

Inaugural Meeting of The African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum, 11-13 October 2023, The St. Regis Almasa Hotel, Cairo-Egypt



AFRICAN ORGANISATION
FOR STANDARDISATION (ARSO)

**Efforts of Harmonisation of Food Regulatory Measures
Across the Continent**

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11th October 2023



Content



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- 1 African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO)**
- 2 Harmonisation of activities responding to Food Safety Strategy of Africa (FSSA)**
- 3 Impact of Harmonized Standards**
- 4 Cooperation with different Partners**

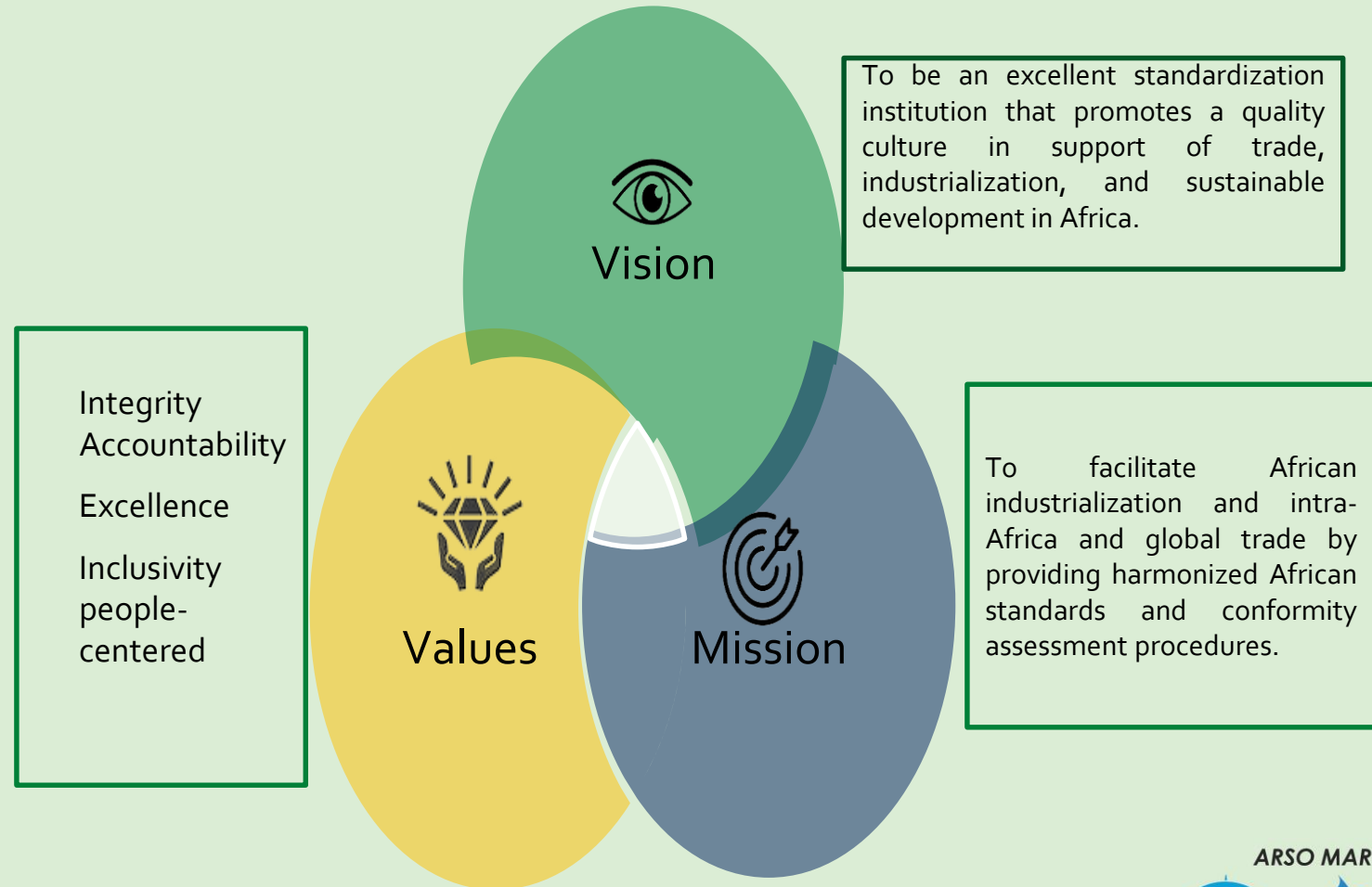
1. African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO)



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ARSO:

- Africa's intergovernmental standards body
- Formed by Organisation of African Union (OAU) (currently African Union (AU)) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in 1977 in Accra, Ghana
- Engaged in the harmonization of standards and the development of conformity assessment procedures
- **43 African governments represented by National Standards Bodies (NSBs)**



