector, GDP growth, employment and ultimately reducing poverty<sup>97</sup>. These interventions have been focused on three main goals: i) the free movement of goods and services, ii) macroeconomic convergence and the monetary union, and iii) the development of the private sector. The expected impacts include a boost for trade in goods and services within the zone, an increase in enterprises' competitiveness and export capacity, and the maintenance of a stable macroeconomic framework, accompanied by an improvement in the business and investment climate.

The analytical framework adopted<sup>98</sup> follows the chain of results that shapes the EU's intervention logic in this domain, namely (i) enhancing the capacities of the DMROs (ECOWAS and WAEMU) and qualifying them to lead regional economic integration (macroeconomic oversight, negotiation and monitoring of trade agreements, drafting, monitoring and coordination

<sup>94</sup> Initiated in 2002 by the World Bank, this indicator ranks 190 economies according to their overall "ease of doing business".

<sup>95</sup> This indicator developed by the World Economic Forum (WEF) ranks the competitiveness of 140 countries, based on 12 indicators.

<sup>96</sup> China, South Korea, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates

<sup>97</sup> Under the 9th EDF RIP, three projects designed to support regional integration, the negotiation of the EPA and business competitiveness were still in progress in 2008 and represented a combined value of €112 million. Under the 10th EDF RIP, regional economic integration was supported by four projects worth a total of €70 million: 1) support for implementing the EPA, 2) the African Regional Technical Centre (AFRITAC) West I and II, 3) trade support, 4) support for private sector competitiveness. Under the 11th EDF RIP, €160 million were allocated to four projects: 1) AFRITAC, 2) boosting competitiveness, 3) trade facilitation, and 4) fiscal transition.

<sup>98</sup> See the sector intervention logic diagram presented in Annex 8 and the presentation of the contribution analysis procedure in Annex 4.

of regional legislation) and Member State capacity development in view of applying the regional rules and procedures. Based on these reinforced capacities and specific technical support mechanisms, the EU sought to contribute to (ii) the adoption and implementation of regional policies conducive to the development of trade and investment. At the same time, it also sought to (iii) have systems set up to guide and support the regional integration process in order to cancel out the negative effects (fiscal transition) or guarantee the beneficial effects by helping to deploy services for businesses. The regional funding used in this sector during the period under review comes to €81.5 million.

### **Answer to the question:**

**EQ 3**

*To what extent have EU support mechanisms helped reinforce regional economic integration and contributed to West Africa's profitable insertion in the world economy?*

Regional economic integration has progressed in recent years, driven by the adoption of a regulatory framework establishing a customs union within ECOWAS and facilitating trade, along with common policies likely to foster the emergence of a more competitive and more attractive economy.

Nevertheless, this framework is not really applied and none of the specific impacts expected from this progress can be seen as yet: trade within the zone is stagnating (according to the official statistics, at least); exports to the rest of the world are dominated by primary products, so heavily dependent on price effects; ECOWAS producers have lost market share in the zone; no change is in sight in private investment trends. Export capacities within the zone are hampered by tariff and non-tariff barriers, the coexistence of several currencies, some of which are non-convertible, and by economic structures lacking in diversification and competitiveness.

Encouraging progress has been made, however, to which the EU has contributed. Advances include the emergence of well-informed stakeholders, who are aware of the stakes and pushing for reforms at Member State level in the trade domain, along with the gradual establishment of a quality infrastructure at regional level and the continued harmonisation of public finance management systems within WAEMU.

However, these advances have yet to be consolidated, whereas there are numerous barriers to change, including certain Member States' reluctance to open up their markets, raise their barriers and adopt harmonised policies, in particular in fiscal matters. This resistance has been underestimated and at the same time ECOWAS's technical and political capacity to counter it has been overestimated. In this respect, the EU, while it has supplied appreciable technical support, has not contributed to reinforcing the organisation's structural capacity and credibility to exercise its leadership of the economic integration process.

The EU's contribution to regional economic integration in West Africa has run up against factors specific to the zone's economic, political and institutional context, which could have been anticipated.

### **4.3.1 Analysis of EU interventions' contribution to reinforcing the free movement of goods, services and capital<sup>99</sup>**

In this domain, the intended outputs of the EU's programmes consisted primarily in building the capacity of the various stakeholders to negotiate the regional Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), along with the conditions for the customs union (CET and trade liberalisation programme), then ensure that they were implemented by the region's States. The most widely-acknowledged of the outputs achieved is the dynamic established around the negotiation of the EPA and the customs union. The negotiators interviewed<sup>100</sup> all stressed the constructive nature of the learning process, in progress from 2008 to 2015, which gave them a better grasp of the issues

<sup>99</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 91-130.

<sup>100</sup> The six negotiators interviewed in the various structures (ECOWAS, WAEMU, civil society, trade ministries) have been involved since 2008 at least in the negotiations and are still active on these issues.

involved in liberalising trade and opening the markets<sup>101</sup>. This is an unexpected effect of the EU regional support mechanisms. However this trend only partially translated into a sustainable reinforcement of the national and regional institutions concerned: the benefits secured by the stakeholders directly involved in the negotiations were not translated into permanent measures by the institutions; no mechanisms were developed for monitoring and evaluating trade liberalisation policies, even though the 10th EDF RIP had made provision for this; ECOWAS's ability to lead all of the work packages associated with trade integration remain limited. Moreover, there is no guarantee that the two DMROs' respective agendas in this domain will coincide, even if tighter coordination has made it possible to harmonise their positions on a several matters (CET, trade liberalisation programme, customs code, VAT).

Significant progress has been made on the regional legislative and regulatory plan (creation of the customs union), but the advances fall short of the initial objectives because of accumulated delays and the difficulties encountered with certain States, which struggle to implement them and even consider going back on them. Ten years after negotiations kicked off in 2003, an agreement was reached, first on the ECOWAS CET in October 2013, then in June 2014 on the regional EPA (with a market opening threshold of 75%<sup>102</sup>). The CET has, in principle, been in application since 2015 in 13 of the 16 countries, while the trade liberalisation programme is now in application in 15 countries. However, the customs union and the common market are far from effective: tariff barriers non-compliant with the CET are still in place; the trade liberalisation programme is proving very difficult to apply on the ground; the free movement of goods is hindered by the maintenance of non-tariff barriers and the poor operation of the customs services. The regional EPA has been blocked, mainly because of opposition from Nigeria, which in 2016 forced Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana to sign interim EPAs that are not absolutely consistent with the ECOWAS CET.

The EU's most obvious contribution to the developments observed is to have initiated the negotiations of the regional EPA. It is unanimously acknowledged that, without the negotiations on the EPA, the ECOWAS CET agreement and the agreement on the trade liberalisation programme would not have been obtained, or at least not in the time frames observed. The support provided through the 9th and 10th EDF TRADE programmes eased the negotiations and their successful conclusion by providing them with technical analyses, building the stakeholders' capacity to master the issues at stake (alongside other donors) and facilitating the convergence of the DMROs' positions on the establishment of the customs union. Further downstream, the EU's support mechanisms also helped facilitate at least the partial application of certain commitments, raised awareness of the CET and trade liberalisation programme among stakeholders in the field, and rolled out the task force on the trade liberalisation programme.

The manner in which the EU conducted its support is one of the factors accounting for the low achievement of its initial objectives<sup>103</sup>. The view of the liberalisation programme was too theoretical and was based on a mistaken judgement of the political and institutional context and the forces at work. It took it for granted that the Member States would be willing to play the regional stakes rather than follow a protectionist policy to develop their national economic sectors. It also thought that ECOWAS would be capable of conducting the EPA process through to its conclusion and, more generally, of leading the economic integration process. The importance of the Member States as driving forces for trade integration and the customs union was overlooked, and this limited uptake of the regional support mechanisms at national level and

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<sup>101</sup> Within this framework, there should be some mention of the role played by the civil society organisations. They are very active in the discussions and, at the request of all of the negotiators, have defended positions that would reinforce protection for the regional markets.

<sup>102</sup> This threshold (the lowest of all of the regional EPAs) is considered by the regional negotiators and the European stakeholders to be a good outcome for ECOWAS.

<sup>103</sup> Other factors also contributed, in particular the political instability in several countries in the region, as well as the EBOLA crisis, which considerably slowed down the implementation of a number of regional programmes.

the linkage of the NIPs with the goals of regional integration. The EU did not sufficiently consider the existence of non-symmetrical integration forces within the region. The WAEMU countries were motivated by their own dynamic, making it more complicated to achieve the objectives of integration on the scale of ECOWAS. Moreover, the EU's position on certain components of the EPA negotiation (PAPED<sup>104</sup>, which retained the periodic review clause or the non-fulfilment clause<sup>105</sup>) may have hampered efforts to reach an agreement.

#### 4.3.2 Analysis of the EU interventions' contribution to reinforcing private sector competitiveness<sup>106</sup>

In this domain, the outputs of the EU's regional support mechanisms consisted mainly in i) the establishment of a regional quality system in 2013 and the adoption of a quality policy (ECOQUAL) within ECOWAS, along with national quality plans in line with the regional commitments, ii) harmonisation of the standards at regional level after adopting the ECOSHAM<sup>107</sup> programme, iii) development of access to testing and calibration laboratories accredited to international standards. However this regional quality system is not yet fully operational: i) the accreditation bodies have now been identified but are not yet established; ii) the standards harmonisation process is in progress but not complete; iii) the national policies have been drafted and are in the adoption phase, but have no (or very few) resources; iv) there are doubts as to the existence of sanitary and phytosanitary standards (SPS) in the true sense of the term, and v) the question of the system's sustainability and funding (public/private) has been raised.

The outcomes, in terms of service rendered in quality issues, are still slight. The quality approach is spreading in the business world, essentially in the formal sector, but the use of testing laboratories is still limited and the certification of ECOWAS-branded products is just beginning. The main inhibitors are companies' lack of resources, the system's lack of visibility and the scarcity of links with export promotion policies.

The EU's contribution to setting up the regional quality system between 2008 and 2016 is very important, due to a combination of factors: i) the continuity of support, which began in 2001 with WAEMU and continued under the 9th, 10th and 11th EDFs; ii) the use of UNIDO as implementing agency since the beginning of the support mechanisms; iii) the choice of a regional approach, solidly anchored in the Member States with national focal points, in charge of adapting the regional commitments and securing funding through the NIP programmes. However, the effectiveness of the EU's regional support mechanisms has been affected, on one hand, by the accumulated delays in implementing the activities and, on the other hand, by the recurrent difficulties of seeing all of the Member States advance at the same time in this domain, in particular in the recognition of regional standards<sup>108</sup>. While the EU's support mechanisms admittedly helped build management capacities within ECOWAS, it will probably not be sufficient to avoid the establishment of a Regional Quality Agency, which may further weaken ECOWAS's ability to lead this sector policy, which is important for economic integration.

<sup>104</sup> The "EPA Development Programme" (PAPED), which was intended to support implementation of the EPA, generated high expectations that were subsequently dashed once the non-additionality of the funds was made clear.

<sup>105</sup> The periodic review clause enables the parties to review a particular point at a later date, once the agreement has been concluded. The non-fulfilment clause maintains the power of both parties and in particular the EU to apply sanctions, founded on Articles 11b, 96 and 97 of the Cotonou Agreement. This might apply, for example, in the event of failure to respect human rights, democratic principles or the rule of law, even if these actions are not in line with the trade commitments made in the EPA.

<sup>106</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 131-145.

<sup>107</sup> Standard Harmonisation in the ECOWAS Region

<sup>108</sup> This is true of Nigeria, which continues to apply its own standards for certain products, despite the existence of regional standards.

After setting up this quality system at regional level, there is still a long way to go towards making businesses across the zone more competitive. The other private-sector competitiveness factors have changed very little during the period under review. The EU's contribution, in any case, is very limited, given the stakes: 1) export promotion is confined to quite specific operations, such as the project to support trade competitiveness and regional integration (PACCIR/WAEMU, one of the components of the 10th EDF TRADE programme)<sup>109</sup>, which was conducted on a small scale, with very few multiplier effects and was largely unknown to the Member States; 2) even though, under the 9th EDF, the EU had provided its support for business events at regional level, creating what the stakeholders considered a positive regional dynamic, these support mechanisms were not continued; 3) the private sector's growing involvement in trade negotiations and policy dialogue is a positive factor, but it cannot yet give a say to and defend the interests of all businesses.

The "value chains" approach used by the 11th EDF more effectively meets the challenge of making industry sectors more competitive and integrating national and regional approaches. It achieves this by promoting cluster approaches, i.e. networking and bolstering the stakeholders in each country. Even so, the choice of industry sectors raises questions, more specifically about their ability to create added value and about the risk of competition between countries that have chosen the same value chains. There are also questions about the choice of agencies tasked with implementing this strategy and their ability to link regional strategy and each Member State's national strategy.

#### **4.3.3 Analysis of EU interventions' contribution to maintaining macroeconomic stability, improving the business climate and stimulating investments<sup>110</sup>**

There are limited outputs in terms of strengthened macroeconomic framework or regional investments. The mechanism for monitoring macroeconomic policies, which was extended to include ECOWAS, became operational in 2012, but the DMROs have little say in decisions on macroeconomic policies: the convergence criteria are not met by the Member States and the sanctions mechanism provided is not applied. There has been little development in the DMROs' ability to draw up and implement Community programmes for public finance management and fiscal transition, and operationalise them within the Member States: the transposition of the six directives of the harmonised public finance framework adopted in 2009<sup>111</sup> was finished in 2016, but its implementation is taking a long time to come and the dates are pushed back each year. There are currently no initiatives planned to further harmonise the public finance management (PFM) systems beyond the French-speaking WAEMU countries. Fiscal transition is a sensitive issue for the Member States within the framework of establishing the customs union. It is not seen as a regional issue, but instead approached from a national angle. Although the regional authorities are presenting the establishment of a monetary union for the entire zone as an objective, certain Member States, including Nigeria, have reservations on the subject. When it comes to promoting investments within ECOWAS, the regional code has not been adopted and is not recognised as a key stake by the Member States, who are more focused on national strategies to attract investments.

The macroeconomic policies followed by the Member States during the period under review present a certain number of risks. The criteria regarding the extent of the budget deficit were

<sup>109</sup> Support for trade promotion bodies, mediation of trade disputes, trade obstacles alert platform, paperless certificate of origin.

<sup>110</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 146-159.

<sup>111</sup> Regarding the code of transparency in public finance management in WAEMU, finance acts, government accounting, government budgetary nomenclature, government accounting systems and the table of government financial operations subsequently completed by two additional directives (including the directive on materials accounting).

exceeded by almost all of the countries. This was because of both external factors (international financial crisis, Ebola epidemic, security problems and political crises in several countries in the zone) and public investment dynamics eased by access to new sources of funding (public-private partnership, non-concessional loans, Chinese loans). The IMF's diagnosis at the end of the period is clear: the vulnerabilities became more acute in recent years. Even if, for almost all of the countries, the debt ratio remains below the 70% threshold, public debt is mounting quickly and the BCEAO's reserves are dwindling. At the same time, little progress has been made on introducing harmonised fiscal policies that will support the establishment of the customs union and the decrease in gate fees it implies. PFM systems are being reformed in all of the countries in the zone, with a clearly-asserted regional dynamic in WAEMU but with specific national strategies in the other Member States, with no involvement of the DMROs. Investment policies are still, for the most part, conducted by each State with a view to individual optimisation. Problems of transparency or non-compliance with the rule of law are still very frequent.

The EU's contribution to improving the macroeconomic framework and investment conditions is palpable at the States level but practically invisible at regional level<sup>112</sup>. The quality of the technical support provided is recognised by the beneficiaries in the Member States, but the lack of ownership and involvement on the part of the DMROs is clearly underscored. Within the framework of the 10th EDF, the use of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) for the investment framework and the IMF for technical support with macroeconomic policies (through AFRITAC) led to preferring a national rather than regional approach to begin with. This confirms the approach taken by the World Bank (WB), aimed at improving the investment framework in certain priority countries<sup>113</sup>, and the IFM's approach, aimed at maintaining the stability of the macroeconomic policies, which continue to be conducted by the Member States (with the exception of monetary policy within WAEMU).

