

# African Organisation For Standardisation



AFRICAN ORGANISATION  
FOR STANDARDISATION (ARSO)

**Africa Strategic Commodities: Leveraging the benefits of standards to facilitate intra- African Trade under the AfCFTA – The ARSO standardisation and Made-in-Africa Qualification criteria initiatives”**

**Mr. Emmanuel Kirwa,  
*Assistant Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, ARSO***

# ARSO: Intergovernmental Organization Established in 1977 by OAU (Currently AU) and UNECA



**INSTRUMENT OF ACCESSION**

WHEREAS the Constitution of The African Regional Organisation for standardization (ARSO) was adopted at Nairobi on 11th January, 1977;

AND WHEREAS Article XIX (6) of the said Constitution provides that the Constitution after coming into force shall remain open for adherence by non-signatory State which are members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Organisation of African Unity;

NOW THEREFORE, the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe being a member of the Economic Commission for Africa and the OAU, do hereby notify that the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe, having considered the aforementioned Constitution and accepted it, to hereby accede to the same and undertakes faithfully to fulfil and carry out the stipulations therein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, ROBERT GABRIEL MUGABE, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe have hereunto set my Hand and affixed the Seal of my Office.

DONE at HARARE this fourth day of DECEMBER, one thousand nine hundred and eighty-nine.

*R. Mugabe*  
R. G. MUGABE  
PRESIDENT  
REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE



በአዲስ-አበባ፡ ሰኔ፡ አሥራ፡ ስድስት፡ ቀን፡ አሥራ፡ ዘጠኝ፡ መቶ፡ ስድሳ፡ ዘጠኝ፡ ዓመተ፡ ምክርቤት፡ ተሰጠ።



AFRICAN ORGANISATION FOR STANDARDISATION (ARSO)

DECLARONS QU'IL EST ACCEPTE, RATIFIE ET CONFIRME ET PROMETTONS QU'IL SERA INVIOLEBLEMENT OBSERVE.

EN FOI DE QUOI NOUS AVONS DONNE LES PRESENTES, REJETUES DU SCEAU DE LA REPUBLIQUE DU SENEGAL.

DAKAR, LE 16 SEP. 1978

*Leopold Sedar Senghor*

LEOPOLD SEDAR SENHOR

Standardization in Africa



OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL  
THE CASTLE  
OSU, ACCRA

**CONSTITUTION OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANISATION FOR STANDARDISATION**

**INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION**

WHEREAS a Constitution of the African Regional Organisation for standardisation was adopted at the Founding Conference held in Accra from 10th - 17th January, 1977.

AND WHEREAS it is provided in the said Constitution that ratification thereto shall be effected by deposit of an Instrument of Ratification with the Executive Secretary of Economic Commission for Africa.

AND WHEREAS on the 20th day of July, 1977, the Supreme Military Council of the Republic of Ghana, acting in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Decree approved the terms of the Constitution of the African Regional Organisation for standardisation.

The Government of the Republic of Ghana do hereby confirm and ratify the Constitution of the African Regional Organisation for standardisation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF this Instrument of Ratification is signed and sealed by the Chairman of the Supreme Military Council of the Republic of Ghana.

Dated at Accra this second day of August, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Seven (1977).

*Ignatius Kutei Acheampong*  
GENERAL IGNATIUS KUTU ACHEAMPONG  
HEAD OF STATE AND CHAIRMAN OF THE SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL

AYANT vu et examiné l' dit Acte, j'ai, avons approuvé et approuvons en toutes et chacune de nos parties, en vertu des dispositions qui y sont contenues et conformément à l'article 53 de la Constitution.

DÉCLARONS qu'il est accepté, ratifié et confirmé et PROMETTONS qu'il sera inviolablement observé.

EN FOI DE QUOI. Nous avons donné les présentes, revêtues du Sceau de la République.

