

•**ECOWAS QUALITY AWARD: The award was presented in the 16 countries of the region and provided motivation for candidates**



BENIN

On June 6th, 2017 at INFOSEC in Cotonou, the National Focal Point (NFP) and the WAQSP National Technical Coordination (NTC) launched the ECOWAS National Quality Award in the presence of Benin business and public authority managers. During the National Quality Award launch, 3 out of the 12 applicant companies fulfilled the eligibility criteria: Colas-Benin (Cat. A), Agétip-Benin (Cat. B) and *Pharmacie de l'Abattoir* (Cat. C). They are thus qualified to represent Benin in the regional award. The representative of the UEMOA resident Commission in Benin, Mr. Yaovi Kounhundé, stated that it was time for "companies in the sub-region to stand out worldwide"; for that to happen, business managers should embrace a quality approach.



BURKINA FASO

Burkina Faso launched the national award on 23 June 2017 in the conference room of the *Agence pour la Promotion des Exportations du Burkina* (APEX-Burkina) in Ouagadougou. The event was held in the presence of WAQSP stakeholders (EU, UNIDO, ECOWAS and WAEMU). At the opening ceremony, the Burkina Faso Minister of Trade, Industry and Handicrafts, Stéphane Wenceslas Sanou, stated the context, the issues at stake in the ECOWAS Quality Award, including its goals before encouraging domestic enterprises to participate in the National Quality Award in order to participate in the ECOWAS Award. He also extended the gratitude of the Government of Burkina Faso to the European Union for financing the programme, the ECOWAS Commission for adopting the Regional Quality (ECOQUAL) Policy and UNIDO for its expertise in performance of the WAQSP. The ceremony ended with the announcement of the companies representing Burkina Faso in the ECOWAS Quality Award: Bank of Africa (Cat. A), SONAR Assurance (Cat. B) and Grace Divine (Cat. C).



CAPE VERDE

Cape Verde launched the national award and the ECOWAS Quality Award simultaneously on Friday 31st March 2017. The event was held in Praia in the presence of a hundred guests from different sectors. In his speech, Mr. Abrão Lopes, President of the Quality Management and Intellectual Property Institute stated that launching the first National Quality Awards arises from the partnership with WAQSP. The Minister of Economy and Employment represented by the National Director of Energy, Industry, Trade and Commerce, Mr. Oscar Borges, stated the importance of quality for companies in Cape Verde. He also mentioned that quality management system should change their mentality and offer a competitive advantage for any organization. For this first edition of the ECOWAS quality award, the companies Cabo Verde Telecom (Cat. A), Casa do Cidadão (Cat. B) and Labojovem (Cat. C) have been selected to represent Cape Verde.



COTE D'IVOIRE

The Ivorian government, supported by the WAQSP national technical coordination launched the ECOWAS Quality Award nationally. The ceremony held on Wednesday, 21st June 2017 in the conference room of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Abidjan-Plateau, brought together the main stakeholders and bodies of the Ivorian Quality System. At this event, the National Quality Award was presented by highlighting the criteria required for national winners to compete in the ECOWAS Quality Award. UNIDO resident representative in Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Tidiane Boye, stressed his organization's support for the establishment of the Regional Quality Award: "This totally original

award will help to clean up and boost the industrial environment in ECOWAS countries". Representatives of the European Union, the ECOWAS Commission and Director of the Cabinet of the Ministry of Industry and Mines have, in turn, stated their involvement in the creation of the ECOWAS Quality Award. Moreover, they reaffirmed their commitment to support the initiative which aims to celebrate quality and promote managers of businesses or member organizations involved in a quality process. At the end of the ceremony, FILTISAC (Cat. A) was presented to the public as the only company involved representing Ivory Coast in the ECOWAS Quality Award.



GAMBIA

Gambia held its National Quality Award ceremony at the Coral Beach Hotel on Friday 24th March 2017. The Gambian Quality Award and its benefits were presented to participants at this ceremony. Mr. Papa Secka, Director General of the Gambian Standards Bureau, stated that the National Quality Award is consistent with the National Quality Policy and is fully in line with the standardization vision of the organization, which plans to organize it each year. The Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Mr. Lamin Dampha, stated that the country is tackling the weakness of the national quality infrastructure, which is slowing down the full participation of Gambia in intraregional and international trade. "ECOWAS will organise the Quality Award for the first time in June 2017. Gambia should participate in the ECOWAS Quality Award but should first organize its own quality award to appoint its representatives at regional level," he explained. Mr. Ricardo Velho, UNIDO consultant, highlighted the fact that any national company wishing to participate in the ECOWAS Award must first compete for the national quality award in its country. To this end, Gambega Company Limited (Cat. A) and Gacem Company Limited (Cat. B), winners of the National Quality Award in their respective categories, were selected to participate in the ECOWAS Quality Award.



