

Journal

RWANDA

STANDARDS

ISSUE 21 NOVEMBER 2020 | NOT FOR SALE

FOCUS ON RSB ACHIEVEMENTS FOR FY 2019-2020

**STANDARDIZATION ACTIVITIES
CONTINUE TO SUPPORT
PROMOTION OF MADE IN RWANDA**
- INTERVIEW WITH HON. MINISTER
OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

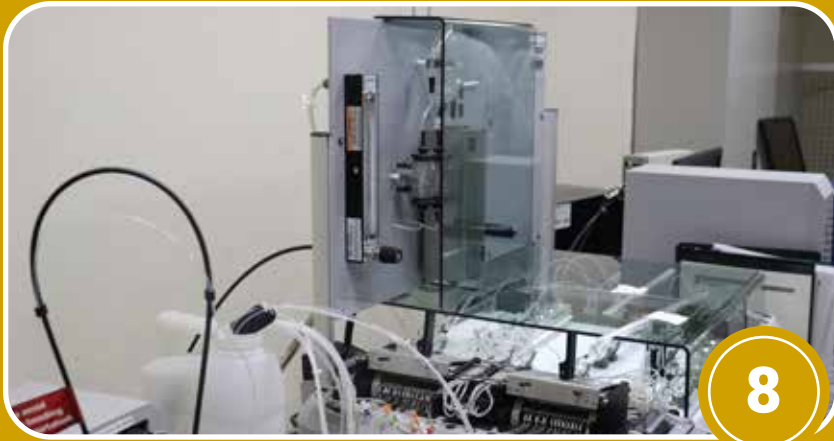
**RSB STARTS THE JOURNEY TO
INTEGRATE GENDER EQUALITY
IN STANDARDIZATION
ACTIVITIES**

STAKEHOLDERS' CORNER








TABLE OF CONTENTS



INSIDE

FOREWORD	7
RSB HAS CONTINUES TO PROMOTE THE STANDARDIZATION AGENDA IN RWANDA DESPITE THE COVID – 19	8
RSB STICKS TO THE COMMITMENT TO DELIVERING INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED SERVICES	14
DEVELOPMENT OF NEW STANDARDS, REVIEW OF EXISTING STANDARDS AND HARMONIZATION WITH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS	21
DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS IN A BID TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19	28
STANDARDIZATION ACTIVITIES CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PROMOTION OF MADE IN RWANDA - INTERVIEW WITH HON. MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY	29
RSB STARTS THE JOURNEY TO INTEGRATE GENDER EQUALITY IN STANDARDIZATION ACTIVITIES	45
ACCREDITATION OF RWANDA STANDARDS BOARD CERTIFICATION SERVICES MAINTAINED AND EXPANDED	65
RWANDA STANDARDS BOARD METROLOGY SERVICES ENSURE FAIR TRADE, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT	66

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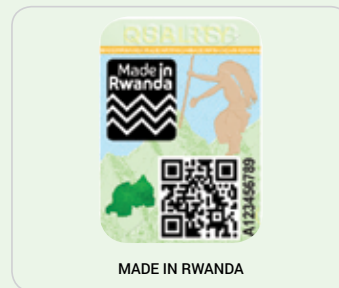


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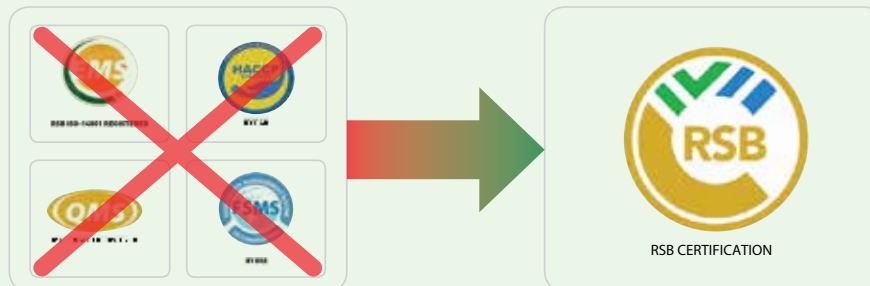


RSB CERTIFICATION MARKS

PRODUCT CERTIFICATION



SYSTEMS CERTIFICATION



FOREWORD



Welcome once again to this edition of the Rwanda Standards Journal focusing on standardization achievements in the Financial Year 2019 / 2020. In line with RSB mandate of developing, publishing National Standards, carrying out research in the area of standardisation, disseminating information on standards, offering Conformity Assessment, Certification and Metrology services, the Financial Year 2019 / 2020 saw a mix of achieving targets for some services and a slow down for other services as a result of the COVID – 19 pandemic outbreak.

In the Financial Year 2019 / 2020, the Standards Body published 126 new standards and reviewed 428 existing Rwanda Standards. These Standards were developed to respond to demands from various industry stakeholders, regulators, while others were reflected in the National Standardization Strategy drawn from different sector specific policies and national strategies like the National Strategy for Transformation (NST-1) Made in Rwanda Policy, Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation, National Agriculture Policy to mention but a few. The published Standards cover various sectors of the economy like agro processing, light manufacturing, building materials, civil engineering Mechanical engineering, electric engineering, Information, Communication Technology (ICT), etc.

In the framework of guaranteeing that products and services conform to the set standards, we have continued to increase the testing scope and the number of samples tested. In this regard, over the said year, we added six (06) new parameters related to electrical and electronics parameters for safety and energy efficiency making a cumulative scope of our quality testing laboratories to a total of 374 parameters. In addition to this, eight (08) new parameters in microbiology and food chemistry laboratories were accredited hence increasing the number of accredited parameters from 12 to 20 parameters as of June 2020.

The number of products and systems acquiring certification has continued to increase. This is mainly the result of sustained awareness of certification services vis-à-vis efforts to strengthen the nexus between RSB services, i.e. Standards development, technical assistance to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and industries, upgrading the scope and accreditation of Testing and Metrology laboratories. As a result, 154 new products were certified with Standardization Mark (S-Mark) while 113 products were re-certified. 162 new locally made products were granted the Made in Rwanda logo, which is a strong quality and marketing mark. The year under review saw RSB certify eleven (11) new systems and re-certify nine (9) afore-certified systems. The ongoing improvements are an enabler to Made in Rwanda products to access international markets and be more competitive on both the local and international markets.

RSB continued calibration and verification of measuring equipments to promote trade and other sectors. The Financial Year 2019 / 2020 saw the Government passing the Metrology Law. The Law determines and institutes modalities for metrological controls, defines key terms, principles and elaborates their applicability. As we refer to Metrology as the science of measurements, we emphasize accuracy, traceability, precision and reliability of measurements

used in different sectors in trade, health, transportation and other different services. We therefore expect the new Metrology Law to be instrumental in enforcing, validating and verifying predefined standards for traceability, accuracy, reliability, and precision. That law also plays a vital role in promoting human activity namely production control, measurement of environmental quality, health and safety assessment, conformity assessment of products, consumer protection and fair trade assurance.

In the financial year 2019/2020, RSB signed the Declaration on Gender Responsive Standards and Standards Development. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal number 5 (SDG5) focuses on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls as key players in trade promotion, and having gender inclusiveness on every strategic forum's agenda. With the support from Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), RSB is in the process of mainstreaming gender in all its operations.

By mainstreaming gender and implementing the signed declaration, RSB is mainly expecting to be able to establish an effective framework to promote equal participation of all genders and leadership in standardization, conformity assessment and metrology activities, establish mechanism to continually assess challenges that hinder access of both women and men to standardization, conformity assessment and metrology services and propose solutions.

We are grateful for the firm support of Government of Rwanda to standardization activities through the work of various institutions in the public sector, Private Sector Federation, Civil Society and Consumers.

Enjoy reading...
MURENZI Raymond
 Director General

INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

RSB CONTINUES TO PROMOTE THE STANDARDIZATION AGENDA IN RWANDA DESPITE THE COVID-19 CHALLENGES



The year 2019/2020 presented RSB with unprecedented challenges as a result of the devastating effects of the COVID – 19 pandemic. However despite the challenges RSB has continued to promote the standardization agenda in Rwanda. In a bid to understand the achievements of RSB in standardization, the Rwanda Standards Journal had a one on one interview with Mr. Murenzi Raymond, the Director General of RSB. Below are the excerpts:

QN: BRIEFLY TAKE US THROUGH THE MANDATE OF RSB

ANS: Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) has the mandate to establish and publish national standards; participating in standardization services at regional and international levels, disseminate information on standards, provide Metrology services and offer conformity assessment for products and services to ensure their quality and safety through quality testing and certification.

QN: IN LINE WITH YOUR ROLE OF DEVELOPING NEW STANDARDS, REVIEWING THEM AND HARMONIZING THEM HOW HAS RSB PERFORMED OVER THE YEAR 2019 / 2020? WHAT HAS BEEN THE TREND OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS?

ANS: Standardization services begin with developing new standards.

Despite the challenges caused by the COVID – 19 pandemic which hindered the activities of organization of physical Technical Committee meetings, the year under review saw RSB registering great achievements in terms of standards development and harmonization. In the Financial Year 2019/2020, against the target to develop 50 standards, RSB published 126 new standards and reviewed 428 existing Rwanda Standards among which 38 are standards of Rwandan origin and 390 standards are adopted from regional and International Standards.

It is important to understand that Standards are reviewed to ensure they are up to date and fit their purpose.

Standards that were developed are distributed across different sectors like agro-processing, light manufacturing, building materials, civil engineering, mechanical, electrical engineering, Information Communication and Technology (ICT), etc. and the requests to develop them originated from the industry and Regulators while others were reflected in the Standardization Strategy drawn from different sector specific policies and national strategies including the National Strategy for Transformation (NST-1(2017-2024), Made in Rwanda Policy (2017), Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation, 2018-2024, National Agriculture Policy-MINAGRI, 2018, ICT (communication, ICT Hub, Local digital Content promotion) strategic Plans, 2018-2024, Energy Sector Strategic Plan, 2018- 2024, National Sanitation Policy (December 2016, National Water Supply Policy (December 2016) Domestic Market Recapturing Strategy, etc..

Today, RSB has produced and published a total number 2796 Rwanda Standards. We continue to participate in standards setting activities at regional and international level to ensure Rwanda's input and voice are heard and therefore increase market access for Made in Rwanda products.

QN: RSB HAS CARRIED OUT TRAINING AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS ON STANDARDIZATION AND OTHER SERVICES OFFERED. WHAT WAS DONE IN THIS REGARD?

ANS: In the Financial Year 2019/2020, we offered capacity building and technical support to stakeholders in order to position them to comply with standards requirements so as to be able to compete on local and export markets. In this regard, 29 technical training sessions were offered to industries and service providers to help them implement specific standards.

Technical support was offered under Zamukana Ubuziranenge Program aiming to support growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMES) and promote the quality of Made in Rwanda Products and services.

Awareness was also raised on both new and existing standards as well as other services offered by the institution.

QN: RSB HAS GRADUALLY INCREASED THE SCOPE AND SAMPLES TESTED BY THE NATIONAL QUALITY TESTING LABORATORIES. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RWANDA?

ANS: Quality testing remains an integral component of conformity assessment to check product design, quality and performance. During the Financial Year 2019-2020, RSB added six (06) parameters related to electrical and electronics parameters for safety and energy efficiency. This addition comes to complement the program under implementation to install the Solar Home Systems (SHS) in rural and remote areas that are not connected to the electricity grid due to their

geographical terrain. The addition brought the scope of our quality testing laboratories to a total of 374 parameters as of June 2020.

In compliance with the East African Community Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (SQMT) Act 2006 requesting Members to designate Testing Laboratories to provide scientific and technical services to perform conformity assessment services for technical regulation or compulsory standards, RSB continued to couple raising awareness on laboratory designation regulation and offering laboratory designation services to private laboratories.

During the Financial Year 2019/2020, eight (08) new parameters in microbiology and food chemistry laboratories were accredited. That addition increased the number of accredited parameters from 12 to 20 parameters. Expansion of accredited scope for our laboratories continues to open doors to Made in Rwanda products to access international markets and be competitive.

Our Laboratories also participated in the Proficiency Testing exercises.

QN: HOW DO YOU SEE THE EVOLUTION OF RSB TESTING LABORATORIES?

ANS: Evolution of RSB Quality Testing Laboratories is appreciated not only because we are able to test the quality of products but also because they evolve in scope expansion while also increasing the testing scope that acquires international recognition.

We are happy that after assessment by the international accreditation body, the validity of accreditation of laboratory services was maintained and extended from 2020 up to 2023.

QN: YOU ARE MANDATED TO PROVIDE PRODUCTS AND SYSTEMS CERTIFICATIONS AND MONITOR CONFORMITY FOR ISSUED CERTIFICATIONS. HOW DID YOU FAIR IN THIS

REGARD OVER THE YEAR 2019/2020? ARE YOU SEEING AN INCREASE IN UPTAKE SO FAR?

ANS: Since 2010, a continued increase has been observed in the number of products and systems acquiring certification. This is mainly due to sustained awareness of certification services vis-à-vis efforts to strengthen the nexus between RSB services, i.e Standards development, technical assistance to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and industries, upgrading the scope and accreditation of Testing and Metrology laboratories

During Financial Year 2019-2020, the target number of new products to be certified with standardization mark (S-Mark) was one hundred and ten (110) new products. At end of June 2020, a hundred fifty-four (154) new products were certified making a cumulative number of seven hundred products (700) with active certifications.

Over the same period, we targeted to re-certify 146 products from forty-nine (49) recertification audits. This annual target was set based on the current clients whose licensing periods fall within the range of 1st July 2019 and 30th June 2020. Despite the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, some on-field activities were not performed as planned and at the end of June 2020, one hundred thirteen (113) products were re-certified.

We were also able to grant the Made in Rwanda logo to 162 new products and certify 11 new systems and re-certify 9 systems.

QN: IN TERMS OF PROVIDING LEGAL, SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL METROLOGY SERVICES, SHARE WITH OUR READERS WHAT THEY ARE AND WHY?

ANS: During the Financial Year 2019-2020, Rwanda Standards Board targeted to calibrate 3219 measuring equipment. At the end of June 2020, 6047 measuring equipment/ instruments used in industries, medical, tourism and hospitality, construction, mining and conformity assessment

quality testing laboratories were calibrated.

During the Financial Year 2019-2020, the targeted number of measuring instruments used in trade and medical sector to be verified was 8000 equipment. At the end of June 2020, 10705 instruments were verified and those included fuel dispensers, trade weights, balances, medical equipment, Water meters and energy meters.

Increase in the number of calibrated and verified measuring equipment and instruments is explained by the continued Metrology services awareness conducted in hotels and restaurants and manufacturing industries and mandatory certification in the dairy and banana and plant based products. In addition, implementation of the Zamukana Ubuziranenge Program, implementation of Quality Testing laboratory designation scheme and enforcement of calibration in public construction projects also have a major input in the number of calibrated and verified equipment.

We are happy that in the same year, the government of Rwanda passed the metrology laws. This law governs metrology services and is instrumental in ensuring the use of accurate measurements in industrial, health, environmental and consumer protection activities

QN: RSB HAS UNDERTAKEN A COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUALLY INCREASE THE SCOPE FOR INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF ITS SERVICES. WHY THIS VERY EXPENSIVE AND RIGOROUS DECISION?

ANS: Rwanda Standards Board established a quality management systems according to ISO 9001 providing requirements for Quality Management System, and following certification by one of the global leading conformity assessment bodies (Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Zertifizierung von Management systemen (DQS) Holdings GmbH) the established management system was assessed and its compliance with the applicable

statutory, regulatory, contractual and customer requirements was reaffirmed.

Also, During Financial Year 2019/2020, following accreditation acquired from Raad Voor Accreditatie (Dutch Accreditation Council, RvA) on food manufacturing and farming of plant categories, established Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) Certification Schemes were assessed and found to be in line with the applicable international requirements.

An important achievement also to be noted is the accreditation of Food Safety Management System (FSMS) and Hazards Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) certification schemes was extended from manufacturing food chain category (C) to farming food chain category. This achievement ensures access to international market of fresh exported agriculture products and products of other key players in the food value chain;

During the same year, the focus in the areas of quality testing laboratories was to conduct surveillance assessments and to start the process of transition and scope extension assessment for the accredited testing laboratories. Against this background, surveillance assessments were conducted and the accreditation of RSB testing laboratories on ISO 17025 providing the competence requirements for testing laboratories was transitioned from ISO 17025:2005, General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories to ISO 17025:2017 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories. The surveillance outputs evidenced the ability of RSB to maintain the accreditation status.

Another paramount achievement was the increase of the accreditation scope that was extended from eight (08) accredited parameters to a total of 20 accredited parameters;

In addition, following surveillance assessment, RSB Mass and Balance laboratories maintained accreditation against ISO 17025 International Standard and Small Volume Laboratory was a latest addition to the accredited Metrology laboratories. To date, our accredited Metrology laboratories are: mass, balance, temperature and small volumes calibration laboratories.

International certification of standards development processes and corporate support services and accreditation of quality testing and Metrology laboratories together with accreditation of certification services are in line with our commitment to ensure RSB services are internationally recognized and trusted, thus providing strong and unwavering trust to customers of Made in Rwanda products and services at international markets.

QN: RSB IS PUTTING FOCUS ON DIGITALIZATION OF HER SERVICES AND MORE SO THE RECENT INTRODUCTION OF THE TRACK AND TRACE SYSTEM AND LIMS UPGRADE. CAN YOU ELABORATE FURTHER ON THESE INITIATIVES AND WHY?

ANS: Digitalization of our services remains our priority. It aims to assure customers quality, trustworthy and timely service in an effective and efficient manner. Customers can now have access to the progress of the service they are being given and they no longer need to travel to RSB to acquire the service.

In partnership with Trade Mark East Africa (TMEA), we have been able to establish a Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) for the quality testing laboratories and the Management Information System (MIS) for Metrology laboratories and other services offered by the institution. Digitalization of services helps have quicker turnaround times to meet customer expectations and eliminate delays in services delivery.

