WTO TBT Committee
Thematic Session on
Conformity Assessment Procedures:
National Quality Infrastructure
Geneva
November 12-13, 2019
Guiding questions

▪ Question: What approaches exist for the development of NQI, including metrology, standardization, conformity assessment and accreditation?

▪ Question: How can Members encourage the use of NQI by their regulators, in order to avoid unnecessary barriers to trade?
QICA – how it all started

- In 2011, the countries of the region understood the need to have access to internationally recognized QI services to foster competitiveness, innovation, trade, and consumer safety.

- The key elements of a quality infrastructure identified were standards development, accreditation and metrology because of their complementary and mutually supportive nature.
What is the NQI?

- The NQI is the totality of the national institutions that provide the framework and services to advance the quality and safety of products and services offered in local and foreign markets.
Creation of QICA

- In 2014, the Quality Infrastructure Council of the Americas was formally created when the leaders of the three regional IQ organizations signed an MOU in Guatemala.

- COPANT - standardization
  IAAC - accreditation
  SIM - scientific and legal metrology
Regional organizations in the Americas

COPANT

IAAC

SIM
Main goals of QICA

- Strengthen the **NQI** in each country.
- Promote the importance of having QI services.
- Collaboration and information sharing among peers at the national level.
- Organize regional and national activities.
- Cross functional training.
Some of QICA activities

- Participated, as QICA, in seminars, workshops to raise awareness and visibility of the value of services provided by the NQI.
- Promoted cooperation and cooperation at the national level among the national members.
- Provided training with the participation of representatives of all three disciplines.
Reaching regulators

- In 2017, QICA initiated a program of outreach to regulators with a different approach.
- Rather than the usual large seminar, we have held small, informal gatherings with regulators, usually on the margins of the GA of members.
- Rather than long presentations, we held open discussions to understand the needs of our customers.
- We see this approach being successful by opening dialogue among regulators/stakeholders and their national QI institutions.
The Future

Now that the concept of QI is being appreciated and understood, QICA will:

- Continue to raise the awareness of the national quality infrastructure among all stakeholders.
- Design more effective mechanisms to determine the needs of stakeholders and demonstrate how the services of the QI can help them meet their goals.
Thank you for your attention!

Ileana M. Martinez
IAAC Representative to QICA
AdvisorsSAT@gmail.com