ARSO MARKS



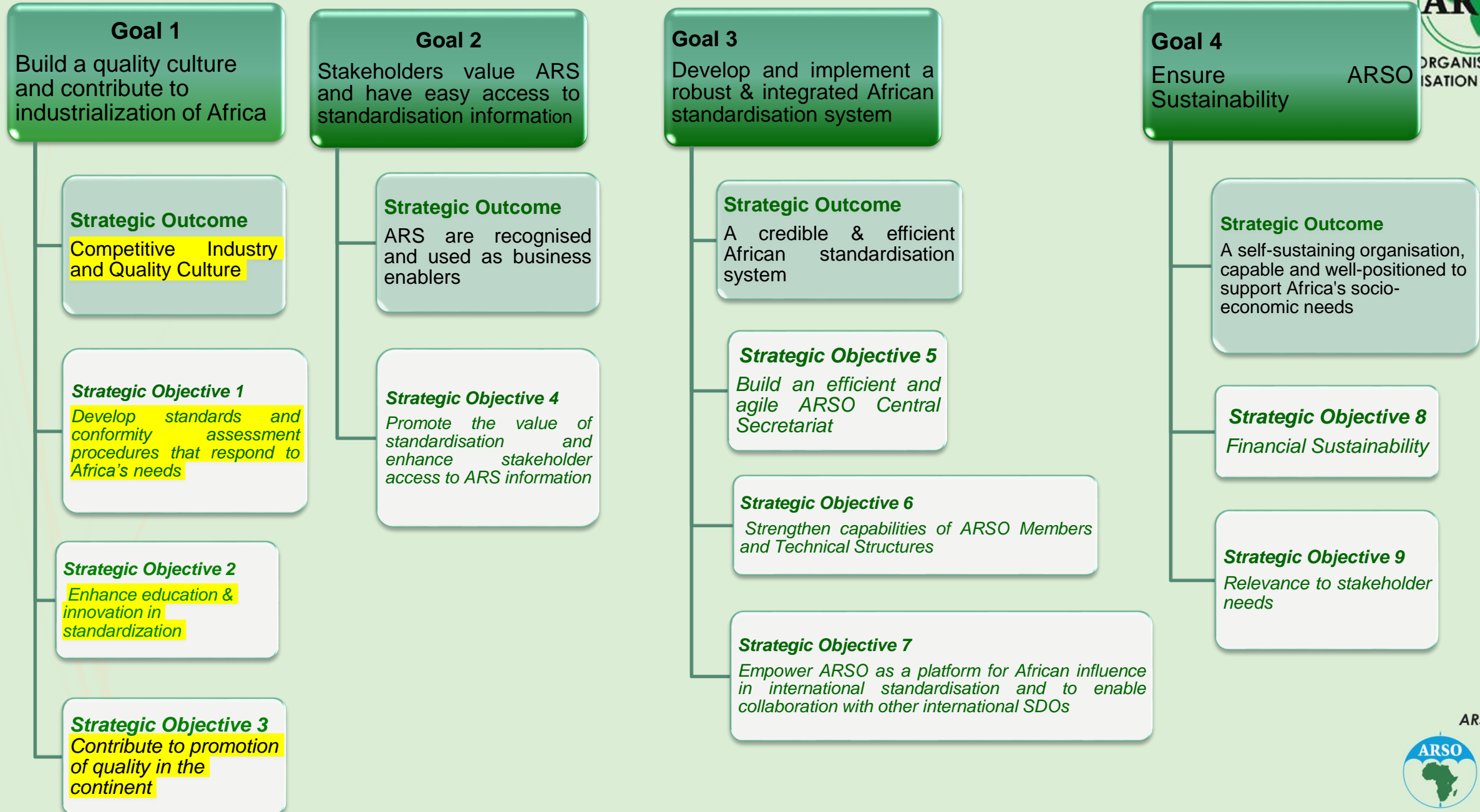
1.2. ARSO Mandate



The mandate of ARSO, as provided for by the Constitution

1. **Harmonise national and/or sub-regional standards as African Standards** and issue necessary recommendations to member bodies for this purpose;
2. **Initiate and co-ordinate the development of African Standards (ARS) with references to products which are of peculiar interest to Africa;**
3. **Encourage and facilitate adoption of international standards by member bodies;**
4. Promote and facilitate exchange of experts, information and co-operation in training of personnel in standardization activities;
5. **Co-ordinate the views of its members at ISO, IEC, OIML, Codex and other international organisations concerned with standardisation activities; and**
6. Create appropriate bodies in addition to the organs of the organisation for the purposes of fulfilling its objectives.