With the completion of the LIMS upgrade, E-reports are now electronically generated to internal and external customers; and customers receive the SMS notifications after submission of samples. The new E-reporting mechanism will improve the laboratories service delivery through direct interaction with customers.

Since the first quarter of financial year 2020-2021, external customers started receiving E-test report in their specific mails boxes.

The Track and Trace system continues to facilitate product and service tracking by clients. It therefore helps the service provider, regulatory bodies and clients to be aware of possible misuse of issued certificates, counterfeits and eases information sharing among the market actors.





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RWANDA STANDARDS BOARD

STICKS TO THE COMMITMENT TO DELIVERING INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED SERVICES



Rwanda continues the journey to fulfilling the vision enshrined in the transformative socio-economic development agenda. Standardization, Conformity assessment and Metrology are among other key pillars that play part in ensuring domestic products and services are quality and competitive at local and international markets. The move to strengthen delivered services for their international recognition goes on and, over the Fiscal Year 2019/2020, Rwanda Standards Boards stuck to the commitment to gradually improving and upgrading the level of services to sustain their compliance with the applicable International Standards. This included undergoing surveillance

audits for the certified and accredited services to re- attest conformity and competences for various schemes that had acquired certification and accreditation by internationally recognized certification and accreditation bodies.

✔ Keeping up with international recognition of Standards Development and Corporate Support Services

Due to proven competence and professionalism in standardization related field, Rwanda Standards Board is an active member of the following but not limited to these regional and international standardization organizations:

- ✔ International Organization for Standardization (ISO),
- ✔ International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC),
- ✔ International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML),
- ✔ Codex Alimentarius,
- ✔ African Organization for Standardization (ARSO),
- ✔ The African Electrotechnical Standardization Commission (AFSEC),

In addition to this, to ensure compliance of standards development processes and corporate support services to the applicable international relevant standards, Rwanda Standards Board established a quality management systems according to ISO 9001 providing requirements for Quality Management System, and the established management system was assessed to check its compliance with the applicable statutory, regulatory, contractual and customer requirements. Following certification by one of the global leading conformity assessment bodies (Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Zertifizierung von Management systemen (DQS) Holdings GmbH), planned periodical internal audits for Standards setting and certification bodies is a requirement for ensuring compliance to the requirements of internal, international and industry standards and regulations, customer requirements and determining the effectiveness of the implemented system in meeting specified objectives to explore opportunities for improvement, to meet statutory and regulatory requirements and provide feedback to Top Management.

In collaboration with DQS, despite the COVID-19 pandemic challenges, RSB conducted a remote Quality Management System (QMS) surveillance against ISO 9001:2015 to ensure maintenance of the certification status awarded to RSB

“We compete to make you more competitive! Our commitment to delivering internationally recognized services is a door-opener to Rwanda’s products and services to access regional and international markets”.

and auditors reported the compliance of RSB established QMS with the requirements of ISO 9001:2015.

Also, during the Financial Year 2019-2020, internal audits were conducted to monitor the effective implementation of the implemented management systems against the international standards that RSB implements (ISO 9001, ISO 17021 , ISO 17025 and ISO 17065 respectively providing the requirements for quality management system, competence requirements for bodies providing management systems certification, competence requirements for testing and calibration laboratories and competence requirements for bodies providing products certification).

✔ **International recognition of RSB Certification Services re-affirmed**

Rwanda Standards Board is a Certification Body that provides both products and management systems certification services.

To ensure compliance with the applicable international requirements, Rwanda Standards Board's management systems comply with ISO 17021 on the requirements for bodies providing certification of management systems and ISO 17065 on the requirements for bodies providing products certification respectively. During



Financial Year 2019/2020, following accreditation acquired from Raad Voor Accreditatie (Dutch Accreditation Council, RvA) on food manufacturing and farming of plant categories, established Hazards Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) Certification Schemes were assessed and found to be in line with the applicable international requirements.

Accreditation of food safety management system (FSMS) and Hazards Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) certification schemes was extended from manufacturing food chain category (C) to farming food chain category. This achievement ensures access to international market of fresh exported agriculture products and products of other key players in the food value chain.

International recognition of our Quality Testing Laboratories was maintained and accredited scope extended

Rwanda Standards Board provides laboratory quality testing services in line with ISO 17025, the international standard providing the requirements for Quality Testing and Metrology Laboratories,

as basis for competence attestation of a quality testing/metrology laboratory.

This competence of RSB to provide Quality Testing services was verified and accredited by Raad Voor Accreditatie (Dutch Accreditation Council, RvA) on food testing parameters in 2019. During the FY 2019/2020, the focus in the areas of quality testing laboratories was to conduct surveillance assessments and to start the process of transition and scope extension assessment for the accredited testing laboratories. Over the above-mentioned period, surveillance assessments were conducted and the accreditation of RSB testing laboratories on ISO 17025 providing the competence requirements for testing laboratories was transitioned from ISO 17025:2005 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories to ISO 17025:2017 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories. The surveillance outputs evidenced the ability of RSB to maintain the accreditation status.

In addition, another paramount achievement was the increase of the accreditation scope that was extended from eight (08) accredited parameters to a total of the following 20 accredited parameters:

LIST OF ACCREDITED PARAMETERS		
No	Material or product	Type of activity
1	Drinking water	Determination of Total viable counts in water
2	Food , feed and environmental samples	Determination of Total viable counts Horizontal
3	Food , feed and environmental samples	Determination of Total coliforms/Horizontal
4	Food and feed	Determination of E.coli/Horizontal
5	Drinking water	Determination of Total Coliforms & Ecoli in water
6	Food and feed	Determination of Salmonella spp/Horizontal
7	Products with water activity greater than or equal to 0.95	Horizontal method for the enumeration of yeasts and moulds: Colony count technique in
8	Products with water activity less than or equal to 0.95	Horizontal method for the enumeration of yeasts and moulds: Colony count technique in
9	Milk and milk products	Enumeration of colony-forming units of Yeasts and/ or moulds by Colony- count technique at 250C
10	Wheat flours	Determination of moisture content
11	Wheat flours	Determination of total ash by incineration
12	Maize and wheat flours	Determination of nitrogen content and calculation of the crude protein content by Kjeldahl method
13	Wheat flours	Determination of crude fat content
14	Maize and wheat flours	Determination of crude fiber content
15	Maize flour	Quantitative determination of aflatoxin B1 and total aflatoxin
16	Milk and milk powder.	Determination of aflatoxin M1 content
17	Sunflower oil	Determination of Refractive index
18	Water	Determination of copper
19	Potable, drinking and Mineralwater	Determination of ph value
20	Potable, packaged drinking and packaged mineral waters	Determination of Zinc



✔ **International recognition of our Metrology Services (Calibration and Verification of measuring equipment Laboratories) was maintained and the scope extended**

Rwanda Standards Board provides Metrology Services (Calibration and Verification of measuring equipment) in line with ISO 17025, the international standard providing the requirements for Quality Testing and Metrology Laboratories, as basis for competence attestation of a quality testing/metrology laboratory. This competence of RSB to provide metrology services in the area of mass, balance, volume and temperature measurements was verified and accredited by Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle (DakKS).

In the view to demonstrate competence to provide accurate measurements, RSB underwent surveillance assessment for Mass and Balance calibration laboratories; and assessment towards extension of accreditation scope to add Small Volume laboratory was conducted. Following the assessment, it was found out that accredited RSB Metrology laboratories of Mass and Balance comply with the requirements and therefore RSB Mass and Balance laboratories maintained

accreditation against ISO 17025 International Standard.

Further, the Small Volumes calibration laboratory was accredited and thus the accredited Metrology laboratories scope was extended from Mass, Balance and Temperature calibration laboratories to Mass, Balance, Temperature and small volumes calibration laboratories.



In the view to demonstrate competence to provide accurate measurements, RSB underwent surveillance assessment for Mass and Balance calibration laboratories; and assessment towards extension of accreditation scope to add Small Volume laboratory was conducted.



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AS WE PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDIZATION ACTIVITIES, YOUR INTERESTS ARE CONSIDERED



One of the core mandates of Rwanda Standards Board is to develop and publish national standards and to ensure that standards information, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures are disseminated to stakeholders including traders, manufacturers, suppliers, importers, regulators, academia, researchers, conformity assessment service providers, consumers and any other interested users.

During the Financial Year 2019/2020 standardization activities focused on the development of new standards, review of current

national standards, participation in and hosting of regional and international standardization activities, development of training materials and offering training services, maintenance of the Quality Management System, conducting awareness events and coaching identified SMEs operating under Made in Rwanda priority sectors (like agro processing, textiles and leather, soaps and cosmetics, wood and furniture, warehouse and warehousing of bagged cereal products, services like garages and beauty salons) in order to raise the quality culture and standards implementation towards compliance to certification requirements.

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW STANDARDS, REVIEW OF EXISTING STANDARDS AND HARMONIZATION WITH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS



New Standards are developed to meet the demands of stakeholders and in line with government development objectives. They are developed in line with the National Standardization Strategy that is developed through assessing and determining economic, social, policy and emerging standardization needs.

In the financial year 2019/2020 RSB set out to develop 50 new standards distributed across different sectors like agro-processing, light manufacturing, building materials, civil engineering, mechanical, electrical engineering, Information Communication and Technology (ICT) and multimedia. Most of the requests (51%) were from Industry and Regulators while

others were reflected in the Standardization Strategy drawn from different sector specific policies and strategies including NIST-1(2017-



RSB published 126 new standards and reviewed 428 existing Rwanda Standards among which 38 are standards of Rwandan origin and 390 standards are adopted from regional and International Standards.

2024), Made in Rwanda Policy (2017), Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation, 2018-2024, National Agriculture Policy-MINAGRI, 2018, ICT (communication, ICT Hub, Local digital Content promotion) strategic Plans, 2018-2024, Energy Sector Strategic Plan, 2018- 2024, National Sanitation Policy (December 2016, National Water Supply Policy (December 2016) Domestic Market Recapturing Strategy, 2015

Despite the challenges caused by the COVID – 19 pandemic which scaled down the activities of organization of physical technical committee meetings, the year under review saw RSB registering great achievements in terms of standards development and harmonization. In the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB published 126 new standards and reviewed 428 existing Rwanda Standards among which 38 are standards of Rwandan origin and 390 standards are adopted from regional and International Standards. This is to cater for new technological development, customer needs and to align our collection of standards with revised international or regional standards.

In addition to standards of Rwanda origin, focus was put given to harmonization of international standards, as recommended by WTO-TBT Agreement, which states that, “The standardizing body shall ensure that standards are not prepared, adopted or applied with a view to, or with the effect of, creating unnecessary obstacles to international trade and where relevant international standards exist or their completion is imminent, the standardizing body shall adopt them without modification or use them, or the relevant parts of them, as a basis for the standards it develops, except where such international standards or relevant parts would be ineffective or inappropriate, for instance, because of an insufficient level of protection or fundamental climatic or geographical factors or fundamental technological problems.” Therefore, among the new developed standards, adopted international

standards contribute 47.3% (42.4% from ISO and 4.9% from ASTM) while the standards of Rwanda Origin account for 52.7% of the total number.

Also, RSB participated in standards harmonization activities at EAC and African level (ARSO) and adopted 99 standards comprising 83 East African Standards (EAS) and 16 African Standards (ARS). 47.3% of new standards were adopted from International Standards Organization (ISO), International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML), American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and International Electro-technical Commission (IEC) and 52.7% were standards of Rwanda origin. Under standards of Rwanda origin, focus was put on promotion of Made in Rwanda (MiR) products and services (chemical products and light manufacturing 15.9%, Agriculture and Agro processing, 14.6%; timber and furniture, 11%; services, tourism and hospitality, 9.8% and 8.5% textile and handcrafts).

RSB participated in harmonization of 120 East



The review of RSB National Standardization Strategy was conducted and the strategy was aligned with RSB Technical Committees strategic business plan. RSB Technical Committees strategic business plan underlines the list of standards to be developed, standards to be adopted from regional and or International Standardization Organizations, as well as existing national standards due for review during the period 2020-2023.

African Standards and played part in development of 31 standards from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), including standards on Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems, essential oils, E-commerce, building sustainable cities and communities and energy management, to mention but a few.

In addition to participating in regional and international standards setting activities, Rwanda hosted eight (8) regional Technical Committee meetings; a Steering Committee on development of EAC Standardization Strategy and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Technical Committee (ISO TC 283) meeting on Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.

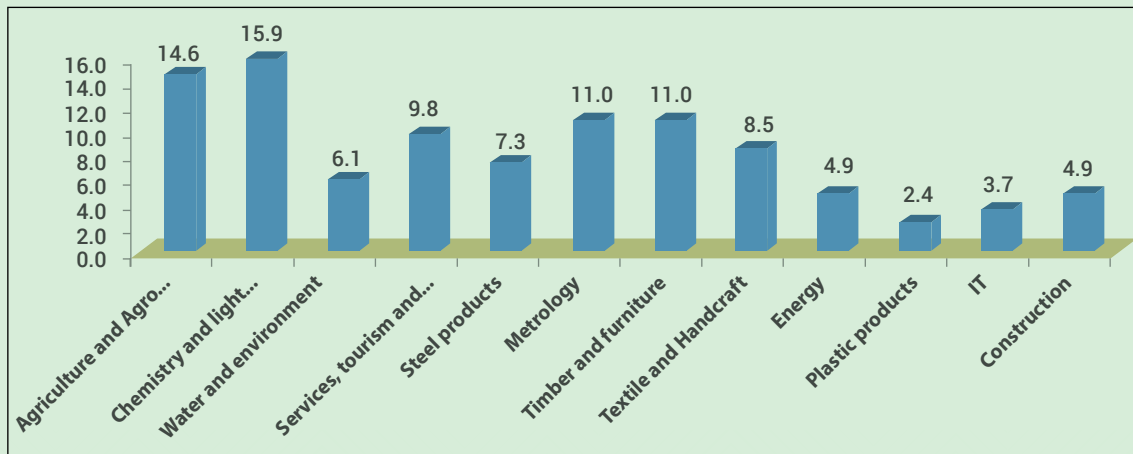
The review of RSB National Standardization Strategy was conducted and the strategy was aligned with RSB Technical Committees strategic business plan. RSB Technical Committees strategic business plan underlines the list of standards to be developed, standards to be adopted from regional and or International Standardization Organizations, as well as existing national standards due for review during the period 2020-2023. The Plan is subject to review every year to cater for new requests from Stakeholders in quest for customer satisfaction.

Graph 1 below shows the percentage of Standards developed in the Financial Year 2019 / 2020 by sector:

To date, RSB has produced and published 2796 standards. Apart from emerging products some sectors have been fully standardized. Focus was given to textile, wood and furniture and related products.

REVIEW OF EXISTING STANDARDS

As per the procedure on Standards development, Rwanda Standards are reviewed every five (05) years or when it is deemed necessary. In the Financial Year 2019 / 2020, the target was to review 50 national standards of Rwanda origin and to update all adopted obsolete International Standards. Due to the COVID - 19 pandemic outbreak, only 38 (78% of the target) standards were revised. Those include: 21% in agriculture and agro-processing, 21% in service, tourism and hospitality, 5.3% in water and environment and 52.7 % in construction. In regard to updating adopted International Standards, a total of 428 standards were reviewed and as a result, 96 adopted International Standards were revised and replaced by new editions; 134 standards were withdrawn and 198 were reaffirmed.



Graph 1 showing percentage number of Standards developed in the Financial Year 2019 / 2020 by sector

PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDIZATION ACTIVITIES AS A WAY TO ASSURE THAT RWANDA'S INTERESTS ARE CONSIDERED



Rwanda Standards Board participates in regional and international standardization activities by taking part into Standards setting and Standards harmonization processes among other standards based activities. Participating into regional and international standardization activities has numerous advantages to the country, including but not limited to:

- ✓ Representing Rwanda into regional and international standardization activities.
- ✓ Removing barriers to regional and international trade.
- ✓ Influencing regional and International Standards development process.
- ✓ Creating regional and international pathways and market.
- ✓ Avoiding the waste of resource by “reinventing the wheel”.
- ✓ Improvement of doing business.
- ✓ Transferring and acquiring state-of-the-art technological know-how.
- ✓ Safeguarding public health and safety by establishing a base of requirements for application to local or imported products in these regulated areas.

Standards harmonization involves different activities including the domestication (adoption) of published regional standards, participation in the harmonization activities by developing and defending national position and preparation and hosting regional meeting.

In the financial year 2019 / 2020, RSB participated in a number of activities including:

1. PARTICIPATION IN TAKING NATIONAL POSITION FOR STANDARDS DRAFTED AND PRESENTED IN REGIONAL STANDARDS HARMONIZATION MEETINGS

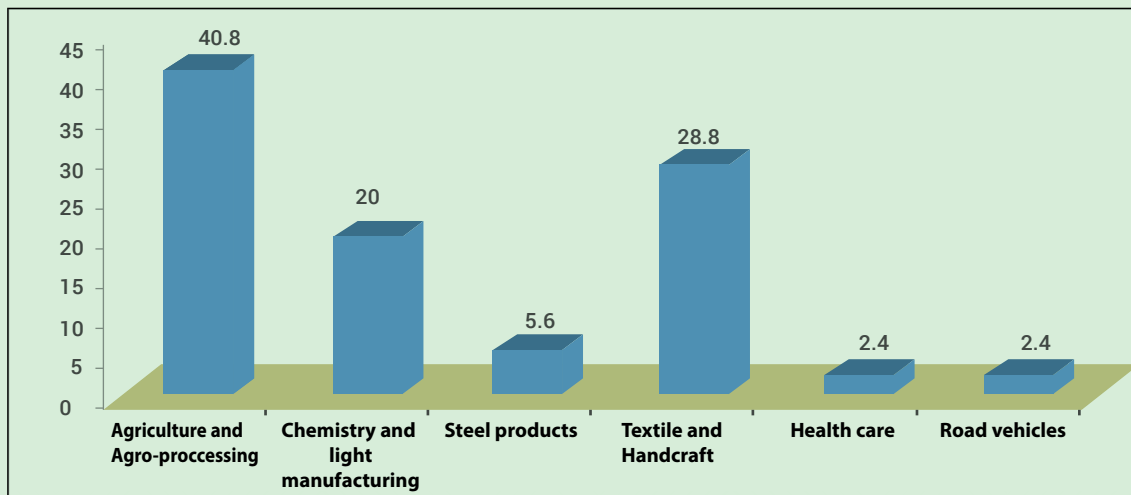
RSB participated in taking national position for 120 standards drafted and presented in regional standards harmonization meetings (EAC, ARSO and AFSEC). This required the development of national position on every circulated standard by undertaking national consultation, compilation and submission of comments and defending the submitted comments in the regional harmonization meeting to ensure Rwanda's interests and issues are considered. The national positions taken included 21 positions designed for standardization activities undertaken by the

African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) and 104 positions designed for East African Community (EAC) standard projects as illustrated in graph 2 below:

2. HOSTING OF REGIONAL STANDARDIZATION COMMITTEE MEETING

In the framework of standards harmonization, Rwanda hosted the Regional Steering Committee for the development of Regional Standardization Plan and other seven Regional Technical Committee meetings.