GHANA

Ghana jointly launched the National Quality Award and the ECOWAS Quality Award at an event on Friday 31 March 2017 in Accra with 60 participants. Speaking on behalf of the Minister of Trade and Industry of Ghana, the Director of Industry, Mr. Barwanoba Baeka, stated that "The Government of Ghana is committed to becoming a real partner to local industries, to help them improving the quality of products and services." He also stated that the aim of the ECOWAS Award was also "a way to encourage organizations to adopt best governance practices and promote sustainable performance." Mr. James Asare-Adjei, president of the Ghana Industries Association (GIA), urged producers to further internalize the requirements of quality standards to make their products more competitive. At this joint event, the National Industries Award was set up by the Association of Ghana Industries. For the ECOWAS Quality Award, Pionner Food Cannery (Cat. A) and Medlab Ghana Limited (Cat. B) were chosen to represent Ghana.



GUINEA

Guinea launched its National Quality Award on Wednesday, 21 June 2017 following the institutionalization of the award. The ceremony was held in the premises of the *Grand Hotel de l'Indépendance* in Conakry. Mr. Djoumè Sangare, Director General of the Standards Institute of Guinea and Metrology (IGNM), informed participants at the awards that "it will contribute on the one hand to stimulate competition among sponsors and managers of public and private companies and on the other hand to promoting consumer protection". After him, the UNIDO country representative, Mr. Ansoumane Berete, stated that "the opportunity for Africa, especially West Africa to be active in the world market, depends on the desire of African countries to provide quality goods and services." The ECOWAS resident representative in Guinea, Mrs. Liliane Alapini, outlined the origins of the Quality Award before illustrating its importance in the implementation of the

Regional Quality Policy (ECOQUAL). She urged the Guinean private sector to invest more in quality. The Secretary General of the Guinean Ministry of Industry, Mr. Alseny Sylla, confirmed the commitment of the Ministry to make the quality award a priority, before thanking partners for their support for Guinea.



GUINEA-BISSAU

The ECOWAS Quality Award was officially launched in Bissau on Monday 12 June 2017. The aim, on the one hand, was to introduce participants to the National Quality Award, the ECOWAS Quality Award, the winning companies and candidates in the regional contest, and on the other hand, to encourage national companies to take part in the national award. Mr. Augusto Mendes Pereira, on behalf of the Minister of State for Energy and Industry stated that Guinea-Bissau had already organized its fourth National Quality Award in 2016, at the end of which four national companies were awarded out of twelve applicants: Innovation SARL, ECOBANK, ASECNA and PETROMAR. PETROMAR (Cat. B) and Emicor & Filhos Lda. (Cat. C), who were named to represent Guinea-Bissau for the ECOWAS Quality Award. Mr. Pereira reaffirmed the strong commitment of the Guinea-Bissau government to promote a national culture of quality by supporting the organization of the National Quality Award in 2018. He ended by congratulating the WAQSP for its support in promoting the quality approach in the ECOWAS region.



LIBERIA

On the 11th of April 2017, the Liberian government launched its National Quality Award attended by some fifty people. Mr. Samuel R. Monger, National Focal Point of the Programme, reminded participants of the background to the creation of the National Quality Award, as part of the WAQSP activities launched on the 30th of June 2015 at the headquarters of the National Standards Laboratory. The European Union Representative, Mr. Hans Lambrecht, praised the enthusiasm of Liberian companies, stating that a market without quality poses a high risk for consumers, if the compliance of products cannot be demonstrated. The Liberian Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Axel M. Addy, emphasized in his opening speech the objective of the award which, according to him, aims to promote and assess excellence in organizational performance through awareness of quality. He called on legally established companies to engage with the Quality Award. At the end of the proceedings, the company Dura Plast Incorporated (Cat. A), was selected to take part in the ECOWAS quality award.