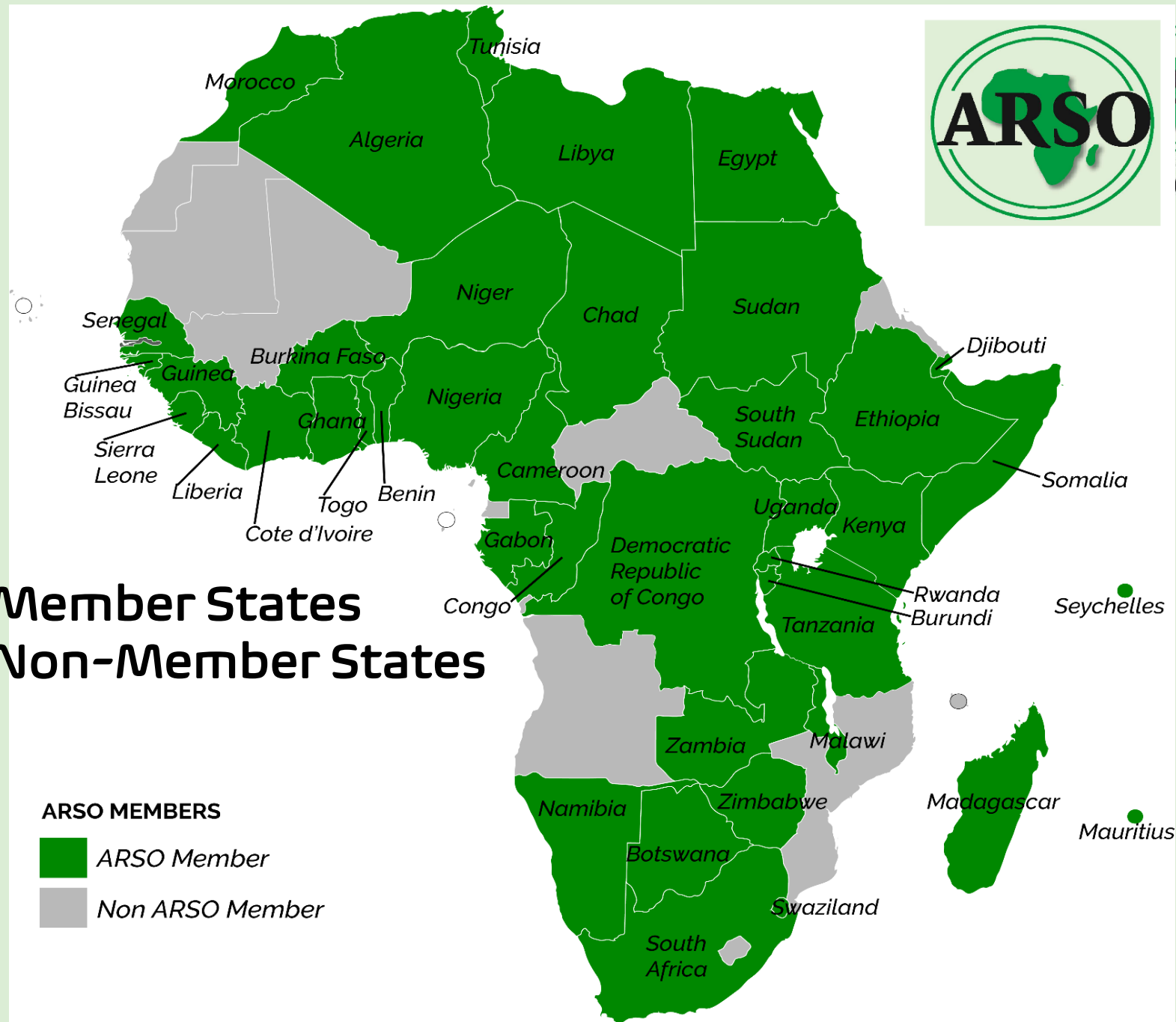
A Abidjan, le 10 / 08 / 78

*Y. Akpan*

Le Président de la République

# Current ARSO Membership

**43 Member States**  
**12 Non-Member States**



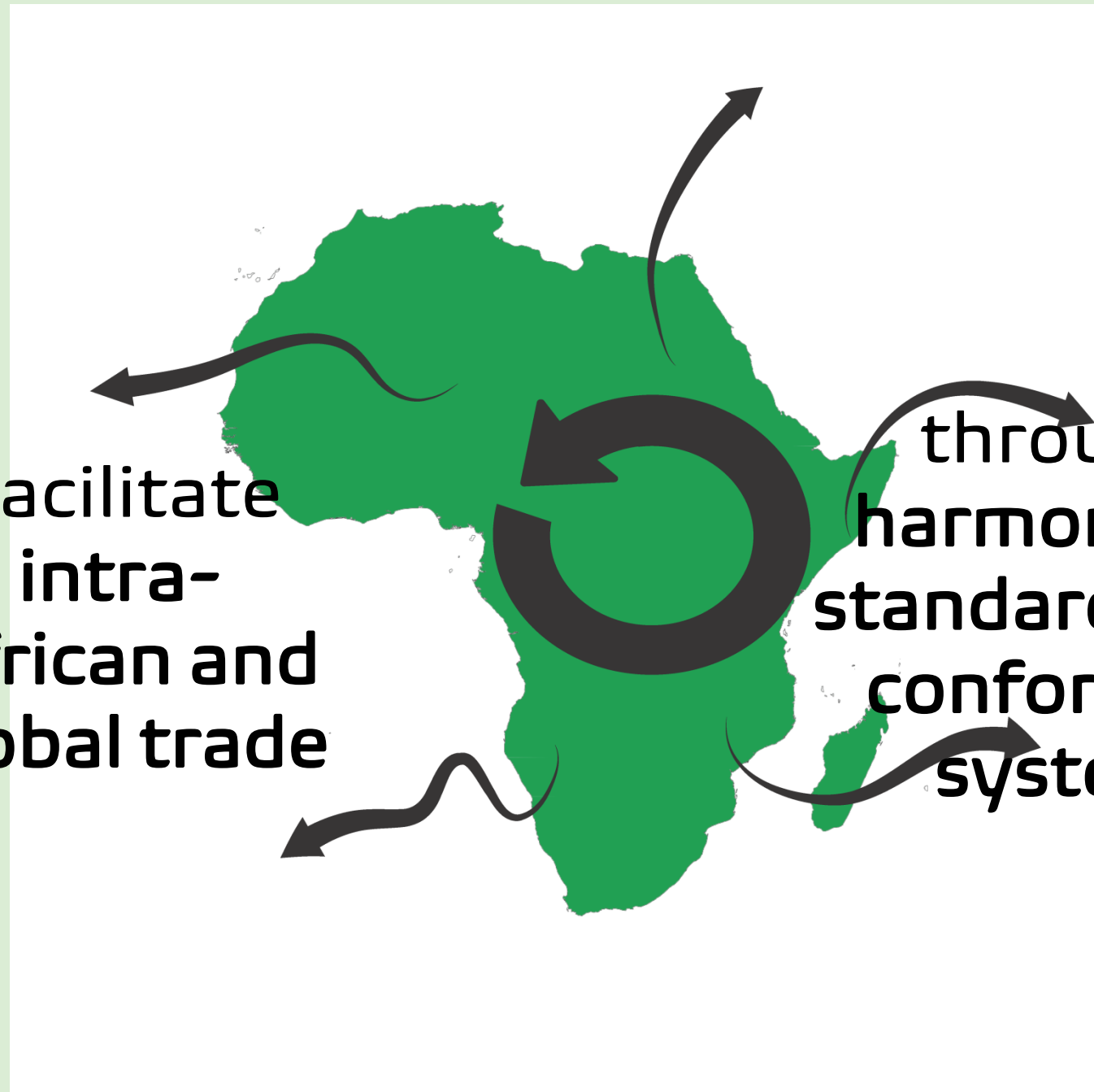
# ARSO Mission



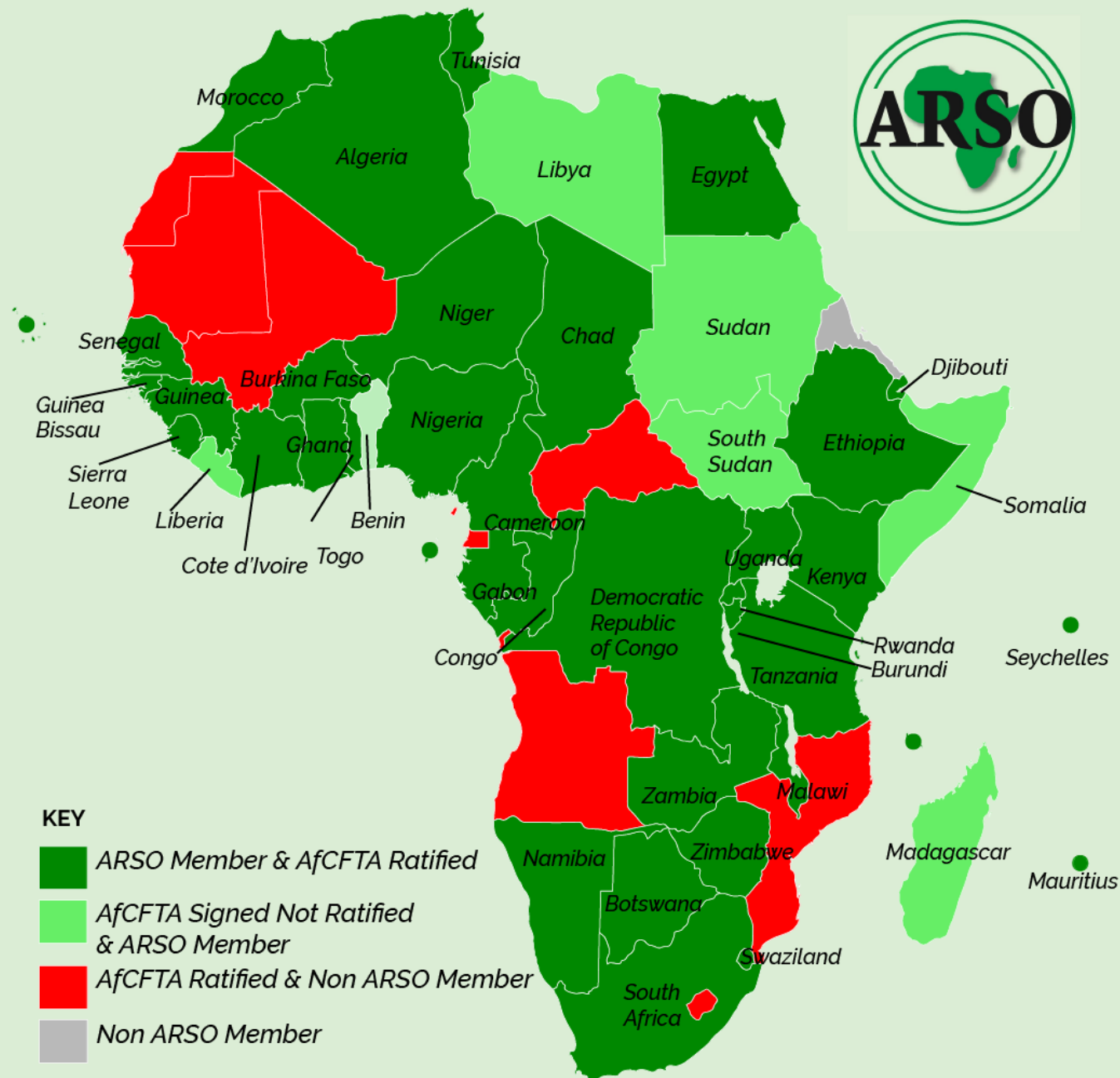
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FOR STANDARDISATION (ARSO)

Facilitate  
intra-  
African and  
global trade

through  
harmonized  
standards and  
conformity  
system



# ARSO At A Glance

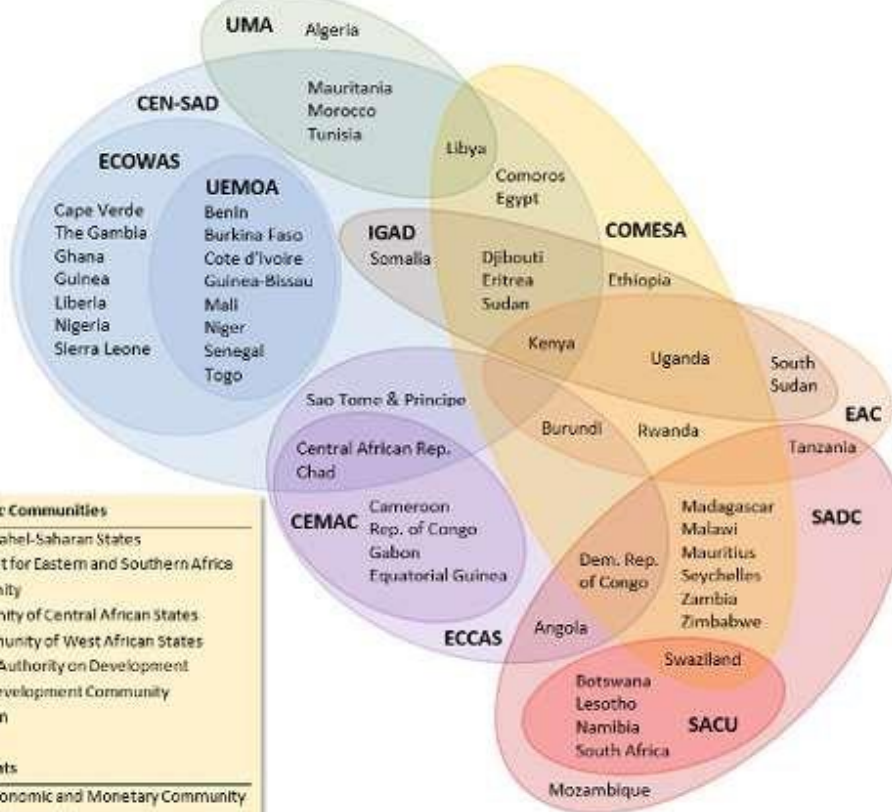


Standardization in Africa



# challenges of standardisation in Africa

## ► Overlapping membership in Regional Economic communities



- Coordination, Collaboration, better use of resources, clarity on the roles/responsibilities, no gaps in the system, no duplication of services
- demand for quality products and services, which invigorates individual businesses and the economy as a whole.
- industry meets the requirements of export markets,
- Competitiveness of the nation's economy and its ability to participate in global trade and in value chains.

