

## THE ROLE OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

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### Abstract

*Regional integration has the potential to develop the agricultural sector of developing countries to meet the demands of the twenty-first century through programmes like the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). This study assessed the impact of regional integration on the agricultural sector of Côte d'Ivoire by; identifying how regional integration can contribute to market accessibility of agricultural produce; and evaluated the effect of regional integration on technological transfer in the agricultural sector. The study adopted purposive and stratified sampling techniques to interview 200 respondents with a questionnaire. The results revealed that regional policy on agriculture have increasing positive impact on the level of agricultural output. Regional infrastructure such as irrigation project has increased the income level of farmers. That notwithstanding, there exist a gap between national and regional agricultural policies that needs to be harmonized for maximum impact in Côte d'Ivoire.*

**Key Words:** *Regional Integration, Agriculture, Development, Policies, Côte d'Ivoire*

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### Introduction

Regional economic integration in the past decades has gained much attention around the world due its foreseen potential to bridge the development gaps especially in the developing and underdeveloped countries. Different approaches of the integration models have been adopted and implemented across continent which has produced an appreciable degree of success (Adekunle and Gitau 2013; Kimbugwe *et al.*, 2012; Bolaños, 2016). The degree of freedom in the adoption of the integration models has reduced the knowledge gap on

this topic although the success rate is highly uneven from one place to the other. Nations have proven not only the undeniable gain accrued from an effective regional marriage, but also by significant advances in approaches and period used to achieve the numerous results in diverse sphere of their economies (AfDB, 1999). Recent trends of development models focus on local context of what works, which solution is appreciated and could be replicated; as well as specific challenges to be addressed especially with respect to developing countries (Alan, 2003; Te

Velde, 2011; Kimbugwe *et al.*, 2012; Bolaños, 2016). The approach has identified a wider scope of focus areas such as human resource development, agriculture, and infrastructural development among others (Alan, 2003; Kimbugwe *et al.*, 2012).

Similarly, attention of nations has been drawn to the potential in regional integration through the role of regional organizations in promoting and developing their national economies by the conditions these organizations could create in a nation (Denters and Gazzini, 2017; Moussa, 2017). Regional economic integration are the new economic models adopted by developing regions like Africa, to address economic problems created by international political division at the world economic level (Cole *et al.*, 1999; Janus, 2016; Fofack, 2018). Unfortunately, the last conflict in the world crippled the developing world to initiate any meaningful industrialization policies and achieve economic prosperity (Amadji and Yeat, 1995). Major incidences that are controlling the global economic order could be traced to: (i) orientation of the super-powers per time (ii) uncertain economic trends (iii) unbalanced and unequal trade policies at the international market (iv) dependence of the developing world on developed economies and (v) political instability and weight of the Third World. The situation creates an atmosphere for nations in Africa to reorient their focus in building a regional economic bloc that can help in the building of formidable economies (Bird, 1985; Barro, 1990; Wharton, 2017).

The quest to achieve economic prosperity and become a formidable regional bloc within the international arena challenged African heads of states to strategize towards a more comprehensive

approach to economic integration of the continent particularly in vital areas such as infrastructural development and food security. The African Union formed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) economic programme to bridge the economic gap on the continent. The programme was finally adopted in July 2001 in Zambia at the 37th session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in the city of Lusaka (De Waal, 2002; Funke and Nsouli, 2003; Hope, 2006; Bhattacharyay, 2010). Agriculture is one of the eight priority areas for NEPAD to provide framework in policies to accelerate economic development in African countries (Kanbur, 2002; Omona, 2010). The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) was developed from NEPAD with specific focus on poverty and hunger elimination from Africa (Canning, 1998; AU-NEPAD, 2003; Boughami *et al.*, 2009). The agriculture-led economic development programme (CAADP) is to enable African countries to expand export of agriculture products and produce, increase food production at the local level thereby reducing mal-nutrition, hunger and poverty. Africa Union owned the programme fully and provided shared framework to be adopted by African countries as strategic plans and policies for implementation, partnership and development assistance in the agriculture sector (AU-NEPAD, 2003; Clark *et al.*, 2004; Kaufmann, 2007; Bruntrup, 2011; Ebi and Amaraihu, 2018). This shows that African leaders had sustainable development in mind under NEPAD before the Sustainable Development Goals were launched (United Nations, 2015). The focus of CAADP is directly

connected to SDG 1 and 2 on alleviating poverty and hunger.

