

Viwang

E-Newsletter



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TBS, the Home of Standards



The Minister for Industry and Trade, Hon. Dr. Selemani Jafo (MP) (centre, seated) poses with winners of the National Quality Awards and representatives of the organizing institutions during the awards presentation ceremony in Dar es Salaam.

Jafo urges producers to prioritise standards



Minister for Industry and Trade, Hon. Dr. Selemani Jafo (MP) addresses participants during the 2024 World Quality Day celebrations in Dar es Salaam.

By Deborah Haule

The government has called on producers in the country to prioritize quality standards as a key strategy to enhance the competitiveness of locally-made products in domestic and global markets.

Speaking at the World Quality Day celebrations in Dar es Salaam recently, Minister for Industry and Trade, Dr Selemani Jafo said by maintaining quality, locally manufactured products will become competitive in regional

and international markets including Europe, India, and China,” Dr Jafo emphasized.

The Minister highlighted that TBS initiatives have enabled local companies to improve their standards and access wider markets adding that Tanzania is highly regarded for producing internationally compliant products.

“Producers must ensure their production adheres to standards to add value to our

products for global markets while doing justice to our nation and consumers,” he urged.

Dr Jafo praised TBS for its role in upholding standards and recognized companies excelling in quality enhancement stating that their achievements demonstrate the value of self-promotion and commitment to excellence.

He noted Tanzania’s vast opportunities with a population exceeding 62 million, and its membership in regional blocs like the East African Community (EAC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

For her part, TBS Director General Dr. Ashura Katunzi, explained that the World Quality Day celebrations align with Quality Week, observed in every November, during which TBS educates the public on quality issues.

This year’s theme, ‘From Compliance to Performance,’ underscored the importance of going beyond adherence to standards by implementing them in every aspect of business operations. Dr Katunzi applauded the government’s efforts under President Samia Suluhu Hassan’s leadership in building a competitive industrial and trade sector and enabling local products to compete globally.

“These efforts ensure that our products and services remain competitive, especially when products from other countries are allowed into our markets,” she said. The event included the presentation of national quality awards to winners of the 2024 fifth season, celebrating excellence in quality adherence and innovation.



A cross-section of stakeholders during the 2024 World Quality Day celebrations in Dar es Salaam



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TBS urges producers to obtain quality mark

By Maryam Abdulaziz

Producers in the country have been urged to ensure that their products carry quality marks issued by Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) to enable them to be exported to other countries, including those in the East African Community (EAC) without any hindrance.

The call was made recently by the TBS Western Zone Acting Manager Mr Hamis Seleleko while speaking to residents, producers, businessmen and investors at the Third Katavi Week Exhibition in Mpanda town.

The aim of the exhibition was to promote the economic opportunities of Katavi Region including investment, agriculture, mining, tourism, and livestock keeping.

Mr Seleleko said the purpose of participating in the exhibition was to provide education on the services offered by TBS including issuance of quality marks for products produced in the country to ensure their quality and add value to them so that they can be accepted by consumers but also

to enable them to be exported, for example, in the East African Community a product that has a quality mark will be taken to any country without any trade barriers.

In addition, he said that TBS had participated in the exhibition to inform the public that they provide testing services by testing various products in the Bureau's state of the art laboratories.

Mr Seleleko made it clear that TBS laboratories are accredited and therefore internationally recognized thus any product tested in any of the laboratories becomes internationally recognized and does not need to be retested.

He mentioned the challenges which businessmen may face by selling products that do not meet the required standards include removal of the products from the market.

"So we are telling the public, businessmen, and entrepreneurs to adhere to the standards requirements," he said.

"TBS mark – A symbol for quality"



We encourage stakeholders to participate in quality awards

Over the past few years, Tanzania has established a National Quality Awards programme to recognize organizations leading in quality. This was a brainchild of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which has been running quality awards competitions since 2011, in a bid to sensitize regional organizations to improve their quality management.

The establishment of the SADC Annual Quality Awards was aimed at recognizing and appreciating organizations and individuals who are contributing to quality advancement in all sectors of SADC, by having measurement and quality systems, procedures and processes that are in line with local, regional and international practices and who use quality advancement to support national and regional economic development.

