

Sub-Saharan Africa



Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Building up a Regional Metrology

Objective The aim of this project is to improve the division of labour and the cooperation taking place within the metrology system at the ECOWAS level. This module provides regional support to the ECOWAS Community Committee for Metrology (ECOMET) and national support to the metrology institutions of the 15 ECOWAS member states for establishing metrologically relevant capacities.

Approach At the regional level, an advanced metrology system ensures accurate, comparable and reliable measurement results as an important component of an efficient quality infrastructure. This is important for consumers, retailers, the agricultural and medical sectors and the manufacturing industry. For example, in retailing, usage of unverified measurement devices can lead to financial losses, while in healthcare, it can lead to incorrect dispensing. In the ECOWAS region, relying on the accuracy of measurement devices is difficult because the measurement and verification system of this region is not yet sufficiently developed. The low rate of harmonisation in the measurement and verification system limits regional cooperation and leads to efficiency losses.

The project promotes the establishment of capacities, the division of labour and the cooperation taking place within the metrology system at the ECOWAS level. It strengthens ECOMET in organisational terms, advises the ECOWAS Commission and supports the establishment of a measurement and verification system within the national metrology institutions of the ECOWAS region. The project's approach combines needs-based advice and training sessions with multifaceted exchange formats and peer-to-peer learning elements. Furthermore, the project aims to integrate the region vertically into the continental and international metrology system via AFRIMETS, a pan-African metrology network.

Impact This project contributes to stronger regional integration of ECOWAS member states in the field of metrology. Less advanced national metrology institutions in the region are supported in improving their provision of services. This should, in turn, also allow them to participate more actively in regional exchanges within ECOMET. At the same time, the project advises ECOMET and its technical committees on how to strengthen their organisational development. Moreover, the project collaborates with the more advanced national metrology institutions to improve their service orientation and visibility to the private sector, including along certain value chains.

By establishing a regional metrology system at the ECOWAS level, the project supports the improvement of the region's measuring capacities, thereby increasing the productivity and competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises within the local and regional economy. This is highly significant for both regional trade within the ECOWAS region and for trade within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Overall, the project will contribute to long-term improvement in the investment climate for domestic and international companies, thereby also contributing to industrial development and increased consumer protection.

Cooperation The ECOWAS Commission is the political partner of this project and assumes a regional coordination function within the field of quality infrastructure. Within the field of metrology, this responsibility is taken on by ECOMET. Both ECOMET and the national metrology institutions of the 15 ECOWAS member states are the implementing partners of the project.

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