



Capacity Building for the Quality Infrastructure Institutions of Kenya



KEBS
Kenya Bureau of Standards
Standards for Quality™

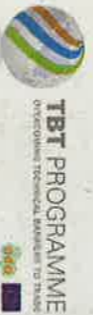
ACP-TBT-EU, KENAS and KEBS Complete Successful Project to Overcome Technical Barriers to Trade in Kenya

Trade is crucial for economic growth in developing countries like Kenya, but there is need for expansion to international trade. As a developing country, Kenya cannot underestimate the importance of compliance with reliable Quality Infrastructure requirements (Standards, technical regulations, metrology, conformity assessment and accreditation).

Today, the 13th of May 2016, an International Conference is taking place in Nairobi at the Hotel Intercontinental, as a final conference for the European Union (EU) funded project "Capacity Building for the Quality Infrastructure Institutions of Kenya". The aim of this final conference is to disseminate the successful project results to the participants and different actors and stakeholders involved, including the private sector.

This project is implemented under the framework of the ACP-EU TBT (African-Caribbean-Pacific-European Union Technical Barriers to Trade) Programme and financed by the European Union under the 10th European Development Fund. The Programme responds to requests for capacity building from ACP countries to ensure full ownership by the ACP beneficiaries.

This project started in November 2015 and it has been implemented by the Spanish company PRYSMA. The Spanish company specializes in Trade and Quality Infrastructure in the fields of Quality, Food Safety, Environment, Innovation, Energy, Health and Safety at work as well as Social Responsibility, as per the EU Directives and Regulations which offers the provision of business development services to SMEs.



The issue of compliance with reliable quality infrastructure requirements is a key determinant of export competitiveness for developing countries.

Current global trade is based on technology-intensive manufacturing and other processes on the one hand, and growing demands for safety, quality and innovation from consumers on the other.

A sound Quality Infrastructure (QI) is, therefore, a gateway for developing countries to improve their competitiveness and connect to global value chains.

It also builds investor confidence in developing countries keen to attract much needed foreign direct investment into their countries. Addressing this problem at the country and regional levels in conformity with existing World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements is one of the objectives of the TBT Programme.

The Programme addresses TBT issues within the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) countries at three levels, namely:

- Upgrading and strengthening both the Quality and Regulatory Infrastructure and related institutions;
- Empowering economic operators and export sectors to comply with international market requirements;
- Disseminating results, good practices and experiences.

The overall objective of the specific project implemented in Kenya is to enhance Kenya's Quality Infrastructure - in particular the national standards body, Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) and the national accreditation body, Kenya Accreditation Service (KENAS), for facilitation of trade. The specific actions were to:

- Enhance the understanding of the WTO, TBT and Trade Facilitation Agreements in Kenya among the quality and regulatory

infrastructure institutions.

- Strengthen the existing capacity of KEBS in development and harmonization of regional standards within East African Community (EAC) countries and enhancing credible conformity assessment as evaluated by KENAS.
- Enhance institutional capacity of KEBS and KENAS for delivering technical assistance on QMS (Quality Management System) for private sector in Kenya.

The goals of the project have been fully completed with additional tasks performed according to the schedule that was agreed upon by the beneficiaries by KEBS and KENAS.

The Spanish firm PRYSMA, responsible for the implementation, hired two international experts, who visited the country several times in different missions and worked closely with KEBS and KENAS.

The two key experts of the project, Fabio Guoli and Betina Balmer are participating in the final conference as speakers exposing the specific work done during project implementation, as well as recommendations in terms of capacity building needs and priority measures to be taken for KEBS and KENAS.



THE NATIONAL STANDARDS BODY

KEBS is the government's principal body that is mandated to facilitate and guide the development of appropriate Standardization and a key player in Conformity Assessment mechanism for goods and services in the country. The entity provides trade facilitation services in Standards Quality Management, Metrology, Testing (SQMT), Calibration, Inspection and Certification. Within the major fields of Metrology, KEBS is the custodian of the National Metrology SI Units.

Results and Achievements

KEBS and KENAS received trainings on in-depth understanding and implementation requirements of the WTO TBT and trade Facilitation Agreements.

