REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION STRATEGY

2015-2019

June 15, 2015

It is both an honor and a distinct privilege for me to present USAID/West Africa's regional development strategy for fiscal years 2015 through 2019. This document is the product of extensive analysis and consultation both internally within the U.S. Government and with our partners throughout the West Africa region, without whom we could not achieve our goal of Social and Economic Well-being Advanced by West Africans.

West Africa is an immense and diverse region of 21 countries facing some of the most significant development challenges in the world. West African states face many common and shared problems that cannot be solved by any individual country alone and thus require regional solutions. For example, addressing common public health challenges in the region, such as increasing access to quality family planning services, can best be achieved through regional cooperation and information sharing, while the movement of people across borders requires a regional approach to control communicable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS and Ebola. Violent extremists operate across borders, and limiting their reach requires a regional perspective. Ecologically significant areas are often transboundary, and climate change affects the entire region. Increasing intra-regional trade and improving food security are, by their very nature, regional challenges. Fortunately, West Africa has strong and active regional institutions with the convening authorities and the political mandates to lead the development and implementation of regional solutions.

Given these challenges and opportunities, USAID/West Africa focuses on programs that address transnational issues, support regional partners' efforts and priorities, link regional policies and priorities to national policies and plans, and in limited cases, conduct programs at the country level with precedent-setting demonstration effect to inform regional priorities and policies. Our approach is to work with and through African regional partners, with the objective of supporting our partner regional organizations to better deliver on their respective mandates.

In addition, a critical part of our mandate is to provide support to other USAID missions and offices in the areas of procurement, financial, administrative management, and legal services, whilst managing bilateral programs in several countries with limited or no USAID presence. USAID/West Africa also serves as a center for learning for USAID in the region, offering a number of USAID University courses, Development Lab offerings and a host of other information-sharing events.

This USAID/West Africa Regional Development Cooperation Strategy has been developed to meet the 21st century challenges that West Africa faces. Through strong collaboration with regional partners, other USAID missions and offices, and with support from USAID Washington, it will serve as an excellent guide to help us bring positive change to the lives of the people of West Africa.

Best regards,

Alex Deprez
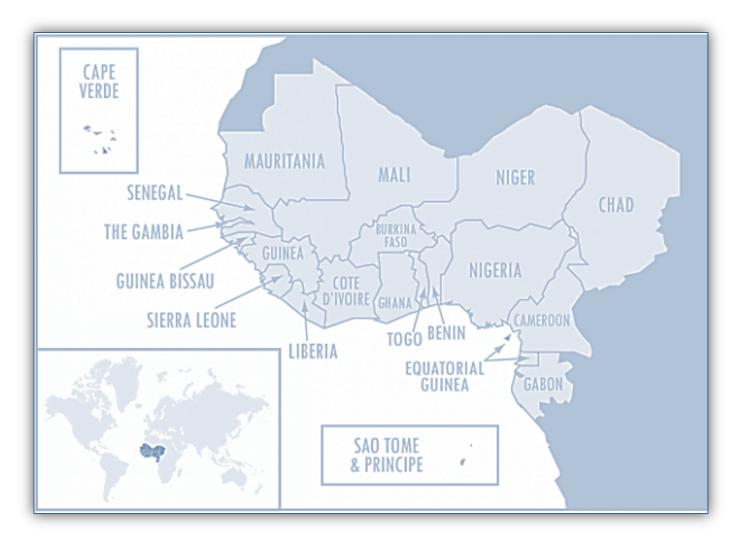USAID/West Africa Mission Director

Map of West Africa

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Acronyms

ACE	Africa Center of Excellence
ACMAD	African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development
AGIR	Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative in the Sahel and West Africa
AGRHYMET	Agrometeorology, Hydrology, Meteorology Institute of CILSS
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AWARE II	Action for West Africa Region Project II
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program
CO2	Carbon dioxide
CILSS	*Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel* (Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel)
CORAF	Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricoles (West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSW	Commercial Sex Workers
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DCA	Development Credit Authority
DHR	Democracy and Human Rights
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DO	Development Objective
ECOWAP	ECOWAS Agriculture Policy
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECREEE	ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
EXO	Executive Office
FSN	Foreign Service National
FtF	Feed the Future
FY	Fiscal Year
G2G	Government-to-Government
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCC	Global Climate Change
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHI	Global Health Initiative
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resources
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IFDC	International Fertilizer Development Center
IFPR	International Food Policy Research Institute
IR	Intermediate Result
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
JPC	Joint Planning Cell
MARP	Most At Risk Population
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSM	Men Who have Sex with Men
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPC	Non-Presence Country
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OU	Operating Unit
PAD	Project Appraisal Documents

PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PMP	Performance Management Plan
RAIP	Regional Agriculture Investment Plan (ECOWAS)
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation "plus" conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
TCN	Third-Country National
TDY	Temporary Duty
TSCTP	Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership
UEMOA	*Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine* (West African Economic and Monetary Union
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Agency for HIV/AIDS
UNFPA	United Nations Family Planning Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDH	US Direct Hire
USG	United States Government
USPSC	US Personal Services Contractor
WAGN	West Africa Grains Network
WAHO	West African Health Organization
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WAPP	West African Power Pool
WSA	Water and Sanitation for Africa
YALI	Young African Leaders Initiative

I.   Executive Summary

USAID/West Africa (USAID/WA) is a highly dynamic, regional mission that leverages strategically targeted programs across a region spanning 21 countries with a population of 367 million. Working through a distinct regional lens, the mission designs and implements programs that are African-led, maintain a regional perspective, support regional partners' efforts and priorities, and pursue a long-term vision balanced with short-term, achievable results. The mission is able to accomplish these results by focusing on programs that take advantage of the interdependent nature and proximity of countries in West Africa; well-established trade and migration routes, which cut across the region; and the presence of active regional institutions, including long-time partners, which have benefited from USAID capacity building efforts and are poised to play a greater role in the region's development.   Employing targeted interventions in peace and governance, economic growth, and health, USAID/WA is able to play a key synergistic role in promoting sustainable development in the region and addressing such crises as Ebola and other regional shocks and challenges. The goal for the USAID/WA Regional Development Cooperation Strategy (RDCS) is:

Social and economic well-being advanced by West Africans

This goal articulates USAID/WA's commitment to support African-led, regional development. The term "advanced by West Africans" underscores the mission's commitment to capacity-building with the direct aim of supporting regional organizations to better deliver on their respective mandates. The goal is supported by three Development Objectives (DOs) that cover the following sectors: peace and governance (including countering violent extremism and conflict management); economic growth (including trade and investment, energy, agriculture, natural resources management, and climate change); and health (including family planning, HIV/AIDS, maternal and child health, and water and sanitation). USAID/WA also has a Support Objective, which represents the service provision (financial, legal, procurement, administrative, and technical) and knowledge management functions of the mission. The DOs and Support Objective are:

- **DO 1: Systems of Non-violent Conflict Management Strengthened in West Africa**
- **DO 2: Broad-Based Economic Growth and Resilience Advanced through West African Partners**
- **DO 3: Utilization of Quality Health Services Increased through West African Partners**
- **Support Objective: USAID's Capacity to Advance USG Objectives in West Africa Enhanced**

USAID/WA's development hypothesis is that, **if** West African systems of non-violent conflict management are strengthened, **if** broad-based economic growth and resilience are advanced through regional partners, and **if** the utilization of quality health services is increased in West Africa, **then** social and economic well-being will be advanced by West Africans. The Support Objective will help achieve the goal by supporting USAID's own capacity to deliver development programming in the region.

USAID/WA's RDCS advances regional objectives through programs that 1) directly engage regional partners, and 2) link to and leverage national investments to have an overall greater regional impact. As a regional mission, USAID/WA has the following responsibilities:

- Address transnational issues that cannot be addressed by any one country alone.
- Support regional partners' efforts and priorities, and build long-term sustainable partnerships with them.
- Link regional policies and priorities to national policies and plans.
- Create linkages and enhance communication between USAID bilateral missions and West African regional bodies.
- In limited cases, conduct programs at the country level with precedent-setting demonstration effect and leverage the experience to influence regional priorities and policies.
- Support the USAID presence in West Africa by 1) supporting USAID/Washington centrally-managed programs in the region, 2) managing the programs of the USAID Representative Office in Côte d'Ivoire and of the Non-Presence Country (NPC) Cameroon, and 3) providing technical and operations services to bilateral missions and other NPCs in the region. (Note that in 2015, USAID/Benin will become a USAID Office under the oversight of USAID/WA.)
- Serve as a Center of Excellence that supports the USAID Forward reform agenda (e.g., Science and Technology, Innovation, Local Solutions) through training, learning and collaboration.

USAID/WA's RDCS covers the five-year period from fiscal year (FY) 2015 through FY 2019. Under the RDCS, USAID/WA will continue to support Presidential Initiatives and Administration priorities, including the Trans-Sahara Counter-terrorism Partnership (TSCTP), Feed the Future (FtF), Power Africa, Trade Africa, the Global Climate Change (GCC) Initiative, the Global Health Initiative (GHI), and the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). The RDCS supports anticipated Congressional earmarks including ones for biodiversity and water. The RDCS directly aligns with the State and USAID Africa bureaus' Joint Regional Strategy for FY 2015-2017, whose goals are: 1) Strengthen Democratic Institutions; 2) Spur Economic Growth, Trade and Investment; 3) Advance Peace and Security; and 4) Promote Opportunity and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, the RDCS and USAID/WA's implementation approaches embody USAID Forward core principles including building and using local capacity, forming and sustaining partnerships, and spurring and scaling innovation.

II.   Regional Development Context

a) Regional Overview

The USAID/WA regional mission is responsible for providing development assistance and technical support across the West Africa region[1]. West Africa is an immense and diverse region of 21 countries facing some of the most significant development challenges in the world. West Africa currently has a population of approximately 367 million[2], and will more than double (to 909 million) by 2050 due to the world's highest rate of population growth.[3] Not surprisingly, this rapidly growing population has created a youth bulge with over 60 percent of West Africans under the age of 25, accentuating the importance of youth as a strategic issue for the regional mission.[4] The region struggles to capitalize on the youth bulge and turn it into a demographic dividend since economic growth rates are insufficient to provide enough jobs, especially for youth, and reduce poverty. Agriculture accounts for 35 percent of the region's gross domestic product (GDP) and engages 60 percent of the workforce, but agriculture yields are low, post-harvest losses high, and cross-border trade in staple foods limited.[5] This, coupled with high vulnerability to climatic shocks, leads to chronic food insecurity. More than half the population is rural but quickly urbanizing, leading to increased stresses on already weak basic urban infrastructure, such as water supply, sanitation and power. Governance is weak, to varying degrees, in the region, recovery from conflict is still fragile in countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, and a recent upsurge in violent extremism and criminality threatens regional stability. Additionally, West Africa is reeling from the ongoing Ebola pandemic compounded by pre-existing weak and overtaxed health systems. The region is home to some of the world's worst health indicators including the world's highest rate of maternal mortality. In addition, more than 50 percent of the region's population is female, yet women are often excluded from decisions that affect their lives, mainly due to their high poverty levels, illiteracy and social norms.

The configuration of states in West Africa (the small sizes of their population, economy, or territory for many countries, as well as five being landlocked) means a heavy interdependence and reliance on intra-regional trade and cooperation. West African states face many common and shared problems that cannot be effectively solved by any individual country alone and thus require regional solutions. These include poverty and food insecurity, which are exacerbated by poorly functioning regional markets. Addressing common public health challenges in the region, such as increasing access to quality family planning services, can best be achieved through regional cooperation and information sharing, while cross-border migration requires a regional approach to control communicable diseases such as

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[1] USAID includes the following countries in its definition of West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, São Tome and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

[2] "Central Intelligence Agency." *CIA*. 20 May 2013. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/wfbExt/region_afr.html.

[3] 2013 World Population Data Sheet, Population Reference Bureau, Washington DC; http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2013/2013-world-population-data-sheet/world-map.aspx#map/world/population/2013

[4] See Footnote 2. Youth populations were calculated per country and compared against the total population for the region. The result is that 62 percent of West Africans are between the ages of 0 and 24.

[5] West African agriculture and climate change, 2013, IFPRI (A. Jalloh, G.C. Nelson, T.S. Thomas, R. Zoumoré, H. Roy-Macauley); http://www.ifpri.org/publication/west-african-agriculture-and-climate-change-0

HIV/AIDS and polio. Violent extremists operate across borders and require a regional perspective. On the resource base side, ecologically significant areas are often transboundary, and climate change affects the entire region.

Explosive urbanization rates over the past 40 years have transformed West Africa from a region characterized by its predominantly rural population to one in which urban areas play increasingly principal roles. Peri-urban areas, defined as fringe settlements adjoining urban areas, are organic and ad hoc in nature; they are often slums and have limited infrastructure, such as running water, electricity, health care and education. The high urbanization rates are expected to continue in the first half of the 21st century. In seven of the nine countries, over 50 percent of the urban population lives in slums.[6] By 2050 the United Nations estimates there will be 419 million people living in urban areas in West Africa.[7] Six of the nine francophone West African countries are predicted to have greater than 60 percent of their population in urban centers by 2050. Côte d'Ivoire and Togo will have nearly 74 percent and 70 percent respectively of their 2050 population living in cities.[8] As the poor population residing in urban and peri-urban areas continues to grow, so do their needs which often times are not reflected in government overall expenditures due to their living conditions, particularly for those living in slums or as squatters.

A number of regional institutions in West Africa already play a vital role in addressing the region's development challenges. Inter-governmental regional organizations have strong political mandates, commitment and support from national governments, and committed and educated staff. Key regional organizations in West Africa include the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)[9] and its sub-agencies, notably, the West African Health Organization (WAHO), the West African Power Pool (WAPP), and the ECOWAS Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE); the Permanent Intergovernmental Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (French acronym—CILSS); the West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD); the West African Economic and Monetary Union (French acronym—UEMOA); and Water and Sanitation for Africa (WSA). In addition, regional private sector alliances, such as the Borderless Alliance and the West Africa Grains Network (WAGN), and regional civil society organizations, such as the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), are emerging as regional leaders. To varying degrees, these organizations do have capacity challenges, due to constraints of funds, systems and staffing. For some regional organizations, this has led to limited capacity to manage funds, conduct monitoring, and generate and use information to make decisions. Communication between Anglophone and Francophone countries can also be a hurdle. Nonetheless, these organizations are poised to build their capacity, enhance collaboration, and take on an even greater leadership role in West Africa.

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[6] Population Reference Bureau data finder. Accessed July 19, 2012.

[7] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision. 99-244

[8] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision Population Database. http://esa.un.org/unup/

[9] ECOWAS us a regional commission of 15 countries in Western Africa (www.ecowas.int); Countries include: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote D'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

b) Sectoral Challenges and Opportunities

i. Peace and Governance

The West African region is vast and weakly governed. A food security crisis in parts of the Sahel, weak governance structures, and continued pressure on limited natural resources continue to stress increasingly fragile local communities. Violent extremist networks are fluid and expanding. Ongoing conflicts in Mali and northern Nigeria radiate instability throughout the region, and the violent Islamist networks that triggered these conflicts threaten to spark similar conflicts across the Sahel, in the Lake Chad region and in northern Cameroon. The continued presence of returnees from Libya in Niger and Chad is an additional potential trigger. The recent civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire have left a legacy of destruction and distrust that will take years, hard work and political will to overcome. Often such conflicts have imposed disproportionate physical, psychosocial and economic costs for women and girls including as a result of rape and other forms of sexual gender based violence used to terrorize and humiliate.   Women in the region, moreover, are consistently excluded from peace negotiations; women account for less than eight percent of participants in peace talks, and less than three percent of the people actually signing peace agreements in the region[10].

 Some governments have made efforts to address women's needs and promote their participation in peacebuilding and reconstruction as reflected by national action plans in support of UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. Currently eight countries in West Africa have action plans: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sierra Leone. [Note: The U.S. Government (USG) National Action Plan for Women, Peace, and Security related to UNSC Resolution 1325 currently identifies five focus countries in West Africa: Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.] Finally, elections remain an important potential source of conflict throughout the region. The disastrous 2010 presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire remain a cogent reminder of the need to mitigate and prevent elections-related violence. There is a regional commitment to maintaining democratic norms and a growing interest among West African countries in countering violent extremism and managing conflict generally. There are also regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs) willing to take on larger peace building roles. ECOWAS wants to play a larger role in conflict early warning, but lacks sufficient capacity to do so effectively and faces political hurdles in addressing latent conflict and violent extremism.

ii. Trade and Investment

Compared to other regions of the world, West Africa's recent economic growth has been remarkable: GDP for the region grew at about 5 percent annually from 2000 to 2010. Growth slowed in 2009—to 3 percent annually—but returned to 5 percent despite uncertainty in the global economy. This particularly positive news is tempered, however, by the very low base of production and the fact that the region remains highly dependent on exports of commodities (rather than value-added goods) to world markets, which do not create the number of jobs poor countries need to alleviate poverty effectively.

West Africa's potential economic growth is hampered by stagnant economic activity both among West African states and between West African states and the rest of the world. West Africans tend to

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[10] UN Working Group for Women Peace & Security in West Africa: http://www.voanews.com/content/women-rarely-included-in-west-africa-peace-building-un-says/1644967.html (cited by the USAID/WA Gender Assessment)

produce and trade in localized markets, which cannot capture the economies of scale typically achieved through trade and investment. West Africa continues to struggle with major barriers to its economic development, such as poor transport and communications infrastructure, the highest transport costs in the world, high levels of corruption, policies that impede intra-regional and international trade, a lack of flexible credit lines, and expensive and unreliable power. Women constitute the largest proportion of informal (often cross-border) traders. However, women cross-border traders still face major constraints, including poor legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks and the lack of protection. On the whole, women's contributions to national economic growth and wealth creation is often unremunerated, unrecognized and absent in national accounts and statistics. Political and social unrest compound already high regional risk premiums to doing business in West Africa. Despite these challenges, regional bodies like ECOWAS are working to harmonize policies and standards to reduce trade barriers, and member states are showing increasing commitment to adhere to and enforce ECOWAS regulations through policy reform and capacity building. In addition, private sector alliances, many of them incubated by USAID, are working to create the economies of scale in production and marketing that will allow producers to add more value to their goods and take advantage of regional and global markets.

Across the region, women's livelihoods are constrained by their low levels of education, limited access to assets like land and a high demand on their time due to their domestic and reproductive roles. While the female labor participation rate has increased in some countries, it still remains low compared to that of men. Men dominate the export and mining sectors, while women are extensively involved in agriculture production. There are significantly fewer women at the higher levels of the value chain, such as in marketing and international trade, where men are numerous. Micro enterprise is a main source of income for women. Ownership of small and medium enterprises (SME) by females is growing but lags behind that of males.

iii.   Agriculture and Food Security

The West African economy is heavily based on smallholder agriculture. Smallholder farming in the region is characterized by rain-fed production, low fertilizer use, poor quality seeds, inadequate water management, low soil fertility, and insecure property rights for women producers. As a result, per-hectare yields are some of the lowest in the world. In addition, post-harvest losses are more than 40 percent of production. Staple foods (livestock and grains) and agricultural inputs (e.g., seeds, fertilizer), like other goods, cannot move easily from areas of production to areas of need. This is a significant factor in food insecurity in the region. Malnutrition is widespread in West Africa. Approximately 37 percent of children 5 years or younger are under height for their age; 28 percent are underweight; and 10 percent are affected by acute malnutrition.

Concerning gender dynamics in agriculture, on average, women comprise some 60 percent of farmers in the region, yet studies have shown that female farmers are 30 percent less productive than their male counterparts. This is because they have less access than men to productive resources (including land, yield-enhancing and labor-saving inputs, technologies, information and training, financial services, water, and irrigation) and opportunities.[11] Given the high level of female participation in the sector, it is

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[11] The State of Food and Agriculture – Women in agriculture closing the gender gap for development, 2010–2011, FAO, ISSN-0081-4539

important to ensure that regional strategies target women's access to productive resources and agriculture technology constraints.

Fortunately, West Africa benefits from well-established regional organizations, including inter-governmental institutions (ECOWAS, CILSS, CORAF) and emerging private sector organizations, such as the West Africa Grains Network (WAGN), who support the agriculture sector. Regional integration of agriculture in West Africa also has a well-defined framework, guided by the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) and ECOWAS' Regional Agriculture Investment Plan (RAIP). In addition, ECOWAS convened a meeting to develop a Plan of Action on Gender and Trade that should help identify some of the challenges and opportunities women face along the agriculture value chain. There is also increasing commitment of member countries to enforce ECOWAS regulations through policy reform and capacity building. However, the limited capacity of regional organizations to assist and facilitate national implementation of agreed-upon agriculture policies remains a challenge, but regional leaders recognize that improving this capacity and assisting member states is a critical goal.

iv.   Environment and Climate Change

Ecosystems are under tremendous pressures in West Africa due to high population growth, poverty, unsustainable land use practices, climate variability and change, and poor governance. For example, the Guinean Forest, a biodiversity hotspot and regulator of the hydrological regime of the region's major rivers, has been reduced to an estimated 15 percent of its original cover. The region has lost between 21 and 50 percent of its mangrove cover in the last 25 years, and marine fisheries are over exploited. Stressed ecosystems—and the societies that depend on their services—are less resilient to long-term climate change and unusual climatic events.

Climate change poses serious challenges to development in West Africa in a range of sensitive sectors. Beyond being a direct threat, climate change will not only exacerbate existing tensions, but also trigger new conflicts by redrawing the maps of water availability, food security, disease prevalence, coastal boundaries, and population distribution in the region. With nine urban centers within 60 km of the 15,000 km coastline, at least 40 percent of the population of West Africa is vulnerable to sea level rise and flooding from tropical storms, which are projected to become more intense as a result of climate change. Climate change will likely make many current development challenges more complex and urgent. For instance, climate change is expected to increase the variability of rainfall, especially in the Sahel, and wreak havoc on its predominantly agriculture-based economy, exacerbating food insecurity and potentially instability. Without adaptive measures that increase local resilience, physical, human and financial losses are expected to be significant.

Women and men in the region have different roles in natural resource management, as well as responsibilities for and knowledge of the natural resources, such as water, land and forests, in their environment. Men tend to play a greater role in the exploitation of natural resources for commercial purposes in the region. There are also different interests and motivations among women and men to conserve, protect or manage these resources. High rates of illiteracy among women reduce their ability to participate in the newly emerging decision-making and policy arenas of climate change and biodiversity. Similarly, some government efforts to promote participatory forest management may include only one half of the community if female community members' meaningful participation is not

actively sought. Promoting inclusive consultation processes that engage all members of the community offer the promise of more integrated, effective and sustainable natural resource management.

v.   Health

Health indicators in West Africa have lagged behind other African regions and the world. Fertility rates are higher than the global average (5.70 vs. 2.58 children per woman)[12] and close to one in three women in West Africa have an unmet need for family planning, meaning they express a desire to limit or space births but do not use any form of modern contraception. Maternal mortality ratios are exceedingly high in the region with countries like Chad and Sierra Leone among the highest at 1,110 and 890 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, respectively[13]. Child mortality rates are equally staggering with the mortality rate for children under the age of 5 in almost all countries in the region at 100 deaths or higher per 1,000 live births[14]. This means that 10 percent *or more* of children in West Africa die before the age of 5. HIV/AIDS prevalence in West Africa has remained low compared to other regions ranging by country from less than 1 percent to 4.5 percent. However, West Africa is confronted by a mixed HIV/AIDS epidemic that is concentrated in key populations (commercial sex workers and their clients, and men who have sex with men). In USAID/WA's 21 target countries, 34 percent of the population (117 million people) lack access to safe drinking water, and 73 percent (253 million) lack access to sanitation. Impediments to the quality of and access to health and water/sanitation services in the region include poor infrastructure, inconsistent data, poor human resources, outdated or lack of government policies, rapid and unplanned urbanization, and relatively low investment in health by national governments (not meeting the Abuja Declaration goal of allocating 15 percent of national budgets for health). The heavy toll of the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa tragically demonstrates the impact that weak healthcare systems combined with already vulnerable human health can have.

Women's and men's access to reproductive health care and their health-seeking behavior vary across the region. Lower levels of education, limited decision-making, and a lack of access to and control over family resources are some of the factors associated with women's disadvantages in accessing health care. Additionally, cultural norms, economic status, age and education also contour women's ability to access family planning and seek necessary treatment. Prevalent practices in the region—early marriage, female genital mutilation, fosterage and betrothals—have direct and indirect implications on reproductive health, particularly for women and girls. HIV/AIDS remains a major health priority for the region and despite progress in the prevention of new cases of infection and a reduction of AIDS-related deaths, the infection rate remains high with nearly five million infected people in West and Central Africa.

One encouraging aspect amidst the Ebola crisis and other daunting health challenges in West Africa is that ECOWAS, WAHO, WSA, and many national governments have shown commitment to address these challenges head on by harmonizing policies, sharing and promoting the scale-up of best practices (techniques or methodologies that, through experience and research, have reliably led to constructive results), and establishing standards of care. WAHO has a unique political mandate in the region to

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[12] Population Reference Bureau http://www.prb.org/pdf13/2013-population-data-sheet eng.pdf
[13] Maternal mortality Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2013 Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, The World Bank and the United Nations Population Division; http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/112682/2/9789241507226 eng.pdf?ua=1
[14] Levels & Trends in Child Mortality; Report 2013; Estimates Developed by the UN Inter-agency Group for Children http://www.childinfo.org/files/Child_Mortality_Report_2013.pdf

influence health policies within its member states that address immediate and ongoing needs. In addition, there is growing interest by foundations (e.g., the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation), and other donors, [e.g., the World Bank, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA)], in addressing health issues in the region. These new players have strong initiatives to build on, such as the Ouagadougou Partnership, a multi-donor supported initiative to integrate family planning into broader health services.

III.   The Role of a Regional Mission

As a regional mission, USAID/WA has a distinct lens through which it works. The vastness of the West Africa region (21 countries, population of more than 367 million, covering an area larger than the contiguous United States) creates an organizational environment where selectivity and focus are imperative. Accordingly, USAID/WA's Regional Development Cooperation Strategy advances regional objectives through programs that 1) directly engage regional partners, and 2) link to and leverage national investments to have an overall greater regional impact. In addition, an essential mandate of the mission is to support USAID programs across West Africa. As such, USAID/WA has the following responsibilities:

- Address transnational issues that cannot be addressed by any one country alone.
- Support regional partners' efforts and priorities, and build long-term sustainable partnerships with them.
- Link regional policies and priorities to national policies and plans.
- Create linkages and enhance communication between USAID bilateral missions and West African regional bodies.
- In limited cases, conduct programs at the country level with precedent-setting demonstration effect and leverage the experience to influence regional priorities and policies.
- Support the USAID presence in West Africa by managing the programs of the USAID Representative Office in Côte d'Ivoire and of the Non-Presence Country (NPC) Cameroon, and providing technical and operations services to bilateral missions and other NPCs in the region.
- Serve as a Center of Excellence that supports the USAID Forward reform agenda (e.g., Science and Technology, Innovation, Local Solutions) through learning and collaboration.

In essence, the role of USAID/WA is to enhance the enabling environment for West Africans to lead their own development and USAID's own ability to implement effective and sustainable development programs in West Africa. Annex I provides a table showing where USAID/WA works in the region.

Pursuing Regional Objectives

A primary responsibility of USAID/WA is to implement regional programs. By definition, regional programs seek to solve regional problems and achieve regional objectives that are only achievable when addressed on a multi-country basis. USAID/WA's regional programs address *shared transboundary* problems that no individual country can solve alone. Such problems include: violent extremism that crosses borders; barriers to trade, such as bribery at border posts or high transport costs; sanitary and phytosanitary standards that must be agreed to across countries; regional value chains for staple foods

that extend across borders; the management of threatened transboundary ecosystems, such as the Guinea Forest or coastal mangroves; and the spread of communicable diseases across borders. Countries also have *similar* problems that can best be solved by collaboration, learning, information sharing and scaling up best practices across borders. These include integrating family planning services into maternal/child and other health services and addressing declining soil fertility.

