

WACOMP-GM NEWSLETTER

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The Gambia



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The Gambia



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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).

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FOREWORD

Mr. Bernard Bau

UNIDO WACOMP-GM Project Manager



Dear readers,

With much delight, I wish to present to you the 6th edition of the West Africa Competitiveness Programme – The Gambia (WACOMP-GM) Newsletter. The project is implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), with funding from the European Union (EU). This publication chronicles the project's activities, achievements, challenges, and testimonials from our esteemed beneficiaries.

The Gambia produces about 20% of its total onion consumption. And even so, a large chunk of it is lost before the producers see a profit. They are grappling with several post-harvest challenges, and at the heart of this menace is the absence of a curing and storage facility. This is now the past for the women of Berefet in the West Coast Region, Nanaba, and Jahuar Mandinka in the Central River Region. The project constructed three curing, packaging, and storage facilities, with a capacity to store 20 tons at any given time while another lot of harvested onions from the field is being cured. This pioneering initiative is expected to directly benefit 700 women and 28 men onion growers.

In this edition, we share a story of how we are promoting the practice of weight and measures in horticultural production. We have supplied weighing scales to 120 gardens across the country and followed up with numerous trainings aimed at helping women effectively operate and maintain the machines. Aside from complying with best practices and generating more income from sales, these precision scales are helping women collect relevant data and utilize it in making informed decisions. You will also find the testimony of Gibairou, a physically-challenged onion producer whose income increased exponentially as a result of our interventions in her garden. Her story, and many other success stories like hers, keep motivating us in increasing competitiveness and compliance along the horticulture value chain.

Another key highlight of this edition is an insight into the project's contribution in strengthening the country's food safety and quality systems by developing the National Food Safety and Quality Policy, providing equipment to the Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA) and training of its technicians to efficiently execute their crucial mandate.

We are at the final stages of drafting the country's first-ever National Laboratory Policy. This will guide the development of the required laboratory capacity to address identified needs and also provide guidance on the efficient allocation of laboratory-related resources within the national quality infrastructure system.

More of these stories are in this edition and at this juncture, I would like to welcome you to take a deep dive into the stories we have prepared for your reading pleasure.

Happy reading!

Groundbreaking: UNIDO Constructs Gambia's First Onion Curing and Storage Facilities



President of Jahuar Mandinka Garden, Kumba Jallow, happily posed for a photo in front of shelves curing her onions.

The Gambia produces about 20% of its total onion consumption. And even so, a large chunk of it is lost before the producers see a profit. They are grappling with several post-harvest challenges, and at the heart of this menace is the absence of a curing and storage facility. For the women of Berefet in the West Coast Region, Nanaba, and Jahuar Mandinka in the Central River Region, this seemingly unending cry is now a thing of the past.

With funding from the European Union, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization's (UNIDO) West Africa

Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP) in The Gambia has constructed three curing, packaging, and storage facilities, offering hope and a new lease of life to the producers of these communities.

For decades, these beneficiaries, after every harvest, find themselves with a large quantity of onions that they must put on the market as they do not have adequate storage facilities. As a result, they are compelled to sell at reduced prices or risk losing their produce at all. First of its kind in the country's 4-decade onion production history, the facilities are 37.7 meters long and 15.6 meters wide, with two compartments: one for curing and sorting harvested onions after field drying and the other for grading, weighing, packaging, labeling, coding, and storage.

With a capacity to store 20 tons at any given time while another lot of harvested onions from the field is being cured, this pioneering initiative is expected to directly benefit 700 women and 28 men onion growers.

"We used to store our harvested onions in empty spaces in our rooms and even under our beds. We did not have space to even cure them; we just harvest and pile them in the limited spaces we have," said Kumba Jallow of Jahuar Mandinka village, whose garden now has a standard curing and storage facility. She expressed optimism that their income will significantly increase this season as the facility will provide them with an opportunity to properly cure, sort, store, and sell their onions at their convenience.

As President of the Garden, Kumba carries a huge burden of not just leading a producer group of 175, but also the continued search for remedies to the challenges they grapple with. In addition to the facility, UNIDO WACOMP supplied empty onion bags, pallets, sewing machines, and weighting machines to help add value to their produce and increase their competitiveness. Numerous trainings on best post-harvest handling practices were provided to onion producers from 120 gardens across the country.

