## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Standards Body (NSB)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Inspectorate Board (NIB)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda Accreditation Services (RAS)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. ISSUE</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CONTEXT</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Vision</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ANALYSIS</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Rationale</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. POLICY</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1. Standardization</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1. General principles</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2. Mandate of National Standards Body (NSB)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2. Metrology</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1. General principles</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2. Mandate of National Metrology Institute (NMI)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.3. Mandate of Legal Metrology Department (LMD)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3. Conformity Assessment</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.1. General principles</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.2. Inspection</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.3. Testing</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.4. Certification</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.5. Accreditation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.6. Technical Regulations</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.7. Education and training</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. IMPACT ON BUSINESS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 1: ................................................................. ................................................................. ................................................................. 22

ROLE OF KEY PLAYERS IN THE NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE ........ 22

Government.............................................................................................................................................. 22
The private sector.......................................................................................................................................... 22
Non Government Organizations (NGOs) ....................................................................................................... 23
International Development Agencies............................................................................................................. 23

ANNEX 2: DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ................................................................. 25

ANNEX 3: LIST OF INSPECTION ACTIVITIES FOR NIB .................................................... 27
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASTM: American Society for Testing and Materials
BIPM: Bureau International de Poids et Mesures
COMESA: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
EAAB: East African Accreditation Board
EAC: East African Community
EDPRS: Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
IAF: International Accreditation Forum
IEC: International Electrotechnical Commission
ILAC: International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
IPPC: International Plant Protection Convention
IMEKO: International Measurement Confederation
ISO: International Organization for Standardization
NGO: Non Governmental Organization
NQI: National Quality Infrastructure
NTRF: National Technical Regulation Framework
OIE: Organisation Internationale des Epizooties
OIML: Organisation Internationale de Métrologie Légale
NIB: National Inspectorate Board
NSB: National Standards Body
NQTL: National Quality Testing Laboratories
NMI: National Metrology Institute
LMD: Legal Metrology Department
NMO: National Metrology Organization
RAS: Rwanda Accreditation Services
RADA: Rwanda Agriculture Development Authority
RARDA: Rwanda Animal Resources Development Authority
RHODA: Rwanda Horticulture Development Authority
RDB: Rwanda Development Board
RURA: Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RBS</td>
<td>Rwanda Bureau of Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>Sanitary and PhytoSanitary (Measures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQMT</td>
<td>Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBT</td>
<td>Technical Barriers to Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In line with Rwanda’s goal of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) institutions, this policy seeks to have a radical transformation of structures and management systems of these institutions. The outcome of this restructuring exercise is the creation and realignment of the existing institutions into the following bodies:

National Standards Body (NSB)

The National Standards Body is comprised of the National Standards Institute (NSI), National Quality Testing Laboratories (NQTL) and the National Certification Services (NCS). It is responsible for the development of national standards as well as conformity assessment (testing and certification) services. The National Standards Body also issues SPS certificates on behalf of MINAGRI.

It also houses the National Metrology Organization (NMO) comprising the National Metrology Institute (NMI) and the Legal Metrology Department (LMD). The NMI provides calibration and maintenance services while the LMD provides verification (testing) and type approval of measuring equipment.

The NMO will be separated later when capacities and means have been fully developed, the NSB remaining with the NSI, NQRL and NCS only. Inspection activities currently under the NSB will be transferred to the National Inspectorate Board to avoid conflict of interest. The NSB shall report to the Ministry responsible for Trade and Industry.

National Inspectorate Board (NIB)

The National Inspectorate Board is an autonomous Body responsible for carrying out inspections to protect the public and the environment from dangerous, counterfeited and low quality products and services: it provides professional and independent inspection services in all sectors throughout the supply chain to meet specific needs of Regulators, Manufacturers, Suppliers of goods and services and any other interested party. Inspectors are guided by standards and regulations in force as declared mandatory by the relevant Ministries. A standard declared mandatory becomes a technical regulation. Sanctions related to non conformity as identified by the inspector (s) are enforced by the relevant regulatory bodies. The NIB shall be under the Ministry responsible for Trade.

Rwanda Accreditation Services (RAS)

RAS is responsible for accreditation of private and public Conformity Assessment Services Providers (inspection and certification bodies, testing/verification and calibration laboratories). It is planned that Accreditation Services initially be established as a Focal Point under the Ministry
responsible for trade, later becoming an autonomous Body as and when the market (scope of work) demands so.

Technical regulations will continue to be issued by relevant regulators, basing on published standards they mean to be mandatory, among other things. A National Technical Regulation Framework is to be developed and implemented that would ensure that technical regulation development follows a common guideline, meets international and EAC obligations and that the division of work between regulatory authorities and the NQI is optimally coordinated.