Countries that aligned their strategic plans for agriculture to the principles of CAADP received financial, technical and political support from African Union through NEPAD. The first and major of the principles of CAADP is to achieve a minimum annual agricultural growth rate of 6% and allocate 10% of national budget to agriculture according to the Maputo Declaration (AU, 2003; Cardamone, 2006; Ebi and Amaraihu, 2018). Furthermore, CAADP made room for mutual review and dialogue, accountability and partnership at the national level. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) developed their Regional Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) to oversee the implementation of CAADP in West Africa by supporting and guiding agricultural development interventions in member states (ECOWAS, 2009). Concrete investment programmes were developed by the joint effort of ECOWAS and AU (ECOWAP/CAADP action plan) in 2005 to improve the livelihoods of the populations through agriculture at the national and regional level and a new strategic policy framework till 2025 (ECOWAS, 2017).

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire is currently focusing on strengthening all sectors in the country through the improvement of existing policies and strategic plans (AfDB-CSP, 2018; CSP, 2019). This has created a need to coordinate the development of an action oriented strategic plan and policy for the agriculture sector that would align with CAADP to benefit from the supports it provides member states (ECOWAS, 2009). ECOWAP/CAADP has the potential to strengthen and add value to

the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy and Plan of Côte d'Ivoire (ECOWAS, 2017). ECOWAP/CAADP would aid in defining a long-term framework for the planning and implementation of national agriculture development programmes and create a platform for peer review and dialogue to identify the synergies and trade-offs between old and new plans and policies for the agriculture sector (ECOWAS, 2017; Badiane *et al.*, 2018).

Poor agricultural development in Africa and Côte d'Ivoire affects productivity, trade and development of which properly managed regional integration could have a very positive impact when adopted (Cardamone, 2006; Soloaga *et al.*, 2006). According to Soloaga *et al.* (2006), less than 10 per cent of the agriculture produce in Côte d'Ivoire is distributed in the ECOWAS sub-region and the rest exported due to challenges like insufficient electricity supply and poor road networks. Moreover, cost of trade in Africa and sub-regions are expensive when infrastructure drawbacks are overcome by using alternative transportation means at the expense of the producer (Grigoriou, 2007; Engel and Jouanjean, 2013; Akpan, 2014; Lange *et al.*, 2016). Delay in delivery cost countries like Côte d'Ivoire dealing in perishable agricultural products (Soloaga *et al.*, 2006). Such scenarios not only hinder productivity, but also contribute to poverty. Moreover, the challenge of limited technological transfer in the agricultural sector still poses a huge hurdle to the country, studies reveal that more than 75% of agricultural activities are executed using rudimentary technology. Thus, little effort has been made to beef up the technological deficit in the agricultural sector.

The effort made by the state in transforming the cocoa sector by the supply of a more disease resistant seedling has less influence on food insecurity in Côte d'Ivoire compared to intervention on daily consumables such as maize, cassava, millet, beans among others (Grigoriou, 2007). The lack of technological development in their production and lack of value additions is a major hindrance to their market accessibility. Although regional integration indeed can lead to agricultural productivity in Côte d'Ivoire, challenges such as lack of management and technical skills, poor road network, absence of technological transfer among others still serve as hindrance to the full impact of regional integration on agricultural development. Moreover, literature on the effect of regional integration on agriculture development in Côte d'Ivoire is limited. Report from other parts of the world has shown that regional integration has led to the industrialisation of some countries in Asia, thus the support of regional umbrellas, countries in Asia have been able to transform their agricultural sector as well as build a buoyant industrial base economy. Findings of this study will inform agriculture policy formulations from national to continental scale and will be relevant for awareness creation, and education of individuals and other agricultural stakeholders in Côte d'Ivoire.

