

## STDF PROJECT GRANT (PG)

### APPLICATION FORM

The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) offers grants for projects that promote compliance with international SPS requirements. Eligible organizations can apply for STDF project funding using this form. Applicants can request up to a maximum of US\$1,000,000 for projects that have a duration of three years or less.

The STDF Working Group makes decisions on requests for STDF funding. The following types of projects are given favourable consideration:

- Projects relevant to the identification, development and dissemination of good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation, including projects that develop and apply innovative and replicable approaches;
- Projects linked to STDF work on cross-cutting topics of common interest;
- Projects that address SPS constraints through regional approaches; and
- Collaborative and inter-disciplinary projects focused on the interface / linkages between human, animal and plant health and trade, and benefiting from the involvement of two or more partners or other relevant organizations.

Complete details on eligibility criteria and other requirements are available in the *Guidance Note for Applicants*. The completed application should be submitted through the [STDF online application system](#).

<b>Project Title</b>	Digitalizing accreditation and conformity assessment systems in West Africa
<b>Objective</b>	Improved compliance of UEMOA countries with key Food Safety Standards using digital tools
<b>Budget requested from STDF</b>	USD 844 468
<b>Total project budget</b>	USD 1 406 727
<b>Full name and contact details of the requesting organization(s)</b>	West Africa Accreditation System (WAAS) / Système Ouest Africain d'Accréditation (SOAC) COCODY ANGRE, 8e TRANCHE, L 84 x W 237 Telephone: (+225) 22 45 64 06 Postal address: BP: 503 BPR 60 ABIDJAN LWP Email: info@soacwaas.org Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)
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## I. BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

### 1. Relevance for the STDF

Why is this project relevant for STDF funding? Explain how the project is related to one or more of the following: (i) the identification, development and dissemination of good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation, including the development and application of innovative and replicable approaches; (ii) STDF work on cross-cutting topics of common interest; (iii) the use of regional approaches to address SPS constraints; and/or (iv) collaborative and inter-disciplinary approaches focused on the interface / linkages between human, animal and plant health and trade, and

benefiting from the involvement of two or more STDF partners or other relevant organizations. See Qn. 9 and Qn. 15 (a) of the Guidance Note.

The proposed project covers the 8 UEMOA States (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo) as well as the Republic of Guinea. Agriculture is the main contributor to the gross domestic product (GDP) of these economies. It aims to improve market access for UEMOA countries. This will primarily be done by ensuring UEMOA countries comply with Food Safety measures and SPS standards in West Africa, ISO, and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Standards. This project, therefore, aims to contribute to the training of West African regional accreditation body food safety assessors and laboratories staff, as well as raising public and private stakeholders' awareness efforts through online activities.

The project is relevant to the STDF as it relates to the following topics cumulatively:

*(i) the identification, development, and dissemination of good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation, including the development and application of innovative and replicable approaches;*

The number of accredited Food Safety testing laboratories, certificates, and inspection bodies remains low in West Africa. Despite all recent efforts noted lately including the recognition of the regional accreditation body by AFRAC and ILAC, the need for a robust and internationally recognized competent conformity assessment system is yet to be sustainable.

The verification and regular assessment of the competence of CABs<sup>1</sup> providing services within the food safety system are essential to build and maintain the required confidence in the conformity assessment results. These results attest to the compliance of food products to the required food health and safety standards and ensure mutual recognition of accredited CABs around the world. The verification of competence and the acceptance of conformity assessment results is increasingly being achieved through internationally recognized accreditation. There are however various challenges in establishing a regional project that aims to strengthen conformity assessment and accreditation systems in West Africa. As it concerns "onsite" verification of CABs, these challenges are posed by various constraints such as the increasing unease with the cost of compliance, ongoing and recurrent pandemics, and political stabilities. The cost of becoming an accredited CAB is stopping many West African organizations to apply for accreditation. In fact, the main challenge reported during the 2022 SOAC general assembly held in Abidjan was related to the sustainability of funding accreditation fees and assessment costs. Accreditation is still inaccessible to many CABs within the region due to the application fees, and Assessors' travel and accommodation fees in the region remain high. To address the insufficient number of accredited CABs and to work with SPS local authorities to implement a single system in which voluntary CABs certificates are recognized by these SPS authorities, this project introduces an innovative mechanism through the optimization of digital technology in the accreditation, conformity assessment, capacity development processes, and awareness raising services. See more information under the section "SPS issue".

The project could be replicable in other West African countries non UEMOA members, as they face the same challenges in increasing the number of accredited CABs and promoting accreditation as an effective mechanism of providing confidence agricultural goods and services. Similar to the West African Accreditation System (SOAC), other accreditation bodies in the region such as NINAS and GhaNAS can benefit on the single system mutual recognition approach and reduce risk to international trade barriers.

*(ii) STDF work on cross-cutting topics of common interest;*

Accreditation fosters a culture of quality and safety of goods and services. It provides relevant authorities with a transparent mechanism that allows for greater control of time and the approval and acceptance of conformity assessment bodies and the results provided by them. As such, the utilization of digital technology within the accreditation assessment process and training space would ease access to the required expertise irrespective of where they reside and would speed up the process for obtaining accreditation. This project would therefore take into account all programs related to improving food safety outcomes for public health and trade and would provide relevant and the use of accredited CABs.

*(iii) the use of regional approaches to address SPS constraints;*

The project covers eight countries within the UEMOA region as well as the Republic of Guinea. According to the 2022-2023 DAC List of ODA recipients, all these countries are among the Least Developed Countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Republic of Guinea, Senegal,

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<sup>1</sup> CAB: Conformity Assessment Bodies

and Togo; except Côte d'Ivoire listed as a Lower Middle Income Country. The project would provide a means to have in-depth discussions among all SPS stakeholders (both public and private). It would also allow the 9 countries to exchange the key elements of accreditation needs of conformity assessment bodies. The strengthening of the West African regional accreditation body to harmonize scheme for accreditation, certification, standardization and metrology activities in the community space would enable these stakeholders to discuss the context, needs, and opportunities that exist for SPS regulatory authorities in their countries to make use of voluntary CABs to improve food safety outcomes.

*(iv) collaborative and inter-disciplinary approaches focused on the interface / linkages between human, animal and plant health and trade, and benefiting from the involvement of two or more STDF partners or other relevant organizations.*

The project would be based on a collaborative approach involving UEMOA member states food safety regulatory authorities, ECOWAS, SOAC and, its voluntary accredited CABs as well as other relevant government agencies and the private sector. SOAC uses multi-disciplinary assessment teams in assessing voluntary CABs among which government agencies and the private sector staff are part of. The accreditation process ensures the implementation of such a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach. It is a significant asset in assuring the use of accredited CABs by UEMOA member states governments and SPS regulatory authorities to demonstrate compliance against international agricultural standards.

SOAC is a signatory of the regional and international mutual agreements and as such can provide a globally recognized accreditation. SOAC has been peer-evaluated by AFRAC AND ILAC and recognized as being competent by its peers in other economies.

## **2. SPS context and specific issue/problem to be addressed**

Provide an overview of the SPS situation in the country/region including details on: (i) food and agricultural trade flows and relevant SPS issues; (ii) the institutional framework for SPS management; and (iii) any SPS priorities or issues identified in SPS-related capacity evaluations, the Enhanced Integrated Framework's (EIF) Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) for least developed countries, or other relevant documents. See Qn. 15 (b) of the Guidance Note.

Also describe and analyse the key SPS issue to be addressed by the project. Explain the causes and effects of this issue, notably for animal/plant health, food safety, market access and/or poverty reduction. See Qn. 15 (c) of the Guidance Note.

Consumer health protection, international trade and the global environment has gained more attention in this new world of Covid-19 pandemic and post pandemic. Confirmation of compliance with SPS processes, international standards and import requirements requires various certificates such as the Phytosanitary certificates, certificates of origin etc. As such, the Competent Authority relies on conformity assessment bodies to provide the data to support assurance of compliance.

(i) food and agricultural flows and relevant SPS issues:

Agriculture is the main contributor to the gross domestic product (GDP) of these economies. UEMOA and ECOWAS have made agriculture one of their main priority areas and have recognized its importance in their overall development strategy and member states' economic welfare is heavily reliant on establishing trade links and to penetrate regional and international markets for their large-scale agricultural commodities and horticultural crop. Despite all efforts to integrate into regional and global trading systems, West African economies face several challenges that need to be addressed to ensure consumer health protection and to benefit from the trade in the region's agricultural produce. Two of the most recurrent challenges for West African agricultural exports and consumer health protection are the ability to verify compliance with the food safety standards and requirement such as SPS measures and the ability to mitigate against the rejection of exported goods. The risk to consumer's health and the rejection of exported agricultural commodities apportioned to the non-compliance with Food Safety standards and requirements, can have devastating economic and social consequences for West Africa. According to the EU Rapid Warning System for Food and Feed (RASFF) RASFF, between 2010 and 2020, the European Union recorded 71 notifications of aflatoxins and pesticide residues in agricultural production from UEMOA member states. 41% of the notifications recorded resulted in the rejection of products at the border; the remaining 59% were classified as "alerts requiring attention". The agricultural sector within the nine

economies covered by this project consists primarily of smallholder farmers, employing on average 66% of the total workforce, with women making up 68% of the workforce.

(ii) the institutional framework for SPS management:

ECOWAS Regulation C/REG.21/11/10 on the harmonization of the structural framework and operational rules on plant, animal, and food safety provides in Article 17, calls for the establishment of a network of laboratories and a network of training institutions. Article 27 further requires the assistance of accredited laboratories to carry out health risk analysis in the Union.

The SOAC is a regional accreditation body. It was created by a Council of Ministers Regulation N°03/2010/CM/UEMOA on the harmonization scheme for accreditation, certification, standardization, and metrology activities in the community space. The Regulation establishes SOAC as the sole respondent for accreditation matters in the eight Member States of the Union. SOAC is also one of the cornerstones of the ECOWAS accreditation scheme which to date is composed of three bodies (in addition to SOAC, GhaNAS which is the accrediting body of Ghana, and NiNAS which is the accrediting body of Nigeria). The 5 States remaining without an accreditation body (Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) can turn to GhaNAS, NiNAS, or SOAC to cover their accreditation needs, according to their choice. It is within this framework that the Republic of Guinea has submitted a request to join SOAC which is currently being processed. One of SOAC's missions is to ensure that the accreditation needs of conformity assessment bodies, primarily those of its member states, are covered in the region as quickly and affordably as possible. SOAC is also considered "a Community instrument to support consumer protection".

(iii) The project is in line with the SPS priorities or issues identified in SPS-related capacity evaluations and the Enhanced Integrated Framework's (EIF) Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) for least developed countries:

Until recently, food safety measures and compliance with food safety standards have received little attention. Compliance with food safety standards, the cost of conformity, and supporting Competent Authorities and the food safety market, are three of the major barriers to the protection of consumer health and trade facilitation. These challenges constitute a barrier to the agricultural sector reaching its full potential, creating jobs, and reducing poverty. The provision of a list of accredited CABs serving the conformity assessment needs in the Food safety system, will be one of the key outcomes of this project that will enable cross-border acceptance of exported goods.

SPS authorities in the UEMOA countries priority is to improve food safety outcomes for the protection of consumers health and fair practices in the food trade, based on public-private collaboration. The project would be based on a collaborative approach involving food safety regulatory authorities, other relevant government agencies and the private sector. It will focus on sharing of experience between the ECOWAS accreditation mechanism, conformity assessment system and the SPS Competent Authorities through committees, exchange of good practice and lessons learned and risk management practices.

(iv) Key SPS issues to be addressed by the project:

The Covid-19 pandemic didn't stop foreign ABs accreditation activities in the region. Instead, they shifted to remote auditing and increasingly utilized digital technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic driven by necessity. In fact, the needs to continue to delivery accreditation services that align with international requirements forces foreign ABs to rethink their delivery models, embracing digital technologies and innovative approaches. The widespread recognition of a need for remote assessment during the Covid-19 pandemic was not unique to the foreign ABs. Throughout the pandemic, SOAC personnel were able to schedule remote activities taking into account the level of risk related internet availability and connectivity, using their knowledge of the West African region and their experience from previous remote assessments. They were able to prevent undesired impacts and potential failures using documented remote assessment SOAC procedures and AFRAC, ILAC-IAF guidelines on remote assessment. From March 2020 to March 2022, SOAC has carried out 45 of these hybrid assessments. Moreover, by the end of January 2022, 100% of SOAC assessments were conducted remotely.

For UEMOA countries to comply with Food Safety measures and SPS standards in West Africa, ISO and IAF, the following key SPS issues to be addressed by the project:

(a) The involvement of competent conformity assessment bodies in the relevant phases of food safety value chain to verify compliance to the relevant standards and guidelines such as the international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISSN 2521-7232), the Codex General Standard for labelling of Packed Foods (CX1-1985), and any other trading economy's labelling requirements, is crucial to support claim exhibit on food labels and by extension, the required consumer trust.

Nevertheless, national, regional and international consumers trust that food safety requirements have not been always met when procuring and consuming food products. In strengthening West African's conformity assessment system, in support of consumer health protection and food trade facilitation, the project will contribute to advancing the consumer's trust in agricultural produce, produce by and originating from West Africa

(b) Trade in agricultural products is of the utmost importance to the member economies of West Africa; however, UEMOA member states' economic welfare is heavily reliant on establishing trade links and to penetrate regional and international markets for their large-scale agricultural commodities and horticultural crop. The provision of a network of accredited CABs serving the conformity assessment needs in the Food safety system, will be one of the key outcomes of this project that will enable cross border acceptance of exported goods. The small number of accredited CABs in the UEMOA region has been an issue to date and need to be addressed. The acceptance and trust in CABs conformity assessment results requires independent attestation of the CABs competence through an internationally recognized accreditation system. Therefore, the independent attestation of the accreditation body's competence, and the accreditation body's independence and impartiality in operating an accreditation body in accordance with the requirements of the international standard ISO/IEC 17011:2017, is critical for the global acceptance of the conformity assessment results produce by an accredited CAB.

(c) The African Union, ECOWAS and EUMOA recognized that the use of accredited conformity assessment bodies in the food safety and agricultural value chain can help with prevention and early detection of threats to consumer's health and phytosanitary challenges and could built confidence in the compliance claim made in for example, phytosanitary certificates and thus mitigating against rejection West Africa's produce. Despite the strong need for accredited conformity assessment service in support of Food Safety, the number of accredited Food Safety conformity assessment bodies remains low. To increase the number of accredited CABs, Food safety assessors need to be trained by SOAC so that they can gain knowledge and become competent in assessing testing laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies.