Working With and Through Regional Partners

USAID/WA works to help solve these regional problems primarily by working with and through regional partners, including regional public sector, private sector and civil society partners. A major focus of USAID/WA programs across sectors is building the capacity of regional inter-governmental institutions to fulfill their mandates. Despite some weaknesses, these institutions are poised to take on even greater leadership roles in advancing the development priorities of their member nations. USAID/WA programs are working with such institutions as ECOWAS, CILSS, WAPP, WAHO, CORAF/WECARD and WSA, among others, to improve their management and leadership capacities and to enhance their ability to develop and harmonize policies, track and support the national-level implementation of harmonized policies, and facilitate the generation and use of quality data and information to improve decision-making. Examples include training CILSS staff on management, working with CORAF/WECARD on the harmonization and adoption of a common seed policy (now 17 countries are in various stages of implementing the policy with assistance from CILSS), and working with WAHO to develop their Health Information System for the benefit of member countries.

In addition, USAID/WA has been instrumental in catalyzing the creation and building the capacity of private sector organizations, such as the Borderless Alliance, the Global Shea Alliance, the West African Grains Network and the African Cashew Alliance, that are now building and taking advantage of economies of scale in distributing and marketing their members' products in multiple countries, which helps them gain access to regional and global markets. USAID/WA also supports regional civil society organizations such as WANEP that are gathering and sharing information on national-level violent conflict through the ECOWAS Conflict Early Warning System. Annex II provides a list of USAID/WA's major regional partners, including public sector, private sector and civil society partners.

Due to the nature of the regional challenges and the convening power of regional organizations, much of USAID/WA's work is carried out through the direct engagement of USAID/WA staff with these organizations, regional and national leaders, and other donors. This engagement builds enduring partnerships, demonstrates USAID's technical leadership, helps catalyze innovation and the scale-up of technologies and best practices, and influences policy making. USAID/WA participates in, and in some cases financially supports and helps convene, numerous meetings that bring together regional organizations, national governments, business leaders, other donors, and/or technical experts to address development priorities. For example, USAID/WA is the lead for the CORAF/WECARD development partner group on regional agricultural research. USAID/WA will also play an instrumental role in promoting gender integration and the collection of gender-sensitive development data through its engagement and partnerships with regional organizations, academics and other thought leaders, such as collaborating with ECOWAS on implementation of its regional gender strategy.
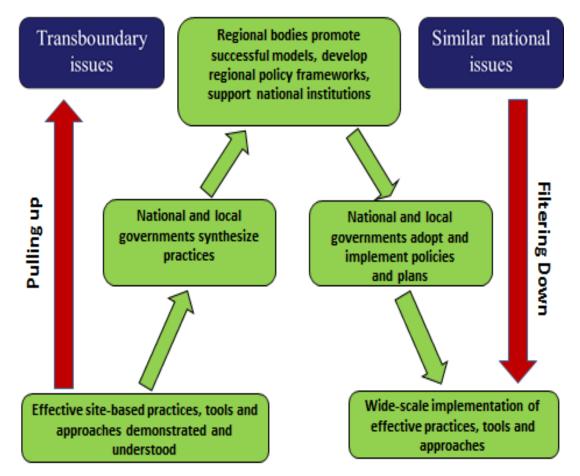
Linking Regional and National

USAID/WA recognizes that regional organizations, policies and standards are effective only in so far as they are linked to and affect national and local realities. **Figure 1** below summarizes the mission's conceptual approach (underpinning the RDCS) that links local experiences to regional impacts. The feedback loop among the regional, national and local levels described in Figure 1 (the diagram focuses on public sector actors but the concept applies to the private sector and civil society as well) already exists in West Africa, with varying degrees of effectiveness depending on the issues and actors involved. USAID/WA believes that, as a regional mission, it plays an important role in strengthening that feedback loop. USAID/WA uses a "systems" approach that links regional priorities and policies, national plans, and local-level practices so that they are mutually reinforcing. Working solely at the "apex" level with regional organizations, as critical as it is, is not enough to achieve regional scale and impact. Of course, the success of this systems approach depends on the work of many other development partners in West Africa who do work primarily at the national or local levels, notably, national and local governments, the private sector, civil society, USAID bilateral missions and offices, and other donors.

In engaging with, and building the capacity of, regional inter-governmental organizations, regional private sector alliances and civil society groups, USAID/WA will focus on helping them to fulfill their mandates (or missions in the case of the private sector and civil society) to "reach down" and assist their members in implementing policies, plans or standards, as well as "pull up" information and lessons from members' experiences to inform regional-level actions. To do so, USAID/WA will help these organizations generate high-quality, evidence-based information and document lessons from local, site-based practices   The mission will help develop and build channels for communication and technology transfer from local to national to regional levels and back again. USAID/WA will itself use, and help others to use, these channels to share high-quality and evidence-based information and learning, and to advocate for particular approaches to solving problems. In turn, this will influence and inform regional priorities, policies and/or standards. Ultimately, national plans and local practices will be affected and people-level impacts achieved.   To be effective, USAID/WA must link to, and leverage the investments of, partners that work primarily at the national and local levels who are already implementing regionally-adopted policies and also testing new approaches to solving problems. Prime among those partners with whom USAID/WA must work are the seven USAID bilateral missions in West Africa, namely those in Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Liberia, Ghana, Benin and Nigeria, as well as to the USAID offices in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Niger, all of which have recently increased their USAID staff significantly. Other donor and national-level actors are also critical partners.

In some cases, USAID/WA itself implements local or national-level activities, either as a means to achieving a regional objective or due to a particular mandate to do so. For example, USAID/WA's support to conserving the biodiversity and forest cover of the transboundary Guinea Forest (encompassing territory in Guinea, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo), one of West Africa's eight major biomes, requires working with local transboundary communities on sustainable forest management practices and forest-based livelihoods. Building resistance to extremist ideology – a region-wide threat – necessarily entails targeting at-risk populations at the community level and building those communities' social trust. Currently, USAID/WA implements such countering violent extremism (CVE) programs in specific targeted zones in Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad. USAID/WA's direct oversight and

Figure 1: Regional-National Linkages

management of the USAID bilateral assistance portfolios in Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon also necessarily involves implementing local and national-level activities. In certain other instances, USAID/WA has a mandate from USAID/Washington to implement national or local-level activities although usually across multiple countries. This includes a program to improve the productivity and sustainability of the cotton sector in the four major cotton producing countries in West Africa, namely, Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali. In health, USAID/WA has a similar mandate from USAID/Washington to implement health activities in four West African countries, specifically, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania and Togo. Finally, in selected cases, USAID/WA provides targeted technical assistance to NPCs. For example, together with other donors and national governments, USAID/WA provides technical assistance for the conduct of Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) in Togo, the Gambia and Cameroon. These DHS results also feed into the regional WAHO Health Information Systems.

When implementing national or community-level activities, USAID/WA deliberately applies its region-wide lens to those activities, leveraging them for precedent-setting, demonstration effects and cross-border knowledge sharing. For example, USAID/WA-supported activities in Togo that integrated family planning into a broader health package have been adopted as a best practice by WAHO and are now

being scaled up across the region. Furthermore, in none of these instances do the USAID/WA-supported on-the-ground activities duplicate activities supported by other USAID missions or offices. In Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania and Togo, for example, USAID/WA is the only USAID entity supporting health activities that work on HIV/AIDS services for key populations, family planning services targeted at urban and peri-urban areas, contraceptive security, pharmaceutical logistics, and health policy and information systems.

Nonetheless, to continue to avoid duplication and to achieve ~~the~~ regional-national linkages and synergies needed to reach regional scale and impact, the West Africa mission must collaborate closely with the ~~seven~~ USAID bilateral missions and offices in West Africa. To that end, USAID/WA will step up efforts to link to and leverage bilateral USAID programs. Models that USAID/WA has successfully used, and plans to intensify, to forge linkages between regional policies and national plans, and between the regional mission and bilateral missions and offices, include:

- Meetings among regional and bilateral implementing partners
- "Roadshows" of USAID/WA staff plus regional implementing partners to bilateral missions
- Bilateral mission and USAID/ WA parallel funding of a transboundary activity
- Providing tools to regional organizations to help them better track and assist national planning processes and/or implementation of regional policies
- Building capacity of national organizations to collect and provide information to regional organizations
- "Hand off" on implementation of a regional policy at the national level from USAID/WA to a bilateral mission
- Incorporating regional-national information exchange/best practices fora into monitoring USAID/WA implementing mechanisms with implementing partners, including awards for monitoring and evaluation
- Regional Partner Meetings, which include bilateral staff and regional implementing partners (such as the one held in Dakar for agriculture in November 2012)
- Paying the vast majority of overhead for certain region-wide activities, such as Africa Lead, which serve both regional and bilateral needs for capacity building.

Supporting USAID in West Africa

As a regional operations platform and a regional Center of Excellence for advancing USAID reforms, USAID/WA can play an increasingly important role in enabling USAID programs in West Africa to be more efficient and effective. As a regional mission, USAID/WA serves as a training center for USAID staff, offering a suite of USAID courses to staff around the region and beyond. In addition, USAID/WA will increase the use of its convening power to bring USAID colleagues and implementing partners together to share tools and best practices, be they technical approaches, approaches to gender integration or improved internal business practices.

USAID/WA provides support services (environmental compliance, administrative, legal, financial, and acquisitions and assistance) and technical expertise to 18 countries in the region, including USAID

Representative Offices and NPCs. This regional operational platform provides economies of scale that allow USAID to carry out programs in countries where a USAID presence, or the full suite of USAID staff expertise, is not cost effective. As such, the regional platform provides relatively ready access to staff that possess needed expertise and are also well-versed in the West African context. The oversight and expertise provided by USAID/WA staff reduce the management vulnerabilities and risks faced by client missions and offices and enhance program efficiency, effectiveness and innovation.   In addition, USAID/Washington looks to regional missions to spearhead and coordinate in their region special Washington-led initiatives. An important example is President Obama's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), which identifies youth leaders in entrepreneurship, civil society and public administration and provides them with leadership training, as well as professional development, mentoring and networking opportunities. USAID/West Africa will be coordinating YALI activities in West Africa including managing a YALI Regional Leadership Center located in Ghana.

IV.   Roles and Responsibilities of USAID/West Africa and USAID/Senegal

In the last few years, USAID/Senegal has taken on the oversight and management of several USAID bilateral programs in the Sahel, notably in Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger and Mauritania. The Senegal mission also now provides operations and environmental compliance support for the Sahel and USAID/Guinea and Sierra Leone. Furthermore, in 2012, USAID's Sahel Resilience Strategy, which focuses on building resilience to climate change and food insecurity among vulnerable populations in targeted zones of Niger and Burkina Faso, was elaborated and approved. The new resilience programs under this strategy are overseen by USAID/Senegal.   In addition, the Senegal mission houses the USAID Offices of Food for Peace and U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, which contribute to the Sahel resilience programming and also cover the entire West Africa region. USAID/WA continues to implement regional programs in the Sahel, some of which have on-the-ground activities in-country. **Table 1** below indicates USAID/WA's and USAID/Senegal's respective roles and responsibilities and in which countries the two missions work.

Country	Regional Programs		Oversight of Bilateral Programs and Staff		Operations Support* for Bilateral Programs		Environmental Compliance Support for Bilateral Programs	
	WA	Senegal	WA	Senegal	WA	Senegal	WA	Senegal
Presence Countries**								
Benin***	X				X		X	
Burkina Faso	X	X		X		X		X
Côte d'Ivoire	X		X		X		X	
Ghana	X				X		X	
Guinea	X					X	X	X
Liberia	X				X		X	
Mali	X							X
Niger	X	X		X		X		X
Nigeria	X						X	
Senegal	X			X		X		X
Non Presence Countries								
Cameroon	X		X		X		X	
Cape Verde	X							
Chad	X			X		X		X
Equatorial Guinea	X							
Gabon	X							
Guinea Bissau	X							
Mauritania	X			X		X		X
São Tomé & Principe	X							
Sierra Leone****	X					X	X	X
The Gambia	X							
Togo	X							

*Operations support = legal, financial, assistance and acquisition, and/or executive office.

** In addition to full missions, Presence Countries include three USAID Representative Offices (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Niger).

***The USAID bilateral mission in Benin is scheduled to transition to a USAID Representative Office, overseen by USAID/WA, in 2015.

****USAID/Guinea oversees USAID/Sierra Leone.

As described above in the section on the role of a regional mission, the local-level activities implemented by USAID/WA in Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger are distinct from, and not duplicative of, other programs in those countries managed by USAID/Senegal. Nevertheless, USAID/WA, USAID/Senegal and USAID staff in-country do coordinate closely to share information, provide mutual support and foster program synergies. This is particularly true and important for the two missions' shared goal of building resilience in the Sahel and throughout West Africa.

The USAID Policy on Resilience defines resilience as:

> *The ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.*

Both USAID/Senegal and USAID/WA contribute to the resilience agenda in West Africa but at different levels. The Sahel resilience program managed by USAID/Senegal works primarily at the household and community levels in Burkina Faso and Niger using an innovative mix of development and humanitarian funding and approaches applied to integrated agriculture, health and governance interventions. On the other hand, USAID/WA takes a systems approach to improving resilience, implementing regional programs (particularly in agriculture, trade and environment) that focus on regional policies, regulatory frameworks and information/knowledge systems that affect resilience and food security across West Africa. USAID/WA is also responsible for leading the policy direction and dialogue with regional institutions including ECOWAS, CILSS, CORAF, and WAHO, while USAID/Senegal works primarily through national partners in Burkina Faso and Niger.

USAID/WA supports regional policies and initiatives that seek to improve food security, such as the ECOWAS regional agriculture policy, ECOWAP. ECOWAP in turn informs the ECOWAS Regional building resilience. An essential part of building resilience in West Africa is facilitating the Regional Agricultural Investment Plan (RAIP) and the member states' respective National Agriculture Investment Plans, which are aligned with RAIP and thus now include a focus on risk reduction and movement of staple foods across borders from areas of production to areas of deficit and need. This is especially critical when shocks occur in particular locations, undermining food production and income generation there. USAID/WA's trade program focuses on the regulatory frameworks governing trade (customs and tariffs) as well as improving the transport and logistics sectors to improve efficiencies and reduce costs. Finally, the West Africa mission works to improve regional information systems related to food security to enable better decision-making at all levels. For example, USAID/WA supports the generation, dissemination and use of agro-meteorological information (through AGRHYMET, the Agro-meteorology, Hydrology, Meteorology Institute of CILSS), land use and land cover data, and famine early warning information, as well as the use of ECOWAS's harmonized food security assessment tool, the "Cadre Harmonisé." Successfully linking the site-based experiences from the USAID/Senegal-managed resilience programs in the Sahel to the regional resilience policies and frameworks supported by USAID/WA will be an important opportunity for advancing resilience in West Africa. Given their respective roles and responsibilities, complementary approaches and shared goals, USAID/WA and USAID/Senegal, together with the USAID in-country staff in the Sahel, are committed to close coordination and collaboration needed to achieve these linkages and synergies and ultimately, greater development impact.

V. USAID/West Africa RDCS Goal and Development Hypothesis

a) Organizing Principles

This Regional Development Cooperation Strategy:

- Is African-led
- Maintains a regional perspective
- Supports regional partners' efforts and priorities
- Pursues a long-term vision balanced with short-term, achievable results

The mission will apply these principles to project designs so that projects align closely with the strategy and meet performance management requirements. Accordingly, new Project Appraisal Documents and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) indicators and processes, as well as portfolio reviews and results reporting, will reflect these principles.

b) USAID/WA Goal

Based on the guiding principles and cumulative impact achievable at the DO level, the mission has selected the following goal for the 2015-2019 performance period:

Social and economic well-being advanced by West Africans

This goal articulates USAID/WA's commitment to support African-led, regional development. Through a process of inclusive deliberation and goal validation, mission staff agreed to adopt a goal that uses the U.S. Institute of Peace definition of social well-being: "**an end state in which basic human needs are met and people are able to coexist peacefully in communities with opportunities for advancement.**"[15] This goal inherently includes food security.

The term "advanced by West Africans" also underscores the mission's commitment to capacity-building of diverse partners in the region – not only the leaders of regional and national institutions, but other important development actors in civil society and the private sector with the potential to help drive development in the region. The goal encapsulates the mission's strategic purpose of supporting regional institutions in delivering on their respective mandates, while encompassing those USAID/WA programs that focus at the national and sub-national level. USAID/WA proposes to measure the goal through a combination of development and capacity-building indicators. These could include the following:

- Average UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) score[16] for selected countries in the region, (e.g., Niger, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, and Ghana)

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[15] United States Institute of Peace, Washington, DC: Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction (The Web Version). Date unknown.

[16] "International Human Development Indicators - United Nations Development Programme." *International Human Development Indicators*. 20 May 2013. http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/GHA.html. "Each year since 1990 the Human Development Report has published the Human Development Index (HDI) which was introduced as an alternative to conventional measures of national development, such as level of income and the rate of economic growth. The HDI represents a push for a broader definition of well-being and provides a composite measure of three basic dimensions of human

- Average UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII) score for selected countries in the region, as a measure of the drag on development imposed by gender inequality
- Capacity of regional organizations as measured through a standard capacity tool [e.g.: Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA)]

USAID/WA will achieve this goal through three DOs and one Support Objective:

DO 1: Systems of Non-violent Conflict Management Strengthened in West Africa
DO 2: Broad-Based Economic Growth and Resilience Advanced through West African Partners
DO 3: Utilization of Quality Health Services Increased through West African Partners
Support Objective: USAID's Capacity to Advance USG Objectives in West Africa Enhanced

USAID/WA's development hypothesis is that, **if** West African systems of non-violent conflict management are strengthened, **if** broad-based economic growth and resilience are advanced through regional partners, and **if** the utilization of quality health services is increased in West Africa, **then** social and economic well-being will be advanced by West Africans. The Support Objective will help achieve the goal by supporting USAID development programming in the region.

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development: health, education and income. The HDI of Sub-Saharan Africa as a region increased from 0.366 in 1980 to 0.475 today."

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING ADVANCED BY WEST AFRICANS

DO 1: Systems of Non-violent Conflict Management Strengthened in West Africa

DO 2: Broad-Based Economic Growth and Resilience Advanced through West African Partners

DO 3: Utilization of Quality Health Services Increased through West African Partners

Support Objective: USAID's Capacity to Advance USG Objectives in West Africa Enhanced

IR 1.1: Ability of People to Address Problems Peacefully Strengthened

IR 2.1: Regional Integration Increased ★

IR 3.1: Best Practices Scaled up

IR 1: Learning & Leveraging by USAID in West Africa Improved

IR 1.2: Targeted Government Institutions Strengthened to Engage Citizens on Contentious Issues

IR 2.2: Conservation and Resilient Low-Emissions Growth Improved

IR 3.2: Enabling Environment at the National and Regional Levels Strengthened ★

IR 2: Operations Strengthened to Manage Risk and Increase Efficiency & Effectiveness

IR 1.3: Ability of Institutions Operating at the Regional Level Strengthened to Respond to Governance Challenges

IR 2.3: Regional Trade and Investment in Targeted Products and Services Increased ★

IR 3.3: Demand for Services Increased*

IR 2.4: Sustainable Agricultural Productivity Improved ★

* Contributions of other partners

★ Feed the Future

c) Cross-Cutting Strategic Issues

While the four objectives are necessary and sufficient to advance USAID/WA's goal, the development hypothesis also encompasses the following strategic, cross-cutting issues:

- Capacity-building
- Gender
- Youth
- Governance
- Climate change
- Resilience
- Conflict

The DO-level Results Frameworks include some or all of these strategic issues. For example, results statements at multiple levels [DO, Intermediate Result (IR) and sub-IR] reflect the mission's significant **capacity-building** and system-strengthening focus. This capacity work will build upon years of USAID/WA support to regional organizations and is intended to help partners deliver on their mandates more effectively. Capacity-building of regional partners is also necessary to achieve ambitious USAID Forward targets for increased programming through local entities over the life of the strategy.

Integrating **gender** into the regional strategy is essential given the gender gaps that exist in West Africa, already cited in earlier sections. UNDP's Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures the percentage lost to potential human development caused by gender inequality across the three dimensions of reproductive health, empowerment (measured by parliamentary representation), and labor market participation. According to the 2012 Human Development Report, at least half of all West African countries fall below the Sub-Saharan African average on the GII, and several, including Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Sierra Leone, are ranked in the bottom ten countries worldwide (of countries with data reported). Social norms and traditions play a large role in sustaining gender inequality, especially when measuring women's position relative to men's in regard to economic, political, education and health criteria. This fact is well understood by USAID/WA, which has consistently focused on gender issues ranging from the role that males play in violent extremism and the need to target young men, to addressing the exclusion many females face when trying to access health services or participate in civic life or peacebuilding activities. In applying a gender-sensitive lens to each DO, the RDCS will help ensure that project designs recognize and remove constraints and/or narrow gaps in the way that women and men benefit from USAID interventions.

Youth[17] is increasingly a development concern in the region. Constituting over 60 percent of the total population, West Africa's youth pose significant development challenges and opportunities[18]. Despite their numbers, youth are often ignored by West African leaders due to social norms. Youth policies and programs remain executive decisions as opposed to parliamentary legislation, open to manipulation, arbitrary change or cancellation. At the same time, the perception of youth as secondary citizens makes

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[17] Youth has multiple definitions, varying both at the country and agency level. USAID's youth policy states that while youth development programs often focus on the 15 to 24 year age range, programs are likely to engage individuals aged 10-29 as a broader youth cohort.

[18] "Central Intelligence Agency." *CIA*. 20 May 2013. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/wfbExt/region_afr.html. An average of the population of 0-24 year olds for countries in West Africa comes to 62 percent.

it hard to penetrate decision-making circles or achieve significant economic status. The result is that other than voting, youth tend to be underrepresented participants in governance systems, unable to participate in formal decision-making processes and often economically marginalized. Recognizing the urgency of the youth bulge, USAID/WA is increasingly applying a youth lens to mission programming to better leverage this potential demographic dividend.

Good **governance** requires "institutions and processes that are transparent, accountable, and responsible to the people they serve." [19] Governance is a cross-cutting issue in that many of USAID/WA's programs involve strengthening governance at multiple levels and in all sectors. Interventions to improve governance range from building institutional capacity, to working with local authorities and local communities, to policy reform and improving policy enforcement.

West Africa is considered to be among the most vulnerable regions in the world to global **climate change** impacts, due to environmental degradation, a highly populated and long coastline (with high exposure to sea level rise and extreme weather events), high rates of poverty (and low capacity to cope and respond), and distinct geographical contrast between wetland and arid zones (and shared natural resource dependency). Changes in climate are anticipated to increase food insecurity, exacerbate drought and flooding events, increase threats to bio-diversity and ecosystems, negatively impact clean water sources, and place additional stress on fragile democracies. Additionally, climate change is expected to result in increased uncertainty and variability in the region's climate, placing additional stress on already fragile livelihoods.

As noted previously, USAID defines **resilience** as "the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth." Demonstrating the linkages among these strategic cross-cutting issues, USAID's resilience policy emphasizes capacity-building, gender, governance, youth and adaptation to climate change. Much of USAID/WA's work promotes resilience. Additionally, the mission will continue to work closely with AGIR, a European Union-led multi-donor initiative that focuses on improving resilience throughout West Africa, and the USAID Joint Planning Cell (JPC), based in Senegal, which targets the vulnerable in several countries in the Sahel. Both have informed the strategy and the mission's long-term development planning.

Conflict is an issue that cuts across all sectors and walks of life. When conflict erupts in the region, such as recent events in Côte d'Ivoire or Mali, the consequences are profound, far-reaching, and lasting. Conflict not only hinders development, but can more accurately be seen as development in reverse. For example, conflict can erode the trust that enables markets to function properly, disrupt people's ability to access health services, damage crops, or destroy infrastructure critical to economic activity. The displacement of populations, which often accompanies large-scale conflicts, brings its own suite of cross-cutting implications for development. By targeting critical drivers of conflict across the region, USG investments in peace and security activities will contribute to long-term stability across sectors and in the West Africa region.

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[19] U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington, DC: Building Resilience to Recurrent Crisis: USAID Policy and Program Guidance, December 2012.

VI.   Development Objectives and Support Objective

a) DO 1: Systems of Non-Violent Conflict Management Strengthened in West Africa

Background and Analysis

Violent extremism, while concentrated in a relatively small number of key countries, presents a region-wide threat to the peace and security of the West Africa region. In recent years, violent extremist organizations have been intensifying their activities in the region. These organizations include Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Boko Haram. This intensification came to a head in 2012 with the expansion of extremist control over northern Mali and the related collapse of the government in Bamako. International intervention, led by French and West African forces, has stabilized a very difficult situation. However, significant uncertainties exist related to the ability of the Malian state to come to a settlement with disaffected constituencies and re-establish itself in northern Mali. Violence has also intensified in northern Nigeria, with consequent spillover effects on neighboring Niger, Chad and Cameroon. Elsewhere in the region, the potential for new conflict with regional or sub-regional impacts remains high in post-conflict countries, particularly Côte d'Ivoire.

All this comes as communities and families in the Sahel region confront recurrent droughts due to climate variability, increasing food insecurity, loss of remittances from migrant workers, and the additional strain of supporting thousands of migrants returning to Niger and Chad from Libya. Underpinning these challenges is an operational environment in which governance structures are weak and democratic gains made in recent years remain fragile.

In analyzing the critical obstacles to security and democratic governance in the region, USAID/WA identified the following challenges and issues:

Violence[20]: Violence and the threat of violence have emerged as critical issues currently facing the region. This includes issues of poverty and unemployment that can contribute as "push factors" for violent extremism, terrorism, structural violence (including ripple effects from the government to the household level), and transnational conflict and violence. It also includes "pull" factors that attract individuals and communities toward violent ideologies. USAID programming has shown that USAID can address issues of violence, particularly through work using community radio to broadcast moderate messages.[21] It also shows that layering of other development interventions along with community radio/messaging can further reduce "push" and "pull" factors. As recent events have demonstrated, terrorism and violent extremism are not bound by country borders; their threat can shift rapidly from one part of West Africa to another. The fluid and transboundary nature of extremist groups demands a concerted regional approach. As a regional mission, USAID/WA has a distinct comparative advantage in terms of programming scope, technical ability, flexibility, and willingness and mandate to tackle these issues.

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[20] AON PLC, "2014 Terrorism & Political Violence Map," 2014. http://www.aon.com/terrorismmap/2014-Terrorism-Map.pdf.
[21] USAID, "Applying Local Solutions to Local Problems: Radio Listeners as Agents of Change," 2010. This is an impact evaluation of the Peace through Development (2008 – 2011) project's radio programming in Niger and Chad.

Elections[22]: Election processes that are not transparent are a key issue, as is election-fueled conflict.

While elections are episodic and country-specific, the importance of transparent elections for regional stability cannot be overstated. The case of the violence that followed the disputed presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire in 2010, which led to the flight of more than 450,000 Ivorian refugees to neighboring countries—Ghana, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Guinea—demonstrates how a national election can quickly become a regional problem. In contrast, donor interventions in Liberia and Senegal provide strong evidence of the importance of support for well-run, peaceful and competitive elections. Addressing the risk of election-related violence at the bilateral level by leveraging regional institutional capacity to support free and fair elections is an area of comparative advantage for the mission, as is more general election support work in USAID NPCs. Not only can USAID/WA provide technical support in this area, but no other donor is currently doing election support work on a regional basis.

