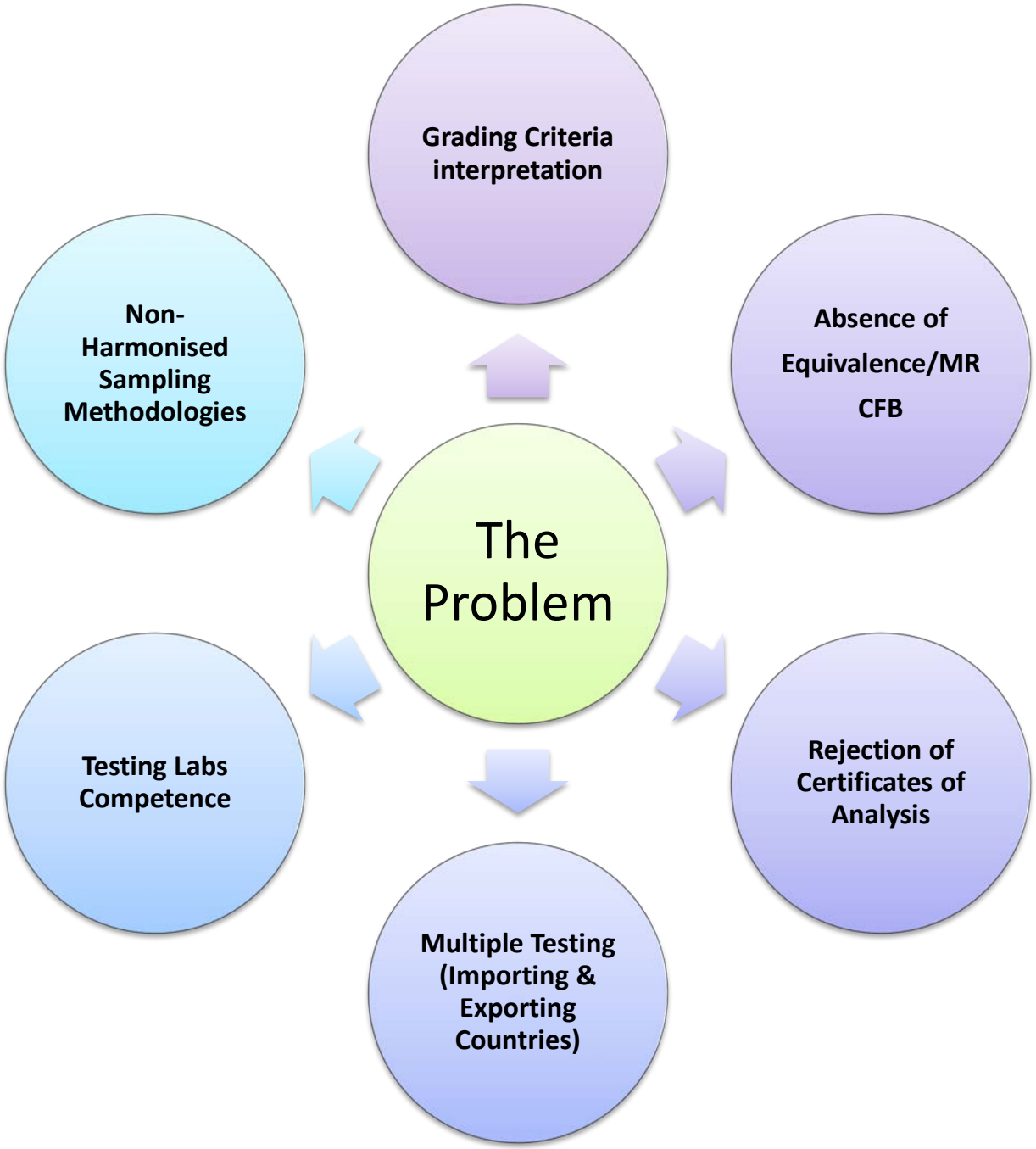
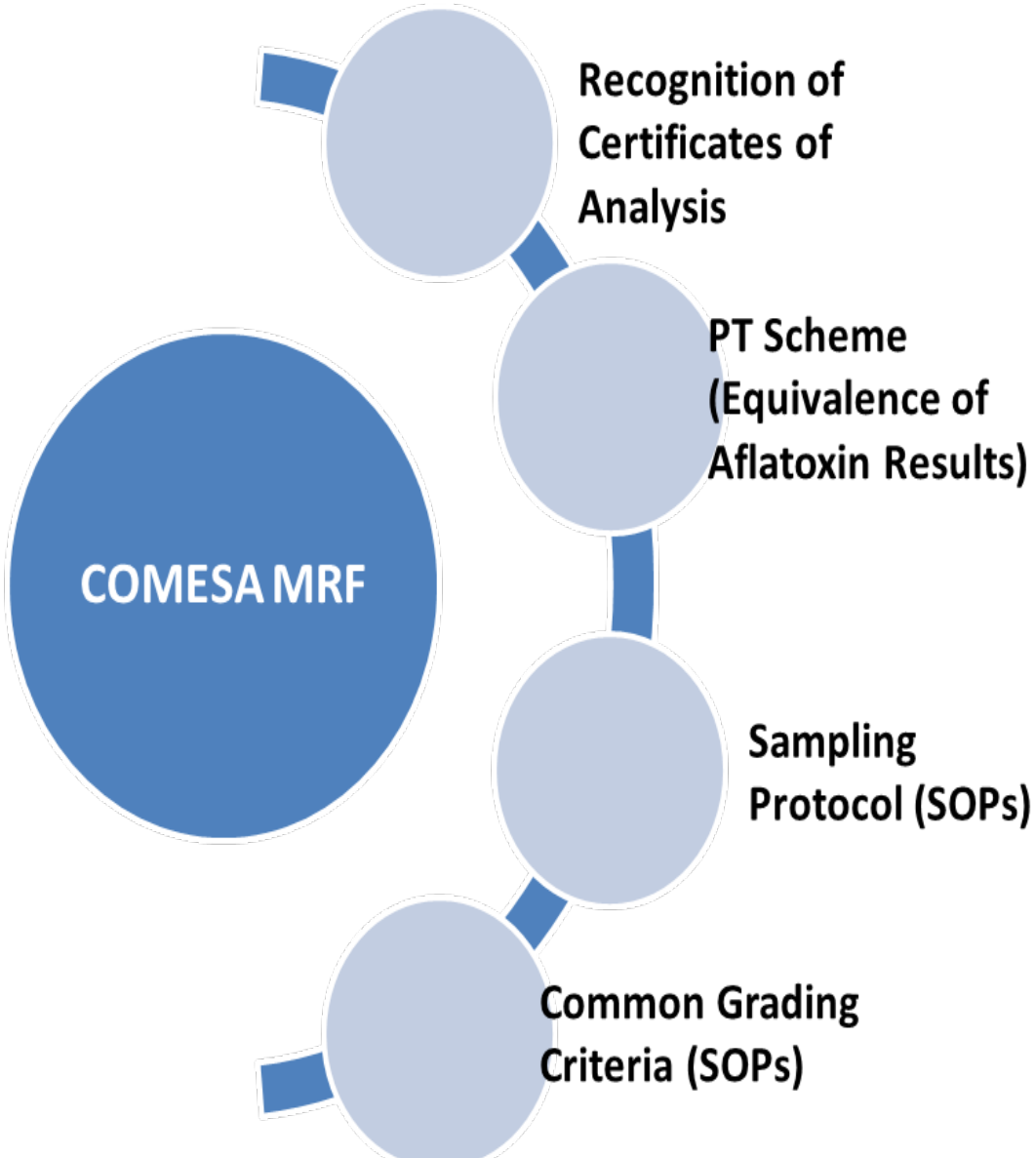
Applying Equivalence to Facilitate Trade in the COMESA Free Trade Area


