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RWANDA QUALITY POLICY

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CONTENT	Pages
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
1 ISSUE.....	6
2 CONTEXT	7
3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES	8
3.1 Vision.....	8
3.2 Objectives.....	8
3.3 Rationale	9
4 ANALYSIS	9
4.1 Elements of the National Quality Infrastructure	9
4.2 Standardization	10
4.3 Metrology.....	12
4.4 Conformity assessment.....	14
4.5 Accreditation.....	20
4.6 Technical regulations.....	21
5 PREFERRED OPTION	22
5.1 Standards.....	22
5.2 Metrology.....	23
5.3 Conformity assessment.....	24
5.4 Accreditation.....	25
5.5 Technical regulation	26
5.6 Education and training.....	27
5.7 Doing Business.....	27
6 STAKEHOLDER VIEWS.....	28

7	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....	28
8	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS.....	28
9	LEGAL IMPLICATIONS.....	29
	ANNEX 1: ROLE OF KEY PLAYERS IN THE NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE	30
	ANNEX 2: DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....	33
	ANNEX 3: RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY NQI INSTITUTIONS.....	35

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In line with Rwanda's goal of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of **National Quality Infrastructure** (NQI) institutions; this policy seeks to have a radical transformation of structures and management systems of these institutions.

The outcome of this restructuring exercise is the creation and realignment of the existing institutions into the following bodies:

National Standards Body (NSB)

The National Standards Body is comprised of the **National Standards Institute (NSI)**, **National Quality Testing Laboratories (NQTL)** and the **National Certification Services (NCS)**. The NSB is responsible for the development of national standards and conformity assessment (testing and certification) services.

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

The NMO is to be separated later due to capacities and means. The NSB has to remain with the NSI, NQTL and NCS only. **Inspection** activities, currently under the NSB, have to be transferred to the **National Inspectorate Board** to avoid conflict of interest. The NSB shall report to the Ministry responsible for **Trade and Industry**.

National Inspectorate Board (NIB)

The **National Inspectorate Board** is an autonomous body responsible for carrying out inspections to protect the public and environment from dangerous, counterfeited and low quality products together with services. It has to provide professional and independent inspection services in all sectors throughout the supply chain to meet specific needs of Regulators, Manufacturers, Suppliers of goods, services and any other interested party. Inspectors shall be guided by standards and regulations in force as declared mandatory by the relevant Ministries.

In fact, a standard declared mandatory becomes a technical regulation. Hence, Sanctions related to nonconformity as identified by the inspector(s) are enforced by the relevant regulatory bodies. The NIB shall be under the Ministry responsible for Trade.

Rwanda Accreditation Services (RAS)

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

1 ISSUE

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

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

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

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

- Conflicting or inexistence of legislations creates overlaps across Agencies and Ministries which leads to lengthy and costly transaction times, role conflict, inefficiency and waste of resources;
- Lack of coordination and synergies between NQI institutions ;
- Lack of respect of procedures for developing national standards at the expense of Rwanda's International credibility;
- Low capacity and under skilled human and material resources in public and private institutions;
- Lack of and/or lag in timely sharing of technical information, with respect to technical regulations and standards, among institutions involved in NQI implementation;
- Non-alignment of some of the NQI and Technical Regulation administration and enforcement procedures with international best practices;
- Inexistence of a national accreditation mechanism;

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

2 CONTEXT

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

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

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

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

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

3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Vision

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

3.2 Objectives

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

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

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

- To have a distinct institutional framework that allows the mobilization of all available resources for strengthening NQI.

3.3 Rationale

The development of the Quality Policy and its implementation will strengthen the NQI, ensuring **quality** as well as **safety of products and services** on the market. Quality products and services inherently instil customer confidence, become competitive and promote export leading to sustainable economic growth.

The Quality Policy will provide for a distinct institutional framework that allows the mobilization of all available resources for enhancement of standardization, product and services quality, safety and health initiatives, and the effective convergence, integration and complementarity of efforts of a wide range of public, private and civil society institutions.

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

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

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

4 ANALYSIS

This Policy is structured around the key elements of the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI). This section provides a detailed analysis for every element.

