

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY



RWANDA QUALITY POLICY

November 2018

CONTENT	Pages
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1 ISSUE	6
2 CONTEXT.....	8
3 SCOPE, VISION, OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES	10
3.1 Scope	10
3.2 Vision	11
3.3 Objectives.....	11
3.4 Guiding Principles.....	11
4 ANALYSIS	13
4.0 Introduction	13
4.1 Strengths.....	13
4.2 Weaknesses	20
4.3 Opportunities.....	24
4.4 Threats.....	25
5. PREFERRED OPTION.....	27
6 STAKEHOLDER VIEWS	35
7 INSTITUTIONNAL FRAMEWORK.....	36
8 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....	42
9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	42
10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	43
ANNEX A: DEFINING THE NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE (NQI) AND TECHNICAL REGULATION FRAMEWORK	45
ANNEX B: IMPLEMENTAION PLAN.....	48
ANNEX C:INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF RWANDA QUALITY INFRASTRUTURE SERVICES.....	53

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFSEC	African Electrotechnical Standardization Commission
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
ARSO	African Organization for Standardization
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
BIPM	Bureau International des Poids et Mesures
CAFMET	Comité Africain de Metrologie /African Committee for Metrology
CEPGL	Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs
CFTA	Continental Free Trade Area
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DDP	District Development Plans
EAC	East African Community
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
EMS	Environmental Management Systems
FSMS	Food Safety Management Systems
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
ILAC	International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
IMEKO	International Measurement Confederation
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
LADAMET	Laboratoire d'Analyses des Denrées Alimentaires, Médicaments, Eaux et Toxiques
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
MINICOM	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MININFRA	Ministry of Infrastructure
MINIRENA	Ministry of Environment
NAEB	National Agricultural Export Board
NAS	National Accreditation Services
NCBF	National Certification Bodies Forum
NLF	National Laboratory Forum

NMS	National Metrology Services
NQI	National Quality Infrastructure
NSB	National Standards Body
OHSAS	Occupational Health and Safety
OIML	International Organization for Legal Metrology
PPP	Public Private Partnership
QMS	Quality Management Systems
RALIS	Rwanda Agricultural and Livestock Inspection
RDB	Rwanda Development Board
REMA	Rwanda Environmental Management Authority
RICA	Rwanda Inspectorate and Consumer Protection Authority
RMO	Regional Mathematics Olympiad
RRA	Rwanda Revenue Authority
RSB	Rwanda Standards Board
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SFS	Standards for Sustainability
SI	International System of Units
SJITC	S ^t Joseph Integrated Technical College
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPC	Standards Project Committee
SQMT	Standardization , Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing
SSP	Sector Strategic Plans
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
TC	Technical Committee
TRF	Technical Regulation Framework
WTO	World Trade Organization.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rwanda is member of World Trade Organization (WTO) since 1995 and has joined Regional Economic Communities including EAC, COMESA and CEPGL which opened up access to wider markets and ultimately increasing demand for safe and quality products and services. The Country has also signed several free trade agreements to benefit from advantages offered by the multilateral trading system. Furthermore, Rwanda is among the very few countries worldwide that have embarked on the process of domestication of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets as reflected in the National Strategy for Transformation (NSTI), all require the existence and maintenance of a strong National Quality Infrastructure to support sustainable development of the country.

In order for Rwanda to have competitive products and services and fully participate in regional and international trade, Rwanda has embarked on the restructuring and reengineering of its National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) and its technical regulation framework to harmonize with those of its trading partners and 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. The Rwanda quality Policy was developed and enacted in 2010 to strengthen National Quality Infrastructure institutions, to remove overlaps, have clear definition of responsibilities and to create synergies between Rwandan institutions in charge of standardization, quality assurance and metrology.

Rwanda Quality Policy (version 2010) was revised to have a fully functional, financially sustainable and internationally recognized NQI institutions that can provide the required independent and reliable evidence of product and service conformity and to align it with Rwanda's new development agenda geared towards promotion of made in Rwanda products and services to ensure their competitiveness on targeted markets through meeting customer needs and expectations and those of the regulatory authorities. The policy was also revised to streamline standardization, conformity assessment and metrology processes to effectively support Rwandan policies and strategies related to trade promotion and industrial development and to keep abreast of dynamic and ever-changing world trading patterns and to effectively address challenges faced by the National Quality Infrastructure.

The current Policy thoroughly re-analyses the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of prevailing National Quality Infrastructure, and sets policy orientations that will help to address current and prospective challenges faced by NQI institutions. The Policy highlights the actions to be undertaken towards ensuring sustainability of the National Quality infrastructure institutions, development and enforcement of technical regulations in compliance with international best practices, promotion of standardization, conformity assessment and metrology activities in Rwanda and how stakeholder engagement will be enhanced to promote cooperation and synergies. Promotion of SMEs was also focused on to enhance their compliance to standards and hence their competitiveness.

In this endeavor, to enhance Stakeholder engagement in national, regional and international standardization activities, to promote Public Private Partnerships and to improve synergies between public and private conformity assessment service providers (testing laboratories and certification bodies), there will be creation of a **National Standards Stakeholder Forum** (SSF) made up by representatives of Private Sector Federation, Managers of NSB technical divisions as well as Consumer Association and NGOs with mandate to promote standardization and related activities; a **National Quality Testing Laboratory Forum** (NQTLF) made up by representatives from public and private Quality Testing Laboratories and a **National Certification Bodies Forum** (NCBF) composed of representatives from public and private certification bodies.

Those Committees will facilitate free flow of information, identification and assessment of standards needs of interest for Rwanda; inter-comparisons and peer assessment, sharing of knowledge, testing facilities and other best practices among others.

A **National Quality Council** will also be created to promote engagement in standardization of Private Sector, Policy Makers, Regulatory Bodies and representatives of Academia and Research Institutions to enhance development of market driven, consensus based and relevancy of Rwanda standards. It will constitute a platform that will promote cooperation and coordination between the National Standards Bodies and its Stakeholders.

Moreover, in a bid to strengthen capacities and ensure sustainability of NQI Institutions, the policy makes provision of creation of a “**Quality Fee**” to be paid by all businesses operating in Rwanda. The Quality fee will complement government funding to national standardization services and will enable to promote compliance to standards of local SMEs and competitiveness of Made in Rwanda products

and services. The fee will also enable cost effectiveness, timely service delivery and easy access on standardization services by all Rwandan businesses. A legal instrument will set modalities related to its operationalization.

Furthermore, to ensure that the Country is provided with quality products and services, the Government will encourage the use of certified products and services in public procurement and incentives will be offered to enterprises that distinguish themselves in the process of quality improvement of locally produced products. Mandatory certification scheme will be implemented for products and services with impact on health, safety and the environment.

1 ISSUE

In the present environment of increased globalization, quality has a very important role to play in technological progress, health, safety, environmental protection, productivity and trade promotion. Hence, to have competitive products and services on both local and global markets, there is a need to have a fully functional and internationally recognized National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) that can provide the required independent and reliable evidence of product and service compliance supported by well coordinated Standardization processes that involve active participation of key players at all levels and backed by knowledgeable society on matters pertaining to quality.

In this Policy, NQI covers the totality of the institutional framework (public and/or private) required to establish and implement standards and provide conformity assessment (inspection, testing and certification), legal, industrial and scientific metrology as well as accreditation services and technical regulation framework. NQI institutions cannot therefore function effectively without a **National Quality Policy** aiming at providing a clear demarcation of their responsibilities to avoid overlaps, conflict of interests and promote synergies as they cut across many Ministries and agencies. Failure to provide any one or a combination of these elements of the Quality Infrastructure in an effective and efficient way has a negative effect on trade, protection of health and safety of the population and the environment and thus sustainable development.

In fact, in order to compete successfully on developed markets, Rwanda industrial and service sectors face 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 local and foreign markets. It is also necessary to establish a system to manage the competence and registration of conformity assessment service providers and professionals operating in Rwanda to increase credibility both nationally and internationally.

It is under this framework that a Rwanda Quality Policy was enacted in 2010 in line with the Government goal to enhance efficiency and effectiveness as well as customer satisfaction of service delivery. Key outcome of the 2010 version was the restructuring of National Quality Infrastructure Institutions and especially the separation of regulatory (import and industrial inspections and market surveillance activities), and non regulatory functions (standards development, trainings, assistance to SMEs, certification, testing, metrology) which were handled by former RBS to align standardization activities with international best practices and to facilitate international recognition of Rwandan standardization and conformity assessment services.

The 2010 Policy was revised to strengthen institutional capacities of the NQI which include RSB, RFDA, RICA, Public and Private Testing and Metrology Laboratories, Public and Private Certification Bodies and Accreditation Desk and to streamline their operations in Rwanda. The review also seek to align the Rwanda Quality Policy with current trends and developments at national and international levels such as African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 on creation of African free trade Area, bilateral and multilateral agreements to which Rwanda is signatory such as WTO Technical Barriers (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) agreements, EAC Common Market Protocol, among others; Vision 2050 whose implementation instrument, the National Strategy for Transformation (NSTI) also embraces the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); all require the existence and maintenance of a strong National Quality Infrastructure which support the three pillars of sustainable development by promoting economic, social and environmental sustainability.

The policy review was also undertaken to link it with several other policies such as National Trade Policy (2011), National Industrial Policy (2011), Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Development Policy (2010) and Made in Rwanda Policy (2017) aiming at promoting 'Made-In-Rwanda' brands to be competitive on national, regional and international markets. All those policies seek to increase productivity, competitiveness and diversified sustainable productive capacities for trading nationally, sub-regionally, regionally and internationally and standards are very vital to achieve those objectives.