Therefore, the aim of the study was to investigate the effect of regional integration on agriculture development in

Côte d'Ivoire. The specific objectives were;

- i. to identify how regional integration can contribute to market accessibility of agricultural product in Côte d'Ivoire; and
- ii. to evaluate the effect of regional integration on technological transfer in the agricultural sector in Côte d'Ivoire.

## **Methodology**

### **Study Area**

Côte d'Ivoire is a country in West Africa. It shares boundary with Liberia and Guinea to the west, Mali and Burkina Faso to the north, Ghana to the east, and the Gulf of Guinea (Atlantic Ocean) at the south between latitude 10° 45' N 4° 18' N and longitude 2° 25' W and 8° 45' W (Figure 1). The country has an area of 322,462km<sup>2</sup> and gained independence on 7 August 1960. From 1960 to 1993, the country was led by Felix Houphouët-Boigny. Its de-jure capital is Yamoussoukro and the biggest city is the Port city of Abidjan (Yopougon). The country is divided into 19 regions and 81 departments (Figure 1). The official language is French, with local indigenous languages also widely used, including Baoulé, Dioula, Dan, Anyin, and Cebaara Senufo. In total there are around 78 languages spoken in Côte d'Ivoire. The country was originally known in English as "Ivory Coast".

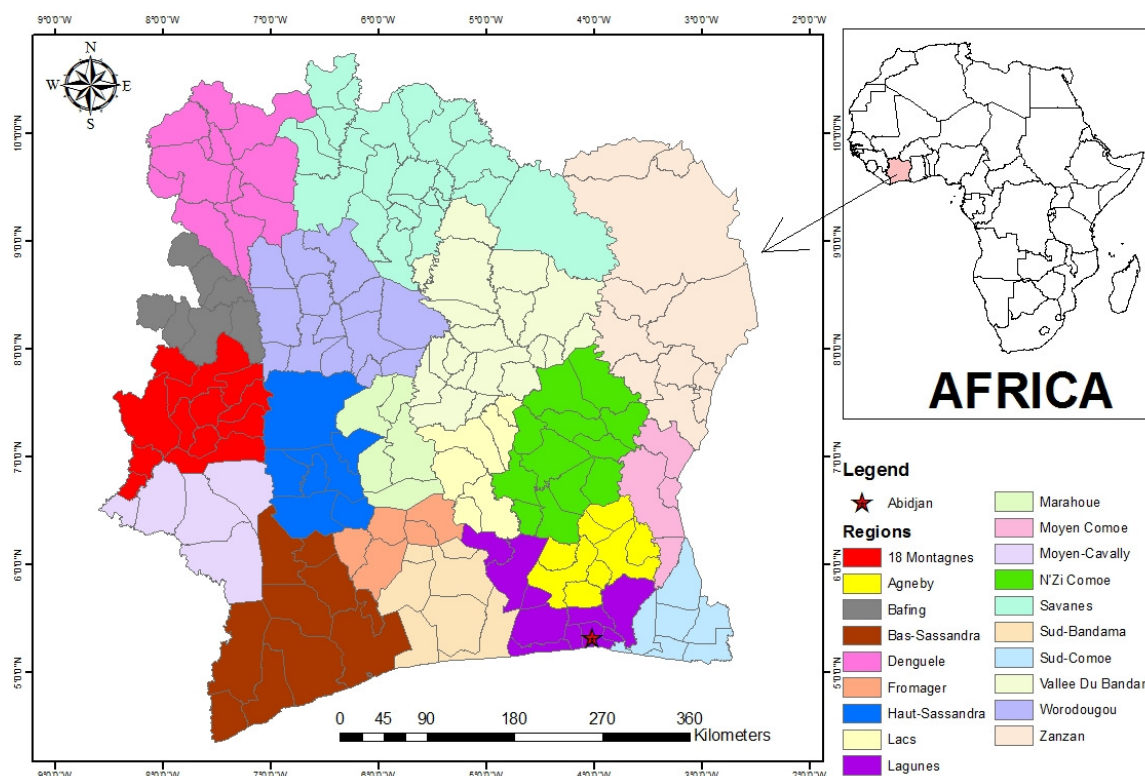


Fig. 1: Map of Cote d'Ivoire showing the 19 administrative sub-divisions

President Felix Houphouët-Boigny founded the country on farmers by allowing farmers from neighbouring countries migrate in and also gave farmers good prices for their products (Koné, 2003). Côte d'Ivoire was the most prosperous French country amongst the former colonies of France at independence (Chafer, 2002). Agriculture, contributed 20.1% to the GDP of the nation in 2017 but employs over 60% of the work force of which majority are small-holder farmers although records on farmers' population have not been updated since 2001 (IFAD, 2015; CIA, 2020). The economy of Côte d'Ivoire is the highest amongst non-oil exporting companies in Africa (Appiah and Gates, 2010; McGovern, 2011). The country is the world's largest exporter of cocoa beans, and the fourth-largest exporter of goods, in

general, in sub-Saharan Africa (following South Africa, Nigeria, and Angola). All the highest producing regions of cocoa are located in the southern part of the country up to Montagnes in the west through to Moyen Comoe at the east (Figure 1) (Chingandu *et al.*, 2017).

### Research Design and Sampling Techniques

An explanatory research design which focuses on cause-effect relationships was used for the study (Yin, 1994; Given, 2008). The study population comprised all the people of Côte d'Ivoire and relevant stakeholders who are into regional integration. The study population was 22.7 million from the projected population of Côte d'Ivoire for 2015. According to Sarantakos (2005), a sample size of 100 is good enough to make generalization. Therefore, a sample size of 200

