



**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY PROF. PETER M. F.
MBITHI, DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR (A&F) DURING THE
REFRESHER TRAINING OF ISO INTERNAL QUALITY
AUDITORS AT THE GREAT RIFT VALLEY LODGE,
NAIVASHA ON JANUARY 10, 2010**

I take this opportunity to welcome you all to this session of ISO internal Quality Auditors' refresher training to be held from today up to Wednesday January 13, 2010. Like before, the refresher training will be conducted by staff from the Kenya Bureau of Standards.

This refresher course is the second such (refresher) course to be held for our trained qualified Internal Quality Auditors. It is necessary to undergo such refresher courses for this will enable the auditors address areas of weakness noted in the last internal audit exercise, especially where some auditors may not have fully adhered to audit guidelines and requirements.

The refresher training is also in preparation for the forthcoming internal Quality Audit already scheduled to be from January 25, 2010 to February 5, 2010 and surveillance audit from February 23, 2010.

As the University of Nairobi Management Representative, I must underscore the high regard that the ISO process is accorded by Management. In the last two years, activities in the University especially those relating to effective and efficient service delivery have been driven by ISO.

As you are aware, the ISO process is deeply involving and will keep us on our toes virtually all the time. This is due to the fact that we have undertaken to ensure that the Quality Management System's procedures are not just working but are regularly audited with follow-up surveillance by the certification body.

It is high time therefore, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, that Management integrated the whole ISO process in its planning and budgeting. There is need also to appoint qualified officers to manage the process, and also provide necessary office

space. My proposal is that the whole ISO function in the University be properly and adequately addressed when we are reviewing the University's Strategic Plan.

ISO 9000 AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

There are those among us who have enquired on the relationship between ISO Quality Management System and the associated functions, and Quality Assurance. This was especially after the university appointed Quality Assurance Officers. I will start with ISO.

ISO 9000

ISO 9000 is a **family** of standards for quality management systems. ISO 9000 is maintained by ISO, the *International Organization for Standardization* and is administered by

accreditation and certification bodies. The rules are updated as the requirements require change over time.

As you are aware, some of the requirements of ISO 9001:2008 (which is one of the standards of ISO 9000 family) include:-

- A set of procedures that cover all key process in the business.
- Monitoring processes to ensure they are effective.
- Keeping adequate records.
- Checking output for defects (i.e. auditing), with appropriate and corrective action where necessary.
- Regularly reviewing individual processes and the Quality System itself for effectiveness.
- Facilitating continual improvement.

An organization that has been independently audited and certified to be in conformance with ISO 9001 may publicly state that it is “ISO 9001:2008 certified”, like University of Nairobi does.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance refers to a program for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of the various aspects of a project, service or facility to ensure that standards of quality are being met.

Two key principles characterize quality assurance: “Fit for purpose” (the product should be suitable for the intended purpose) and “right first time” (mistakes should be eliminated). Quality Assurance includes regulation of the quality of raw materials, assemblies, products and components, services

related to production and management, production and inspection process.

It is important to realize that quality is determined by the intended users, clients and customers, and that it is not the same as “expensive”. Even goods/services with low prices can be considered quality items if they meet a market need.

Quality Assurance Vs. Quality Control

Quality control emphasizes testing of products to uncover defects, and reporting to the management who make up the decision to allow or deny the release, whereas quality assurance attempts to improve and stabilize production and associated processes, to avoid, or at least minimize, issues that led to the defects in the first place.

Certification to an ISO 9001 standard therefore does not by itself guarantee (assure) any quality of end product or services; rather, it certifies that standardized business processes are being applied.

This is the reason why even with ISO certification, we need Quality Assurance officers, for it is them who ensure that standards of quality as specified in a particular Quality Management Systems are being met.

The upshot of this is that developing a Quality Management System is one step; the next step is to have a Quality Assurance Office.

With those clarifying remarks, it is now my pleasure to invite the Vice-Chancellor Prof. George Magoha, to give the official opening remarks.

Thank you.