4.1 Elements of the National Quality Infrastructure

At the international and regional levels, **three** separate but interdependent and interlinked **main “pillars” of knowledge** are essential for developing a NQI that enables sustainable development that can lead to full participation in international

trade and satisfy the technical requirements of the multilateral trading system. These are **Standardization** (capabilities to develop, publish and disseminate standards to interested parties), **Metrology** (access to physical, chemical, biological standards of measurements as well as provision of calibration and legal metrology services), and **Conformity Assessment** (inspection, testing and certification) with a mechanism to ensure that all conformity assessment service providers are competent.

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

4.2 Standardization

4.2.1 General principles

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

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

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

4.2.2 Current situation

The development, approval and publication of Rwanda Standards are vested in the Rwanda Bureau of Standards (RBS). However, some Ministries and Agencies develop standards and codes of practice that are **not based on internationally recognized procedures as applied by the RBS**; a contravention of the article 3 of the law N°43/2006 of 5/10/2006 creating RBS and disregard of a number of standards already developed and published by RBS for public use.

Since 2002, the Bureau has published **633 National Standards** in a wide range of fields including agriculture, health, engineering, electronics, metrology, chemical products and environment. It is also participating in standards harmonization within East African Community (EAC) and COMESA. Currently, there are around **1200 EAC** and **300 COMESA** harmonized standards which have to be adopted and implemented by all member States.

RBS is also a member of the international standards setting bodies: International Standardization Organization (ISO), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC); International Organization for Legal Metrology (OIML), American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and Codex Alimentarius. All those organizations provide RBS with a collection of international standards which can be adopted at the national level free of charge. Currently, around **60 000** standards and related reference materials are available in the RBS Information Centre.

Despite all the available standards information, the implementation of existing standards by our local industry, public institutions and the public in general is still very low. The RBS has a crucial role to play in increasing awareness of the standards to promote quality culture among Rwandans.

With regard to disseminating information on standards, RBS acts as the **National Enquiry Point (NEP) for WTO/Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) agreement**. In this role, it provides information on standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures to the Business Community. The NEP needs to be strengthened with a view to providing relevant services to all stakeholders.

4.2.3 Analysis of current situation and possible options

Typical standards institutions are:

- 1. National Standards Bodies (NSBs)**
- 2. Sectoral Standards Development Organizations (SDOs)**
- 3. Industry Based Standards Organizations (IBSOs)**

Although most National Standards Bodies are public organizations, there are a few private ones in developed economies. **A public NSB** is usually a monopoly while a **private** one has an agreement with the Government to perform similar activities as NSB.

Even if standards can be developed by many organizations including companies and regulators, it is normally the role of **NSB to develop consensus based standards**. As such they take into account the balanced views of all stakeholders (Traders, Industry, Consumer Associations, Regulators, Academia, Research Institutions, NGOs, etc) affected by such standards. NSB also provides the linkages for national inputs into the development of international standards.

Considering the Rwandan economy, the formation of Sectoral Standards Development Organizations and Private Standards Bodies or the development of standards by NSB together with some Ministries and regulators may **not be cost effective**. Rwanda should opt for **strengthening the existing NSB** and encourage the involvement of industry and regulators in the process of development of national standards. This

consensus building should also facilitate the implementation of national standards. The Government should also make a formal long term commitment to financing the NSB if the implementation of national standards has to be sustained.

NSB should have the role of **coordinating** all the **standards development activities in all sectors** and the published standards be used as the **basis** for the development and implementation of **technical regulations** by regulators and Ministries. Companies may develop their own standards but they should not contradict the national standards. This good practice **resonates** well with the WTO agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) together with the EAC and COMESA trade protocols.

In addition, the NSB may choose between developing indigenous standards and adopting regional or international standards as national standards. The advantage of the latter (**adopting**) is that it can lead to **better trading opportunities, facilitating trade and may reduce the dumping of poorer quality goods**. In contrast, the development of purely national standards requires significant technical resources and expertise and even may take a longer time. The developed standards tend to focus on national needs and might hamper international trade with other countries that have gone the international route.

Rwanda should therefore strive to adopt suitable regional and international standards to promote exports and competitiveness of Rwanda products and develop purely national standards for local industry development especially Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs).

