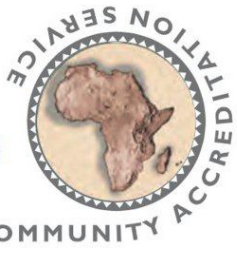




SADCAS

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY ACCREDITATION SERVICE



ACCREDITATION: EMPOWERING TOMORROW AND SHAPING THE FUTURE



Minister of Communications, Knowledge and Technology, Honourable Thulagano Merafe Segokgo delightfully received an accreditation certificate for National Dosimetry Lab (NDL) of the Radiation Protection Inspectorate (RPI) from Southern African Development Community Accreditation Service (SADCAS) CEO, Ms. Eve Christsine Gadzikwa (March 2023) in Gaborone, Botswana.

Today is World Accreditation Day, celebrated on the 9th of June every year, this is a global initiative by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) to raise awareness about the crucial role that accreditation plays in various aspects of life.

This year's theme, Accreditation: Empowering Tomorrow and Shaping the Future, highlights the role that accreditation plays in shaping various aspects of life, from technology to transportation, sustainability to security, and inclusivity to innovation as digitalization, new technologies and growing sustainability concerns continue to change our world, What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is the process of providing recognition to an organization for its competence in performing specific tasks. It involves the assessment of the technical competence of organizations in providing conformity assessment service such as testing, certification (management systems/ product/ personnel) and inspection. Accreditation also underpins the competence of medical testing laboratories, organisations providing Proficiency Testing (PT) and Reference Maternal Producers (RMP).

Need and Importance of Accreditation

Accreditation provides solutions to the problems arising from the dynamic changes affecting global trade, in recognising the importance of adopting new technologies and moving with accreditation trends. SADCAS is set to introduce new scopes such as Proficiency Testing, Medical Imaging, etc in response to the needs of the market.

As part of the growth in the scope of health sector, laboratory diagnosis, health research, health inspectorate all have gained tremendous importance in today's practices. Health research and laboratory diagnosis all contribute towards improving the care and treatment of patients worldwide.

Sustainable Development remains the cornerstone of the modern world, hence accreditation can also help consumers and businesses make informed decisions regarding goods and services that protect the environment.

Furthermore, accreditation plays a pivotal role by supporting global trade in terms of removing technical barriers to trade (TBTs). Quality infrastructure provides businesses with access to a wider international marketplace as well as improving the quality and safety of imports from those economies.

2024 World Accreditation theme relates to many of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).



ABOUT SADCAS

The Southern African Development Community Accreditation Service (SADCAS) is a multi-economy accreditation body established in terms of Article 15 B of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade with the primary purpose of ensuring that conformity assessment (CA) service providers operating in those SADC Member States (MS) which do not have national accreditation bodies are subject to oversight by an authoritative body. SADCAS services the accreditation needs of 14 SADC Member States namely: Angola; Botswana; Comoros; Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); Eswatini; Lesotho; Madagascar; Malawi; Mozambique; Namibia; Seychelles; Tanzania; Zambia; and Zimbabwe.

SADCAS is now in its sixteen (16th) year of operation, the first multi-economy accreditation body in the world and has proved to be a viable, cost-effective and sustainable model that optimizes limited financial and human resources. Several other regions in the world such as the Gulf region, West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Caribbean Islands etc, have benchmarked on the "home grown" SADCAS model, a concept developed by a group of experts from the SADC region.

SADCAS accreditations continues to grow both in terms of field and scope of accreditation as well as sectorial coverage. By 31 March 2024, a total of 354 accreditation certificates to 286 accredited facilities in 13 SADC Member States and two non-SADC countries Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire had been issued. This demonstrates the demand of SADCAS services in the region and its relevance in supporting industry and facilitating global trade. SADCAS has cumulatively conducted 274 training courses (as of 31 March 2024) in most SADC Member States as part of its efforts to develop the capacity of conformity assessment bodies to integrate accreditation in improving performance of their conformity assessment bodies. In addition, SADCAS has been spearheading efforts to capacitate member states by training and mentoring Technical Assessors so



In January 2024, SADCAS CEO, Ms. Eve Christine Gadzikwa (dressed in a white suit) handed nine (9) accreditation certificates to the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) in a grand ceremony held Dar er Salaam, Tanzania.

as to build a large pool of competent registered SADCAS assessors to make accreditation more accessible and affordable at local level.

Benefits of Accreditation to Governments, Regulators, Manufacturers, Exporters, Traders, SMEs

- When using an accredited service, industry players can be assured that they will receive the level of high-quality test reports from credible laboratories that they can trust.
- High value goods that are traded locally or destined for foreign markets need to have credibility based on acceptability of test reports.
- Poor quality products are a cost to the producers because there is a high chance of the goods being rejected due to non-compliance.
- Accreditation therefore gives assurance to users of laboratories that the results are safe and reliable.
- Results from accredited laboratories, medical laboratories, inspection bodies and certification bodies do not need to be retested thus saving the business owner lots of money and increasing competitiveness on the global market.

SADCAS continues to evolve with the dynamic changes in the accreditation landscape, hence its ability to process applications and offer training in the three official languages of SADC i.e., English, French and Portuguese. Recently, the SADCAS team conducted training on ISO 15189:2022 in Mozambique in December 2023. Consequently, five (5) facilities have already undergone accreditation assessment to ISO 15189:2022. This is a major milestone for SADCAS, as the organisation strives to broaden its geographical footprint in the SADC Region.

For more information about SADCAS visit www.sadcas.org

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