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SADCAS
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Note from The Editors

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Mr Xavier Mugari

We are pleased to present Issue 36 of the SADCAS Newsletter (July 2020 Edition) to keep our readers updated on accreditation activities in the region and beyond. Inside you will find news on accreditation activities undertaken by SADCAS and developments in the field of accreditation.

COVID-19 pandemic is still a threat to global health and global economy. As part of SADCAS' vision to be a sustainable accreditation body at the cutting edge of credible accreditation service delivery, SADCAS Management has availed full suite of tools to foster communication, coordination and support required to ensure business continuity and fulfilment of organisation's mission of providing credible, cost effective, accreditation services for SADC Member States aimed at supporting trade, enhance the protection of consumers and the environment and improve the competitiveness of SADC products and services in both the voluntary and regulatory areas.

Following the publication of SADCAS AP 23 – Remote assessments, management and execution in April 2020, all types of assessments i.e. continue to be conducted remotely. To date SADCAS has undertaken 30 remote assessments of which 6 are re-assessments, 21 periodic assessments and 3 transition assessments in 8 SADC Member States and one non SADC country Ghana. To ensure credibility and integrity of the assessment process, SADCAS implements a risk-based approach in planning and executing remote assessments.

Training activities which were suspended following national lockdowns and travel restrictions, will resume in September 2020 using Zoom online video conferencing platform.

These arrangements have been put in place to safeguard the health and safety of SADCAS staff, SADCAS assessors, SADCAS Trainers, CAB staff and other interested parties during the COVID-19 pandemic.

June 9, marks World Accreditation Day (WAD) as a global initiative jointly established by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation-related activities. This year activities to celebrate 2020 WAD were rather limited due to COVID-19 pandemic with most of the SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS being in lockdown and the associated travel restrictions, and having to practise precautionary measures such as social distancing, etc. Celebrations in the region included circulation and publication of press releases in the various national media and circulation and posting of WAD video on social media platforms.

Participation in AFRAC mid-term meetings and some IAF meetings was undertaken virtually and this enabled a larger representation of SADCAS in these very important meetings.

In the wake of this pandemic, SADCAS will continually assess the risks to accreditation activities and will keep stakeholders informed on any developments.

General And Leading Stories

SADC CELEBRATES 2020 WAD

June 9, marks World Accreditation Day (WAD) as a global initiative jointly established by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation-related activities. The inaugural WAD was celebrated in 2008.

Accreditation: Improving food safety is the theme for 2020 World Accreditation Day (WAD) which will be celebrated worldwide on 9 June 2020. This theme highlights the role of accreditation in improving food safety.

This year activities to celebrate 2020 WAD were rather limited due to COVID-19 pandemic with most of the SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS being in lockdown and the associated travel restrictions and precautionary measures such as social distancing, etc. This year commemoration activities in the region ranged from circulation and publication of press releases in the various national media, circulation and posting of WAD video on social media, television and radio interviews to a high-level visit to an accredited testing laboratory in Seychelles. In preparation for the celebrations SADCAS provided all National Accreditation Focal Points (NAFPs) with a press release.

In the Union of Comoros, the NAFP was interviewed on national radio.

In Eswatini the video produced by IAF and ILAC on 'Accreditation: improving food safety' was downloaded and circulated to all stakeholders on the 8th June, 2020 with an encouragement to watch the video. A press release was also published in the local newspapers on the 10th June, 2020. Emails were sent targeting all food related stakeholders such as Senior Government officials, Directors/CEOs for Regulatory Ministries and Agencies, food testing laboratories and certification body etc.

In Madagascar WAD was celebrated in collaboration with the Codex Alimentarius contact point of Madagascar. An article based on the SADCAS WAD Press release together with the video on 'Accreditation: improving food safety' were circulated by email to 32 entities from the public and private sectors, laboratories, inspection and certification bodies and consumer's association. The article and the video were widely disseminated on the Facebook account and the website of the Codex Alimentarius contact point for Madagascar **http://www.codex-mada.org/index.php/fr/blog-codex/114-l-accreditation-pour-promouvoir-la-securite-sanitaire-des-aliments**. A total of 15 352 persons viewed the video published at Facebook.

Malawi joined the rest of the world in cerebrating the day through a press release that was published in the two main print media. The press release which was based on the SADCAS press release additionally provided information about the NAFP housed in the Malawi Bureau of Standards. Overwhelming feedback on the press release has been received.

In Mozambique WAD was marked by the dissemination of information on the importance of accreditation and how accreditation contributes to food security and its use as a tool to facilitate trade, especially exports. The information was disseminated through a press release that was prepared based on the information received from SADCAS and sent to the media. The press release was published by 3 electronic newspapers. The NAFP also had a slot on national television. In the interview, the concepts of accreditation and conformity assessment were explained as well as the marketing of SADCAS.

Mrs Guilhermina A Nhampulo NAFP–Mozambique being Interviewed on Mozambique National Television on WAD

General And Leading Stories

In Seychelles WAD celebrations were limited to the publication of the WAD Press release and the Accreditation Day poster in the 'Nation' a national newspaper, circulation of the SADCAS WAD Press release to all laboratories, fish establishments, Competent Authority for export of fish and other relevant stakeholders and a visit to Seychelles Bureau of Standards Testing Laboratories by the Honorable Mr Vincent Meriton the Vice-President (VP) of Seychelles. The visit by the Vice President was covered by the national daily 'Nation' and the television 'Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation'.

In Zimbabwe the SADCAS WAD press release was flighted in major newspapers. Actual celebrations may not take place in the near future due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions

SEYCHELLES VICE PRESIDENT VISITS SEYCHELLES BUREAU OF STANDARDS TESTING LABORATORIES ON WORLD ACCREDITATION DAY

Staff of the Seychelles Bureau of Standards (SBS) welcomed Honourable Mr Vincent Meriton the Vice-President (VP) of Seychelles, on short visit to the SBS Offices situated at Providence, Mahe. The purpose of the visit which coincided with the World Accreditation Day celebrated on 9 June 2020 was that of encouragement and support to SBS whose responsibility falls under the VP portfolio.

The VP was led on a tour of the facilities by the SBS Chief Executive Officer Mr Andy Ally during which the VP interacted with employees who prided in their work and achievements over the years and also listened to their concerns and the challenges. The visit was also an opportunity for the VP to see the new pieces of laboratory equipment that SBS had just received and to visit a new laboratory that has been completed to accommodate the new Gas Chromatography (GC) for the testing of alcoholic beverages for sugar level and other substances. The new laboratory equipment was purchased under the auspices of the SADC Trade Related Facility (TrF) Project to further strengthen SBS conformity assessment services. The TrF is a mechanism for financial and technical support given to SADC Member States to assist them to implement commitments made under the SADC Protocol on Trade and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the European Union (EU) and the SADC EPA Group. The overall objective of the TrF is to improve the participation of SADC Member States in regional and international trade in order to contribute to sustainable development in the SADC region.

The tour started with the Microbiology Laboratory where Jeanne Underwood, a senior technician, explained to him the tests undertaken in the Microbiology Laboratory and the equipment used. The Microbiology Laboratory mainly tests food and water samples brought in from hotels, and fish samples from the fishing industry as well as from numerous other clients. The Microbiology Laboratory was the busiest of all the laboratories during the COVID-19 restrictions as it had to continue providing the service to support the fishing industry for continuity in fish experts to international markets. The Laboratory also carries out monitoring checks on water samples brought in by various individuals and some bottled water producing companies.

Mr Vivian Radegonde explaining to the VP

Next to be visited was the Chemical Analysis Laboratory during which Chantale Camille, a Technician in the Laboratory, explained to VP Meriton how the new Analytical Balance is used to weigh fish samples for different tests and explaining how it is more precise and more modern in its readings. All the equipment meets the required internationally certified standards.

All the services offered at the SBS are for a fee.

SBS Laboratory staff and Management attentively listening to the VP Mr Meriton on the right and Mr Ally 2nd form right

General And Leading Stories

As part of the project SBS received other pieces of laboratory equipment including:

- Dissolved Oxygen Meter which is used to measure dissolved oxygen in water. Dissolved oxygen refers to the level of free oxygen present in water. Dissolved oxygen levels that are too high or too low can harm aquatic life and affect water quality.
- Turbidity Meter, which is used to measure the turbidity in water. In drinking water, the higher the turbidity level, the higher the risk that people may develop gastrointestinal diseases.
- Laboratory Freezer (-80 Degree Celsius) which is used to store reference strains that are used for testing of bacteria in food and drinks.
- Laboratory Refrigerator (4 degree Celsius) which is used to store reagents used for the testing of histamine in fish.

According to Mr Ally, the VP's visit was an opportunity for him to see for himself and understand the importance of SBS as the national standards body and see the necessary infrastructure required to continue promoting standard, inspection and certification to ensure that everything that is produced and manufactured locally meet the required safety standards. The SBS Laboratories are accredited by SADCAS in the scope Chemical Analysis covering various test methods and the Mass Metrology. The National Accreditation Focal Point for Seychelles is housed within the SBS.

# ACCREDITATION: IMPROVING FOOD SAFETY

Increasingly, there is an international aspect to food and water production as ingredients, products or parts of products, may come from several countries around the world, requiring more and more proofs of conformity to the requirements of the importing economies. Food producers also face pressure from regulators to reduce food waste and to be efficient in their use of natural resources such as clean water. Food producers are able to use the services of inspection bodies, certification bodies and validation/verification bodies to monitor and to prove compliance to regulatory requirements.

Foodborne diseases have a significant impact on public health, food security, productivity and poverty. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 33 million years of healthy lives are lost due to eating unsafe food globally each year. Nearly 600 million people fall sick and 420 000 die prematurely each year because of foodborne diseases. Thirty percent (30%) of foodborne deaths occur among children under five years of age. Accredited conformity assessment activities contribute to the prevention and treatment of the adverse effects of unsafe and adulterated food.

The Role of Accreditation

It is important that the market has assurance that testing laboratories, inspection bodies and certification bodies collectively known as conformity assessment bodies (CABs) operate to acceptable standards and this is the purpose of accreditation. The accreditation process determines, in the public interest, the technical competence and integrity of these organizations.

Conformity assessment is the demonstration that what is being supplied actually meets the requirements specified or claimed. Conformity assessment can be applied to a product, a service, a process, a system, a body or persons and includes activities such as testing, inspection and certification through the food supply chain from farm to fork.
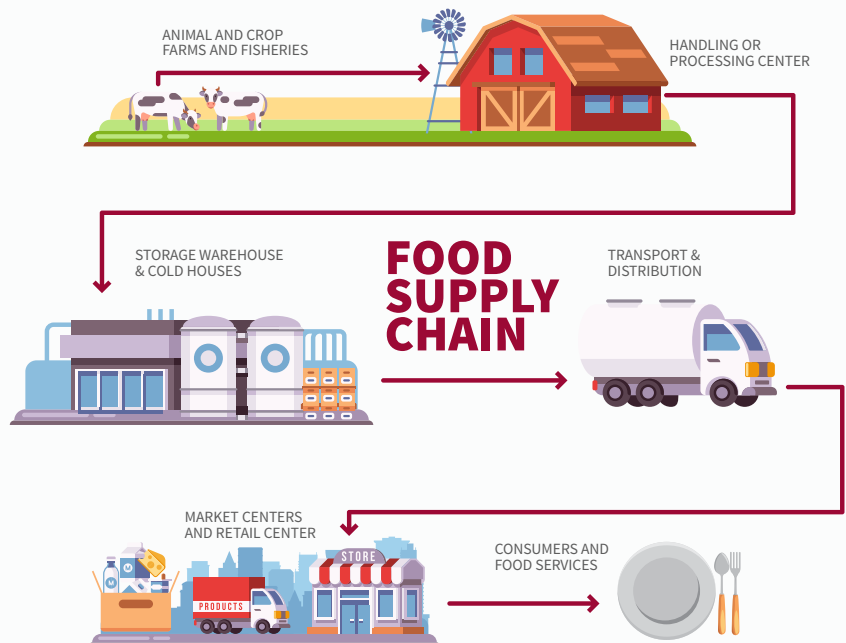
Food Supply Chain from Farm to Fork

General And Leading Stories

Testing laboratories are accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 to carry out a wide range of chemical, microbiological, physical and organoleptic tests to assure the quality and safety of raw foods and processed foods, feed, pesticide and antibiotic residues, plant health, animal health, vaccines, disease control and animal by-products. Testing also covers aspects such as packaging and environmental testing, plant and animal health. Inspection bodies are accredited to ISO/IEC 17020 to carry out activities in the food industry such as pre-shipment, plant and animal health, meat and slaughterhouses inspection etc. Proficiency testing providers (PTP) are accredited for the establishment and conduct of proficiency testing programs using ISO/IEC 17043. Proficiency testing is a tool used extensively in the food processing and production industries to help ensure food products are safe for human consumption. **Certification bodies** are accredited to ISO IEC 17021-1 and ISO/IEC 17065 to carry out audits of food and feed handling sites throughout the supply chain, from farm to manufacture to restaurants and retail outlets. Accreditations awarded by members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) include a number of national and international food safety schemes such as ISO 22000, GLOBALG.A.P Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA),and FAMI-QS schemes which have gone through the rigorous IAF endorsement process. **The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI)** improves food safety and business efficiency by ensuring the mutual acceptance of GFSI-recognized certification programmes across the industry, enabling a simplified "once certified, recognised everywhere" approach. The FAMI-QS is designed for organizations that manufacture feed additives and/or supply individual components to the feed industry. It is designed to guarantee safety and good hygienic conditions throughout the entire food production chain, to include all components.

Accreditation Supporting Food Chain Security

In Australia and New Zealand, the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) supports PrimeSafe, the regulatory authority for the safety of meat, seafood and pet food in Victoria, Australia. A Food Safety Management Scheme (FSMS) supports PrimeSafe in its management of establishments' compliance to the Victorian Meat Industry Act 1993, the Victorian Meat Industry Regulations 2015, the Seafood Safety Act 2003, and the Seafood Safety Regulations 2014 through accrediting conformity assessment bodies that audit the compliance of meat establishments to the prescribed standards.

In China, the administration of HACCP Management System Certification, published in 2002, as No.3 announcement by Certification and Accreditation Administration of the People's Republic of China (CNCA) in Article 9, that the organizations that conduct HACCP Management System Certification shall be approved by CNCA and accredited by the China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment (CNAS) . By the end of 2019, China had issued 120,000 certificates in the food sector, involving tens of thousands of food companies, among which over 11,000 food production companies were certified for HACCP Management System Certification.

Many case studies on major outbreaks of foodborne disease or food adulteration scandals show that using accredited conformity assessment services allows a shift from reactive behaviour to preventive and proactive systems in many countries around the world. Investing in a competent conformity assessment infrastructure aligns with the World Bank recommendation for sustained investments in prevention, including ones that build countries' core competencies to manage food safety risks, and motivate and empower many different actors, from farm to fork, to act responsibly and with consumer health in mind.