“The women used to cure their onions under a tree and then store them in their homes. With the promise of a storage facility last year, onion production has significantly increased this year,” recalled Binta Daffeh, the Agricultural Extension Officer supervising Berefet Garden.

She commended the strong leadership of the garden and assured that the facility would be judiciously utilized and properly maintained for generations to come.

“UNIDO and the EU are complementing the efforts of The Gambia. As a ministry, we wish to develop the vegetable sector so that it can be more beneficial for the producers. This store will go a long way in increasing the quality of the onions and attracting higher prices in the markets,” said the Director of Agriculture at the West Coast Region, Bakary Gassama.

During a visit to the facility in Berefet, Lumana Kamashi, the Development Cooperation Officer of the EU Delegation in The Gambia, was overly delighted over the completion of this milestone. Her office, she said, is proud to be associated with the development, expressing optimism that the new facilities will exponentially boost onion production and enhance the competitiveness of the gardens.

For his part, UNIDO Project Administrator Christian Lasser noted that the facilities will increase the competitiveness of the beneficiary gardens through enhanced quality and compliance along the onion value chain. He credited the cordial cooperation that exists between the project and the government of The Gambia, saying the facilities will go far enough in complementing government efforts in respect of the implementation of food quality and safety standards at primary production.



The outlook of the onion curing and storage facility in Jahuar Mandinka, CRR.



Onion bulbs placed on selves to cure before weighing, packing and storage.



A happy onion producer standing at the storage component of the facility where measured and bagged onions are packed.

Would-be Beneficiaries of WACOMP-GM Onion Storage Facilities on Study Tour at Berefet



Onion producers from Pakau Njogu familiarizing themselves with the onion storage facility in Berefet.

Women onion producers in Kiang Nema and Pakau Njogu on Monday, June 24, 2024, embarked on a study tour of the onion curing and storage facility at Berefet Women's Garden.

The facility was built by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) under the West Africa Competitiveness Programme—The Gambia (WACOMP-GM), with support from the European Union. The WACOMP-GM project constructed two other storage facilities in Nanaba and Jahaur Mandinka in the Central River Region (CRR), with an extra two that will be constructed in Kiang Nema in the Lower River Region (LRR) and Paku Njogu in the North Bank Region (NBR).

The storage center serves the triple role of curing, packaging, and storing the onions,

which can be preserved in quality conditions for months. The aim of the visit was to create a platform where onion producers from the two communities could see the storage facility in Berefet and learn from the users how they operate and manage the facility in compliance with best practices.

Malamin Drammeh, the UNIDO National Horticulture Expert, commended the people of Berefet for sharing their knowledge for their fellow women producers to benefit, noting that it will help the visitors to be adequately prepared to judiciously use their facilities when they are ready.

Karafading Badjie, President of Berefet Women's Garden, described their garden as a center of excellence in training farmers on

best agronomic practices, noting that it is important to create a unified bond among members to strengthen the advancement of the storage facility.

“As women gardeners, it is key to maintain peace and unity among yourselves because it is only through oneness that you can achieve progress in the use and maintenance of your upcoming onion storage facilities and in onion production in general,” Badjie told the visiting farmers on tour.

She emphasized the significance of women’s involvement in commercial onion farming, saying women are the leaders in this sector and should do away with subsistence farming and embark on a more profitable farming venture. The WACOMP-GM onion storage facilities, she went on, are a major bolster in their drive to increase onion production in their garden.

Majula Sanyang, the head of the Berefet Women’s Garden committee on the management of the storage facility, said before the facility’s availability, they were encountering a series of challenges and could not benefit more from their produce. She applauded WACOMP-GM and the EU for saving their harvest from destruction.

“With the advent of our storage facility, we can now properly cure and preserve our onion produce, unlike before, when most of our goods perished because of a lack of a storage facility,” Sanyang said. She said onion production has greatly enhanced and improved their source of income and has increased their living standards.

“We do not buy onions in Berefet anymore because we have them in abundance and we are the main suppliers to most vendors,” she said.

