

# NEWSLETTER

DELEGATES FROM 36 COUNTRIES IN NAIROBI FOR PLENARY



## IN THIS ISSUE

**KENYA HOSTS ISO/COPOLCO  
45<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY**

**KENYA CELEBRATES  
WORLD METROLOGY DAY**

**CAROLINE OUTA'S  
JOURNEY TO ISO HELM**

**KEBS TO HOST KARIBU  
BUSINESS CENTRE'S  
REGIONAL OPERATIONS**

**KEBS EMBRACES  
PRODUCTIVITY  
MAINSTREAMING**

*National Standards Council Chairman, Anthony M. Munyiri (left), is joined by Kenya Bureau of Standards Director for Quality Assurance and Inspection, Dr. Muriira Karau, and the International Organization for Standards Committee on Consumer Policy (ISO/COPOLCO) Secretary, Dr. Cristina Draghici, during the official opening of the Committee's 45<sup>th</sup> Plenary in Nairobi on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2024.*

# KEBS HOSTS ISO/ COPOLCO 45<sup>th</sup> PLENARY

3-day Plenary discussion on sustainable measures for consumer protection

# KENYA HOSTS ISO/ COPOLCO 45TH PLENARY

By Geoffrey Nyerere



National Standards Council Chairman Anthony M. Munyi officially opening the ISO/COPOLCO 45th Plenary in Nairobi.

**K**enya successfully hosted the 45th Plenary session of the International Organization for Standards Committee on Consumer Policy (ISO/COPOLCO) during which discussions centered around consumer protection.

The 3-day session, which took place between 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024, was hosted by the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) and attracted delegates from across the globe, including representatives from 36 countries who flew to Nairobi.

Key speeches were delivered by the Chairman of the National Standards Council (NSC), Anthony M. Munyi, ISO/COPOLCO Acting Chairman Eunsook Moon, KEBS Managing Director, Esther Ngari and ISO Deputy Secretary General, Silvio Dulinski. ISO Committee for Conformity Assessment (CASCO) Chair Caroline Outa-Ogweno chaired one of the sessions.

The Plenary which was themed, **Building Circularity into Sustainable Trade, Standards as Solutions in Consumer Protection**, sought to explore the role of standards in supporting sustainable trade alternatives and the role standards can play in promoting the circular economy.

It also delved into examples of good practice, focusing on how promoting and implementing standards can help national economies set up programs to reduce waste and help consumers make sustainable choices.

In his keynote speech, Munyi observed that standards had assumed grave importance especially with the myriad challenges facing consumers and affirmed the Kenya government's commitment towards consumer protection and safety through establishment of the right standardization infrastructure.

The Chairman, whose Council oversees the policy direction of the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS), said standards provide a foundation of safety and reliability and are vital in building consumer confidence while enabling emerging technologies to flourish.

He assured the Plenary that the Kenya government has prioritized standardization not only as a key driver for industrial growth as set out in the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, but also as an important component in ensuring consumers are protected from harmful products and practices.

Munyi said Kenya had put in place the right regulatory framework to guarantee consumer protection through the Consumer Protection Act 2012 (No. 46 of 2012) which prohibits unfair trade practices and misleading advertisement while setting out rights and obligations respecting

specific consumer agreements. The Chairman who was accompanied by ISO/COPOLCO Acting Chairperson Eunsook Moon said it was crucial however that even as the regulatory framework was strengthened, the importance of standards as a solution to consumer protection is prioritized.

“Standards play a very important role in consumer protection by ensuring quality, safety and reliability of products and services. It is through standards that we’re able to establish benchmarks for product quality and safety, and where recourse can be obtained in the event of harm caused by products that fail to meet applicable standards,” he observed.

Munyiri said KEBS, as the national standardization authority, has a mandate to implement and enforce standards pivotal for quality, safety and efficiency. KEBS is also responsible for issuing quality certification marks like the S-Mark to indicate that a product meets quality standards as a way of helping consumers identify safe and reliable products.