Management of Natural Resources[23]: Disputes over natural resources and land are a key cause of regional conflict. Disputes are often framed by what is called the "resource curse"[24]: poor governance of high-value natural resources, such as minerals and oil, which contributes to corruption and profiteering. Other issues include lack of transparency in natural resource management and systemic corruption. Inadequate or unequitable natural resource management is commonly understood as a key root cause of regional conflict. Recent work to improve legislative oversight of natural resource extraction in Niger demonstrates that USAID/WA has the capacity to address this issue directly by working with targeted communities and institutions.[25] Peace and governance activities mitigating conflict over natural resources will complement natural resource management interventions under DO2, which also have a strong governance focus.

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[22] Sisk, T.M and A Reynolds (1998), "Introduction" in Elections and Conflict Management in Africa, Sick, T.M and A. Reynolds (eds.), United States Institute for Peace: Washington, D.C., p4.

[23] "United Nations Expert Group Conference Report on Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa: Transforming a Peace Liability into a Peace Asset," UN OSAA, Cairo, 2006, p. 7
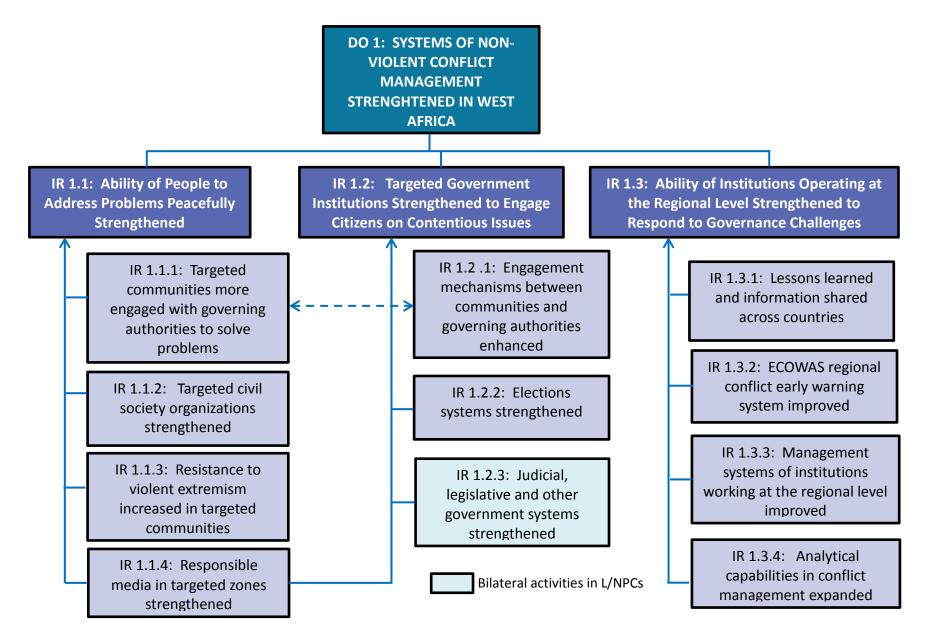
[24] Collier, Paul. "The Political Economy of Natural Resources."
http://users.ox.ac.uk/~econpco/research/pdfs/PoliticalEconomyofNaturalResources-SocialResearchArticle.pdf.

[25] "An Evaluation of the CEPPS National Democratic Institute/IFES Natural Resource Management Strengthening Program in Niger (DRAFT)," USAID/West Africa, 2014.

DO 1: SYSTEMS OF NON-VIOLENT CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRENGHTENED IN WEST AFRICA

IR 1.1: Ability of People to Address Problems Peacefully Strengthened

IR 1.2: Targeted Government Institutions Strengthened to Engage Citizens on Contentious Issues

IR 1.3: Ability of Institutions Operating at the Regional Level Strengthened to Respond to Governance Challenges

IR 1.1.1: Targeted communities more engaged with governing authorities to solve problems

IR 1.1.2: Targeted civil society organizations strengthened

IR 1.1.3: Resistance to violent extremism increased in targeted communities

IR 1.1.4: Responsible media in targeted zones strengthened

IR 1.2 .1: Engagement mechanisms between communities and governing authorities enhanced

IR 1.2.2: Elections systems strengthened

IR 1.2.3: Judicial, legislative and other government systems strengthened

IR 1.3.1: Lessons learned and information shared across countries

IR 1.3.2: ECOWAS regional conflict early warning system improved

IR 1.3.3: Management systems of institutions working at the regional level improved

IR 1.3.4: Analytical capabilities in conflict management expanded

Bilateral activities in L/NPCs

Development Hypothesis

USAID/WA identified peaceful conflict management, an essential component of regional stability, as one of its highest intended outcomes and will aim to improve the systems that must be in place to manage potential conflict in the region. The mission considers conflict management to encompass CVE, election management and conflict prevention. The objective is to enhance the ability of communities, governments (local and national) and regional organizations to peacefully manage disputes and conflicts that arise. The focus is on systems; USAID/WA has neither the scope of programs nor depth of resources to eradicate conflict in this vast and volatile region. Rather, USAID/WA interventions will result in systems better able to handle conflict, when it does happen, in a non-violent, inclusive way.

USAID/WA's theory of change under this DO is that strengthened capacity for conflict management in West Africa depends on mutual reinforcement at three levels: 1) people engaging with each other (as individuals and/or via formal or informal organizations) and with government to resolve local issues by peaceful means; 2) good governance of national government institutions; and 3) effective institutions operating across national borders to support regional conflict management and share information about effective approaches to conflict management. These will result in outcomes greater than the sum of their parts – strengthened regional conflict management systems. This also requires a fourth element: linkages among and across each level to improve regional conflict management capacity. Thus, the development hypothesis is that **if** people in the region are better able to address problems peacefully, targeted government institutions have increased capacity to engage with citizens on contentious issues, and institutions that operate regionally are better able to provide good governance, **then** this will strengthen systems that support non-violent conflict management in West Africa[26].

Intermediate Results:
IR 1.1: Ability of people to address problems peacefully strengthened
IR 1.2: Targeted government institutions strengthened to engage citizens on contentious issues
IR 1.3: Ability of institutions operating at the regional level strengthened to respond to governance challenges

Assumptions and Risks
The development hypothesis and results framework are informed by the following:

Assumptions:
- USAID/WA maintains or expands its mandate for regional CVE programming under the TSCTP and for selected (bilateral) activities in NPCs.
- The emphasis on conflict mitigation remains consistent with USG/USAID priorities in the region and ad hoc demands for other types of programming do not shift resources and attention away from the core DO.
- Conditions in the region provide manageable security risks (especially for CVE) to allow USAID and implementing partners to operate and maintain a stable presence.

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[26] "Theories of Change and Indicator Development in Conflict Management and Mitigation," USAID/CMM, 2010, 16-23.

- External shocks (economic, environmental, political, etc.) are not too great to derail achievement of results.
- The perception of USG policies in the region remains favorable or neutral.
- USAID/WA has adequate information and resources to appropriately target beneficiaries, and beneficiaries have continued interest in working with USAID.
- ECOWAS engagement with USAID continues, especially in regard to regional early warning.
- USAID personnel can obtain travel clearance to work in the region.

Risks:
- Security constraints resulting from erupting violent conflict have a destabilizing effect on the region or in specific countries within the region.
- Political instability or other events destabilize the region.

Illustrative DO-level Indicator
- Country political stability and absence of violence point value score

Cross-Cutting Issues:
Governance: USAID/WA considers one of the key purposes of governing to be solving problems in a peaceful way. Governance is an orientation guiding how people work together and requires strong reciprocal linkages between government and non-government actors. It includes helping to empower people and strengthen systems so that people know their rights and can identify, communicate and obtain what they need from governing authorities. It means creating hope and encouraging people to work collectively – whether citizens solve problems together, or government and citizens interact constructively. Governance includes informal and formal means of building and fulfilling the social contract in a way that is legitimate, representative and conflict-sensitive. This governance approach is applicable across DOs (e.g., in policy development efforts that include consultation with civil society to yield better, more legitimate and acceptable policies).

Gender: The DO reflects the following focus areas for gender-mainstreaming: 1) awareness and response to gender-based violence (GBV) and better understanding of, and response to, the role of women in conflict and peace-building; and 2) promoting gender equality in political participation and conflict prevention. USAID/WA will look for opportunities to address gender issues in the region through the following:

- Conducting research that will increase the understanding of women's influence on countering violent extremism.
- Monitoring gender responsive early warning indicators as part of electoral conflict prevention programming.
- Strengthening capacities for supporting women's leadership and political representation at all levels.
- Strengthening women leaders' voices in support of peace, especially peaceful elections.

Support for women's leadership and gender-responsive early warning systems will be a particularly important aspect of USAID/WA's approach to preventing and mitigating election-related conflict across the region. This is in alignment with the goal of the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and

Security, which is to empower women as equal partners in preventing conflict and building peace in countries threatened and affected by war, violence, and insecurity. USAID/WA will work to increase the participation of women, women's organizations and networks, and women leaders in the establishment and implementation of national-level conflict early warning systems and responses in countries facing potentially divisive elections. The early warning systems will integrate gender perspectives by including gender-specific indicators tailored to each country with the engagement of local women's organizations. At the community level, women-led organizations will be an integral part of data collection for the early warning systems. At the national level these organizations will also be involved in formulating responses to conflict risks and often in the execution of those responses. For example, the mission's programs will support influential women in national public roles and media campaigns that counter inflammatory messages, educate voters about their rights and responsibilities, and advocate for issues of particular concern to women, notably protection from sexual gender based violence.

Capacity-Building: Strengthening local systems is the foundation for achieving many USAID/WA results. To that end, the mission will help build leadership within targeted entities to enhance their ability to identify and meet their own capacity needs. Through this approach, USAID/WA expects to better empower beneficiaries, increase ownership and leverage capacity-building outcomes for broader impact. An important aspect of USAID/WA's approach to building capacity will be to better link targeted local communities and their leaders, civil society organizations, national governments and regional organizations not only for the purposes of supporting advocacy and information exchange, but also so that these institutions that operate at various levels can build their networks, learn from each other and adopt best practices in conflict management.

Youth: Current analysis in West Africa indicates that youth are disproportionately at risk of potential radicalization and mobilization by violent extremism.[27] Many youth are unemployed, and traditional social norms in West Africa tend to marginalize youth and limit their participation in decision-making. Consequently, youth are an important focus of USAID/WA's programming to prevent and mitigate conflict and counter violent extremism. USAID/WA programs will continue to work with youth to provide them with opportunities to positively engage in their communities' decision-making processes and to have their voices heard. This will include such mechanisms as radio discussion and call-in programs that focus on topics of interest to youth. Leadership and job skills training are also important components of USAID/WA's programs targeting youth.

IR 1.1: *Ability of people to address problems peacefully strengthened*—This IR and its sub- IRs focus on civil society. At its core are individuals in targeted locations who desire to reconcile societal conflict peacefully. The ability of communities to determine and communicate their collective interests contributes to the peaceful resolution of local issues. Local conflict can be better managed if people feel empowered to express their concerns in a non-violent manner that will not cause a violent response. This outcome requires stronger linkages within and between communities as well as bridges between communities and governing authorities. USAID/WA will enhance opportunities for the populations most at-risk to extremism, specifically youth and other marginalized groups, to play constructive roles in

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[27] "Niger Counter Extremism Assessment," USAID/West Africa, 2009, pp. 12-14.

their communities. In tandem, the mission will work with host country governments to open avenues for peaceful dialogue and inclusion in decision making with local authorities, with the aim of providing alternatives to radicalization and recruitment into violent extremism as a means of addressing grievances. Illustrative activities include conflict mitigation and management training for community leadership and civil society organizations; vocational and livelihoods training for at risk groups, such as youth; and training local radio station personnel on unbiased, fact-based reporting. In addition, USAID/WA will seek to build and/or strengthen region-wide networks of civil society organizations, youth and media to enhance cross-border learning and other exchanges focused on empowering citizens, managing conflict and resistance to violent extremism.

Sub-IR 1.1.1: Targeted communities more engaged with governing authorities to solve problems– For citizens to engage effectively with government, communities must be able to define their collective interests; form consensus and prioritize their collective interests; and communicate their collective interests in a peaceful, constructive manner. Successful engagement also entails peaceful discourse; full participation in

> **Trans-Sahara Counter-terrorism Partnership:** Established in 2005, the TSCTP is a multi-faceted, multi-year U.S. inter-agency effort designed to counter violent extremism in the Trans-Sahara region. TSCTP focuses on containing and marginalizing terrorist organizations by strengthening individual country and regional counter-terrorism capabilities, enhancing and institutionalizing cooperation among the region's security and intelligence organizations, promoting democratic governance, and discrediting terrorist ideology. As part of TSCTP, USAID works at the community level to address groups most vulnerable to extremist ideologies through youth empowerment, improved local governance, and improved access to information and messages of peace and tolerance. USAID/WA has responsibility for USAID's TSCTP programming in Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso, and is increasing its capacity to serve as the field coordinator for USAID TSCTP efforts in the region and potentially to expand to other countries given the fluid nature of violent extremism.

government processes (e.g., voter turnout); safe spaces for discussing issues; an environment of tolerance; and confidence in civil society organizations (CSO). Participation must also be inclusive so that under-represented and traditionally disenfranchised people are willing to use the governing systems. These systems include official governing authorities and/or anyone with power or a voice in a community (e.g., local utilities, CSOs and traditional authorities).

Achieving this requires that people are better informed and believe there is a sense of accountability. Constituents must know what to demand of legislators and must have the skills to advocate for what they want from government. They must desire constructive dialogue within and among communities, and between communities and governing authorities. They must also trust that government institutions and governing bodies at multiple levels will listen to their concerns and serve their interests in an inclusive, peaceful and constructive manner. The ability of groups to organize is also important to maximize social cohesion and increase resistance to violent messaging, threats or actions. Active engagement between citizens and government is a key element to support peaceful problem-solving among individuals. To foster gender equality in this area, it is also important to promote and support women's national and regional networks for peace. For these reasons, this result is linked to sub-IR 1.2.1: Engagement mechanisms between communities and governing authorities enhanced.

Sub-IR 1.1.2: Targeted CSOs strengthened– The hypothesis is that strong CSOs can better advocate and increase people's ability to peacefully manage conflict and hold government accountable. CSOs must effectively represent and serve local interests. To achieve this, CSOs must be able to conduct fact-based, credible conflict-related analysis, be strengthened to promote women's rights and inclusive participation and leadership, and serve as an effective information resource for the public. CSOs must know what triggers to spot, what to track, and how to conduct evidence-based analysis. They must demonstrate inclusivity, transparency, integrity and openness in the processes of gathering and disseminating information as well as in their internal policies, procedures and systems. CSO effectiveness also requires strong linkages to national and regional CSO networks, regional CSOs, governing bodies, and other authorities.

Sub-IR 1.1.3: Resistance to violent extremism increased in targeted communities– Resistance to violent extremism should not be confused with resilience to climatic shocks. While in the Sahelian context, the two are related (and indeed food security resilience has important governance- and conflict-related components), USAID/WA distinguishes between the two.[28] For this objective, the mission uses the term resistance to mean the ability of communities to successfully navigate and/or constructively engage with those within their own communities, who are potentially drawn towards extremist ideologies, while rejecting those (either from within or from outside) who espouse violence in pursuit of extremist ends.[29] The theory of change is that improved social cohesion within at-risk communities, together with support for moderate voices and the creation of a positive outlook for at-risk youth, leads to greater ability to resolve local issues peacefully and, ultimately, to greater community resistance against violent extremism. Gender is an important aspect of understanding and building resistance to violent extremism. Marginalized male youth are considered most at-risk for attraction to violent extremist ideology; they will indeed be a focus of the mission's CVE programming. However, the role of Sahelian women in fostering resistance to or support for violent extremism is not well-understood nor is the role played by gender based violence. USAID/WA will support research and analysis of these and other questions related to CVE and will share the results with other stakeholders, including other USAID missions and offices as well as other parts of the USG, in order to improve CVE programming.

Sub IR 1.1.4: Responsible media in targeted zones strengthened– USAID/WA has identified media development as a key strategic approach with a multiplier effect across its entire peace and governance portfolio.[30] Aspects of responsible media include positive, responsible messaging; promotion of non-violence; and tolerance of multiple viewpoints. Expected outcomes are increased responsible

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[28] This issue was discussed in detail as part of JPC discussions with USAID/Senegal during development of the Sahel Resilience Strategy. At an operational level, the approaches are distinguishable in whom they target: food security resilience work targets those at risk of food insecurity; CVE work targets those at risk of being influenced by violent extremist ideologies or organizations. While these groups overlap in some circumstances, each situation has to be considered on its merits. In the case of zones in West Africa where JPC economic resilience-related work overlaps with USAID/WA CVE work, both approaches are complementary from a CVE perspective: JPC work contributes to addressing "push" factors for CVE at the aggregate level for targeted zones. USAID/WA CVE work is more focused on higher risk groups and more oriented towards "pull" factors.

[29] USAID/WA has been at the forefront of preventative CVE work worldwide. USAID's most current policy document on CVE, entitled "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency" (September 2011) notes (p. 5) the importance of resistance against the influence of extremist narratives.

[30] "Applying Local Solutions to Local Problems: Radio Listeners as Agents of Change," USAID, 2010, pp. 18-19.

programming from various media outlets—including radio, television, websites, and blogs—with formats including discussions, public interviews and dramas. Expected outcomes also include increased public awareness of current issues; the use of responsible, fact-based journalism; and increased subject matter expertise of journalists. This sub-IR also links to IR 1.2, as media is both a conduit to communicate issues to governments (e.g., by alerting governing authorities to local concerns before they worsen), and a vehicle for governments to deliver public messages.

IR 1.2: Targeted government institutions strengthened to engage citizens on contentious issues

Increased government human resource capacity is the underlying objective of this IR. This refers to increased responsiveness to citizens at the local level, enhanced transparency and accountability, and systems strengthening. The term "systems" has a wide meaning, encompassing government institutions' operating systems and cross-institutional systemic processes or functions that governments perform (such as judiciary systems and election systems). Because organizational capacity is based on the ability of multiple systems to function adequately, USAID/WA has adopted a holistic view and will focus where capacity is weakest. For institutions critical to reducing conflict, this includes strengthening operating systems such as financial management, communications, and M&E. This IR is linked to IR 1.1 and implies a two-way linkage: governments and citizens improving their ability to engage with each other. Illustrative activities include supporting information campaigns and town hall meetings connecting government representatives to constituents; improving access to justice for marginalized populations; and training of elections management body personnel.

Sub-IR 1.2.1: Engagement mechanisms between communities and governing authorities enhanced–

This result concerns the presence of new and improved mechanisms and opportunities for enhancing engagement between communities and governing authorities. Government must have an orientation to care about citizens and consider constituents' needs. Expected outcomes include increased inclusivity with government recognizing the importance of, and enhancing efforts to reach out to, under-represented and traditionally disenfranchised members of society.

Sub-IR 1.2.2: Election systems strengthened–

This encompasses improved election systems and processes such as voter registration and vote counting together with improved capacity to manage election-related violence. It also includes internal institutional administrative processes (e.g., management, accounting, and M&E systems) and improved capacity for transparent, accountable resource management. At the level of individual government workers, expected outcomes include enhanced job-relevant skills, such as leadership and management capabilities.

Sub-IR 1.2.3: Judicial, legislative and other government systems strengthened–

This sub-IR captures work done in the bilateral context. In selected instances, targeted non-election-related systems must also be strengthened in order to involve citizens on issues of concern. These government systems include the use of legislative agendas, judicial processes, handling of court cases, tax collection, budgetary systems (including improved fiscal transparency), and internal administrative processes (e.g., management, accounting, compliance, and M&E systems). Expected outcomes are similar to those for sub-IR 1.2.2, which include greater use of enhanced job-relevant skills (e.g., leadership and management), as well as improved capacity for transparent and accountable use of resources.

IR 1.3: <u>**Ability of institutions operating at the regional level strengthened to respond to governance challenges**</u>

IR 1.3 and its sub-IRs represent the third stream of activities needed to reach the DO. These outcomes are expected to result mainly from increasing the capacity of ECOWAS and targeted CSOs to act regionally, and represent an important and distinctive contribution that USAID/WA can make. Illustrative activities include conducting regional conferences on best practices in managing conflict during elections, and supporting moderate voices and youth engagement to enhance resistant to violent extremism. In addition, USAID/WA will focus on strengthening ECOWAS's conflict early warning capacity, possibly including embedding an advisor in the ECOWAS Early Warning Directorate for regular training and mentoring of staff.

Sub-IR 1.3.1: Lessons learned and information shared across countries– The intended outcome is a sustainable, African-led linkage mechanism to share information and learning regionally, particularly regarding countering violent extremism and election-related issues that may lead to violence. Leaders and decisionmakers must have access to reliable, timely information in order to make better strategic decisions on conflict response. The focus is mainly on peer-to-peer learning to better address the threat of extremism and election-related violence. The intended result is the creation of low-stakes opportunities for learning and information exchange outside of specific country contexts in order to mitigate conflict risks. For CVE, this requires sharing analysis and lessons from both successful and unsuccessful approaches to addressing the "push and pull" factors leading to extremist violence. To manage potential elections violence requires knowing the times and places for risky events, an ability to anticipate trigger points, and an ability to sequence actions in advance of elections. Cross-fertilization of lessons learned takes place through peer-to-peer interaction, e.g., by governments (national and local), political parties, think tanks, media, academia, community leaders (such as Imams) and youth.

This sub-IR entails the creation of a lasting repository of information to serve as a regional institutional memory over the long term. This repository might become a physical location or be served by networks of communities of practice in the region. Another desired outcome is a cadre of informed, local thought leaders and facilitators on these issues at the national level. In this way, issue leaders can continue to have a positive multiplier effect that leverages USAID resources beyond the life of program activities.

Sub-IR 1.3.2: ECOWAS regional conflict early warning system improved– This sub-IR is based on the theory that improved analytical and organizational skills of early warning staff would result in better, more timely and relevant conflict risk assessment reports produced by the ECOWAS Early Warning Directorate that better meet the needs of ECOWAS leadership and decisionmakers at all levels. To achieve this requires improved reporting capabilities and improved ability to conduct issue-based, context-specific conflict risk assessments, particularly focused on election-related violence. To promote better gender-sensitive data and analysis, efforts may be made to strengthen the gender analysis capacity of ECOWARN's analysts, including the use of more gender sensitive indicators and greater inclusion of female analysts. (A recently-conducted review of ECOWARN applauded their

inclusion of gender indicators but also pointed out that very few women are involved in data collection, analysis and response.[31])

Sub-IR 1.3.3: Management systems of institutions working at the regional level improved– Management systems include M&E, knowledge management, communications, accounting, planning and compliance, as well as stand-alone financial management systems that can track financial results. They also include improved intra-organizational communication and feedback systems, knowledge management systems and information sharing tools within regional institutions. This sub-IR may in part be supported by other donor partners.

Sub-IR 1.3.4: Analytical capabilities in conflict management expanded- By improving analytical abilities among research institutes that work at a regional level in areas of interest to USAID/WA, their resulting reports should be clearer, credible, usable, and supported by evidence-based conflict risk analysis. Improved analytical abilities include conducting impact evaluations and custom analytical research. Underlying this is the need for access to better information resources and best practices in order to improve decision-making around managing conflict.

Regional-National Linkages

A key element of USAID/WA's strategic approach is strengthening reciprocal linkages between governments and people, as well as between national governments and regional institutions. The intended outcome is governments that are responsive to the needs of people, and people with constructive mechanisms to communicate their collective voices. Improved reciprocal linkages between governing authorities and citizens are especially important to mitigate conflict at the national level. However, at the regional level, it is equally critical that a larger feedback loop exists to link national governments to trans-national organizations in order to maximize the sharing of lessons, transfer of expertise, sharing of early warning information on violent conflict, and communication of norms around governance and conflict mitigation.

Successful conflict management systems require mutual reinforcement at the community, national, and regional levels. Taking the example of conflict around elections, USAID/WA will work with communities in high risk areas to understand, recognize, and report potential conflict. Concurrently, the mission will build the capacity of national-level early warning systems to compile, synthesize, and communicate information to national decisionmakers. At the regional level, USAID/WA will continue to support ECOWARN to source information from national early warning systems across the region in a timely and accurate manner, allowing ECOWAS to play a more active and informed role in managing potential conflicts before they erupt. USAID/WA will also support the sharing of lessons on CVE programs with stakeholders across the region, including exploring regional meetings of national, community and religious leaders, such as imams.

USAID/WA will also play an important role in helping to address the management and coordination gap between high-level, USG interagency collaboration at the strategic level (e.g., with TSCTP) and the multiple USG and USAID operating units working on the ground in West Africa, particularly in the

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[31] USAID/WA West Africa Regional Gender Assessment, pp. 86-87

Sahel, to increase stability, manage conflict and counter violent extremism. This will allow USAID to replicate or emulate best practices more efficiently across the region and to promote those best practices to interagency and host-country partners.

Selectivity and Focus

By identifying conflict as a critical threat to regional stability and people's well-being in West Africa, and conflict management as a DO, USAID/WA has made a strategic choice in the allocation of its limited resources. Rather than accepting a mandate to improve governance writ large, as in the past, now the mission will target its activities according to the "push" and "pull" factors of potential conflict. USAID/WA may certainly address governance issues in its programming, but only if those specific issues have been identified as key drivers of conflict.

In addition, the focus of USAID/WA's conflict mitigation work is on systems. By building local, national, and regional capacity to predict, mitigate, and manage conflict, the mission will strengthen the indigenous systems that will allow West Africans to cope with potential conflicts in non-violent, inclusive ways. This approach does not attempt to address the root causes of conflict, which would require significantly more resources. Instead, USAID/WA will focus on what is manageable given the mission's regional mandate and funding levels.

Finally, given its limited resources and broad scope, USAID/WA has adopted a targeted geographic approach when analysis of conflict risks calls for programming at the national and sub-national levels. Targeting high-risk groups in a manner that is precise and flexible to changes on the ground is a key element of USAID/WA's strategy. Good targeting will depend on the ability of the mission to carefully research and identify target beneficiaries and will also, to a large extent, be driven by resource imperatives and coordination with USAID bilateral missions and other donor institutions. As a consequence, programmatic priorities may shift over time and across the region as the risk of conflict changes.

The USG has been at the vanguard on issues of countering violent extremism in West Africa, and in the recent past, was the sole significant resource partner addressing this issue. However, recent events in northern Mali and also Niger have cast a spotlight on conflict and violent extremism in the region and both the European Union and the United Nations have made commitments to do more to counter violent extremism and increase resilience across the Sahel. Aligning USAID/WA's ongoing efforts with new donor initiatives, sharing experiences, and developing joint or complementary approaches will be critical throughout the strategy period.

b) DO 2: Broad-Based Economic Growth & Resilience Advanced through West African Partners

Background and Analysis

More than half of the countries in West Africa are considered low-income, with only two countries (Equatorial Guinea and Gabon) achieving high or upper middle income level status.[32] GDP per capita varies with approximately half of the countries in the region having a GDP per capita of less than $1,000 USD, with countries like Niger and Liberia having a GDP per capita of only $374 USD. [33] However, the forecast is not completely bleak as most countries in the region are experiencing an increase in economic growth and the overall average growth for Sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa) is expected to be 6 percent over the 2013-15 period.[34] To build on this encouraging trend, USAID/WA focuses on three inter-related sectors of economic growth: agriculture, trade and environment.