1.2.ARSO Strategic Plan (ARSO SP) 2022-2027

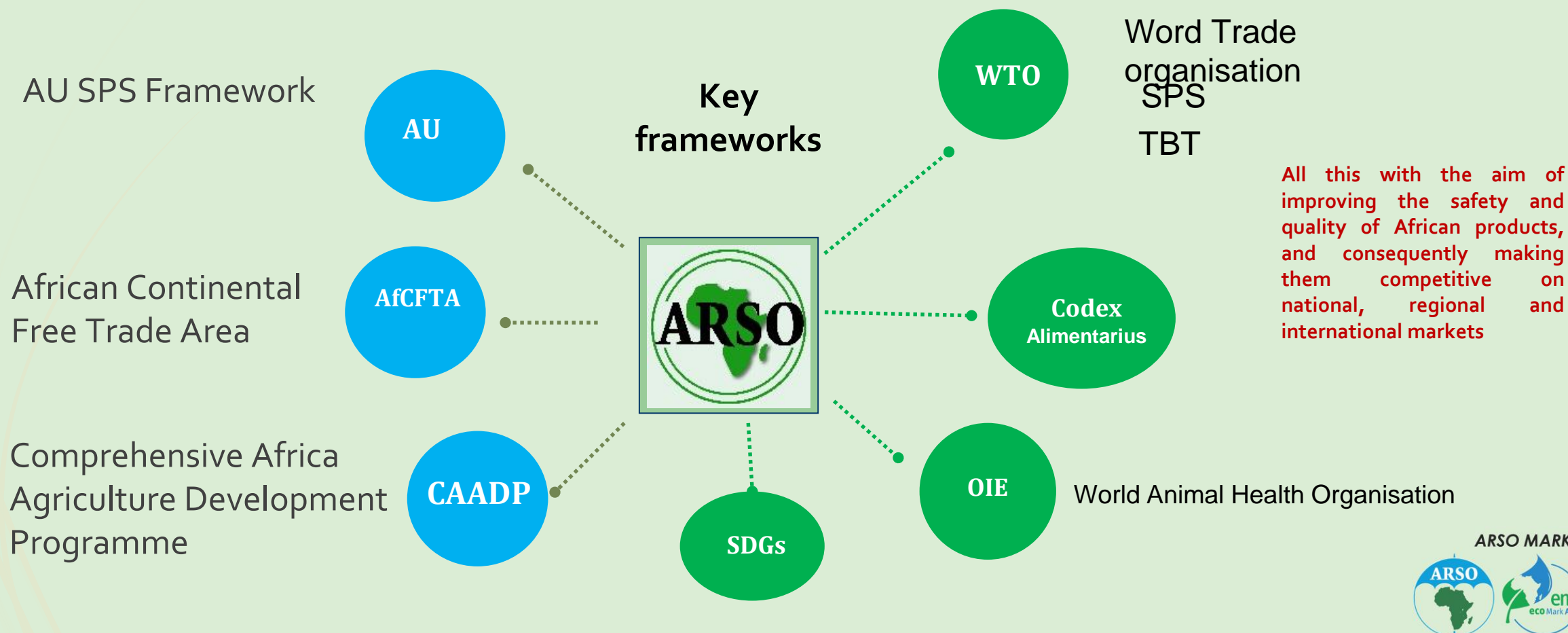


1.3. ARSO-Global & Continental Frameworks



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ARSO focuses on implementing the global and Continental frameworks



1.4 ARSO's stakeholder profile



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- **Pan-African policy Organization**
- AUC (AfCFTA, IBAR...)
- AUDA-NEPAD
- RECS (COMESA, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC, UMA) – **JAG & SMC**

- **African NSBS**
- ARSO members
- ARSO non Members

Influence and support continental policies
Political and financial support for ARSO
Position ARSO to support strategic African Imperatives

Mobilise national experts to develop ARS
Facilitate adoption and use of ARS
Join and pay membership fees

Promote quality culture in Africa
Benchmark to improve ARSO
African influence in Global standards
Support ARSO

Drive development of ARS
Advocate for use of ARS

- **International and African organization**
- PAQI (AFRAC, AFRIMETS, AFSEC, ARSO)
- SDOs: ISO, Codex, IEC, ASTM...
- Development partners

- **ARS Developers & users**
- ARSO TCs
- Private Sector
- Regulators
- Consumers
- Special interest groups

2. Harmonisation of activities responding to Food Safety Strategy of Africa (FSSA)



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The Strategic Objectives of the FSSA are to:

SO1: Strengthen Food Safety and quality Policy, Legal and Institutional frameworks

SO2: Strengthen the human and infrastructure capacity for food control systems

SO3: Promote food safety culture, evidence-based advocacy, communication, information and knowledge sharing to raise consumer awareness and empowerment

SO4: Improve trade and market access at national, regional, continental and global levels

SO5: Strengthen research, innovation, technology development and transfer

SO6: Establish and strengthen coordination mechanisms and enhance cooperation at national, regional, continental and global levels

2.1 ARSO Interventions in FSS (1)



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**Harmonization of
standards in
agriculture & Food**

(ARSO TCS)

⑩ 25 TCs in agriculture

⑩ 315 harmonized and published ARS in Agriculture, food and animal products(meat, eggs, food packaging and labeling etc...)