The Ministry responsible for trade is responsible for the implementation of the Rwanda Quality policy. The implementation cost for five years is estimated at Rwandan Francs Thirty Billion (Rwf 30,000,000,000)
1. ISSUE

In the present environment of increased globalization, empirical evidence suggests that standardization and its conformity assessment companions have a very important role to play in technological progress, health, safety, environmental protection, productivity and trade promotion.

In order to compete successfully in developed markets, Rwanda’s industry faces a formidable array of challenges. Over and above the logistics, management and financial issues, one of the major stumbling blocks is the attainment of demonstrable product and/or service quality demanded by authorities, as well as the major players in the markets. Hence, in order to have unhindered access to foreign markets, Rwanda’s industry needs to have an internationally recognized and supportive National Quality Infrastructure that can provide the required independent and reliable evidence of product and service compliance.

Recognizing that Rwanda’s National Quality Infrastructure and its Technical Regulation Regime are not yet developed to their full potential, and that they are not fully harmonized with those of its major trading partners, it follows that these need to be addressed in a holistic manner, as they cut across many Ministries, agencies and stakeholders within, regionally and internationally. Hence, as Rwanda re-engineers and upgrades the National Quality Infrastructure, its Technical Regulation Framework (TRF), and reorganizing their relationship, it must decide how to cater for technological and quality needs, minimize environmental, health and safety risks while avoiding inefficiency, conflict of interest, unnecessary and costly barriers to trade through development of a sound Quality Policy.

Specifically, this Quality Policy aims at addressing the following constraints and issues:

- Conflicting or inexistence of legislations creating overlaps across Agencies and Ministries which leads to lengthy and costly transaction times, role conflict, inefficiency and waste of resources;

- Lack of coordination and synergies between NQI institutions;

- Lack of respect of procedures for developing national standards at the expense of Rwanda’s International credibility;

- Low capacity and under skilled human and material resources in public and private institutions;

- Lack of and/or lag in timely sharing of technical information, with respect to technical regulations and standards, among institutions involved in NQI implementation;

- Non-alignment of some of the NQI and Technical Regulation administration and enforcement procedures with international best practices;

- Inexistence of a national accreditation mechanism;
• Lack of harmonization of enforcement of quality control mechanisms within the region;
• Lack of strong consumer associations to influence the quality of Rwanda products and services;
• Lack of quality management systems in public and private institutions;
• Lack of a quality culture within the Rwandan Private Sector which tends to focus on quantity rather than quality;
• Lack of concerted institutional framework for funds mobilization for strengthening of NQI.

2. CONTEXT

Rwanda has set ambitious targets for growth and poverty reduction in its vision 2020. Within this framework, the Government is engaged in liberalization of her economy and has adopted measures for market oriented economy supported by increase in industrial and agricultural productivity, value addition and export promotion among others.

Despite this commitment, the Rwanda industrial sector is still at its infant stage and the country relies mainly on export of raw agricultural commodities. On the other hand, trends towards globalization of trade and regulatory requirements in the developed markets entail tighter technical regulations and quality requirements.

To effectively compete in these markets and to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the multilateral trading system offered by the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Rwanda has not only to strengthen its supply capacity but it has also to develop a reliable quality and regulatory infrastructure in line with international best practices.

In addition, for Rwanda to participate successfully in regional and international trade, it is essential that the lacking building blocks of the quality infrastructure (e.g. accreditation) be put in place and existing ones strengthened and upgraded to facilitate access of Rwandan goods and services to external markets.

The development of the said regulatory and quality infrastructure will lead to better access to regional and international markets, improved regulatory framework and consequently better public health, consumer and environmental protection and ultimately economic growth, poverty reduction and better quality of life.
3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

3.1. Vision

Have an operational, internationally recognized National Quality Infrastructure that will guarantee efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of goods and services, better public health, safety, environmental and consumer protection that will lead to sustainable economic growth as result of well coordinated government and private institutions.

3.2. OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the Quality Policy is to ensure that goods and services emanating from or traded in Rwanda are designed, manufactured and supplied in a manner that matches the needs, expectations and requirements of the purchasers and consumers as well as those of the regulatory authorities in the local and in the export markets.

In order to reach the above stated objectives; the following strategic objectives need to be attained:

- To have a harmonized system for standards development based on demonstrated needs of the Rwandan Authorities, Industry and the Society;
- To have a recognized National Metrology System that ensures the provision of reliable and accurate measurements;
- To improve synergies and coordination between the implementing institutions;
- To improve and maintain recognized Conformity Assessment services;
- Establish and maintain a recognized National Accreditation System
- Strengthen and harmonize the enforcement of national quality control systems
- Harmonize the National Quality Infrastructure with the region and international systems
- Have competent and skilled human resource personnel;
- Develop a quality culture for the application of quality management systems in public and private institutions
- To have a distinct institutional framework that allows the mobilization of all available resources for strengthening NQI.