Agriculture and Food Security: Agriculture plays a key role in achieving food security and economic growth across West Africa. The agriculture sector contributes to 30-40 percent of the region's GDP. More important, roughly 70 percent of the region's population relies on agriculture for their livelihood.[35] The disparity between value addition and labor is in part due to inefficient agricultural practices and poor value chain development; limited access to affordable and reliable high quality inputs to increase production; and lack of information on new technologies and innovations. These factors contribute to West Africa's struggle with high levels of food insecurity and explain why West Africa produces some of the lowest per hectare yields in the world.[36] Furthermore, low consumer purchasing power, insecure land tenure, and the high rate of subsidized imports make the agriculture sector unprofitable. Compounding the problem, intra-regional trade

> **A Regional Approach to Nutrition:**
> USAID/WA's work with UEMOA, ECOWAS, WAHO, other regional institutions, and the private sector to strengthen food fortification practices and streamline fortification standards is greatly contributing to utilization of fortified products and enhanced nutritional uptake of populations in the region. With USAID support, 10 out of 11 ECOWAS countries have mandatory legislation for fortifying vegetable oil and 11 for wheat flour, with over 80 percent of samples conforming to fortification standards. It is estimated that 79 percent of children under 5 now have access to vitamin A- fortified oil and 72 percent of women of reproductive age have access to fortified oil and flour.

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[32] "Countries Classified by Income Group | Global Finance." *Countries Classified by Income Group | Global Finance*. 20 May 2013. http://www.gfmag.com/tools/global-database/economic-data/12066-countries-by-income-group.html.
[33] "GDP per Capita (current US$)." *Data*. 20 May 2013. http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD. The outliers are Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Cape Verde, where the GDP per capita are $27,478, $11,114 and $3,798 respectively.
[34] "The World Bank's Global Economic Prospects." N.p., n.d. Web. Jan. 2013. (p. 155).
[35] Johnson Michael. et al; Regional Strategic Alternative for Agricultural-let Growth and Poverty Reduction in West Africa, ReSAKSS Working Group Paper No. 22; November 2008, p. 23.
[36] Rain-fed production, low fertilizer use, poor quality seeds, inadequate water management, and low soil fertility characterize smallholder farming in West Africa. See Feed the Future's West Africa FY 2011-2015 Multi-Year Strategy, p. 5.

is plagued by poor infrastructure, high levels of corruption, policy barriers, and lack of harmonization between national level and ECOWAS regulations.[37] The region has the highest transportation costs in the world, despite low pay for truckers. Shipping to and from West Africa is time consuming and expensive, and the quality of service is lower, compared to other regions of the world.[38]

Food security in West Africa is the goal of the mission's FtF strategy, which is incorporated into this RDCS. Soil fertility in West Africa is decreasing, with declining organic matter and decreasing ability of soils to hold moisture. This is compounded by climate change and the low use of soil amendments by farmers to supply nitrogen or other nutrients back to the soil as well as the lack of use of integrated soil fertility practices. The use of climate smart agricultural practices can help farmers to adapt to the changing climatic conditions and to preserve soils. Farmers often are not able to access or afford quality and appropriate seeds and fertilizers, and their knowledge of new technologies and practices is often very limited. Increasing agricultural productivity is essential to improving food security and catalyzing economic growth in West Africa.

 Another critical aspect of food security in West Africa is intra-regional trade. Because of the different agro-ecological zones, ranging from the Sahel desert to the humid coastal areas, each area is favorable to different types of agriculture; thus food security is heavily dependent upon the movement of agricultural commodities from areas where they are produced to areas of demand. West Africa is crisscrossed by ancient trade routes, many of which are still in use today. Livestock produced in the Sahel (cattle, sheep, goats) are regularly moved to coastal markets, while grains grown in coastal areas (rice, millet, sorghum) move inland to drier areas that are not as suitable for crop production. This exchange has been going on for eons but is plagued by many barriers, including complicated border procedures, lack of harmonization of sanitary and phytosanitary standards, corruption, poor roads, lack of storage facilities, and inefficient transport. All of these factors drive costs up. West African regional organizations are engaged in trying to improve this situation through adopting common regional policies and practices, improving regional standards, and working with countries to roll out the new approaches. The strong linkage between West African countries' National Agriculture Investment Plans and the ECOWAS RAIP under the ECOWAP and the CAADP provides a good avenue to improve the whole system. At the same time, more regional private sector organizations—producer, processor, input-supplier, etc.—are starting to emerge. These have an important role in representing their members and linking them to markets and services, and in advocating for policy change.

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[37] See Brookings Institute, *Accelerating Growth through Improved Intra-African Trade*, January 2012; and Economic Commission for Africa, Assessing Regional Integration in Africa (ARIA V): Towards an African Continental Free Trade Area, 2012. A study by the West Africa Trade Hub reveals that, in fact, poor roads are no longer the primary problem for transport in West Africa. Rather, policy to protect roads from deteriorating is a larger concern. See West Africa Trade Hub, Technical Report #25, Transport and Logistics Costs: Tema-Ougadougou Corridor, April 2010.

[38] Road transport in three Francophone countries (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali) is up to six times more expensive than Pakistan and 40 times more expensive than France (where labor costs are much higher). Rizet, C., and J. Hine. 1993. "A Comparison of the Costs and Productivity of Road Freight Transport in Africa and Pakistan." *Transport Reviews* 13(2). A recent USAID study reveals that transport and logistics costs account for high end market prices of maize (approximately 59%) and livestock (about 18%). See *West Africa Trade Hub Technical Report No. 41*, West Africa Trade Hub Technical Report No. 41 (March 2011), p. 3. A recent World Bank study revealed that road transport prices in West Africa are, on average, significantly higher than other regions of the world. See Teravaninthorn, Suppee and Gael Raballand. 'Transport Prices and Costs in Africa," World Bank, 2009.

High malnutrition rates in West Africa complicate efforts to improve the population's overall food security. While many factors aggravate nutritional deficiencies, poor harvest and post-harvest food storage and processing practices result in significant losses in the quantity and nutritional quality of food products, and in high levels of aflatoxins, which are potentially very dangerous. Approximately 37 percent of children 5 years or younger are under height for their age; 28 percent are underweight; and 10 percent are affected by acute malnutrition. Food fortification programs by USAID/WA have helped countries to adopt standards and, through private sector engagement, improved access to fortified flour and cooking oil is now widespread.

Trade: West Africa's trade is characterized by reliance on imported staple foods, a low degree of intra-regional trade, and dependence on extractive rather than on value-added exports (e.g., oil, gold, iron, bauxite, uranium, diamonds).[39] These factors tend to lead to stagnant incomes for the majority of the population. Overcoming the challenges of poverty, food insecurity, and malnutrition in West Africa will require addressing regional income stagnation in addition to agricultural productivity. These two issues are inextricably linked to weaknesses in the business enabling environment and private sector capacity, which in turn result in low levels of trade and investment. Essentially, West African farmers and firms produce and trade mainly in localized markets, and therefore do not receive the benefits of transformative investment that accessing regional and global markets can

> **Synergies Between Trade and Food Security:** Trade inefficiencies present significant barriers to economic growth across the region. To address this issue, USAID/WA programs are helping to reduce costs to West African businesses that depend on interstate trade corridors through the provision of information concerning costs, delays, and other inefficiencies along interstate corridors. The mission has used this experience to educate stakeholders who advocate with regional governments to make changes in policies and regulations that hamper regional trade. In FY 2011, through advocacy and collaboration with regional organizations and stakeholders, USAID/WA programs catalyzed reform in trade policies, leading to a 29 percent decrease in the number of barriers along West Africa's interstate corridors. Given the strong link between food security in the region and cross-border trade of staple crops, achievements in the mission's trade programming are integral to achieving FtF results.

achieve by taking advantage of economies of scale. This is due to a number of constraints. There are few competitive West African farmers and firms that are capable of supplying goods in commercial volumes that meet international market requirements for product quality. Moreover, the organizational structures to pool products to achieve economies of scale are not present. Even when West Africa's nascent firms would like to invest in expanding their businesses, they often do not have access to critical support services, such as electricity and affordable and reliable transport. The lack of access to electricity for West Africa's agribusiness firms limits their ability to expand food processing as well as to develop other manufacturing industries. The region's transport services are hindered by inefficiency, corruption along West Africa's roadways, and a lack of competition. These factors undermine the

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[39] In 2013, crude petroleum accounted for the vast bulk of exports to the U.S. (74.9%) from the ECOWAS region. Natural resource extraction (16.3%), agriculture (8.1%), manufacturing (0.6%), and apparel/textiles (0.1%) made up the remaining 25.1%. In 2012, intra-regional trade in ECOWAS reached only 9.1%, much lower than for North America (33.7%), ASEAN (22.9%), Latin American and the Caribbean (19.4%), and Southern African Development Community (17.0%). Trade Map data available at http://www.trademap.org/

critical private sector investment that is necessary to increase employment, improve food security and reduce poverty.

Field research found that women account for about 80 percent of cross-border trade in West Africa. Most of the trade is informal and centers on agriculture products and cosmetics. The challenges faced by female cross-border traders include lack of information, limited access to credit and business training, harassment, and inadequate transportation and storage.

Environment: West Africa is experiencing a period of fast economic growth. This is taking place in the absence of effective environmental governance. Environmental institutions are chronically underfunded and environmental laws and regulations are often ignored. At the household level, resource use decisions tend to be made in response to short-term needs rather than long-term consequences. In short, decisionmakers at all levels either do not fully appreciate the importance of sound environmental stewardship, or are unwilling/unable to adopt environmentally sound practices due to a lack of positive incentives. As a result, the ubiquitous degradation of West Africa's ecosystems is eroding their ability to provide the services upon which life and development depend and compromising the social and economic resilience of West African households, communities and nations to climatic shocks. To reverse this trend, decisionmakers at all levels need to be convinced of the importance and feasibility of sound ecosystem management. They need to understand the social, economic, political, cultural, and ecological costs of ecosystem degradation and appreciate the immediate and long-term benefits of healthy ecosystems – economic and otherwise. Sound ecosystem management needs to be seen not as an impediment to development, but as an essential component of it. This change in understanding and attitude calls for the generation, communication and use of environmental knowledge in a manner that is understood by non-technicians and useful for decision-making. The information should, besides demonstrating the importance of ecosystems, illustrate the need for regional collaboration, and be useful for policy and decision-making, and planning. While every ecosystem is important, at this juncture, three ecosystems are of vital importance to the future economic development of West Africa and the wellbeing of its population: 1) Coastal ecosystems, especially mangroves and coastal lagoons; 2) shared watersheds; and 3) the Guinean Forest landscape[40].

Coastal Ecosystems - West Africa's coastal ecosystems are the food basket of the region. As the breeding ground and nursery to most commercial fish species, West Africa's mangroves play a crucial role in the region's economy by supporting a $400 million dollar annual coastal-marine fishing industry[41]—the single most important source of foreign exchange for several West African countries. It is estimated that fish contribute at least 50 percent of total animal protein intake in the Gambia, Ghana, and Sierra Leone. Furthermore, coastal ecosystems provide an essential habitat for migratory birds and threatened species, and play a fundamental role in buffering coastal zones against the impacts of climate change. In fact, the value of ecosystem services provided by one square kilometer of mangrove has been calculated to be between $200,000 and $900,000 annually. Unfortunately, the region has lost between 21 percent and 50 percent of its mangrove cover in the last 25 years.[42] Climate change will exacerbate

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[40] We refer to the area once covered by the Guinean Forest as a landscape because patches of forest are now interspersed with areas where humans have profoundly intervened.
[41] (http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/flyer_wwf_300806.pdf)
[42] UNEP (2007). Mangroves of Western and Central Africa.

existing anthropogenic pressures on the African coastal zones[43] through sea level rise, changes in storm frequency and intensity, and changes in water temperature and pH, and unless decisive adaption measures are taken, may push these systems into a different ecological state altogether, including collapse.

Moreover, in term of climate change mitigation, the role of coastal mangroves as carbon sinks has become more apparent, as knowledge about their carbon sequestration capacity (they sequester about five times more carbon per unit area than any other forest ecosystem) is better understood. However, carbon pools of coastal wetlands, including mangroves (also known as "Blue Carbon"), are poorly understood at present and their potential for contributing to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) are underestimated or not estimated at all in national REDD+ strategies. This is particularly true in Africa. In terms of mitigation potential, the ocean's vegetated habitats—especially mangrove forests, salt marshes, and sea grasses—cover less than 0.05 percent of the sea bed but account for more than 50 percent, and as much as 71 percent, of all carbon storage in ocean sediments. In addition, these ecosystems comprise only 0.05 percent of the plant biomass on land but store a comparable amount of carbon per year to tropical forests. This ranks them among the most intense carbon sinks on the planet. On average, between two to seven percent of blue carbon sinks are being lost annually. These rates exceed the loss rates in tropical upland forests. Halting degradation, restoring the lost marine carbon sinks in the oceans and slowing deforestation of tropical forests could result in mitigating emissions by up to 25 percent.

> **Ecosystem Services** are the short- and long-term benefits people obtain from ecosystems. They include: 1) *Provisioning* goods and services, or the production of basic goods such as food, water, fish, fuels, timber, and fiber; 2) *Regulating* services, such as flood protection, purification of air and water, waste absorption, disease control, and climate regulation; 3) *Cultural* services that provide spiritual, aesthetic, and recreational benefits, and; 4) *Supporting* services necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services, such as soil formation, production of oxygen, crop pollination, carbon sequestration, photosynthesis, and nutrient cycling.

Shared watersheds - With 28 shared watersheds, West Africa's interlinked countries depend on each other for water. Several major rivers originate in well-watered highlands and flow across sub-humid, arid and semi-arid landscapes of different countries. The hydrologic regimes of the region's largest rivers are experiencing declines in volume flow that cannot be explained by variation in rainfall[44]. Over the past 40 years, Lake Chad has shrunk to three percent of its original area. In addition, the uneven geographic distribution of surface water poses special management challenges and is a likely source of conflict as countries pursue national objectives without fully considering their regional ramifications. Within nations, often sector-specific plans and decisions ignore cross-sectoral and environmental impacts. Thus, irrigation competes with hydropower generation, and key wetland habitats are devastated with potentially irreversible negative consequences to regionally and globally important ecosystem processes such as waterfowl migration and fisheries production. Without enhanced

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UNEP-Regional Seas Programme/UNEP-WCMC.
[43] (http://www.ipcc.ch/ipccreports/sres/regional/index.php?idp=30). Recent disagreements over water between Burkina Faso and Ghana, Senegal and Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria
[44]ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD (2006). Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa. ECOWAS/SWAC

collaboration, disagreements[45] between countries over surface water are likely to become more common and severe as the demand for this resource increases and climate change renders rainfall more variable and unpredictable.

The Guinean Forest landscape - The Guinean Forest once covered 620,000 km². It is now reduced to small patches that together measure 93,000 km², 15 percent of the original cover.[46] This area is where the headwaters of most rivers in West Africa are located, and is still the largest forest in West Africa. It is significant because of its high endemism diversity and the environmental threats it continues to face. For example, the remaining patches of Guinean Forest harbor nearly 9,000 plant species, 320 mammal species and 785 bird species. Nearly one in three species of amphibians and one in four species of reptiles are endemic to this forest ecosystem. The remnants of the Guinean Forest are one of the last refuges for scattered populations of chimpanzees and nearly 30 other primate species. The remaining Guinean Forest is threatened by habitat destruction, wildlife hunting and trafficking, climate change, and mining, among other hazards. With its high rainfall and importance to multiple watersheds, preserving what is left of the forest offers one of the best opportunities for land-based climate mitigation in West Africa.

West Africa suffers greatly from energy insecurity in part because of inadequate development and utilization of potential indigenous clean energy sources, such as hydro, wind, solar, and gas. This forces consumers in the region to rely on increasingly expensive and polluting fuel oil and diesel, which contribute to GCC and have significant other negative environmental impacts. Moreover, with the projected near doubling of the population in West Africa by 2050, energy demand will increase in tandem with the population, and absent any transformational shift to cleaner energy sources, energy-related carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions will increase as well.

Human-induced climate change is predicted to increase temperatures two to three degrees Celsius globally by the end of the century[47], thereby increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as droughts and flooding. At the same time, the diminishing quality of natural habitats, rangelands, and farmlands undercuts their ability to withstand such stressors. This will increase the number of environmental refugees forced off their lands, leading to increased poverty and insecurity.[48] In rangelands, natural forests and aquatic systems, the protection of soil, water and wildlife resources will be critical in adapting to ongoing climate change and protecting important ecosystem services such as carbon storage, biodiversity protection, flood protection, clean water provision and climate regulation. These areas also provide important sources of food and livelihoods through a wide array of natural products including timber, charcoal, wild foods, medicines and fibers. The foresters and craftsmen that benefit from these products are often farmers and pastoralists as well. So, a holistic approach to improve incomes, policies and natural resource management regimes is needed and is the most sustainable way to help diversify livelihoods, increase resilience to climate shocks, and reduce risks for West African households.
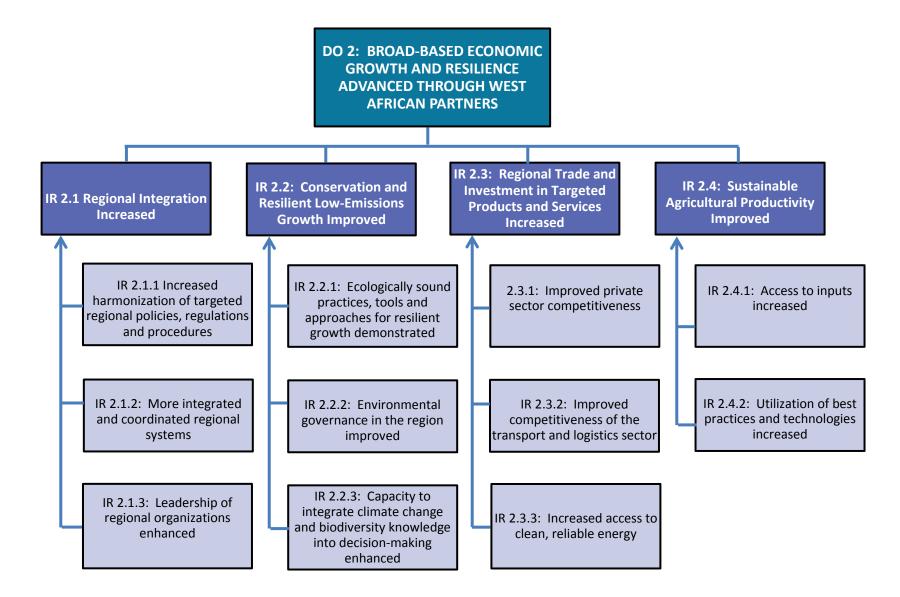
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[45] www.atlas-westafrica.org
[46] http://www.conservation.org/WHERE/PRIORITY_AREAS/HOTSPOTS/AFRICA/GUINEAN-FORESTS-OF-WEST-AFRICA/Pages/default.aspx
[47] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, 2007,
[48] Ibid.

Faced with these and other formidable development challenges, spanning a vast and ecologically diverse region, and mindful of Presidential Initiatives, congressional earmarks, and other program mandates, USAID/WA has conceptualized a DO and accompanying IRs that are mutually reinforcing from an economic, environmental and capacity-building perspective while also capitalizing on the regional nature of its work in trade, agriculture and environment. This DO's Results Framework, moreover, incorporates the mission's approved FtF Strategy, emphasizing partnerships with public and private sector organizations.

DO 2: BROAD-BASED ECONOMIC GROWTH AND RESILIENCE ADVANCED THROUGH WEST AFRICAN PARTNERS

IR 2.1 Regional Integration Increased

IR 2.2: Conservation and Resilient Low-Emissions Growth Improved

IR 2.3: Regional Trade and Investment in Targeted Products and Services Increased

IR 2.4: Sustainable Agricultural Productivity Improved

IR 2.1.1 Increased harmonization of targeted regional policies, regulations and procedures

IR 2.2.1: Ecologically sound practices, tools and approaches for resilient growth demonstrated

2.3.1: Improved private sector competitiveness

IR 2.4.1: Access to inputs increased

IR 2.1.2: More integrated and coordinated regional systems

IR 2.2.2: Environmental governance in the region improved

IR 2.3.2: Improved competitiveness of the transport and logistics sector

IR 2.4.2: Utilization of best practices and technologies increased

IR 2.1.3: Leadership of regional organizations enhanced

IR 2.2.3: Capacity to integrate climate change and biodiversity knowledge into decision-making enhanced

IR 2.3.3: Increased access to clean, reliable energy

Development Hypothesis

In alignment with Agency policy defined in *Securing the Future: A Strategy for Economic Growth*, USAID/WA will pursue economic development goals that promote "rapid, sustained, and broad-based growth." The mission will implement regionally focused programs that will work to ensure sustainability through inclusion of factors such as policy incentives, community land use mapping, and sustainable use of natural resources. USAID/WA programs will actively target the poor and marginalized groups in order to ensure that poverty reduction accompanies economic growth. Broad-based economic growth creates the opportunities impoverished households need to raise their living standards and provides countries with the resources to better utilize and benefit from their natural resource endowments and expand access to basic services.

Building resilience is a key determining factor in realizing this DO. USAID/WA's regional partners play an important role in helping to enable all segments of society to withstand shocks and stresses without losing economic development gains. USAID/WA's approach to resilience focuses on specific "systems" within the agriculture, trade and environment sectors. These systems include natural ecosystem resources, such as watershed and soil health; food security systems; land use change systems; national governance; regional information systems; regional institutions; and regional policies. The regional dimensions of resilience are strengthened through selective strategic programming and capacity building with core partner institutions. For example, in the agriculture sector, USAID/WA supports the organizational development of CORAF and CILSS—the regional institutions that provide agriculture research and food security early warning systems, respectively— and works with ECOWAS and its technical partners to develop regionally integrated information systems. In trade, USAID/WA works with ECOWAS and the private sector commodity associations to increase intra-regional trade, remove border barriers, and increase access to export markets. In the environment sector, USAID/WA supports CILSS to conduct land use and land cover analyses for developing evidence-based stakeholder decision processes, harmonize water and sanitation policies, and disseminate best practices. Together, these efforts build a strong regional policy and institutional framework, which underpin programs at the community level that are often supported by USAID bilateral missions, such as the Sahel resilience program implemented by USAID/Senegal in West Africa.

USAID/WA's hypothesis focuses on the mutually-reinforcing nature of regional policy-making and governance approaches combined with sector-specific capacity-building and applied research used to identify and employ the most promising African-led approaches, technologies and practices in trade, clean energy, agriculture, food security and natural resource management. These, in turn, will lead to more broad-based economic growth and resilience across the region. USAID/WA's theory of change under this DO is that **if** West African institutional partners are empowered to increase regional integration of policies and systems, improve management of the natural resource base upon which long-term growth depends, enhance agricultural productivity and value chain development, and promote regional trade and investment, **then** this will advance broad-based economic growth and resilience in the region.

Intermediate Results:
IR 2.1: Regional Integration Increased
IR 2.2: Conservation and Resilient Low-emissions Growth Improved
IR 2.3: Regional Trade and Investment in Targeted Products and Services Increased
IR 2.4: Sustainable Agricultural Productivity Improved

Assumptions and Risks:
USAID/WA's development hypothesis and accompanying Results Framework are informed by the following:

Assumptions:
- ECOWAS and other regional institutions continue to promote regional harmonization and integration efforts, and to work closely with national actors and Member States.
- Foreign direct investment rates for the region remain stable over the medium term.[49]
- Global economic growth continues and enables demand to increase for African products.
- Stability in both foreign exchange and commodity prices allow West Africans to import staple foods such as rice in the short term and fertilizer in the medium term.
- Rainfall in West Africa is sufficient in most agro-ecological zones to ensure adequate food production and ecosystem integrity.
- National governments at the highest levels demonstrate genuine political will and capability to implement regional policies.

Risks:
- The region is unable to move from reliance on extractive exports toward value-added exports.
- Civil unrest and violent extremism lead to national or regional instability.
- Increasing climate variability such as drought and flooding cause unforeseen extreme events.
- High population growth continues to undermine efforts to reduce overall levels of hunger and poverty across West Africa.
- Global consumer markets collapse or there are price shocks in world commodity markets.

Illustrative DO Indicators:
- Quantity of greenhouse gas emissions (measured in metric tons CO_2 equivalent) reduced or sequestered as a result of USG assistance
- Number of stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change as a result of USG assistance
- Number of ECOWAS countries that are meeting selected CAADP targets: CAADP compact in place, annual investment in agriculture of 10 percent, agriculture growth rate of 6 percent; volume and value of (targeted) staple crops traded regionally
- Number of countries with approved National Agriculture Investment Plans linked to the regional ECOWAP
- Number of stakeholders implementing risk-reducing practices/actions to improve resilience to climate change as a result of USG assistance
- Percent change in agricultural GDP

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[49] "The World Bank's Global Economic Prospects." N.p., n.d. Web. Jan. 2013. (p. 161.)

Cross-Cutting Issues

Climate Change: While there remains considerable uncertainty concerning climate change projections for West Africa, USAID/WA expects that increased climate variability associated with climate change will be a major challenge to economic growth during the strategy period. Farmers, particularly in the Sahel, are already seeing changes in rainfall patterns affecting growing seasons, which will continue to have a significant impact on food security. Decreases in rainfall can also make it more difficult to access clean water, while rising sea levels and increased inland flooding can stress weak infrastructure, often leading to reduced water availability and increased water contamination. West African socio-ecological systems' resilience to climate change is also reduced by anthropogenic stressors. How these stressors interact with climate change to affect the ability of ecosystems to provide services is not fully understood. It is expected, however, that unless non-climate stressors are addressed, important ecosystem services will be drastically and adversely affected due to climate change. Given the potential magnitude of these and other anticipated impacts, and the fact that different West African sub-regions will experience different changes in climate variables, more reliable data are essential for planners and decisionmakers in the region. For this reason, USAID/WA will invest in research and analysis by regional entities to improve both the mission's and regional partners' understanding of, and ability to plan for, negative impacts of climate change.

Governance: Improved governance at all levels is critical to building resilience, managing threatened ecosystems and promoting broad-based economic growth. This DO places particular emphasis on the management of regional systems and norms that reduce corruption and diversion of productive resources. Whether reducing bribery along transport routes or rent-seeking by government officials working in key regional economic growth sectors, or improving the internal management and responsiveness of regional organizations to their constituents, improved governance will help enhance the enabling environment for economic growth and support increased resilience in the region.

Capacity-Building: USAID/WA considers capacity-building to be a prerequisite for achieving results for all four IRs discussed below. During the strategy period, USAID/WA will support regional partners to deliver on their mandates to improve broad-based growth, food security and effective natural resource governance in West Africa. USAID/WA has enjoyed strong relationships with regional organizations, including CILSS and CORAF. FtF assessments revealed that regional partner organizations such as CILSS lack full capacity to develop and implement their strategies, thereby undermining their ability to deliver on their mandates. For this reason, USAID/WA believes that its comparative advantage lies in strengthening the capability of these regional partners to facilitate and support national planning, and helping them harmonize integrated markets and systems, including efforts to protect transboundary ecosystems and enhance regional trade networks. Targeted entities include regional intergovernmental organizations, such as ECOWAS and the Mano River Union, as well as non-governmental and private sector organizations, such as WAGN, West Africa Livestock Sector Confederation of National Associations, Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa, Nature Conservation Resource Center, Rainforest Alliance, Cashew Alliance, Borderless Alliance, Shea Alliance, etc.

Gender: Both men and women contribute to agriculture, trade and environmental activities. But the contribution of women's livelihood activities to national development is generally overlooked in the

region. The multiple dimensions of gender inequality in West Africa's markets, business development services, land tenure systems, and natural resource management regimes tend to interact with and reinforce each other, i.e., legal, administrative or customary restrictions on the rights of individual women to own land, manage natural resources, acquire property or secure financing for business development. USAID/WA has identified three avenues to better ensure that gender is incorporated in DO2 programs. First, the economic growth programs will focus on value-added products that offer opportunities to female entrepreneurs; second, economic and environmental resilience programs will aim to address issues that disproportionately affect women's participation (such as security at borders and land tenure security); and third, USAID/WA will promote higher levels of female participation in capacity development through greater inclusion in training opportunities, more prominent involvement in public events, and mentored leadership of private sector associations. Additional analysis and disaggregation of gender impacts in the course of each DO-funded program will identify necessary modifications to ensure gender issues are adequately addressed.

