

Summary

of the report on the mid-term evaluation of the project

“Establishment of a Regional Quality Infrastructure in the East African Community (EAC)”

September 2010



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Introduction

An mid-term evaluation of the joint EAC-PTB project “Establishment of a Regional Quality Infrastructure in the East African Community”, currently in its second phase, was carried out between 7 and 20 September, 2010. The mid-term evaluation was

- to assess the achieved results and impacts of the project and
- to elaborate planning orientation for the design of phase III.

The evaluation team included:

- Mr Siegfried Jenders, independent consultant and mission leader,
- Mr Tobias Diergardt, PTB project coordinator, as observer, and
- Mr William Muzinguzi, Principal Standards Officer, EAC Secretariat, also as observer.

The team visited the EAC Secretariat in Arusha, moving on to Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Kampala, Bujumbura and Kigali. It held talks with members of the National Standards Bureaus (NSBs), representatives of ministries, private sector organisations, a private QI organisation and two selected industries. The team linked up with the EAC - GTZ development programme as well as the Rwandese-GTZ programme on sustainable economic development and employment and had discussions with representatives of other development partner organisations, notably the EU, DFID, UNIDO and the World Bank).

A planning workshop was organised on 20 September 2010 in Kigali, where the preliminary findings and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation were presented and discussed. Participants included the Director General for Customs and Trade of the EAC Secretariat, chief executives and senior management of national QI institutions from all member countries, a representative of a line ministry (Uganda) as well as a representative of the EABC. The workshop verified the findings of the mid-term evaluation and discussed in particular the issues of strategy development for NSBs, the enhancement of the role of the EAC Secretariat and the inclusion of trade agreements (EPA, Tri-partite agreement) in their context with the evolving QI system.

Context of the project

Integration within the East African Community has continued to progress. Although implementation of a full customs union and the removal of non-tariff barriers remain challenges, trade flows within the region have increased. The new member states of Burundi and Rwanda are successfully taking steps to fully integrate in the EAC. Development partner



organisations are increasing their assistance to the EAC, in particular with regard to capacity and infrastructure development for economic integration.

The German government continues to cooperate with the EAC, supporting the integration progress. The EAC - PTB project “Establishment of a Regional Quality Infrastructure in the East African Community” forms an integral part of this cooperation. Implementation of this project started in January 2004. Its first phase, ending in June 2007, was followed by a second phase, which will end in December 2010. Consultations between the EAC and the German government resulted in an agreement to finance a concluding third implementation phase of two years duration.

Assessment of Project Planning and Implementation

The second phase of the EAC - PTB project has the objective of improving the shaping of the Quality infrastructure in the EAC and its adaptation to the East African SQMT Act. The achievement of the project objective was to be measured by greater participation of the private sector in EAC standards elaboration, increased collaboration between NSBs, improvements in intra-regional trade flows and increased demand for quality management certification. In order to facilitate integration of Burundi and Rwanda, two achievement indicators related to improved QI service provision and enhanced QI capacities in those countries.

The project focused on the transfer of knowledge and best practice in QI provision through short term training, advisory assignments and study visits. It facilitated the exchange of know-how and experience among QI providers and stakeholders in the region.

Significant consultancy was rendered for the development of EA standards procedures. The project also supported the establishment of the East African Accreditation Board in line with the SQMT Act. Assessor trainings were conducted to support the emergence of an East African Accreditation structure. The project’s support for product certification included peer assessments as well as training of trainers, resulting in further training being provided by local experts. Capacities for harmonisation of inspection procedures were further developed, including a study visit to Germany. With regard to metrology, trainings, attachments in Germany and support for conferences was provided, intercomparisons successfully facilitated and support for the accreditation of metrology laboratories extended. Among others, the project supported annual regional proficiency testing rounds. With regard to Burundi and Rwanda, consultancy to both countries was rendered with regard to pertinent legal issues and organisational development. Also, a study visit to South Africa was

facilitated. Capacities of NSBs in these countries were strengthened by way of knowledge transfer through international experts, delivery of metrology equipment as well as the facilitation of intra-regional transfer of know-how from the Kenyan NSB in the form of trainings and attachments. These capacity development measures have already contributed to increased service delivery.