The review also sought to streamline the funding mechanisms for Rwandan National Quality Infrastructure, to improve Stakeholder Engagement and to provide for a framework for the development and implementation of fundamental laws related to standardization, conformity assessment, metrology, accreditation and technical regulations among others.

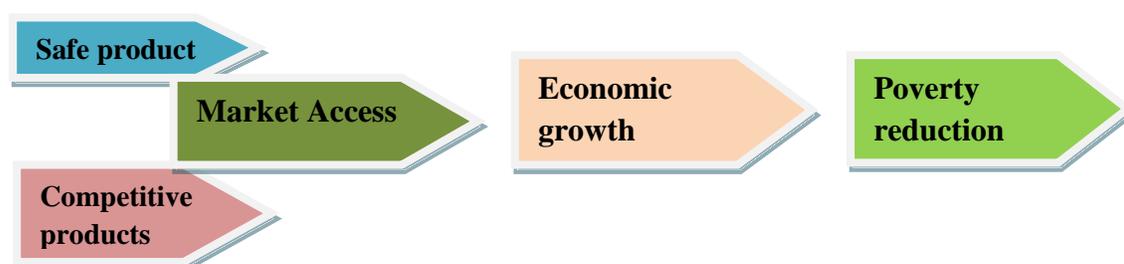
Specifically, the review aimed at addressing the following key challenges and gaps:

- ❖ Limited funding of Rwandan National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) institutions;
- ❖ Inadequate infrastructure for effective provision of NQI services;
- ❖ Inadequate Technical Regulation Framework leading to ineffective enforcement of some technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures;
- ❖ Limited abilities for SMEs to translate standards requirements into operational practices and low uptake of standards in both public and private institutions;
- ❖ Limited Skilled human Resource in the areas of standardization, conformity assessment and metrology as well as technical regulations development and enforcement;
- ❖ Limited public awareness and quality culture;
- ❖ Low Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Stakeholder engagement in NQI services;
- ❖ Limited participation in regional and international standardization activities, conformity assessment and metrology activities;
- ❖ Inexistence of a national accreditation mechanism leading to poor quality of private consultancies, trainings and conformity assessment services;
- ❖ Low uptake of standards requirements in public procurement and other development projects.

2 CONTEXT

It is generally recognized that enhanced trade leads to economic growth, the impact of which ultimately is poverty reduction. One important factor essential for trade is a supply side that gains market access through competitive and safe products. This can only be achieved through developing and implementing appropriate quality standards, provision of reliable conformity assessment activities, setting a transparent technical regulation regime and expanding primary processing and value adding, increasing the competitiveness of local manufacturing and a vigorous pursuit of exports to difficult markets – all of which relate directly to an effective and productive National Quality Infrastructure.

Figure 1 Competitive and safe products, trade, economic growth and poverty reduction



The changing economic environment prompted by liberalization and privatization policies in Rwanda along with globalization of trade, calls for a strong National Quality Infrastructure to support industry, trade, environment and consumer's health and safety. In view of this, it is imperative to put in place measures and institutional mechanisms to ensure that all goods and services traded on domestic and international markets meet the required quality, environment, health and safety standards through appropriate production technologies and other value addition processes. This would significantly contribute to Government's sustainable development efforts to eradicate poverty through wealth creation and prosperity for all.

In fact, Rwanda is among the very few countries worldwide that have embarked on the process of domestication of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through the collaboration with development partners, the country has already started to assess how to domesticate the SDGs targets in the national development and poverty reduction strategies built on Government's aspiration to transform Rwanda into high income economy to ensure high living standards of Rwandans by the middle of the 21st century. This is reflected in the blue print of the Vision 2050 as well as The National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), developed as implementation instrument of the remainder of Vision 2020 and for the first four years of the Vision 2050.

To achieve the above, there is need for a supportive NQI ensuring that Rwandan products and services fit for their purpose, have required level of safety and quality to access foreign markets by, enabling SMEs to compete through creation of a level playing field for all businesses (big or small), improving the balance of trade, increasing employment and productivity and thus benefit the national economy as a whole. This resonates well with key targets and interventions of NSTI including growing traditional exports, promoting non-traditional exports, growth of the service sector as well as cross cutting interventions such as promotion of made in Rwanda, developing of cross border and trade logistics infrastructure and development of industrial parks among others.

With regard to trade liberalization, Rwanda has signed several international/regional or bilateral trade agreements including World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements on removal of Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) requiring reference to harmonized/international standards on matters pertaining to trade; Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (ECGLC) and free trade agreements including Africa Continental free Trade Area (CFTA)

and EAC Common Market Protocol. All those agreements are expected to enhance trade through removal of technical barriers through creation of a single market for goods and services with free movement of people, investments, capital and services. This requires an effective national Quality infrastructure to assist the Rwandan industry to produce competitive products and services.

In addition to the above, Rwanda is in the process of adopting its Vision 2050 integrating SDGs, Paris Declaration on Climate Change, EAC Vision 2050, African Agenda 2063 and its 10 year implementation Plan, EDPRS 3 and National Strategy of Transformation (NST1), target being to reach Upper Middle income by 2035 and High Income by 2050, this requiring average annual growth of 10%. Several policies and strategies have also been adopted including Made in Rwanda Policy (2017), aiming at promoting ‘Made-In-Rwanda’ brands to be competitive on the international markets, National Industrial Policy (2011) and Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Development Policy (2010) aiming at increasing productivity, competitiveness and diversified sustainable productive capacities for trading nationally, sub-regionally, regionally and internationally.

All the above opportunities necessitated the review of the Rwanda Quality Policy 2010 and hence, in parallel with the implementation of NSTI, the Government of Rwanda is seeking to develop, establish and maintain an effective and efficient National Quality Infrastructure that would gain international acceptance. At the same time, the government will develop and implement a common approach to technical regulation, i.e. a National Technical Regulation Framework (NTRF), and ensure that the division of work between the NQI institutions and the regulatory authorities is properly coordinated.

3 SCOPE, VISION, OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

3.1 Scope

This Policy is structured around the key elements of the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI); namely, standardization, metrology, conformity assessment and accreditation necessary to provide acceptable evidence that products and services meet defined requirements especially standards, technical regulations, market and regulatory requirements, be it demanded by authorities (technical regulation) or the market place (contractually or inferred). This includes both public and private institutions and the regulatory framework within which they operate.

3.2 Vision

Have an operational internationally recognized National Quality Infrastructure that will guarantee efficiency and effectiveness in the goods and services delivery, better public health, safety, environmental and consumer protection leading to sustainable socio-economic growth as a result of a strong coordination between government and private institutions.

3.3 Objectives

The overall objective of the Quality Policy is to have a Quality Infrastructure and a Technical Regulation framework that improve competitiveness of goods and services made or traded in Rwanda in meeting customer needs, expectations and requirements as well as those of the regulatory authorities on the local, regional and international markets.

In order to reach the above; the following specific strategic objectives are to be attained:

- ◆ To maintain a strong and sustainable National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) through strengthening and upgrading of standardization, metrology, conformity assessment and accreditation services;
- ◆ Design a mechanism for sustainable funding of National Quality Infrastructure;
- ◆ To position Rwandan NQI as a center of excellence for standardization, conformity assessment and metrology services;
- ◆ Provide a framework for the development of fundamental laws on standardization, conformity assessment, metrology and accreditation activities in Rwanda;
- ◆ Establish and implement effective Technical Regulation Framework that complies with international best practices and relevant regional and international agreements to which Rwanda is signatory;
- ◆ To raise awareness and quality culture in Rwandans and especially in young professionals through introducing standardization in school curricula;
- ◆ To strengthen national accreditation services and encourage the use of accreditation in the national regulatory environment;
- ◆ Strengthen Public Private Partnership (PPP) in conformity assessment and metrology services and Stakeholder involvement in standardization;
- ◆ Enhance participation in national, regional and international standards setting activities, proficiency testing and inter laboratory comparisons to ensure competence of conformity assessment service providers;
- ◆ Promote recognition of conformity assessment services in Rwanda and assistance to SMEs towards compliance to standards.

3.4 Guiding Principles

As signatory of WTO TBT Agreement on technical barriers to Trade, Rwanda has accepted the code on Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards and the following principles which also guided this policy.

3.4.1 Non discrimination

The government shall accord treatment to products originating in the territory of any other Member of the WTO no less favourable than that accorded to like products of national origin and to like products originating in any other country.

3.4.2 Prevention of unnecessary obstacles to international trade

Standards and conformity assessment procedures shall not be prepared, adopted or applied with a view to, or with the effect of, creating unnecessary obstacles to international trade.

3.4.3 Harmonization

The Government shall participate actively in regional and international standardization, conformity assessment and metrology activities to avoid unnecessary barriers to trade and shall adopt regional and international standards where applicable except where such standards or relevant parts would be ineffective or inappropriate, for instance, because of an insufficient level of protection or fundamental climatic or geographical factors or fundamental technological problems.

The Government shall also make every effort to avoid duplication of or overlap with, the work of standardization bodies and achieve consensus on standards and conformity assessment procedures they develop through engaging all Stakeholders comprising all representatives of the Private Sector, Government Agencies, Academia and research institutions, Consumers, among others.

3.4.4 Transparency

The development of Rwanda Standards, conformity assessment and metrology procedures shall be done in a transparent manner and all essential information shall be accessible to all interested parties to avoid interruptions of trade and to promote industrial development and other sectors of the economy. Stakeholders shall represent the largest possible national consensus of opinion among concerned parties.

3.4.5 Public Private Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement

The government shall promote the partnership with the private sector in the development of standards and provision of conformity assessment and metrology activities. It shall also ensure that all

stakeholders are fully engaged to promote uptake and relevancy of the National Quality Infrastructure activities.