4.3 Metrology

4.3.1 General principles

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

Metrology can be subdivided into:

1. **Scientific Metrology** dealing primarily with **Research** on definition and realization of measurement standards;
2. **Industrial Metrology** dealing with the satisfactory safe keeping and dissemination of measurement units to Industry and Laboratories; and

3. **Legal Metrology** responsible for enforcement of trade, safety and health measurement regulations, and type approval of measurement instruments. It also embraces the regulation of pre-packages for retail goods.

4.3.2 Current situation

Rwanda Bureau of Standards is mandated to provide metrology services in the country. It has been offering a number of services in legal and industrial metrology since October 2007. These services are provided in six laboratories (Mass, Dimensions, Pressure, Volume, Electricity and Temperature laboratories).

These laboratories do not have sufficient equipment to carry out all the required work and some measurements such as force, energy and transformer, Radio Frequency and Microwave, Time, Flow, Photometry, Acoustics, Radiations, High Frequency and Chemical Metrology do not have equipment and are not carried out.

In the field of Legal Metrology, inspections, verification and calibration (**re-verification**) of equipment used in trade like fuel dispensers, scales and other weighing equipment is regularly done by personnel from the laboratories on a basic scale as well as health and safety related equipment. Type approval of the measuring equipment is not currently done.

4.3.3 Analysis of current situation and possible options

Globally, the National Metrology Infrastructure consists of three distinct and separate metrology establishments representing three categories of metrology stated below:

- A National Metrology Institute (NMI) responsible for scientific and industrial metrology;
- A Legal Metrology Department (LMD) or Weights and Measures Department; responsible for Legal Metrology and;
- Private Calibration Services (PrCS) and/or Public Calibration Services (PuCS) covering calibration and instrument testing.

The National Metrology Institute is invariably a public organization as per the definition; the Legal Metrology Departments but Calibration laboratories may be public or private.

Many options are possible and each one carries risks and advantages. The various options for Rwanda could be the following:

- Have **two separate metrology entities** set up, the **National Metrology Institute (NMI)** responsible for scientific and industrial metrology and a **Legal Metrology Department** responsible for legal metrology; this is an ideal situation as it creates

independence of the two institutions; however there is a high risk of **breaking the traceability** link to National and International Metrology Standards.

- An **autonomous National Metrology Institute (NMI)** and **Legal Metrology Department (LMD) under the Ministry responsible for Trade**. This option still creates the independence of the two institutions; the disadvantage is likely to come from undue influence of the line Ministry contrary to its mandate as it has been observed where this option is practiced.
- **NMI under the National Standards Body (NSB) and LMD under the Ministry responsible for Trade**. However, the current global trend is discouraging this course due to cases of mixing-up mandates of the two departments.
- **NMI and LMD under NBS**. This can be the optimum solution but should only serve as a transition until the capacity of the two departments have been developed enough for the two departments to create an autonomous body called the National Metrology Organisation (NMO).

For coherency in realizing national metrology interests, **cost effective management** of national metrology services, understanding between the two institutions working for common interests albeit at different levels and easy monitoring and evaluation for effectiveness, the National Metrology Institute and Legal Metrology Department should be separate in responsibilities and functions but under one management called the **National Metrology Organization (NMO)**. This **convergence** is currently being **encouraged** to minimize operational costs and to boost research and easily extend technologies to local citizens.

- Whereas **Legal metrology** function should **not** be **privatized**, calibration laboratories may be public and/or private, should be accredited and should ensure that their reference standards are traceable to the national standards of measurements.

4.4 Conformity assessment

4.4.1 General principles

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

The overall objective of conformity assessment services is to **demonstrate the quality of products** and services independently from the manufacturer or the supplier. Hence, conformity assessment service providers shall pay attention to national needs,

be transparent, recognized and non-discriminatory and avoid unnecessary barriers to trade.

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

4.4.2 Inspection

4.4.2.1 General Principals

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

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

In addition, there is a system of Pre-Import Verification for Conformity (PIVoC) by an independent recognized inspection body before their shipment to minimize the entry into importing countries of poor quality products. This is an anti-dumping strategy. Designated public institutions with a clear regulatory framework also carry out inspections.

