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WAQSP NEWS



CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION IN WEST AFRICA



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WAQSP NEWS

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► **Kalilou TRAORE**

Dear readers,

In this third issue of our newsletter, we highlight the management of the national and regional quality awards, certification and accreditation. This will enable you to understand how these important components of the ECOWAS quality policy (ECOQUAL) contribute to the realization of ECOWAS Vision 2020 which intends to operate a shift from an “ECOWAS of States” to an “ECOWAS of peoples”.

“the programme will support seven ECOWAS countries and Mauritania, which have no Awards, towards the organization of a first edition ”

ECOWAS indeed supports States to establish or strengthen national product certification schemes. To date, at least 6 countries in the region can take advantage of a product certification system that is more or less operational. The challenge is now to support the upscaling of these systems to international standards.

One of the key expected results of the WAQSP, one of the leading programmes supporting the implementation of ECOQUAL, is the promotion of an ECOWAS product certification scheme that will be backed by the national product certification systems. WAQSP activities in this field have been initiated, including in Benin and Senegal whose cases are featured in this issue.

The challenge of access to international markets prompted the Commission to initiate activities in the field of accreditation that allows, amongst other objectives, to recognise the competency of conformity assessment bodies and therefore give due credibility to compliance certificates they issue. After several years of vacuum in this area, the process is accelerating at State level: Nigeria created its national body (NINAS), Ghana is on track to create one and the UEMOA is operationalizing its multi economy organism, the West African Accreditation System (SOAC). The latter harmoniously integrates within the ECOWAS accreditation strategy. It proves once more the will of complementarity of actions between the two Commissions in terms of quality infrastructure building.

Commissioner for Industry and Private Sector Promotion ECOWAS Commission

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This is an opportunity to extend our warm congratulations to WAQSP National Technical Coordinator in Senegal, Mr. Aboubacry Baro, newly elected Chairperson of the Board of Directors of SOAC. He depicts in this issue the challenges of this body for the coming years.

“The WAQSP will support the establishment of an ECOWAS Quality Award”

In parallel, the Commission is stepping up efforts to promote a “quality” culture in the region. In this context, the WAQSP will support the establishment of an ECOWAS Quality Award.

Indeed, the programme will support seven ECOWAS countries and Mauritania, which have no Awards, towards the organization of a first edition as soon as possible; similarly, necessary synergies will be implemented to capitalize on the experience of the UEMOA countries that already organize their Awards within the UEMOA Quality Award. This newsletter issue provides a summary of the conclusions of the validation workshop of the criteria for National Awards and the ECOWAS Quality Award held in January 2016 in Abidjan.

The new section “Activities of partners” highlights the key conclusions of the metrology workshop organized in Lomé in February by the ECOWAS/PTB Programme.

Finally, I am pleased to inform you that other actions pertaining to National Quality Policies for the benefit of Member States and the ECOWAS are well advanced. They will constitute one of the flagship themes of our next issue.

Happy reading!

“One of the key results of the WAQSP, one of the leading programmes supporting the implementation of ECOQUAL, is the promotion of an ECOWAS product certification Mark”





ECOWAS Quality Awards: Competition criteria finalized

► Group picture of the validation workshop of the competition criteria for the National and ECOWAS Quality Awards. Photo: WASQP

The West Africa Quality System Program (WAQSP) organized from 25 to 26 January 2016 at Hotel Belle Côte, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), a major workshop involving representatives of ECOWAS countries and Mauritania, UEMOA and ECOWAS Commissions and ECOWAS regional employers' organizations. This workshop aimed at defining and validating the harmonized criteria for both the National and the ECOWAS Quality Awards.

The principle of the establishment of a Regional Quality Award was enacted under Regulation C/REG.17/12/13 adopting the rules for the organization of the ECOWAS Quality Award. The meeting participants were required to analyse and adopt or amend the report of Ms. Edwige De Souza, international expert recruited by the WAQSP to draft the criteria for both the National and ECOWAS Quality Awards.

