



MALAWI NEWSLETTER



Malawi Project Team



Mr. Otto LOESENER
Project Manager for the SQAM
Project
email: O.Loesener@unido.org



Mr. Juan Pablo DIAZ CASTILLO
Project Manager for the MATCB
Project
email: J.Diaz-Castillo@unido.org



Mr. Francois DENNER
Chief Technical Advisor – MATCB
and SQAM Projects
email: F.Denner@unido.org



Mr. Jackson HAU
National Project Coordinator –
MATCB Project
email: J.Hau@unido.org



Ms. Aleksandra LESZCZYNSKA
International Consultant – MATCB
Project, Newsletter producer and
editor
email: A.Leszczynska@unido.org



Ms. Laura Elisa PEDRAZA LEON
International Consultant – SQAM
Project
email: L.Pedraza-Leon@unido.org

Welcome to the first edition of the MATCB Quality Times Digest - a quarterly publication of the MATCB Project for Malawi implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

MATCB Quality Times Digest brings you quarterly updates on activities of the “Market Access and Trade Capacity Building Support for Agro-industrial Products” Project (MATCB) in Malawi - supported by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)

The “Market Access and Trade Capacity Building Support for Agro-industrial Products” Project (MATCB) in Malawi aims to support the enhancement of the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI). Its purpose is to improve quality, safety and marketability of Malawian goods and services through the removal of technical barriers to trade. Allowing the country to improve its competitiveness in the global market by having an adequate and sustainable NQI in place, consistent with international and regional principles.

In 2012 and 2013, Malawi embarked respectively on the EU funded “Development of a robust Standardization, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology infrastructure for Malawi (SQAM)” Project and the NORAD funded MATCB Project. The SQAM Project is implemented by UNIDO together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Both projects are targeted interventions in legal and industrial metrology, two key building blocks in the NQI, and are complementary to each other. UNIDO is responsible for their effective technical implementation.

In partnership with:



Norad





Group picture, MATCB Inception Workshop, 26-27 Feb 2014 in Lilongwe, Malawi

MATCB Project Profile: Boosting Economic Growth through Inclusive Trade Facilitation

Trade is an engine for growth that may lift many Malawians out of poverty. Currently, Malawi is unable to significantly penetrate foreign markets due to limited Quality Infrastructure and the absence of an internationally recognized Accreditation Body. Conformity assessment activities (testing, calibration, certification and inspection) require accreditation to ensure the country's growth in exports. The Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) sets and implements standards and conducts conformity tests on selected imports and exports.

However, certificates from MBS are not widely recognized and exporters incur high costs to obtain certification overseas. Developmental partners have recognized the importance of coordinated interventions and technical assistance to provide Malawi with the support to overcome supply-side constraints and to upgrade its industrial base.

UNIDO has signed an Administrative Agreement with NORAD for the implementation of the MATCB Project in Malawi. This project, which is being implemented in conjunction with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Private Sector Development, Malawi (MoIT) since July 2013 aims to enhance Malawi's capacity for product certification, which is critical for the promotion of exports in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II).

"Quality of goods and services are essential to build competitiveness on regional and international markets, said Director of UNIDO Trade Capacity Building Branch, Mr. Bernardo Calzadilla-Sarmiento. "UNIDO plays a critical technical role in the project by providing support to MBS to put in place an adequate national conformity assessment and accreditation infrastructure. This will ultimately reduce costs for exporting and will increase competitiveness of Malawi Products and advance Malawi's export-led development agenda", he added.

This project, which is being implemented in conjunction with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Private Sector

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Development, Malawi (MoIT) since July 2013 aims to enhance Malawi's capacity for product certification, which is critical for the promotion of exports in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II). "Quality of goods and services are essential to build competitiveness on regional and international markets, said Director of UNIDO Trade Capacity Building Branch, Mr. Bernardo Calzadilla-Sarmiento. "UNIDO plays a critical technical role in the project by providing support to MBS to put in place an adequate national conformity assessment and accreditation infrastructure. This will ultimately reduce costs for exporting and will increase competitiveness of Malawi Products and advance Malawi's export-led development agenda", he added. Upon successful implementation of the MATCB Project, the MBS will be equipped with a physical infrastructure and technical expertise to ensure that their certification of goods and services are recognized and accepted at overseas markets, beyond the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) region.

