

COMMUNIQUE

The Third General Assembly of the West African Seed and Planting Material Network was held in Accra, Ghana from 21st to 24th February 2006. Both public and private sector delegates from 12 West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo) participated in the workshop.

Objectives of the workshop were:

1. To assess progress made in the seed supply systems through the complimentary efforts of the public and private sector partners,
2. To share information and experiences among network members and between the network and regional and international seed organizations and
3. To develop strategies for the way forward in improving the seed delivery systems.

At the end of the workshop, delegates were satisfied of the progress made by WASNET since its inception in 1999. They were however, unhappy of the seizure of donor-funding at end of September 2006 from the Government of Germany through the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ).

Delegates strongly felt that:

In view of the importance of improved seeds in ensuring food security, as well as improving agricultural productivity and livelihoods of farmers who constitute 60-70% of our populations,

In view of the poor state of the seed delivery systems, particularly at the inception of the network, in comparison with other regions

In view of the significant achievements of WASNET in the development of the private seed sector to enhance its seed delivery capacity,

Considering that WASNET is the only information exchange forum for discussions on matters relating to seed industry development in West Africa for both the public and private sectors,

Considering that WASNET is one of the main actors in West Africa for the implementation of the process of harmonization of regulations for seed certification and quality control and for the common regional catalogue presently under the leadership of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS),

Considering the contribution of WASNET toward the improvement of agricultural productivity in West Africa by the distribution of improved seed to small scale farmers through the community based seed systems,

Considering the adoption in January 2005 of the regional agricultural policy ECOWAP for the entire West Africa and its action plan 2006 to 2010 in which the seed sector development has an important role to play,

Considering the following key achievements of WASNET:

- ✓ Creation and official launching of national seed association in West Africa
- ✓ The website of WASNET <http://www.wasnet.org> as main source of information of West African seed sector,
- ✓ The half yearly newsletter of the West Africa Seed Network (ISSN 1595-2312) edited in English and French for more than one thousand private and public seed actors in West Africa and beyond,
- ✓ The provision of email addresses through the website (i.e. ghana@wasnet.org for the public and beninprivate@wasnet.org for the private sectors) in each of the twelve member countries of WASNET, which are all member states of ECOWAS,

Considering that the funding of WASNET assured since 1999 by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) will end on 30th September 2006,

Considering the risks of loosing these important achievements if the funding of WASNET ceases after 30th September 2006, and the consequences of food reducing crop productivity, decreasing farmers incomes and food insecurity,

Delegates of the 3rd General Assembly of WASNET make the following recommendations:

1. ECOWAS in the implementation of its Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP), considers WASNET as its specialized organ for seed and planting material and ensures it's funding.
2. The Steering Committee and the regional Coordinator of WASNET contact the authorities of ECOWAS to discuss this communiqué and WASNET documents. This would allow ECOWAS understand the necessity for integrating WASNET in its institutional structure for sustainability.
3. The Executive Secretariat of ECOWAS should contact the authorities of IITA and GTZ to discuss the possibility of extending funding for 6 more months to allow ECOWAS prepares itself for the integration.

Agreed in Accra, Ghana on the 24th day of February 2006

By delegates who attended the Third General Assembly of WASNET