



## West Africa Regional Economic Bulletin | July 2022

Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Friends,

Our commitment to self reliance through food security, access to electricity, and economic empowerment is evident in this month's highlights. Our partnerships are empowering women in West Africa, supporting the power and energy sector, promoting food security and availability of fertilizers, preserving the environment, and improving the livelihoods of farmers.

You can view this month's edition on our website as well as stay abreast with other [previous editions](#).

Enjoy, and continue to stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Matthew Anderson

Office Director

USAID/West Africa | Regional Economic Growth Office (REGO)

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## THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS

### U.S. Ambassador to Cape Verde Visits Mini Grid Project on the Island of Fogo



*Middle: The U.S. Ambassador to Cape Verde, H.E. Jeff Daigle, being shown the ECREEE Mini Grid in Cape Verde*

**Island of Fogo, Cape Verde, June 8, 2022:** The U.S. Ambassador to Cape Verde, His Excellency Jeff Daigle has visited the mini grid project, Eletrificação da Região de Chã das Caldeiras (Electrification of the Chã das Caldeiras Region) on the Island of Fogo. The mini grid, which provides electricity to the entire Cha das Caldeiras region using renewable energy, was funded by a grant support from USAID/West Africa and Power Africa to a private developer in Cape Verde. The funding forms part of the ECOWAS Renewable Energy Facility (EREF), which is managed by the ECOWAS Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) based in Praia, Cape Verde.

The project involves the design, supply, installation, and commissioning of a 25 KWp solar photovoltaic mini grid including 100kWh battery storage and 20kW diesel generator, which benefits 200 structures and about 1,000 people. The key components included installing the generation equipment, building the required distribution network and supplying 200 smart meters for households and small businesses as well as conducting indoor wiring for these households and small businesses.

## West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (WATIH) Co-investment Partner Coliba Africa Protects the Planet through Recycling

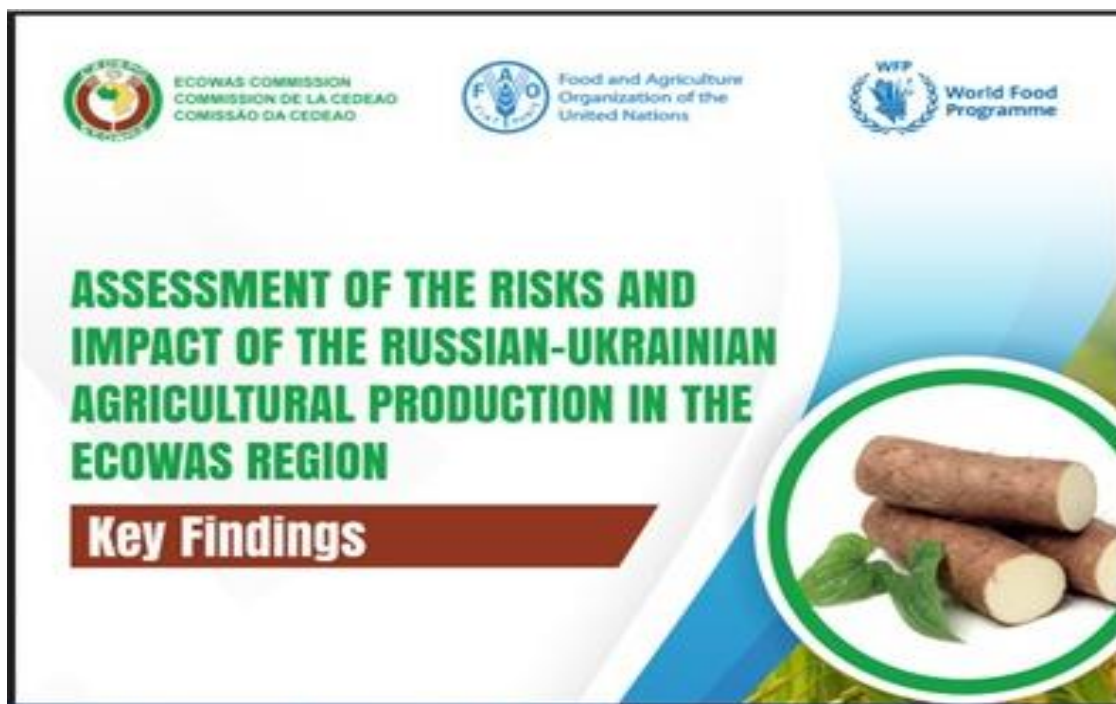


*Coliba's co-founder and CEO interacts with some of the waste collectors. Photo Credit: Coliba*

**Côte d'Ivoire:** Coliba Africa, an Ivorian company specialized in the collection and transformation of plastic waste into food-grade plastic flakes, is training informal waste collectors and raising the community's awareness through its program "Protect Your Planet." With a co-investment grant of \$850,000 from the West Africa Trade and Investment Hub, Coliba Africa has a goal to increase the quantity and quality of plastic waste collected and recycled in Abidjan through the full integration of 6,000 informal waste collectors into the value chain. The construction of its plastic recycling plant will help create up to 250 direct full-time jobs, 70 percent of which will be held by women.