4.4.2.2 Current situation

Currently, inspection seems to be the common conformity assessment approach to enforce standards, guidelines and technical regulations. In fact, it is currently conducted by several institutions in Rwanda. The following institutions are involved in inspection activities:

(i) Rwanda Bureau of Standards (RBS)

RBS inspects imports and exports for quality compliance to standards and ensures their control at all points of their production, marketing and consumption within the country. This is done through import inspection at border posts, industrial inspection and market surveillance activities.

(ii) The Agencies of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources

Rwanda Animal Resources Development Authority (RARDA), Rwanda Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) and Rwanda Horticulture Development Authority (RHODA) carry out plant protection and animal health inspections, as well as controls of agrochemicals.

(iii) The Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health inspects food supplements, food hygiene, medical products and establishments.

(iv) The Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA) and Local Government Authorities

The Ministry and Local Government Authorities inspect buildings, roads, bridges and other civil engineering structures.

(v) Rwanda National Police

Rwanda National Police carries out inspections of motor vehicles for road worthiness.

(vi) Rwanda Development Board (RDB)

RDB inspects hotels and food establishments.

(vii) Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA)

REMA inspects projects, activities and products that may cause environmental degradation. Among products inspected are prohibited products that can pollute the environment such as prohibited chemicals and gases.

4.4.2.2 Analysis of current situation and possible options

As it appears, the inspection system described above is **scattered** in different institutions. The system of inspecting, reporting, decision making and flow of information between all the institutions is not clearly defined. This leads to waste of resources, overlaps, gaps, role conflict and hence inefficiency.

To build an effective system, a number of options exist globally for quality and safety inspections:

1. **National Inspectorate Board (NIB)** comprising relevant departments depending on areas to be inspected and providing inspection services to meet specific needs of regulators, other government authorities or private companies;
2. Each autonomous institution carrying out inspections according to its scope of activities
3. SPS and veterinary products to be inspected by the Ministry of Agriculture Agencies, Foods and Medicines Authority to inspect pharmaceuticals, foods and health establishments, the rest to be inspected by the National Inspectorate Board;
4. NSB to handle all quality inspections. However if NSB retains this arm of conformity assessment, its primary mandate would be interfered with, and hence tantamount to conflict of interest.

For efficient management of resources, removal of functional overlaps, simplified planning, cost effectiveness, monitoring and evaluation, option one related to the creation of a **National Inspectorate Board** is preferred for Rwanda.

4.4.3 Testing

4.4.3.1 General principles

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

4.4.3.2 Current situation

Rwanda has quality control laboratories scattered under different institutions which include: Rwanda Bureau of Standards (Biochemical and Materials Testing laboratories), Ministry of Infrastructure (National laboratory of Public Works) , Ministry of Agriculture (Plant health and Seeds Laboratory, Veterinary Laboratory); Ministry of Health (Labophar, National Reference Laboratory), National Police (Forensic laboratory and Centre for Technical Controls), Rwanda Geology and Mines Authority (OGMER) (mineral quality control), medical laboratories).

4.4.3.3 Analysis of current situation and possible options

Most of the above laboratories have similar equipment. If few of the equipment were to be used by **one institution** they can fulfil the purpose of all the laboratories in the country. When it comes to maintenance, all these laboratories **source experts from outside** (currently there is no expert for laboratory equipment maintenance in the country), this leads to a bigger budget for maintenance than it should be. Procurement

of **consumables** is done by the separate institutions yet the Government would have advantages if it was done as one lot by one institution.

In addition, most of the laboratories do not fully implement **international good laboratory practices** (ISO/IEC 17025 on general requirements for competence of calibration, testing laboratories and ISO 15189 on particular requirements for quality and competence of medical laboratories).

Quality control laboratories may be public or private and may be organized in two ways: **sectoral approach or combined approach**.

In the sectoral approach, each quality institution dealing with quality and safety matters has its own quality control laboratories whereas in combined approach, all the quality matters are handled by only one **National Quality Control Institution**. The advantage of the latter approach is that, **one piece of equipment** can service the quality control demands in more than one sector without the need to procure the same equipment for each institution as it is done currently.