- Call for Withdrawal of conflicting standards
- ARSO-REC's Continental standardization strategy

# Issues Affecting Intra-Africa Trade



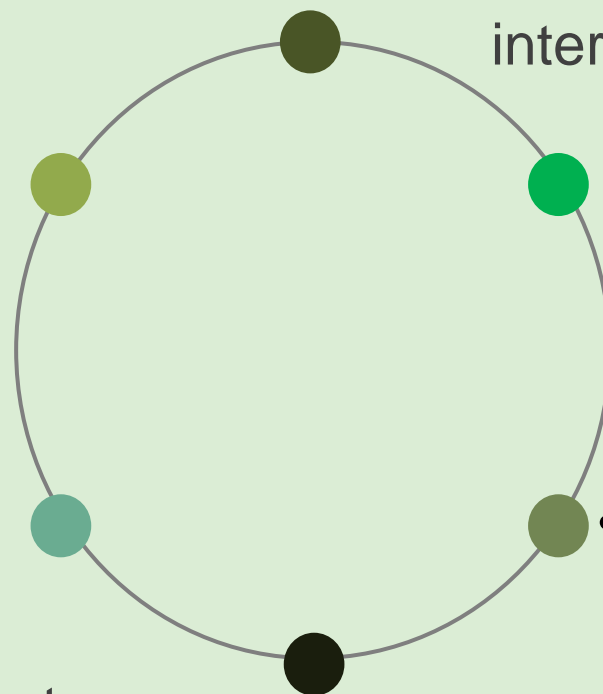
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Non recognition of other parties' **regulations** and conformance procedures.

Inadequate **capacity** of the QI to effectively support businesses and governments

High cost of **compliance** with technical regulations /requirements for export products due to re-testing

Technical Requirements and SPS measures **not aligned** to international requirements



- **Unaccredited CA** services (Weak Qis)
- SPS regulations/measures are used as protectionist devices

- Inadequate capacity to comply with **food safety** standards and facilitate trade.
- Inadequate **investment** to improve capacity

➔ TBT and SPS Related

# Priority sectors for ARSO Members within the RECs



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## Priority RVCs for RECs (based on PEBs)

COMESA	EAC	ECCAS	ECOWAS	SADC	UMA
Agro-processing, including vegetables, tea, sugar	Agro-processing including vegetables, tea, cereals, beverages and spirits	Agro-processing including dairy, coffee, tea, cereals, cocoa, beverages and spirits,	Agro-processing including fruits and nuts, coffee and tea, edible oils, cereals, beverages and vinegar	Agro-processing including fruits and nuts, sugar, beverages and spirits	Fish processing
Minerals beneficiation including copper, cobalt, nickel etc.	Cement	Mineral oils	Mineral fuels	Mineral fuels	Edible oils
Wood and wood products	Precious stones	Wood and wood products	Essential oils	Precious stones	Cement
Mineral oils	Mineral oils	Precious stones	Cotton	Iron steel	Minerals beneficiation
Cotton and textiles	Iron and steel	Iron and steel	Precious stones	Automobile	Fertilizer
Iron and steel	Creative economy	Automobile	Ships and boats		Textiles
Precious stones		Ships and boats			Iron and steel
Creative economy					Automobile

## Priority products for standards harmonization

Portland cement; fish; milk and milk products; fruits incl. fruit juices; edible oils incl. palm oils; cereals incl. rice, wheat, maize, sorghum; automobiles; mineral water

## Strategic plan 2022-2027

- ARS are recognized and used as business enablers
- Promote the value of standardisation and enhance stakeholder access to ARS information

# ARSO mandate in the AfCFTA harmonisation



## AfCFTA TBT annex 6-Article6 : Cooperation in Standardisation

1.State Parties shall:

- a)develop and promote the adoption and/or adaption of **international standards**;
- b)promote the adoption of standards developed by the **ARSO** and the **AFSEC**;
- c)where a relevant international standard required to facilitate trade does not exist, request the **ARSO** and/or the **AFSEC** to develop the required standard to facilitate trade between State Parties;

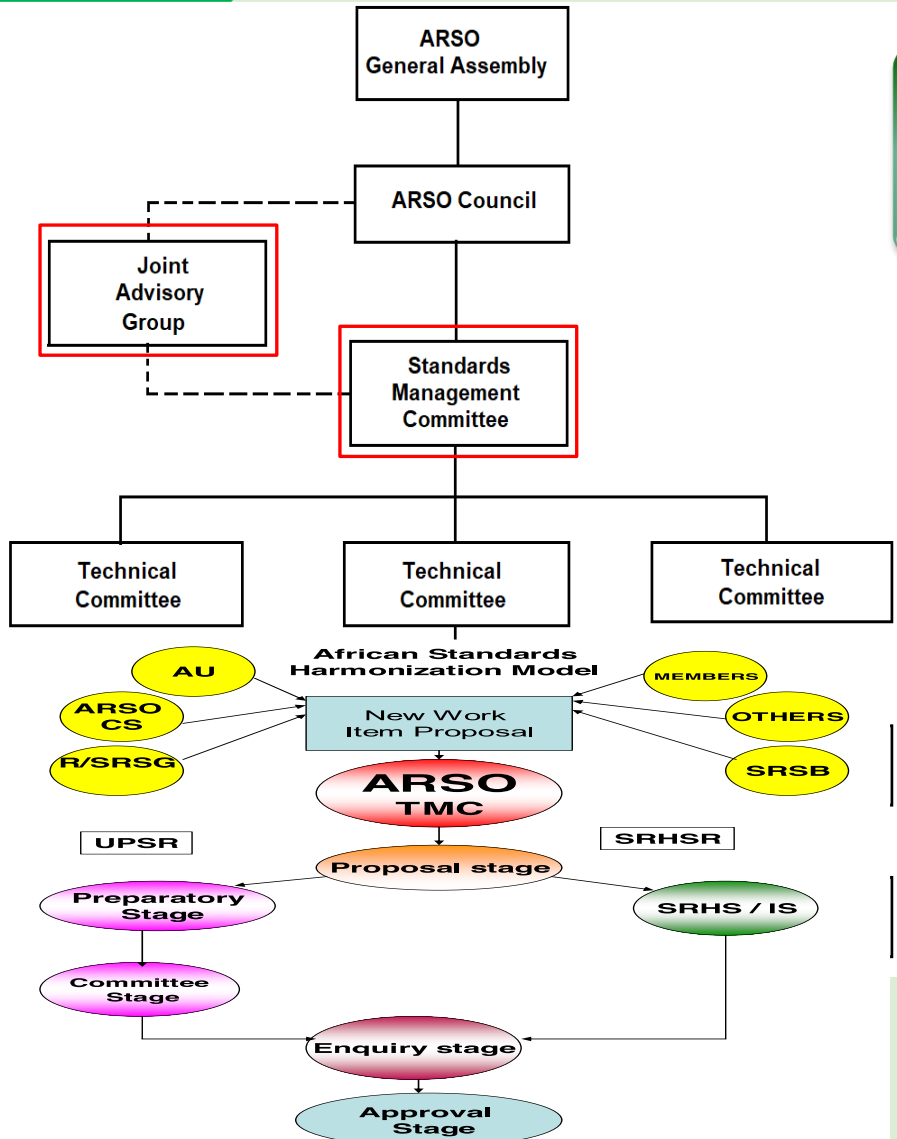
### ➤ TBT and SPS:

- **Harmonization of standards in priority sector – TC 97**
- **Harmonization/equivalence of Technical regulations – AQP-ACTReF**
- **Recognition of conformity assessment test results – Mutual recognition Agreement**

# The role of ARSO including the programmes and standards harmonisation



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### Goal 3

Develop and implement a robust & integrated African standardisation system

#### Strategic Outcome

A credible & efficient African standardisation system

#### Strategic Objective 5

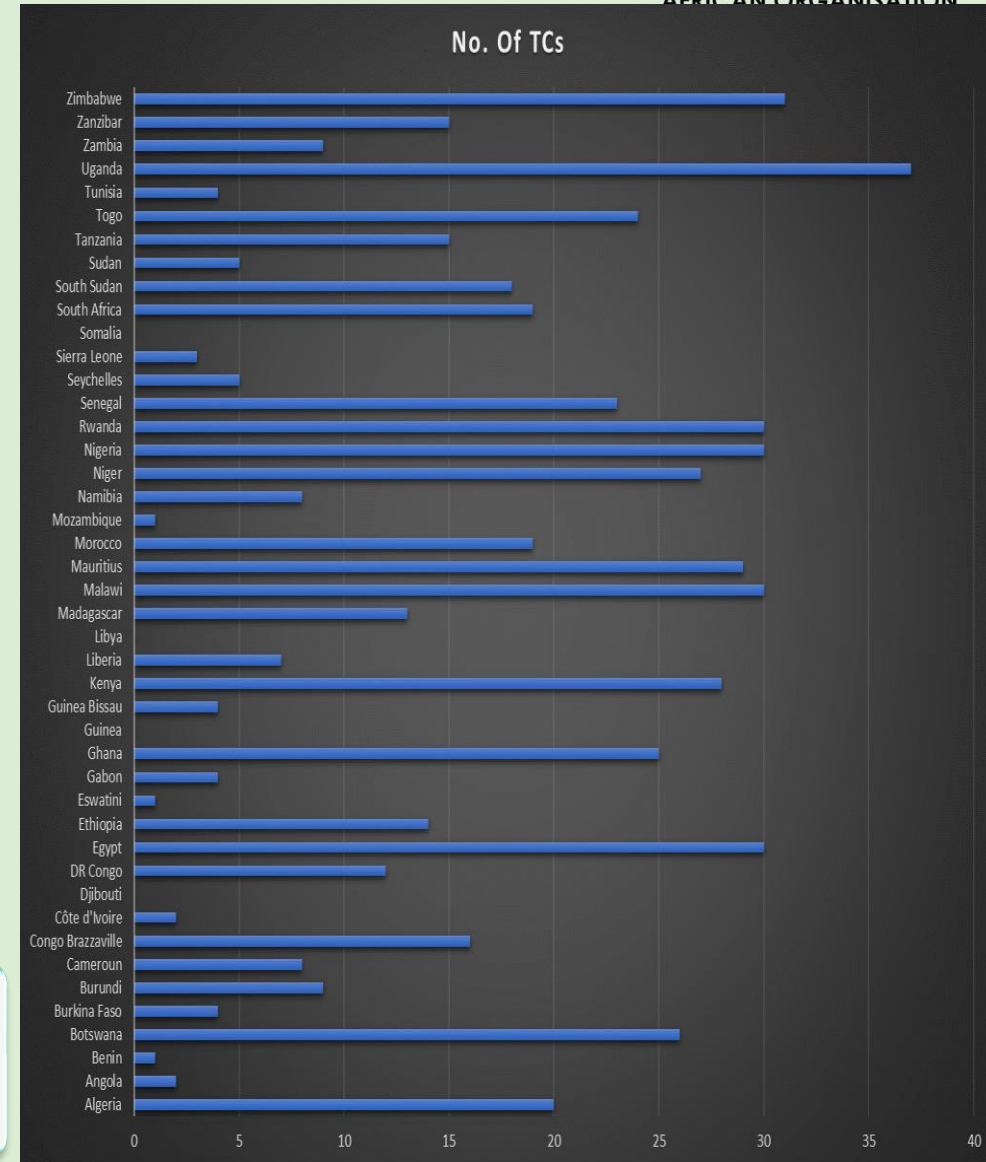
Build an efficient and agile ARSO Central Secretariat

#### Strategic Objective 6

Strengthen capabilities of ARSO Members and Technical Structures

#### Strategic Objective 7

Empower ARSO as a platform for African influence in international standardisation and to enable collaboration with other international SDOs



## ARSO Standards Strategic areas



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	No. of standards published	Products (Goods)	Services	Tests, analysis, sampling	Codes, glossaries, units
<b>Technical Harmonization Committee</b>					
THC 01, Basic and General Standards	145	65	5	28	47
<b>THC 02, Agriculture and Food Products</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>THC 03, Building and Civil Engineering</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>26</b>
THC 04, Mechanical Engineering and Metallurgy	109	68	0	35	6
<b>THC 05, Chemistry and Chemical Engineering</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>16</b>
THC 06, Electrotechnology	60	30	0	7	23
<b>THC 07, Leather and Textile Products</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>28</b>
THC 08, Transport and Communications	161	106	23	20	12