Mr. Emmanuel Tra BI IRIE, representing the Minister of Industry and Mines of Côte d'Ivoire, participated in the opening ceremony together with other high ranking officials including Mr. Mensan Lawson Hechelli, Director of Industry of the ECOWAS Commission, Mr. Issouf Ouattara, representative of UNIDO Côte d'Ivoire, and Mr. Aka Jean Joseph Kouassi, Chief Technical Advisor of the WAQSP. The UEMOA Commission was represented at the workshop by Mr. Salifou Issoufou, Head of the Technical Secretariat of the UEMOA Quality Award.

Officials supported this initiative at the heart of the quality promotion agenda in West Africa. In particular, they requested that efforts of all institutional actors and the private sector, including through their active participation in the promotion of the ECOWAS Quality Award, help improve the quality of products and services from the West African region.

Following two intense days of work led by the representative of the country presiding the ECOWAS Commission, Senegal, participants concluded that the National as well as the ECOWAS Quality Awards should endorse ISO 9001 (2015 version) and ISO 9004 (2009 version) criteria. However, the inclusion of the ECOWAS integration criteria is also foreseen. These should help consolidate the regional approach of the Award.

At country level, 4 levels of awards will be granted. In addition, two designation proposals for the awards were selected for each level, the final choice being left to the discretion of States (Commitment to quality, Mastery of quality, Encouragement for excellence, Excellence" or "Bronze-Silver-Gold-Diamond"). Only national companies admitted to Level 4 in their respective countries will be able to compete for the Regional Award.

Regarding the regional level, 5 awards are foreseen: the ECOWAS Quality Award and 4 special awards with the following labels: «Leadership, Product development, Resources Management and Stakeholders Orientation». A capacity building programme will assist the organization of these awards, specifically in countries with no similar prior experience.

The relevance of the ECOWAS Quality Award is evidenced by the emergence of a real concern for quality in countries where the practice of a National Quality Award is long established. Thus, Benin and Côte d'Ivoire indicated that their National Awards witnessed an increase in the number of certified companies in their respective countries. This confirms that despite financial impediments in their organization, these Awards do generate a significant enthusiasm by companies in the region for quality.

A roadmap was established to support the implementation of the Awards with the objective of launching the first edition of the ECOWAS Quality Award during the first quarter of 2017. The roadmap includes capacity building of all stakeholders, in particular in terms of organization and management of Awards.

Initiated in September 2014 for its current third phase, the West Africa Quality System Programme (WAQSP) is an ECOWAS programme financed by a European Union's grant of 12 million Euros. It receives technical support from UNIDO. The WAQSP aims to establish a framework for the development and operation of an appropriate and efficient quality infrastructure in order to facilitate intra-regional and international trade.

Product Certification: Senegal promotes NS Mark, Its national product certification Mark



From left to right. : Clemens Schroeter, Chief of the Economics, Trade and Governance Section of the Delegation of the European Union (EU) in Senegal; Mamadou Diop, General Secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Mines of Senegal; Victor Djemba, Representative of UNIDO in Senegal; Barama Sarr, Director General of the Senegalese Standards Association (ASN), Focal Point and Chairperson of the National Monitoring Committee (NMC) of the WAQSP Photo : WAQSP

Dakar, 21 January 2016 – The WAQSP, through its National Technical Coordination Unit (NTCU), held in Dakar on 21 January 2016, a promotional day for the NS product certification Mark, the national product certification scheme.

The objectives were to inform interested parties on the procedure for awarding the national product Mark coined “national certificate of conformity to Senegalese standards (NS)”, to raise awareness on product certification, and more importantly to stress the importance of this Mark for consumer protection and the promotion of exports of Senegalese products.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Mamadou Diop, General Secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Mines of Senegal, representing the Minister, Mr. Aly Ngouille Ndiaye. He shared the table of authorities with Mr. Victor Djemba, Representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal, Mr. Clemens Schroeter, Chief of the Economics, Trade and Governance Section of the Delegation of the European Union (EU) in Senegal, and Mr. Barama Sarr, Director General of the Senegalese Standards Association (ASN), Focal Point and Chairperson of the National Monitoring Committee (NMC) of the WAQSP. Mr. Aboubacry Baro, National Technical Coordinator (NTC) of the WAQSP, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the West African Accreditation System (SOAC) and Mr. Marcel Gbaguidi,

Principal Technical Expert (PTE) of the Regional Technical Coordination Unit (RTC) of the WAQSP based in Abuja, Nigeria also attended this meeting.

