



Digitalisation for East African Trade and Integration (DIGEAT)

Facilitating the cross-border mobility of professionals in the EAC Partner States



Our approach

As an innovative step to breaking down barriers hindering the cross-border mobility of professionals in East Africa, the East African Community (EAC) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) jointly developed the project Digitalisation for East African Trade and Integration (DIGEAT). In the pilot phase, DIGEAT focuses on the existing Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for engineers to establish a digital data exchange mechanism to facilitate the mutual recognition of practicing engineers in the region. The mechanism will later serve as the best practice for other regulated professions. The project covers the four Partner States that have signed the MRA of Engineers, while others will be consulted for future buy-in. DIGEAT's approach consists of two steps aiming to improve the regulatory framework and conditions for the mobility of engineers to offer their services in the EAC.

The first step focuses on improving digital services to strengthen the cross-border mobility of engineers. This involves conducting process analysis in the Partner States and document the results. This step aims to identify solutions to increase the effectiveness execution of the process of recognising professional qualifications. In this regard, DIGEAT will focus on the technical optimisation of national registers and the implementation of workshops on data exchange mechanisms and their legal frameworks and adaptations.

The second step focuses on the improvement of the regulatory framework. The process will kickstart with a multistakeholder forum consisting of representatives of key parties, such as competent authorities, representatives of the ministries of labour, engineering associations including associations of women engineers, and private sector representatives.

The challenge

The EAC Common Market, the second pillar of East African integration, came into force in 2010 after its adoption by Partner States. However, the lack of a common standardised approach to mutually recognise professional qualifications is still a challenge. As a result, free movement across borders is hindered. Professionals accredited in their home country must go through the same process in the destination country due to the lack of data exchange mechanism of national professional registries among EAC Partner States. In 2011, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania signed Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) to address the abovementioned issue. These MRAs cover four groups of professionals: accountants, architects, engineers and veterinarians. But until today, even though these MRAs were signed, other challenges arising from diverse national legal frameworks lead to continued discrimination of the specified professionals.

Project name	Digitalisation for East African Trade and Integration (DIGEAT)
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	East African Community
Lead executing agency	Secretariat of the East African Community
Duration	01.06.2022 – 31.12.2025

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The convening of the multistakeholder forum was commissioned by the 19th meeting of the EAC Sectoral Council on Education, Science and Technology, Culture and Sports (SCESTCS), held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from 17-22 June 2024. The multistakeholder forum will discuss issues of harmonisation of regulatory frameworks to facilitate cross-border mobility of engineers and report back to the SCESTCS for policy guidance.



Photo; Engineers Workshop

Projected Outcomes ...

- A digital regional data exchange mechanism to unlock mutual recognition of professions will be established.
- Engineers from four participating EAC Partner States will rate their access to improved digital tools that facilitate cross-border mobility of professions.
- Regulatory framework improvements to facilitate the cross-border mobility of engineers, will be submitted to the EAC Council of Ministers.
- Sub-processes in at least three Partner States for the approval of cross-border mobility of engineers in EAC Partner States will be digitalised.

Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

‘Digitalisation for East African Trade and Integration
(DIGEAT)’

EAC Secretariat, Former State Lodge
P.O. Box 13854
Phone +255 27 20 50 288
Fax +49 (0)00 123 456 789
eac-germancooperation@giz.de
www.giz.de; www.eacgermany.org

As at

July 2024

Photo credits

List of photographers in alphabetical order
EAC-GIZ: page 1 Mkandawire, Chimwemwe:
page 2

Text

DIGEAT

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of

Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

In cooperation with