⑩ 440 standards are in process of being harmonized in collaboration experts from African Countries member of ARSO

⑩ 260 outreach Materials, 50 Certified products and a capacity building Training for 30 Trainers and 180 auditors and producers



List of ARSO/TCs in Agriculture and Food Products



Harmonization of standards in agriculture & Food

(ARSO TCS)

1. ARSO/TC 02, Apiculture and pollination services
2. ARSO/TC 03, Fish, fisheries and aquaculture
3. ARSO/TC 04, Milk and milk products
4. ARSO/TC 05, Horticulture
5. ARSO/TC 06, Coffee, cocoa, tea and related products
6. ARSO/TC 07, Meat, poultry, eggs and related products
7. ARSO/TC 08, Food additives
8. ARSO/TC 09, Spices, culinary herbs and condiments
9. ARSO/TC 10, Food hygiene
10. ARSO/TC 11, Contaminants and toxins in foods and feeds
11. ARSO/TC 12, Cereals, pulses and derived products
12. ARSO/TC 13, Oilseeds, edible fats and oils
13. ARSO/TC 14, Food packaging and labelling
14. ARSO/TC 15, Nutrition and foods for special dietary uses
15. ARSO/TC 16, Sugar, starch and confectionery
16. ARSO/TC 17, Animal feeding, feeds and feeding stuffs
17. ARSO/TC 18, Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages
18. ARSO/TC 19, Seed and propagation materials
19. ARSO/TC 20, Tobacco and similar products
20. ARSO/TC 21, Pesticide residues
21. ARSO/TC 22, Agrochemicals
22. ARSO/TC 23, Live animals
23. ARSO/TC 63, Drinking water supply and sanitation systems
24. ARSO/TC 79, Veterinary drugs
25. ARSO/TC 83, Organic Agriculture and Biotechnology

2.2 ARSO Interventions in FSSA at the continental level



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1. Project on Harmonisation of standards and Conformity Assessment to facilitate the production and trade in **Safe and quality Agricultural and food products**.

Scope

1. ARSO/TC 03 - Fish and fisheries products
2. ARSO/TC 04 - milk and milk products
3. ARSO/TC 05 - Horticulture
4. ARSO/TC 06 - Coffee, cocoa and tea and related products
5. ARSO/TC 17 - Animal feeding, feeds and feeding stuffs
6. ARSO/TC 23 - Live animals
7. ARSO/TC 61 - Eco-labelling, sustainability and resilient systems
8. ARSO/TC 83 - Agriculture and biotechnology
9. ARSO Conformity Assessment Committee (ARSO/CACO/Technical guidelines); and
10. ARSO Consumer Committee (ARSO/COCO).



3. Project-Cereals, Pulses, Meat, Poultry and Food Packaging & Labelling

Aim: Establish uniform parameters among member states and RECS to address the challenges of packaging and value addition, under the following three priority areas:

- (i) ARSO/TC 07- Meat, poultry, eggs and related products
- (ii) ARSO/TC 12- Cereals, pulses and derived products
- (iii) ARSO/TC 14 - Food packaging and labelling

2. ARSO-SADC program for improving fisheries Governance and blue Economy and Trade corridors in SADC

Standards, Quality Assurance, SPS and Eco-Certification

4. Harmonization of African Standards for Insects for Food and Feed

Scope: stds harmonisation, training and certification docs., sensitisation and promotion materials



**Conformity
Assessment and
regulatory
guidelines
(ARSO CACO)**

2.3 ARSO Interventions in FSS (2)

- **ARSO operates a Regional certification system through ARSO CACO:**
- Enables member states to produce and offer goods/products and services of consistent and improved quality through the harmonization of common quality control, inspection and testing activities
- Gives confidence/assurance to consumers that the product has been tested against the requirements (sanitary, Phytosanitary, technical regulations) of the targeted markets
- Designed to certify quality and promote African products
- Eco-mark Africa: awarded to goods and services that demonstrate **environmental, economic and social sustainability** within the established legal framework of the country of production.
- Awarded on products certified to African standards alongside national brands.

2.4 ARSO Interventions in FSS (2) Cont...

Conformity Assessment and regulatory guidelines (ARSO CACO)

- 2 Sub-Committees (SCs): Standards Implementation (SI) & Technical Regulations (TRs)
- African Conformity Assessment Programme ([ACAP](#)): 12 documents
- 9 certification schemes under ([ACAP](#)) (e.g. ECOMARK AFRICA)
- Conformity Assessment Policies and certification guidelines (60) for poultry, meat, eggs, dairy, live animals, fruits & Vegetables, fish & fish products
- Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs): *Piloting by* Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe
- ARS-MiA: Made in Africa — Criteria for qualification and guidance for implementation

ARSO - African Eco-labelling Standards (AES)



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1. **ARS AES 1-2014 Agriculture -Sustainability and ecolabelling**
2. ARS AES 2-2014 Fisheries -Sustainability and ecolabelling
3. ARS AES 3-2014 Forestry -Sustainability and ecolabelling
4. ARS AES 4-2014 Tourism -Sustainability and ecolabelling
5. ARS AES 5-2018 Tilapia -Sustainability and ecolabelling
6. ARS AES 6-2018 African catfish -Sustainability and ecolabelling
7. ARS AES 7-2020 Cocoa -Sustainability and ecolabelling

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Scope

Provides requirements for the sustainable

- production,
- processing and
- trading

of agricultural products including:

- ❖ food,
- ❖ beverages and non-food products;
- ❖ livestock and livestock products,
- ❖ bee products;
- ❖ wild harvested products; and
- ❖ agricultural fibre products.

