

## **The Concept**

Following a decision of the Government of Ghana and the European Commission to implement a Trade Related Assistance and Quality Enabling Programme “TRAQUE”, a Financing Agreement between the European Commission and the Republic of Ghana was signed on the 13th January, 2011.

The Financing Agreement foresaw an initial budget allocation of Euro 9 million, that was afterwards extended in time and budget, from to 15 million €, to be funded from the 10th EDF remaining resources earmarked for Trade and Private Sector Development. The extension in time is one year ending in 2016. The operational duration of the programme is 66 months + 24 months of closure period.

The TRAQUE Programme aims at offering continuous support to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), in private sector development, trade facilitation and capacity building with special attention to capacity issues in industrial strategy and post Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) implementation support as well as Standards, National Quality institutions, trade and private sector export support organisations.

The programme is under the contracting authority of the National Authorising Office at the Ministry of Finance, and being implemented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, with support of an international technical assistance team provided by Agriconsulting Europe S.A (AESA).

## **Objectives**

The overall objective of the TRAQUE programme, as defined in Article 2.1 of Annex II of the Financing Agreement, is to facilitate trade and stimulate trade led pro-poor growth.

The Specific objectives are:

- Improving trade related capacity and performance of MoTI and related agencies and
- Supporting the national quality policy and the related National Quality Infrastructure

## **The main results that the programme is expected to achieve are:**

- Strengthened capacity of MoTI in trade policy analysis and formulation, and for the implementation of trade policies and trade agreements (including the EPA);
- Effective institutions for the implementation of the national quality policy and the creation of a performing quality infrastructure covering areas such as metrology, accreditation, standardisation, conformity, certification and regulation. The institutions will have clear mandates and the capabilities to control and promote compliance with WTO- Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary (SPS) requirements, conditioning access to international markets.

## **Organisation**

The **Contracting Authority** for the project is the National Authorising Officer, at the Ministry of Finance.

The **Project Supervisor** is the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The Ministry has nominated a member of staff as the Programme Director and Imprest Administrator to supervise and co-ordinate the implementation of the programme of activities.

The **Imprest Administrator** and the Imprest Accountant have been delegated the powers to draw up and implement consecutive Programme Estimates, award contracts and grants, commit expenditure and make the corresponding payments.

A **Steering Committee** has been set up to oversee and validate the overall direction and policy of the project. Membership shall be made up of representatives from public, private sector as well as donor agencies. The role of the Steering Committee is to provide policy guidance without interfering in day-to-day management issues.

A **Technical Assistance** Team led by Agri-consulting SA is assisting MoTI in the implementation of the project. The Team is composed by a Team Leader, a Key Quality Expert and by a number of short term experts with various specialisations, including Metrology, Chemistry, Laboratory Quality Management, several ISO Standards (17025, 17020, 17021, 15189) on Inspection and Conformity assessment, Accreditation, Warehouse certification system, Legislation, data management for Human Resources, Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, among other.

## **Extension of Programme**

In December 2013, the Ministry of Finance requested for an increase in the overall budget of the TRAQUE Financing Agreement from the initial 9 Million Euros to 15 Million Euros, to accommodate new initiatives in-line with the TRAQUE core objectives. So currently, instead of the programme ending in 2014, it has been extended to 2016 with the following additional activities identified as:

- The Establishment of a fully operational National Accreditation Body that will supervise and ascertain the professional quality of laboratories and certification and inspection bodies in Ghana and that will be able to provide international recognition of their work and results.
- Technical support to warehouses/Warehouse Receipt System as a precondition to proceed with the establishment of a nationwide Commodity Exchange System.

## **The TRAQUE programme is implemented through different modalities:**

1. **Programme Estimates by Ministry of Trade & Industry**  
They are in the framework of direct decentralised operations, implemented directly by MoTI Programme Unit/Team
2. **Technical Assistance to MoTI and other implementers**  
The assistance is designed to advice the beneficiary in the implementation of the

activities of the TRAQUE Programme, in terms of technical capacity and administrative support during the project lifetime.

3. **Grant**

**Agreements**

Four grant agreements have been awarded to 4 different Institutions in Ghana: the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA), the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA).

Scope of the grants is to enhance the capacity of the agencies to serve their clients in areas related to international and regional exports and in understanding and overcoming their TBT and SPS challenges, as well as strengthening the competences in standards and food safety in line with the national quality policy requirements. Subjects include Standards and Quality processes, quality chain requirements, direct support actions to private sector.

4. **Supplies**

The TRAQUE programme is providing technical equipment to 28 laboratories of main quality institutions (e.g. the National Metrology Institute, the Plant Protection & Regulatory Services Directorate, the Accra Veterinary Laboratory, the Food Research Institute), including some minor renovation works and specific training for instruments installation and maintenance.