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THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

National Standards and Quality Policy

For quality, safety and competitiveness of goods and services

Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARSO	African Regional Organization for Standardization
AU	African Union
BIPM	Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (International Bureau of Weights and Measures)
CAC	Codex Alimentarius Commission
CIPM	Comite International des Poids et Mesures (International Committee for Weights and Measures)
CICS	Competitiveness and Investment Climate Strategy
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CONSENT	Consumer Education Trust
CDO	Cotton Development Organization
DDA	Dairy Development Authority
DGAL	Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratories
DWD	Directorate of Water Development
DSIP	Development Strategy and Investment Plan
DTIS	Diagnostic Trade Integration Study
EAC	East African Community
ERA	Electricity Regulatory Authority
ESA	Education Standards Agency
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product

MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MLHUD	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development
MTIC	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development
MICT	Ministry of Information and Communications Technology
MoH	Ministry of Health
MTCS	Medium Term Competitive Strategy
MW&E	Ministry of Water and Environment
MoWT	Ministry of Works and Transport
MAK	Makerere University
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MSME	Micro Small Medium Enterprises
NDA	National Drug Authority
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NES	National Export Strategy
NPA	National Planning Authority
NAPE	National Association of Professional Environmentalists
NOGAMU	National Organic Agriculture Movement of Uganda
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NSQP	National Standards and Quality Policy

NWSC	National Water and Sewerage Corporation
NDP	National Development Plan
PSFU	Private Sector Foundation Uganda
ICPAU	Institute of Public Accountants of Uganda
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Agency on Development
IEC	International Electro-technical Commission
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IOML	International Organization of Legal Metrology
OIE	International Office of Epizootics
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SMCA	Standards development, Metrology, Conformity Assessment and Accreditation
SPS	Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary
SQMT	Standards, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UEDCL	Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited
UCC	Uganda Communication Commission
UCDA	Uganda Coffee Development Authority
UDC	Uganda Development Corporation
UCPA	Uganda Consumer Protection Association

UIB	Uganda Institute of Bankers
UBA	Uganda Bankers Association
UCA	Uganda Cooperative Alliance
UIA	Uganda Insurers Association
UIC	Uganda Insurance Commission
UIPE	Uganda Institute of Professional Engineers
ULS	Uganda Law Society
UNFFE	Uganda National Farmers Federation
UTA	Uganda Tea Association
UTB	Uganda Tourism Board
UFPEA	Uganda Fish Processors and Exporters Association
UMA	Uganda Manufacturers Association
USSIA	Uganda Small Scale Industries Association
UNBS	Uganda National Bureau of Standards
UNCCI	Uganda National Chamber of Commerce and Industry
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
UNRA	Uganda National Roads Authority
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
URA	Uganda Revenue Authority
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
IATA	International Air Transport Association

CASSOA East Africa /Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Trade is crucial for economic growth in developing countries Uganda inclusive. However, to expand regional and international trade; there is need to adopt and implement internationally recognized and accepted Standards, Metrology; Conformity Assessment and Accreditation(SMCA) practices. These activities provide a vital link to global trade, market access and export competitiveness as they contribute to consumer confidence in product safety, quality, health and the environment.

Globalization of trade and investment via multilateral institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) as well as through regional and bilateral trade agreements that promulgate rules governing non-tariff trade barriers. One of the main challenges facing the international trading system is the variation in certification, testing, inspection practices, and standards used by different countries. Unless trade partners use similar or equivalent standards and conformity assessment procedures and recognize each other's certification results, the costly problem of discriminatory, non-transparent, and unnecessary obstacles to trade will persist. The importance of standards and conformity assessment in both domestic and international trade was prominently noted in the 1994 Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade(TBT Agreement). The agreement recognizes that harmonized standards and conformity assessment procedures can expedite or seriously hinder the free flow of goods in international commerce. The agreement also requires that such procedures are not be prepared, adopted, or applied with a view to or with the effect of creating unnecessary obstacles to trade.

