

West Africa Competitiveness Programme *News*

Focus on the WACOMP
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The West Africa Competitiveness Programme aims to support a number of selected value chains at national and regional level to promote structural transformation and better access to regional and international markets, while taking into account social and environmental concerns. The WACOMP consists of one regional component and sixteen national components (15 ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania).

Mr. Bernardo
Calzadilla-SarmientoUNIDO Managing Director,
Directorate of Digitalization,
Technology and
Agri-Business (DTA)

Dear readers,

The COVID-19 pandemic is confronting each of us with unprecedented challenges and new settings and has disrupted the global economic activity in West Africa and the rest of the world with many essential global value chains either being halted or severely interrupted. Thus, the pandemic has clearly shown the relevance of UNIDO's mandate and highlighted the importance of standards for trade and quality infrastructures by ensuring for instance the availability and quality of key medical goods. For example, laboratory services, by ensuring the quality and accuracy of tests, provide an essential contribution to the diagnostic, management and monitoring of patients. The COVID-19 pandemic will also necessitate new standards to meet new challenges presented by the pandemic, for instance in terms of temporary hospitals and virtual accreditation. This transition phase to new ways of project implementation are embedded into UNIDO's technical assistance Programmes in West Africa, such as the West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP).

In the global efforts to overcome the virus together, UNIDO is working with its Member States and partners to address the crisis and its impacts on the economy and societies. Together with our partners we must ensure that the recovery focuses on building inclusive and sustainable economies that are more resilient in facing pandemics, climate change and many other global challenges. The challenges posed by this global health crisis show that global cooperation and regional integration is more important than ever in order to build competitiveness and resilience and improve quality infrastructure, so that we can address unforeseen events as such in the future.

Besides the negative effects of COVID-19, the main economic challenges in West Africa include limited competitiveness of enterprises and the need for better value-chain integration at regional and national levels in order to scale-up sustainable structural transformation. To compete in export markets, West African countries need to work towards increasing the volume and range of the products they sell and export

while complying with the increasingly stringent market requirements on product quality, safety, health and environmental impact. Standardization along the value chain enables reduction in production and transaction costs, increased quality and market opportunities, competitive positioning and an improved management of risks.

UNIDO has been the first technical partner of many West African States in the field of Quality. Thanks to the support of the European Union (EU), it has also been a pioneer in the setting-up of a Regional Quality Infrastructure. Since 2001, UNIDO has supported the 15 ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania through designing, establishing, enhancing and promoting quality infrastructure at national and regional level, which has been ensured through several regional Programmes funded by the EU. UNIDO is very thankful for the support of the EU in funding these Programmes on trade, Quality Infrastructure and regional integration over the past two decades and proud to have contributed to the achievement of many positive results such as the 15 harmonized national quality policies in the region. This successful and dynamic co-operation is continuing through UNIDO's implementation of projects under the EU-funded West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP), which is a partnership initiative between ECOWAS and the EU.

While the overall objective of the Programme is to strengthen the competitiveness of West Africa and to enhance the countries' integration into the regional and international trading system, including the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), it also has a bearing on regional economic integration and highlights a commitment to the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and West Africa.

The past results of UNIDO's projects in West Africa prove that quality is making its way into the minds and attitudes of practitioners and politicians alike. These last few years have been decisive in the emergence of the system but it is necessary to continue to support the movement to make it viable and to root quality culture in the habits and practices of the West African society. Access to markets remains a significant challenge in the region, but ambitious Programmes such as the WACOMP are assisting West African countries in strengthening competitiveness

and increasing trade and investment flows. All of this will help create jobs, reduce poverty and improve the lives of many communities and individuals of the region; entrepreneurs, consumers, civil servants, teachers, students, diaspora, young people and women are all potential levers.

UNIDO, in cooperation with ECOWAS, UEMOA commissions and other partners, aims to improve the necessary regional and national quality infrastructure systems and competitiveness of enterprises throughout the West African Region and we want our efforts to follow these principles:

- Firstly, we want every country in the region to achieve a higher level of industrialization and competitiveness in their economies, and to benefit from the globalization of markets and regional integration for industrial goods and services.
- Secondly, we want to ensure that no-one is left behind in benefiting from the technical assistance through the WACOMP projects, and in particular that prosperity is shared among women and men in all the project countries.
- Thirdly, we must ensure that the broader economic and social growth which we promote takes place within an environmentally sustainable framework and is in line with the vision of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III).
- Finally, we want to make sure that the unique knowledge and resources of all relevant actors in the Programme are combined to maximize the development impact of ISID and strengthen the overall competitiveness of the West African Region.

This edition is the first release of a series of bulletins compiling highlights from the various WACOMP projects implemented with the technical assistance of UNIDO. I hope that you find the articles of interest and we welcome your suggestions for the possible improvement of the future editions.

Mr. Bernardo Calzadilla-Sarmiento

Facts about the West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP)

1

The West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP) is a partnership initiative between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the European Union (EU).

It has a bearing on regional economic integration and highlights a commitment to the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and West Africa.

The overall objective of the programme is to strengthen the competitiveness of West Africa and to enhance the countries' integration into the regional and international trading system, including the newly established African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

2

WACOMP is funded through a €120 million contribution from the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for West Africa (2014 – 2020) under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF).

The main economic challenges in West Africa include competitiveness of enterprises and the need for better value chain integration at regional and national levels in order to scale up sustainable structural transformation.

The WACOMP embraces the vision of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III) and is also aligned to UNIDO's mandate of fostering Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID).

The action will be carried out in the ECOWAS member states (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo) and in Mauritania, through national components in each country, as well as a regional one.










For each country, priority value chains have been identified and the type of activities selected involves a combination of long and short term technical assistance, training, coaching, equipment and studies. The country components will be implemented by selected specialized agencies or through national execution while the regional component will be led by the ECOWAS Commission with the technical assistance of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Trade Centre (ITC). UNIDO has been so far entrusted as implementing partner in 5 countries (one or two additional countries may still come up).

National components of WACOMP

- Implemented by UNIDO
- Collaboration with UNIDO foreseen

<p>Benin</p> <p>Amount: €5m Lead ministry: Ministry of finance Implementing partner: GIZ Selected Value Chains: Soya, ICT</p>	<p>Burkina Faso</p> <p>Amount: €7.5m Lead ministry: Ministry of Trade, Industry & Handicraft Implementing partner: Chamber of commerce Selected Value Chains: Honey and its by-products; Cotton/Cotton oil processing and by-products; Renewable energy</p>	<p>Cape Verde</p> <p>Amount: €5m Lead ministry: Unit (Office of Prime Minister) Implementing partner: UNDP Selected Value Chains: ICT; Renewable energy; Culture, events & media, tourism & leisure</p>	<p>Cote d'Ivoire</p> <p>Amount: €9m Lead ministry: Ministry of Regional Integration Implementing partner: Chamber of commerce Selected Value Chains: Tropical fruits/ processed fruits; Cassava & derivatives; Cashew; Rubber & plastics; ICT</p>
<p>The Gambia</p> <p>Amount: €4m Implementing partner: UNIDO, United Purpose Selected Value Chains: Onion</p>	<p>Ghana</p> <p>Amount: €9m Implementing partner: UNIDO Selected Value Chains: Cassava & derivatives; Tropical fruits/processed fruits; Cosmetics & personal care products</p>	<p>Guinea</p> <p>Amount: €5m Implementing partner: UNIDO Selected Value Chains: Pineapple</p>	<p>Guinea Bissau</p> <p>Amount: €4m Implementing partner: UNIDO Selected Value Chains: Mango</p>
<p>Liberia</p> <p>Amount: €5m Selected Value Chains: Cassava & derivatives; Inland and coastal fisheries</p>	<p>Mauritania</p> <p>Amount: €4m Selected Value Chains: Poultry industry; Skin, hide & leather, Gum arabic</p>	<p>Mali</p> <p>Amount: €5.5m Selected Value Chains: Tropical fruits/processed fruits; Cereals; Skin, hide & leather</p>	<p>Niger</p> <p>Amount: €5m Selected Value Chains: Skin, Hide & Leather</p>
<p>Nigeria</p> <p>Amount: €10m Implementing partner: GIZ Selected Value Chains: Ginger; Tomatoes/pepper; Textiles & garments; Skin, hide & leather</p>	<p>Senegal</p> <p>Amount: €8.3m Implementing partner: ITC Selected Value Chains: Mango; Onion; ICT</p>	<p>Sierra Leone</p> <p>Amount: €5m Implementing partner: UNIDO Selected Value Chains: Cassava & derivatives; Cocoa; Palm oil</p>	<p>Togo</p> <p>Amount: €5m Implementing partner: GIZ Selected Value Chains: Pineapple</p>

WACQIP (regional component)

	Project title	West Africa Competitiveness and Quality Infrastructure Project - WACQIP
	Contract Agreement Signature	01 August 2018
	Coordinating agency	ECOWAS Commission
	Implementing agency	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
	UNIDO's interventions	UNIDO's interventions under the WACQIP consist of the two components: (1) Quality Infrastructure (2) Business Environment/Competitiveness
	Donor	European Union
	Budget	€5,664,000 (EU/ 11e FED: €5,554,000; UNIDO : €100,000)
	Objectives	General objective: stimulate the competitiveness of SMEs in the 16 beneficiary countries through value chain development and an enhanced level of production, transformation and export capacities of the private sector. The WACQIP focuses on supporting four value chains at the regional level: (i) cassava and its derivatives, (ii) mango, (iii) textiles & garments, and (iv) information and communication technology (ICT) as a cross-cutting value chain.
	Follow WACQIP on	Website: https://wacomp.projects.ecowas.int Twitter: @wacqip Facebook: @wacompwacqip Linkedin: @WACOMP WACQIP Instagram: @wacompwacqip



Quality Infrastructure

Quality Infrastructure Needs Identification Study of the Regional Value Chains in the Member States

In order to support the existing Quality Infrastructure (QI) in the region in terms of standards and technical regulations, test methods to be harmonised and Conformity Assessment Bodies, the exact needs and structures related to the selected regional value chains were to be identified through a QI needs identification study in each of the ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania.