“ RSB participated in taking national position for 120 standards drafted and presented in regional standards harmonization meetings (EAC, ARSO and AFSEC). ”



Graph 2 showing sector distribution (in %) of developed national position on regional standard projects

Table 1 below shows Regional Technical Committee meetings that were hosted in FY 2019/2020

S/N	EASC TC REFERENCE NUMBER AND TITLE	HARMONIZED STANDARDS
	Regional steering committee	Regional Standardization Plan (RSP)
	EACS/TC 071 Cosmetics and Related Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FDEAS 956, Air freshener aerosols – Specification FDEAS 957, Aftershave – Specification FDEAS 958, Baby oils – Specification FDEAS 959, Body oils – Specification FDEAS 960, Deodorants and antiperspirants – Specification FDEAS 961, Glycerine for cosmetic industry – Specification FDEAS 962, Hair spray – Specification FDEAS 963, Lip balm (Lip salve) – Specification FDEAS 964, Lip shine (gloss) – Specification FDEAS 965, Lipstick – Specification FDEAS 966, Hair extensions – Specification DEAS 967-1, Butter for cosmetic use – Specification – Part 1: Shea butter
	EASC/ TC 017 on milk and milk products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DR EAS 1008: 2019Fermented milk – Specification DR EAS 1009: 2019Gouda cheese – Specification DR EAS 1010: 2019Cottage cheese – Specification DR EAS 1011: 2019Cheddar cheese – Specification DR EAS 1012: 2019Mozzarella cheese – Specification DR EAS 1013: 2019Cream cheese– Specification
	EASC/TC 21	
	EASC/TC 66 packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FDEAS 984_1:2020 Packaging ancillary materials – Specification – Part 1: Single-sided pressure sensitive adhesive tapes FDEAS 985_1:2020 Hermetic storage bags – Specification – Part 1: Woven polypropylene outer bag FDEAS 986:2020 Portable rigid plastic hermetic grain silo – Specification FDEAS 987_1:2020 Glass containers – Specification – Part 1: Bottles for carbonated and non-carbonated drinks

3. DOMESTICATION (ADOPTION) OF PUBLISHED REGIONAL STANDARDS

In the perspective of boosting intra-regional trade, standards are harmonized and adopted to serve as common language to express the required quality and safety of products that have to be traded within the region. This practice enables countries to get rid of outdated standards that cannot respond to the current quality, safety, technological and trade trend challenges and new products that need to be standardized.

In this regard, with the challenges of outdated standards, lack of standards for some potential products and harmonizing technicalities in the standards documents, Rwanda domesticates published regional standards to align the existing standards with current technologies in order to find appropriate solutions to current challenges and to develop new standards.

In the Financial Year 2019 / 2020, a total of 99 standards were adopted as national standards.

The adopted standards include 83 East African Standards and 16 African Standards distributed in the various sectors as shown below: indicated in table 2.

Table 2 showing percentage of standards adopted / domesticated in the Fiscal Year 2019/2020.

SECTOR	NUMBER OF ADOPTED STANDARDS	%
Agriculture and Agro-processing	47	47.5
Chemistry and light manufacturing	22	22.2
Steel products	4	4.0
Textile and Handcraft	24	24.2
Energy	2	2.0

4. PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL STANDARDIZATION ACTIVITIES

From 5th to 11th October 2019, Rwanda hosted the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Technical Committee meeting on Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) to discuss relevant documents aimed for implementation of ISO 45001:2018 standard. This meeting brought together experts from all over the world who are member of the ISO/TC 283 on Occupational Health and Safety.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), there are currently more than 2.78 million deaths a year because of occupational accidents or work-related diseases, in addition to 374 million non-fatal injuries and illnesses. Aside from the enormous impact on families and communities, the cost to business and economies is significant. To help organizations reduce work-related accidents, injuries and diseases, ISO developed the world's first International Standard for occupational health and safety

(OH&S). ISO 45001, Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements with guidance for use. The standard provides a framework to increase safety, reduce workplace risks and enhance health and well-being at work, enabling an organization to proactively improve its OH&S performance. Health and safety in the workplace are the number one concern of most businesses, yet still deaths and injuries occur. ISO 45001 sets the minimum standard of practice to protect employees worldwide.

Rwanda Standards Board hosted the ISO TC 283 Meeting on occupational health and safety. The meeting was organized with an objective of developing ISO 45003 Occupational Health and Safety – Psychological Health and Safety in the workplace – Guidelines and implementation handbook of ISO 45001, that provide the requirement to control the conditions and factors that could affect the health and safety of workers, visitors, or any other person in the workplace, to avoid their ill health and/or injury.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL POSITION ON ISO PROJECTS

Participation in international standardization activities offers Rwanda an opportunity to influence international standards, and provide the opportunity to local industries, to be familiar with the standard being harmonized, which facilitate their implementation once published. It also shortens the adoption process once published.

During the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB monitored the development of thirty one (31) ISO projects from seven ISO Technical Committees and actively participated in the development of the following fifteen (15) projects in the sector of food and related conformity assessment standards, essential oils, occupational health and safety, energy, and smart community. These monitored projects include ISO/CD 24081 Ground cassava leaves (Isombe) – Specification initiated by Rwanda.

DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS IN A BID TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19



In a bid to support the Government of Rwanda's protective measures, and Ministry of Health guidelines set in place to fight the spread of COVID-19 virus; Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) developed standards to enable the manufacturing of quality face masks:

1. **RS 433-1 2020 Face masks – Specification – Part 1 Medical masks**
2. **RS 433-2 2020 Face masks – Specification – Part 2 Barrier masks**

Those standards lay down technical specifications that must be observed by mask manufacturers to comply with quality and safety aspects. In addition, the standards provide for key test parameters to ensure the manufactured masks conform to the



preset quality and safety requirements. Access to those standards related to personal protection equipment (PPE) as well as other relevant standards used in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic was granted free of charge.

STANDARDIZATION ACTIVITIES CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PROMOTION OF MADE IN RWANDA - INTERVIEW WITH HON. MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY



The Made in Rwanda campaign was launched in 2015 and in 2017 Cabinet approved it into a policy. Effective implementation of the Made in Rwanda policy through supporting local industries, enhancing quality and quantity of goods produced will help reduce Rwanda's trade deficit. Rwandans must consume more local products and services; produce more for the Made in Rwanda policy to succeed.

What does the Made in Rwanda policy mean, what has been achieved so far, challenges and what is Government doing to promote the consumption and production of more Made in

Rwanda goods and services?. (Recall-Interview of the Rwanda Standards Journal with Honorable Soraya Hakuziyaremye Minister of Trade-May 2019)

IN 2015, THE GOVERNMENT OF RWANDA STARTED A CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE MADE IN RWANDA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES AND LATER ON THE MADE IN RWANDA POLICY WAS APPROVED BY CABINET. WHY WAS THIS NECESSARY?

Over the past years, Rwanda experienced a negative balance of payments. Made in Rwanda



initiative was therefore one gap through promoting production and consumption of locally made products. It is in this regard that Made in Rwanda initiative was introduced in 2015. In 2017, the Made in Rwanda Policy was passed by Cabinet as a guiding tool to implement the Made in Rwanda initiative. The Made in Rwanda Policy is a holistic roadmap to achieving competitiveness, building on recent positive momentum through two main channels. Firstly, it brings together existing Government interventions under a clear policy framework, including ongoing amendments to the public procurement law to give 15% preference to local products, VAT exemption for raw materials and capital goods and the Made in Rwanda communications campaign.

Secondly, it addresses remaining supply side bottlenecks via targeted interventions aimed at improving quality, boosting cost of competitiveness and linking anchor firms within domestic value chains and developing action plans for specific value chains. The Made in Rwanda Policy has five main pillars; Mind-set Change, Improving Quality, Reducing the Cost of Competitiveness, Promoting Backward Linkages, Sector Specific Action Plans.

THE PROMOTION OF MADE IN RWANDA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES GOES HAND IN HAND WITH ELIMINATING CHALLENGES

FACING RWANDA'S PRIVATE SECTOR. HOW IS MINICOM AND THE GOVERNMENT AT LARGE HELPING IN THIS REGARD?

To promote Made in Rwanda, it is imperative to work hand in hand with the Private Sector to address underlying issues affecting the performance of the industrial sector. Government of Rwanda is addressing key issues in trying to address the underlying challenges to increase production of local products, ensure competitiveness of locally made products and spur consumption of locally made products. One of the challenges being faced is the issue of lack of understanding of sector – specific constraints. This is being addressed through developing specific sector strategies and action plans.

Secondly, manufacturers were being faced with the challenge of high costs of production. Government is addressing this challenge by facilitating access to raw materials, skilled labour, finance, and modern technology through institutions like National Industrial Research and Development Agency (NIRDA), utilities like electricity, serviced land and efficient use of the available resources. Furthermore, there was an identified problem of poor quality goods. Through Rwanda Standards Board (RSB), we are helping put up the quality infrastructure to offer standardization services and increase support

to local manufacturers through programs like Zamukana Ubuziranenge to offer support in as far as quality is concerned.

More still, the problem of poor linkages between anchor firm and local suppliers is being addressed through improving linkages between suppliers and consumers. The annual Made in Rwanda Expo is one of the avenues to address this specific challenge. Lastly, the issue of biased perception of locally made products is being addressed first by encouraging manufacturers to adhere to standards in as far as production, branding and packaging is concerned and we are doing a deliberate communication campaign towards promoting locally made products.

WHAT ACHIEVEMENTS HAS THE MADE IN RWANDA POLICY REGISTERED SO FAR?

Made in Rwanda policy is bearing fruits. For example between the calendar years 2015 and 2017, exports increased by 69% while imports decreased by 4%. In the same period Rwanda's trade deficit decreased by 36%. Between the years 2016 and 2018, a significant increase of export was observed for different products like Garments which increased from USD 3.3 million in 2016 to USD 6.28million in 2018, Construction materials increased from USD 2.2 million in 2016 to USD 9.3 million in 2018 and Flours like maize and wheat flour increased from USD 24.8 million in 2016 to USD 52.9 million in 2018.

WHAT STRATEGIES DO YOU HAVE IN PLACE TO FACILITATE AND PROMOTE THE MADE IN RWANDA EXPORTS?

Since the launch of Made in Rwanda Initiative in 2015, the Government of Rwanda has put more efforts in attracting potential investors by availing serviced land and other supports such as VAT exemption, reduction of electricity tariff etc. More so, Export Growth Fund (EGF) has been restructured to facilitate more exporters.



Made in Rwanda policy is bearing fruits. For example between the calendar years 2015 and 2017, exports increased by 69% while imports decreased by 4%.

Trough institutions like NIRDA, industries are technically supported to acquire and use appropriate technology through open call program. Furthermore, RSB is strengthening her capacity in order to develop required standards and offer more testing and calibration services to manufacturers and is also supporting industries to acquire quality marks to enable them to be competitive locally and access foreign markets.

THE MADE IN RWANDA POLICY IS QUALITY AND MIND-SET CHANGE. HOW ARE YOU ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES?

As earlier mentioned, we are encouraging manufacturers to produce quality products, adhere to standards, do good branding and packaging and a communication campaign is being done geared towards promoting locally made products.

DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL MESSAGE TO RWANDANS IN REGARD TO EMBRACING MADE IN RWANDA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES?

I would like to call upon all Rwandans to give priority to locally made product. This will contribute much to our vision of self-reliance. I also request all manufacturers to improve the quality of what they are producing as well as increase the production to satisfy the local market and export the surplus. I further request all Government institutions and the Private Sector Federation to prioritize the implementation of Made in Rwanda Policy to ensure sustainability of the Made in Rwanda.

RSB STRENGTHENED CAPACITY BUILDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SMES AND STAKEHOLDERS THROUGH THE ZAMUKANA UBUZIRANENGE PROGRAM TO PROMOTE MADE IN RWANDA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



On the ground of Made-In-Rwanda philosophy, Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) introduced a new product/service safety performance system, also dubbed “Maturity Model” and commonly known as “Zamukana Ubuziranenge Program”. This program systematically develops and supports processing SMEs and other services to reach the desired quality and safety performance but also build a strong standards implementation and compliance culture in SMEs.

Broadly, Zamukana Ubuziranenge Program aims

at improving the quality of Made-in-Rwanda products and services for market access and competitiveness as stated in Pillar three (3) of the Made in Rwanda Policy (2018) focusing on quality. The program intends to support SMEs to establish and maintain the strong quality management systems in agro-processing industries through offsite and hands-on trainings but also provide advisory services to establish cost effective requisites such as premises and utilities, equipment and tools, packaging materials as well as labelling, which eventually will lead to certification.

✔ Training and Technical Support as a strategy used to ensure products and services meet standards requirements

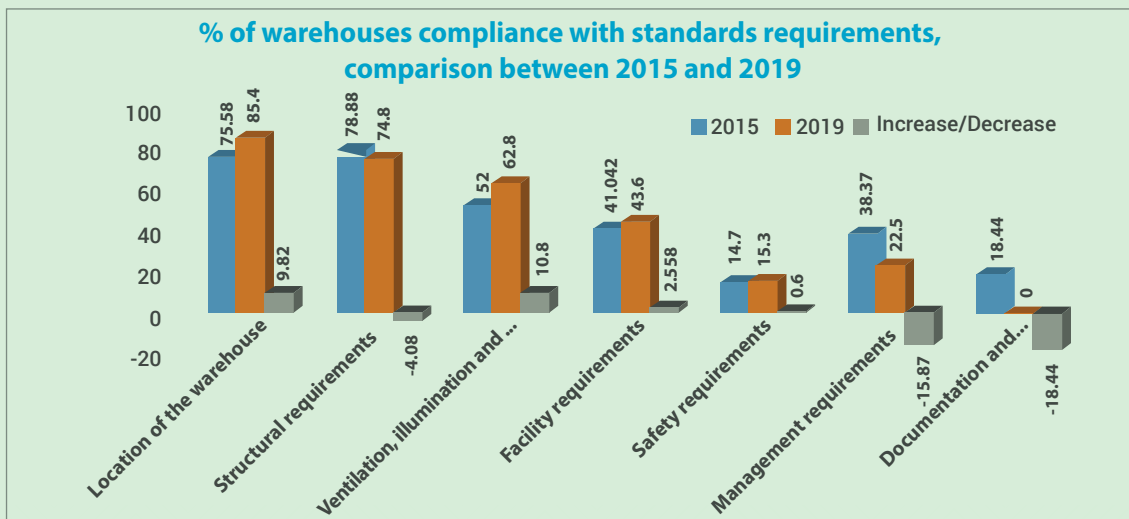
In the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB offered capacity building and technical support to stakeholders in order to position them to complying with standards requirements so as to be able to compete on the local and export markets. In this regard, 29 technical training sessions were offered to industries and service providers to help them implement specific standards including: Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) for food processing industries, Guidelines for Auditing Management Systems Requirements, Quality Management Systems Requirements, General Principle for Food Hygiene- Code of Practice, Food Safety management systems, General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories, products standards (Apiary, horticulture, cereals, milk and milk products and Alcoholic beverages) and Safe Use of Liquefied Petroleum Gases (LPG) and its equipment.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WAS OFFERED TO SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

Technical assistance intends to help Small and Medium Enterprises understand standards requirements in their field of interest, help them assess how they stand and accompany them in the journey to building the required capacity to meet the requirements. During the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB offered technical assistance to SMEs in the Made-in-Rwanda priority sectors including: agro – processing SMEs, light manufacturers in cosmetics, soaps and detergents, warehouse operators, beauty salons, SMEs involved in wood and furniture, textile and garments and to garages.

✔ Technical assistance to SMEs in agro-processing

In the Financial Year 2019/2020, 15 SMEs were planned to be recommended for certification. Those included SMEs operating in the area of cereals and cereal products, horticulture products, meat and meat products and milk and milk products. A call was made to SMEs to get



Graph 3 showing warehouses compliance with standard requirements, comparison between 2015 and 2019

assistance and from 82 SMEs that responded to the call for applications and requests for assistance: 66 SMEs were visited and their level of the standard compliance was assessed and provided with technical reports showing the area of improvement. From 66 SMEs assessed, 31 SMEs (50 trainees) were trained in the areas of cereals and cereal products, milk and milk products, horticulture products, honey and alcoholic beverages. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic not all SMEs were trained as planned. The work to train the remaining SMEs continues in the Financial Year 2020/2021.

✔ Technical assistance to warehouse operators

Considering the increase in production of cereals and pulses which moved from 370,523MT in 2006 to 672,000MT in 2018 (FAOSTAT, 2019), it is important to have warehouses around the country that meet the required standards and warehouse receipt system law in order to secure the quality and safety of stored grains. The introduction of warehouse receipts and contract farming as well as increased modernization of the agribusiness sector in Rwanda is another motivating factor to support continual improvement in the warehouses. Taking note of this, RSB designed a program to assist warehouses and the first assignment was to assess the level of compliance of warehouses against the requirements of RS 264:2020 Warehouse and warehousing for storage of bagged grains standard; and thus to ensure that the subsequent interventions such as training and coaching are in line with the need of every warehouse.