The standard applies to all production, processing and trading within the operator's sphere of influence

ARS/AES Requirements



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6.1 Legal compliance

6.2 Economic sustainability

6.3 Social and Environmental
Management

6.4 Human rights protection

6.5 Labour rights protection

6.6 Maintenance of biodiversity

6.7 Soil management

6.8 Water management

6.9 Climate change, mitigation and
adaptation

6.10 Crop husbandry and farm
management

6.11 Pesticide use and management

6.12 Energy efficiency

6.13 Waste and pollution management

6.14 Handling and segregation of
certified products

6.15 Animal husbandry



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2.5 ARSO Interventions in FSS (3)



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Consumer Committee (ARSO COCO)

- ⑩ Illustrated sensitization and promotional materials on key products (Organic Agriculture and biotechnology, Horticulture) and African traditional medicine
- ⑩ Outreach materials
- ⑩ Brochures
- ⑩ Articles
- ⑩ 9 WGs with 65 proposals of Consumer standards that need to be harmonized

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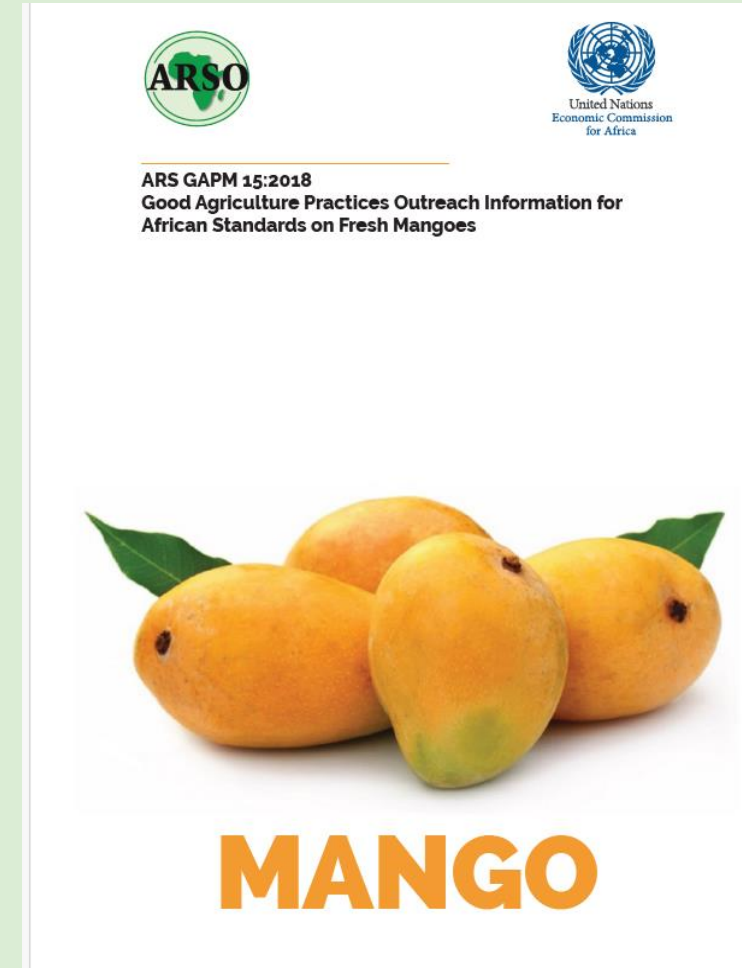
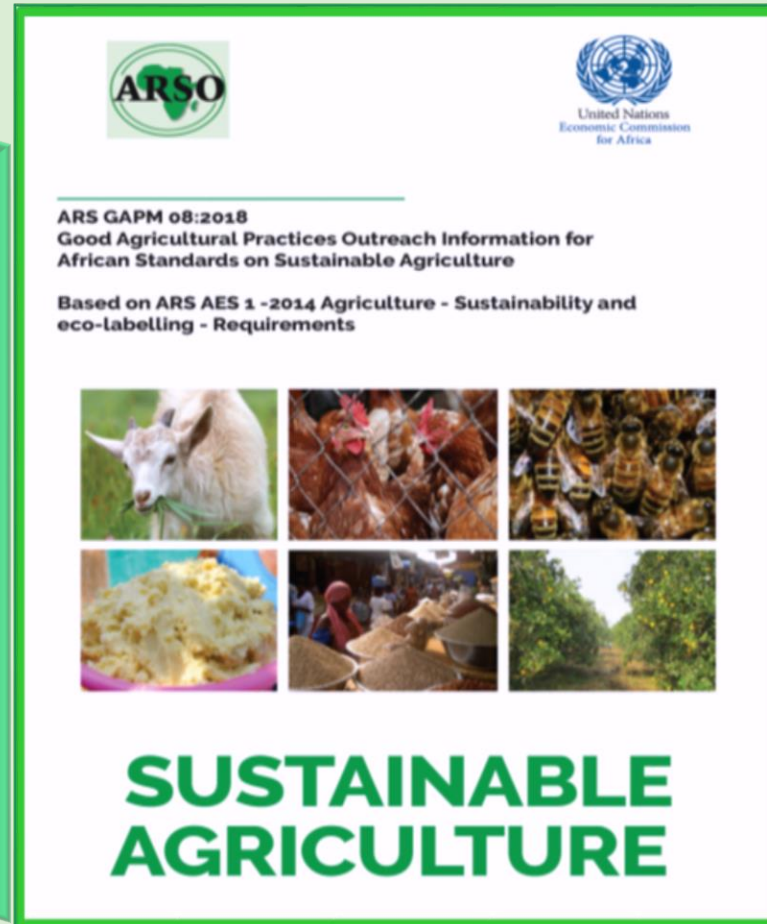