This study was structured in two parts:

- 1) The first part involved four regional experts for each value chain who conducted a general diagnostic on the international and regional level based on literature review, their experience and technical background. This enabled them to develop a questionnaire that would further be used for data collection in the second phase. The regional experts were supported by international experts for ICT and textile and Garment Value Chains.
- 2) The second phase focused on data collection and analysis of data by 52 national experts who were selected in each of the ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania for each regional value chain. The regional experts further synthesised the national reports by identifying the needs that were reported in a regional report.

As part of finalisation of this study, the activities carried out during this period are as follows:

- Supervision of the mission of national and regional experts which allowed the experts to better understand their mission and to remove the obstacles they faced;
- Collection, analysis and validation of data from the national mission reports:
 - o The data processing was carried out by regional experts under the supervision of the regional coordination team, 49 reports were received, including 13 on cassava & derivatives, 15 on mango, 12 on textile & garments and 9 from information and communication technology;
 - o This process resulted into regional reports that highlighted the QI needs to be supported at regional level.
- Identification of priority products/derivatives and activities to be implemented at regional level.

Registration of ECOWAS Certification Mark

To promote quality and the ECOWAS Certification Mark (ECOQMARK), WACQIP's approach is targeted towards:

- Supporting pilot companies/enterprises related to the regional value chains to receive the ECOWAS Certification Mark of Quality (ECOQMARK);
- Supporting national certification bodies achieve capacity to deliver the ECOWAS Mark to enterprises in the region;
- Continuity of the process of quality promotion within national and regional quality structures;

• Development of sectorial applications on the products of the regional value chains.

In this regard, five priority needs for sectorial applications have been identified at the value chain level through the regional quality infrastructure study. These products are:

- o Barrier masks for the textile and garments value chain;
- o Starch and gari for the cassava and derived products value chain;
- o Dried mango and mango juice/nectar for the mango value chain.

In addition, efforts to register the ECOQMARK with the African Intellectual Property Organisation (OAPI) have also continued during this period. A complete review of the registration documents was carried out taking into account the instructions and recommendations of the IPSP Department and the Legal Department of the ECOWAS Commission. To date, the finalized documents are awaiting the signature of the President of the ECOWAS Commission.



Setting Up of ECOWAS Quality and Industry Database (ECOQIB)

The quality and industry database is online (<https://ecoqib.waqsp.org/>) thanks to the ECOQIB application, which facilitates access to beneficiaries. As part of WACQIP, an update of this database is planned, taking into account the new data generated by the QI study on the four priority value chains (cassava & derivatives, mango, textiles & garments and ICT).

To this end, during this reporting period the following activities were carried out with a view to update the application:

- Analysis of observations collected from ECOQIB national focal points and other users of the database;
- New features have been defined with a view to integrating them into the ECOQIB application;

• An expert in statistics was recruited to support the updating, transposition, and collection of additional data in connection with the national focal points of the database;

• Quality and industry data excel tables have been improved and updated in order to align them with the new features of the ECOQIB application;

• The existing product list has been updated to include those from the four priority value chains;

• Transposition of existing data and entry of new data was initiated.

Ultimately, the aim is to make the database more relevant and accessible to beneficiaries, in particular the ECOWAS Competitiveness Observatory currently under setup.



Business Environment and Competitiveness

Organisation of Regional B2B Networking Events

This activity aims to support the development of inter-regional and intra-regional trade in selected value chains. The primary output is expected to be two major “Meet the Buyers” events for the relevant procurement managers of large ECOWAS companies, MNCs and representatives of MSMEs. In close collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission, UNIDO and ITC are working together to ensure the organisation of the “Meet the Buyers” events and agreed to a joint consolidated approach for the delivery of the first Meet the Buyers event which was originally planned to be held in Mali in September 2020.

This period marked the completion of data collection in all Member States concerning key players (buyers and sellers) involved in the regional value chains. Moreover, an external contractor with significant experience in the delivery of such business-to-business events has been contracted by UNIDO to undertake all practical aspects of the Meet the Buyers events. ITC is responsible for designing, operating and financing the enterprise support scheme aimed at assisting SMEs to attend the event.

Business Coaching and Management Training

This activity aims primarily to develop a pool of trained enterprise development trainers across the ECOWAS region. The sub-component is delivered in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO to deliver activities by adapting the existing “Start and Improve Your Business” (SIYB) programme to the specific needs and requirements of WACQIP. A train-the-trainer programme will be implemented for selected counterpart institutions and trainer certificates will be issued after the completion of the trainer cycle. This will involve an initial training of trainers. These trainers demonstrating that they have acquired the needed competencies by training entrepreneurs in SIYB under the supervision of a Master Trainer.

The period marked the completion of several activities under this sub-component, including:

- The identification of key Business Support Organisations and training institutions in Member States;
- The signature of a collaboration agreement between UNIDO and ITC-ILO for implementation of activities related to the sub-component;
- The analysis of training needs and selection of training materials to be used by the project (SIYB);
- The selection of one partner training institution in each WACOMP country. Two trainee trainers have been selected from those partner training institutions and virtual training of trainers will commence in September 2020.



Establishment of a Regional PPP Network and Online Platform

The primary purpose of this sub-component is the establishment of a regional Public-Private Partnership (PPP) network and online platform to monitor and share relevant data on PPPs in West Africa. The online platform will comprise two connected databases of PPP stakeholders and PPP projects in the region, for which data have already been collected by an international PPP expert with the support of national experts in each of the project countries.

A detailed online survey of key PPP stakeholders in each WACOMP country has also been launched in English, French and Portuguese to identify key problems experienced in the implementation of different types of PPP in different sectors. Understanding the key issues faced will allow legislators to adjust regulations to simplify the process and for implementers to learn from the experiences of others. The survey results will be incorporated into the online database and therefore be available to all PPP stakeholders in the ECOWAS region in the future.

WACOMP in Ghana



	Project title	WACOMP - Ghana Building competitiveness for export of cassava, fruits and cosmetics value chains in Ghana
	Contract Agreement Signature	29 March 2019
	Implementing agency	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
	Government co-ordinating agency	Ministry of Trade and Industry of Ghana (MoTI)
	Counterparts	MOTI, MOFA, GEPA, GSA, NBSSI, CSRI, AGI, FDA, COCOBOD, Producers Associations, Laboratories.
	Duration	48 months
	Donor	European Union
	Budget	€6,350,000 (EU/ 11e FED: €6,200,000; UNIDO : €150,000)
	Objectives	<p>General objective: strengthening the export competitiveness of the Ghanaian economy through enhanced value-added, low carbon, sustainable production and processing and an increased access to regional and international markets.</p> <p>Specific objectives: improve the performance and growth of the following value chains: (i) Cassava, (ii) Fruits (mango and pineapple) and (iii) Cosmetics and personal care products, improve competitiveness of MSME's, strengthen the supporting of intermediate organisations and create better linkages among the selected value chain actors.</p>
	Follow WACOMP Ghana on	<p>Website: wacompghana.org E-mail: wacomp.ghana@unido.org Twitter: @WACOMPghana Facebook: @WACOMPghana Linkedin: @West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP)- Ghana Instagram: @wacomp_ghana</p>

Cosmetics Conference in Tamale to Promote Quality Standards and Regulations

Ghana's natural cosmetics and personal care products have a comparative advantage in shea butter, coconut oil and essential oils. These products have a high export potential but very often do not meet international standards.

In the framework of the activities carried out by the project to improve the competitiveness of SMEs and their capacity to comply with national and international standards, WACOMP Ghana organised a conference on quality regulations and how they apply to products on 2nd and 3rd of March 2020 in Tamale.