This exercise was conducted following the warehouse gap analysis under taken in 2015 and which covered 86 warehouses, distributed in 21 districts from all provinces and the City of Kigali. In the year 2019 / 2020, 33 warehouses from 6 districts underwent onsite training. The following graph shows SMEs that were found complying with standards requirements at more than 75%

as a result of comparison between the 2015 and 2019 status.

According to the assessment findings, it was observed that the changes in the level of compliance related to infrastructure including location, structure, facilities are insignificant. However, performance related to the maintenance which affect the structure of warehouses, performance related to management and documentation dropped significantly at -4.08%, -15.87% and -18.44%, respectively. It was observed that there is an increase in warehouses with cracks on the floor, destroyed drainage pipes, damaged screens/nets anti-birds/insects. None of the visited warehouses was taking records for traceability purposes nor did grading based on commodity standards.

The rate of decrease in compliance with important requirements related to the maintenance and management of warehouses implies that some of the warehouses will no longer be functional as required in a few years to come if no appropriate measures are taken to avert the situation.

After the assessment exercise, 95 operators from 16 warehouse owned by nine organizations were trained on warehouse, commodity and grading standards. Considering the level of compliance to warehouse standard, the management and handling of commodities, 8 warehouses were recommended to immediately progress for certification as RSB continues to support them.

Table 3 showing warehouses recommended to progress for certification

S/N	Company	Number of Warehouses
1.	East Africa Exchange (EAX)	03
2.	Rwanda Grains and Cereals Corporation (RGCC)	03
3.	SARURA commodities Ltd	01
4.	4-B holding Ltd	01



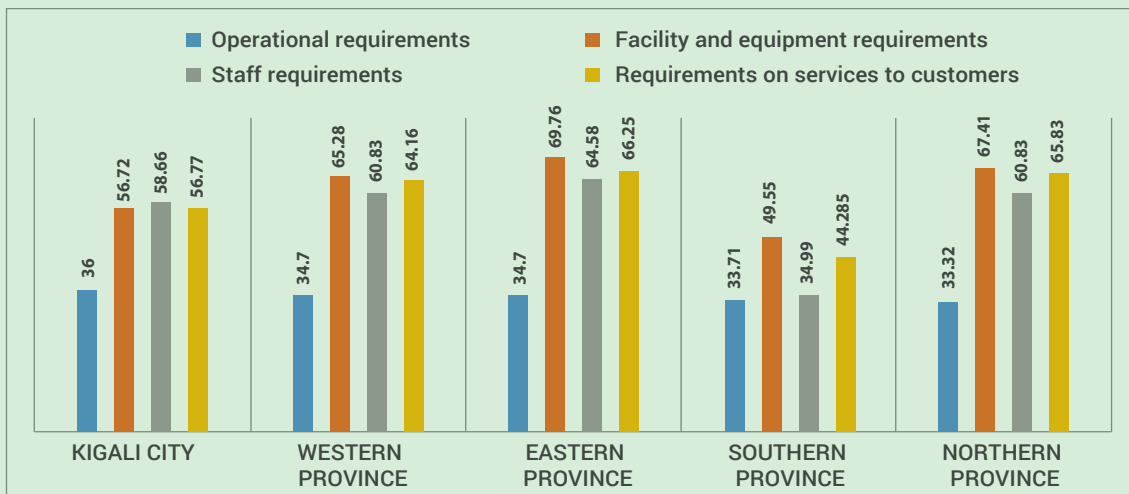
In order to make the existing warehouse infrastructures more profitable and to keep stored grains safe as required by food safety standards and warehouse receipt system law, recommendations were made to all concerned institutions and requested to join efforts to make correction and corrective actions of the identified gaps. Recommendations made include:

1. As most of the warehouses are owned by cooperatives, the competent authority in charge of cooperatives should sensitize cooperative manager to issue guidelines which help improve maintenance of warehouses and undertake regular control and inspection of the warehouse assets.
2. Construction of most of the warehouses was supported by the Ministry of Agriculture through its different projects (PASPA, RSSP) and there is still a need to support those cooperatives in the correction of some defects which may affect the storability of grains including repair of roofs, floors, vents and other defects as identified per warehouse.
3. Management related nonconformities are due to low level of awareness and competence in standards implementation and needs the intervention of Rwanda Standards Boards through awareness training on quality and food safety management in warehouses. The training on standards is also needed for all technicians and extension services which assist farmers and other layers of the value chain including transporters, post-harvest handling centres.
4. Except if there may be other warehouses not visited during the first exercise, the underutilization is not justified while the estimated total capacity of warehouses is only 23.75% of the total production in 2018. There may be unfair practices such as middleman or farmers storing production in their houses which requires both Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Trade and Industry to strictly organize concerned value chains, especially in the cereal sector.
5. Despite this underutilization, emerging new warehouses closer to existing ones were observed. New investment should consider production in the region and if possible organize concerned cooperatives so as to share existing infrastructures and put efforts

- on post-harvest infrastructures including dryers.
6. All the interventions may not be sustainable if they are not supported by appropriate regulation framework. The competent authorities having mandate to regulate commodity value chain(s) or any stage of them should establish guidelines and regulations which will sustain the culture of implementing standards and good practices in the warehouse day-to-day activities. This is in line with the implementation of the Law n°58/2017 of 21/1/2018 regulating the warehouse receipt system. This law stipulates the establishment of Ministerial Orders and Guidelines, so far not developed, which should allow the implementation of the law and improve the quality and safety of grains in Rwanda. These ministerial orders include:
 - a. An Order of the Minister determining fees for applying for application for and issuance of a warehouse receipt operator’s license (article 3).
 - b. An Order of the Minister determining those who are required to buy and sell commodities through a warehouse of the warehouse operator (article 31).
 - c. An Order of the Minister determining standards and other requirements for warehouse and warehouse management (Article 31).
 - d. General regulations prescribing the manner, in which specified commodities must be inspected, classified, graded or weighed for the purposes of being deposited in a warehouse (Article 31).

✔ RSB offered technical assistance to beauty salons to ensure safe and quality service

Unsafe or unhygienic practices in the beauty treatment industry can lead to the spread of infectious diseases that may affect the health of their client as well as salon operators. Illnesses such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS



Graph 4 showcasing the status of visited Beauty Salons at provincial and City of Kigali level

can spread by blood-to-blood contact, so it is essential for staff to understand the precautions required for any procedure that may involve skin penetration and possible blood contamination. To assist salon operators to improve the quality and safety of their services, in 2017, RSB published a standard on cosmetology and wellness for beauty salons. In the framework of implementing this standard, Rwanda Standards Board targeted to assist fifteen beauty salons to upgrade their level of compliance and make them ready for certification at the end of the Financial Year 2019–2020. In order to achieve the above target, 54 beauty salons were identified from 10 districts (5 from Gasabo, 6 from Nyarugenge, 5 from Kicukiro, 6 from Musanze, 6 from Rubavu, 4 from Rwamagana, 4 from Kayonza, 4 from Nyagatare, 7 from Huye and 7 from Muhanga districts). The identified salons were assessed against compliance with the requirements of RS 355:2017 Cosmetology and wellness for beauty salons standard. The graph below shows the status of the assessed beauty salons compared to the requirements of the salon standard.

According to the graph 4 on page 36, the assessment pointed out the following findings:

- ✔ Operational requirements are highly complied by beauty salons located in Kigali City and lowly complied by beauty salons located in Northern Province;
- ✔ Beauty salons located in Eastern Province have a high level of compliance with facility and equipment requirements, while beauty salons located in Southern Province lowly comply with the same requirement;
- ✔ Beauty salons located in Eastern Province showed high level compliance with the staff requirements whereas beauty salons located in Southern Province were found to be lowly compliant with the same requirements; and
- ✔ Salons located in Eastern Province were found with high level of compliance with requirements on service to customers; while beauty salons located in Southern Province showed low compliance with the same requirements.

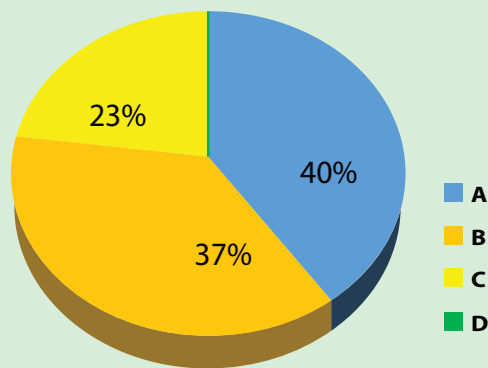
After conducting the gap analysis, RSB offered onsite training on RS 355:2017 Requirements. Staff of the assessed beauty salons located in Muhanga, Huye, Rwamagana, Kayonza, Nyagatare and Musanze Districts were trained with a total of 228 participants representing 27 beauty salons. As the training was coupled with initial coaching, the sessions started with discussing specific technical report to agree on the identified gaps. The process ended in an assessment of compliance for the coached salons and 14 in total including 2 in Muhanga, 1 in Huye, 2 in Musanze, 2 in Rubavu, 2 in Nyarugenge, 1 in Kicukiro, 1 in Gasabo, 1 in Nyagatare, 1 in Kayonza and 1 in Rwamagana had closed the afore-identified gaps hence have been recommended to proceed for certification.

✔ **Technical assistance to light manufacturers in cosmetics, soaps and detergents**

Light manufacturing is one of the priority sectors of the Made in Rwanda policy. The sector offers opportunities for emerging SMEs, and consequently, Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) developed standards on cosmetics, soaps and detergents to promote quality assurance in Rwanda's cosmetics, soaps and detergents manufacturing sector for market access and competitiveness. During the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB made a call for application of SMEs in light manufacturing to acquire technical assistance under Zamukana Ubuziranenge Program. The call was responded to by 43 SMEs in cosmetics, soaps and detergents sub-categories. Technical assistance that was offered to the applicants included situation assessment and gap analysis in complying with relevant

standards, training and monitoring the closing of identified gaps.

The process started with conducting the situation assessment and gap analysis in complying with relevant standards, and the following pie chart shows the level of compliance for assessed SMES for manufacturers of cosmetics, soaps and detergents:



Where : **A: Basic, shyiramo imbaraga ; B: Satisfactory , Byiza; C: Good , byiza;D: Very Good, byiza cyane**

Pie Chart showing level of compliance for visited SMEs involved in the manufacturer of cosmetics, soaps and detergents

Based on the assessment results, all the SMEs need to put more effort in the implementation of the standard towards full compliance with the requirements. This will also requires the intervention of public and non-public institutions by providing technical and financial support. RSB continues technical assistance to the benchmarked SMEs/Cooperatives, and they are trained in accordance with their individual quality performance for improvement. The development of training materials reflected the capacity building needs of the assessed SMEs/

Cooperatives as well.

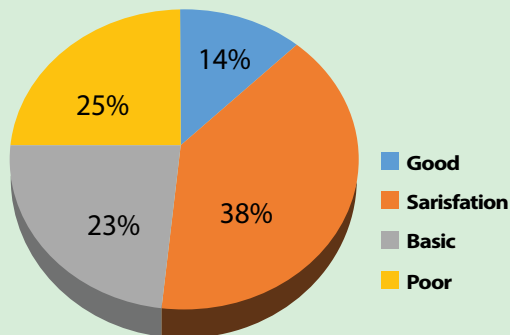
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SMES INVOLVED IN WOOD AND FURNITURE

Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) partnered with the German International Cooperation for sustainable development (GiZ Eco-Emploi) to develop standards on timber and wooden furniture that will promote trade and quality assurance in Rwanda’s wood value chain. This project was in response to the tenth (10th) resolution of the 2016 National Leadership Retreat which stated “Specifically promote industries that add value to products available in Rwanda: Wood products, milk, hides and skins, minerals, textile and shoe making industries”. The developed standards will promote quality improvement of local timbers and strengthen the local wood sector, promoting an import substitution with local products.

In the Financial Year 2019/2020 Action Plan, RSB planned to train at least 30 operators in the wood value chain on the implementation of standards related to the wood sector. These include Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and cooperatives. The trainings activities intended to promote the understanding of wood value chain operators with regards to the requirements of standards related to the wood sector after gap analysis. The process started with conducting an assessment to the companies (i.e.: SMEs and cooperatives). 48 companies were ranked in four categories namely good, satisfactory, basic and poor. According to figure 6, only 14% of the assessed companies (7 companies) were ranked as good. This means that they operate generally well with better equipment and quality control such as sourcing raw materials and final products of good quality. The quality control and infrastructure in these companies both comply at 67.14% on average. 38% of the assessed companies were ranked satisfactorily which means that, of the requirements assessed, they comply with them



on average between 50-59%. This indicates that they have relatively major work for improvement. The remaining companies, 23% were ranked basic whereas 25% were ranked poor. This means that part of them meet basic requirements with almost poor infrastructure, other have basic equipment with poor working condition. The pie chart below summarizes the findings:



Pie Chart showing ranking of all assessed SMEs and cooperatives in the wood and furniture sector

Based on the assessment conducted, the following recommendations were made:

- ✔ To train SMEs and cooperatives on national standards related to wood sector;
- ✔ Enhance the efforts made by Rwanda Wood Value Chain Association (RWVCA)/Private Sector Federation (PSF) and concerned government institutions to improve the performance of the wood sector;
- ✔ To collaborate with relevant stakeholders to establish a laboratory for testing of wooden products and a facility to dry timbers to the required moisture content as set out in relevant national standards. This will help SMEs and cooperatives to get certification marks from RSB or other certifying bodies,
- ✔ Request concerned institutions to build udukiri in every district especially in the Northern Province and encourage operators to use them;

- ✔ To collaborate with stakeholders such as GIZ Eco-Emploi, MINICOM, NIRDA, RDB, PSF, RCA, BDF and NEP to deliver a full package to companies to be trained on national standards relevant to the wood sector,
- ✔ To collaborate with relevant government institutions for fair import of timbers from neighbor countries (for example DRC).

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SMES INVOLVED IN TEXTILES AND GARMENTS SUB-SECTOR

In 2015, the Government of Rwanda moved to ban the importation of second hand clothes and footwear. This decision originated from the need to promote local production of textiles and garment products. Local manufacturers are expected to play an important role in feeding the local market to achieve self-reliance. To boost the textile sector and attract more investors, the Government has taken the measures to increasing import tariffs on used clothes, waive import duties on fabrics and accessories used in textile production and Government avails land to investors engaged in apparel production, to mention but a few.

Despite the facilitating measures at hand, many of the textile and garments companies still work in non-conducive environment due to the unregulated practices of workers, inappropriate infrastructures, construction and location. Services offered are questionable due to the lack of management skills, lack of skills in advanced tailoring and design, lack of coordination among market actors, unqualified technicians and absence of proper equipment to provide good services.

RSB under ZAMUKANA UBUZIRANENGE program organized a series of activities to help local manufacturers in textile and garments sector to comply with the existing national, regional, continental and international standards to ensure that manufactures of textile and garments deliver

acceptable, safe, efficient and quality products and services that meet customer satisfaction into a good environment.

This was necessary to:

- ✔ Raise awareness and training on standards requirements in textiles industries;
- ✔ Establish a body either a governmental or private in charge of regulating the sector;
- ✔ Quality assurance to ensure the quality of raw materials from abroad before they are released to the market;
- ✔ Inspire all the textile operators to join cooperatives since many are still working on their own and this discourages those in cooperatives;
- ✔ To invite and work hands in hands with other relevant stakeholders such as MINICOM, NIRDA, RDB, PSF. RCA, BDF...so that the full package is delivered to the trainees during the upcoming training.

Technical assistance was offered to 48 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the textile and garments sector. Activities that were conducted included identification of the SMEs, benchmarking the SMEs and providing with them training on relevant quality applicable standards. The next phase will emphasize monitoring of the effectiveness in implementing the standards, and coaching of SMEs towards certification.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO GARAGES

Garages are important in ensuring safe and healthy vehicles on the Road. Against this background, Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) developed and published standards to support the transport sector. Those Standards include but not limited to RS 407- 1: 2019, Emission limit – Performance evaluation – Part 1: Road vehicle,



RS 318- 1: 2016, Roadworthiness testing – Part 1: Motor vehicles emission requirements to deal with mechanical soundness of vehicles and RS 402: 2019 on Garages – Construction and management requirements. Developed standards help to have vehicles that are safe for transport with less harm to the environment.

For continual support to garages in meeting standards requirements, RSB under ZAMUKANA UBUZIRANENGE program, planned to support potential garages across the country to meet standards requirement aiming at promoting safety, health and professionalism of garages. In the 2019/2020 Financial Year, 15 garages were planned to be trained on standards requirement. Among the activities to be conducted were site visits to evaluate the level of compliance and subsequent needs in terms of capacity development against compliance to RS 402: 2019 Garages – Construction and management requirements standard. Visits and assessments against the requirements of the standard were conducted to 60 garages in Gasabo, Nyarugenge, Kicukiro, Musanze, Rubavu, Huye and Muhanga Districts.

In Kigali all 32.35 % of ‘assessed companies are above minimum requirements with 4 (11.76 %) garages recommended for S-Mark while seventeen (17) , (50%) were recommended for

training so that they can also be able to start certification process. Thirteen (13) garages which is 38.23 % were found in very poor conditions.

Southern province is the second to have the highest number of companies in poor conditions after City of Kigali, whereby among thirteen (13) assessed garages only one (1) is at satisfactory level while twelve (12) which is (92.3%) do not meet minimum requirements, and among them four (4) may be trained to improve their conditions to become at satisfactory level whereas the remaining eight (8) were found to be in poor conditions. In total, five (5%) garages were recommended for training and none of the assessed garages in Southern province qualify for recognition.

Western province is the third to have the highest percentage number of poor performing garages at basic level with four (4), thus 57.14%; while

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Training, technical assistance and any means of knowledge transfer necessitate availability of guiding tools to enhance the knowledge transfer process.

garages meeting satisfactory level are two (2) and no garage was found with very good performance. Findings from the overall assessment indicate a potential figure of 35.71% garages that can be trained to improve their performance towards certification.

Among the thirteen (13) companies assessed in Northern and western Provinces no garage shows very good performance rather 15.38 % of the garages were at satisfactory level and 84.6% were found with poor performance. Seven (7) garages were recommended for training.