MALI

Like other WAQSP beneficiary countries, Mali officially launched the ECOWAS Quality Award in the presence of the Minister of Industrial Development, Mr. Mohamed Aly AG Ibrahim. This took place on Thursday, 22th June 2017, in the Ministerial Conference Room in Bamako. At the start, the Operations Director of UNIDO in Mali, Mrs. Traore Haby Sow, talked about the creation of the ECOWAS Quality Award "which aims to stimulate competition within the ECOWAS zone and ensures that companies adopt a quality system and international standards, a requirement to operate in international markets". The Representative of the ECOWAS Commission in Mali, Mr. Abdoulaye Bane, stated that "it is by bearing in mind the importance of the role played by industrial development that ECOWAS heads of state and governments adopted the West African Common Industrial Policy (WACIP) on July 2nd. 2010". Mohamed Aly AG Ibrahim expressed the gratitude of the government of Mali to ECOWAS, the European Union, UNIDO, WAEMU and WAQSP for all the actions undertaken to develop quality infrastructure activities. During the ceremony, *Conseil Ingénierie et Recherches Appliquées* (CIRA) was announced as the winning business to represent Mali in the ECOWAS Quality Award (Cat. A).



MAURITANIA

The Mauritanian government officially launched its national quality award on Wednesday 12 April 2017. The event took place at the premises of the Mauritania-Nouakchott Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. It was an opportunity for some Mauritanian companies to enter the first ever competition for this Award. The Representative of the European Union Delegation to Mauritania, Mr. Hans-Christian Beaumont, stated the positive aspects of the cooperation between the European Union and Mauritania and the importance of ensuring the compliance of national products with international standards. The Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Mrs. Naha Mint Hamdi Ould Mouknass, stressed that there is interest in the quality system which constitutes a major advantage for any company. According to the Minister, in a world of strong competition, only the quality on offer determines consumer choice. To this end, she made Mauritanian companies aware of the need to include quality.



NIGER

Niger officially presented the ECOWAS Quality Award at a ceremony that took place on the 23rd of June 2017 in Niamey. In her introductory remarks, the Ministry of Industry's communications officer provided a brief overview of the process that led to the launch of the ECOWAS Quality Award. The Niger Minister of Industry, Mr. Abdou Maman, stated that the organization of the Quality Award was a part of the government's policy, aimed at improving the competitiveness of products to increase and diversify the volume of commercial exchanges and to generate resources needed to improve gross domestic product and the living standards of communities. He informed participants that the Niger Government will support the promotion of a quality culture among companies and consumers, particularly as part of company capacity building initiatives to offer quality products and services that are compliant with the applicable standards. SOGEA SATOM (Cat. A) and *La Laitière du Sahel* (Cat. B) are the two National Quality Award-winning companies appointed as Niger's representatives in the ECOWAS Quality Awards.



NIGERIA

At the end of the first ECOWAS Quality Award ceremony, the Nigerian Quality Infrastructure Project (NQIP) published a statement that looked at Nigeria's participation in the process and the ceremony. From this statement, it appears that three Nigerian companies were awarded in different categories for their efforts in the field of quality.

They are Clina Lancet Laboratories Ltd which received the Excellence Award (Cat. C), as well as the special award for the best company manager in the region. In category B, Zaika Foods Ltd received an award for the best innovative product in the region and PZ Cussons was given the leadership award (Cat. A) as the organization that is most compliant with the award criteria based on quality management system ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 9004.

These Nigerian companies thus awarded regionally were the national award winner at level 4 of the Nigerian National Quality Award (NiNQA).

The Nigerian Quality Award was launched in April 2017 by NQIP with the support of WAQSP. The award ceremony will take place in Lagos on 22 November 2017.

Commented [BB1]: Did NQIP also play a role? If so, mention it.



SENEGAL

The ECOWAS Quality Award was launched on Friday 9th June 2017 at the Hotel *Fleur de Lys* in Dakar. On this occasion, the General Secretary of the Ministry of Mines and Industry, Mr. Mamadou Diop, released the name of the two companies representing Senegal in the regional award. They were Eiffage Senegal and LABOSOL - AGTS, respectively in categories A and B. According to the general

secretary, WAQSP aims to establish a framework for the development and running of an effective quality infrastructure in the region to facilitate intraregional and international trade, protect consumers and the environment and promote sustainable economic development. For the UNIDO representative in Senegal, Mr. Victor Diwandja Djemba, the organization of the award is aimed at boosting awareness to improve products in the region. The Director of the Office of the Ministry of Mines and Industry, replacing Minister Mr. Aly Ngouille Ndiaye, stated that the ethos of the ECOWAS Quality Award was "Striving for Excellence through Quality".