respondents from 14 districts in Côte d'Ivoire to give relevant information for the study.

Both purposive and stratified sampling techniques were used. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the Principal Officers who occupy various positions while the stratified sampling technique was used to unbiasedly select other respondents (Tipton, 2014).

#### ***Data Sources and Collection Method***

Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. The primary data was obtained from the study area with the aid of questionnaires. Secondary data was ascertained from existing literature including literature from journals, books, articles, newsletters, magazines, the internet, published and unpublished materials that dealt with the research topic.

A closed-ended questionnaire was used to gather data for the study. The questionnaires were divided into five parts. The first part deals with the socio-demographic information of the respondents. The second part took account of how regional integration has contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce in Côte d'Ivoire. Part three deals with how regional integration has contributed to technological transfer in the agricultural sector. The fourth part catered for how regional policy on infrastructural management and technological skills have affected economic development in Côte d'Ivoire. The last part also looked at the impact of technological transfer in the agricultural sector on ordinary farmers in Côte d'Ivoire.

#### ***Data Analysis Procedure***

Data were collated and cleaned (quality assurance) before direct coding to

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The analytical procedure that was utilized included descriptive statistics (such as frequencies, pie chart and percentages, chi-square and ANOVA). Both the questionnaire (instrument) and the results (data) were validated to assess their accuracy. The questionnaire was pre-tested on 30 respondents after it was revised by the supervisor and with initial information from the study area. The validation of data was done to ensure that all questionnaires were answered and respondents were chosen as per the research criteria.

#### ***Ethical Consideration***

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from Institute of Governance, Humanities and Social Sciences (PAUGHSS), University of Yaoundé which ensured easy access to the respondents. Before the questionnaires were administered, the researcher sought for their permission. The researcher obtained informed consent of the respondents and also explained to them the rationale of the study and, their right to withdraw from the study if they wished to do so. The researcher also assured the respondents of their confidentiality and anonymity in responding to the questionnaires.