(d) Good communication between all stakeholders and knowledge sharing is key in achieving the project initiatives. Sharing of experience between SOAC, the ECOWAS, accreditation and voluntary conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities in the UEMOA countries will be one of the objectives of this project. Establishing committees and an exchange platform will solidify common interests between stakeholders and address the deficient collaboration and trust seen between voluntary CABs, private sector and SPS Authorities. Thus, the use of voluntary CABs will increase and improve food safety outcomes for protection of consumers health and fair practices in the food trade, based on public-private collaboration.

### **3. Links with national/regional development plans, policies, strategies, etc.**

Explain how the project supports national/regional development plans, agricultural/trade/SPS policies and strategies, and any other relevant priorities. If a national/regional SPS strategy exists, indicate how the project supports this strategy. See Qn. 15 (d) of the Guidance Note.

The project is aligned with UEMOA and ECOWAS agricultural policies; both policies focus on food safety. Their Implementing Regulations provide for reliance on the relevant CABs in the field of Food Safety, such as accredited laboratories, to carry out health risk analysis. In addition, ECOWAS is implementing a vast programme (WACOMP) to support competitiveness, with the financial support of the European Union and several technical agencies including the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Bank, UNIDO, etc. The programme intends to develop national and regional value chains. There is a need for conformity assessment services (laboratories, certification bodies (for products, systems and - persons), etc.) to be recognised as competent. Furthermore, ECOWAS has launched a mark of conformity to ECOQMARK standards. The sectoral applications of ECOQMARK will also require the support of competent conformity assessment services.

The project is also in line with the ECOWAS Quality Policy (ECOQUAL) guidelines. ECOQUAL has been implemented in all member countries through the National Quality Policies. These national and regional Quality Policies aim at developing sub-regional, regional and international trade, protecting the environment and consumers. In addition, the project contributes to the consolidation of the achievements of the West African Quality Infrastructure Programme (WACQIP), funded by the European Union (EU) and executed by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in partnership with UEMOA and ECOWAS from 2001 to 2019.

#### **4. Past, ongoing or planned programmes and projects**

Provide detailed information about relevant past, ongoing or planned national or donor funded projects and programmes related to SPS, food safety, animal and/or plant health in the country or region, as appropriate, as well as any SPS components of broader agricultural or trade capacity building programmes. Explain how lessons learned from previous projects have been taken into account in the design of this project, and clarify how the project will complement these related initiatives. Where applicable, explain how the project relates to the EIF and/or Aid for Trade process. See Qn. 15 (e) of the Guidance Note.

*STDF/PG/665 Piloting the use of Third-Party Assurance (TPA) Programmes to improve food safety outcomes for public health and trade.*

The STDF/PG/655 programme actions are complementary to the present project. In fact, the STDF/PG/665 aims to organize training for government inspectors on risk-based inspection practices. Similarly, the present project foresees the organisation of a sharing of experience between the SPS Competent Authorities of the member countries and SOAC. In this framework, for Mali and Senegal, risk management in the implementation of accreditation evaluations could be considered for sharing experience with the Food Safety inspection bodies of these two countries.

Furthermore, as part of the STDF PPG 665, a pilot experiment is currently underway in Mali and Senegal with a view to reducing official controls, especially when companies are certified on the basis of certain private standards which is in line with this project expected outcomes.

Also, the STDF/PG/665 include developing selection criteria for Operator in the food sector (ESA) / pilot enterprises benefiting from mentoring support and develop links (mentoring, coaching) between larger enterprises and SMEs with different levels of capacity. The STDF/PG/655 programme plans to strengthen some 30 ESAs in the field of Food Safety based on existing international best practices (e.g. GFSI GMPs). If the food products on which the ESAs are selected are also those selected by the WACOMP, sectoral applications for product/system certification may be developed taking into account the Food Safety reference systems deployed within companies by the STDF/PG/655 programme.

Lastly, this project plans to develop national expertise of future accreditation assessors in the field of food safety. In doing so, account will be taken, as far as possible, of the national expertise selected for training in Food Safety by the STDF/PG/655 programme in Mali and Senegal. Both projects aim to conduct joint train the trainer's programmes for public and private sector food safety practitioners on the capacity building programme.

*STDF/PG/782 Food safety remote inspection practices for improved trade.*

STDF/PG/782 aims to identify current practices applied by regulators regarding the conduct of remote inspection practices of food business operators in their jurisdiction to ensure enforcement functions without risking human health. These types of inspection practices have received more attention due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The PPG reflects the growing interest to deploy new digitalized and telecommunication-based solutions in official food safety inspection.

Likewise, this STDF/PG/770 will enhance SOAC ability to further embark on an innovative digitalised assisted remote assessment process of conformity assessment bodies by introducing augmented reality technology, integrating CABs digital information with the assessor's environment in real-time (e.g.,; interactive glass used by an assessor during remote assessments). Food safety assessors trained by SOAC will gain knowledge to assess voluntary CABs. The training will be done remotely. Thus, SOAC will build capacity through online training and digital knowledge dissemination on food safety compliance to conformity assessment body's staff on food safety, accreditation body staff and assessors, the National Accreditation Focal Points and where required or requested, the staff of the National Competent Authority. Adopting digitalization will enable remote assessments which is in line with the guidance provided by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), the IAF and the Pan African Quality Infrastructure (PAQI).

*Complementarities with the WACOMP for compliant agricultural products*

It is worth noting the West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP) objectives. The WACOMP aims to support several selected value chains at the national and regional level. The major objectives of the programme are to strengthen the competitiveness of West African countries and also enhance their integration into the regional and international trading system. The programme is aligned to support the implementation of the West African regional policies and programmes, including the West Africa Common Industrial Policy (WACIP), West Africa Quality System Programme (WAQSP) and ECOWAS Private Sector Development Strategy. The WACOMP project plan to improve

regional trade and exports of selected value chains and improved market access for UEMOA countries. The WACOMP project is also aimed to develop national value chains for a group of priority products. Whereas, for 8 of the 9 countries covered by the SOAC, the value chains identified are mainly focused on agri-food products with Food Safety challenges to be addressed.

Finally, this project will benefit from UNIDO's experience. The choice of UNIDO as executing agency reinforces the inclusive dynamics of the project: UNIDO implemented the quality programmes from 2001 to 2019 and therefore has the institutional memory of the project; UNIDO is implementing the regional WACOMP including its quality component as well as the WACOMP at the national level in Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Cabo Verde and lately a component in Senegal. In addition, the International Trade Centre (ITC) implements the regional WACOMP with UNIDO, but is also a component of the national WACOMP programme in Senegal. As a member of the WACOMP regional steering committee with UNIDO, coordination to carry out complementary actions to this project is ensured.

## **5. Public-public or public-private cooperation**

Explain how the project promotes cooperation between government organizations involved in managing SPS issues and/or with the private sector. See Qn. 15 (f) of the Guidance Note.

This project is based on public-private collaboration. It is framed around a collaborative approach involving regulatory SPS authorities, voluntary CABs, other relevant government agencies, and the private sector. The representatives of the private sector are the chambers of commerce and industry. The chamber of commerce and industry in each beneficiary country was consulted during the feasibility study. These chambers of commerce and industry, along with their roles in their respective local business communities, gain a voice in their governments. They are members of the general assembly and of the board of directors of SOAC. The members were consulted during SOAC general assemblies and board of directors' meetings. As such, a general assembly held on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in Abidjan was an opportunity to ask the participants and stakeholders their views on the Use of Digital and IT Tools Feasibility. The general assembly was followed by a workshop on the development and the funding of accreditation in West Africa to increase the emergence of competent laboratories within the region on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Accredited CAB services and technical competence service providers will be used by the private sector when the National Accreditation Focal Points successfully inform the private sector in their countries (through industry associations) about accreditation and its benefit (output 4).

The CABs, both public and private will be assisted to implement the ISO standards to get ready for an initial accreditation assessment. Private companies certified in Food Safety and consumer health protection domain have competent expertise that constitutes a pool of SOAC accreditation assessors in Food Safety. By making their technical experts available, private companies are expected to elevate the efficiency and effectiveness of the SOAC assessments and contribute to the success of the project. SOAC as an accreditation body also relays on external resources in each of the 9 countries. These experts as part of the training (output 1) ready to be deployed during assessments (output 3). Private sector experts are valuable to the project when it comes to their awareness of applicable local laws and regulations.

In addition to making the assessments more valuable, the experts from private sectors at the country level will contribute to the effort of sensitizing the public on the benefits of using accredited CAB services (output 4).

Greater confidence in service delivery and in their consistency of quality will allow SPS authorities to rely on voluntary CABs that they are confident will deliver reliable services. It is expected that SOAC shares audit techniques with the SPS Competent Authorities. Areas of cooperation are identified for more regular use by the SPS Competent Authorities of accredited public and private conformity assessment services.

Through enabling the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies, this project advances public-private partnership relations as such accredited conformity assessment bodies can become part of the regulatory network of conformity assessment service providers, supporting safe trade and the protection consumers' health.

This project aims to fast-track SOAC membership to the IAF and foster SOAC status as a signatory to AFRAC, ILAC recognition arrangements for the Food safety conformity assessment bodies required (e.g. testing and calibration Laboratories accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025, inspection bodies accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020, certification bodies accreditation to ISO/IEC 17065 for product, process or service certification, ISO/IEC 17021 for management system certification). Furthermore,

under this project, SOAC shall endeavour to conclude agreements with the relevant private sector and regional food safety scheme owners such as GLOBAL G.A.P and the ECOWAS regional certification system for the benefit of SME/VSE enterprises.

SOAC, as an accreditation body and by its nature will have to tap into a larger resource pool from the public and private sectors. Therefore, capacity-building interventions, training sessions and information exchange tied in with accreditation services provided to CABs would enable cooperation between assessment team members. This cooperation will enable food companies sensitized seek the services of accredited voluntary CABs.

## **6. Ownership and stakeholder commitment**

Which stakeholders (e.g. government agencies, private sector organizations, relevant local coordination mechanisms on SPS, trade, agriculture, environment, and/or private sector capacity building) actively support this project? Explain how these stakeholders would be involved in the project. **Attach letters of support** from each of these organizations. See Qn. 15 (g) of the Guidance Note.

This project originated from a first project application titled "Facilitating food safety compliance and consumer health protection through digitalization" submitted to the STDF by SOAC on behalf of nine (9) countries: the eight UEMOA members (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo) and Guinea. The overall objective of the application was to strengthen West African's conformity assessment system, in support of consumer health protection and food trade facilitation.

The STDF Working Group during its meeting held on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, acknowledged that the PG application submitted was interesting, relevant, and with high potential, also in the context of COVID-19. However, members identified several risks (in terms of the feasibility of a digitalization program in the region) and indicated areas requiring further clarification (budget, implementation arrangements, among various others). The project application was therefore not approved. Instead, the STDF Working Group approved a PPG in order to help the applicant conduct a feasibility study and, if deemed feasible, submit again an application addressed to the STDF Working Group.

The feasibility was therefore conducted from November 22, 2021, to July 22, 2022, with the objective to identify the challenges, opportunities, and needs to use digital and IT tools to strengthen, the delivery, performance, and processes of the conformity assessment system and the accreditation system in 9 countries in West Africa which supports consumer health protection and food trade facilitation.

Keys methodology elements of the feasibility studies included various desk reviews, following which SOAC headquarters in Abidjan was visited from February 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in order to consult stakeholders in the West African Region and carry out an assessment of the regional accreditation IT infrastructure and resources.

Through the study, various stakeholders from all 9 countries were actively consulted. They were engaged to identify and detail the challenges these countries face with respect to SPS issues. Stakeholders included members of the ECOCONF (ECOWAS Community Committee for Conformity Assessment) composed of representatives of conformity assessment bodies from the 15 ECOWAS member states, the regional private sector through a representative of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of West Africa (FCCIAO) and a representative of the Federation of Employers' Organizations in West Africa (FOPAO).

A series of zoom meetings, interviews and consultations were held with key players in the topic of accreditation and conformity assessment, the National Accreditation Focal Points who promote accreditation in the Member States as well as members of the private sector in the region throughout the feasibility study.

It was established during the feasibility study that despite several challenges and a number of necessary conditions to be considered, a potential regional project in establishing a regional project that aims at using digital and IT tools to strengthen conformity assessment and accreditation systems in the West African is feasible and should be considered. The study highlighted the importance of looking at beyond the various challenges since they can easily be mitigated. More, the Covid 19 crisis has increased the digital initiatives. Most of these nine West African countries are



among the least developed countries and need to keep up with the increasingly digitalized world of accreditation and conformity assessment to ensure that they are not left behind.

This project has been developed based on the positive final conclusions of the feasibility study that would include strengthening capacities of Food Safety CABs through digitisation, increasing and expanding capacities for West Africa food companies to respect food safety requirements and enhancing dialogue between relevant stakeholders for compliant agricultural production through digitisation.

The project is widely supported by several key stakeholders, notably African and regional stakeholders: AU - IBAR, DAERE ECOWAS, UEMOA Commission (DAREN and DEMEN), etc. At the level of the private sector, we note the interest of the UEMOA Regional Consular Umbrella Chamber of Chambers of Commerce, as well as the UEMOA DEMEN which implements the UEMOA Policy on Private Sector Development. This project has the particularity of covering 9 ECOWAS Member States. At the end of this project, it could thus be duplicated and extended to the 15 ECOWAS Member States. To this end, ECOWAS is a member of the Steering Committee and implements one of the components of the programme relating to dialogue between SOAC and the SPS Competent Authorities. The project has thus gained the support of 12 stakeholders: UEMOA (1), ECOWAS (2), and (9) from the private and public sectors in each beneficiary country including from the chambers of commerce and industry (See Appendix 5: Letters of Support).

## **II. PROJECT GOAL, OBJECTIVE, OUTPUTS & ACTIVITIES (LOGICAL FRAMEWORK)**

### **7. Project Goal / Impact**

What is the overall goal of the project? The goal should describe (in one statement) the expected longer-term impact or positive change to which the project will contribute, particularly in terms of market access, the SPS situation and poverty reduction.