In order to optimize resources, minimize duplication of duties, wastage of resources on equipment and reagents, better coordination; Rwanda should adopt the combined approach by setting up a **National Quality Testing Laboratories (NQTL)** under one management, which will facilitate international recognition of Rwanda's testing services.

4.4.4 Certification

4.4.4.1 General principles

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

Three types of certification exist:

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

4.4.4.2 Current situation

The Rwanda Bureau of Standards is operating **voluntary product and system certification schemes** through offering **Quality Marks** to products and systems

complying with relevant Standards. **Private certification bodies** are also allowed to Rwandan market and have been providing especially system certification services.

The agencies under the Ministry of Agriculture; the Rwanda Animal Resources Development Authority, the Rwanda Agricultural Development Authority and the Rwanda Horticulture Development Agency also provide **certification** for plant and animal health of exported products and certify veterinary drugs and other veterinary inputs.

The Tea Board Authority (OCIR THE) and the Coffee Board Authority (OCIR CAFÉ) also certify tea and coffee for export respectively.

4.4.4.2 Analysis of current situation and possible options

The system is **fragmented** and no quality control based on standards requirements for most of the above institutions is done. There is no clear coordination between relevant institutions to ensure that exports are tested and certified before shipment. The existing legal framework is fragmented and overlapping, then **traceability** is lacking.

In order to streamline the certification activities, the Government may decide to **privatize certification** services and subcontract private certification bodies or continue providing certification services but **define clearly the scopes of activities** of each public institution involved. In fact, internationally, certification services are offered by both public and private bodies mainly to increase efficiency and effectiveness through competition.

For Rwanda's case, it is better to have **both private and public certification bodies**. They should **demonstrate competence especially through accreditation** in order to deliver sustainable and recognized services.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Animal resources Agencies should continue to handle **SPS certification** since they are specialized in these activities and are designated as the competent authorities. The NSB and other private certification bodies, on the other hand, should handle product and system certification other than that of SPS.

Although certification is a voluntary activity, all products shall meet minimum standards requirements before they are put on the Rwandan market in order to protect consumers, the environment and the promotion of local industry.

Relevant Authorities of National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) shall take the leading role in ensuring that products made in Rwanda are inspected and certified to meet the local and international market quality requirements.

4.5 Accreditation

4.5.1 General principles

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

4.5.2 Current situation

Rwanda does not have an accreditation Body. However, under the EAC Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (SQMT) Act, 2006; section 6(d), **each Partner State is required to designate a National Accreditation Body as part of its Quality Infrastructure**. Countries which have not currently established the body could nominate a **focal point** instead. Rwanda has already nominated the focal point who is member of the East African Accreditation Board (EAAB) and is working in Rwanda Bureau of Standards. The Community is targeting to create a Regional Accreditation Body.

4.5.3 Analysis of current situation and possible options

Accreditation bodies come in various forms: most of the countries have only one, some have many and in others it is a big organization such as the National Standards Body. The tendency now is for countries with many accreditation bodies to **merge them** into one or at most two to reflect the requirements of International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF). The accreditation bodies need to be **independent** of and separate from other quality infrastructure organizations to avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Since the **Rwanda National Standards Body** is currently carrying out conformity assessment activities, it **cannot** be given the accreditation mandate. For that purpose, considering the resources constraints, it would be best to have just one National Accreditation Body which all ministries and regulators would agree to use and support so that it can be economically and technically viable.

In the meantime, Rwanda could use the regional or foreign accreditation bodies and establish an **accreditation desk or a focal point in the Ministry responsible for Trade** to facilitate the assessment and accreditation of national conformity assessment bodies and set an accreditation body in the future. This is **in line** with the requirements of **EAC/SQMT Act, 2006**.

The current focal point service in RBS should be transferred to the Ministry responsible for Trade in order to avoid the conflict of interest.

4.6 Technical regulations

4.6.1 General principles

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

4.6.2 Current situation

Technical regulations are developed and administered by Ministries responsible for agriculture, construction, electricity, environment, health, industry and trade, telecommunication, tourism, transport, petroleum and mineral resources.