At national level in Tanzania, the competition, which is open for participants from both the Mainland and Zanzibar, was established by the government under the Ministry of Industry and Trade in 2020. It is organized by the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS), the Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO), the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF), the Zanzibar Bureau of Standards (ZBS), the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA), the Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI), the Tanzania Trade Development Authority (TanTrade) and the Tanzania Women Chamber of Commerce (TWCC).

Quality awards are formal recognitions bestowed upon organizations that demonstrate exceptional performance

in quality management and continuous improvement. These awards serve to highlight best practices, encourage excellence, and promote competitiveness within various industries. Typically, organizations undergo rigorous assessments based on established criteria, and those that excel are honored with these awards. Worldwide, the use of quality awards programmes has helped businesses and other organizations to improve their ability to compete and fulfil their missions.

Evidence shows that award winning organizations achieve higher levels of broad based success. This has been proven by multiple studies of long term business results of award winning organizations. Participation in quality awards programmes have enabled these organizations to better understand what to do and how to do it. By participating, companies get a chance to compare their approaches to proven models for organizational success, they take advantage of expert third party feedback to implement performance improvement plans; and they know where to focus process improvements to achieve the desired results.

The Tanzania National Quality Awards competition for the year 2024/2025 was launched on 14th August, 2024. It focused on five sub-categories namely best company of the year, best product of the year, best service of the year, best seller of the year (international) and best individual who did well on issues related to quality. The awards were scheduled to coincide with the World Quality Week (2024), which is conducted each year with the aim of raising awareness of the quality management profession — specifically raising awareness about the role of quality in businesses and organizations; encouraging companies to improve their processes, products, and services; highlighting the importance of ethical and sustainable quality practices; and fostering a culture of

continuous improvement and customer focus.

The World Quality Week theme for 2024 was “Quality: from compliance to performance”, which refers to the transition organizations make from merely adhering to regulatory standards (compliance) to actively enhancing their operational effectiveness and achieving superior results (performance). This shift emphasizes not just meeting minimum requirements but striving for excellence and continuous improvement.

The winners of the best company of the year award for big enterprises was Said Salim Bakhresa Company Limited, followed by Kilombero Sugar Company Limited (runner-up) and Raphael Logistics (T) Limited (second runner-up); while CAPS Limited was nominated the best company of the year under SMEs category, followed by Zaidat Products (runner-up) and Simba Pipes Industries Limited (second runner-up). Meanwhile, the best product of the year award for big enterprises went to Brown Sugar produced by Kilombero Sugar Company Limited. For SMEs, the award for the best product of the year was won by Coconut Butter Petroleum Jelly produced by Zaidat Products, followed by HDPE Pressure Pipe for Buried Application manufactured by Simba Pipes Industries Limited and Supa Sembe processed by Mwangaza.

The award for the best service of the year for big enterprises was taken by Raphael Logistics while Ampola Tasakhta Hospital came out as runners-up. For SMEs, the best service of the year award was taken by CAPS Limited. Meanwhile, Zaidat Products became the winner of the best seller of the year (international) award for SMEs. Likewise, Prof. Bendantunguka Phillibert Tiisekwa won the award for the best individual who did well on issues related to quality, followed by Mr. Idrissa Ali Mussa (runner-up) and Mr. Hafidh Mohamed Salim (second runner-up).



Speaking during the event to present the National Quality Awards for 2024/2025 which took place in Dar es Salaam on 18th November, 2024 and was graced by him, the Minister of Industry and Trade, Hon. Dr. Selemani Jafo (MP) called upon producers to prioritize standards as a key strategy to enhance the competitiveness of locally-made products in domestic and global markets. He said Tanzanian products can only compete in local, regional and global markets if they meet standards requirements. He praised TBS, Tanzania's national standards body, for its role in upholding standards.

Dr. Jafo commended the companies excelling in quality enhancement, stating that their achievements demonstrate the value of self-promotion and commitment to excellence. He reiterated that it is by maintaining quality, that Tanzanian products can become competitive in regional and international markets, including Europe, India and China.