Youth: Rapidly changing demographics in West Africa and their effects on economic development in both the short- and long-term is a key factor of the DO2 strategy. The growing number of youth as well as their preferences regarding place of domicile and profession are changing rapidly. More youth are leaving rural areas and natural resource-based sectors, the farming sector in particular, and are moving to urban centers where they believe that they will have a better chance for a more secure future. The effects of these shifting migration patterns on government service capacity, job creation, and maintenance of agriculture production to meet the needs of burgeoning populations are enormous and troubling. Without more focused attention to keeping more youth in the agriculture and natural resource management sectors, and to broadening these sectors to include more processing and value addition as a means of enticing youth who are looking for off-farm employment, demographic trends in West Africa will pose additional challenges to food security.[50] Shifting populations also strain governments' ability to provide and monitor growth and effectively manage resource use. USAID/WA will pay close attention to the effects on natural resources from increasing populations (primarily youth) and shifting economic patterns including professional preferences (youth leaving the agriculture sector) to mitigate these effects through dissemination and adoption of best practices in agriculture, natural resource management, and land use.

IR 2.1: Regional Integration Increased
Regional integration and its sub-IRs for policy harmonization, improved coordinated regional systems and enhanced leadership of regional organizations are necessary to achieve the DO of broad-based economic growth and resilience at the regional level. All three economic growth sub-sectors (agriculture, trade, and environment) are dependent on improved regional integration to achieve both sector-specific results as well as results that are cross-cutting and synergistic.

Regionally integrated systems are critical to the development of the West Africa region. Information systems provide meteorological, food security, renewable resources, trade flow, vulnerability, land

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[50] See West Africa FTF Strategy 2011-2015, p. 6. Food production has not kept pace with the West Africa's growing population. The region's current population of 290 million is projected to reach 430 million within the next 15 years. This growth has been accompanied by massive urbanization, as 60 percent of West Africans are projected to live in urban areas by 2020.

cover, wildlife, migration, climate change and other information, all necessary in addressing the region's development concerns. For example, market information systems provide important information on prices and locations of markets to enable informed choices by farmers and traders. To assist in monitoring food security, a standard vulnerability assessment tool has now been accepted throughout the region. This standardized tool will soon provide information on vulnerable populations' food security and nutritional status that is comparable among countries, allowing for more appropriate targeting of aid resources and policy interventions.

USAID/WA's first point of entry is through the mission's primary partners,

> **USAID/WA and Energy:** Although West Africa is well endowed with energy resources, per capita energy consumption in the region is among the world's lowest. West Africa consumes an average of 88 kilowatt hours per person annually in comparison to the world average of 2,400 kW/per person. The low consumption rate is partly due to the fact that only 20 percent of the population has access to electricity. The lack of reliable, clean and low cost energy has negative consequences for economic growth and poverty reduction, as well as the prospects for improvements in education and healthcare. USAID/WA has proposed an energy program that will contribute to meeting the objectives of the Power Africa Initiative to increase electrical generation and expand cross-border trade in electricity, as well as meeting the Global Climate Change Initiative's objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

regional organizations. In addition to regional systems, ECOWAS, CILSS, ECREEE, UEMOA, WAHO, WAPP, and CORAF have already made great strides in developing and harmonizing important regional initiatives, such as the Zero Hunger Initiative, Rice Self-Sufficiency Policy, Fertilizer Regulations, Trade Liberalization Scheme, and Nutrition Fortification Standards, among others. Regional organizations highlight the importance of integration and the role that a regional approach can serve in addressing development constraints. USAID/WA will continue to support the regional harmonization and implementation of these policies, including through assisting with the development of key regulations and guidelines that are necessary to expand these regionally.

Regional trade integration is particularly important due to the link between trade and movement of agricultural goods, and in particular, staple foods. Trade integration entails adoption of a common set of harmonized policies including product, sanitary and phytosanitary standards, tariffs, and border processes that allow goods to move smoothly across borders, reducing the time and effort associated with interstate trade. Since most staple food value chains are regional, integration is needed to reduce barriers to trade. From a natural resource management perspective, integration is essential because environmental impacts do not respect national boundaries. Most of the countries in West Africa have at least basic legislation and policies aimed at natural resource management but are ill equipped to implement, monitor and enforce them. Furthermore, these regulations were formulated from a national perspective without taking into account the fact that West Africa is an ecologically, culturally and socially interconnected region. Regional organizations can help bring decisionmakers and practitioners together to help them share information, compare experiences and agree to collaborate in addressing environmental issues that have a regional dimension, such as transboundary watershed management, fisheries, wildlife trafficking, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and environmental impact

assessments, among others. USAID/WA is uniquely positioned to promote this level of regional integration and collaboration.

Sub-IR 2.1.1: *Increased harmonization of targeted regional policies, regulations, and procedures–* In
comparison to its counterparts in southern, eastern and central Africa, ECOWAS has gained significant traction in recent years with regard to member states as signatories to policies, regulations, and procedures affecting customs, fertilizer quality, seed certification, etc. However, much more substantive work and advocacy is needed to engage member states to not only adopt and incorporate these agreements into their national frameworks, but to actually implement them.

USAID/WA will continue focusing efforts on removing barriers to free trade through implementation of existing ECOWAS protocols at the borders. USAID/WA believes that successful implementation will help combat corruption. Reforms related to liberalization of the trade and transport sector inherently threaten entrenched interests in both the public and private sector—there are many people who make or enhance their livelihoods through illegal kick-backs. Successful reform efforts will require identifying national and regional champions of reform to drive progress in West Africa. USAID/WA will seek partnerships with reform-minded national and regional leaders and organizations, and selectively prioritize financial and technical assistance to those entities/individuals best placed to achieve an impact. Implementation will require significant institutional reform, including reducing the number of officials, procedures, and discretionary authorities involved in policy implementation. In addition, USAID/WA will seek to promote capacity strengthening for regional organizations such as the Borderless Alliance to develop an advocacy agenda for gender sensitive cross-border trade policy, and will also advocate for the effective implementation of existing commitments and mechanisms that promote gender equality in trade and business the ECOWAS region.

USAID/WA will specifically focus much of its efforts on building regional coalitions, supporting regional institutions, and strengthening regional to national relationships in order to facilitate greater understanding, adoption and action with regard to harmonization. The theory behind this IR is that increased harmonization of targeted policies, regulations and procedures will facilitate greater regional cooperation and understanding, thus significantly increasing the probability of a more integrated and therefore stable and economically secure West Africa. It is expected that through USAID/WA's targeted efforts, key sectoral policies will be adopted, gazetted and implemented in a greater number of ECOWAS member states. To achieve this IR, USAID/WA will place significant emphasis on coordination and collaboration with USAID bilateral missions and offices in West Africa to yield more realistic and sustainable results.

Sub-IR 2.1.2: *More integrated and coordinated regional systems–* Underlying this IR is the need for greater availability and better access to information, data, resources and best practices in order to improve decision-making and create an evidence base for policy interventions. A prime example of the utility and benefit of more integrated and coordinated regional systems is the ECOAGRIS information system, which will link up to eight existing regional information systems to provide a comprehensive picture of agriculture. The recent creation of the "*cadre harmonisé,*" a standardized vulnerability assessment tool that ECOWAS member states and donors have agreed to use, will now permit national

governments and other relevant stakeholders to similarly assess, categorize and develop more targeted interventions for food and humanitarian aid, and policy approaches for chronically vulnerable populations. More coordinated agricultural research efforts, combined with the designation of regional centers of specialization, as organized by CORAF, will help create a regional network of centers of excellence. This IR also includes improved intra-organizational communication and feedback systems, knowledge management systems, and information sharing tools within and among regional public and private sector entities. Significant attention will also be given to key relationships and resource sharing between national and regional level organizations, such as national agriculture research institutions and regional agriculture centers of excellence. Key to achieving this latter effort is increased USAID/WA collaboration with USAID bilateral missions and offices.

Sub-IR 2.1.3: *Leadership of regional organizations enhanced–* Regional integration will not be achieved or sustained without the strong and sustained leadership of regional institutions who champion and support it. Effective leadership depends on strong organizational, technical and analytical capacities, as well as the ability to articulate a vision, set goals and collaborate with stakeholders across the region to achieve those goals. These characteristics are part and parcel of these organizations' ability to fulfill their mandates to promote improved natural resource management, increased trade and investment, and enhanced food security in West Africa.   USAID/WA will focus on building the leadership capacity of those organizations that have the greatest ability and potential to drive and shape economic development in the region, including ECOWAS, CILSS and CORAF. The focus will be on inter-governmental institutions but selected private sector and civil society organizations, whose voices are critical to advancing regional integration, will also be targeted. The mission will provide technical assistance, training and tools in the areas of human resources, financial management, procurement, internal controls, policy formulation, information management, technical and analytical capacity, gender sensitive data analysis, and performance monitoring and evaluation, among others. When feasible, the mission will directly fund regional organizations in line with USAID's commitment to local ownership and sustainability. Intended outcomes include more capable regional partners and improved collaboration among stakeholders, including across the Anglophone-Francophone divide, between regional and national organizations, and between the public and private sectors.

IR 2.2: Conservation and Resilient Low-emissions Growth Improved

While economic growth is viewed as necessary to lift West Africa's population out of poverty, the rapid increases in foreign direct investment, the enlargement of the extractive industry sector, the expansion of the region's infrastructure, the increase in consumption, urban expansion, and high rates of population growth, all in the absence of environmental safeguards and effective governance, is unraveling the region's environmental fabric. In keeping with standard practice for developing regions, sound environmental management—essential to help countries mitigate the negative environmental impacts of climate change and economic and population growth—is near the bottom of the list of investment and political priorities. In a region with pressing socio-economic needs, it becomes hard for decisionmakers and politicians to have a full appreciation for the importance of investing in the environment. As a result, while West Africa's rich and diverse environment could support a vibrant and diverse regional economy, its capacity to deliver essential human and natural systems services is being seriously compromised. In addition, West African institutions have a weak capacity to develop and disseminate ecologically sound practices, tools and approaches; integrate climate change and biodiversity into

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decision-making; and improve environmental governance essential to achieving resilient low-emissions growth.

This IR calls for a change in the way West Africans factor in ecosystems as part of their development and life strategies. The reversal of West Africa's environmental degradation requires a change in the attitude and behavior of governments, institutions, communities and households towards the environment. This is an ambitious goal, but one that cannot be avoided. USAID/WA will use knowledge as its primary instrument; it will generate, test, disseminate and mainstream knowledge. By involving West African organizations in its knowledge-based implementation approach, USAID/WA will also build the capacity of West African institutions. USAID/WA will generate and test knowledge through two interrelated approaches: 1) empirically by applying, testing and adjusting field-level approaches to biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation and mitigation; and 2) supporting analytical studies, data base development and monitoring capacity.

USAID/WA will target two biomes for its empirical approach to the theory of change: 1) mangroves and the coastal lagoon systems; and 2) the Guinean Forest landscape. If resources and capacity allow, USAID/WA will engage in watershed management. Thematically, the mission will focus on studies related to climate vulnerability, wildlife trafficking, climate mitigation, strategic environmental assessment in trans-boundary watersheds, economic valuation of ecosystems and ecosystem services, the development of geo-referenced databases (to make such information easily accessible for decisionmakers), fisheries studies (habitat use and migration), resource use and economics, and gender roles within household and local institutions. In many instances the studies will be in support of the site-based empirical interventions.

USAID/WA will disseminate and mainstream environmental knowledge primarily through regional institutions (ECOWAS, Abidjan Convention, the Mano River Union, UEMOA, selected river basin organizations). It will do so by supporting these organizations' efforts to: 1) convene forums and conferences on key environmental issues; 2) develop sound strategies and action plans; 3) conduct studies within their strategies and action plans; 4) promote dialogue on trans-boundary environmental issues; 5) conduct training contemplated in their strategies and action plans; and 6) catalyze agreements on selected environmental topics such as wildlife trafficking, fisheries and cross-border environmental impacts of economic activities.

USAID/WA will work closely with USAID bilateral missions and donors in the region to operationalize the "filtering down" or scaling up of effective practices as presented in Figure 1 (page 10). USAID/WA has discussed the conceptual framework, implementation approach and illustrative activities with the USAID bilateral missions in Guinea/Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ghana, and with the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Global Environment Facility, the United Nations Environment Program and the United Nations Development Program.

Sub-IR 2.2.1 Ecologically sound practices, tools and approaches for resilient growth demonstrated–This sub-IR addresses the fact that while there is a substantial body of experience in the application of natural resource management and conservation practices in the region and elsewhere in the world, these have not been integrated into holistic approaches that include governance, economic,

social, cultural and ecological spheres of environmental management and conservation in West Africa. Furthermore, both national governments and communities have limited experience in climate change adaptation. Integrated site-level activities will be supported in coastal ecosystems and the Guinean Forest, with the exception of climate change adaptation activities, which will be restricted to coastal areas. Sites will be selected based on a set of clearly stated criteria. Achieving this sub-IR subsumes that successful local-level environmental governance systems are adopted and communities benefit from resilient low-emissions growth and biodiversity conservation. The hypothesis is that if local communities adopt improved environmental governance systems and realize the benefits of improved environmental conditions, then effective site-based practices, tools and approaches will have been demonstrated.

Sub-IR 2.2.2 Environmental governance in the region improved– While most West African countries have at least basic legislation and policies aimed at natural resource governance, they are often ill equipped to implement, monitor and enforce those established laws and policies. In some countries, community forests ruled by bylaws were adopted as a tool to decentralize natural resource management (NRM) governance; however, local governments do not have the resources or the capacity to manage them. In addition, many policy frameworks remain undeveloped. For instance, most countries in West Africa have developed National Adaptation Programs of Action but few have made significant progress on developing REDD+ Readiness plans, National Adaptation Plans, or coastal development frameworks. Poor integration of government structures at a variety of levels—regional, national and local—often leads to confusing and contradictory policies, which act as a disincentive for people to invest in improved resource management. For example, the lack of harmonized policies across the region has led to a system of poorly integrated national parks and protected areas that do not maintain migratory corridors for wildlife. This is especially important when taking a regional approach as the enforcement of many policies will occur at the local level.

West Africa has a well-developed regional environmental agenda built over the years at considerable expense to its institutions, countries and donors. This agenda, manifested in conventions, protocols, strategies and action plans, together with the legal international commitments assumed by West African countries (e.g., treaties, conventions, protocols), provides a sound framework for improving regional environmental governance. New instruments will have to be created for newly emergent themes such as climate change adaptation and mitigation, and wildlife trafficking. Therefore, USAID/WA will work with and through regional organizations to achieve this sub-IR. The focus will be on strengthening the role and capacity of regional institutions to scale up experiences, approaches and tools; catalyze and facilitate regional collaboration; and mainstream climate change and biodiversity knowledge into policy and decision-making. USAID/WA will work with two categories of regional organizations: those with a policy mandate (ECOWAS, Abidjan Convention Secretariat, and the Mano River Union) and those with a service-provision mandate [CILSS, the African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development (ACMAD) and AGRHYMET]. If regional organizations have the capacity to promote changes in growth models, and if these changes are guided by sound biodiversity and climate change knowledge, then environmental governance in the region will improve.

Sub-IR 2.2.3 Capacity to integrate climate change and biodiversity knowledge into decision-making enhanced– Effective NRM and land use planning depends on information such as patterns of biodiversity, rates of population growth, and rates and locations of deforestation, historical trends and future projections. Unfortunately, the data necessary to make informed decisions is lacking in West Africa. Climate variability and change is poorly monitored owing to the extremely limited distribution of rain gauges; lack of capacity in meteorological services (including insufficient density of weather stations) and the lack of good historical data. Furthermore, wildlife populations, forest biodiversity and coastal systems are poorly monitored, migratory flows of people are poorly understood and tracked, and the capacity to predict future climate change remains low. The lack of data is compounded by the lack of cohesion among the various national governments for data collection and dissemination, including a large disconnect between the information being supplied and the needs of the end users, and an unwillingness of some national governments to share data. Furthermore, even where information is available, decisionmakers often lack the capacity to use it effectively, either because they do not have the facilities to access and process the data (e.g., lack of internet or Geographic Information System mapping facilities) or due to the lack of capable staff. Finally, there is a lack of information on the best practices appropriate to the West African context that leads to sustainable development that can be promoted.

> **USAID's Biodiversity Code** is a compliance tool to assess if projects are appropriately programming Biodiversity earmarked funds. It uses four criteria:
> - The program must have an explicit biodiversity objective; it is not enough to have biodiversity conservation as a positive externality from another program;
> - Activities must be identified based on an analysis of threats to biodiversity;
> - The program must monitor associated indicators for biodiversity conservation; and
> - Site-based programs must positively impact biologically significant areas.

This sub-IR will address deficiencies in the capacity to generate and apply knowledge, information and technology for sound planning and decision-making. The information generated will feed into the facilitation, dialogue and harmonization processes to be led by regional political organizations. These may include CILSS, ACMAD, AGRHYMET or other national organizations such as research institutes and universities with the capacity to provide quality services. To the extent required, other organizations will contribute to the achievement of this purpose, particularly with respect to wildlife trafficking, an issue in which neither regional nor national organizations are well-versed.

To ensure adequate attention and sensitivity to gender issues associated with the environment sector, USAID/WA will consider a range of approaches such as the following:

- Seek out women's groups that may not be involved in biodiversity conservation or climate change but have legitimacy and recognized roles within the community. Build their technical capacity and be open to what concerns and motivates them.
- Analyze policies and proposed reforms for gender impacts and discuss implications with government representatives, NGOs and other stakeholders.

IR 2.3: Regional Trade and Investment in Targeted Products and Services Increased

USAID/WA's theory of change is that *DO 2 Broad-Based Growth and Resilience in West Africa* cannot be achieved without catalyzing greater broad-based private sector investment in West Africa. This will be accomplished by demonstrating the success of critical cross-border commercial ventures and transactions (i.e. the targeted value-added and staple foods sectors under sub-IR 2.3.1), working with targeted regional private sector associations to improve their competitiveness (sub-IR 2.3.2), removing trade barriers and regional fragmentation (IR 2.1), and improving access to the critical services (sub-IR 2.3.3 and sub-IR 2.2.3) of transportation and electricity.

As part of the FtF strategy development process, USAID/WA identified targeted sectors for food security, including livestock (cattle, sheep and goats) and grains (maize, rice, millet and sorghum) and the port and transit aspects of fertilizer and seed trade. The value chains were selected based on their importance to inter-regional trade, potential for value addition, their importance to large production by smallholders, and potential synergies with other supported value chains.[51] These sectors are essential to increasing the region's food security because they comprise a substantial portion of the protein and calories in the West African diet. In addition, a limited understanding of and lack of investment in agriculture value chains has limited the creation of value-added food products, which can increase incomes and improve the nutritional quality of foods in the regional marketplace. Moreover, to overcome poverty in addition to malnutrition, USAID/WA will also address income and credit needs to enable both the production and purchase of food. Recognizing that not all West African farmers can become commercial scale producers, USAID/WA's trade program will also target increased off-farm employment through non-traditional, value-added products with high export and income generation potential.

> **The Multiplier Effect:** Research shows that income multipliers in West Africa are between 1.58–2.43, meaning that $1,000 of sales of a basket maker, cashew farmer, or shea farmer produces *additional* household income in the local economy of $580–$1,430, depending on the product and local economy. Although employment is more difficult to measure for agricultural households since farmers are continually working on a wide range of enterprises, employment multipliers reported indicate that for $1,000 of sales, between 100–160 jobs are supported in local economies where those sales occur.

Coordinating USAID regional and bilateral programs along the value-chain: To increase exports, USAID/WA will improve the ability of individual firms in the region to compete in the global marketplace and improve the overall environment for trade. USAID/WA will work with and through regional institutions to foster the policies and conditions for improved and more accessible services, such as customs, transportation and logistics services, reliable energy, and financial services, and to strengthen transboundary value chains for critical products including staple foods. USAID/WA will catalyze greater private sector investment by supporting trade and investment transactions and the expansion of market information systems across the region for producers, buyers, and retailers.

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[51] See West Africa FTF Strategy 2011-2015, p. 13. USAID/WA has selected as its highest priority value chains the major cereals (i.e., maize, millet, rice, and sorghum) and livestock. These value chains were selected based on their: 1) importance to intra-regional trade; 2) high potential for value addition; 3) production by large numbers of smallholders; and 4) synergies with other supported value chains (e.g., maize is used as livestock feed).

If one conceives of a value chain as linking the producer of raw materials at one end and the final consumer at the other, USAID/WA's programs will work with global buyers, regional processors and regional private sector organizations in the middle of the chain to aggregate demand and achieve economies by focusing the majority of assistance to organizations from the center of the chain to the consumer. USAID/WA will coordinate with bilateral missions and donors whenever possible on ways to link the two halves of the value chain; this may include the development of models, technologies and approaches at the producer/processor/storage level that can be regionally scaled up and disseminated. This assistance will include providing information to regional producer groups to ensure that the choices of agricultural products grown are informed by international market preferences and demand.

Sub-IR 2.3.1: *Improved Private Sector Competitiveness–* USAID/WA expects to achieve IR 2.3 by assisting West African associations to organize and participate in regional and international trade events. USAID/WA will build regional associations to achieve sufficient scale to interest international buyers and investors. These regional associations will assist members to develop and meet formal contractual obligations made between buyers and sellers of staple foods and value-added products, and to access modern financial services. Connecting producers in West Africa to value-chain leaders in the region and in world markets is a key avenue to deliver trade-led growth. By focusing on specific transactions that link West African farmers and firms to regional processors and international buyers, USAID/WA will facilitate better information on market opportunities and understanding of market requirements. The livelihoods of many West Africans will be directly affected by increased sales from targeted staple foods, agricultural inputs, and value-added sectors.[52]

In West Africa, most grades and standards for agricultural goods and manufactures are not adequately developed or used, and as a result, West African products are uncompetitive in the marketplace. For example, poor quality and low yields are key factors in making local commodities, such as rice, uncompetitive with imported commodities. The expansion of maize production is constrained by problematic quality issues, such as the presence of aflatoxin. Trade in cattle and small ruminants has long been confined to animals on the hoof because cuts of local red meat cannot compete with imported meat. Concerns about contamination of cashews and shea limit investment in these value-added sectors.

This sub-IR's focus addresses the lack of competitive West African farmers and firms that are capable of supplying goods in commercial volumes that meet international market requirements for product quality. USAID/WA will work through and with regional private sector associations, and assist them to be sustainable. Improving storage life and product quality are among the top priorities of private sector

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[52] Economists generally agree that the private sector is the engine of growth. An array of regional institutions and private sector associations in West Africa plays a vital role in addressing the region's development challenges. Unfortunately, significant capacity issues hinder the ability of these development partners to address food security adequately in the region. Due to constraints of resources, systems, and staffing, these organizations have generally faced organizational challenges, including limited capacity to manage funds, conduct monitoring, and generate/use information for improved decision-making. See West Africa FTF Strategy 2011-2015, p. 31. The voice of the private-sector voice in addressing regional trade and food security issues is generally viewed as weak, at both the national and regional levels. If the organizational capacity of private sector associations is strengthened and if their private missions are reinforced, then their improved effectiveness will allow them to advance the interests of their members. If these locally owned/managed organizations translate into more responsiveness to the concerns of their constituents, then these stronger West African partners will more capably drive and shape their own development agenda.

association members. This includes both work with industry associations to meet global buyers' standards for manufactured goods, as well as support for regional agriculture associations to develop smallholder farmer's capacity to meet grading, handling and sorting requirements, and the sanitary and phytosanitary regulations of targeted staple foods.

Sub-IR 2.3.2: *Improved Competitiveness of the Transport and Logistics Sector*– There is a great need in West Africa for a more competitive transport and logistics sector. West African trucks are older, cover less ground, travel at lower speed, and carry fewer payloads than anywhere else in the world. The poor state of trucking is a result of systemic disincentives to invest in transportation.

This sub-IR addresses challenges of transport services that limit West African farmers' ability to expand regional food processing, as well as the competitiveness of light manufacturing industries. USAID/WA will work with and through regional institutions to foster the policies and conditions to trigger greater investment in transport. The focus of work under this sub-IR is providing market stakeholders (farmers, shippers, business owners and consumers) information and credible data to advocate for change. These stakeholders, armed with information, will be able to choose efficient transport corridors over inefficient ones, placing additional pressure on governments that oversee inefficient infrastructure to make necessary improvements and policy reforms. USAID/WA will continue working with regional advocacy organizations and ECOWAS member states' governments to liberalize the transportation sector and reduce the number of checkpoints and bribes along trading corridors.[53]

Sub-IR 2.3.3: *Increased Access to Clean, Reliable Energy*– One of the key driving agents for increased trade and economic growth—access to energy—is a critical challenge in West Africa. The lack of reliable, clean and affordable energy in West Africa has negative consequences for opening new factories, for processing food for proper storage and, ultimately, on the prospects for economic growth and poverty reduction.[54] According to the African Development Bank, businesses lose more than 6 percent of sales revenue due to power outages.[55] USAID/WA will contribute to meeting the objectives of the President Obama's new Power Africa Initiative to increase electrical generation and expand cross border trade in electricity and the GCC objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. To accomplish this, USAID/WA programs will leverage private investment in small- and medium-scale renewable energy generation, assist in developing regional electricity plants that generate from natural gas, and facilitate cross-border trade of energy in the region through the WAPP and complete interconnectivity for multi-

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[53] In the West Africa Trade Hub Project, the number of controls (-23%), the value of bribes paid (-47%), and the time spent in delays transporting goods (-39%) have all been reduced during 2006-2013. See West Africa Trade Hub 2, Final Report, August 2013.

[54] Sub-Saharan Africa averages 56 days a year without electricity (Enterprise Survey Data Base, World Bank 2008). This means that self-generation of electricity plays an important role in the region. In West Africa, diesel generators represent a significant component of the total installed electric generation capacity in the region (18%). See Paying the Price for Unreliable Power Supplies: In-House Generation of Electricity by Firms in Africa. Foster, Vivien and Jevgenijs Steinbuks, for the World Bank's Africa infrastructure Country Diagnostic, 2008. Low reliability also means that distributors need to buy leased energy agreements for emergency power, which has a significant cost impact: for example, Kenya 1.5% of GDP, Tanzania 0.96% GDP and Ghana 1.9% of GDP. See *Underpowered: The State of the power Sector in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Eberhad, Foster, Briceno-Garmendia, Ouerdraogo, Camos and Shkaratan for the World Bank's Africa Infrastructure Country Diagnostic, 2008.

[55] *Unlocking Africa's Clean Energy Potential for Employment & Economic Growth,* SE4All Powering Africa Conference Copenhangen – 24 September 2012.

country trading by 2020. To boost sensitivity to gender issues associated with the WAPP, USAID/WA will consider several recommendations, such as the following:

- Support WAPP's efforts to recruit female trainees in its regional utility training and capacity building activities, and to share promising practices for recruitment of female trainees with ECREEE.
- Provide WAPP with gender training tools and resources appropriate for WAPP member utility managers, especially those tasked with recruitment and training.

IR 2.4: Sustainable Agricultural Productivity Improved

Increasing agricultural productivity is key to increasing the availability of nutritious food in West Africa and to improving the resilience of the vulnerable. Addressing improved access to quality agricultural inputs and increased use of climate-smart agricultural and other productivity-enhancing practices are core investment areas in the mission's FtF strategy. The low yields per hectare of West African agriculture are linked to declining soil fertility, inadequate farming systems, low use of improved seeds and technologies, and the negative effects of climate change. Limited access to quality and affordable agricultural inputs, such as seeds and fertilizers, is one of the main constraints to poor agricultural productivity in West Africa.