Grading Criteria interpretation
Absence of Equivalence/MR CFB
Rejection of Certificates of Analysis
Multiple Testing (Importing & Exporting Countries)
Testing Labs Competence
Non-Harmonised Sampling Methodologies
The Problem

The Solution: Equivalence & Mutual Recog.



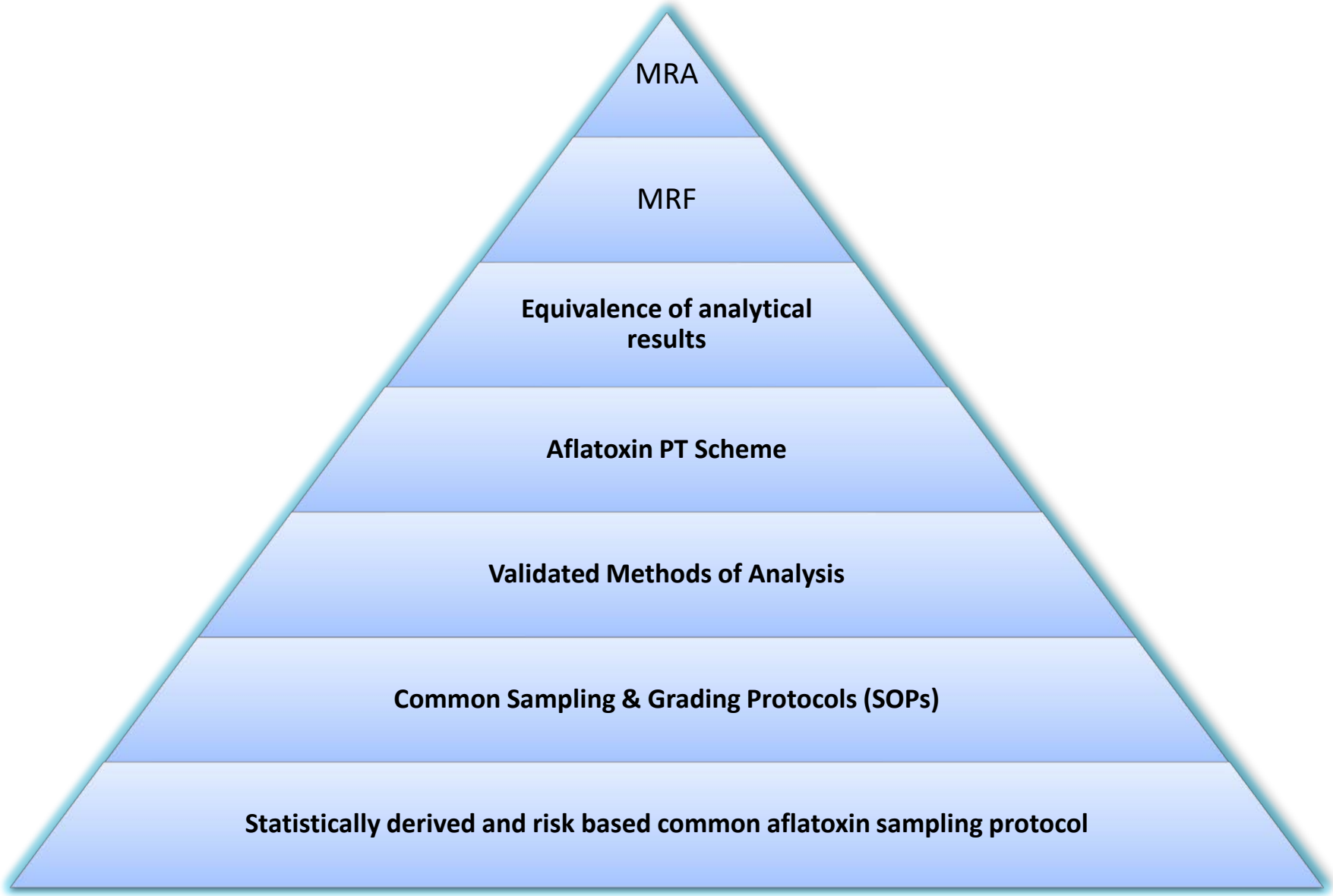
COMESA MRF

Facilitate MS to ***trade freely*** in grain commodities among them even though differences in regulatory systems may continue to exist

MS accept each other's conformity assessment and grading systems in order to avoid subjecting maize products to ***unnecessary & overlapping conformity assessment & grading procedures*** in both the exporting and importing country.