4. ANALYSIS

4.1. Rationale

The development of the Quality Policy and its implementation will strengthen the NQI, ensuring quality as well as safety of products and services on the market. Quality products and services inherently instil customer confidence, become competitive and promote export leading sustainable economic growth;
The Quality Policy will provide for a distinct institutional framework that allows the mobilization of all available resources for enhancement of standardization, product and services quality, safety and health initiatives, and the effective convergence, integration and complementarity of efforts of a wide range of public, private and civil society institutions;

The Quality Policy will ensure that Rwanda develops the technical and cultural environment for the application of quality management systems in public and private service providers and manufacturing enterprises, and the development of an infrastructure that would help sustain the quality focus;

The Quality Policy will facilitate and support cooperation and communication amongst all stakeholder groups, especially those from the NQI and NTRF, within a participatory framework to develop implementation mechanisms and to agree on an effective and efficient division of labour; and

The application of the Quality Policy will help Rwanda prepare for its full integration into the EAC Common Market, as well as its transition into the global economy, in order to improve its competitiveness and hence to enhance the quality of life of all its people.

5. POLICY

This Policy is structured around the key elements of the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI). This section defines the institutions that fall under the NQI.

Elements of the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI)

At the international and regional levels, three separate but interdependent and interlinked main “pillars” of knowledge are essential for developing a NQI that enables sustainable development that can lead to full participation in international trade and satisfy the technical requirements of the multilateral trading system. These are Standardization (capabilities to develop, publish and disseminate standards to interested parties), Metrology (access to physical, chemical, biological standards of measurements and provision of calibration and legal metrology services), Conformity Assessment (inspection, testing and certification) and a mechanism to ensure that all conformity assessment service providers are competent.

In this policy, the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) encompasses all the public and private institutions required to establish and implement the above pillars in order to provide demonstrable and acceptable evidence that products or services meet requirements, whether required by the market place or by Government authorities.

The institutions envisaged under this policy shall be organised as follows:

5.1. Standardization
5.1.1. General principles

Standards are developed by a transparent, open and consensus based process involving all interested parties and are approved by a recognized body, generally the National Standards body (NSB). Upon publication, the public is notified of the existence of the standards to serve as a basis for development of technical regulations, product and process design and quality control.

Standardization follows a hierarchy of standards: international, regional and national standards. An NSB may choose between developing an indigenous standard or adopt a regional or international standard as a national standard.

Trade associations, Consortia and Public institutions may develop standards and apply them to their own activities. However, these standards can only become national standards after they are approved and published by the NSB.

With regard to national standards as the initial building block for most quality related activities, the Government ensures that the standards development process depends on achieving consensus amongst stakeholders, and is implemented by or on behalf of the National Bureau of Standards within a participatory and transparent environment. It encourages the adoption of relevant international and regional standards based on demonstrated needs of Rwandan authorities, industry and the society, and ensures that all standards are periodically reviewed to ensure continuous conformity with technological developments, market trends and international requirements.

NSB as the focal point in developing, adoption and harmonization of standards of all areas provides the framework required to develop and publish national standards and other normative documents at national level. NSB participates in the process of developing regional and international standards where this is of relevance for Rwanda, and coordinates these activities.

The development and publication of Rwanda Standards complies with international best practices and requirements as defined in the WTO TBT Agreement and ISO/IEC Directives and the EAC Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (SQMT) Act.

To develop National Standards, NSB establishes the relevant technical committees, which develops the standards in conformity with approved guidelines and rules. Ministries, Government agencies, academic and scientific institutions commit themselves to participate in these committees, along with individual or organized industry, traders, suppliers and civil society (NGOS, agriculture and tourism, and other specialized associations).

The development of national standards is fully facilitated by the Government in order to provide access to necessary technical reference documents for Producers, Importers, Consumers, Regulators and other stakeholders.
NSB acts as the National Enquiry Point on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) matters. It is also responsible for dissemination of standards related information to the public through tailored short trainings, workshops, seminars, industrial visits and availing public access to the information and documentation centre.

The National Standards are approved published and housed by the National Standards Body but are made available to Ministries and regulatory agencies for development of technical regulations and guidelines.

