

Malawi Exports to Receive a Boost as the Standards Body Seeks International Recognition

Products from Malawi will soon find it easier to enter and compete in the international market following a move to support accreditation of the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) by an internationally recognised standards accreditation body. This has been made possible with the EUR 50,000 funding from the Irish Embassy in Malawi through TradeMark East Africa.

Currently, MBS is unable to certify products and attain recognition in international markets. This is due to lack of accreditation with an international authority on Standards. As a result, key export products like Macadamia nuts have their samples taken to South Africa for testing, causing a direct increase in business costs and time. This reduces the competitiveness of products from Malawi, impeding their potential to reach international markets.

Accreditation of MBS will significantly increase efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness of exports, eliminating the number of rejections owing to non-compliance.

Emphasising the importance of compliance to international standards, the Ambassador of Ireland to Malawi, Mr. Séamus O'Grady said, "We are delighted to support Malawi in strengthening food safety and food standards through this grant, which will contribute to Malawi's ambitions to grow exports and open up new opportunities globally."

TradeMark CEO David Beer added, " *We commend the Malawi Bureau of Standards' efforts towards acquiring international accreditation which will in-turn make them a recognized and trusted body. That is a crucial achievement for increased market access of locally manufactured products and an opportunity for cross-border trade growth and export promotion. We are happy to keep supporting this good cause to promote increased trade in the region.*"

Since its creation, MBS has provided quality services in standards development, quality assurance through industry inspection, market surveillance, import inspection and certification, testing, metrology services and awareness-raising. Standards, conformity assessment (**testing and certification**), and calibration and verification (Metrology) services are key to enhancing the competitiveness of Malawian products, fair trade and consumer protection that in the end leads to trade promotion and socio-economic growth of the country. They are also benchmarks for business growth as standards compliance promotes quality, opens door to broader market access and increases competitiveness leading to export opportunities.

TradeMark's Malawi Country Programme aims at reducing persistent barriers and significantly improving trade outcomes. This programme focuses on two dominant themes: i) Improving trade along the key trade corridors for Malawi by developing one-stop border posts; improving trade automation; and, ii) Supporting priority export value chains to include focused work on Standards and SPS; Trade Policy; simplification and automation of trade-related regulatory processes.