



PRESS RELEASE

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New quality standards promise better trading future for Somaliland industries

Hargeisa, 4th August 2021: Somaliland Quality Control Commission (SQCC) launched 16 quality Standards of the most traded goods with the aim of supporting local industries tap into regional markets. The 16 standards [are among the first for the](#) country and cover the following sectors: Oils Seeds, Edible Fats and Oils, Cereals, and pulses; Livestock and livestock products; and beverages.

TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) provided support to SQCC for the development and harmonisation, adoption, and dissemination of conformity assessment product standards for the priority sectors with the potential to be traded within the Eastern Africa region. The project was funded by UKAID' s Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) and technical assistance provided by British Standards Institution (BSI).

In the absence of harmonised standards, enterprises face challenges while exporting and accessing markets due to the technical product requirements of the local or destination market. Such requirements include the need for goods to comply with quality, health and safety and sustainability standards as well as the associated conformity assessment procedures. Failure to adhere to these technical requirements result to higher transaction costs, longer time to access export markets and loss of economic opportunities.



Somaliland' s adoption of the 16 standards, will help overcome some of these challenges. It is also timely as the newly enforced Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) provides a platform for liberalisation of movement of goods and services within the AfCFTA framework; offering opportunities for enterprises that comply with technical regulations, voluntary standards, and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures. Intentional commitment by businesses to continuous improvement of quality management systems will establish the foundation of competitiveness and access to regional, global and/or niche markets. As trade and investment opportunities arise; businesses will need certification and accreditation of their services, products and processes. This move by SQCC therefore positions it to facilitate the country to adhere to requirements for exports and access the regional market. Further, uptake of the 16 standards combined with strengthening of Somaliland' s relations with its trading partners will ensure that its goods and services adhere to relevant regulations required for trade, as well as safeguarding the health and safety of the region' s consumers. Speakers noted that adoption of standards will enhance the ability to export goods by: i) Reducing the need for retesting, re-inspection and recertification abroad through acceptance of measures, tests, conformity assessment results issued by SQCC; ii) Cutting the time and costs of moving goods across borders; iii) ensure that processes, products and services are fit for purposes.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Musa Hassan Yousuf the Chairman of SQCC said:

“Standards are the means by which a level playing field can be achieved and maintained especially as the Somaliland opens up to global trade and AfCFTA comes to force. Small and medium sized enterprises stand to gain from a more inclusive approach to standardisation and will ensure they contribute to economic of growth of Somaliland and beyond. Increased use will help businesses access greater markets. The knock-on effect



to Somaliland will be these firms ploughing back investment and growing local industries which will create jobs.

He added, *"Implementation of these standards will help Somaliland producers/enterprises integrate into regional and global value chains by producing according to established quality and safety standards. The Standards will also help SQCC control and certify imports from different destinations into Somaliland. Our mandate to oversee development of national quality procedures and systems will enhance the country's ability to trade."*

TMEA Country Representative Mr. Abdi Osman said:

"Somaliland is facing a difficult battle of tackling some of the technical barriers to trade some of which TMEA is supporting the country reduce. "Adequate infrastructure and compliance to standards is critical to industrialisation. We are committed to support export quality management through SQCC so local industries can tap into regional markets, drive rapid economic growth, stimulate and increase value addition consequently contributing to poverty reduction." Abdi further said that TMEA's ongoing support to SQCC will facilitate Somaliland to overcome challenges relating to a deeper understanding of quality and safety standards, review of national trade policies as they relate to global trends and quality infrastructure gaps to support conformity assessment of traded goods. To strengthen the standards development function of SQCC, a Standards Development Blueprint was developed and training delivered to provide a foundation for further practical training on standards development and standards development and adoption of the priority product standards. TMEA is also supporting modernisation of the SQCC laboratories at Berbera port which will be launched later this year.

Education about and access to quality services will be critical in changing mindsets which is key to successful take-up. TMEA with SQCC will undertake



awareness campaigns to educate and train regulatory officials as well as the private sector to adopting these standards.

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NOTES for EDITORS

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About TMEA

TradeMark (**Trade** and **Markets**) East Africa is an aid-for-trade organisation that was established in 2010, with the aim of growing prosperity in East Africa through increased trade. TMEA operates on a

not-for-profit basis and is funded by the development agencies of the following countries: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, United States of America as well as the European Union. TMEA has its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, with successful operations and offices in EAC-Arusha, Burundi (Bujumbura), Tanzania (Dar es Salaam), Democratic Republic of Congo (Bukavu), Ethiopia (Addis-Ababa), Malawi, Zambia, South Sudan, Uganda (Kampala) and Rwanda (Kigali).

About SQCC

The Somaliland Quality Control Commission (SQCC) is the Somaliland National Standards Body (NSB) with mandate to develop, maintain and promote the use of standards and eliminate counterfeit products. SQCC carries out its mandate



by performing the following: Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (SQMT) which integrates development of national standards and implementation of standards through conformity assurance activities.

Additionally, SQCC is mandated to provide testing, calibration, and products inspection services to ascertain quality and compliance to set standards. SQCC' s capacity to adequately provide the necessary services to stakeholders, namely local manufacturers, importers of raw materials and finished goods, and consumers at large, is hampered by capacity constraints. These constraints limit the uptake and adoption of standards by the business community and prevent the Republic of Somaliland from attaining her trade and development potential.