In the early 1990's, the Government of Uganda embraced a number of policies geared towards providing an enabling environment for the private sector to do business and serve as an engine for economic growth. As a result, Uganda has attained economic growth of an average GDP of ¹7.2%

¹ Data source: UBOS- UNHS 1992/93, 2002/03, 2005/06 and 2009/10, MoFPED - NDP 2010/11- 2014/15, Budget Background Paper 2009/10.

for the period 1997/98-2000/01, 6.8% for the period 2000/01 - 2003/04, 8.0% for the period 2004/05-2007/08, 7.1% for the Fiscal Year 2008/09 and 5.8% for the fiscal year 2009/10. This impressive GDP growth has also been accompanied by a significant reduction in poverty levels. The percentage of the population living below the poverty line declined from 56% in 1992/93 to 23.1% in 2009/10.

In terms of individual sector contribution to this growth, the agricultural sector grew at an average rate of 1.25% for the period 2003/04-2008/09 though its share contribution to GDP decreased from 38.5% to 24.5% during the same period. Despite this decrease in the GDP contribution, agriculture remains the largest employer in the country. Its performance raises issues of productivity and the strategies to modernize the sector.

The industrial sector which includes manufacturing, construction and mining grew at an average rate of 9.1% in the same period and its share contribution to GDP increased from 19.4% to 24.80%. Industrialization offers greater prospects for increased employment, higher export earnings, wider tax base, increased purchasing power, increased integration with agriculture, product diversification, greater efficiency, and technical skills for modernization and higher productivity throughout the whole economy. This can only be sustainable with increased investment in standards and quality infrastructure development.

In the same period, the services sector grew at an average rate of 9.6% and its share contribution to GDP increased from 42.0% to 51%. The key drivers of this growth were: information and communication technology, trade, transport, education, tourism and financial services. These services account for over 70% of the value added to agricultural and manufactured goods. Government recognizes the need to strengthen mechanisms that would increase the quality and availability of these services to the productive sectors; as both service suppliers and goods producers depend directly on the quality of service inputs for their competitiveness.

The changing economic environment prompted by liberalization and privatization policies in Uganda 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 for 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 increase the producers, processors, traders and consumers' health and

safety, wealth and welfare; thereby strongly contributing to Government's sustainable development efforts to eradicate poverty through wealth creation and stimulate prosperity for all.

Despite the successes achieved, the national quality infrastructure faces a number of constraints that hinder its effective contribution to national competitiveness. Among the constraints are: inadequate resources and quality infrastructure; weak coordination and collaboration among stakeholders; low awareness among stakeholders; inadequate policy and regulatory framework; limited participation in regional and international standards fora.

Development of this policy followed a Cabinet directive that required the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry during the approval of the National Trade Policy in August 2008. In addition, Government has developed and is implementing several policies and strategies. These include: National Development Plan (NDP), National Industrial Policy, National Export Strategy (NES), the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries - Development Strategy and Investment Plan (DSIP), and the Millennium Development Goals. All these policies and strategies are intended to address challenges in the economy in order to improve Uganda's competitiveness and accelerate socio- economic transformation for prosperity.

While developing the policy, regional and international commitments were taken into account and ensured that this policy is aligned to the respective commitments; especially under the African Union, the East African Community (EAC Trade Protocol and SQMT Act 2006), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) and FAO/WHO-Codex Alimentarius Commission.

This policy has been developed following a wide consultative and collaborative process among stakeholders including; Members of Parliament; Ministries, Affiliated institutions and Agencies, Private sector, civil society organizations, academia and the media. The consultative process provided an in-depth understanding of the challenges and constraints related to standards, metrology, accreditation, conformity assessment and technical regulation; and also developed by consensus the key strategic policy interventions.