Table 4 showing performance levels of assessed garages and number of garages recommend for training and coaching

“ For continual support to garages in meeting standards requirements, RSB under ZAMUKANA UBUZIRANENGE program, planned to support potential garages across the country to meet standards requirement aiming at promoting safety, health and professionalism of garages.

No	Province	Number of companies assessed	Ranking	Number	Recommended for training and coaching	Recommended for recognition/certification
1	Northern province	6	Poor	2	4	0
			Basic	3		
			Satisfactory	1		
			Very Good	0		
2	Western province	7	Poor	4	3	0
			Basic	2		
			Satisfactory	1		
			Very Good	0		
3	Southern province	13	Poor	8	5	0
			Basic	4		
			Satisfactory	1		
			Very Good	0		
4	City of Kigali	34	Poor	13	17	4
			Basic	10		
			Satisfactory	7		
			Very Good	4		
Total		60			29	4



NEW STANDARD SPECIFIC TRAINING MODULAR COURSES WERE DEVELOPED AND APPROVED

Training, technical assistance and any means of knowledge transfer necessitate availability of guiding tools to enhance the knowledge transfer process. In the Financial Year 2019/2020 RSB developed and distributed to stakeholders 13 new training modular courses specific for ISO/IEC 17025 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories, ISO 9001-Quality Management Systems, ISO 19011:2018 Guidelines for auditing management systems, RS 184: 2017 Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and ISO 22000:2018 Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) and modular courses for product specification. The following 13 modular courses were developed and approved as per procedure on the development of training materials.

a) 4 modular prepared on Measurement traceability, Assuring the Quality of Test Results, Methods Validation, Estimation

b) 6 sector specific modular courses were developed:

1. Training module on Cereals and cereal product standards,
2. Training module on Horticulture standards,
3. Training module on Milk and Milk products,

4. Training module on Meat and Meat products standards,
5. Training module on Apiary products standards and
6. Training module on Alcoholic beverages

c) 2 cross-cutting training modules were developed

1. Training modular on equipment in food establishment
2. Training modular course on building of food establishment including Potato collection centre, warehouse for bagged products.

d) Modular courses on ISO/IEC 17025 standard

Three materials on HACCP, FSMS and PRPs applied in manufacturing were also developed pending approval.

In addition to the above materials, the development of the following training and awareness materials was initiated:

1. Awareness materials on acoustic noise
2. Training materials on eco-labeling
3. Kinyarwanda version of the training materials on saloons
4. Training materials garages
5. Training materials on textile
6. Training materials on LPG
7. Training materials on wood and wood products.

STANDARDS AWARENESS ACTIVITIES INCREASE UPTAKE AND ADHERENCE TO STANDARDS



Standards awareness and education is one of the core responsibilities of RSB. In the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB conducted 15 awareness events on standards requirements and policies. Those included:

- ✓ Two awareness events offered to 20 public institutions on ISO 9001; and air pollution and waste water management awareness offered to Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA).
- ✓ Seven (7) awareness activities were also carried out at the occasion of celebrating the World Standards Day 2019 under the theme **"Video Standards Create a Global Stage"** to students in Integrated Polytechnic Regional Colleges (IPRCs), video makers and manufacturers.
- ✓ Four (4) public lectures on standardization were undertaken at the African Leadership University, University of Tourism Technology and Business Studies (UTB), Kigali Independent University (ULK) and University of Rwanda-College of Science and Technology (CST).

Furthermore, standards guidelines were developed to support in the awareness campaign to combat the Covid-19 pandemic.

These are:

- ✓ Guidelines to garage operators
- ✓ Guidelines to beauty salons
- ✓ Guidelines to processors of hand sanitizers

RSB STARTS THE JOURNEY TO INTEGRATE GENDER EQUALITY IN STANDARDIZATION ACTIVITIES



Standardization is a cross-cutting issue. The United Nations (UN) in 2015 introduced the 2030 sustainable development agenda which among other areas focuses on gender promotion. Integration of gender lens in standardization is seen as the best way to sustainably empower women and girls.

Specifically, the Sustainable Development Goal number 5 (SDG5) on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls captures the attention of all key players in trade promotion, and this led to having gender inclusiveness on every strategic forum's agenda.

Acknowledging the importance of achieving SDG 5 and thus incorporating standardization as a sustainable development cross cutting aspect, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) through its Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) defined promotion of gender inclusiveness in standardization as an effective contributing factor to achieving the SDG 5 and therefore initiated the **Gender Responsive Standards Initiative**; which further was embraced by Standards Bodies across the globe.

The UNECE Gender Responsive Standards Initiative aims to provide a practical framework for standards bodies seeking to make the standards they develop, and the standards development process they follow, gender responsive.

This initiative has been launched in 2016 with the following main objectives:

- ✔ Strengthening the use of standards and technical regulations as powerful tools to attain SDG 5
- ✔ Integrating a gender lens in the development of both standards and technical regulations; and

- ✓ Elaborating gender indicators and criteria that could be used in standards development.

To realize these aims, the Initiative brings together a diverse working group composed of representatives from standardization bodies, as well as experts on gender issues and women's empowerment, representatives of regulatory bodies and policymakers, non-governmental organizations, UN organizations and global members of the academic community.

The working group exchange information and best practice about successful approaches to gender-responsive standards development and implementation and resolve to work toward achieving the initiative objectives. The working group pledge to make standards and the standards development process gender responsive by signing the **Gender Responsive Standards and Standards Development Declaration**, the commitment expressed by standards organizations.

RSB SIGNED THE DECLARATION ON GENDER RESPONSIVE STANDARDS AND STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

In line with the existing Government of Rwanda (GoR) policy and regulatory frameworks established to achieve the ultimate goal of preserving the principles of gender equality and women's rights, Rwanda has made great efforts to promote gender inclusiveness in all sectors contributing to sustainable development of the country.

Furthermore, guided by National Gender Policy, different sectors both public and private have developed gender mainstreaming strategies to align their strategic orientations with the existing initiatives with gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

Recognizing the need to support the governmental initiative on promoting gender equality through gender inclusiveness in standardization, conformity assessment and metrology services, Rwanda Standards Board resolved to join its efforts with the international standardization community by signing the declaration on Gender responsive standards and standards development as a commitment to integrate gender accountability in her daily delivered services.

Currently, RSB is in process of mainstreaming gender in her operations under the support of Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), an important stage in implementing the signed declaration.

By mainstreaming gender and implementing the signed declaration group of actions, RSB is mainly expecting to achieve the following:

- ✓ Establish effective framework to promote equal participation and leadership in standardization, conformity assessment and metrology activities.
- ✓ To establish mechanism to continually assess challenges that hinder access of both women and men to standardization, conformity assessment and metrology services and propose solutions.
- ✓ To establish mechanism to continually assess the impact of standardization, conformity assessment and metrology services in trade participation to both women and men to and propose solutions to the observed challenges.
- ✓ To generate gender desegregated data on both women and men in trade to guide policy development and strategic planning.

RSB SIGNING OF THE UNECE GENDER RESPONSIVE STANDARDS INITIATIVE IS A POSITIVE STEP TOWARDS ENSURING SUSTAINABLE GENDER EQUITY IN RWANDA – INTERVIEW WITH THE CHIEF GENDER MONITOR, ROSE RWABUHIHI

To achieve the SDG5, Rwanda Standards Board partnered with Gender Monitoring Office to implement the Gender Responsive Initiative. The Rwanda Standards Journal made an encounter with the Chief Gender Monitor. Below are the excerpts:

QN: BRIEFLY TELL US THE MANDATE OF GENDER MONITORING OFFICE?

ANS: Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) was formed in respect of the Government of Rwanda's commitment to building a society that gives and respects everyone's rights. The country considers gender equality as a strategy for the respect of human rights, democracy and good governance for sustainable development. The Government has put in place laws, policies, strategies and regulations in addition to domestication of different regional and international commitments as well as establishment of institutions mandated to promote gender equality between men and women, boys and girls.

To ensure compliance and effective implementation of the various national, regional and international commitments, the Government of Rwanda established the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) through the Constitution of 2003 revised in 2015, with a mandate to monitor the respect of Gender Equality principles, promote gender accountability at all levels and fight against Gender Based Violence and related injustices. The Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) is established by the law No 51/2007 Of 20/09/2007 which



Rose RWABUHIHI , Chief Gender Monitor.

determines its responsibilities, organization and functioning.

GMO strives to effectively monitor gender mainstreaming and the fight against GBV/ Injustices in public, private, civil society and religious institutions to achieve gender equality in Rwanda.

QN: WHAT IS THE PICTURE OF GENDER EQUALITY IN RWANDA WHEN IT COMES TO ACTIVITIES PERTAINING TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

ANS: As clearly stipulated in the various Government of Rwanda development agenda (Vision 2020, NST-1 and Vision 2050) aimed

at “transforming Rwanda into a middle-income country, an economic trade and communications hub”, aspects of Gender and Family Promotion are prominently highlighted as one of the crosscutting areas. These frameworks set a strong and solid stage for gender equality and women’s empowerment was set for women and men of Rwanda to realize their rights, potentials, aspirations and be full partners and beneficiaries in the Country’s development. From transition to transformation, it is visible that Gender Equality and the empowerment of women in Rwanda is not a myth but an achievable goal in the journey of transformation.

A lot has been done as achieved thus far as seen in the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 revised in 2015 where the principles of gender equality and women’s rights are strongly enshrined and provides for the minimum 30% quota for women in all decision-making organs, in Rwanda’s Vision 2020, in Gender Sector Mainstreaming Strategies, National Gender Policy 2010, Girls’ Education Policy 2008, National Policy against Gender Based Violence 2011, The Health Sector Policy 2015, Organic Law N° 12/2013/OL of 12/09/2013 on State Finances and Property, Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation 2018 - 2024 (PSTA IV), National Decentralization Policy 2012, Law N°27/2016 of 08/07/2016 Governing Matrimonial Regimes, Donations and Successions.

More so a lot has been achieved in terms of gender equality in economic transformation, i.e access to finance, employment, agriculture, Information and Communications Technology sectors, Entrepreneurship and Business Development

Gender Monitoring Office is an institution mandated to ensuring gender equity and monitoring gender based violence in service delivery. It is an institution that ensures gender accountability as a principle of inclusiveness in good governance, service delivery and democracy. It is responsible

for monitoring gender inclusiveness in all sectors i.e. Government institutions, private sector, NGOs, Faith based institutions to mention but a few. All these institutions have a responsibility to ensure gender inclusiveness and fight gender based violence and gender discrimination.

QN: AS THE ORGAN IN CHARGE OF PROMOTING GENDER IN RWANDA, HOW DID YOU ASSESS RWANDA STANDARDS BOARD (RSB)’S SIGNATURE OF THE GENDER RESPONSIVE STANDARDS AND STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT DECLARATION AND WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

ANS: We would like to first of all thank RSB for signing this agreement. Gender based issues are all encompassing. They require consented efforts from all stakeholders in government, civil society and the private sector.

We as an institution charged with gender monitoring, are excited by this declaration. We are looking forward to seeing gender sensitive standards being developed and also have more women and girls getting involved in standards setting activities like RSB Technical Committees.

Positive strides ought to be taken by ensuring that there is gender equity in government, civil society, Faith Based Institutions and the private sector to ensure that gender equity is observed in the management structure and products and services offered. The declaration is a positive step RSB has taken to ensuring that the aspect of gender equity takes a center stage when setting standards.

RSB has developed standards that touch our social and economic aspects of life. This declaration will ensure that women and girls rights are respected and taken care of in the day today implementation of these standards. This declaration will ensure that women and girls can easily assess social amenities without any difficulty of discrimination.

CONTINUAL UPGRADE OF NATIONAL QUALITY TESTING LABORATORIES REMAINS A PRIORITY TO ASSURE PRODUCT AND SERVICE QUALITY AND COMPETITIVENESS



Conformity assessment is an integral pillar of the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) that serves as a bridge between standards and the market. Conformity assessment when applied correctly, help businesses to improve competitiveness and facilitate trade, as customers have greater confidence and trust in goods and services purchased. Manufacturers can use conformity assessment to create a market advantage as they can demonstrate that their products and services fulfill requirements established in standards and technical regulations through the use of product certification marks and test certificates.

Without an effective and properly resourced testing facility at the National Standards Body, the private sector has less opportunity to get their products tested in Rwanda, and instead are forced to have various product samples tested in neighboring countries and abroad thus increasing

not only the cost but also causing a longer lead time in receiving back the test results. Without effective publicly available testing facilities, Rwanda would be falling behind other African countries, and therefore, the country took the initiative to strengthen and develop its testing facilities and in-house capabilities for the benefit of Rwandan industry and its citizens.

To support the implementation of Standards, RSB under the National Quality Testing Laboratory Division (NQTLD) has established Chemical Laboratories, Biotechnology Laboratories and Materials Testing Laboratories with a scope of **374 parameters as of June 2020**. The primary function of the testing laboratories is to provide a wide range of laboratory testing services for verification of Standard requirement compliance of different products, quality control of products from different industries and SMEs, assistance for research organization, the valuing of goods

for purposes of trade, support regulatory functions in case of product complaints, check for composition and or strength of materials and confirm the absence or presence of banned ingredients or unwanted substance.

The National Quality Testing Laboratories provide the following services;

Materials testing laboratories offer:

- ✔ Civil and Construction material analysis
- ✔ Soil analysis
- ✔ Concrete materials and products analysis
- ✔ Building materials analysis
- ✔ Electrical and electronics analysis
- ✔ Mechanical and metallurgy engineering analysis
- ✔ Textile products analysis

Biotechnology Laboratories offer:

- ✔ Food microbiological analysis
- ✔ Nonfood microbiological analysis
- ✔ Environmental microbiology analysis
- ✔ Anti-bioactivity analysis

Chemical Laboratories offer:

- ✔ Organic chemistry analysis
- ✔ Pesticides and veterinary drugs residues
- ✔ Pesticides formulation analysis
- ✔ Petroleum and biodiesel analysis
- ✔ Essential oils and traditional Medicines analysis
- ✔ Inorganic chemistry analysis
- ✔ Trace metals analysis
- ✔ Radiation analysis
- ✔ Minerals analysis
- ✔ Industrial and environmental chemistry analysis
- ✔ Seeds analysis

- ✔ Fertilizer analysis
- ✔ Food nutrient and additives analysis
- ✔ Mycotoxins analysis

TESTING SCOPE WAS INCREASED

In a bid to respond to the Government of Rwanda (GoR) target to ensure households get access to electricity in order to accelerate the economic development of the country through enhancing their health and standards of living, during the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB added six (06) parameters related to electrical and electronics parameters for safety and energy efficiency. This addition comes to complement the program under implementation to install the Solar Home Systems (SHS) in rural and remote areas that are not connected to the electricity grid due to their geographical terrain.

To check and assure the quality and electrical potential capability of imported SHS, RSB procured a high technology Battery Testing Machine, Solar Panel Testing Kits and Flow Detection Gauge equipment to test the following critical parameters of SHSs system:

- ✔ open circuit voltage
- ✔ battery maximum capacity and life span
- ✔ battery safety
- ✔ solar panel maximum power at standard test conditions
- ✔ solar panel efficiency
- ✔ ultrasonic inspection of flows or material

Solar Home Systems in rural areas are capable of electrifying homes, villages, farms, small industries, water supply pumps and irrigations, reduce the use of candles, kerosene, firewood, improve the quality of indoor and outdoor environment. The laboratory test results will help regulators to limit access of substandard SHSs products at the domestic market.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE EVOLUTION OF RSB LABORATORIES TESTING CAPACITY

The Testing Laboratory was established as a unit in 2002. At the time, most of the testing parameters were subcontracted to Kenya Bureau Standards (KEBS) and other laboratories in the region. In the Financial Years 2002-2006, the laboratory could only test 60 parameters and most of them were being tested using old test methods since there was no equipment in place. The total number of tested samples was 600 in 2006 when the testing laboratory acquired the Modern Kjeltex, Soxtec and other equipment. The scope of testing increased to 70 parameters, at that time and only four (4) laboratories were operational: General Chemistry, Spectroscopy and Chromatography and Microbiology.

- ✓ In the Fiscal Year 2007/2008, the Organic Chemistry Laboratories started operating and more equipment were procured such as GCECD and HPLC. The scope of testing increased from 70 to 80 parameters and tested samples reached 800.
- ✓ In the Fiscal Year 2008/2009, the laboratory started participating in East African Community Proficiency Testing (EAC PT). The scope of testing was 87 and the laboratory tested 920 samples.
- ✓ Fiscal Year 2010/2011 saw the start of the Inorganic Chemistry Laboratories and new AAS with Graphite Furnace, Nitrous Oxide and FIAS installed, more than 20 elements of heavy Metals added to the 107, tested samples reached 1,046. Also, with the introduction of Petroleum laboratory, Destructive testing and civil engineering, tested samples reached 1,066 and the scope of testing was 113 parameters.
- ✓ In the Fiscal Year 2011/2012, Non-destructive

testing and Mycotoxin laboratories were added to the scope of testing reached 160 parameters and samples tested were 1,834. Antibiotics residues and Illegal dyes testing was introduced, and Mycotoxin testing scope increased, the tested samples increase to 2,067 and the scope of testing was 180 parameters.

- ✓ Fiscal Year 2013/2014 saw the start of the packaging materials testing laboratory and the scope of testing increased to 200 parameters and the number of tested samples was 2,888. Operational laboratories increased to 10 from four (04) in 2006.
- ✓ During the Fiscal Year 2014/2015, 25 new parameters were added making a cumulative number of 225 parameters, then in the Fiscal Year 2015/2016, 30 new testing parameters were added to the existing scope to make it 255 parameters cumulatively.
- ✓ In the Fiscal Year 2016/2017, with the installation of the pharmaceutical testing laboratory, the scope was increased by 34 new additional parameters, making a cumulative number of 289 parameters.
- ✓ In the Fiscal Year 2017/2018 with the installation of other equipment in pharmaceutical testing laboratory, the number of parameter increased by 66 and the cumulative number of parameters was 355 parameters. 13 new parameters in the areas of electrical, paints and textile have been added during 2018/2019 financial year which gives a cumulative number of 368 parameters to date.

