

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*



RWANDA FDA
Rwanda Food and Drugs Authority

**GUIDANCE ON PROCEDURAL ASPECTS FOR
APPLICATIONS FOR MARKETING AUTHORIZATION OF
HUMAN PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS**

AUGUST, 2024

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Pharmaceutical Products*

FOREWORD

Rwanda Food and Drugs Authority (Rwanda FDA) is a regulatory body established by the Law N° 003/2018 of 09/02/2018. One of the functions of Rwanda FDA is to regulate matters related to quality, safety and efficacy of human pharmaceutical products in order to protect public health by increasing access and availability of essential pharmaceutical products.

Considering the provisions of the technical regulations governing the registration of human pharmaceutical products, and the Guidelines for registration of human pharmaceutical products, the authority has to issue the *Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human Pharmaceutical Products*

Rwanda FDA adopted the Common Technical Document (CTD) Guidelines on Submission of Documentation for registration of human pharmaceutical products. These guidelines have been developed to provide guidance to the applicants and the Authority in managing applications for registration of human pharmaceutical products. These guidelines were developed in reference to the Compendium of Medicines Evaluation and Registration for pharmaceutical products Regulation Harmonization in the East African Community, World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Conference on Harmonization of Technical Requirements for Registration of Medicines for Human Use (ICH) and other available literature.

The Authority acknowledges all the efforts of key stakeholders who participated in the development and validation of these guidelines.

Prof. Emile BIENVENU
Director General

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

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*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	2
DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT HISTORY	3
DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY.....	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	4
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	5
1. INTRODUCTION	6
2. SCOPE.....	6
3. TYPES OF APPLICATIONS	6
4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR HUMAN PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS REGISTRATION.....	6
5. PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS (MANAGEMENT OF APPLICATIONS)	7
6. MAINTENANCE OF MARKETING AUTHORIZATION	9
7. CANCELLATION OR SUSPENSION OF MARKETING AUTHORIZATION.....	10
8. APPEALS AGAINST RWANDA FDA’S DECISIONS ON HUMAN PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS MARKETING AUTHORIZATION.....	11
9. VARIATIONS IN PARTICULARS OF REGISTERED PRODUCTS.....	11
9.1 Extension Applications.....	11
9.2 Duplicate Licensing.....	12
ENDORSEMENT OF THE GUIDELINES	15

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BMR	Batch Manufacturing Record
EMA	European Medicines Agency
GCP	Good Clinical Practice
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
ICH	International Conference on Harmonization of Technical Requirements for Registration of Human Medicines Use
MA	Marketing Authorization
MAH	Marketing Authorization Holder
MER	Medicines Evaluation and Registration
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
TWG	Technical Working Group
WHO	World Health Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

As a preliminary step, Rwanda FDA issues marketing authorization of all human pharmaceutical products prior to their use in Rwanda. The objective of human pharmaceutical products marketing authorization is to ensure that human pharmaceutical products marketed in Rwanda are safe, efficacious and of good quality and are manufactured in facilities that complies with the requirements prescribed in Rwanda FDA Good Manufacturing Practice guidelines. All local manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors and importers of pharmaceutical products must be licensed before they can conduct their businesses.

The guideline covers the steps that are followed from the submission of a dossier to the final outcome, the timeframe and procedure for competent authorities to amend, where necessary the conditions of marketing authorization of a particular product.

2. SCOPE

The guideline is applicable for all types of application submitted to the Rwanda FDA that include new applications of registered human pharmaceutical products.

3. TYPES OF APPLICATIONS

For purposes of submission to the Rwanda FDA, applications are classified into new application, application for variation of a registered pharmaceutical product and renewal application.

A new application is an application for registration of a pharmaceutical product that is intended to be placed on the market for the first time. A new application may only be made by the applicant and he shall be the person who signs the application form.

A new application for registration shall include submission of relevant documentation as provided in the main guidelines for registration of human pharmaceutical products in use.

4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR HUMAN PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS REGISTRATION

- 4.1 All applications and supporting documents shall be in English. All submitted documents which are in any language other than English must be accompanied by a certified or notarized English translation.
- 4.2 The responsibility of applying for product marketing authorization rests with the company responsible for the introduction of the product into the Rwanda market, i.e.: The Marketing Authorization Holder (MAH).

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

4.3 Applications must be duly completed and supported by all of the required documents i.e. Module I to Module V in accordance with Rwanda FDA Common Technical Document (CTD) for registration of pharmaceutical products. The submitted application will be screened for completeness within 30 working days. Dossiers which are incomplete will not be accepted for evaluation.