Under this IR, as inputs become more accessible and affordable, utilization of improved varieties of inputs and integrated soil fertility management practices are expected to markedly increase productivity for target crops. USAID/WA will also seek to expand the availability of quality inputs throughout the region by spurring increased private investment in the sector and thus increasing regional production.

In tandem with the tangible components of input availability and access is the key role regional and national level entities play in creating an enabling environment for agricultural inputs in the marketplace. In this regard, USAID/WA will work to strengthen the policies associated with making agricultural inputs more available and reducing government interference with private sector participation in seed multiplication and distribution of veterinary supplies. This aspect of agricultural productivity is supported by sub-IR 2.1.1: Increased harmonization of targeted regional policies, regulations, and procedures. Agricultural productivity will similarly be increased through USAID/WA's work with regional institutions and others to increase the breadth and reach of market information systems under sub-IR 2.1.2: More integrated and coordinated regional systems. For example, USAID/WA will increase information regarding the availability and access to quality fertilizer in the region, and improve access to climate-related information critical to mitigate the effects of climate variability on production cycles.

Utilization of best practices and technologies, including adapted and improved seeds, conservation farming, Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration, holistic management and integrated soil management, are climate smart practices, will maintain the health and productivity of the land. While the proven success of new technologies and practices are often locally known, their adoption across West Africa is limited, and there is a need to actively share and distribute them across the region. USAID/WA's work to increase knowledge transfer within the region through regional institutions will expand to help ensure this vital information is shared more broadly and more consistently among all public and private partners.

Sub-IR 2.4.1: *Access to inputs increased*– To address food security needs in West Africa, significant increases in agricultural productivity and food production are required. This sub-IR is supported by conclusions from a recent International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)/ International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) fertilizer assessment[56] and an IFPRI analysis[57] indicating that expanded use of improved seeds and fertilizers are critical to raising productivity gains and overall food security. Productivity gains will depend on these inputs becoming increasingly available and more widely adopted through policy reforms, and their use becoming more efficient through proper soil and water management techniques, leading to sustainable demand-driven supply structures. While use of modern inputs is gradually expanding in the region, policy issues, fragmented markets and weak private sector involvement inhibit their wider availability and use.

USAID/WA's strategy for increasing access to inputs such as fertilizer and improved seeds will focus on improving the investment environment by removing policy-related obstacles impeding private sector investment in fertilizer blending, manufacturing, distribution and sales in West Africa. Since the widespread use of subsidies by some national governments represents a significant hurdle to increasing private sector investment in fertilizer, USAID/WA will support critical policy reform efforts by building the analytical capacity of the recently created Regional Technical Agency for Agriculture and Food at ECOWAS, and working with agricultural input producer associations and other private sector actors to lobby for needed reforms. USAID/WA will work closely with the agricultural inputs industry associations to advocate for policy reform, strengthen commercial networks, and facilitate transactions. Finally, USAID/WA will use Development Credit Authority (DCA) loan guarantees to help spur investment in the fertilizer industry and help improve fertilizer production, processing and packaging.

One of the top priorities of ECOWAS in the agriculture sector is expanding the use of modern agricultural inputs through a private sector-led program. On the supply side, its strategy to intensify the use of agricultural inputs includes boosting local production of fertilizers, organizing the production of bulk blending, promoting the use of natural phosphate produced in the region, promoting the production of improved and certified seeds, and conducting research on the intensification of food crops. On the demand side, ECOWAS proposes to lower input prices through subsidies (until market expansion limits fertilizer costs by economies of scale), promote distribution networks for agricultural inputs, encourage agricultural finance, enact tariffs measures and tax incentives at the regional level to encourage intensification, and increase fertilizer use efficiency through proper soil and water management practices (as per CAADP Pillar 1 on Sustainable Land and Water Management). USAID/WA's programs will support ECOWAS in the achievement of this priority. USAID/WA may also collaborate with ECOWAS on agriculture input regulations affecting women farmers, for example by facilitating meetings between national women's agricultural associations so they can have conversations about women farmers' specific input needs (types, quantities, packaging, price, etc.) for subsequent presentation to ECOWAS, or by providing technical and logistical support to such women's agricultural associations in their preparation to present these needs to ECOWAS.

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[56] IFPRI/IFDC, "Policy Considerations for Improving Regional Fertilizer Markets in West Africa." November 2010.
[57] IFPRI, "Regional Strategic Alternatives for Agricultural-led Growth and Poverty Reduction in West Africa." December 2006.

Sub-IR 2.4.2: *Utilization of best practices and technologies increased*– A tremendous amount of research and studies conducted over the decades have produced significant advances in agriculture and land use practices and new technologies. However, these advances are often unknown to the broader population.[58] Underlying this sub-IR is the theory that technologies and practices that could exponentially increase the degree of agricultural transformation in West Africa and lead to improved food security and sustained agricultural and economic gains in the region already exist. However, linkages between regional, national and local entities are weak and do not allow for the scaling and dissemination required to create transformational change in the agricultural sector. This is also a huge impediment to creating the economies of scale necessary to foster private sector investment.

There is a growing body of research that confirms the links between proper soil and water management, increased productivity, and climate resilience.[59] These are also critical actions for improving agricultural productivity because they enhance the effectiveness of improved seeds and fertilizers. Soil management techniques that combine the use of inorganic fertilizer with compost or manure have generated an average of 50 percent increase in fertilizer use efficiency.[60] Several studies have also shown that rainfall infiltration can be significantly increased through simple soil conservation measures such as *Zai* pits[61]and stone bunds, and through conservation agriculture. CAADP, recognizing that sustainable soil and water management is vital for increased agricultural productivity, has provided a supportive structure under its Pillar 1, "Sustainable Land and Water Management."

Another such best practice example that is gaining greater traction across the region is the increased use of climate-smart agriculture practices. USAID/WA will focus on the development and dissemination of knowledge on the use of such practices (e.g., what combination of practices is most productive and practical, given specific farm conditions and characteristics) and on better concentrating climate-smart agriculture interventions in areas that have the potential to benefit most from the technology. Increased use of climate-smart agriculture practices will, however, also require a high level of collaboration and involvement of USAID bilateral missions to drive widespread adoption at the farm level across the region. Regional organizations (CORAF and CILSS), USAID/WA and USAID bilateral missions will work with national organizations to help farmers learn about climate-smart agriculture and to ensure the necessary inputs are available to drive widespread adoption. Paramount to success under this sub-IR is USAID/WA's commitment to increased attention and coordination with USAID headquarters in Washington, as well as USAID bilateral missions and offices in the region.

To ensure adequate attention to gender issues affecting women's production and participation in agriculture, USAID/WA will consider a range of actions, such as the following:

- Work with ECOWAS and CORAF Gender Advisors to document potentially promising innovative land initiatives that are promoting gender equality and empowering women farmers in

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[58] See West Africa FTF Strategy, p. 16.

[59] See Breman, H., B. Fofana & A. Mando; The Lesson of Drente's 'Essen' Soil Nutrient Depletion in Sub-Saharan Africa and Management Strategies for Soil Replenishment; (in Braimoh, A.K. & P.L.G. Vlek; Land Use and Soil Resources; Springer Media, 145 – 166.

[60] Breman, H., B. Fofana & A. Mando; *The Lesson of Drente's 'Essen' Soil Nutrient Depletion in Sub-Saharan Africa and Management Strategies for Soil Replenishment;* (in Braimoh, A.K. & P.L.G. Vlek; *Land Use and Soil Resources;* Springer Media, 145 – 166.

[61] *Zai* are pits or holes in which organic matter is mixed with soil. They concentrate nutrients and water and aid water infiltration and retention. Contour stone bunds are low stone walls that slow and spread water and prevent soil and organic matter from being washed away

> Burkina Faso and Senegal. Capture useful lessons from these initiatives and disseminate to the rest of the region through sensitization and advocacy; and explore ways of replicating and/or scaling up such initiatives regionally, a few countries at a time.

- Encourage the creation of national networks of technical professionals who have received sufficient training in gender issues and support them to seek gender balanced solutions to boosting agricultural productivity.

Sub-IR 2.4.3: *Capacity of regional agriculture partners to fulfil their mandates improved–*

Regional integration will not be achieved or sustained without the strong and sustained leadership of regional institutions who champion and support it. Effective leadership depends on strong organizational, technical and analytical capacities, as well as the ability to articulate a vision, set goals and collaborate with stakeholders across the region to achieve those goals. These characteristics are also part and parcel of these organizations' ability to fulfill their mandates to promote improved natural resource management, increased trade and investment, and enhanced food security in West Africa. USAID/WA will focus on building the leadership capacity of those institutions that have the greatest ability and potential to drive and shape economic development in the region, including ECOWAS, CILSS and CORAF. The focus will be on inter-governmental institutions but selected private sector and civil society organizations, whose voices are critical to advancing regional integration, will also be targeted. The mission will provide technical assistance, training and tools in the areas of human resources, financial management, procurement, internal controls, policy formulation, information management, technical and analytical capacity, and performance monitoring and evaluation, among others. When feasible, the mission will directly fund regional organizations in line with USAID's commitment to local ownership and sustainability. Intended outcomes include more capable regional partners and improved collaboration among stakeholders, including across the Anglophone-Francophone divide, between regional and national organizations, and between the public and private sectors.

Regional-national Linkages

USAID/WA will continue to build the capacity of regional inter-governmental organizations, including ECOWAS, CILSS, CORAF, UEMOA, WAPP and ECREEE, as well as private sector alliances, notably the Global Shea Alliance, the African Cashew Alliance and the Borderless Alliance, to help them fulfill their mandates to "reach down" and assist nations in implementing policies and plans that either heads of state or private sector actors have agreed to. This will include not only helping those organizations to train staff and improve financial and other management systems, but also providing them with tools (e.g., checklists, benchmarking, policy diagnostics, multi-media presentations, databases) that will better enable them to track and support progress in policy implementation at the national level. USAID/WA will also intensify communication and coordination with USAID bilateral missions, especially in the FtF focus countries of Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia and Senegal with the aim of improving information exchange and programming synergies that could help accelerate national implementation of regional agriculture, trade and environment policies and standards. Mechanisms for achieving this could include joint work planning of regional and bilateral implementing partners or adjustments to existing work plans to avoid duplication and facilitate "hand offs" on particular policies (e.g., reducing the number of checkpoints on trade routes, passing food fortification standards).

Selectivity and Focus

The challenges and opportunities related to advancing economic growth and resilience in the region are many. USAID/WA has aligned its priorities with those of key regional organizations in areas that maximize the comparative advantages of the mission and line up with availability of funding. Because ECOWAS has in place, for example, an RAIP to implement CAADP through the ECOWAP, USAID has aligned its FtF agriculture and many of its trade activities to contribute to this plan. ECOWAS works with a network of regional organizations to achieve this, and USAID works with and through the same organizations to help achieve their objectives and to forge regional integration. Much of this work simultaneously contributes to resilience. In the environmental arena, USAID/WA has undertaken a series of assessments to pinpoint the highest priority ecosystems where impact can be achieved. The Power Africa Initiative has set the stage for work in the power sector—USAID will build capacity and leadership of two key regional entities to better provide and coordinate power, namely WAPP and ECREEE. By working with and through regional organizations, while also building their capacity, USAID/WA has achieved selectivity and focus.

c) DO 3: Utilization of Quality Health Services Increased through West African Partners

Background and Analysis

West Africans suffer from some of the worst health outcomes in the world as demonstrated by the region's poor health indicators. This includes high maternal and infant mortality rates, low use of modern contraceptives (regional average: 9 percent) and high unmet need for modern contraceptives (regional average: 30 percent). Additionally, vitamin A deficiency is pervasive in the region, contributing to high perinatal death rates. [62] The high prevalence of diarrheal disease is closely linked to poor accessibility to clean water and is a leading cause of child mortality under 5.

Despite low HIV prevalence among the general population (ranging from less than 1 percent to 4.5 percent depending on the country, with an average of below 2 percent)[63] relative to other regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, West Africa contributes a significant number of new infections to the global burden due to its large population. In addition, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is quite high in key populations, notably commercial sex workers (CSW) and men who have sex with men (MSM),[64] with rates in this population being 19 to 30 times higher than in the general population.[65] A recent Institute for Basic Biomedical Sciences study conducted in Cameroon showed HIV prevalence rates as high as 44.4 percent

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[62] DHS Data 1990 – 2012 averaged for West Africa
[63] UNAIDS 2012 estimates: UNAIDS Global Report, 2013 and DHS Data 2003 -2012.
[64] Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) Data 2001-2010.
[65] UNAIDS Global Reports 2004-2010.

for MSM.[66] In Burkina Faso and Togo, the study showed similar trends among key populations, where the rate among CSW is 32.9 percent in Bobo Dioulasso and 27.1 percent in Lomé.[67]

The incidence of acute respiratory infection is already seasonally very high in the Sahel and will only increase with the increased frequency of dust storms predicted in climate models. Meningitis epidemics in West Africa are linked in part to dust storms during harmattan. Arsenic and heavy metals, agricultural fertilizer and pesticides, bacteria, viruses and fungi also travel by air, increasing the damage to respiratory systems. In addition to the severe effects of these health conditions on human dignity and well-being, their negative impact on economic growth in the region is significant. Unfortunately, West African countries are not equipped to address the enormity of health-related problems. Health systems are weak, and poor governance and accountability are fundamental constraints to the delivery of quality health services.

Gender-related field research on health has focused on four factors related to family planning and HIV/AIDS: the traditional power dynamic between men and women as an obstacle to women's health; child mortality; early/forced marriage; and lack of health knowledge among women. Persons interviewed highlighted the persistent issue of men preventing their wives from contraceptive use and the continuing need for women to get permission from their husbands to seek reproductive health care. In addition, two factors associated with high child mortality rates in the region were identified: women's poverty, and the fact that health project staff distribute health products such as mosquito nets to heads of households, who tend to be men. Early marriage and women's lack of knowledge about health options and issues were also identified by persons interviewed as obstacles to better reproductive health, family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention.[68]

Ouagadougou Partnership: The USAID/WA Regional Health Office has taken a leadership role in advancing donor coordination through the Ouagadougou Partnership in West Africa. The partnership includes the governments of the United States, France, and Germany, as well as the Gates and Hewlett Foundations, the United Nations Fund for Population Assistance, the World Health Organization and WAHO. Its aim is to strengthen donor coordination and to align priorities and responses for family planning in the region.

Given the magnitude of health-related challenges and the limited funding available, USAID/WA will continue to focus on achieving meaningful results by leveraging development gains across the region. To that end, USAID/WA supports health programming across the region in partnership with WAHO, the United Nations Family Planning Agency (UNFPA), United Nations Agency for HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WSA, selected host country Ministries of Health, regional networks, and civil society organizations, as well as international NGOs. USAID/WA implements three main types of health programs: regional-level programs; multi-country bilateral program support; and responding to individual requests from the U.S. Congress.

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[66]"Integrated Biological and Behavioral Surveillance Survey in (Yaoundé, Douala) Cameroon 2011." HIV/AIDS Prevention Project, May 2012.
[67]Baral S. et al, Examining Risk Factors for HIV and Access to Services among Female Sex Workers (FSW) and Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) in in Burkina Faso, Togo and Cameroon, December 2013.
[68] USAID/WA Regional West Africa Gender Assessment 2013

USAID/WA has strategies for HIV/AIDS, Family Planning and Capacity-Building, and supports wider USAID health strategies, such as the recent USAID Global Health Strategic Framework of April 2012 and the USAID Water Strategy 2013-2018. The goal of the Family Planning Strategy is to reduce the extremely high unmet need for family planning in West Africa; for HIV/AIDS, the aim is to reduce the number of new HIV infections among most at risk populations (MARPs), CSW and MSM, in particular; for capacity-building, the goal is to strengthen the managerial and technical capacity of key regional and national institutions. USAID/WA also supports the goals and principles of the GHI, the Promise Renewed and the Child Survival Call to Action and will contribute to USAID's global goal of creating an AIDS-free generation and reducing preventable maternal and child deaths. Efforts to promote food fortification with essential vitamins and minerals, in accordance with regionally established standards, will improve nutrition throughout the region.
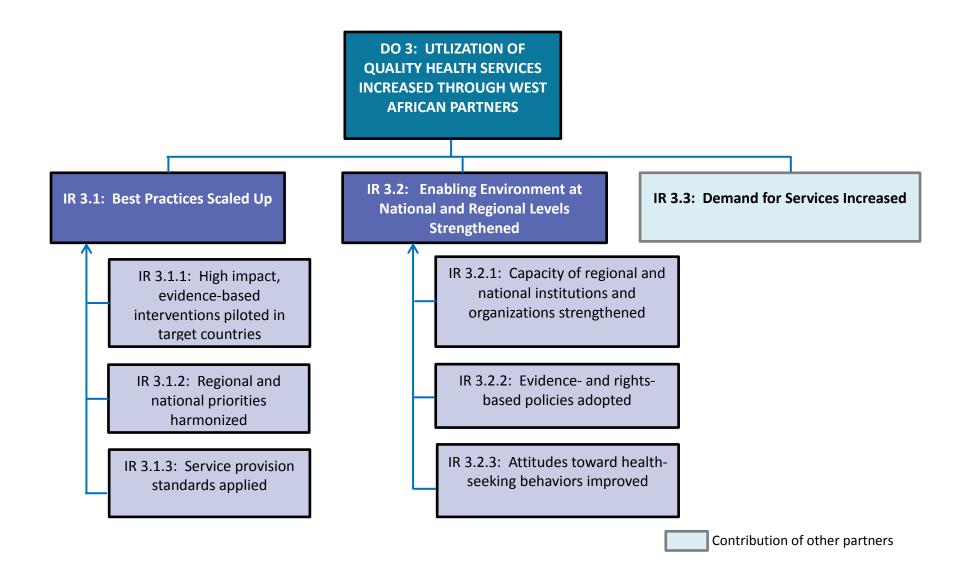
Guiding Principles

USAID West Africa's health DO aligns with the GHI focus on the following:

- Providing technical leadership in responding to new global health challenges
- Partnering strategically with a wide range of actors
- Accelerating the development and application of innovation, science and technology
- Scaling up evidence-based equitable, inclusive and locally-adapted health solutions
- Strengthening local health system capacity to support partner countries' leadership of health policies, strategies and actions
- Promoting inclusion, gender equality and female empowerment
- Working efficiently and being effective stewards of public trust and resources

To maximize impact, USAID/WA aims to capitalize on its expertise and credibility to function as a center for learning and leveraging in the health sector. Thus, USAID/WA's overall health strategy depends in large part on the engagement of other donors in the region. Given limited funding, achieving significant results depends on USAID's ability to provide leadership within the donor community and then leverage that position to mobilize commitment and funding from other actors. USAID/WA will concentrate on the supply side of service delivery and on strengthening the enabling environment from the community to the regional level to increase utilization of quality health and water and sanitation services. This includes bringing to a regional scale proven best-practices from pilots conducted in targeted countries and geographic areas to address barriers to utilization. Barriers include affordability, convenience and discrimination. These are addressed by providing services and commodities in the communities where beneficiaries live; empowering communities to make informed decisions about their health; and building the capacity of national and regional partners to use evidence and data for decision-making and policy development. USAID/WA will rely on other actors (donors and local institutions) to address the demand side that is also necessary for increasing utilization of high quality health services in West Africa.

Through its prominent role in regional and national partnerships (e.g., Ouagadougou Partnership, Joint UN Regional Team on AIDS, Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanisms) and with a women- and girl- centered approach, USAID/WA will contribute to GHI goals (Preventing Child and Maternal Deaths and creating an AIDS Free Generation) by reaching 800,000 women with family planning services and 120,000 individuals with HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support services. The overall health strategy

aligns with other Agency strategies and those of USAID/WA's regional partners, namely ECOWAS (ECOWAS HIV Strategic Plan 2011-2015) and WAHO (WAHO Strategic Plan 2009-2013), and is based on evidence from Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) 2001-2010, as well as UN data and lessons learned from previous USAID/WA interventions.

DO 3: UTLIZATION OF QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES INCREASED THROUGH WEST AFRICAN PARTNERS

IR 3.1: Best Practices Scaled Up

IR 3.2: Enabling Environment at National and Regional Levels Strengthened

IR 3.3: Demand for Services Increased

IR 3.1.1: High impact, evidence-based interventions piloted in target countries

IR 3.1.2: Regional and national priorities harmonized

IR 3.1.3: Service provision standards applied

IR 3.2.1: Capacity of regional and national institutions and organizations strengthened

IR 3.2.2: Evidence- and rights-based policies adopted

IR 3.2.3: Attitudes toward health-seeking behaviors improved

Contribution of other partners

Development Hypothesis

This DO focuses on utilization, i.e., the uptake and use of services by the people of West Africa. Utilization encompasses access as well, meaning that services are accessible and available. This DO incorporates the essential role of West African partners, including the WAHO, WSA, national Ministries of Health, regional networks and civil society organizations, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNICEF, and international NGO implementing partners. USAID/WA aims to accomplish this with a three-pronged approach:

- Provide quality health services in countries with no bilateral mission and use the experience to identify best practices.
- Promote best practices in health and water and sanitation service delivery, both technical and managerial.
- Generate evidence for policy, programming and resource allocation.

The greatest deficits in access to health services can be found in the poorest segments of the population – particularly, poor women and children in urban and peri-urban settings, but also those who are socially marginalized, including CSW and MSM. USAID/WA will continue to prioritize these groups within the traditional target populations of women of reproductive age, children under age 5, and MARPs. While providing services to targeted populations (in focused geographic zones in NPCs to reach the maximum number of beneficiaries with limited resources), USAID/WA will also use the services to generate evidence from testing high impact interventions, proven in other parts of the world, in the West African context (learning), and building partnerships to scale up successful interventions (leveraging). USAID/WA will also use that evidence to bolster advocacy with governments, CSOs and donors to promote policy and regulatory reform.

In health, USAID/WA's theory of change is that by influencing policies, facilitating scale-up of quality services, leveraging funding for key interventions, and engendering sustainable West African institutions to carry out high quality programs, USAID/WA will increase utilization of quality health services. The health development hypothesis is that **if** best practices are scaled up, the enabling environment at the national and regional level is strengthened, and demand for health services is increased, **then** the utilization of quality health services will be increased through West African partners.[69]

DO illustrative indicators:
- Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR)
- Percent of CSWs reporting the use of condoms with their most recent client (to be used within HIV/AIDS focus countries)
- Percent of men reporting the use of a condom the last time they had sex with a male partner (to be used within HIV/AIDS focus countries)

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[69] Sources: 1) Action for West Africa Region (AWARE)II End of Project Report; 2) Performance Evaluation of USAID's Contributions in the Strengthening of the Institutional and Technical Capacities of the West African Health Organization (WAHO), 2003 – 2011; 3) Supplémentation en vitamine A et consommation des huiles fortifiées en vitamin A chez les enfants de 6á 59 mois et leurs mère dans la ville de Bobo-Dioulasso et la province de Gourma Juin 2012; 4)HIP-Family Planning High-Impact Practices (www.fphighimpactpractices.org; 5) PEPFAR Blueprint: Creating an AIDS-Free Generation Nov. 2012; 6) Spotlight HIV/AIDS/STIs –Promoting Rights and Preventing HIV among Men Who Have Sex with Men, July 2006 No. 3 in A series.

- Percent of population using an improved drinking water source
- Percent of population using an improved sanitation facility
- Percent of children under age 5 who had diarrhea in the prior two weeks
- Percent of women of reproductive age reported using family planning services
- Percent of Most-At-Risk Population who received an HIV test in the last 12 months and know the results

Intermediate Results:
IR 3.1: Best practices scaled up
IR 3.2: Enabling environment at the national and regional level strengthened
IR 3.3: Demand for services increased (Other donors)

Assumptions and Risks:
Assumptions:
- Social, political and legal environments remain favorable to implement selected interventions.
- The commitment of national Ministries of Health to support intervention implementation continues.
- The presence, engagement and funding of other donors continues.
- Partner institutions and civil society organizations demonstrate a minimum level of competency.
- Public support remains favorable.

Risks:
- Political instability or other events destabilize the enabling environment in focus countries.
- Other donors and governments change their focus and do not fund demand creation activities.
- UNFPA is not able to supply family planning commodities[70].
- Other members of the Ouagadougou Partnership do not follow through on their commitments to fund focus countries' Family Planning Action Plans[71].
- The quality of clean water sources and sanitation services are not maintained.

Cross-cutting Issues:
This DO emphasizes the RDCS strategic cross-cutting themes of governance, capacity-building, gender and youth.

Governance: In health, the aspects of governance that USAID/WA emphasizes are regional systems and policies that improve access to key public health services and improved human rights. Whether through

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[70] UNFPA is active in the region, funding reproductive health commodity systems, contraceptive commodities and behavior change efforts such as the "Schools for Husbands" in Niger. UNFPA is the primary supplier for family planning commodities in the region, supplying all the USAID/WA focus countries. USAID/Washington also liaises with UNFPA on the monthly Coordinated Assistance for Reproductive Health Supplies group calls to help countries prevent and fill family planning commodity stock-outs.

[71] As a result of the February 2011, "Francophone West Africa Regional Conference: Population, Development, and Family Planning: The Urgency to Act", in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, USAID along with the French and German governments, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, WHO, the World Bank and the UNFPA launched the Ouagadougou Partnership. Aligned with the Ouagadougou Conference Declaration and Millennium Development Goal 5b, and in response to the high level of unmet need in West Africa, the Partnership agreed to support nine West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo) to: 1) accelerate the achievement of their national goals for modern contraceptive prevalence rate; and 2) reach at least an additional 1 million women by 2015.

harmonized policies and laws to reduce criminalization of homosexuality, improved access to youth-friendly reproductive health services, or empowered communities to advocate for quality health and water and sanitation services, improved governance will help improve the enabling environment for health and the health status of West Africans.

Capacity Building: In health, USAID/WA's activities to strengthen selected community-based and national partners, as well as regional institutions, takes place across all sub-IRs. Building the managerial, technical, knowledge management and leadership capacity of all these partners is essential to achieving the overall DO.

Gender: USAID/WA will give special emphasis to addressing underlying gender issues that may affect beneficiaries' utilization of the different health services offered and will also monitor and respond to GBV. The principles of gender integration in health for USAID/WA include:

- **Gender participation and empowerment:** USAID/WA will work to increase the capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities and societies.

- **Gender equality:** USAID/WA will promote policies and laws that will improve gender equality, health status, and/or increase access to health, social and family planning services for all people. USAID/WA will strengthen the capacity of institutions that set policies, guidelines, norms and standards that affect health and water/sanitation outreach and services, to improve health outcomes for women and girls and promote gender equality. This includes assisting government authorities and policymakers to gather and use evidence about specific barriers to the use of health services to develop more effective policies for expanded family planning uptake.

- **Removal of socio-cultural barriers to access:** Urban slums are characterized by high levels of substance abuse, early sexual initiation, transactional sex, age asymmetry of sexual partners, and high rates of sexual and GBV, all of which are factors putting women at risk for unplanned pregnancy. USAID/WA will utilize multiple community-based approaches, such as behavior change communication, community mobilization, advocacy, and engagement of community leaders/role models, to improve health and hygiene for women and girls[72]. USAID/WA will also specifically engage with women's groups and women leaders as family planning service providers and community communicators on the benefits of family planning.

- **Addressing harmful norms and GBV:** Male norms surrounding masculinity can contribute to stigma and discrimination faced by MSM and CSW.[73] USAID will apply a gendered perspective, ensuring culturally sensitive approaches that acknowledge the significance of

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[72] 1) Population Reports: Elements of Success in Family Planning Programming, Series J, Number 57, Family Planning Programs, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health INFO Project, Center for Communication Programs (funded by USAID); 2) See: HIP-Family Planning High Impact Practices Community Health Workers: Bringing Family Planning Services Where People Live and Work.

