

Dynamic and effective Organized Private Sector (OPS) to create and support Conformity Assessment Bodies

Challenge

Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) are generally established to prove compliance of goods and services with quality standards, regulations, specifications and other requirements. Testing or calibration laboratories, certification and inspection bodies, serve to reassure industry and consumers at large. When establishing conformity assessment infrastructure, appropriate legal and regulatory framework for recognized standards, accreditation, certification and inspection schemes must be ensured. To allow acceptance of their services on the international scene, such CABs must obtain formal recognition by the international system through a National (or Regional) Accreditation Body.

When a laboratory seeks accreditation, the National Accreditation Body will additionally assess compliance with the technical requirements of specific standard test methods for which the laboratory may be seeking recognition. Many aspects of global trade are fundamentally dependent on conformity assessment. For many traded products and services, it is often essential that they are accompanied by test results, measurements, inspection reports or certifications.

The Nigerian OPS, at its top management levels, is aware of the gaps in the quality infrastructure and is willing to take rational and economically justified steps towards increased ownership of non-mandatory institutions of the National Quality Infrastructure, such as certification and training organizations.

Response

The UNIDO-EU project addresses the involvement of the Nigerian OPS in the creation and support of CABs by providing assistance through the following outputs:

Consultations with Project Partners for the implementation of certification bodies for management systems and persons
Development of certification bodies for management systems, to assess conformity to ISO 9001 and ISO 22000/HACCP and other management standards and for certification of persons
Implementation of ISO/IEC 17021 for certification bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
Training auditors for management systems: selection, training and assessment of trainees according to ILAC applicable guides. Creation of a pool of registered auditors for certification of management systems
Pilot certification audits by a team of lead auditors and recently trained auditors for the certification of management systems, in companies willing to cooperate with the certification body
Implementation of ISO/IEC 17024 for certification bodies providing audit and certification of persons
Internal audits on the compliance of the certification bodies with ISO/IEC 17021 and ISO/IEC 17024. Application for accreditation of the certification bodies