4 ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

For a comprehensive understanding of the macro-environment in which the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) is operating analysis of key political, economical, social, technological, environmental and legal factors was carried out. In addition, both internal and external factors that affect the performance of NQI were identified using SWOT Analysis. The process involved identification of the strengths and weaknesses of NQI institutions as well as opportunities and threats present in the environment.

The outcomes of the analysis which constituted the basis for definition of key policy options and implementation plan are outlined below.

4.1 Strengths

4.1.1 Conducive Political, Socio Economical and Technological Environment

Through its vision 2020, the Government of Rwanda has set ambitious targets for growth and is committed to becoming a middle income country achieving per capita income US \$ 1240 by 2020 (Vision 2020). In addition, Rwanda is in the process of adopting its Vision 2050 integrating SDGs, Paris Declaration on Climate Change, EAC Vision 2050, African Agenda 2063 and its 10 year implementation Plan, EDPRS 3 and National Strategy of Transformation (NST1) to reach Upper Middle income by 2035 and High Income by 2050, this requiring average annual growth of 10%.

For that purpose, Rwanda embraced strong governance reforms that would enable the society to prosper in different economic, social and technological areas and is striving to maintain conducive environment for the private sector to effectively conduct business and serve as an engine for economic growth. Worth is to note that Rwanda has already registered tremendous progress. In 2010, Rwanda was the top global reformer in the World Bank Doing Business report and the second global reformer out of 183 countries in 2011. The country is also the 9th easiest place to start business in the World and

6th most competitive economy. In 2016, the Rwanda ranked 56th out of 190 countries making her the second in Africa after Mauritius (World Bank Report, 14th edition). According to 2018 Report, Rwanda rose to 41st from 56th this shows the potential for Rwanda in doing business.

In addition, the country has enjoyed political stability since more than two decades and this has spurred Foreign Direct Investments stimulating growth in all business sectors.

As far as Rwanda GDP growth increased from 2.2% in 2003 to 7.2% in 2010 with a peak growth of 11.5% in 2008, and an overall average GDP of 7% (MINECOFIN). These achievements are not only a result of the above long term economic development plan, Vision 2020 but also its medium strategy, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) and other Government Policies and strategies which are giving direction towards transforming Rwanda from poverty to a middle income, knowledge based economy.

In addition, the Government strongly believes that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can facilitate this process and is committed to integrate ICT in all sectors of our economy through National ICT Plans (NICI Plans 1, 2, 3 & *NICI Plan* Phase IV, 2016-2020) as key driver for socio economic development in order for Rwanda to be competitive and to progress towards being a regional ICT hub.

All the above cannot be achieved without a strong National Quality Infrastructure providing standards based solutions, conformity assessment services and metrology enabling the business community to be more competitive on local, regional and international markets and protection of health and safety of the population as well as the environment.

The government of Rwanda had previously approved the Rwanda Quality Policy in 2010, which serves as a clear indicator of political will to guide the functioning of the National Quality Infrastructure in the country. It has also secured conducive environment where it can prosper through establishment of favourable trade and investment policies in order to increase trade with the rest of the world. In that regard, the Rwanda Quality policy is complemented by several other policies which

share the same mandate of increasing productivity, competitiveness and diversified sustainable development.

Those policies and strategies include Rwanda Trade policy (September 2010); Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Development Policy (June 2010), Rwanda National Export strategy (NES) (April 2011), National Industrial Policy (April 2011), Domestic Market Recapturing Strategy (2015), National Food and Nutrition Policy (January, 2014), Rwanda Competition and Consumer Protection Policy (July 2010), Environment and Natural Resources Policies (January, 2015), Private Sector Development Strategy, Health Sector Policy (January, 2015) and Rwanda National Construction Industry Policy (August, 2009) among others.

4.1.2 Existence of Institutional framework for National Quality Infrastructure and technical regulations development and enforcement

Over the last few years, the Government of Rwanda has put in place an institutional framework for the Quality Infrastructure and technical regulations, which is composed of the National Standards Body, Conformity Assessment (Testing, Certification and Inspection) and Metrology Services Providers as well as Regulatory Bodies.

While development and publication of national standards, inspections, legal and scientific metrology as well as accreditation services are sole responsibilities of the Government; certification, testing and industrial metrology are carried out by both competent private and public services providers.

With regard to development and implementation of technical regulations, there are Ministries and Agencies responsible respectively for technical regulations development and enforcement and they include the Ministries responsible for trade and industry, agriculture and animal resources, infrastructure, health care, water, labour, transport and environmental protection.

For technical regulations related to quality assurance and inspections, Rwanda is in the process of establishing Regulators including Rwanda Inspectorate and Consumer Protection Authority (RICA) and Rwanda Foods and Drug Authority (RFDA) which will be regulating quality and safety of products and services offered for sale on Rwandan market through enforcing technical regulations, carrying out import inspections, market surveillance and industrial inspections.

As far as dissemination of information on technical regulations, standards, conformity assessment and metrology is concerned; four National Enquiry Points have been created for that purpose: A National Enquiry Point related to technical barriers to trade (WTO/TBT NEP) located at Rwanda Standards Board; Enquiry Point related to Food safety located under the Ministry of Health, Animal health Enquiry Point and Plant health Enquiry Point housed under the Ministry in charge of Agriculture while the Ministry in charge of trade is acting as Notification Authority.

4.1.3 A wide scope for standardization, conformity assessment and metrology services

The National Quality Infrastructure has a wide scope for standards development, conformity assessment and metrology services. In actual fact, standards are developed in almost every priority area of the country's economic development ranging from food, agriculture, construction materials, textile and leather, tourism and hospitality and other service industry, ICT and multimedia, electrical, electronics and civil engineering, chemical and consumer products to ensure environmental protection, health, and safety of the population, effectiveness and efficiency of products and services offered for sale on Rwandan market or exported.

Currently, more than 2,390 Rwanda Standards are published, including product specifications, test methods, codes of practice and system standards. The country has also around 100,000 standards and related reference materials and is implementing a project on introduction of standardization in school curricula to raise the quality culture in Rwandans in general and in young professionals in particular. NSB and other private companies are also offering training services on standards requirements for SMEs, Industry and other Stakeholders to enhance standards uptake and compliance.

Concerning testing services, existing quality testing facilities include National Quality Testing Laboratories of the National Standards Body and other public and private quality laboratories. These include National Laboratory of Public Works in MININFRA, Plant Health and Seeds Laboratory in MINAGRI, Mineral Quality Control and Geochemistry and Mineralogy Laboratory in MINIRENA; and other private laboratory such as Alexis STEWART international (private metal testing and analysis), LADAMET (University of Rwanda), SJITC Public Works Laboratory (S^t Joseph Integrated Technical College), IPRC-Kigali Laboratory; among others.

The above laboratory facilities have got capacity and the State of Art analytical equipment to cover different products, including construction materials, pharmaceutical and traditional herbs, leather, soil; precious minerals, electrical and electronics, food and agriculture; packaging, chemical products.

Metrology services were also established to offer legal and industrial metrology services. Industrial metrology services are provided by both public and private institutions while legal metrology services remain the sore responsibility of the government. Scientific metrology is yet to be operational. The sectors covered currently are: construction, tourism and hospitality, medical, telecom, manufacturing, education and research, agriculture and agro-processing, petroleum, energy, transport and mining.

The metrology service delivery is enhanced by the fact that the National Metrology System combines legal and industrial metrology. This synergy between metrology services offer a number of benefits for the National Quality Infrastructure since it enabled to optimize resources that would be wasted if metrology services delivery was scattered. Another benefit resulting from coordinated metrology services is in the form of effective law enforcement and service delivery.

Certification services are offered by Public and Private Certification Bodies, while sanitary and phyto-sanitary certification services are exclusively provided by agencies under the Ministry of Agriculture. The management of the mining sector certification and traceability is coordinated at regional level.

Existing system certification schemes include but not limited to Quality Management System (QMS-ISO 9001), Environmental Management Systems (EMS-ISO 14001), Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS-ISO 22000), Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), Occupational Health and Safety Management (OHSAS), Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Organic Farming, Rain forest and Fair Trade.

4.1.4 Provision of certified and accredited services

Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) services pertaining with standards development, provision of training, awareness and dissemination of information and corporate services have been certified against the ISO 9001 standard. This constitutes an evidence of commitment to consistently providing quality services that meet customer needs and expectations as well as statutory and regulatory requirements. In addition, the standardization system is based on the worldwide accepted principles, namely Transparency; Openness; Impartiality; Effectiveness and Relevance; Consensus; Performance based;

Coherence and Due process which enable the NSB to develop and publish market driven, relevant and consensus based standards.

As far as metrology is concerned, the RSB Metrology services provided by Mass, Balance and temperature laboratories have been accredited which will open markets to its customers, facilitate mutual recognition and international recognition of Rwandan metrology services. There is also a plan to extend the scope of accreditation of accredited laboratories and pursuing the accreditation of new ones. Worth is also to note that among the certification schemes that the National Standards Body (RSB) offers, the food safety systems (ISO 22000 and HACCP as per RS 184) are also accredited.