[73] Meeting the Sexual Health Needs of Men who Have Sex with Men in Senegal, Institute of Environmental Studies, Cheikh Diop University, Senegal National AIDS Control Council Horizons Program, Sept. 2012 (Funded by USAID)

traditions, while addressing harmful gender norms. Mission programs will include activities to monitor and reduce GBV and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities.

Youth: Youth in West Africa have particular reproductive and sexual health needs. For youth, access to contraceptive and HIV/AIDS services is often limited, not only by barriers of distance, cost, and inadequate commodity supply, but also by fear of stigma and mistreatment, lack of privacy and confidentiality, and lack of information. Many adolescent girls are also affected by transactional and inter-generational sex, early marriage and early childbearing. USAID/WA will develop evidence-based service delivery approaches in the West African context to reach married and unmarried youth with a range of reproductive health services, including youth friendly services that offer all contraceptive methods, including emergency contraception and long-acting methods. As appropriate, USAID/WA will incorporate into its service delivery programming youth-friendly approaches including mobile health, social media, mentorship, and peer education. Stakeholder assessments with youth groups will ensure that service delivery approaches are designed to meet the needs of youth. At the policy level, USAID/WA will continue to advocate for youth-friendly services and work with WAHO to develop its youth sexual and reproductive health strategy.

IR 3.1: Best practices scaled up
 USAID/WA will implement high impact, evidence-based interventions aligned with regional and national priorities using new service provision standards. In family planning, the mission will start by using existing information from the Action for West Africa Region Project II (AWARE II), which was implemented from July 2009—July 2012. AWARE generated important lessons learned for implementing best practices, including the following:

- Focus on a limited number of best practices to glean meaningful results and inspire replication.
- Sign Memoranda of Understanding that clearly describe the project and expectations of the country partners with each target nation, prior to implementation.
- Contract with organizations, rather than individuals, for technical support; their expertise often spans overlapping technical areas and allows for a unified approach, rather than the numerous strategies that may emerge from individual consultants.[74]

Examples of best practices to be further scaled up include: training, equipping and supporting Community Health Workers to provide family planning services to women at sites where they go for other health services; and "task shifting" of certain tasks to less specialized health care workers, namely nurses and midwives.

For water and sanitation, USAID/WA will align with the new USAID Water and Development Strategy[75] that outlines how proven evidence-based approaches to reliable provision of safe water and sanitation services can be applied in areas such as assuring quality of service, use of Community-Led Total Sanitation approaches, sanitation marketing, and promotion of effective hygiene practices.

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[74] AWARE II: End of Project Report June 2012.
[75] USAID Water and Development Strategy 2013-2018.

Based on these and other lessons, USAID/WA will engage in operations research, and develop and adapt innovative approaches to the West Africa context. Activities will demonstrate how to implement programs more efficiently and effectively, and show how efficiencies improve the cost-effectiveness and coverage of services taken to scale.

Sub-IR 3.1.1: High impact, evidence-based interventions piloted in target countries– USAID's Global Health Bureau has identified a set of best practices or "high impact practices" in health that have been proven to yield maximum health impact. Health program implementers in the West Africa region may also generate best practices that contribute to the body of evidence or package of services that already exists. These practices will be piloted in focus countries and evidence generated to confirm or repudiate their appropriateness for West Africa.

Sub-IR 3.1.2: Regional and national priorities harmonized– For best practices to be implemented throughout the region, countries in West Africa must have common priorities, which in turn are supported by the development of, and agreement upon, harmonized policies and standards among these countries. New priorities that USAID/WA will advocate for include youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services. These shared and consistent priorities, policies and standards will facilitate implementation of public health and water and sanitation programs that apply the same best practices, which will result in a regional approach to solving common public health challenges. WAHO, which USAID/WA will support, plays a crucial leadership role in facilitating health policy and standard harmonization in the region.

Sub-IR 3.1.3: Service provision standards applied– Once health workers and water/sanitation user association members are trained and equipped to implement best practices, they have the responsibility to apply the new standards associated with these practices. Supervisors and managers can use periodic competency checks and ratings to determine whether health workers and water/sanitation user association members are providing services according to standards. USAID/WA will support its partner Ministries of Health and Public Works Ministries to track compliance with service provision standards.

IR 3.2: Enabling environment at the national and regional levels strengthened
USAID/WA defines the enabling environment for health as including regional standards, national laws and regulations, customs, ambient messages, and self-perception. Strengthening the enabling environment is essential to achieving the DO. Indeed, another lesson from AWARE II is that programs that aim to achieve ambitious goals with limited resources and time require strong support from donors, government stakeholders and local experts who are committed to pursuing an honest, communicative and sustained partnership. As a center of leveraging, USAID/WA will assist regional and national institutions in meeting identified needs of the region as a whole and in USAID focus countries. USAID/WA will strengthen the institutional capacity of regional coordinating entities, especially WAHO and WSA, to take a leadership role in donor coordination and alignment around country and regional health strategies. To foster local ownership, USAID/WA will leverage existing regional and national platforms to promote adoption of evidence- and rights-based policies. Furthermore, by encouraging health seeking behaviors among target beneficiaries, USAID/WA will contribute to the enabling environment by changing behavior patterns and self-perceptions.

IR 3.2.1: Capacity of regional and national institutions and organizations strengthened– This IR is rooted in the concept that USAID/WA's activities, like all development efforts, should be taken over by indigenous agencies in the long run. Capacity building will focus on organizational, managerial, technical and financial skills to enable WAHO and other regional institutions to assume a leadership role in setting priorities for policy, and to enable national institutions to implement those policies. In doing so, USAID/WA will draw on lessons from many years of helping to strengthen the capacity of regional and national entities[76]. Based on these lessons, USAID/WA will do the following:

- Provide technical assistance to support WAHO in assessing the implementation of all regional resolutions and other policy decisions made so far and in helping countries move from adoption to real implementation.
- Provide technical assistance to build WAHO's leadership, advocacy and communication capacity, so that WAHO is more able to influence ECOWAS commissioners, Ministers of Health and other ministers to implement agreements such as the 15 percent budget line item for health agreed to in the Abuja Declaration[77].
- Support regional efforts for research focused on innovative ways to improve the quality of health care including strategies for scaling up voluntary counseling and testing, peer health education programs, and community-integrated management of childhood illnesses, and explore effective strategies for providing disability-friendly reproductive health care services to women with disabilities.
- Engage further with the region's seven bilateral missions to identify and prioritize a limited set of high impact practices to roll out at the country level, as USAID/WA does not have the resources to engage consistently with national-level institutions and policy makers across the region.

Sub-IR 3.2.2: Evidence- and rights-based policies adopted– Policy and advocacy work will aim to remove not only legal obstacles, but also organizational regulations, guidelines or protocols—both within and outside the health system—that may prevent vulnerable populations from accessing key health services. Improved policies will be based upon sound data and human rights principles to reduce discrimination and exclusion. To this end, USAID/WA will improve the use of quality information among key decisionmakers, including policy makers. USAID will work along the entire continuum of policy implementation, from introduction, debate, adoption, revision, and implementation. This strategy recognizes that while passing laws or policies is important, social, economic, and cultural realities may prevent their implementation; therefore USAID/WA will increase civil society advocacy capacity to strengthen the public voice for evidence- and rights-based policies in health.

Quality data is key to convincing leaders to change important policies and invest in health services. Directly and through regional platforms such as WAHO, USAID will introduce policy makers and legislators to new research and data to influence decision-making that promotes a supportive enabling

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[76] Performance Evaluation of USAID's Contributions in the Strengthening of the Institutional and Technical Capacities of the West African Health Organization (WAHO) 2003 – 2011

[77] The Abuja Declaration: In April 2001, the Africa Union countries met in Abuja, Nigeria and pledged to increase government funding for health to at least 15% of their annual budget to improve the health sector and urged donor countries to scale up support. Source: www.who.int/healthsystems/publications/abuja_report_aug_2011.pdf

environment for health programming. Because dissemination is needed to ensure that key decisionmakers use evidence-based information (in all its forms), USAID/WA will support such activities as panel discussions, demonstrations and workshops that actively engage change makers in powerful ways, in addition to disseminating electronic documents. Further, health advocacy must also be evidence-based; therefore, USAID will provide civil society actors with management and leadership skills and evidence-based advocacy tools so they can more effectively advocate and mobilize political support for implementation of a supportive enabling environment.

Sub-IR 3.2.3: Attitudes toward health seeking behaviors improved– Some social norms and beliefs about acceptable lifestyles discourage women's use of family planning services and methods. MARPs often don't seek health services because of stigma and discrimination from members of their communities and from health workers. Even with the provision of clean water, communities do not always follow good hygiene practices to reduce water borne diseases in the home. Despite existing and effective communication strategies and materials to raise awareness, communities continue to harbor misbeliefs and misconceptions about several key health interventions; work is needed to change these harmful attitudes and behaviors for improved health. USAID/WA will work with its partners and in communities to change attitudes and behaviors of target populations so that these populations seek the services they need and practice good hygiene for better health. Recognizing the role that civil society, religious leaders, and leaders within ministries play in the advancement of the wellbeing of populations, USAID/WA will also work to ensure that these influential groups have the appropriate information on public health evidence that may contradict tradition and social norms. USAID/WA will also consider promoting male engagement as a relevant component for health programs to ensure more effective reproductive health services results. In addition, USAID/WA will consider expanding the use of women's associations for regional mobilization efforts to increase women's access to and use of family planning services.

IR 3.3: Demand for services Increased *(Other donors)*

 Demand for health services in West Africa is already strong (e.g., 30 percent unmet need for family planning[78], 36 percent unmet need for safe drinking water[79]). The strategy acknowledges that donors, national governments and other partners are working to increase demand for quality health and water/sanitation services. IR 3.3 captures their necessary contribution to achieving the DO, which is being implemented in partnership and collaboration with other donors. These include notably: WAHO, the French Government, the Hewlett Foundation, the Gates Foundation, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNICEF, World Bank, JICA, Ministries of Health, regional networks, and civil society organizations, as well as implementing NGO partners.

Regional-National Linkages

USAID/WA's approach to promoting regional-national linkages in health policies and services is twofold: 1) Supporting and testing innovative approaches to scalable health interventions in specific country settings, and 2) Building the capacity of regional organizations, principally WAHO, to fulfill their mandates to share best practices, harmonize standards, and assist nations to apply both.

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[78] Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) Data 2001-2010.
[79] A Snapshot of Drinking-water and Sanitation in the MDG region Sub-Saharan Africa – 2010 Update. WHO/UNICEF 2010.

Limited resources preclude the regional mission from taking best practices to scale across the region. However, in collaboration with other regional and national stakeholders, USAID/WA will test and identify approaches to providing health services that may have worked in other regions but have not yet been used in West Africa. This includes engaging the private sector in partnerships to provide services in collaboration with the World Bank Group and Mobile Network Operators. Through its recognized technical leadership and engagement with regional organizations and other health stakeholders in the region, USAID/WA is in a position to share these best practices for potential scale-up across the region.

As a regional body, WAHO has the ability to leverage member countries to focus and mobilize around the scale-up of prioritized practices. This is because WAHO is the specialized health agency of ECOWAS, with a political mandate to promote health and well-being across member countries by harmonizing regional policies, pooling resources and fostering collaboration to address regional health priorities[80].

These objectives align well with the USAID/WA's vision of being a center of learning and leveraging in the health sector. Thus, by supporting WAHO to create platforms such as "Best Practices Forums" to share knowledge about high impact interventions and scale-up methodologies, USAID can foster the adoption of these practices at the country level to improve health services on the ground.

In 2011, USAID/WA helped WAHO to develop a regional health information system (HIS) policy. Using its convening power at the highest levels, the policy was adopted by member states during the Annual Health Minister's Meeting in 2012. The policy aims to strengthen data collection, analysis and use to allow the region to have reliable data to track progress against key health indicators and identify challenges on a timely basis. Since the policy adoption, WAHO has worked with members states to implement and operationalize it. In Ghana for example, the Ministry of Health is implementing the policy with the support of the USAID bilateral mission. Examples such as these clearly show the inherent connection between regional policy development and bilateral implementation. USAID/WA will continue to support and advocate for similar processes in other countries.

Selectivity and Focus

USAID/WA currently supports 14 USAID NPCs to implement family planning, maternal and child health, and HIV/AIDS activities. In addition, USAID/WA manages approximately $5.6 million in President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) funding for Cameroon. In redefining its role as a center of learning and leveraging, USAID/WA has elected to further focus its efforts in a select number of countries from the 14 NPCs following its assessments of gaps and needs in the region and of its comparative advantage as a regional platform.
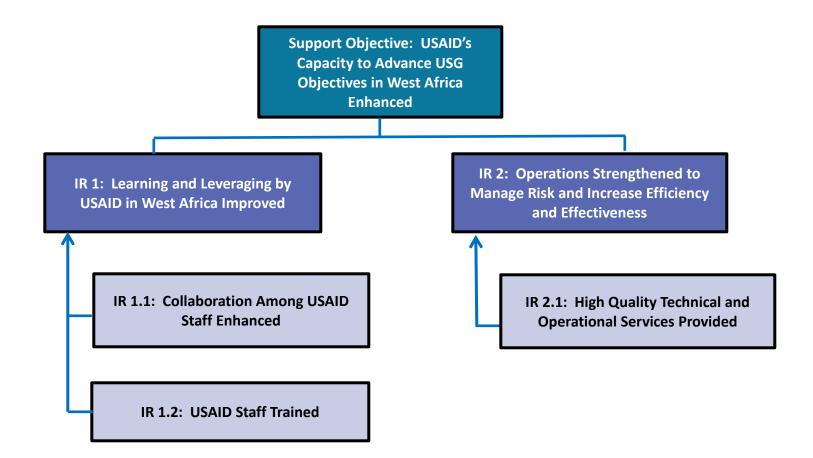
USAID/WA has elected to focus its pilot interventions in six countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Mauritania and Togo. Furthermore, USAID/WA will pilot high impact promising and/or best practices in urban and peri-urban areas where gaps and needs exist. USAID/WA will also work to leverage its leadership role in partnerships to expand coverage of services to rural areas. Lastly, USAID/WA will continue to address policy bottlenecks and commodity and logistic systems issues

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[80] WAHO Vision and Mission Statement (www.wahooas.org)

broadly drawing from lessons learned elsewhere but also in some of the countries where USAID has a bilateral presence to improve the overall enabling environment.

d) Support Objective: USAID's Capacity to Advance USG Objectives in West Africa Enhanced

USAID/WA's work covers three basic areas: regional programs, serving as a center of learning and leveraging, and serving as an operational platform to support NPCs and bilateral USAID missions. Regional programs focus on strengthening regional institutions, policy harmonization, transboundary issues, and Presidential Initiatives as related to the mission's DOs and goal. By leveraging the lessons derived from these regional programs and using its comparative advantage as a regional mission to convene, learn from and train USAID colleagues, USAID/WA can also serve as center to promote and support enhanced USAID effectiveness in the region. USAID/WA's role as a regional technical and operational platform allows USAID to have a presence in countries where it is not cost-effective to place an entire mission with staff that have the full range of expertise needed to plan and implement programs, and also to take advantage of economies of scale in providing certain technical, legal, acquisitions and assistance, and financial services to bilateral missions. For USAID Representative Offices and NPCs, the mission provides a full array of oversight and services including the design, procurement and implementation of programs; and technical management support that includes hiring/supervision of staff, International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS), and financial management. In addition, for both NPCs and USAID bilateral missions, USAID/WA provides the following support: acquisition and assistance; financial management (including assessments); regional legal advisors; environmental compliance; and assistance to embassies for Self Help and Democracy and Human Rights (DHR) activities. USAID/Ghana is the largest recipient of USAID/WA support services, as the mission's Regional Financial Management Office, Regional Executive Office, Regional Legal Advisor, Regional Environmental Officer, and Regional Acquisition and Assistance Office also serve as the requisite offices for USAID/Ghana. In this regard, the two missions are closely linked.

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│   Support Objective:  USAID's │
│   Capacity to Advance USG    │
│   Objectives in West Africa  │
│          Enhanced            │
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Support Objective: USAID's Capacity to Advance USG Objectives in West Africa Enhanced

IR 1: Learning and Leveraging by USAID in West Africa Improved

IR 2: Operations Strengthened to Manage Risk and Increase Efficiency and Effectiveness

IR 1.1: Collaboration Among USAID Staff Enhanced

IR 2.1: High Quality Technical and Operational Services Provided

IR 1.2: USAID Staff Trained

Support Objective: USAID Capacity to Advance USG Objectives in West Africa Enhanced

As a regional operations platform, USAID/WA plays an increasingly important role in enabling Agency programs in the region to be more efficient and effective. Among the key USG objectives in West Africa are countering violent extremism and promoting stability, increasing trade and investment opportunities, building resilience to crises, and fostering sustainable development. USAID contributes to the achievement of these objectives by instituting the USAID reform agenda to enable local solutions, build partnerships and alliances across the public-private divide, scale up innovations, improve programmatic learning, and enhance efficient business processes. USAID/WA sees its role as sustaining and improving an enabling environment that advances Agency reform efforts to achieve USG development objectives in the region. To this end, the mission provides a crucial function in ensuring that its regional activities link to national policies/plans and the work of USAID bilateral missions/offices in ways that promote a unified and coherent Agency development agenda for the region. With its convening role, moreover, USAID/WA is uniquely positioned to house, anchor, sustain and extend the Agency's evolving priorities in science, technology, innovation and partnerships in West Africa. Enabling environment in this Support Objective refers to the combination of effective collaboration, learning and operations that allow USAID to implement development programs successfully.

Development Hypothesis

The Development Hypothesis under this Support Objective is that ***if*** learning and leveraging by USAID in West Africa are improved and ***if*** operations are strengthened to manage risk and increase efficiency and effectiveness ***then*** USAID's capacity to advance USG objectives in West Africa will be enhanced.

Assumptions and Risks:
Assumptions:
- USAID/WA will retain the mandate to be both a regional Center of Excellence and a regional operational platform.
- USAID/WA will have the staffing and financial resources to carry out that mandate.
- Ghana will remain a stable, viable location for the West Africa regional mission.
- USAID bilateral missions and Offices will continue to need the services provided by USAID/WA.
- USAID bilateral missions and Offices will have the resources and commitment to coordinate and collaborate with USAID/WA.

Risks:
- USAID/WA will not have adequate financial resources to recruit, support and retain staff, especially Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs), with technical expertise.

Support Objective Illustrative Indicators:

- Number of partners (governmental, civil society, etc.) adopting improved practices (financial and organizational)
- Number of improved practices implemented by USAID in the region or Agency-wide (technical approaches and business practices)
- Number of conferences and workshops supported to advance regional development objectives
- Number of public-private alliances developed
- Number of development innovations promoted and scaled up

Intermediate Results:
Support IR 1: Learning and Leveraging by USAID in West Africa Improved
Support IR 2: Operations Strengthened to Manage Risk and Increase Efficiency and Effectiveness

Support IR 1: Learning and Leveraging by USAID in West Africa Improved

As a regional mission, USAID/WA enjoys a distinct comparative advantage in terms of programming scope, technical ability, flexibility and willingness to scale innovations.   This is because an integral part of the mission's regional programs is to identify, test, share and scale promising development innovations, or the application of proven approaches from elsewhere in the world to the West African context. These practices range from geospatial mapping and analysis of forest cover and land use to the provision of youth-friendly reproductive health services.   The mission's Africa Center of Excellence (ACE) will serve as a focal point for the Agency's convening power that brings together USAID colleagues and partners to support the most promising science, technology, innovation and partnership (STIP) solutions in the region. This is in alignment with the objectives of the newly-established USAID Global Development Lab, based in Washington, which seeks to increase the application of STIP to sustain and expand development impact. Through ACE, USAID will play a strong coordinating role in West Africa, highlight needs/gaps and ensure that good ideas are broadly shared with various development partners and constituents. By implementing regional programs that address common problems that transcend borders across West Africa, USAID/WA provides an important platform from which to advance mission and USAID development priorities across the region. USAID/WA's role as an operational platform provides a unique opportunity to promote learning and leveraging. To this end, the ACE facility will provide USAID/WA with added tools that encourage USAID staff and partners to create, innovate, and learn from the evolving trends in development, and subsequently make programmatic revisions, as appropriate, to achieve development objectives. Promoting the Agency as a regional thought leader, these services may include training, outreach, speaker series, research and publications— tailored to the West African context and the needs of evolving development priorities. As a result, USAID will learn more systematically from its development interventions across West Africa, anchor its programs more firmly with local organizations, and more rigorously and credibly document the effectiveness of its development programs.

Illustrative Activities under Support IR 1 include the following:
- Convene meetings, workshops and seminars on specific topics (e.g. best practices in family planning, resilience programming, environment, climate change, barriers to trade) and on USAID Forward (e.g., local solutions).
- Share information with USAID stakeholders (especially bilateral missions and offices) on the development priorities of regional organizations, including gender considerations.
- Set up virtual communities of practice on specific development issues. Train USAID staff from West Africa (and around the world) in standard USAID courses and special technical and managerial topics (e.g., climate smart agriculture in West Africa, accounting best practices).
- Provide regional venues for knowledge management and exchange that break down barriers to learning and collaboration across the public and private sectors.

- Support conferences, workshops and other venues for training, networking, knowledge sharing and partnership building for improved development impact.
- Provide analytical support services available (e.g., research and analysis; information and knowledge management; and logistical support services) in support of learning and leveraging.

Support Sub-IR 1.1 Collaboration Among USAID Staff Enhanced– As part of its learning agenda, the ACE platform can serve as a knowledge center to share successful and scalable approaches, challenges, and lessons learned for development interventions across the region. Communication and collaboration are the necessary underpinning of knowledge management. USAID/WA will intensify efforts to promote better communication and collaboration within USAID, building on initiatives the mission has already undertaken. For example, USAID/WA has convened USAID colleagues and implementing partners in Accra to share environmental best practices. USAID/WA will convene conferences, seminars and workshops to exchange knowledge about both technical approaches and business practices. Technical topics could include evidence on countering violent extremism; approaches to improving access to water/sanitation; sharing diagnostic tools on the implementation of policies for fertilizer, seeds, nutrition, family planning, etc.; and common performance management issues and challenges (e.g., data quality for indicators). Business practice topics could include accounting best practices, procurement integrity, government ethics anti-corruption, legal compliance, assistance instruments to promote local solutions; and financial and organizational assessment tools. Such knowledge management efforts also offer the opportunity to forge stronger links between field missions and offices and Washington by more frequently bringing together, face-to-face, a critical mass of experts from both sides. In addition to convening, USAID/WA will explore, develop and use other communications tools, such as web-based communities of practice, newsletters and roadshows of staff, among others, to share knowledge on technical and operational topics and best practices. The intent is to provide thought leadership and build effective USAID networks that share best practices and catalyze innovation.

Such knowledge management, grounded in field experience in one of the most challenging operating environments in which USAID works, will benefit not only West Africa, but the Agency as a whole. Building on experience and networks in West Africa, USAID/WA and USAID colleagues will be able to synthesize practices to help local partnering across the Agency, the USG and donors, developing harmonized approaches to financial and organizational assessment, mitigation, legal compliance, audits and agreements.

Support Sub-IR 1.2: USAID Staff Trained– USAID/WA will continue to act as a training center, offering a variety of courses to the meet the professional development needs of USAID staff in West Africa and around the world. These trainings include the standard suite of USAID University courses focused on program management, financial management and M&E, among others. USAID/WA will work with USAID University and pillar bureaus in USAID/Washington to expand the course offerings, including more technical and leadership courses. With additional resources, mainly staff and support to ACE, USAID/WA would establish a more robust ACE training facility, similar to other USAID regional hubs, such as the Asia Regional Training Center managed out of the Regional Development Mission for Asia (in Bangkok, Thailand), and to the USAID Learning Center in Crystal City, Virginia. The ACE facility not only offers a greater variety of courses and offers standard courses more frequently, but also

tailors specific technical and operations courses to the needs of USAID missions and offices in the region. This vision requires a separate training facility and more logistics and other support staff, but will greatly improve the cost effectiveness and relevance of providing training to USAID staff in West Africa and throughout the continent. Accra is particularly well-suited as a location for a training center in West Africa because Ghana is English speaking, Accra has relatively well-developed infrastructure (by West African standards), and Accra is one of the safest cities in Africa. The ACE facility will be a modern, world-class training and conference center easily accessible to Missions in Africa and the Middle East.

Support IR 2: Operations Strengthened to Manage Risk and Increase Efficiency and Effectiveness

Well-managed operations in USAID are those that consistently comply with applicable laws, regulations, and standards of ethics. They apply both proven and innovative technical approaches to programming. They are efficient and timely in carrying out core functions such as administrative services, human resources management, and information technology support. They also allow for creativity, innovation and risk taking to promote greater sustainability, while putting in place risk management measures. Thus, in providing operational and technical services to 18 countries in the region, including Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire, whose bilateral programs USAID/WA oversees, as well as operations support to its own staff and programs, USAID/WA bears significant responsibility. Notably, USAID/WA provides environmental compliance support for more than $1 billion of programming per year. USAID/WA's objectives in providing these services is to ensure good stewardship of financial resources, reduce management vulnerabilities, increase the efficiency of business practices, promote innovation and support programming through local partners.

Support Sub-IR 2.1 High Quality Technical and Operational Services Provided– USAID/WA will continue to provide operational support to the USAID Representative Office in Côte d'Ivoire and the NPC Cameroon, as well as bilateral missions in the region in a number of ways. For Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon, these services include human resources, travel and transportation, information technology, implementation of management policy, liaison between the Africa Bureau and the country offices, managing relationships with embassies and ICASS committees in the region, procurement, and general management counsel to the front offices. Through these services the Regional Executive Office (EXO) provides a large part of the operational platform required to implement the programs of the NPCs. In addition, USAID/WA provides legal, financial, and acquisitions and assistance services to the NPCs. The range of these services to Côte d'Ivoire will decrease over time as that USAID Office staffs up, including bringing on board its own support staff.   When the bilateral mission in Benin transitions in FY 2015 to a USAID office under USAID/WA supervision, needed operational services for Benin will increase.

USAID/WA also provides a wide range of services to bilateral USAID missions and embassies, partially discussed above. The full list includes the following:

- Acquisitions & Assistance
- Financial Management
- Resident Legal Officer

- Executive Office
- Environmental Compliance
- Program Office Support
- Assistance to Embassies for Self Help and DHR Activities (this may disappear if/when the State Department takes on its management)
- Project Design
- Outreach and Communications
- Program Budgeting and Reporting

In providing these services, USAID/WA legal, financial, environmental compliance, and assistance and acquisitions staff will strive to increasingly clarify and streamline processes and educate staff on requirements and procedures, such as on U.S. legal, regulatory and policy compliance, to a point that they are thoroughly integrated into design and oversight procedures and do not delay or impede achievement of results. In practical terms, this means increased participation of legal, financial, and contracting staff in the early stages of program development, building relationships and staff knowledge, and providing improved, intuitive tools to strengthen analysis and compliance. In addition, USAID/WA will continue to serve as a ground for "field pilot testing" new USAID business practices in the region, such as financial management software.

A growing role of USAID/WA is to provide services and leadership in the area of Local Solutions and other innovative, as well as proven, partnership models that build sustainability and leverage resources. USAID/WA will increasingly engage and support mission development of non-traditional local, bilateral and multilateral implementation mechanisms, especially Government-to-Government (G2G), multi-donor, DCA, delegated cooperation, Global Development Alliance agreements, and support to local consortia and enterprise funds. The Regional Office of Financial Management currently has a four-person team of financial analysts solely dedicated to conducting financial and organizational assessments of local partners, including local governments (e.g., for 18 districts in Northern Ghana that are partners in USAID/Ghana's health and FtF activities), civil society organizations (e.g., WANEP), and regional organizations (e.g., the WAPP, which is a partner for Power Africa). The Regional Office of Acquisition and Assistance is proactively reaching out to NGOs and other local institutions in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Benin to educate them about working with USAID and alert them to partnering opportunities. USAID/WA will intensify and increase these efforts to promote local solutions by forming and deploying an inter-disciplinary team of technical, legal and contracting experts, in addition to financial analysts, to conduct more in-depth financial/organizational assessments. USAID/WA will also build on the current practice of using local (Ghanaian) audit firms to participate in these assessments. If more routine financial services, such as travel and entitlement payments, could be carried out in Washington by a "backroom" operation, financial staff could use their freed-up time to not only conduct assessments but also to provide technical assistance to local partners on financial management.