Fatou Korta from Kiang Nema appreciated the study tour and acknowledged that they had learned a lot about how to utilize such a storage facility. She thanked the WACOMP-GM project for initiating the visit and noted that they are ready to welcome a similar storage facility in their village, as they are determined to emulate and do even more than what the women of Berefet have been doing. She said the storage facility, if completed, will enhance onion production in not only their village but the region in general. Sohna Ceesay, President of Pakau Njogu Women Gardeners, highlighted the importance of the study visit as a key for women onion producers and a motivational preparation for welcoming their onion storage facility. She said women in her village are suffering great losses in their onion production and could not gain much from their gardening due to the lack of a storage facility.

“We are happy that WACOMP-GM and the EU will provide us with a storage facility, and we are fully prepared to implement the knowledge gained,” Ceesay said.



WACOMP-GM Horticulture Expert, Malamin Drammeh, highlighting the significance of the study tour.



The President of Berefet Garden, Karafanding Badjie, welcoming visitors to their garden.

Promoting the Culture of Measurement in Onion Production



Amie weighing her harvested produce at the garden using the WACOMP-GM precision weighing scale.

In The Gambia, food prices at local markets are determined by the interplay of bargaining power and ad hoc measures between vegetable growers and marketers. The use of traditional weights and measures is causing inefficient transactions and has negatively affected farmers' productivity, income, and competitiveness. Middle-women, locally called 'ngendenjais', uphold ad hoc traditional market transactions in a way that benefits their interests at the expense of the producers.

As part of its drive to increase competitiveness among value chains, WACOMP-GM is working on promoting the culture of weighing and measurement in horticulture for quality compliance and increased income. With funding from the EU, UNIDO supplied weighing machines to 120 gardens to help address these challenges.

In January 2023, training of trainers on bench weighting scales was organized for engineers from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and metrologists of the Gambia Standards Bureau (TGSB). 25 engineers from the Ministry of Agriculture were trained on how to assemble and repair the scales.

Held across the 5 intervention regions of the project in June 2023, another training targeting 120 garden secretaries on the operation and maintenance of the bench weighting scales was organized. This training of garden secretaries, facilitated by Mr. Abdoulie F. Njie, a metrologist at TGSB, was meant to develop the capacities of the beneficiaries on the importance of weighing their produce and the know-how on how to operate and maintain the donated scales for sustainability.



Amie watering her onion beds.

Amie Drammeh is one of the onion producers who is now reaping the fruits of measurement. She is the vice president of a beneficiary community garden in Medina Serign Mass Garden, a village about 19 kilometers away from the capital, Banjul.

“We used to sell our harvests per pot, bucket, or pan without measuring them. This puts us in a very disadvantaged position as the system only favors the ngendemjais,” she said.

Amie, aged 41, who uses her proceeds to fund the education of her six children, said her profits have now increased significantly since last marketing season as she made use of the weighting scales the WACOMP-GM project gave them.

“With these scales and the training we received, we are now able to operate and maintain them effectively. Now we have accurate data on our total production yield, the amount of postharvest loss, and other important details,” she rejoiced.

Malamin Drammeh, the National Horticulture Value Chain Expert, said scales also play a critical role in agribusiness and

trading, adding that precise weighing ensures fair trade and trust among producers and buyers.

Thanks to the project’s awareness-raising and provision of weighing scales, farmers are adopting standard weights and measures, as these standards would enhance their business competitiveness and increase their profits,” said Drammeh.

The modern agricultural landscape heavily relies on precision and efficiency, which is where scales become indispensable tools. From seed selection to harvest, scales ensure that farmers make informed decisions, optimizing production while minimizing

waste and environmental impact. As we continue to face global challenges such as population growth, climate change, and resource scarcity, the importance of scales in agriculture becomes even more pronounced.

Encouraging sustainable farming practices, promoting technological advancements, and supporting our farming communities are essential steps UNIDO continues to promote towards securing a resilient and thriving future in The Gambia.

Testimony of Gibairou, a Physically Challenged Onion Producer Breaking Barriers



Gibairou watering one of her onion beds in the garden.

My name is Gibairou Ceesay from Jahaur Mandinka. I am a differently-abled woman. My right leg was amputated due to a wound I sustained on it when I was young. This circumstance does not deter me in any way. I am a gardener, and the proceeds I receive from the sale of my produce are used for the livelihood of my family.

In 2023, I harvested eight bags of onions, and this year, I have expanded my cultivation to include eleven beds of onions, two beds of garbage, one bed of mint leaves, and two beds of tomatoes. Among the eleven beds of onions I have this year, my plan is to sell six beds and use the remaining five beds for family consumption. I used to store my harvested onions in my house; the space was so limited, and that condition exposed our onions to many diseases.

