



**Kenya Bureau of Standards**  
Standards for Quality life

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# NEWSLETTER

KEBS' PETER MUTUA TO CHAIR INFLUENTIAL CODEX COMMITTEE



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*Peter Mutua, Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) Manager, Food Standards, who will chair the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) in-session working group (WG) on priorities.*

# Kenya to chair Codex Committee Working Group

Codex Committee on Food Additives sets standards on food safety

# Kenya at the helm of CCFA Working Group on Priorities of Food Additive for Safety Evaluation

By Urbanus Kisiu



A customer checks out a product at a Supermarket.

**K**enya recently became Chair to the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) in-session Working Group (WG) on priorities list of food additives. This is the group that establishes priority lists of food additives, including flavouring agents and processing aids for safety evaluation or re-evaluation by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA).

**Peter Mutua**, the Manager, Food Standards, at the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) spoke to **Urbanus Kisiu**, to shed more light on the nature and work of the committee and its relevance to Kenya.

## **Q, What is CCFA (Codex Committee on Food Additives) and what is its mandate?**

Let us first understand what Codex is so that we can get a clearer perspective on the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) itself.

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (commonly referred to as Codex) is the decision-making body established to develop international food standards under the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme.

For Codex to perform its functions efficiently, it works through committees. The Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) is one of the General Committees of the Codex Commission.

It is responsible for ensuring safe use of food additives. This is achieved through assigning functional classes to food additives, maximum use levels for individual food additives, preparing lists of food additives for risk assessment by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) and assigning international numbering system. Furthermore, CCFA ensures align-

ment of correct use levels between the general standards for food additives and commodity standards.

CCFA comprises four working groups (WG) which work as sub-committees of the food additives. The WGs are: Working Group on alignment of food additives; Working group on international numbering systems (INS), Working group on the General Standards for Food additives and Working group on priority list for JECFA evaluation.

Kenya is the new Chair of the CCFA working group (WG) on priorities. This is the WG that establishes priority lists of food additives for risk assessment (safety evaluation or re-evaluation) by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA).

In undertaking its work, the WG on priority list relies on data availabil-

ity for evaluation on any requested safety evaluation for new and existing food additives. Where a re-evaluation is requested by a Codex Member Country and there is lack of data or data sponsor, the WG has powers to recommend to CCFA the withdrawal of the food additives from use based on safety concern. A classical example being the recommended withdrawal of Azodicarbonamide (ADA) (INS 927 a) which has been in use in bakery products such as bread acting as flour treatment agent mainly to whiten flours due to safety concern.

**Q, How is this chairmanship of the CCFA Working Group on Food Additives relevant to Kenya?**

It means quite a lot I would say. First, it's a privilege for Kenya to chair such a highly technical and globally significant committee. But away from the privileges, it gives us a strategic opportunity as a country to lead and influence global standardization in line with KEBS Vision and mission.

Secondly, as the government agency for standards, we see it as a useful platform to raise more awareness among local industries to actively participate in the issues of food additives, including compliance by setting an example as a country in Africa. This way, we will ensure that we are applying food additives in a safe way to meet the intended technological need in food processing

As the first country in Africa to occupy the seat, we will be looking forward to encourage and motivate other African countries to actively participate in Codex activities including taking leadership in some of the Codex committees where possible taking over hosting of some Codex secretariat. This way Africa will be part of developers of the standards rather than being net users.

**Q, How will you use the position to promote awareness on food additives among consumers and food processors?**

Our primary focus will be the food industry because it is the food manufacturers who procure and use these food additives. Without adequate knowledge on the appropriate and safe use of additives, they will continue to expose consumers to either unsafe or excess levels of additives.

By virtue of this leadership role, we will work with them and share knowledge on correct interpretation of general standard for food additives, empower them on how they can raise concerns on any food additives or even introduce new ones and the application of safe use principles such that they become the benchmark for the rest of the region. We will have structured interactions through workshops, one-on-one discussions, industrial visits among other strategies.

We would also like them to understand the various parameters for the application of additives in different food products including the rationale behind their use so as to make informed decision.

This has been one of the biggest motivations for us to get to that very technical committee, but very strategic for us to advance our agenda for the good of our consumers.

**Q, What challenges do you anticipate in executing your mandate as a committee?**

I would say getting into the position is more of a solution instead of a challenge. The position provides us with a fresh impetus to renew our drive to raise more awareness and forge more alliances with industry players to address the issues around

usage of food additives. Since We have been having challenges of misuse of food additives, now we are in a position where we start focusing on those challenges and providing solutions by converting the industry from wrong use to safe use. We can now use this position to influence and mobilize technical support to educate the stakeholders.