Coliba has finalized the selection of a first cohort of approximately 600 informal plastic waste collectors and designed the materials for their training. The training program will help the waste collectors better define recyclable and non-recyclable packaging, apprise them of the possibilities and usefulness of recovering different types of plastic waste, and teach them how to create a profitable and sustainable business.

## ECOWAS Assesses the Impact of the Russian-Ukrainian Crisis on Agricultural Production in the Region



*Report on the Impact of the Russian-Ukrainian Crisis on Agricultural Production*

**West Africa:** For over a decade, food and nutrition crises have been hitting many West African countries with increasing frequency and scope. Particularly aggravated in the Sahel, the crises have exploded in recent years under the combined effect of the physical insecurity of citizens caused by terrorism, banditry, inter-community conflicts as well as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation has caused significant displacements, with about 5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the region, including 1.8 million in Burkina Faso, 300,000 in Niger, more than 2 million in Nigeria, and 400,000 in Mali along with the closure of markets, health centers and schools. The continuing crisis affects livelihoods and disrupts trade flows and the mobility of people.

With the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC), The ECOWAS Commission for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources conducted an assessment with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to assess the risks associated with the Russian-Ukrainian conflict on agricultural production, trade and prices of agricultural products in West Africa. The study also assessed the humanitarian risks that could arise in the 15 West African countries and identified measures to mitigate the emerging food crisis in the region in order to better strengthen the resilience of agri-food systems.

With Russia and Ukraine being two major world suppliers of nitrogen and potassium fertilizers, the conflict has led to increases in fertilizer prices and disrupted the supply of fertilizer for the current 2021/2022 agricultural season, which forebodes a decline in food production. Read the full assessment report in [English](#) and [French](#).



## The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) Advance Mutual Priorities in the Region



*Participants at the Strategy and Policy Group Meeting. Photo credit: OECD*

**Paris, France, June 24-25, 2022:** The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) held a Strategy and Policy Group meeting to present recent results and plan future activities jointly with regional and donor partners. The annual meeting highlighted SWAC's efforts to align with the U.S. government policy priorities, to produce practical tools and research for public and private sector stakeholders and to convene leaders to address issues related to food insecurity, urbanization, and violence across the region.

The Sahelian countries of West Africa established the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) in 1973, following a challenging period of drought and famine. SWAC helped to bring about a sharp increase in Official Development Aid for the Sahel and has strengthened the capacities of CILSS. In 2001, the Club broadened its mandate and extended its geographical coverage to encompass the whole of West Africa. Since 2013, USAID, the U.S. government lead for the relationship with OECD/SWAC, has provided an annual contribution to SWAC for program management and operations. The rising food insecurity in the Sahel and West Africa is a key concern for SWAC.

The 2022 Strategy and Policy Group meeting was attended by officials from Austria, Belgium, the European Union (EU), France, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland, and the U.S. as well as representatives from USAID, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), and CILSS. Read highlights from the strategy meeting [here](#).

## Fertilizer Stakeholders in Nigeria and Niger Recommend Solutions to Cost Build-Up Challenges



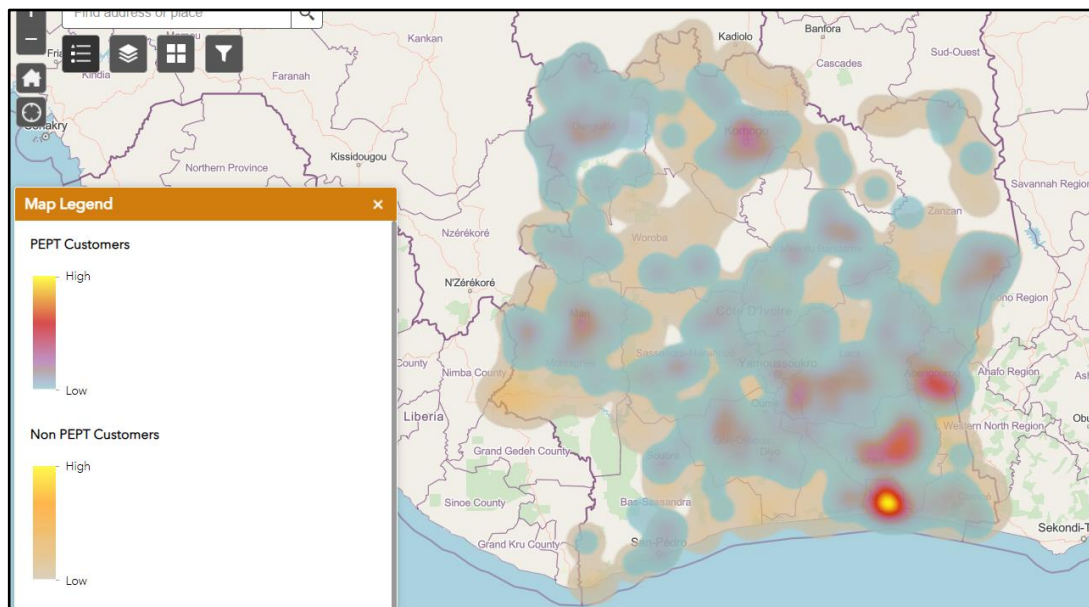
*Participants at the fertilizer cost build-up Workshop. Photo Credit: IFDC*

