



**REPORT OF THE REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON THE MUTUAL RECOGNITION
AGREEMENT FOR ENGINEERING PROFESSIONALS IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
HELD ON 2-3 SEPTEMBER 2014 AT THE BOMA HOTEL
NAIROBI KENYA**

1.0 Background

The Training workshop on the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for Engineering Professionals in the East African Community was organised by East African Business Council (EABC) in collaboration with International Trade Centre (ITC). The main objective of the workshop was to bring together stakeholders who are actively involved in the implementation of the MRA for engineering services in the EAC Partner States such as competent authorities, engineers, member of professional boards and EAC officials with aim of training them on the implementation of the agreement.

The specific objectives of the one and half day training were:

- Develop an understanding of MRA in general, their purposes and the benefits they can bring
- Develop an in-depth understanding of the Engineering Services MRA
- Address practical issues of implementations relevant to the engineering sector
- Develop a guide for use by competent authorities to assist in managing the organisational, infrastructure and co-operation challenges of implementing MRA
- Develop plans for communicating the MRA- how to raise awareness of the existing MRA
- Develop a set of tools that they can be used to provide information about the MRA to a variety of agencies

The training workshop attracted 25 trainees/participants from engineering professional services across 5 EAC Partner States. The trainees were from engineering regulatory bodies (competent authorities) private engineering practitioners; engineering professional associations, EAC Secretariat and EABC Secretariat.

The list of the participants is hereto attached as **Annex I**



2.0 Opening Session

2.1 Welcome Remarks by Vincent Oluoch, Chairman of East African Professional Services Platform

Mr. Vincent Oluoch, Chairman of the East African Professional Services Platform (EAPSP) welcomed all delegates to the training workshop. He reiterated that the training is yet another effort by East African Business Council (EABC) in collaboration with International Trade Centre (ITC) to sensitize the private sector and competent authorities in the EAC region on the opportunities and challenges present by the EAC integration process.

He underscored that the composition of the trainees from both public and private sector demonstrate the need of the stronger partnership between the two parties in implementing EAC decisions and agreement. He was of the view that fully implementation of the MRA for engineering services will enable professionals in the engineering sector to free supply their services in the EAC region.

He concluded by challenging the private which is main stakeholder in the engineering services to take a lead in the implementation of the Mutual Recognition Agreement for Engineering Professional Services in the EAC.

2.2 Mr. Aloysius Chebet, representative of EAC Secretariat

Mr. Aloysius Chebet Principal Officer with EAC Secretariat welcomed participants to the training. He said that EAC Secretariat as the focal point of all MRAs in the region is very delighted by EABC's efforts to sensitize engineers on how best to implement the MRA on engineering services.

He hinted that unlike other Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the EAC integration process is mainly focused in having its people more united. He said that the ultimate aim of MRA is to ensure that professionals in East Africa can move freely and provide services lawfully in all EAC Partner States.

2.3. Mr. Ben Czapnik representative of International Trade Centre (ITC)

Mr Ben Czapnik emphasized that ITC work is mainly to support business community by clarifies the business implications of multilateral trade agreements and assists business in understanding, shaping and benefiting from trade rules. He said that ITC is very happy to continue work with private sector in EAC region especially in the area of implementation



EAC agreements. He said that while last year ITC was able to support training business community on Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) in general this year the ITC is supporting training on specific MRAs which have already negotiated and signed by EAC professionals.

3.0 Presentations & Discussion Sessions

3.1 Session 1: MRAs in theory and the EAC Framework by Ms. Alison Hook, Consultant with ITC

Ms. Alison after introducing the Training Manual on MRA for Engineering Services in the EAC, in her presentation she covered various areas including definition of MRA, different types of MRAs; key components of MRA, reasons for developing MRAs, its benefits the link between MRAs and market access commitments, the EAC context, outstanding issues in Engineering MRA and the main elements of the Engineering MRA.

During the discussion it was observed that Rwanda had undergone massive legal and institutional framework which is necessary for it to sign the MRA as currently is not party to the agreement. It was reported that Rwanda has however written to EAC Secretariat about its accession to the agreement. EAC Secretariat reported that it expected to submit Rwanda's application to the relevant Sectoral Council in October this year.

It was urged that other EAC Partner States which are signatory to the Engineering MRA continue supporting Burundi in establishing the necessary legal and institutional framework for the engineering professional so that it can also become the signatory of the agreement.