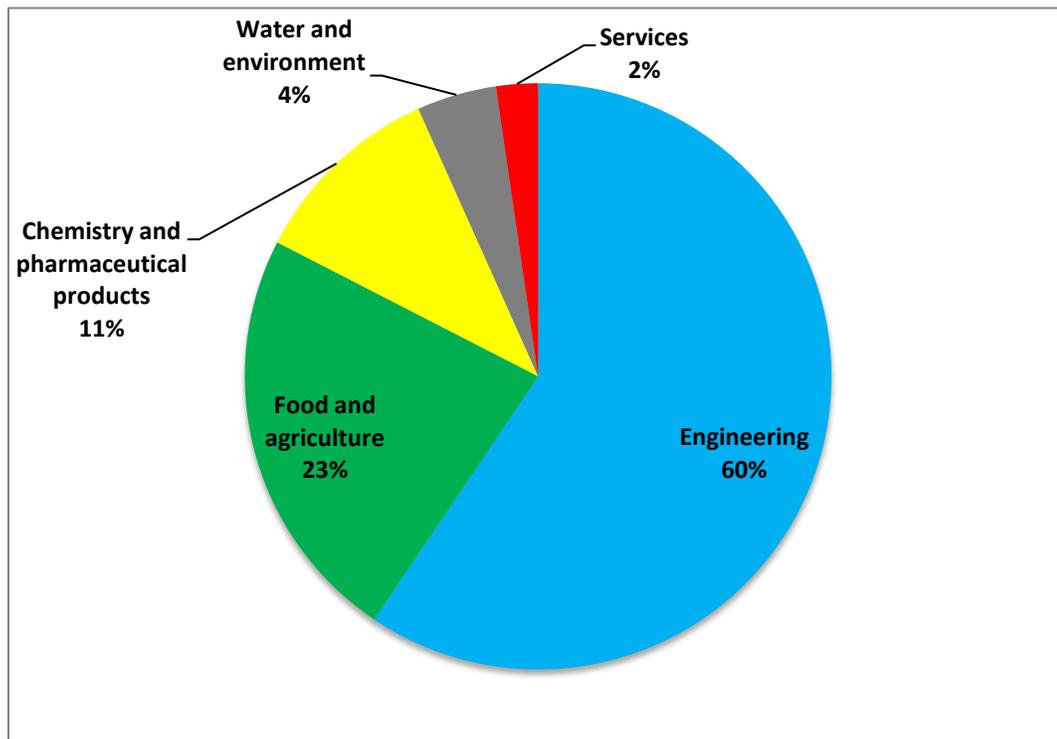
With regard to testing, the National Quality Testing Laboratories of NSB are operating as required by the international standard (ISO/IEC 17025 requirements) and international good laboratory practices and is pursuing accreditation as a proof of competence in offering accurate and reliable services.

Rwanda is also implementing the EAC regulation on designation of laboratories in Partner States to function as testing laboratories to provide scientific and technical services to perform conformity assessment services for technical regulations or compulsory standards. This activity is being undertaken by the Ministry responsible for trade and industry and so far eleven (11) laboratories have been designated to carry out conformity assessment activities for trade purposes. Detailed information on certification and accreditation of RSB services is provided in Annex C.

4.1.5 Knowledgeable human capital with basic training in standardization

The National Quality Infrastructure has knowledgeable human capital with basic trainings to develop national standards and to offer conformity assessment and metrology services.

As a result of combined efforts of the existing human capital and partnership with over 500 experts from various organizations, more than 2000 national standards have been published to address quality issues in different sectors of the Rwandan economy. In addition, more than 20 trainings on standards requirements are offered each year to provide stakeholders with necessary skills to implement standards. The figure below shows the number of standards published as of 2018.

Figure 2 All standards developed by RSB (up to 2018)

4.1.6 Membership to International Organizations

Rwanda is a member of the regional and international standards setting bodies such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Organization for Legal Metrology (OIML), Codex Alimentarius Commission, International Measurement Confederation (IMEKO) and African Organization for Standardization (ARSO), African Electrotechnical Standardization Commission (AFSEC), ITU, East African Community (EAC), and AFRIMET.

Rwanda also has working relationships with international organizations such as IEEE, International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), and ASTM. International Membership to these organizations confers Rwanda the right to access to a collection of international standards which can be adopted at the national level free of charge, enable the country to be a standards setter and its participation in conformity assessment and metrology fora. These international bodies also provide technical assistance programmes upon which the policy implementation can build.

4.1.7 Assistance to Small and medium Enterprises towards standards compliance

In order to assist Industries and in particular SMEs to achieve standards compliance, the Government of Rwanda is designing various programmes targeted to their strengthening. It is under this background that it has introduced a food quality development and management system referred to as “**Zamukana Ubuziranenge**” Program. This program intends to systematically develop and support Agro-processing SMES to reach the desired quality and safety performance but also build a strong quality culture in Rwanda.

The program uses a Food Safety Maturity Model (FSMM), which serves as a strategic tool that benchmarks the company’s quality management system but also serves as performance measurement systems (PMS) implying that SME’s are evolving and transformed from lower food safety performance to the better level. The model reflects the company’s status in terms of standards or procedures’ compliance and robustness of food safety systems in comparison with where it is targeting to be. This system helps SMEs to control all potential food safety hazards and ensure the products quality characteristics are maintained.

The program also trains and places food science graduates in agro-processing SMEs to support and monitor the systems development and performances to ensure the targeted quality performance is achieved.

4.2 Weaknesses

4.2.1 Limited skilled human resource and inadequate infrastructure

A combination of Human capital and infrastructure play a paramount role in the success of the NQI operations. The existing NQI is constrained by limited skilled human resource and inadequate infrastructure, and it has been relying on knowledgeable human resource with basic skills and basic infrastructure. Consequently, the NQI fails to effectively deliver services that are proportional to market demands. This also limits active and optimal involvement in standards development, conformity assessment and metrology activities.

In this regard, in order to increase relevant, market driven and timely standards and effective delivery of training services to SMEs, there is need to have a pool of trained experts in standardization and negotiation skills and competent trainers from both public and private institutions.

Testing and Metrology services also need to be upgraded to meet the market demand, which requires additional resources such as specialised equipment and trained personnel to be able to utilize most of the standards to test some critical parameters.

There is also need to empower NQI institutions with such a state of art IT infrastructure necessary to effectively manage information and speed up standard development, quality testing, and certification and inspections services delivery.

4.2.2 Ineffective technical regulatory framework

Despite the existence of quality and safety standards covering almost all sectors, the level of implementation remains low and does not increase in the same rate with the companies' establishment. The analysis of standard sold shows that out of 25000 registered companies on the Rwanda territory, only 2373 have purchased at least one standard. The standard sale grows at a rate of 21% while the SMEs grow at an average rate of 24% (*NSD Report, 2016*).

The process of development of technical regulations is also hampered by limited synergy and communication between existing regulators, overlapping roles and responsibilities and lack of regulators in some sectors. Furthermore, standards are voluntary by nature and there is inadequate mechanism of development and of technical regulations from standards and their enforcement.

In order to ensure effective development and implementation of the Technical regulations, a National Technical Framework is to be developed and implemented which would ensure that technical regulations development follows common guidelines, meets regional and international obligations, and that the division of work between regulatory authorities and the NQI is optimally coordinated.

4.2.3 Limited abilities of SMEs/institutions to translate standards' requirements into operational practices

Usually standards are technical documents that are not easily decoded without technical expertise. Experience from the prevailing National Standard Setting institutions shows that local SMEs have limited abilities to translate standards' requirements into operational practices during their standards implementation exercises. The resulting lack and low level of standard compliance holds back certification of products, systems and services, hence the proliferation of sub-standard goods/services

on national market leading to unfair competition between certified and non-certified products/services and potential threat to consumer safety.

4.2.4 Low Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and stakeholder engagement in standardization

Statistics from the Ministry of Trade and Industry show an estimated 72,000 SMEs in the country among which only 25,000 are registered and supposed to be served by the NQI (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Policy (2010).

With prevailing human capital, infrastructure and financial capabilities, it is very apparent that the National Quality Infrastructure cannot deliver its intended objectives of raising competitiveness of local products and services on local, regional and international market unless there is an active Public Private Partnerships and stakeholder involvement in standards development, metrology and conformity assessment services.

4.2.5 Limited participation in regional and international standardization, conformity assessment and metrology services

Rwanda is a member of the regional and international standards setting bodies. However, participation in regional and international standardization, conformity assessment and metrology activities is limited by financial capabilities. As a result, Rwanda is unable to influence those activities in order to represent Rwandan interests.

Moreover, quality testing and metrology laboratories services have limited resources for participating in proficiency testing and inter-laboratory comparisons, hence to secure recognition for ensuring confidence in exporting of locally made products.

4.2.6 Limited public awareness and quality culture

Delivery of quality products and services by local firms depends on the success of the National Quality Infrastructure operations, which also depends on the extent to which NQI services are used by the general public.

The success of NQI is constrained by limited awareness of the importance of standardization and lack of quality culture among Rwandans. As a result, quality is not regarded by some local companies as a priority since they don't recognize the need for standards in their business operations, hence leading to

proliferation of substandard products and services and this compromise their competitiveness. Consumers are unknowingly exposed to cheap and unsafe goods which in many cases are hazardous to their health and the environment.

4.2.7 Limited information about market demand for NQI services

Market Information is regarded as key ingredient for the success of the National Quality Infrastructure. However, the potential of the NQI to deliver services that are proportional to the market demands is hampered by the lack of reliable data on the market composition and demand for services provided by NQI. As a result, there is limited ability of NQI institutions to make rational and informed decisions during the planning for standards development, conformity assessment and metrology services provision.

Since regional integration in EAC, COMESA, CEPGL and in Africa in general, and Rwanda strategic geographical location, has opened up a wider market and increased demand for safe goods and services that call for standards, conformity assessment and metrology services provision, there is therefore need to put in place a mechanism to have relevant information to be able to develop relevant and timely standards and to provide optimum conformity assessment and metrology services for increased customer satisfaction.

4.2.8 Lack of accreditation body

The ability of the local firms to provide quality products and services that are competitive on local, regional and international market is hindered by the lack of national accreditation authority which would ensure that bodies providing conformity assessment services have required competences to perform those operations.