We have quite a number of other food additives that are lined up for re-evaluation in the next couple of years and with us being in the priority committee, we'll be keeping tabs on progress.

**Q, What is your outlook for the future?**

The future is very bright; we have our work cut out. We will rally member countries especially in Africa to be prompt in responding to issues raised by the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) so that appropriate action can be taken to address concerns on food additives in the region. We will also work with members to proactively collect and provide data on additives to inform the Committee's decisions in executing its mandate.

I call on our local stakeholders to collaborate more with KEBS to help us streamline the usage of additives to enhance the safety of consumers. It is also beneficial for them to support KEBS in the implementation of the standards through compliance. They are welcome to proactively engage with us.

I will be happy to help and see the food industry develop a self-regulatory framework in the food additives space so as to inculcate responsible quality culture within the food industry for the benefit of accessing a bigger market, but most important ensure our consumers are effectively protected from unsafe use of food additives.

# Innovation Pipeline Symposium identifies opportunities to empower MSMEs

By Geoffrey Nyerere



*A Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises trader interacts with Kenya Bureau of Standards Director, Market Surveillance, Peter Kaigwara, and Manager, Marketing Luiza Kiguta, during the 7<sup>th</sup> Series of the Innovation Pipeline Symposium at the KEBS Headquarters on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2024.*

The Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) 7th series of the Innovation Pipeline Symposium drew to a close on June 7th, 2024, with Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) stakeholders gathering to explore ways of empowering the sector.

The series kicked off with sessions in Mombasa and Eldoret in May, culminating in the Nairobi Symposium held at the KEBS Headquarters on June 6th and 7th. It was themed, **Empowering the MSMEs Sector through Training & Certification**, and aimed to create networking opportunities for up coming MSMEs.

KEBS collaborated with several government departments in the course of the series including the Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry,

the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), the Medium Small Enterprises Authority (MSEA), the Kenya Industrial Research Development Institute (KIRDI) and the Competition Authority of Kenya (CAK).

Others were the Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI), Kenya Investment Authority (KIA), Kenya Industrial Estates (KIE), Kenya Trade Network Agency (KTNA), Kenya Women Fund (KWF) and the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF).

During the symposium the Ministry gave an update on on-going government efforts to facilitate trade for MSMEs, especially the role of the recently launched Karibu Business Support Centre (KBSC) in enhancing ease of conducting business in the country.

The symposium also delved into mechanisms through which MSMEs can find support to succeed in business through membership and sustainable quality assurance practices.

The KRA made a presentation on processes of becoming tax compliant while the CAK, KIPI and the KIA discussed modes of empowering MSMEs through training, certification and fair competition.

KEBS Director, Metrology and Testing, Dr. Henry Rotich, made a presentation on metrology defining the importance of the science in determining the quality of products. Other presentations were made by the KIE, KTNA, KWF and YEDF who gave insights touching on financial support and competition regulations for MSMEs.

The KEBS Managing Director, Esther Ngari, who officially opened the Nairobi Symposium, said it was meant to elevate the standards and capabilities of MSMEs.

Ngari said, "By nurturing their growth through structured training and rigorous certification processes, we not only prepare them for the demands of the market but also instil a culture of excellence and innovation".

The Managing Director said the symposium serves as a crucial platform for MSMEs to access the tools and knowledge necessary to thrive in today's competitive landscape.

"As we convene, we recognize the pivotal role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in driving our na-

tion's economic transformation," she said,

The Managing Director further observed that the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) rightly acknowledges the MSME sector as a potent force in generating jobs, fostering innovation and creating livelihood opportunities for citizens.

Ngari said this was the reason KEBS had partnered with several institutions to provide a platform for deliberations on strategies to empower MSMEs through training and certification.

She encouraged the participants to engage in constructive deliberations and forge partnerships that can help grow their enterprises.

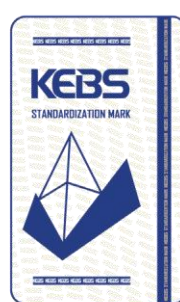
"As we engage in today's discussions, let us be motivated by the knowledge that our concerted efforts can create a ripple effect of opportunities. Partnerships formed, ideas shared and commitments renewed here will serve as the catalysts for a transformative economic journey." Said the Managing Director,

## MSMEs should forge partnerships that can help grow their enterprises.



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# 4th Information Security Management System Conference roots for digital resilience

By Solomon Kyenze



Kenya Bureau of Standards Managing Director, Esther Ngari, officially opens the 4th Annual Information Security Management System (ISMS) Conference in Naivasha on June 10th.