The target for Fiscal Year 2019/2020 was to add 3 parameters on baseline of 368, but six parameters were added which gives a cumulative number of 374 parameters.

ACCREDITED SCOPE OF NATIONAL QUALITY TESTING LABORATORIES WAS INCREASED AND ACCREDITATION VALIDITY EXPANDED



Testing laboratory involves multistep processes that are susceptible to multiple sources of error. These errors can lead to significant result variability and decreased accuracy, which in turn can potentially lead to incorrect diagnosis and inappropriate treatment. Production of quality data on which decisions are based on good laboratory practice (GLP), guidelines and other international conventions. High quality laboratory results are also required to protect the health and safety of consumers.

Laboratory accreditation is a widely accepted process of evaluation of a laboratory's quality, performance, reliability and efficiency. It is a means to promote and enforce better quality in testing laboratory and to ultimately reduce testing errors. Accreditation also increases the credibility of the results and services delivered by a laboratory through providing recognition that it is compliant with quality and competence standards considered necessary for accurate, reliable and safe testing. The value of accreditation lies in promoting the delivery of reliable results to the customers.

Concerning promotion of trade and industry, laboratory accreditation facilitates trade as governments increase technical barriers to trade in an effort to regulate their markets. Accreditation provides assurance to trading partners that an exporting country is competent to test, inspect or certify to the trading partners' requirements, thus overcoming trade barriers by assuring compliance to the WTO/TBT Agreement. Also, accreditation of laboratories ensures that test results can be reproduced to a sufficient degree in any accredited laboratory. It is an independent method of monitoring laboratory competence and performance and it assures the validity of results to users. An accredited laboratory can establish Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) with counterpart bodies. These agreements ensure equivalency of systems in different countries. There is automatic acceptance of test results from accredited laboratories, which are parties to a given MRA. Costs are reduced because there is no need for duplicate testing by both exporters and importers and this serves to eliminate technical trade barriers and facilitate trade.

Beyond that, using accredited laboratories also facilitates economic growth. The accrediting process relies on a uniform approach to determining laboratory competence – an approach that has been accepted and implemented across many borders. Because of internationally accepted testing and measurement practices, data generated by an accredited laboratory may lead to the more ready acceptance of exported goods in overseas markets. Laboratory accreditation is the basis for attesting that you offer internationally recognized and trusted test results, and ensuring customers that our testing laboratories offer services in accordance to International Standards and that the results generated are accepted and trusted worldwide.

During the Financial Year 2019/2020, 8 new parameters in microbiology and food chemistry laboratories were accredited. That addition increased the number of accredited parameters from 12 to 20 parameters.

The new accredited parameters are:

- ✔ Yeasts and mould in milk and milk products (cheese, yoghurt, fermented milk, etc)
- ✔ Yeasts and moulds in liquid and semi-solid products (like tomato paste, mayonnaise, etc)
- ✔ Yeasts and moulds in liquid and semi-solid products (flour, tea, coffee, etc)
- ✔ Quantitative determination of aflatoxin B1 and total aflatoxin in Maize flour
- ✔ Determination of aflatoxin M1 content in Milk and milk powder.
- ✔ Determination of copper in Water
- ✔ Determination of zinc in potable, packaged drinking and packaged mineral waters
- ✔ Determination of pH value potable, drinking and mineral water.

It is important to note that accreditation of our quality testing laboratories will greatly contribute to the promotion and competitiveness of Made in Rwanda products, especially those exported to regional and international markets. In addition, accreditation of laboratory services will also benefit local consumers through ensuring public safety through offering conformity assessment services of produced products and those traded on local market.

THE VALIDITY OF ACCREDITATION OF LABORATORY SERVICES WAS MAINTAINED AND EXTENDED FROM 2020 UP TO 2023

At the beginning of the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB targeted to maintain accreditation for accredited scope, register for accredited proficiency testing schemes and to get 10 test methods verified. RSB submitted applications for accreditation of 10 parameters and had 10 parameters assessed for accreditation. On this milestone:

- ✔ RSB underwent assessment for accredited scope and the assessment report attested compliance with the accreditation requirements and thus the accreditation was maintained and extended from 2020 up to 2023.
- ✔ On Laboratory registration, requests were addressed to FAPAS (Food Analysis Performance Assessment Scheme-UK Proficiency Testing (PT) schemes and EAC schemes.
- ✔ 10 Proficiency Testing samples were received from FAPAS and 14 samples received from EAC PT providers. Proficiency Testing samples were tested and reports were submitted to FAPAS and EAC Proficiency Testing providers.
- ✔ 10 test methods were verified (Enumeration of yeasts and moulds in milk and milk products in liquid and semi-solid products, Enumeration of yeasts and moulds in liquid and semi-solid products, Quantitative determination of aflatoxin B1 and total aflatoxin in Maize flour,

- ✓ Determination of aflatoxin M1 content in Milk and milk powder; Determination of copper in Water; Determination of zinc in potable, packaged drinking and packaged mineral waters, Determination of pH value Potable, drinking and Mineral water, Determination of compressive strength of cement; Determination of conductor resistance of electrical cables; Determination of tensile strength of steel bars and Determination of metal coating thickness of roofing sheets)

By the end of the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB had already received all Proficiency Testing reports from FAPAS and EAC Proficiency Testing providers. The benefit of the participation in Proficiency Testing schemes is to allow the laboratory management to be informed on the performance/ quality of released test results and to help decide on better ways to streamline the laboratory processes.

Another important achievement for the National Quality Testing laboratories is that in the Financial Year 2019/2020 Quality Testing Laboratories migrated from offering the services under the guide of ISO 17025: 2005 standard up to the new standard-ISO/IEC 17025: 2018, a standard serving as guide to the work of Testing and Calibration laboratories. International Organization for Standardization (ISO) affirms that the ISO/IEC 17025 standard enables laboratories to demonstrate that they operate competently and generate valid results, thereby promoting confidence in their work both nationally and around the world.

Further, ISO notes that the standard also helps facilitate cooperation between laboratories and other bodies by generating wider acceptance of results between countries. Test reports and certificates can be accepted from one country to another without the need for further testing, which, in turn, improves international trade.

RSB PARTICIPATED IN PROFICIENCY TESTING (PT) FOR EXISTING SCOPE

Proficiency testing determines the performance of individual laboratories for specific tests or measurements and is used to monitor laboratories' continuing performance. It is also called inter-laboratory comparison. As this term implies, proficiency testing compares the measuring results obtained by different laboratories.

Proficiency testing is an evaluation of participant performance against pre-established criteria by means of inter-laboratory comparisons" (ISO/IEC 17043). During the financial year of 2019-2020, Under East Africa community /Testing Technical Sub Committee, RSB planned to carryout proficiency testing notification preparation, proficiency testing samples on Sugar, cosmetics and bar soap procurement, and proficiency testing samples on sugar, cosmetics and bar soap dispatch and proficiency testing evaluation conduction.

In this regard, the 14th round EAC Proficiency Testing (PT) notification was prepared and communicated to potential laboratories, PT samples on sugar, soap and cosmetics were procured, prepared and dispatched to different laboratories in EAC. PT evaluation reports were prepared.

For Laundry Soap, seven (7) parameters were analyzed: Moisture, volatile content, Free caustic alkali as NaOH, Total free alkali, Ethanol insoluble matter; Matter insoluble in water; Chloride content as NaCl. Six (6) laboratories have participated

For Skin Cosmetic Lotion, seven (7) parameters were analyzed: Hydroquinone Content, pH, Total Fatty Substance content, Thermal stability, Lead, Arsenic and Mercury. Five (5) laboratories have participated.

For Sugar, five (5) parameters were analyzed: Moisture content, polarization, sulfur dioxide, insoluble impurities, color and conductivity. Four laboratories have participated.

DESIGNATION OF EXTERNAL TESTING LABORATORIES, A WAY TO BRING RELIABLE TESTING SERVICES CLOSER TO THE PUBLIC

The East Africa Community Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (SQMT) Act 2006, especially in its Article 12 which stipulates that Partner States may establish or designate Organization to function as Testing Laboratories to provide scientific and technical services to perform conformity assessment services for technical regulation or compulsory standards.

The recently approved East African Community Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (designation of Testing Laboratories) Regulation, requests that the Minister responsible for the implementation of the SQMT shall designate approved National Quality Testing Laboratories on the advice of the National Standards Body. In the case of the Republic of Rwanda, the Ministry of Trade and Industry is custodian of those powers.

To implement the SQMT Act provision on laboratory designation, the EAC Testing Technical Sub-Committee (EAC-TTSC) developed a procedure with criteria to be used for designation process of testing laboratories in Partner States based on ISO/IEC 17025, General requirements for competence of testing and calibration laboratories; and any testing laboratories in the Partner States looking for designation at national level is required to be operating and complying with the quality management system based on the ISO/IEC 17025 requirements.

RSB performed the review of application forms and self-assessment checklist in order to align the assessment tools with the new version of ISO/IEC 17025:2017. Upon completion of the review, the National Quality Testing Laboratory Division



conducted the assessment in three private laboratories:

1. ACTS laboratory
2. EQUAL GOLD COMPANY VISION 2025 laboratory, and
3. SG MINERALS laboratory

The laboratories were informed of the outcomes of the assessment to correct non-conformities.

Furthermore, eleven testing laboratories had been assessed and designated in 2017 according the old version of ISO/IEC 17025: 2005 which will be obsolete come December 2020 see their validity come to an end in November 2020. RSB notified them of the availability of the new version of the underlying International Standard, and called them to start the process to apply the designation against the new standard.

DIGITALIZATION OF LABORATORY SERVICES THROUGH CONTINUED UPGRADE OF LABORATORY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LIMS) YIELDS GOOD RESULTS



Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) is a database application that is used to store and manage information associated with the laboratory such as sample submission contracts, sample matrix, test results, methods, parameters, quality controls and control limits. It accommodates the expansion with a clear migration path so that none of the customizations previously made are lost. Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS) aims at reducing the testing turnaround time and ease of data management.

LIMS promotes the efficiency of RSB Laboratories and have quicker turnaround times to meet industry standards and eliminate delays in services

delivery. During the Financial Year 2019/2020, in partnership with Trade Mark East Africa (TMEA) the process of upgrading the Laboratory Information Management Systems was continued and completed. The upgrade of LIMS enables online reporting and equipment interfacing. With the completion of the LIMS upgrade, E-reports are now sent to internal customers and all customers receive the SMS notifications after submission of samples. E-report will improve the National Quality Testing Laboratories service delivery through direct customer interaction.

In first quarter of the Financial Year 2020/2021, external customers started to receive E-test report in their specific emails boxes.

CONTINUED INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CERTIFIED LOCALLY MADE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, FOUNDATION FOR MARKET ACCESS AND COMPETITIVENESS



Since 2010, a continued increase has been observed in the number of products and systems acquiring certification. This is mainly due to sustained awareness of certification services vis-à-vis efforts to strengthen the nexus between RSB services, i.e Standards development, technical assistance to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and industries, upgrading the scope and accreditation of testing and Metrology laboratories and thus an increasing uptake of standardization and conformity assessment services by the customers.

Product certification is an attestation following assessment that; attributes, characteristics, quality, or status of goods, are in accordance with

established standards. RSB products certification scope covers a mix of diversified sectors including but not limited to foods and beverages, construction materials, cosmetics, paper based products and other industrial products. Certified products are given a Standardization Mark (S-Mark) or Made-in-Rwanda logo, to be displayed on the product.

BENEFIT OF PRODUCT CERTIFICATION

- ✓ The Mark is a powerful marketing tool for all manufacturers especially exporters. This eliminates the need for products to be re-tested all the time;

- ✔ Displaying the mark gives a product real point-of-sale differentiation resulting in more sales and greater revenue;
- ✔ The Mark provides credibility when negotiating any contract especially government contracts as reflected in Rwandan regulation, exports and tender submissions;
- ✔ There is an improvement in complaints' handling this cuts costs and increases customer satisfaction;
- ✔ The certification scheme results in consistent quality of products as it involves operating in a defined manner.

During Financial Year 2019/2020, the target number of new products to be S-Mark certified was one hundred and ten (110) new products. At end of June 2020, a hundred fifty-four (154) new products were certified making a cumulative number of seven hundred products (700) with active certifications. The performance in product certification is 138 % increase per annum. The overachievement observed was due to bigger turn up of new applications for certification that were received as a result of Zamukana Ubuziranenge Program, Made in Rwanda awareness campaign and improved customers awareness regarding the benefits certification.

PRODUCTS RE-CERTIFICATION

Product re-certification is an attestation following re-assessment that; attributes, characteristics, quality, or status of goods, are still in accordance with established standards. In case a certified product nearing the expiry of its certification period is found complying with requirements against which the initial certification mark was granted, it is re-certified: allowed to continue using Standardization Mark (S-Mark), to be displayed on the product. The re-certification takes place after two years (2) of certification of any product.

According to the RSB certification scheme, every

certified product is re-certified upon request prior to end of the two years validity of certification. The target number of products to be re-certified during the Financial Year 2019/2020 was one hundred forty-six (146) products from forty-nine (49) recertification audits. This annual target was set based on the current clients whose licensing periods fall within the range of 1st July 2019 and 30th June 2020. At the end of June 2020, one hundred thirteen (113) products were re-certified making a cumulative of three hundred eighty-one (381) re-certified products.

The performance in product re-certification for this year was 77 %. The target was not met due to some clients delaying to close non conformities raised by RSB auditors. In addition to that, some clients failed to pay re - certification fees (as they had received a support of 50% provided by Rwanda Development Board (RDB) as an initiative to support initial certification; and this support is not applicable for the clients applying for re-certification). Another challenge that negatively impacted the performance of re-certification work was the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak which did not permit the onsite re-certification audit activities.



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SURVEILLANCE AUDITS ON CERTIFIED PRODUCTS

As a requirement in the RSB Products Certification Procedure for Standardization Mark (S-Mark), surveillance audits are conducted at least once in two years of license period on certified products to check continual compliance of both certified products and clients’ production processes with the requirements of applicable standards.

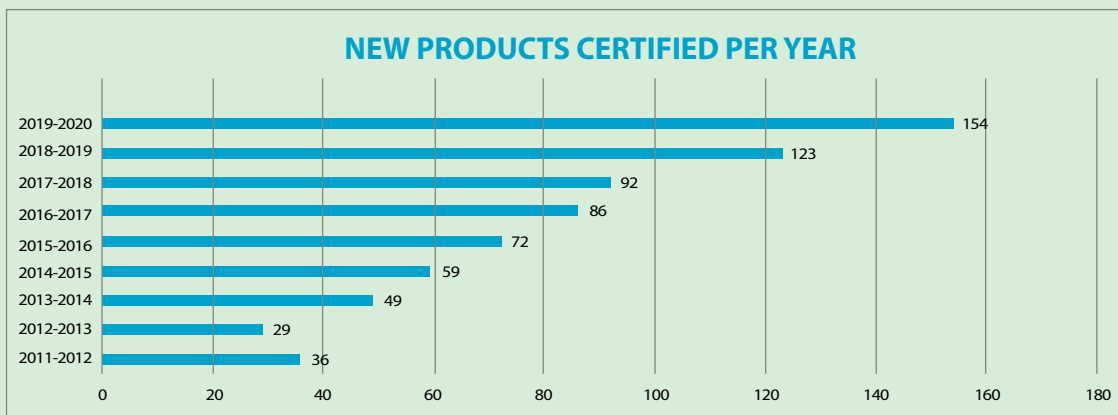
In the Financial Year 2019/2020, industrial surveillance audits for eighty (80) S-Mark certified products were planned. At end of June 2019, one hundred and fifty-five (155) products were surveyed in fifty-four surveillance audits conducted in industries making a cumulative number of 435. In the same year, the performance in industry surveillance audits on certified products for the current financial year was equivalent to 193.75 %. The over-achievement is explained by a number of audits that were carried forward from the previous financial year. Further, special audits were conducted for banana and plant based alcoholic drinks due to the non-respect of certification requirements that was observed in this sector causing some products to put on the market substandard products bearing Standardization Mark. The malpractice triggered conducting unplanned audits to monitor the

performance of certified products in that sector and protect consumers.

MARKET SURVEILLANCE FOR S-MARK CERTIFIED PRODUCTS

According to products certification procedure for Standardization Mark (S-Mark), market Surveillances are conducted at least twice in two years of license period on certified products. The main objective of the market surveillances is to check continual compliance of certified products on the market against the relevant products standards’ specifications.

One hundred and sixty (160) market samples were planned for FY 2019/2020; two hundred and twenty (220) market surveillance samples for S-Mark certified products were collected from the market for quality and safety assurance purposes, making a cumulative number of 961. The performance for the current Financial Year is equivalent to 137.5%. On this milestone, RSB achieved above the target due to the effort that was put on the specific regulated sector (Banana and Plant based alcoholic beverages); where the frequency of collecting samples on the market was increased to deal with issues of counterfeiting and other misbehaviors that were observed in this specific sector.



Graph Showing Number of Products Certified Per Year (From FY 2011/2012- FY 2019/2020)

MORE DOMESTIC PRODUCTS ACQUIRED MADE-IN-RWANDA LOGO



Rwanda is a rapidly growing developing country with average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of over 7% per annum since 2010 backed by a strong policy framework. The Made in Rwanda (MIR) Policy is aligned with Rwanda's aspiration to become upper middle income country by 2035 and register higher income by 2050. This is a holistic roadmap aimed at increasing economic competitiveness by enhancing Rwanda's domestic market through value chain development via Made in Rwanda Policy's five (5) main pillars, i.e. Sector Specific strategies, Reducing the Cost of production,

Improving quality, Promoting Backward Linkages and Mind-Set Change.