5.1.2. Mandate of National Standards Body (NSB)

- Developing and publishing national standards
- Monitoring and contributing to international and regional standardization activities on behalf of stakeholders and adopt them at the national level
- Conducting training in standardization and conformity assessment
- Assisting regulators in the development of technical regulations
- Providing information on standards and related conformity assessment activities
- Raising awareness and promoting the importance of standards and quality infrastructure as tools to improve market access, technology transfer and sustainable development
- Complying with WTO TBT agreement through hosting the TBT National Enquiry Point

5.2. Metrology

5.2.1. General principles

The second building block of the Quality Infrastructure is the availability of the National Metrology System that ensures the provision of reliable and accurate measurements. The legal metrology services of the National Metrology system guarantee protection of consumers and environment through. A functional Metrology System ensures quality production, fair trade and protection of the health and welfare of citizens.

Metrology can be subdivided into:

Scientific Metrology dealing primarily with Research on definition and realization of measurement standards, Industrial Metrology dealing with the satisfactory safe keeping and dissemination of measurement units to Industry and Laboratories and Legal Metrology responsible for enforcement of trade, safety and health measurement regulations, and type approval of measurement instruments. It also embraces the regulation of pre-packages for retail goods.
In order to establish a common metrological framework, the Government enhances and upgrades the metrology capability by strengthening the existing National Metrology Infrastructure under the Rwanda Bureau Standards, towards the creation of a National Metrology Institute (NMI) and a Legal Metrology Department (LMD) so that it can provide reliable and accurate measurement service within Rwanda, whilst at the same time linking up internationally with the Calibration and Measurement Capability (CMC) recognition system administrated by the Bureau International de Poids et Mesures (BIPM).

As a transition, the two entities should remain in NSB as separate departments with the future aim of establishing the National Metrology Organization (NMO) with autonomous status which acts as the custodian of the national measurements standards and be responsible for the scientific, industrial and legal metrology in the country. However as the private sector grows, it may take up calibration activities and NMO remains with the role of ensuring that the private calibration laboratories are traceable to national standards of measurements and carrying out scientific metrology.

The NMI is responsible for scientific and industrial metrology while the LMD has the responsibility to type approve, calibrate and verify measurement equipment falling within the scope of its regulation, and to ensure protection of consumers by controlling pre-packaging operations of products, all of which to be based on international standards such as the recommendations of the Organization International de Métrologie Légale (OIML).

Calibration services may be provided by the public metrology laboratories or private calibration laboratories provided that their calibration equipment is traceably calibrated to the national measurement standards kept by the Metrology Organization or another regional or international metrology laboratory with known and recognized measurements capabilities but this is done in case there are no national capability to calibrate the private calibration laboratories.

### 5.2.2. Mandate of National Metrology Institute (NMI)

The responsibilities of the NMI will be to:

- Establish and maintain national measurement standards demonstrably traceable to international metrology standards for the relevant metrology quantity
- Ensure that a national calibration system is established and maintained to disseminate metrology standards to industry, the authorities and the society
- Represent the country at the international Metrology Associations e.g. BIPM;
- Represent the country in regional metrology Associations such as AFRIMET and EAC
- Carry out research in the area of scientific metrology for realization of units and reference materials in the field of chemical metrology

### 5.2.3. Mandate of Legal Metrology Department (LMD)
• Control the usage of measuring equipment in trade, law enforcement, health services and environmental protection;
• Control over pre-packaging operations;
• Manage regional and international relationships in the area of legal metrology
• Type approve equipment used in trade, health and safety

5.3. Conformity Assessment

5.3.1. General principles

Conformity Assessment involves sampling, inspection, testing and certification as a means of giving assurance that the product, process, system, body or person does conform to the requirements of standard(s) or technical regulation(s).

The overall objective of conformity assessment services is to demonstrate the quality of products and services independently from the manufacturer or the supplier. Hence, conformity assessment service providers shall pay attention to national needs, be transparent, recognized, and non-discriminatory and avoid unnecessary barriers to trade.

Conformity assessment service providers may be private or public and may be used both for commercial and regulatory purposes.

5.3.2. Inspection

General Principles

According to international best practices, a responsible authority could employ its own inspectors or an independent recognized inspection body could be subcontracted to carry out the work in the implementation of standards and technical regulations and concentrate on issuing guidelines and monitoring activities.

Where the responsible authority uses its own inspectors, there should be clear separation of responsibilities of the inspection personnel from other personnel employed in the other functions to avoid conflict of interest. Whether they are public or private, inspection bodies should be independent, impartial and have integrity in all their activities.

There is in addition, a system of Pre-Import Verification for Conformity (PIVoC) by an independent recognized inspection body before their shipment to minimize the entry into importing countries of poor quality products. This is an anti-dumping strategy.

