

## **BACKGROUND PAPER**

### **THE WEST AFRICA QUALITY SYSTEM PROGRAMME (PHASE 3)**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

The West Africa Quality Programme (WAQP) was instituted with the overall objective of strengthening regional economic integration and trade by creating an environment that facilitates compliance with international trade rules and technical regulations. The WAQP ran for five years (2001-2005) and expanded from the original eight member states of the Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA) in Phase 1 to include the remaining seven ECOWAS member states and Mauritania in Phase 2 (2007-2013).

Following a successful first phase, the second phase of the West Africa Quality Programme (WAQP) was launched in 2007 for a period of 5 years. Through the programme tangible results outlined below were achieved.

1. A regional quality policy (ECOQUAL) as well as some national quality policies based on ECOQUAL were adopted
2. A regional quality infrastructure scheme was established
3. Regional standards harmonisation programme was commenced. Till date 27 standards in the area of food and agriculture have been approved and adopted as regional standards
4. Twenty one (21) testing/calibration laboratories were accredited as per ISO/IEC 17025, General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories and ISO 15189 *Medical laboratories-Particular requirements for quality and competence*.
5. Twenty (20) enterprises were certified to ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems – Requirements and ISO 22000 Food safety management systems - Requirements for any organization in the food chain
6. More than 4000 staff members of laboratories, inspection bodies and private companies were trained on ISO/IEC 17025 ISO 22000, ISO 9001 and ISO 17020 Conformity assessment - Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection

In order to deepen regional integration and consolidate the implementation of the quality infrastructure, it was decided to further support the region, hence Phase 3 of the programme.

Phase 3 of the programme has been termed as the West Africa Quality System Programme (WAQSP-3) to emphasize the need to develop or strengthen National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) in the ECOWAS region. The components of the NQI are Standardization, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology (SQAM). These pillars are vital for market access of products and services produced by enterprises in the West African Region.

## **2.0 Overall objective of the WAQS programme (Phase 3)**

The overall objective of the programme is to support the implementation of the regional quality policy of ECOWAS aiming at **“establishing a framework for the development and operation of suitable, relevant, efficient and effective quality infrastructures to facilitate intra-regional and international trade, protect the consumer and the environment, and promote sustainable economic development”**.

### **2.1 Specific objectives of the programme**

The programme covers four specific objectives as follows:

Specific objective 1: To enable relevant stakeholders in countries to make use of the regional quality infrastructure and harmonised legal framework.

Specific objective 2: To facilitate regional and international trade by providing the Private sector access to strategically prioritised and harmonized standards

Specific objective 3: To enable the Private and Public sectors gain access to a network of accredited and competitive conformity assessment services provided in the region

Specific objective 4: To entrench quality consciousness within the Private sector

### **3.0 Components and Expected Results**

#### **Quality Policy:**

- Harmonization of national quality policies with ECOQUAL
- Adoption of standards and national laws on consumer protection and information
- Establishment of a financial mechanism to sustain the West Africa Quality Infrastructure.

#### **Standardization:**

- Support the regional standards harmonization mechanism (ECOSHAM) and ensure the adoption of harmonized standards by member countries
- Strengthen National Standards Bodies of member countries

#### **Accreditation:**

- Establishment of a Regional accreditation scheme

#### **Metrology:**

- Establishment of a Regional metrology and calibration scheme

#### **Conformity Assessment:**

- Establishment of a Regional Product certification scheme
- Strengthening of conformity assessment bodies and services

#### **Quality Conciousness:**

- Creation and strengthening of quality centres for awareness of quality conciousness in the private sector
- Establishment of National and ECOWAS quality award schemes
- Establishment of a Regional database on quality

### **4.0 Funding and Implementation**

The European Union (EU) funded Phase 1 and 2 of the West Africa Quality Programme. Following the success of the first two phases of the WAQP, the EU decided to continue supporting the development of the quality infrastructure in the Region and allocated a sum of EUR 12,000,000 for the current phase of the programme.

Phase 3 of the programme is being implemented with technical support from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). This phase will run from 2014 to 2018.

## **5.0 National Structures for Implementing WAQSP Phase 3**

A National Monitoring Committee (NMC) which is a consultative structure composed of key National stakeholders from public, private and consumer groups has been set up by the Ministry of Trade and Industry to monitor and oversee the smooth implementation of the WAQSP Phase 3. The Chairman for the NMC is Mr. Robert Baffour Tandoh, Director for Standards at MOTI. The Vice Chairman for the NMC is Mr. Kofi Kappito of the Consumer Protection Agency.

The Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) was nominated by the ECOWAS Commission as the National Focal Point (NFP) for the Program to facilitate and ensure the proper implementation of the programme at the National level. Ghana Standards Authority appointed Mrs. Prudence Asamoah-Bonti as the Head of NFP. She also acts as the Secretary to the NMC.

In order to ensure efficient coordination of the programme activities, the GSA has established in accordance with its Terms of Reference a National Technical Coordination Unit (NTCU) which will be responsible for the daily coordination of the National, administrative, financial and technical follow-up of the implementation of the programme at the country level. The Head of the NTCU is Mr John Oppong-Otoo and the Assistant Head is Mr James Hammond.

### **5.1 Members of the National Monitoring Committee**

1. Mr. Robert Baffour Tandor, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Accra (Chairman)
2. Mr. Kofi Kapito Owusuhene, Consumer Protection Agency, Accra (Vice Chairman)
3. Mrs. Prudence Asamoah-Bonti, Ghana Standards Authority, Accra (Secretary)
4. Mr. Lambert Abusah, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Accra
5. Mrs. Martha Gyansa-Lutterodt, Ministry of Health, Accra
6. Mrs. Milly Kyofa-Boamah, MOFA-Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate, Accra
7. Mr. John Awuni, Importers and Exporters Association of Ghana
8. Mrs. Fiona Asafu-Adjaye, Association of Ghana Industries, Accra
9. Mr. Y. Barry, Ghana Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Accra
10. Mr. Nana Osei, Bonsu, Private Enterprise Foundation, Ghana
11. Mr. Christian Peters, Head of Economic and Trade Section, EU Delegation To Ghana
12. Mrs. Wilhemina Quarcoopome, Food and Drugs Authority, Accra
13. Mr. Ebenezer N. Kotey, CSIR-Institute for Industrial Research, Accra
14. Dr. Lawrence D. Abbey, CSIR-Food Research Institute, Accra
15. Mr E.N.A Arde-Acquah, Ghana Standards Authority, Accra

16. Mrs. Nana Pokuaa Asare-Twerefour, National Codex Contact Point, Ghana Standards Authority, Accra
17. Mr. Richard K. Dollah, Ghana Standards Authority, Metrology Division, Accra
18. Mr. James Hammond, Assistant Head, National Technical Coordination Unit, Ghana Standards Authority, Accra
19. Mr. John Oppong-Otoo, Head, National Technical Coordination Unit, Ghana Standards Authority, Accra

## **6.0 Main Beneficiaries of the Programme**

The main beneficiaries of the Programme are:

- ECOWAS and WAEMU Commissions
- National Authorities
- National metrology organizations
- National standards bodies
- Conformity assessment bodies (analysis and testing laboratories, certification or inspection bodies)
- Professional and Trade Associations
- Independent organizations for quality promotion, quality consulting firms and consultants
- Consumer Associations

The national programme will be launched on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at the Alisa Hotel, Accra by the Honorable Minister of Trade and Industry.

For further information on the West Africa Quality System Program Phase 3, please contact the following address:

**The National Technical Coordination Unit**

**West Africa Quality Systems Programme Phase 3**

**Ghana Standards Authority**

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