The overall goal of the project is to improve market access for UEMOA countries so that they face lesser market barriers and increasing share of agricultural production exported to other countries. Agriculture is the main contributor to the gross domestic product (GDP) of these economies.

### **8. Target Beneficiaries**

Identify the final beneficiaries (e.g. small farmers, producers, workers, consumers, etc.) and explain how they are likely to benefit from the project, quantifying these benefits as far as possible. See Qn. 15 (h) of the Guidance Note.

The proposed project covers the 8 UEMOA States (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo) as well as the Republic of Guinea. All are listed as Least Developed Countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Republic of Guinea, Senegal and Togo) ; except Côte d'Ivoire listed as a Lower Middle Income Country, according to the DAC-List-of-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2022-23.

This project has been developed with the objective of promoting confidence in the operation of voluntary CABs in those countries. It contains activities to enable them to operate generally in accordance with national and international Food Health and Safety standards and requirements and also to demonstrate they operate competently and are able to generate valid results. The project outcomes are aimed to establish a basis for increasing the effectiveness of the UEMOA countries food system, reducing non-compliance with Food Safety standards and requirements and achieving improved results and preventing negative effects. Producing reliable test, inspection and certification, results will significantly contribute to mitigating trade barrier caused by noncompliance with international standards on conformity assessment. Reliable results can further contribute to health, safety and the protection of the environment as it can inform sound decision making with respect to the use of pesticides and fertilisation and pest. Furthermore, the multi-economy accreditation body, and by implication all UEMOA member economies will gain from the improved accreditation scope that will be internationally recognised.

SOAC is a signatory to the ILAC Mutual Recognition Agreements. This achievement facilitates cooperation between West African voluntary CABs (laboratories, inspection bodies and certification bodies) and other bodies in other regions, and assist in the exchange of information and experience, and in the harmonization of standards and procedures. For example, the acceptance of results between countries is facilitated if laboratories conform to its applicable standards. In addition, all

conformity assessment bodies in the UEMOA countries will benefit from international recognition of their certificates when SOAC will be signatory of the IAF Multilateral Recognition arrangements.

The project will reduce Food Safety non-compliance of recurrent West African productions on international markets but also on national markets. In addition to creating added value for West African agricultural enterprises, local populations will have easier access to healthy and safe products.

As a result, all actors in the agricultural value chain which includes government, producers, pickers and exporters to enable market access for West Africa's agricultural produce. Therefore, ultimately the beneficiaries will include producers of food, exporters and conformity assessment bodies providing services and regulators in the food safety space.

#### **(a) Gender-related issues**

Identify and address any specific needs and opportunities linked to gender in the project. This should include an analysis of the possible positive/negative effects of the project on gender equality. For instance, how are different genders involved (e.g. as producers, farmers, traders, workers in food business operations) in particular value chains of relevance to the project, what constraints (if any) do they face and how could they be addressed to take advantage of new opportunities? How are different genders expected to benefit from the project? Inclusion of gender-specific indicators, wherever possible, is encouraged.

There is a need for effective monitoring of agricultural products compliance to national and international standards. This will require a coherent and harmonized policies within the UEMOA countries and the involvement of national partner authorities and of all ministries involved in the control of the sanitary safety of agricultural production in West Africa. To reach out the targeted beneficiaries, efforts will also require the involvement of UEMOA member states officials and Agricultural educational institutions UEMOA member states. In all cases, women have an important role to play. This project would therefore take into account gender aspects throughout its implementations in all levels including during SOAC trainings and assessments. The number of trained food safety women assessors and assessment team members who provide SOAC-accredited remote assessment is key to determining their involvement and improvement achieved. Moreover, the number of women participating in voluntary CABs accreditation is a measurable objective and will facilitate determining if these objectives have been met. It is expected that the project would improve women's access to information, technology and equipment during remote SOAC assessments.

Similarly, cooperation between all stakeholders of different genders during exchange of information and experience sharing will be encouraged. This project is expected to be representative during committees' formation and implementation of platform for exchange and sharing of experience activities.

Targeted policies and procedures can also contribute to gender equality. In particular, the development of gender-sensitive policies within SOAC quality management system can push for gender equality as they ensure that gender considerations are sufficiently taken into account by top management.

The project aims to provide relevant and useful experiences and findings on the gender-related aspects. In the implementation of the project, particularly during the establishment of the pool of experts, the gender approach will be applied in conformity with ECOWAS and UEMOA policies. Calls for applications will be non-discriminatory. Female applications will be encouraged. At least 40% of the experts selected should be women, with equal skills. The existence of at least two women within the CABs will be one of the criteria to be met when selecting the beneficiary structures of the project. Gender balance and other diversity aspects will be considered in the accreditation process.

- A gender analysis will be conducted during the project inception phase. Such analysis will help to effectively identify and understand the gender differences and the importance of gender equality in the specific context of the project. Additional recommendations on gender-responsive activities and approaches that will result from the gender analysis will also be integrated, and the logical framework of the project and its indicators will be reviewed where applicable. Project reports will include a chapter dedicated to gender mainstreaming

to report on progress achieved in this area. Gender disaggregated data collection and analyses will be used for monitoring the performance of the project.

## **9. Project objective, outputs and activities (including logical framework and work plan)**

Describe the immediate objective (purpose or outcome) of the project, the outputs (measurable results that contribute to the objective) and the activities that will be carried out to achieve the specified outputs. This description should be based on, and consistent with, the logical framework for the project.

The objective of this project is to improve market access for the 8 UEMOA countries. This project aims to build and increase share of agricultural production exported from beneficiary countries to other countries. The objectives are consistent with the logical framework as described in Appendix 1.

The immediate objective (purpose) is to improve compliance of UEMOA countries with key Food Safety Standards using digital tools. COVID-19 has popularized the use of digitization to ensure the continuity of activities at the global level, including in the countries benefiting from the project. This context was decisive for stakeholders' acceptance of the use of digitization. To mitigate travel restrictions and low business activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SOAC, similar to other ABs, increased the use of remote auditing.

Throughout the project, trained and qualified assessors will assist in implementing quality management systems within some CABs and evaluate other CABs taking into account any potential bias and conflict of interest. CAB training and gap analysis will foster their conformance to international standards. Hence, reduce the number of unsatisfactory inspections/assessments. The number of unsatisfactory inspections/assessments is expected to decrease gradually every year throughout the project time. To achieve its objectives, the project will deliver technical and functional capacity development, including well-trained SPS officers who will spread good practices in the field to comply with SPS requirements, as well as a number of competent assessors and inspectors (both technical qualification and personal attributes).

The project proposes the following 2 outcomes:

**OUTCOME 1** Selected Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) implement improved food safety and quality management systems

**OUTCOME 2** Enhanced understanding and confidence of national and regional stakeholders in conformity assessment results and the accreditation system for regional and international agri-food trade.

The project will center around the five following outputs, each with its own sets of activities:

Output 1 Food safety assessors in each participating UEMOA country are trained to assess food safety and accredit CABs with the use of digital tools.

Output 2 CABs are trained by assessors on food safety and quality management systems.

Output 3 CABs are assessed and accredited (using hybrid approaches including digital tools) at reduced time and cost.

Output 4 Public and private sectors at the country level sensitized/informed on the benefits of using accredited CAB services

Output 5 Regional experiences and good practices on accreditation are shared between SOAC, ECOWAS, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities in the UEMOA countries through an exchange platform.

**OUTCOME 1** Selected conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) implement improved food safety and quality management systems

The project has been developed based on the needs and the outcome of selected CABs implement improved food safety and quality management systems. Food safety assessors will be trained, qualified and authorised by SOAC to perform assessments. These assessors will be used to implement the applicable standards within the CABs.

Given their quality management systems different level of maturity, it is likely that the activities of this project may be implemented slightly different in each CAB. In fact, some CABs may already have a developed quality management system and will need less support from the trained assessors. Whereas, other CABs that do not have any quality management system will require more effort. Therefore, it is expected that the least developed CAB participating in the project will need more attention in closing of the gaps analysis made by the assessors. Nevertheless, the number of remote assessment services carried out by SOAC trained assessors to the CABs operating in the Food Safety field (laboratories, system-competence-product certification bodies) will increase. Special attention will be paid to the number of remote assessment services carried out by SOAC trained assessors to the CABs operating in the Food Safety field (laboratories, system-competence-product certification bodies). Performance evaluation and performance indicators should be developed in line with the accreditation schemes checklist so that the selected CABs can implement improved food safety and quality management systems. Gap analysis report issued by qualified experts and assessors and the gap analysis to CABs will support the achievement of this outcome.

Output 1 Food safety assessors in each participating UEOMA country are trained to assess Food Safety and accredit CABs with the use of digital tools.

The activities of this output are characterized by being easy to implement in all of the participating countries. In fact, all countries should benefit from the anticipated activities. Particular attention will be paid to the appropriate selection of the trainees within the 9 countries and will be based on the maturity of the quality assurance system and the number of CABs in the country as well as the educational capacities to replicate the knowledge in the field. A training report will be produced at the end of the training by the trainer to measure progress and expected achievement. It is intended that 100 trainees must satisfy the training passing criteria defined by the trainer

Activities: The following activities will be carried out under this output:

#### 1.1. Trainers provide training on ISO/IEC Standards related to Food Safety

To meet the competency requirements on the various ISO/IEC Standards related to Food Safety, the candidate assessors will be trained by experts in SPS and qualified so that they have the competence to perform assessment activities for which they will be responsible and to assist candidate CABs for accreditation. The availability of experts in SPS capable of providing up-to-date information about the accreditation requirements and willing to train the participants as well the availability of the trainees are conditions of success. See sub-activities below.

##### 1.1.1 Select and recruit the trainers to provide training on ISO/IEC Standards related to Food Safety (IEC 17025 / ISO IEC 17020 / ISO IEC 17021 /ISO IEC 17065 / ISO IEC 17024)

The selection and recruitment of trainers will be initiated by SOAC organising a call for applications at national level using SOAC online platforms and onsite press releases. Selection criteria will be defined by SOAC and will be based on the candidate's education, experience and knowledge of the applicable ISO standards. In addition to understanding the ISO standards, the availability of the candidate trainers to provide the training activities will be determined so that so that all the ISO standards as covered.

##### 1.1.2. Trainers are trained by SOAC/UNIDO using SOAC's remote training methodology in accreditation

SOAC procedure P18 define the requirements for conducting remote assessments and applies to all SOAC accreditation schemes. The use of digital and IT tools to strengthen the delivery, performance and processes of the conformity assessment system and the accreditation system has evolved and increased as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, particularly in light of shifting work practices. Remote training methodology in accreditation will be held by SOAC in order to provide guidance to selected trainers and ensure standardized and reproducible results. The main objective of this sub-activity is to ensure that the trainers learn and take advantage of SOAC experience in remote training acquired during the Covid-19 outbreak.

#### 1.2. Assessors/trainees per country

A total of 150 persons (including 9 National Accreditation Focal Points) will be selected and trained by the trainers coming from activity 1.1.2 on the ISO standards. The recruiting and training of assessors will be conducted by SOAC according to a its documented process for determining and documenting the competence criteria for personnel involved in the management and performance of assessments. Since not all trainees will complete the training and qualification process, 100 persons will be retained for onsite training. This activity requires an appropriate selection of the trainee assessors within the 9 countries based on the maturity of the QA system and the number of

CABs in the country. The following sub-activities will be conducted so that trainings are completed over the time and 100 trainees are selected for further practice training.

1.2.1. Select candidate assessors per country (about 150+)

1.2.2.1 Prepare/update the training modules and develop a written exam (quiz) for each standard

1.2.2.2 Trainers coming from activity 1.1.2 deliver training modules to assessors using hybrid modes (in-class and distance learning platform)

1.2.3. Provide a written exam to verify familiarizing them with relevant requirements and

1.2.4. Select 100 trainees for further practice training (remote)

1.3. Qualification and authorization of assessors

Competence criteria will be determined by SOAC with regard to the requirements of each accreditation standard. The competence criteria will include the required knowledge and skills for performing accreditation functions and activities. Therefore, a supplementary training will be held remotely and will include direct supervision of qualified assessors during SOAC assessments. Although this training phase will be performed remotely, it will include direct observation of competent assessors performing assessments. The trainers will have the opportunity to participate in the assessment and it will be the responsibility of the assessment lead assessor to determine the trainee is independent and does not require supervision and can be signed off. The following sub-activities will be conducted so that trainings are finalized and trainees are deemed competent and are authorized.

1.3.1. SOAC to develop a practice training plan and schedule

1.3.2. Provide trainee assessors opportunity to observe competent assessors performing assessments

1.3.3. Confirm trainee assessors' competency and issue formal authorization (sign off)

These activities are conducted with a close collaboration of the CABs; therefore a strong commitment of the CABS personnel and their management is necessary to assure success..

Output 2 CABs are trained by assessors on food safety and quality management systems.

25 CABS are trained

It is vital to create understanding and general awareness among CABs about the benefits of accreditations and issuing valid results that comply with ISO standards and technical regulations. To overcome the limited human resources within some of the CABs, it is also important to ensure that they get the necessary, accurate, and updated information so that they can implement management systems and get ready for accreditation assessment. It is essential to reach the target audience with the appropriate messages to ensure the availability of a fair number of CABs in each country along with the appropriate selection of the CABs within the 9 countries.

Activities: The following activities will be carried out under this output:

2.1. Identify interested CABs in being accredited (+/- 50 CABs)

Providing training and assistance to interested CABs by the trained assessors will began establishing a list of interested participants. To select the CABS and ensure their availability as well as their commitments, a set of criteria will be set by SOAC. The criteria for selecting and registering the CABs will be developed in coordination with the assessors and experts in SPS willing to train the CABs. A list of approximately 50 CABs will be consolidated. A CABs training report will be provided following trainings in which any assessor's conflict of interest will be stated and mitigation plan determined to assure proper accreditation process.

2.2. Implementation of quality management systems in those CABs by assessors trained in output 1 (+/- 100 assessors)

Trained assessors will implement a quality management system in the selected CABs. This includes performing an initial diagnosis, mock assessment, gap analysis and recording system failures of the selected CABs.

In this activity, an implementation coach will be recruited by SOAC to supervise the assessors in assisting the CABs in implementing corrective actions.

2.3. Confirmation of the CABs readiness

Once corrective actions fully implemented, the respective CABs assigned assessor will provide a pre-assessment report on the CAB readiness so that SOAC can issue a formal letter confirming CAB readiness to be assessed.