Designated public institutions with a clear regulatory framework also carry out inspections.

In this regard, for efficient management of resources used currently in inspections, removal of functional overlaps, simplified planning, cost effectiveness, monitoring and evaluation and fast-
tracking Doing Business, a National Inspectorate Board (NIB) is created under the Ministry responsible for trade to provide professional and independent inspection services in all sectors throughout the supply chain to meet specific needs of Regulators, Manufacturers, Suppliers of goods and services and any other interested party.

- Quality control of products supplied to the market for their compliance with the obligatory safety and marking requirements set in legal acts, technical regulations and mandatory standards,
- Monitoring of quality of products and services through import inspection, industrial inspections market surveillance activities and metrology verification activities,
- Initiating proposals for technical regulations and mandatory standards and submit them to the relevant authorities for approval
- Providing technical advice to regulators and other relevant authorities on matters related to quality of products and services
- Participating in national and international events associated with inspections
- Establishing cooperation with regional and international institutions with similar attributes

5.3.3. Testing

General principles

Testing is an important technical tool used in conformity assessment for consumer protection, environmental conservation, trade facilitation and public or private procurement processes. Mutual recognition and/or acceptance of test results is of paramount importance in inter and intra-trade and reduction of technical barriers to trade.

The testing functions currently done by an array of Testing laboratories scattered in different institutions are put under one management to form a National Quality Testing Laboratories (NQTL) in order to optimize resources, minimize duplication of duties, improve coordination of Rwanda quality control and improve traceability. The NQTL are managed by the National Standards Body. The NQTL provide testing services to the public and private sector to prove compliance of products and services to technical regulations, standards or other market or customer requirements. NQTL shall seek accreditation to facilitate international recognition of Rwanda’s testing services.

Mandate of the National Quality Testing Laboratories

- Carry out testing of products (foods, medicines, materials, chemicals, pesticides, etc) as a way of quality assurance.
- Carry out proficiency testing with peers nationally, regionally and internationally
- Collaboration with harmonization of activities with other regional and international partner

5.3.4. Certification
**General principles**

Certification assists consumers to make informed decisions about the products and services and enable suppliers to achieve market place acceptance. This is done to achieve customer satisfaction and confidence, the protection of the environment and facilitation of trade.

Three types of certification exist:

- Product certification;
- System certification and
- Personnel certification.

The Certification Unit under RBS is upgraded to form a National Certification Services (NCS) which provides product and system certification services other than those falling under Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) certification which are handled by the Ministry responsible for Agriculture and Animal Resources Agencies as the designated competent authority.

Whilst enhancing the capacity of the public institutions, the Government creates a policy environment that will not hinder, but facilitate the development of private conformity assessment service providers, and the Government utilizes their services in public procurement and technical regulation provided that they can demonstrate their competence through accreditation. As a measure to ensure that the state is provided with quality products and services, the Government utilizes national, regional and international standards to the full extent possible in state purchases, and demands independent proof of compliance of delivered products and services with relevant standards through an appropriate use of conformity assessment activities. Establishing an incentive, i.e. preferential treatment, for enterprises that distinguish themselves in the process of quality improvement through product and/or system certification is part of the overall approach.

For promotion of trade, all products to be exported shall be certified against relevant Standards. In addition, all products made in Rwanda, shall meet minimum standard requirements and shall have Rwanda Standardization Mark to be delivered by the National Certification Services before they are placed on the market.

**Mandate of a National Certification Services**

The responsibilities for the certification body under the NSB will be:

- Providing product and systems certifications based on the international best practices for market requirements and standards
- Public awareness on services rendered by certification body
- Assessments for compliance of certifications provided
5.3.5. Accreditation

**General principles**

Accreditation is one of the critical quality infrastructure elements that facilitate trade. Accreditation of conformity assessment bodies provides the acceptance of test results, inspection reports and certificates that accompany products and services traded across borders.

In order to facilitate independent attestation of the technical capabilities of the conformity assessment service providers to the satisfaction of local, foreign markets and authorities, the Government sets up a National Accreditation Focal Point in the Ministry responsible for trade. The National Accreditation Focal Point is responsible for facilitating accreditation of conformity assessment service providers such as inspection bodies, testing laboratories, calibration laboratories and certification bodies by International recognized accreditation bodies while setting in place a legal framework for Rwanda Accreditation Services and undertaking awareness programmes for potential clients for accreditation. In addition, in order to harmonize its services with the region, the Rwanda Accreditation Focal Point represents the country in East African Accreditation Board and other regional and international accreditation fora.

