East African Community

Quality Management System at the EAC Secretariat

Background

As outlined in Article 71 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (EAC), the EAC Secretariat is responsible for, among others, the strategic planning as well as financial and technical management of programmes relating to the development of the Community. High quality standards in the above are therefore very important as the EAC Secretariat strives to provide its stakeholders with services which meet and even exceed their expectations. The EAC Secretariat is committed to strengthen its operations and is therefore rolling-out a Quality Management System (QMS) in preparation for ISO 9001:2008 certification.

Assignment

The EAC Secretariat, through the EAC's Office of the Deputy Secretary General (Planning and Infrastructure) and its assigned Quality Management System Focal Officer, is leading the assignment.

Imprint (U) Ltd, a Uganda-based firm specialised in QMS and capacity building, is assigned to facilitate and guide the implementation of the ISO 9001:2008-based Quality Management System throughout the Directorates and Departments of the EAC Secretariat in order to attain ISO Certification by the end of 2015.

The German International Cooperation (GIZ), on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, is supporting the above assignment both financially and technically.

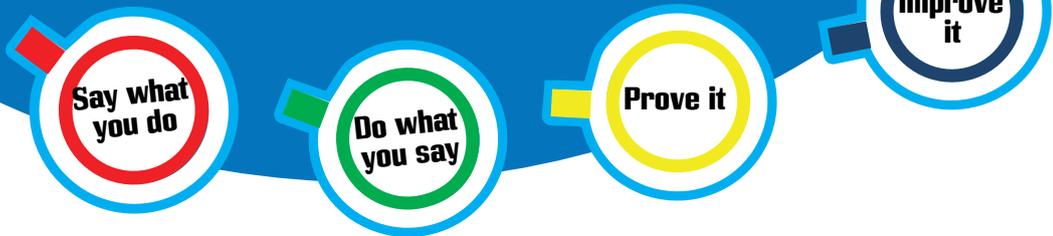| Contact	Maurice Danje Planning Expert/EAC QMS Focal Officer EAC Headquarters, Room 1006, EALA Wing Arusha, Tanzania T +255 27 250 4253 M +255 758 494 797 mdanje@eachq.org www.eac.int
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Duration	01.06.2014 - 31.12.2015

Approach

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is the world's largest developer of voluntary International Standards. ISO has published more than 19,500 International Standards covering almost all aspects of technology and business.
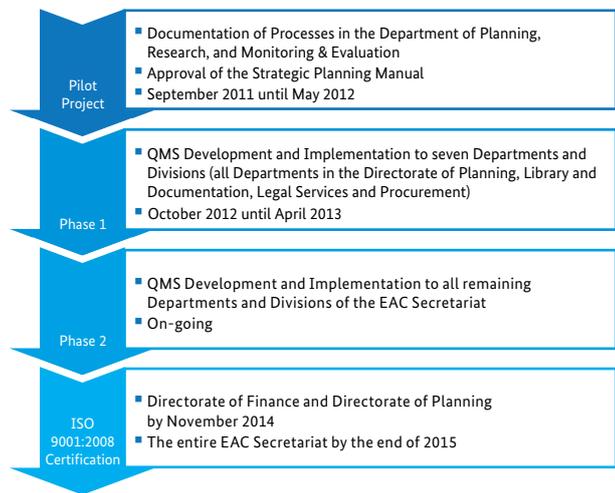
The ISO 9000 family addresses various aspects of quality management and provides guidance and tools for companies and organisations who want to ensure that their products and services consistently meet customer's or stakeholder's requirements, and that quality is consistently improved. ISO 9001:2008 is the only Standard in the family that companies and organisation can be certified to. This Standard is based on a strong customer/stakeholder focus, the motivation and commitment of top management, the process approach and continual improvement. Checking that the System works is a vital part of ISO 9001:2008. An organisation must regularly perform internal quality audits to check how its quality management system is working.