2.5 ARSO Interventions in FSS (Cont'...)



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Outreach material and
information sharing-
Standards
implementation)



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2.6 ARSO Interventions in FSS (4)



Capacity building and awareness creation activities

- Capacity building of farmers, SMES, auditors, certification bodies, TC experts is provided to facilitate in the implementation of harmonised standards including food safety Management systems
- From 3rd to 5th October, 31 SMEs from 12 members countries were trained on standards, certification requirements and GMP on insects for food and feeds (KEBS has published 4 stds on insectes)
- Tools:
 - *African Day of Standardisation*
 - *PAQI E-Learning Platform (currently has 6 courses)*
 - *African Continental VSS Platform*
 - *ARSO Monthly webinars*

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2.7 ARSO Interventions in FSS (5)



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Information
sharing
(ARSO DISNET)



The **ARSO-DISNET** - Documentation and Information Networks- Sharing the SPS/TBT Measures Information

Focus - promote the collection, dissemination and use of information on ARS, TRs & CA

1. **ARSONet** - The ARSO Networks for African Standards Information Centres/Libraries.
2. **ARSO DISNET TBTs National Enquiry Points** - For cooperations in notifications
3. **ARSO DISNET African Trade Web Portal (ATWP)** - An Online African Trade Information Web Portal that facilitates access to country-by-country information about import and export conditions of their products.

Currently ARSO and the WTO Secretariat initiated the African Transparency Champions in October 2022 for Capacity building. A second workshop was hosted by Kenya on 25th - 28th April 2023 in Nairobi Kenya.



2.7 ARSO Interventions in FSS (Cont)



Information
sharing
(ARSO DISNET)



ATWP - Africa Trade Web Portal Member Login

Home About Exports and Imports Requirements Tariffs & Quotas Trade Agreements Standards Map Statistics

Intra-Trade in Africa



Trade in Africa



The Africa trade varies from one country to another and is dominated by diverse natural resources that the continent enjoys in abundance. Other countries represent the higher side of the spectrum whereas other have the least trade volumes and can therefore be said to be a representation of extremes.

Most African economies remain largely agrarian, dependent on agriculture and other natural resources as the major source of foreign exchange and employment. However, many African

Latest updates

- > World Trade Statistical Review
- > The new USA president to abolish AGOA

[More news updates...](#)

Currency Converter

100

From
US Dollar (\$)

To
Euro (€)

Convert

Notify me on TBT matters

Under the SPS Agreement,

2.8 SPS Stocktaking document



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To see where SPS capacity gaps exist and to direct investments to achieve the necessary corrective capacity developmental measures.