Thanks to UNIDO WACOMP-GM, we now have an onion curing and storage facility where we can safely keep our onions this year. The storage facility is standard, and it has other areas for curing and packaging. The project also gave us empty onion bags, a weighting machine, and pallets for the placement of the onion bags after we had properly cured, weighted, and packaged them.

Before the arrival of this storage facility, we used to keep our onions in our houses. Whenever our relatives and other friends come to visit us, they request that we give them some onions. Due to this culture, we barely sell much, as the majority of them get spoiled, and the little that is left is shared with our visitors.

Now, these challenges are no more. All our onions are stored together at the facility, and they are under the management of a committee that looks after the facility. Now we are motivated to grow more onions because we have peace of mind. I would like to thank the project and its donor, the EU, for their contribution to improving my livelihood.

Strengthening The Gambia's Food Control System for Safety and Quality Compliance



FSQA Food Inspectors taken on a conducted tour of Atlantic Sea Food by UNIDO Quality Infrastructure Expert as part of their training.

Africa is saddled with high rates of foodborne diseases and hazards that present significant challenges to its food system. These challenges are indicative of Africa's weak capacity to comply with food safety regulations, resulting in public health problems. In addition, another challenge is the toll of unsafe food on food security and nutrition on the continent. The Gambia has her share of this 'pandemic'.

In June 2022, a WhatsApp audio went viral featuring a woman's voice. She claimed that fish vendors at various fish landing sites and fish markets are using snipers (dichlorvos) to preserve smoked fish. Despite a serious public

outcry, the Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA) could not independently prove the use of the insecticide by fish vendors.

Samples from selected fish markets were sent to a laboratory in Senegal for testing. The test confirmed the presence of sniper (dichlorvos) and four other insecticide products in samples collected from Bakoteh Fish Market, a popular fish market at the heart of urban Gambia. The insecticides can cause heart problems and breathing difficulties.

FSQA is a government agency that seeks to control the safety and quality of food and animal feed. Although the objective of

establishing the institution is clear, it is confronted with challenges, notably a lack of expertise and equipment to test food products to determine their quality and safety for public consumption.

With funding from the European Union, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) under the framework of its West Africa Competitiveness Programme—The Gambia (WACOMP-GM) has committed efforts to support The Gambia in strengthening its food safety and quality control systems.

In January 2023, UNIDO supported FSQA in developing and validating the country's 1st National Food Safety and Quality Policy, marking the birth of an effective food safety system pivotal in ensuring the safety of national food supplies as well as food products for regional and international trade.

Mamudou Bah, Director General of the Food Safety and Quality Authority, said the policy would strengthen food safety governance in The Gambia as well as promote and ensure the harmonization of institutional coordination and collaboration.

“In order to ensure that food consumed locally and internationally is safe and sound, a country needs to put in place the required political, legal, and institutional framework,” said Lumana Kasmashi of the EU.

Not just the policy, WACOMP-GM has provided laboratory equipment to FSQA and conducted a series of trainings aimed at developing the capacities of the authority's staff in executing their crucial mandate.

“Now we can conduct testing and make informed decisions on food quality and safety through the use of the equipment supplied by WACOMP-GM,” Bai Dodou Jallow, Director of Scientific Affairs at FSQA, said.

“We are still confronted with many issues ranging from expired products, waste management, pests, infrastructure problems in the markets, and drainage problems, but such partnerships and support will help us overcome those issues,” he added.

The training helps the staff keep up with international standards in food safety.

“The approach our staff take needs to be standardized based on international standards, and this is what WACOMP-GM is helping us to do. The project is also helping us build the capacities of our laboratory officers, and we have conducted a series of trainings on international food safety standards such as HACCP. The project is also supporting our internal monitoring laboratory,” Bai Dodou said.

Abdoulie Jallow, Principal Food Inspector at the FSQA, rejoiced that the training they have received is crucial to improving their capacity to test for pesticide residues. He also thanked WACOMP-GM for training inspectors of the institution on how to operate the testing machines, stating that the machines help them make decisions on the spot during inspections.