In the fiscal transition domain, the EU contributed more to developing a regional agenda, mainly through the technical assistance provided by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) to the ECOWAS Customs Directorate. By supporting the Member States in this domain, through AFRITAC, it should be able to facilitate a convergence of regional and national concerns, and thereby push for regional commitments to be applied. The 11th EDF's fiscal transition programme, shortly to be implemented, should meet this need to ensure better communication between these two levels.

#### **4.3.4 Analysis of the EU's contribution to the specific impacts sought in economic integration<sup>114</sup>**

Overall, as mentioned in the context analysis<sup>115</sup>, none of the specific impacts sought through EU support for regional economic integration have been achieved. This lack of EU contribution to the desired impacts stems from factors that are specific to the zone's economic, political and institutional context and which could have been anticipated.

- 1) Weak support for the reforms among the DMROs. For want of sufficient technical capacities and resources, ECOWAS and WAEMU are unable to enforce, within all of the Member States, the commitments made in terms of free movement or enforce application of the common provisions (compliance with the macroeconomic convergence criteria) and regional policies adopted (customs code, trade policy, quality policy, etc.);

<sup>112</sup> This is because there is no strong multilateral drive within the WAEMU zone to take a concerted stand on implementing stability monitoring mechanisms and structural reforms.

<sup>113</sup> Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal and Nigeria.

<sup>114</sup> This analysis is based on the findings presented in the previous three sections (4.3.1 to 4.3.3).

<sup>115</sup> See the introduction to EQ 3 above, and Annex 7.

- 2) The difficulty of imposing or consolidating a regional approach in domains with major national interests. This is especially true for domains in which the Member States are under heavy pressure in their bilateral relationships with the international community (for example in matters concerning fiscal transition and the use of domestic revenue, or improvement of the business climate);
- 3) ECOWAS's lack of political power to have the regional EPA adopted and avoid a situation in which a CET coexists with unharmonised interim EPAs.

Over and above these contextual factors, the initial strategy has been called into question. Because it is based on liberalising trade, bolstering business's competitiveness (essentially in the formal sector) and bringing in far-reaching reforms to improve investment conditions, it did not sufficiently consider the scant diversification of the economic structures within and between the Member States, nor the informal sector's substantial role in generating GDP and employment (and which meets specific conditions in cross-border trade and competitiveness). In a broader perspective, the choice of an economic integration strategy driven by a growth objective, without first checking that it is inclusive and without factoring in territorial and social cohesion aspects within the regional space, is also questionable, given the EU's stated objectives of reducing poverty and inequalities.

### **Box 3 – Summary of the survey of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) in West Africa<sup>116</sup>**

The results of the survey of West African CCIs confirm the mission-based observations regarding the changes in the conditions for doing business, private-sector competitiveness and the business climate. Half of the CCIs believe that there was no improvement in either export or import facilities within ECOWAS (i.e. to and from member countries) during the period 2008-2016 (the situation was judged worse for export facilities). All acknowledged that the introduction of the CET in 2015 and the establishment of the trade liberalisation programme are important, or even very important, facilitating factors. However, the tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade are still the top-ranking obstacles. While there has been a perceptible improvement in the tariff situation over the period, the non-tariff barriers, on other hand, have not diminished and include non-application of the regulations, the existence of road blocks and a lack of information about the markets. The CCIs have also noted that non-specialised economic structures, strong competition among economies in the zone and especially competition from low-cost products from Asia continue to be a huge impediment to intra-regional trade.

Perceptions of changes in the business climate vary: a small majority believe it has improved while the other survey participants believe instead that the climate has deteriorated. The application of the CET and, to a lesser degree, the adoption of a common quality policy (ECOQUAL) and harmonised standards (ECOSHAM) are seen as major steps forward, just like the increase in public/private dialogue.

On the whole, the CCIs believe that private sector competitiveness has improved slightly, and point to the improvement in product quality and the application of standards, along with the introduction of technological innovations and labour qualifications as propitious factors.

## **4.4 EQ 4 – Interconnexion (transport and energy)**

### **Sector context:**

In West Africa, road haulage services continue to be expensive and of mediocre quality. During the period under review, there was no noticeable improvement in transport prices or lead times in the region: journey times between ports and the capital cities of landlocked Sahel countries are still extremely long, which limits the number of rotations per year to a maximum of 12 and keeps prices high. The longest delays are always the waiting times at ports and borders. The prices

<sup>116</sup> The full results of this survey have been included in the evaluation matrix for EQ 3 (see Annex 1, p.119).



charged in the region for inter-State transport are distinctly higher than those charged elsewhere<sup>117</sup>. Road haulage rackets ("abnormal practices") had gradually been halved up until 2014, though they continued to inflate transit costs by around 10%. The resurgence of security concerns from 2015 onwards prompted the reintroduction of numerous police checks and, with them, a fresh outbreak of rackets. Estimates put the proportion of overloaded vehicles on the road at between 80% and 90% of heavy-vehicle traffic. However, a major improvement is just beginning to be seen: a reduction in extreme overloading<sup>118</sup>, which is the most damaging for the road network. The decline in overloading has not yet had any effect on the lifespan of roads, even recently-built ones.

During the period under review, the performances of the energy sector in West Africa are marked by i) the implementation of a regional organisation of electricity supply, with three regional electricity companies<sup>119</sup> under ECOWAS supervision, ii) meagre improvements in industry governance by ECOWAS Member States, iii) a limited increase in the length of regional lines, mainly because of time taken to organise blending projects and commission projects covering very long distances, iv) a slight increase in electricity production (for the same reasons) and v) the introduction of energy efficiency policies and efforts to promote renewable energies. Access to electricity improved, going from 36% in 2008 to 44% in 2014<sup>120</sup>.

### **Field covered and sector intervention logic:**

EU cooperation in the transport sector systematically went through the regional level, especially under the 10th EDF in connection with the initiative to plan regional corridors at continental level<sup>121</sup>. EU regional cooperation supported the application of the ECOWAS and WAEMU community directives on the protection of the road network assets (axle load control) and cross-border transport facilitation. It also set out to improve inter-State road transit conditions, rehabilitate regional sections of the road and improve air safety. Under the 10th and especially the 11th EDFs, regional cooperation's focus on infrastructure was presented by the EU as a justification (or a compensation) for the EU's withdrawal from the transport sector in the majority of West African NIPs. The 11th EDF represented a major break with earlier approaches in that (i) it used blending, and (ii) it transferred the responsibility for implementing regional cooperation to the national authorising officers (sector governance project). EU-West Africa cooperation strategy sees blending - through the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund (EU-AITF), then the Africa Investment Facility (AIF) - as a particularly appropriate means of intervention for projects of regional interest, i.e. essentially interconnections or sections of road that are critical for the movement of goods and people between landlocked countries and ports in countries on the Gulf of Guinea. A total of close to €160 million was committed to the transport sector over the period.

In the energy sector, the 10th EDF's support mechanisms were focused on updating the regional energy sector policy, strengthening the institutions in charge of constructing the regional market, and promoting energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. There are also plans to invest in extending the interconnection of national electricity grids so that countries with surplus power (essentially Nigeria) can trade with Sahel countries that are short of energy. EU regional cooperation also helped set up the worldwide Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) initiative, to which the non-committed 10th EDF funding was reallocated in 2012. The 11th EDF is the first regional cooperation cycle in which the energy sector became an EU focus area in West Africa,

<sup>117</sup> The benchmark price of transport unions in landlocked countries is CFAfr40-45 per tonne and per kilometre. The High Council in Côte d'Ivoire charges CFAfr60. By comparison, the price in Europe is around CFAfr10. In Morocco, it is CFAfr23 and in Mauritania, where there are no freight quotas, it was around CFAfr35 in 2012.

<sup>118</sup> Vehicles carrying loads of 80 to 100 tonnes, whereas the standard load is 27 tonnes.

<sup>119</sup> These three bodies are, respectively, in charge of the regional electricity market, energy efficiency and renewable energies.

<sup>120</sup> Source: World Bank. 2014 is the latest year available. For more information about electricity access figures, see the data presented in the evaluation matrix (Annex 1).

<sup>121</sup> Under the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA).

with complementary features between the RIP (notably through the trust funds) and the NIPs (support for energy sector policies and investments in electricity distribution and access). In all, nearly €173.5 million were committed to the energy sector over the period under review.

#### **Answer to the question:**

**EQ 4**

*To what extent have the EU's regional interventions helped improve transport for goods and people and access to energy?*

**In the "transport" sector**, EU regional cooperation has contributed to advances in regional legislation on combating road vehicle overloading. However, despite WAEMU's strong involvement and the EU's active support, the States in the region have not honoured their commitments. The situation accordingly remained virtually unchanged throughout the period under review, with 80-90% of lorries overloaded and damaging regional corridors, including those funded by the EU. Moreover, EU regional cooperation has not had any noticeable effect on the fluidity of inter-State transit, not the state of regional corridors. The majority of the actions taken under the 9th and 10th EDF RIPs to streamline inter-State traffic have accumulated long delays and have not yet been completed. Road investments have been marginal, whether in the cumulative linear total or with regard to the regional role of the two sections built. The recent changes in regional cooperation methods (notably the use of blending) have come at the cost of the EU's ability to influence its regional and national partners in dialogue on transport policies. Against this backdrop, the question of ownership and sustainability of the benefits may rapidly become crucial.

**In the "energy" sector**, the EU's interventions are aimed at improving access to electricity by interconnecting the networks and establishing the institutional and regulatory conditions for a regional market. The bulk of these interventions began with the 10th EDF, so their effects on the establishment of a regional electricity market or on an increase in household consumption or a fall in prices cannot be seen yet. These interventions point to structural transformations, mainly in terms of laying down the regulatory bases for a regional electricity market. However, little consideration has been given, at either regional or national level, to a risk factor: the continuing efficiencies of the national electricity companies and the minimalist opening of the sector to private operators.

#### **4.4.1 Analysis of EU regional support mechanisms' contribution to faster, more streamlined and safer inter-State transit<sup>122</sup>**

The conditions of inter-State transit have not been modified by EU regional cooperation. The 9th EDF project "Facilitation of transport in the WAEMU zone", devoted 65% of its resources to three juxtaposed control posts that were not operational at end-2016. The other outputs planned by the 9th EDF project, namely the regional transport observatory and an information system on the network of regional corridors, have not been produced either. The resources of the 10th EDF regional project, "transport facilitation", signed in 2014 and which is just entering the operational phase, were also partially absorbed by these three control posts. The only investment in regional corridor development that was budgeted for in the 10th EDF RIP was the construction of the Rosso Bridge between Senegal and Mauritania: a piece of infrastructure that would be very useful for regional integration. The project had to be dropped when the two countries were unable to finalise it. It was replaced by two operations that could begin rapidly: a 34 km section of road in Burkina Faso and a 396 km section of road in Niger (towards Nigeria). At end-2016, neither of these two projects had been finished. However, the EU contributed towards improving the regional corridors<sup>123</sup> under the NIPs. The guarantees that these corridors and the rest of the network would be properly maintained were not improved, despite linking up the RIP programmes (WAEMU regulations No. 11 and 15) and the NIP programmes on the theme of road maintenance and its funding.

<sup>122</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 160-175.

<sup>123</sup> See the map shown in the evaluation matrix for EQ 4 in Annex 1.

The EU's regional support mechanisms did not contribute to the marginal and fragile improvements in road transport facilitation in West Africa observed during the period under review. The key interventions were not operationalised or were abandoned (transport observatory, information system, Rosso bridge). The policy dialogue in view of the West African States' possible application of regional policies did not succeed (in particular for road maintenance and customs interconnection), except, to a certain extent, for the reduction of abnormal practices.

In the "air transport" subsector, the project to support air safety training built the technical skills of future professionals. In time, it will facilitate harmonisation with international rules, supported at national level by a project carried out by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)<sup>124</sup>. However, the training courses had only a very indirect impact on air safety. The addition of several of the region's airlines to the EU's black list was a far more powerful incentive: the countries in the region accelerated their efforts to achieve compliance with the standards laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

#### 4.4.2 Analysis of the EU regional support mechanisms' contribution to reducing road vehicle overloading<sup>125</sup>

The outputs of EU support for combating vehicle overloading show a good track record. The EU started taking action against overloading under the 9th EDF RIP, with studies and advocacy. These initial actions helped make the issue a priority in the 10th EDF, with growing involvement of WAEMU then ECOWAS and the governments of States in the region. Four meetings of transport ministers were organised with EU backing, with strong commitments, especially in 2015. Policy dialogue conducted under the RIP with NIP funding addressed the installation of a network of weighing stations and, more generally, compliance with the commitments made at regional level<sup>126</sup>. Regional regulations on checking vehicle overloading were transposed into national laws, but were applied only very gradually and with excessive tolerances. Application of WAEMU R14 ran into opposition from hauliers and port authorities, two stakeholder categories that generally wield political influence. EU communication on the theme was gradually taken up by hauliers, or at least those positioned in the segment of premium services. The practice of overloading, initially considered normal and inevitable, is now unpopular, even if it persists in the majority of cases. However, it was not possible to standardise the solutions for applying the policy, which was left to either the road maintenance fund (FER) or specialised agencies. The rigour and systematisation of the controls varies greatly from one country to another. Efforts to combat overloading on one corridor (successively Cotonou then Lomé) had a dissuasive effect, prompting hauliers in landlocked countries to switch to other corridors with laxer regulations (Côte d'Ivoire or Ghana). Countries that had made a serious commitment to fighting overloading had to go back on their tracks<sup>127</sup>. Under pressure from the haulier unions, nowhere were goods over the legal weight unloaded.

The ECOWAS and WAEMU Member States have not applied in a coordinated and synchronised manner the regional regulatory framework that they had practically all transposed into their national legislations. Attempted implementations were marked by an "educational" approach to hauliers, which consisted in introducing large tolerances that undermined the utility of the policies. As well, the majority of the inspection facilities were overly lenient, if not open to corruption. Mid-2016, the coastal countries suspended the application of R14, *sine die*, challenging over 10 years of policy dialogue with the EU and the other TFPs. The EU and WAEMU

<sup>124</sup> Project: "Supporting the improvement of air safety in Sub-Saharan Africa (SIASA)", 2013-2016, €2.7 million.

<sup>125</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 176-185.

<sup>126</sup> The question continues to be addressed under the 11th EDF RIP through the project to improve sector governance.

<sup>127</sup> The port of Lomé, for instance, lost half of its traffic in 2015-2016.

subsequently vigorously supported a resumption of the dialogue (transport ministers' meeting and Africa-EU summit in late 2017). To date, despite its investment in relaunching the regional dynamic (2015 summit) and its efforts to involve WAEMU in monitoring application of the roadmap, the EU has not managed to achieve a real reduction in vehicle overloading on regional roads, except, perhaps, for cases of extreme overloading.

#### **4.4.3 Analysis of EU regional support mechanisms' contribution to improving the electricity access rate<sup>128</sup>**

In the "energy" sector, EU regional cooperation has achieved the following main outputs to date<sup>129</sup>: i) updating and adoption of the regional masterplan for interconnecting and developing the regional electricity market (with an investment plan); ii) drafting and adoption of a policy to improve energy efficiency and develop renewable energies, and iii) establishment and beginning of the operationalisation of a regional regulator, the ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERERA). Rural electrification was supported by two calls for proposals (Electrify) covering 50 projects for a total value of €190m, with the EU contributing 50% of the sum<sup>130</sup>.

The EU's effective contribution to establishing a regional market and improving access to electricity through regional electricity interconnection will be seen only in a few years, given the normal time frame for arranging the financial and technical aspects of the construction projects for new interconnection lines. The adopted projects are just the very first step. It will take far more investment to actually connect the region and leave behind bilateral exchanges of electricity. The possibility of establishing a regional market hinges on the creation of a coordination body (WAPP/ICC). The EU is funding the body's construction and facilities in Benin, but it will be operational in 2019. The EU is making a substantial contribution in terms of the master plan, even if the funding disbursed to date to implement the master plan is not proportional to the investments identified and assumed by ECOWAS. At this early stage of its involvement in the sector, and given the slow pace of regional institutional construction, the EU has not yet contributed to improving the populations' access to electricity, apart from projects that are not part of the RIP (such as the Zagtouli solar power plant in Burkina Faso and the rural electrification projects).