## Cont. ARSO Standards Strategic areas



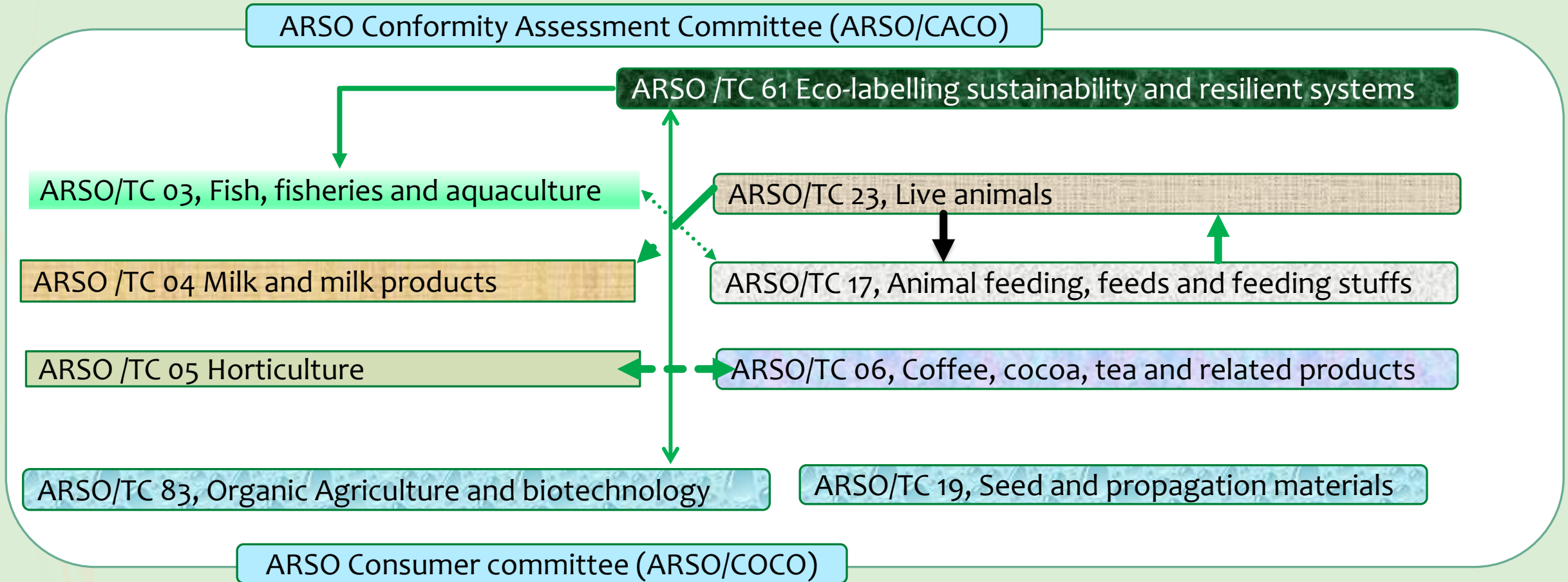
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	No. of standards published	Products (Goods)	Services	Tests, analysis, sampling	Codes, glossaries, units
<b>Technical Harmonization Committee</b>					
<b>THC 09, Environmental Management</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>
THC 10, Energy and Natural Resources	0	0	0	0	0
THC 11, Quality Management	6	0	0	0	6
THC 12, Services	105	1	83	0	21
<b>THC 13, Traditional and Complementary Medicine</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>THC 14, Healthcare Technology</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>105</b>
THC 15, Household Goods and Services	0	0	0	0	0
Conformity Assessment Committee	68	0	0	0	68
Consumer Committee	16	0	0	0	16
Specialized Working Groups	1	0	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2171</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>498</b>

# Harmonization of African Standards Primary Products

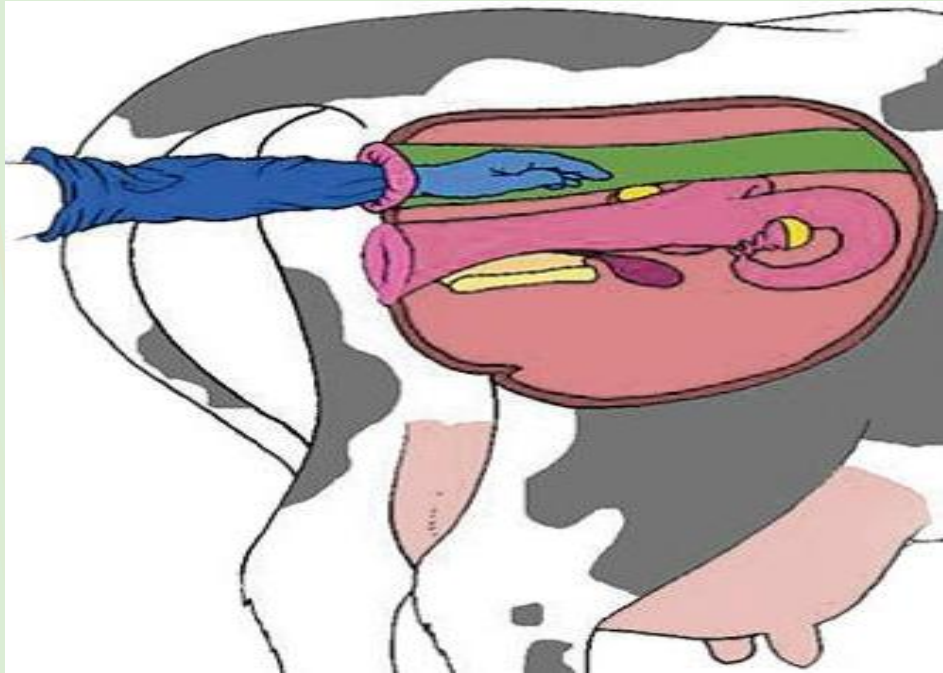


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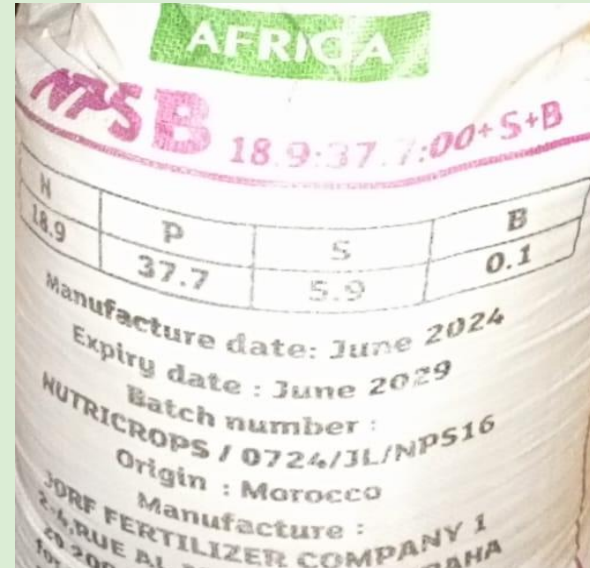