### ***Results and Discussion***

#### ***Socio-demographics of Respondents***

The result shows that 66% are females and 34% are males (Table 1). This result indicates that majority of the respondents are females and is consistent with the entire population of Côte d'Ivoire where majority of about 52% are females. Majority of the respondents (36%) falls between age 31-40 years while 31%, 19% and 14% belong to age 20-30 years, 41-50 years, 51-60 years respectively. The

highest percentage of respondents are within the ages of 31-40 years. From Table 1, 65% of the respondents are married, 21.5% are single whereas 12% 1.5% of the respondents are divorced and widow respectively.

Out of the 200 respondents, 46% of the respondents are Muslims, 39% are Christians while 14% are Traditionalists with 1% belonging to other religious

affiliations (Table 1). This result is consistent with the population of Côte d'Ivoire where majority of the population about 75% are Muslims and Christians. Moreover, almost half of the respondents (49%) have had Senior High School education, while 36%, 13% and 2% had First degree, Master's degree and PhD respectively.

Table 1. Socio-demographics of respondents

Characteristics	Respondents (%, n=200)	Characteristics	Respondents (%, n=200)
Sex		Age (years)	
Females	66	20 -30	31
Males	34	31 - 40	36
		41 - 50	19
Marital Status		51 -60	14
Single	21.5		
Married	65	Institution of work	
Divorced	12	Private sector	25.5
Widowed	1.5	Health	2
		University	31
Religious affiliation		Financial	22.5
Christian	39	Civil Servant	8.5
Muslim	46	Business Sector	4.5
Traditionalist	14	National Security Service	4.5
Others	1	NGOs	1.5
Educational Qualification		Position at work place	
Senior High School	49	Administrator	42
First Degree	36	Banker	4
Master's Degree	13	Consultant	8
PhD	2	Student	10
		Teacher	16
		Trader	20

The socio-demography of respondents further showed that majority worked in the University (31%) and the least represented work for NGOs (1.5%) as shown in Table 1. The highest percentage of respondents were Administrators (42%) and the least were bankers (4%) (Table 1).

### ***Regional Integration and Market Accessibility of Agricultural Produce***

Respondents were asked to indicate whether regional integration has contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce. A total of 69% agreed and 18% strongly agree, while 2% strongly disagree (Table 2). This is consistent with the work of Clark *et al.*

(2004) which revealed that ECOWAP/CAADP action plan developed by ECOWAS and the NEPAD has the tendency to contribute to market accessibility of agricultural produce and to promote agricultural sector growth and economic development member states (ECOWAS 2009, 2017). Majority (48% agreed and 35% strongly agree) of the respondents are of the view that provision of proper road network through regional integration has contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce in Côte d'Ivoire (Table 2). This finding is consistent with other research findings in

Africa as cited in Iganiga and Unemhilin (2011) which reported that a proper road network and infrastructural development by the regional umbrella have contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce in many African countries. On the view that provision of communication infrastructure for farmers such as mobile phones, proper communication network and other services through regional integration has contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce in Côte d'Ivoire, 60.5% strongly agreed and 18% agreed (Table 2).

Table 2: The level of agreement on the impact of regional integration on market accessibility of agricultural produce in Côte d'Ivoire

Indicator questions/statements	Scale of agreement to statement by respondents (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Regional integration contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce	18	69	9	2	2
Provision of proper road network	35	48	10	5	2
Communication infrastructure for farmers	60.5	18	12.5	8	0.5
Broader market	46.5	16	33.5	2	1
Ready market	64.5	16.5	6	10.5	1.5
Increased agro product	25	53	11	4	7

Respondents ascertained that the provision of broader market through regional integration has contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce as shown in Table 2. Agreement to the statement was approximately 63%. This finding is similar to the findings of Benin and Yu (2012) which concluded that regional integration by enlarging the size of the market stimulates market accessibility, develops agricultural research and development related activities and diversifies agricultural production. According to 81% (64.5% strongly agree; 16.5% agree) of the respondents, availability of ready market through regional integration has

contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce. Furthermore, majority (53% agree; 25% strongly agree) of the respondents strongly agree that increased agro products through regional integration has contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce in Côte d'Ivoire.