On the legal side, the Resident Legal Officer will work with client mission staff as thought leaders, enabling innovation in development methods and mechanisms, while ensuring new ideas have the support they need to succeed. In practical terms, this means designing new types of implementation agreements and new structures for partnerships, identifying and mitigating risks, and additional support for responsible oversight. This also means strengthening G2G agreements based on lessons learned, and if staffing resources permit, providing a rapid response team to support new partners and

mechanisms to help them identify, understand and resolve questions before they become compliance problems.

USAID/WA can also play an important role in promoting gender integration in USAID programming in West Africa. USAID/WA will do the following:

- Include gender analysis in feasibility studies, baseline studies and market assessments.
- Include gender disaggregated, pre- and post-training capacity and participation measures and gender baseline data to enhance assessments and evaluations, thereby strengthening capacity-building programs.
- Convene workshops, share data and analysis, and provide training on gender integration and research.

Finally, through formal and informal communications, USAID/WA technical staff will continue to provide a great deal of technical assistance to USAID staff in other missions and offices, as well as to inter-agency partners, in the region. This can include participating on technical evaluation committees, reviewing Concept Papers and Project Appraisal Documents, assisting with project design and/or reviewing Statements of Work. Furthermore, as feasible and appropriate, USAID/WA will continue to use mechanisms for technical M&E and operations research that other missions can "buy into" for these services.

VII. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Building on current M&E practices, USAID/WA plans to develop and establish a robust mission-wide M&E system to track progress, continually test development hypotheses and enhance learning. The overall goal of the RDCS M&E system is to establish a means of providing critical information for USAID/WA managers to assist them in guiding implementation of the RDCS towards attainment of the DOs, the Support Objective, and the Goal.

A major challenge for USAID/WA as a regional mission is that most standard indicators mandated by Presidential Initiative (FtF, GHI) and/or earmark tracking (GCC, biodiversity) are at the people-level or biophysical level. Often, such indicators are not appropriate for measuring the true value of regional programs and adequately "telling our story." The number of people reached by health services, or hectares of land under improved natural resource management, does not reflect the contributions of the mission in exerting influence through direct engagement and policy dialogue, leveraging knowledge, sustaining and building partnerships, and building the capacity of regional partners. The USAID Bureau for Food Security has recognized this limitation and is working with USAID/WA, USAID/East Africa, and USAID/Southern Africa to develop appropriate "customized" regional indicators to capture the contributions to food security of the regional missions' FtF programs. The same challenge of finding ways to capture and measure the value added by regional programs applies to other sectors, as well, particularly health, which tends to measure individuals reached by health services rather than taking into account changes at the level of policy and governance, which admittedly are more difficult to measure.

A second challenge is that the M&E capacity of implementing partners in West Africa is often limited. In conducting Data Quality Assessments of programs, USAID/WA has found problems with the quality of data collection and analysis, which is often linked to the limited capacity of staff. In addition, in spite of notable successes, such as CILSS successfully tracking and sharing trade data from across the region, regional organizations often lack M&E capacity as well.

To establish a robust M&E system, the mission will first design a mission-wide PMP that guides the choice of indicators, data collection, analysis and dissemination at the Goal, DO, associated IR and sub-IR levels during the implementation of the RDCS. In doing so, USAID/WA will seek to develop a number of custom indicators across sectors that are more relevant to regional programs, such as indicators related to regional policy development or multiplier effects of reduced trade barriers. To the extent possible, these indicators will be aligned with the indicators used by regional organizations, such as ECOWAS. Their success will be USAID/WA's success.

The mission will continue ongoing efforts to improve both mission and partner M&E through the use of three M&E institutional contractors, one for peace and governance, one for economic growth, and one for health. These activities are dedicated to increasing the availability of quality information and data analysis, implementing learning agendas, undertaking evaluations, and building the M&E capacity of implementing partners.

In addition, as part of the PMP and in accordance with the USAID Evaluation Policy, USAID/WA will develop an Evaluation Plan. USAID/WA is committed to using evaluations to inform program design and management and to sharing evaluations with stakeholders and colleagues. To start the evaluation planning process and as required by USAID policy on strategy development, USAID/WA has developed a list of high priority evaluation questions and identified at least one opportunity[81] for an impact evaluation of a project or project component for each Development Objective.

A list of illustrative evaluation questions for each DO and indicators at the Goal, DO, IR and sub-IR levels can be found in Annex 3.

Collaboration, learning and capacity building, including building the M&E and information management capacity of implementing partners, regional organizations and other counterparts, is an integral part of each DO. Each DO has results that explicitly relate to learning. For Peace and Governance, there is IR 1.3.1 *Lessons Learned and Information Shared Across Countries*. For Economic Growth, IR 2.2.1 *Adaptation Approaches for Vulnerable Socio-Ecological Systems Demonstrated* is a key step to advancing learning about effective climate adaption in West Africa. IR 2.4.2 *Utilization of Best Practices and Technologies Increased* is a result based on stakeholders from across the region learning from each other. Similarly, in Health, IR 3.1 *Best Practices Scaled Up* is a result based on collaboration and learning. Even where it is less explicitly stated, collaboration and learning underpin nearly all of USAID/WA's interventions and objectives, as regional programs are all about enhancing collaboration across countries, usually through regional institutions, to solve common and shared problems. The Support Objective uses the same tools of collaboration, learning and capacity building and applies them to internal USAID stakeholders and their common challenges of implementing efficient and effective development programs that build partnership and sustainability. Support IR 1 *Learning and Leveraging by USAID in West Africa Improved* again brings that

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[81] Note that this does not mean that an impact evaluation is required for every DO.

concept to the fore, while Support IR 2 also has embedded within it a process of sharing knowledge to scale up effective management systems.

ANNEX 1: Where USAID/West Africa Works

USAID/West Africa Regional Current Activities and Support Services to USAID Bilateral Missions and Offices (indicated by an X):							
Country	Regional Activity	Technical Support or Oversight	Environmental Compliance	Regional Office of Financial Management	Regional Office of Acquisition & Assistance	Regional Legal Office	Regional Executive Office
USAID Bilateral Missions							
Benin	X	X	X	Surge	X	X	X
Burkina Faso	X	X					
Côte d'Ivoire	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ghana	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Guinea	X	X	X				
Liberia	X	X	X	Surge		X	
Mali	X						
Niger	X	X					
Nigeria	X		X				
Senegal	X	X					
Non-Presence or Limited Presence Countries*							
Cameroon	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cape Verde	X	X					
Chad	X						
Equatorial Guinea	X	X					
Gabon	X	X					
Guinea Bissau	X	X					
Mauritania	X	X					
São Tomé & Principe	X	X					
Sierra Leone	X	X	X				
The Gambia	X	X	X				
Togo	X	X					

*USAID/WA oversees the bilateral Operating Year Budget programs of Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon.

ANNEX 2: West African Regional Organizations that are Partners of USAID/West Africa

Organization	Date of Foundation	Location of Headquarters	Role/Mandate	Membership/Geographic Coverage
Intergovernmental				
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)	May 28, 1975	Abuja, Nigeria	Promote economic integration in all fields of economic activity, particularly industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions, social and cultural matters.	15 member countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo
West African Health Organization (WAHO)	1987	Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso	Attain the highest possible standard and protection of health of the peoples in the sub-region through the harmonization of the policies of the Member States, pooling of resources, and cooperation with one another and with others for a collective and strategic combat against the health problems of the sub-region.	The 15 ECOWAS member countries

Organization	Date of Foundation	Location of Headquarters	Role/Mandate	Membership/Geographic Coverage
Intergovernmental (continued)				
Water and Sanitation for Africa (WSA)	1988	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	Combine a multi-sectoral approach with the promotion of sustainable and equitable access to water and sanitation services in Africa. WSA supports African countries through the development of integrated, innovative and sustainable strategies for the development, implementation and monitoring of policies, initiatives and the mobilization of financial and human resources.	All countries in Africa
Abidjan Lagos Corridor Authority (ALCO)	Member countries signed a treaty in April 2014 to construct and manage the six-lane highway, and establish a corridor management authority with a supra-national status	Cotonou, Benin	1. Reduce border crossing time, harassment and costs; 2. Reduce transport and logistics costs; 3. Promote trade and economic development amongst countries.	Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. NB: The corridor will account for 70 per cent of commercial traffic within the ECOWAS region

Organization	Date of Foundation	Location of Headquarters	Role/Mandate	Membership/Geographic Coverage
Intergovernmental (continued)				
Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS)	1973	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	Invest in research for food security and to combat the effects of drought and desertification in order to have a new ecological equilibrium in the Sahel.	Originally 9 countries: Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Chad. Now linked to ECOWAS, its scope has expanded to Côte D'Ivoire, Guinea, Benin and Togo
West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA)	January 10, 1994	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	Promote economic integration among countries that share the CFA franc as a common currency.	8 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, and Guinea-Bissau
Le Hub Rural	1994	Dakar, Senegal	Assist West and Central African constituents (States, Inter-governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations and Development Partners) to promote coherence in rural development programs worldwide. The Hub provides advisory support, expertise information and promotes consultations on issues concerning rural development and food security.	Benin; Burkina Faso; Cameroon; Cape Verde; Congo; Ivory Coast; Gabon; Gambia; Ghana; Guinea; Guinea Bissau; Equatorial Guinea; Liberia; Mali; Niger; Nigeria; Central African Republic; Senegal, Sierra Leone; Chad; Togo Intergovernmental organizations: ECOWAS, The Economic Community of Central African States; CILSS; Conference of Ministers of Agriculture of West Africa and Central; UEMOA

Organization	Date of Foundation	Location of Headquarters	Role/Mandate	Membership/Geographic Coverage
Intergovernmental (continued)				
Mano River Union	October 3, 1973	Sierra Leone	Establish a firm economic foundation for lasting peace, friendship, freedom and social progress between our countries.	Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire
West African Power Pool (WAPP)	January 2006	Cotonou, Benin	Ensure Regional Power System integration and realization of a Regional Electricity Market.	14 of the 15 ECOWAS member countries (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo) WAPP is made up of Public and Private Generation, Transmission and Distribution companies involved in the operation of the electricity in West Africa. Currently, 26 member companies.
ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE)	July 2010	Praia, Cape Verde	Contribute to the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of West Africa by improving access to modern, reliable and affordable energy services, energy security and reduction of negative environmental externalities of the energy system.	The 15 ECOWAS member countries

Organization	Date of Foundation	Location of Headquarters	Role/Mandate	Membership/Geographic Coverage
Civil Society				
West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)	1988	Accra, Ghana	Enable and facilitate the development of mechanisms for cooperation among civil society-based peacebuilding practitioners and organizations in West Africa by promoting cooperative responses to violent conflicts; providing the structure through which these practitioners and institutions will regularly exchange experience and information on issues of peacebuilding, conflict transformation, social, religious and political reconciliation; and promoting West Africa's social cultural values as resources for peacebuilding.	The 15 ECOWAS member countries, with over 500 member organizations across West Africa
West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF)	March 1987	Dakar, Senegal	To conduct, coordinate and disseminate research on agricultural practices and improved seeds to member states and national research centers.	22 countries in West and Central Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cap Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, The Gambia Ghana, Guinea , Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo

Organization	Date of Foundation	Location of Headquarters	Role/Mandate	Membership/Geographic Coverage
Civil Society (continued)				
Abidjan Convention Secretariat	March 1981	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire	Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region.	22 countries: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo (DR), Congo (Rep. of), Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia (The), Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Namibia, Nigeria, São Tomé e Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Togo
Private Sector				
African Cashew Alliance (ACA)	2005	Accra, Ghana	Support the African cashew industry by: 1. Providing technical assistance and facilitating investments; 2. Promoting market linkages and international standards, and 3. Sharing information and best practices.	An association of African and international businesses with an interest in promoting a globally competitive African cashew industry. Today, nearly 200 member companies work under the ACA banner and represent all aspects of the cashew value chain, including producers, processors, traders, and international buyers.
Global Shea Alliance (GSA)	2011	Accra, Ghana	Design, develop, and deliver strategies that drive a competitive and sustainable shea industry worldwide, improving the livelihoods of rural African women and their communities.	Currently has 350 members from 25 different countries. Membership includes women's groups, small businesses, suppliers, international food and cosmetic brands, retailers, and non-profit organizations.

Organization	Date of Foundation	Location of Headquarters	Role/Mandate	Membership/Geographic Coverage
Borderless Alliance (BA)	May 2012	Accra, Ghana	Increase trade across the region, by working towards the elimination of all non-tariff barriers to trade.	Sixty two members from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo as of December 2013. Membership keeps expanding. Includes Public and Private organizations
Private Sector (continued)				
West Africa Grains Network (WAGN)	2008	Varies	Act as an effective platform. for driving the growth of the cereals sector in west Africa	Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal
Confederation of National Associations of the Meat & Livestock Sector of West Africa (COFENABVI)	December 1, 2004	Varies	Meet the challenges related to production, the marketing of animal products, regional integration and the fight against poverty and hunger by promoting community policy implementation.	The 15 ECOWAS member countries

ANNEX 3: Illustrative Performance Indicators and Development Objective Evaluation questions

GOAL: Social and Economic Well-being Advanced by West Africans

Illustrative Goal-level Indicators:
- Average UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) score for selected countries in West Africa
- Capacity of regional organizations as measured through a standard capacity tool (Organizational Capacity Assessment)

DO 1: Systems of Non-Violent Conflict Management Strengthened in West Africa

Illustrative Evaluation Questions:

1. 1 How have USAID-assisted civil society organizations in Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad been able to peacefully address conflict management challenges since 2013? (Performance Evaluation)

Illustrative Indicators:

DO-level:
- Country political stability and absence of violence point value score

IR 1.1 Ability of people to address problems peacefully strengthened
- Number of new groups or initiatives created through USG funding, dedicated to resolving the conflict or the drivers of the conflict
- Number of targeted communities more engaged with governing authorities to solve problems
- Number of local women participating in a substantive role or position in a peacebuilding process supported with USG assistance
- Number of host nation inhabitants reached through USG-assisted public information campaigns to support peaceful resolution of conflict

IR 1.1.1 Targeted communities more engaged with governing authorities to solve problems
- Percent of individuals who report that local government takes into account the opinions of citizens in local decision-making processes (disaggregated by sex)

IR 1.1.2 Targeted civil society organizations strengthened
- Number of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) programs directly related to US Government CVE objectives implemented in country by civil society and partner governments
  Number of Groups Trained in Conflict Mediation/Resolution Skills or Consensus Building Techniques with USG-Assistance
- Number of women's civil society organization receiving USAID capacity building assistance

IR 1.1.3 Resistance to violence extremism increased in targeted communities
- Resistance to Violent Extremism index in targeted zones

IR 1.1.4 Responsible media in targeted zones strengthened
- Number of training days provided to journalists with USG assistance, measured by person-days of training

IR 1.2 Targeted government institutions strengthened to engage citizens on contentious issues
- Number of government institutions implementing identified best practices in participatory, accountable and transparent local decision-making as a result of USG assistance
  Government Effectiveness Index Score (World Bank)

IR 1.2.1 Engagement mechanisms between communities and governing authorities enhanced
- Number of community events held to discuss local governance issues

IR 1.2.2 Election systems strengthened
- Number of elections officials trained with USG assistance (disaggregated by sex)

IR 1.2.3 Judicial, legislative and other government systems strengthened
- Number of public forums resulting from USG assistance in which national legislatures and members of the public interact

IR 1.3 Ability of institutions operating at the regional level strengthened to respond to governance challenges
- Regional institutional capacity assessment score

IR 1.3.1 Lessons learned and information shared across countries
- Number of conflict/fragility early warning systems, conflict assessments, or response mechanisms supported by USG assistance

IR 1.3.2 ECOWAS regional conflict early warning system improved
- Number of peacebuilding organizations receiving conflict analysis or conflict early warning reports from USG-supported early warning systems

IR 1.3.3 Management systems of institutions working at the regional level improved
- Number of personnel working at regional institutions receiving USG-supported training in organizational capacity building (disaggregated by sex)

IR 1.3.4 Analytical capabilities in conflict management expanded
- Number of institutions receiving USG assistance to improve their analytical capacity

DO 2: Broad-based Economic Growth and Resilience Advanced Through West African Partners

Illustrative Evaluation Questions:

2.1 How has the USAID West Africa Regional Mission contributed to the adoption of agricultural technology in the region since 2013? (Impact Evaluation)

2.2 How has USAID West Africa Regional Mission facilitated trade in agricultural commodities across the region since 2013? (Performance Evaluation)

Illustrative Indicators:

DO-level:
- Quantity of greenhouse gas emissions measured in metric tons CO_2 equivalent, reduced or sequestered as a result of USG assistance
- Number of stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by sex)
- Number of ECOWAS countries that are meeting selected CAADP targets: CAADP compact in place, annual investment in agricultural of 10 percent, agriculture growth rate of six percent; Volume and value of (targeted) staple crops traded regionally
- Number of countries with approved National Agriculture Investment Plans linked to the regional ECOWAS Agriculture Policy (ECOWAP)
- Number of stakeholders implementing risk-reducing practices/actions to improve resilience to climate change as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by sex)
- Percent change in agricultural GDP

IR 2.1 Regional integration increased:
- Number of laws, policies, strategies, plans, agreements, or regulations officially proposed, adopted or implemented as a result of USG assistance (this included those that address climate change, mitigation or adaption, and/or biodiversity conservation, trade, agriculture, etc.), including tracking policies in each of the following stages of development as a result of USG assistance: Stage 1: Analyzed; Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation; Stage 3: Presented for legislation/decree; Stage 4: Passed/approved; Stage 5: Implementation has begun
- Regional Harmonization of key policies: Number of countries who have adopted key policies or standards (i.e. seed policy, fertilizer regulations, food fortification standards, etc.)
- Regional indicator (under development) to show actual implementation of policies once adopted at country levels

Sub-IR 2.1.1   Increased harmonization of targeted regional policies, regulations and procedures
- USAID/WA is currently working with the Bureau for Food Security in Washington to develop indicators for this

Sub-IR 2.1.2   More integrated and coordinated regional systems
- USAID/WA is currently working with the Bureau for Food Security in Washington to develop indicators for this

Sub-IR 2.1.3: *Leadership of regional organizations enhanced*
- An established process is used to identify and build future leaders and managers from within the organization
- Employees express satisfaction with aspects of their work and affiliation with the organization
- Percent of organizational/institutional stated objectives are achieved as planned (using verifiable data)
- Percent of policy reform agenda advanced as planned
- Number of tools introduced to track implementation of regional policies
- Number of tools introduced to advance policy change at the national levels

IR 2.2 Conservation and resilient low-emissions growth improved
- Number of hectares of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved natural resource management as a result of USG assistance
- Quantity of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, measured in metric tons of CO2e, reduced or sequestered as a result of USG assistance
- Number of stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by sex)

Sub-IR 2.2.1 Ecologically sound practices tools and approaches for resilient growth demonstrated
- Number of hectares in areas of biological significance and/or natural resource showing improved biophysical conditions as a result of USG assistance
- Number of local level civil society organizations (i.e. management committees, forest protection committees) with a biodiversity conservation or NRM mandate
- Number of local level regulations on NRM and biodiversity conservation
- Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource management and conservation as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by sex)

Sub-IR 2.2.2 Environmental governance in the region improved
- Number of laws, policies, strategies, plans, agreements, or regulations addressing climate change (mitigation or adaption) and/or biodiversity conservation officially proposed, adopted or implemented as a result of USG assistance
- Number of institutions with improved capacity to address climate change issues as a result of USG assistance

Sub-IR 2.2.3 Capacity to integrate climate change and biodiversity knowledge into decision-making enhanced
- Number of laws, policies, strategies, plans, agreements, or regulations addressing climate change (mitigation or adaption) and/or biodiversity conservation officially proposed, adopted or implemented as a result of USG assistance
- Number of person hours of training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance
- Person hours of training completed in climate change supported by USG assistance
- Number of tools, databases, monitoring systems developed or adapted to analyze, organize, manage or share data on biodiversity and climate change
- Number of peer-reviewed technical reports and publications

IR 2.3: Regional trade and investment in targeted products and services increased:
- Value of international trade in targeted value-added products as a result of USG assistance
- Percent change in value (volume) of intra-regional trade in targeted agricultural commodities
- Value of new private sector investment in the non-agriculture/agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by implementation
- Number of jobs created as a result of USAID assistance

Sub-IR 2.3.1 Improved private sector competitiveness
- Number of firms (excluding farms) or CSOs engaged in agricultural and food security-related manufacturing and services now operating more profitably (at or above cost) because of USG assistance

Sub-IR 2.3.2 Improved competitiveness of the transport and logistics sector
- Average number of days required to trade goods across borders (average of export/import time)

Sub-IR 2.3.3 Increased access to clean, reliable energy
- Increase in KW hours generated as a result of USG assistance

IR 2.4 Sustainable agricultural productivity improved:
- Gross margin per unit of land, kilogram, or animal of selected product (crops/animals selected varies by country)
- Gross margin per hectare, animal or cage of selected product
- Number of hectares of land under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance
- Percent change in agricultural GDP
- Number of technologies or management practices in one of the following phases of development: Phase I: under research as a result of USG assistance; Phase II: under field testing as a result of USG assistance; Phase III: made available for transfer as a result of USG assistance
- Value of new private sector investment in the agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by USG assistance

Sub-IR 2.4.1 Access to inputs Increased
- Increase in the volume of inputs (seed and fertilizer) sold in the region

Sub-IR 2.4.2 Utilization of best practices and technologies Increased
- Number of technologies or management practices in one of the following phases of development: Phase I: under research as a result of USG assistance; Phase II: under field testing as a result of USG assistance; Phase III: made available for transfer as a result of USG assistance
- Number of farmers and others who applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by sex)

DO 3: Utilization of Quality Health Services Increased Through West African Partners

Illustrative Evaluation Questions:

3.1 To what extent are USAID funded best practices in nutrition being scaled up in West Africa? (Performance Evaluation)

3.2 To what degree can improvements in HIV/AIDS prevention and care services in Togo and Burkina Faso since 2013 be credited to USAID assistance? (Impact Evaluation)

DO illustrative indicators:
- Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR)
- Percent of CSWs reporting the use of condoms with their most recent client (to be used within HIV/AIDS focus countries)
- Percent of men reporting the use of a condom the last time they had sex with a male partner (to be used within HIV/AIDS focus countries)
- Percent of population using an improved drinking water source
- Percent of population using an improved sanitation facility
- Percent of children under age five who had diarrhea in the prior two weeks
- Percent of women of reproductive age reported using family planning services
- Percent of Most-At-Risk Population who received an HIV test in the last 12 months and know the results

IR 3.1: Best practices scaled up:
- Couple Years protection in USG supported programs (CYP)
- Number of individuals who received Testing and Counseling services for HIV and received their test results (PEPFAR Output - #P11.1.D)
- Percent of households using improved water sources
- Percent of households using improved sanitation facility

Sub-IR 3.1.1 High impact, evidence-based interventions piloted in target countries
- Number of new health service approaches successfully introduced through USG supported programs
- Evidence of BPs for HIV/AIDS prevention incorporated into local, district or national health protocols or standards)
- Number of additional USG-assisted community health workers (CHWs) providing family planning information and/or services during the year

Sub-IR 3.1.2 Regional and national priorities harmonized
- Evidence that a regional policy is being implemented in targeted ECOWAS member states, at the national level

  Milestone Indicator, i.e. below. Each time a milestone is met, a result is achieved.
  Step 1: Draft policy/guideline/norm is developed by a regional institution (ECOWAS, WAHO) in consultation with Ministry of Health officials of ECOWAS member states

Step 2: Regional policy/guideline/norm is adopted by the ECOWAS Assembly of Health Ministers

Step 3: Regional policy/guideline/norm is disseminated to Ministry of Health officials throughout the ECOWAS member states

Step 3: Steps are taken by Ministry of Health officials of ECOWAS member states to implement the regional policy/guideline/norm at the national level

Sub-IR 3.1.3   Service provision standards applied

- Percent of service providers deemed technically competent based on an assessment, according to national, international or other defined standards

IR 3.2: Enabling environment at the national and regional levels strengthened:

- Milestone Indicator: Each time a milestone is met, we have achieved a result.
  - Step 1: MOU signed with appropriate level of the Ministry of Health/Public Works
  - Step 2: Draft policy/guideline/norm is developed in consultation with Ministry of Health/Public Works officials at the national, regional or district level
  - Step 3: Health/water and sanitation facility and/or NGO health/water and sanitation staff and community input is elicited
  - Step 4: Draft policy/guideline/norm is modified based on feedback
  - Step 5: The modified draft policy/guideline/norm is introduced as part of standard operating procedures for health/water and sanitation facilities and NGOs
  - Step 6: The policy/guideline/norm is adopted as standard operating procedures at the local, district or national level for health/water and sanitation facilities and NGOs

Sub-IR 3.2.1 Capacity of regional and national institutions and organizations strengthened

- Number of local organizations that meet USG financial reporting standards
- Number of local organizations following defined guidelines for a M&E plan
- Number of local organizations with improved organizational and management capacity as measured by a defined organizational assessment tool
- Number of local organizations with improved organizational and management capacity as measured by a defined organizational assessment tool

Sub-IR 3.2.2 Evidence and rights-based policies adopted

- Number of policies or guidelines developed or changed with USG assistance to improve utilization of health services

Sub-IR 3.2.3 Attitudes toward health-seeking behaviors improved

- Evidence of change in knowledge, attitudes or practices for health services utilization of community leaders, healthcare providers and targeted populations

IR 3.3: Demand for services increased (Other donors):

- Percent of the population who know at least one source of modern contraceptive services and/or supplies
- Percent of population who know at least one MARP-friendly service provider
- Percent of population who know the location of a clean water source
- Percent of population who know the location of a latrine/toilet

Support Objective: USAID's Capacity to Advance USG Objectives in West Africa Enhanced

Support Objective-level Illustrative Indicators:
- Number of partners (governmental, civil society, etc.) adopting improved practices (financial and organizational)
- Number of improved practices implemented by USAID in the region or Agency-wide (technical approaches and business practices)

Support IR 1 Learning and Leveraging by USAID In West Africa Improved:
- Number of conferences/workshops convened by USAID/WA for USAID colleagues, inter-agency and/or leadership of USAID implementing partners on development topics
- Number of new programming approaches adopted by USAID missions and offices in West Africa and a result of USAID/WA-led knowledge management
- Number of knowledge tools developed and used
- Number of Agency policies refined at mission level prior to adoption
- Number of USAID staff trained at USAID/WA (disaggregated by sex)

Sub-IR 1.1 Collaboration among USAID staff enhanced
- Number of conferences/seminars/workshops convened by USAID/WA for USAID colleagues

Sub-IR 1.2 USAID staff trained
- Number of USAID staff trained at USAID/WA (disaggregated by sex)

Support IR 2 Operations Strengthened to Manage Risk and Increase Efficiency and Effectiveness: Illustrative Indicators
- Number of negative audit findings across the region (reduced)
- Number of financial and organizational assessments of local partners conducted by USAID/WA staff
- Number of negative environmental Best Practice Review findings (reduced)
- Procurement Action Lead Time (reduced)

Sub-IR 2.1 High Quality Technical and Operations Services Provided
- Number of person hours of service provided by USAID/WA staff
- Number of financial and organizational assessments conducted by USAID/WA staff Customer satisfaction surveys