Adalberto Vieira, UNIDO International Quality Infrastructure Expert, highlighted various supports given to FSQA in the framework of the WACOMP-The Gambia Project. He underscored several activities and initiatives that were undertaken to support onion and allied value chain actors in the Gambia, including conformity assessment bodies, farmers, and food processors.

“The support includes the deliberation and validation of national food safety and quality policy, national laboratory policy, the provision of testing equipment, and the procurement of processing equipment for selected gardens, specifically in relation to food safety and quality policy,” he said.

Poor-quality and unsafe food products are some of the most critical issues in the Gambia's quest to provide adequate, nutritious, and safe food to its growing population. They also negatively affect the country's ability to boost consumer health and hinder the growth of its regional and international trade. With UNIDO's development of the National Food Safety and Quality Policy and its continued provision of equipment and training for FSQA, there is hope that the country's food control systems will be better strengthened to reduce and withstand these challenges.

By Kebba AF Touray, as part of the UNIDO WACOMP-GM Reporting Grant



WACOMP-GM presenting laboratory equipment to FSQA. The field equipment include moisture analyser, heavy metal testing kit, aflatoxin testing kit, thermometers, and refractometers.



Participants at the validation workshop of the National Food Safety Policy in January 2023

How WACOMP-GM is enhancing competitiveness through extension service



Extension worker, Assan Njie, demonstrating how to carefully uproot ripe onion bulbs, while the WACOMP-GM staff look on.

Agricultural extension officers play a pivotal role in the overall agricultural development of any country. Extension officers are intermediaries between researchers and farmers. They operate as facilitators and communicators, helping farmers in their decision-making and ensuring that appropriate knowledge is implemented to obtain the best results with regard to sustainable production and general rural development.

In The Gambia, the agricultural sector is the main driver of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

growth and the most important source of the country's economy, with two-thirds of the population's livelihood depending on it.

Despite all their relevance, extension officers in The Gambia continue to face multiple challenges, including low remuneration and incentives, inadequate in-service training, lack of appropriate technology, as well as poor linkages with research and farmers. In all these menaces, the farmers -who are the main actors in the agricultural value chain - ultimately bear the full brunt.



WACOMP-GM regional training of extension workers to help improve the quality of their work.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) under its West Africa Competitiveness Programme – The Gambia (WACOMP-GM) rolled out numerous training initiatives aimed at strengthening their competence and keeping them updated with international agronomic best practices.

With support from the European Union (EU), the project has provided a series of capacity building trainings for extension workers to enhance their skills and knowledge –so as to increase efficiency and productivity in the onion value chain.

WACOMP-GM has trained over 100 extension workers in West Coast Region (WRC), Lower River Region (LRR), North Bank Region (NBR), and Central River Region (CRR) – touching the

lives of onion producers in 120 gardens across the country.

Assan Njie, 28, is one of the beneficiaries of WACOMP-GM's interventions. He participated in many capacity building workshops, including on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), Post Harvest Management Practices, Market Requirements for Onions, Jokkalante Marketing Platform.

He works in CRR as an extension officer – supervising over 5 gardens, including Nanaba, Jahuar Mandinka, Kaur Touray-kunda, Jenju Wollof, and Jahuar Jahanka.

Like many other extension workers in The Gambia, Assan was operating on the old

methods in post-harvest handling of onions in the gardens he supervises.

“The trainings I have participated in have helped enhanced the quality of my work. Now I am better equipped with not only the knowledge but also the techniques of how to work with farmers to share the lessons learned. The gardens I supervise now properly cure and dry their onions before they store them. They now experience fewer post-harvest losses due to WACOMP-GM’s capacity building support,” Assan said.

The project is strengthening the country’s technical competencies, capabilities and capacities of quality infrastructure institutions and conformity assessment service providers to 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 WACOMP-GM trainings, targeting extension workers such as Assan, are also strengthening 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.

They have immensely improved his knowledge and skills – making his work effective and less tedious as an agricultural extension officer. He is now helping 807 farmers across Lower and Upper Saloum districts, out of which only 24 are male.

“With the new skills I have learned from the WACOMP-GM trainings, my work is now much easier. Most of the people who work in the gardens I supervise can apply these skills and knowledge I have learned and shared,” he added.

Due to his dedication, Assan participated in a WACOMP-GM training of traditional communicators in June 2024, where he trained the participants on best agronomic practices.