In front of representatives of local government authorities responsible for trade, industry and health, consumer associations, private employers, the media, to name a few, Mr. Diop said that by promoting the NS product certification Mark, the EU and UNIDO enacted the will of the President of the Republic of Senegal, His Excellency Macky Sall. He thus solemnly conveyed the acknowledgements of the latter and the gratitude of the Government of Senegal. As he recalled, “Aware of the challenges, the Government of Senegal had requested UNIDO, through the WAQSP, to support the country in defining its National Quality Policy, in order to mobilize the appropriate resources for the development of a National Quality Infrastructure, including the development of a product certification scheme, through the NS product certification Mark [Editor’s note]”. He also urged the ASN, in his dual capacity as National Focal Point agency for the WAQSP and national body for product certification, responsible for managing the NS Mark, “to further develop this activity that will provide support to flagship projects of the Emerging Senegal Plan” designed to guide the country’s public policy until 2035.

Pursuing, Mr. Djemba reiterated UNIDO’s commitment to support developing countries like Senegal to establish a sound quality infrastructure, including

product certification schemes that would allow them to better integrate international trade. He recalled that “in the context of free trade where tariff and non-tariff barriers are challenged, the quality of goods and services has become a determinant of the competitiveness of enterprises.” But, as he insisted, “this goes hand in hand with the increased recognition of the competency of conformity assessment bodies, particularly product certification bodies [Editor’s note]”. These observations were confirmed by Mr. Schroeter, who stressed that certification has become a matter of survival for economies of developing countries as “the ever increasing demands of consumers, the increased awareness of authorities on the need to protect their populations and their environment, as well as to comply to WTO requirements, including compliance to agreements on Technical Barriers to Trade or Sanitary and PhytoSanitary measures.” In cognizance of this, he said, the EU decided to grant the WAQSP, which covers the 15 ECOWAS countries and Mauritania, a grant of 7, 9 billion CFA over 4 years to support the implementation of the Regional Quality Policy (ECOQUAL) – one of the main outcomes of which is the establishment of the ECOWAS Product Certification Mark. In order to reach its maturity, the regional Mark needs to rely on national product certification bodies of the region, such as the ASN in Senegal.

Following the official speeches, Mr. Baro and Mr. Sarr gave two presentations, respectively on accreditation and certification. These enabled participants to better understand these topics. The ensuing discussion with

the audience provided them with the opportunity for better insights but also to express their concerns and understand the role expected from them in the promotion of the NS Mark.

For Mr. Baro, the existing setup is encouraging considering the fact that, by relying on inter-country synergies, about forty accredited laboratories in the region now make it possible to achieve reliable basic tests on food products, indispensable for export. These accredited laboratories, whose competence is internationally recognized, prove a major asset for the development of a recognized national product certification scheme, including the NS Mark; indeed, test certificates issued by laboratories are a crucial element of any product certification system. These certificates must therefore be beyond dispute to strengthen the credibility of the scheme and the associated national certificate of conformity.

In the end, this workshop is the starting point for the revitalization of product certification activities in Senegal which are still at infancy state – only a single NS certificate has been awarded to date: raw peanut oil. In the future, the ASN intends to develop as a priority the certification of drinking water and reinforcement steel, two national priorities within the framework of consumer protection.

The meeting was covered by the press, national television (RTS 1) and the Pan African News Agency (APA News).



Overview of participants - Photo: WAQSP

Benin - National Certification Day: ABeNOR promotes the NB Mark

Testimony of Mrs KINHOUANDE (certified company MOOV Benin)



On 22 December 2015, the Beninese Agency for Standardization and Quality Management (ABeNOR) Focal Point agency for the West Africa Quality System Programme (WAQSP), presented the certification process of the Beninese mark of conformity to standards, the NB Mark. At the same time, ABeNOR awarded the first official certificate of conformity of “soft drinks” products to the CEO of Lakhy Industry enterprise. This happened in front of 250 participants at a ceremony held in the presence of authorities of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Benin,

represented by Mr. Adam Ahanchede, Chief of Staff, and Mr. Djoulé Sabi Boum, Legal Technical Advisor of the Ministry and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of ABeNOR. Mr. Ahanchede used this opportunity to express to the European Union, ECOWAS and UNDP representing UNIDO in Benin, the sincere gratitude of the Minister for their significant contribution to the development of the national quality infrastructure.