A number of regulatory bodies (Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA), the Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA), Rwanda Animal Resources Development Authority (RARDA), Rwanda Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) and Rwanda Bureau of Standards (RBS) have, among others, the mandate to develop and or to implement the technical regulations and mandatory Standards.

The notification mechanism has also been put in place. It comprises four enquiry points (RBS for TBT, RARDA for animal health, RADA for plant health, and MINISANTE for food safety) that provide information on market requirements, technical regulations and SPS measures to the Business Community. The Ministry of Trade and Industry acts as the Notification Authority.

4.6.3 Analysis of current situation and possible options

The notification service and the enquiry points are not properly functioning mainly because the officers in charge are also responsible for other duties.

The above regulators do not have a system of information sharing and their activities are not coordinated. This can lead to duplication of duties and waste of resources.

Regulatory authorities can be organized in many ways:

- **Sectoral approach** where an authority is set up to regulate a particular sector. The following institutions are created in many countries: Water Regulatory Board,

Electricity Regulatory Board, Road Authority, Housing, National Foods Authority, Medicines Authority, Environmental Authority, Tourism Board, etc.

- **Combined approach** where all the Regulatory authorities come together to form a **National Regulatory Board** to enforce technical regulations and Ministries remain with the mandate of their development.

The second option can enhance coordination and proper allocation of responsibilities amongst the regulators; avoid duplications and enhance trade whilst at the same time ensuring the safety and health of the society and the environment.

However, even if this option has many advantages, it may be difficult for the time being to coordinate so many institutions with different mandate. The responsible authority may run the risk of losing focus. In addition to that, considering the ongoing regional harmonization process and the Rwandan obligations in regional and international agreements, the best option for Rwanda could be to maintain sector specific regulators.

In order to ensure effectiveness of this option, a National Technical Framework is to be developed and implemented that would ensure that technical regulation development follows a common guideline, meets international and EAC obligations and that the division of work between regulatory authorities and the NQI is optimally coordinated.

5 PREFERRED OPTION

5.1 Standards

5.1.1 With regard to national standards as the initial building block for most quality related activities, the Government ensures that the standards development process depends on achieving consensus amongst stakeholders, and is implemented by or on behalf of the National 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.

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

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

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

5.1.5 The development of national standards is fully facilitated by the Government in order to provide access to necessary technical reference documents for Producers, Importers, Consumers, Regulators and other stakeholders

5.1.6 NSB acts as the National Enquiry Point on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) matters. It is also responsible for dissemination of standards related information to the public through tailored short trainings, workshops, seminars, industrial visits and availing public access to the information and documentation centre.

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

5.2 Metrology

5.2.1 In order to establish a common metrological framework, the Government enhances and upgrades the metrology capability by strengthening the existing National Metrology Infrastructure under the Rwanda Bureau of Standards, towards the creation of a National Metrology Institute (NMI) and a Legal Metrology Department (LMD) so that it can provide reliable and accurate measurement service within Rwanda, whilst at the same time linking up internationally with the Calibration and Measurement Capability (CMC) recognition system administrated by the “Bureau International de Poids et Mésures” (BIPM).

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

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

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

5.3 Conformity assessment

5.3.1 Conformity assessment activities (certification of products, management systems, personnel, testing and inspection services) for the technical regulations or market place may be provided by conformity assessment service providers (certification bodies, laboratories and inspection bodies), in both private and public domains that demonstrably fulfil the requirements of the relevant international standards or are accredited by Rwanda Accreditation Services (RAS) or another internationally recognized accreditation body.

5.3.2 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.

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

5.3.4 In addition, regarding public testing activities, in order to optimize resources, minimize duplication of duties, wastage of resources on equipment and reagents and better coordination of Rwanda quality control testing laboratories scattered in different institutions; these laboratories are put under one management to form a National Quality Testing Laboratories (NQTL) under the National Standards Body. It provides

testing services to the public and private sectors to prove compliance of products and services to technical regulations, standards, other markets or customer requirements. NQTL shall seek accreditation to facilitate international recognition of Rwanda's testing services.

In the area of certification, the Certification Unit under RBS is upgraded to form a National Certification Services (NCS) which provide 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.

