
**Conformance and Interoperability (C&I)
Validation Workshop, Laico Regency Hotel,
Nairobi, Kenya 21st – 23rd October 2015**

S5-5 Proposed Roadmap for conformity and
Interoperability Programme, including MRAs, for EAC
Region– Implementation process, Phased approach,
Expected benefits from a common C&I Programme for EAC
countries

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OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

- Background to C&I in EAC/ EACO
- Implementation process
- Phased approach
- Expected benefits from a common C&I Programme for EAC countries
- Conclusion
- Experiences/ Outcomes On C&I From SADC



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BACKGROUND TO C&I IN EAC/ EACO

- In the framework of collaboration among regional and sub-regional organizations for establishing a common conformity and interoperability (C&I) regime and mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) the ITU, upon request of the East African Communications Organization (EACO), is carrying out a C&I assessment study on the five countries of the East African Community (EAC): Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.
- Even though some of these countries have made greater strides in the development of their ICT systems especially in the areas of Conformity assessment, others still need to catch up with those that have made relatively greater progress.
- It is worth mentioning that C&I of systems within the overall framework of collaboration in the standardization of systems and networks can make a significant contribution to the development of ICT industry hence the need for these assessments in the regions.
- The assessment involves identifying actions necessary to realize greater contribution of ICTs to socio-economic development in EAC by removing the bottlenecks (such as barrier to trade and investment in the ICT industry) associated with lack of conformance and interoperability among/ between systems and networks



Relationship of C&I Project to European Commission and AU for funding a project on "HARMONIZATION OF ICT POLICIES, LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS IN AFRICA (HIP-AFRICA)"

- C&I is a socio-economic/ developmental issue in that it affects access and quality of ICTs by populations and that lack of a C&I regime (policy, legislative and regulatory) impacts investments in the ICT industry thus undermining the bridging of the digital divide
- The C&I Assessment covers policy, regulatory, legislative and technical issues related to ICTs in EAC in particular and Africa in general
- Hence, C&I programme for Africa (and EAC) is (needs to be) an important and integral part of the EC and AU project for funding.



DELIVERABLE/OUTCOME OF EAC/EACO C&I ASSESSMENT

- Possible Scenarios for establishing of Common C&I Regime and Mutual Recognition Agreements have been specified.
- Recommendations for possible ways to facilitate the implementation of ITU Conformity and Interoperability Programme especially in the areas of Capacity building and the Establishment of Test Centres on regional and sub-regional basis.
- Recommendations for regional or sub-regional organizations suitable to perform conformity assessment testing including the function of MRA coordination are provided



PHASED APPROACH

Recommendation 1 (Plan 1):

- Develop a Plan for the establishment of EAC In-Country C&I Testing Laboratories. This plan shall include the criteria to determine the locations and the testing scopes of these in-country C&I testing laboratories

Recommendation 2 (Plan 2):

- Develop a Plan for the establishment of Regional C&I Testing Laboratories. This plan shall include the criteria to determine the numbers, locations and testing scopes of these Regional C&I Testing Laboratories.



Recommendation 3 (Plan 3)

- Develop a Plan for the Establishment of a EAC MRA Framework similar to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment (APEC TEL MRA) covering 21 economies in the Asia Pacific region.
 - This plan shall preferably include the creation of a small EAC MRA Task Force which can adapt the APEC TEL MRA to meet specific requirements of the EAC Region.

 - In implementing the EAC MRA, Members States shall become signatories to this multilateral arrangement in the EAC Region Participation in the EAC MRA is voluntary. The EAC MRA Model may be adopted by other RECs in Africa.

PROPOSED STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EAC C&I OUTCOMES

- All three plans be submitted to the attention of EAC secretariat for the follow-up while technical assistance shall be available from ITU/BDT for the development and execution of the recommended Plans.
- In order to establish a Training Programme to build capacity for EAC Member States it was recommended to identify institutions (Conformity Assessment Bodies) in the EAC Region that may be in a position to provide qualified training courses on C&I in the framework of an MOU signed with ITU as has been undertaken in other ITU Regions.
- The EAC Secretariat may facilitate this by liaising with appropriate institutions that would sign an MOU with the ITU.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