Underpins and forms the basis upon which participating MS will ***elaborate and implement*** the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for trade in maize and maize products

MRF Building Blocks/Technical Components



MRF Key Benefits

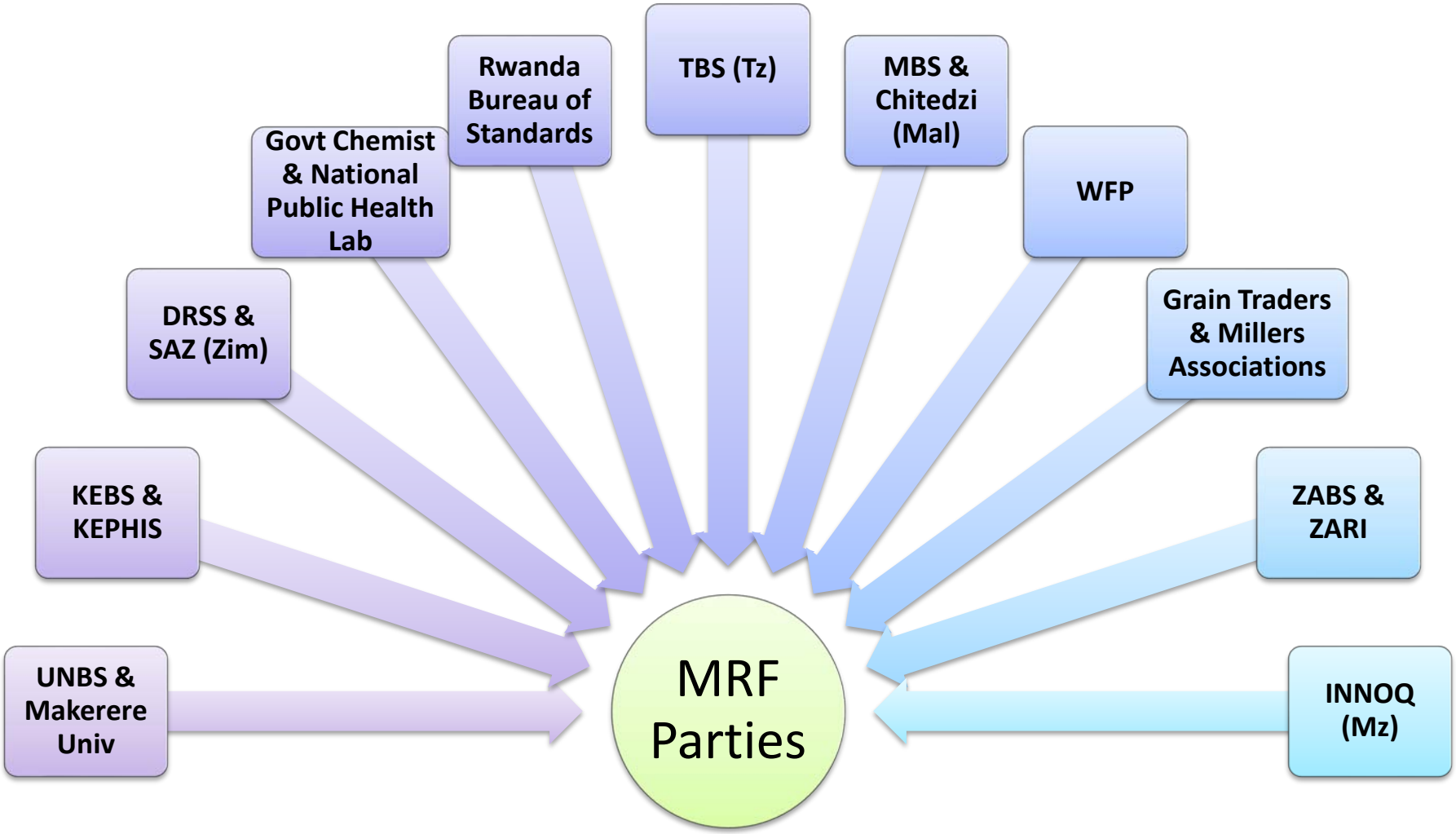
Lower costs to business and improved competitiveness, reflecting lower compliance costs from harmonized procedures, conformity assessment regimes and grading standards/criteria