## **4.5 EQ 5 – Food and nutrition security**

### **Sector context:**

West African agriculture's added value showed a very high growth rate during the period under review, reflecting the growth in agricultural output. Yet the growth rate has levelled out in recent years, which is worrying in light of the likely increase in regional demand as a result of demographic factors and changes in eating habits. Until recently, agricultural growth was driven essentially by an increase in the area of land cultivated and the agricultural workforce, but this trend is set to become a thing of the past<sup>131</sup>. Agriculture and the food sector at large employ a great majority of the regional workforce. However, agriculture and livestock raising account for only a small share of the income of the Sahel's poorest rural populations, as the share of non-agricultural employment in rural areas is increasing steeply. Across the region, the progression of

<sup>128</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 185-198.

<sup>129</sup> Within the framework of the support project (10th EDF RIP and the Energy Facility) for the information and coordination centre of the West African Power Pool (WAPP/ICC), the specialised ECOWAS institution in charge of constructing the regional energy market.

<sup>130</sup> The disbursement level is 83%.

<sup>131</sup> Nearly 40% of the increase in regional agricultural output since 2008 is thought to be due to an increase in yields.

the agricultural front and the growth of the herd are going hand-in-hand with an increase in tensions and disputes over land.

The frequency and intensity of food crises remained high throughout the period under review. Over and above the crises induced by "natural" causes, there has been a sharp increase in the prevalence and severity of anthropogenic crises since the early 2000s, particularly in the Sahel zone. It is difficult to track trends in the number of people hit by food insecurity as a result of economic crises, because of changes in the analytical frameworks and the shortcomings of information management systems. Moreover, the available data shows that acute malnutrition levels remain high<sup>132</sup> in the majority of the region's countries. Nevertheless, infant mortality has decreased sharply, partly due to the broader coverage and greater efficiency of the treatment of severe acute malnutrition. The available data shows a steady decline in the incidence of undernourishment in the region and in most countries. Lastly, we have noted that the incidence of chronic infantile malnutrition is at a standstill, apart from in Senegal, Ghana and Mauritania, where the situation has improved. When they coincide with significant population growth, these trends very often indicate an increase in the number of chronically malnourished children.

### **Field covered and sector intervention logic:**

This question concerns a sector that has been increasingly important in EU regional cooperation since 2008, on both the political and the financial fronts. The first line of regional cooperation, which was developed in the 9th EDF and continued during subsequent funding cycles, aims to increase agricultural productivity and smallholders' income by investing in i) reducing losses in fruit yields and ii) distributing improved seeds. EU regional support mechanisms for this first line vary widely in respect of resource allocation, the instruments used and the type of ownership<sup>133</sup>. The second line of EU regional cooperation aims to step up sustainable land management (SLM). It runs initiatives to restore agricultural land but the main thrust of its action involves generating and sharing knowledge, and supporting multi-stakeholder dialogue processes. The third line aims to more efficiently manage food and nutrition crises by supporting initiatives to improve information and warning systems, and by developing a food storage strategy on different scales (local, national and regional). Lastly, regional cooperation aims to step up efforts to design, implement and evaluate public policies on "food and nutrition security, sustainable agriculture and resilience" (SANAD&R). The 10th EDF RIP was essentially concerned with the first two of these four focus areas. Following the food crisis in 2011/2012, it was decided to change tack. Stakeholders launched the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) and laid the groundwork for the regional food security storage programme - both regional outworkings of EU cooperation's "food crisis resilience" strategy<sup>134</sup>. In all, nearly €118 million have been committed in this sector over this period, through a regional programme, the Food Facility (2010-2012, €20 million), three FOOD projects (2011-2016, totalling €21.8 million), two EDF projects (2014-2019, totalling €76 million). A significant share of the 10th and 11th EDF funding was also transferred to ECHO to set up emergency and relief responses following the food and sanitary crises that struck the region<sup>135</sup>.

<sup>132</sup> Frequently exceeding emergency levels: 15% of children under the age of five suffer from acute malnutrition

<sup>133</sup> The sums allocated to the interventions range from €0.6 million to €20 million. The instruments used include the Food Facility initiative, two EU thematic lines and the EDF (RIP). Depending on the projects, the project owners were either ECOWAS, a collective formed by IFAD, ICRISAT and ECOWAS, or NGOs.

<sup>134</sup> COM (2012) 586: The EU Approach to Resilience: learning from food security crises.

<sup>135</sup> In EQ 8, we examine ECHO's actions from the viewpoint of their complementarity and consistency with EU policies in EQ 8.

**Answer to the question:****EQ 5*****To what extent has EU cooperation with West Africa contributed to reinforcing sustainable food and nutrition security and the populations' resilience?***

Whereas the food security component of the 10th EDF RIP was directed more towards increasing agricultural and pastoral productivity, the implementation of EU regional cooperation focused more on reducing vulnerability and malnutrition. In this domain, European cooperation has helped achieve certain advances, in particular i) the reinforcement and harmonisation of the frameworks for analysing cyclical food and nutrition insecurity within the regional subspace, and ii) the emergence of a stakeholder consensus on the political guidelines conducive to increasing resilience to food crises. However, these public policy guidelines are only just starting to be applied by the ROs and the States, and their implementation is confronted with the difficulties of moving beyond the institutional approach and principle of inter-sector coordination at both national and regional level.

**4.5.1 Analysis of EU regional support mechanisms' contribution to increasing agricultural productivity and producers' income<sup>136</sup>**

Given the lack of thematic consistency and continuity in regional cooperation's support for agricultural productivity, it made only a small and not very sustainable contribution to the buoyancy observed during the period in the regional agro-pastoral sectors. However, the soundness of this judgement is limited by the lack of solid monitoring and evaluation systems within the framework of the interventions, and the unreliability of the information available on the region's agricultural production. The support given to the seed-growing sectors was short-lived (two years) and without any follow-up, reducing the possibility of strengthening the stakeholders in these sectors beyond boosting the immediate availability of improved seed. The fruit fly eradication program initiated in 2016 is improving control methods and developing a monitoring system across several countries, but the lack of visibility into continued investments is compromising the sustainability of the achievements. The 11th EDF program of regional support for productivity in livestock raising and the facilitation of pastoral exchanges is only just beginning. Even though access to regional markets for local agricultural products is one of the priorities of the 10th EDF RIP, actions to reinforce regional economic integration (cf. EQ 3) did not specifically address agro-pastoral sectors, and the design of the sector-specific regional cooperation actions did not foster cross-border partnerships propitious to trade in regional products. In short, regional actions on the sector's structural transformations appear to have had very little tangible impact. Their impact is also compromised - even more than the outcomes of each of the actions concerned - by the limited coherence<sup>137</sup> and continuity of the support mechanisms for the agricultural sector's productivity and competitiveness.

**4.5.2. Analysis of EU regional support mechanisms' contribution to significantly increasing the acreages of sustainably-managed agricultural land<sup>138</sup>**

Reports from the Sustainable Land Management regional programme show that the area of rehabilitated land is larger than expected, and disseminate information on the subject. However, the interviews carried out indicate that limited use has been made of the knowledge-building outcomes of the program beyond the stakeholders involved. Where opinions diverge like this, the

<sup>136</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 199-206.

<sup>137</sup> Even though it addresses a certain demand from the region's stakeholders, the choice of the mango sector as the beneficiary of the 10th EDF's regional support mechanisms is characteristic: the aim is to help raise an export barrier, even though the regional agri-food markets are driven by regional demand. This is not a high-priority sector for either WAEMU agricultural policy nor ECOWAP (the ECOWAS agricultural policy).

<sup>138</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 206-210.

absence of outside evaluation is very detrimental. Even before 2008, regional and national public policy guidelines made sustainable management of agricultural land a priority, which has been regularly reasserted since. The aim, in so doing, is to meet long-term demographic and climate change challenges. However, to date little has been done to translate this priority into concrete investments<sup>139</sup>. Although there is a regional technical consensus on the subject, policies promoting sustainable land management have not been widely applied by the countries in the region. This shows the limits of regional and technical levers for influencing the handling of issues whose main motivations are national and political. "Multi-country" programs, supported by other partners and connecting regional and national components, the ownership of which is assigned to the States, seem better equipped to facilitate political dialogue with national administrations.

The available analyses indicate a loss of momentum in traditional methods for restoring fertility and a steep decline in the practice of fallowing land, in a context in which cultivated acreages have doubled in 40 years. Regional cooperation actions seem to be having less influence on these trends, for two main reasons: because the States were not very involved in the pilot actions supported, they do little to incorporate the lessons learned from these actions into their national policies. Moreover, the sustainable land management program gave little attention to the question of securing land tenure, nor the factors behind the expansion of cultivated land to the detriment of natural areas<sup>140</sup>.

#### **4.5.3 Analysis of EU regional support mechanisms' contribution to significantly improving food crisis prevention and management<sup>141</sup>**

In this domain, the levels of achievement of the outputs of EU regional cooperation vary. EU support has fostered the development of tools to analyse food and nutrition insecurity and facilitated their harmonisation within the regional area. Although this project was kicked off over 10 years ago, concrete advances could be seen from 2012 onwards. Support for the Food Crisis Prevention Network (FCPN) assisted with implementing the Charter on the "Regional System for the Prevention and Management of Food Crises" (PREGEC) and helped learn the lessons that led to a roadmap for a reform of the FCPN. Implementation of the regional food security storage program (in progress) is encountering numerous difficulties, which stem from a combination of factors: i) the complexity of the project's design and the large number of stakeholders involved, ii) problems related to ECOWAS's operation and organisation, and iii) weak uptake by ECOWAS Member States of the principle of solidarity underpinning this regional reserve. Despite these difficulties, a number of advances have been made, beginning in 2017, and Nigeria was the first country to benefit from the regional reserve.

The adoption of the *Cadre Harmonisé* (CH) as a framework for regional analysis of food and nutrition insecurity and its dissemination in the coastal countries from 2013 represents an important step forward in terms of analysing risks at an infra-national level. However, there are also several limitations<sup>142</sup> to the tool. Moreover, the FCPN's decision-making role and capacity for operational coordination are also limited. Little progress has been made in emergency

<sup>139</sup> The National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) have shown their limits as a tool for addressing the issue of "Climate-Smart Agriculture" (CSA) in national policies, and ECOWAS has noted the general inadequacy of regulations on securing land tenure throughout the region.

<sup>140</sup> Which would require a more multi-sector, political approach to deal with the demographic question.

<sup>141</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 210-230.

<sup>142</sup> National information systems cannot feed into it on an autonomous basis; the conduct of national analysis processes is heavily dependent on the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel; national investments in the information systems are insufficient to leverage prior methodological learning; the CH is not suitable for the information available, nor for the coastal countries' analytical requirements; vulnerability analysis in urban environments remains a weak point.

preparedness<sup>143</sup> and intervention monitoring varies widely from one country to another. The coordination of responses to humanitarian crises caused by security or health issues exceed the competencies of national food crisis management systems and remain a problem. The United Nations system continues to play a lead role in diagnosis and response. Lastly, the States' adoption of innovative intervention methods remains limited<sup>144</sup>. Apart from European support mechanisms, which have acted as a catalyst, the development of information systems has been supported by the combined efforts of coalitions of stakeholders<sup>145</sup> at regional level and at the level of sub-region countries. EU support for emergency diagnosis and preparedness<sup>146</sup> is continuing and the 11th EDF makes provision for supporting the FCPN reform process.

While the region has experienced numerous food crises since 2008, EU regional cooperation's contribution to preventing and attenuating these crises has varied considerably: though the EU's action has helped make the responses to food and nutrition crises more effective, these advances remain heavily dependent on outside support with both technical and financial aspects. These difficulties show that improvements in diagnosing food crises do not necessarily result in the sub-region's political decision makers allocating increased resources to preventing and managing such crises.

#### 4.5.4 Analysis of EU regional support mechanisms' contribution to improving sectoral governance<sup>147</sup>

EU regional cooperation has spawned a diverse range of outputs in sectoral governance: it increased consultation and the circulation of information about regional political processes; it encouraged organisations of livestock farmers to become involved in these processes (see box below); it set up and supported AGIR (the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative), which drew up regional and national guidelines for more effectively addressing the reduction of vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity in public policy; it helped set up a regional information management system (ECOAGRIS) to steer ECOWAS's agricultural policy; it enabled regional executives to receive top-level training on SANAD&R subjects.

#### **Box 4 – Summary of the case study: support for regional livestock farming policies - input and perspectives<sup>148</sup>**

Regional cooperation actions designed to protect and secure livestock farming have been very apt and effective. This issue lies at the intersection of several different aspects of regional integration, including economic development of the areas bordering the regional space, food security and sovereignty, conflict prevention, natural resource management, regional crisis management and prevention. An analysis of regional cooperation underscores a continuity of action in this domain: after having supported the involvement of livestock farmers' regional-level professional organisations in the policy dialogue, the EU plans to increase its support under the 11th EDF RIP, drawing on the lessons learned from trials carried out in certain countries. This future support will have to meet a number of challenges, namely: greater dialogue between Sahel countries and coastal countries; tighter governance and regional coordination in this domain, given the abundance of regional initiatives. These challenges will have to be met even though European regional support mechanisms are restricted, on one hand, by lower financial resources than initially provided for in the 11th EDF RIP and, on the other hand, by limited possibilities for supporting the strengthening of ECOWAS's coordination and leadership capacities.

<sup>143</sup> There is no regional contingency plan (one is being drawn up with support from the "stocks" project); no national emergency response plans, apart from a few exceptions (Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso).

<sup>144</sup> It is still essentially the international stakeholders who use intervention methods other than food aid and/or discounted prices (e.g. monetary transfers) as a crisis response instrument.

<sup>145</sup> In particular the United Nations, USAID, FEWS Net, IPC and NGOs.

<sup>146</sup> Through support for ECOAGRIS and the regional food security storage strategy.

<sup>147</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 230-258.

<sup>148</sup> Full information on the content of this box can be found in Annex 10.



With regard to regional governance of the SANAD&R sector, the landmark event of the early 2000s was the adoption of policies and strategies formalised respectively by ECOWAS, WAEMU and the ICDCS. These regional guidelines, which echoed international strategic frameworks, were broad-ranging and overlapped with those of other sectors. Though the issue of boosting agricultural productivity remains a key regional and national concern, other subjects have gained in importance, such as resilience to food crises, chronic malnutrition, livestock farming, youth and financing for agriculture. Moreover, some subjects continue to be largely overlooked by regional policies, such as gender issues, while regional and national strategies diverge on some points. Barring certain specific cases, these multisectoral strategic frameworks have not been effectively put into operation at either regional or national level.

In 2013, ECOWAS decided to set up the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF) to operationalise its policies and programmes. Even so, blockages remain<sup>149</sup>. In fact, the ROs compete for access to the outside funding they rely on and, for want of efficient management systems, each partner adopts its own funding arrangement. From a financial viewpoint, an analysis of the Maputo commitments<sup>150</sup> reveals marked differences in the amount of public resources countries allocated to the agricultural sector. The investments are also unevenly divided among the four pillars of the AGIR roadmap<sup>151</sup>. ECOWAS is having trouble obtaining the funds necessary for implementing ECOWAP, which it attributes to competition with the security priorities, and the general economic situation. The ECOWAS Agriculture and Food Development Fund (ECOWAFD) is still not operational, despite the fact that the decision to set it up was made in 2013, and ECOWAP's 2015 track record highlights the lack of regional incentives. Apart from the early warning systems, little progress has been made in monitoring and analysing the indicators used to manage and guide public policy in the SANAD&R sector<sup>152</sup>.