- The regional lab will enable EAC countries test ICT equipment for Conformance and Interoperability. There will be an urgent need for MRA coordination to facilitate the process.
- Capacity building to be extended to operators (not only policy makers and regulators) in NGN technologies and other areas/technologies. This will help address issues on e-waste among other others.
- The claims of the suppliers regarding conformance would be tested against relevant standards adopted by member countries.
- Technical and regulatory barriers to trade will be removed and a large market created for ICTs which lead to economies of scale, low costs and affordability by the citizens



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CONCLUSION

- The implementation of a common C&I regime for EAC is urgent and timely
- Similar Outcomes are envisaged as those the SADC Study and related workshop that was held in Livingstone, Zambia, in October 13 to 15, 2014
- It is suggested that similar process/ steps be applied for the results and outcomes of the EAC C&I assessment study and related final workshop (Nairobi October 21 to 23, 2015) and with context specific modifications, if any
- EAC Member States are encouraged to provide any further information that may be pending for incorporation in the final draft C&I assessment report ahead of the workshop (Nairobi October, 2015)
- The EAC/EACO is encouraged to consider and discuss the support for the EAC C&I project with AU in the framework of the EC and AU funding for the project "**HARMONIZATION OF ICT POLICIES, LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS IN AFRICA (HIP-AFRICA)**"



EXPERIENCES/ OUTCOMES ON C&I FROM SADC

Outcomes of the Workshop for SADC Countries to Promote the Development and Implementation of Conformity Assessment Programmes, Livingstone, Zambia, 13-15 October, 2014



Outcome 1. Develop a Plan for the establishment of SADC In-Country C&I Testing Laboratories. This plan shall include the criteria to determine the locations and the testing scopes of these in-country C&I testing laboratories

- **Reference:** [Feasibility Study for a Conformance Testing Center.](#)



Outcome 2. Develop a Plan for the establishment of Regional C&I Testing Laboratories. This plan shall include the criteria to determine the numbers, locations and testing scopes of these Regional C&I Testing Laboratories.

- **Reference:** [Guidelines for Developing Countries on establishing conformity assessment test labs in different regions. <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Technology/Pages/CIGuidelines.aspx>](http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Technology/Pages/CIGuidelines.aspx)
- Note: The links are active in the accompanying word document



Outcome 3: Develop a Plan for the Establishment of a SADC MRA Framework similar to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment (APEC TEL MRA) covering 21 economies in the Asia Pacific region.

This plan shall preferably include the creation of a small SADC MRA Task Force which can adapt the APEC TEL MRA to meet specific requirements of the SADC Region. In implementing the SADC MRA, Members States shall become signatories to this multilateral arrangement in the SADC Region. Participation in the SADC MRA is voluntary. The SADC MRA Model may be adopted by other RECs in Africa.



Outcome 3: Cond

- **Reference:** Guidelines for the development, implementation and management of Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) - [English & French version](#). Establishing Conformity and Interoperability Regimes: Basic Guidelines - [English & French version](#)

The testing scopes of the In-Country C&I Testing Laboratories should complement each other in order to provide maximum scope coverage within the SADC Region.

- **Note: The links are active in the accompanying word document**



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Steps and recommendations adopted in SADC C&I Outcomes

- All three plans were submitted to the attention of SADC secretariat for the follow-up while technical assistance shall be available from ITU/BDT for the development and execution of the recommended Plans.
- In order to establish a Training Programme to build capacity for SADC Member States it was recommended to identify institutions (Conformity Assessment Bodies) in the SADC Region that may be in a position to provide qualified training courses on C&I in the framework of an MOU signed with ITU as has been undertaken in other ITU Regions.
- The SADC Secretariat may facilitate this by liaising with appropriate institutions that would sign an MOU with the ITU.



Decision of SADC Ministers on C&I Project

"The Ministers approved the establishment of the SADC Conformity and Interoperability (C&I) Committee to develop a Plan for the Establishment of SADC In-Country and Regional C&I Testing Laboratories and a Plan for the Establishment of a SADC Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) Framework for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment.

This SADC C&I Committee shall be composed of representatives from the SADC Secretariat (Chairman of the Committee), SADC Implementing Agencies CRASA and SATA and one member from each SADC Member State. They urged Member States to submit to the SADC Secretariat their nominations before the 16th January 2015"



Thank you for the collaboration