In that regard, depending on the requirements of the export market, the certification and testing services are sometimes outsourced to internationally recognized conformity assessment bodies at high cost and sometimes impossible to compensate by trade gain.

4.2.9 Limited in-house testing facilities

The National Quality Testing institutions face a challenge related to the provision of centralized quality testing services on their headquarters. Another challenge associated to centralised testing

services is that some firms lack of in-house testing facilities. As a consequence, only few customers located nearby quality testing laboratories are fairly served, and remotely located customer's waste additional resources and time to access to the quality testing services, reason being of losing interest in getting their products tested, which leads to unsafe products on Rwandan market and which can endanger the health of Consumers.

4.2.10 Lengthy procurement processes

In order for NQI institutions to provide services that meet market demand, state of art equipment and reagents must be available for use. However, these institutions encounter such a lengthy procurement process that does not match with the business operations that undermine the development of sustainable NQI services.

4.3 Opportunities

4.3.1 Increasing global demand for safe products and services

World safe products and services demand has been increasing over the years. This demand occurs in all sectors of human life but with some particularities with the countries. Rwanda market noted high quality product and service demand in different area including inter alia, agriculture, construction, pharmaceuticals, traditional medicine, textile and leather, agro-processing, rubber and wood and ceramics. The increasing demand in those products and services lead to proliferation of industries and service providers that seek for standardization and conformity assessment services with the willing to provide competitive goods and services and gain the confidence of consumers.

This, therefore, provides an opportunity for Rwanda quality infrastructure to take advantage of this market segment in developing standards for new products, providing certification, and testing and metrology services. This coupled growth of industry and standardization and conformity assessment services may have an important impact on the economy growth of the country through optimization of resources on both side, reduction of trade deficit and enhanced reputation.

4.3.2 Regional integration and geographical placement of Rwanda

The Rwanda has benefited from the regional integration in terms of standards, Conformity assessment, metrology and accreditation services. In addition, three of EAC Partner States share a border with Rwanda. This leads to expansion of the market and promotion of trade. Rwanda has potential to export metrology and testing services within the region. In addition, harmonization of certification schemes with the region may enhance consumer confidence and increase the number of products and processes that conform to established standards.

4.4 Threats

4.4.1 Ineffective enforcement mechanism of technical regulations, laws and treaties

Rwanda has concluded free trade arrangements with different blocs including EAC, COMESA and ECCAS where the movement of goods and services has been facilitated; however, trade benefits of the country have been hindered by some Partner States that do not observe the signed agreement which creates unnecessary barriers to cross border trade, increases trade cost and abound counterfeit products on Rwanda market and consequently slows the local industry and SMEs development.

For example, the harmonization of standardization, conformity assessment activities and metrology has been slow over the last period. Currently only around 1400 EAC standards have been so far harmonized while there is need for almost 5000 standards to be harmonized as per the EAC Business council report. Moreover, the rate of domestication of EAC standards has been low in some Partner States. The persistence of the above situation may affect the objectives of the National Quality Infrastructure.

4.4.2 Rapid technology evolutions and unpredictable Changes in Consumer taste and preferences

Competitive conditions among industry have led to exponential evolution of technology and mass emergence of diversified products and services on the global market. This evolution can certainly change or solidify consumer preferences and taste regarding new products and services.

To accommodate all those changes and ensure continual assurance of the quality and safety of the products and services, national quality infrastructure will require financial and human capacity on the

same peak as technological evolution, to undertake research activities to generate data to inform the standardization of the new products, put in place necessary testing infrastructure and to sensitize consumers.

4.4.3 Proliferation of private standards

Local organizations prefer to use their own private standards in case of Rwanda Standards. This leads to standards duplication, non optimal use of resources, low uptake of Rwanda Standards and eventually to the provision of poor quality goods and services.

4.4.4 International restrictions on production, trading and use of biological and chemical reagents

Biochemical reference materials are fundamental for the performance of metrology and testing services. However, the international restrictions on production, trading and use of biological and chemical reagents in developing countries continue to ruin the functioning of quality testing and metrology laboratories to their optimum.

4.4.5 Porous/informal cross borders trade

A significant portion of cross border trade with neighbouring countries is conducted informally. Those are not imports and exports that escape from the regulatory framework of taxation and other procedures but also illegitimately produced goods and services of poor quality and which are unsafe to the consumers.

This porosity of borders compromises the activities of the inspection and certification bodies which lead to the abundance of sub-standard or non-certified products on the market and to the inhibition of domestic industries and SMEs.

5. PREFERRED OPTION

5.1 Introduction

The preferred option for the Rwanda Quality Policy focuses on maintaining a sustainable and internationally recognized quality infrastructure that ensures that products and services manufactured or imported into Rwanda meet customers' needs and expectations and those of the Regulatory Authorities.

The policy actions outlined below and detailed in depth in the implementation plan are centred upon the analytical framework used in Section 4, so as to directly address the opportunities and constraints identified regarding National Quality Infrastructure and current technical regulation regime. The chapter highlights inter alia, the actions to be undertaken towards ensuring sustainability funding of the National Quality Infrastructure institutions, development and enforcement of technical regulations in compliance with international best practices, promotion of quality culture and standardization, conformity assessment and metrology activities in Rwanda, how stakeholder engagement will be enhanced, provision of support to SMEs towards standards compliance to ensure their competitiveness at national, regional and international markets.

5.2 Policy actions

5.2.1 Funding of the National Quality Infrastructure

The financial sustainability of any organization, including the Quality Infrastructure institutions is critical. This might be taken as self-evident, but standardization, conformity assessment and metrology activities requires stable funding so that the institutions operate effectively to meet the needs of customers and stakeholders and government priorities over the long-term.

One major lesson learnt from the analysis is that the Rwanda Quality Infrastructure needs to be financially sustainable in order to provide optimal services that improve competitiveness of goods and services made or traded in Rwanda on the local, regional and international markets and ensures health and safety of the population and protect the environment.

In order to maintain a strong and sustainable quality infrastructure, the Government will continue to fully support the National Quality Infrastructure Institutions, and the Private Sector contribution will be mobilized through contributing towards strengthening the quality institutions. In this regard, a “**quality fee**” will be paid by all businesses registered in Rwanda to complement government funding to the National Quality Infrastructure. The fee will enable to promote compliance to standards of local SMEs and competitiveness of Made in Rwanda products and services; cost effectiveness and timely service delivery as well as easy access on standardization services by all Rwandan businesses. A law on standardization, conformity assessment and accreditation services will set a framework for payment of this quality fee and there shall be no overlapping payment of the quality fees.

5.2.2 Technical regulations development and enforcement

The Government will foster 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** as defined in the Standardization, Conformity assessment and Accreditation law and that meets the requirements of the WTO/TBT Agreement and other regional trade protocols in order to access markets and increase the competitiveness of Rwandan products and services.

Regulators continue to 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 Rwanda Standards or adopted regional or international standards (or parts thereof). In this regard, coordination with National Standards Body is of paramount importance.

The Government 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 through certification or any other conformity assessment procedures provided that the conformity assessment service providers demonstrate competence through accreditation, recognition or designation.

Products manufactured in EAC Partner States that fall within the scope of technical regulations and for which conformity assessment procedures have been followed in the EAC Partner States and bearing notified quality marks certified against EAC harmonized standards are granted free cross-border movement without further testing and certification as provided for in the EAC/SQMT Act, 2006.

A National Technical Regulatory Committee (NTRC) will be created under the Ministry of Trade and Industry in order to oversee the development and implementation of technical regulations, increase synergies, facilitate inter regulators and service providers communication and avoid overlaps of roles and responsibilities among Regulators. A framework for operationalization of the Committee will be provided by the law governing standardization, conformity assessment and accreditation services in Rwanda.

5.2.3 Standards development and promotion of quality culture

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 the National Standards Body (NSB) 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.

As the only body with powers to define and publish Rwanda Standards in all sectors, NSB provides a framework for development and publication of national standards that 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.

NSB also ensures that Rwanda standards are relevant, timely, market driven and meet national and international market needs while protecting health, safety and environmental at the same time. A mechanism to collect information on market demand shall be established through continually assessing standards needs, development of standardization strategies and carrying out studies such as market research and determination of effectiveness of published standards among others.

In order to enhance participation in regional and international standardization activities; NSB organizes and coordinates the representation of Rwanda in regional and international standardization activities where this is of relevance for Rwanda and gives advice on adoption of relevant regional or international standards based on demonstrated needs and interests of regulatory authorities, industry and the society in Rwanda.

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 trainings, workshops, seminars, industrial visits and availing public access to the information and documentation centre.

In particular, a framework will be put in place to allow NSB to build and or mobilise competences from both public and private institutions for the purpose of providing training and required technical assistance to SMEs to enable translation of standards requirements into action with the aim of contributing towards trade promotion and competitiveness of SMEs and support the Domestic Market Recapturing Strategy.

The Government will also invest in developing and maintaining a high-level standardization culture and awareness creation in order to increase the uptake of standards through:

- ◆ Integrating Standardization in formal education, research and development;
- ◆ Standards education services in view of intensifying non-formal education and training in Standardization targeting elementary and Secondary school learners, young professionals, technical college and university students;
- ◆ Designing and implementing programmes to assist SMEs to comply to standards;
- ◆ Creating awareness of Regulators and assist them in making reference to standards while developing technical regulations
- ◆ Promoting use of standards in procurement and government purchases
- ◆ Raising awareness of the business community and consumers about the attributes of quality goods and compliance with standards and international codes.

A **National Standards Stakeholder Forum (NSSF)** will be created to promote Stakeholders involvement in national, regional and international standardization activities and to facilitate free flow of information between NSB and the business community. It will comprise Managers of NSB technical divisions as well as representatives of the Private Sector, Consumer Association and NGOs with mandate to promote standardization and related activities.

