

# **GCLA DNA LABORATORY ACCREDITED AS FIRST DNA LABORATORY UNDER SADCAS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The history of the Government Chemist Laboratory Authority (GCLA) can be traced back to 1895 under the German Colonial Administration when it was established as Government Chemist Laboratory (GCL) mainly for researching tropical diseases, particularly Malaria and Tuberculosis (TB). In 2016, the Government Chemist Laboratory Authority was established by Act No. 8 of 2016.

GCLA is a member to the National Laboratories Association of Tanzania.(NLAT).

## **ROLES OF THE AUTHORITY**

The GCLA is a government scientific institution with significant responsibilities for conducting laboratory analyses of the safety and quality of foods, natural medicines (herbal medicines), chemicals, pesticides, water, industrial products, and samples from security agencies with criminal-related cases. In addition, the Authority is responsible for providing expert witnesses/opinions in all Courts in the country and professional advice based on laboratory analyses performed for the government, the private sector and individuals inside and outside the country. The GCLA has successfully obtained accreditation in four laboratories: the Food, the Environment, Lake Zone and the Human DNA laboratories.

## **ACHIEVEMENT OF DNA LABORATORY ACCREDITATION**

The achievement of DNA laboratory accreditation marks the first DNA laboratory to be accredited by SADCAS in the region. The DNA laboratory accreditation increases the validity of the information of the scientific analysis nationally and internationally. The DNA Laboratory deals with all matters pertaining to human DNA technology. These include (i) sampling and receipt of biological samples, preliminary screening/examination of samples, DNA testing using molecular techniques, reporting writing and court testimony. Forensic biology and DNA testing at the DNA laboratory are at the heart of GCLA's laboratory services because GCLA is the referral laboratory in the country. It was GCLA's strategic milestone to ensure the laboratory was accredited under ISO 17025:2017 since human DNA testing is a service that requires extreme care to provide accurate, consistent, and reliable results as they determine the fate of an individual.