4.4 A dossier is a file that contains detailed scientific information on the chemistry, formulation, manufacturing, quality control and non-clinical and clinical studies that demonstrates quality, safety and efficacy of active pharmaceutical ingredient(s) and the corresponding finished pharmaceutical product.

Different sections of the dossier shall be distinctly marked and page numbered in the style: page x of y and have a table of contents indicating the sections and page numbers. Where information is required in the application forms its location shall be cross referenced in dossier. Information for each section shall be printed on both sides of an A-4 paper which will be arranged sequentially on a 1.00 mm or more diameter stainless spring and clamped with a stainless steel binder of not less than 1.0 mm thick in an A4 expandable spring file. The file shall be of cardboard or paper material of not less than 600gsm.

4.5 The entire application shall be submitted electronically to Rwanda FDA.

4.6 Data shall be presented on A4 and 80g/m² paper with readily readable letters of at least 12 font sizes. Every page shall be numbered sequentially. Extension sheets, tables, diagrams and other supporting documents shall as far as possible be of the same size, well annotated, numbered and appropriately cross-referenced.

4.7 Application must be accompanied by two samples of the finished product as packaged for sale. Rwanda FDA may request for additional samples when need arises.

4.8 The payment of registration fee as prescribed in the regulation Governing Tariff/Fees and charges on Services Rendered by Rwanda Food and Drugs Authority

5. PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS (MANAGEMENT OF APPLICATIONS)

5.1 Upon acceptance of an application, an acknowledgement for the receipt of the application will be issued within and a reference number will be generated. The reference number shown in this acknowledgement should be used in all subsequent correspondences relating to the application.

5.2 Rwanda FDA shall complete screening of the dossier for completeness within 30 working days from receiving such application.

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

- 5.3 In the event that the dossier is incomplete, it will be rejected. The applicant will be notified of the rejection.
- 5.4 In case of a positive outcome during screening, Rwanda FDA shall notify the MAH in writing that the screening has been successfully completed and place the dossier in the evaluation queue.
- 5.5 Review of application for marketing authorization of a product will follow the appropriate evaluation queue. Priority review may be granted where the product is intended for treatment of a serious or life-threatening disease. Evaluation of priority product shall be carried out within 3 months from receiving the application.
- 5.6 Evaluation of the application shall be carried out within 12 months from receiving the application.
- 5.7 Abridged evaluation will be carried out to human pharmaceutical products that are registered in any of the agreed benchmark regulatory agencies.
- 5.8 During product evaluation, Rwanda FDA may request for further information and additional supporting documents from the applicant. This shall be considered as the first round of evaluation.
- 5.9 Applicant should make available such information or documentation requested after the first round of evaluation within 90 calendar days from the date of receipt of the request.
- 5.10 Applicant should make available any information or documentation requested after subsequent rounds of evaluation within 90 calendar days from the date of receipt of the request.
- 5.11 If no response is received from applicant after the timelines described in 5.9 and 5.10 above, the clock stops and the application will be cancelled if no formal request for extension of deadline has been made to Rwanda FDA. A new application will have to be submitted if the MAH wishes to pursue marketing authorization of the product.
- 5.12 Evaluation of the additional information shall be carried out within 3 months from receiving such information. This shall be considered as the second round of evaluation and subsequent submission of additional information shall be considered as third round of evaluation and so forth.
- 5.13 Evaluation of one application shall not exceed four rounds of evaluation with the exception of administrative queries.

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

- 5.14 The MAH will be informed of the decision of Rwanda FDA in writing as to whether the application has been approved or rejected.
- 5.15 A registration number will be given when a product is registered. The registration number is specific for the product registered as specified in the registration documents. A certificate of registration shall be issued for the registered product.
- 5.16 For a product to be issued MA, it must be manufactured in a GMP compliant facility and studies conducted following GCP

6. MAINTENANCE OF MARKETING AUTHORIZATION

- 6.1 The conditions for marketing authorization of pharmaceutical products are as follows: -
 - 6.1.1 The product registered with the marketing authorization number as stated in the marketing authorization certificate shall have the name, composition, characteristics, specifications and origin as specified in the marketing authorization documents.
 - 6.1.2 The holder of the marketing authorization certificate must supply such documents, items, samples, particulars or information as Rwanda FDA may require in relation to the registered product.
 - 6.1.3 The labels for the registered product must comply with all of the labelling requirements as specified by the guidelines for labelling.
 - 6.1.4 The registered product must only be indicated for use as approved by Rwanda FDA.
 - 6.1.5 The holder of the marketing authorization certificate must inform Rwanda FDA of any adverse reactions or complaints on quality, safety and efficacy of the registered product immediately after he/she becomes aware of such adverse reactions or complaints.
 - 6.1.6 The holder of the registration certificate must notify in writing to Rwanda FDA of any decision to withdraw the marketing authorization of the product and shall state the reasons for the decision.
- 6.2 MAH shall be required to pay retention fees as specified in regulation N^o DFAR/HMDAR/TRG/001 establishing tariffs, fees and charges.
- 6.3. The retention of the registered product on the register shall be applied for every year and the application shall be submitted two months before. The applicant should submit the following documents:
 - 1. Application letter