The conference was organised in partnership with the Ghana Trade Fair Company, as part of the

24th Ghana International Trade Fair Exhibition, attracted more than 50 cosmetic producers from the Northern cluster.

Experts from Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) and WACOMP Ghana presented in details the product registration process and the certification of products, and highlighted some basic information on quality management principles.

The quick guide on how to comply with GSA and FDA requirements procedures, edited for the conference, is available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3mnUp62>



Participants of the Cosmetics Conference in Tamale

WACOMP in Sierra Leone



	Project title	WACOMP – Sierra Leone Increasing Sierra Leone's Competitiveness through Enhanced Productivity and Trade Compliance in selected Value Chains (Cassava, Cocoa and Palm Oil)
	Contract Agreement Signature	14 December 2018
	Implementing agency	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
	Implementing partner	International Trade Centre (ITC)
	Main Counterpart	Ministry of Trade and Industry of Sierra Leone
	Duration	48 months
	Donor	European Union
	Budget	€4,376,971
	Objectives	<p>General objective: To strengthen the competitiveness of Sierra Leone and enhance its integration into the regional and international trading systems.</p> <p>Specific objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SO1: Improve the performance, growth and contribution to industry, regional trade and exports of cassava, cocoa and palm oil value chains. - SO2: Improve the climate for business at national level.
	Follow WACOMP Sierra Leone on	Facebook: @SLCOMPET Twitter: @SLCOMPET



MSCB team in a regular weekly training

Co-operation with Academic Institutions in Sierra Leone

Establishment of the Management System Certification Body (MSCB) in Sierra Leone started in 2019 under the EU-funded WACOMP. UNIDO as the implementing agency of the programme's national component in Sierra Leone has been providing the necessary technical and advisory assistance for the MSCB staff.

MSCB aims to become the first internationally accredited Certification Body in Sierra Leone, representing a landmark achievement in the objective of developing effective and efficient national quality infrastructure. Sierra Leone will thus be able to certify its enterprises under the brand "Certified in Sierra Leone, Accepted Globally" and pave the way for sustainable promotion of enterprises that inspire customer confidence. In return, the enterprises will be better positioned to compete in regional and

international markets as well as to achieve internal process improvements.

Throughout the recent months, UNIDO has been providing technical and advisory assistance to the MSCB staff to implement ISO/IEC 17021:2015 and ISO 19011:2018, which are the international standards that define requirements for bodies that audit and certify management systems. Since March 2020, UNIDO has been organising weekly remote training for the MSCB staff with the objective to improve their skills and competences for auditing management systems. In the upcoming period, UNIDO also plans to organise a Lead Auditor Training to seal the creation of the pool of competent national auditors in Sierra Leone.

WACOMP in Guinea



	Project title	WACOMP – Guinea REFILA, Revival of the Pineapple Industry
	Contract Agreement Signature	August 2, 2019
	Implementing agency	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
	Implementing partners	International Trade Centre (ITC) Europe Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee (COLEACP)
	Main Counterpart	Guinean Ministry of Trade and Industry and SMEs
	Duration	48 months
	Donor	European Union
	Budget	€4,990,000 (EU/11 th FED: €4,900,000; UNIDO: €90,000)
	Objectives	<p>General objective: Contribute to strengthening the competitiveness of West African countries and their integration into regional and international trade systems.</p> <p>Specific objectives :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SO1: Improve the performance of the “pineapple” industry in Guinea and promote its growth, by stimulating its contribution to industry, regional trade, exports and job creation. - SO2: Improve the business climate in Guinea, in particular through the integration of regional policies in favor of competitiveness into national policies.
	Follow WACOMP Guinea REFILA on	Twitter: @WACOMP_Guinea Facebook: @WACOMPGUINEE Instagram: @wacompguinee

Stakeholders Consultation Workshop on the Revival of the Pineapple Industry

On 31 January 2020, the stakeholder consultation workshop on strategic choices and synergy of interventions in the REFILA was held in the conference room of Kindia's teacher's training college (École Normale d'Instituteur (ENI), in French). This workshop, organised by UNIDO with technical and financial support from the European Union and ENABEL, was part of the flagship initiatives to revive the pineapple industry,

including the REFILA project and the ENABEL entrepreneurship project.

More than 70 people from various structures responsible for the production, distribution, and pineapple processing components as well as financial institutions, public partners, technical services, trade unions, young entrepreneurs, graduate students and the media took part in the workshop.

This technical workshop which served as the opening of Kindia Regional Entrepreneur's Fair (SADEN), was an event for meeting and information for the various stakeholders on the strategic choices for the revival of the pineapple industry and for the initiation of a framework for consultation and partnership.

Field Expert's Mission on Data Analysis to Strengthen the Pineapple Value Chain

From 25 to 29 February 2020, a team of experts from the REFILA project carried out additional analyses in the project's intervention areas, namely in Forécariah and Kindia. This complementary analysis, which is part of the project's inception activities, was aimed at updating a number of information and data already existing in the REFILA project document. This exercise has made it possible to identify in a concrete way the needs of support, opportunities and constraints faced

by the different actors in the value chain. To do this, nine (9) themes have been identified to guide and form the basis of this complementary analysis. Namely: diagnostics, strategies and action plans for the production and availability of inputs, the production and availability of quality releases, funding pineapple entrepreneurs, access to land and permanent access to water, availability of quality packaging at competitive prices, implementation of pilots aggregation, strengthening

of FEPAF and other professional organisations, production, processing, marketing of pineapple and specifically pineapple Guinea. All these themes were addressed through one-on-one meetings and groups with the support and participation of local and administrative authorities as well as local resource people with sufficient information on these topics. This approach allowed the experts to carry out an information collection taking into account the entire pineapple value chain.



WACOMP in Guinea Bissau



	Project title	WACOMP – Guinea Bissau Improving the Competitiveness of the Mango Value-Chain in Guinea Bissau: Production, Local Processing and Export Support
	Contract Agreement Signature	30 December 2019
	Implementing agency	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
	National Counterpart	Ministry of Trade and Industry
	Implementing Partner	Europe Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee (COLEACP)
	Duration	46 months
	Donor	European Union
	Budget	€4,080,000 (EU/11 th FED: €4,000,000; UNIDO: €80,000)
	Objectives	<p>General objective: Strengthen the competitiveness of Guinea Bissau and contribute to its integration into regional and international trade systems.</p> <p>Specific objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SO1: Improve the performance of the “Mango” sector in Guinea Bissau and promote its growth, by stimulating its contribution to local industry, regional and international trade as well as job creation in the country. - SO2: Improve the business climate in Guinea Bissau, in particular through the integration of regional policies in favour of competitiveness into national policies.

Promotion of the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Guinea Bissau

Entrepreneurship in Guinea Bissau is taking its first steps and the existing services are done through private sector or NGO's hence the youth and women access in the country is very limited.

Under the WACOMP - Guinea Bissau, specific activities are planned that will support directly young producers and entrepreneurs and women participation in the Mango Value-Chain, through entrepreneurship and/or reinforcement of their capacities and skills in work. It will also provide the capacity building to improve the entrepreneurship ecosystem that could foster other economic sectors.

Regarding entrepreneurship, special attention must be taken regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and the new “normal”; so innovation and technologic solutions will be preferential.

The main approach will be the IDEA (Innovation,

Development and Entrepreneurship for All) Program developed by UNIDO to foster the development of an entrepreneurial culture and facilitate integration into the formal economy. It is based on 5 sequential and flexible steps:

- 1) Identifying/evaluating value chains and related market opportunities;
- 2) Skills development and trainings (beneficiaries and institutions);
- 3) Provide incubation, acceleration services and access to finance (online & in the area of intervention);
- 4) Structure private sector activity through developing cluster and business networks;
- 5) Ensuring sustainable enterprise growth and scale up the intervention.

In each one of these steps, several methodologies will be used, including

different partners.

One of the main tools is the IDEA App, an e-platform dedicated to bridge young entrepreneurs with mentors globally, directly fostering knowledge transfer and skills development. The goal is to encourage the participation of the national experts and diaspora to accelerate the emergence of new business development communities, increase know-how transfer and create new market opportunities.

The IDEA app is an all-in-one hub with access to matching with a mentor, a step by step incubation methodology with key definitions, examples, data visualisations and more. After the initial program design, the entrepreneurs and mentors apply to the platform are selected. A matching phase follows between the entrepreneurs and mentors. With the attribution of the mentors to each entrepreneur (1on1 mentorship), the program starts online and

on community space with weekly meetings, validation of the work and checkpoints. The entrepreneur must go through 8 steps:

- (i) Value proposition;
- (ii) Competition map;
- (iii) Stakeholder map;
- (iv) Sales and activities;
- (v) Pricing and business models;
- (vi) Growth plan;
- (vii) Financial projections;
- (viii) Social impact metrics.