By launching and supporting the AGIR alliance, EU regional cooperation played a part in expanding the sectoral strategic guidelines to include nutrition, resilience and social welfare topics. However, the AGIR alliance, under the guidance of the regional roadmap, encouraged policy directions that failed to take account of the national contexts. European leadership of AGIR also generated high expectations of the EU's contribution to the priorities supported - a misunderstanding that was subsequently difficult to dispel. The advances in strategic orientations, underpinned by fragile analyses and hypotheses concerning the political, institutional and financial aspects of the regional context, are qualified by such factors as: the lack of complementarity between ROs; the absence of financial trade-offs on the part of the ROs; little involvement of development banks in the AGIR alliance; the coastal countries' scant interest in AGIR priorities. Given the RO's difficulty in drawing on RIP funds, carrying out certain projects and obtaining their trade-offs, funds have been reallocated from the 11th EDF RIP to the EUTF and blending solutions. This context restricts the EU's ability to encourage the ROs to strengthen their complementary features for the SANAD&R sector within the framework of the reforms under way.

In the end, the EU's support mechanisms have contributed to shifts in the focus of regional and national public policies, aimed at permanently improving access to food and reducing chronic malnutrition. However, they have failed to eliminate the institutional barriers and lack of inter-

<sup>149</sup> There is still little coordination between ECOWAS and WAEMU; ECOWAS has very little involvement in designing certain regional programmes carried out by the ICDCS, even though the latter is described as ECOWAS's "technical arm"; the RAAF struggles to fulfil its role because of a lack of administrative and financial autonomy, and persistently reduced operational capacities.

<sup>150</sup> The NEPAD Member States have committed to allocating 10% of their national budgetary resources to implementing their agricultural policy within five years.

[https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/9548-assembly\\_fr\\_10\\_12\\_july\\_2003\\_auc\\_the\\_second\\_ordinary\\_session.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/9548-assembly_fr_10_12_july_2003_auc_the_second_ordinary_session.pdf)

<sup>151</sup> The "sustainable increase in agricultural productivity" pillar takes precedence over the "nutrition", "social welfare" and "governance" pillars. See: FCPN, 2017.

<sup>152</sup> The ongoing development of the ECOAGRIS system is hampered by the absence of national data for many indicators and the difficulty of reporting data to the regional level.

sector coordination that are hindering implementation of these policies. Although EU regional cooperation has helped encourage national investments in the SANAD&R sector, only a very small portion of these investments have gone towards certain pillars of the AGIR roadmap, namely vulnerable populations' social welfare and nutrition.

#### 4.6 EQ 6 – Sustainable natural resource management

##### Sector context<sup>153</sup>:

Because of the great diversity of ecosystems in West Africa, the region is faced with numerous natural resource management issues. But over and beyond this diversity, a number of major issues are common to all of the countries: integrated management of fresh water (against a backdrop of frequent droughts in the Sahel countries); the protection of forest species (development of pioneer fronts in certain coastal countries, expansion of cultivated farmlands, excessive logging for export and heating, etc.); soil erosion and desertification (rapid expansion of cultivated land, absence of rational agricultural intensification); biological diversity (biodiversity has been in constant decline over the past century due to rapid settlement of the region, agricultural expansion, poaching, illegal trafficking in wild species and hunting). Two geographical environments in particular are at the centre of environmental concern: the Sahel, which is threatened by desertification, and the forest zone, parts of which are subject to intensive clearing and the harmful consequences of excessive deforestation. Sweeping changes are also occurring as a result of climate variability and climate change, to which the region is particularly vulnerable because of the many constraints mentioned above and its scant ability to adapt.

##### Field covered and sector intervention logic:

The question concerns the extent to which EU regional support mechanisms have been able to help protect natural marine and terrestrial ecosystems, and especially cross-border protected areas, in West Africa. It also considers the potential benefits that the populations living alongside the protected areas may be able to derive from better management of the ecosystems as their vulnerability to climate change becomes more acute. Natural resource management was not one of the main focuses of the 9th and 10th EDF RIPs, but it is part of the third focus sector of the 11th EDF RIP. Over the last 10 years, the regional cooperation resources allocated to this domain have remained limited (though on the rise). They have mainly been channelled into multi-country cooperation actions in cross-border natural resource management, with total funding amounting to €42 million.

##### Answer to the question:

**EQ 6**

*To what extent have EU regional support mechanisms helped maintain biodiversity and ecosystemic services in West Africa?*

Since natural resources are not one of the 9th and 10th EDF RIPs' focus areas, a sound decision was made to concentrate interventions on two issues: preserving biodiversity in the cross-border protected areas of Niger, Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo, and combating illegal sea fishing.

In the intervention areas, these EU regional support mechanisms have made a major contribution to maintaining biodiversity and ecosystemic services. Positive results have been seen in the propitious conditions for managing the fauna and flora, and local governance of natural resources.

The barriers to sustainable natural resource management are still present: increased anthropogenic pressure; great vulnerability to climate change; lack of dissemination of technical solutions (limiting their adoption by the populations adjoining the protected areas); technical and legal barriers to cross-

<sup>153</sup> This section is based, in part, on the following documentary sources: ECOWAS, Agriculture and Food in West Africa: Trends, Performances and Agricultural Policies, 2014.

border cooperation activities; a shortage of resources in national administrations and little recognition of the role of ECOWAS and WAEMU in environmental matters (ECOWAS and WAEMU adopted regional environmental strategies in 2008 but they have not been applied nor updated).

Against this backdrop, and given that EU regional cooperation's achievements are localised and usually temporary, its contribution to sustainable natural resource management for West Africa as a whole is meagre.

#### 4.6.1 Analysis of EU regional support mechanisms' contribution to sustainable management of cross-border natural resources<sup>154</sup>

EU-funded interventions in the sustainable management of cross-border natural resources have yielded numerous outputs: they range from infrastructure construction to database development and stakeholder capacity-building, including deeper knowledge of the variety and abundance of biodiversity (new species were discovered during two projects) and rural research and development activities. The overall result of delivering these various outputs is positive: i) when the intervention promoted participatory ecosystem management, the stakeholders concerned became more aware of their roles, rights and duties; ii) a plan was drawn up to develop and manage cross-border conservation blocks; iii) joint interstate anti-poaching patrols were carried out, but they were too few for the scope of poaching; iv) knowledge of the natural resources was expanded, and v) the national parks' infrastructures and facilities were developed. However, these achievements fell short of the ambitious objectives that had been set and it had not been possible to conduct some of the activities.

The development of cross-border natural resource protection during the period under review is marked by a status quo: the number of joint patrols in the cross-border areas remains limited, the knowledge acquired has not been passed on, insufficient attention was paid to researching and disseminating techniques and information, illegal fishing in coastal areas is not systematically sanctioned (because of the difficulty of applying the law at international level).

The EU's contribution to more effective protection for cross-border natural resources in West Africa remains limited because it does not extend beyond the projects' intervention areas. In some cases, tangible outcomes were observed and the presence of EU interventions made it possible to slow resource deterioration<sup>155</sup>. However, the impact of these actions remains limited: the trend towards natural resource deterioration continues in the areas in which there were no interventions, and it resumes when the interventions stop, even temporarily. On the other hand, the recognition by the stakeholders concerned (administrations, local populations, etc.) of the value of the protected areas in terms of biodiversity and the importance of their cross-border connection is a major condition for the sustainability of actions in this domain. However, while most of the interventions include knowledge-building initiatives, the lessons learnt from them are not extensively disseminated, so there is little uptake by the stakeholders concerned. For both the countries concerned and the EU, it is very difficult to conduct joint cross-border activities. Even international NGOs have difficulties.

Terrestrial and marine biodiversity continued to deteriorate during the period under review<sup>156</sup>. It is difficult to see the link between EU interventions and changes in the region's biodiversity, mainly because of the shortage of overall and project-specific information<sup>157</sup>. The Landscapes of West Africa atlas (CILSS, 2016) nevertheless shows that natural resource deterioration can be

<sup>154</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 259-268.

<sup>155</sup> For example, following a successful law suit against illegal fishing boats, the latter did not return to the Developing Marine Protected Areas.

<sup>156</sup> See the presentation of the regional background above and in Annex 7.

<sup>157</sup> The projects lack baseline studies and are often based on general observations or even hypotheses with little supporting documentation.

slowed or even halted in protected areas where conservation initiatives are undertaken<sup>158</sup>. The experience gained through the ARTP project (protected areas in Liberia and Sierra Leone) also shows that protected areas that enjoy EU support contain greater biodiversity than non-protected areas. In a broader perspective, EU interventions in the sector have either curbed poaching or curbed illegal offshore fishing. When these activities are continued for a lengthy period of between 10 and 15 years, there is a favourable impact on biodiversity.

#### **4.6.2 Analysis of EU regional support's contribution to improving regional governance of natural resource management and climate change<sup>159</sup>**

EU regional support for environmental governance has yielded very few outputs and they have had little impact. Environmental management lies within the responsibility of national institutions and West African States are slow to recognise the role that regional organisations can play in coordinating strategies and harmonising tools in the "environment" sector. Accordingly, the four-party agreement between Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger and Togo for subregional cooperation on managing cross-border protected areas did not eventuate during implementation of the PAPE (Programme d'appui aux parcs de l'Entente) programme<sup>160</sup>. Moreover, cross-border cooperation activities (anti-poaching patrols, drafting of development and management plans) were conducted, demonstrating the possibility, but also the legal and logistical limitations of joint operations such as these. It has proved to be very difficult to establish integrated cross-border management of protected areas, as the example of the ARTP project shows: despite the interest shown by the Presidents of the two countries (Liberia and Sierra Leone) and support from the WB and the EU, the project was unable to go beyond simple joint actions. In the area of climate change, the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) - West Africa carried out numerous activities that enabled the countries in the region to take a stance at the three Conferences of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Concerning the development of regional environmental strategies in the area of natural resources, at the beginning of the period under review, WAEMU and ECOWAS adopted environmental policies<sup>161</sup> that they had drawn up in a convergent, coordinated manner. More specific documents were also developed, such as a WAEMU regulation on fishing (2007) and ECOWAS's Forest Convergence Plan (2013). These policies attracted little attention from the Member States and were not updated. This reflects, on one hand, the low "visibility" of WAEMU and ECOWAS in the environmental field and, on the other hand, the meagre human and financial resources allocated to the national institutions in charge of natural resource conservation to fulfil their functions. Other regional organisations playing a technical role, such as the ICDCS or the Subregional Fishing Commission (SRFC), enjoy greater recognition in their respective domains (agriculture and livestock farming for the ICDCS, fishing for the SRFC).

Where regional environmental strategies are concerned, EU regional cooperation fostered greater recognition of the issues and supported endeavours to harmonise cross-border natural resource management. These endeavours did not lead to the signature of interstate cooperation agreements, but they did enable greater consultation between national administrations and on-site collaboration.

Little progress was made in regional natural resource management over the period under review. In addition, it should be noted that the countries in the region are heavily involved in the negotiations on fighting climate change and closely monitor the undertakings made at UNFCCC Conferences of the Parties. In this domain, the drafting of the contributions for the COP 21

<sup>158</sup> See more detailed analyses in the evaluation matrix (Annex 1).

<sup>159</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 269-280.

<sup>160</sup> Note that a tripartite agreement on the WAP zone was concluded after closure of the PAPE programme.

<sup>161</sup> WAEMU's "Common Policy on Environmental Improvement" in 2008 and ECOWAS's Environmental Policy in 2008.

(Paris, 2015) and their submission to the UNFCCC Secretariat can be attributed to EU-funded activities.

All in all, the EU's contribution to developments in the management of regional natural resources and climate change has been quite small. This is due to a number of factors: i) the relatively small resources allocated to this sector of regional cooperation; ii) the regional organisations' ineffectual attempts to develop and implement an overall vision and their difficulties in promoting the regional nature of environmental actions, and iii) the intersectoral nature (environment, security, tourism, rural development) of actions to conserve or promote cross-border natural resources, which heightens the difficulties of consultation and coordination among the stakeholders concerned.

#### **4.6.3 Analysis of EU regional interventions' contribution to reducing the vulnerability to climate change of the populations of cross-border zones in West Africa<sup>162</sup>**

With regard to reducing vulnerability to climate change, the main outputs of EU regional support mechanisms are as follows: i) the creation of participatory approaches, which have demonstrated their importance for law enforcement or for establishing a "win-win" situation between socio-economic development and natural resource conservation; ii) the creation of direct or indirect jobs, in particular for women, by involving local populations in conservation activities<sup>163</sup>; iii) the reduction of anthropogenic pressure on protected areas as a result of improving agriculture or building infrastructures in the neighbouring areas, and iv) the reduction of conflicts between beneficiaries (e.g. crop growers - livestock farmers) and between the managers of protected areas and the local populations.

Trends in the benefits drawn by the populations from sustainable natural resource usage during the period under review have seldom been documented by either the national administrations (in charge of the environment or rural development) or the EU-funded projects. In general, the latter do not have a baseline for the populations' socio-economic situation, since these interventions are linked to the guardianship agencies in charge of natural resource protection, not those in charge of rural development. The projects carried out a few action-research activities, but they focused more on the management and protection of natural resources than on the use of the resources for the populations' benefit.

Against this backdrop, the EU's contribution to the trends observed in the benefits of sustainable natural resource management for the populations remained limited. Although the interventions entailed in the protection of protected areas acknowledge the importance of the neighbouring populations, the latter receive little in the way of support (by comparison with the total project budget) and the support is not very effective, because of the environmental protection institutions' lack of rural development skills and authority. Moreover, successfully conducted activities (see above) remain locally-based because of a lack of replication and dissemination, and there is limited uptake. Before the techniques or procedures developed to solve a particular problem can be applied, there must be sufficient time and resources to convince the interested parties of their merits, gain their trust and guide them in their use.

While stressing that there is also very little regional documentation concerning the development of the populations' vulnerability to climate change, it appears that the EU's contribution to this particular impact has remained confined to the intervention areas and was not very sustainable.

<sup>162</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 280-287.

<sup>163</sup> Direct jobs: carrying out work, performing surveillance, etc. Indirect jobs: tourism, the craft industry, etc. However, health crises (Ebola) and security crises dampened the potential of certain activities (tourism) that would have benefited both the protected areas (financing) and the local economy.

In the end, given their focus on regional economic development, the ROs are largely unaware of the stakes and opportunities offered by rational natural resource management at local level.

## 4.7 EQ 7 – Intervention means and approaches

### Field covered and sector intervention logic:

This question covers the cooperation scheme's effectiveness and efficiency in the broad sense: it considers the range of instruments used, the procedures, the role of technical assistance, partnership arrangements with regional organisations<sup>164</sup>, etc. Its analysis is based on specific investigations and on observations made during the handling of other questions. This question cuts across the entire intervention logic. It aims to ascertain to what extent the types of aid and the methods of aid provision are suited to the objectives pursued by regional cooperation strategy. It pays particular attention to capacity development<sup>165</sup> and ownership, which are crucial factors in achieving regional cooperation strategy's objectives.

### Answer to the question:

**EQ 7**

*To what extent have the combination of instruments, the intervention approaches and the aid management methods helped to achieve the outcomes obtained by EU regional cooperation with West Africa?*

The limited outcomes obtained by EU regional cooperation in West Africa are the result of, among other things, factors linked to the intervention approaches and the management and organisational methods employed by regional cooperation. The following factors in particular are concerned: i) dialogue on the policies conducted by the EU at national level fails to give sufficient consideration to regional issues; ii) shortcomings in the intervention logic underpinning stakeholder capacity development, and especially the ECOWAS and WAEMU Commissions, prevented it from reinforcing the Commissions' credibility and effectiveness; iv) insufficient linkage between the action of the various entities, within European institutions, in charge of managing and monitoring regional cooperation, and v) insufficient consideration of cross-cutting questions in the formulation and implementation of interventions.

### 4.7.1 Analysis of the workings of partnership arrangements between the EU and West African regional organisations<sup>166</sup>

Political dialogue between ECOWAS and the EU is conducted periodically<sup>167</sup> within a formal framework that brings together the country chairing ECOWAS, the country assuming the presidency of the EU, the heads of the ECOWAS Commission, the European Commission and the EEAS. These meetings mainly deal with peace and security issues, and regional economic integration (in connection with the EPA). Regional policy dialogue, though not formalised, is quite frequent and takes a variety of forms<sup>168</sup>. However, its effectiveness is curbed by the lack of importance paid to regional questions in the national level policy dialogue conducted by the EU. Leadership of the preparation and accomplishment of the RIPs has improved since the

<sup>164</sup> Since the beginning of the 11th EDF, these partnerships also include the EDF's national authorising officers.