Output 3 CABs are assessed and accredited (using hybrid approaches including digital tools) at reduced time and cost.

The aim is to accredit a total of 20 CABs by SOAC within the 9 countries during the three years. Accreditation process will be conducted according to existing SOAC procedures and in accordance with the ISO/IEC 17011, AFRAC, ILAC and IAF international requirements.

Activities: The following activities will be carried out under this output:

### 3.1. CABs officially request SOAC to be accredited. SOAC process applications received (+/-25)

SOAC will require an authorized representative of the applicant CAB to make a formal application by completing and submitting the application package. Upon reception of the application package, SOAC will review its ability to carry out the assessment of the applicant CAB and select an assessment team, inform the CAB and schedule the assessment.

### 3.2. Assessors trained in output 1 carry-out accreditation assessments to CABs

For each application, SOAC will appoint an assessment team consisting of a team leader and a suitable number of assessors for the scope to be assessed. Team members are selected among the assessors trained in output 1 to carry-out accreditation assessments to CABs. In order to avoid conflicts of interest, SOAC will inform the CABs of the names of the members of the assessment team, any observers, and the organizations they belong to, sufficiently in advance to provide the CAB the opportunity to lodge an objection to the appointment of any particular team members or observers.

Review CAB quality management system documents by assessment team

The assessment team will review all relevant documented information supplied by the CAB to evaluate its system for conformance with the relevant standards and other SOAC requirements for accreditation. Since the readiness was already established in previous activity (also listed above), the assessment team will conduct the assessment based on the assessment plan. The assessment team will analyse all relevant information and objective evidence gathered prior to and during the assessment to determine the extent of competence of the CAB and its conformance with the requirements for accreditation. A written report on the outcome of the assessment will be provided to the conformity assessment body without undue delay and within a defined timeframe. As stated in the ISO/IEC 17011 standard, the assessment report will contain comments on competence and conformity, the scope assessed and will identify nonconformities, if any, to be resolved in order to conform with all of the requirements for accreditation.

SOAC will make an accreditation decision on the basis of an evaluation of all information received and any other relevant information without undue delay.

**OUTCOME 2** Enhanced understanding and confidence of national and regional stakeholders in conformity assessment results and the accreditation system for regional and international agri-food trade.

Using conformity assessment and accreditation in Food Safety services to increase agricultural exports has increasingly become an important topic for promoting economic competitiveness and trade. To participate in the global economy and access export markets, national and regional stakeholders are required to better understand and have confidence in conformity assessment results and the accreditation system. Therefore, the aim of this output is to ensure that the public and private sectors are sensitized to the benefits of using competent CABs in Food Safety services to boost agricultural exports. To improve the skills and awareness of stakeholders, public and private sectors on the benefit of accreditation it is critical to adequately identify of the most qualified candidates to be informed as well as their availability. The outcome highly depends on the availability of skilled and competent participants, stakeholders and authorities to attend virtual meetings, panel discussions, webinars, workshops and a regional platform meeting so that they can be regularly informed on the importance of accreditation in the field of SPS & Food Safety and the use of accredited vCAB services by public and private sectors.

The level of awareness of the public and private sector will be measured monthly report from accreditation focal points dedicated to the project. Using conformity assessment and accreditation services are measured using SOAC annual survey report. The accredited vCABs responses to SOAC

Annual survey as well as reports on Google analytics and tag manager to track visits in each country will establish key indicators of performance.

Output 4 Public and private sectors at the country level sensitized/informed on the benefits of using accredited CAB services

Growing the awareness of the public and private sectors at the country level on the benefits of using accredited CAB services has generally increased the need to ensure that CABs can operate a quality management system that is seen as conforming to applicable standards. The aim of this output is to first ensure National Accreditation Focal Points in each country to inform SPS authorities about the usefulness of strengthened accredited services. Second, establish a communication campaign that promotes the importance of accreditation and the usefulness of strengthened accredited services through regular meetings, mass media campaign in each country. Finally, the National Accreditation Focal Points will inform private sector (businesses) in their countries (through industry associations) about accreditation.

As a result, the number of food companies using CAB services should increase per beneficiary country due to the number of SPS authorities sensitized on accreditation and the number of people reached through the mass media campaign. The development of the three following activities will be carried out in close coordination, and in parallel with each other, with the support of the national accreditation focal points and a local infographic designer.

Activities: The following activities will be carried out under this output:

4.1. National Accreditation Focal Points in each country to inform SPS authorities about the usefulness of strengthened accredited services

The project resources will be linked with knowledge and communication tools of the project partners and other relevant existing networks to enable increased outreach and knowledge of the SPS authorities about the usefulness of strengthened accredited services. Regular virtual meetings, panel discussions, webinars, workshops and a regional platform meeting with SPS authorities will provide the national accreditation focal points in each country the opportunity to disseminate the knowledge on the benefits of using accredited CAB services. Information e-package content will be prepared by a local infographic designer on key topics selected by the national accreditation focal points in coordination with SOAC for the SPS authorities. It is intended in these activities that National Accreditation Focal Points in each country organize and host regular meetings with SPS authorities using information e-package content created by a recruited local infographic designer. The infographic designer will design an accompanying communication campaign.

4.2. Mass media campaign - Announcement in TV/radio/ newspapers in each country about the importance of accreditation

This will be a very significant set of activities to complete the output on sensitizing and informing the Public and private sectors at the country level on the benefits of using accredited CAB services. Communications products will include brochures and newsletters on the project, designed to be released to selected press. Media selection criteria will previously have been defined by SOAC with the intent to widely spread and outreach the public about the importance of accreditation.

4.3. National Accreditation Focal Points to inform private sector (businesses) in their countries (through industry associations) about accreditation

The project recognizes that the overall capacity development of project stakeholders should not only focus on the SPS authorities and the public but also on the private sector. Generally speaking, private sector operators are more flexible in ensuring that service quality remains high. The benefits of using accredited CAB services and technical competence service providers by the private sector communication campaign will start with identifying key stakeholders (including business associations) in each country. Private sector will be sensitized to the benefits of using competent CABs in Food Safety services to boost agricultural exports by train national accreditation focal points on the approach to take and how to promote the project locally. National accreditation focal points in each country will organize and host regular meetings with the private sector. Conferences will be held according to a predetermined schedule by a qualified and well-versed speaker in the field accreditation, agricultural products and Food Safety, who will be recruited by the project coordinator.

Seeking feedback from focal points is required for an effective communication with the private sector. Although the content will benefit from the valuable inputs from all the stakeholders throughout the two other activities in this output, it will still be very important to continually update content based on feedback received and the objectives of the project.

Output 5 Regional experiences and good practices on accreditation are shared between SOAC, ECOWAS, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities in the UEMOA countries through an exchange platform

Developing a more supportive knowledge-sharing infrastructure will enhance understanding and confidence of national and regional stakeholders in conformity assessment results and the accreditation system for regional and international agri-food trade and will mitigate possible declining interest on the project. Knowledge-sharing techniques will be supported by creating a committee for exchange and sharing of experience activities, between SOAC, ECOWAS, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities including a web-platform at SOAC.

In addition to sharing knowledge between all the stakeholders, the creation and use of a network will support continuous exchanges between national accreditation focal points and promote learning and collaboration. To enable this output and sustain exchange activities, a website will be created by the end of year 1 and maintained by the web-designer throughout and beyond the project implementation.

Quarterly reports on the quality of exchanges and shared analyses to complete, improve and validate the content will involve both SOAC and UEMOA member states officials. To maintain focus and ensure that conflicts of interest do not exist or are resolved so as not to adversely influence subsequent activities, project committee's and network's terms of reference and frequency of the meetings will be defined and documented.

In addition, it will be necessary to find out about other digitized systems in the field of conformity assessment. The objective is to study whether they are potentially interoperable with this project. Among the existing digitized systems, particular interest will be given to that on CODEX remote audits and inspections. SOAC IT unit will be responsible for carrying out this study. A comparative report between the systems will be one of the deliverables of the project.

The project has a multi-country regional scope. To ensure its effectiveness, it is necessary to identify other partners who intervene on the same subject. The objective is the synergy of actions with the potential projects identified, particularly at the national level. Certain known projects will be targeted. These include national WACOMP projects, especially those implemented by UNIDO, national USAID projects in the States concerned, including those on foreign agricultural service positions (national USAID projects in beneficiary countries and USAID Senegal's Sahel Regional Office and USAID West AFRICA Regional (as they provide support to many ECOWAS countries), as well as US Foreign Agricultural Services (FAS) Posts in the region). This activity will be initiated in close collaboration with the national accreditation focal points. Country reports will be provided by each National Accreditation Focal Point.

Activity 5.3 Online workshops to take knowledge and study possible inter – operability with other digitized systems, i.e., codex work on remote audits and inspections

Activity 5.4 Involving relevant stakeholders to encourage possible synergies with other donors (i.e., national WACOMP / UNIDO projects, national USAID projects in beneficiary countries and USAID Senegal's Sahel Regional Office and USAID West AFRICA Regional (as they provide support to many ECOWAS countries), as well as US Foreign Agricultural Services (FAS) Posts in the region)

Activities: The following activities will be carried out under this output:

5.1. Committee created for exchange and sharing of experience activities, between SOAC, ECOWAS, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities including a web-platform at SOAC

Sharing experiences between all stakeholders will be an important modality to increase awareness and sustain commitment and interest on the project. Committee members are carefully selected from SOAC, ECOWAS, conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities to ensure effective operation.

SOAC, ECOWAS, conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities together will select committee members from and decide on the committee's terms of reference and frequency of the meetings. These sub-activities will be held during the inception phase and can occur during the launch of the project. A local web-designer will create a web-platform at SOAC for exchange allowing committee members to share their experience activities. The local web-designer will maintain the web-platform.

5.2. Network to promote continuous exchanges between National accreditation focal points

In this activity, committee members will be selected to create a network for which the terms of reference and frequency of the meetings will be decided. A regional Communication Expert will be



recruited to run and animate the social networks; and maintain communication policy. The expert will also supervise the focal points for writing questions and answers articles.

These sub-activities will be held during the inception phase and can occur during the launch of the project.

Linking national and regional interests requires substantial coordination with the regional integration organizations and continuous exchanges between National accreditation focal points. A regional Communication Expert will be recruited to run and animate the social networks, maintain communication policy and supervise the focal points for writing questions and answers articles in order to promote continuous exchanges. A new online newsletter related to the project will also be designed and disseminated to all national accreditation focal points with project news, activities and results on a quarterly basis.

5.3 Study to take knowledge and identify possible inter – operability with other digitized systems, i.e., codex work on remote audits and inspections.

For this activity, SOAC's IT unit will be responsible for obtaining information, namely through an online documentary search, on other digitized systems in the field of accreditation and conformity assessment, which apply in the Member States. project members. This identification and the necessary contacts will be facilitated by the STDF and UNIDO.

5.4 Identification of relevant stakeholders to encourage possible synergies with other donors.

The national accreditation focal points will be responsible for collecting information on projects covering similar themes; this activity will be carried out at the start of the project. Online discussion workshops on the objectives of the various programs of the identified projects will be organized following their identification.

#### **Attach:**

- (i) **A logical framework** summarizing what the project intends to do and how, what the key risks and assumptions are, and how outputs and outcomes will be monitored and evaluated (Appendix 1). See Qn. 15 (l) of the Guidance Note and the template attached to this application form. Attached
- (ii) **A detailed work plan** indicating the start and completion date of the project, as well as sequence in which activities would be carried out (Appendix 2). See Qn. 15 (m) of the Guidance Note and the template attached to this application form. Attached
- (iii) **Terms of Reference** (TORs) for key national/international experts to be involved in implementation of activities included in the work plan. The TORs should include information on specific tasks and responsibilities, duration of assignments, number of missions (if appropriate), and required qualifications/experience (Appendix 6). See Qn. 15 (n) of the Guidance Note. Attached

## **10. Environmental-related issues**

Briefly discuss any environmental-related issues and implications that are relevant to the project. This should cover the environmental implications of project activities, including any SPS control measures promoted, and their potential positive and/or negative implications or consequences. Specifically:

- To what extent does the project contribute directly or indirectly to environmental protection (e.g. through reduced use of pesticides/chemicals or use of less toxic pesticides, adoption of integrated pest management systems, reduced burden on land through improved animal production practices, etc.)?
- Does the project have any possible negative implications on the environment (e.g. increased use of pesticides, chemicals, antibiotics)? If so, what are these consequences and how will they be managed or reduced? See Qn. 15 (k) of the Guidance Note.

The aim of the project, through the qualification of experts in the field of accreditation, will increase the number of accredited CABs, thus contributing on the one hand to the promotion of control measures in Food Safety and on the other hand to the increase of trade. The availability of accredited CABs will make it possible to monitor a greater number of companies to ensure that they are producing in accordance with applicable good practices as requested. The results of the project contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Objectives (SDOs), in particular SDOs 1, 3, 5 and 9. In addition, relying on digitisation helps to reduce greenhouse gases generated by

aviation; the project, which is largely based on digitisation, reduces the use of this means of transport by at least a third.

It is worth noting that the project will make maximum use of the digital platforms of SOAC and enable efficient and resilient digital remote assessments of voluntary CABs. Remote assessments have the merit of using less hardcopy standard operating procedures (SOPs). Most CABs documentation that was paper-centric would be available in e-format. Everything from CABs quality management system documentation to SOAC assessment reports and teams supporting evidence would be electronic and would constitute measures that will be reducing carbon footprint due to reduced paper usage.

In short, the implementation of the project will have no negative impact on the environment but will contribute to its positive impact.

As per UNIDO Environmental and Social Safeguards Policies and Procedures (ESSPP), the Environmental and Social screening template has been completed and this project has been categorized as "C". Although no further specific environmental and/or social assessment is required for category C projects, environmental and social aspects will be duly considered in all the project activities.

## 11. Risks

Briefly discuss the major risks identified in the logical framework and explain what actions will be taken to mitigate or manage them.