### ***Regional Integration and Technological Transfer in the Agricultural Sector***

Respondents were asked to state whether regional integration has contributed to technological transfer in the agricultural and infrastructural sector in Côte d'Ivoire and results presented in Table 3. The result shows that 45% of the respondents stated strongly agree, 42%



stated neither agree nor disagree, 11% stated agree while 2% disagreed. This result suggests that majority of the respondents strongly agree that regional integration has contributed to technological transfer in the agricultural and infrastructural sector in Côte d'Ivoire. However, a close percentage of those who strongly agreed neither agreed nor disagreed. Boughami *et al.* (2009) reported that through the introduction of CAADP by AU/NEPAD, there has been technological and innovation transfer in the agricultural sector in many member state (ECOWAS, 2017).

Results in Table 3 shows that 54.5% of the total responded agree with the assertion that regional integration has contributed to technological transfer in the agricultural sector in Côte d'Ivoire. About 26% accepted that it has led to the development of improved seedlings for rural farmers. Moreover, majority perceived that new varieties of agro-seedlings could have resulted from technological transfer in Côte d'Ivoire via regional arrangement, the results shows that 16% of the respondents agreed and 68.5% strongly agreed (Table 3). Thus, from the analysis most of the respondents affirm that regional integration can contribute to technological transfer in the agricultural sector. On the development of irrigation projects in Côte d'Ivoire, about

60% (see Table 3) agreed regional integration through technological transfer has contributed to irrigation development.

There was a strong agreement (52%) that regional integration has contributed to technological transfer in mechanised farming (Table 3). Further investigations showed that the level of agreement of regional integration in increasing agricultural financing is growing (38% strongly agreed; 28.5% agreed). Development of road network and agro processing industries was perceived to also have resulted from regional integration by majority of the respondents (Table 3). The analysis reveals that the regional policy CAADP is helping to improve upon the existing agro processing industries in the country. This result is consistent with the country's 2020 development framework which aims to transform the existing agro processing industries. The results show that energy supply in Côte d'Ivoire has increased through regional integration (60% and 14% of the total respondents agree and strongly agree respectively). Fifty percent of the respondents agree that an increased in agricultural export is an indication of improved agricultural sector in Côte d'Ivoire, 25.5% of the respondents strongly agree to the assertion, 14.5% of the total respondents neither agree or disagree to the view (Table 3).

Table 3: The contribution of regional integration to technological transfer in the agricultural sector in Côte d'Ivoire

Indicator questions/statements	Scale of agreement to statement by respondents (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Regional integration has contributed to technological transfer in the agricultural sector	45	11	42	1	1
Improved seedlings	26	54.5	11.5	4	3.5
New varieties of agro-seedlings	68.5	16	8.5	5	0.5
Development of Irrigation Project	38.5	22	37	1	1
Develop Mechanised Farming	52	15	17.5	12.5	2
Increased Agricultural Financing	38	28.5	19.5	5	7
Developed Road Network	46.5	18.5	20	10.5	3.5
Developed Agro Processing Industries	50.5	10.5	26.5	8	3.5
Increased Energy Supply	60	14	12.5	8.5	4
Increase in Agricultural Export	25.5	50	14.5	3	6.5

***Effect of Technological Transfer on the Livelihood of Smallholder Farmers in the Agricultural Sector***

The results of the study showed that technological transfer in the agricultural sector has an impact on smallholder (ordinary) farmers in Côte d'Ivoire. Approximately 69% agreed while about 10% disagreed (Figure 2). This result implies that majority of the respondents

are of the view that technological transfer in the agricultural and infrastructural sector have an impact on the ordinary farmers in Côte d'Ivoire. The result was similar to the findings of Armas *et al.* (2012) which revealed that technological transfer in the agricultural and infrastructural development have great impact on agricultural growth and ordinary farmers in Indonesia.