Ngari, in a speech read on her behalf by the organization’s Director for Quality Assurance and Inspection, Dr. Muriira Karau, said KEBS plays an important role in providing standardization, metrology and conformity assessment solutions for sustainable development in the country.

The Managing Director said the organization’s mission is to enhance the quality of life, protect consumers, promote trade, industry and innovation through rigorous quality control mechanisms. Ngari said even as KEBS establishes and enforces adherence to standards, it was imperative that manufacturers produce goods that meet set benchmarks.

She called for closer cooperation within the ISO community to develop stronger, better and more consumer-focused relationships, and to enhance communication with consumers to help them make informed and confident decisions.

The ISO/COPOLCO Acting Chairperson called for consumers to be given more say in global trade matters, noting that despite constituting the largest economic group, consumers

were rarely consulted on important global matters, especially those relating to standardization.

Moon observed that consumers made up 70 percent of all global spending and hence cannot be ignored whenever important decisions relating to consumption and trade are concerned.

During the Plenary, participants also considered ways for consumers to be informed about circular processes in manufacture and reuse of materials and goods through awareness-raising. The plenary also reviewed the relevance of marks or labels in circularity claims and whether there is an opportunity for new standards work in the area.

## The ISO/COPOLCO Acting Chairperson called for consumers to be given more say in global trade matters.



Delegates attending the ISO/COPOLCO 45th Plenary in a group photo at the end of the 3-day event in Nairobi.

# Focus on Sustainable Practices as Kenya Celebrates World Metrology Day

By Solomon Kyenze



*National Standards Council Chairman, Anthony Munyiri (right), consults with Kenya Bureau of Standards Director, Quality Assurance & Inspection, Dr. Muriira Karau, during an occasion to commemorate the 2024 World Metrology Day.*

**K**enya joined the world in celebrating the World Metrology Day on May 20th with this year's focus being on sustainability.

Stakeholders in the measurements sector gathered at a Nairobi Hotel to commemorate the occasion whose highlight was a speech by the Principal Secretary, State Department of Industry in the Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry, Dr. Juma Mukhwana.

The World Metrology Day commemorates the signing of the Metre Convention in 1875 which helped establish a global measurement system, the foundation for scientific discovery, industrial advancement, international trade facilitation and ultimately a better quality of life while protecting the environment.

The occasion provided an opportunity for the country to appreciate the important role that metrology plays in promoting sustainability and addressing the pressing challenges facing the planet.

Dr. Mukhwana, whose speech was read by the Director, State Department for Industry at the Ministry, Mr. Joseph Mbeva, observed that there was a growing demand in the modern world for accurate and reliable measurements not only in the manufacturing sector and domains of national and international trade, but also in the areas of human health and safety, protection of the environment, communications and in all fields of science and engineering.

The Principal Secretary expressed satisfaction that the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS), as a National

Metrology Institute, has continued to excel in providing leadership and direction in the national traceability of measurements to the International System of Units (SI), and offering calibration services for industrial and trade measurements and other local and international calibration laboratories.

He further observed that KEBS plays a significant role in maintaining national, regional, and international linkages with the relevant bodies, coordinating scientific research and special metrology-based projects, and providing technical training to the industry in measurements, both locally and internationally.

"Through KEBS, we can today as a country boast of having a very fine metrological scientific infrastructure covering a broad spectrum of mea-

“Through KEBS, we can today as a country boast of having a very fine metrological scientific infrastructure covering a broad spectrum of measurement fields”

Dr. Mukhwana

surement fields,” said Dr. Mukhwana who described this as a notable mark of excellence that promotes and guarantees quality products.

The Principal Secretary also announced that the Ministry had spearheaded the drafting of the Quality policy of Kenya to address challenges faced by the country in accessing overseas markets partly due to the absence of distinct and internationally recognized quality infrastructure.