Norwegian Ambassador Visits the MBS

The newly appointed Ambassador from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Lilongwe, His Excellency Mr. Kikkan Haugen visited the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) on 3 December 2014. The purpose of this meeting was to learn about the current collaborations with the MBS in the framework of MATCB Project, as well as future plans for 2015. The MBS Deputy Director General, Willy Muyila in the opening remarks stressed the role of MBS in joint cooperation with the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD).

"Our mandate is to promote standardization and quality assurance. MBS is in the process of getting its conformity assessment services accredited with support from the Government and development partners through the SQAM and MATCB projects with financial support from the Norwegian Government", he noted.

The Norwegian Ambassador stressed that Malawi has a huge investment potential especially in the agro-based manufacturing due to a rich availability of natural resources.



The new Norwegian Ambassador to Malawi, Mr. Kikkan Haugen, visited the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) in Blantyre on 3 December 2014

“The reason of my visit is to understand the major challenges that local businesses and investments are facing, as well as opportunities for Norway to support the export market in Malawi,” he added.

The meeting agreed that next year the joint Investment Seminar for the Captains of Industry and Businesses will be conducted. The purpose of this event would be to identify common export opportunities for Malawian and Norwegian industries. The Ambassador highlighted very important role that the MBS is playing in the achievement of Malawi’s national development agenda. At the end of the meeting he indicated that he would visit more often the MBS to get more familiar with MBS infrastructure and interventions undertaken under MATCB Project.

Quality and Institutional Development – National Quality Policy (NQP) Dissemination Workshops and Launch of the NQP in Malawi

The formulation of the National Quality Policy is one of the major achievements of the UNIDO programme implemented in Malawi. The policy aims at creating awareness on producing quality products and encouraging a quality culture through creation of a credible quality infrastructure to realize the National Export Strategy. The NQP in Malawi was approved in January 2014 and officially launched in August 2014, by the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT) through a series of workshops in the Southern, Central and Northern parts of Malawi.

“Every country needs a sound infrastructure to achieve its societal goals. Quality infrastructure is used by businesses and government to optimize production, health, consumer protection, environment, security and quality,” said MBS Director General Davlin Chokazinga during the NQP Dissemination Workshops organized in August 2014, in Blantyre.

“The National Quality Policy provides the foundation for a robust SQAM infrastructure for the citizens, business and economy of Malawi,” he added.

The drafting process of NQP started in February 2012. The draft NQP along with the Metrology Bill was

reviewed through a consultative process that involved main stakeholders. Deputy Secretary for Trade and Industry, Mr. Kedron Chisale said in the capital Lilongwe during the NQP launch ceremony that the policy would facilitate the diversification of Malawi’s industrial sector and promote exports. He added that the policy would also bring all players involved in quality issues together, including development partners and private sector.

However, there are still many critical factors which have an impact on the successful materialization of the NQP in Malawi. There is a strong need for the development of a roadmap to ensure the policy implementation - National Quality Strategy (NQS) under MoIT leadership and in partnership with private sector and consumers.

QUALITY POLICY TIMELINE

Feb 2012 - The draft of NQP was finalized during NQP Workshop and submitted to the government for final comments

Sept 2012 - The NQP was sent to the Cabinet for approval

May 2013 - Approval of the NQP by Cabinet

Jan 2014 - Final version of the NQP was signed by Minister of Trade and Industry (MoIT)

Aug - Sept 2014 - National Quality Policy Dissemination Workshops

3,500 copies were produced with support of the MATCB Project and disseminated to stakeholders in 3 workshops funded by the SQAM Project and lead by the MoIT in the Southern (Blantyre), 26 Aug, Central (Lilongwe, 29 Aug) and Northern (Mzuzu, 4 Sep) regions