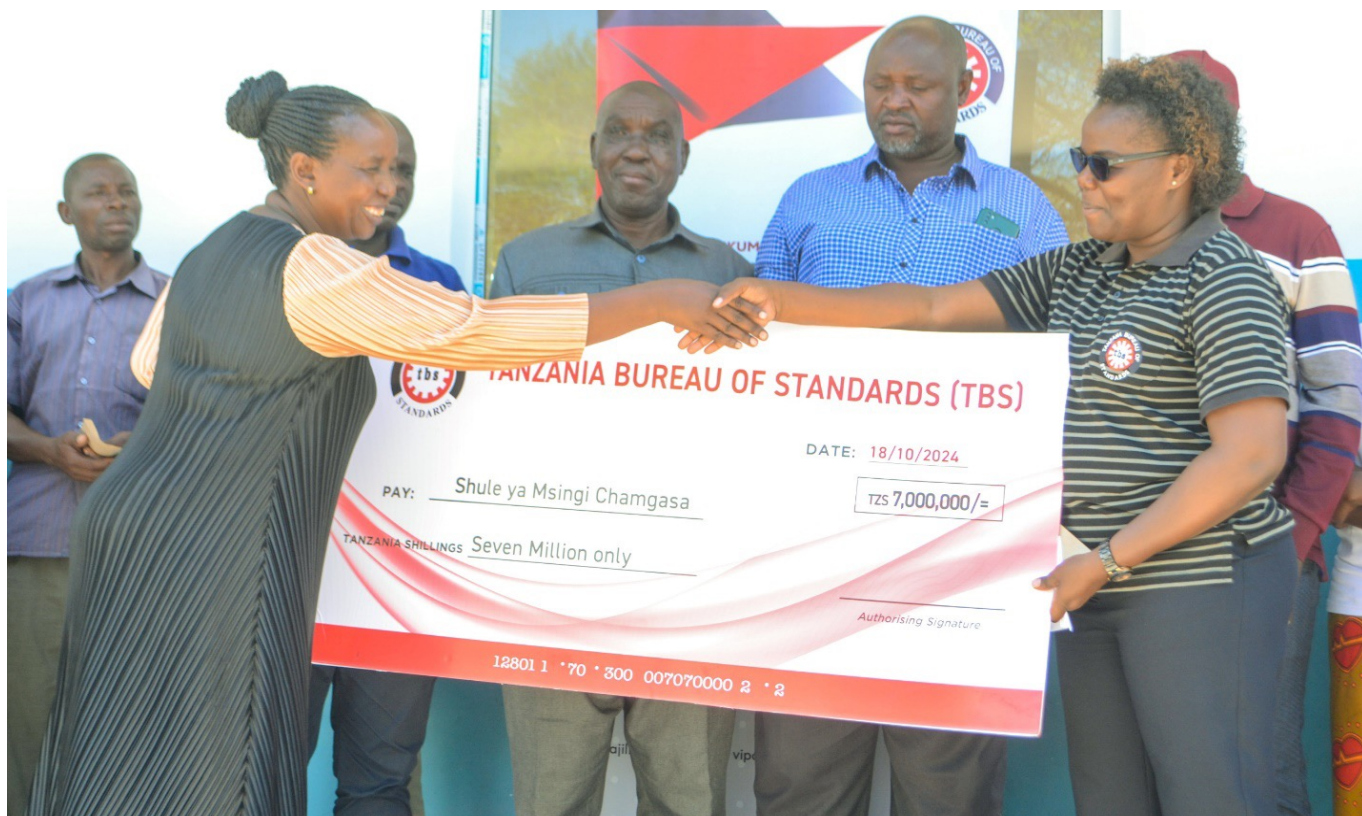
On her part, the TBS Director General, Dr.

Ashura Katunzi expounded on the theme of the World Quality Day, "From Compliance to Performance", which, she said, underscored the importance of going beyond adherence to standards by implementing them in every aspect of business operations. She praised the government's efforts in building a competitive industrial and trade sector and enabling local products to compete globally.

In a nutshell, quality awards play a crucial role in promoting excellence, recognizing outstanding achievements, and encouraging continuous improvement within organizations across different sectors. The awards provide benchmarks for organizations to measure their performance against industry standards, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. It is against this background that we call upon manufacturers and service providers to participate in the national quality awards, as this is a priceless opportunity to showcase their commitment to excellence, gain industry recognition, and benchmark against the best.

“When you buy a product always look for the TBS mark which assures you of quality, reliability and safety”

TBS supports Chamugasa Primary School in Simiyu



TBS Lake Zone Manager Ms. Happy Kanyeka (right), presents a dummy cheque worth 7m/- to Chamugasa Primary School Headmistress, Ms. Redempta Missanga, being the Bureau's support in addressing the shortage of toilets at the school.

By Deborah Haule

Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) has handed over new toilets to Chamugasa Primary School in Busega District, Simiyu Region as part of its commitment to support government's initiatives to improve learning environment.

TBS Lake Zone Manager Ms Happy Kanyeka said the 7m/- worth project was designed

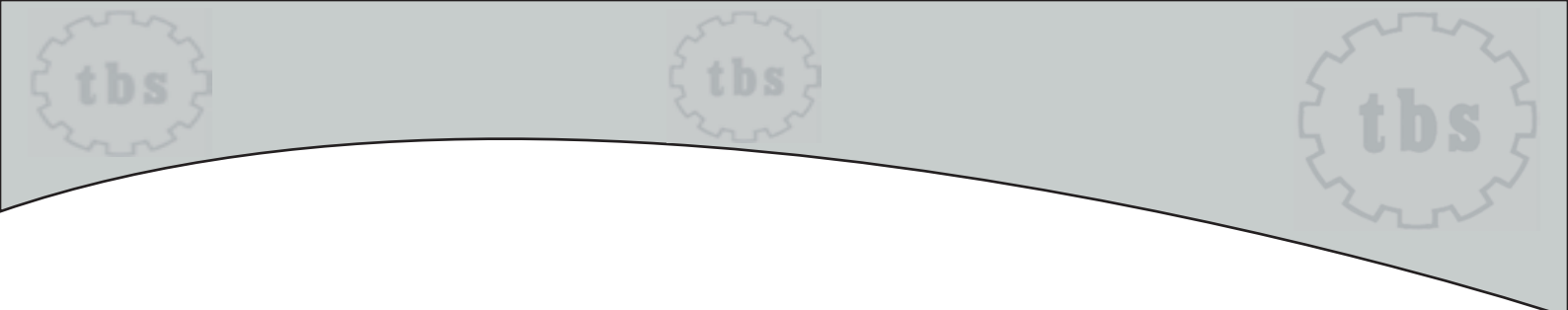
to address the shortage of toilets at the school.

"We give back to the community what we receive. This initiative aims to facilitate the significant efforts made by the government to enhance the learning environment for students," said Kanyeka.

Apart from handing over

the project, Ms Kanyeka used the opportunity to educate students on how to recognise products certified by TBS and the importance of reading the information especially expiry date on the products they purchase.

For her part, the School's Headmistress, Ms Redempta Missanga commended TBS



for its support in constructing the new toilets noting that the school established in 1959, was also facing a challenge of shortage of eight classrooms and 200 desks.

“Our school has 678 students (345 girls and 333 boys) with eight teachers (five women and three men). We urge other stakeholders to

continue supporting efforts to improve teaching and learning environment,” said Ms. Missanga.

On behalf of the students, Ms. Elizabeth Mafayo expressed gratitude to TBS for contributing to the construction of the new toilets, stating that the facilities have alleviated the challenges they previously faced.

“We had been facing challenges with the lack of toilets...we thank TBS for helping us... now there are no more issues,” she said.

***“Misuse of TBS
quality mark is a
criminal offence
punishable under the
Standards Act No. 2
of 2009”***



TBS: Grapes certification enhances market competitiveness

By Dennis Mzamilu

Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) has emphasized that certifying grape products is vital for ensuring their quality and safety hence boosting their competitiveness in both local and international markets.

TBS Inspector in the Central Zone, Mr Domisiano Rutahala made the remarks during the Dodoma International Grape Investors Expo held at Mashujaa Grounds in Dodoma.

The expo was themed ‘Grapes: An Investment Opportunity and a Catalyst for National Development’. Rutahala stated that with certification from TBS, grape products can get access to wider markets especially in the East African Community.

“Certification builds consumer trust as it guarantees that the products are safe, reliable, and of the required quality, which is

crucial for the growth of the grape industry and for securing long-term economic benefits for producers and entrepreneurs,” he said.

Mr Rutahala described the expo as a crucial opportunity for the Bureau to educate manufacturers especially entrepreneurs on the benefits of certifying their products with the TBS quality mark.

He emphasized that TBS is a business-friendly institution working closely with entrepreneurs, with the government allocating funds to provide this service for free.

Mr Rutahala noted that Dodoma is the only region in Tanzania that produces grapes, with most grape-based product manufacturers located there.

“TBS mark of quality: An assurance that you are buying a quality product”

TBS urges mining stakeholders to uphold standards



TBS Quality Assurance Officer, Mr. Pascal Mnuni provides education to entrepreneurs during the 7th Mining Exhibition in Geita.

By Staff Reporter

Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) has urged mining stakeholders to uphold standards to ensure quality, safety and competitiveness of products within the sector.

The statement was made by TBS Senior Public Relations Officer Ms Neema Mtemvu at the

7th National Mining Technology Exhibitions at Bombambili grounds in Geita Region. "Compliance with established quality benchmarks makes Tanzanian mining products more competitive globally, opening up new opportunities for trade and investment," she said.

She noted that TBS through its technical committees on mining has developed standards that will ensure safety in the mining sector which is contributing to higher economic growth and increased exports and capital inflows into the country.

Ms Neema said TBS has the

role to undertake measures for quality control of products of all descriptions and to promote standardization in industry and commerce countrywide.

She said high-quality, certified products are more likely to attract buyers both locally and internationally hence boosting export opportunities.

This, in turn, strengthens the mining sector's contribution to the economy, ensuring that it remains competitive and

resilient in global markets.

According to Ms Neema, through the exhibitions TBS is engaging with stakeholders and educating them on the importance of standards adding that the Bureau also interacted with entrepreneurs to listen to their challenges, provide solutions and encourage them to understand the importance of producing quality-certified products.

Ms Mtemvu emphasized that

TBS is committed to fulfilling the government's mission of ensuring entrepreneurs contribute to the country's economic growth by producing goods that meet the required standards.

"That's why we are using this opportunity during the mining exhibitions to educate the public on the procedures to follow in order to certify their products for free," Mtemvu explained.

“Quality is everyone’s responsibility”

TBS urges manufacturers to certify product quality for broader market

By Deborah Haule

TANZANIA Bureau of Standards (TBS) has urged product manufacturers to certify quality of their goods to enable them to sell beyond East African market and take advantage of Local Content Policy.

TBS Northern Zone Manager Eng. Joseph Ismail made the call during an exhibition organized by Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA) in Babati District, Manyara Region.

Speaking to the media at the exhibition themed 'Manyara for Business and Investment Growth' Eng. Ismail explained that TBS plays a crucial role in promoting investment by facilitating production of various goods.

He encouraged manufacturers to formalize their businesses, noting that obtaining a quality mark would allow them to export products beyond East Africa.



TBS officers (left and second left) educate entrepreneurs during the Tanzanite Business Exhibition in Babati.

He highlighted Manyara as a strategic region with numerous hotels that require products certified by TBS.

“To sell to these hotels, you must certify the quality of your products. Through the Local Content Policy, hotel owners are inclined to purchase locally in Manyara rather than sourcing from Arusha but they won’t buy uncertified products,” he said.

He made it clear that TBS is a supportive

institution that works closely with traders, with government funds allocated to assist them.

“The government through TBS provides quality certification services free of charge.... I encourage manufacturers to come to TBS and certify their products.” He said while advising them to formalize their businesses to facilitate access to various bank loans.

***Quality does not
only begin with a
letter Q. It must
be followed by U.***

TBS directed to design strategies for curbing illegal entry of goods



Members of the TBS Board of Directors being shown around by members of TBS Management during a familiarization visit at Tunduma Border.

By Mussa Luhombero

Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) Board of Directors has directed TBS Management to develop strategies to address the issue of products entering the country through informal routes.

The directive was issued by TBS Board Chairman

Prof Othman Chande Othman during a visit to TBS offices at Tunduma and Kasumulu Border posts. The aim of the visit was to assess current operations and identify strategies to enhance the Bureau's effectiveness and support business growth in the country.

“Apart from strategies to curb the illegal entry of products, TBS management should continue educating the public about the effects of using banned and uninspected products,” said Prof Chande.

During the visit, the TBS Board emphasized on the importance of ensuring both imported and locally manufactured goods are marked to make it easier for consumers to identify quality-assured products.

This directive follows a report by TBS Director General Dr Ashura Katunzi who highlighted that uninspected products, including banned cosmetics continued to

enter the market through informal channels.

In her report, Dr Katunzi said that despite of collaboration with other regulatory authorities in market surveillance and in all official entry points, such as border posts, airports, and ports, some unfaithful businessmen use porous borders of the country to bring in the country uninspected products.

The Board noted that the continued presence of substandard and banned products reflects its high demand in the market. As a result, the Board urged TBS to strengthen public education efforts and to ensure all inspected products are

***“To beat your
competition, make
quality your
mission”***

TBS urges farmers on best practices for food safety



TBS Quality Assurance Officer, Mr. Kaiza Kilango educates farmers in Kilosa on best agricultural practices.

By Deborah Haule

Farmers in the country have been urged to adopt best agricultural practices to combat foodborne diseases with a particular focus on reducing contamination risks.

Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) emphasizes that adherence to established guidelines are essential for enhancing food safety and public health.

TBS Senior Quality Assurance Officer Mr

Kaiza Kilango highlighted the importance of hygiene, effective crop management and safe handling techniques at a training session for farmers in Kilosa Morogoro Region.

“By prioritising these practices, farmers can safeguard their livelihoods and protect consumer health,” he stated.

This initiative aims to cultivate a culture of safety and quality within the agricultural

sector, ensuring that Tanzanian produce meets both national and international standards.

Key practices recommended by Mr Kilango include timely land preparation, using quality seeds, appropriate planting and spacing, proper fertilization and harvesting at the right time.

He warned against placing harvested crops on the ground where fungi can thrive, advising instead to dry crops on raised platforms and transport them carefully to avoid moisture exposure, which can lead to issues like aflatoxin contamination.

Furthermore, Mr Kilango stressed the need for protective gear against unpredictable rainfall during harvesting, especially given the challenges posed by climate change.

Once crops such as maize and groundnuts are brought home, they should be dried on tarpaulins or raised platforms and processed using machines that minimize breakage, as broken grains are more prone to contamination.

Proper storage is crucial, Mr Kilango said adding that once adequately dried, maize should be

stored in pest-resistant bags or treated with approved insecticides to prevent moisture buildup.

He also recommended sorting out any maize showing signs of aflatoxin contamination during processing.

“If we implement these measures effectively, we will significantly reduce, if not eliminate, aflatoxin and other foodborne challenges in our country,” he concluded.

On his part, TBS Senior Quality Assurance Officer Mr Gerald Magola noted that farmers from 15 out of 40 wards in Kilosa district, which produce abundant maize and groundnuts have received training on avoiding foodborne diseases like aflatoxins.

This effort aims to help communities produce safe crops and access markets both locally and internationally. Similar training sessions have been conducted in other regions, including Itilima in Simiyu and Urambo in Tabora as part of a broader initiative to enhance food safety across the country.

***“Quality is not
an act. It is a
habit”***

TBS emphasizes the importance of removing lead (Pb) in paint



Participants of a multi-stakeholder workshop on lead paint elimination in Tanzania pose for a photo during the workshop.

By Staff reporter

Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) has continued to emphasize the importance of removing lead from paint due to its effects on health, especially for young children.

The emphasis was made during a multi-stakeholder workshop on lead paint elimination in Tanzania that was held in Dar es Salaam in October 2024.

The workshop organized by the AGENDA for Environment and Responsible Development (AGENDA), TBS, and another NGO named Lead Exposure Elimination

Project (LEEP) aimed to raise awareness of lead paint and elimination in Tanzania.

Making opening remarks, TBS Director of Standards Development Mr David Ndibalema said that, "lead was being used for a long time in paint as a primary pigment in house paints, industrial paints, and automotive paints to speed up drying, increase durability, maintain a fresh appearance, and resist moisture that causes corrosion, but now it is associated with diseases such as high blood pressure but also affecting children's growth and causes harm to adults.