During the program, it is possible to visualise the progress. At the end, the entrepreneurs can download their business plan in PDF and use it to get started and/or raise funds. A final presentation event will be done, as well as awarded the best projects. Aligned with this incubation, the project will make the link with the previous phases of generating ideas and the subsequent phases to support the business growth, digital and technology transfer and with the financial institutions.



WACOMP in The Gambia



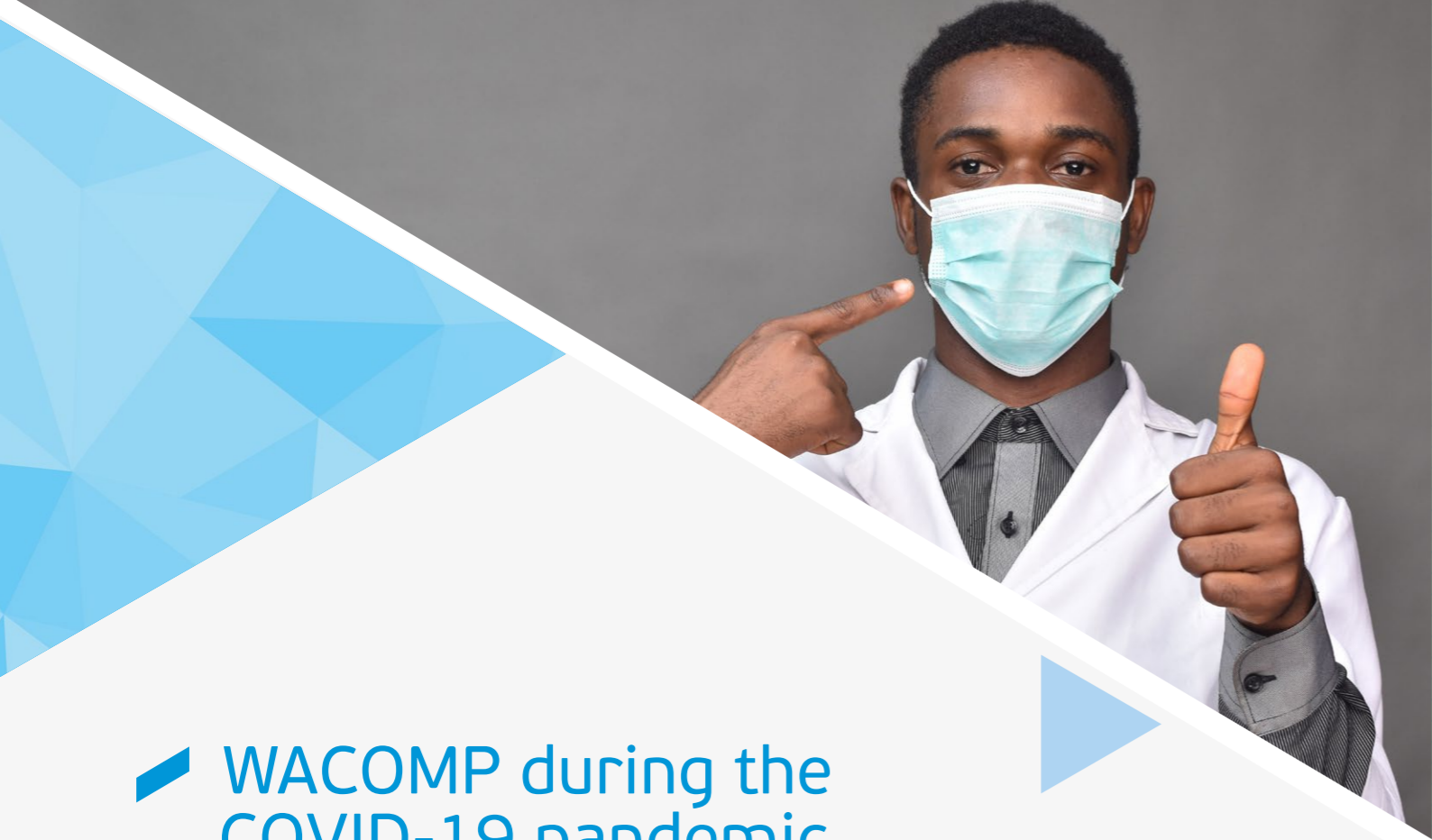
	Project title	WACOMP - The Gambia Increasing competitiveness through enhanced quality and compliance along the onion VC
	Contract Agreement Signature	1 August 2020
	Implementing agencies	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); United Purpose
	Main Counterpart	Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment (MoTIE)
	Other Counterparts	The Gambia Standards Bureau (TGSB), The Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA), Ministry of Agriculture, Producer Associations, Business Associations, MSME and other actors along the onion and horticulture VC.
	Duration	48 months
	Donor	European Union
	Budget	€4,000,000, of which €2,350,000 is implemented by UNIDO and €1,250,000 by United Purpose, an international development charity.
	Objectives	Overall objective: Strengthen the competitiveness of The Gambia and enhance its integration into the regional and international trading systems. Specific objective: Improve the performance, growth and contribution to industry, regional trade and exports of onion and other horticulture VC.

The Gambia's Action Plan

The project will cover a wide range of beneficiaries, both in the private and public sectors. At the ground-level, the direct beneficiaries are MSMEs (producers and processors) along the onion and other horticultural VCs. At the institutional-level, the project will directly benefit trade support institutions (TSI), primarily The Gambia Standards Bureau (TGSB), the Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA), the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and Business Support Organisations (BSOs). These institutional beneficiaries commit to ensuring full counterpart capacity as required to facilitate the achievement of the intended project outcomes.

Based on the findings and resulting work plan established during the project inception phase, the following indicative activities are to be implemented:

<h3>1</h3> <p>Increase onion VC compliance and performance, leading to expansion of market access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness raising and training on quality, standards and market requirements, for selected VC actors. Advice to MSME and other actors along the VC for enhancing their capacity on standards compliance and value addition. Provision of storage facilities, measurement and processing equipment at the community level. Identification, evaluation and promotion of market opportunities and linkages along the VC. Promote business development and investment opportunities. 	<h3>2</h3> <p>Strengthen technical capacity and competence of the FSQA, TGSB and the other relevant institutions of the quality infrastructure and the coordination between them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on the draft food safety policy and support standards development in selected VC. Strengthen institutional capacity of TGSB for standards implementation, metrology, certification, and information point. Strengthen institutional capacity of FSQA to conduct food safety inspections. 	<h3>3</h3> <p>Strengthen technical capacities of the MoA and related services in respect of the implementation of food quality and safety standards at primary production.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen institutional capacity of the Plant Health Services. Strengthen institutional capacity of the Agricultural Extension Services Division. Provision of support to the Planning Department of the MoA. Support technology development for inter-institutional coordination on food safety. Procure equipment and support for accreditation of a food laboratory.
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WACOMP during the COVID-19 pandemic

The current COVID-19 pandemic has become a major concern on a global scale and in particular in Africa. Its widespread impact on health, economies and politics has some direct and indirect side effects on the implementation activities of the WACOMP projects. In order to ensure a smooth, effective and secured continuity of activities, the various projects have developed contingency plans to swiftly respond to the pandemic on regional and national level.

UNIDO provides through its WACOMP projects technical assistance on various levels to West African countries, in particular

through the current pandemic. Furthermore, UNIDO is addressing the crisis and its impacts on the West African economy and society by building an inclusive and sustainable economy that is more resilient in facing pandemics, climate change and many other global challenges. Therefore, the WACOMP projects have developed a contingency plan with the aim to build capacities across a wide range of technical requirements for manufactures (including standards, metrology, certification, conformity assessments, laboratory policy) to proactively respond to the crisis.

For SMEs and public institutions to recover from the impact of the pandemic, it is crucial to strengthen the overall regional quality infrastructure in order to remain resilient and foster a competitive business environment. The WACOMP has hence prioritised the capability to respond and mitigate the effects of the pandemic through copious activities.

In order to meet the evolving challenges imposed by the pandemic, UNIDO has identified priority needs that are vital on a regional stage through the integration of contingency plans that will follow at each national component.



ECOWAS Community Standardization Committee (ECOSHAM) Meeting Poster

WACQIP: A Contingency Plan to Deal with the COVID-19 Pandemic

The regional component of the WACOMP, the West Africa Competitiveness and Quality Infrastructure Project (WACQIP) has elaborated a contingency plan that was presented to the last technical steering committee, held on the 9th April 2020, which recommended its development into a concept note for validation by EU and ECOWAS. The concept note was further validated by EU and ECOWAS for immediate implementation.

It should be noted that among the measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic there are two essential products, face masks for non-sanitary use and hydroalcoholic gels and solutions. Thus, the response plan was based on an inventory carried out in April 2020, relating to the Quality Infrastructure of ECOWAS Member States by considering the production of face masks for non-sanitary use and gels and hydroalcoholic solutions.