A pilot project for introducing the ISO 9001:2008 Standard at the EAC Secretariat commenced with the documentation of processes in the Department of Planning, Research, and Monitoring & Evaluation in September 2011. In May 2012 the Strategic Planning Manual was approved, containing amongst others the planning procedures and work aids. Following the success of the pilot phase and benefits being realised, QMS development and implementation was to be extended to all Directorates and Departments of the EAC Secretariat in two phases.
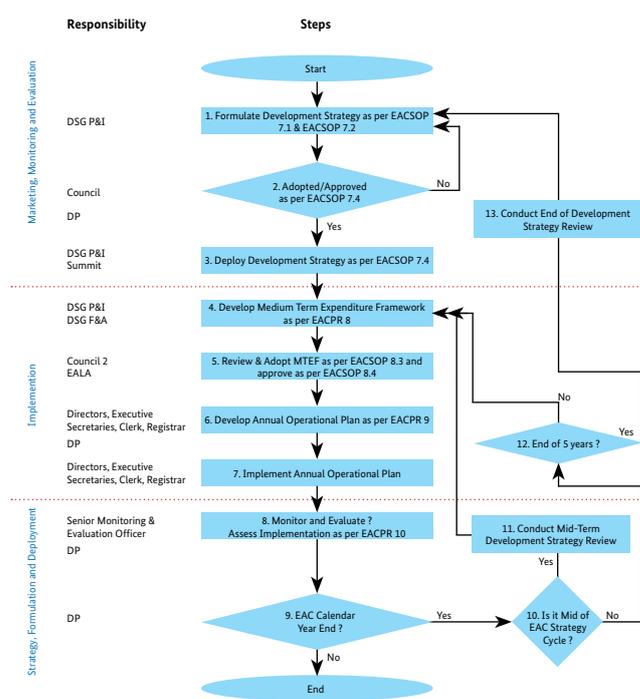
ISO Certification

Pilot Project
- Documentation of Processes in the Department of Planning, Research, and Monitoring & Evaluation
- Approval of the Strategic Planning Manual
- September 2011 until May 2012

Phase 1
- QMS Development and Implementation to seven Departments and Divisions (all Departments in the Directorate of Planning, Library and Documentation, Legal Services and Procurement)
- October 2012 until April 2013

Phase 2
- QMS Development and Implementation to all remaining Departments and Divisions of the EAC Secretariat
- On-going

ISO 9001:2008 Certification
- Directorate of Finance and Directorate of Planning by November 2014
- The entire EAC Secretariat by the end of 2015

Phase 2 of the implementation of QMS at the EAC Secretariat will be conducted in three sub-phases:

Phase 2 of QMS Implementation at EAC Secretariat		
1	2	3
Inception	Definition, Gap Assessment and Detailed Planning	Implementation, Deployment and Establishment

QMS Gap Assessment is critical as it provides the baseline of the status quo. The documented processes – each complying to applicable ISO requirements and established documents control procedure – are validated and final processes compiled for implementation. Key process measures and indicators as well as records are determined and tracked to monitor the performance of processes.

Further, QMS implementation structure and routines such as progress review meetings, management reviews and internal quality auditing is established and carried out. A team of Internal Quality Auditors is being trained to carry out regular quality audits to ensure that the Secretariat maintains compliance with the QMS at all times. Finally, upon recommendation by an external quality audit, ISO Certification is granted. Continued maintenance and post-certification improvement will follow.

Example of a Process Flowchart:
EAC High-Level Strategic Planning Process

Expected Results

The complete roll-out of QMS and the ISO 9001:2008 Certification will make the EAC Secretariat sustainably reliable, efficient, and standing-the-test-of-time in terms of high-quality service delivery while raising confidence levels and meeting expectations of its stakeholders.

Direct benefits from introducing QMS are amongst others:
- motivated staff, who understand their roles and how their work affects quality;
- improved service quality, leading to satisfied stakeholders;
- improved management and operational processes, resulting in increased productivity; and
- efficiency and cost savings as well as improved financial performance.

As a consequence, the EAC Secretariat will enhance its reputation and improve its stakeholder relationships, employee morale and management control.

Communication on Quality15

The logo Quality15 stands for the EAC Secretariat's commitment to receive ISO certification in quality management by 2015. The EAC QMS Focal Officer, together with the EAC Executives, will regularly update all staff on the different stages of the roll-out process. Look out for Quality15 to stay tuned !