**T**he 4th Annual Information Security Management System (ISMS) Conference was held in Naivasha between June 10th to 14th, with focus on unravelling Information Security Management System strategies that could strengthen digital resilience.

The Conference, which was organized by the National Computer and Cybercrimes Coordination Committee, brought together Information Security Management System operatives from both the public and private sector.

Among the participants were Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Managers, Chief Information Security Officers, Quality

Assurance and Compliance Managers, Risk Audit officers as well as Information Security Management System Coordinators.

The Conference topics were broad covering aspects of digitization of government services, data privacy and compliance, data analytics in management of information security risks, the role of leadership in ISMS implementation, critical information infrastructure protection framework, supply chain management and integration of ISMS with other management systems among others.

There was active participation from key players in the public and private sector, including speeches from the National Computer and Cybercrimes

Coordination Committee, the Kenya Bureau of Standards Managing Director, Esther Ngari, as well as sessions led by representatives from several leading organizations including Safaricom and the Kenya Revenue Authority.

The KEBS Managing Director observed that there was a growing need for information security management, especially at this time when cybercrime and data breaches were on the rise with digitization.

Ngari noted that despite enhancing efficiency in service delivery and streamlining operations to boost productivity, digitization had also brought with it new challenges relating to privacy and data protection. "Just like any good technological ad-



*Kenya Bureau of Standards National Quality Institute Head, Charles Maru, addresses the 4th Annual Information Security Management System (ISMS) Conference in Naivasha.*

vancement, digitization has its own challenges, especially those relating to privacy and data protection, which were hitherto unknown," she noted.

The Managing Director warned that the possibility of experiencing data breaches today was greater than any other time in the past.

She stated, "In fact, it is now almost no longer a question of if, but when we, as organizations, might experience data breaches which ought to concern us more when we consider what might be at stake."

Ngari called for greater resilience, as well as the establishment of mechanisms to cushion the industry from the negative side effects of technology, which should include the adoption of sound Information Security Management Systems.

She said KEBS, as the National Standards Body, has an important role to play in the country's economic development by creating a safe environment where enterprise can thrive.

KEBS has adopted technology and innovation, institutional capacity and legal health as key foundations to aid it in achieving this mandate.

The Managing Director said KEBS, as an active member of the International Standardization Organization (ISO), has a responsibility to enforce Conformity Assessment by adopting and availing to our market international standards that help safeguard quality and safety.

To this end, she singled out ISO/IEC 27001 as one of the Standards adopted from the ISO which Kenya Bureau of Standards, as the local custodian, would encourage local enterprises to consider integrating in their information security management operations. ISO 27001/IEC is an information security standard that provides a framework and guidelines for establishing, implementing and managing Information Security Management Systems.

The standard provides mechanisms-

for preservation of the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information by applying a risk management process and gives confidence to interested parties that risks are adequately managed.

It also provides a best-practice approach that helps organizations manage their information security by addressing people, processes and technology. Certification to the ISO 27001 standard is recognized worldwide and indicates that an Information Security Management System is aligned with information security best practices.

The standard at the same time sets out a framework for organizations to establish, implement, operate, monitor, review, maintain and continually improve an Information Security Management System.

"Adoption of this certification does, in the long-run, support the development of an internal culture that is conscious of information security risks and one which constantly works to ensure prevention and mitigation mechanisms are perfected.

Besides coming from the Kenya Bureau of Standards, the ISO/IEC 27001 sends a bold message to the market of an organization's commitment to best practices and firm desire for data protection through a viable and internationally recognized information security management system," Ngari noted.



*A section of the participants following proceeding during the 4th Annual Information Security Management System (ISMS) Conference in Naivasha.*

# Calls for public-private collaboration on food safety as Kenya marks 2024 World Food Safety Day

By Solomon Kyenze



Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) Ag. Director, Standards Development & Trade, Zacharia Lukorito, represented KEBS Managing Director, Esther Ngari, during celebrations to mark the World Food Safety Day on June 6th, 2024 in Nairobi. Here the Director is seen presenting the Managing Director's speech.

**K**enya joined the rest of the world in marking the World Food Safety Day on June 6th, 2024 with calls for the private sector to collaborate with regulators to ensure food safety.

The Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS), as a lead player in food safety, was among various stakeholders who actively participated in celebrations to commemorate the date at a Nairobi Hotel. This year's theme was, **Food Safety- Prepare for the unexpected.**

The theme elicited vibrant discussions that centred on the best mechanisms of securing food, with various speakers drawn from both

the public and private sector urging for more resilience and joint efforts to ensure safety in the food production chain.

KEBS Managing Director, Esther Ngari, as one of the key speakers, said food safety was not only the responsibility of regulators, but a collaborative effort that also included the private sector.

"Whereas regulators set policy and play a watchdog role, it must be a collaborative public-private sector responsibility to guarantee safety throughout the food supply systems. the Managing Director advised.

She expounded further by urging private sector players, including small-

holder farmers, street vendors and even the largest multinational food companies to work more closely with the public health department, government food agencies and labs in the interest of ensuring food safety.

The private sector could, for instance, play a complementary role to government's food safety audits by providing their own audits which would help secure the validity of food safety tests.

The private sector can also collaborate with the government to strengthen the certification framework since certification from 3rd party organizations can go a long way in enhancing consumer trust





*Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) Metrology & Testing Director, Dr. Henry Rotich, participates in a panel discussion during celebrations to commemorate the World Food Safety Day on June 6th, 2024 in Nairobi .*

and safety in products.

Ngari called for a proactive approach to food safety which should involve implementation of robust food safety protocols at every stage of the supply chain, from farm to fork, warning that this could not succeed if left to regulators alone.

The Managing Director cited the Codex Alimentarius Commission

as one of the influential bodies establishing standards on food safety, and whose standards constitute the World Trade Organization's benchmark for food trade.

She said KEBS was working closely with the Commission to implement some of its standards in the country on food safety and was collaborating with CCAFRICA and the EAC Codex Forum to have some key standards

translated into Kiswahili to ensure better adoption and implementation across our region.

Ngari highlighted the fact that Kenya co-hosted the 54th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH54) with the United States of America in Nairobi earlier this year where Kenya chaired the work on the Development of Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Markets for Food.

She said once adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission later this year, the guidelines will enable and equip members to respond to issues in their traditional markets.

**The public and private sector should collaborate to ensure safety in the food production value-chain.**



*Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) Ag. Chief Manager, Quality Assurance, John Kabue, makes a point during celebrations to commemorate the World Food Safety Day on June 6th, 2024 in Nairobi .*

# PICTORIAL

## 7<sup>th</sup> INNOVATION PIPELINE SERIES.

Kenya Bureau of Standards organized the 7<sup>th</sup> Series of the Innovation Pipeline for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) which kicked off with the Mombasa and Eldoret series in May, 2024 culminating in a Symposium at the KEBS Headquarters in Nairobi in June.

### Eldoret Series.



Attendees at the Innovation Pipeline Eldoret Series pose for a group photo at the end of the event in May. The series was organized by the Kenya Bureau of Standards.



Representatives of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises' sector in Eldoret following proceeding at the Innovation Pipeline series organized by the Kenya Bureau of Standards in the town.



Kenya Bureau of Standards Ag. Chief Manager, Marketing and Customer Care, Redemta Cherotich (left), explains a point to Evelynne Okwero during the Innovation Pipeline series in Eldoret in May.



Participants displaying their ware during the Innovation Pipeline Eldoret Series in May



Kenya Bureau of Standards North Rift Regional Manager, Vincent Cheruiyot, addresses the Innovation Pipeline Eldoret Series in May.

## Nairobi Symposium.



Kenya Bureau of Standards Director, Market Surveillance, Peter Kaigwara (centre), and Manager, Marketing Luiza Kiguta, sampling some of the products at the 7th Series of the Innovation Pipeline Symposium at the KEBS Headquarters on June 7th.



A beauty products exhibition at the 7th Series of the Innovation Pipeline Symposium at the Kenya Bureau of Standards Headquarters on June 7th.



A colorful display of handwoven scarves at the 7th Series of the Innovation Pipeline Symposium that concluded at the Kenya Bureau of Standards Headquarters on June 7th.



An exhibitor displays some of his handmade products during the 7th Series of the Innovation Pipeline Symposium at the Kenya Bureau of Standards Headquarters in June. The Symposium was organized by KEBS to empower Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.



A participant at the 7th Series of the Innovation Pipeline Symposium at the Kenya Bureau of Standards Headquarters tries out a garment that was exhibited by a trader.



Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) players following proceedings during the 7th Series of the Innovation Pipeline Symposium at the Kenya Bureau of Standards in June.



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Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.

**Helen Keller**



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# Empowering Nutrition for Healthier Lives

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