Available

- SPS legislative framework or a national SPS committee

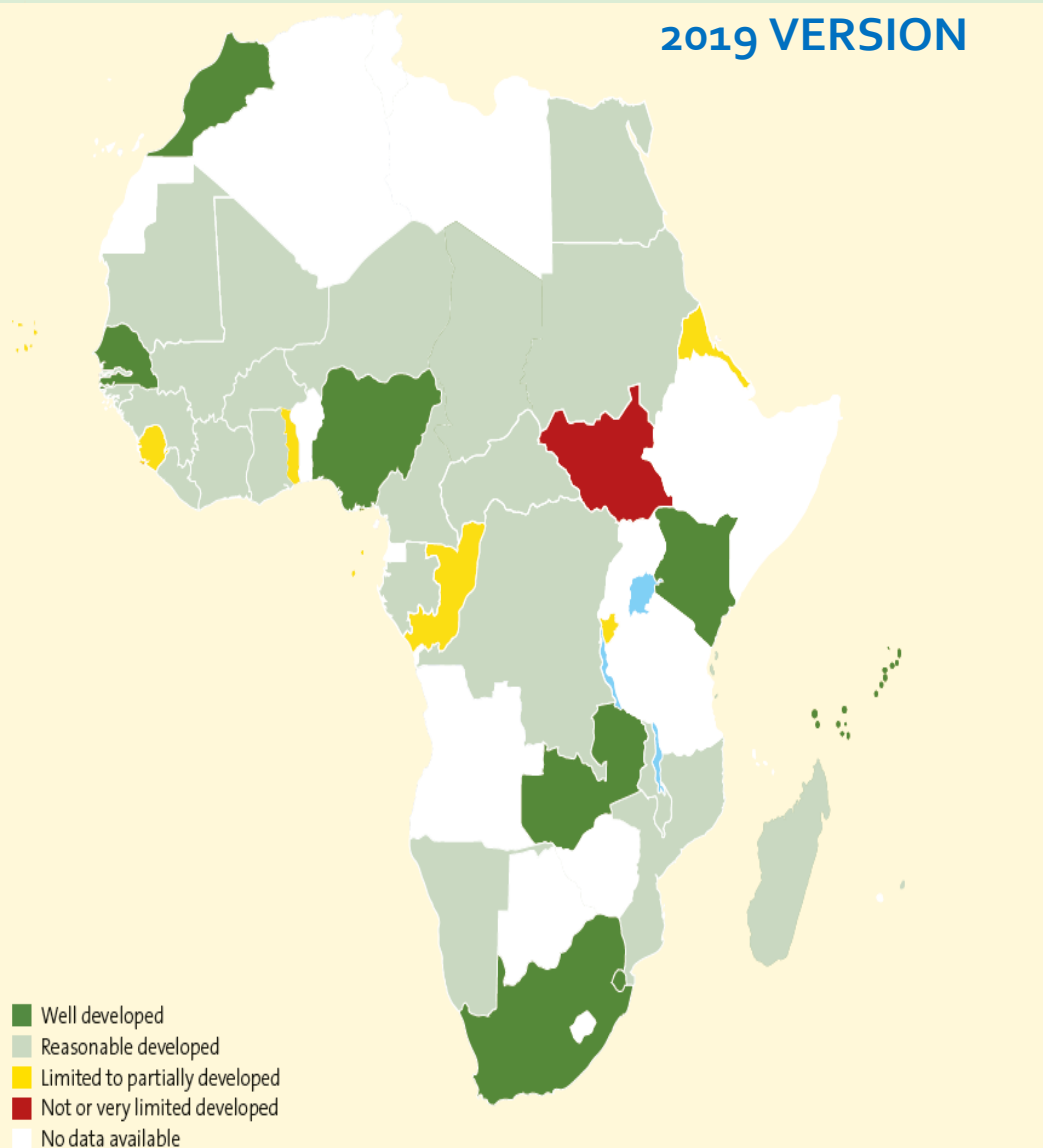
Well developed

1. Eswatini
2. Kenya
3. Morocco
4. Nigeria
5. Senegal
6. Seychelles
7. South Africa
8. Zambia

Missing or work in progress

- documented specific SPS-related trade concerns
- participation in the WTO SPS Committee activities
- competent authority to conduct audits or verifications
- Early warning and emergency procedures
- human and financial capacities