Risk	Risk Type/Risk Owner	Impact	Probability	Mitigation	Assumptions
Instability in Member States disrupts project activities, results and impact	International Environment  Member States	High	Medium	Monitor the situation and adjust the project if necessary	The region would remain allowing uninterrupted implementation of project activities.
Beneficiary States unable to produce Food Safety-compliant products for export	Beneficiaries  Beneficiary countries	High	Medium	Achieve synergies with ongoing projects in the Food Safety field such as the WACOMP	Successful Food Safety projects of the WACOMP type
SOAC not being able to become a signatory of the IAF Multilateral Recognition arrangements.	Impact and Sustainability  SOAC	High	Low	Pre-qualification evaluation	SOAC is re-evaluated following implementation of corrective actions
Assessment and certification and training costs remain high.	Impact and Sustainability  Beneficiary institutions	High	Low	Optimising the use of ICTs to carry out distance learning and assessments	The significant decrease in accreditation costs is motivating more conformity assessment
High travel cost	International Environment	High	Low	To set up a pool of Food Safety and Quality experts in each State in order to	Bodies to seek accreditation.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Risk Type/Risk Owner</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
	Beneficiary institutions			reduce travel costs. Remote assessment to be performed	
Weak commitment of official Food Safety structures	Impact and Sustainability  Beneficiary institutions	High	Low	For the engagement of the official Food Safety structures, SOAC mobilizes the UEMOA and ECOWAS Commissions to inform the competent authorities of the respective Member States by referral to the supervisory authorities (Ministers). The Food Safety Laboratory Network is mobilizing its members to join the project.	The Food Safety structures are sufficiently committed to the project and its results.
Insufficient human resources with the basic criteria required for selection	Beneficiaries  Beneficiary institutions	Medium	Medium	Concerning human resources, SOAC will rely of the ECOWAS Quality and Industry database to target the best profiles in each Member state. A synergy is ensured with other projects that plan to train experts in the field of Food Safety	The required expertise is readily available and affordable
Low Internet speed at the level of the users concerned	International Environment  Beneficiary institutions	Low	Medium	For Internet speed, SOAC will favour alternative measures such as making downloadable version modules available online in lighter formats (e.g. audio plus PPT instead of video); structures will be encouraged to use mobile	Internet connectivity will remain relatively stable, benefiting from the significant investments made by States in this area during COVID-19.

Risk	Risk Type/Risk Owner	Impact	Probability	Mitigation	Assumptions
				connection solutions when the network connection is faulty.	
Continuation of COVID-19	International Environment  Member States	Low	Low	Develop and implement innovative ways to ensure continuity of services and follow the recommendations of national and international health authorities.	COVID-19 would no longer pose a risk that the Peer Evaluation could be postponed beyond the project period.
Lack of awareness of the importance of the project by the private sector to stimulate international trade.	Impact and Sustainability  Private sector institutions	Low	High	With a view to the effective involvement of the private sector, SOAC will inform the umbrella structures and professional associations concerned by the project by relaying on the Regional Consular Chamber of the UEMOA and the National Accreditation Focal Points. The project will also be based in the outcome of exchanges between the private sector and other stakeholders foreseen by projects.	The need for reliable conformity assessment results is understood and desired by producers and traders.

## 12. Sustainability

Explain how the results of the project will be sustained in the longer-term, addressing financial and institutional sustainability. See Qn. 15 (i) of the Guidance Note.

There are key sets of factors that can affect the success of this project among which the level of participation of all ministries involved in the control of the sanitary safety of agricultural production in West Africa, the involvement of UEMOA member states officials, as well as the interest of the agricultural educational institutions within the UEMOA member states. Improving these factors with the overall approach to remote conformity assessment methodologies will increase the success of the project.

Since UEMOA countries will continue to comply with Food Safety measures and SPS standards in West Africa, ISO, and IAF after the 3 years funded by the STDF the project is set to be a long-term activity. In particular, the project will ensure that expertise in Food Safety and accreditation will continue to be available in the Member States. Training and online learning and evaluation will be controlled and documented processes. These achievements will help to maintain the competence of the CABs in the Food Safety sector. Voluntary CABs will continue to offer their services to farmers, producers, and exporters. In addition, projects such as WACOMP and STDF/PG/665 will have strengthened the capacity of enterprises. They will be able to use the services of SOAC-accredited Food Safety CABs. The experts can be used by companies as consultants to deploy Food Safety quality systems.

Information and experience are shared between different stakeholders. Thus, the collaboration between competent authorities, accredited conformity assessment bodies, and SOAC will be strengthened. Areas of cooperation will have been identified with a view to more intensive use by the competent authorities of conformity assessment services in the accredited Food Safety sector. There will be incremental additions of conformity assessment services when considered together will contribute to the sustainability of the project.

International standards are continually changing. To better support UEMOA countries and strengthen knowledge, both ECOWAS and SOAC recognize the importance of competence requirements for each function influencing the results of laboratory testing, inspection bodies, and certification bodies activities. Ongoing training to adapt to revised standards will continue to be a key pillar of conformity assessment. Both organizations will rely on a low cost of remote training to maintain cost efficiency and competence of Food safety actors. It is expected that other technical and financial partners will continue to support countries to generate and disseminate knowledge (e.g.; UE, World Bank).

The sustainability of the project is therefore dependent on a number of factors. Those factors include the commitment of UEMOA member state officials; involvement of national partner authorities; availability of competent assessors having appropriate technical and personal attributes; and, well-trained officers to spread good practices in the field for compliance with SPS requirements. Sufficient resources must be allocated for information dissemination on the importance of accreditation in the field of SPS & Food Safety and the use of accredited vCAB services by public and private sectors. In addition, coherent and harmonized policies within the UEMOA countries will solidify the principal objectives of improved market access for the 8 UEMOA countries, and self-sufficiency through agricultural exports from the beneficiary countries.

### **III. BUDGET**

#### **13. Estimated budget**

Provide a *detailed* breakdown of the total project budget (in US\$) using the table in Appendix 3 for guidance. The detailed budget must be provided as an Excel file. It should be prepared on the basis of the outputs identified above, and the resources needed to complete the specified activities. The budget may include expenditures for expertise, travel, training, workshops, minor equipment items, project management, general operating expenses, etc.

The budget should clearly specify: (i) the amount requested from STDF; (ii) the applicant's own contribution to the project, which may be in the form of financing or an in-kind contribution (e.g. staff time, use of premises, etc.) and is subject to audit (see Qn. 12); and (iii) the amount (if any) requested from other donors. See Qn. 10, Qn. 14 and Qn. 15 (o) of the Guidance Note for more information on the budget, and what the STDF funds (and does not fund).

A detailed breakdown of the total project budget is included in Appendix 3. It has been prepared based on the 5 outputs identified in section 9 of this document (also included in Appendix 1), and the resources needed to complete the specified activities. The budget includes expenditures for expertise, training, workshops, quality management system implementations and CABs assessments, kick-off, and closing events, travel, committee meetings, project management, general operating expenses, etc.

The total amount requested from STDF is USD \$844,468.77 out of the total project cost of USD \$1,406,727.19. The matching funds include USD 562,258.43 of contributions from SOAC and the CABs (both public and private) and the 9 countries.

#### **14. Cost-effectiveness**

Explain how the project may be considered a cost-effective contribution to addressing the SPS problem(s) identified above, compared to alternatives (including no action). See Qn. 15 (p) of the Guidance Note.

Experience shows that cost related to the accreditation of laboratories, inspection bodies and certification bodies fees remain high for organizations in West Africa. To lower the cost and make accreditation assessments more cost effective for food certification, SOAC aims to accredit locally CABs against ISO standard, national / regional food schemes (such as HACCP) or international private schemes (such as BRCGS, Global Gap, BIO, etc.).

The project aims to increase of the number of trained and qualified food safety assessors which will provide SOAC-accredited remote services, including assessments, to voluntary CABs at reduced time and cost. Furthermore, a larger pool of assessor, will allow a better selection taking into account the geographical location of the needed expertise when onsite activity in support of remote assessment is required. Reduced cost of transportation due to proximity will reduce the risk of incomplete expertise to cover the scope of accreditation.

### **IV. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION & MANAGEMENT**

#### **15. Implementing organization**

Identify the organization(s) responsible for project implementation and attach evidence of its technical and professional capacity to implement the project (i.e. a list of achievements and record of financial probity). If an STDF partner or third party acceptable to the STDF is proposed to implement the project, attach written consent from that organization (Appendix 5). See Qn. 15 (q) of the Guidance Note.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) will be the implementing partner for this project. UNIDO will be responsible for the project implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The project will be managed by the SME Competitiveness, Quality and Compliance Division (SME) of UNIDO, in accordance with the Guidelines for the Technical Cooperation Program and Project Cycle (UNIDO/DGAI.17. Rev.1: Guidelines for the Technical Cooperation Program technical cooperation and the project cycle - partially replaced by UNIDO/DGB/(P).130 and UNIDO/DGAI.21).

UNIDO implemented the regional quality programmes in West Africa that led to the operation of SOAC. During these programmes, UNIDO led the assistance in establishing Food Safety expertise in support of ESAs in West Africa. ESAs have also been supported in the certification of management systems (ISO IEC 9001 / ISO IEC 22000). Similarly, laboratories have been accredited as well as product certification bodies in the field of Food Safety. UNIDO has a long tradition of cooperation and a strong partnership with STDF.

It is important to note that UNIDO supported the recruitment of a team of experts to contribute to the drafting of the PPG leading to the very first application submitted by SOAC on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 by allocating USD 18,254.

UNIDO is also implementing project STDF/PG/665 called "*Piloting the Use of Third-Party Assurance (TPA) Programmes to Improve food safety outcome for public health and safety*", which has points of convergence with this programme. See section 4 above. In addition, UNIDO also implements several parts of the ECOWAS WACOMP programme; the need to work in synergy with WACOMP has been highlighted to the ensure sustainability of results.

#### **16. Project management**

Explain how the project will be managed, clearly indicating roles and responsibilities. If a Project Steering Committee is to be established for this purpose, specify its role, membership and meeting schedule, and explain how decisions will be made, etc. See Qn. 15 (r) of the Guidance Note.

The project management responsibility will remain with UNIDO. UNIDO will provide a designated project manager who will work closely with the Steering Committee members. UNIDO will recruit a

project associate (50 percent under this project) to ensure the day-to-day coordination of the project and will assign a part-time administrative assistant (not directly charged to the project).

UNIDO will lead the logistical implementation and will ensure the financial and administrative effective management of the project. Therefore, UNIDO will be in charge of recruiting the project manager dedicated to the implementation of the project.

The project manager will be responsible for monitoring the project's progress, evaluating the performance, and reporting to the stakeholders. UNIDO will be contracting all the experts on ISO/IEC standards responsible for providing training to the assessors.

The project will call upon the experts' knowledge of ISO/IEC and SPS standards. This will involve contracting all the experts including ISO/IEC Standards experts responsible for providing training to the assessors, a Web-designer, and an infographic Designer.

This project aims to improve market access for UEMOA countries by ensuring they comply with Food Safety measures and SPS national, regional, and international standards and will contribute to the training of West African regional accreditation body food safety assessors and laboratories staff, as well as raising public and private stakeholders' awareness efforts through online activities.

It is to be noted that UNIDO has experience in successfully implementing food safety capacity building projects including implementation of quality programmes in the West African region since 2001. UNIDO is currently implementing most of the regional WACOMP project as well as the STDF/PG/665 on third party assurance in two countries in the region.

The project manager will be responsible of recruiting a team of experts on the ISO/IEC applicable standards to this project. The experts who will be providing training and mentoring the vCABs will be reporting to the project manager while the national coordinator will be reporting to SOAC Director General. The project manager will visit SOAC headquarter once a year during the three years of the duration of the project and will be reporting on the advance of the intended outcomes.

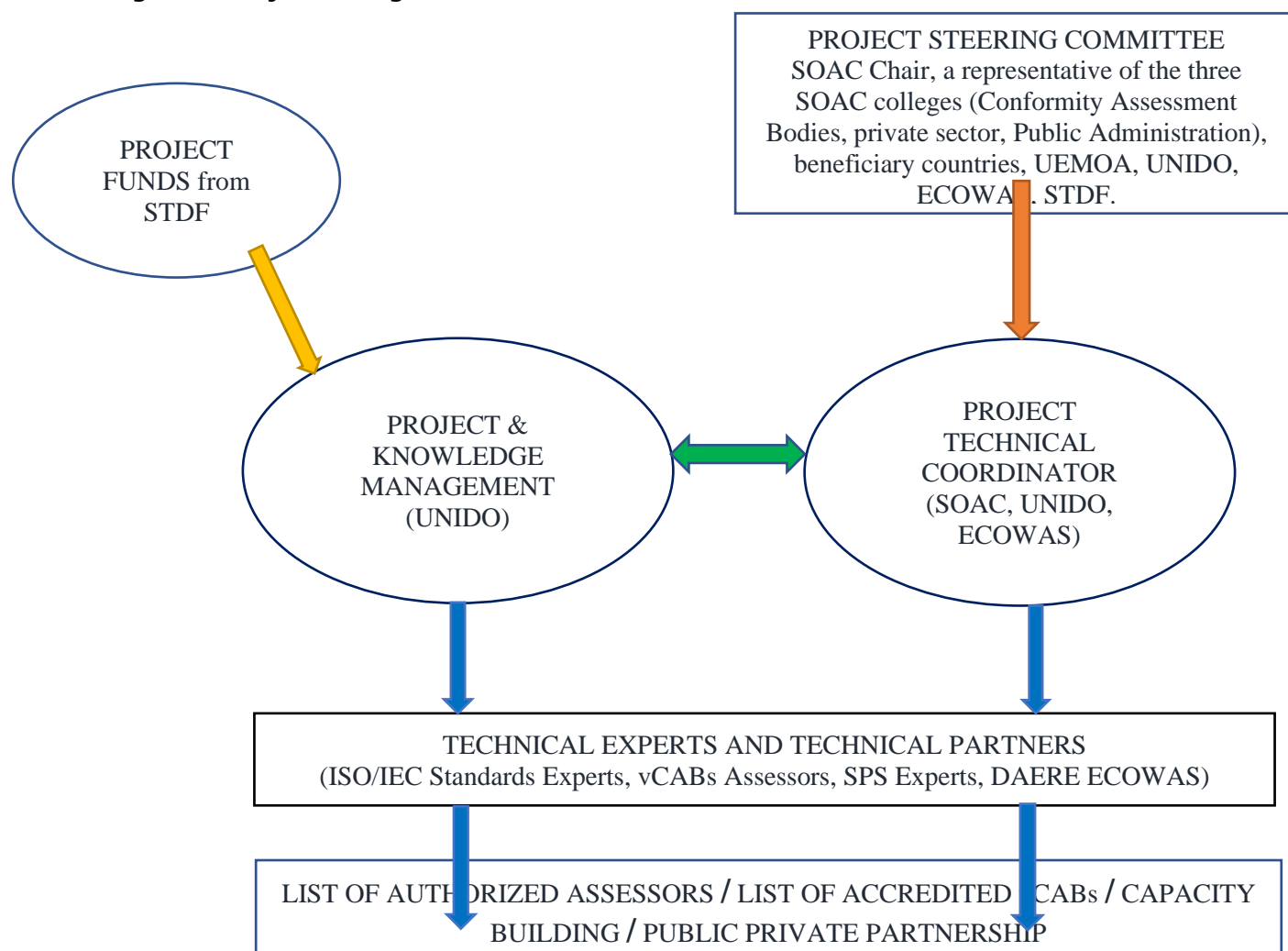
The Project Manager will look after the stakeholder's routine communications, functional component and all the operational matters. He/she will keep SOAC, STDF and other key partners regularly informed about the progress and issues and will seek technical and managerial advice on regular basis. This will help the key technical players stay well informed and will allow them to play their technical and advisory roles in an efficient manner.