General And Leading Stories

In Europe, European Regulation (EC) No 2017/625 relies on accreditation to support food security in Europe. It requires that all analytical results from laboratories that carry out official controls must be accredited in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025. It also extends to the whole food chain, with more specific rules for dealing with fraud, including the obligation of Member States to carry out regular, unscheduled checks to ensure integrity and authenticity throughout the food chain. The requirements for accredited laboratories are reflected in Article 37, which directs the laboratory to include every one of the methods of analysis necessary for the realisation of controls that are required, for example by operators.

In France, accredited inspections support food safety in commercial catering through the application of the European Regulation (EC) No 2017/625 opened the way for the implementation of new inspection tools for food safety. Official inspections occur throughout the food chain to confirm facilities' level of conformity . In accordance with regulatory requirements, the NF V01-015 standard relating to the inspection of hygiene levels in commercial catering facilities was issued in May 2016. Regulatory requirements will specify to what extent the results of this inspection activity could be taken into account by the relevant authority in the framework of official inspections for food safety. Accreditation of inspection bodies will help ensure a high level of hygiene and, as a direct consequence, the protection of consumers.

In India, the Indian Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSAI) relies on the National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB) accreditation to improve standards of food production. The FSSAI has produced third party auditing regulations which prescribe NABCB accreditation for food safety audit agencies. Food businesses that receive satisfactory audit results may be subjected to less frequent inspection by Central or State licensing authorities. Third party audits will reduce the burden on the regulatory inspection conducted by Central or State Licensing Authorities and encourage efficient self-compliance by food -related businesses.

In Japan, the issue of radioactive contamination in food caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake on 11 March, 2011, has raised the importance of laboratory accreditation against international standards more than before. The Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) issued the notification that laboratories accredited under ISO/IEC 17025 are reliable analysis organizations for the measurement and analysis of radioactive materials in food.

In Mexico, accreditation has contributed towards the competitiveness of the Mexican Agrifood sector. The National Health Service, Food Safety and Quality and the Mexican Accreditation Entity (EMA) work in partnership to coordinate efforts to promote the standardization and harmonization of procedures, requirements and related accreditation, and approval of certification bodies, verification units and testing laboratories. Accreditation has enhanced the competitiveness of agrifood products produced in Mexico, which account for 6.2% of exports. Accreditation drives better performance and delivers a high degree in reliability of results.

In Poland, pork and venison produced in the country are covered by the Trichinella monitoring programme. In accordance with the legal requirements, species susceptible to trichinosis infection are subject to mandatory testing – this concerns swine, wild boar and horse meat, among others. Accreditation of laboratories involved in trichinosis diagnostics makes it possible to obtain reliable test results, and the procedures developed and implemented by the laboratories not only provide greater confidence in the results obtained, but also help ensure their comparability.

In the UK, beef from the UK can now be exported to Canada after approval was given by inspectors, following work involving the Agriculture & Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Food Standards Agency (FSA), UK Export Certification Partnership (UKECP), Quality Meat Scotland and HCC Meat Promotion Wales. The agreement covers both primal cuts and processed beef and the UK officials have been working to ensure that the processed beef is tested to the required microbiological standards required by the Canadian authorities This process is now in place and has been robustly evaluated to UKAS standards allowing shipments to begin immediately.

General And Leading Stories

In the UK accreditation also supports food safety and food crime prevention. In response to the horsemeat scandal in Europe, the UK Government published a report recommending that accredited testing, inspection, and certification provides a mechanism to ensure food integrity and to prevent food crime.

In the USA, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has adopted the use of accreditation in its oversight of imported foods. The FDA recognizes accreditation under the voluntary Accredited Third-Party Certification Program. Accreditation bodies recognized by the FDA have the authority to accredit third-party certification bodies which, once accredited, can conduct food safety audits and issue certifications of foreign food facilities (including farms) and the foods both for human and animal consumption that they produce.

Accreditation, Sustainable Development Goals and Food Safety

Food safety is directly and indirectly linked to achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those related to ending hunger and poverty, and promoting good health and well-being. Food and nutritional security are realized only when the essential elements of a healthy diet are safe to eat, and when consumers recognize this. The safety of food is vital for the growth and transformation of agriculture, which are needed to feed a growing and more prosperous world population, for the modernization of national food systems, and for a country's efficient integration into regional and international markets. Unsafe food has multiple complex interactions with nutrition. For example, toxins may directly lead to malnutrition, some of the most nutritious foods are the most implicated in Food borne disease (FBD), and concerns over food safety may lead consumers to shift consumption away from nutritious foods. Lack of clean water increases the risk of food being unsafe as infectious FBDs can be transmitted via water.

Inclusive food markets provide livelihoods and an opportunity out of the poverty cycle for many people. Preventing FBD allows workers to perform better and have a better opportunity to contribute to economic growth. Many countries have immense potential for industrialization in food and beverages (agro-industry) with good prospects for sustained employment generation and higher productivity. Inadequate infrastructure in the food industry, including conformity assessment services, leads to a lack of access to markets, jobs, information and training, creating a major barrier to doing business. The quality infrastructure is positively related to the achievement of social, economic and political goals. Accredited conformity assessment services support the efforts to upgrade the technological capabilities of the food industry and the development of sustainable and resilient infrastructure.

Accreditation Supporting the Global Trade of Safe Food

Safe food is essential for nutritional security, human development, the broader economy, and international trade. The global trade of food, which has become highly complex and interconnected, now accounts for $1.5 trillion (Source: WTO).

Agricultural exports in Africa makes Africa the 5th largest exporter of a number of products. African agricultural exports include spices, fish, meat, cocoa, avocadoes, dairy products, fruits such as grapefruit, plums and pears etc. Companies looking to expand their business on the global market can benefit from holding accredited certification in several ways. The first and most important is that it can provide an entrée into a given market that would otherwise be closed to that organization. An increasing number of organizations, in both the public and private sectors are specifying accreditation as a precondition to tendering for contracts. A company that either holds or utilises accredited certification services is therefore able overcome this hurdle and widen the potential market for its goods or services.

As accreditation is recognized internationally it can open doors abroad equally well as those in the domestic market. This is made possible through the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation's Mutual Recognition Arrangement (ILAC MRA) and the International Accreditation Forum's Multilateral Arrangement (IAF MLA).

Spices Exports

Avocadoes exports

Grapefruit exports

Fish exports

Beef exports

General And Leading Stories

The IAF MLA or ILAC MRA contribute to the freedom of world trade by eliminating technical barriers.

These operate as catalysts for the respective economies in two ways. In addition to helping companies with SADCAS accreditation or accredited certification to pitch for business abroad, it also enables companies to have confidence in the results of accredited facilities in other countries. A larger and level playing field are some of the ways in which accredited certification can help to increase sales. It can be utilized as a credential to designate an organization as qualified to provide a particular service. This demonstration of confidence provides credible evidence of best practice and can be used to distinguish one organisation from its competition.
The IAF MLA or ILAC MRA contribute to the freedom of world trade by eliminating technical barriers. IAF and ILAC work together to find the most effective way of achieving a single system to meet the objective: "Accredited once, accepted everywhere".

Accreditation Supporting Procurement

The IAF CertSearch is an exclusive global database for accredited management system certifications which aggregates data from accreditation bodies that are signatory to the IAF Multilateral Arrangement and accredited management system certificates. The platform which currently contains around 400,000 management system certificates from accredited suppliers and allow purchasers to check if their potential suppliers hold such certificates. The IAF CertSearch is a tool that supports procurement processes and has already gained significant support from government agencies, industry and from all levels of the accredited network worldwide following its launch. Whilst this is a voluntary database, the IAF CERTSEARCH has received commitments from users.

SADCAS EXTENDS INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION IN THE IAF MLA

SADCAS is delighted to announce the extension of international recognition in the International Accreditation Forum Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (IAF MLA) to the following sub-scopes under the Main Scope Management Systems Certification (ISO/IEC 17021-1).

- Environmental Management Systems (ISO/IEC 17021-2), EMS (ISO 14001:2015); and
- Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (ISO/IEC TS 17021-10), OHSMS (ISO 45001).

This extension was granted by the IAF MLA Committee on 19 June 2020 taking into account the letter of support from the African Accreditation Cooperation who had granted the said extension in May 2020. This brings to three (3) the sub-scopes including Quality Management Systems (ISO/IEC 17021-3), QMS (ISO 9001:2015, for which SADCAS is now internationally recognized.

The IAF MLA status on the SADCAS page in the Members & Signatories area of the IAF website, as well as in the MLA MC_17 report, which is available under the about the 'IAF MLA' button on the toolbar at the top of the IAF home page has been updated to reflect this achievement.

The IAF is the world association of Conformity Assessment Accreditation Bodies and other bodies interested in conformity assessment in the fields of management systems, products, services, personnel and other similar programmes of conformity assessment. Its primary function is to develop a single worldwide program of conformity assessment which reduces risk for business and its customers by assuring them that accredited certificates may be relied upon. Accreditation assures users of the competence and impartiality of the body accredited.

Through this international recognition the certificates issued by SADCAS accredited certification bodies are recognized in 68 economies worldwide thus removing the need for repetitive certifications. Effectively this means that through internationally recognized accreditation SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS and whose certification bodies are accredited by SADCAS have better access to foreign markets
- A truly global reach!

SADCAS CONSTITUTION REGISTERED

SADCAS a multi economy accreditation body servicing the accreditation needs of 14 SADC Members States, is registered as a not for profit company limited by guarantee under the Botswana Companies Act CAP:42:01. SADCAS was incorporated on 6 December 2005. SADCAS is a subsidiarity Institution of SADC having been approved as such by the SADC Council of Ministers in August 2007. The relationship between SADCAS and SADC is formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on General Cooperation. SADCAS Headquarters are situated at Gaborone, Botswana.

In June 2019, SADCAS was advised by the Company Secretary, UPT Secretarial Services of the ruling by the Botswana Companies Act that existing Companies apply to the Companies' and Intellectual Property Authority (CIPA) for re - registration via the new CIPA Online Business Registration System (OBRS). The transition period for re-registration commenced on 3rd June 2019 and ended on 31st May 2020. According to the set requirements, any company that fails to register on the OBRS within the transition period would automatically be deregistered with any registrations after the transition period attracting a large penalty.

SADCAS embarked on the re-registration process facilitated by the SADCAS Company Secretary, UPT Secretarial Services and was successfully re-registered on 28 October 2019 with a new Certificate of incorporation number UIN BW00000969150. At the same time SADCAS registered a change in address to the new Offices.

Noting that some aspects critical to SADCAS operation as an accreditation body and international recognition that are embodied into the Memorandum of Association (MoA) which was revoked through the re-registration process, it became inevitable for SADCAS to come up with a Constitution. Hence the Board resolved that UPT Secretarial be engaged to draft the Constitution based on the SADCAS Articles of Association and Memorandum of Association. In implementing the Board resolution, UPT Secretarial was engaged by SADCAS to draft the Constitution within set timelines. A series of drafts were prepared and reviewed by the Board with the final draft being considered at the 63rd meeting of the SADCAS Board of Directors held on 18 February 2020. The key changes made in coming up with a Constitution are as follows:

- **Alignment of SADCAS Objects** with Article 15 B of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade and to avoid an overlap with the objects of SADC Cooperation in Accreditation (SADCA) as outlined in Article 15 A of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) annexes to the SADC Protocol on Trade.

- **Representation of the SADC Secretariat on the SADCAS Board of Directors** - SADCAS being a subsidiarity institution of SADC, a permanent seat was allocated for the SADC Secretariat representative on the Board of Directors subject to the terms and conditions and other clauses of this Constitution applying to all directors.

- **Term of Office of Board Members Chairman and Vice Chairman** - Taking note of the terms of office in related organizations designed to ensure continuity, the term of Office of Board members, Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board were changed to 5 years subject to reappointment for a further five-year period if he/she is willing to continue to act as a member of the Board.

- **Gender** specific terms included in the Memorandum and Articles of Association have been amended in the Constitution to reflect gender neutrality.

At the February Board meeting the Board having reviewed the final draft agreed to recommend the approval by the General Assembly of the special resolution on the alteration to the provision of and the replacement of the SADCAS Memorandum of Association and the Articles of Association with a Constitution which was subsequently approved by the SADCAS General Assembly at its 15th Annual General Meeting held in March 2020 following which the approved Constitution was registered on 16 April 2020.

HIGHLIGHTS 2020 AFRAC MID-TERM MEETINGS

The 2020 AFRAC mid -term meetings were held virtually from 1 to 3 June 2020. The meetings were originally scheduled to be held in Nairobi, Kenya with the Kenya Accreditation Service as the host. After considering that most countries from where AFRAC members are drawn were in lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic and further taking note of the prevailing travel restrictions, it was decided to go ahead with virtual mid-term meetings. A survey was undertaken by the Secretariat and all members indicated that they would be able to participate in the virtual meetings. The meetings were hosted by the AFRAC Secretariat, SANAS (South Africa) and KENAS (Kenya). The virtual meetings were attended by representatives from ASLM, BOBS ENAO, EGAC, GhaNAS, KENAS, MAURITAS, NINAS, SADCAS, SANAS, SDAC, SOAC, SON and TUNAC. SADCAS was represented at the meetings by Mrs Maureen P Mutasa, the Chief Executive Officer, Ms Jeanne Françoise Ranorovelo, the Technical Manager, Mrs Pinkie Malebe Technical Manager Designate, Mr Xavier Mugari Quality Manager, and Mr Victor Mundembe and Mrs Eva Muronda the latter 2 of whom are Scheme Coordinators.

A number of meetings were held between 1 and 3 June 2020 as follows:

- MRA Committee meetings held on Monday 1 June 2020;
- Calibration and Testing, Certification, Inspection and Medical Sub Committees and the Technical Committee meetings held from 1 to 2 June 2020;
- Marketing and Communications Committee and MRA Council meeting held on Tuesday 2 June 2020; and
- Executive Committee meeting held all day on Wednesday 3 June 2020.