<sup>165</sup> Capacity development is the process by which individuals, groups and organisations (...) develop (...) their (...) resources and knowledge (...) to perform functions, solve problems and achieve objectives. This definition is taken from: "Evaluation Methodology & Baseline Study of European Commission Technical Cooperation Support", September 2012, p. 1.

<sup>166</sup>For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 288-293.

<sup>167</sup> The 21st ECOWAS-EU meeting was held on 4 April 2017 in Brussels. The last such meeting dated back two and a half years. The WAEMU Commission attended the meeting as an observer.

<sup>168</sup> The EUDs' heads of cooperation meet in Nigeria and in Burkina Faso with, respectively, the commissioners from the ECOWAS Commission and those from the WAEMU Commission; the "regional cooperation" sector of the DG DEVCO unit responsible for West Africa meets on a monthly basis with the WAEMU and ECOWAS representatives in Brussels; the officer responsible for this sector holds phone meetings with the presidents of both Commissions.

establishment in 2014 of the Technical Working Group (TWG) and the Strategic Steering Committee (SSC), though without changing the asymmetry of the stakeholders' positions (the EU retains a preponderant role). The participation of the region's countries in various forums for dialogue with the EU on migration issues has influenced the formulation of their national migration policies. On the whole, the performances of the regional projects' steering committees have been quite poor. For some programmes, the technical monitoring committees operate satisfactorily. Within ECOWAS, a support unit for implementation of the 9th EDF RIP operated up until April 2010, playing a useful role in carrying out regional cooperation and coordinating the two DMROs. With regard to WAEMU, the 10th EDF support project (PARCI) for the EDF unit began operating only at the end of 2017, due to differences of opinion between the EU and WAEMU, and lengthy delays on the part of WAEMU.

#### **4.7.2 Analysis of EU regional support mechanisms' contribution to building regional organisations' capacity to discharge their duties<sup>169</sup>**

Under regional cooperation strategy, from the 8th EDF up to the 10th EDF, capacity development for regional cooperation stakeholders<sup>170</sup> steadily gained in importance. As a result, it was allocated a significant proportion of EU regional cooperation budgets (in the form of institutional support and capacity-building components or actions in sectoral programmes). The signature of the 11th EDF RIP at the end of the period ushered in a major change, reducing the sums dedicated to institutional support for the DMROs and diversifying the range of stakeholders involved in implementing the EDF<sup>171</sup>).

Throughout the period under review, there was i) no shared diagnosis (by the EU and the beneficiary regional organisations) of capacity-building requirements and ii) no intervention strategy defining the priority actions and the appropriate implementation methods in this domain. For the DMROs, the strategic frameworks laying down the priorities for individual and organisational capacity development were drawn up only towards the end of the period<sup>172</sup>. Moreover, the institutional reforms of both organisations are still in progress and have had a negative effect on their ability to design policies and strategies, make decisions, run their bodies, recruit staff (the hiring freeze is still in progress) and train staff.

In some cases, EU capacity-building support mechanisms were able to play a positive role by providing the means to build individual capacities within organisations (regional economic integration, SANAD&R). On the whole, though, the outcomes of the support are very mixed. Sectoral analyses concur in confirming that, for want of a capacity-building intervention strategy (within both the EU and the supported organisations), the decisions made remained unrelated, operating on a silo principle<sup>173</sup> without sufficient coordination (between themselves and with the other TFPs). The outcomes were also compromised by protracted delays in project implementation (9th and 10th EDFs<sup>174</sup>). As a result, EU-funded technical assistance served mainly to perform operational tasks to rectify anomalies and shortcomings observed in the workings of these organisations and achieve the projects' immediate objectives, rather than creating a permanent internal capacity as part of the organisations' medium-term strategy. In a number of cases, flaws were also noted in the actual deployment of the technical assistance, with

<sup>169</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 293-304.

<sup>170</sup> DRMOs, specialised technical institutions, national administrations of the region's Member States, civil society organisations.

<sup>171</sup> Access to EDF funding for national authorities and regional organisations other than the DMROs, and funding management delegated to international organisations or EU Member States' agencies.

<sup>172</sup> An integrated capacity-building programme (2016-2020) was drawn up at WAEMU's initiative at the end of the period under review, acknowledging the need to integrate all capacity-building requirements and support mechanisms of the various TFPs in the matter. A plan for 2016-2020 was also drawn up at ECOWAS. However neither of these documents existed at the time of signing the 10th EDF RIP or formulating the various interventions.

<sup>173</sup> Different Commissions/Divisions, sectors and projects are completely isolated from each other.

<sup>174</sup> Some of which began only in 2017.

teams not correctly positioned in the institutions' organisation chart, and/or working as "substitutes". The problem was compounded by the failure of the DMROs (notably ECOWAS) to honour their commitments regarding staff secondment or recruitment. At the end of the period, the problems observed became more acute when funds were delegated to international organisations or Member State agencies, which were not consistently aware or in favour of capacity development and for which the EU did not have the appropriate tools to effectively monitor the outcomes, effects and impacts of the support. Given the initial intervention logic, this is an unexpected effect.

#### **4.7.3 Analysis of EU support mechanisms' contribution to reinforcing regional organisations' legitimacy and credibility<sup>175</sup>**

Throughout the period under review, there was little adoption (and therefore little application) of regional strategies, policies and directives by the ECOWAS and WAEMU Member States. There is a gap between the commitments made at regional level during summit meetings of Heads of State or cabinet meetings and their actual application in the countries. The discrepancy is particularly stark in the fields of trade policies (tariff and non-tariff barriers continue to be applied in intra-regional trade) and transport policies (regulations designed to eliminate vehicle overloading are not applied). The reasons for this situation are more socio-political and legal<sup>176</sup>. By comparison with the ROs in other African regions, ECOWAS and WAEMU draw up high-quality regional strategies. However, their implementation track records prove to be quite poor. One of the factors accounting for this is that these two DMROs try to cover too many domains for their available human and financial resources. And EU cooperation has not helped the organisations set priorities and focus their interventions on a limited number of domains, subdomains or actions by applying the principle of subsidiarity as best possible.

Moreover, while ECOWAS and WAEMU have a relatively high self-financing ratio (compared with other ROs in Africa<sup>177</sup>), many Member States have substantial, chronic payment arrears. This reflects a vicious circle in which the DMROs' efficiency is undermined by non-payment of their contributions, which lowers their legitimacy and in turn does not encourage Member States to pay what they owe<sup>178</sup>. For want of systems to monitor the application of community rules, there is no way for the stakeholders concerned (Member States, civil society organisations, private stakeholders, TFPs, etc.) to know what stage the regional integration process has reached and, therefore, to understand the ROs' actual role in guiding the States towards effective implementation of regional policies.

The convergence of the strategies, policies and regulations adopted by ECOWAS and WAEMU formally progressed during the period under review, more specifically with regard to trade policy (adoption of the ECOWAS CET, which applies throughout the zone) and transport policy (axle load checks). However, in practice, collaboration between the two organisations remains difficult. The joint technical secretariat (JTS), whose operation was supported for several years by the EU, cannot manage to play a true coordination role between the two DMROs. In a number of domains (food security, peace and security), each organisation takes initiatives and draws up

<sup>175</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 305-311.

<sup>176</sup> Up until 2006, ECOWAS did not have any legal instruments enabling community texts to be automatically transposed into national laws. WAEMU, on the other hand, has always had the necessary instruments. Today, in both the WAEMU zone and the ECOWAS zone, a community text is automatically transposed into national law without having to be ratified by Parliament.

<sup>177</sup> WAEMU self-finances 80% of its operating budget and 0% of its investment budget. Up until 2014, ECOWAS financed its entire operating budget and a substantial share of its investments. However its resources depend heavily on Nigeria's contribution. Following the collapse in oil prices, Nigeria drastically reduced its payments to ECOWAS, thereby weakening the latter's financial situation.

<sup>178</sup> As a result of these funding problems, ECOWAS's failure to honour its commitments to financing the Regional Food Security Reserve discredited it in the eyes of the various sector stakeholders (TFPs, professional organisations, etc.).



strategies that may or may not be coordinated with those of the other organisation. These coordination problems between the two DMROs have had a negative effect on the accomplishment of several EU-funded regional programmes (9th and 10th EDF), notably in trade, competitiveness and transport matters.

#### **4.7.4 Analysis of the arrangements for organising and implementing EU regional cooperation<sup>179</sup>**

The human resources dedicated to regional cooperation with West Africa (both at headquarters and in the EUDs) are insufficient, given the sums allocated and the complexity of the cases. Although the Court of Auditors report in 2009 noted a lack of clarification in the organisation of regional cooperation, to date there is no consensus on the respective roles that the various entities (DG DEVCO, EEAS, EUD with a regional mandate, other EUDs) play or should play in steering cooperation with the West Africa region. For an EUD that does not have a regional mandate, regional cooperation is a minor concern because of the scant attention generally paid to regional issues in national-level cooperation, and the complexity of setting up regional projects. However, the situation has been changing since the 11th EDF began, since it entails preparing projects (such as "transport governance or "energy governance") that involve both regional and national authorising officers.

On the whole, regional cooperation has a poor track record in terms of meeting implementation timetables. This is due to a combination of factors: i) shortcomings in programme design (weak theories of change and underestimated risks and hurdles); ii) the DMROs' lack of the (mainly) organisational and management skills necessary to carry out, or have carried out, the actions under their responsibility, and iii) lack of effective coordination between ECOWAS and WAEMU (the 9th and 10th EDF programmes were "divided up" between the two organisations). Regarding the cost/outcome ratio, in some cases the use of implementing agencies seems to entail abnormally high implementation costs because the choice of agency is not subject to competitive bidding.

#### **4.7.5 Analysis of the consideration given to cross-cutting aspects when formulating and implementing the EU's regional interventions<sup>180</sup>**

The actual incorporation of these cross-cutting aspects (gender, human rights, HIV-AIDS and the environment) in regional cooperation strategies (in the 10th and 11th EDF) and in the design, implementation and monitoring of the interventions falls far short of the EU's stated objectives. Regarding the formulation of the interventions, the EU's internal mechanisms for factoring cross-cutting aspects into interventions were reinforced and standardised during the period (in particular for social aspects such as gender and the environment), with a systematic analysis at the stage of formulating the interventions. These mechanisms have resulted in greater interest being paid to cross-cutting aspects. However, they have also resulted in a standardised approach<sup>181</sup> that does not make up for the lack of in-depth socio-economic analyses to gain a proper understanding of the issues upstream of the interventions. The interventions' logical frameworks subsequently fail to explain how these aspects are going to be factored in, or the planned actions are marginal in the interventions' overall objective and their scope remains limited. Finally, the monitoring and evaluation systems used for regional interventions give little or no consideration

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<sup>179</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 311-316.

<sup>180</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 316-322.

<sup>181</sup> Including common frameworks for all sectors and interventions, though different levels of application exist, depending on the category of project.

to cross-cutting issues<sup>182</sup>. More specifically in relation to gender issues, the monitoring and evaluation systems do not systematically include disaggregated indicators, and when they do, they are seldom entered.

The factors accounting for this marginal consideration of cross-cutting aspects are: i) the inadequacy or even complete lack of in-depth socio-economic analyses to gain a proper understanding of the issues sufficiently upstream of defining the interventions, and therefore put forward appropriate measures; ii) the human resources in charge of implementing the interventions are seldom aware of and/or trained in these issues. This is equally applicable to the teams in charge of coordinating and implementing the interventions (EU, ROs, technical assistance) and the consultants responsible for monitoring and evaluation exercises; iii) human resources are focused on attaining the programme objectives, which are often ambitious and which do not allow for more than marginal treatment of these aspects; iv) headquarters services fail to provide adequate guidance as to how to effectively factor in these aspects. Regional organisations continue to pay very little attention to these cross-cutting aspects and it seems that the EU has not been able to initiate an improvement in the situation as part of its regional cooperation with West Africa during the period under review.

#### 4.8 EQ 8 – Coordination, complementarity and coherence

**Field covered and sector intervention logic:** This general question concerns the EU's entire strategy of cooperation with the West Africa Region during the period 2008-2016. It aims to deal with four evaluation criteria and key factors to which the EU pays particular attention, namely coordination with other technical and financial partners, the complementarity and added value of European institutions' interventions by comparison with those conducted by EU Member States, and the consistency of the EU's action in the various aspects of its relations with the West Africa Region<sup>183</sup>.

##### **Answer to the question:**

<b>EQ 8</b>	<i><b>To what extent is the EU's strategy of cooperation with West Africa coordinated with other donors' interventions, complementary to Member States' interventions, and formulated and implemented in a consistent manner?</b></i>
<p>The mechanisms for coordinating aid with the West African regional integration process were reinforced during the period, resulting in better information sharing among the stakeholders and, in some sectors, better operational coordination. However, because the different stakeholders did not jointly programme their cooperation strategies, this did not result in tighter convergence, nor increased policy dialogue. Where regional cooperation in West Africa is concerned, the coordination and division of work between the EU and its Member States also proved to be limited. There appears to be a considerable gap between the strong added value the EU enjoys in relation to its support for regional integration and its failure to leverage these competencies to share the concrete experience of the EU regional integration process with its West African counterparts. The low visibility of EU support for regional actions also compromises the effectiveness of any policy dialogue that may take place, insofar as it deprives the EU of an additional lever for encouraging the political, institutional and other changes targeted by regional cooperation interventions.</p> <p>Throughout the period under review, it was difficult to achieve coherence and synergies between the various sectors of regional cooperation, and between the actions taken and instruments used within any one sector. This can be attributed to the fragmentary nature of the support, and insufficient coordination and consultation within the EU. At the end of the period, these factors were compounded by the fact that programme implementation was divided up among different implementing agencies.</p>	

<sup>182</sup>There is no baseline situation against which environmental and social changes and targets can be measured; indicators refer to activities, not outcomes; there is no reporting; in a number of cases, there is no use of logical frameworks to track progress.

<sup>183</sup> Added value and consistency are evaluation criteria specific to the EU.

With regard to the interactions between regional cooperation strategies and other EU policies, the overall assessment varies from one sector to another.

#### **4.8.1 Analysis of the processes and methods used to define and monitor implementation of EU regional cooperation strategy<sup>184</sup>**

During the period under review (10th and 11th EDF), there was no consultation or discussion with the other TFPs about the process of preparing the RIPs for West Africa. There is no mechanism for dialogue and consultation between the EU and the other TFPs for this purpose. There are formalised coordination mechanisms between the DMROs and their TFPs, but they are not very active<sup>185</sup> and are more like exchanges of information on the various TFPs' portfolio of current programmes than real aid coordination mechanisms. We have also noted a lack of proactivity on the part of the DMROs with regard to these issues. This situation stems mainly from the following factors: i) insufficient staff (within these organisations) to allow a broader consultation in the various sectors, ii) a lack of coordination and consultation between the two DMROs, and iii) the DMROs' reluctance to share information about the funding granted by each of their partners in the different sectors.

The number of mechanisms for coordinating the TFPs increased sharply during the period (sometimes at the EU's initiative), mainly among ECOWAS partners. Although these consultation frameworks improved information sharing among TFPs, the investments yielded limited outcomes in terms of joint aid programming or operational coordination of the interventions: i) there is still no detailed, up-to-date map of the various stakeholders' interventions, so stakeholders have a rather patchy vision of other stakeholders' portfolio; ii) the structure of this coordination is still very fragmented; iii) given that not all of the TFPs have regional cooperation strategies or regional offices, it is not always easy to identify the appropriate contacts and know where consultation on regional cooperation is taking place; iv) we have also noted the absence of regional cooperation's "new stakeholders": because they do not get involved in the coordination mechanisms (WB, ADB), they pose a risk to aid efficiency and impact. The sector analyses indicate that the TFPs have a rather similar analysis of the stakes of regional integration in West Africa and that, in the flagship sectors in which they operate, there is no major sectoral inconsistency and the interventions follow a fairly similar logic. Without consulting these stakeholders specifically on the subject, it is difficult, however, to talk about strategy convergence. In fact, each TFP draws up its own agenda bilaterally and often on a top-down principle. Good operational coordination has been noted in some cases, such as SANAD&R and trade. In the "peace and security", "environment" and "regional economic integration" sectors, convergence is still limited by the large number of TFPs involved in these topics and the shortage of aid coordination. In the case of institutional support for the DMROs, the support continues to be scattered.