A national coordinator in charge of the day-to-day implementation and coordination of project activities will be recruited and be based at the SOAC Secretariat in Abidjan. He/she will visit, when necessary, the recipient countries to monitor effective implementation of activities. The national coordinator will support the project manager in preparing semi-annual, annual, and final reports to be reviewed by SOAC.

The logistical and financial aspects of the projects will be managed by UNIDO. A project staff (national assistant) will be tasked with supporting the national coordinator with daily operational activities. The daily operational activities are not limited to administration, but will also include preparing subcontracts to be signed with project partners, making preparation for trainings such as purchase of airline tickets, contracting with hotels, arranging local transportation, etc. The National Assistant will be based in Abidjan and work under the direct supervision of the National Coordinator. He/she will be trained by specialised administrative staff of UNIDO.

The ECOWAS Commission, through the DAERE, will steer cooperation activities between national competent authorities, SOAC and accredited Food Safety conformity assessment services. SOAC chairs the Project Steering Committee.

**Figure 1. Project Management Structure**



The Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be formed by:

- 1 Representative of the Conformity Assessment Bodies
- 1 Representative of the private sector
- 1 Representative of the Public Administration
- 1 representative per beneficiary country
- 1 representative UEMOA
- 1 representative ECOWAS
- 1 representative STDF
- 1 representative of UNIDO (secretary of the meeting)

SOAC, created by the UEMOA Council of Ministers, is also the centrepieces of the ECOWAS accreditation system. As such, SOAC participates in the achievement of the objectives of various regional policies, notably the agricultural, industrial and quality policies of the two institutions. The two Commissions thus encourage the implementation of this project which contributes to the improvement of the skills of the CABs of the Food Safety sector in the Member States.

The ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions that are members of the Steering Committee can thus ensure the link with future complementary policies and projects in order to participate in ensuring the sustainability of the programme, including in the field of human health with the assistance of the West African Health Organisation (WAHO).

### ***Procurement and Grants***

*“All procurement under the project shall be effected in line with applicable UNIDO rules and regulations. Waiver as per Financial rule 109.5.5 (a) (ii) Monopoly – will have to be applied for West*



*Africa Accreditation System (WAAS) / Système Ouest Africain d'Accréditation (SOAC) (Vendor ID 40018745) as according to the principle of territoriality in accreditation, there is no competition between accreditation bodies. It will particularly relate to activities under Output 1 (training) and Output 3 (accreditation assessments). Otherwise no exception to open competition is foreseen."*

*"The project has no grant component and therefore no grant is foreseen."*

## **V. REPORTING, MONITORING & EVALUATION**

### **17. Project reporting**

Provide information on the reporting schedule, including the type and number of reports (i.e. inception report, progress reports, final report) to be prepared. These reports will provide the basis for systematically monitoring progress and give recipients an opportunity to make substantive comments on any unanticipated issues that require attention. Progress reports should normally be submitted every six months unless an alternative reporting schedule is agreed. See Qn. 15 (s) of the Guidance Note.

Reporting will be done in line with the work plan schedule. Every 6 months, a progress report of the activities and outputs will be generated and sent to the STDF, using their indications and template. Reports of workshops and other activities implemented during this period will also be incorporated. The project staff will work closely with SOAC and other collaborators to prepare progress reports and final project report that monitors project indicators and measures. The Project Steering Committee will consider the Progress Reports and will advise on any modification to the project plan, which will be discussed with STDF.

An inception workshop is going to be held where the logical framework will be reviewed to finalize identification of: i) outputs ii) indicators; and iii) missing baseline information and targets and workplan. A baseline survey will be done to register the outcomes of the inception meeting. The results of the inception meeting and baseline survey is expected to be a set of defined activities, outputs and indicators (and updating of the logical framework) against which project progress will be measured. These will then be discussed and finalized at the PSC meeting, and also shared with the STDF Secretariat, and will form the basis for tracking and monitoring progress throughout the project duration.

The responsibility of tracking project progress will be by the Project Manager, with project partners and country focal points expected to provide relevant information to track the indicators. The Project Manager will prepare comprehensive interim progress reports and make inputs to the final project report, ensuring holistic and comprehensive monitoring of project indicators and measures. An overall assessment of project progress against all indicators and outputs will be done towards completion of the project.

A report will be developed for presentation and discussion at the final meeting at which an implementation program (involving the project multi - stakeholder network) of final project outputs will be finalized.

### **18. Monitoring and evaluation, including performance indicators**

Describe how progress made in project implementation will be monitored and evaluated. With reference to the logical framework, provide information on the key indicators (quantified to the extent possible) that will be used to monitor and measure the success of activities carried out. See Qn. 15 (t) of the Guidance Note.

UNIDO will ensure that project activities are monitored, and project outcomes and impacts are appropriately being assessed, based on the project's logical framework and following the STDF Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework. For this, the project will develop a M&E plan that will identify data sources, data collection methods, sources of quantitative and qualitative, to establish a baseline for monitoring the project indicators. Special attention will be given to monitor gender for each activity. The initial phase will allow the relevance of the proposed indicators to be

checked, and new indicators may be included if necessary. SOAC and ECOWAS participate in the monitoring of the deliverables, notably with the staff dedicated to the project set up.

Monitoring of activities and outputs will aim to ensure that the project is on track or course corrected as appropriate, dependent on the identification of unplanned or unintended changes. Evaluation will focus on measuring outcomes and impacts, to assess if progress is being made towards project stipulated goals; to document any changes that have occurred; to identify whether any unintended or unplanned changes have been observed; and to gauge the durability of impacts over time.

According to STDF's rules, the Project will undergo an independent end-of-project assessment, carried out by an external evaluator, and whose report will be attached to the final Project report. The budget for such an assessment is included in the budget. The development of the terms of reference, selection of the evaluator and contracting of this assessment is the responsibility of UNIDO.

In addition, after project's completion, the project could be subjected to an ex-post evaluation, drawing on the OECD-DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance. The development of the terms of reference, selection of the evaluator and contracting of this assessment is the responsibility of the STDF. UNIDO will collaborate closely with the selected consultant in due time.

## **19. Dissemination of the projects results**

Describe how the project results will be disseminated within the country and/or more widely. Explain if, and how, the project may be replicated or its results used more widely. See Qn. 15 (u) of the Guidance Note.

The communication plan of the project is designed to maintain close contact and communication with all the actors involved and serve as a means of disseminating the progress and results obtained.

The results of the project are disseminated as follows: - SOAC Social Networks - SOAC website - Web page dedicated to the project - Project newsletter - Teleconferences with stakeholders - By SOAC National Focal Points in the States SOAC will solicit its partners: STDF, UNIDO, UEMOA Regional Consular Chamber, UEMOA and ECOWAS Commission (WACOMP project, ECOWAQ Agency, etc.) to relay the results on their communication platforms. The project's approach could be replicated by other accreditation bodies in developing countries, currently being consolidated such as SOAC, that wish to do so. The results of the dialogue between the competent authorities, SOAC and the Conformity Assessment Services, under the coordination of ECOWAS, will be formalised with a view to being replicated in other regions.

The approach based largely on distance education is replicable at the national and regional level. The project covers 9 ECOWAS countries; eventually, the results will be duplicated to all 15 Member States. The project does not address the issue of the competence of biomedical laboratories. The pandemic has reminded us of the extent to which human health is correlated with animal and plant health in order to have healthy agricultural resources. The results obtained could be duplicated for medical biology CABs, especially medical laboratories of which less than 20 are currently accredited in the ECOWAS space.

Dissemination, communication, and outreach will be achieved through SPS portal development creation of a webpage devoted to the project activities and outputs on the SOAC website and using SOAC social media (including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn) as the project's main tools for outreach and public communication. Communications products may include news items, photos, videos, web updates and social media posts (using #STDF and #SafeTrade). In addition to reporting on project progress and milestones, an emphasis will be placed on producing human-interest success stories.

The project will have a multimedia manager responsible for developing a communications strategy and related calendar throughout the life of the project, including the target audience, media to be used, products to be developed and expected results. This CP must consider all the aspects contemplated in the STDF Communications Plan

([https://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF\\_Comms\\_plan\\_Final.pdf](https://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF_Comms_plan_Final.pdf)).

Furthermore, the project will appropriately use the STDF logo on all project-generated external communication materials, including social media, to ensure its prominence and visibility, as specified in the STDF Communications Plan. Project results will also feed into STDF's corporate publications and dissemination channels.

## **20. Legal Context**

It is expected that each set of activities to be implemented in the target countries will be governed by the provisions of the Standard Basic Cooperation Agreement concluded between the Government of the recipient country concerned and UNIDO or – in the absence of such an agreement – by one of the following: (i) the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement concluded between the recipient country and UNDP, (ii) the Technical Assistance Agreements concluded between the recipient country and the United Nations and specialized agencies, or (iii) the Basic Terms and Conditions Governing UNIDO Projects.

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### **ATTACHMENTS**

**Appendix 1:** Logical framework (see attached template)

**Appendix 2:** Work Plan (see attached template)

**Appendix 3:** Project Budget in Excel (see attached template)

**Appendix 4:** Letters of support from organizations that support the project request

**Appendix 5:** Written consent from an STDF partner that agrees to implement the project **OR** evidence of the technical and professional capacity of another organization proposed to implement the project.

**Appendix 6:** Terms of Reference for key staff involved in project implementation

**APPENDIX 1: Logical Framework**

	<b>Project description</b>	<b>Measurable indicators / targets</b>	<b>Sources of verification</b>	<b>Assumptions and risks</b>
<b>Goal</b>	Improved market access for 8 UEMOA countries	Increased share of agricultural production exported from beneficiary countries to other countries	Published exportation data from UEMOA countries	<p>Coherent and harmonized policies within the UEMOA countries</p> <p>Involvement of national partner authorities</p> <p>Low participation of all ministries involved in the control of the sanitary safety of agricultural production in West Africa</p> <p>Low involvement of UEMOA member states officials</p> <p>Low involvement of Agricultural educational institutions UEMOA member states</p>
<b>Immediate objective (purpose)</b>	Improved compliance of UEMOA countries with key Food Safety Standards using digital tools	Number of unsatisfactory inspections/assessments decreases gradually every year throughout the project time.	<p>Inspection data from UEMOA countries authorities</p> <p>Assessment data from SOAC</p>	<p>Well-trained SPS officers spread good practices in the field to comply with SPS requirements</p> <p>Availability of competent assessors and inspectors (both technical qualification and personal attributes)</p> <p>Insufficient resources allocated to the dissemination of the mission</p>

APPENDIX 1: Logical Framework				
	Project description	Measurable indicators / targets	Sources of verification	Assumptions and risks
<b>OUTCOME 1</b>	Selected conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) implement improved food safety and quality management systems	The number of remote assessment services carried out by SOAC trained assessors to the CABs operating in the Food Safety field (laboratories, system-competence-product certification bodies) has increased	Gap analysis report	Qualified experts make the gap analysis. Commitment of the CABS Lack of human resources within some of the CABs. Low CABs management commitment
<b>Output 1</b>	Food safety assessors in each participating UEOMA country are trained to assess food safety and accredit CABs with the use of digital tools. (gender disaggregated)	A total of 150 persons (including 9 National Accreditation Focal Points) will be trained on the standards. From the 150 persons trained in class, 100 will be retained for onsite training (of which 40% women) (gender disaggregated)	SOAC Competence Management File of assessors Training report will be produced at the end of the training by the trainer. 100 trainees must satisfy the training passing criteria defined by the trainer	Availability of the trainees. Availability of experts in SPS willing to train the participants Appropriate selection of the trainees within the 9 countries based on the maturity of the QA system and the number of CABs in the country. Educational capacities to replicate the knowledge in the field.
<b>Activities</b>	<p><b>1.1. Trainers</b> provide training on ISO/IEC Standards related to Food Safety</p> <p>1.1.1 Select and recruit the <b>trainers</b> to provide training on ISO/IEC Standards related to Food Safety (IEC 17025 / ISO IEC 17020 / ISO IEC 17021 /ISO IEC 17065 / ISO IEC 17024)</p> <p><b>1.1.2. Trainers</b> are trained by SOAC/UNIDO using SOAC's remote training methodology in accreditation</p> <p><b>1.2. Assessors/trainees</b> per country</p> <p>1.2.1. Select candidate <b>assessors</b> per country (about 150+)</p> <p>1.2.2. Prepare/update the training modules and develop a written exam (quiz) for each standard</p> <p>1.2.2. <u>Trainers deliver training</u> modules to assessors using hybrid modes (in-class and distance learning platform)</p> <p>1.2.3. Provide a written exam to verify familiarizing them with relevant requirements and</p> <p>1.2.4. Select 100 trainees for further practice training (remote)</p> <p>1.3. <b>Qualification</b> and authorization of <b>assessors</b></p>			