Aug - Sept 2014 - Malawi launches NQP

Dec 2014 - Implementation under the “Development of a robust Standardization, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology infrastructure for Malawi (SQAM)” Project focuses to recruit a national consultant to work with the MoIT for the development of a National Quality Strategy (a roadmap to ensure the policy implementation)

METROLOGY LAW TIMELINE

Dec 2012 - Feb 2013 - MoIT conducted workshops in support of development the Metrology Law; 2nd draft was tabled at the Feb-2013 workshop

Sep 2014 - The new Metrology law was passed by Cabinet Committee

Study Tour Visit to National Standards Bodies (NSBs) in the Region

The MATCB Project provided support to the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) through the organization of a five-day study tour which took place from the 27-31 July. The participants accompanied by the Chief Technical Advisor visited selected national standards and metrology institutions in the Botswana, Mozambique and South Africa. All those countries in the region have developed and built a new infrastructure in recent years. The MBS is in the process of reforming its structural and operational parameters in order to attain international accreditation as a standards regulator. One of the key pillars of this process is to construct the new MBS buildings that would meet international standards. The MBS has procured the land for new premises and contracted the architects despite challenges to secure the financial resources from the Government.

This study tour, therefore, was organized with the objective to identify lessons learnt in the construction, operation and maintenance of facilities in general with specific emphasis on laboratories. The participants included the architects and a representative of the Department of Buildings of the Government of Malawi (GoM). "We will certainly avoid the designs that have presented operational and maintenance problems. In addition we are aware of various options in dealing with temperature control and vibrations. The effects that others did not have to deal with are earthquakes.

We have to design our buildings to withstand earthquakes while at the same time satisfy the requirements of a laboratory, said participant Mr. Joseph Malingamoyo, Quantity Surveyor from MOD Architects concluding the tour. The measure of success of the study tour was demonstrated when, towards the end of August 2014, architects presented an inception report to the MBS and the Department of Buildings of the GoM. This report outlined a realistic work plan with timescales and key activities for the construction process of the new building.

MATCB Project Builds the Legal Metrology Capacity of Malawian Laboratories

One of the key focus areas of MATCB Project is the capacity building in support of Legal Metrology. Under Legal Metrology, substantial capacity gaps exist in the calibration and verification of weighbridges. The Weights and Measures Act of Malawi, gives the MBS the mandate to calibrate weighbridges on commissioning and a mandatory verification once a year. Verification is also required upon request from a client and whenever substantial in-service repairs are undertaken. Legal Metrology capacity of MBS was enhanced in the areas of mass and volume through the purchase and delivery of the weights and laboratory handling equipment through SQAM Project. The MATCB Project is expected

to procure the truck and forklift for weighbridge verification (to be used for long distance transportation of weights for weighbridge verification in Malawi). Upgrade of the Blantyre metrology site needs to be prioritized as equipment cannot be operated under current conditions.

Fact box

Implementation Partners:

- Partner Institutions: donor institution - NORAD, government coordinating agency - Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT)
- Beneficiaries: Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS), National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM). Beneficiary institutions should involve other stakeholders, such as chambers of commerce, technical institutions, consumer organizations, private companies, laboratories, Laboratory Association of Malawi (LAM), Malawian population in the project activities.

Implementation period: July 2013 – July 2017

The outcomes for the project:

1. The Government of Malawi commits to a quality culture and to supporting the MBS services by providing a strengthened legislative and institutional environment in support of the national metrology infrastructure.
2. The Legal Metrology Department of the MBS-National Metrology Institute (MBS-NMI) is recognized nationally, regionally and internationally, is upgraded and type approval and verification services are enhanced for consumer protection.
3. Certificates issued by MBS of calibration services performed in support of legal metrology services are accepted nationally, regionally and internationally.
4. NASFAM processing associations have improved access to local, regional and foreign markets through strengthened testing and export certification, and a quality system implemented in selected value chains.
5. Governance and monitoring systems are established for local ownership and project sustainability.

Contact details

For more information contact:

UNIDO Trade Capacity Building Branch

tcb@unido.org

www.unido.org

In partnership with:

