



# ***9th Continental Essay Competition Concept Note***

**Theme:**  
**“The Role of  
Standardisation in  
Promoting African  
Pharmaceutical and  
Medical Devices Industries  
to Attain Self-reliance and  
resilience in Combating  
COVID-19 and Future  
Pandemics”**



**October 2021**

# ORGANISERS



## **African Organization for Standardization**

ARSO is an intergovernmental body, established by the African Union and UNECA in 1977 with the principal mandate to harmonize African Standards and conformity assessment procedures in order to reduce Technical Barriers to Trade and therefore promote intra African and international Trade as well as enhance the industrialization of Africa.

Part of ARSO mandate is to ensure the well-being and safety of the African Community. Thus being an African organization, all the efforts to eradicate poverty and ensure the youth are enlightened and create a culture of quality among the youth is in line with its vision and mission.

### **ARSO Vision Statement**

To be an excellent standardisation center that promotes trade and industry.

### **ARSO Mission Statement**

To facilitate intra-African and global trade through providing harmonised standards and facilitating their implementation.



AMC Group Africa Limited is a leading Kenyan management training, consultants and system auditors with clients from government ministries, parastatals, and institutions of higher learning and private sector organizations. They are the first Consultancy Firm in Kenya to be ISO 9001:2015 Certified.

In addition to this, AMC Group Africa Ltd also runs the following:

- The certified firms expo and plenary sessions
- Annual quality workshops
- Directory of certified firms



## INTRODUCTION

By demobilising economies, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have indicated COVID-19 pandemic as the largest threat to global economy since the financial emergency of 2008–2009, as COVID-19 has severely demobilized the global economy. In its April 2020 report, the African Union has reported that “Indeed, the high dependency of African economies vis-à-vis foreign economies predicts a negative economic spinoff for the continent, evaluated at an average loss of 1.5 points on economic growth 2020 and it is unlikely that the 3.4 percent economic growth rate for the continent, forecast last year by the African Development Bank, will be achieved because of the COVID-19 crisis”. (AUC, 2020, <https://africatimes.com/2020/04/06/new-au-report-zeroes-in-on-covid-19-economic-impacts/>). Before the pandemic, the World Bank estimates that Africa's share of exports to the rest of the world amounted to around 80% of its total trade.

In the midst of extraordinary challenges and uncertainties, leaders are under pressure to make decisions on managing the immediate and long-term impact of the pandemic and its consequences, decisions that will shape the state of the world for years to come and what might be the silver linings in the crisis and how might leaders use this moment to build a more resilient, prosperous, equitable and sustainable world, is a subject of interest (World Economic Forum 2020).

On a positive note, due to the endemic reliance on imports, and the breakdowns in supply chains associated with lockdown measures, for the African continent, COVID-19 has strengthened the case for developing intra-African regional value chains and unlocking the continent's business potential, while focusing on the African SMEs and Africa's Industrialisation and Manufacturing for essential products.

Therefore, as countries all over the world are making a focused effort towards the re-opening of their economies with increased surge on the demand for safe and quality Personal Preventive Equipment, the role of standardisation is being tested and manifested at the same scale, to achieve the intricate balance of saving lives and livelihoods at the same time. Like their international counterparts (ISO, ASTM, AFNOR, CEN-CENELEC, SAC-China, SIS, INTERTEK, COTECNA) the African National Bureau of Standards and Certification Bodies are taking leadership role to offer, free of charge, the necessary standards and Conformity Assessment Services (see the link <https://www.arso-aran.org/standards-for-covid-19/>) for the local manufacturers/SMEs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on the importance of Quality Infrastructure (QI) for resilience. Standards can impact trade and affect access to essential medical technologies across the globe. A recent survey jointly carried out by the Africa Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) of UNECA and International Economics Consulting Ltd. (IEC) on the impact of COVID—19 on business and trade across Africa substantiates the ability of African firms, with effective support from the African Quality Infrastructures (NSBs), to adapt and innovate in response to COVID—19 challenges, including global supply chain disruptions.

ARSO, together with other regional quality infrastructure organizations and the National Bureau of Standards have an important role to play in contributing the Quality Infrastructure benefits to addressing the COVID 19 pandemic and offering solutions to Africa's quest for self-reliance, resilience and industrialisation/economic recovery.



Theme: "The Role of Standardisation in Promoting African Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Industries to Attain Self-reliance and resilience in Combating COVID-19 and Future Pandemics"



## ABOUT THE 9TH CONTINENTAL— ESSAY COMPETITION

Theme: "The Role of Standardisation in Promoting African Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Industries to Attain Self-reliance and resilience in Combating COVID-19 and Future Pandemics"

The Competition aims to have 3 categories of winners: the National, Regional and Continental. In this regard, ARSO is requesting all the National Standards Bodies (NSB) in Africa to organise the competition at the National level and send out the attached documents (9th Continental Essay Concept Paper and Registration Form) to the various Universities /Colleges for the competition. The NSB is expected to conduct the competition at National level. This entails sending out the relevant documents to Colleges/ Universities, receiving the essays from the participants, doing the assessment, and awarding or giving recognition to the winners as appropriate to the NSB. The organizers are inviting students in institutions of higher learning in Africa (Colleges/ Universities approved by their local commission of higher education) to submit their essays on the theme: "The Role of Standardisation in Promoting African Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Industries to Attain Self-reliance and resilience in Combating COVID-19 and Future Pandemics" to their respective National Standards Bodies (NSBs) email addresses. (Confirm with your respective NSBs on the submission dates)