Evaluation

Focusing on specific aspects of integration and trade facilitation, the EAC - PTB project is evaluated as highly relevant and fully in line both with EAC member states' development policies as well as the principles of German economic cooperation. NSBs are eager to play key roles in support of EAC integration, but yet have to formulate pertinent strategies to that effect. The project objective was ambitious; in particular the level of private sector participation in EA standards development and the envisaged division of labour between NSBs could not be achieved to the full planned extent, though interaction and cooperation have increased considerably. Trade flows between member countries have grown. The attribution of the enhanced QI to this improvement should have been elaborated more clearly. The Rwanda and Burundi NSBs have demonstrated that limited, but focused support measures have led to tangible improvements. Strategic advice on QI infrastructure rendered by the project is of high standard, but implementation seems to be still hampered by a number of factors. Still, the overall effectiveness of the project is rated as high. The project has been able to bring about important impacts. Facilitating meetings and collaboration among NSBs has led to the exchange of ideas, helping NSBs, according to their own assessment, to develop ways forward. Competent short term expert support has raised professional confidence of NSB staff. An overall growing demand for QI services can be observed. More efforts need to be directed towards following up on outcomes and measuring direct and indirect impacts of the project.

Administrative costs of the project are kept low, resulting in high levels of efficiency. The use of competent regional NSBs experts in addition to the international expertise creates high levels of synergies. The project coordinates well with other development partners (UNIDO, WB, GTZ).

Sustainability of the project is enhanced by the strong institutional status of NSBs in all EA member countries, the effective transfer of knowledge to NSBs and the strong and growing demand for QI services. Sustainability is at the same time constrained by a perceived slow pace of ownership development with regard to further integration, readiness to effect

changes on the part of NSBs as well as by limits of the EAC Secretariat to facilitate and follow up on implementation.

Recommendations

Based on the favourable evaluation of the project's results during its second phase, the mid-term evaluation recommends that a third phase is implemented. Emphasis during this phase should be on aspects of the strategic orientation of national QI institutions as well as the EAC Secretariat, on selected areas of capacity building - with a continued focus on Burundi and Rwanda, and on consolidation of achievements and sustainability of results. Some areas of strategic orientation may require time - a possibility further extension of the project should therefore not be categorically excluded.

With regard to enhancing strategic orientation, the evaluation team recommends that a retreat of the heads of departments of line ministries, CEOs of NSBs, W&Ms, NABs and the EAC Secretariat on strategies for the EAC QI and the technical regulation framework be facilitated. Following the outcome of such a retreat, advice and support, also with regard to the context of the QI system with EPAs and Tri-partite agreements, should be provided if requested. As far as NSBs are concerned, the project should facilitate the elaboration of strategic business plans of NSBs (facilitating the process, not developing the plans). It is regarded as important that such plans include chapters dedicated on the NSB's role in EAC integration as well as the identification and appraisal of new/alternative business opportunities for NSBs, as their roles might have to undergo changes in view of the outcome of the above proposed retreat. The project should provide advice and support for the implementation of strategies, if requested. It is further recommended that EAC senior management be advised on how to enhance its leadership role with regard to shaping the QI system in the EAC and on coordinating QI with other integration initiatives.

Capacity development measures should continue to include metrology intercomparisons, training and support for metrologists, facilitation of PT schemes as well as assessor trainings and facilitation of peer assessments. Maintaining the focus on Rwanda and Burundi, supply of equipment should continue to a limited degree. Details of support measures will be decided jointly with the project partners.

Project measures during the third phase should be directed towards consolidation of achievements and conclusion of activities in a way that they may be sustainably continued after project will have phased out. The project should consequently continue and strengthen

its cooperation with other development partner organisations, enhancing complementation and possibly continuation of project's results. The project should support the anchoring of monitoring functions (keeping them smart and simple) and support the evaluation of impacts of an improved QI system at private sector level.

The formulation of the project objective should not be changed. It would still read: "As an element of the regional integration process, the shaping of the quality infrastructure through the EAC Secretariat as well as the Technical Committees with participation of the regional economy and NBS is improved and adapted to the new legal framework (SQMT Act)."

Indicators should measure, in suitable quantitative and time bound ways, the increasingly effective interaction between EAC Secretariat and QI institutions as well as among QI institutions with regard to QI system improvements, the growth of demand for QI services from private and public sectors, the improved participation of the private sector in QI matters, strengthening of QI capacities in Ruanda and strengthening of QI capacities in Burundi.

With regard to future perspectives for QI support in East Africa, two areas appear important: specialist support in selected sub-sectors that are important for East Africa's economic development, such as pharmaceuticals, which would have to combine expertise in QI and in trade and would have to be conceived jointly with ongoing cooperation programmes, and strategic support for the development of QI in East Africa, which would have to be complemented with expertise in organisational development and would have to be planned jointly with high level policy and strategy decision makers not only of the EAC but also the of the EA members states.



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