When deemed necessary, the Government shall transform the National Accreditation Focal Point into a fully fledged, independent Accreditation Body that is recognized internationally; Rwanda Accreditation Service (RAS).

All accreditation activities in Rwanda shall be handled by a single, national accreditation body (RAS) that works in accordance with international standards pursues international recognition and signs mutual recognition arrangements on behalf of Rwanda with relevant international accreditation organizations. No other national body shall be established. RAS shall establish the relevant technical committees to handle all required sectors to be accredited, such as test laboratories, calibration laboratories, bodies for the certification of products and management systems, inspection bodies and bodies carrying out training and certification of quality related personnel.

**Mandate of the Accreditation Body (Rwanda Accreditation Service (RAS))**

- Provide accreditation services to conformity assessment bodies and personnel
- Monitor regional and international activities relevant to its own activities
- Represent the country in the relevant regional and international accreditation bodies
- Enter into agreements on mutual recognition with regional and international accreditation bodies.

5.3.6. Technical Regulations
**General principles**

The WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreements recognize the right of each member country to establish, adopt and implement technical regulations (including mandatory/compulsory standards) for legitimate objectives such as the protection of human health and safety, animal and plant life or health, the environment and avoiding deceptive practices provided that their notification is made to other WTO member countries to avoid technical barriers to trade.

The Government fosters the development, implementation and maintenance of technical regulations for legitimate reasons across all relevant authorities (Ministries or agencies responsible for agriculture, construction, electricity, environment, health, industry and trade, telecommunication and ICT, tourism, transport, petroleum and mineral resources, etc) that are based on a National Technical Regulation Framework that fully meets the requirements of the WTO TBT Agreement, the EAC Trade Protocol, utilizes the quality infrastructure and also acceptable to the main trading partners, in order to access markets and increase the competitiveness of Rwandan products.

Regulators carry out the government mandate to oversee the implementation and administration of technical regulations and are given the appropriate regulatory powers to enforce sanctions for non-compliance.

In line with WTO TBT and SPS agreements as well as obligations of EAC SQMT Act, technical regulations are based wherever possible on relevant national, regional or international standards (or parts thereof containing the technical requirements) to gain acceptance and their easy implementation. In that regard, coordination with National Standards Body is of paramount importance.

The Government ensures the provision of public facilities, for inspections and testing of products and services falling within the scope of technical regulations. It furthermore ensures that harmful practices against consumers are minimized by ensuring that all producers, distributors and suppliers of goods and services abide by the relevant technical regulations, and monitor harmful practices such as cheating, false or fraudulent activities and take appropriate actions against them. Regulated entities shall endeavour to prove their compliance to requirements of technical regulations.

In order to ensure the proper implementation of technical regulations, the Government establishes and maintains an adequate infrastructure to develop, implement and monitor consumer protection policies, and to ensure that relevant measures are implemented for the benefit of all population sectors, particularly in the rural areas.
Products manufactured in EAC Partner States that fall within the scope of technical regulations and mandatory standards and for which conformity assessment procedures have been followed in the EAC Partner State and have quality marks, may be granted free cross-border movement without further testing and certification as provided for in the EAC SQMT Act, 2006.

5.3.7. **Education and training**

Government and private academic institutions shall take the necessary steps to ensure that various stakeholders have the opportunity to obtain the knowledge and the skills they need to cope with the economy triggered by globalization challenges. Moreover, they should establish appropriate programmes on different education levels including specialized adult training programmes, with the aim to improve the quality culture, and to develop the specialized knowledge and expertise required for implementing the Quality Policy. They shall also take measures to develop and implement training and registration programmes for auditors and consultants in quality and environmental management systems, health and safety in the workplace, and other relevant certification activities.

6. **IMPACT ON BUSINESS**

In order to speed up the quality inspection of goods and services entering the County, Pre-verification for conformity (PIVoC) is carried out by designated competent bodies in order to prevent entry into Rwanda of substandard and counterfeit products that pose high risk to the safety and health of the consumers as well as the environment. The services of the National Inspectorate Board, the Customs Body, Immigration and Emigration, and other relevant bodies are integrated in a Single Window in order to offer quality inspection services to the public.