The presentations are hereto attached as **Annex IIa and IIb**

3.1 Session 2: Practical Issues in Domestic Application by Ms. Alison Hook, Consultant with ITC

During this session the presenter concentrated on practical issues of implementation of MRA such as registration/eligibility obligation of both applicant and competent authority; disciplinary issues- procedure at local level and appeal level; Guidance in the MRA on implementation – rights and responsibilities of migrant engineers; and standard registration.

During the discussion session participants break into country groups and explore how they would deal with practical issues –obstacles- that might arise in implementation of the Engineering Services MRA. During this session participants also complete section 2 of the Handbook whereby they were able to address various registration issues such as where an inbound engineers requesting recognition under MRA; rights and responsibilities of EAC Migrant engineers under the MRA; standard registration process for applicants; work relationship with other competent authorities and fill in the useful contacts in the MRA Address book.

The presentation is hereto attached as **Annex III**



3.2 Session 3: Communicating the MRA by Ms. Alison Hook, Consultant with ITC

The presentation mainly focused on the key elements of a communications strategy, communication tools and press releases. The presentation concentrated on how competent authorities can best ensure that internal and external audiences have appropriate information they need about the MRA.

During discussion session participants break into country groups and addressed the following questions: identify the different audiences both internal and external who might need to know about some aspect of the MRA; what message or information should be targeted on each of identified group; how identified groups would most likely access messages about the MRA? And what mechanisms could each group adopt to improve communication with different target audiences.

At end of the session participants created a social forum through **LinkedIn** whereby all participants and east African engineers were invited to join and share various information regarding engineering services.

The presentation is hereto attached as **Annex IV**

3.3 Session 4: Services Integration under the Common Market Protocol by Ms. Angela Careen Becaty, Consultant with ITC

The presentation focused the following areas: EAC framework on liberalisation of services (Annex V of Common Market Protocol CMP); Linkage of Movement of Natural Person –Mode 4 – and schedule on movement of workers (Annex II of CMP); some challenges and implications of linking mode 4 and free movement of workers to Engineers and their MRA; and EAC efforts to delink mode 4 and free movement of workers and coming up with regulations for mode 4 and its annex.

The presentation is hereto attached as **Annex V**

3.4 Session 5: Practical Issues in Regional Cooperation by Ms. Alison Hook, Consultant with ITC

The presentation was mainly focusing on the following areas: How does MRA facilitate regional cooperation; Key areas for co-operation by competent authorities through the Co-ordination Committee; Regional Co-operation- Education and Training; Regional Co-operation –Data Sharing; Regional Co-operation – Problem Solving and Dispute Resolution; and Ideas from the European Union

After presentation, the participant break up into group discussion whereby they discussed on how can regional cooperation be further developed. During the discussion they addressed following questions What are the priorities?; What can realistically be done?; Who should undertake these tasks? and By when?

In discussing those questions it was unanimously agreed that coordination committee should be champion on the implementation of MRA by prioritising following issues: signing MRA for Rwanda



and Burundi; push for regulation on Mode 4-Movement of Natural Person; harmonisation of national laws; accreditation of engineering courses and harmonisation of CPD program.

Participants also recommended that in order to realistically develop cooperation further following tasks should be jointly done by competent authorities, coordination committee, EABC and ministries responsible for EAC affairs: supporting Burundi complete ; follow up with EAC Secretariat for signature of MRA by Rwanda; collaborate with EABC in following up on the regulation for Mode 4 and its annexes; sensitise all stakeholders starting with engineering professional bodies and competent authorities were task to share list of accredited university programs .

The presentation is hereto attached as [Annex VI](#)

4.0 Closing Session

4.1. Closing Remarks by Mr. Ben Czapnik representative of International Trade Centre (ITC)

In his closing remarks Mr. Ben, thanked all trainees for actively participated in the training. He also thanked the trainer of the training for job well done. He promised that ITC will complete the Hand book for Engineers and share it with stakeholders in the near future.

4.2 Closing Remarks by Mr. Michael Baingana representative of EABC Secretariat

Mr. Baingana on behalf of the Executive Director of EABC thanked ITC for been able to support EABC to organise the training for engineers. He was of the view that the specific trainings which had already been already conducted on Architecture Services and Engineering Services will encourage relevant stakeholders in implementing the respective MRAs.

He urged private sector to push for the fully implementation of the MRAs as well as other EAC agreements which are of benefits to businesses. He challenged the participants as the key stakeholders in the professional services to lobby for further liberalisation of services as well as the need to come up with regulations for Mode 4.

The workshop was officially closed at 12.30hrs.