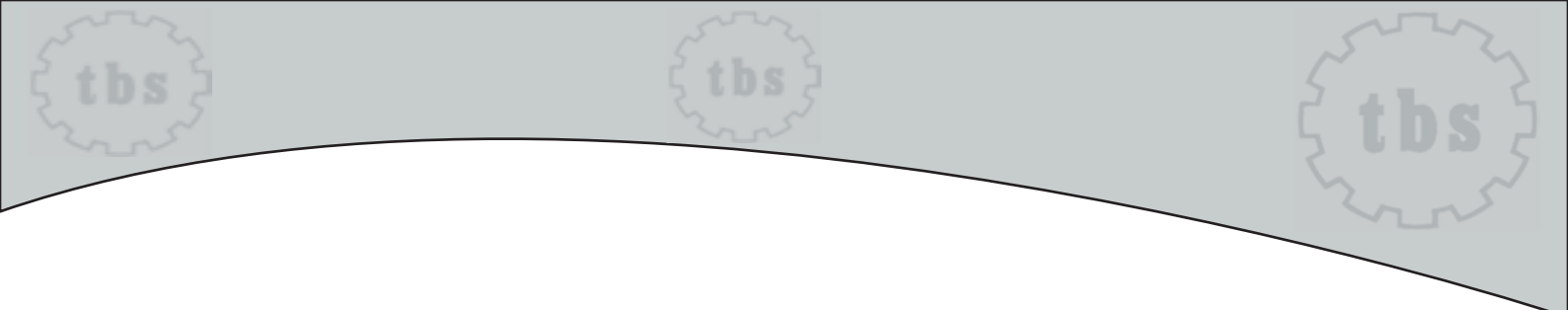
TBS Director of Standards Development Mr. David Ndibalema delivers opening remarks during the workshop.

Mr Ndibalema explained that the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) encourage the use of alternative methods in making paints and

abandon the use of lead in paint concluding that, TBS has set minimum levels of lead in paint for all paints standards and continues in campaigns to encourage the production of safe paints.



TBS Standards Officer, Mr. Miraji Kambangwa (left), AGENDA for Environment and Responsible Development Executive Secretary, Mr. Silvani Mng'anya (centre) and TBS Quality Assurance Officer, Mr. Josephat Kulwa during the multi-stakeholder workshop on lead paint elimination in Tanzania.



Mr Miraji Kambangwa, Standards Officer at TBS, said that one among the actions taken by the Government of Tanzania in that direction is endorsing legal standards that set a limit for lead in paint and other related products.

Mr Kambangwa highlighted that manufacturers are required to comply with the limit of no more than 90 parts per million (ppm) (90 mg/kg total lead), affirming that the limit has also been harmonized within the East Africa Community partner states.

He remarked that by doing so, Tanzania has become among the 48% of countries that have confirmed that have legally binding controls on the production, import, sale, and use of lead paints.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified lead as one among ten widely used chemicals posing major public health concerns, requiring action by member states to protect the health of workers, children and women of reproductive age.

It was also noted that childhood lead poisoning, including exposure during pregnancy, can have lifelong health impacts such as learning disabilities, anemia, and disorders affecting coordination, visual-spatial, and language skills. This raises the need for more clinician training on heavy metal management to combat lead exposure, he declared.

***“Quality begins on
the inside... and
then works its way
out”***

Enhancing food safety, food quality, and trade in the East African region through proficiency testing: A case study on proficiency tests (PTs) for honey, maize, rice grain, spices, and peanut butter



Emanuel Bakashaya

Proficiency Testing (PT) is the evaluation of participant performance against pre-established criteria using interlaboratory comparisons. The East African Community (EAC) Proficiency Testing (PT) scheme began in 2006 with just three food matrices: Wheat flour, salt, and water. Since then, it has expanded significantly to include over 20 food matrices and 15 non-food matrices, reflecting a strong commitment to enhancing food safety and quality across the region. This initiative is managed by dedicated national standards bodies from five East African countries: Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi.

The food matrices provided by the Tanzania Bureau of Standards include honey, maize grains, rice, spices, peanut butter, fruit juice, energy drinks, and salt.