A **National Quality Council** will also be created to promote engagement in standardization of Policy Makers, Regulatory Bodies and the Private Sector to promote relevancy of Rwanda standards. It will constitute a platform that will promote cooperation and coordination between NSB and the Private sector, ministries and other agencies responsible for the implementation of standards and technical regulations. The Quality Council will comprise Ministers and or Permanent Secretaries from all Ministries responsible for standards implementation and enforcement, Managing Directors of key National Quality Infrastructure Institutions, Chair persons of the fora on standardization and conformity assessment (NSSF, NQTLF and NCBF) mentioned above and representatives of the private sector. It will be chaired by the Ministry in charge of Trade and Industry and the Managing Director of NSB will handle the Secretariat.

5.2.4 Conformity assessment services provision

In order to provide conformity assessment services to the Regulators, the Industry and especially to the SME sector, the Government establishes, maintains and continuously improves the conformity assessment service providers and all quality infrastructure related institutions in the public domain. These include inspection agencies, calibration laboratories, testing laboratories and certification bodies. To this effect, the Government will establish a mechanism for getting data and information on the available market for increased customer satisfaction and sustainability and provision of effective conformity assessment services proportional to the market demand.

Whilst enhancing the capacity of the public institutions, the Government will create 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.

Private conformity assessment providers shall be approved by the Minister in charge of Trade and Industry prior to starting their operations in Rwanda, and criteria for approval will be determined. Apart from National Quality Testing Laboratories under the National Standards Body which act as reference laboratory in quality domain, other reference conformity assessment service providers shall be designated by the Ministry in charge of Trade and Industry.

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.

National Certification Services (NCS) 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 authorities.

The government shall provide necessary support to National Certification Services providers to seek **accreditation** to enable them offer trusted and recognized services for promoting exports and competitiveness of local industries.

Mandatory certification shall be applied to products and services that have health, safety and environmental implications and a minimum required personnel competence for businesses and SMEs whose operations have same implications shall be defined.

In addition, in order to increase reputation and trust in certified products/ services, to avoid unfair competition, counterfeiting, and proliferation of substandard products on the Rwandan market; a quality mark track and trace management system will be introduced to ensure traceability of the quality marks, calibration, testing and training certificates to promote consumer protection and trade facilitation.

In the area of testing, the Government shall continuously upgrade National Quality Testing Services to cover the country's development priorities and to provide trusted testing services and will exploit the opportunities of being a regional centre of excellence in quality testing services.

In addition, a National Quality Testing Laboratory Forum (NQLTF) comprising representatives of quality testing laboratories operating in Rwanda and a National Certification Bodies Forum (NCBF) comprising Certification Bodies operating in Rwanda will be created to increase synergies between Public and private conformity assessment service providers.

To streamline the inspections services; the government will strengthen inspection institutions to suit the needs and expectations of the customers and required legal instruments will be developed. Specifically the Government will:

- Put in place **specific laws and technical regulations** for ensuring consumer health and safety, environmental protection and fair trade among others;
- Provide public facilities and **sufficient staff to cover all manned borders**, industry sectors and markets for inspection of products and services falling within the scope of technical regulations;
- Create a **Centralised Quality Information System** for effective inspections service delivery;
- Establish a framework for the **provision of Cross frontier Inspection services** to mitigate risks associated with products that are re-exported due to lack of prior inspection at their origin;
- Set a mechanism for **product registration** before products and or services are placed on the market or delivered in order to facilitate standards and technical regulations, compliance and to avoid proliferation of substandard products and services which may endanger the health and safety of consumers and environment.

5.2.5 Metrology services provision

In a bid to increase synergies, National Metrology Services combine scientific, industrial and legal metrology. However, while industrial metrology services can be provided by private Metrology service providers, Legal Metrology remains the sole responsibility of the government.

To operate in Rwanda, Private calibration laboratories shall obtain authorization from the Ministry responsible for trade and Industry. **Measurement traceability** of private calibration laboratories are obtained from the National Metrology Services or another regional or international metrology laboratory with known and recognized measurements capabilities in case there is no national capability.

A legislation framework for both public and private metrology services shall be established to ensure equitable utilisation of measurement, not only in trade but also in law enforcement, health service, environmental management and industries to promote free local, regional and international trade without technical barriers based on international recognition of measurements.

Government shall ensure that National Metrology Infrastructure is continuously upgraded to respond to government priority sectors and that networks are developed in a way that enhances industrial innovation, competitiveness and international trade whilst supporting societal objectives and commitment to sustainable growth. It shall also upgrade national metrology services for becoming a regional centre of excellence in the area of metrology and shall support active participation in international metrology organization activities to ensure traceability of the national measurement standards to the International System of Units (SI).

5.2.6 Accreditation services provision

In a bid to ensure that the National Quality Infrastructure provides trusted services to the customers, it is vital that the government puts in place an institutional framework to provide accreditation **services** to facilitate accreditation for health centres, education institutions and conformity assessment bodies.

As the third fundamental building block of the quality infrastructure, namely to facilitate independent attestation of the technical capabilities of the conformity assessment service providers, the Government will strengthen the “**Accreditation Desk**” in the Ministry responsible for Trade and Industry. The Accreditation Desk will be responsible for facilitating accreditation of conformity assessment service providers such as inspection bodies, testing laboratories, calibration laboratories and certification bodies through foreign accreditation bodies in an internationally acceptable manner.

Once the number of accredited organizations reaches a viable amount, the Government will be committed to transforming the Accreditation Desk into a fully fledged, independent Accreditation Services that will seek international recognition through structures such as the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

Only one such national accreditation body shall be established to be utilized by all regulatory authorities and the market place, that will work 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.

The National Accreditation Service shall establish the relevant technical committees to handle all required sectors to be accredited, such as testing laboratories, calibration laboratories, bodies for the certification of products and management systems, inspection bodies and bodies carrying out training and the certification of quality-related personnel.

6 STAKEHOLDER VIEWS

The revised draft quality policy and technical regulation framework were circulated to key stakeholders including regulators, government ministries involved in development and administration of technical regulations and quality control, Academia, Private Sector federation (PSF) representatives, industries, importers and exporters, civil society and consumer association for inputs and comments.

Two workshops targeting the above representatives were organized on the two documents respectively in May and September 2016. The two workshops participants were all positive towards the revised policy and developed technical regulation framework. It was recommended to include the drafted technical regulation framework in the Law on standardization and Conformity Assessment for easy implementation of the revised quality policy through catering for all activities related to standardization, conformity assessment, metrology and technical regulations development in one instrument.

Worth is to note that another workshop targeting representatives of the Standards Platform was organized in October 2016 to debate especially on the quality fee to be instituted to complement government funding and to ensure sustainable funding of the National Quality Infrastructure. Participants agreed on the need for the quality fee and recommended a strong representation of the private sector in all standardization fora to facilitate a flow of standards information. The following were also recommended:

- ❖ The policy to provide a mechanism for raising awareness on the benefits of standards through a close collaboration between NSB, PSF, Consumer Association and Civil Society;
- ❖ Laboratories should be recognized as competent through accreditation or designation;
- ❖ PSF should have strong representation in standardization activities through participation in committees on standardization;
- ❖ Policy to provide clarification on activities which can be carried out by the private sector;
- ❖ Encourage the use of e-services to be able to start the business as quickly as possible;
- ❖ Encourage implementation of HACCP principles in food establishments and the latter should be encouraged to employ knowledgeable staff to ensure effective implementation of HACCP system;
- ❖ Organize more debates and trainings on Quality services and products.

It was highlighted that the success of PSF is based on implementing standards and Stakeholders supported the review of the policy to ensure maintenance of the National Quality Infrastructure to ensure the competitiveness of their businesses.

A final validation workshop was held on 8th June 2018 comprising representative of all Stakeholders including Ministries, Regulators, Academia, Industries, Civil Society, Standardization Technical Committees and the Private Sector Federation. The Stakeholders validated the policy and provided inputs to improve the document.

7 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

7.1 Advisory Committee in charge of implementation of the policy

Recognizing that the activities of the National Quality Infrastructure are carried out by both the public and private sector and cut across many regulatory bodies and agencies, this policy requires appropriate institutional framework and coordination mechanism among Stakeholders.

To ensure proper coordination, **an advisory committee** will be set in place by the Ministry in charge of trade and industry to fast track and spearhead activities related to the implementation of the policy.

7.2 Ministry in charge of trade and industry

The Ministry in charge of trade and industry will ensure the setting in place of fora related to standardization; namely the Standards Stakeholder Forum, the Quality Council, the National Testing Laboratory Forum, the National Certification Bodies Forum and the National Technical Regulation Forum and the Advisory Committee responsible for spearheading the implementation of the policy.

The ministry will chair the Quality Council and the Advisory Committee and mobilise the funds for implementation of the policy.

7.3 Regulators and Ministries responsible for development and enforcement of technical regulations (Agriculture, health, infrastructure, water and sanitation, food safety, environment, mining, utilities,...)

The above authorities will:

- Nominate representatives and participate actively in activities of the Committees stated above
- Participate actively in the development of national standards
- Develop and enforce technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures

7.4 National Standards Body (NSB)

The National Standards Body (NSB) is responsible for:

- 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 trainings in the areas of standardization, conformity assessment and metrology activities to promote standardization culture and standards compliance
- Assisting regulators in the development of technical regulations
- Providing information on standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures
- Raising awareness and promoting the importance of standards and quality infrastructure as tools to improve market access, technology transfer and sustainable development
- Hosting the TBT National Enquiry Point in compliance with WTO/TBT Agreement
- Carry out research and surveys on standards to ensure development of relevant and market driven standards.