He said that upon enactment, the Quality policy of Kenya will not only boost the advancement of the country’s sustainable development agenda but also support the country to realize the Vision 2030 aspirations of becoming a globally competitive country that offers high quality products to both domestic and international markets while guaranteeing social, environmental and consumer protection.

Dr. Mukhwana also described measurements as the cornerstone of quality infrastructure that impacted every aspect of our lives from industry to innovation, commerce to conservation.

He praised the role played by KEBS in helping strengthen the manufacturing sector and said as a Ministry, they were following through on the Kenya Kwanza manifesto, which aims to double manufacturing’s share of our GDP by 2025.

He said metrology, especially through industrial calibration, would help the country fine-tune its manufacturing processes, making them more efficient and competitive.

Esther Ngari, KEBS Managing Director in a speech read on her behalf by the organization’s Director for Quality Assurance and Inspection, Dr. Muriira Karau, said the organization was taking a leading role in sustainability by developing standards designed to promote sustainable growth and development in the country.

Ngari cited the E-mobility industry where KEBS has spearheaded the development of standards in the sector while KEBS has helped establish technical committees aimed at bringing the industry together to develop relevant standards that will guide sustainable development.

The Managing Director said KEBS was on course to adopt 290 standards aimed at mitigating climate change which will mark an increase of relevant climate mitigation standards.

Ngari said KEBS was keen to reduce its energy and water use by 5% by the end of the 2024-2025 financial year as a further demonstration of the organization’s commitment to sustainable growth.

Dr. Henry Rotich, KEBS Director for Metrology, Testing and Research observed that 2024 marks the first year that the World Metrology Day officially becomes a UNESCO International Day which was testament to the importance of metrology to the global community.

“By proclaiming 20th May as World Metrology Day, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Culture (UNESCO) has recognized the importance of metrology to the global community and wishes to highlight its role in improving quality of life, enabling international trade, and preserving the environment. This aligns with UNESCO’s goal of building a better world through science and education,” Dr. Rotich reiterated.

He said metrology played a crucial role in promoting sustainability and addressing the pressing challenges facing the planet.

Metrology also enabled the provision of accurate and reliable measurements and contributed to informed decision-making besides promoting efficiency and facilitating the development of sustainable practices across various sectors.



Joseph Mbeva, the Director, State Department for Industry while representing the Principal Secretary in that Department, Dr. Juma Mukhwana, during celebrations to mark this year’s World Metrology Day in Nairobi.

# Caroline Outa-Ogweno's rise to the pinnacle of ISO

By Solomon Kyenze



*ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (ISO/CASCO) Chairperson Caroline Outa-Ogweno. She's also KEBS Regional Manager, Lake Basin Region.*

**C**aroline Outa-Ogweno wears many hats. Conformity Assessment guru of international repute, mentor, mother, cleric are just but some of the roles that constitutes Caroline.

For a woman who has scaled continental and international barriers, Caroline is surprisingly cool, composed and very down to earth. She loves the basis of what she does, Conformity Assessment and lights up every time the topic features.

It may come as a surprise to learn that Kenya is the only country presently occupying two slots at the influential International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Council, which may not have been by design. Kenya, as a member of the ISO, is

privileged to have Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) Managing Director Esther Ngari sitting at the ISO Council, but enjoys an added privilege of having Caroline sit in the same board, though not as a representative of the country.

Caroline's ascendancy to the ISO Council wasn't straightforward, it was an arduous journey that practically commenced at the onset of her career way back in 1993, taking her to the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) as a conformity Assessment Advisor before international duty called when she was elected Chairperson of the ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (ISO/CASCO).

The CASCO is one of the three Policy Development Committees of the ISO, the others being the ISO Committee on Consumer Policy (COPO-LCO) and the Committee on Developing Country Matters (DEVCO), all whose Chairpersons automatically sit at the ISO Council.

