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Republic of The Gambia



UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



— West Africa Competitiveness Programme



Increasing competitiveness through enhanced quality and compliance along the onion value chain



The West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP)

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. WACOMP is funded through a EUR 116 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 low levels of competitiveness of enterprises and value-chain integration at regional and national levels in order to scale-up sustainable structural transformation.

The overall objective of the programme is to strengthen the competitiveness of West Africa and to enhance the ECOWAS countries' integration into the regional and international trading system, including the newly

established African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

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

The action is being carried out in the ECOWAS member states (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Republic of Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo) and in Mauritania, through national components in each country, as well as a regional one. The country components are being implemented by selected specialized agencies. WACOMP in The Gambia is being co-implemented by UNIDO and by United Purpose, an international development charity, in coordination with the Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment (MoTIE) in The Gambia.

WACOMP's Overall Objectives

Specific Objective 1



Improve the performance, growth and contribution to industry, regional trade and exports of selected Value Chains

Country level

- Competitiveness at firm-level is improved, especially through the Cluster's approach.
- Intermediate organisations of the selected Value Chains are strengthened and service delivery to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises is improved and expanded (quality standards, new green solutions, market access, etc..).

Regional level

- Better regional linkages among selected VCs actors are promoted and key regional intermediary organisations are supported.
- Regional quality infrastructure system is strengthened, with a view to promote environmental issue.

Specific Objective 2



Improve the climate for business at national and regional levels

Country level

- Regional policies in favour of competitiveness are mainstreamed in the country and help enable a business-friendly environment.

Regional level

- The regional policy and framework to improve competitiveness are harmonised, formulated and monitored.
- The capacity of the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions and Member States to successfully manage, coordinate and monitor the programme is strengthened.



WACOMP in The Gambia

Forty-four years ago, The Gambia and the European Union (EU) began its Framework of Cooperation. In 2018, The Gambia became the 14th West African country to sign the region-to-region Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the EU. Today, the EU remains the most open market for The Gambia owing to the trade preferences granted to it. In fact, the country can tout a Gross State Product (GSP) utilization rate that is not only among the highest in the region but among all African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) countries; this highlights the level of commitment the present administration has towards accelerating trade growth through prioritization of agricultural productivity and diversification.

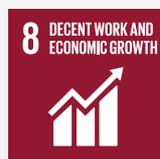
To improve the livelihoods of vulnerable smallholders, development cooperation aims to facilitate human welfare and human capital formation integral to trade competitiveness such that underserved, rural regions are not as susceptible to exogenous shocks like erratic weather patterns or pandemic-induced disruptions to the supply chain.

WACOMP in The Gambia is implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in close concert with United Purpose, with the aim to support The Gambia in the development of the horticultural value chain and the sector at large,

thereby strengthening import substitution for staple horticultural products like onions and stabilizing food security. At present, The Gambia imports more than 70 percent of its local demand for onions and low in-country capacity for product grading, weighing, and transformation or value addition has led to much post-harvest loss and missed opportunities.

The project aims to strengthen the technical competencies, capabilities and capacities of quality infrastructure institutions and conformity assessment service providers so that the system as a whole and its composite institutions better respond to agri-food sector needs. An effective quality infrastructure system is necessary to provide confidence to buyers, users and regulators that products are compliant with market requirements. The project also aims to strengthen compliance capacity of upstream value chain actors such that products meet mandatory and voluntary quality parameters, including that of food safety, which is a non-negotiable credence attribute for consumers. As holistic value chain development can only be achieved through collective and coordinated effort, United Purpose will be an important ally to UNIDO in this endeavour to strengthen inter-connectivity and collaboration between value chain actors.

This project contributes to the achievements of the following Sustainable Development Goals



Gender equality and women empowerment will be enforced at all levels of the project.

Logic of intervention

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 FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ARE TO BE IMPLEMENTED:

Output 1

Competitiveness at firm-level is improved, especially through the cluster approach.

1

Increased onion value-chain (VC) compliance and performance, leading to expansion of market access.

- 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.

Output 2

Intermediate organizations of the selected VC are strengthened and service delivery to MSME is improved and expanded.

2

Strengthened technical capacity and competence of the Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA), The Gambia Standards Bureau (TGSB) and the other relevant institutions of the quality infrastructure and the coordination between them.

- 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.

3

Strengthened technical capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and related services in respect of the implementation of food quality and safety standards at primary production.

- 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.

Horticulture Value Chain in The Gambia

Main bottlenecks

Responses

Production

Levels of quality and productivity

Compliance with quality requirements

Strengthened cooperation between institutions and the private sector, especially farmer-based associations

Lack of storage facilities

Establishment and operationalization of shared onion calibration/storage facilities.

Processing

Low/no added value to the product

Provision of processing equipment and shared services to associations and/or marketing federations.

Training, counselling and support to a number of pilot processing enterprises on process control

Marketing

Limited options to market the product

Support to increase business opportunities and linkages

Poor packaging

Assistance/coaching to improve packaging

Level of linkages along the VC

Promotion of marketing platforms/facilities to associations and/or marketing federations

Promotion of linkages for the VC in line with the Government policy to buy local for the national School Feeding Programme

Production and dissemination of information, education and communication materials on business performance and linkages between smallholders and markets.

Strategy to curb dumping and promote leveraging for the small holder farmers in the onion sector

Cross-cutting issues

Limited extension services to ensure appropriate plant protection and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)

Support the inspection and quarantine services of the Plant Protection Services and promote sustainability over time through a train-the-trainers approach

Support international accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020 for the inspection units of the Plant Protection Services

Upskilling of the Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA) inspectors

Limited food safety inspections

Furnishing of FSQA inspection units with inspection and sampling equipment

Lack of testing laboratories - poor food safety

Support to selected testing labs with potential to provide the testing service for the needs of the onion, tomato, pepper and other relevant horticulture products

Competitiveness

Beneficiaries

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and producers

The Gambia Standards Bureau (TGSB)

The Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA)

Other actors and stakeholders along the onion and horticulture value chain

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

Producer Associations

Business Associations

At a glance

Donor

European Union

Duration

48 months

Main counterpart

Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment (MoTIE)

Co-implementing agencies

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and United Purpose (UP)

Budget

€4,000,000, of which €2,350,000 is implemented by UNIDO



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