2.0 SITUATION ANALYSIS

Uganda's national quality infrastructure is not yet developed to its full potential. In order to attain international standards and socio-economic development, a national quality infrastructure acts as an impetus for the success of all the economic activities. It comprises of standards, metrology (science of measurement), conformity assessment (inspection, certification, laboratory testing) and accreditation. In order to enhance the competitiveness of local industries, promote fair trade, protect the health and safety of the consumers, including prevention of trade in sub-standard goods and to coordinate the provision of Standards, Metrology, Conformity Assessment and Accreditation (SMCA) services in Uganda; Government in 1983 promulgated the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) Act, Cap 327; as amended in 2010, formulated other complimentary laws such as the Weights and Measure Act, Cap 103, the Food and Drug Act, Cap 278 and regulations.

The development of the national standards and quality Policy is based on a number of factors that are vital for setting up the foundation for its implementation. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the current SMCA system are detailed below;

2.1 STRENGTHS

2.1.1 Conducive Political and Economic Environment

The political leadership in Uganda is unequivocally committed to modernization through industrialization for socio - economic transformation. The country has enjoyed relative political stability since 1986 and a number of economic reforms introduced since 1990's have over the years created macro economic stability in Uganda. This has endeared (make attractive) the country to global investors stimulating growth in all business sectors.

The Government of Uganda acknowledges that meeting the required standards and quality measures and their effective implementation is key to all the production and services sectors. This can improve the efficiency of Uganda's domestic trade and contribute greatly to the export of goods and services, both of which are important for employment and wealth creation.

2.1.2 Existence of Complementary Policies, Laws and Regulations

There are a number of complementary policies, laws and regulations that address specific issues within the Quality Infrastructure. These include: National Industrial Policy (2008); National Trade

Policy (2008); National Health Policy (2009); National Tourism Policy (2003) and National Tourism Act of 2008; Food and Drugs Act, Cap 278; Uganda National Bureau of Standards Act, Cap 327; Weights and Measures Act, Cap 103; National Environment Act, Cap 153 and accompanying Regulations (1998); the Water Act, Cap 152; Electricity Act, Cap 145; Public Health Act, Cap 281; Fish Act, Cap 197; Local Governments Act, Cap 243; Uganda Communication Commission Act, Cap 106; Petroleum Supply Act, 2003; Adulteration of produce Act, Cap 27 and enabling Regulations of 2003; Sale of Goods Act, Cap 82; EAC SQMT Act 2006; Hotels Act, Cap 90; Copy right Act, Cap 215; Insurance Act, Cap 213; Control of Agricultural Chemicals Act, Cap 29; and Customs and Excise Act, Cap 215. These policies, laws and regulations provide the foundation for the implementation of the standards and quality policy.

2.1.3 Institutional framework for Quality Infrastructure and technical regulation

Technical regulation, standards, metrology, accreditation and conformity assessment (inspection, laboratory testing and certification) activities in Uganda are carried out by both the public and private sectors. In addition to UNBS, there are other various Ministries, departments and agencies which develop standards, and administer technical regulations. These include Ministries responsible for: Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries; Works and Transport; Information and Communication Technology; Energy and Mineral Development; Gender, Labour and Social Development; Internal Affairs; Health; Water and Environment; Education and Sports; and Local Government.

Further, there are statutory agencies such as National Drug Authority(NDA), National Environment Management Authority(NEMA), Electricity Regulatory Authority(ERA), Uganda Communications Commission(UCC), Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA), Cotton Development Organization(CDO), Dairy Development Authority (DDA), Education Standards Agency(ESA), Uganda Tourism Board(UTB), Uganda Wildlife Authority(UWA), Uganda National Roads Authority(UNRA), Uganda Institute of Bankers(UIB), Institute of Public Accountants of Uganda (ICPAU), Civil Aviation Authority(CAA) and its affiliated regional and international organizations such as Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA) and International Air Transport Association(IATA) and Uganda Insurance Commission (UIC) among others that carry out standardization activities.