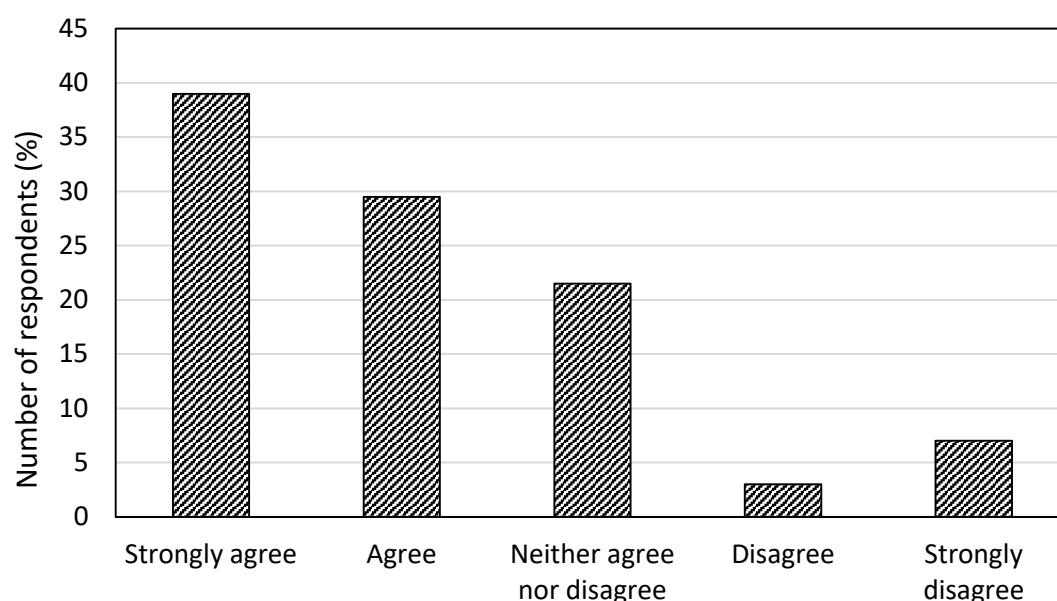


Fig. 2: Response on whether technological transfer in the agricultural sector have an impact on the ordinary farmers in Côte d'Ivoire

Figure 3 show that increase in agricultural output, access to portable water, increased household income, improved energy supply and access to improved health facilities have a positive impact of technological transfer via regional integration to the smallholder farmer in Côte d'Ivoire. Increased agricultural output was agreed and strongly agreed to by 45.5% and 34% of

the respondents respectively (Figure 3). Seventy-eight percent agree to access to portable water by an ordinary farmer in Côte d'Ivoire as an impact of technological transfer. Moreover, the results reveal that 57.5% and 19.5% of the total respondents agree and strongly agree with the statement that technological transfer in the agricultural sector has increased household income (Figure 3).

