



# OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

## U.S. Agency for International Development

### MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 29, 2023

**TO:** USAID/West Africa, Regional Mission Director, Jo Lesser-Oltheten

**FROM:** USAID OIG Africa Regional Office, Audit Director, Robert Mason /s/

**SUBJECT:** Financial Closeout Audit of USAID Resources Managed by West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development in Multiple Countries Under Cooperative Agreement AID-624-A-17-00002, January 1 to December 19, 2022 (Report No. 4-624-24-040-R)

This memorandum transmits the final audit report on USAID resources managed by West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF) under the Partnership for Agricultural Research, Education and Development Project (PAIRED). CORAF contracted with the independent audit firm Ernst & Young, Accra, Ghana to conduct the audit. The audit firm stated that it performed its audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. However, it did not have an external peer review program that fully satisfy the standards' requirements. The audit firm is responsible for the enclosed report and the conclusions expressed in it. We do not express an opinion on CORAF's schedule of expenditures of USAID awards; the effectiveness of its internal control; or its compliance with the award, laws, and regulations.<sup>1</sup>

The audit objectives were to (1) express an opinion on whether the schedule of expenditures of USAID awards for the period audited, was presented fairly, in all material respects; (2) evaluate CORAF's internal controls; (3) determine whether CORAF complied with award terms and applicable laws and regulations; (4) review the indirect cost rate; and (5) review the implementation status of the prior period recommendations.

To answer the audit objectives, Ernst & Young (1) audited the schedule of expenditures of USAID awards including the budgeted amounts by category and major items and the revenues received from USAID for the period covered by the audit and the costs reported by CORAF as incurred from January 1 to December 19, 2022; (2) evaluated the control environment, the adequacy of the accounting systems, and control procedures that pertain to CORAF's ability to report financial data consistent with the assertions embodied in each account of the schedule of

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<sup>1</sup> We reviewed the audit firm's report for conformity with professional reporting standards. Our desk reviews are typically performed to identify any items needing clarification or issues requiring management attention. Desk reviews are limited to review of the audit report itself and excludes review of the auditor's supporting working papers; they are not designed to enable us to directly evaluate the quality of the audit performed.

expenditures of USAID awards; (3) identified the award terms and pertinent laws and regulations and determined which of those, if not observed, could have a direct and material effect on the schedule of expenditures of USAID awards; (4) determined that the review of the indirect cost rate was not applicable; and (5) reviewed the implementation status of the prior period recommendations. CORAF reported expenditures of \$4,854,816 in USAID funds during the audited period.

The audit firm concluded the schedule of expenditures of USAID awards presented fairly, in all material respects, program revenues and costs incurred under the award for the period audited. The audit firm identified no questioned costs; no material weaknesses in internal control; and one instance of material noncompliance. Since the instance of material noncompliance was also included in a recommendation in the prior period, we are not making a recommendation again.

Accordingly, we are not making any recommendations.

During our desk review, we noted one area for improvement which the audit firm should address in future audit reports. We presented this area in a memo to the controller, dated November 29, 2023.

OIG does not routinely distribute independent public accounting reports beyond the immediate addressees because a high percentage of these reports contain information restricted from release under the Trade Secrets Act, 18 U.S.C. 1905 and Freedom of Information Act Exemption Four, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4) ("commercial or financial information obtained from a person that is privileged or confidential"). In addition, USAID OIG has determined that this transmittal memo and the enclosed report are not subject to notification and reporting requirements under Section 5274 of the National Defense Authorization Act.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 Pub. L. No. 117-263, § 5274. Please direct related inquiries to [oignotice\\_ndaa5274@usaid.gov](mailto:oignotice_ndaa5274@usaid.gov).