In addition, there are a number of laboratories in various Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, academic and research institutions that undertake activities such as testing, measurements that support the standards and quality infrastructure.

Furthermore, the Government policy of liberalization of the economy has encouraged private sector laboratories and firms to offer conformity assessment services; a number of these are accredited.

Over time, the national standardization system has achieved significant accomplishments. These include inter alia; establishment and development of standardization institutions, development and issuance of over 1200 National standards (75% of these standards are based on regional and international standards) and about 1,100 standards have been harmonized at EAC, pending gazetting, compliance enforcement of technical regulations and issuance of certificates of approval/conformity to quality requirements for goods and services.

2.1.4 Membership to International Organizations for SMCA

UNBS is a correspondent member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and also a member of the Africa Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO). UNBS is the National contact point for FAO/WHO- Codex Alimentarius Commission, which is responsible for the Worldwide Food Standards Programme. It is also the enquiry point responsible for World Trade Organization (WTO) with respect to the Agreements on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT). Some of these bodies provide technical and financial support on standards and related programmes, upon which the policy implementation can be built.

2.1.5 Human Resources in SMCA Management

There exist some trained personnel with experience in (SMCA) systems both in the private and public sector. The Government of Uganda has provided financial support for human resource development in SMCA among various government institutions. This will provide the platform for sustaining the (SMCA) activities and a basis on which to build the required capacities for managing the diverse standards and quality assurance programmes.

2.1.6 Information, Education and Communication channels

Government has put in place an enabling environment that allows extended media coverage for information dissemination. The existence of many public and private electronic and print media,

and improved telecommunications services provide a platform for; communication, education and information sharing on standards and quality. The internet services are available in the country and can be used to search and disseminate information on standards, metrology, accreditation and conformity assessment procedures. In addition, there is a documentation and information centre at UNBS that provides national, regional and international standards information.

2.1.7 Public Private Partnerships

In recognition of the growing linkages between the public and private sectors, the Government is enhancing the regulatory support to enable public- private sector cooperation and increased investment by the private sector in infrastructure and delivery of high quality services.

There are a number of private sector associations which provide an interface between Government and private sector on SMCA matters. These include among others; Private Sector Foundation Uganda(PSFU), Uganda Manufacturers Association(UMA), Uganda National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UNCCI), Uganda Bankers Association(UBA), National Coalition of Service Industries, Uganda Insurers Association, Engineers Registration Board(ERB), Uganda Law Society(ULA), Uganda Fish Producers and Exporters Association (UFPEA), Uganda National Farmers Federation(UNFFE), Kampala City Traders Association(KACITA), Horticulture Exporters Association(HORTEXA), National Organic Agriculture Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU), Uganda Small Scale Industries Association(USSIA), Uganda Tea Association (UTA), Uganda Tourism Association(UTA), Uganda Cooperative Alliance(UCA),Uganda Consumer Protection Association(UCPA) and Consumer Education Trust(CONSENT). In addition to self regulation, some of these associations carry out basic training in quality management systems, offer business development and marketing services to their members. This provides avenues to disseminate and share information on standards and quality related matters among producers, traders, service providers and consumers

2.2 WEAKNESSES

2.2.1 Inadequate SMCA Policies and Regulatory Framework

Uganda's body of legislation pertaining to technical regulations, standards, metrology, accreditation and conformity assessment is in a state of transition with many areas covered by

inadequate legislation. Other areas like Quality Assurance and Consumer Protection, Product liability and Competition are at various points in the national legislative process.

Even where specific policies, laws and regulations are relevant and or appropriate, their enforcement is often weak. In addition, the regulatory capacity is limited in terms of; coverage and outreach, number of personnel and facilitation to do market surveillance and inspection. Some of the existing laws do not provide for deterrent penalties which compounds the incidence of non compliance among other causes. Limited awareness of the business community and consumers, effective and efficient market surveillance systems, clear compliance requirements and non-discriminatory measures also contribute to non compliance.