Screenshot of AFRAC Executive Committee in Session on 3 June 2020

MRA Committee

The 13th MRA Committee was attended by 11 members with SADCAS represented by Mrs Maureen P Mutasa SADCAS CEO as the main member and Mrs Pinkie Malebe as the alternate SADCAS representative. The meeting was very ably chaired by Mr Moez Boughalmi a representative of TUNAC. The objectives of the meeting were to:
- Review progress on workplan items and resolutions;
- Plan for upcoming peer evaluations;
- Review recommendations of the EWG regarding evaluator performance;
- Review progress on review of the MRA Documents;
- Review accreditation bodies (ABS) transition reports; and
- Consider and recommend improvements to the management of the MRA processes

A total of 9 resolutions were passed during the 13th MRA Committee meeting. Some of the key resolution passed were as follows:
- Although all AFRAC arrangements had successfully transitioned to ISO/IEC 17011: 2017 well ahead of the transition deadline of November 2020, noting that AFRAC had applications to join the MRA underway and was expecting another application (new and scope extensions) and in an effort not to cause delays, the   MRA Committee assigned the Chair and the Secretary to look into ILAC/IAF and other regions' processes for conducting evaluations during extraordinary events/circumstances such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Based on recommendations of the Evaluator Working Group (EWG), the MRA Committee qualified two (2) Team Leaders and three (3) peer evaluators namely:
    - Team Leaders:
      - Mr Robin Gopee MAURITAS (Mauritius); and
      - Mrs Susan Munyiri-Ochieng KENAS (Kenya).

Regional and International Interactions

- Peer Evaluators:
  - Mr Mpho Phaloane SANAS (South Africa) as evaluator in the scope of Inspection (ISO/IEC 17020);
  - Mr Getnet Tsigemelak ENAO (Ethiopia) as evaluator in the scope of Medical Testing (ISO 15189); and
  - Mr Mahesh Koolwont MAURITAS (Mauritius) as evaluator in the scope of Testing (ISO/IEC 17025) and Medical Testing (ISO 15189).
- Adopted a number of ILAC/IAF (new/revised) published since the 12th MRA Committee meeting and at the same time noted the withdrawal of a number of ILAC and IAF documents. Noting the newly published revision of ILAC P 15:05/2020- Application of ISO/IEC 17020: 2012 for the accreditation of inspection bodies, the MRA Committee agreed to arrange an online training courses for evaluators and AB staff. An expert will be identified to develop the said training course by end of 2020.
- Noting the launch of IAF CERTSEARCH an exclusive global database for accredited management system certifications which aggregates data from 68 accreditation bodies that are signatory to the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) and 815 accredited certification bodies amounting to 700,000 management system certificates, the AFRAC MRA Committee encouraged Arrangement members who are signatory to the IAF MLA to sign up to the database.

Technical Sub Committee and Technical Committee Meetings

All the Subcommittees of the AFRAC Technical Committee (TC) namely: Inspection (SADCAS represented by Ms Jeanne Ranorovelo), calibration and testing (SADCAS represented by Mrs Pinkie Malebe), certification (SADCAS represented by Mr Victor Mundembe) and the newly constituted Medical (SADCAS represented by Mrs Eva Muronda with Mr Xavier Mugari as the alternate) met before the main TC meeting. All SADCAS representatives participated in the TC meeting. The TC passed a total of 10 resolutions. Some of the key resolution passed were as follows:

- Encouraged AFRAC members to vote in the affirmative on the ballot on the extension to the deadline provided by ILAC regarding transition to ISO/IEC 17025:2017 before the deadline of 3 June 2020. The ballot was subsequently passed with ILAXC and ISO agreeing to the extension of the transition deadline to 1 June 2021.
- Appointed Ms Barbara Mokgethwa (SANAS) as the AFRAC TC Medical Sub-Committee Chair and appointed Ms Eva (SADCAS) as the Vice Chair of the Sub-Committee
- Recommended the withdrawal of IAF MD 3, IAF ID 8, 9, 10 and 11 all of which were withdrawn since the September meetings
- Requested members to participate in the revision of ISO 15189 at ISO/TC 212 through their National Standard Bodies mirror committees. '
- Resolved to develop the AFRAC guidance document on Remote Assessments.
- Recommended the adoption of the ILAC IC resolution on 18-month transition of ILAC P15:2020 with a deadline of November 2021.

Marketing and Communications Committee (MCC)

The MCC meeting at which SADCAS was represented by Mr Xavier Mugari, passed 7 resolution. Some of the key resolution passed were as follows:

- Established a Task Force to develop AFRAC promotional material package.
- Encouraged all AFRAC members to commemorate the 2020 WAD according to the 2020 WAD theme Accreditation: Improving Food Safety, and requests that members submit articles based on their commemorations.
- Resolved to conduct the following trainings:
  - ASANA application (1 Day) to be facilitated by Mr Mohammed Hassan; and
  - Marketing and Communication Basics of Social Media (1 Day) to be facilitated by Ms Elizabeth Muema.

MRA Council Meeting

The 9th MRA Council held on 2 June 2020 was attended by 8 out of 9 members with SADCAS represented by Mrs Maureen P Mutasa as the main member and Mr Xavier Mugari as the alternate SADCAS representative. The meeting was very ably chaired by Mrs Mutasa, the Chair of the MRA Council. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- To review and confirm MRA Council Membership;
- To refamiliarize with MRA Council TORs;
- To consider the report of the MRA Committee Chair;
- To consider notification of changes by MRA Signatories;
- To define the process and responsibilities for the adoption of IAF/ILAC resolutions and monitoring implementation thereof; and
- To review members' voting performance in AFRAC, ILAC and IAF.

Regional and International Interactions

A total of 13 resolutions were passed during the 9th MRA Council meeting. Some of the key resolution passed were as follows:

- Considered the report of the Chair of the MRA and
    - Congratulated the MRA Committee on the AFRAC scope extensions.
    - Noted the progress report on the upcoming re-evaluation and scope extension of AFRAC to PT, RMP, Product and Personnel certification to be undertaken in 2021 and the witnessing thereof being conducted and the names of the team members appointed by IAF and ILAC to undertake the said re-evaluation and scope extensions and noted the plans in place to ensure peer evaluators' competence coverage of the scopes of re-evaluation and scope extensions especially RMP
- Noted applications received, considered and approved by the MRA Council via email correspondence since the last meeting held in Sept 2019 and reaffirmed decisions thereof as follows:
    - MAURITAS successfully transition to ISO/IEC 17011:2017, the MRA Council, approved through electronic ballot on 29/11/2019. The next full re-evaluation will be conducted in May 2022
    - EGAC's: Self-declaration for sub-scope extensions: OH&SMS & EnMS) - IAF MLA status extended.
    - SANAS: Self-declaration for sub-scope extensions: OH&SMS & EnMS) –To apply to IAF MLA through self-declaration
    - SADCAS: Self–declaration for sub-scope EMS and OHSMS – IAF MLA status extension.
    - SANAS Application for Extension of scope - PT, RMP, Product & Personnel Certification – ILAC MRA status extended
- Considered progress with applications under process.
- Recorded 4 notifications of changes as follows and which the Secretariat will update accordingly:
    - Change in physical address of SADCAS Offices
    - Correction on name of the Ministry under which MAURITAS falls
    - Contact person for SANAS changed
    - SADCAS re-registered and new Constitution approved and registered
- Defined the responsibilities and process for reviewing and adopting IAF and ILAC resolutions of relevance to the MRA and resolved that ILAC/IAF Resolutions shall be reviewed by the MRA Committee, as applicable, following which recommendations shall be made to the MRA Council for consideration. The Secretariat was then requested to amend the MRA Committee and MRA Council terms of reference to reflect this process
- Reviewed members' voting performance in ILAC and IAF and resolved to request ILAC to make accessible on a regular basis data on voting performance so as to enable members to monitor their performance and to take necessary action to address any shortcomings in performance.

Executive Committee Meeting

The mid-term meeting culminated with the 15th AFRAC Executive Committee meeting whose main objectives were to:

- Follow-up on implementation of the 5-year Strategic Plan;
- Review EXCO's workplans and Resolutions;
- Review AFRAC's finances and the AFRAC fees structure; and
- Consider recommendations arising from the various meetings held prior to the Executive Committee meeting.

A total of 24 resolutions were passed by the Executive Committee including the approval of the 6th AFRAC Management Report, approval of the Stakeholder Committee guidelines and Stakeholder member representative voting rights. Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 pandemic, the Executive resolved to conduct the 11th AFRAC Annual General Meeting and associated annual meetings virtually.

The 2020 mid-term AFRAC meetings were very successful and met the set objectives. The virtual meetings presented a cost effective opportunity for members to attend the meetings as evidenced by the representation from SADCAS.

SADCAS PARTICIPATES IN CASCO VIRTUAL MEETING FOR AFRICA REGION

A virtual meeting via Zoom was organized amongst the CASCO Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretariat and representatives from nine (9) CASCO National Mirror Committees (NMCs) from the African region namely: Kenya (KEBS); Botswana (BOBS); Uganda (UNBS); South Africa (SABS); Namibia (NSI); Tanzania (TBS); Zimbabwe (SAZ); Mauritius (MSB); and Rwanda (RSB). SADCAS participates in CASCO activities through the Zimbabwe

Regional and International Interactions

NMC (SAZ) which was represented by Ms Romana Marunda, Mr Ranganai Mutonono, Mr Tony Lampard, Mrs Oliviah Zimba and Mr Victor Mundembe. The meeting was held over two days on 23 and 30 April 2020.

Mr Reinaldo Figueiredo, the CASCO Chair, welcomed all the participants and presented the CASCO Chair's report, that was circulated prior to the meetings for information. Mr Sean McCurtain, the CASCO Secretary, reminded Members on the importance of voting on open CASCO ballots, as failure to meet the prescribed threshold leads to downgrading in the membership of the ISO member for a year. He reminded Members that given the broad scope of CASCO work, some CASCO standards might not trigger the national stakeholders' interest, which is a normal situation among all Members. He therefore encouraged Members to focus and participate in those areas where there is a national interest and expertise and to cast an abstention vote where there is no interest.

The participants introduced their NMCs and reported on their participation in CASCO. As part of this introduction, participants also shared the challenges faced amidst the current COVID-19 pandemic and how members were addressing these challenges.

Botswana – Do not have a formalized CASCO NMC and operate through two structures one of which is focused on conformity assessment and in particular certification and comprises of certification clients (industry) and representatives from government and regulators. The second structure focuses on laboratory activities and is composed of calibration, testing and medical laboratories.

Kenya – The CASCO NMC in Kenya is relatively new and was constituted this year. The NMC has active and committed stakeholders and will continue to work on strengthening its participation in CASCO.

Mauritius - The NMC for Mauritius was established in 1995 and is an active NMC that is involved in many CASCO activities. One of the key challenges is to get timely and quality inputs from stakeholders mainly due to lack of expertise in a particular field or lack of awareness. Often, feedback comes at implementation or after implementing the standard. Some incentives, capacity building or improved information sharing with stakeholders is needed to get stakeholders on board when the standard is being developed.

Namibia – The Namibian Standards Institution (NSI) Certification body (CB) was tasked to oversee and coordinate the work of the CASCO NMC. One the challenges faced hence is the broad scope of CASCO work, that goes beyond certification, and making it difficult for the NMC to cover all conformity assessment activities, including testing, inspection etc. The CB had planned to have its kick-off meeting to finalize the NMC Terms of Reference (TORs) in February/March 2020 but was postponed due to COVID-19 outbreak. The CB is currently investigating other means of holding the meeting remotely.

South Africa - Reported of a slow-down in the NMC activities due to the COVID-19 lockdown, but generally the NMC is very active and committed to advancing CASCO work and covering all the different conformity assessment activities and involving industry, academia and regulators etc.

Uganda has a formal NMC for CASCO that is well represented and active. He also noted that one of the difficulties is the extended scope of work of CASCO and that the NMC tries to focus on key areas. A lot is done to engage relevant stakeholders within the quality infrastructure (QI) in Uganda.

Rwanda – Rwanda Standards Board that is currently using existing TCs/SCs, to submit their inputs to CASCO. There is no dedicated CASCO NMC for now, but the establishment of such an NMC is under discussion and part of future planning. It was also noted that the NSB would need support from ISO to build capacity and train members, to kick off these new activities in CASCO. The representatives also highlighted the growing importance of access to "private" standards in the region.

Zimbabwe – The NMC was established more than 25 years ago. The key challenge faced by the NMC is getting timely and enhanced input from national stakeholders and how to help the members better understand the requirements of the standards for enhanced and timely inputs. Zimbabwe uses I-Solutions to disseminate information, which is a good tool for efficient information sharing.

Tanzania - Challenges faced are similar to those expressed by the other countries and mainly the need to encourage stakeholder participation.

- The participants further discussed and commented on potential initiatives that could help strengthen their participation in CASCO. The observations made and actions proposed for CASCO consideration are summarized as follows:
- The delays in adoption of international standards at national level due to lack of systems to allow for parallel development so that the adoptions can be published within a reasonable timeframe, one or two months, after the CASCO standard is released. It was suggested that countries as much as possible have NMC programmes to mirror the CASCO work programme.
- Support in the form of P-Member twinning offered by ISO, should be promoted and used more often, including the possibility of virtual Co-Convenorship.

Regional and International Interactions

- CASCO needs to encourage more P-Members including those from developing countries, to volunteer to convene WG meetings and to put in place mentorship programme for CASCO Convenors for skills transfer thus build up capacity. In that regard, it was proposed that clear TORs for a Co-Convenor be developed, so they can be considered in NMCs.
- In an effort to keep the NMCs engaged and raise awareness, it was proposed that CASCO organize one or two short informative sessions after each CASCO policy and technical meeting. The sessions could be run by Convenor(s) and the Secretariat, with the objective to report the key outcomes of the meetings, highlight the key elements of a document and give an opportunity to Members to ask questions and seek clarifications on any unclear requirements. The primary objective is to share information and keep members abreast of the developments.
- Participants also stressed the importance of regional structures in Africa, such as ARSO, AFRAC and AFRIMETS and how the different NMCs can interact and support each other at the regional level.
- Organization of regional trainings on CASCO standards and sponsorship programmes for participation in international meetings, were also highlighted as key elements to continue building capacity and facilitate Members' participation in CASCO. Remote facilities should be investigated for the forthcoming CASCO Plenary in Berlin.
- It was also mentioned that the INetQI group has started working on a project for a single *library for conformity assessment,* a single platform that will gather information on conformity assessment from different sources. The platform will feature different search options, by sectors for example, to allow the user to find relevant information in a simple and efficient manner.

The CASCO Chair, Mr Reinaldo Figueiredo reminded Members that one of the things that was discussed at the CASCO Plenary in Nairobi in 2019, were challenges for developing countries to participate in Standards Development. The absence of or difficulty in establishing efficient NMCs to collect national positions was identified as one of the top 10 challenges by members. Therefore, CASCO plans to organize a break-out session focused on NMCs during the next Plenary, to continue sharing good practices. The Chair launched a call for volunteers from the African region to present during a panel session (5-7 minutes talk) any concrete projects/success stories/initiatives that their NMCs have implemented and that could inspire others.

All participants expressed their appreciation and thanked the CASCO Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretariat for organizing the virtual meetings, that were an excellent opportunity to share experiences and ideas on how to enhance participation of stakeholders in ISO CASCO work. Above all it was an opportunity for to meet and talk to the new ISO Chair albeit virtually. Members were encouraged to participate in future meetings to share good practices and stay informed.