#### **4.8.2 Analysis of the complementarity between EU regional cooperation strategy and Member States' strategies, and analysis of the added value of the EU's community action<sup>186</sup>**

There is limited coordination and division of work between the EU and its Member States. Although the Member States are informed of the programmable regional cooperation actions, there was no joint programming of the 10th and 11th EDF RIPs for West Africa. Moreover,

<sup>184</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 323-329.

<sup>185</sup> Irregular meetings, turnover among meeting attendees and, in the case of WAEMU, a more dynamic approach only at the end of the period.

<sup>186</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see: Annex 1, pp. 329-332.

there is no mechanism for consultation between the EU and its Member States for this purpose, although some of them (in particular France, Germany and Spain) initiate and finance regional actions. The growing prominence of new cooperation instruments (ETF and blending) at the end of the period is changing the relationships between the EU and the Member States' agencies, but this is not necessarily propitious for progress in the division of work, insofar as resources in donation form come solely from the EU. The Member States' agencies act solely as EU funding implementation agencies: there are no grounds for distributing roles between the regional cooperation strategy of the Member State concerned and that of the EU.

The EU has a recognised added value and legitimacy in the field of support for the regional integration process, because of i) its status as a regional integration entity, and ii) the scale of the resources deployed<sup>187</sup>. However, the EU does not sufficiently leverage the competencies it enjoys as a regional integration entity. In the various sectors of regional cooperation, very few civil servants from the European Commission Directorates-General have been involved in sharing a concrete experience of the regional integration process in the EU with their West African counterparts (in the form of missions to West Africa or reception of senior ECOWAS or WAEMU officials in Brussels).

Because the regional organisations' actions are low-profile, the EU's regional support mechanisms have a low profile also. The proliferation of implementing agencies<sup>188</sup> (and the specific positioning of some of them) during the period under review are reducing the EU's visibility in the regional projects concerned and spotlighting these agencies instead. The low visibility of EU support for regional actions also compromises the effectiveness of any policy dialogue that may take place, insofar as it deprives the EU of an additional lever for encouraging the political, institutional and other changes targeted by regional cooperation interventions.

#### **4.8.3 Analysis of the internal consistency of EU interventions in West Africa<sup>189</sup>**

The coherence and synergies among the various sectors of regional cooperation, and between the actions carried out and the instruments used within any one sector, were problematic throughout the period under review, mainly because of i) the fragmentation of the support mechanisms, which are governed by different levels of cooperation (national or regional), different instruments (EDF, EUTF, IcSP, etc.) and different sectors, and ii) insufficient internal coordination and consultation. For example, many actions supported by the EU during the period concerned cross-border areas (transit facilitation, efforts to combat terrorism and illegal trafficking, irregular migration control, etc.). However little effort was made to achieve coherence and synergies among the different actions. At the end of the period, these factors were compounded by the fact that programme implementation was divided up among different implementing agencies.

In the "peace and security" sector, the interactions between interventions concerning Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and those conducted for development cooperation purposes were analysed on the basis of the more specialised study on the "Sahel counter-terrorism" (CT Sahel) programme. The lessons learnt in terms of coherence, coordination and synergies between interventions covered by different EU policies are summarised in the box below.

<sup>187</sup> Its commitments have changed since the 8th EDF and the envelope doubled between the 10th and 11th EDF.

<sup>188</sup> The growing tendency to use implementing agencies stems from the ROs' operational difficulties in defining, coordinating, implementing and monitoring interventions, which caused substantial delays in implementing interventions under the 9th and 10th EDF.

<sup>189</sup> Consistency with the strategy's overall objective is analysed in EQ 1. For a more detailed analysis of this section, see: Annex 1, pp. 332-341.

**Box 5 – Summary of the case study: The Sahel counter-terrorism programme<sup>190</sup>**

The CT Sahel programme, financed by the IcSP from 2011 to 2016 to the value of €8.7 million, pursued a threefold objective: i) create a knowledge hub on organised crime and terrorism, ii) build local prevention capacities, and iii) enhance the States' capacity to pursue and repress terrorist acts. It had two components: a national component (Mali, Mauritania and Niger; Burkina Faso and Chad) and a regional component, the G5 Sahel Defence College. The programme was set up as the Sahel was experiencing numerous political and military events that prompted many stakeholders to step in, notably the EU (three CFSP missions: EUCAP Sahel Niger 2012, EUTM Mali 2013 and EUCAP Sahel Mali 2014) or some of its Member States (France-led military interventions: Serval 2013, then Barkhane 2014). Many EU-backed initiatives have also been taken by continental or regional organisations (AFISMA, MINUSMA and the G5 Sahel Joint Force).

While this latest "security traffic jam"<sup>191</sup> underscores the importance of greater coherence in EU interventions, better complementarity with its Member States' initiatives and stronger coordination with the other institutions, there does not appear to have been a strategy to this effect. On the one hand, there was no mechanism aimed at ensuring coherence among the interventions (CFSP, IcSP and EDF). On the other hand, numerous obstacles hindered the circulation of information among the actions led by different European instruments but acting on the same theatre of operations and addressing related issues.

The effectiveness of EU support mechanisms for combating terrorism has been weakened by i) the lack of a thematic information-sharing network, ii) a lack of coordination among interventions led by different instruments but addressing the same institution (e.g. the G5 Sahel), and iii) insufficient synergies between the support channelled into different institutions but pursuing the same objective (this applies to the support provided to the G5 Sahel and the MNJTF on one hand, and ECOWAS on the other). This siloed operation was accentuated by the fact that not all of the delegations had a "security and defence" adviser who could have centralised and circulated the information. This institutional complexity and the lack of coordination between the various interventions also considerably weaken the European Parliament's control function<sup>192</sup>.

During the period 2008-2016, DG TRADE and DG DEVCO aligned their agendas more closely. The links between trade and development were tightened, since, with the successive negotiations on the EPA and the CET, trade had become an important item on West African countries' development agenda. At the end of the period, collaboration between the TRADE and DEVCO Directorates-General also appears to be stronger: in Brussels, DG TRADE is involved in the programme formulation phases and assumes a technical monitoring role during the implementation phase. This does not prevent differing views<sup>193</sup>, but these differences can be attributed to different action perspectives. The installation of DG TRADE experts in two EUDs (in Nigeria and in Côte d'Ivoire<sup>194</sup>) fostered closer relations between trade and development, in particular in policy dialogue, even if, without an agreement on the regional EPA, policy dialogue is currently taking place essentially at national level (in each of the three countries covered). The coordination of interventions in the field remains complicated, though, and often proves to be insufficient. The growing importance accorded to trade and private-sector development in development agendas and the expected deployment of the European Investment Plan will make this coordination indispensable.

The period under review coincides with a major initiative to draw together the DG ECHO and DG DEVCO on the SANAD&R sector, which led to the adoption of a joint strategy by the two

<sup>190</sup> A detailed presentation of the case study can be found in Annex 10

<sup>191</sup> Crisis Group, "Force du G5 Sahel: Trouver sa place dans l'embouteillage sécuritaire", Report No. 258, 12 December 2017.

<sup>192</sup> European Parliament, *Le Sahel : un enjeu stratégique pour l'Union européenne*, Briefing, November 2017.

<sup>193</sup> For the countries that were signatories to the interim EPAs (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana), the DG TRADE wanted trade support mechanisms to be written into the 11th EDF NIPs, along with actions entailing a smaller financial commitment and more focused on capacity building.

<sup>194</sup> Côte d'Ivoire is covered by the interim EPA. The DG TRADE experts based at the Côte d'Ivoire EUD also cater for the other country covered by the interim EPA, namely Ghana.

DGs in 2012<sup>195</sup>. In West Africa, this ECHO-initiated cooperation was expressed in joint support for the AGIR alliance. It led to sound strategic coherence between sector cooperation priorities and the priorities written into DG ECHO's successive Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIPs), in particular regarding support for food security information systems (FSIS) and the planned support for the regional food security reserve. The inclusion of the SANAD&R sector as a concentration sector in the majority of NIPs and the increase in the funding allocated to this sector between the 10th and 11th EDF RIPs were influenced by this strategic cooperation. Apart from the substantial transfers of resources from the 10th and 11th EDF RIPs to the successive HIPs, these closer relations generated complementary features in many of the region's countries with regard to i) support for FSISs, ii) support for national food crisis prevention and management systems, and iii) policy dialogue. On the other hand, a substantial share of the resources programmed for the 11th EDF RIP's SANAD&R pillar was reassigned to the ETF from 2016 onwards. The latter is used as an LRRD (Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development) instrument, but basically makes it possible to initiate actions at national or even local level. These closer collaborations were facilitated by the growing number of ECHO staff in the region, greater involvement in common networks and work platforms, and the existence of ECHO's Dakar office, dedicated to regional issues. Despite this strategic move towards closer relations, ECHO voices a certain scepticism about the outcomes of regional and national institutions' capacity-building strategy, particularly in relation to FSISs and the priority given to malnutrition prevention by regional and national stakeholders. For its part, DEVCO has questions about the impacts and sustainability of social safety net initiatives, the implementation of which is often delegated to private stakeholders.

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<sup>195</sup> Com 586: The EU Approach to Resilience: Learning From Food Security Crises.

## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusions

The 11 conclusions reached by the evaluation are organised according to the EU's evaluation criteria (cf. *"Better Regulation"*) and certain key questions. They are presented in the table below.

**Table 1 – Summary of conclusions**

Criteria /Key questions	Conclusions	Corresponding evaluation questions
Relevance	C1 – The vision underlying regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa is far less clear now than it was ten years ago.	EQ 1 EQ 2 - 6
	C 2 – Regional cooperation focused on the main integration challenges facing West Africa, although for several key programmes the theories of change have had major shortcomings.	EQ 2 - 6
	C 3 – EU-West Africa regional cooperation has adjusted to changes in the context. However, it has not sufficiently learned the lessons from earlier interventions.	EQ 1 EQ 2 - 6
Effectiveness	C4 – A large proportion of the expected outputs from EU regional supports have been obtained. However, there are few areas for which these outputs have been translated into significant contributions to the deliverables.	EQ 2 - 6
Efficiency	C5 – During the period under review, the efficiency of the regional cooperation programmes, while difficult to measure, has proved to be mixed.	EQ 2 - 6 EQ 7
Impact and sustainability	C 6 – The EU's regional cooperation actions are not very sustainable, mainly because uptake by the regional organisations and their Member States has been only superficial.	EQ 2 - 6
	C 7 – With regard to the specific impacts, the EU's regional cooperation has made little contribution to the improvements observed or to limiting the deterioration of the situation.	EQ 2 - 6
EU coordination and added value	C 8 – There is little evidence of the EU's "natural" added value in terms of support for regional integration.	EQ 8
Complementarity and coherence	C 9 – Complementarity, coherence and synergies within and between cooperation sectors are, on the whole, insufficient.	EQ 1 EQ 7 EQ 8
Cross-cutting issues	C 10 – EU regional cooperation actions have finally done little to effectively consider cross-cutting aspects such as gender, human rights, HIV-AIDS and the environment.	EQ 7
Capacity-building	C 11 – EU regional cooperation allocated considerable resources to capacity-building for stakeholders, and in particular the DMROs. The support provided in this area was deployed without a thorough initial diagnostic and, barring a few exceptions, yielded few results.	EQ 7

### 5.1.1 Overall conclusion

At the beginning of the period evaluated (as in the previous period), regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa reflected the integration model at work within the EU, i.e. a law-based approach. Mainly through failure to give adequate consideration to the political, social and economic factors impeding such an approach, EU-West Africa regional cooperation yielded few lasting outcomes. The doubling of the regional envelope between the 9th and 10th EDFs has more to do with the stakes involved in the negotiation of a free-trade agreement (EPA) between the two regions than with any outcomes achieved through regional cooperation. Similarly, the further doubling of the envelope between the 10th and 11th EDFs owed more to new interdependencies between the two regions (notably in security and migration) than to the achievement of any significant progress in regional cooperation and integration within the West African space. Despite the improvements made in the governance of EU-West Africa regional cooperation since the beginning of the 11th EDF, the two partners' lack of common policy directions in terms of their vision of regional integration or the practical outworking of their partnership is weighing on their cooperation today.

### 5.1.2 Relevance

**Conclusion 1 – The vision underlying regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa is far less clear now than it was ten years ago. This reflects the tension between the principles underlying the Cotonou Agreement and the priorities of the recent Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy for the European Union.**

When the 10th EDF RIP began 10 years ago, EU-West Africa cooperation was underpinned by a fairly clear regional integration project comprising three major focus areas:

- Support for liberal economic integration by setting up a customs union and negotiating a free-trade agreement with the EU (regional EPA), and initiatives to upgrade private sector competitiveness and develop regional infrastructures (mainly transport). This first focus area rested on the hypothesis that increasing regional integration would encourage economic growth, which would "automatically" benefit all categories of the population and all regions (percolation process)<sup>196</sup>.
- The strengthening of ECOWAS's role in consolidating peace and security, in connection with the institutional architecture (the APSA) defined by the AU.
- Support for regional cooperation actions aimed at handling interdependencies or common problems such as protected cross-border areas and the prevention of food crises...

At the time, the drafting and implementation of this regional cooperation between the EU and West Africa was governed by the spirit (and the letter) of the Cotonou Agreement. Today the EU, as part of asserting its common foreign and security policy<sup>197</sup>, is keen to better defend its interests and protect its security. And this, in turn, is influencing the focus (and conditions) of its development cooperation policy. This change of direction, which is made clear in the "global strategy" (Mogherini, 2016) and in the New European Consensus on Development (2017), is particularly relevant to West Africa because of the phenomena occurring there (terrorist movements, migration to Europe, drug trafficking, etc.) and their repercussions on Europe, mainly because the two areas are geographically close.

<sup>196</sup> The EU also went through a liberal-type integration, but it was accompanied by powerful public intervention instruments (Common Agricultural Policy, structural funds, etc.).

<sup>197</sup> This stronger assertion of the EU's Foreign and Security Policy is one of the consequences of the Lisbon Treaty and the creation of the EEAS.



Other changes have occurred alongside this shift in the EU's position as a major player in development cooperation. In economic spheres, the "regional integration project" is floundering almost all over the world: the vision of liberal globalisation regulated by agreements between major regional groups under the aegis of the WTO is declining. In West Africa, despite the adoption of major texts such as the CET and the FTA, formal economic integration has made little headway and the regional EPA has broken down. Lastly, there is a discrepancy between, on one hand, the EU's guidelines on reducing poverty and inequalities and, on the other hand, the regional economic integration strategy in West Africa (backed by the EU), which, to date, has given scant attention to extending the benefit of economic growth to all regions and all social categories.

In the "peace and security" sector in West Africa, the challenges have become steeper and more diverse. Though ECOWAS is quite well-equipped to deal with the more diverse range of threats it faces, there is a problem of geographic mandate. This is because the terrorist movements currently destabilising the region operate in regions that span a number of Regional Economic Communities (RECs): Boko Haram is present in West Africa and Central Africa; AQIM is in West Africa and North Africa, and the other active groups are in the Sahara-Sahel region. As a result, the EU supports other institutions, such as the Lake Chad Basin Joint Task Force and the G5 Sahel Joint Task Force, which operate partly in the ECOWAS zone, given the rather limited coordination with ECOWAS.