**Lagos, Nigeria, June 22-24:** Stakeholders in the fertilizer private sector and regulators from Nigeria and the Niger Republic have met to discuss the cost build-up in transporting fertilizers from the port to the farmer, a key element responsible for high fertilizer prices in West Africa. The International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) organized the workshop under its mandate to support the ECOWAS Commission in improving fertilizer consumption in the region. The meeting was convened by the Feed the Future Enhancing Growth through Regional Agricultural Inputs System (EnGRAIS) project with funding from USAID West Africa. Other technical and financial partners included HortiNigeria, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Nigeria; Fertilizer Sector Reform Support Project in Niger; AfricaFertilizer.Org; and the West African Fertilizer Association.

After reviewing and validating information on costs and processes involved in trading fertilizers, including soluble fertilizers involved in the production of vegetables, between Nigeria and the Niger Republic, the stakeholders made key recommendations in a communiqué to the governments of Nigeria and Niger; the private sector fertilizer associations; and the ECOWAS Commission to facilitate fertilizer trade between the two countries and across the West Africa region.

Read the [communiqué](#) on fertilizer cost build-up.

## Power Africa's Support Accelerates Universal Electricity Access in Côte d'Ivoire



*GIS dashboard showing electrified communities. Photo Credit: Power Africa*

Power Africa's support to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire's Programme Electricité Pour Tous (PEPT) [Electricity for All Program], has connected more than 1.2 million homes and businesses and will facilitate 400,000 more connections over the next two years with the goal of moving towards achieving universal electricity access by 2025. PEPT is an initiative that subsidizes upfront grid connection costs for low-income households through a revolving fund so more families can afford to access power.

To assess the impact of PEPT and engage private sector stakeholders to ensure its long-term sustainability, Power Africa supported Côte d'Ivoire's electricity utility, Compagnie Ivoirienne d'Electricité (CIE), to develop the PEPT Connections Dashboard. PEPT is an innovative data dashboard that visualizes and assesses gaps to accelerate electrification efforts. Power Africa worked with CIE to build the platform, upload data, and train staff to update, modify, and manage the platform.

The online tool aggregates the country's electricity data in an accessible, sharable platform and will allow CIE to edit, access, update, and display geospatial data, as well as visualize trends, perform analyses, and track the progress of connections in real time to help in strategic decision-making for the future of PEPT. Power Africa is also exploring how to adapt the dashboard for sector-specific needs, such as connecting more health facilities to electricity. Côte d'Ivoire's innovative approach demonstrates the promise and potential of data to affect positive change and power communities, from the local to the national level.



## West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (WATIH) Supports Rice Farmers in Nigeria



*A rice field. Photo: Web image*

USAID West Africa's Trade and Investment Hub (WATIH) awarded a grant of \$1.3 million to Nigeria-based [Kiara Rice Mill Ltd.](#) (Kiara) to support 5,000 farmers in Niger and Kebbi States. With this support, the farmers will cultivate 10,000 hectares of paddy rice, producing 80,000 metric tonnes (MT) of paddy rice. As part of the WATIH-supported project, Kiara Rice will also seek to maximize its processing capacity to produce 72,000MT of freshly milled, high-quality parboiled rice per year to improve food security; establish two aggregation centers in Niger and Kebbi States to store harvested paddy, and procure two 30MT vehicles to transport paddy to the factory.

Kiara has accessed a ₦2 billion (approximately \$4.8 million) loan facility to support project implementation and recruited 73 project team members, including project staff, agronomists, extension agents, and factory workers. Kiara has sensitized and trained stakeholders and extension agents in good agronomy practices (GAP) in paddy rice production. Kiara began developing its GAP training manual, recruited 2,294 farmers (30 percent youth, 44 percent women) in five local government areas (LGAs) of Niger State and 843 farmers (20 percent youth, 32 percent women) in three LGAs of Kebbi State. Kiara conducted a baseline survey for 205 farmers in Niger and 100 in Kebbi to be used in future project analysis. Finally, Kiara leased land in Niger and Kebbi to begin its demonstration exercises.

The Trade Hub team provided Kiara with technical support to address security challenges in the program area affecting Kiara's ability to work in the planned LGAs. This support included training the key project team on proactive security indices and channels of reporting, and onboarding Kiara's project manager and



a consultant on the USAID-funded Partners Liaison Security Operations (PLSO) to provide real-time intelligence reports covering their project locations to Kiara.

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