UNIDO PUBLISHES DOCUMENTS RELATED TO CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT

The United Nations Development Organization (UNIDO) has published 2 documents related to conformity assessment entitled **"Tested and Accepted - Implementing ISO/IEC 17025:2017"** and **"Advancing Conformity Assessment for the New Digital Age**". The publications were launched on World Accreditation Day on 9th June 2020.

The publication "Tested and Accepted - Implementing ISO/IEC 17025:2017" is a guidebook based on the previous UNIDO issue "Complying with ISO/IEC 17025" published in 2009. The guidebook contains a brief overview of conformity assessment and the CASCO toolbox and then a summary of the changes in the 2017 version of ISO/IEC 17025, an explanation of the changes and consequences and guidance to application as well as cross references between the 2005 and 2017 versions. The publication Tested & Accepted – implementing ISO/IEC 17025 is available and can be downloaded on **https://tii.unido.org/sites/default/files/publications/Guide%20ISO%2017025-2017.pdf**

The publication" Advancing conformity assessment for the Digital Age" gives an overview of the new digital age, articulates the important role of conformity assessment bodies in sustainable development and how UNIDO is helping countries navigate change. The document cites the various quality infrastructure projects currently under way in the various regions including the Southern Africa region where UNIDO is strengthening conformity assessment bodies so as to meet the increasing demand for better and safer products. The publication Advancing conformity assessment for the Digital Age is available and downloaded on **https://tii.unido.org/sites/default/files/publications/UNIDO%20 Conformity%20Assessment_Brochure_2020.pdf**

Marketing and Promotion

NAFP-MALAWI AT THE FRONTLINE OF PROMOTING ACCREDITATION AND MARKETING SADCAS IN MALAWI

Accreditation is the process of officially recognizing an institution/body as competent to perform a particular activity or offer a specific service. Accreditation, therefore, has a crystal-clear objective: it aims to assure businesses, end users and regulators that a conformity assessment body (CAB), such as a testing, calibration or medical laboratory, certification or inspection body, has the required technical competence and operates impartially. This competence is assessed by accreditation bodies against international standards and requirements.

In line with the forgoing, accreditation bodies assess CABs in a variety of key functions, assessing them against standards which have been developed by the global community through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and International Electro Technical Commission (IEC). These standards cover functions such as inspection, certification and testing. With inspection bodies, certification bodies and laboratories accredited to these standards, they have been independently checked as being able to deliver competent and impartial inspection, certification and testing services in all parts of local, national and international food chains.

Mr Masautso Ngamwane 1st NAFP Malawi

In the SADC region, accreditation activities are coordinated by the SADC Cooperation in Accreditation (SADCA), a regional Cooperation whose objective is to coordinate accreditation activities in the region and facilitate the national, regional and international recognition and acceptance of SADC accreditation infrastructure and providing Member States with accreditation as a tool for facilitating trade and the protection of health and safety of the public and the environment in both the voluntary and regulatory areas.

SADCAS, a multi-economy accreditation body is one of the 3 accreditation bodies in the region. SADCAS services the accreditation needs of 14 SADC Members States including Malawi but excluding Mauritius and South Africa that have national accreditation bodies MAURITAS and SANAS respectively. Seven out of the 8 accreditation schemes offered by SADCAS are internationally recognized.

National Accreditation Focal Points (NAFP's) who were established in all the SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS are responsible for promoting the benefits and importance of accreditation and marketing SADCAS service offering. In that role NAFPs handle accreditation enquiries, disseminate related information and act as an administrative link between SADCAS and clients/potential clients within their respective countries. In an effort to handle the above responsibilities, Malawi has two NAFP's; Mr Masautso Ngamwane and Mrs Margret Sauzande and they are located in the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT) respectively. The NAFPs are supervised by Mr Symon O Mandala, the Director General of the MBS.

Based on an approved national action plan, the NAFPs submit quarterly progress reports to SADCAS which reflect the achievements made during the review period. One of the key performance areas the NAFPs have made progress during the quarter is the promotion and marketing of SADCAS services and achievements. In line with this, the NAFPs in Malawi continued sharing the March 2020 edition of the Pioneer the SADCAS electronic Newsletter, to stakeholders. The NAFPs also submitted an article to SADCAS for publication in the July 2020 edition of the Pioneer. Further to that, the NAFPs continued collecting data on regulators and CABs in Malawi for consolidation and then submission to SADCAS. The other key performance area in which the NAFPs made headway during the quarter is in the improvement of cost effectiveness of processes and enhancement of service delivery. Here the NAFPs continued handling and processing accreditation enquiries. During the quarter a number of enquiries were received and processed. Progress was also made on the key performance area of development, recruiting and retaining of SADCAS' most important asset by identifying 3 more experts in different accreditation fields to be trained as assessors. This is in effort to ensure that SADCAS pool of expert assessors is sufficient for cost effective assessments of its accreditation services within its catchment area. Finally, on the key performance of strengthening the effectiveness of the NAFPs, the NAFPs continued engaging Laboratory Association of Malawi (LAM) in an effort to collaborate in promoting and marketing SADCAS accreditation services. During the month of July 2020, the NAFPs also managed to compile and submit quarterly progress report for April – June 2020 period to SADCAS.

The performance for the quarter was affected by the escalating cases of Covid-19 as most of the activities planned involve somewhat physical meetings with stakeholders. The NAFPs therefore embarked on means of achieving the planned interventions whilst not compromising on the Covid-19 containment measures. The NAFPs will continue working towards planned activities to achieve set targets even amidst the pandemic.

The 1st NAFP Officer for Malawi, Mr Ngamwane was appointed on 16th September 2019. A holder of a BSC in Environmental Sciences and Technology - Food Technology and a certificate in Production Management, Mr Ngamwane is currently the Management Systems Certification Officer at the Malawi Bureau of Standards.

NAFP News

HANDHOLDING CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT BODIES IN ESWATINI

Through funding from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), two consultants were engaged to conduct a handholding exercise for three (3) laboratories and three (3) inspection bodies on the development and implementation of ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and ISO/IEC 17020:2012 respectively. The project which was originally scheduled to run from January to June 2020 was extended until August 2020 due the COVD -19 Pandemic. The project is being spearheaded by NAFP-Eswatini which is housed within the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Regulatory & Quality Infrastructure Development Department. The overall objective of the project was to provide technical support to laboratories and inspection bodies involved in the prioritized development sector of Eswatini thus increase the number of conformity assessments bodies getting accredited in Eswatini.

The strategy for the project included:

Gap Analysis which sought to establish the extent of application of the requirements of the respective international accreditation standard in each laboratory's/inspection's, to determine the size and nature of gaps between the current status of each of the laboratory's/inspection's own existing quality management system (QMS) and the requirements of the international standard. The Gap Analysis was conducted using the international standard as one of the criteria, together with the entity's own documentation and other applicable requirements (e.g. customer, regulatory, supplier). The results of the Gap Analysis formed the basis for the implementation plan for the hand-holding exercise.

Documentation Assistance which included assistance in developing documentation of the following: Quality Policy Manual; Procedures; Work Instructions: Quality Records: Various records including charts, files, inspection and testing records, assessment results, and any other records of objective evidence.

Internal Audit and Management review - An Internal audit which is carried out in accordance with a defined procedure and is designed to monitor compliance with the respective accreditation standard and a **Management Review** which is conducted in order to determine the effectiveness of the quality management system and as a way of ensuring that a laboratory/inspection body is involved in continuous process improvement.

The Project envisaged that if the laboratories and inspection bodies are handheld, they will be able to reach the accreditation status faster.

Testing Laboratories

At the beginning of the year, three (3) laboratories were selected by the NAFP for Eswatini namely: Manzini Municipality Laboratory; Food Hygiene Testing Laboratory; and Fuel Testing Laboratory for assistance under the COMESA Project.

The Consultant started off by conducting a gap analysis to these laboratories to determine the status of the QMS. To address the Gap Analysis and as a first step a transition training course on ISO/IEC 17025:2017 was conducted for all the participating Laboratory personnel. This was followed by documenting the system when each laboratory was allocated a number of days to close the gaps. This was done with close assistance from the Consultant and during this time the following activities were carried out:

- Revision of the quality manual including the addition of the Management System requirements;
- Revision of the existing procedures to ensure conformity with the quality manual and to address all the ISO/IEC 17025 requirements;
- Preparation of new procedures to address the management system requirements;
- Verification of the forms to be used as records to provide the objective evidence that the system is being implemented as documented.

NAFP News

The following outputs were realized from the documentation stage:

- The quality manual was revised, and the management system requirements were included.
- The existing procedures were revised.
- Some of the outstanding procedures were written.
- Forms were verified and corrections needed were noted.

Each laboratory documentation status was rated. All the laboratories' documentation status was above 50%. Following the documentation assistance, some of the laboratories still had a lot of work to do in order to finalize their documents in a short time so that they will have at least one month of implementation before the audit and management review were undertaken.

Due to the COVID -19 Pandemic, the internal audits were carried out electronically. The three (3) laboratories sent all the documents electronically to the Consultant. Audit reports which highlighted deficiencies in each of the laboratory system were issued. Recommendations for corrective actions were also made and disagreements on findings were resolved before the report was completed and submitted to the Project Unit.

Inspection Bodies

Three (3) Inspection Bodies namely : Mbabane Municipalities; Matsapha Town Council; and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (Occupational, Health and Safety Department were selected for assistance from the COMESA project. The steps undertaken were almost the same as for laboratories except that with inspection bodies, the Consultant started off by conducting an awareness training to Management about the standard to get a buy in. For all the three organizations, management was very keen to see the standard being implemented in their organizations. The Consultant then conducted the Gap Analysis, the documentation process, internal audit and management Review.

Mrs Sybil Dlamini

Mrs P Dlamini

NAFPs Eswatini

Lessons Learnt

The duration for the handholding exercise was too short hence activities were undertaken in haste. The Handholding exercise is a good way of helping CABs to get accredited as they will be guided step by step and become involved in the work done.

Assessor Corner

UNDER THE EYE OF AN ASSESSOR - MLAS

I was qualified and registered as a SADCAS technical assessor under the Medical Laboratories Accreditation Programme (MLAS) on 21 February in 2018 having been trained under the auspices of the SADC EU EDF 10 REIS programme in 2017. The assigned scopes of assessment are heamatology and Blood Banks based on my experience.
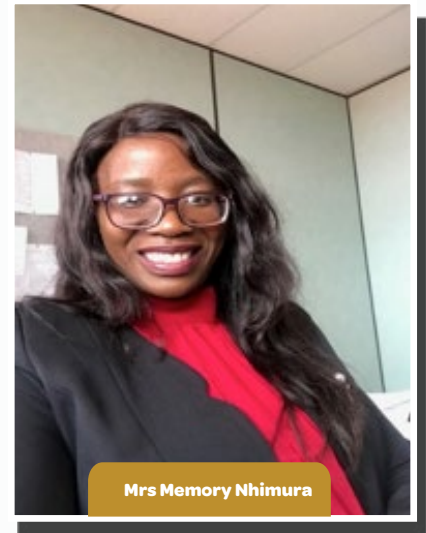
I hold a Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Sciences Honours' Degree from the University of Zimbabwe, with 14 years working experience in medical diagnostic laboratories including 3 years tutoring Hematology in a learning institute. In addition, I have attained various certificates in Laboratory Quality Control & Method Validation, Internal Auditing and Quality Management Systems based on ISO 15189, ISO/IEC 17011 and a postgraduate diploma in Education.

With a determination to contribute immensely to healthcare delivery systems, particularly focusing on quality service delivery, my journey so far has been excitingly challenging. My first assessment assignment was in June 2018 when I was part of the team that assessed 37 Military Hospital Pathology Division Laboratory in Accra Ghana. Since that first assessment, I have undertaken another 12 assessments bringing the total assessments that I have

Mrs Memory Nhimura

undertaken on behalf of SADCAS to 13 thus far. Determination is the key attribute demonstrated by all the laboratories that I have assessed resulting in their accreditation. It is impressive to note how in some cases, laboratories with limited resources remained steadfast in achieving set objectives and there was evident quality improvement throughout their quest to attain accreditation.

I must say, working with other well experienced assessors has widened my assessment skills, and in the process, I have gained a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the ISO 15189 standard. As I continue on this journey, I would be very delighted to see footprints of quality implementation in medical laboratories across Africa, with patients receiving accurate and reliable results. What an amazing journey with SADCAS! It has since ignited my passion for travelling and exploring, experiencing various diverse African cultures.

To my colleagues, the members of the assessment teams that I have been a part of, to SADCAS and to all laboratories I have assessed, THANK YOU for giving me the opportunity to realize my dream of contributing towards an improved healthcare delivery system in Africa!

UNDER THE EYE OF AN ASSESSOR - VLAS

I was registered as a SADCAS Technical Assessor in the Scope "Serology" under the Veterinary Laboratories Accreditation Scheme (VLAS) on 25 November 2015.

Being an assessor for SADCAS has made me realize that communication and team work are key. We always work as a team, with the technical assessors being experts in their different fields and the Team Leader being the glue that keeps the team together. It is also the Team Leader that is your go-to person if there are any issues, discrepancies or queries during the assessment process.

The VLAS like Medical Laboratory Accreditation Scheme presents a broad scope that includes but not limited to Microbiology, Bacteriology, Virology, Mycology, Molecular Biology, Toxicology, Parasitology, Chemical Pathology, Cytology and Histopathology
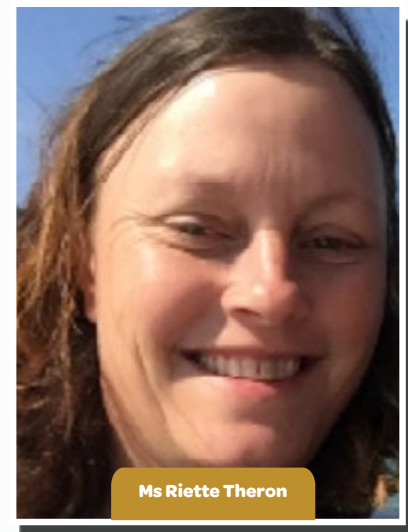
Ms Riette Theron

Assessor Corner

Being an assessor for SADCAS has made me realize that communication and team work are key. We always work as a team, with the technical assessors being experts in their different fields and the Team Leader being the glue that keeps the team together. It is also the Team Leader that is your go-to person if there are any issues, discrepancies or queries during the assessment process.

The VLAS like the Medical Laboratory Accreditation Scheme presents a broad scope that includes but not limited to Microbiology, Bacteriology, Virology, Mycology, Molecular Biology, Toxicology, Parasitology, Chemical Pathology, Cytology and Histopathology etc. As a Technical Assessor it is critical to have the relevant expertise for the scope you assess in view of the importance of veterinary diagnostics and its impact on the economy. It also means keeping up to date with international requirements, as most of the veterinary laboratories are members of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). The assessor must make sure that the methods being assessed meet all the requirements.

