



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

“Enhancing the capacity of testing laboratories in countries of the region is an important component of the Programme as it ensures that the quality of products can be verified against international standards and thus makes local laboratories attractive and competitive.”

Bernard Bau, Industrial Development Officer,
UNIDO

Quality test: the inspiring journey of Côte d’Ivoire’s testing laboratories

Having a product tested through internationally-recognized accredited laboratories adds value as it ensures quality – a key ingredient for gaining consumers’ trust, increasing business competitiveness and integrating new markets. This is true for all businesses in all countries. In West Africa, the development of a quality infrastructure has been identified as a key measure to strengthen regional trade and economic integration. In Côte d’Ivoire, UNIDO’s support for Environment and Agribusiness Laboratories (ENVAL) has allowed the private entity to flourish.

UNIDO’S APPROACH

Since 2001, the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) have been supporting the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission in the promotion of a quality culture in the region. Launched in 2014 as the third phase of this endeavour, the West Africa Quality System Programme (WAQSP) helps develop suitable, relevant, efficient and effective quality infrastructure to facilitate intra-regional and international trade, protect consumers and the environment, and promote sustainable economic development.

UNIDO’s support to ENVAL provides a prime example of successful reinforcement of quality standards for proof of conformity and for boosting of competitiveness.

“In just a few years, we have managed to set up seven laboratories, each of which is the best in its field,” said Bakary Coulibaly,

ENVAL’s Director General. “The support of the West Africa Quality Programmes has been decisive in this success.”

UNIDO has, among other things, provided support to the laboratories in the ISO/IEC 17025 standard accreditation process by strengthening the capacities of technicians, including on metrology and audit, and by supporting the acquisition of new equipment.

IMPACT

“The impact of the programme is reflected in the improvement of our laboratory practices, the loyalty of our customers, and the conquest of new markets such as Carrefour,” Coulibaly said.

Matenin Cissé, Quality Manager at Carrefour, Côte d’Ivoire, said: “The reliability of the ENVAL laboratories’ analyses, the competitiveness of their testing costs, their optimal delivery times and the good management of their relationship with Carrefour explains why we

have chosen this group since 2015 for the testing of our products.”

ENVAL has been able to establish partnerships with Société de Culture Bananière (SCB), Société Agricole Kablan Joubin (SAKJ), Office National de l’Eau Potable (ONEP), the Carrefour Group, Société de Distribution d’Eau de Côte d’Ivoire (SODECI) and more.

WAY FORWARD

The benefits of the first accreditations have enabled ENVAL to expand its coverage at the national level. Through the support provided by UNIDO, ENVAL has also set up a textile analysis laboratory – the first of its kind in the sub-region – and will further expand its activities to include soil, foliage and oil analysis, as well as noise and air quality measurement. To date, two of ENVAL’s seven laboratories have received their accreditation and more will follow.

Côte d’Ivoire now has laboratories whose field of competence is broad and which can advise on quality-related problems and support the development of new products.

AT A GLANCE

Project title	West Africa Quality System Programme
Thematic area	Advancing Economic Competitiveness
Donor	European Union
Project counterpart	ECOWAS
Budget	12,000,000 EUR
Duration	August 2014 – September 2019