There is creation of an adequate information network that involves all the various quality infrastructure institutions to guarantee the success and to speed up quality related activities. This information network is respectively spearheaded by National Bureau of Standards as the appointed Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Enquiry Point, the Ministry of Agriculture as the appointed Sanitary and Phyto Sanitary (SPS) Measures Enquiry Point and Ministry of Health in Food Safety related matters, but which must be extended to include all the relevant stakeholders and Ministry of Trade and Industry as the Notification Authority for World Trade Organization regulations.
7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

To facilitate the implementation of the Quality Policy, the Government of Rwanda will review the existing legal framework as a priority measure, to benchmark it against international best practices, and to ensure that it complies with the international and regional obligations. Enabling bills for the new institutions to be created by this policy will need to be developed. These bills will include the following:

1. The revision of the RBS laws;
2. The law creating National Inspectorate Board
3. The law creating the National Quality Reference Laboratories
4. The Metrology Bill
5. The law or an appropriate legal act (such as a Prime Minister’s Decree) establishing the Rwanda Accreditation Services.
6. The Liability law
7. Food safety law.

The respective ministerial orders needed shall be made when the new institutions come into force.
ANNEX 1:

ROLE OF KEY PLAYERS IN THE NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The roles and responsibilities of the Government, Private Sector, NGOs and International Development Partners and other key players should be influenced by the following policy guidelines:

Government

The Government, through its various institutions, has an enabling coordination and education role in the implementation of the Quality Policy. Its tasks include the following:

a) to establish and maintain the basic elements of the public quality infrastructure and the creation of mechanisms to allow for the protection of the consumer and for full private sector participation;
b) create an environment that would be conducive for the establishment and proper functioning of an effective and efficient National Quality Infrastructure and Technical Regulation Framework,
c) profound restructuring of the technical regulation regime and quality infrastructure, and where necessary create new structures,
d) Full review of concomitant legislations in order to align them with International Best Practices, and with International obligations and Regional requirements such as the EAC Standardisation, Quality Assurance Metrology, Testing (SQMT) Act, 2006;
e) to minimize market failures through review and consolidation of the legislation that defines the responsibilities of producers and suppliers to ensure that goods and services meet contractual and legal provisions so as to encourage fair and effective competition in order to provide consumers with the greatest range of products and
f) To create a quality culture in the public and private domains by promoting quality awareness campaigns, providing for the integrated approach to quality management in the public sector, promoting and supporting the creation of mechanisms or institutions that contribute to the awareness raising and knowledge dissemination regarding quality to the society.

The private sector

In order to achieve the maximum benefit from the Quality Infrastructure, the private sector, should:

a) Improve the quality of its products and services, hasten the introduction of international practices in the field of quality and so contribute to the competitiveness of Rwandan products and services;
b) Participate actively in representative structures and technical committees dealing with standardization, accreditation and metrology or related activities;

c) Participate in and promote national quality events, including national quality awards and the like;

d) Participate in and promote quality dissemination activities, such as congresses, seminars and publication of information in journals, magazines and other suitable means for communications;

e) Develop human resources, by training the people needed for improving the quality of products and services;

f) Invest in the development of quality infrastructure, benefiting from the improved market opportunities that result from the implementation of the Quality Policy; and

g) Participate in financing activities that support quality by paying industry levy fee as shall be determined by the government in consultation with private sector.

Non Government Organizations (NGOs)

The successful implementation of the Quality Policy will require the active involvement of all of society, in particular NGOs, cooperatives, associations for the promotion of quality and excellence, chambers of industry, trade and commerce, and the media in order to realize proclaimed objectives.

Therefore, within the implementation process of the Quality Policy, NGOs are encouraged to take the following initiatives in coordination with relevant partners:

a) Promote and participate in the quality education and training activities;

b) Participate in the dissemination of quality related information;

c) Implement activities that promote the improvement of quality and the environment;

d) Promote the representation of relevant bodies in the technical committees in the field of standardization, metrology, accreditation and quality; and actively participate in development of standards

e) Propose suggestions on Quality Policy improvement and better ways to implement the Quality Policy and;

f) Finance standardization activities

The media is encouraged to become actively involved in the dissemination of information related to standardization and quality and the improvement of productivity.

International Development Agencies

All organizations in Rwanda of the international development agencies shall ensure that development and capacity building programmes include the NQI and shall; –
a) Support the implementation of the Quality Policy;
b) Coordinate support of other partners for the execution of priority programmes related to standardization;
c) Support the transfer of quality related technology to the country;
d) Support the transfer of knowledge and information which allow for the development of adequate quality and technology infrastructure;
e) Support Rwanda’s participation in relevant international organizations; and
f) Provide training for national specialists and technicians who would ease the implementation of the Quality Policy.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

International relationships are extremely important to ensure that the NQI understands the international trends, and that Rwanda’s authorities and industry remain firmly in touch with what is happening at the international level.

Therefore all the stakeholders have to cooperate to create conditions favourable for active participation in international organizations related to the various functions of the NQI institutions. This would be achieved through strengthening the affiliation with these organizations and supporting participation of representatives of the Rwandan public and private sectors in the relevant standardization activities.

