



Quality Infrastructure and Good Governance

Good governance is often understood as the *good* or *responsible* management of the government or the state. Promoting good governance is a key element of Germany's development cooperation policy, with the goal being to make sure that the state acts responsibly as regards political power and public resources.

This implies that the state protects its citizens as well as the environment. Having a quality infrastructure in place ensures that traded goods and services fulfil the respective safety requirements and that neither public health nor the environment will be endangered.

Context

The quality infrastructure plays a decisive role for sustainable economic development. Standardization, metrology, accreditation and conformity assessment are all elements that make important contributions to the fields of environmental protection, natural resource management, and social responsibility. The institutions of the quality infrastructure work to ensure that the social and competition policies are implemented fairly, and they must be able to detect and quickly react to changes in society and the environment.

One of the functions of standards and technical regulations is to steer activities that are decisive for sustainable development, such as environmental and energy management, evaluating and measuring greenhouse gases, reducing emissions, etc. Institutions responsible for conformity assessment provide the required services (e.g., certification of environmental management systems); accreditation bodies test and validate the capabilities of certification, test and calibration bodies.

The metrology system supplies reference standards to ensure reliable measurements (e.g., for measuring energy, environmental pollution and emissions). The quality infrastructure operates according to a coherent architecture. Interaction between the individual elements is indispensable to ensure the system's effectiveness.

The quality infrastructure not only represents the backbone of modern and connected economies, it also imposes accountability with respect to compliance with a values-based code of conduct. Promoting the rule of law and setting up efficient public institutions are important approaches in terms of good governance.



Contribution

PTB's contributions are always geared to international good practices and are carried out with transparency, impartiality and objective expertise. Within the scope of development cooperation, PTB supports all quality-infrastructure-related disciplines, in some cases specifically targeted to individual fields, such as the agricultural and food industry, renewable energy sources and energy efficiency, sustainable development, environmental and climate monitoring, circular economy, and consumer protection, to name but a few.

Besides these targeted measures, the national, regional and continental structures are provided with specialist and process counselling. These counselling services are usually performed in connection with reform processes and the establishment of quality-related policies developed in concert between the state, the corporate economy and civil society. A national or continental quality policy contains essential elements of good governance.



The CE marking was created to guarantee safe products for end users within the scope of the free movement of goods within the European Community (EC). The

CE marking stands for the guarantee that all the requirements of the relevant EC directives (pertaining to aspects such as safety and health) are met.

The CE marking is based on complex procedures that draw on different elements of the quality infrastructure with the aim of protecting consumers and ensuring legal certainty.

Impacts

The rule of law and the predictability of legal decisions are of equal importance to both consumers and producers – in other words, to all citizens of any given country. Bodies of legislation and the associated supporting and monitoring institutions work to make the actions of public officials transparent and predictable.

The best-known element of the quality infrastructure are standards. Standards are based on the consolidated findings gained in the fields of science and technology and through experience. They represent the best solution in a given context. Standards contribute to ensuring consumer health and safety, protecting the environment, facilitating trade, guaranteeing the quality of products and services, promoting technology transfer, improving production and increasing efficiency. Standards are therefore regarded as high-profile tools with a good leverage effect. They are developed by all interested parties in a concerted process. They are transparent and issued by respected institutions.

For the purposes of good governance, however, technical regulations are far more important. Technical regulations are issued by ministries and authorities that are responsible for safeguarding citizens' health and safety, protecting property and the environment, and combatting fraud.

The public implicitly assumes that products and services will meet their expectations in terms of quality, efficiency, safety, economy, reliability, compatibility with other products and devices, and environmental friendliness. The proof (via conformity assessment) that products and services comply with the relevant standards and technical regulations as well as with the requirements laid down in purchase specifications is one of the essential impacts generated by the quality infrastructure.

Quality infrastructure can't fix everything,
but without it, you can't fix anything.