Wider choice of maize and maize products for consumers

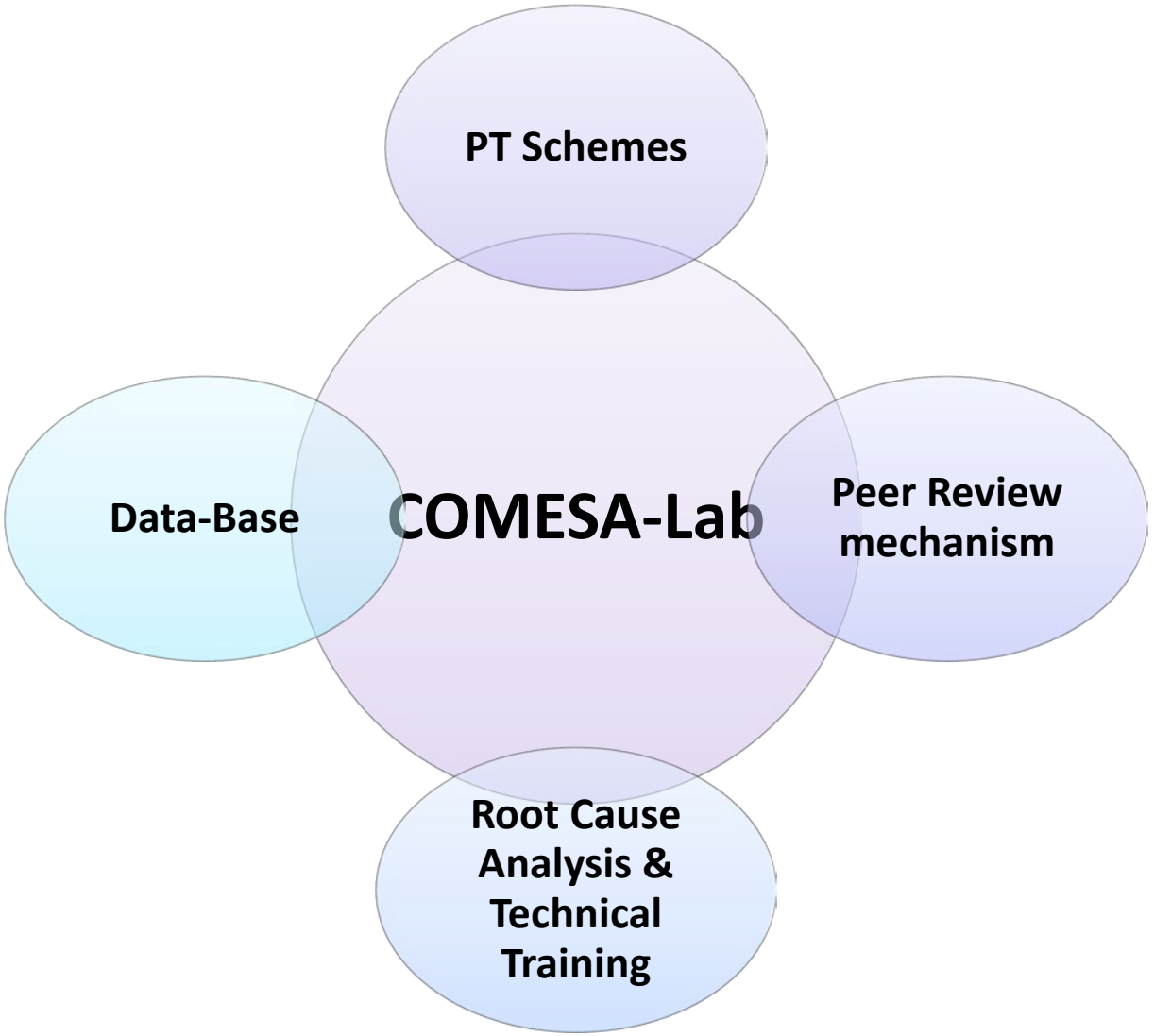
Enhanced cooperation between regulatory authorities in the region

Opportunities to scale up use of mutual recognition and equivalence agreements within the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) and the larger Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)

MRF Stakeholders



COMESA-Lab PT Schemes



Capacity Building

- Because of varied technical capacities within public and private entities across COMESA, implementation of the C-MRF requires continuous technical support and training on the various key components, specifically on: (i) implementation of the sampling SOPs; (ii) participation in the aflatoxin proficiency testing scheme and support to close the identified capacity gaps; (iii) implementation of the common grading criteria.
- The C-MRF document is as a resource mobilization tool to facilitate each party in the mobilization of resources.

Dispute Resolution Mechanism

- Differences between Parties under this Agreement concerning the C-MRF, to be settled amicably between the Parties concerned.
- Failure to reach settlement:  reference to C-MRF Technical Committee (Clause 7).

➢ Can be further escalated to COMESA Dispute Resolution Mechanism