Caroline joined KEBS as a Quality Assurance Officer fresh from graduating as a Chemistry student from the University of Nairobi in 1993 and later switched to Conformity Assessment in 2000.

She was to head the Certification Body at KEBS between 2004-2019 which is responsible for implementing two of ISO's documents- ISO 17021 and ISO 17024, which meant working closely with the CASCO Working Group 21. Engagement with Working Group 21 acted as her entry point to CASCO proper, as she ended up being nominated as member of the CASCO Chairman's Policy Coordination in 2012 to represent developing countries.

Her deep knowledge of the status of Conformity Assessment in developing countries, having chaired the ARSO Conformity Assessment Committee (ARSO-CASCO) is what endeared her to CASCO. As an ISO 17021 expert, ARSO had mandated her to guide African countries on how to establish Conformity Assessment structure.

Towards the end of 2019, then CASCO Chairperson Reinaldo Figueiredo, invited Caroline to deputize him and she served as CASCO Vice Chair for two terms, 2020/2021, and 2022/2023 when Reinaldo's term expired creating a vacancy in the top seat.



Caroline Outa-Ogweno. during a KEBS training session.

She seized the opportunity on Reinaldo's encouragement and threw her hat in the ring being elected as the organization's first ever female chairperson to serve for the period 2024/2025, with Canadian Elias Raul as her vice chairman.

Caroline has seized the role with vim and gusto and favours continuity of some of the programs initiated during Reinaldo's term, one of which is a Mentorship Program that provides an opportunity for experienced CASCO Working Group members to mentor up-and-coming conformity assessment individuals from around the globe.

The first mentee in the program was Kenya's Doris Mueni who's mentor was from the USA.

Doris has now graduated to be a Working Group Convenor herself and Caroline wants to see more of such success stories.

She also intends to fortify Information Sessions that have been used at CASCO to build consensus before voting on important issues.

The online sessions have helped to inform and educate CASCO members whenever a matter within CASCO's mandate has required resolution.

Caroline is at the same time keen to see CASCO actively involved in ISO's projects relating to Sustainability and Climate Change to complement the ISO Smart project by leveraging on technology to make standards more available to the standards community.

She also aims to work closely with her team during her tenure to ensure the full implementation of both the CASCO Strategy as well as the ISO 2030 Strategy.

CASCO is responsible for developing international standards in the Conformity Assessment area and part of its role is to accredit national standards bodies like KEBS, and to act as the global validator of some of the quality standards marks developed by member nations.

"Conformity Assessment is very important to global trade because for you to trust any standards' mark of quality, you expect the body issuing them to be accredited and competent to undertake conformity assessment," the CASCO Chairperson states.

She further explains that CASCO accreditation assists a country to be more competitive at the global stage. CASCO is liaising closely with

ARSO to develop an African Mark of quality that will facilitate cross-border trade across the continent.

Having two members at the ISO Council helps to strengthen Kenya's Conformity Assessment credentials, besides providing an opportunity for the country to influence conformity assessment at the global stage.

Caroline is currently the KEBS Regional Manager for the Lake Region based in Kisumu, having been transferred from the Mt. Kenya Region where she occupied the same position.

The married mother of two meanwhile has a passion for social work and runs a not-for-profit project-Blue Cross Kenya alongside her husband in Kisumu which rescues youth from drug and substance abuse.

She is also a Pastor at the Mavuno Church in Kisumu and a fitness enthusiast who takes pleasure in weightlifting. Her other passion is mentorship and training where she has continued to train people on financial management.

**CASCO accreditation assists a country to be more competitive at the global stage. CASCO is liaising closely with ARSO to develop an African Mark of quality that will facilitate cross-border trade across the continent.**

# KEBS to host Karibu Business Support Centre's regional operations

By Urbanus Kissiu



The Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry, Rebecca Miano, presides over the launch of the Karibu Business Support Centre in Nairobi.

**T**he recently launched Karibu Business Support Centre (KBSC) will have some of its countrywide offices housed within the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) regional network.