2.2.2 *Inadequate Institutional Capacities for the Quality Infrastructure*

The capacities of public and private sector agencies that render service in the national quality infrastructure are inadequate and need to be strengthened. In addition, the infrastructure inventory is not known and as a result, facilities and equipment utilization is not optimized. The apparent gaps are in the following areas; accredited laboratories, human resource development, inspection services, certification and accreditation services, related support services and geographical reach.

2.2.3 *Limited coordination and collaboration among SMCA agencies and organizations*

Despite the existence of numerous institutions with both legislative and executive powers to administer technical regulations, many of these have overlapping and sometimes conflicting mandates. Besides, coordination and collaboration of these (SMCA) activities is presently very weak and more often informal especially in the sharing of information.

2.2.4 *Low public awareness, participation and compliance*

One of the major constraints that the regulators in standardization face is low level of public awareness, market Information and advocacy on safe and quality goods and services. This is partly due to the high cost of undertaking information, education and communication awareness campaigns. As a result, consumers are unknowingly exposed to cheap, unsafe and substandard goods and services that are in many cases hazardous to their lives and lead to illnesses or at times death.

Compliance to technical regulations is low in many areas. This is due to inadequate regulatory regimes, low levels of awareness among producers, manufacturers and suppliers, and in some

cases lack of adequate technologies. As a result poor quality goods that are detrimental to the human health and safety of the environment are imported into the country; and local manufacturers also produce and place substandard goods and services on the market

2.2.5 Limited skilled human resources

The current trained personnel in quality infrastructure and technical regulation system are still insufficient to support the development of standards and implementation of technical regulations and provide the required testing and calibration services. In addition, there is lack of national appropriate training curricula for (SMCA) related skills among the academic institutions. Furthermore, there is limited capacity of back up service to undertake maintenance and repair of scientific and technological equipment.

2.2.6 Limited participation in regional and international SMCA setting fora

UNBS is a correspondent member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). However, Correspondent members do not take an active part in the technical and policy development work, but are entitled to be kept fully informed about the work of interest to them.

A number of factors limit Uganda's participation in regional and international (SMCA) fora. These include; limited financial and technological capacity to participate in order to influence the development of international standards. In addition, the available scientific capacity and associated physical infrastructure such as accredited laboratories are still limited in some aspects and do not provide adequate scientific information required for effective participation.

2.3 OPPORTUNITIES

The development of the policy considered the following as the available opportunities for Uganda to improve its competitiveness in the domestic and international markets through standardization;

2.3.1 Regional and International SMCA Initiatives

Uganda is a member of various regional and international SMCA setting organizations such as EAC-SQMT, EAAB, COMESA Committee, TRIPARTITE (COMESA, EAC & SADC) Free Trade Area, ARSO, AFRIMET, ISO, IEC, WTO, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), International Labour Organization (ILO) and Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) for food safety, International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) for plant health and World

Organization for Epizootics (OIE) for animal health. All these provide avenues to participate and benefit from financial and technical cooperation programmes and best practices in standards, quality assurance, metrology and testing areas.

2.3.2 *Regional and International Markets*

Uganda is a signatory to a number of trade and trade related agreements that include among others; the East African Common Market(EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the African Caribbean and Pacific- European Union(ACP/EU) partnership, the World Trade Organization(WTO). In addition, it's also a beneficiary of non reciprocal unilateral trade preferences such as Everything But Arms(EBA) by the European Union, the African Growth Opportunity Act(AGOA) of the United States; and offers by China, Canada and Japan under Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). All these arrangements provide a huge market potential for Uganda's export goods and services and are an incentive to promote standards and; consistently deliver competitive goods and services.

2.3.3 *Increasing demand for organic goods*

The global demand for organic goods continues to be among the fastest growing market segments, increasing at an average of 15- 20% per annum and total world market reaching over 60 billion US dollars in 2008 (organic monitor). Uganda has taken important steps in exploiting current Global market trends, by transforming and diversifying reasonable amount of conventional agricultural production into organic farming.