Inter dependence of Experts in standards development in the Agric Value chains

# Utilising standards for improved Agricultural products



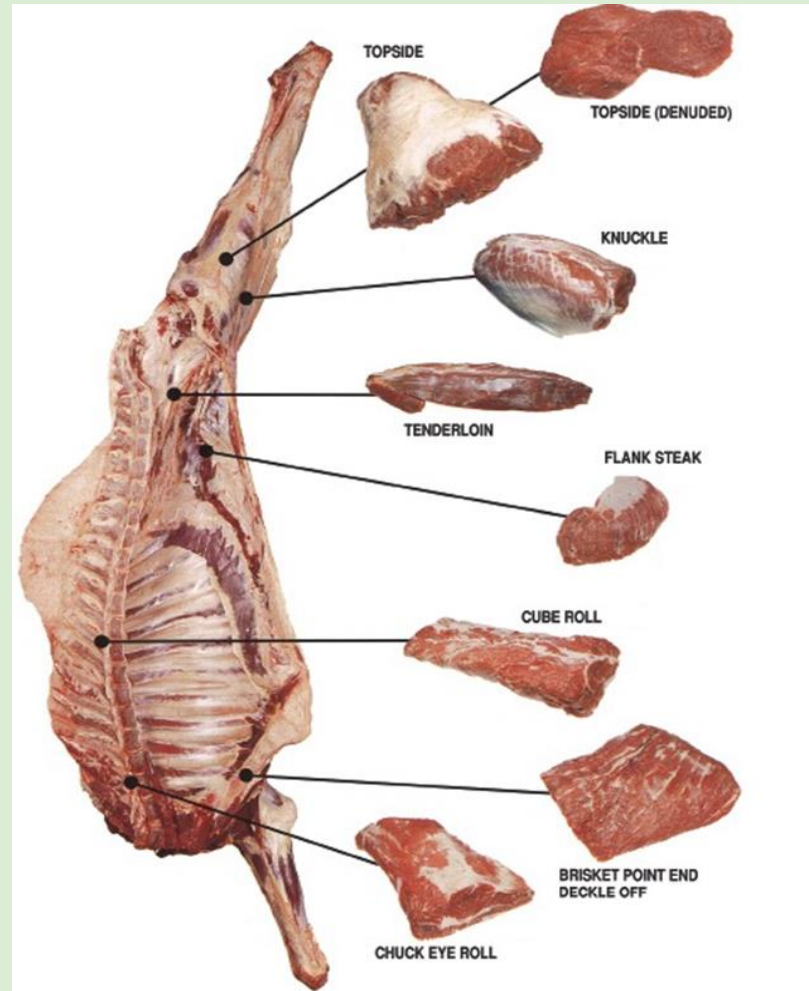
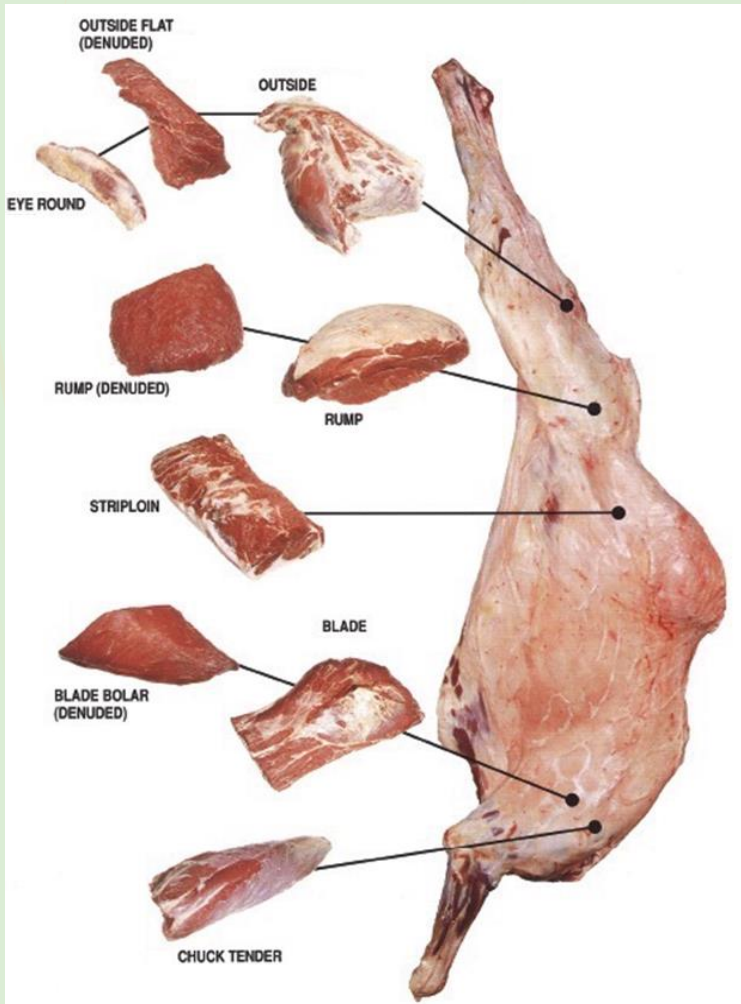
ARS GPOM 35:2025, Livestock breeding methods husbandry, healthcare, free-range pasture-fed, extensive, semi-intensive, intensive/zero-grazing, stock density, etc)



➤ To sustainably produce Agri products, utilization of agro-chemicals produced in the continent seem to be of beneficial