The ceremony also provided a forum for two certified companies and a 4 star hotel to share experiences in

the field of quality: mobile company MOOV, winner of the 2014 UEMOA Quality Award in the large businesses category, mineral water production company FIFA, winner of the 2014 UEMOA Quality Award in the medium businesses category and Benin Royal hotel, recently rated 4 star hotel in the month of December 2015, host of the ceremony.

This ceremony recorded six communications on the following themes:

- The various aspects of Quality Infrastructure in Benin, by Gabin Degbey, Director of ABeNOR;
- Quality in the Hospitality industry: Control and certification, by Georges Legba, Director of Tourist Establishments in Benin;
- Product certification in ABeNOR: Case study of LIBS company in Benin, by Youssouf Mama Sika, Chief of the Certification Department of ABeNOR and National Technical Coordinator (NTC) of WAQSP in Benin;
- The role of a laboratory in trade: Cases of an accredited metrology laboratory and a testing laboratory, by Mireille Dehoue, Hygiene, Water and Food Section (SHEA), National Health Laboratory (LNS);

- The role of metrology in consumer protection and enhancement of products, by Gabriel Ahissou, Metrologist;

- ISO 9001:2008 certification: The situation in Benin, by Edwige de Souza, Intertek representative in Benin.

After the meeting, three major resolutions were taken:

- Beninese companies will constantly be informed about quality standards held at ABeNOR, including on the opportunity to get the Kaweru certification “Hospitality in public services”;
- A database of certified companies will be established;
- Certification standards for small “maquis” (small local restaurants) will be developed.

Earlier during the day, a field trip was organized. It audited thirty restaurants in Cotonou that were given for the occasion hygiene kits (apron, towels) to improve their practices and ensure the quality of their products. Thirty public companies have benefited from on-site coaching on the Kaweru standard, with the aim of preparing for certification to this standard.



From left to right : Adam Ahanchede Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Benin; Youssouf Mama Sika NTC of WAQSP in Benin; A certified company recipient; Gabin Degbey, Director of ABeNOR, Focal Point of WAQSP in Benin



SOAC perfectly fits in the ECOWAS accreditation system

Aboubacry Baro

President of the Board committee of SOAC

SYSTEME OUEST AFRICAIN D'ACCREDITATION (SOAC)

President Baro Aboubacry invites stakeholders and beneficiaries to better ownership

Today, the issue of quality in general, and accreditation in particular, has become a major challenge for the economic and social development of Africa, said the President of the Board of Directors of the West African Accreditation System (SOAC), Mr. Aboubacry Baro, during an interview.

WAQSP - The implementation of the SOAC was supported by technical and financial partners, including the European Union and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) as part of quality programmes. Could you tell us more about these programmes in your capacity as National Technical Coordinator in Senegal during phases 2 and 3.

«SOAC, one of the major results of Quality Programs of the subregion»

WAQSP - Mr. President, what is the West African Accreditation System (SOAC)

A. Baro - SOAC is a regional accreditation body born from the vision and leadership of the UEMOA Commission. One should recall that accreditation is defined as "an attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks". In plain English, accreditation is essential to guarantee the quality of products and services to consumers in a given geographical area. The general rule is to have one accreditation body per country. In UEMOA, given the limited human, technical and financial resources, it was decided to establish a single regional body to serve all Member States.

A. Baro - Indeed the role played by technical and financial partners such as the EU and UNIDO in the development of accreditation in the region has been decisive. In fact since 2001, the European Union (EU) has been supporting West Africa in formulating commonly called Quality Programmes executed by UNIDO. First dedicated to the UEMOA region from 2001 to 2005, with a budget of 14 million €, this support was extended to ECOWAS and Mauritania from 2007 to 2012 with a budget of 16.9 million €. In 2014, based on the success of previous phases, the EU renewed its financial commitment, through the West Africa Quality System Programme (WAQSP), with a total of 12 million €. The ECOWAS Commission provides leadership for the whole region. The main objective of the WAQSP is to support the implementation of the ECOWAS Quality Policy and Infrastructure.

