

SADCAS HOSTS A DELEGATION FROM MINISTRY OF WATER, TANZANIA

SADCAS were delighted to host a delegation from the Tanzania Ministry of Water comprised of Quality Managers and Heads of 6 Water testing laboratories and 2 officers from the Ministry's Head Office from 25 to 26 February 2020. The programme comprised of a benchmarking visit to the Water Utilities Corporation Laboratory in Mmamashia and a half day workshop at SADCAS Offices in Gaborone, Botswana. The purpose of the visit which was organized by SADCAS was to benchmark and exchange knowledge and ideas on the testing processes, appreciate the type of equipment and methods used, challenges faced and solutions thereof, and to learn and understand the SADCAS accreditation process and applicable requirements as the Laboratories ready themselves for accreditation. The visit was also an opportunity to network.

On 25 February 2020, the delegation was received and welcomed by the Acting Water Quality Manager Mr Moagi Letsamao who gave an overview of the Water Utilities Corporation journey towards accreditation, the scope of accreditation and benefits derived from being accredited.



Tanzanian delegation pose for a photo with Water Utilities Corporation and Mrs Malebe

On 26 February 2020, the delegation visited SADCAS offices for a half-day workshop. The Head of delegation, Mr Peter Marobho, explained the purpose of the visit highlighting that the Ministry was preparing to submit applications for the accreditation of 6 of the 16 laboratories that are under the Ministry of Water. Tanzania's Ministry of Water has a total of 16 regional Water Quality Laboratories across Tanzania. "To us this is a motivational visit true to the saying "If you see it, you believe it"', remarked Mr Marobho during the opening ceremony of the workshop. The laboratories' representatives were from the Central Water quality Laboratory in Dar es Salaam; Singida Water Quality Laboratory; Shinyanga Water Quality Laboratory; Musoma Water Quality Laboratory; Kigoma Water Quality Laboratory; and Bukoba Water Quality Laboratory, all of which conduct chemical and microbiological analyses of water as part of their quality control regime.

The delegation was welcomed by the SADCAS Chief Executive Officer, Mrs Maureen Mutasa who expressed her delight in hosting the delegates and outlined the programme for the half day workshop. After the introduction by the delegates, Mrs Pinkie Malebe, introduced SADCAS staff. Thereafter Mrs Mutasa gave an overview of SADCAS and developments in SADCAS over the years and the remarkable achievements to date in particular international recognition of 6 accreditation schemes on offer the latest of which is the Management Systems Certification Bodies Accreditation Scheme to ISO/IEC 17021-1 sub-scope Quality Management System. She also informed the delegates about the Legal Metrology Accreditation Scheme under which SADCAS had accredited the first mechanical meter verification laboratory. She also informed the delegates about the Medical Imaging

Accreditation Scheme which is under development. She indicated that SADCAS will continue to broaden the scope of accreditation as and when need arises.

The CEO briefed the delegates on SADCAS financing, explaining the basis for determining government contributions. On operational income she informed on how SADCAS continues to strive for sustainability of its operations. In conclusion, Mrs Mutasa shared challenges faced by SADCAS in particular slow inflow of government contributions, limited resource allocations for National Accreditation Focal Points, limited number of French and Portuguese assessors. Despite the challenges, Mrs Mutasa reported that as a way forward SADCAS will continue to consolidate its service delivery, focus on extension of services in areas of demand, strengthen capacity to accredit in French and Portuguese, ensure SADCAS' sustainability beyond 2017 and ensuring succession within SADCAS.

Mr Xavier Mugari, SADCAS Quality Manager gave a presentation on the need for water testing and benefits of accreditation, in particular benefits of accreditation in water testing laboratories. This was followed by a presentation by Mrs Pinkie Malebe, the Scheme Coordinator for Testing Laboratories on the accreditation criteria during which she detailed all the requirements to be considered and met when applying for accreditation. These, for the case of the Ministry of water Laboratories include the ISO/IEC 17025 standard, the Laboratories' Quality Management Systems which addresses the requirements of the ISO/IEC standard, the accreditation body requirements and the applicable national and international regulatory requirements. Mrs Malebe briefly explained the accreditation requirements as stipulated in all the applicable SADCAS Technical Requirements and Technical Guidelines that should be considered and complied with before and after accreditation.

Mr Mogae Molaoa, The SADCAS Training Administrator from the Corporate Services Unit gave a presentation on SADCAS Training Services detailing the courses on offer for different creditable standards; public and in-house training requirements, costs and the scope and durations for the various courses on offer. In the ensuing presentation, Mrs Malebe outlined the accreditation process highlighting the key stages of the accreditation process and the accreditation timelines as applicable to testing laboratory.

In his final presentation the Quality Manager outlined the SADCAS' Complaints and Appeals processes and informed on the number and nature of complaints received by SADCAS to date and the status of the complaints in hand. Mr Mugari reported that SADCAS has not had any appeals against the decisions made during the accreditation process.



Tanzania delegation pose for a photo with SADCAS Management and Staff

The last presentation of the half day workshop on accreditation costs was made by Mrs Malebe, detailing and citing examples of how costing for accreditation is determined. She also informed of the strategies in place to maintain the competitiveness of accreditation fees. The purpose of this presentation was to demystify the notion that SADCAS accreditation fees are high but to inform that SADCAS are fairly priced to recover all direct and indirect costs associated with the service and more importantly to inform that accreditation is an investment and like any investment conformity assessment bodies must realize a return on that investment.

The presentations were followed by a questions and discussions session where the delegates wanted to know more about the accreditation requirements and any other additional information they required in preparation for the applications for accreditation. The questions and enquiries were ably answered by the SADCAS team to the satisfaction of all.

The closing remarks were given by Ms Jeanne Ranorovelo, the SADCAS Technical Manager. The workshop ended with a group photo and a tour of the SADCAS office after which lunch was enjoyed by all.

~~~~~