It is very important to conduct a thorough assessment and write assessment findings (nonconformities) in a clear and concise manner so that the laboratory understands and effectively address the findings. The laboratory would submit evidence of implementation of corrective actions to address the nonconformities. The Technical Assessor has to review the submitted evidence of corrective action and make a decision on whether the non-conformities were addressed effectively.

Being a SADCAS assessor entails a lot of travel within the SADC region. One has to get used to traveling, stress at airports due to delayed flights etc. despite that, one has to always be sharp and well prepared for the assessment. There would be instances where the facility may request for a scope extension or inclusion of additional personnel on site. As a Technical Assessor one has to evaluate the request by the facility, discuss with the Team Leader who will consult with SADCAS before the making the decision. Assessments can be very engaging, where the team may have to work overtime in order to cover the scope of the assessment.

What I can recommend to young assessors is to always be professional and listen. Consult your Team Leader on issues. Work as a team. Expect the unexpected and try to assist where you can. An assessment is a lot of effort, but the satisfaction is knowing that you are making a difference. In the end there is nothing more rewarding that a "thank you". You leave there feeling part of the family.

INVITATION TO REGISTER AS SADCAS ASSESSORS

The Southern African Development Community Accreditation Service (SADCAS) invites qualified assessors to be registered as SADCAS assessors for its testing/calibration/medical laboratories, and certification (management systems/product)/inspection bodies' accreditation schemes. SADCAS' strategy is to grow its pool of assessors so as to cover the anticipated scopes of accreditation, and the geographical and language diversity in the SADC region of which 14 Member States are serviced by SADCAS.

Assessors from private and public sectors as well as from technical institutions/associations who have been trained, qualified and registered as assessors by an accreditation body are invited to apply by completing SADCAS F 26: SADCAS Assessor/Technical Expert Information Record which can be downloaded from the SADCAS website link http://www.sadcas.org/sites/default/files/pdf-documents/SADCAS%20F%2026%20-%20SADCAS%20Assessors-Experts%20Information%20Record%20[Issue%205].pdf

SADCAS will review and evaluate all applications received to ensure that the assessors have the prerequisite qualifications, technical knowledge and experience required by SADCAS.

Applications shall be addressed to:
Mrs Pinkie Malebe
SADCAS Technical Manager Designate
Email: pmalebe@sadcas.org

Staff News

WORKING FROM HOME DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN - A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE

The world is facing the impact of Covid-19 on all aspects of life, in all countries and in all businesses. No one is certain about how much and how long the impact of the pandemic will last on the global economy. Given the unprecedented situation, I am one among the millions of working professionals who have had to alter my life and work schedules in order to be able to contribute to my workplace.

Prior to April 2020, I could have never imagined that performing accreditation related work could survive a complete work-from-home setup. However, I tried it by putting all my efforts into it for three months and this new setup has really proved to be a real success. It has not been easy at the beginning. However, I did manage to it to the best of my ability and it did come out with very good results.

As far as my personal experience had been, I was staying alone during this lockdown. I was new to Botswana and it was a completely new environment to me as I joined SADCAS just one month prior to the lockdown phase. I was away from my home and my home country; I was already missing my family and I didn't even have time to familiarise myself to the local context. In order to face the lockdown crisis, I had to mentally prepare myself in order to adapt to the new crisis situation.

Ms Varsah Gungoa

During the lockdown, my day would begin with taking stock of work and quickly working on the day's task. At the beginning, the speed was less than usual for many things as there were certain disadvantages about not being with others in the office and having no hard copy files at hand. Moreover, slow internet capacity with frequent interruption, learning to be tech savvy person and multiple interactions with different people over the phone would delay things compared to being around each other in office. Nonetheless, one thing that kept me going was my hour-long workout schedule, and no matter how late it would get, I made sure to meet my daily work targets.

With each passing day, I started to feel more and more lonely working from home and I couldn't wait to get back to the office. I was counting each and every day. I was feeling that my anxieties were increasing day by day and I was kept on telling myself that I needed to be strong and fight with it. So, the strategies that I adopted and that have helped me in the past three months was that I did more cooking and trying new recipes from YouTube channels. It was a kind of killing the monotony of being stuck at home days and nights. I also got into the habit of exercising for half an hour every evening to get my muscles stretched. I would sometimes go out jogging whenever the weather was not too cold.

Although it was a treat to stay home and not having to do the daily 3 kilometres walking to the office in the extreme cold weather to which I was not used to, the anxiety of an uncertain situation was the stress I couldn't ignore. This situation has given me an opportunity to learn so many mundane things and at the same time has opened tiny windows in my mind to analyse and reflect on different emotional upheavals in an environment of turbulence. Personally, it's a learning experience working from home, exploring culinary skills and becoming tech-savvy. So, the lockdown for me is a curious mixture of simple delights and painful anxieties. But finally, today's storms are tomorrow's rainbows.

This article was compiled by Ms Varsah GUNGOA. Varsah who is from Mauritius, joined SADCAS in March 2020 as Assessor under the Testing Laboratories Accreditation Scheme.

WORKING FROM HOME – EFFECTS OF COVID-19

Thursday, 2 April 2020 at midnight marked the beginning of a 49-day lockdown in Botswana, where the SADCAS Office is based. This was a week after a similar lockdown was imposed in South Africa following a surge in COVID-19 infections. At the time of lockdown, Botswana had about 7 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and one death. The lockdown was announced a week prior to enable organizations to prepare for a shutdown and for those that will be working remotely to arrange themselves accordingly.

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As part of SADCAS' vision to be a credible accreditation body at the cutting edge of accreditation service delivery and for business continuity amid this difficult time, SADCAS Management quickly put in place measures to ensure that there are minimum interruptions and that operations continue as much as possible.

Working from home was subsequently effected on 3 April 2020 as the lockdown was an absolute one, with only essential service and frontline workers being allowed to go to work. The rest of the general population were allowed to leave home only to access essential services such as health facilities and to get food supplies.

During the first week of lockdown working from home had its challenges as issues of internet connectivity came to play, as understandably the networks were overloaded as new internet connections reached an all-time high, and with this increased demand the turnaround time for service providers was delayed.
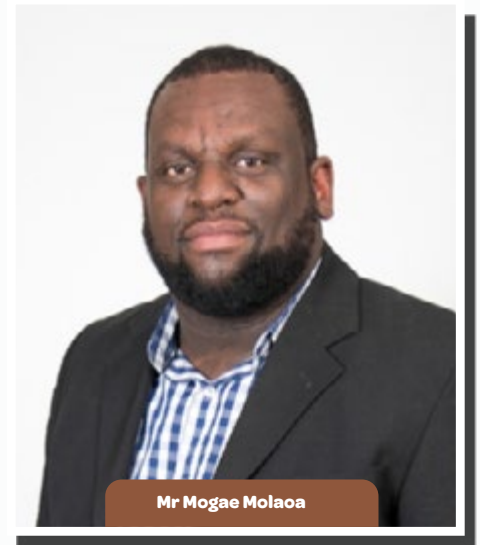
Mr Mogae Molaoa

There was also a lot of anxiety and nervousness as COVID-19 seemed to be escalating with the numbers in the region rising daily. Some of our stakeholders were also on total lockdown and had completely halted operations and could not be reached during this period.

In the second week things seemed to improve as most of the connectivity issues were addressed. Even though the COVID-19 situation in Botswana was not as dire as in other countries there was a steady increase in confirmed positive cases, however the Presidential Task on COVID-19 was quite active and constantly updated the nation which was reassuring. By end of the 2nd week of the first Lockdown SADCAS was registered under essential service as we accredit conformity assessment bodies including laboratories from key sectors such as water and waste water testing, food testing, testing of hand sanitizers, disinfectants, mining laboratories, calibration laboratories involved in the calibration of thermometers etc. and medical testing all of which operate under Essential Services.

Support from colleagues and Management was also invaluable during this time as there was a lot of team work and encouragement amongst each other. Management had also put in place the Workplan and reporting function weekly to ensure that business operations continue and this was also used as a way of monitoring and making sure that the most critical tasks within the SADCAS value chain were carried out during this time and deviations were evaluated and corrected accordingly.

The lockdown was further extended by another 14 days and technology played a crucial part during this time as SADCAS as able to conduct and participate in meetings, regional and international, and was also able to conduct for the first time since inception, Remote assessments. Lessons that were learnt from this was that we are now into the knowledge-based era and technology bridges and gap enables and supports business processes if it is used properly in alignment with an organization's strategy.

Just as we were on a phased return to Office aiming for 100% by 1 August and due to a spike in cases another lockdown was pronounced from 30 July 2020 midnight to midnight on 13 August 2020.

This article was compiled by Mr Mogae Molaoa, the SADCAS Training Administrator. In his position as Training Administrator, Mr Molaoa is responsible for marketing SADCAS training services and effecting all training administration.

Staff News

VICTOR MUNDEMBE ATTENDS ISO/IEC 17065:2012 VIRTUAL TRAINING AT ANAB

Mr Victor Mundembe, the SADCAS Scheme Coordinator for Certification Bodies amongst other schemes attended a training course on Understanding the Requirements and Concepts of ISO/IEC 17065:2012. The training was undertaken from 21 to 22 July 2020 online, using the WebEx Virtual Platform. The training was provided by ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB), USA, led by Mrs Marlene Moore, a seasoned ANAB Trainer and Assessor in Product Certification. The training was attended by 13 other experts from all over the world including the United States of America, Canada, Europe and South Africa, representing Accreditation Bodies, Certification Bodies, Certification Schemes and Consultancy Firms.

The objective of the training was to understand the requirements and concepts of the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 standard on Conformity Assessment – Requirements for Bodies Certifying Products, Processes and Services. The training was also meant to prepare Mr Mundembe for a skills transfer mentorship programme with SANAS to be undertaken under the SANAS/SADCAS Twinning Partnership Agreement (TPA), thereby ensuring that Mr Mundembe adequately meets the competence requirements of the Scheme Coordinator for SADCAS CBAS - Product.
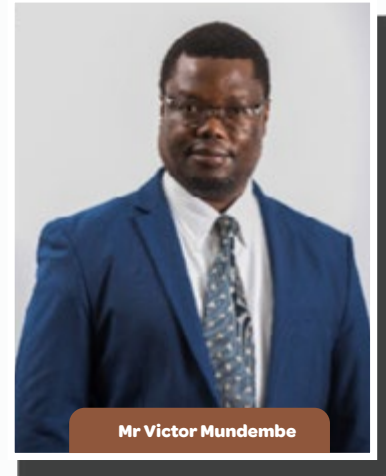
Mr Victor Mundembe

The training involved self-study, exercises to apply the standard and quiz testing that enabled meaningful participation in the discussions aiding the understanding of the requirements and concepts and how the standard was written. A clause by clause approach discussed all the clauses with applicable examples.

The training was a success and it enabled Mr Mundembe to understand the concepts and requirements of the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 standard. Various types of certifications and certification scheme elements that must be included in certification schemes to address the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 were discussed. Mr Mundembe also interacted with international experts in Product Certification and gained insight on how remote training courses are provided. Electronic training certificates were provided by ANAB within two weeks of completion of the course.

INVITATION TO REGISTER TECHNICAL EXPERTS

SADCAS invites experts having specific technical expertise in any of the accreditation schemes currently offered by SADCAS for Calibration/testing/medical laboratories; certification bodies (management systems/product) and inspection bodies in order to registered as Technical Experts. A Technical Expert is a person assigned by SADCAS to an assessment team to provide specific knowledge or expertise within the scope of assessment. A Technical Expert works under the supervision of an experienced Team Leader/Technical Assessor.

Technical experts from private and public sectors as well as from technical institutions are invited to apply by completing SADCAS F 26: SADCAS Assessor/Technical Expert Information Record which can be downloaded from the SADCAS website link **http://www.sadcas.org/sites/default/files/pdf-documents/SADCAS%20F%2026%20-%20 SADCAS%20Assessors-Experts%20Information%20Record%20[Issue%205].pdf**

SADCAS will review and evaluate all applications received to ensure that the experts have the prerequisite qualifications, technical knowledge and experience required by SADCAS.

Applications shall be addressed to:
Mrs Pinkie Malebe
SADCAS Technical Manager Designate
Email: pmalebe@sadcas.org

THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF STANDARDS AND ACCREDITATION

There are many cases where standards and accredited conformity assessment help businesses of any size and sector reduce costs, increase productivity and access new markets. They can help to:

- Build customer confidence that your products are safe and reliable;
- Meet regulation requirements, at a lower cost;
- Reduce costs across all aspects of your business; and
- Gain market access across the world.

Business Benefits **www.business-benefits.org** is a website jointly developed by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), ILAC, International Organization for Standards (ISO), Independent International Organisation for Certification (IIOC), and International Certification Network (IQNet), that showcases these benefits through case studies, research papers, and supporting materials. The examples published on the site cite tangible financial data to evidence the cost savings achieved whether through resource efficiency or meeting regulation at lower cost, the value of accessing new markets, or savings achieved through recognition from organisations such as insurers, regulators or purchasers. The site contains case studies from multinationals such as IBM, Chrysler, and Hitachi to national companies such as Aberdare Cables and Pretoria Portland Cement Company.

The site was launched in October 2017 at the ILAC and IAF conference in Vancouver. Additional case studies will be added in due course to ensure that the site can be a valuable resource to promote the use of standards and accreditation to the business community. The site aims to mirror the success of **Public Sector Assurance**, a similar site that promotes the value of accreditation to policy makers.

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SADCAS/SANAS JOINT COMMUNIQUE - SADCAS EXTENDS INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION TO IAF MLA

The Southern African Development Community Accreditation Services (SADCAS) extended its international recognition in the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) and subsequently in the International Accreditation Forum Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (IAF MLA) to the Main Scope Management Systems Certification (ISO/IEC 17021-1) in the following Sub-scopes:

- Quality Management Systems (ISO/IEC 17021-3), QMS (ISO 9001:2015) granted on 25 September 2019 by AFRAC and on 9 November 2019 by IAF.
- Environmental Management Systems (ISO/IEC 17021-2), EMS (ISO 14001:2015) granted on 4 May 2020 by AFRAC and on 19 June 2020 by IAF.
- Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (ISO/IEC TS 17021-10), OHSMS (ISO 45001) granted on 4 May 2020 by AFRAC and on 19 June 2020 by IAF.

With this additional achievement, the accreditation certificates issued on seven (7) out of the eight (8) accreditation schemes offered by SADCAS are internationally recognized. This means that the certificates issued by SADCAS accredited calibration/testing/veterinary/verification/medical laboratories, and certification and inspection bodies are recognized in 103 countries worldwide thus removing the need for repetitive conformity assessment checks. Effectively this means that through internationally recognized accreditation SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS have better access to 103 foreign markets – A truly global reach.