7.5 National Metrology Laboratories

The National Metrology Laboratories is responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining national measurement standards demonstrably traceable to international metrology standards for the relevant metrology quantity;

- Ensuring that a national calibration system is established and maintained to disseminate metrology standards to industry, the authorities and the society;
- Representing the country at the international Metrology Associations e.g. BIPM;
- Representing the country in regional metrology Associations such as AFRIMET and EAC;
- Carrying out research in the area of scientific metrology for realization of units and reference materials in the field of chemical metrology;
- Controlling the usage of measuring equipment in trade, law enforcement, health services and environmental protection;
- Controlling over pre-packaging operations;
- Managing regional and international relationships in the area of legal metrology;
- Typing approve equipment used in trade, health and safety;
- Carrying out metrology verification activities.

7.6 Private Metrology Laboratories

Private Metrology Laboratories are responsible for:

- Providing industrial metrology services
- Participating in awareness related to metrology activities in Rwanda

7.7 National Certification Services Body

The National Certification Services Body is responsible for:

- Providing product and systems certifications based on the international best practices for market requirements and standards;
- Ensuring public awareness of services rendered by certification bodies;
- Carrying Assessments for compliance of certifications provided;
- Participating in the National Certification Forum.

7.8 Private Certification Bodies

The Private Certification Bodies are responsible for:

- Providing system certification services;
- Participating in the activities of the National Certification Bodies Forum;

- Participating in awareness on certification.

7.9 National Quality Testing Laboratories

The National Quality Testing Laboratories are responsible for:

- Carrying out testing of products (foods, medicines, materials, chemicals, pesticides, etc.) as a way of quality assurance;
- Carrying out proficiency testing with peers nationally, regionally and internationally;
- Collaborating with harmonization of activities with other regional and international partners;
- Carrying out awareness on standards and guidelines related to good laboratory practices implementation and EAC laboratory designation procedures

7.10 Private Quality testing laboratories

The public quality testing laboratories are responsible for:

- Providing testing services;
- Seeking laboratory registration, recognition and or accreditation to undertake conformity assessment activities;
- Participating actively in the Quality Testing Laboratory Forum activities.

7.11 National Inspectorate Authorities

The National Inspectorate Authorities are responsible for:

- Controlling the quality 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;
- 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

7.12 National Accreditation Authority

The National Accreditation Authority is responsible for:

- Providing accreditation services to conformity assessment bodies and personnel
- Monitoring regional and international activities relevant to its own activities
- Representing the country in the relevant regional and international accreditation bodies
- Entering into agreements on mutual recognition with regional and international accreditation bodies

7.13 National Quality Council

The National Quality Council is an apex body responsible for:

- Formulating the strategies, policies on matters related to standardization, conformity assessment, metrology and accreditation in the country;
- Monitoring of all various components of the NQI to ensure transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of their operations;
- Monitoring the progress of activities of National Standards Stakeholder Forum, National Certification Bodies Forum and National Quality Testing Laboratories Forum ;
- Handling of appeals regarding standardization and conformity assessment activities in Rwanda;
- Advocating for standards development, conformity assessment, metrology and accreditation projects ;
- Advising the Government regarding strategic direction and working mechanisms of the National Quality Infrastructure

7.14 National Standards Stakeholder Forum

The National Standards Stakeholder Forum is responsible for:

- Evaluating areas of National interest for standardization activities to ensure all key national priority sectors are covered;
- Facilitating coordination between agencies and departments in order to harmonize and align projects pertaining to standardization and related activities;
- Evaluating annual standards action plans according to strategic areas of interest;

- Advising on national standards strategic planning;
- Ensuring that national interests are represented fairly in regional and international standards activities in line with national industrial and export policies.

7.15 National Quality Testing Laboratory Forum

The National Quality Testing Laboratory Forum is responsible for:

- Propose regulatory tools which will facilitate the Laboratories to operate in organized manner;
- Establish testing Laboratory data base in the country which will help in planning and proper management in terms of business development;
- Sharing knowledge and facilities on testing products and maintenance experts;
- Establish assessments tool for testing Laboratory services to identify and evaluate Overall Laboratory system, Environmental factor, testing scope, personnel, techniques, and equipment in use;
- Harmonization of test methods/protocols and laboratory quality controls in order to minimize the differences, maximize efficiency and expedite practices, and achieve nationally and internationally harmonized and acceptable approaches;
- Establish Laboratory personnel capabilities in trainings through sharing of knowledge and available facilities;
- Establish Inter laboratory comparisons and proficiency testing;
- Sharing expertise on laboratory designation and accreditation requirements;
- Establishment of Laboratory chemical waste management strategy and common site to be used.

7.16 National Certification Bodies Forum

The National Certification Bodies forum is responsible for:

- Proposing regulatory tools which will facilitate the Certification Bodies to operate in an organized manner;
- Establishing certification bodies data base in the country;
- Sharing Knowledge and experience in providing certification services;
- Establishing mechanisms for peer assessment activities;

- Harmonizing processes and procedures.

7.17 National Technical Regulation Committee

The national technical committee is responsible for:

- Coordinating activities related to technical regulation development and implementation amongst the regulatory authorities and the NQI;
- Ensuring that the regulatory authorities follow the defined Technical Regulation Framework in developing and implementing technical regulation;
- Ensuring that all the regulatory authorities consistently meet the requirements of the WTO-TBT Agreement, the WTO-SPS Agreement and other trade agreements
- Overseeing the review of technical regulation already on the statute books by the regulatory authorities, in order to revise, confirm or withdraw such regulation and to make sure that it complies with the Technical Regulation Framework.

8 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Annex B sets out the actions, costs and organizations responsible for the implementation of the policy options.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is vital to avail financial resources for the implementation of the Quality Policy. A number of key initiatives in the Quality policy implementation plan, particularly the initiatives related to infrastructure, affecting quality of products and services already have existing channels for funding.

Within their mandates of all sectors of national economy, concerned ministries shall budget and mobilize resources from public funds, international development partners and the private sector for the implementation of this quality Policy.

Any service related to National Quality Infrastructure activity from the responsible government institution shall be offered at a charge determined and made public by the Competent Authority. Such services include but not limited to the following:

- ❖ **Sale of standards** - This is in relation to sale of specific Rwanda Standards, foreign Standards and related publications to the industry and any other interested party;
- ❖ **Training** – This is in relation to the training services offered to Stakeholders on demand;
- ❖ **Laboratory Analysis** - This is in relation to private samples submitted by the client for testing, and private or public samples upon the request by the regulator;
- ❖ **Metrology Services** - This is an income from routine calibration services, instrumentation and engineering services (legal and industrial/applied metrology) in support of the measurement solutions program and annual license fees for maintenance and repair of weighing instruments by private bodies;
- ❖ **Quality Inspection** - this is based (a given percentage) on imported and locally manufactured goods that fall under regulated goods. It includes inspection done at border, industry site and owner premises as shall be enacted by the Competent authority;
- ❖ **Product registration** - it is charged on products and services that have to undergo registration process before being allowed to the market as shall be enacted by the Competent authority;
- ❖ **Import for Motor Vehicles** - The income from this particular item is in relation to contracts for motor vehicle inspection by the competent authority;
- ❖ **System Certification** -The income from system certification services to industry including but not limited to Quality Management System, Environment Management System, and Food Safety management Systems;
- ❖ **Personnel Certification** - Income from personnel certification;
- ❖ **Product certification** - Income from certification for use on products that comply with the minimum requirements of Rwanda standards or any other quality specifications prescribed in Rwanda.

As provided for in 5.2.1 there shall be created a **Quality Fee** to top up Government funding and support the operations of the National Quality Infrastructure institutions to cater for activities of standards development, standards research, dissemination and publication of standards, testing, certification and metrology and any other as may be determined by the Competent Authority.

10 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 laws for the new institutions to be created by this policy need to be developed. The laws include the following:

- ◆ The revision of the law governing RSB;
- ◆ Enactment of Standardization , Conformity Assessment and Accreditation law;
- ◆ Enactment of Metrology law

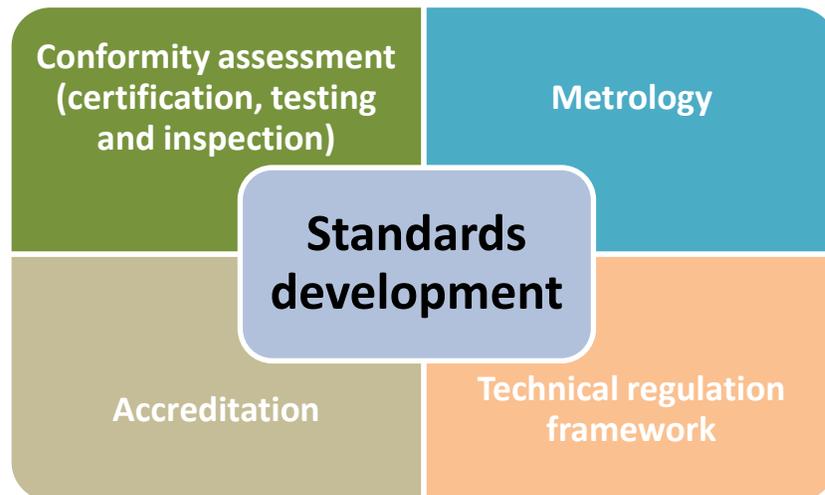
ANNEX A: DEFINING THE NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE (NQI) AND TECHNICAL REGULATION FRAMEWORK

A.0 Introduction

The Quality Infrastructure can be defined as the totality of the institutional framework (public and/or private) required to establish and implement standardization, conformity assessment (inspection, testing and certification), metrology (scientific, industrial and legal), and accreditation services necessary to provide acceptable evidence that products and services meet defined criteria, be they demanded by regulatory authorities (i.e. technical regulations) or the market place (i.e. contractually or inferred).

