

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

While entering the third and final year of the project's term, we are working hard on the implementation of the jointly planned activities, as well as trying to include some additional demands from the partner side along with preparing for another project with a term of three years. The initial strategy meetings and concept discussions illustrate the high interest in continuing our successful work. Therefore, a future project will also include the support of the national quality infrastructure, close cooperation with regional testing laboratories as well as practical and demand-oriented support for SMEs. While preparing application documents,

several milestones need to be achieved during this year, like the evaluation of our project in September. During the evaluation, many partners will be met and the project's success factors as well as the lessons learnt will be discussed. We will update everyone on the evaluation as soon as we can.

In the meantime, I would like to invite you to read the two articles below that highlight the high-quality inputs provided by the project as well as some changes in behaviour observed during two company visits.



Daniel Böhme, PTB Project Coordinator

SUCCESSFUL ASSESSMENT:

PRACTICAL HANDS-ON TRAINING PREPARED ITI STAFF FOR INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

The Industrial Technology Institute (ITI) offers several proficiency tests each year for their customers in the field of microbiology in food, water and cement (mechanical and chemical testing).

ITI's goal is to gain accreditation according to ISO 17043 and – in the middle of 2017 – they formally applied for that accreditation through SLAB.

At the request of ITI and SLAB, training on ISO 17043 / ISO 13528 was organized by PTB. A total of 15 participants from SLAB, external assessors of SLAB and ITI staff joined the training course from 5 to 14 December 2017. All of them were very familiar with the management requirements of ISO 17043. The main focus of the training sessions was related to the statistical approach of the proficiency test results following ISO 13528. Mr. Richard Collyer provided a tailor-made three-day

training workshop for the assessors, followed by two days of training only for ITI. Afterwards, a two-day hands-on training workshop in the form of a mock audit was held by the trainer.



The participating assessors prepared a formal audit report including all the non-conformities they had detected. Mr. Collyer supervised the process and advised the assessors. In total, 14 non-conformities were observed, mostly related to the QM documentation.

In the following weeks, ITI corrected all the findings and delivered the corrective action report to SLAB, which accepted the mock assessment with the finalized corrective actions formally as a pre-assessment. SLAB is in the process of implementing their protocols to finally prepare for the actual audit.

WHAT FOOD HANDLING BUSINESSES IMPROVED AFTER PARTICIPATING IN PROJECT WORKSHOPS – TWO EXAMPLES

Between July and October 2017, approximately 380 food handling businesses attended our Awareness Raising Workshops on Quality Management for Food Hand-

Below: The owner of Lingan Cool Bar, Mr. Geethashagilan and his new checklists.



lers conducted by the project partners. One of them was the Titanic Restaurant in Nelliady Town, Jaffna District. The restaurant was established in 2010 with a staff of 3 family members. It has expanded since then and now has 12 workers. From the knowledge the owner gained in the workshop, he has introduced several

types of checklists in order to ensure that his employees comply with the relevant regulations. These checklists relate to personal hygiene and regularly keeping the cooking area, cooking utensils, the restaurant area and the outside environment clean, along with a high standard of store maintenance. As a result, public health inspectors have assigned him 83 marks in the food hygiene checklist compared to 75 prior to his attending the workshop.

The owner of the Lingan Cool Bar in Jaffna Town, who is an ice cream manufacturer and operator of several ice cream parlours, has equally introduced a number of changes. While formerly waitresses cleaned the tables and the floors in the various parlours, this task is now assigned to dedicated and well-paid cleaning employees in order to ensure top hygiene levels and a welcoming atmosphere for customers. The company has also reduced the usage of food colouring in order to minimize the risks to health.