Made in Rwanda policy is implemented in close coordination with other Government agencies and with private sector partners, whereby MINICOM was tasked to provide the overall Policy lead, whereas Rwanda Development Board (RDB) and Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) were tasked to lead the policy implementation on market access and quality of products and services.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry mandated RSB to receive and assess applications for Made in Rwanda logo, issue Made in Rwanda logo and monitor its use. Based on the Made in Rwanda logo implementation roadmap, RSB designed the logo, set logo acquisition criteria and documented a procedure for acquiring the logo as well as licensing contract. In addition to that, RSB developed the Management Information System or Track and Trace System that is used in monitoring that the issued logo is used effectively.

Criteria to acquire the Made in Rwanda logo are:

- ✔ The product processing company is registered in Rwanda
- ✔ The product complies with Quality/ safety requirements (compliance attested by Standardization Mark or Systems Certification, or any other approved conformity assessment model)
- ✔ Compliance with Rules of origin,
- ✔ Company production capacity,
- ✔ Use of Technology in processing,
- ✔ Employability capability of the manufacturer

- ✓ Employment creation
- ✓ Export potential
- ✓ Market recapitulation

Based on above criteria, from Quarter1-Quarter 2 of the Financial Year 2019/2020, seventy-one (71) applications for one hundred eighty five (185) products were received whereby most of them were lining in agro processing sector (milk and milk products, juices, banana value chain, flours) while some other sectors include: construction materials, cosmetics, motor vehicle assets (software for hiring motors and speed governor) and Smart Phones.

As of June 2020, sixty four (64) companies with one hundred sixty (162) products were granted the Made in Rwanda logo. Below are the details of products granted the Made in Rwanda logo in respective product sub-sectors:

- a) **Coffee:** 6 products (3 companies)
- b) **Milk and milk products:** 21 products (2 companies)
- c) **Banana and plant based alcoholic beverages:** 61 products (42 companies)
- d) **Juice, Jam and Jellies:** 16 products (2 companies)
- e) **Construction materials:** 8 products (2 companies)
- f) **Honey:** 2 products (2 companies)
- g) **Fortified foods:** 4 products (1 company)
- h) **Cereal flours:** 6 products (1 company)
- i) **Bread and biscuits:** 5 products (1 company)
- j) **Chili oil:** 2 products (1 company)
- k) **Liquors:** 6 products (1 company)
- l) **Insecticides:** 1 products (1 company)
- m) **Exercise book:** 1 (1 company)
- n) **Mattresses:** 18 products (2 companies)
- o) **Gas cookers and Refrigerators:** 4 products (1 company)
- p) **Sanitary pads:** 1 product (1 company)



SYSTEMS CERTIFICATION ENSURES CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT OF PROCESSES AND OPERATIONS IN ORGANIZATIONS



Certification is the provision by an independent body of written assurance (certificate) that the product, service or system in question meets specific requirements. Certification is a useful tool to add credibility by demonstrating that the product, process, system or service meets the expectations of clients and/or customers. For some industries, certification is a legal or contractual requirement. In almost every business sector and area of economic activity, certification creates greater levels of assurance, drives performance and thus boosts customer confidence.

Management systems certification not only reassures consumers and partners around the world that the service offered meets requirements of specific Standard, but also goes a long way toward improving organizations' processes and

operations. Implementation and certification of a management system tells stakeholders that they have embarked on the journey of continuous improvement with regard to quality, environment or safety related issues. External validation helps an organization to continually improve its strategies, operations and levels of service. Quality system certification involves the assessment, determination of conformity against a quality system standard and within a certain scope of activity and surveillance of an organization's or manufacturer's quality system.

Organizations that comply with standards, statutory and regulatory requirements are granted Single Quality Mark for Systems certification.

The Single Quality mark for certified systems is accompanied by a licensing contract, certificate

of registration and license all valid for three years. Each year, a surveillance audit is conducted to assess continual compliance of the certified system. Currently, Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) provides certification for different systems including:

- ✓ RS ISO 9001: 2015 Quality Management Systems-Requirements
- ✓ RS ISO 22000: 2018 Food Safety Management Systems-Requirements for any organization in the food chain
- ✓ RS 184: 2017 Food safety system based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) – Requirements for any organization in the food chain
- ✓ RS ISO 14001: 2015 Environmental management Systems-Requirements
- ✓ RS ISO 45001: 2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems-Requirements with guidance for use

Other systems certification schemes are under development, and they include:

- ✓ Garage Certification
- ✓ Warehouse Certification
- ✓ Salons Certification
- ✓ Good Agricultural Practices certification
- ✓ Gender Equality Seal certification
- ✓ Organic Certification
- ✓ Information Management Systems
- ✓ Energy Management Systems
- ✓ Good Finance Grant Practices certification

BENEFITS OF SYSTEMS CERTIFICATION

The benefits accrued from system certification are many and are a result of how able the certified

organization uses the certification acquired to promote the service offered, processes and the quality and safety of products or service. Specific benefits include, but are not limited to:

- a) Improvements in efficiency and productivity— leading to reduced losses (waste), lower costs per unit of production and increased profit
- b) Improvements in meeting and maintaining regulatory requirements associated with the organization's product or service
- c) Commercial benefits including improvement in company image, reputation and access to markets
- d) Creating a good reputation and boosting customer confidence

Since the kickoff operation of systems certification in 2013, the number of certified systems has been slowly but steadily increasing. This is due to the fact that implementing a system is not an event, but rather a process. In addition, a number of setbacks like low level of understanding of the relevance of management system standards to most private companies cause prolonged time to implement system standards. During Financial Year 2019/2020, the target number of new systems to be certified was twenty-three (23) systems. At the end of June 2020, eleven (11) new Systems were certified making a cumulative number of 63. New certified systems are in the areas of:

- ✓ Food safety system based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) – Requirements for any organization in the food chain (HACCP)-4 systems
- ✓ Food Safety Management Systems- 1 system;
- ✓ Quality Management System- 4 systems
- ✓ Environmental Management System (EMS)- 1 system

✔ Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems: 1

In the same year, three (3) systems were audited for initial certification audits (stage two) verifying implementation of the standard requirements. Two (2) systems were audited for stage one which is the verification of documentation against the standard requirements including readiness for stage 2. However, the process could not be completed for reasons ranging from failure to pay certification fees, failure to close non-conformities and lockdowns as a measure to contain the spread of the Covid – 19 pandemic.

SYSTEM RE-CERTIFICATION

The purpose of re-certification is to confirm continued conformity and effectiveness of the management system and its continued relevancy and applicability for the scope of certification. A recertification audit is conducted to evaluate the continued fulfillment of all the requirements of the entire relevant management system standard or other normative documents.

According to the RSB certification scheme, every certified system is re-certified upon request prior to end of the three (3) years certification validity. During Financial Year 2019-2020 RSB targeted to re-certify nine (9) systems. At the end of June 2020, nine (9) Systems were re-certified making a cumulative number of fifteen (15) re-certified Systems. Re-certified systems were in:

- ✔ Quality Management System: 3 systems,
- ✔ Food Safety Management Systems: 2 systems
- ✔ Food safety system based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) – Requirements for any organization in the food chain (HACCP)-4 systems

The performance in Systems re-certification for the Financial Year 2019/2020 was 100 %.

SURVEILLANCE AUDITS ON CERTIFIED SYSTEMS

Surveillance activities are developed by a certification body in order to monitor representative areas and functions covered by the scope of the management system on a regular basis and take into account changes that may arise in the certified management system.

Surveillance audits are on- site audits planned together with other surveillance activities so that the certification body can maintain confidence that the clients' certified management system continues to fulfill requirements between re-certification audits.

Surveillance audits of 32 Systems were planned for the Financial Year 2019/2020. At end of June 2020, 19 surveillance audits were conducted making a cumulative number of 39. The performance in surveillance audits on certified Systems for that financial year was equivalent to 59.4%.

Table 5 below shows the number of new certified and re-certified systems as well as the surveillance audits conducted for certified systems.

System	New Systems Certified	Re-Certified Systems	Surveillance Audits	Total Certified Systems
HACCP	4	4	12	26
FSMS	1	2	-	6
QMS Systems	4	3	7	17
EMS	1	N/A	N/A	1
OHSMS	1	N/A	N/A	1
TOTAL	11	9	19	52

ACCREDITATION OF RWANDA STANDARDS BOARD CERTIFICATION SERVICES WAS MAINTAINED AND EXPANDED

Accreditation is third party attestation that a conformity assessment body formally demonstrates its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks. Certification bodies are accredited after achieving compliance to ISO 17021: *Requirements for Certification Bodies*.

ISO 17021 is an International Standard that provides Certification Bodies (CB) with a set of requirements that will enable them to ensure that their management system certification process is carried out in a competent, consistent and impartial manner. See also ISO/IEC 17021 *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems*.

International standards (ISO or ISO/IEC) are used when assessing conformity assessment bodies. They mostly focus on the expertise, impartiality, independence and improvement culture of conformity assessment bodies. Organizations that meet the standards receive formal accreditation, which means they are permitted to use the accreditation mark. Certificates and reports that are provided with an accreditation mark are accepted worldwide and accreditation therefore promotes international trade.

All over the world markets customers want reassurance that materials, goods and services purchased or produced meet their expectations by complying with international and market standards. Recognized competence reduces risks of getting substandard or defective goods, services and materials

Inspection or testing costs are often costly and time-consuming, may result in likely recall or non-acceptance of certain material requiring reshipping or legal action. Accreditation assures and minimizes the risks of repeat inspection or tests. Accredited once accepted everywhere. Accreditation provides a framework for mutual recognition worldwide. Products and services certified, tested or inspected once can be accepted everywhere with equal confidence hence improved international recognition.

In the Financial Year 2019/2020, RSB targeted to maintain acquired accreditations on ISO 22000 Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) and RS 184 Food safety system based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) – Requirements for any organization in the food chain (HACCP). Those accreditations cover the scope of Farming and Food Manufacturing (Category B and C respectively) and their maintenance was to be made through formal attestation of continued compliance with the accreditation requirements following completion of assessment conducted by the Dutch accreditation Body (RvA).

Due to the measures to contain COVID-19 pandemic, the planned third accreditation assessments for category C and first for category B that were scheduled to take place from 17th to 19th March 2020 were postponed to July 2020 and successfully conducted from 21st to 28th July 2020 through remote assessment. The outcomes of the accreditation assessment on the ISO 22000 FSMS and RS 184 HACCP accreditation on Farming and Food Manufacturing scope (Category B and C) witnessed good performance and RSB maintained the accreditation as planned.

RWANDA STANDARDS BOARD METROLOGY SERVICES ENSURE FAIR TRADE, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT



The National Metrology Services Division is the infrastructure on science and technology of measurements; and is the custodian of National Measurement Reference standards in all quantities. By this, Rwanda Standards Board plays an important role in assuring accurate and internationally traceable measuring results in industries, health and safety, trade transaction, tourism and hospitality, environment protection, research center and education as well as in construction and mining sectors to mention but a few. Metrology services in Rwanda are governed by the Law N° 70/2019 of 10/01/2020 and thus metrology system is an important infrastructure to support and enhance the applicability of

measurements in production, trade competition, medical services, environment protection and conformity assessment services to move stably in the international trade forum.

National Metrology Services Division provides calibration services to quality testing laboratories, industrial, health hospitality sectors and environmental protection in order that their measuring equipment are traceable to national and international standards in Length, Electrical, Time and Frequency, Pressure and Vacuum, weighing system, Force and Torque, Density, Volume and Flow, Acoustics and Vibration, Thermometry, Dosimetry, Moisture, Chemical and Legal Metrology



verification services to ensure fairness in trade transaction, in utilities, transport, environment protection, public health and safety.

In everyday life everybody commonly measures something. People measure lengths, weights, speeds, time and they expect the indications of their measuring instruments to be reliable. In industry, for the manufacturing of products as well as for the provision of services, careful measuring is an element of the quality of the manufactured product or of the service provided. To carry out measurements, instruments are used, which no matter how sophisticated and modern they may be, have a common drawback: their readings are not constant in time. The causes of this drifting are many and the major one is definitely obsolescence. But there are other reasons: mechanical wear, oxidation, wrong handling, etc.

After given intervals, the operator has to be able to rely on the reading of the measuring instrument, he has to have evidence that instrument has not drifted beyond permissible limits. They must, in other

words, be in a position to show that the traceability of the measurement to national standards is complied with.

Metrological activities, calibration, testing and measurements are valuable inputs to ensure the quality of many industrial and quality of life related activities and processes. This includes the need to demonstrate traceability, which is as important as the measurement itself. Recognition of metrological competence at each level of the traceability chain can be established through mutual recognition agreements, accreditation of laboratories and services and peer review.

Calibration is a basic tool in ensuring the traceability of a measurement instrument, measuring system or reference material. Calibration determines the performance characteristics of an instrument, system or reference material. It is usually achieved by means of a direct comparison against measurement standards or certified reference materials. A calibration certificate is issued and, in most cases, a sticker is provided for the instrument.

MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL METROLOGY ENSURING ACCURATE MEASUREMENTS IN PROMOTING TECHNOLOGY AND ALL SECTORS OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY



Mechanical metrology helps to realize, maintain and disseminate the national measurement standards for the following areas: mass, volume, pressure, temperature and dimensions. Laboratories established in this regard include:

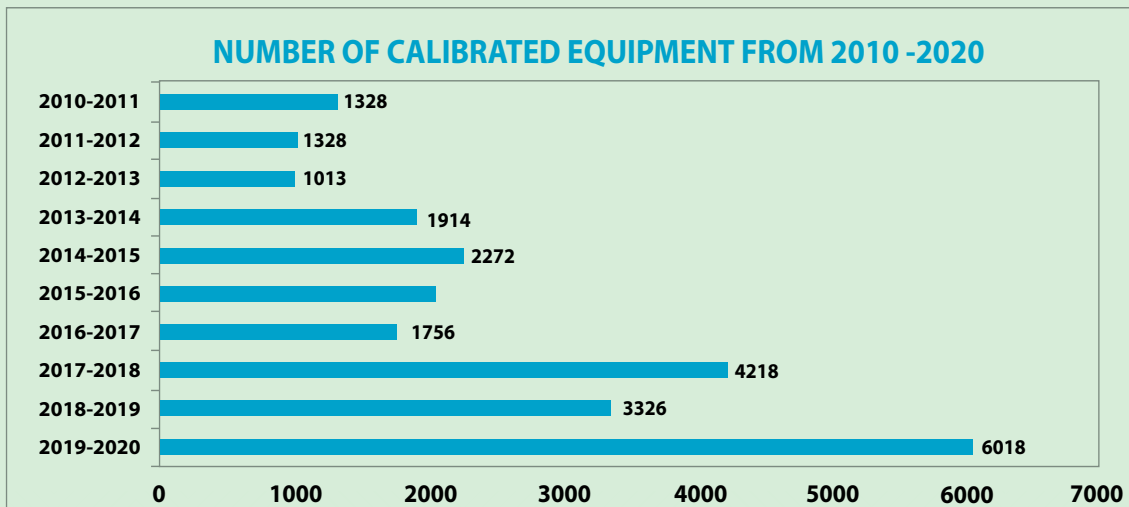
- ✓ Mass laboratory that offers services of calibration of standard masses and masses from industries.
- ✓ Pressure laboratory that conducts calibration of different types of industrial pressure gauges and blood pressure gauges.
- ✓ Temperature laboratory that conducts calibration of equipment(s) including but not limited to thermometers, laboratory ovens, incubators, cold rooms, autoclaves, fridges and freezers, coolers, furnaces and refrigerators.
- ✓ Dimensions laboratory that undertakes the following calibrations: Vernier Calipers micrometer screw gauges, block gauges, tapes, meters, rulers, dipsticks and centrifuges.
- ✓ Flow laboratory that offers service of calibration of flow meters and water meters.
- ✓ Volume laboratory that conducts calibration of laboratory glassware (Pipettes, Graduated cylinders, Burettes, Density bottles, volumetric flasks), Piston-operated volumetric apparatus (Micropipettes, dispensers, piston burettes...) and tanks as part of Legal metrology activities.

- ✓ The Balance laboratory conducts calibration of all types of balances and weighbridges.
- ✓ Force laboratory that conducts calibration of compression Machines: 1kN –3,000kN, CBR testing Machines (rings) 1 – 100kN, Marshall testing machine (rings) 1 – 100kN and tensile testing machines 1–100kN.
- ✓ Electrical metrology helps to realize, maintain and disseminate the national measurement standards for the following areas: AC/ DC, power & energy, and time & frequency. Laboratories that were established include:
- ✓ AC/DC laboratory that conducts calibration of Ammeters, Voltmeters, Multi-meters, Ohmmeters, Inductance meters, Capacitance meters, Voltage Sources and pH meters
- ✓ Energy laboratory that makes calibration of Single phase mechanical and electronic electricity meters, three phase mechanical and electronic electricity meters and Polyphase electronic energy meters
- ✓ Time and frequency laboratory that conducts calibration of Measurement Amplifiers, Timers/ Stopwatches, Signal Generators,

Spectrum Analyzers, Communications monitors, Noise meters, Frequency meters, Time meters, Oscilloscopes.

Mechanical and electrical metrology addresses mass and associated quantities such as pressure, flow, volume force as well as temperature, electrical, dimensional and provision of a national time scale. These laboratories offer services to all sectors across the economy and technologies.

During the Financial Year 2019/2020, Rwanda Standards Board targeted to calibrate 3219 measuring equipment. At the end of June 2020, 6047 measuring equipment/ instruments used in industries, medical, tourism and hospitality, construction, mining and conformity assessment quality testing laboratories were calibrated. The over- achievements on set targets is attributed to the mandatory certification in the dairy and banana and plant based products, Metrology services awareness conducted in hotels and restaurants and manufacturing industries, implementation of the Zamukana Ubuziranenge Program, implementation of Quality Testing laboratory designation scheme and enforcement of calibration in public construction projects.



Graph 5 showing the evolution of calibration activities from 2010 to 2020

LEGAL METROLOGY; FACILITATING FAIR TRADE THROUGH HARMONIZED WRITTEN STANDARDS, CONSISTENT MEASUREMENT STANDARDS AND INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED CERTIFICATES



The purpose of legal metrology is to control the usage of measuring equipment in trade, law enforcement, health services and environmental protection through type approval, initial and periodic verifications and inspections; and control pre-packaging operations. Legal metrology services include the verification of trade masses, verification of balances, verification of fuel dispensers, verification of bulk meters, verification of water meters, verification of medical equipment, pre-packed products control as well as licensing maintenance/repairs operators.

