

## Africa

# Support of a Pan–African Quality Infrastructure

## Summary of the Evaluation Report

### Project Data

Project No.:	2006.2039.3
PTB No.:	95226
German Contribution:	1.2 Mio. EUR
Period of current Phase:	01/2010–12/2012
Total Period:	01/2007–12/2015
Evaluation Period:	11/2011
Type of Evaluation:	Mid–Term Evaluation
PTB Working Group:	Q.54
Project Coordinator:	Kathrin Wunderlich
Evaluator:	Dr. Hartmut Janus Senior Economic Advisor GIZ

This report was elaborated by independent evaluators for the PTB. It only does reflect the evaluators' opinions and conclusions.

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## Summary of the evaluation of the project „Support of a Pan–African Quality Infrastructure“

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### **Project Description**

Up to now African developing countries could use the benefits, offered by globalization, only insufficiently, compared to countries in other developing regions. This is reflected e.g. by a very low share of Africa in world exports as well as a low level of intra-African trade. One of the prerequisites for a stronger participation in trade as well as for guaranteeing consumer, health and environmental protection is that goods and services traded correspond to agreed standards and technical regulations. This consistency has to be verified (conformity assessment). In addition, this process itself must comply with international agreements and must be mutually recognized. The network of standards, measurement, certification and accreditation is called quality infrastructure. The objective of the present project is to strengthen the Pan-African integration process by supporting the establishment and performance of Pan-African institutions in the field of quality infrastructure. Measures in four areas contribute to the achievement of the objective: a.) strategic advice and awareness raising among the AU/NEPAD (policy support); b.) institutional support to ARSO, AFSEC, AFRIMETS, and AFRAC (institutional capacity development); linkage of states, regional economic communities (RECs) and sub-regional initiatives to the Pan-African institutions in the field of quality infrastructure (linking and integration) as well as d.) technical advice in the areas of harmonization, comparisons and international technical progress (technical support).

### **Assessment of the project**

The project in support of a Pan-African Quality Infrastructure is assessed to be successful overall. It is a good practice of a multi-level approach, linking the Pan-African, the regional and the national level.

During its second phase, important milestones have been achieved. Amongst others, the establishment of AFRAC as well as the institutional development of AFRAC and AFRIMETS have been supported. The project also contributed to the elaboration of mid-term strategies of AFRAC and AFRIMETS. In addition, it facilitated a workshop on the integration of the Pan-African Quality Infrastructure with the AU in 2011. With regard to policy support, the topic “quality infrastructure” has been strengthened within the NEPAD Secretariat. In addition, the realization of training courses such as the course on “Quality Infrastructure for Sustainable Development” has been supported in 2010/2011. These performances of the project are highly appreciated by its African partners.

### *Concept and Impact chain*

The concept of the present project is well elaborated. It consists of a sequence of different change processes. The first change process concerns the establishment of four Pan-African institutions in the field of quality infrastructure. With the creation of AFRAC in 2010, this process has been finalized. A subsequent process is to strengthen the organizational development of these institutions. With the support to the establishment of working groups and the elaboration of medium term strategies for AFRIMETS and AFRAC, this process is on the right track. The next process consists of facilitating the cooperation of these four institutions as well as supporting their links with international organizations. The workshop on the “Integration of the Pan-African Quality Infrastructure with the AU” represents an important step in this process. In another process, the topic of quality infrastructure should be anchored politi-

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cally on the Pan-African level and the recognition of the four Pan-African institutions in this field by the AU Commission be achieved. Finally, relevant processes are to support the implementation of education and training courses in the area of quality infrastructure.

The objective on the phase level (“Pan-African institutions in the field of quality infrastructure are the core elements of a concerted quality infrastructure strategy and are recognized on the political level”) includes precisely those elements whose achievement turned out to be particularly challenging.

Fundamental to the impact chain are the four areas of support mentioned above (policy support, institutional capacity development, linking and integration, technical support). The awareness-raising for the private sector and the civil society has not explicitly been part of the support areas so far. Some gaps in the representation of the value chain – as included in the offer to the BMZ – can be observed. In addition, in some cases, the different levels of the impact chain (use of output, direct impact, indirect impact) are confounded.

### *Relevance*

The relevance of quality infrastructure for trade as well as consumer, health and environmental protection is generally acknowledged. It is also reflected in relevant strategies from the African (e.g. AU/NEPAD African Action Plan 2010-2015) as well as German side (e.g. BMZ Strategy Paper Aid for Trade in German Development Policy). However, there is a difficulty to assess the relative relevance of quality infrastructure in comparison to other challenges that African developing countries face with respect to their development as well as their regional and international integration. In addition, a large number of quantitative and qualitative studies deal with the impact of quality infrastructure on development. Yet, these studies rarely concern the Pan-African level. Often, they are not sufficiently exploited and their results are not represented in a generally understandable way. Within the area of development of the Pan-African quality infrastructure, the establishment of relevant Pan-African institutions, their cooperation and their involvement in international institutions are regarded as being relevant. (Grade 2)

### *Effectiveness*

With respect to the effectiveness of the present project, different time limits for indicators on the module (12/2015) and on the phase level (12/2012) have to be distinguished. More progress with respect to indicators regarding the active participation of Pan-African in international institutions in the field of quality infrastructure as well as the realization of comparison studies can be detected. At the same time, although there is progress, a lower degree of achievement is observed with regard to the elaboration of a concerted strategy as well as political recognition of the four Pan-African institutions in the field of quality infrastructure. The concerted strategy should basically aim at stressing the equality of the four institutions, the consistency of their division of labor with international rules and at elaborating on action plan for their cooperation. Some results of the project are not reflected in the indicators, such as the realization of the training course on “Quality Infrastructure for Sustainable Development” (unintended positive results). In general, the indicators should be more on the level of direct impact than on the level of use of output. (Grade 2)