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

2. Payment proof of prescribed fees
 3. Annual safety reports
- 6.4 The registration of a product shall be valid for 5 years or such period as specified in the registration certificate (unless sooner suspended or cancelled by Rwanda FDA).
- 6.5 The renewal of product registration should be done not later than three months **(90 days)** prior to expiry.

Applications for renewal of registration shall be made by submitting the following:

- 6.5.1 Duly filled in application form for registration.
- 6.5.2 Batch Manufacturing Record (BMR) of a real batch manufactured within at most six months before the submission of the application.
- 6.5.3 Details of all changes during validity of the registration.
- 6.5.4 Two samples of the finished product as packaged for sale.
- 6.5.5 A site master file that describes the manufacturing facilities.
- 6.5.6 Non-refundable evaluation fee for registration of human pharmaceutical products and GMP and GCP inspection fees for facilities not inspected and approved by Rwanda FDA within a period specified by Rwanda FDA.

7. CANCELLATION OR SUSPENSION OF MARKETING AUTHORIZATION

- 7.1 Rwanda FDA may cancel or suspend the marketing authorization of any product if there are deficiencies in safety, quality or efficacy of the product or failure to comply with the marketing authorization requirements or due to changes in national policies.
- 7.2 Such products may not be imported and marketed in the country. The holder of the registration certificate shall immediately surrender to Rwanda FDA the marketing authorization certificate upon cancellation or suspension of marketing authorization of the product.
- 7.3 Rwanda FDA shall notify all Partner States in the region on the decision taken by Rwanda FDA.

8. APPEALS AGAINST RWANDA FDA'S DECISIONS ON HUMAN PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS MARKETING AUTHORIZATION

- 8.1 For products that have been suspended and cancelled marketing authorization by Rwanda FDA, MAH may make a written appeal to Rwanda FDA to review its decision.
- 8.2 All notice of appeals must be made within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the Rwanda FDA's notification.
- 8.3 MAH shall make appeal by giving grounds for review for each reason given for the rejection of his product. The grounds for the request shall be based on the information that was submitted in the product dossier. Any additional or new information that was not earlier submitted will not be accepted. Rwanda FDA may review or uphold its earlier decision.

9. VARIATIONS IN PARTICULARS OF REGISTERED PRODUCTS

All variations to a registered product shall be made according to requirements stipulated in the Rwanda FDA Application Guidelines for Variation of Registered Human Pharmaceutical Products.

9.1 Extension Applications

- 9.1.1 An extension application is an application that is a modification of an already registered human pharmaceutical products. The modification shall be such that it does not fulfil criteria for minor or major variations but is similar enough to the original product in terms of quality, safety and efficacy.
- 9.1.2 A marketing authorization holder may apply for extension of marketing authorization of an already registered product as an extension application. Such an application should be submitted as a new application however an abridged evaluation will be carried out.
- 9.1.3 Extension applications shall be applicable in the following situations:
- (a) Changes or addition of a pharmaceutical form from multi-dose to single-dose of the finished product or vice versa.
 - (b) Change or addition of strength of the finished product.
 - i. Change or addition of a route of administration of the finished product for products of the same pharmaceutical form.
 - ii. Inclusion of medical devices that result in change of strength, pharmaceutical form or route of administration of the finished product.

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

9.1.4 An extension application shall be accompanied by the following:

- (a) A dully filled in applicant form with the extension application box clearly marked (ticked).
- (b) The applicable registration fees for applications for registration of new applications.
- (c) A full dossier submitted in accordance to the requirements stipulated in the guidelines for submission of documentation for registration of human pharmaceutical products.
- (d) A cover letter declaring the following:
 - i. The name and registration number of the relevant product from which the extension is applied.
 - ii. The marketing authorization holder for both products shall remain the same.
- (e) An overview of the nature of the extension being made.
- (f) Supporting data related to the proposed extension.

9.1.5 Rwanda FDA final decision on whether an application meets the criteria for extension applications will lie with Rwanda FDA. In case of any doubt the MAH may contact Rwanda FDA before filling for an extension application.

