

## Gaining access to global markets: Successes in reinforcement of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and Food Security Monitoring Systems (FSMS)



According to the World Health Organization 420,000 people, including 125,000 children, die each year from eating contaminated food. Africa and South East Asia are the two regions that pay the highest price. As a result, food exports from West Africa are generally blocked due to food safety issues, particularly to European and American markets. Faced with this issue, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) implements the West African Quality System Programme (WAQSP) and has successfully strengthened West African food quality systems and infrastructure.

For instance, under the WAQSP, 225 persons from 15 ECOWAS countries have benefited from trainings in Food Security Monitoring Systems (FSMS), in accordance with the ISO 22000 standard. As a result, 105 candidates, including 40 women, were successfully awarded as ISO 22000 consultants. On average, each

Country	Qualified consultants	Country	Qualified consultants	Country	Qualified consultants
Benin	7	Ghana	7	Mauritania	9
Burkina Faso	7	Guinea	7	Niger	6
Cape Verde	8	Guinea Bissau	7	Sierra Leone	6
Côte d'Ivoire	5	Liberia	7	Senegal	7
The Gambia	6	Mali	7	Togo	4

country now has 7 food safety experts trained by the programme. Consequently, across the region, inspectors and laboratories make use of 26 regional food standards in such as rice, cassava, meat, milk, groundnut and sugar.

*Number of successfully qualified consultants under the WAQSP for each of the supported countries*

Furthermore, the programme has built the capacity of 16 evaluators on ISO IEC 17020 and supported 10 food testing laboratories to obtain initial accreditation, or extend their scope in order to meet the ISO IEC 17025 standard. For instance, the Cape Verdean body for the Quality Control of Fishery Products (ACOPECSA) and the Mauritanian National Office for the Safety Inspection of Fishery and Aquaculture products (ONISPA) have both benefited as a result of UNIDO's interventions. The approach adopted by UNIDO, in collaboration with the French National Association for Standardization (AFNOR), makes sure to increase the safety of food products through the use of trained experts and auditors.

Finally, in order that all stakeholders can benefit from the reinforcement of food safety infrastructure in West Africa by the WAQSP, a directory of all testing laboratories and inspection laboratories in the region has been drafted. The directory acts as a means of promotion and facilitates access to economic operators and consumers. Using an all-encompassing approach of capacity building, accreditation and knowledge-sharing, UNIDO has been able to successfully ensure food safety in West African products.