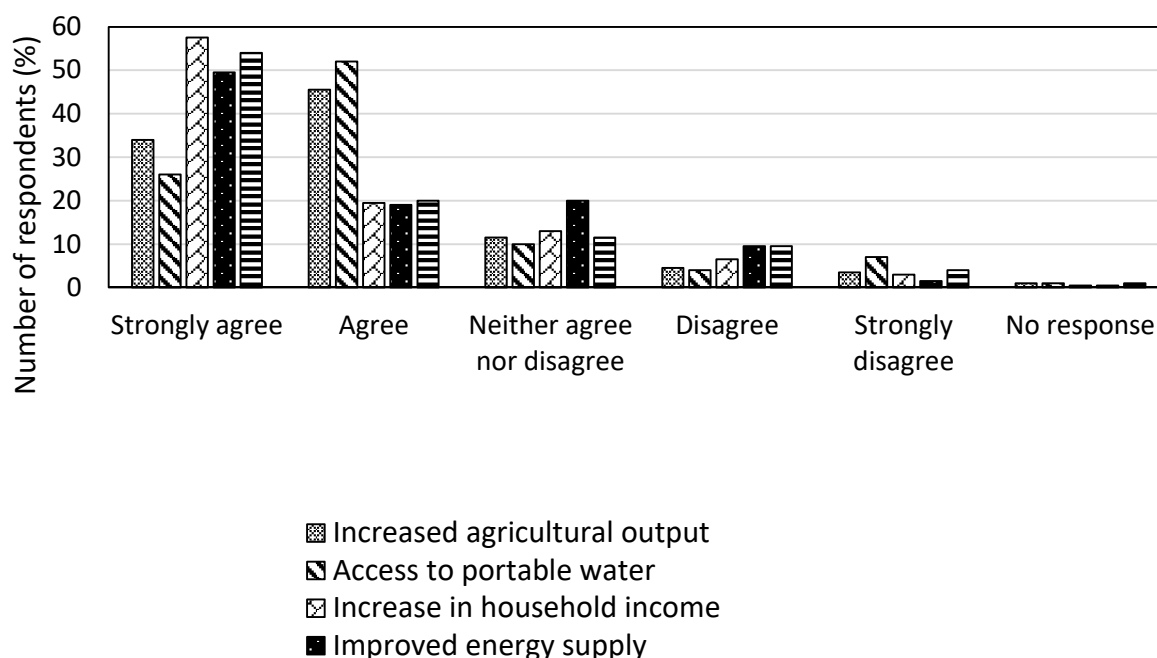


Fig. 3: Perceived impact of technological transfer on the livelihood of a smallholder farmer in Côte d'Ivoire

Improved energy supplies as one of the impacts of technological transfer in the agricultural sector on the life of ordinary farmers in Côte d'Ivoire was agreed to by 68.5% of the respondents while 74% agreed that access and improvement in the health facilities is one of the impacts of technological transfer in the infrastructural sector on the life of the ordinary farmers in Côte d'Ivoire. About 9.5% disagree on the point that access and improvement in the health facilities is one of the impacts of technological transfer in

the infrastructural sector on the life of ordinary farmers in Côte d'Ivoire. And finally, 4 per cent of the total respondents strongly disagree that access and improvement in the health facilities is one of the impacts of technological transfer in the infrastructural sector on the life of ordinary farmers in Côte d'Ivoire.

### Conclusion

The study assessed the effect of regional integration on agricultural development in Côte d'Ivoire by

identifying how regional integration may have contributed to market accessibility of agricultural produce and further evaluated the effect of regional integration on technological transfer in the agricultural sector in Côte d'Ivoire. One challenge that the study reveals is the question of harmonization of regional and national policies on agriculture to directly meet the agricultural development of Côte d'Ivoire. This demand is of particular relevance for integration arrangements that goes beyond the nation's trade ability. Policy harmonization may be necessary to overt challenges associated with the agricultural sector such as rural transports systems, marketing, communication infrastructure and access to finance and help to achieve the full benefit of the available market for the sector.

Moreover, how the industrial efficiency would impact internal trade terms between agriculture and other sectors and the economy as a whole under regional integration should be fully understood. The current import substitution industrial policies in Côte d'Ivoire is the cause of the expensive agriculture inputs such as machinery, and fertilizers in particular. Although regional integration could generate market accessibility for the country's agricultural sector, challenges like buying agriculture inputs at high prices and selling products at low prices (a policy dictated by other internal reasons) weakens the gains and earning power of the agricultural sector.

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