He testified: “HACCP is another important piece of knowledge that has helped me a lot. I was trained as one of the extension facilitators to help raise the awareness of farmers in providing clean and hygienic products to the communities they serve.”

The National Horticulture Value Chain Expert of the project, Malamin Drammeh, said the importance of extension workers in the successful implementation of their project cannot be overstated.

“WACOMP-GM is committed to sustainable agriculture. Given that the project is timebound, we have strengthened the Ministry of Agriculture by training extension workers and working with them to improve farmers’ knowledge and application of standard agronomic practices,” Drammeh said.

He added: “Before the intervention of WACOMP-GM, onion producers used to encounter a lot of post-harvest losses. This is because they prematurely harvest their onions. However, with the skills and knowledge provided to extension workers during our trainings, farmers now allow their onions to reach the maturity period before harvesting, curing, and sorting.”

With a growing population, a shrinking land base, and emerging threats of climate change, agricultural transformation has become a high priority in enhancing productivity and conserving natural resources in The Gambia. More training of extension workers is needed to address the pressing challenges of food insecurity and poverty, as well as to protect livelihoods and enhance economic growth.

By Katibi Yaffa, as part of the UNIDO WACOMP-GM Reporting Grant

Media Engagements: Training of Journalists and Launch of Reporting Grant



Berefet storage facility management committee member talking to journalists on their standard operating procedures.

In February 2024, a training of journalists was organized in Soma, LRR. The training, which targeted 20 media practitioners from newspapers, television and community radios, was one of the many training initiatives the project has conducted since its inception. The training developed the capacities of the participants in effectively reporting on horticulture and the quality infrastructure system in The Gambia. They were also kept abreast with the latest impactful interventions of the project in a bid to inspire them to initiate news stories on them.

Issues of horticulture, quality and standards are hugely underreported in the media. And sadly, the few reports on the sector are mainly

event-based coverage reports and press releases. This is largely due to the media's inadequate capacity on quality and standards - their significance in national development, mandates of conformity assessment institutions, etc. This weakness has consequently resulted to lack of interest or inability to understand, identify and pursue newsworthy stories on quality and standards.

Considering these, WACOMP-GM rolled out several initiatives to stimulate the media's interest in issues of quality and standards by promoting in-dept news reporting on the sector. Key among these strides is the launch of a reporting grant in June 2024. The scheme provides coverage fee to the journalists to help

facilitate exclusive reporting on horticulture, quality and standards.

A series of radio advertisements were rolled out on community radio stations and the national radio and television. As part of the project's continued efforts to promote local onions, a total 375 radio slots covering 750 minutes were aired on 5 radio stations across the country and the state TV. The adverts were meant to raise awareness about comparative advantages of locally-produced onions and also share contacts of the marketing federations to increase access to market.

Following the completion of the Gambia's first standard onion curing and storage facilities in Nanaba, Jahaur Mandinka and Berefet, the project invited 25 media practitioners to the facility in Berefet to have a tour of it and interact with the beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Alieu Ceesay from the Alkamba Times and Zackline Colley from the Fatu Network Media shared their appreciation to UNIDO WACOMP for facilitating their coverage of this landmark development.

Alieu pointed out that the facilities built for low-income women gardeners will help alleviate their burden.

He added: "Being part of this trip allowed me to see the storage facility and talk to the beneficiaries, which I found very commendable".

Zackline Colley also expressed that the media tour at Berefet Garden was extremely valuable to her as a journalist because it gave her the opportunity to directly interact with farmers, who are a backbone of the country's economy.

"The tour provided a wealth of visual and contextual content that enriched my stories, making them more engaging for my audience. Seeing the onion curing and storage facility in person offered me a broader understanding of its impact, which would have been difficult to capture through second-hand information alone," she noted.



Awareness raising session for traditional communicators (kanyelengs) by WACOMP-GM-trained extension workers

CURING

BEFORE



AFTER



STORAGE

BEFORE



AFTER



WACOMP-GM Newsletter

Meet the UNIDO WACOMP-GM Team

Joseph Ndenn

*National Technical
Coordinator*



Katim Touray

Senior Driver



Malamin Drammeh

*National Horticulture
Value Chain Expert*

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Republic of The Gambia



UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



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



WACOMP The Gambia

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.

Expected Results

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



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