«EU and UNIDO support quality programmes in West Africa since 2001»

I would like to take the opportunity of this interview to express our gratitude anew to these two long-standing strategic partners for quality in the region.

WAQSP - How have these quality programmes affected the development of SOAC?

A. Baro - One of the flagship results of phases 1 and 2 of the quality programmes is beyond any doubt the creation of SOAC (phase 1) and the assistance provided in its operationalization (phase 2). Indeed, a number of concrete actions were taken, including the development of a business plan and draft statutes, as well as the training of candidate assessors at regional level and in member states. Another major result was the identification and training of resource persons for the implementation of accreditation committees in order to establish a decision-making process for granting accreditation consistent with international best practices, etc. It is also important to note that accreditation covers multiple and varied areas of activities; therefore, it was necessary to identify priority sectors. This is what the UEMOA Commission did by selecting the food industry and medical biology field.

WAQSP - We get the idea that quality gradually extended to the whole of the West African region. What role will SOAC now play in the ECOWAS accreditation system?

A. Baro - SOAC perfectly fits in the ECOWAS accreditation system. As a matter of fact, article 7.2. of Regulation C/REG.19/12/13 establishing the regional quality infrastructure states that, "For the sake of rationalization of resources and regional harmonization of accreditation procedures, the regional accreditation system [of ECOWAS, Editor's note] will support the establishment of regional accreditation bodies involving at least two Member States". This is the case of SOAC which covers, as you know, eight economies in the

region. With the establishment of accreditation bodies in Nigeria (NINAS) and Ghana, ECOWAS is thus ensured to cover an array of accreditation needs in the region, through the achievement of partnership agreements with other countries who do not have accreditation bodies. At SOAC level, such cooperation agreements are already foreseen: a resolution of the Constitutive General Assembly held in Abidjan on 15 and 16 December 2015 mandated the Board to develop partnerships with ECOWAS and other West African countries not part of SOAC

WAQSP - If the demonstration is now made that accreditation is important, the fact remains that the topic is highly technical and, as such, not appealing to the layman. What can be done to reverse this situation?

A. Baro - It is true to say that accreditation is a highly technical field. I therefore agree that we have to simplify our approach in order to ensure support of the masses. Indeed the economic development of our continent is highly correlated to the development of accreditation which is to some extent one of the foundations of sovereignty.

If technical and financial partners and some specific initiatives have today resulted in more or less forty accredited laboratories in the region, it is important to note that these accreditations were issued by organizations based outside of ECOWAS; in fact, neither SOAC, nor NINAS, nor the Ghanaian accreditation body are yet fully operational. So, if nothing is done to accelerate their operability, proof of the quality of services and products consumed locally or exported, will continue to be assessed outside the region.

World Accreditation Day

9 June 2016



www.publicsectorassurance.org

Accreditation: A global tool to support Public Policy



«World accreditation Day is celebrated annually on June 9»

source : www.ilac.org

This is why I insist on the necessity to operationalize the overall accreditation system of the region, including the SOAC. Another important issue that we will have to look into will be the accessibility of accreditation services by conformity assessment bodies of the Union, both in terms of cost competitiveness and proximity of service.

«It is necessary to operationalize the accreditation system in the region»

As you see, the stakes are tremendous. This is why “to reverse the situation”, and make accreditation accessible to everyone, strong political commitment is first and foremost indispensable. Unless there is strong political ownership of quality issues, and particularly accreditation, it is unlikely that we record any major progress in this area, despite significant technical and financial support of our partners. In order to achieve this, we need to focus on political awareness campaigns aimed at parliamentarians, but also on the media, civil society, consumer associations, etc. so that all these stakeholders convey the message in a comprehensive way. Another aspect we need to focus on: our education system in order to better educate people on the issues that affect decisively the future of our socio-economic activities.

WAQSP - “Ensuring the existence in the region of evaluation capacity of quality of services and products consumed locally or exported”, does that mean that we have to disengage from the international level, including from international accreditation bodies?

A. Baro - Precisely not. The promotion of our exports undeniably needs linkages to the international level. SOAC cannot evolve in a vacuum. It will strive to become a member of regional and international accreditation cooperation bodies such as the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC), International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

At this level, accreditation bodies, after a rigorous peer-evaluation process driven by accreditation cooperations, sign mutual recognition agreements that allow to confer an African (AFRAC) or international (ILAC/ IAF) range to a certificate established by the SOAC.