- ARSO/TC 22, Agrochemicals
- ARSO/TC 19, Seed and propagation materials

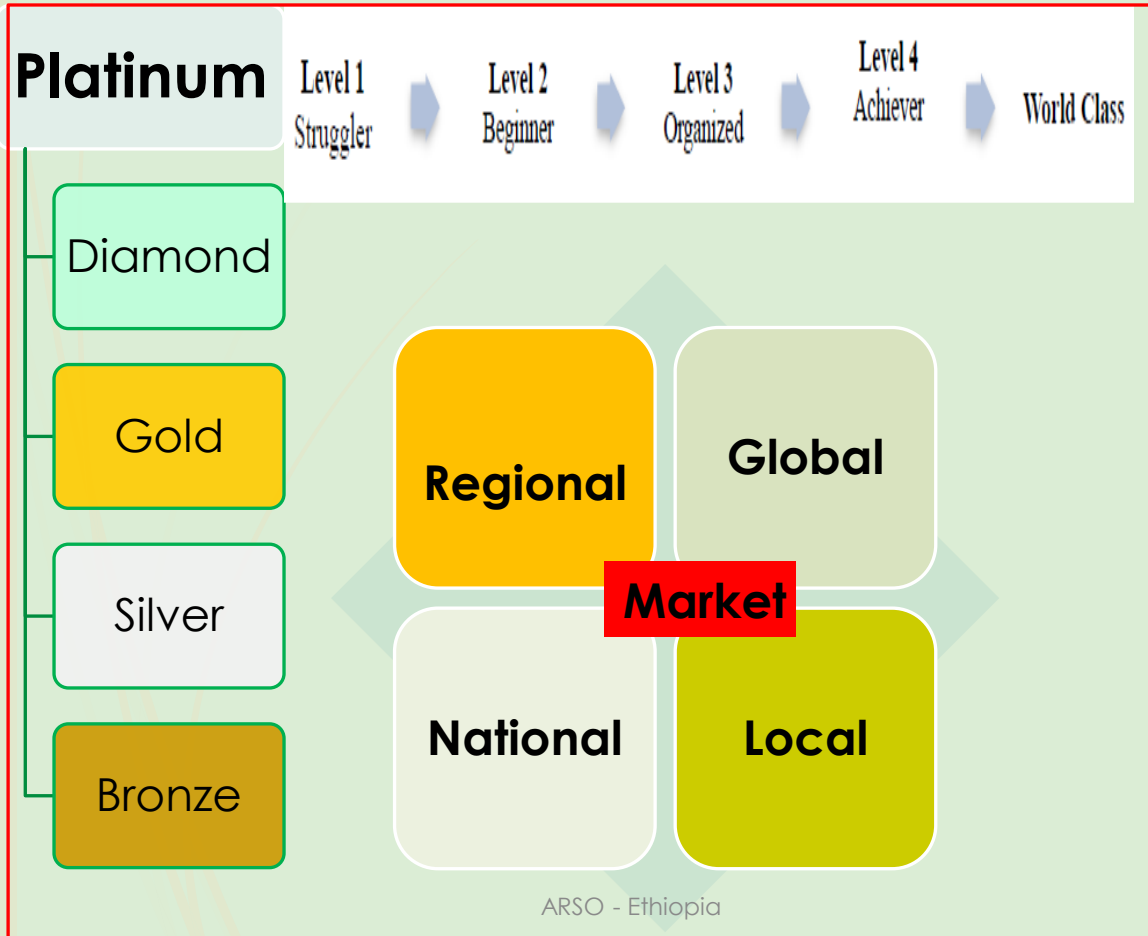
# Utilizing standards for value additions



- **Carcasses and parts — Specification**
- Camel carcasses and cuts – Specification
- ARS 1225:2024, Turkey meat
- ARS 1226:2023, Duck meat
- ARS-1242:2023, Goose meat
- ARS 1245 2023, Bovine (beef) meat
- ARS 1246 2023, Bovine (veal) meat
- ARS 1247 2023, Caprine (goat) meat
- ARS 1248:2023, Ovine (sheep) meat
- ARS 1250:2023, Rabbit meat

# Competitive Industry and Quality Culture

## On the service to SMES



**Goal 1**  
Build a quality culture and contribute to industrialization of Africa

**Strategic Outcome**  
Competitive Industry and Quality Culture

**Strategic Objective 1**  
Develop standards and conformity assessment procedures that respond to Africa's needs

**Strategic Objective 2**  
Enhance education & innovation in standardization

**Strategic Objective 3**  
Contribute to promotion of quality in the continent

### Most common exports

**AfCFTA: opportunity for industrial upgrading**

- Some products feature in top 10 exports to Africa (& within REC) but not top 10 exports to world
- These are typically more industrialized products (e.g. cement and motor vehicles)
- Unprocessed raw materials dominate RECs exports to the rest of the world
- Most common REC exports are primary agricultural products and minerals

**Analysis of most common exports is not enough**

- Overlooks the significant opportunity to tap into "under-exploited" or "untapped" opportunities to scale up intra-African trade under the AfCFTA

### Potential export basket

**Continental market: more diversified**

- Number of products in PEB to Africa is much higher than the number in PEB to the World (exception of ECOWAS)
- REC comparative advantage within Africa (compared to ROW) is more diversified with greater VA & less limited to primary products
- Some products enter REC PEBs for both African & World markets – offer potential for developing competitive RVCs which are positioned to enter GVCs (e.g. leather, textiles, works of art, essential oils and agro-processing)

**PEB to Africa**

- 4,077 products for which at least one REC has comparative advantage in vis-à-vis Africa
- Majority of products (2,086) enter PEB for only one REC - highlights varying CA across regions, & significant potential for boosting intra-African trade and between-REC RVC development

***ARSO Made in Africa Qualification Criteria, its strategic role and impact in competitiveness of the Made in Africa Products and intra-African Trade***



- **Quality & safety** - TBT and SPS addressed by harmonized ARS
- **Rules of Origin** – enjoy preferential tariffs under AfCFTA - Annex 2
- **Patenting and Intellectual Property** – recognition and ownership

*Asante*

*Merci beaucoup!*

*Thank you!*

*شكرا*

*Muito obrigado!*