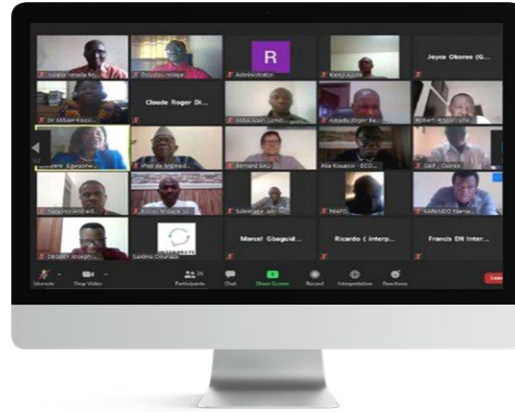
Within this framework, the WACQIP organised on 24 April 2020 an online meeting with a view to proposing the elaboration of key standards on the requirements, methods of testing, making and use of non-sanitary masks and the specifications and method of testing of hydroalcoholic products. As a result of this meeting,

the Technical Management Committee (TMC) of the ECOWAS mechanism for the Harmonization of Standards (ECOSHAM) has established a working group on Textile & Garment (WG-T&G), taking charge of the drafting of the ECOWAS standard (called ECOSTAND) standard on barrier masks for non-sanitary use, while the one on hydroalcoholic products was entrusted to the Technical Harmonization Committee on Chemistry (THC3).

As per instruction of the TMC, five technical meetings of GT-T&G and THC3 respectively were organised on 28 April, 4 and 5 May 2020. Despite the challenging circumstances such as stability of internet connection and simultaneous interpretation in English and French, a hundred participants and stakeholders from the different working groups fruitfully took part of these online technical exchanges as well as the TMC meeting on 24 April. The results of the public inquiry on the two draft standards, launched in the Member States as part of an emergency procedure, have been validated and are being consolidated.

On 20th May 2020, the ECOWAS Community Committee for Standardization (CCS), created by the Council of Ministers and ensuring the role of the Technical Management Committee (TMC) of the ECOWAS Regional Mechanism for the Harmonization of Standards (ECOSHAM), has approved two draft ECOWAS standards on technical specifications for the manufacture of consumer masks for non-sanitary use (ECOSTAND 082:2020 Barrier Masks - Minimum Requirements - Methods of Testing - Making and Use [Serial Manufacture and Artisanal Making or DIY]) and hydro-alcoholic hand products (ECOSTAND 083:2020 Hydro-alcoholic products -Hand Sanitizer - Specifications and test methods).

The adoption of these two harmonized regional standards on barrier masks and hand sanitizers was



commended by the ECOWAS Heads of States during their 57th Ordinary Session on 07th September 2020.

The adoption of the two ECOWAS standards, supported by the project, will have an important impact on the ECOWAS member states and its consumers at all levels of production, distribution, consumption and trade of barrier masks and hydro-alcoholic hand products.

In line with these recent activities, WACQIP will further support the conceptualization and implementation of complementary measures such as accreditation of conformity assessment bodies, development of certification, testing and inspection schemes at regional as well as country level through those WACOMP projects being implemented by UNIDO, in particular Ghana, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and The Gambia. Furthermore, the involvement of Consumer Associations and the Private Sector will be enhanced.

Organisation of Regional B2B Networking Events

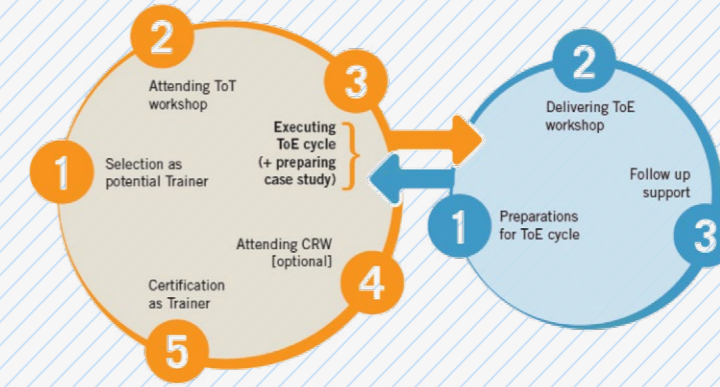
The COVID-19 pandemic effectively put on hold all actions under this sub-component due to the lockdowns in both Europe and Africa.

A revised joint UNIDO-ITC planning paper has been prepared suggesting that if a physical event is still the chosen route then the event be delayed until October/November 2021 with a formal decision being made in March 2021 as to whether the then ruling

circumstances allow planning of a physical event in 2021 to commence. At the same time, a paper has been set out with the option of holding the first Meet the Buyers event virtually (in February/March 2021) with the second event being a hybrid physical/virtual event later in 2021.



ToT cycle



ToE cycle

Business Coaching and Management Training

The sub-component experienced delays as a result of COVID-19, but ITC-ILO and UNIDO agreed an approach to minimise disruptions:

- Training of trainers will be delivered virtually.
- Design and establishment of an e-Campus platform through which ITC-ILO will interact/work with selected participants during the COVID-19 lockdown phase: this will be operational by 1st September 2020.
- Design and development of SIYB eLearning materials to allow continued Training of Trainers during the lockdown phase of the pandemic.

A three-week induction period will commence on 14th September to familiarize trainees with the electronic platform and ensure they understand the methodology and approach utilized for the eLearning approach, while formal online SIYB training is planned to commence on 6 October 2020.

The final step of the trainee training (namely the delivery by the trainees of a training programme to entrepreneurs) will be delivered physically in December 2020/January 2021 in strict compliance with national measures/restrictions regarding COVID-19 (face masks, hand sanitizers, social distance, etc.).

Establishment of a Regional PPP Networking and Online Platform

In order to ensure the maximum possible progress of this sub-component during the lockdown phase caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, an assessment of the COVID-19 implications for the sub-component has been undertaken and it has been concluded that until the formal launch of the online PPP

database, actions will not be negatively implemented. Nevertheless, a virtual meeting to discuss the implications of COVID-19 and the planned way forward was held with officials from the ECOWAS Commission and the way forward was agreed.

In order to ensure implementation of the planned activities in the next period (July to September 2020) and given the continuation of restriction measures due to COVID-19, the project has to count and build on the success and experiences achieved in the application of its contingency plan. The support of the national components of the WACOMP will also be essential. Therefore, the cooperation and consultation initiated with the countries, in which WACOMP is implemented by UNIDO, will be extended to other countries.

Ghana: A Contingency Plan to Deal with the COVID-19 Pandemic

Since the beginning of the pandemic, WACOMP Ghana has been innovative in the implementation of programme activities supported by research data. To analyse the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the project target value chains, WACOMP Ghana launched in May an online survey addressed to the SMEs directly benefiting from the project. The results of the assessment, covering 64 companies (70% female owned) <https://bit.ly/3gb1cwq>, showed:

- 73% of the respondents indicate that COVID-19 impacted negatively on their business, with 37% operating at reduced capacity, 31% closed, another 22% were operating only in reduced time (on alternate days) and only 8% of the businesses were capable of maintaining their regular working hours.

Based on the findings of the survey and the interaction with WACOMP beneficiaries, the project team revised the annual work plan to contain the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the target value chain, support them to respond and adapt to a new contest and finally to recover from the pandemic.

SMEs in the three target value chains requested the project to focus on support and technical coaching, supporting the link to financial institutions, as well as the compliancy with the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and standards.