2019 VERSION



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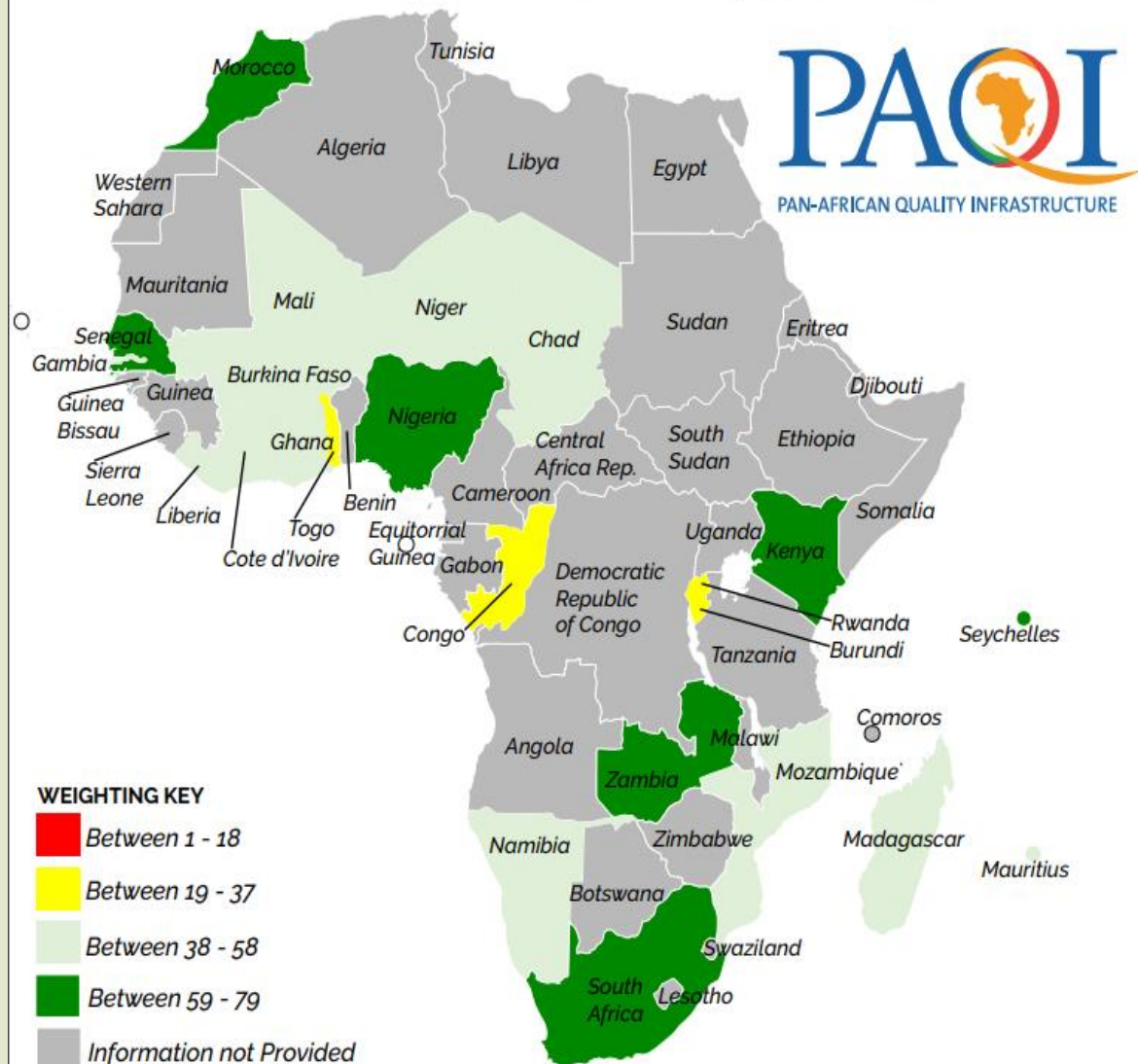


SPS Stocktaking document– 2022 version



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Overall SPS Status - Complete Data



Well developed

1. Burundi,
2. Egypt,
3. Kenya,
4. Malawi,
5. Morocco,
6. Niger,
7. Nigeria,
8. Rwanda,
9. Senegal,
10. South Africa

New

1. Burundi,
2. Egypt,
3. Malawi,
4. Niger,
5. Rwanda,

Past

1. Eswatini
2. Seychelles,
3. Zambia

Missing or work in progress

Non- availability of documented specific SPS-related trade concerns

Participation in the WTO SPS Committee activities.

Human and Financial capacity to conduct audits or verifications

Early warning and emergency procedures

Available

Competent Authorities in place

Active participation to the AfCFTA SC-SPS

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3. Impact of Harmonized Standards

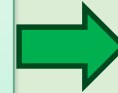


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Standards and Market access

Standards/
Technical
regulations

- ☐ Good manufacturing process
- ☐ Improved quality products
- ☐ Consumer protection
- ☐ Competitiveness



- Mutually accepted products
- Equal treatment (traders
- Basis for TRs

- Resilient Food safety system
- Reduction/Removed trade barriers
- Fairness in cross border and international trade



One standard-One test-one product accepted everywhere

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4. Cooperation with different Partners

Over 70 MoUs with different partners have been signed to support ARSO Programmes which immensely benefit the ARSO Members:



- **ISO** – implementation of the ISO Regional Policy on standardisation to benefit the African countries and to ensure that African interests and priority sectors are considered in international standards.
- **ITC** – Engagement for support to the Made Africa Qualification guideline among the Private Sector.
- **UNECA** – Implementation of Eco Mark Africa Scheme among member States.
- **UNIDO** –strengthening Quality Infrastructure activities the ACP region.
- **AOAC** –implementation of Conformity Assessment programmes, Analytical testing for increased food safety and trade
- **AfCFTA**: to boost intra-Africa Trade by eliminating trade barriers emanating from conflicting stds, regulations and conformity assessment procedures (Annex 6 & 7 of AfCFTA underline the importance of harmonisation in promoting trade .
- **AfDB** – Implementation of project on the harmonisation of Standards and Conformity Assessment in the Agricultural and food Sector
- **Afreximbank and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)** - support the Harmonisation of Pharmaceutical and Medicinal devices Standards
- **PTB** – Support for the harmonisation of Standards





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Thank you for your kind attention

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