<b>APPENDIX 1: Logical Framework</b>				
	<b>Project description</b>	<b>Measurable indicators / targets</b>	<b>Sources of verification</b>	<b>Assumptions and risks</b>
	1.3.1. Develop a practice training plan and schedule 1.3.2. Provide trainee assessors opportunity to observe competent assessors performing assessments 1.3.3. Confirm trainee assessors competency and issue formal authorization (sign off) (gender disaggregated)			
<b>Output 2</b>	<b>CABs are trained</b> by assessors on food safety and <b>quality management systems.</b>	25 CABs are trained (gender disaggregated)	Participants list Training report provided following training	Conflict of interest.  Availability of a fair number of CABs in each country Appropriate selection of the CABs within the 9 countries Trained assessors' availability to train the CABs Availability of experts in SPS willing to train the CABs Educational capacities to replicate the knowledge in the field.
<b>Activities</b>	2.1. Identify interested CABs in being accredited (+/- 50 CABs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Define selection criteria and select CABs</li> <li>○ Develop a list of selected CABs</li> </ul> 2.2. Implementation of quality management systems in those CABs by assessors trained in output 1 (+/- 100 assessors) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruit implementation coaches</li> <li>○ Perform Initial diagnosis, mock assessment, gap analysis by implementation coaches</li> <li>○ Assist CABs in implementing corrective actions</li> </ul> 2.3. Confirmation of the CABs readiness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide a pre-assessment report on the CAB readiness</li> <li>○ Issue a formal letter confirming CAB readiness to be assessed</li> </ul> (gender disaggregated)			
<b>Output 3</b>	<b>CABs are assessed and accredited</b> (using hybrid approaches including digital tools) at reduced time and cost.	20 CABs are accredited by SOAC within the 9 countries during the three years. 1 to 2 CABs accredited during the second year	SOAC accreditation report on accredited CABs	Availability of accreditation resource persons (assessors, experts, SOAC staff)

<b>APPENDIX 1: Logical Framework</b>				
	<b>Project description</b>	<b>Measurable indicators / targets</b>	<b>Sources of verification</b>	<b>Assumptions and risks</b>
		(gender disaggregated)	SOAC Web page on the list of accredited CABs	Unsatisfactory CABs responses following Accreditation assessments  Delayed accreditation process
<b>Activities</b>	<p>3.1. CABs officially request SOAC to be accredited. SOAC process applications received (+/-25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete and submit the application package by CABS</li> <li>○ Select assessment team and inform the CAB</li> <li>○ Schedule the assessment by SOAC</li> </ul> <p>3.2. Assessors trained in output 1 carry-out accreditation assessments to CABs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review CAB quality management system documents by assessment team</li> <li>○ Carry out the assessment and provide assessment report</li> <li>○ Make a decision on accrediting the CAB</li> </ul> <p>(gender disaggregated)</p>			
<b>OUTCOME 2</b>	Enhanced understanding and confidence of national and regional stakeholders in conformity assessment results and the accreditation system for regional and international agri-food trade.	<p>The public and private sectors are sensitized to the benefits of using competent CABs in Food Safety services to boost agricultural exports.</p> <p>Key interested parties are regularly informed on the importance of accreditation in the field of SPS &amp; food safety</p> <p>Use of accredited vCAB services by public and private sectors increased</p> <p>Adhere stakeholder awareness of the benefits of</p>	<p>SOAC annual survey report. Accredited vCABs responses to SOAC Annual survey.</p> <p>Monthly report from accreditation focal points dedicated to the project.</p> <p>Google analytics and tag manager to track visits in each country</p>	<p>Adhere public and private sectors awareness on the benefit of accreditation Involvement of public and private sectors</p> <p>Adequate identification of the most qualified candidates to be informed Availability of participants to attend online workshops</p>

APPENDIX 1: Logical Framework				
	Project description	Measurable indicators / targets	Sources of verification	Assumptions and risks
		digitisation including assessment cost savings.		
<b>Output 4</b>	Public and private sectors at the <b>country level</b> sensitized/informed on the benefits of using accredited CAB services	<p>The number of Food companies using CAB services increase per beneficiary country. (disaggregated by women-led enterprises)</p> <p>Accredited CAB volume of work increased.</p> <p>Number of SPS authorities sensitized on accreditation</p> <p>Number of people reached through the mass media campaign</p>	<p>SOAC report on accredited CABs</p> <p>Accredited CABs list on SOAC website</p> <p>Conferences are held according to a predetermined schedule</p>	<p>Qualified and well-versed speaker in the field to be recruited</p> <p>Slowed accreditation process due to number and nature of nonconformities</p> <p>Delayed accreditation report</p> <p>Delayed corrective action following CABs assessments</p>
<b>Activities</b>	<p>4.1. National Accreditation Focal Points in each country to inform SPS authorities about the usefulness of strengthened accredited services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Accreditation Focal Points in each country organizes and host regular meetings with SPS authorities</li> <li>○ Design a accompanying communication campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recruitment of a local infographic designer</li> <li>▪ Create information e-package content</li> </ul> </li> <li>○</li> </ul> <p>4.2. Mass media campaign - Announcement in TV/radio/ newspapers in each country about the importance of accreditation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Define Media Selection criteria</li> <li>○ Develop brochures and newsletter on project</li> <li>○ Release the brochures and newsletter on project to the selected press</li> </ul> <p>4.3. National Accreditation Focal Points to inform private sector (businesses) in their countries (through industry associations) about accreditation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify key stakeholders (including business associations) per country</li> <li>○ Train National accreditation Focal Points on the approach to take and how to promote the project locally</li> <li>○ Seek feedback from Focal Points</li> <li>○ Update content based on feed back and objectives</li> <li>○ National Accreditation Focal Points in each country organizes and host regular meetings with the private sector (gender disaggregated)</li> </ul>			



APPENDIX 1: Logical Framework				
	Project description	Measurable indicators / targets	Sources of verification	Assumptions and risks
<b>Output 5</b>	<p><b>Regional</b> experiences and good practices on accreditation are shared between SOAC, ECOWAS, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities in the UEMOA countries through an exchange platform</p>	<p>Regional stakeholders' awareness increased.</p> <p>Platform/Committee for exchange and sharing of experience activities created.</p> <p>1 Website is created by the end of year 1 and maintained.</p>	<p>Quarterly reports on the quality of exchanges and shared analyses to complete, improve and validate the content</p>	<p>Involvement of UEMOA member states officials</p> <p>Involvement of Agricultural educational institutions UEMOA member states</p> <p>Sustainability of exchange activities</p> <p>Conflict of interest</p> <p>Lack of focus on the objectives</p>
<b>Activities</b>	<p>5.1. Committee created for exchange and sharing of experience activities, between SOAC, ECOWAS, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities including a web-platform at SOAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Select committee members from SOAC, ECOWAS, conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities</li> <li>○ Decide on the committee's terms of reference and frequency of the meetings.</li> <li>○ Create a web-platform at SOAC for exchange and sharing of experience activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recruit a local web-designer</li> <li>▪ Create the web page within SOAC website on the project</li> <li>▪ Ensure maintenance of the web-platform even after project completion</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>5.2. Network to promote continuous exchanges between National accreditation focal points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Select committee members</li> <li>○ Decide on the Network's terms of reference and frequency of the meetings.</li> <li>○ Recruit a regional Communication Expert</li> <li>○ Run and animate the social networks</li> <li>○ Maintain communication policy</li> <li>○ Supervise the focal points for writing (questions and answers) articles</li> </ul> <p>Activity 5.3 Study to take knowledge and identify possible inter – operability with other digitized systems, i.e., codex work on remote audits and inspections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Nominate SOAC staff in charge of the study</li> <li>○ Collecting information via online documentation research on similar initiatives</li> <li>○ Issue a comparative report between identified systems.</li> </ul> <p>Activity 5.4 Identification of relevant stakeholders to encourage possible synergies with other donors</p>			

**APPENDIX 1: Logical Framework**

	<b>Project description</b>	<b>Measurable indicators / targets</b>	<b>Sources of verification</b>	<b>Assumptions and risks</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identification of other partners</li> <li>○ Issuing national reports on existing partners and possible synergies / implemented synergies</li> <li>○ Organise remote sharing experience meetings with these donors</li> </ul> <p>Activity 5.5 Closing meeting with all stakeholders (Remote activity)                      Review results, final evaluation, recommended follow up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prepare the meeting documents</li> <li>○ Organize the meeting</li> <li>○ Draft the meeting report</li> </ul> <p>(gender disaggregated)</p>			

**APPENDIX 2: Work Plan**

Activity	Responsibility	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Inception Phase and Project Launch event (in-person)</b> Project goals, plans, outputs shared with all stakeholders. Conduct a gender analysis	Project Manager, SOAC Director General	X											
	Gender experts (under UNIDO's supervision)	X											
<b>Outcome 1 Selected conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) implement improved food safety and quality management systems</b>													
<b>Output 1 Food safety assessors in each participating UEOMA country are trained to assess food safety and accredit CABs with the use of digital tools.</b>													
Activity 1.1 Trainers provide training on ISO/IEC Standards related to Food Safety	Project Manager, SOAC ISO/IEC Experts	X	X										
Activity 1.1.1 Select and recruit the trainers to provide training on ISO/IEC Standards related to Food Safety (IEC 17025 / ISO IEC 17020 / ISO IEC 17021 /ISO IEC 17065 / ISO IEC 17024)	Project Manager, SOAC Director General	X											
Activity 1.1.2 Trainers are trained by SOAC/UNIDO using SOAC's remote training methodology in accreditation	Project Manager, SOAC Director General		X										
Activity 1.2 Assessors/trainees per country	Project Manager, SOAC ISO/IEC Experts		X										
Activity 1.2.1. Select candidate assessors per country (about 150+)	SOAC Director General			X									
Activity 1.2.2.1 Prepare/update the training modules and develop a written exam (quiz) for each standard	ISO/IEC Experts		X										
Activity 1.2.2.2 Trainers deliver training modules to assessors using hybrid modes (in-class and distance learning platform)	ISO/IEC Experts			X	X	X							

Activity	Responsibility	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Activity 1.2.3 Provide a written exam to verify familiarizing them with relevant requirements and	ISO/IEC Experts			X	X	X							
Activity 1.2.4 Select 100 trainees for further practice training (remote)	SOAC Director General				X	X	X						
Activity 1.3 Qualification and authorization of assessors	Project Manager, SOAC Director General					X	X	X	X				
Activity 1.3.1 Develop a practice training plan and schedule	ISO/IEC Experts		X										
Activity 1.3.2 Provide trainee assessors opportunity to observe competent assessors performing assessments	SOAC Director General			X	X	X	X	X	X				
Activity 1.3.3 Confirm trainee assessors competency and issue formal authorization (sign off)	SOAC Director General			X	X	X	X	X	X				
<b>Output 2 CABs are trained by assessors on food safety and quality management systems. 25 CABs are trained</b>													
Activity 2.1 Identify interested CABs in being accredited (+/- 50 CABs)	SOAC Director General	X											
Activity 2.2 Implementation of quality management systems in those CABs by assessors trained in output 1 (+/- 100 assessors)	Authorized Assessors		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 2.3 Confirmation of the CABs readiness	Authorized Assessors, SOAC Director General			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Output 3 CABs are assessed and accredited (using hybrid approaches including digital tools) at reduced time and cost</b>													
Activity 3.1 CABs officially request SOAC to be accredited. SOAC process applications received (+/-25)	CABs Top Management		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 3.2 Assessors trained in output 1 carry-out accreditation assessments to CABs	Authorized Assessors, SOAC Director General	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Activity	Responsibility	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Outcome 2 Enhanced understanding and confidence of national and regional stakeholders in conformity assessment results and the accreditation system for regional and international agri-food trade.</b>													
<b>Output 4 Public and private sectors at the country level sensitized/informed on the benefits of using accredited CAB services</b>													
Activity 4.1 National Accreditation Focal Points in each country to inform SPS authorities about the usefulness of strengthened accredited services	Project Manager, SOAC Director General, National Accreditation Focal Points	X	X	X	X								
Activity 4.2 Mass media campaign - Announcement in TV/radio/newspapers in each country about the importance of accreditation	Project Manager, Assistant Project Manager	X	X	X	X								
Activity 4.3 National Accreditation Focal Points to inform private sector (businesses) in their countries (through industry associations) about accreditation	Project Manager, SOAC Director General, National Accreditation Focal Points	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Output 5 Regional experiences and good practices on accreditation are shared between SOAC, ECOWAS, UEMOA, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities in the UEMOA countries through an exchange platform</b>													
Activity 5.1 Committee created for exchange and sharing of experience activities, between SOAC, ECOWAS, UEMOA, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities including a web-platform at SOAC	Project Manager, SOAC Director General, ECOWAS		X										
Activity 5.2 Network to promote continuous exchanges between National accreditation focal points	Project Manager, SOAC Director General, National Accreditation Focal Points		X										
Activity 5.3 Study to take knowledge and identify possible inter-operationality with other digitized systems, i.e., codex work on remote audits and inspections					X	X	X						
Activity 5.4 Identification of relevant stakeholders to encourage possible synergies with other donors	Project Manager, SOAC Director General, National Accreditation Focal Points			X	X	X							

Activity	Responsibility	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Activity 5.5 Closing meeting with all stakeholders (Remote activity)	Project Manager, SOAC Director General												X

### **APPENDIX 3: Budget (US\$1,399,572)<sup>2</sup>**

The following table provides an example to illustrate the budget can be prepared based on outputs identified in the log frame and the activities needed to achieve these outputs.

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<sup>2</sup> Use the headings in the budget table above as a basis to prepare a budget table in Excel.

