

**Contact : Mme Ouleye Anne**  
Email: [ouleye.anne@coraf.org](mailto:ouleye.anne@coraf.org)  
Tel: +221 77 503 42 84

## PRESS RELEASE

### Preventing Food Crisis in West Africa: What is CORAF's Role?

**Cotonou, Benin, December 06, 2017:** The West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF) has been invited to participate in a critical annual West Africa regional event to discuss lasting solutions to prevent hunger in the region.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) is organized by the [Sahel and West Africa Club \(SWAC\)](#). It will hold in Cotonou, Benin from December 4-6, 2017 and will focus on food and nutrition issues facing West Africa.

At the heart of [CORAF's](#) participation at this year's event will be a discussion of a 2014 multi-stakeholder intervention which considerably contributed to preventing a food crises at the peak of the Ebola epidemic. While drawing lessons from the CORAF implemented Ebola intervention, the session will also allow participants to consider the region's preparedness and its improved ability to cope with similar crises in future.

As the largest sub-regional research organization in Africa, CORAF contributes considerably to growing the food systems in the region through innovative research and smart technologies to tackle the effects of climate change.

«Together with the private sector, donors and decision makers of several countries, CORAF delivered timely and critical seeds to affected communities in Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone,» says [Dr. Abdou Tenkouano](#), Executive Director of CORAF.

«In the history of West Africa, there had rarely been such demonstration of solidarity among Member-States in the Community. For the [Economic Community of West African States \(ECOWAS\)](#) and the [West African Economic and the Monetary Union \(WAEMU\)](#), this was a perfect testimony of its vision to promote regional integration and cross-sectoral collaboration to tackle challenges of regional scale.»

Titled «Seeds of Resilience and Regional Solidarity» the CORAF side event will also discuss solutions to address emerging challenges such as climate change.

Devising innovative techniques, climate-smart crop varieties and innovative approaches to the implementation of the seed regulation have been central to the recent work of CORAF and partners. These actions have resulted in the increased supply of quality seeds in the region and considerably relieved millions of producers and farmers from the difficulty of accessing quality seeds.

By working with the private sector, it has also enabled greater involvement of businesses in the sector.

CORAF is mandated to serve as the technical arm of ECOWAS, WAEMU, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the **Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC)**. It is one of the implementing bodies of Pillar 4 of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) designed to improve food security and incomes in Africa. Pillar 4 aims specifically to improve the capacity of the agricultural research system to develop and disseminate appropriate new technologies.

In this regard, CORAF was designated by ECOWAS to implement the West Africa Seed Program. This is a major five-year seed program today credited for contributing to improving the industry in West Africa. Similarly, CORAF is designated to implement the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program. The complementary actions of the two programs created a synergy for the achievements of national and regional seed industry development, agricultural productivity improvement, and Ebola Seed Support initiative.

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#### Note to editors:

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*CORAF is Africa's largest sub-regional research organization. Established in 1987, CORAF now comprises 23 national agricultural research systems in 23 West and Central Africa countries. In the past 30 years, CORAF has improved agricultural production and increased the incomes of millions of entrepreneurs and farmers. In collaboration with major players in the agric value chain, CORAF leads in up-scaling smart science, innovation, and technology solutions to achieve agricultural transformation. Climate, gender, migration, nutrition, youths, monitoring, and evaluation, are central to its delivery approach. Visit [www.coraf.org](http://www.coraf.org) for the latest information.*