Examples of PT samples provided by TBS

The EAC Proficiency Testing Scheme serves as an essential quality assurance tool for laboratories, allowing them to compare their performance and identify areas for improvement. It is encouraging to see that this scheme not only fosters collaboration among regional laboratories but also aims to enhance quality assurance standards. Furthermore, participation in a proficiency testing scheme is a critical requirement under ISO/IEC 17025, which stipulates that laboratories must engage in proficiency testing (PT) and/or interlaboratory comparisons (ILCs) to ensure the validity of their results.

Honey, maize grains, rice, and peanut butter are some of the most important traded commodities in the East African Community (EAC) region, serving as essential staple foods. Besides regional trade, the EAC also exports spices to markets in Europe, Asia, and America. However, industries and testing laboratories in the region face significant challenges due to inconsistencies and a lack of uniformity in their practices, measurements, and procedures, resulting in issues with accuracy and reliability.

Additionally, regional trade encounters obstacles

due to trade barriers from quality inconsistencies and contamination issues. These include aflatoxin, hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF), heavy metals, and microbiological contamination. To tackle these challenges, the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) has established the Proficiency Testing Programme under the East Africa Proficiency Testing Scheme, which operates in accordance with relevant ISO 17043 requirements. This programme aims to assist processors and testing laboratories in obtaining accreditation by improving validation processes and maintaining stringent quality standards.



Preparation of PT samples



Participating in PT programmes can enhance industries in maize grain sorting, handling, and storage practices

The regional production of reference materials particularly proficiency tests enhances the capabilities of laboratories and industries by reducing dependence on imported resources. This transition is anticipated to result in cost reductions, thereby increasing accessibility for

both institutions and individuals. Additionally, the regional production of reference materials helps to address national and regional challenges, including contamination and post-harvest losses, which leads to improved safety and quality.



Packed maize and rice grain proficiency testing samples ready for shipment

The current initiative offers reference materials that are based on quality testing and safety parameters. The focus of capacity-building efforts is on the provision of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) parameters. Cost-effectiveness, a sizable and varied participant pool, and a wide range of multi-analyte possibilities per matrix are just a few of the EAC PT Scheme's noteworthy advantages. These features allow participants to consolidate individual programmes resulting in significant savings in both time and resources. The provision of Proficiency Testing by the Tanzania Bureau of Standards, as part of the East African Community (EAC) Proficiency Testing (PT) Scheme, has established a robust reputation as a reliable framework for ensuring food safety and quality throughout the region. By implementing a structured approach to proficiency testing, this scheme significantly contributes to assisting laboratories in aligning

their products with international standards. Such alignment is essential for preserving consumer trust and advancing public health initiatives. Furthermore, the EAC PT Scheme enables laboratories to adhere to rigorous testing protocols and accreditation requirements, thereby ensuring that the products evaluated not only comply with regulatory standards but also exemplify the highest levels of quality and safety within the food industry. Through its comprehensive and systematic approach, the scheme promotes continuous improvement and fosters confidence in food products among both consumers and stakeholders.

Participation in the Proficiency Testing Programme

Registration for each round is a vital step in ensuring successful participation. All

participants must register because only registered laboratories will receive proficiency testing (PT) samples. To register, participants need to complete the registration form and submit it via e-mail to the provider. Registration opens after each round announcement, which typically takes place in May each year.

Proforma invoices that include banking information will only be issued upon request and after the PT provider has received the completed registration forms. Participants must pay all applicable fees in advance and provide proof of payment to the provider. Only then will the laboratory or institution be considered registered and confirmed for participation in the PT round.

Operation of the Proficiency Testing Scheme

Proficiency Testing (PT) schemes operate by providing participating laboratories with similar/identical samples for concurrent testing. Each laboratory analyzes these samples, ideally integrating this process into its regular operations, and then reports the results back to the PT provider. The provider subsequently issues a report that outlines the level of agreement between the laboratory's results and the accepted values. If necessary, the laboratory can take appropriate actions to improve its performance based on this feedback.



Collection of proficiency testing samples by courier for shipment to participants

***Emanuel Cosmas Bakashaya is a Quality Assurance Officer and PT Coordinator for Food Chemistry Laboratory Tanzania Bureau of Standards.**



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in Global Trade**