

SMEs now trained in standards

TANZANIA Bureau of Standards (TBS) has embarked on a programme to educate small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) on national standards and have access to international markets, an expert with the bureau said here yesterday.

The TBS Head of Engineering and Standards Department, Mr Charles Ekelege, told participants in a two-day seminar on Growing Business and Exports that the bureau was currently reaching out to SMEs through various exhibitions, particularly those conducted by the Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO) in the zones.

The National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP), known in

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its Kiswahili acronym as MKUKUTA, had earmarked about 30m/- to that effect, he said, stressing that standards were a common tradition language in the globalisation era.

"Every effort must be made to ensure companies produce more and better quality products complying with the set standards," he said, explaining that the role of standards had been recognised and accepted as fundamental tool for facilitating trade and many countries owed large part of their economic growth to trade development.

Mr Ekelege said standards drawn up at

international, regional and national levels were responsible for building trust and market opportunities, encouraging high quality production, improving producers' profitability and protecting consumers' interests.

All national, foreign and international standards, which the bureau collects, were at the disposal of the economic players and copies of the standards could be availed at the bureau at nominal fees, he said, adding that Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania were now harmonising their standards and that about 400 of the East African Community (EAC) standards were now in place in the region.