

UNBS PUSHES FOR MORE INVESTMENT IN METROLOGY TO COMPETE GLOBALLY

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The Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) is actively tasking the Government to scale investment in metrology to enhance the accuracy and reliability of measurements across various sectors.

According to the UNBS executive director, Eng. James Kasigwa, Metrology plays a critical role in supporting Uganda's socio-economic transformation and industrialisation.

Kasigwa made the remarks during a public dialogue to commemorate World Metrology Day held at Hotel Africana last Thursday under the theme: *Building Trust in Policy Making, With the Goal of Creating Public Awareness*.

"UNBS is committed to strengthening its metrology sector through various initiatives, including the establishment of the National Metrology Institute, automation of metrology

Using inaccurately calibrated instruments leads to economic losses through the manufacture of sub-standard products which cannot boost customer loyalty.

services and training of metrologists. We also urge the Government to strengthen its Metrology systems and place accurate measurement at the centre of policy making, trade, industrialisation and consumer protection," Kasigwa said.

"UNBS aims to expand measurement services to under-served sectors and communities through mobile laboratories, as the bureau advocates for a modernised Legal Metrology Bill 2026 and Scientific and Industrial Metrology Bill 2026 to ensure accurate measurements and product compliance to

standards," he added.

CAUTION ON ACCURACY

While most sectors still do not enforce proper measurements, Kasigwa explained that Metrology directly affects operations of all sectors, among them agriculture, health, energy, construction, oil and gas, telecommunications and transport.

"If there is no fair trade because of malfunctioning scales, businesses may end up selling more than they are paid for, while consumers pay more for less value. This must be addressed," Kasigwa said.



Bagonza (second-right), Eng. Kasigwa (centre) with other officials during the to commemoration of World Metrology Day at Hotel Africana in Kampala, recently

The risk further stretches to the manufacturers in that, through using inaccurate instruments while producing goods, they will end up with sub-standard products that limit their potential to compete in regional and global markets.

Lynette Bagonza, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Co-operatives, described metrology as a key pillar for Uganda's economic transformation agenda.

"This year's theme is timely and important because it reminds us that accurate measurement is essential for credible decisions, fair markets and public confidence," Bagonza said.

She further noted that

reliable measurement systems are key to strengthening consumer protection, improving trust in regulatory systems and enhancing Uganda's competitiveness in international markets.

"The Government is currently reviewing metrology laws to align them with regional and international standards and support Uganda's industrial growth agenda. All laws have to be updated to ensure that every sector operates according to acceptable standards," she said.

INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE

Uganda's overall investment in research and development is estimated at 0.2% to 0.5% of its Gross Domestic Product,

an amount far below global leaders. Within this already limited funding, metrology receives only a tiny fraction. Most metrology functions in Uganda are handled by UNBS and these include: Legal metrology (weights and measures), calibration services and product quality assurance. As Uganda pushes forward with industrialisation under Vision 2040 and expands its participation in global trade, Metrology must be recognised as a strategic enabler as it improves export readiness and market access, supports local manufacturing and value addition, enhances public health and safety systems and strengthens the digital and innovation ecosystem.