KBSC is meant to enhance ease of conducting business in the country and underlines the government's commitment to fostering economic growth and prosperity.

The Centre was launched by Investments, Trade and Industry Cabinet Secretary, Rebecca Miano, in April and is headquartered at the NSSF Building in Nairobi with its Mombasa, Nyeri and Eldoret operations premised within KEBS regional offices.

KBSC is touted to revolutionize the business landscape by serving as a comprehensive hub for entrepreneurs, investors, and traders.

It will offer a wide array of services, including advisory support on investments, manufacturing and trade policies, collection and dissemination of business information, liaison services, and facilitation of business linkages.

KBSC aims to streamline these processes and address the challenges faced by businesses through the KBSC Online portal, providing businesses with detailed information and seamless interaction with government agencies on investment, industry and trade matters.

CS Miano, while launching the Centre on April 15<sup>th</sup> stressed the importance of creating a conducive environment for business and investment opportunities to flourish and reiterated the government's dedication to streamlining service provision and addressing the challenges faced by entrepreneurs, investors and traders.

"Our vision for the Karibu Business Support Centre goes beyond its establishment; it embodies our unwavering commitment to facilitating the ease of doing business in Kenya," remarked Miano

The Cabinet Secretary further added, "Whether you're a visionary entrepreneur with groundbreaking ideas



or a seasoned industrialist seeking to expand operations, the KBSC stands ready to simplify and expedite your business journey.”

The launch highlighted the significance of the Karibu Business Support Centre in addressing crucial aspects of business facilitation.

“We envision the Karibu Business Support Centre as more than a mere resource; it represents a collaborative platform for entrepreneurs to thrive, innovate and contribute to our nation’s progress,” added the Cabinet Secretary

The Karibu Business Support Centre’s comprehensive range of services aims to empower businesses and drive economic growth.

It seeks to enable businesses to overcome challenges and seize opportunities for growth and expansion by providing personalized support and facilitating access to information and resources

The launch of the Karibu Business Support Centre signifies a milestone in Kenya’s journey towards economic prosperity.

The government extends an invitation to entrepreneurs, investors, and traders to embrace this initiative and leverage its support services for mutual growth and success.

CS Miano further urged the business community to take advantage of the centralised services offered at the support centre,

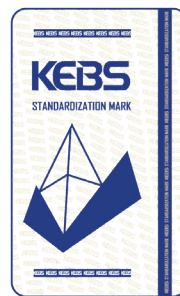
“The Karibu Business Support Centre is not just mere brick-and-mortar establishments, it’s a symbol of our commitment to facilitating the ease of doing business in Kenya.

## The Karibu Business Support Centre’s comprehensive range of services aims to empower businesses and drive economic growth.



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# KEBS Embraces Productivity Mainstreaming

By Solomon Kyenze



Kenya Bureau of Standards Managing Director Esther Ngari, addresses the 3rd National Wage Bill Conference at the Bomas of Kenya on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**T**he Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) is working with the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) and the National Productivity Coordination Centre (NPCC) to realize the objectives of productivity mainstreaming.

The Bureau is among 30 pilot organizations appointed by both the SRC and NPCC to implement productivity mainstreaming.

Productivity mainstreaming involves developing and implementing strategies and interventions aimed at ultimately entrenching a culture of productivity.

KEBS was among the participants at the 3rd National Wage Bill Conference at the Bomas of Kenya between April 15th and 17th where the Managing Director Esther Ngari, made a presentation on lessons that KEBS has so far learnt from productivity mainstreaming.

The Managing Director who was accompanied by the Chairman of the National Standards Council (NSC), Anthony M. Munyiri, said KEBS had embraced the opportunity to work with SRC and NPCC to implement the productivity mainstreaming.

"The management has embraced this opportunity and worked close-

ly with the SRC and NPCC to realize the objectives of productivity mainstreaming in KEBS," Ngari told the participants.