9.2 Duplicate Licensing

9.2.1 Rwanda FDA shall authorize the same applicant to submit more than one application for a finished product when there are objective verifiable reasons on public health grounds regarding the availability of finished products to health-care professionals and/or patients, or for co-marketing reasons and/or for Export purposes.

9.2.2 Additionally, the holder of a marketing authorization can grant the use of product information to another marketing authorization holder, whereby the original marketing authorization holder acts as a contract manufacturer.

9.2.3 The assessment on whether the conditions of a duplicate application are met shall be done on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the facts of each application. The overall objectives being preservation of public health.

9.2.4 To assess whether an application refers to a particular finished product that has already been granted a marketing authorization, and consequently, whose application for a marketing authorization qualifies for a duplicate license, the composition in active substance(s) and the pharmaceutical form shall be considered. Thus, any finished product

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

with the same qualitative and quantitative composition in active pharmaceutical ingredient (i.e. the same strength) and the same pharmaceutical form are to be considered as the same relevant product.

9.2.5 A duplicate product shall be identical in all marketing authorization requirements with the exception of brand name and any other specific requirements on labelling. Additionally, any variation made to the original marketing authorization should be applied for the duplicate license.

9.2.6 Conditions for a Duplicate Marketing Authorization are outlined hereafter:

- (a) That the duplicate application shall be submitted by the same applicant that submitted and/or holds the marketing authorization/application that is being duplicated (hereafter “original marketing authorization/application”).
- (b) That the original marketing authorization is valid. This step does not apply in case of duplicate applications that are submitted in parallel with the original marketing authorization application (i.e. in cases where the application for the original marketing authorization is still pending).
- (c) In cases where the duplicate marketing authorization is submitted on the basis of an informed consent application, there should be a letter of consent from the marketing authorization holder that owns the dossier that is referred to.
- (d) The original marketing authorizations to which the duplicate application relates has to be valid at the time of the submission of the duplicate application.

9.2.7 The applicant for a duplicate license may fall under the following categories:

- (a) Applicant is the same entity that applied for the original marketing authorization.
- (b) Applicant belongs to the same group of companies as the applicant of the original marketing authorization.
- (c) Applicant is an independent entity that has agreed to placing on the market the product with the applicant of the original marketing authorization (evidence of license agreement or other agreement that can be identified are required).
- (d) Applicant is an independent entity whereby there are license agreements with the marketing authorization holder of the product in respect of which the duplicate is asked but not for the placing on the market of that product.

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

(e) Applicant is an independent entity that has got an agreement to purchase and/or use data from the company that has applied for a marketing authorization for the product for the first time but there is not an agreement regarding the placing on the market of the product.

9.2.8 All documents in accordance to the guidelines on submission of documentation for new applications should be submitted however an abridged evaluation shall be applied. In addition, the following shall be submitted when making a duplicate license application: -

(a) A dully filled in application form (Annex II) with the duplicate license box clearly marked (ticked).

(b) A cover letter detailing the following:

- i. The name of the marketing authorization holder relevant for the duplicate application.
- ii. The name of the product relevant for the duplicate application.
- iii. The proposed brand name for the duplicate license.
- iv. The proposed marketing authorization holder for the duplicate license.

(c) The applicable registration fees for applications for registration of new applications.

(d) For co-marketing reasons, the evidence co-marketing (contract or letter of agreement between the companies).

(e) For duplicates asked on grounds of the existence of patents protecting certain therapeutic indications or pharmaceutical forms, the applicant shall provide a commitment undertaking to extend the therapeutic indication(s)/ pharmaceutical form(s) of the duplicate marketing authorization as soon as the patent restrictions no longer exist. Alternatively, the applicant may also commit to withdraw the marketing authorization with restricted indications/pharmaceutical forms after the relevant patents are no longer in force. The SmPC shall be harmonized. The commitment letter shall be submitted alongside the Marketing Authorization Application Dossier.

(f) Letter of consent in the case of an "informed consent application".

*Guidance on Procedural Aspects for Applications for Marketing Authorization of Human
Pharmaceutical Products*

ENDORSEMENT OF THE GUIDELINES

	Prepared by	Checked by		Approved by
Title	Division Manager for Human Medicines and Medical devices Registration	Head of Drugs Department	FOR Division Manager for Quality Management System	Director General
Names	Dr. Steven NKUSI	Dr. Vedaste HABYALIMANA	Mr. NDAYAMBAJE Théogène	Prof. Emile BIENVENU
Signature				
Date				