A training on the ISO/IEC Guides to KEBS staff was provided by an international highly qualified consultant, specifically on Regional and National adoption of international standards and other international deliverables; Code of Good Standardisation Practice; Standards Development (elaboration and adoption); engagement of the private sector and EAC Standards Development procedures.

As per the key findings, the participants and the trainer pointed out the difficulties on regional standardization activities at East African Community (EAC). They reiterated the importance to continue capacity building's activities within the region.

In November last year, KEBS organized a Workshop and Round Table on the functions of the WTO TBT National Enquiry Point and instruction to the Notify Kenya TBT system. The system captures and stores Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) notifications for the WTO in a database system and alerts stakeholders through an email subscription system.

The Standards Development Department staff at KEBS drafted the Specific Standards for Scaffolding -aluminum couplers and aluminum tubes and conducted a Market Impact Study on the Synthetic Oil sector as well.

There was also engagement of the private sector in KEBS and KENAS activities, especially in the three following priority sectors: flowers, textile and leather.



THE NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BODY

Kenya Accreditation Service (KENAS) is the sole National Accreditation Body (NAB) mandated to offer accreditation services in Kenya.

It gives formal attestation that Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) are competent to carry out specific conformity assessment activities.

Results and Achievements

KENAS Assessors and Technical Staff underwent training on Measurement of Uncertainty and Method Validation facilitated by the Spanish Centre of Metrology. Each training course included theory and practical; however, emphasis was given to the practical with case studies in physics, medicine and chemistry.

Four KENAS staff attended a five day attachment at the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) and another four KENAS staff attended a three day attachment at the Hong Kong Accreditation Service (HKAS). One staff attended the ILAC MCC/IAF CMC Workshop held in Pretoria, South Africa and another two staff members attended the ILAC/IAF Mid-year Meeting held in Frankfurt.

The experiences garnered from the attachments and meetings have been useful in exploring new areas of accreditation i.e. good laboratory practice; Legal metrology laboratory accreditation; accreditation of National Metrology Institute (NMI); Awareness programs and effective non-expensive communication activities; proposal writing for funding; collaborations and business development.

A KENAS representative participated in the International Organisation for Standardization/ Conformity Assessment Committee (ISO/CASCO) Working Group 42 on the revision of the ISO standard ISO/IEC 17011:2004 in Geneva, Switzerland. ISO/IEC 17011 is the standard that is used by accreditation bodies to accord conformity assessment bodies. The Committee Draft was reviewed with intense deliberations in areas of Proficiency Testing (PT) and its use as a tool for accreditation, peer evaluation requirements in pursuit for harmonization of accreditation body activities across the globe as well as requirements for accreditation. The meeting delivered a Committee Draft (CD) 2 which was circulated for further comments with an overwhelming positive vote.

entire process hence assisting in identifying opportunities for continual improvement of metrological assurance and traceability systems. The comparison results were good considering that small discrepancies from a few of the participating laboratories were found.



Calibration labs preparing for the mass inter-laboratory comparison.

KENAS established an Inter-Laboratory Comparison (ILC) scheme for high precision calibration laboratories in the country in cooperation with the National Metrology Institute (NMI). The purpose of this ILC program is to give confidence to the technical capacity of the participating laboratories and provide objective evidence about the technical competence thereto. The ILC Programme Protocol was prepared by staff of the two institutions and revised by an international technical expert.

The programme commenced and ran for three weeks, starting with initial measurement and set up at KEBS instrumentation laboratory, in the field of non-automatic weighing instruments. Thereafter, 10 external laboratories participated, replicating the same measurement and providing their data for comparison.

The technical experts received and corrected the data while providing comments to the

KENAS has also participated in the revision of the East African Community Standards Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing Act (EAC SQMT Act 2006). The act under review has yielded an East African Community Standards, Accreditation and Conformity Assessment Bill 2016 (EAC SACA Bill 2016). This Bill seeks to streamline the standardisation and conformity assessment activities by moving accreditation from the Standards Committee to the East Africa Accreditation Board (EAAB) as the apex body for accreditation matters in East Africa Region. The areas of conformity assessment have been enhanced to provide room for private sector participation in a bid to alleviate capacity and capability concerns while directing specific requirements to regulations. Recently, the Bill was reviewed by partner states in Kampala, Uganda. The outcome of this review will be presented the conference closing session today.