SADCAS is recognized by the SADC Council of Ministers as a subsidiarity institution of SADC. SADCAS draws its mandate from Article 15 B of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade and as per the Memorandum of Understanding signed between SADCAS and SADC. SADCAS provide accreditation services to 14 SADC Member States namely; Angola; Botswana; Comoros; Democratic Republic of Congo; Lesotho; Madagascar; Malawi; Mozambique; Namibia; Seychelles; Swaziland; Tanzania; Zambia and Zimbabwe.

This communique serves to inform all management systems certification bodies about the way forward regarding accreditation following SADCAS' achievement. A number of scenarios are considered as follows:

1. **For all management systems certification bodies accredited under the SADCAS/SANAS Twinning Partnership Arrangement (TPA)**, The South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) certificate will be valid until the upcoming periodic assessment and thereafter SADCAS will be the sole provider of accreditation services to your facility. Your organization's listing will be removed from SANAS directory of accredited facilities and you will be required to return the SANAS accreditation certificate and schedule of accreditation, and to destroy any other materials that refer to SANAS accreditation.
2. **For all management systems certification bodies** whose applications are in progress in the recognized sub-scopes, only a SADCAS certificate will be issued.
3. **All management systems certification bodies'** applications in the sub-scopes not yet internationally recognized such as Food Safety Management Systems, HACCP etc shall be processed under the SADCAS/SANAS TPA.
4. **All new applications for accreditation under the main scope management system received by SANAS from the 14 SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS** from 10 November 2019 shall be referred to SADCAS.

SADCAS accreditation documents and application forms are available from the SADCAS website **www.sadcas.org/policies_n_procedures.php** or else we refer you to contact the SADCAS Scheme Coordinator for the Management System Certification Bodies Accreditation Scheme on **vmundembe@sadcas.org** for more information.

Meanwhile SADCAS is also working towards signatory status for its certification bodies - product (ISO/IEC 17065) accreditation scheme, and any applications from such certification bodies shall continue to be processed under the SADCAS/SANAS TPA until SADCAS has achieved international recognition in the AFRAC MRA and the IAF MLA.

Maureen P Mutasa (Mrs)
SADCAS Chief Executive Officer

Mpho Phaloane (Mr)
SANAS Acting Chief Executive Officer

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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY –
APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2020

In an effort to continuously improve its accreditation services thus serve customers better, SADCAS undertook a customer satisfaction survey during the 2019/20 financial year.

The Customer satisfaction survey form was circulated to clients electronically on an ongoing basis for completion as they receive accreditation services from SADCAS. The feedback is analyzed on an ongoing basis with any suggestions for improvement being considered and implemented accordingly. Nonconformities were raised on SADCAS F42 for any "Poor" customer feedback or comments of concern which were then investigated with identified corrective action being implemented for improvement purposes. One hundred and one (101) forms were circulated and sixty-nine (69) responses were received i.e. 68% response rate.

The following results are based on an analysis of all the feedback received during the period beginning 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

96% rated professionalism of assessment team from **good to excellent** with **92%** rating from **very good to excellent**. Refer to Figure 4.

100% rated SADCAS accreditation for accuracy and completeness of technical information from **good to excellent** with **90%** rating from **very good to excellent.** Refer to Figure 2.

98% rated SADCAS overall accreditation services from **good to excellent** with **95%** rating from **very good to excellent**. Refer to Figure 1.

93% rated SADCAS accreditation process timelines from **good to excellent** with **87%** rating from **very good to excellent.** Refer to Figure 3.

Although there was a **2%** decline in the rating for overall accreditation services compared to 2018/19, a notable increase of **9%** in the ratings from very **good to excellent** was noted. A slight decline of **5%** was noted in the ratings for accreditation process timelines compared to 2018/19.

General Comments – Whilst generally, customers are satisfied with all aspects of the accreditation process, SADCAS take seriously the feedback received from clients and has put in a place a system that investigates all concerns expressed, identifies corrective action and implement the corrective action for continuous improvement.

Figure 1 - Overall Satisfaction on Service Received 2019/20 Year
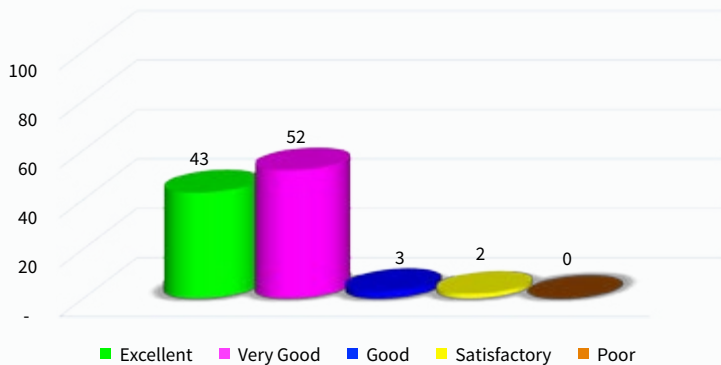
Figure 2 - Accuracy & Completeness of Technical Information 2019/20 Year
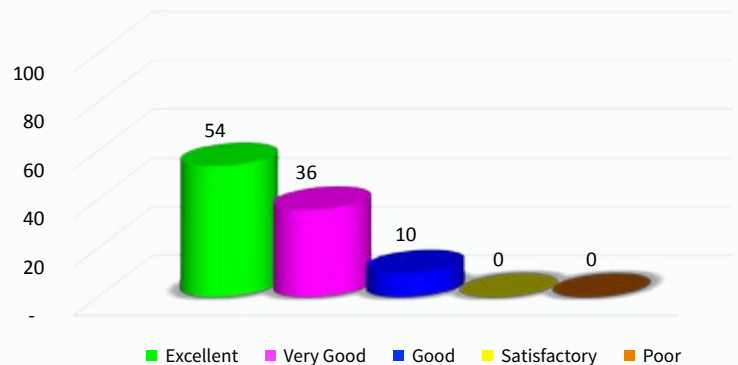
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Figure 3 - Accreditation Process Timelines 2019/20 Year

Excellent 42 · Very Good 45 · Good 6 · Satisfactory 6 · Poor 1

■ Excellent ■ Very Good ■ Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Poor

Figure 4 - Professionalism of Assessment Team 2019/20 Year

Excellent 79 · Very Good 13 · Good 4 · Satisfactory 4 · Poor 0
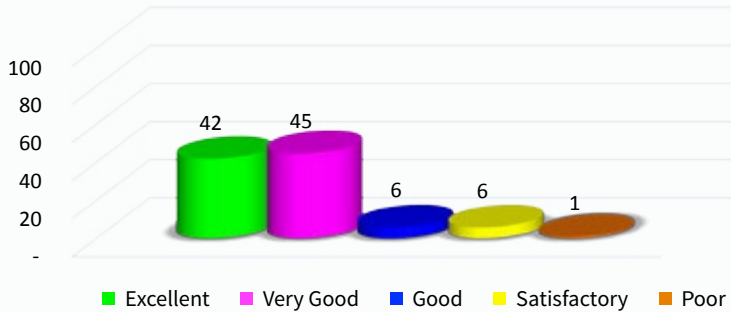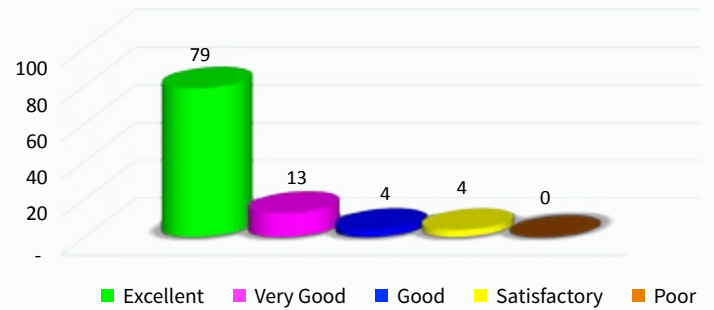
■ Excellent ■ Very Good ■ Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Poor

Figure 5 - Overall Satisfaction on Service Over the Past 5 Years

■ 2014/15 ■ 2015/16 ■ 2016/2017 ■ 2017/2018 ■ 2018/19 ■ 2019/20
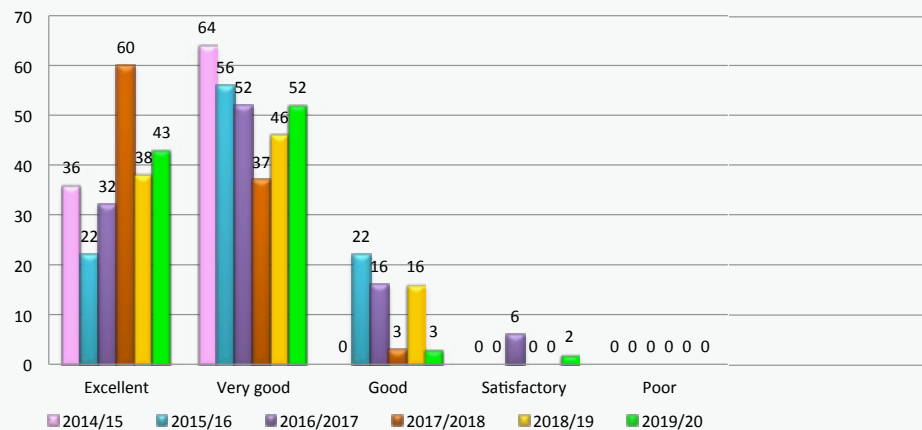
IS YOUR COVID-19 SCREENING THERMOMETER ACCURATE ENOUGH?

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in most Governments world-wide enacting measures to curb the spread of the deadly virus. One such regulation is the health screening through measuring the human body temperature, as fever is considered as one of the symptoms of the disease. The traditional temperature measuring instruments of the contact type are not desirable as they risk spreading the disease, hence the proliferation on non-contact type infra-red radiation thermometers. Have you ever wondered whether these devices are accurate? You have often noticed that your body temperature readings are inconsistent, and not so repeatable. How accurate should they be? How durable should the devices be and, better still, will the devices remain accurate after repeated use over weeks, months or years to come? How do you know if you have purchased a reliable instrument that will work correctly in your environment? Are you using it correctly? Is there trust in the device?

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These questions can be answered within the context of existing national, regional and international quality infrastructures.

National authorities or regulators have the responsibility to ensure that products placed on the marketplace are safe and suitable for intended purposes. Most Regulators are generally knowledgeable in their mandates although they may lack specialized expertise in certain areas. Measuring instruments like infra-red thermometers used for medical purposes may be classified as medical devices and be subject to the control of medical regulatory authorities. One may purchase such a device off the shelf of a Pharmacy. Some countries may regulate such instruments through their national legal metrology bodies with mandates to regulate all measuring instruments used for any regulated purpose, or for the purposes of any law within the country. In order to ensure that the device is suitable or conforms to approved type, the regulator prescribes and enforces metrological requirements on the measuring device, based on international standards. Devices that have a bearing on health, safety and the environment should be adequately controlled.

Metrology is defined as the science of measurement and Legal Metrology is the application of legal requirements to measurements and measuring instruments. Controls imposed on measuring instruments should be based on international metrological practices.

Regulators should ensure that measuring instruments are accurate by requiring that they be calibrated by accredited calibration laboratories or by the national metrology institute (NMI) or verified or inspected by the national legal metrology authority or by designated laboratories. These conformity assessment services of calibration, verification, inspection are meant to ensure that the measuring instruments conform to requirements such as the accuracy levels that may be prescribed in regulations. These conformity assessment services are usually not adequate for a measuring instrument that is used by the ordinary person, under environmental conditions that may be harsh (e.g. outdoors) and operated over prolonged periods of time before conformity can be re-verified. The regulator usually prescribes additional metrological requirements such as type evaluation, approval and certification and that the approved measuring instruments be repaired or maintained only by registered or certified persons.

In order to confirm the competence of the conformity assessment service provider and give assurance and confidence to the users or owners that the measuring instruments are accurate, it is imperative that the conformity assessment services be accredited by an accreditation body that is internationally recognized such as SADCAS. If the regulator undertakes any of the conformity assessment services, they must also be accredited. International best practice requires that technical regulations be based on harmonized international standards and that regulators utilize the existing internationally recognized quality infrastructure in order to ensure an appropriate level of credibility of measurement results in the national regulatory environment. SADCAS is signatory to the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) and the International Laboratory Accreditation (ILAC) Mutual

IMPORTANCE OF ACCREDITATION IN COVID-19 TESTING LABORATORIES
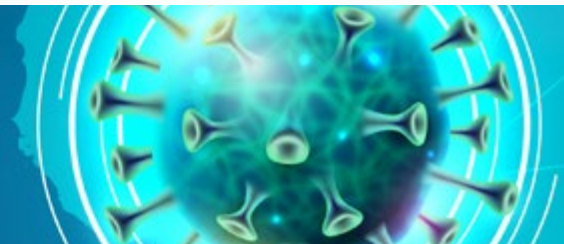
The ongoing "Coronavirus disease 2019" or "COVID-19" caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Corona Virus 2) pandemic is primarily a health crisis, but it also has far reaching economic consequences. As a global crisis it is posing challenges to humanity that have never been experienced before.

Reliable results of medical laboratories conducting tests to detect the SARS-CoV-2 virus are essential in the management of the pandemic. It is now very evident that quality and accuracy of laboratory results provide essential contribution to the diagnosis, managed care and therapeutic monitoring of the highly infectious diseases such as COVID-19. Molecular assays conducted on nasopharyngeal swabs or other upper respiratory tract specimens are the most commonly used for reliable diagnosis of COVID-19. Most molecular assays have achieved 100% specificity, since the primers are designed specifically for the target gene sequences of SARS-CoV-2. However, sensitivity can be

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affected by specimen quality, sampling time to symptom onset, testing errors, or other technical deficiencies. Both false- positive and false-negative results have negative implications for disease containment efforts. With the limited resources, workforce and expertise to test, it is worth noting that embracing quality management by the way of accreditation is key. Therefore, it is critical to implement sustainable quality assurance through accreditation in all COVID-19 testing laboratories.

Accreditation to COVID-19 testing in accordance with ISO 15189 provides the following benefits:
- It is a means of demonstrating competence to perform testing of COVID-19; and
- It is a guarantee for accurate and reliable test results.

Reliable test results strengthen community confidence in test results. In a health crisis, the need to rely on fast and accurate testing results is higher than usual as authorities use test data to make decisions on lockdown, surveillance and monitoring impact of initiatives aimed at preventing spread of the disease.