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### *Development policy impacts*

This criterion evaluates the impact of the project on overall development goals, such as economic growth, poverty and well-being. The project fosters rather medium- to long-term structural reform processes, e.g. the establishment of institutions as well as the elaboration and implementation of their medium-term strategies. Some of the reforms supported, such as the establishment of AFRAC and the document on the integration of the Pan-African quality infrastructure with the AU, are rather recent (2010, 2011). Therefore, the current impact of the project on growth and poverty in Africa is probably rather limited. However, in the long run (end of the project in 12/2015), if the reforms continue to be successful, a substantial impact on trade, growth and well-being can be achieved. Another challenge consists in difficulties to measure the impact of quality infrastructure e.g. on trade on a Pan-African level. (Grade 2)

### *Efficiency*

The present project works with a relatively lean management structure. Therefore, the amount of overhead costs is comparatively limited. Other elements contribute to a very positive assessment of the efficiency criterion: The e-learning part reduces the costs of the blended training course on “Quality Infrastructure for Sustainable Development”. In addition, the present project cooperates closely with other projects in Africa to support the quality infrastructure on a regional and national level. Therefore, synergy effects can be used. A larger part of the costs of the project is spent on financing the participation of relevant executives and experts in training courses, the general assembly of Pan-African institutions in the field of quality infrastructure, workshops, etc. (Grade 1)

### *Sustainability*

The present project supports the establishment of structures that - once functioning - should have longer term effects. However, the financing model of some of the Pan-African institutions in the field of quality infrastructure is currently still an open issue. A sustainable self-financing is not assured in either case. In addition, there is the challenge to raise the awareness among governments and the private sector for services delivered by institutions in the area of quality infrastructure. This is necessary in order to augment their willingness to pay and therefore to increase the demand for these services, even if they are with costs. Finally, the impact of selected measures of the project – in particular on the political level - still seems to be individual-related. Thus, the risk of mobility of personnel threatens the sustainability of the effects of the project. (Grade 3)

### *Other relevant questions/problems*

PTB’s multi-level approach with respect to its support to quality infrastructure in Africa on a Pan-African, regional and national level should be emphasized as good practice. It is based on a well-elaborated strategy that is regularly updated. The fact that project coordinators and short-term international consultants are in charge of projects on different levels adds to the horizontal and vertical exchange of information and experiences.

The close cooperation between the project and most of its partners can be highlighted as one of the strength of the project. It is at least partly due to the technical character of the is-

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sues treated and the fact that only a few donors are active in the field of supporting quality infrastructure on a Pan-African level. At the same time, the technical character leads to the challenge to strengthen the cooperation with stakeholders in related fields (agriculture, trade) and to establish quality infrastructure as a cross-cutting issue.

Other relevant questions concern the steering of the project. Currently, there are no “steering committee” meetings that bring all the relevant stakeholders of the project together. During the mid-term evaluation, it is argued that the value added of these meetings might be limited. However, they might strengthen the discussion of next year’s annual work plan of the project, the prioritization of activities, the assessment of last year’s achievement and the common understanding of the project. In addition, a consolidated annual work plan elaborated by the project and approved by its partners does currently not exist.

### **Recommendations**

On the basis of the above results, recommendations refer to different levels:

#### *Strategy*

1. After the establishment of the four Pan-African institutions in the field of quality infrastructure, the strategy of the project should be pursued: support the four “pillars” in their capacities and operations, strengthen their cooperation and foster their concerted efforts towards NEPAD/AUC.
2. Regarding the cooperation of the four pillars, in the past, the project occasionally played an important role as “honest broker” where challenges came up. If necessary, this role should adequately be pursued in the future.
3. The efforts towards the recognition by the Commission of the African Union should not hinder other activities of the four pillars, which are currently fully functional.
4. Pan-African institutions in the field of quality infrastructure might be advised to follow the Tripartite process closely but carefully, since the relevance and success of this process are not yet fully clear.

#### *Fields of activities*

5. The fields of activities of the project should closely align to the strategies of its partners, such as the medium-term strategies of AFRIMETS and AFRAC that have recently been elaborated.
6. An important field to be strengthened seems to be the awareness-raising among national governments and private enterprises in order to increase the demand for quality infrastructure services. Pan-African institutions can support regional and national institutions in this regard.

Another field seems to be the strengthening of quality infrastructure as a cross-cutting issue and its integration in sector programs (e.g. agriculture). In this regard, “clients” have to be picked up where they are. This also concerns the language used. The value added of quality infrastructure should easily become aware to sector experts.

7. Relevant actors of PTB and GIZ programs should lobby for a closer cooperation between them in particular at the level of the AU.

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### *Components and Indicators*

8. The components of the project might consider the distinction between the supply and the demand side of quality infrastructure services.
9. Currently, the formulation of components is rather broad and comprehensive. Given the fact that resources are limited, it is recommended that, while keeping a high degree of flexibility, the strategic prioritization within each component might be strengthened together with partners.
10. Indicators should be formulated more consequentially on the level of direct impacts.

### *Project administration*

11. The elaboration of a consolidated annual action plan, including an adequate degree of flexibility, is recommended.
12. It might be considered to have regular steering committee meetings, bringing together the project and all its partners. These meetings should take place at a low frequency (e.g. twice a year) and might be organized in the framework of another common event.



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