«It needs a very strong commitment of the authorities»

WAQSP - A call to action?

A. Baro - After fifteen years of nonstop effort in the field of quality infrastructure in general and accreditation in particular, the first results are certainly here but remain very fragile. Therefore, notwithstanding the assistance of technical and financial partners such as the EU and UNIDO, they deserve the backing of all stakeholders to be consolidated and sustained. Therefore, I appeal for greater involvement in the development of these strategic sectors by, to name but a few:

- our politicians, for the adoption and implementation of appropriate regulatory texts;
- the mass media, for an increased dissemination of quality culture;
- end customers, through civil society and consumer associations, as sentinels in charge of alerting public opinion and increasing demand for quality products and services;
- the private sector, one of the main actors involved in this issue, in order to ensure greater competitiveness of our businesses, increasingly shaken in a context marked by the various regional and international commitments of our States, including the entry into force of the ECOWAS Common External Tariff or the ongoing negotiations of the Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU;
- and finally the UEMOA Commission, in order to fast-track the implementation of the roadmap for the full operationalisation of SOAC.

PARTNERS ACTIVITIES



Togo - ECOWAS / PTB Metrology Programme: Status meeting & planning of activities (2016-2017)

From 3 to 4 February 2016, ECOWAS and the German National Metrology Institute (Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt - PTB) organized a meeting in Togo to determine the schedule of their metrology program activities for 2016 - 2017. Mr. Badjibassa Foguebara, representative of the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Private Sector and Tourism of the Republic of Togo, who opened the meeting, thanked the PTB and ECOWAS for their support to the region in the field metrology. The meeting was attended by Mr. Lawson-Mensan Hechelli, Director of the ECOWAS industry, Mr. Aka Kouassi, Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) of the West Africa Quality System Programme (WAQSP), Mr. Florian Paffenholz, project coordinator of metrology Programme ECOWAS / PTB, representing the German side and Mamadou Syll Kebe, Director of the industrial redeployment of the Ministry of Industry and Mines of Senegal, Chairman of the meeting.

After recalling that the positive evaluation in 2015 of the first phase led to the extension of the program until July 2017, Mr. Paffenholz informed that Dr. Barbara Siegmund is the new Head of the SSA Working Group. Then, an inventory of the project was made. Overall, it is noted: a material support for the benefit of three (3) countries, a sensitization workshop on the development plan started and which will be continued in 2016, a training of trainers (two members per country) and an inter-laboratory comparison in Mass (in progress). The results of an independent evaluation recommended the revision of the Steering Committee and the increase in PTB consulting capabilities. In conclusion, Mr. Paffenholz said the conduct of the first phase of the program has not lived up to expectations. He also informed participants in the plenary session that the objectives, cooperation and

funding of the program remained the same as during the first phase, but the implementation methodology has changed.

The new program approach is: improve institutional capacity; strengthen strategic skills; improve the technical capabilities in metrology. Furthermore, the working plan 2016 -2017 should focus on three (3) main activities: skill development of national metrology Institutes (NMI); the development of a regional metrology strategy; and finally the improvement of basic metrological services. Thus, three (3) working groups were created to propose development plans in order to adapt and refocus the new phase of the program in accordance with these guidelines.

Following him, Mr. Aka Kouassi, representative of UNIDO, presented the objectives and expected results of WAQSP. To recap, the WAQSP is funded by the European Union to the tune of 12 million € and is executed by UNIDO. He also shared activities ongoing, including: the setting up of a database on quality infrastructure for the ECOWAS region; the preparation of national quality awards & ECOWAS Quality Award; the setting up of a community advisory council for metrology, ECOMET; and finally the cooperation project between WAQSP and PTB, in the areas of technical assistance but also the development of metrology laboratories in the region. Cooperation highly welcomed by participants in the voice of Mr. Kebe.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the participants paid a working visit to the Directorate of Packaging and Legal Metrology (DCML) Togo. They visited the mass and volume laboratories and have seen the progress over the years.