5.3.5 Whilst enhancing the capacity of the public institutions, the Government creates a policy environment that will not hinder, but facilitate the development of **private** conformity assessment service providers, and the Government utilizes their services in public procurement and technical regulation provided that they can demonstrate their competence through accreditation.

5.3.6 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.

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

5.4 Accreditation

5.4.1 In order to facilitate independent attestation of the technical capabilities of the conformity assessment service providers to the satisfaction of local, foreign markets and authorities, the Government sets up a **National Accreditation Focal Point** in the Ministry responsible for trade. The National Accreditation Focal Point is responsible for facilitating accreditation of conformity assessment service providers such as inspection and certification bodies, testing and calibration laboratories by International recognized accreditation bodies. When deemed necessary, the Government shall transform the National Accreditation Focal Point into a fully fledged and independent Accreditation Body that is recognized internationally; **Rwanda Accreditation Service (RAS)**.

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

5.5 Technical regulation

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

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

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

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

5.5.6 In order to ensure the proper implementation of technical regulations, the Government establishes and maintains an adequate infrastructure to develop, implement and monitor consumer protection policies; and to ensure that relevant

measures are implemented for the benefit of all population sectors, particularly in the rural areas.

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

5.6 Education and training

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

5.7 Doing Business

5.7.1 In order to speed up the quality inspection of goods and services entering the Country, Pre-verification for conformity (PIVoC) is carried out by designated competent bodies in order to prevent entry into Rwanda of the substandard and counterfeit products that pose high risk to the safety and health of the consumers as well as the environment.

5.7.2 The services of the National Inspectorate Board, the Customs Body, Immigration and Emigration, and other relevant bodies are integrated in a Single Window in order to offer quality inspection services to the public.

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

6 STAKEHOLDER VIEWS

A retreat and three **ICC (Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee)** meetings held on Quality Policy brought together different Ministries and Regulatory Bodies involved in the National Quality Infrastructure as well as the Private Sector Federation.

The meetings were positive towards the necessity of the policy. They recommended clarifying the framework for technical regulation and implementation mechanisms, to use the standards developed by the National Standards Body as a basis for development of the technical regulations to avoid overlaps between the responsible authorities, to clarify the division of labour among the NQI institutions (MINISANTE, MINAGRI, MINICOM, MININFRA, RURA, RDB, RHODA, RARDA and RBS).

It was also recommended merging institutions with common goals and responsibilities in one institution with comparative advantages in terms of physical infrastructure as well as human and financial resources. It was also suggested that setting up an Accreditation Office in relevant Ministry would be appropriate for recognition of NQI as the starting point and establishment of a fully fledged Accreditation entity when deemed necessary. They noted also the need to define the activities which may be carried out by the Private Sector.

7 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Annex 2 sets out the actions, costs and organizations responsible for the implementation of the policy options. Overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation will lie with the Prime Minister's office which may form committees to expedite the implementation process when deemed necessary.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is vital to avail financial resources for the implementation of the Quality Policy. Funding by the Government of Rwanda for the implementation of the policies, in addition to the budgets of the merged institutions will require an estimated 52 million US dollars. This is provided together with the implementation plan in annex 2.

The Government of Rwanda is responsible for financing the development, upgrading and restructuring of the existing and new NQI institutions within the public sector. The financing of private sector institutions and organizations remains the responsibility of the private sector, as well as their involvement in technical committees and similar structures at the national, regional and international level.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

1. The revision of the RBS laws
2. The law creating National Inspectorate Board
3. The law creating the National Quality Reference Laboratories
4. The Metrology Bill
5. The law establishing the Rwanda Accreditation Services.
6. The Liability law
7. Food safety law.

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

ANNEX 1: ROLE OF KEY PLAYERS IN THE NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

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

▪ Government

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

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

▪ Private sector

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

- a) Improve the quality of its products and services, hasten the introduction of international practices in the field of quality and so contribute to the competitiveness of Rwandan products and services;

- b) Participate actively in representative structures and technical committees dealing with standardization, accreditation and metrology or other related activities;
- c) Participate in and promote national quality events, including national quality awards and the like;
- d) Participate in and promote quality dissemination activities, such as congresses, seminars and publication of information in journals, magazines and other suitable means of communication;
- e) Develop human resources, by training the people needed for improving the quality of products and services;
- f) Invest in the development of quality infrastructure, benefiting from the improved market opportunities that result from the implementation of the Quality Policy; and
- g) Participate in financing activities that support quality by paying industry levy fee as shall be determined by the government in consultation with private sector.