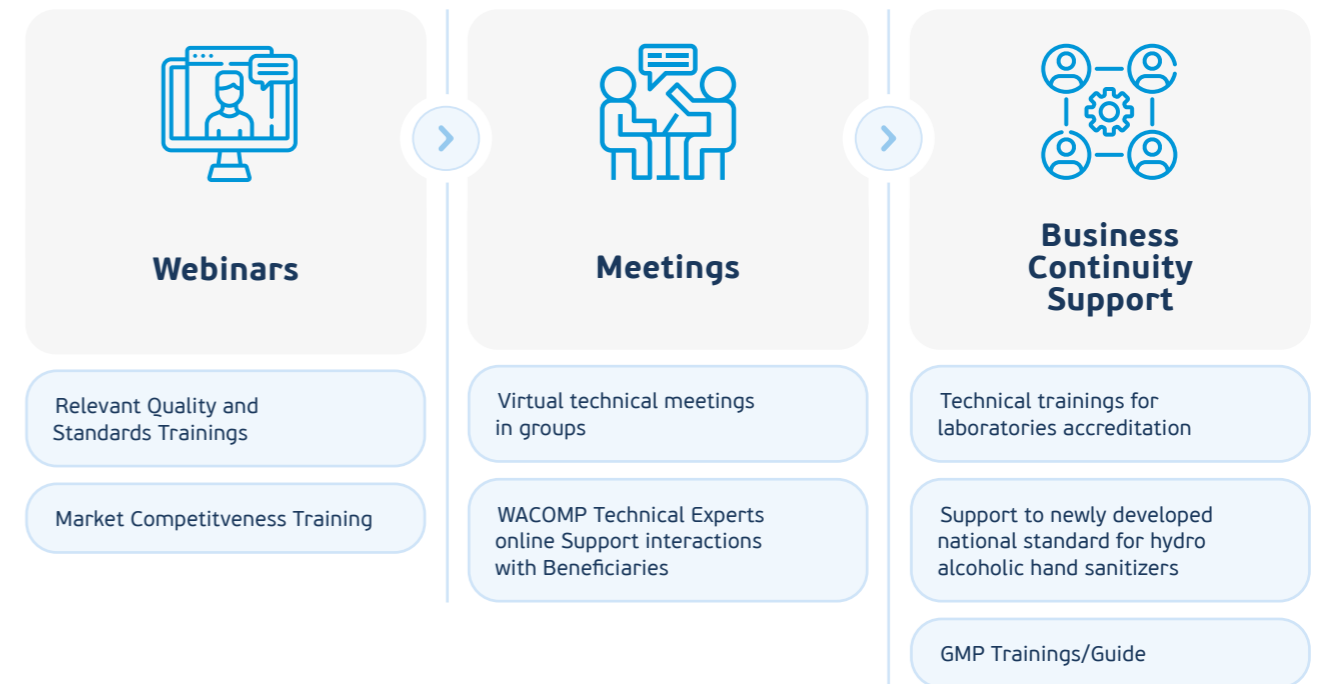
Taking into account the COVID-19 preventive measures, WACOMP has revised the way it provides technical assistance to the companies.

The project shifted more and more to online trainings over the past four months and organised several awareness and coaching sessions on themes considered as a priority for the project beneficiaries. In details, a special focus has been paid to strengthening private – public dialogue to face the pandemic and defining roadmaps for the three Value Chain Strategic Committees, to supporting companies to be more visible online and to shift towards e-marketing and e-commerce and to providing coaching to laboratories towards accreditation.

COVID-19 Project Implementation Strategy

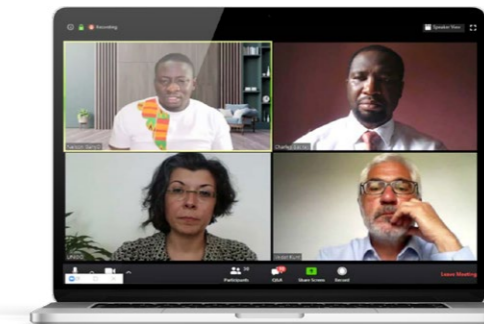


COVID-19 Resilient Roadmap



WACOMP Ghana Digital Marketing Webinar

An online training webinar was organised on 30th of April focusing on E-marketing approaches, as part of the WACOMP Ghana COVID-19 strategic response. About 100 registered participants expressed their interest to enhance skills on this topic.



The training was delivered by Mr. Vedat Kunt, UNIDO International Cluster Development Expert and Mr. Nelson Ganyo, Trainer of Trainers at GEPA Export School. The panellists took participants through strategies on how to use digital marketing tools and platforms to promote their brands.

Mr. Kunt explained how consumer behaviour is shaped and changing in the cosmetics sector, highlighting that consumer consciousness is built around health, price and beauty. For overcoming COVID-19 impediments, he recommended the cosmetic clusters to focus on innovation by developing new products,

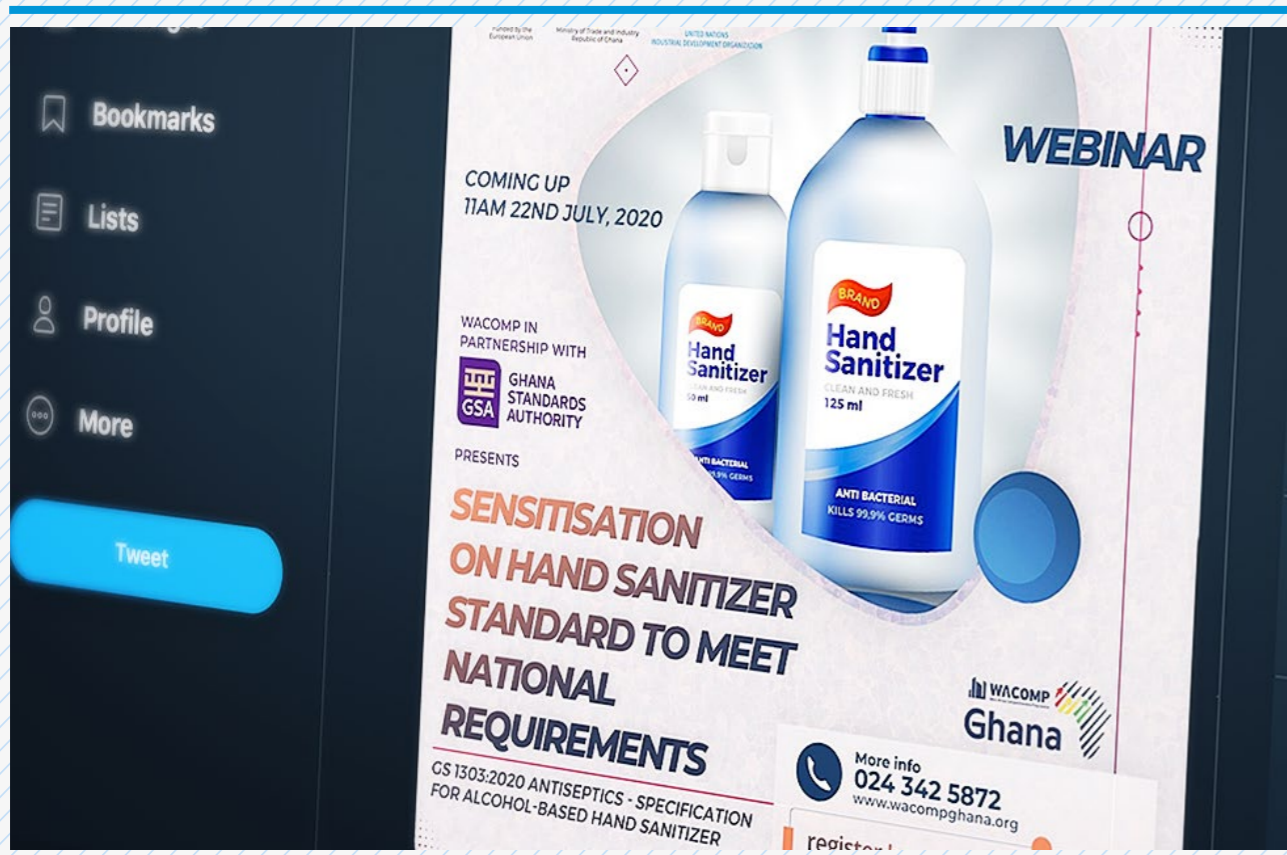
new marketing techniques and new business models. Participants were encouraged to work together and develop a common platform for promoting the cosmetic cluster products.

Master e-marketing techniques, becoming digital and take advantage of the power of the Internet can facilitate

the connection to suppliers and the markets.

Mr. Ganyo, one of the certified trainers of the GEPA export school, transferred the knowledge gained on digital marketing to the webinar participants. He presented different channels for e-marketing ranging from websites, social media and Ghanaian e-commerce platforms. Special attention was paid to the interaction with consumers on the digital platforms and on how to capture their attention.

A recorded version is posted online for those who missed the session via link <https://bit.ly/2LrfYBA>



@WACOMPghana tweet on Hand Sanitizer Standard Requirements Webinar held on 22nd July, 2020

WACOMP Ghana Online Training on the National Standard for Hand Sanitizers

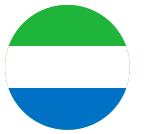
On 22 July 2020, WACOMP Ghana organised an online training on the national standard for hand sanitizers.

The training was organised in collaboration with the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) and aimed at promoting national requirements for alcohol-based hand sanitizers' production.

Over 50 Ghanaian Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) willing to produce high quality hand sanitizers for the national market registered for the training. Due to the rising number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Ghana, WACOMP Ghana has resolved to continue to support the fight by strengthening cosmetics clusters producers' capacities to produce high quality alcohol-based hand sanitizers.



Sierra Leone: A Contingency Plan to Deal with the COVID-19 Pandemic



Global COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in rescheduling of WACOMP Sierra Leone activities, which require international travel of staff and experts or include physical meetings of larger groups of beneficiaries.