Likewise, all the stakeholders should cooperate to create conditions conducive for an effective understanding and participation in implementation of the WTO TBT and SPS Agreement requirements, as well as provide for active participation in regional structures related to the various functions of the Quality Infrastructure institutions, thereby collectively and individually fulfil Rwanda’s obligations in regional and international matters related to the Quality Infrastructure.
## ANNEX 2: DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Budget (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Restructuring a National Bureau of Standards into the National Standardization Institute (NSI), the National Metrology Organization (NMO) and the National Certification Services (NCS)</td>
<td>Put in place a legal framework for the NSI, NMO and NCS</td>
<td>MINICOM RBS MIFOTRA MINIEAC</td>
<td>15 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of strategic business plan for the Institutions above</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designing, construction and equip Institutes infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human resources capacity building for each institute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accreditation process for each institute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Creation of a National Inspectorate Board (NIB)</td>
<td>Put in place a legal framework for the NIB</td>
<td>MINAGRI MININFRA MINISANTE MINICOM MINIRENA MINICT MIFOTRA MININTER MINALOC</td>
<td>15 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of strategic business plan for the Institution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Setting up a Technical Regulation Framework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designing, construction and equip Institute’s infrastructure for both Head Quarters and Provincial offices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human resources capacity building for the institute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accreditation process for each institute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Restructure and strengthen existing scattered quality control laboratories into a National Quality Testing Laboratories (NQTL)</td>
<td>Put in place a legal framework for the NQRL</td>
<td>20 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Development of strategic business plan for comprehensive quality control laboratories</td>
<td>MINAGRI MININFRA MINISANTE MINICOM MINIRENA MIFOTRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Designing and construction of the laboratories</td>
<td>MININTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Equipping the laboratories (equipment and consumables)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human Resource capacity building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accreditation process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Setting up a National Accreditation Body (Rwanda Accreditation Services (RAS))</td>
<td>Put in place a legal framework for the RAS</td>
<td>2 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Development of a National Focal Point for Accreditation issues but this will later be a fully fledged Accreditation Body</td>
<td>MINICOM MINIEAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Development of strategic business plan for RAS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Designing, construction and equipping of the infrastructure for RAS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human Resource capacity building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Seeking international and Regional recognition like ILAC, IAF.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ANNEX 3: LIST OF INSPECTION ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE NATIONAL INSPECTORATE BOARD (NIB) ON BEHALF OF REGULATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Regulator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Inspection of expired products regulated under the pharmacy law</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Inspection of foods and pharmaceutical manufacturing plants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3  | Inspection of prohibited products or controlled by environmental protection laws:  
Inspection on manufacturing, importation, use and sale of polythene bags in Rwanda in accordance with law no 57/2008 of 10/09/2008 relating to the prohibition of manufacturing, importation, use and sale of polythene bags in Rwanda;  
Inspection of chemicals and other prohibited pollutants in accordance with the Prime Minister’s order no 26/03 of 23/10/2008 determining the list of chemicals and other prohibited pollutants; (see list in annex 5)  
Inspection of prohibited drugs or chemical substances according to the Prime Minister Order N°27/03 of 23/10/2008 determining a list of prohibited drugs or chemical substances unless authorized or temporary permitted (see list in annex 6)  
Inspection of importations and exportations of ozone layer depleting substances, products and equipment containing such substances according to the Ministerial order no 006/2008 of 15/08/2008 regulating the importation and exportation of ozone layer depleting substances, products and equipment containing such substances (see list in annex 7) | Environmental Management Authority            |
<p>| 4  | Inspection of type approved ICT terminals and electronic Equipments to ensure their compliance to national and international standards | National Utilities Regulatory Agency           |
| 5  | Inspection and spot-checks to follow-up in the return and/or disposal of the electronic products at their end of life ( electronic waste management) |                                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Inspection of indoors and outdoors wiring and cabling to ensure compliance to national and international standards and techniques</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Inspection of water and electricity supply equipment (water volume and pressure, voltage, current, frequency, power factor and technical losses in electricity transmission and distribution network) to ensure that right quantities are supplied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Quality inspection of Gases and petroleum products, cylinders and accessories, storage tanks, filling stations, etc to ensure compliance to national or international standards and regulations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Visual inspections of export products (consignments) at the airport</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Inspection of import agro-chemicals/organic inputs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Import inspection, market surveillance and industrial inspection of products and services governed by mandatory standards and technical regulations</td>
<td>Ministry of Trade and Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Legal metrology verification of weighing instruments used in trade, law enforcement, health and environment</td>
<td>National Bureau of Standards (Legal Metrology Department)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>