▪ **Non Government Organizations (NGOs)**

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

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

- a) Promote and participate in the quality education and training activities;
- b) Participate in the dissemination of quality related information;
- c) Implement activities that promote the improvement of quality and the environment;
- d) Promote the representation of relevant bodies in the technical committees in the field of standardization, metrology, accreditation and quality; and actively participate in the standards development;
- e) Propose suggestions on Quality Policy improvement and better ways to implement the Quality Policy; and
- f) Finance standardization activities.

- **Media**

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

- **International Development Agencies**

All organizations in Rwanda of the international development agencies shall ensure that development and capacity building programmes include the NQI and shall;

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

- **Relationships with international organization**

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

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

Likewise, all the stakeholders should cooperate to create conditions conducive for an effective understanding and participation in implementation of the WTO/TBT and SPS Agreement requirements; as well as providing for active participation in regional structures related to the various functions of the Quality Infrastructure institutions. Thereby, stakeholders should collectively and individually fulfil Rwanda's obligations in regional and international matters related to the Quality Infrastructure.

ANNEX 2: DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Programme	Activities	Responsible	Budget (USD)
1			15 m
Restructuring the National Standards Body into the National Standardization Institute (NSI), the National Metrology Organization (NMO) and the National Certification Services (NCS)	Put in place a legal framework for the NSI, NMO and NCS	MINICOM/ RBS/	
	Development of strategic business plan for the Institutions above	MIFOTRA/	
	Designing, construction and equip Institutes infrastructure	MINIEAC	
	Human resources capacity building for each institute		
	Accreditation process for each institute		
2			15 m
Creation of a National Inspectorate Board (NIB)	Put in place a legal framework for the NIB	MINAGRI/	
	Development of strategic business plan for the Institution	MININFRA/	
	Set up a Technical Regulation Framework	MINISANTE/	
	Design, construct and equip Institute's infrastructure for both Head Quarter and Provincial offices	MINICOM/ MINIRENA/	
	Human resources capacity building for the institute	MINICT/ MIFOTRA/	
	Accreditation process for each institute	MININTER/ MINALOC	

3			20 m
Restructure and strengthen existing scattered quality control laboratories into a National Quality Testing Laboratories (NQTL)	Put in place a legal framework for the NQTL	MINAGRI/	
	Development of strategic business plan for comprehensive quality control laboratories	MININFRA/	
	Designing and construction of the laboratories	MINISANTE/	
	Equipping the laboratories (equipment and consumables)	MINICOM/	
	Human Resource capacity building	MINIRENA/	
	Accreditation process	MIFOTRA/ MININTER	
4			2 m
Setting up a National Accreditation Body (Rwanda Accreditation Services (RAS))	Put in place a legal framework for the RAS	MINICOM/ MINIEAC	
	Development of a National Focal Point for Accreditation issues but this will later be a fully fledged Accreditation Body		
	Development of strategic business plan for RAS		
	Designing, construction and equipping of the infrastructure for RAS		
	Human Resource capacity building		
	Seeking international and Regional recognition like ILAC, IAF.		

ANNEX 3: RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY NQI INSTITUTIONS

Mandate of National Standards Body (NSB)

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

Mandate of the National Metrology Institute (NMI)

The responsibilities of the NMI will be to:

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

Mandate of the Legal Metrology Department (LMD)

- Control the usage of measuring equipment in trade, law enforcement, health services and environmental protection;
- Control over pre-packaging operations ;
- Manage regional and international relationships in the area of legal metrology
- Type-approve equipment used in trade, health and safety.

Mandate of the National Certification Services (NCS)

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

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

Mandate of the National Inspectorate Board (NIB)

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

Mandate of the National Quality Testing Laboratories (NQTL)

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

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

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