NATIONAL LABELS ARE ISSUED IN WEST AFRICA



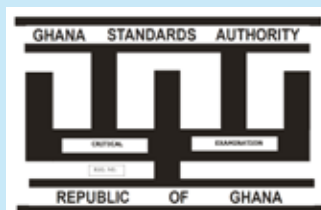
In BENIN

1. NB, Benin's national Product-Certification Mark was created in 2010;
2. The ABeNOR (Agence Béninoise de la Normalisation et de la Promotion de la Qualité) is responsible for the Product-certification Scheme ;
3. To date, following products have benefitted from this label: medicinal soaps, asbestos-free tiles, shea butter, organic pineapple juice, normal pineapple juice, soft drinks, and mineral water.



In GHANA

1. GHANA STANDARDS, the national product certification Mark was created in 1970;
2. The Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) is the national statutory body empowered to undertake conformity assessment activities, including product certification of locally manufactured products.
3. The label is affixed to approximately to local products as follow: agricultural and food products, cosmetics, building and construction material, electrical equipment, etc.



In CÔTE D'IVOIRE

1. NI, Côte d'Ivoire's national Product-Certification Mark was established by Decree No. 95-372 of 30 March 1995 on Standardization and National Standards Compliance system;
2. CODINORM, the national standardisation body, is responsible for the Product-certification Scheme;
3. Two product families benefit from the NI label:
 - Electric wires and cables;
 - Wood packaging for exported products;
 About thirty products have been awarded the certificate.



In NIGER

1. The Nigerien Product-certification scheme was established by Decree No. 71/MMDI/AVCN of 5 June 2014.
2. The Scheme is managed by the AVCN (Agence Nationale de Vérification et de Conformité aux Normes);
3. Certified products range from KILICHI (dried meat) to white sesame and include Cowpea, Cassava flour, "DEGUE" (millet flour & curd) & Bulb onion.



In SENEGAL

1. NS: Senegal's national Product-Certification Mark was established by Decree 2002 - 746 of 19 July 2002
2. The ASN (Association Sénégalaise de Normalisation) is managing the Product-certification Mark;
3. So far, only one product is certified: raw peanut oil.



DID YOU KNOW?



OVERVIEW OF THE THE BODIES SUPPORTING COOPERATION IN ACCREDITATION AT AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

Accreditation

Accreditation is the recognition by a third party of the competence of a body in a given field. It can be voluntary, to showcase one's competence, or obligatory under certain regulations.

It is based on standardized criteria defining the requirements in terms of technical competence and implementation of a quality management system.

The role of regional and international accreditation cooperation's organisms

The main role of these organisms is to harmonize accreditation practices implemented by national or multi-economy accreditation bodies.

The harmonization of accreditation practices gives rise to the development and publication of guidelines for the application and interpretation of standards based on the conclusions of working groups involving national & multi-economy accreditation bodies.

The harmonization process is guaranteed by the organization of peer evaluation underlying the mutual recognition agreements.

Some bodies supporting cooperation in accreditation at Regional and International levels

ILAC and IAF

ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Co-operation) and IAF (International Accreditation Forum) are global accreditation cooperation organisms working respectively for the recognition of accreditation of laboratories and inspection bodies (ILAC) and the accreditation of certification bodies (IAF), via evaluation of skills of national or multi-economy accreditation bodies. ILAC and IAF have established and maintain multilateral mutual recognition agreements.

AFRAC

The African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) was created in September 2010 during a Constitutive General Assembly held in Cairo, Egypt. The main members of AFRAC are accreditation bodies operating on the continent and involved in the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies (testing or metrology laboratories, inspection bodies, product, system or person certification bodies)



www.ilac.org



www.iaf.nu



www.intra-frac.com

WAQSP IN A FEW WORDS

West Africa Quality System program

Support for the implementation
of the ECOWAS Quality Policy

FUNDER

European Union

FUNDING AMOUNT

€ 12 000 000

BENEFICIARIES

Regional Level

UEMOA Commission, ECOWAS Commission

National Level

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinée-Bissau, Guinée, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sénégal, Sierra Leone, Togo & Mauritanie.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

UNIDO

ISSUES

Quality Infrastructure : Quality policy, Accreditation, Metrology, Standardisation, Conformity assessment, Quality promotion

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