

SADCAS CEO ATTENDS CROSS FRONTIER ACCREDITATION EVENT



Mrs Maureen Mutasa SADCAS CEO

The SADCAS CEO Mrs Maureen Mutasa attended the Cross frontier accreditation event organized by the Global Quality Infrastructure Index (GQII). The event which was held virtually on 1 September 2021 was attended by over 150 delegates from all over the world. The purpose of the event was to comment on a study, a first to address the phenomenon of cross frontier accreditation based on empirical data.

The event started off with a presentation on cross frontier accreditation by Dr Ulrich Harmes – Liedtke and Dr Andres Matta. This was followed by comments by representatives of international accreditation alliances starting off with Mrs Etty Feller ILAC Chair who informed the delegates about the ongoing revision of ILAC G 21 Cross frontier accreditation Principles of Cooperation followed by Mr Emanuele Riva IAF Vice Chair and Director Certification and Inspection at ACCREDIA.

The Director General at the TIC Council, Mrs Hanane Taidi commented from the conformity assessment body point of view. This was followed by presentations giving the regional and national perspectives starting off with a presentation by Mrs Mutasa entitled "Sharing accreditation goals: The SADCAS Experience". In her presentation Mrs Mutasa first gave a brief background to the establishment of SADCAS and why the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region went for a multi economy accreditation body, the achievements so far. She then shared with delegates the challenges and key lessons learnt before commenting on the study. In commenting on the study she agreed that accreditation which is one of the pillars of a Quality Infrastructure, is probably the least developed in Africa of all the quality infrastructures. The multi economy accreditation body model whereby one accreditation body services the accreditation needs of a number of countries is an option for developing countries whose clientele base is not large enough to sustain a national accreditation body. It is a tool for the development of accreditation infrastructure in Africa especially in East, Central and West Africa where there are gaps. Over the years, SADCAS the first multi economy accreditation body in the world has proved to be a viable, cost effective and sustainable model which optimizes limited financial and human resources. A number of other regions in the world such as the Gulf region, Economic Community of West African States (UEMOA), etc. have benchmarked on the "home grown" SADCAS model, a concept developed by a group of experts from the SADC region. She informed the delegates that although SADCAS Offices are headquartered in Botswana, National Accreditation Focal Points who are appointed by the Governments and are as it were, SADCAS tentacles of reaching out to clients/potential in the SADC Member States, are based in the 14 SADC Member States. SADCAS should therefore not be counted as cross frontier accreditation as per the definition in the study report. Furthermore, all the countries serviced by SADCAS should be at the same level of development as they are all serviced by one body.

The last presenter was Mr Ferney Chaparro Diaz Director ONAC (Colombia) followed by a question-and-answer session then closing remarks by the Moderator Mr Christian Schoen.

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