Accreditation supports the correct functioning of Medical Laboratories involved in COVID-19 testing. Internationally recognized accreditation bodies such as SADCAS are responsible for providing a formal attestation of the integrity of conformity assessment bodies and their competence to perform specific tests. In the context of the global health crisis, accreditation of medical laboratories conducting COVID-19 testing is particularly important as it ensures recognition of foreign test results. Accreditation provides a "credential" that designates the medical laboratory and its test results as qualified and competent to provide the testing services in the scope in which it is accredited.

In an effort to identify Medical Laboratories undertaking COVID -19 testing in the region, SADCAS conducted a survey. COVID-19 survey questionnaires were sent to 51 Medical Laboratories accredited by SADCAS. According to the survey, 16 out of the 51 accredited Laboratories perform COVID-19 testing. However, these 16 Laboratories are not accredited for COVID-19 testing. Noting the importance of accreditation in ensuring accurate COVID-19 test results and noting that accreditation is test specific, Medical Laboratories already accredited by SADCAS are encouraged to apply for COVID-19 testing scope extension.

Laboratory seeking COVID-19 testing accreditation will undergo rigorous assessments to achieve international accreditation. SADCAS has trained and qualified Assessors in the scope of COVID-19 testing (Molecular Biology) and is ready is to offer COVID-19 testing accreditation services.

Assessments conducted by SADCAS Assessors in the scope of COVID-19 testing focus on the following key areas to ensure quality of results:
Personnel: Laboratory scientists/technologists performing COVID-19 tests need to demonstrate training, experience and competence in handling, transportation and testing of COVID-19 samples.

Equipment and Metrological Traceability: COVID-19 Testing equipment should be maintained in safe working condition and in working order. Laboratory personnel should be trained on PCR techniques used in COVID-19 Testing. Equipment calibration status and metrological traceability should be recorded. Metrology is essential in the context of COVID-19 as accurate biological measurements play a vital role in a health crisis. In this particular field, certified reference materials (CRMs) and reference measurement methods provide stated references upon which medical laboratories can anchor their measurement results. This helps to reduce the potential of having false positives or false negatives test results.

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In addition, the traceability of measurement results to internationally accepted stated references, together with their stated measurement uncertainties, provide the basis for their comparability and global acceptance.

Method Validation/Verification: The method in use should be the one provided and validated by the manufacturer. Method verification/ validation protocols and reports should be provided as evidence that the COVID-19 method is capable to achieve the intended use. The performance characteristics such as sensitivity and specificity should be acceptable.

Quality Control and Proficiency Testing: Quality Control is a process of systematic internal monitoring of the performance of bench work in COVID-19 testing laboratories, including instrument checks and verifying new lots of test kits. Quality Control validates the competency of testing laboratories by assessing sample quality and monitoring test procedures, test kits, and instruments against established criteria. It also includes the review of PCR results and documentation of the validity of testing methods Proficiency Testing (PT): Participating in PT allows COVID-19 testing laboratories to assess their performance by comparing their results with results from other laboratories within the network (testing and reference laboratories). Proficiency testing, a prerequisite for accreditation, evaluates testing competency, the performance of the laboratories, reliability of the testing methods, and accuracy of the results reports.

The SADCAS Medical Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (MLAS) was established in June 2010. The MLAS is multi – disciplinary accreditation scheme operated in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011: Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies. The fields of accreditation under the SADCAS MLAS as outlined in SADCAS TG 03: Areas of Accreditation include: Clinical Chemistry; Biochemistry; Cytology; Hematology; Histopathology; Immunology; Microbiology; Pathology; Virology; Serology; Molecular Biology; Endocrinology; Blood Transfusion/Blood Bank; Immunophenotyping; and Andrology. The SADCAS Medical Laboratories Accreditation Scheme is internationally recognized having achieved signatory status in the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation Mutual Recognition Arrangement (ILAC MRA) in 2017. SADCAS has accredited 51 medical laboratories in six (6) SADC Member States namely: Botswana (9); Eswatini (3); Namibia (7); Tanzania (17); Zambia (4); and Zimbabwe (10); and 2 non-SADC countries Ghana (1) and Cote d'Ivoire (1). At the same time 14 applications are at the various stages of processing.

REMOTE ASSESSMENTS – SEIZED OPPORTUNITY

In an effort to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on assessments, SADCAS has introduced alternative arrangements to conduct assessment as outlined in SADCAS AP 23-Remote Assessments- Management and Execution published on the 1st of April 2020.
As defined in SADCAS AP 23, remote assessment means assessment of the physical location or virtual site of a Conformity Assessment Body (CAB), using electronic means. Remote assessments include assessments conducted via electronic means such as online access, video links, web conferencing, telephone interviews, desktop assessment of documents/records, etc. To date SADCAS has undertaken 30 remote assessments in 8 SADC Member States.

Prior to the assessments, SADCAS verified the prerequisite requirements for remote assessments for each CAB which included access to internet through a reliable connection by all team members as well as the CAB staff, suitable video conferencing software and confirmation of confidentiality of information that will be accessed via the internet.

The CABs were requested to submit copies of Management System Quality Manual (policies, procedures, methods and work instructions) and all records required for management system assessment, vertical assessment, witnessing of activity, evaluation of Proficiency Testing requirements and partly completed F 121- Compliance to SADCAS Policy on Metrological Traceability. The CAB fully cooperated and submitted all required documents ahead of the scheduled assessments. The documents were then forwarded to the assessment teams for review prior to the assessment.

Virtual opening meetings were conducted via Zoom and WhatsApp video calls using the standard assessment agenda and chaired by the assessment Team Leaders. During the Opening meeting, the Team Leader established the names of the personnel who will provide additional information to the assessment team, along with contact email and phone numbers to ensure constant contact during the assessment. During the assessment, the assessment team members reviewed the records and completed applicable SADCAS Checklists. Interviews were conducted to seek clarity and additional evidence. All nonconformities identified were discussed and verified with CABs to ensure correctness

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of information. Virtual closing meetings were held during which the findings and Assessment Recommendation reports were presented following the standard closing meeting agenda.

The remote assessments were successfully conducted without compromising the integrity of the accreditation granted by SADCAS. All records that would be required for a typical onsite assessment were submitted to the assessment teams for review and Witnessing of Activities was conducted via video calls. The assessors were able to gather enough objective evidence to verify the competence of the CABs. The CABS cooperated fully in providing the requested records and ensuring constant contact during the remote assessments. The remote assessments were as thorough and beneficial to CABs as on-site assessments.

Feedback received from CABs after the assessments indicated that the facilities were satisfied with the way remote assessments were conducted. Suggestions for improvement were received from the CABs and Assessors who were involved in the remote assessments. SADCAS is committed to maintaining the integrity and credibility of the assessment process and building   confidence in accreditation and shall evaluate the suggestions and implement them as appropriate.

PUBLICATION OF THE REVISED TR 14

This serves to announce the publication of **Issue 4 of SADCAS TR 14: SADCAS Policy – ISO/IEC 17025:2017 Transition**. The revised version of the document was published on the 22 June 2020.

This document has been revised following the extension of the ISO/IEC 17025:2017 Transition period from 30 November 2020 to 01 June 2021. The International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) have agreed to this extension to ensure all laboratories are able to be transitioned following the restrictions imposed as a result of the global coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak.

SADCAS TR 14 applies to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accredited Testing/Calibration laboratories.

SADCAS Assessors are to re-familiarize with the policy as they evaluate the transition of accredited laboratories.
SADCAS TR 14 was revised by SADCAS Technical Manager and approved by the SADCAS CEO.
The published document is available on the SADCAS website **http://www.sadcas.org/sadcas-tr-14-sadcas-policy-isoiec-17025-2017-transition**

SADCAS ACCREDITS NAMIBIAN STANDARDS INSTITUTION TESTING LABORATORIES

SADCAS is proud to announce the accreditation of the Namibia Standards Institution (NSI) testing laboratories. NSI Testing Centre is part of the Namibian Standards Institution, a National Standards Body of Namibia. The Testing Centre is located at Langer Heinrich Crescent, New Light Industrial Area, Walvis Bay, Namibia.

The mandate of NSI Testing Centre is to provide reliable testing services mainly on Fish and fishery products, Shellfish, Potable water, Sea water and wastes to aquaculture, fishing and other industries through its Chemistry and Microbiology laboratories.

NSI Testing Centre has been accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2017 for the scopes of "Microbiological Analysis" and "Chemical Analysis" and have been granted unique accreditation numbers TEST-1 0020 for Microbiological Analysis and TEST-5 0048 for Chemical Analysis. Accreditation for Microbiology Analysis was granted on 12 December 2019 and 25 May 2020 for Chemical Analysis. Both certificates are valid for 5 years from the date of accreditation.

News on Services

In the scope "Microbiological Analysis" an array of microbiological parameters in Fish and Fishery Products, Meat and Meat Products, Egg and egg products, Chicken and Chicken Products, Shellfish and Ready-to eat Foods have been accredited. The Laboratory also conducts and is accredited for a series of Microbiological parameters Potable Water (Tap, RO3, Borehole, Bottled and Ice), Borehole Water, Bottled and Ice Water, Sea Water (Sea Water and Ice) as well as Effluent Water and Microbial cultures as per the Schedule of accreditation.

Chemical tests are conducted in various food products such as Shellfish, Fish and Fisheries Products, Poultry and Poultry Products, Meat and Meat Products for an array of tests such as Determination of Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP) toxicity, Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) Toxicity, Lipophilic Toxins and Determination of Histamine, Mercury, Cadmium and Lead as per the Schedule of Accreditation. The laboratory also conducts Water Quality tests on Potable Water, Bottled Water and Wastewater for Determination of Turbidity, pH, Conductivity and Total Dissolved Solids.

"SADCAS welcomes Namibian Standards Institution Testing Centre Laboratories to its family of accredited facilities."

MORUPULE COAL MINE LABORATORY ACCREDITED

Morupule Coal Mine (MCM) is a coal mining company located on the outskirts of Palapye in the Central district of Botswana. The MCM is 100% owned by the Government of Botswana under the Minerals Development Company, Botswana.

The Morupule Coal Mine laboratory has recently been accredited by SADCAS in the scope "Chemical Analysis" of coal in accordance with the international standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017. The MCM Laboratory has been assigned a unique accreditation number TEST-5 0050. The laboratory which is set within the Morupule Coal Mine has been accredited for sample preparation and in seven (7) test methods for coal as follows: Particle Size Distribution; Determination of Phosphorus; Determination of Total Sulphur; Determination of Calorific Value; Moisture in analysis sample; ISO Ash; and Determination of Volatile Matter. The accreditation certificate which was issued on 19 June 2020 is valid for 5 years until 18 June 2025.

Morupule Mine Plant

The certificate was handed over during a ceremony held on 14 July 2020 at the MCM Recreational Club, Palapye, Botswana. The ceremony was attended by MCM senior managers and laboratory staff and started off with a prayer, followed by a SHE (Safety Health and Environment) moment during which safety issues were highlighted. An overview of the Mine's mission, vision and values were presented by Mr D Sentsho. Values of MCM are embedded in a statement as "We are passionate about Safety as we work together in a caring environment growing our business into a centre of excellence.

The Production Manager Mr Elvidge Radithongwe gave welcome remarks and acknowledged the growth that the MCM has experienced and shared how priorities had shifted over the years from quantity which was the then celebrated measure in the mining industry, to quantity underpinned by quality as assured through accreditation.

News on Services

Mr Radithongwe informed about the upcoming project Motheo where MCM intends to export Coal to international markets where accreditation is poised to play the important role of assuring MCM customers of the quality of the product. He further stated that quality through accreditation assures safety, assures revenue and eliminates risks. He congratulated the Laboratory for the hard work that resulted in this major achievement and pledged Management continued support to the Laboratory so as to ensure continued compliance with standards and accreditation requirements. He shared the plans to extend the Laboratory's scope of accreditation.

Ms Refhilwe Tshipa, a Process Engineer, Head of Laboratory and the Nominated Representative shared a moving story on "The Journey to Accreditation". She narrated the process from the time when she made contact with SADCAS to enquire on accreditation to the time when the SADCAS assessment team presented a recommendation report at the end of the assessment that was conducted on 25-26 March 2020. She defined it as a story of success, excellence and passion that was not without challenges, hard work, sweat and tears. She cited the challenges encountered and thanked her team for their passion and hunger to achieve. The objective to accredit the laboratory was achieved. She stated that the team's work ethics had to change, a change that has seen the laboratory output increasing from testing 15 to 70 samples a day then from 30 to 300 samples after introducing a 24-hour shift. The Head of Laboratory thanked MCM Top Management and the IT Department for the support. She stated that the laboratory will be extending the scope of accreditation to include water and oil testing.

Next to give a speech was Mrs Maureen Mutasa, the SADCAS Chief Executive Officer who was accompanied to the ceremony by Mrs Pinkie Malebe, the SADCAS Technical Manager Designate. In her address Mrs Mutasa stated that Morupule Coal Mine is the 50th testing laboratory and the 22nd facility in Botswana to be accredited by the SADC Accreditation Service (SADCAS). She informed the gathering that SADCAS is the first multi economy accreditation body in the world is signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Mutual Recognition Arrangement (ILAC MRA) for the testing, veterinary, calibration and verification laboratories accreditation schemes as well as the International Accreditation Forum's Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for certification bodies accreditation schemes. Accreditation enhances the confidence and is the basis of trust amongst trading partners and that with this achievement, the MCM laboratory accreditation certificate is recognized in 103 countries worldwide thus removing the need for repetitive conformity assessment checks. "Effectively this means that through internationally recognized accreditation SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS have better access to 103 foreign markets – A truly global reach!"

She stated that the Morupule Coal Mine Laboratory accreditation process took a record 10 months from the application to granting of accreditation attributed to the highly responsive Nominated Representative, Ms Refhilwe Tshipa and her team. Touching on the importance of accreditation specifically to MCM Laboratory, Mrs Mutasa gave statistics of mining explorations of minerals in the SADC region specifically citing that Botswana is endowed with minerals such as Diamonds, Copper, nickel and large coal deposits making Botswana the 2nd largest producer of coal after South Africa. She further said that the mineral processing sector is identified in the SADC Industrial Policy as one of the priority sectors for development. Testing Laboratories play a critical role in the mining and mineral processing sector in that they conduct mineral assays in support of exploration, research, grade control in the processing plant. Laboratories are also involved in environmental monitoring of mining activities. Mining companies make decisions about exploration and grading based on the data generated by these analytical laboratories. "The MCM Laboratory is responsible for giving support to production and commercial Departments by availing information of coal qualities and ensuring that the teams responsible for the production and selling of coal have valid and accurate information to work with", she said. Mrs Mutasa encouraged MCM Laboratory to maintain their accreditation throughout the validity period of the accreditation certificate during which

MCM staff proudly displaying the accreditation certificate

From Left to Right: Mrs Mutasa, SADCAS CEO; Mr Radithongwa, MCM Production Manager; Ms Tshipa, Head of Laboratory; and Mrs Pinkie Malebe SADCAS Technical Manager designate

News on Services

SADCAS would undertake periodic assessments to ensure continued compliance. Mrs Mutasa handed the accreditation certificate to the Production Manager Mr Radithongwa and congratulated MCM laboratory for the great milestone.