She said KEBS operates a performance management system based on the Balanced Scorecard.

KEBS has committed to productivity mainstreaming through a Quality Management System (ISO 9001:2015) certification in which continuous improvement is a central principle.

KEBS has also aligned its recently launched Strategic Plan, 2023-2027 to the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) and the

Kenya Vision 2030 Fourth Medium Plan while also taking into cognizance the Fifth Generation Strategic Plan Guidelines.

The Managing Director said KEBS had put in place key productivity structures which include a Productivity Mainstreaming Committee and Champions, a Productivity Framework and a Productivity Improvement Strategy.

KEBS has gone ahead to train several cadres of its management and staff on productivity mainstreaming including members of the NSC, the senior management committee at the organization, the Productivity Measurement and Implementation Committee and the Productivity Measurement and Improvement Committee Champions.

The Organization has deployed various strategies to realize the objectives of productivity mainstreaming including developing and implementing an action plan for new ways of working, developing and implementing KEBS Competency based training modules that equip staff with specific knowledge and skills to deliver on objectives.

KEBS has further developed and implemented a Procurement Plan and automated its processes to reduce waste and enhance turn around times.

It has also increased its revenue base by expanding scopes of work, automated its fleet management and at the same time developed and implemented the guidelines for Human Resource policy on self drive.

The organization has gone a step further by identifying products certified against Foreign Standards or Manufacturer Specifications and at the same time implemented the National Standardization Plan.

Ngari described productivity level as an indicator of an organization's competitiveness and said productivity culture and practices can enable an organization to produce quality goods and services at costs that meet the test of domestic and international markets.

The Managing Director further observed that highly productive organizations promote and maintain high standards and quality of life of their people.



**KEBS** Kenya Bureau of Standards  
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**World Metrology Day**  
Unleash the Power of Precision Measurement  
with KEBS Force, Torque, and Hardness Lab!  
#WorldMetrologyDay2024

# KEBS/MEDIA EDITORS FORUM PICTORIAL

The Kenya Bureau of Standards hosted senior editors to a media workshop in Naivasha between 29-30<sup>th</sup> April 2024 to sensitize them on the organization's mandate.

Close to 30 senior editors attended the engaging session that was led by KEBS senior management including the Managing Director Esther Ngari.



KEBS senior management and Editors pose for a group photo towards the end of the workshop.



KEBS Managing Director, Esther Ngari, in a panel discussion during day two of the workshop.



KEBS Metrology & Testing Director, Dr. Henry Rotich, presents on *ensuring precision, traceability & accuracy to meet quality requirements*, during the workshop



KEBS Human Resource and Administration Director, Chris Kibett, gives a vote of thanks at the end of the workshop.



KEBS Ag. Director, Standards Development & Trade, Zacharia Lukorito, makes a presentation on *unlocking quality and consistency, the imperative of developing standards*, during the workshop.



Some of the editors following the proceedings at the workshop. At least 30 senior editors attended the workshop.



KEBS Director, Quality Assurance & Inspection, Dr. Muriira Karau, makes a presentation on *the synergy of quality assurance and quality control for conformity assessment* at the workshop.



KEBS Ag. Communications Manager, Verah Akomo, demonstrates how to authenticate a product to editors during the workshop.



KEBS Ag. Chief Manager, Quality Assurance, John Kabue, responds to a question during the workshop.



KEBS Ag. Head of Standards Development & Trade, Zacheus Mwatha, tackles the topic, *setting the standards for excellence, are we up to the challenge?*, during the workshop.



The Executive Director of the Eastern Africa Grain Council, Gerald Masila, meets KEBS Managing Director, Esther Ngari, during the workshop. He later made a presentation on *how standards can fuel industry innovation*.



Kenya Bureau of  
Standards  
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Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have,  
and only you can determine how it will be spent.

**Carl Sandburg**



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# Crafting Legacies of Quality

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