Following the initial restrictions on movement, the WACOMP Sierra Leone team decided to focus on the project activities where implementation can advance remotely. This allowed to shift resources on activities that include desk research, analysis and collaboration with international partners. For instance, UNIDO allocated more resources on development of short academic courses for quality management to be implemented at the University of Sierra Leone. UNIDO international experts were available to dedicate more time for development of the learning materials and discussions were also held with several international universities to explore the potential for dual recognition of the academic courses. These initiatives have potential to ensure the sustainability of results beyond the project duration. Similarly, UNIDO held weekly remote training for staff of Sierra Leone Standards Bureau (SLSB) on establishment of Management System Certification Body (MSCB) and accreditation of Food Chemistry and Food Microbiology laboratories. This included the training and implementation of all Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Work

Instructions (Wis) and Procedures (PDs) as per relevant standards.

Throughout this period, UNIDO also remotely supported several MSMEs with technical assistance for implementation of ISO 9001 management standard.

Subsequently, the number of remote training activities has increased and UNIDO also started the organisation of webinars for larger audience as a substitute for high-level events in the country. This was particularly recognized by the project stakeholders during the Steering Committee Meeting in May 2020. For instance, UNIDO organised a webinar in July, 2020 on ISO 34101:2019 standard for Sustainable and Traceable Cocoa with participation of more than 60 people. During this time, the remote technical assistance to MSMEs was also expanded to ISO 22000 management standard.

For these reasons, it can be concluded that the implementation of majority of project activities has not been significantly affected by COVID-19. However, for project activities where beneficiaries are primarily farmers in remote districts of Sierra Leone with limited access to internet, UNIDO had to postpone hands-on and practical training at a farm site.



Contributing to the Development of Quality Culture in Sierra Leone: Webinar on ISO3401

On July 23, 2020, WACOMP Sierra Leone, completed a webinar on sustainability and traceability of Cocoa in Sierra Leone with the emphasis on ISO 34101 in partnership with Sierra Leone Standards Bureau (SLSB), Produce Marketing Board (PMB), Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) of Sierra Leone.

62 attendees were trained by Mr. Jack Steijn, Co-founder of Equipoise and Chairperson of the Technical Committee that has created ISO 34101, Ms. Caroline Lubbers, Co-founder of Equipoise, and Dr. Hussain Malik Shaukat, Chief Technical Advisor for WACOMP Sierra Leone, UNIDO.

The webinar discussed developments in cocoa and chocolate markets in Europe and beyond, from the first sustainability certificates to the discussion about due diligence obligations to companies selling on the European market for sustainability in their supply chains. The second part of the webinar explored comparing sustainability standards that could play a role in strategies to improve sustainability of the Sierra Leonean cocoa production, from existing voluntary standards like Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade to private company standards such as Mondelez' Cocoa Life and Nestlé's Cocoa Plan, also touching upon organic standards. Special attention was given to the new ISO (International Standards Organisation) standard ISO 34101 on Sustainable and Traceable Cocoa, parts 1-4.

Certification Schemes and Poverty Relief

Tool to support professionalization of cocoa farming. Adoption of requirements will enable farmer organizations to deliver targeted services to farmer members, assisting them to transform their farms into economically viable business.

Commitment to farm development plans will assist farmers in planning an economically viable, sustainable future for their cocoa farms.

Attention for living income in meant to bring farmers that meet criteria enough income to cover their household needs.



Guinea: A Contingency Plan to Deal with the COVID-19 Pandemic

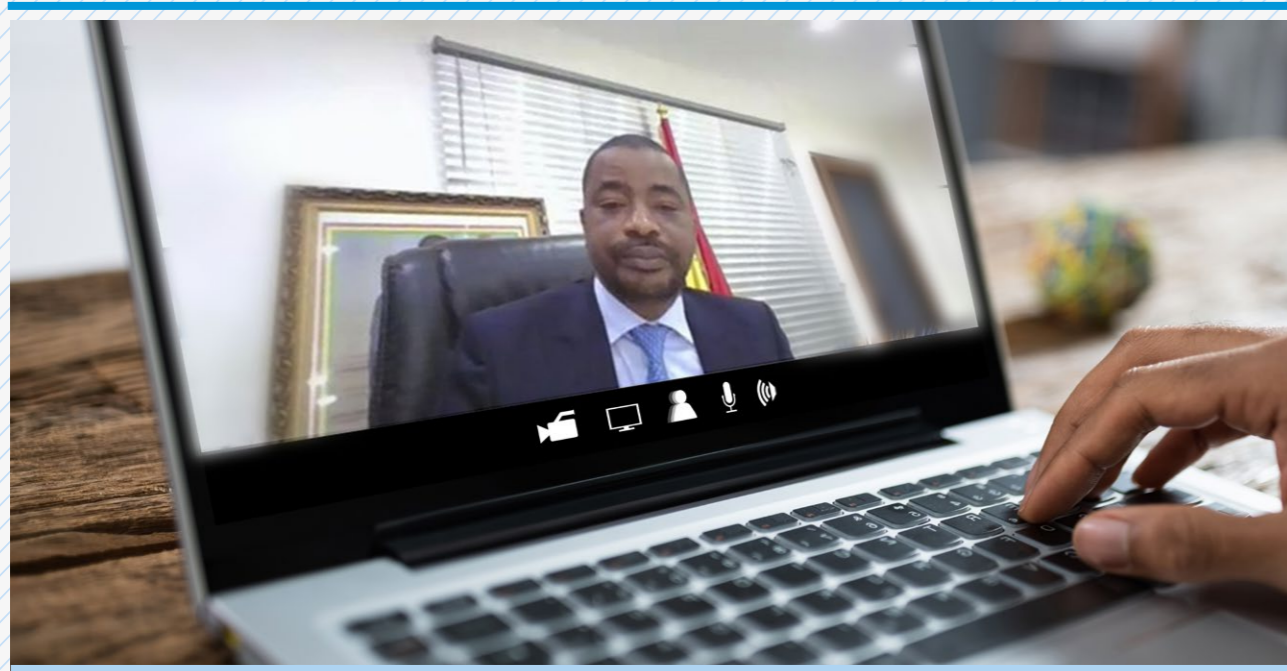
In order to ensure a smooth, effective and secured continuity of activities, the REFILA project has adopted health measures to protect the safety of its staff and actors involved in the activities. Furthermore, a contingency plan has been developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan and its proposed activities are in accordance with the agreement of the European Union, the donor of the national component of WACOMP in Guinea, in English called "Revival of the pineapple industry".

REFILA is continuing its project interventions to help in preventing the spread of the coronavirus and mitigating its negative impacts on project beneficiaries and their communities in the different intervention zones of the project. While the project contingency plan's primary objective is to mitigate the COVID-19 impact on the pineapple sector through protection measures for the respective actors and sourcing communities, it also aims to support the countrywide response efforts against the rapid spread

of the coronavirus across Guinea. Hence, one of UNIDO's interventions, which is part of the overall UN Response Framework and in line with the national response plan for Guinea, is the distribution of personal protection equipment and hygienic kits for the pineapple sectors' actors, project partners, relevant target groups and communities around the project areas. On 02nd September 2020, REFILA organised a ceremony in cooperation with the Guinean National Agency for Sanitary Safety (ANSS), to distribute the hygienic kits to counterparts and beneficiaries, including 50,000 facemasks, 1,000 medical protective blouses, 5,000 medical gloves, 2,000 bottles of hydro-alcoholic solutions, 1,000 simple and 30 complex hand washing kits, 120 boxes of soap, 50 thermo-flashes and 150 liters of bleach. Besides this, internet access facilitation, chairs and tables for the conduction of the project's remote online meetings and trainings have been ensured. In addition, the project is in the process of purchasing 4,000 COVID-19 rapid screening tests.

Another project intervention in view of the COVID-19 response is community awareness raising and distribution of the acquired hygienic kits in the project field sites in Conakry, Kindia and Maferinyah through two local NGOs. These COVID-19 awareness raising activities have been carried out in French but also local languages to reach and sensitize actors of the pineapple sector, local communities and especially young women and men on the causes, consequences and possible prevention measures such as hand washing, the importance of wearing facemasks and general hygiene practices with regards to COVID-19.

These activities are implemented in close cooperation with the ANSS and will lead to a collective change in practice and behavior of the Guinean society on how to deal with the pandemic.

