

NAFPS in the Front Line of Accreditation Promotion

National Accreditation Focal Points who are appointed by their respective governments are mainly responsible for the promotion of accreditation and marketing of SADCAS services within their respective countries. They are SADCAS tentacles of reaching out to clients/potential clients as well as stakeholders including the general public in SADC Member States. In executing SADCAS activities, NAFPs prepare annual implementation plans in support of SADCAS annual implementation plans in order to achieve SADCAS objectives. The implementation of national action plans by NAFPs is monitored for progress by SADCAS through quarterly reports. Upon evaluation of the reports by SADCAS, each NAFP is given feedback for improvement as necessary. Summaries of NAFP quarterly reports are circulated to all NAFPs, their respective supervisors, and SADCAS Board members and are subject of discussion at Board meetings. NAFPs meet annually to be appraised on developments in SADCAS, review their activities and to develop the framework for the next year's marketing plan.

To this end the 12th NAFP Annual meeting was held at the NLA -SA Offices in Pretoria, South Africa. Representatives from 11 out of 13 SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS namely: Angola; Botswana; DRC; Lesotho; Malawi; Mozambique; Namibia, Seychelles; Swaziland; Zambia; and Zimbabwe attended the meeting. Tanzania and Madagascar were not represented at the meeting. Attendance costs to the meeting were sponsored under the auspices of the UNIDO/SADC Regional Laboratory Associations project on developing a sustainable Quality Infrastructure Programme for SADC which is funded by the Government of Finland.



NAFPs and SADCAS Staff pose for a photo during the 12th Annual meeting

During the meeting the NAFPs developed the 2019/10 marketing framework which will be populated, finalized and circulated to NAFPs by 27 April 2019 for comment by 4 May 2019 following which the Marketing Plan shall be finalized by 10 May 2019 and submitted for approval by the SADCAS Board of Directors at its meeting to be held in May 2019. In preparing for the SRLA-NAFP meeting which was subsequently held from 11 to 12 October 2018, and after a presentation by Mr Pablo J Davila, UNIDO and in ensuing discussions, the NAFPs identified potential areas of cooperation and made final touches to their presentations. The NAPs further noted the need to step up their collaborative efforts with the National Laboratory Associations particularly in developing and implementing together, technical assistance projects to prepare conformity assessment bodies for accreditation and in promoting accreditation in their respective Member States. The meeting was also an opportunity to update NAFPs on developments in SADCAS and to review inflows of Governments Contributions towards SADCAS sustainability beyond 2017 of which NAFPs were requested to assist in following up on.

A total of 19 resolutions were passed during the meeting with a vote of thanks to UNIDO for sponsoring the attendance costs of the NAFPs and NLA SA for the excellent facilities provided for the meeting. Three SADCAS Management and staff facilitated the meeting which was also attended by 3 UNIDO representatives Dr Elsie Meintjies, Ms Cindy PAROKKIL and Mr Pablo J Davila.