Kindly note that a minimum of 25 participants should be registered with respective NSBs in order for them to proceed to regional competition. The deadline for submitting top three winners by National Standards Bureaus (NSBs) is **18th March 2022** (This Deadline is only for Countries Submitting to the ARSO Central Secretariat; the deadline for participants submission to the NSBs might vary depending on the Country) through [arso@arso-oran.org](mailto:arso@arso-oran.org)

## ENTRY RULES AND CONDITIONS

1. This competition is open to Citizens of all African Countries Only below the age of 35 years living in Africa and studying in a university/college recognised by the local commission for university education or equivalent body in their countries
2. Length of essays : Essays should be between 1000 and 1200 words
3. Presentation: Essays should be double spaced and presented in Century Gothic, size 12
4. Language of essays: Essays must be submitted in English or French
5. Information on the author: Authors may use up to 50 words to describe themselves. Information should include their names, course and year of study, name, town and country in which their university is located. (N. B: this will not be part of the 1000- 1200 words)
6. Contacts of authors: Authors should provide us with their postal, physical, telephone and email addresses on the first page of the essay together with the title of the essay and information on the author. Also kindly attach a copy of the Identity Card or Passport and a completely filled registration form that can be obtained from AMC Group Africa Limited (<http://amcgroupafrica.com/> ) and ARSO (<https://www.arso-oran.org>)
7. Eligibility - The following essays are not eligible for this competition:
  - i. Essays that have been published in any form.
  - ii. Essays that have been shown or accepted for other competitions.
  - iii. Essays that focus on the work of a particular person, organization or brand name.
  - iv. Participants are only allowed to submit one essay.





## WHAT THE ORGANISERS ARE LOOKING FOR—NOT NECESSARILY IN THE ORDER BELOW:

There are different areas on the role of Standardisation in resolving and addressing the socio-economic issues for the Role of Standardisation in Promoting African Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Industries to Attain Self-reliance and resilience in Combating COVID-19 and Future Pandemics:

- How to reduce the effect of the COVID—19 Pandemic on African Economies
- The Problems facing the African Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Industries
- Strategies developed to address problems facing the Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Industry in Africa
- Solutions provided through the Implementation of Standards in Combating COVID—19 and future Pandemics
- General Understanding of Standards and Specific Issues affecting players

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6. Contacts of authors: *Authors should provide us with their postal, physical, telephone and email addresses on the first page of the essay together with the title of the essay and information on the author. Also kindly attach a copy of the Identity Card or Passport and a completely filled registration form* that can be obtained from AMC Group Africa Limited (<http://amcgroupafrica.com/> ) and ARSO (<https://www.arso-aran.org>)
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## PRIZES FOR WINNERS

There will be two levels of winners

At Regional Level

1st position – USD 500

2nd position –USD 300

3rd position – USD 200

At Continental Level

1st position – (male and female) each USD 1000

2nd position –USD 800

3rd position – USD 500

*In addition the 1st Position Winner at the Continental Level will be given a trip and accommodation to the next ARSO General Assembly Events that will take place in 2022 to be honored.*

## SELECTION OF WINNERS IN REGIONS

The selection of winners at regional level will be done according to the UNECA clustering of African states as follows.

Central Africa:

Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome & Principe

Eastern Africa:

Burundi, Comoros, D.R Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda

North Africa:

Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia

Southern Africa:

Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe

West Africa:

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo

More information on this can be obtained by visiting [www.uneca.org](http://www.uneca.org).



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## **COPYRIGHT**

Please note that by entering the competition, you have assigned copyright of your essay to the organizers of this event who may publish it in whole or in part on their respective websites, websites of national standards bodies, a wide range of publications for circulation both inside and outside Africa.

## **SELECTION OF WINNERS**

Winners will be selected through a fair and impartial selection process by the organizers. The decision of the judges shall be final, on the awarding procedures and process.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF WINNERS**

### **Regional winners**

Information on regional winners will be published on the following websites:

1. The organizers
2. Their respective regional economic communities
3. The website of their national standards body

Regional winners will be announced during the national standards day celebrations in their countries immediately following the essay competition and selection of winners:

### **Continental winners**

Information on Continental winners will be published on the following websites:

1. The organizers
2. African Union Commission
3. Website of all national standards bodies

Continental winners will be announced during the Africa Standards Day Celebration held yearly during the ARSO General Assembly Events (in Cameroon — June 2022)

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES TO DOWNLOAD RELEVANT DOCUMENTS:**

- African Organization for Standardisation - [www.arso-aran.org](http://www.arso-aran.org)
- AMC Group Africa - [www.amcgroupafrica.com](http://www.amcgroupafrica.com)
- Websites of various National Standards Bodies in Africa