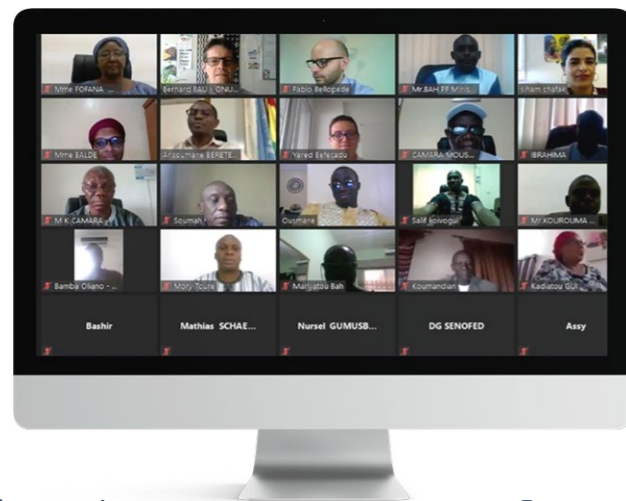


H.E.Mr. Tibou KAMARA, Minister for Industry and SMEs of the Republic of Guinea at the 2nd steering committee

The 2nd Session of the Steering Committee of the « REFILA » Project Held in Conakry

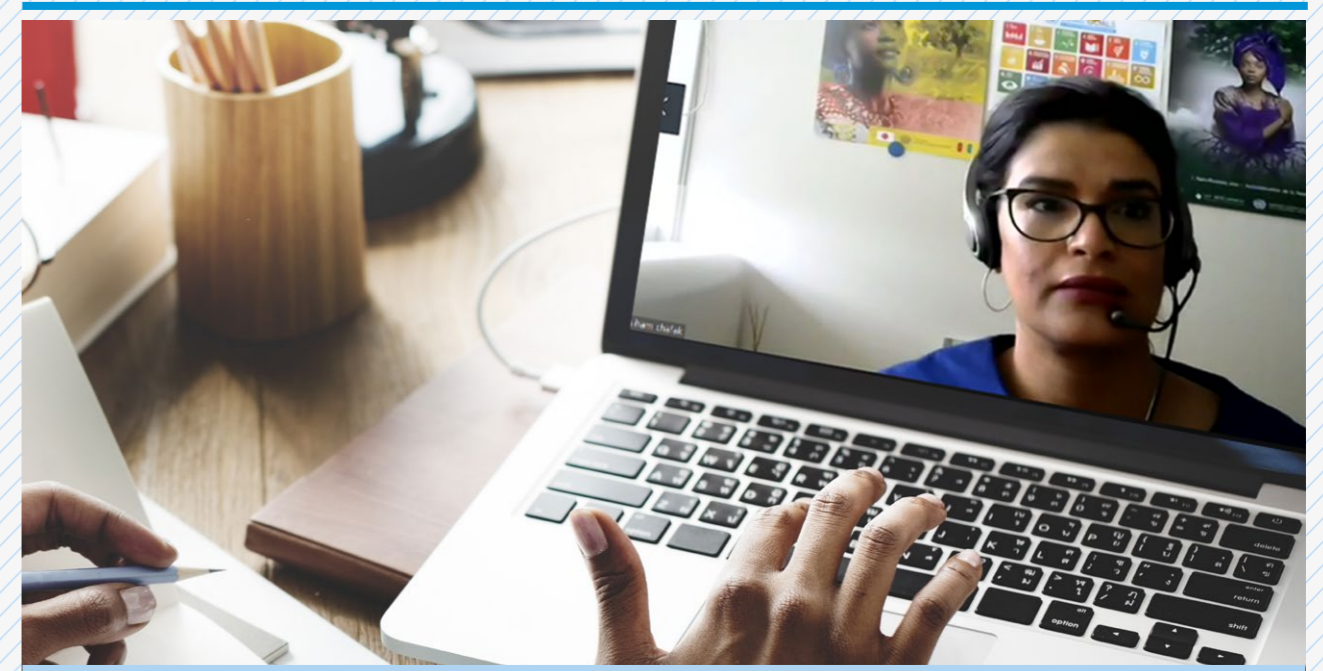
July 10, 2020, the Ministry of Industry and SMEs in collaboration with UNIDO and in consultation with all stakeholders organised in videoconference, the 2nd Steering Committee of the REFILA project to present the results of the start-up activities that were used to revise the strategies and directions of the project in the various areas targeted.

The objective of this virtual meeting was to present to the members of the steering committee the results obtained by the project in the implementation of the actions plan of the start-up activities of the project. More specifically, it aimed to gather feedback from the members of the steering committee on the findings/results documented by the experts during the implementation of



the action plan, and to take into account the guidance of the steering committee members on the prospects for the implementation of the project taking into account the current health situation caused by COVID-19.

Chaired by the Minister of State, Minister of Industry and SMEs, this virtual meeting was attended by UNIDO, the technical and financial partners of the project, in particular the European Union, the focal points of the project based in the ministries of agriculture and trade as well as the beneficiaries represented by the FEPAF (federation of farmers of the fruit sector of the Lower Coast).



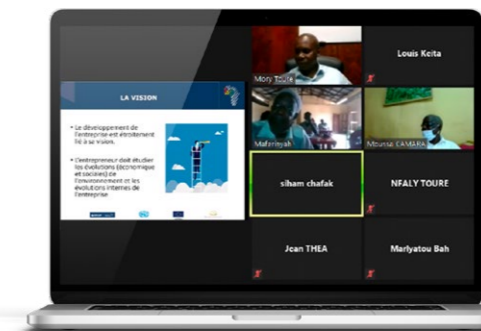
Ms. SIHAM CHAFAK, international UNIDO expert and trainer

Training of Actors of Kindia's Pineapple Industry in Maferinyah in « Entrepreneurial Spirit »

From 13 to 15 July 2020, the training of the actors in the pineapple sector of the Kindia and Maferinyah areas, areas of intervention of the REFILA project, was held via videoconference. Around 40 people participated in this online training. The aim of this training

was to strengthen the capacity of the actors in the pineapple sector to be more competitive and more structured as entrepreneurs.

Three international experts and one national expert took part to discuss the different themes of this training.





Guinea Bissau: A Contingency Plan to Deal with the COVID-19 Pandemic



The COVID-19 pandemic will have a big impact in Guinea Bissau. The restrictive measures are likely to affect the most labor-intensive and unskilled jobs. The impact of the pandemic on employment is likely to primarily affect women who dominate the informal retail trade market for subsistence, particularly in urban areas.

Regarding entrepreneurship, special attention must be paid regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and the new "normal" so innovation and technologic solutions will be preferential.

The project undertook to assess the technical and institutional feasibility of the IDEA App tool, in order to test and adapt good practices in support of

entrepreneurship and the incubation of young people and women.

This methodology is currently completely feasible, particularly due to the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 (travel, reunification, etc.) and it has been translated into Portuguese and is ready to be used for young people involved in the mango value chain; or any other priority value chains; young people working in services linked to value chains and young professionals in agricultural and agrifood trades, green energy or the recovery of residues from priority products and professionalizing farm management services. The selection of young candidates for this training will be done with training institutions and sectoral institutions.

Upcoming events and activities

- SEP > OCT**○

WACOMP - Guinea
Training workshop on delayed flowering and Good Agricultural Practices.
The general objective of this activity is to contribute to significantly reduce crop loss and improve product quality.

WACOMP - Ghana
Technical training for cassava value chain actors for applying quality and standards (HACCP) in the development of High Quality Cassava Flour and cassava starch.
- OCT**○

WACQIP - Quality Infrastructure
ECOSHAM meeting to update the standards business plan and create 2 new Technical Harmonization Committees (THCs).
Diagnostic audits with a view to the final selection of the testing laboratories to support accreditation.
Upgrade workshop for database focal points to update data.
Regional PPP workshop of policy makers.

WACOMP - Guinea Bissau
Official launch of the WACOMP Guinea Bissau and first Steering Committee Meeting.
Women Leadership Forum 2020. A delegation of Women leaders from Bissau attending the meeting online.
- NOV**○

WACQIP - Quality Infrastructure
ECOCONF meeting to adopt sectoral applications to adopt the 2020-22 action plan.
Registration of the ECOQMARK at OAPI.
- 18 SEPT > 30 SEPT**○

UNIDO's engagement during the high-level week of the 75th Session of the UNGA.
- 28 SEPT > 23 NOV**○

WACQIP - Quality Infrastructure
Training of English and French Trainer of trainers (Master trainers).
- 6 OCT**○

WACQIP - Business Environment and Competitiveness
UNIDO, in collaboration with the International Training Center of ILO, will execute a Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) train-the-trainer programme for selected counterpart institutions in the ECOWAS region.
- 6 OCT > 8 OCT**○

LKDF Forum 2020
Green Skills for a Sustainable Future.
- 12 OCT > 13 OCT**○

WACQIP - Quality Infrastructure
ECOCONF meeting for updating of certification programmes including quality labels/certification mark for the regional value chain products and mandatement of Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs).
- 24 OCT**○

United Nations Day
- 14 OCT > 16 OCT**○

2nd International Sustainable Energy Conference
ISEC 2020 "Renewable Heating and Cooling in Integrated Urban and Industrial Energy Systems".
- 16 OCT**○

WACQIP - Quality Infrastructure
ECOSHAM TMC meeting to update the regional standardisation programme and set up the new regional technical standards harmonization committees for textile and garment and ICT.
- 20 OCT**○

WACQIP - Quality Infrastructure
ECOREG meeting to review texts for technical regulation and consumer protection.



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West Africa Competitiveness Programme News

Focus on the WACOMP
projects implemented
by UNIDO

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