The elements or services of the Quality Infrastructure can be provided by a number of institutions provided that international good practices on conflicts of interest are observed. Failure to provide any one or a combination of these elements of the Quality Infrastructure in an effective and efficient way will have a negative effect on trade.

Figure 3 Services provided by the NQI



A.1 Standards development

Standards are a formal document developed and published by a National Standards Body, generally by consensus, containing the requirements that a product, system, process or service should comply with. Standards are the basis of technical regulation, contractual obligations or market expectations. Standards are developed on a number of levels, namely:

- International standards
- Regional standards
- National standards

A.2 Conformity assessment

Conformity assessment is the collective term for services necessary to provide evidence that a supplier, product, system or service meets requirements such as provided for in a standard or technical regulation.

The following are generally considered to be conformity assessment services:

- Inspection;
- Testing;
- Certification (product or system).

A.3 Metrology

Metrology is the technology or science of measurement and the service is required to ensure internationally recognized traceability of measurements and calibration of measuring instruments.

Metrology can be subdivided into:

- Scientific metrology,
- Legal metrology,
- Industrial metrology.

A.4 Accreditation

Accreditation, including peer assessment, is the activity providing independent attestation as to the competency of individuals or organizations providing conformity assessment services, thereby facilitating international recognition of claims of conformity.

A.5 Technical regulations

Technical regulations are developed and implemented by the government. Whereas technical regulations contain requirements similar to standards, they also include administrative provisions for their implementation. Compliance with standards is voluntary whereas compliance with technical regulations is mandatory.

Technical regulations are clearly defined in the WTO/TBT Agreement and all WTO member states have to comply with these provisions. Technical regulations contain technical requirements for the relevant product as well as the administrative provisions for their implementation, which is mandatory by law.

The technical requirements are based on standards. The administrative provisions include the conformity assessment regime to be followed, identify the regulatory government and its responsibilities, and provide for sanctions that have to be applied in the case of non-conforming products.

ANNEX B: IMPLEMENTAION PLAN

No.	Policy Measure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Budget (Million)	Institutions responsible
Policy objective 1: Development / revision of the National Quality Infrastructure institutions Legal Instruments and setting in place a policy implementation mechanism								
1.1	Review and approval of the Rwanda Quality Policy	x					5	RSB/MINICOM
1.2	Development /Revision of the laws governing NQI institutions (RSB, RICA, RFDA, ...) and related Regulations	X					5	RSB/MINICOM, MINAGRI, MINISANTE
1.3	Enactment of the law governing Standardization , conformity assessment and accreditation services and related regulations	X					10	RSB/MINICOM
1.4	Enactment of the law governing inspection services and related regulations.	X					10	RSB/MINICOM, MINAGRI, MINISANTE
1.5	Enactment of Metrology law and related regulations	X					10	RSB/MINICOM
1.6	Put in place and operationalise a steering committee for overseeing the implementation	X	X	X	X	X	10	MINICOM

	of the quality policy							
Policy objective 2: Ensure sustainable funding and strengthen NQI institutions								
2.1	Review and approval of NQI Institutions' structures	X					5	NQI institutions and parent Ministries
2.2	Development of NQI Institutions' strategic plans	X	X				100	NQI Institutions
2.3	Development of staff retention strategies	X	X				50	NQI Institutions
2.4	Carry out market research and impact evaluation for NQI services		X				50	NQI Institutions
2.5	Development of a national standardization strategy		X				50	RSB/MINICOM
2.6	Creation and operationalization of Standards and Conformity Assessment Service providers fora to promote synergies	X	X	X	X	X	15	RSB/MINICOM
Policy objective 3: Positioning Rwandan NQI as a center of excellence for standardization, testing and metrology services								
3.1	Develop human resources necessary to provide standardization, training and	X	X	X	X	X	500	RSB/MINICOM

	technical assistance, testing and metrology services							
3.2	Develop required infrastructure (new building, state of art testing and calibration facilities, reference materials, etc)	X	X	X	X	X	15,000	RSB, RICA, RFDA, MINICOMMINA GRI and MINISANTE
3.3	Certification and accreditation of NQI services for international recognition	X	X	X	X	X	500	NQI Institutions
3.4	Participation in international standardization activities, inter laboratory comparisons and proficiency testing	X	X	X	X	X	500	RSB
Policy objective 4: Raise awareness on standardization, conformity assessment and metrology and foster quality culture in public life and throughout society								
4.1	Develop and implement a communication strategy for raising quality awareness	X	X	X	X	X	300	NQI Institutions
4.2	Incorporate standardization, conformity assessment and metrology concepts into national curriculum at secondary and tertian levels of education	X	X	X	X	X	250	RSB, REB, HEC, MINEDUC
4.3	Develop, design and print educational materials on standardization, Conformity	X	X	X	X	X	100	RSB, REB, HEC, MINEDUC

	Assessment and Metrology to be used in schools (textbooks and other reference materials)							
4.4	Increase Technical assistance to SMEs for quality compliance		X	X	X	X	500	RSB/MINICOM
Policy Objective 5: Ensure standards compliance of imported and locally produced products								
5.1	Review of procurement law to provide preferential treatments for quality compliant products and service	X					2	RSB/MINICOM, RPPA
5.2	Set minimum requirement for personnel involved in sectors that have health, safety and environmental implications		X				2	NQI Institutions and parent Ministries
5.3	Design and implement a mechanism for mandatory certification		X				5	RSB
5.4	Develop and implement a mechanism for product registration	X	X	X	X	X	5	RICA, RFDA
5.5	Develop and implement a mechanism for providing cross frontier NQI services			X	X	X	10	RSB
5.6	Create, operationalise and maintain a centralised national quality information sharing system			X			800	RSB, RICA, RFDA

Policy objective 6: ensure that conformity assessment services providers are internationally recognized								
6.1	Put in place and operationalise National Accreditation Office		X				30	MINICOM
Policy objective 7: Strengthen the national technical regulation framework through setting up common approach to regulation across all regulatory institutions in order to meet WTO/TBT and SPS agreements and international best practices								
7.1	Create and operationalise a National Technical Regulatory Committee	X					20	MINICO, MINAGRI, MINISANTE and Regulators
7.2	Develop and enforce technical regulations for products and services which have an impact on health, safety and environment	X	X	X	X	X	50	Regulators (RICA, RFDA, REMA, RURA,..)
7.3	Create and implement a capacity building programme for regulators		X	X	X	X	20	MINICOM
Total						18,914 billion		

ANNEX C: INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF RWANDA QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

In the vision of strengthening its delivered services for their international recognition, Rwanda Standards Boards improved and upgraded the level of its delivered services for their compliance on the applicable international standards and attestation of conformity and competences on various schemes were issued by the internationally recognized certification and accreditation body.

C.1 International recognition of Standards Development and corporate support services

Due to its competence and professionalism in standardization related field, Rwanda Standards Board is an active member of the following but not limited to these regional and international standardization organizations:

- International Organization for Standardization (ISO),
- International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC),
- International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML),
- Codex Alimentarius Commission,
- African Organization for Standardization (ARSO),
- The African Electrotechnical Standardization Commission (AFSEC),

In addition to this, to ensure compliance of standards development processes and corporate support services to the applicable international relevant standards, Rwanda Standards Board established a quality management systems according to ISO 9001 providing requirements for Quality Management System, and the established management system was assessed to check its compliance with the applicable statutory, regulatory, contractual and customer requirements by the internationally accredited conformity assessment body (**Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Zertifizierung von Management systemen (DQS) Holdings GmbH**), the one awarded ISO 9001 certification to RSB.

C.2 International recognition of Certification Services

Rwanda Standards Board is a certification body that provides both products and management systems certification services.

To ensure compliance with the applicable international requirements, Rwanda Standards Board, management systems complying respectively with ISO 17021 on the requirements for bodies providing certification of management systems and ISO 17065 on the requirements for bodies provides products certification.

The same established management systems where assessed and found to be in line with the applicable international requirements where the system the Hazards Analysis and Critical Control Points and Food Safety Management Certification Schemes were assessed and **accredited by Raad Voor Accreditatie (Dutch Accreditation Council, RvA)** and the accreditation certificate awarded to RSB.

In the same vision, various intra region peer assessments at EAC level on products certification and inspections were conducted and evidenced compliance of Rwanda Standards Board certification and inspection services respectively to the requirements of ISO 17065 and I7020.

C.3 International recognition of Metrology Services (Calibration and Verification of measuring equipment Laboratories)

Rwanda Standards Board provides Metrology Services (Calibration and Verification of measuring equipment) in line with ISO 17025, the international standard providing the requirements for Quality Testing and Metrology Laboratories, as basis for competence attestation of a quality testing/metrology laboratory.

This competence of RSB to provide metrology services was verified and accredited by **Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle (DakkS)**.

C.4 International recognition of Quality Testing Laboratories

Rwanda Standards Board provides laboratory quality testing services in line with ISO 17025, the international standard providing the requirements for Quality Testing and Metrology Laboratories, as basis for competence attestation of a quality testing/metrology laboratory.

This competence of RSB to provide Quality Testing services was verified **Raad Voor Accreditatie (Dutch Accreditation Council, RvA)** and the accreditation issuance is under process.

In addition to this, Rwanda Standards Board participates in proficiency testing (PT) and other inter-comparison tests, which result in maintaining the qualification of Rwanda Standards Board Laboratories as reference laboratories at regional level (COMESA, EAC).