The vote of thanks was given by the Worker's Union Representative who congratulated the workers (Laboratory Staff) and indicated that with accreditation will assure the sustainability of their jobs. The ceremony was closed with a prayer and the SADCAS delegation was invited to lunch with MCM staff.

BOBS TRADE METROLOGY UNIT ACCREDITATION RENEWED

SADCAS is delighted to announce the renewal of accreditation of the Botswana Bureau of Standards – Trade Metrology Unit (BOBS-TMU). Through this renewal the Botswana Bureau of Standards – Trade Metrology Unit has been re-granted the unique accreditation number CAL-8 005 indicating that the Botswana Bureau of Standards – Trade Metrology Unit is accredited in the scope of "Mass Metrology" The certificate which was re-issued on 29 May 2020 is valid for 5 years until 28 May 2025. The re-assessment of the laboratory was undertaken to the new version of the standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and successful transition from ISO/IEC 17025:2005 was granted to ISO/IEC 17025:2017, making BOBS-TMU the 3rd Metrology Laboratory under the SADCAS Calibration Laboratories Accreditation Scheme (CLAS) to achieve this important milestone, ahead of the then transition deadline of 30 November 2020. Following the recommendation of the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee (ILAC AMC) and as a result of ILAC Ballot which closed on 3 June 2020, the transition period was extended to 1 June 2021.

The primary function of BOBS-TMU is the enforcement of the Weights and Measures Act (Chapter 43:06). As the custodian of the National Measurement Standards for Mass in Botswana, the BOBS-TMU has a central role in the National Measurement System through the dissemination of metrological traceability to all stakeholders in Botswana through the calibration and legal metrology verification services it offers. The accreditation of BOB-TMU guarantees the metrological traceability of the country's national measurement standards to the international system of units (SI) and facilities trade through the international recognition of SADCAS, an ILAC MRA signatory in the scope of calibration to ISO/IEC 17025. Furthermore BOBS-TMU, the National Legal Metrology Authority of Botswana, with its competence to perform mass calibrations re-confirmed through the accreditation renewal, now has an option to extend its accreditation scope to the SADCAS Legal Metrology Scheme (LMAS) in order to ensure global acceptance of measurements undertaken within the regulatory domain.

SADCAS ACCREDITS NIP- RUNDU PRIVATE LABORATORY

The Namibia Institute of Pathology (NIP) Rundu Private Laboratory is the 53rd Medical Laboratory to be accredited by SADCAS. It is the 7th Medical Laboratory in Namibia to be accredited under the SADCAS Medical Laboratories Accreditation Scheme (MLAS) and again the 7th NIP Laboratory to be accredited by SADCAS. The NIP Rundu Private Laboratory has been accredited in two (2) scopes: Chemical Pathology and Haematology in accordance with ISO 15189:2012.

News on Services

Through this accreditation, NIP Rundu Private Laboratory has been granted the unique accreditation number: MED 053; indicating that NIP Rundu Private Laboratory is now a SADCAS accredited medical laboratory. The accreditation certificate which was issued on 19 May 2020 is valid for 5 years until 18 May 2025.

The initial assessment of NIP Rundu Private Laboratory was undertaken by a team of 2 assessors over 2 days from 23 to 24 January 2020. SADCAS congratulates NIP Rundu Private Laboratory on this significant achievement and welcomes NIP Rundu Private Laboratory to the family of SADCAS accredited facilities.

Medical Laboratories are a critical part of the healthcare delivery system. Accreditation of medical laboratories is a mark of quality and is objective proof that a medical laboratory is competent, safe, efficient, and reliable and patient focused. Numerous benefits are as a result of accreditation of Medical laboratories; of which includes benefits to the patients, regulators and the medical laboratories themselves. SADCAS looks forward to accrediting more Medical Laboratories in Namibia.

BRTI ZIMBABWE ACCREDITATION RENEWED

The Biomedical Research and Training Institute (BRTI) based in Harare, Zimbabwe was first accredited by SADCAS on 30 March 2015 in the scope "Mycobacteriology" in accordance with ISO 15189:2012. The international standard ISO 15189:2012 specifies requirements for quality and competence particular to medical laboratories. The standard contains the requirements necessary for medical laboratories to demonstrate their competence to deliver reliable services.

Renewal of accreditation was granted to BRTI on 25 May 2020 and the accreditation certificate is valid for the 2nd cycle up to 24 May 2025. The re-assessment was conducted in December 2019 by a team of 2 assessors. Through this accreditation, BRTI continues with the unique accreditation number, MED 009. The BRTI is among the 9 medical laboratories in Zimbabwe that are have been accredited by SADCAS.

Accreditation of Medical Laboratories is a preferred framework for building a quality medical laboratory system. Laboratory accreditation provides formal recognition to competent laboratories, thus providing a ready means for customers to identify and select reliable services. Accreditation of medical laboratories in accordance with ISO 15189 provides a number of benefits which includes guarantee for accurate results, improvement of patient care, and strengthening community confidence in test results. The importance of accreditation cannot be overemphasised and now is the hour for all the medical laboratories to be accredited.

SADCAS congratulates BRTI on this significant achievement and continued relationship with the family of SADCAS accredited facilities.

NEW ACCREDITATIONS, SCOPE EXTENSIONS, SUSPENSIONS AND WITHDRAWAL 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2020

Organization & Location	Scheme	Dates	New Accreditations	Scopes Extension	Suspension
Namibian standards Institution – Testing Centre	Testing to ISO/IEC 17025	2020-05-25		**TEST-5 0048** • Chemical (Fish, Meat, Water)	
Bureau Veritas Mozambique, Tete Environment Laboratory	Testing to ISO/IEC 17025	2020-06-12	**TEST– 5 0049** • Chemical (Water)		
Morupule Coal Mine Laboratory, Botswana	Testing to ISO/IEC 17025	2020-06-19	**TEST– 5 0050** • Chemical (Coal)		
Central Veterinary Laboratory, Zimbabwe	Testing to ISO/IEC 17025	2020-06-12	**VET 005** • Bacteriology • Parasitology • Protozoology • Virology • Serology		
High Due (Pty) Ltd T/A Siza Minerals Laboratory, Botswana	Testing to ISO/IEC 17025	2020-07-06			**TEST– 5 0036** • Chemical Analysis
Namibia Institute of Pathology Limited – NIP Rundu Private Laboratory	Medical to ISO 15189	2020-05-19	**MED 053** • Chemical Pathology • Haematology		

STATUS OF KEY ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND ILAC/IAF/SADCA DOCUMENTS

STANDARD	STATUS
ISO/IEC AWI Guide 60 – Conformity assessment – Code of good practice	New project approved
ISO/IEC Guide 60:2004 – Conformity assessment – Code of good practice	International guide to be revised
ISO/IEC Guide 68:2002 – Arrangements for the recognition and acceptance of conformity assessment results	Close of review
ISO/CD 15189:2012 Medical Laboratories – Requirements for quality and competence	Committee Draft Stage
ISO/IEC 17000 Conformity assessment – Vocabulary and general principles	International Standard published. Now ISO/IEC 17000:2020 Date of publication: 2020-05
ISO/IEC 17021–1:2015 - Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements	International standard under periodical review
ISO/IEC TS 17021–12 - Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems - Part 12: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of collaborative business management systems	International Standard published. Now ISO/IEC TS 17021-12:2020 Date of publication: 2020-04
ISO/IEC TS 17023:2013 - Conformity assessment – Guidelines for determining the duration of management system certification audits	International standard under periodical review
ISO/IEC 17030:2003 Conformity assessment – General requirements for third-party marks of conformity	International standard to be revised

STANDARD	STATUS
ISO/IEC CD 17030:2003 Conformity assessment – General requirements for third-party marks of conformity	Committee draft study/ballot initiated
ISO/IEC 17040:2005 Conformity assessment - General requirements for peer assessment of conformity assessment bodies and accreditation bodies	Close of review
ISO/IEC 17043:2010 - Conformity assessment – General requirements for proficiency testing	International standard to be revised
ISO/IEC AWI 17043 - Conformity assessment – general requirements for proficiency testing	New project approved
ISO/IEC 17050-1:2004 Conformity assessment – Supplier's declaration of conformity – Part 1: General requirements	International standard confirmed
ISO/IEC 17050-2:2004 Conformity assessment – Supplier's declaration of conformity -- Part 2: Supporting documentation	International standard confirmed
ISO/IEC 17067:2013 Conformity assessment – Fundamentals of products certification and guidelines for product certification schemes	Close of review
ISO/CD 22003-1 Food Safety Management Systems – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems - Part 1: Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems	Committee Draft approved for registration as Draft International Standard
ISO/AWI 22003-2 Food Safety Management Systems – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems - Part 2: Requirements for bodies providing audit of food safety management systems in conjunction with safe food product/process certification	New project approved
ISO/IEC CD TS 27006-2 – Information security, cybersecurity and privacy protection — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of privacy information management systems according to ISO/IEC 27701 in combination with ISO/IEC 27001 – Part 2: Title missing	Committee draft study/ballot initiated
ISO/IEC 27006:2015 - Information technology — Security techniques – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of information security management systems	International standard under periodical review
ISO/FDIS 14065 - Greenhouse gases - Environmental information – Requirements for bodies validating and verifying environmental information	Final Draft International Standard registered for format approval
ISO/AWI TR 14069 Greenhouse gases – Quantification and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions for organizations – Guidance for the application of ISO 14064-1	New project approved
ISO/DIS 14091 – Adaptation to climate change – Guideline on vulnerability, impacts and risk assessment	Close of voting
ISO/PRF TS 14092 GHG Management & related activities: requirement & guidance of adaptation planning for organizations including local governments and communities	International Standard published. Now ISO/TS 14092:2020 Date of publication: 2020-05
ISO/DIS 14097 Framework and principles for assessing and reporting investments and financing activities related to climate change	Draft International Standard ballot initiated
ISO/DIS 19694-1 Stationary source emissions – Determination of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in energy-intensive industries – Part 1: General aspects	Draft International Standard ballot initiated
ISO/DIS 50003 Energy management systems – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of energy management systems	Close of voting
ILAC P10:07.2020 – ILAC Policy on Metrological Traceability of Measurement Results	This document describes the ILAC Policy on metrological traceability of measurement results. The implementation date for this most recent version of ILAC P10 is July 2021
ILAC P15:05/2020 – Application of ISO/IEC 17020:2012 for the accreditation of inspection bodies	This document provides information for use by both accreditation bodies and inspection bodies on the application of ISO/IEC 17020. This revision includes updates as a result of the outcome of the ILAC inspection Committee workshops, ISO CASCO clarification requests and the experience gained in the application of ISO/IEC 17020:2012 and the previous version of ILAC P15. The implementation date for ILAC P15:05/2020 is 18 months from the date of publication on the ILAC website (i.e. November 2021). The examples of the application of ISO/IEC 17020 removed from the previous version of ILAC P15 as a result of this revision are now available from the IC FAQs

STANDARD	STATUS
ILAC G29:06/2020 – Guidelines for harmonization of scopes of ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation of WADA anti-doping laboratories	This document has been developed by the ILAC WADA Liaison Group with additional contributions from the WADA Laboratory Expert Group (LabEG) and the WADA Science department. It provides accreditation bodies involved in the ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation of WADA anti-doping laboratories with guidance on the formulation of scopes of accreditation for those laboratories taking into account the specific needs of the anti-doping field. This document is cross referenced in the revised WADA ISL scheduled for implementation on 1 January 2020
IAF MD 8:2020 – Application of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 in the field of Medical Device Quality Management Systems (ISO 13485)	Issue 4, issued 29 June 2020, application from 30 November 2020. This document provides normative criteria on the application of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 for the accreditation of bodies providing audit and certification of organization's management system to ISO 13485. All clauses of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 continue to apply and this document provides additional criteria to this standard.
P002-02 - SADCA Appeals and Complaints procedure	Issue no.2 This document has been prepared by SADCA Secretariat and approved by the General Assembly. Issue and application date: 27 April 2020
P006-02 - SADCA Management Review Procedure	Issue no.2 This document has been prepared by SADCA Secretariat and approved by the General Assembly. Issue and application date: 27 April 2020
P008-02 – Qualifications Criteria for SADCA Positions and Transfer of Responsibilities	Issue no.2 This document has been prepared by SADCA Secretariat and approved by the General Assembly. Issue and application date: 27 April 2020
P009-02 – SADCA Procedure for Adopting ILAC and IAF Documents	Issue no.2 This document has been prepared by SADCA Secretariat and approved by the General Assembly. Issue and application date: 27 April 2020
A019-10 – SADCA MRA Council Terms of Reference	Issue no. 1 This new document has been prepared by SADCA MRA Council and approved by the General Assembly. Issue and application date: 27 April 2020

DIARY OF UPCOMING EVENTS

DATES	MEETINGS	VENUE
4 August 2020	SADCA Technical Committee	Video Conference
5 August 2020	SADCA Marketing and Communication Committee	Video Conference
6 August 2020	SADCA Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) Committee	Video Conference
7 August 2020	SADCA Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) Council	Video Conference
14 -21 August 2020	IAAC General Assembly	Virtual
20 August 2020	SADCAS Board Strategic Session	Virtual
20 August 2020	ISO TC 212 WG 1 – ISO CD1 ballot meeting	Virtual
30 - 31 August 2020	Pan African Quality Infrastructure (PAQI) Joint Meeting	
3 September 2020	SADCAS HRRC Meeting	Virtual
3 September 2020	SADCAS FRAC Meeting	Virtual
3 September 2020	SADCAS Board of Directors	Virtual

3 September 2020	OECD 7th Annual Meeting	Virtual
September 2020	SADCAS Advisory Committee for Inspection, Zimbabwe	Virtual
10 September 2020	SADCA Executive Committee	Video Conference
11 September 2020	SADCA General Assembly	Video Conference
16 September 2020	IBAS for Inspection in Zimbabwe	Virtual
24 September 2020	42nd ISO General Assembly	Virtual
21-25 September 2020	AFRAC Meetings	Video Conference
September 2020	SADCAS – TUNAC Twinning Partnership Arrangement	Virtual
September 2020	SADCAS – SOAC Cooperation	Virtual
12 – 15 October 2020	10th Eurachem PT Workshop	Virtual
14 October 2020	World Standards Day	
27 October – 5 November 2020	ILAC-IAF Joint Annual Meetings	Virtual

SADCAS
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY ACCREDITATION SERVICE