Legal Metrology advances the protection of citizens. In the field of health, accurate measurement of even the most basic parameters such as patients weight, temperature and blood pressure can lead to more accurate diagnostics and thus to improvements in the health. For example the results of blood tests should be independent of the laboratory performing the test-Incorrect doses can be dangerous, under dosing may not adequately treat an illness. Overdosing, on the other hand, may cause illness or side effects that can be lethal. Legal metrology regulates national measurement system to

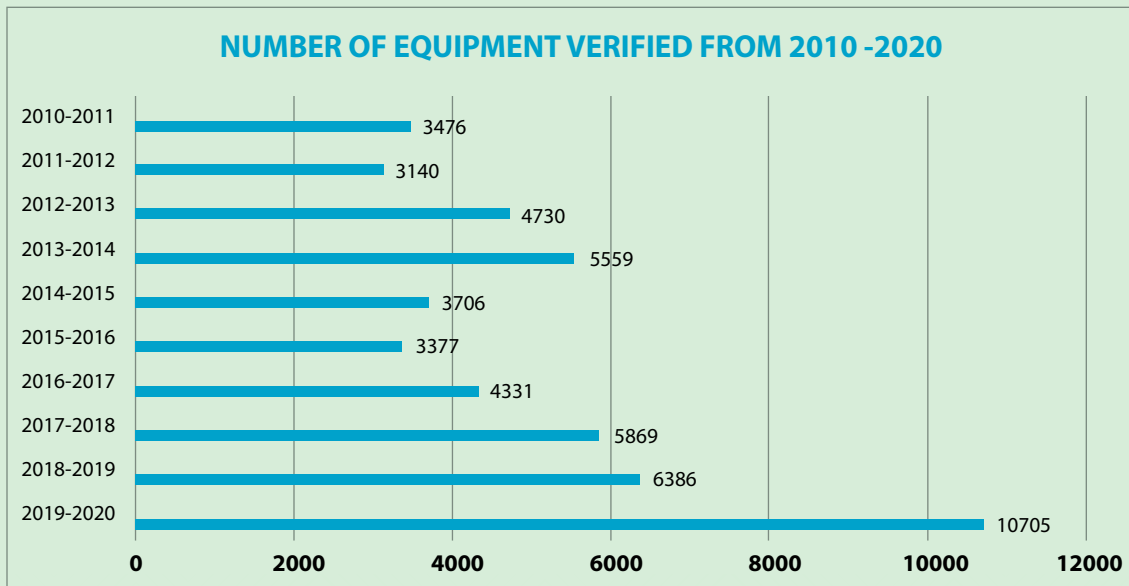
ensure the playing field in trade is leveled and thus making trade fairer. In farming for example, Legal Metrology activities ensure that all farmers receive the correct payment for their produce and all consumers will receive the correct amount of goods for their money. In addition, the control of prepackages goods helps reduce the fraud in the increasingly important area which often concerns staple foodstuffs. The correct measurements help also the government to collect the correct taxes on bulk exports.

In the transport sector, legal metrology controls to measurements which affect road safety, such as speed, blood alcohol, vehicle overloading, tyres pressure gauges, reduce accident rates. Concerning the protection of the environment, accurate measurement in air quality monitoring and vehicle emissions control lead to effective environmental monitoring and planning.

During the Financial Year 2019-2020, the targeted number of measuring instruments used in trade

and medical sector to be verified was 8000 equipment. At the end of June 2020, 10705 instruments were verified and those included fuel dispensers, trade weights, balances, medical equipment, Water meters and energy meters. The annual performance was 133.81%.

“ Legal Metrology advances the protection of citizens. In the field of health, accurate measurement of even the most basic parameters such as patients weight, temperature and blood pressure can lead to more accurate diagnostics and thus to improvements in the health.



Graph showing number of equipment verified from FY2010/2011 to FY 2019-2020

CHEMICAL METROLOGY ENSURING TRACEABILITY IN CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL MEASUREMENTS



Chemical metrology helps to realize, maintain and disseminate measurements standards in chemical measurements. Chemical metrology covers organic, inorganic and physical chemistry measurements. The Chemical Metrology Laboratory offers the service of calibration of the following equipment: PH meter, Alcohol meter, Electrolytic conductivity meter, Viscosity meter and Density meters.

Chemical metrology is a relatively new area that is witnessing rapid development and ensuring traceability in chemical and biological measurements. Chemical metrology underpins the rigorous measurement approach to address food safety, health and environment protection goals and supported accurate measurement in quality testing laboratories of contaminants.

Chemical metrology scope:

- Calibration of measuring instruments of trace of contaminants and chemical substance

in solution such as pH meters, Conductivity meters, Density meters, Refractometers, Alcohol meters, TDS meters, turbidity meters ..etc.

- Production of reference buffer solutions

Chemical metrology entails calibration of equipment and measuring instruments in the sectors of health and safety, industries, environmental protection, hotels and restaurants, mining, conformity assessment quality testing laboratories, construction, etc. RSB set out to calibrate 50 chemical measuring instruments, in by the end of the Financial Year 2019 / 2020, 250 equipment had been calibrated.

Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) continues to build expertise in chemical metrology through continued collaboration with other stakeholders in order to meet the expectations of international stakeholders such as World Health Organization (WHO), Codex Alimentarius, etc.



ALMAHA FOR INDUSTRY CO LTD'S LOCALLY MANUFACTURED REFRIGERATORS AND GAS COOKERS ACQUIRED MADE IN RWANDA LOGO



Mr. Desire Tuyisenge, the industry's Operations Manager

Based in Bugesera Industrial Park, the company is a result of Rwanda's rapid growing economy and backed by a strong policy framework.

Almaha for Industry Company started with the manufacturing of home appliances like Refrigerators and accessories, solarwater heaters and accessories, Gas Cookers, Freezers and accessories, Gas Cooker Accessories and a Repair and Servicing Workshop.

According to Mr. Desire Tuyisenge, the industry's Operations Manager, the company's vision is to operate chains of home appliances plants in

Rwanda and neighboring countries with an aim of developing highly successful and profitable chains of home appliances plants with state of the art facility and latest technology. In compliance with environmental standards and statutory requirements, Almaha for Industry Co Ltd products are environmentally friendly. All manufactured fridges and cookers use the internationally recommended L600 and L290 gases.

"Almaha for Industry Co products were assessed and granted the protected Made in Rwanda logo, a logo attesting that a product fulfils quality and other requirements. That logo is a strong marketing tool, and powerful tool to fight against product falsification, fighting counterfeiting, an attestation of genuineness and facilitates traceability" reiterates Mr. Tuyisenge.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

At Almaha for Industry Co Ltd, quality assurance and staff safety is paramount in the day to day operations. Mr Tuyisenge Desiré asserts that the industry operates in accordance with Occupational Health and Safety Standard requirements; and it gets quality testing and Metrology services from accredited RSB National Quality Testing Laboratories and Metrology laboratories for testing of raw materials, products and for calibration of equipment ,weighing scales and other measuring instruments to ensure manufactured products meet International Standards requirements.



BENEFITS

Almaha for Industry Co's products prices are affordable

The target for Almaha for Industry Co is to provide the domestic market and export markets with quality and affordable process. Mr Tuyisenge stresses:

"We are here to show that Rwanda is able to manufacture high quality electronic products that are competitive. It is astonishing but true- our products are cheaper by over 30% than imported products. Prices are friendly as compared to imported fridges and gas cookers. The company has helped in reducing Rwanda's balance of payment deficit. Initially all fridges and gas cookers used to be imported from abroad. Today Rwandans have an option of getting these products locally and at cheaper prices."

• Empowering Rwandans and Job creation

The company creates jobs for over 80 employees, 99% of whom are Rwandans. This has helped in job creation, incapacitate domestic workforce to acquire skills and knowledge transfer. Almaha for Industry Co's strategy is to develop local workforce skills and build an innovative mindset to ensure the company contributes in diversifying products manufactured in Rwanda and by Rwandans. Experts from abroad come and train employees, and trained employees ensure knowledge transfer is a vicious cycle.

FUTURE PLANS.

In the future, the company plans to add manufacturing of detergents and liquid soaps, Ceramic products, solar water heaters and other products that are needed to accelerate Rwanda's socio-economic transformation journey. All those products are produced and sold at cheaper prices

as compared to similar items of same quality in the market and Almaha for Industry Co targets to expand their markets to export to neighboring countries like Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya and South Sudan.



PUTTING MADE IN RWANDA PRODUCT DIVERSIFICATION FIRST:

ISHYO FOODS LTD PROVIDING QUALITY FRUIT JAM PRODUCTS

What started like a passion for cooking saw the birth of Ishyo Foods Ltd, a company that produces fruit jams in various flavors like vanilla, strawberry, pineapples, tree tomatoes and others?

Ishyo Foods Limited the company which started operations in 2018 after securing seed funding from United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Rwanda, is now carving herself a niche as a household name in the production of fruit Jam, with her products distributed all over major supermarkets in Kigali and also looking forward to supplying leading hotels and restaurants in the country.

Quality is at the Centre of all Ishyo Foods Ltd

“Ishyo Foods Limited products have been granted the RSB quality mark S-Mark. The certification means a lot to Ms Kanyana as this is attestation to their pursuit for and adherence to quality. The S-Mark certification opened doors for them, they are able to supply to leading hotels for example because they are trusted and proven.

operations as Ms. Kanyana Sharon the Managing Director notes:

“Jam is an essential component when applied to bread, it is a food, therefore its quality and overall hygiene is very paramount to human health. At Ishyo Foods we take extra caution when handling our products throughout the whole value chain. For raw materials, we make sure we buy quality from



Ms. Kanyana Sharon the Managing Director - Ishyo Foods Limited

only farmers and cooperatives that are working with Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI). We also take precaution on the hygiene from the farmer, to our receiving area at the factory, storage, to processing lines, packaging and dispatching to our clients."

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"When I first thought about processing jam, I made my trials intending home use. Myself being an agronomist, I coupled my skills with reading standards document to learn about specifications and consulted Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) for other requirements. To my surprise, I found out that everything is stated in the Standards. The standards guided me in everything I did. At RSB, I learned about the Zamukana Ubuziranenge Program that support Small and Medium Enterprises in the journey to quality. I applied and joined that program. The Program accompanied me in the whole journey through training, coaching and advice until our products acquired the Standardization Mark. I congratulate RSB for having thought of such a tremendous program. It really is what the Rwandan industry needed. With the S-Mark now, our next step is getting the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) certification." enthused Ms. Sharon Akanyana, Managing Director of Ishyo Foods Limited.

Ms Akanyana believes that since Ishyo Foods Limited products are quality and affordable their future plan is to begin making fruit yoghurts and also target to export to neighboring countries, Europe and Asian markets:

"Our government has created a conducive environment for us to thrive as the private sector, it has sought partnerships for us to seek better



markets, what is now required of us as the private sector is to seize the opportunities. Our focus now is to acquire HACCP and other certifications." Ms Kanyana emphasizes.

Ishyo Foods Ltd is proud to contribute to national development. It offers employment to Rwandans both directly and indirectly. However, Ms Kanyana says they are still faced with a challenge of mindset change whereby some people still think imported products are better than local products. She is optimistic that with increased sensitization, this stereotype will end and with the introduction of the Made in Rwanda Logo by RSB, this will eventually be overcome:

"Rwanda as a brand is known for quality and delivering on her promises. We believe the Made In Rwanda Logo issued by RSB will be a strong branding tool for our products on the international market and it will also protect our products from being counterfeited." She adds.

MsKanyana is thankful for the collaboration with RSB through the Zamukana Ubuziranenge program and call upon other Rwandans to embrace the culture of standardization as the benefits outweigh the costs involved.



TAPPING INTO THE MICE OPPORTUNITIES WITH STANDARDS:

HACCP CERTIFICATION ENABLES IZERE SERVICES AND TRADING CO. LTD TO PROVIDE QUALITY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES THAT MEET INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS TO THE GROWING HOSPITALITY SECTOR IN RWANDA



Mrs Mumporeze Angelique, the founder of IZERE Services and Trading Company Limited

Founded in 2012, with the desire to provide clean hygienic fruits and vegetables to the fast growing hospitality sector in Rwanda, IZERE Services and Trading Co. LTD aimed to change the wanting hygiene practices in the food catering services at that time. Though, the company knew little about standardization and certification services that would be the driving force in achieving their revolutionizing ambition in the business. IZERE Services and Trading Co.

Ltd works with Rwandan farmers to provide high quality fresh fruits and vegetables.

The company strives to value all phases of the fruit and vegetables industry supply chain. It provides technical and advisory support to farmers in order to guarantee the quality of the fruits and vegetables that they cultivate. In this way IZERE guarantees greater food safety to its customers and producers.

IZERE Services and Trading Co. Ltd strives to keep professionalism, honesty and ethical practices in all business transactions at all times and meet the expectation of our clients. Our desire is to be the number one food supplier in the East African region with the best reputation and service provision.

IZERE Services and Trading Company Limited has been supplying parastatals, hotels, restaurants, inns and other companies with freshly produced fruits and vegetables and prides itself on its track record.

One of the key aspirations of the company's Quality Policy is to enable farmers to adhere to the IZERE production terms that are based on the food safety standards and other customer-

specific requirements. In this context, IZERE offers on-farm technical assistance and coaching to farmers through its Agronomy Service. This is an important role that focuses on offering advice from farming, corporatism, assistance in the both pre-harvest and post-harvest food measures until fruits and vegetables are supplied to customers.

JOURNEY TO HAZARD ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS (HACCP) CERTIFICATION

The journey to the certification began with the constant request from Izere Services and Trading Company clients demanding HACCP certification as a prerequisite to supply them with fruits and vegetables.

“When we started this business, we used to supply fruits and vegetables to some clients who did not demand certification at all. Our ambition was to give special focus to product hygiene. The existing customers appreciated the level of our supplies’ hygiene. It was not until we welcomed growing offers to supply high caliber hotels that we learned about the requirement to be HACCP certified. Our commitment could not just fade. We decided to go to Rwanda Standards Board to learn about the HACCP certification requirements” noted Mrs Mumporeze Angelique, the business owner.

IZERE Services and Trading Company Limited made application for HACCP certification and was visited to assess the level of compliance with the requirements. “When we got at RSB Offices, we were advised to join the Zamukana Ubuziranenge Program in order to grow gradually and systematically in compliance with food safety standards requirements. The first thing they told us was that quality is a journey, an easy one that builds on someone’s commitment to fulfill customer satisfaction; but a difficult one when someone lacks commitment to adhere to the requirements. We acquired a series of training, and through the Zamukana Ubuziranenge program we completed the technical assistance journey which



ended in having in place a food safety system that is able to guarantee the quality and safety of the fruits and vegetables we supply to our customers. It of course involved more investments, but which we did not delay to see them paying off.” Mrs Angelique continued.

Thanks to the technical assistance through the Zamukana Ubuziranenge program, the company’s food safety system culminated to being HACCP certified.

“With this certification, the established system helped us improve the way we our relationship and interaction with farmers to ensure we get quality products. Also, the certification brought increased customer satisfaction through an improvement in quality of products and reduced losses. We were able to attract new customers: today, the company clientele increased from two (02) clients before certification to over 11 to date. There has been an increase of over 80% in our clientele as a result of acquisition of HACCP certification; and the offers are always increasing. We now confidently supply fruits and vegetables to all categories of hotel including five-star hotels.” Amazed Mrs Angelique.

To ensure quality, the company makes sure that quality and safety is observed right from the farm. It has a cold room and backup fridge, Refrigerated distribution vans, UV water treatment plant,



designated wash station, Cooler boxes for sample transportation, and many other facilities.

The HACCP implementation matrix at Izere Service and Trading is implemented by a team of Food Science and Technology professionals, Finance and Business professional and Agronomists. Together, the team has set up a HACCP implementation plan, Standard Operation Procedures in line with standards implementation procedures.

Critical Control Points have been earmarked to ensure they are not violated across the value chain. It is important to ensure good agriculture practices right from the application of fertilizers and pesticides, harvesting and post-harvest handling of fruits and vegetables.

In terms of quality control of the system, the company uses potable water in the washing of fruits and vegetables. With the help of RSB testing laboratories periodic testing of water is carried out to ensure cleanliness. Water is subjected to UV treatment to ensure its quality and periodic washing and cleaning of the water tanks is carried out. There is a clear cleaning program as stipulated by the HACCP implementation program.

IZERE Services and Trading Company Limited attests that HACCP certification helped them reduce wastes and the quantity of rejected supplies was reduced at more than 95% hence increasing customer satisfaction and company profitability.

CLIENTS

Before HACCP Certification Izere Services and Trading Co. Ltd had 02 clients, to date after being HACCP certified the company offers service to 11 clients in the hospitality sector. They include; Radisson Blue Hotel, Serena Hotels, Marriot Hotel, Galaxy Hotel, Onomo Hotel, Rwandair Catering, Hotel de Mille Collines, One and Only Hotel in Nyungwe and Gorilla Nest, to mention but a few.

As Rwanda has embarked on the journey to becoming a tourism destination hub through promotion of the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences/Conventions and Events/Exhibitions (MICE) tourism and attracting investment in the tourism sector, the certification of Izere Services and Trading Co. Ltd is timely as it ensures that Hotels, Restaurants and other tourism establishments can now get quality and reliable food and vegetable supplies that meet international standards. To this end, the company proprietor Mrs Mumporeze Angelique is grateful to the technical support provided by Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) and deeply indebted to the visionary leadership of H.E Paul Kagame that has provided a conducive environment for investments and particularly helped women to be involved in economic activities.



“I fetched encouragement from the messages of our President H.E. Paul Kagame to women and I believed we, women, are equally able. We started small, but we now offer internationally recognized fruits and vegetables supply services.”


Mrs Mumporeze Angelique, the founder of IZERE Services and Trading Company Limited



Rwanda Standards Board
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 3250