SIERRA LEONE

The government of Sierra Leone officially launched its National Quality Award on Friday 31 March 2017 at the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau. Mrs. Adama Kamara, member of the organization committee and director of finances at the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau stated that the National Quality Award is a novelty in the country, as «it is the very first time that Sierra Leone is organizing such an award". The objectives of the award according to Mrs. Kamara are to: "(...) strengthen quality culture in industries, reward organizations for their efforts to achieve quality, promote local products and the image of the country both regionally and internationally". In his speech, Mr. Kingston B. Evans, chairman of the National Monitoring Committee, stated that the National Quality Award is a strategy to create quality awareness among all national stakeholders and to facilitate intraregional and international competitiveness. He stated that the award covered the following categories: Company of the year, Product of the year, Service of the year and Individual award of the year. The Sierra Leone Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Ibrahim Washingai Mansaray, encouraged stakeholders to take advantage of the event by networking and sharing information on quality. For the ECOWAS Quality Award, the company G. Shankerdas and Sons (SL) Ltd. (Cat. A) was appointed to represent Sierra Leone.



TOGO

In Togo, the ECOWAS Quality Award was launched nationally on 30th May 2017. Jointly organized by the National Focal Point (NFP) and the WAQSP National Technical Committee (NTC), the event brought together major actors in the country's quality system. The two Togolese quality award-winning companies entered for the regional competition, FORMATEC (Cat. B) and *Cabinet d'Expertise Comptable* (AEC) (Cat. C), were introduced to the public. Mr. François Fidégnon Kpakpo, chairman of the Togolese award organization committee and the NFP stated that the aim of the ECOWAS Award was "(...) not only to get as many companies as possible in the sub-region to engage in the quality system, but also to ensure a better position for products and services from ECOWAS countries in the international market". In the name of the Minister of Industry and Tourism, the general secretary Mr. T'Faraba Atara urged Togolese companies and institutions to get involved in the quality and certification system, regardless of their size and sector, and to take part in the Togolese Quality Award and the Regional Quality Award.

Award ceremony for the first ECOWAS Quality Award: The ECOWAS Commission rewards the best companies in the region

The award ceremony for the first ECOWAS Quality Award took place on Friday, 30th June 2017 in Abidjan, in the presence of Quality Ministers from the region, stakeholders (ECOWAS, EU, UNIDO, and WAEMU) and partners (particularly FEWACCI, SOAC and NINAS) of the Programme, as well as managers of institutions and business owners.

During a ceremony that took place under the patronage of His Excellency Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and presided by the Ivorian Minister of Industry and Mines Mr. Jean Claude BROU, before some 400 participants, several awards were given to companies,

individuals and institutions that have contributed to the promotion and development of quality in West Africa.

The companies won awards in three categories: small companies (Cat. C, less than 20 employees), medium companies (Cat. B, 20-100 employees) and large companies (Cat. A, more than 100 employees). For each category, there is an Excellence Award and four Special Awards (Leadership, Product Development, Resource Management and Stakeholders Orientation). The companies taking part in the ECOWAS Quality Award are National Quality Award winners.

Winner Companies of the Excellence Awards of the 1st Edition of ECOWAS Quality Award

For this first edition of the award, FILTISAC from Côte d'Ivoire, AGETIP-BENIN from Benin and CLINA LANCET LABORATORIES from Nigeria respectively won the excellence awards in categories A, B and C. The other award-winning companies were:

- Cat. A - Large companies: PZ CUSSONS (Nigeria), SOGEA SATOM (Niger), CIRA (Mali), Cabo Verde Telecom (Cape Verde)
- Cat. B - Medium companies: PETROMAR (Guinea Bissau), Zaika Food (Nigeria), Medlab Ghana Limited (Ghana), LABOSOL-AGTS (Senegal)
- Cat. C - Small companies: LABOJOVEM (Cape Verde), Accounting firm (Togo), Pharmacie Abattoir (Benin), Grâce Divine (Burkina Faso)

The ECOWAS Quality Award is an essential component of the ECOWAS Quality Policy (ECOQUAL). Introduced in 2013, it falls within the Commission's efforts to promote a "culture of quality" within the region. It aims to award the best companies in the sub-region in the field of quality, with the aim of encouraging economic operators and officials within organizations to improve the quality of the products and services offered to consumers.