What is happening in the "peace and security" sector reflects the broader question of the relationship between what is commonly called "multi-country functional cooperation" and the integration process on the scale of a REC such as ECOWAS. In its actions in West Africa, the EU has always combined both types of support in relative proportions that have varied over time. At the beginning of the period evaluated, the priority was clearly given to regional integration such as it was defined and led by the two DMROs, ECOWAS and WAEMU. At the end of the period, the focus shifted to multi-country actions, either under the auspices of an intergovernmental institution (as was the case with support for the G5 Sahel) or at the sole initiative of the EU (the multi-country actions financed by the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa). The EU is leaning towards multi-country cooperation without having carried out any real review of this type of action, even though there is quite a rich pool of experience in the matter in certain sectors (such as the environment, support for civil society or food security).

It seems, then, that the picture has become somewhat blurred on two (interlinked) levels. On the one hand, in both West Africa and Europe, the consensus among leaders as well as public support for regional integration projects has weakened. On the other hand, the EU's conception of the role of development cooperation, particularly in West Africa, has changed because of the various interdependencies linking it to the region. This change in the EU's position, which can already be seen on the ground, is at odds with the texts that still govern regional cooperation, and this is weighing on dialogue with the two DMROs. These two elements mean that the different stakeholders within the European institutions and the West African DMROs are keenly aware of the somewhat unclear course currently guiding cooperation between the two regions. This being so, there is a pressing need to set up a fresh regional integration project, in which the stakeholders (the EU and the West African partners) fully agree on the objectives and scope.

**Conclusion 2 – Regional cooperation has addressed the main integration challenges facing West Africa, but the theories of change have revealed major flaws and the objectives have not been sufficiently ranked.**

The fields covered and the objectives of EU regional support are very relevant, given West Africa's features (little diversification of the economic fabric and intra-regional cooperation, growing threats to security and stability, more frequent food crises, etc.) and the need for regional integration to overcome these numerous challenges. Despite the lack of clarity and the questions

currently surrounding its policy directions (cf. Conclusion 1), this regional cooperation is therefore completely justified.

Even so, sector analyses (cf. EQ 2 - 6) have revealed major flaws in the design of several major EU-West Africa cooperation programmes. These shortcomings in the sector theories of change are situated at several levels and are of various types:

- The objectives and, most importantly, the results are too ambitious for the duration of the interventions and financial and human means allocated to them;
- The political and economic obstacles to effectively implementing regional integration have been underestimated, with regional integration often remaining a stated objective that the region's political leaders do not actually support;
- The technical difficulties of applying certain measures (such as harmonizing the customs departments' IT systems) have been underestimated;
- There is insufficient coordination and linkage between the EU's cooperation actions at national level and at regional level. This is particularly important in a region where the majority of countries are LDCs that depend heavily on foreign aid and whose dealings with international institutions (IMF, World Bank, etc.) are based on an analysis of their national performances, without any real consideration of whether or not they meet their regional commitments (cf. answer to EQ 3).

This results in logical frameworks in which the hypotheses are insufficiently detailed (they fail to identify the parties that stand to gain or lose as a result of integration) and the risk mitigation and monitoring measures are insufficiently developed.

On top of these problems in the design of the sector interventions, the thematic field covered by EU–West Africa regional cooperation as a whole is too vast. The mandates and roadmaps of the two DMROs are very ambitious for the resources at their disposal: their meagre human resources are also insufficiently skilled and motivated, and the financial resources too scant. Moreover, EU cooperation has not had a hand in setting priorities or focusing regional interventions on a limited number of sectors and subsectors.

**Conclusion 3 – EU-West Africa regional cooperation has adjusted to changes in the context. However, from one period to another, it has not sufficiently learned the lessons from earlier interventions.**

When the 10th EDF RIP was being carried out in "food and nutrition security", EU-West Africa regional cooperation had been able to adjust to the context and give the emphasis to preventing and managing food crises, whereas the 10th EDF RIP had initially been more focused on improving agricultural productivity. This partial refocusing of the sector was a fitting response to the growing frequency of food crises in the region.

In 2015, the EU created a new tool, the Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF), to address the increasingly frequent crises of various types in the Sahel (and in other parts of Africa). It was financed by the 11th EDF RIP for West Africa (a €200m transfer taken out of the RIP's total budget of €1,150m), among other sources of funding. With the EUTF, as well as the IcSP, the APF and the thematic lines, EU regional cooperation had a range of instruments or programs, in addition to the RIP, capable to addressing the diversity of challenges facing the West Africa region. This increase in the number of regional cooperation tools has come at a cost in terms of coherence, complementarity and synergies between the different measures, particularly in the "peace and security" sector (cf. Conclusion 9).

Moreover, the positive aspects of this "plasticity" in regional cooperation are lessened by the fact that, in several domains (or sub-domains), the new interventions have not sufficiently learned the lessons from earlier interventions; more specifically, the causes for the failure to obtain certain results have not been analysed in depth. To a large extent, this stems from i) the shortcomings in

the regional programmes' monitoring and evaluation systems (heightened by ROs' shortcomings in the monitoring and evaluation of regional integration); ii) the fact that implementation of the 9th and 10th EDF RIPs has fallen behind schedule (as a result, the new programmes are formulated when the previous ones have barely begun); iii) the fact that implementation is divided up among various agencies (making it difficult to obtain an overview of the results obtained in a particular domain); iv) the lack of continuity in EU cooperation on certain themes (e.g. agricultural sectors) and v) the turnover in European Commission staff (at headquarters and in the EUDs) without a structured mechanism for transmitting the institutional memory (in the broad sense). These various factors have had a negative effect on the effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the EU's regional cooperation.

### 5.1.3 Effectiveness

**Conclusion 4 – A large proportion of the expected outputs from EU regional supports have been obtained. However, there are few areas for which these outputs have been translated into significant contributions to the deliverables.**

The level of achievement of the outputs is satisfactory for a large majority of the sectors and subsectors covered by EU regional cooperation. The few subsectors for which regional support has not yielded the expected outputs are: the common investment market, the facilitation of interstate road transit, the development of agricultural production and value chains, regional natural resource governance and a large proportion of institutional support for the DMROs.

In all sectors of cooperation, EU regional support has helped raise awareness of issues (e.g.: sustainable land management, road overload, etc.), the development of shared methodologies (management of public finances, diagnostic of food insecurity, knowledge of drug trafficking circuits, etc.) or the adoption of community strategies, policies or regulations (free movement of goods and people, quality standards, regional agricultural policy, etc.). These are major achievements.

These positive contributions are nevertheless not generally reflected by the effective application of community rules by West Africa states or the implementation of investments meeting the needs identified at regional level. This meagre effectiveness (as far as results are concerned) can be attributed to a number of factors, including: i) programme designs, most of which favour a rights-based approach (thereby reproducing one of the main traits of European construction) without paying sufficient attention to the analysis of stakeholders' coalitions in favour, or not, of furthering regional integration; ii) the lack of importance paid to regional issues in the national policy dialogue conducted by the EU (the failure of West African States to honour their regional commitments is seldom on the agenda of EU policy dialogue with each of these States) and iii) the difficulties or weaknesses encountered in regional cooperation management (cf. Conclusions 5 and 9).

### 5.1.4 Efficiency

**Conclusion 5 – During the period under review, the efficiency of the regional cooperation strategy, while difficult to measure, has proved to be mixed.**

Gauging the efficiency of a cooperation strategy is a tricky exercise, especially for regional cooperation. If we look at the relatively satisfactory level of the outputs obtained with EU regional support (cf. Conclusion 4), the efficiency of the inputs allocated to regional cooperation can be considered quite high. If, however, we consider the low level of the results obtained (cf. Conclusion 4), on one hand, and the very long delays recorded in implementing many programmes, on the other hand, the efficiency appears to be quite low.

The poor performances in keeping to the agreed schedule stem from a combination of factors: i) shortcomings in programme design (weak theories of change and underestimated risks and hurdles); ii) the DMROs' lack of the (mainly) organisational and management skills necessary to carry out, or have carried out, the actions under their responsibility; iii) poor performances by certain implementing agencies, and iv) lack of effective coordination between ECOWAS and WAEMU (the 9th and 10th EDF programmes were "divided up" between the two organisations). Moreover, in some cases, the use of implementing agencies is not subject to competitive bidding and seems to entail abnormally high implementation costs.

### 5.1.5 Impact and sustainability

#### **Conclusion 6 – Sustainability of the EU's regional cooperation actions is weak, mainly because of superficial ownership by the various West African stakeholders concerned.**

The sustainability of the results (if any) of EU regional cooperation is generally low, irrespective of the sectors. The main factors for this are: i) the West African States' weak ownership of the regional integration process; ii) the fact that the non-state stakeholders concerned (CSOs, private sector, etc.) are ill-equipped to contribute more actively to drawing up and monitoring regional policies; iii) the difficulties encountered by the regional organisations in exercising the mandates assigned to them by their Member States, and iv) the shortcomings in the design and implementation of capacity-building actions (cf. Conclusion 11).

Although ECOWAS and WAEMU are still officially the co-pilots of regional cooperation strategy, it appears that, during the period under review, they were gradually marginalised in this role (a responsibility was shared between the two DMROs and the EU). The option chosen for the 11th EDF RIP, whereby the national authorising officers are given direct access to regional funding envelopes, is likely to get West African States more involved in regional cooperation actions. However, this option is applied more or less appropriately, depending on the sectors: for example, it is more appropriately applied in the new "transport" programme than in the "competitiveness" programme<sup>198</sup>.

#### **Conclusion 7 – With regard to the specific impacts, and where it has been possible to assess this factor, the EU's regional cooperation has contributed little to the improvements observed or to limiting the deterioration of the situation.**

For most of the 17 specific impacts targeted by the EU's regional cooperation strategy (see Figure 4 in Chapter 3), the region has seen a deterioration in its situation over the period 2008-2016. The exceptions include some aspects of political governance (political involvement, elections, legal processes), air safety, the extreme overloading of road transport vehicles, and agricultural productivity. It is very difficult to assess the role played by EU regional cooperation in fostering the improvements noted in these fields or curbing the deteriorations recorded in the others. Two of the main reasons for this difficulty are major shortcomings in the DMROs' monitoring and evaluation of regional policies (due to the weaknesses of the national and regional statistics systems) and the deficiencies (or even absence, in some cases) of systems to monitor and evaluate EU regional cooperation interventions.

For most of the areas of impact, and taking into count the methodological limitations of the analysis, the level of contribution to EU regional cooperation is either nil or low. This lack of contribution to impact is seen even for sectors in which EU regional cooperation has been active for many years and with significant resources (e.g. trade facilitation, transport, etc.). It reflects i) the intensity of the constraints on the regional integration process in West Africa (cf. above), ii)

<sup>198</sup> In the "competitiveness" programme, the question of synergies or, on the contrary, potential competition between the value chains chosen by each country is not addressed.

the shortcomings in the formulation of the interventions (cf. Conclusion 2), iii) the problems observed in the implementation timetable (cf. Conclusion 5) and the coherence (cf. Conclusion 9) of the interventions, and iv) the lack of continuity in EU support for certain thematic lines<sup>199</sup>.

### 5.1.6 EU added value and coordination

**Conclusion 8 – There is little evidence of the EU's "natural" added value in terms of support for regional integration.**

Because of its status and its experience as an economic union<sup>200</sup>, the EU claims to be a "natural" advocate of regional integration in developing countries (cf. the European Commission's communication However we cannot but note that in West Africa during the period under review there was little evidence of this "intrinsic" added value of the EU. Although the EU has allocated large (and fast-growing) sums to regional cooperation, it turns out that:

- there is little coordination between EU regional cooperation and the Member States' regional actions (admittedly few Member States are involved on a regional scale in West Africa) except in the "food security" sector, or with regional actions conducted by other technical and financial partners;
- there is little complementarity or synergy between EU cooperation actions at regional and national level (little linkage between the NIPs and the RIPs or among the various NIPs), particularly with regard to policy dialogue (cf. above). Under the 11th EDF, there is greater complementarity between RIP and NIP in certain sectors, notably the food security sector;
- it generally lacks visibility<sup>201</sup> in the communications of both the ROs and the West African States. This scant visibility is accentuated by the growing use of implementing agencies and the rise of blending;
- very little use is made of the expertise and experience available within the European institutions when it comes to formulating, implementing and monitoring regional policies<sup>202</sup>.

### 5.1.7 Complementarity and coherence

**Conclusion 9 – Within and between cooperation sectors, there is, on the whole, insufficient complementarity, coherence and synergies**

Throughout the period under review, it was difficult to achieve coherence and synergies between the various sectors of regional cooperation, and between the actions taken and instruments used within any one sector. This can be attributed to the fragmentary nature of the support, and insufficient coordination and consultation within the EU (more specifically between regional and national EUDs). These conclusions are reinforced, at the end of the period, by the fact that programme implementation has been divided up among the various implementing agencies, along with the establishment of new instruments (such as the EU's Emergency Trust Fund for Africa).

With regard to the interactions between regional cooperation strategies and other EU policies, the overall assessment varies from one sector to another: it is positive in food and nutrition security (development cooperation policies at DG DEVCO and humanitarian aid at DG

<sup>199</sup> In the "SANAD&R" sector, for example, there was no continuity in the support mechanisms for the "agricultural value chains", "food security regional storage" or "sustainable land management" themes.

<sup>200</sup> And a monetary union, for the euro zone.

<sup>201</sup> In the "food security", EU regional support has a high profile.

<sup>202</sup> For example, the Budget, Competition, Economic and Financial Affairs DGs send few civil servants on assignment to the DMROs and receive few counterparts from ECOWAS and WAEMU to exchange experiences.

ECHO); it is mixed in trade, even if the synergies between the Trade and Deco DGs increased during the period under review; it is unsatisfactory in "peace and security", where there is insufficient exchange of information and coordination between CFSP missions and interventions governed by development cooperation policy.

### 5.1.8 Cross-cutting issues

**Conclusion 10 – EU regional cooperation actions have done little to effectively take into account cross-cutting aspects such as gender, human rights, HIV-AIDS and the environment.**

The actual incorporation of these cross-cutting aspects (gender, human rights, HIV-AIDS and the environment) in regional cooperation strategies (in the 10th and 11th EDF) falls far short of the EU's stated objectives<sup>203</sup>. The EU's internal mechanisms for factoring these cross-cutting aspects into interventions were stepped up and standardised during the period and greater interest was indeed shown in these aspects in the various sectors. However, these mechanisms also resulted in a standardised approach that does not make up for the lack of in-depth socio-economic analyses to gain a proper understanding of the issues upstream of the interventions (cf. Conclusion 2 regarding the flaws in the theories of change). Moreover, this focus on cross-cutting issues failed to generate appropriate measures concerning the implementation of interventions (in terms of specialised human resources, the specific objectives required in interventions, and monitoring and evaluation systems).

**Conclusion 11 – EU regional cooperation allocated considerable resources to capacity-building for stakeholders, and in particular the DMROs. The support provided in this area was deployed without a thorough initial diagnostic and, barring a few exceptions, yielded few results.**

Although a significant proportion of the EU's regional cooperation funding is allocated to stakeholder capacity-building, virtually no provisions have been made for gauging the results of this support. Yet this support has had mixed results in the various cooperation sectors for want of an overall intervention strategy, whether in the EU or the organisations concerned. When there are positive results, they mainly concern individuals and/or tools: pressing questions remain concerning assimilation of the improvements within the organisations and, therefore, their institutional sustainability. The lack of robust theories of change on which regional programmes were founded once again serves in part to explain this situation (assumptions insufficiently examined with regard to the specific roles of regional organisations vis-à-vis the states and other stakeholders).