APPENDIX: BUDGET (USD)	BUDGET FOR WHOLE PROJECT				
	Unitary cost	STDF	In-Kind (SOAC)	Other (CABs)	In-kind from the countries
<b>KICK-OFF EVENT (in-person)</b>					
<b>Member States Participants</b>					
Government SPS authorities participants (27) to dedicate their time to the event for 4 days	\$87				\$9,396
<b>Perdiems</b> (3 participants/country for 9 countries for a total of 27 participants) DSA (2 days)	\$204	<b>\$11,016</b>			
<b>Event package</b> (for 50 participants)	\$92	<b>\$4,600</b>			
<b>Travel Insurance</b>	\$38	<b>\$1,026</b>			
<b>Ground Transportation</b>	\$11	<b>\$594</b>			
<b>Hostesses</b> (4 hostesses for 2 days event)	\$39	<b>\$312</b>			
<b>Administration and secretariate fees</b>	\$1,100	<b>\$1,100</b>			
<b>Airline Tickets for participants</b>					
Cotonou Abidjan Cotonou (3 delegates)	\$1,400	\$4,200			
Ouagadougou Abidjan (3 delegates)	\$1,820	\$5,460			
Bissau Abidjan Bissau (3 delegates)	\$2,710	\$8,130			
Bamako Abidjan Bamako (3 delegates)	\$1,450	\$4,350			
Niamey Abidjan Niamey (3 delegates)	\$3,600	\$10,800			
Conakry Abidjan Conakry (3 delegates)	\$1,800	\$5,400			
Lomé Abidjan Lomé (3 delegates)	\$990	\$2,970			
Dakar Abidjan Dakar (3 delegates)	\$1,700	\$5,100			
Abidjan Abidjan Abidjan (3 delegates)	\$0	\$0			
<b>Subtotal Airline Tickets</b>		<b>\$46,410</b>			



<b>Other Participants</b>					
UNIDO Staff (1 participant)					
Flight Vienna Abidjan Vienna	\$1,740	<b>\$1,740</b>			
DSA (3 days)	\$204	<b>\$612</b>			
Ground Transportation	\$11	<b>\$33</b>			
Consultant (Project writer)					
Flight Ottawa Abidjan Ottawa	\$2,500	<b>\$2,500</b>			
DSA (3 days)	\$204	<b>\$612</b>			
Ground Transportation	\$11	<b>\$33</b>			
Consultant time to respond to questions related to project during kick-off event (4 man-days)	\$695	<b>\$2,780</b>			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$73,368</b>	<b>\$0</b>		<b>\$9,396</b>

**OUTCOME 1 Selected Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) implement improved food safety and quality management systems**

**Output 1 Food safety assessors in each participating UEOMA country are trained to assess food safety and accredit CABs with the use of digital tools.**

Activity 1.1 Trainers provide training on ISO/IEC Standards related to Food Safety					
Activity 1.1.1 Select and recruit the trainers to provide training on ISO/IEC Standards related to Food Safety (IEC 17025 / ISO IEC 17020 / ISO IEC 17021 /ISO IEC 17065 / ISO IEC 17024)					
Expert on ISO/IEC 17025 (36 months)	\$870	\$31,320			
Expert on ISO/IEC 17020 (36 months)	\$870	\$31,320			
Expert on ISO/IEC 17021 (36 months)	\$870	\$31,320			
Expert on ISO/IEC 17024 (36 months)	\$870	\$31,320			
Expert on ISO/IEC 17065 (36 months)	\$870	\$31,320			

Activity 1.1.2 Trainers are trained by SOAC/UNIDO using SOAC's remote training methodology in accreditation					
Expert on ISO/IEC 17025 (36 months)	\$1,850		\$66,600		
Expert on ISO/IEC 17020 (36 months)	\$1,850		\$66,600		
Expert on ISO/IEC 17021 (36 months)	\$1,850		\$66,600		
Expert on ISO/IEC 17024 (36 months)	\$1,850		\$66,600		
Expert on ISO/IEC 17065 (36 months)	\$1,850		\$66,600		
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$156,600</b>	<b>\$333,000</b>		
Activity 1.2 Assessors/trainees per country					
Activity 1.2.1. Select candidate assessors per country (about 150+)					
Press releases for the selection of candidates to be trained per country for 9 countries	\$348.00	\$3,132.00			
Contacting the press, coordination and issuing - 2 man-days	\$695.50	\$1,391.00			
Activity 1.2.2.1 Prepare/update the training modules and develop a written exam (quiz) for each standard					
2 man-days per standard (ISO IEC 17025)	\$565.00	\$1,130.00			
2 man-days per standard (ISO IEC 17020)	\$565.00	\$1,130.00			
2 man-days per standard (ISO IEC 17021)	\$565.00	\$1,130.00			
2 man-days per standard (ISO IEC 17065)	\$565.00	\$1,130.00			
2 man-days per standard (ISO IEC 17024)	\$565.00	\$1,130.00			
Activity 1.2.2.2 Trainers deliver training modules to assessors using hybrid modes (in-class and distance learning platform)					
Expert on ISO/IEC 17025 - for 5 days	\$565.00	\$2,825.00			
Expert on ISO/IEC 17020 - for 5 days	\$565.00	\$2,825.00			
Expert on ISO/IEC 17021 - for 5 days	\$565.00	\$2,825.00			

Expert on ISO/IEC 17024 - for 5 days	\$565.00	\$2,825.00		
Expert on ISO/IEC 17065 - for 5 days	\$565.00	\$2,825.00		
IT expert to manage SOAC IT platform during 36 months	\$406.00		\$14,616	
3 years Zoom subscription	\$150.00		\$450	
Activity 1.2.3 Provide a written exam to verify familiarizing them with relevant requirements				
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17025)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17020)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17021)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17065)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17024)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
Activity 1.2.4 Select 100 trainees for further practice training (remote) (with Activity 1.1.3)				
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17025)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17020)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17021)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17065)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
1 man-day per standard (ISO IEC 17024)	\$565.00	\$565.00		
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$29,948</b>	<b>\$15,066</b>	
Activity 1.3 Qualification and authorization of assessors				
Activity 1.3.1 Develop a practice training plan and schedule - 2 man-days	\$695.00		\$1,390	
Activity 1.3.2 Provide trainee assessors the opportunity to observe competent assessors performing assessments. Assessment teams receive a lump sum of 333,91 USD per person to supervise a hundred (100) trainees during assessments	\$334.00		\$33,400	

Subscription to training web platforms for the observers for 36 months	\$31.00		\$1,116		
Activity 1.3.3 Confirm trainee assessors competency and issue formal authorization (sign off) and Issue training certificate - 1 man-day	\$695.00		\$31.00		
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$35,937</b>		
<b>Monitoring activities in output 1 by Project Manager</b>					
Activity 1.1.1 (9 man-days)	\$695	\$6,255			
Activity 1.1.2 (3 man-days)	\$695	\$2,085			
Activity 1.2.1 (6 man-days)	\$695	\$4,170			
Activity 1.2.2 (3 man-days)	\$695	\$2,085			
Activity 1.2.3 (6 man-days)	\$695	\$4,170			
Activity 1.2.4 (6 man-days)	\$695	\$4,170			
Activity 1.3.1 (3 man-days)	\$695	\$2,085			
Activity 1.3.2 (3 man-days)	\$695	\$2,085			
Activity 1.3.3 (3 man-days)	\$695	\$2,085			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$29,190</b>	<b>\$0</b>		
<b>Output 1 Subtotal</b>		<b>\$215,738</b>			

<b>Output 2 CABs are trained by assessors on food safety and quality management systems. 25 CABs are trained</b>					
Activity 2.1 Identify interested CABs in being accredited (+/- 50 CABs)					
Contact CABs and gauge their interest - 2 man-days	\$695.50		1391		
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$1,391</b>		
Activity 2.2 Implementation of quality management systems in those CABs by assessors trained in output 1 (+/- 100 assessors)					

Initial diagnosis, 2 days / per CAB, 50 CABs, done remotely. Total of 100 days	\$400.00			\$40,000	
Drafting/updating procedures, 3 days / per CAB, 50 CABs, done remotely. Total of 150 days	\$400.00			\$60,000	
Mock assessment 2 days / per CAB, 50 CABs, done remotely. Total of 100 days	\$400.00	\$40,000			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	
Activity 2.3 Confirmation of the CABs readiness					
Corrective action, 1 day / per CAB, 50 CABs, done remotely. Total of 100 days	\$400			\$20,000	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	
<b>Monitoring activities in output 2 by Project Manager</b>					
Activity 2.1 (1 man-day)	\$695	\$695			
Activity 2.2 (1 man-day)	\$695	\$695			
Activity 2.3 (1 man-day)	\$695	\$695			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$2,085</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Output 2 Subtotal</b>		<b>\$42,085</b>			
<b>Output 3 CABs are assessed and accredited (using hybrid approaches including digital tools) at reduced time and costs</b>					
Activity 3.1 CABs officially request SOAC to be accredited. SOAC process applications received (+/-25)					
Fees to process - SOAC will process 5 CABs files in Year 1	\$521.75	\$2,608.75			
Fees to process - SOAC will process 10 CABs files in Year 2	\$521.75	\$5,217.50			
Fees to process - SOAC will process 15 CABs files in Year 3	\$521.75	\$7,826.25			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$15,653</b>	<b>\$0</b>		

Activity 3.2 Assessors trained in output 1 carry-out accreditation assessments to CABs					
Trainees logistical costs support (100 trainees)	\$170.00	\$17,000			
Initial assessment fees is around \$4348 per CAB for 25 CABs	\$4,348	\$108,700			
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$4,518</b>	<b>\$125,700</b>	<b>\$0</b>		
<b>Monitoring activities in output 3 by Project Manager</b>					
Activity 3.1 (2 man-days)	\$695	\$1,390			
Activity 3.2 (6 man-days)	\$695	\$4,170			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$5,560</b>	<b>\$0</b>		
<b>Output 3 Subtotal</b>		<b>\$146,913</b>			

**OUTCOME 2 Enhanced understanding and confidence of national and regional stakeholders in conformity assessment results and the accreditation system for regional and international agri-food trade.**

**Output 4 Public and private sectors at the country level sensitized/informed on the benefits of using accredited CAB services**

Activity 4.1 National Accreditation Focal Points in each country to inform SPS authorities about the usefulness of strengthened accredited services					
Identification of stakeholders in each country - 2 man-days	\$695		\$1,390		
Speakers' fees Conferences (2 days /conference for 12 conferences)	\$348	\$8,352			
Recruitment of a local infographic designer for 5 months, throughout 3 years	\$1,739	\$8,696			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$17,048</b>	<b>\$1,390</b>		
Activity 4.2 Mass media campaign - Announcement in TV/radio/ newspapers in each country about the importance of accreditation					
Announcement in TV/radio/ newspapers (12 medium for 2 appearance)	\$522	\$12,522			

<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$12,522</b>	<b>\$0</b>		
Activity 4.3 National Accreditation Focal Points to inform private sector (businesses) in their countries (through industry associations) about accreditation					
Brochure printing (100 brochures per country for 9 countries)	\$9	\$8,100			
National Accreditation Focal Points incentives to promote the project (2 days / month for 3 years per country for 9 countries)	\$87	\$56,376			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$64,476</b>	<b>\$0</b>		
<b>Monitoring activities in output 4 by Project Manager</b>					
Activity 4.1 (2 man-days)	\$695	\$1,390			
Activity 4.2 (2 man-days)	\$695	\$1,390			
Activity 4.3 (2 man-days)	\$695	\$1,390			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$4,170</b>	<b>\$0</b>		
<b>Output 4 Subtotal</b>		<b>\$98,216</b>			
<b>Output 5 Regional experiences and good practices on accreditation are shared between SOAC, ECOWAS, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities in the UEMOA countries through an exchange platform</b>					
Activity 5.1 Committee created for exchange and sharing of experience activities, between SOAC, ECOWAS, and conformity assessment bodies and the competent SPS authorities including a web-platform at SOAC					
Implement a multi-stakeholders Committee - 2 man-days	\$695		\$1,390		
Recruit a Communication Expert (21 days/month X 5 months) - Total of 105 days	\$243	\$25,515			
Recruit a local Web-designer for 5 months	\$1,050	\$5,250			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$30,765</b>	<b>\$1,390</b>		

Activity 5.2 Network to promote continuous exchanges between National accreditation focal points					
National Accreditation Focal Points incentives to gather feedback and provide content to feed the webpage (2 days / month for 3 years per country for 9 countries)	\$87			\$56,376	
Activity 5.3 Study to take knowledge and identify possible inter – operability with other digitized systems, i.e., codex work on remote audits and inspections					
Identification / reporting of similar digital initiatives by SOAC IT Cell	\$36		\$544		
Activity 5.4 Identification of relevant stakeholders to encourage possible synergies with other donors					
National focal points incentive to gather information of other donors for synergies with the project (refer to Activity 5.2)					
Organise online sharing experience workshop with other donors supporting digitisation for CABs, ABs	\$695		\$1,390		
Activity 5.5. Gender focal designation and in action to ensure that gender mainstreaming is considering all along the project					
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,934</b>	<b>\$56,376</b>	
<b>Monitoring activities in output 5 by Project Manager</b>					
Activity 5.1 (12 man-days)	\$695	\$8,340			
Activity 5.2 (24 man-days)	\$695	\$16,680			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$25,020</b>		<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Output 5 Subtotal</b>		<b>\$55,785</b>	<b>\$3,324</b>	<b>\$56,376</b>	
<b>CLOSING EVENT (virtual)</b>					



Using SOAC platform video conference and personnel and resources during two days	\$840		\$1,680		
Government SPS authorities participants (27) to dedicate their time to the event for 2 days	\$87				\$4,698
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,680</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4,698</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL OF ALL 5 OUTPUTS AND EVENTS</b>					
		<b>\$632,105</b>	<b>\$391,788</b>	<b>\$156,376</b>	<b>\$14,094</b>
<b>PROJECT MANAGEMENT</b>					
Project manager to manage the implementation 16 days/year for 3 years (48 man-days)	\$695	\$33,360			
Assistant manager to support the implementation 6 days/year for 3 years (18 man-days)	\$522	\$9,392			
Uses SOAC platform (Refer to Activity 1.4.1 Subscription to video conferencing)					
3 UNIDO missions to SOAC headquarter in Abidjan (1 mission/year) for a total of 3 missions					
Flight Vienna Abidjan Vienna	\$1,740	\$5,220			
DSA (3 days)	\$204	\$1,836			
Ground Transportation	\$11	\$99			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$49,907</b>		<b>-</b>	
<b>COMMUNICATIONS &amp; OTHERS</b>					
Publications-printing, video, communications		\$20,000			

End of Project Independent Assessment (Time and travel)		\$15,000			
Gender analysis to be conducted during the inception phase		\$20,000			
Contingency funds (5% of SUBTOTAL OF ALL 5 OUTPUTS AND EVENTS)		\$31,605			
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$86,605</b>			
<b>Project Sub Total</b>		<b>\$768,616</b>	<b>\$391,788</b>	<b>\$156,376</b>	<b>\$14,094</b>
Overhead (12% of SUBTOTAL OF ALL 5 OUTPUTS AND EVENTS)		\$75,853			
<b>Project Total</b>		<b>\$844,469</b>	<b>\$391,788</b>	<b>\$156,376</b>	<b>\$14,094</b>
<b>Grand Total Project</b>		<b>\$1,406,727</b>			