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<sup>203</sup> Cf. : *Agenda for a change, New European Consensus on Development.*

## 5.2 Recommendations

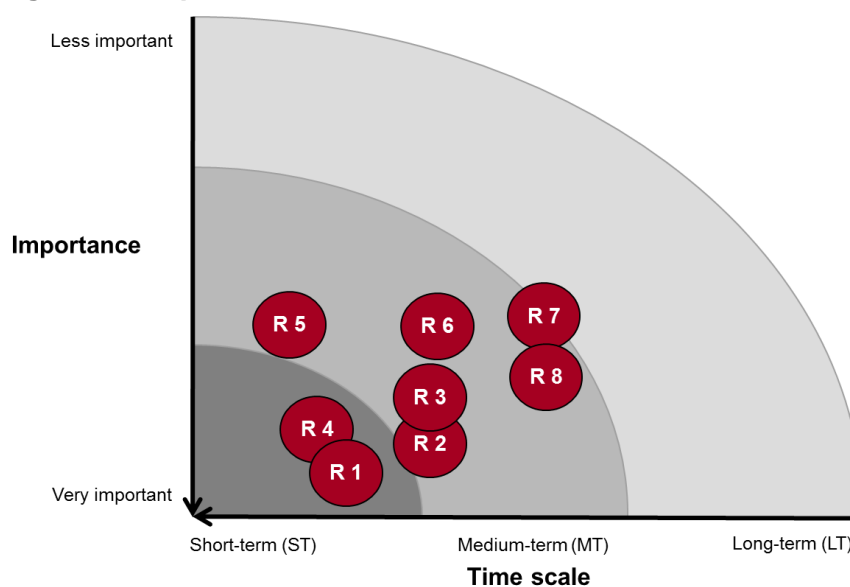
This evaluation has led to 13 recommendations, made up of eight cross-cutting recommendations and five sector-specific recommendations. All of these recommendations apply to the DG DEVCO, the EEAS and the delegations in West Africa in charge of regional cooperation.

### 5.2.1 Cross-cutting recommendations

The cross-cutting recommendations are summarised in the table below and ranked in Figure 5. Table – Summary of the recommendations and link with the conclusions

Recommendations	Benchmark conclusions
R 1 – Lay the groundwork for ongoing regional cooperation with West Africa	1
R 2 – Organise knowledge building by major theme in regional cooperation	2 and 3
R 3 – Continue to improve the institutional organisation of regional cooperation with West Africa	5, 8 and 9
R 4 – Devote a larger share of policy dialogue to regional issues	4, 6,8 and 9
R 5 – Improve coherence and synergy among the various interventions	9
R 6 – Reinforce the culture of monitoring and evaluation	7
R 7 – Give greater consideration to cross-cutting aspects	10
R 8 – Improve capacity-building processes	11

Figure 5 – Importance and time scale of the recommendations



Source: IRAM-ADE

NB: Short-term = within a year; medium-term = in 1 to 3 years; long-term = in over 3 years.

**Recommendation 1****Lay the groundwork for ongoing regional cooperation with West Africa**

**Pursue regional cooperation with West Africa beyond 2020** (end of the current 11th Regional Indicative Programme). With this in mind, and in close connection with thinking on the "post-Cotonou" period:

- **Prepare a joint communication** (by the European Commission and EEAS) for the Council and the Parliament **on the theme of regional integration in developing countries**, based on the conclusions of the evaluations of recent or ongoing regional cooperation. Preparing this communication would give the various EU entities an opportunity to put forward their current view of support for regional integration. The communication should be aligned on the policy directions laid down in the New European Consensus on Development, and notably those concerning the inclusiveness and sustainability of economic growth processes.
- To assist with preparing this communication, **organise a specific dialogue with West African stakeholders**, i.e. regional organisations (ECOWAS, WAEMU, Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, G5 Sahel, MNJTF), Member States, representatives of the private sector and civil society organisations. This dialogue would, in part, come under the political dialogue between the EU and the West African regional organisations. It would enable the various stakeholders, from the EU and from West Africa, to review the last 10 years of regional cooperation in terms of content, the quality of the dialogue and the methods of managing EU aid. The review would also deal with multi-country operational cooperation, examining the circumstances (and conditions) in which multi-country cooperation presents significant advantages over cooperation across the region as a whole<sup>204</sup>. The present evaluation could be one of the inputs for this dialogue process.

**Recommendation 2****Organise knowledge building by major theme in regional cooperation**

Under the DG DEVCO's knowledge management policy, **organise regular knowledge-building processes for each major theme of EU-West Africa regional cooperation**, such as: intra-regional cooperation; competitiveness; the fight against organised crime; counter-terrorism; resilience; cross-border natural resources. These processes would involve the various services concerned within the European institutions, the regional and national institutions that are the beneficiaries of this cooperation, civil society organisations and the implementing agencies. The aim would be to learn from the successes and failures recorded by the programmes conducted, in each domain, over the last 10 years or so, in order to identify ways to improve the definition of realistic objectives, the content of future programmes, implementation methods, activity coordination and information circulation<sup>205</sup>.

These knowledge-building processes would receive upstream input from **political economy analyses** (by mixed teams of European and West African researchers) in order to gain a better understanding of the political and economic obstacles to enhanced regional cooperation and integration in West Africa in the different sectors of activity. The results of these knowledge-building exercises would be presented each year to the SSC.

<sup>204</sup> The recent launch of the "Sahel Alliance" makes this review all the more important.

<sup>205</sup> Unlike a strategic evaluation (such as this study), the process would involve all of the stakeholders right from the beginning, so that together they could define the future of regional cooperation.



**Recommendation 3****Keep improving the institutional organisation of regional cooperation with West Africa**

**Continue improving institutional organisation** (within the European institutions) **of the management and monitoring of regional cooperation with the West Africa region.** In particular, this would imply:

- Increasing the staffing levels of the "regional cooperation" sector of the unit responsible for West Africa (DG DEVCO), mainly to have sufficient resources to monitor regional actions over and above the RIP (thematic lines, IcSP, APF, ETF, ComTrade, etc.)<sup>206</sup>;
- Increasing the staffing levels assigned to regional cooperation in the Nigeria and Burkina Faso EUDs to enable i) an improvement in the design of regional programmes<sup>207</sup>, ii) a more intense political dialogue and policy dialogue with the DMROs and the other regional institutions, and iii) closer monitoring of the functions assigned to the implementing agencies (by reinstating the DMROs in the role of project owner);
- Increase the resources allocated to the EUDs (other than the Nigeria and Burkina Faso EUDs) that are in charge of managing and monitoring regional programmes (e.g. the EUDs of Togo and Senegal).
- Hold more frequent consultation and coordination meetings i) between the Nigeria and Burkina Faso EUDs and ii) between these two EUDs and the other EUDs in West Africa<sup>208</sup>;
- Improve the process for negotiating Pillar Assessed Grant or Delegation Agreement (PAGODA) conventions with the EU Member States' agencies or with international organisations, to ensure that the EU and these implementing agencies agree on the objectives, expected outcomes and approaches of the regional programmes these agencies are assigned to carry out.
- Encourage the EU and West African administrations (the ROs and the States) to share their experience and leverage their expertise (within the European institutions and the Member States' administrations), taking inspiration from the European Neighbourhood Policy methods (twinning and TAIEX-type support mechanisms)

**Recommendation 4****Devote a larger share of national policy dialogue to regional issues**

**Give greater consideration to regional issues in the policy dialogue conducted by the EU with each of the ECOWAS (and WAEMU) Member States.**

In synergy with a more sustained policy dialogue at national level, **examine the feasibility of allocating additional financial envelopes** (for example by topping up budget support), which would be granted to each of the countries in the region, provided that they all complied with or implemented regional commitments.

<sup>206</sup> An alternative formula would be to set up thematic task forces on the themes addressed by a large number of instruments or programmes, e.g. counter-terrorism.

<sup>207</sup> Increase the time allocated to preparatory work, given the complexity of the institutional processes; monitor the consultants more closely; pay special attention to the monitoring and evaluation systems, etc.

<sup>208</sup> Methods to be defined, for example: circulate information, share experience, hold specific meetings of the Codelao (coordination mechanism for EU Delegations in West Africa).

**Recommendation 5****Improve coherence and synergy among the various interventions**

As part of implementing the 11th EDF RIP, **improve the coherence and synergies between the various interventions**. This would concern in particular:

- The "regional economic integration" sector by means of:
  - regularly circulating information about project activities between the implementing agencies, the regional and national EUDs and the DMROs;
  - efficiently coordinating components involving the promotion of trade and exports, and the strengthening of enterprise competitiveness, in particular by setting up sector policy review committees;
  - within the framework of the new competitiveness programme architecture, implemented in parallel manner at regional and national levels, set up communication and coordination channels among the many stakeholders involved.
- The "peace and security" sector, by defining and applying streamlined methods for circulating thematic information among all of the services concerned in the European institutions (while still keeping sensitive information confidential)<sup>209</sup>. This should concern, first and foremost, the field of counter-terrorism and the theme of intelligence (the latter is common to many EU areas of intervention: maritime security, early warning systems, anti-trafficking and anti-terrorism initiatives, etc.).
- The "SANAD&R" sector, by continuing efforts to coordinate the strategy and operations of ECHO and DEVCO as part of the "resilience to food crises" approach.
- The "natural resource management" sector, by planning interventions over a sufficiently long period of time and by avoiding interruptions between successive phases.

**Recommendation 6****Reinforce the culture of monitoring and evaluation**

**Support ECOWAS in developing its tools and capacities for monitoring and evaluating regional integration.** These support mechanisms would concern the major themes of regional integration<sup>210</sup>. They would make ECOWAS more legitimate, with regard to its Member States, in leading the regional integration process and more credible in the dialogue with its TFPs. For the latter, including the EU, accurate and precise data on the regional integration process would help make their interventions more pertinent, help assess the impacts of their interventions and ease coordination. WAEMU would contribute to the development of these tools by focusing, for its Member States, on the domains for which it has comparative advantages (monetary integration, convergence of macroeconomic and fiscal policies, etc.).

In addition to these support measures for ECOWAS, **reinforce the "monitoring and evaluation culture" in the EU's regional cooperation programmes**, mainly by: i) drawing up robust theories of change (and the associated OVIs) during programme formulation; ii) systematising annual monitoring missions (Results-Oriented Monitoring) and iii) hold discussion and evaluation meetings to gather EUDs, implementing agencies and project owners together for

<sup>209</sup> For example, through "communities of practice" or virtual cluster meetings that, each month, would report on progress on the various programmes (national and regional programmes, and programmes associated with different instruments) related to security in the Lake Chad region or the nucleus of the Sahel G5.

<sup>210</sup> In the field of regional economic integration, the aim would be to cover intra- and extra-zone trade, value chain competitiveness, investment dynamics, etc.

evaluation reports (mid-term or final), with the aim of multi-stakeholder knowledge-building based on the successes, difficulties and failures of the regional programmes.

Greater efforts on monitoring and evaluation could subsequently yield **results-oriented communication tools**, highlighting the region's progress in integration and cooperation (and the EU's role in these improvements).

### Recommendation 7

#### Give greater consideration to cross-cutting aspects

**Give greater consideration to the cross-cutting aspects** when formulating and implementing regional interventions. This would imply:

- incorporating these aspects into the agreements with the regional organisations and other project owners;
- taking these aspects into account when drawing up the Terms of Reference for any formulation mission, and providing the means of carrying out in-depth socio-economic analyses;
- giving greater weight to these aspects when selecting implementing organisations, whether implementing agencies, consulting firms or technical assistants;
- ensuring that this information is included in reporting and evaluation documents of any sort.

### Recommendation 8

#### Improve capacity-building processes

**Improve the relevance and coherence of the capacity-building strategies and processes** (individual and institutional) In particular, this would imply:

- When formulating interventions, more effectively linking the design of the capacity-building processes to the analyses, by sector and by institution, of the main bottlenecks to be eliminated and the stakeholders present;
- Given the plethora of regional institutional systems, encouraging coordination among ROs and guiding the reform process under way towards a rationalisation of institutional systems;
- Defining and applying systems to monitor and evaluate outcomes, including specific indicators for training initiatives and other capacity-building actions;
- Specifying the technical assistants' job content and improving the selection process for technical assistants in order to better match capacity-building requirements and the technical support provided;
- Clarifying the respective roles, in monitoring the technical assistants' work, of the project owner (generally a RO), the organisation that recruited the technical assistant (consulting firm, implementing agency, etc.) and the EUD in charge of the regional intervention concerned.
- Leverage the knowledge acquired through the TAIEX instrument so that the technical expertise existing in the European institutions and in the Member States' administrations can be used for capacity building in West African ROs.

The improvement of capacity-building processes should concern not only DMROs but also the other stakeholders currently or potentially playing a major role in the regional integration process: federations of private-sector stakeholders; networks of civil society organisations, etc. For these non-state stakeholders, the main aim would be to build their capacities to play an active role in

drawing up regional policies and monitoring their effective application (while at the same time tightening these federations' and networks' internal accountability mechanisms).

### 5.2.2. Sector-specific recommendations

The sector-specific recommendations are based on both the answers to the sector evaluation questions (2 to 6) and the more general conclusions, to which they add greater detail.

#### Regional economic integration:

- Help to relaunch the process of regional economic integration by supporting a dual dynamic: the Nation States, which remain the spearheads of integration (often guided by their own interests); other groups (private sector, civil society, etc.), which transcend purely national interests and may encourage certain functions to be transferred to a supranational level. The aim is to harmonise the visions of these two dynamics. More specifically, this will involve: i) strengthening the regional dimension in programmes funded by the 11th EDF<sup>211</sup>, while at the same time making sure that the interventions, even when they target the States, are still part of this regional dimension and are understood as such by the national beneficiaries; ii) engage the technical and financial partners in regular dialogue on regional issues.
- Give greater consideration to the inclusiveness and sustainability of the growth processes when drawing up economic integration processes and thereby fall into line with the New European Consensus on Development from 2017, which states that: *"The European Union will also continue through its trade policy to ensure that developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable, reap the benefits of inclusive growth and sustainable development from enhanced participation in regional integration and in the multilateral trading system."* This implies:
  - o Continuing to upgrade the legal frameworks (trade, customs, investment, labour force mobility) and the fiscal frameworks (transition, harmonisation) to factor in the free movement of goods, services, people and capital.
  - o Making it a priority to ensure that the commitments made under the Customs Union are effectively applied.
  - o Taking more targeted actions to develop exchanges and "innovation" in labour-intensive value chains, to guide and support small businesses in the informal sector in their efforts to export or import within the sub-region, to develop cross-border cooperation programmes along the borders, targeted at "vulnerable" groups.

#### Transport:

- Combine ongoing blending operations with a regional programme designed to gradually bring national policies into line with regional directives on i) liberalisation (gradual detachment from the system of national quotas and establishment of regional cabotage operations), ii) the professionalisation of the transport industry (regulate entry into the profession), iii) transport facilitation and iv) efforts to combat vehicle overloading (recognise that loaders and carriers are jointly responsible) and abnormal practices. To achieve this alignment, special-interest platforms should be set up to enable the countries in the region to exchange information and ideas, and national and regional policy dialogue should be more closely linked (cf. R4).

<sup>211</sup> Essentially AFRITAC (PFM, fiscal transition, macroeconomic planning) and the two ICF components (corridors and investment framework).

**Energy:**

- Continue investing in regional interconnection through blending, and strengthen the ties with the initiatives carried out using NIP funding, to make sector governance more open, more efficient and more transparent about prices. A regional programme of policy dialogue on regulating the energy sector could help speed up the emergence of the economic and social outcomes expected from the regional market.

**SANAD&R:**

- Conduct political economy analyses (cf. R2) on: i) the political, financial, institutional and other obstacles preventing States in the region from effectively investing in efficient food security information systems; ii) the conditions for decision-makers and citizens to support regional solidarity mechanisms such as the regional food security reserve; iii) the root causes of vulnerability to food crises, and iv) a deeper understanding of the links between migration, vulnerability and insecurity.
- Apply the recommendation regarding additional financial allocations (cf. R4) to themes specific to the "SANAD&R" sector, in particular to eliminate the constraints on cross-border seasonal migration, or harmonise and rationalise information systems.
- Given the plethora of regional institutional systems in the "SANAD&R" sector, encourage coordination among ROs and guide the reform process under way towards a rationalisation of institutional systems;
- Actively contribute to the coordination among TFPs by playing a strong role in supporting regional leadership.

**Environment and climate change:**

- In efforts to protect environment and to attenuate the populations' vulnerability to climate change, add a "bottom-up" approach to the current "top-down" normative approach through: i) a coordinated approach to rural development, natural resource management and measures to combat climate change; ii) support for economic activities associated with protected areas; iii) support for diversifying rural populations' activity systems, and iv) support for networking local organisations.