Effective implementation of standards in organic agriculture sub sector provides opportunities for increasing sustainable production, improving quality and safety, and accessing higher value markets.

2.3.4 *Increasing global demand for safe goods and services*

There is increased global demand on the fundamental importance of safe goods and services. This comes in the context of increasing demand for such goods and associated high premiums consumers are willing to pay. This, therefore, provides an opportunity for Uganda to take advantage of this market segment.

2.4 THREATS

2.4.1 *Proliferation of global private standards*

As Uganda seeks to expand and further diversify its exports, it is increasingly faced with more stringent private standards especially those related to food safety, plant and animal health as well as in respect of other commodities and services. Private standards such as Global Good Agricultural Practices (GLOBAL GAP) change rapidly and pose a new type of challenge that demands innovative approaches to ensuring market penetration. These standards are set by private bodies and very difficult to predict and hence threaten the competitiveness of Uganda's goods.

2.4.2 *Unpredictable Changes in Consumer taste and preferences*

Rapid changes in tastes and preferences attributed to increases in consumer incomes, awareness, standards of living and lifestyle pose challenges to local producers.

2.4.3 *Climate change*

The world in general and Uganda in particular, have faced the challenge of adjusting to the continuously changing climate. Climatic shocks influence the performance of sectors which are key to Uganda's trade competitiveness namely; agriculture, water, energy and industry. The effects of climate change are higher temperatures, changing landscape, increased risk of drought, fire and floods, pests and diseases.

2.4.5 *Proliferation of Sub-standard Goods and Services*

Sub-standard goods and services supplied through foreign and local traders and manufacturers illegally replicate well-known brand names and designs on their packages. Sub-standard goods and services pose health and safety risks to the citizens and undermine the growth of the economy. The Goods that are commonly replicated are: alcoholic beverages and fruit juices; shoe polish and shoes; toothpastes and brushes; soaps and detergents; pens and books; electrical and electronic equipments; clothing and textile apparels; construction materials, medicines, cosmetics, vehicle spare parts, computers and software, among others. The services that are commonly affected include e-commerce, health services, education, among others. This form of trade negatively

affects the viability of legally registered businesses by damaging their reputation and reduces the market share.

3.0 POLICY VISION, MISSION & OBJECTIVES

This policy focuses at developing and sustaining a national SMCA system, which is robust and able to achieve the requirements for high quality goods and services. The policy will also strengthen the national technical regulation regime to protect the people and the environment from unsafe products without restricting trade.

3.1 Vision

Vision of the National Standards and Quality Policy is *'to have an effective and efficient national quality infrastructure that delivers goods and services that are internationally competitive'*.

3.2 Mission

The Mission is *"to develop an SMCA infrastructure that supports the production and consumption of quality goods and services"*.

3.3 Objectives

The strategic objectives of the National Standards and Quality Policy are to;

1. Rationalize, harmonize and strengthen the standards Regulatory Framework,
2. Establish a framework to enhance coordination and collaboration among regulatory and standards development agencies,
3. Develop and improve the national quality infrastructure,
4. Strengthen human resource capacity in the national quality infrastructure,
5. Enhance SMCA awareness and dialogue to improve compliance,

6. Support MSMEs to conform to national standards and comply to technical regulations,
7. Support both the public and private sector entities to conform with set standards,

3.4 Policy targets

In view of the current global competitiveness, it is imperative to put in place measures and institutional mechanisms to ensure that all goods and services for domestic and international markets meet the required quality, environment, health and safety standards through appropriate production technologies and other value addition processes. Inline with the national development cycle of five years, the National Standards and Quality Policy implementation over the five-year period aims at achieving the following Strategic Targets are outlined below;

1. 75% of locally manufactured products certified,
2. At least 50% of all commercial agricultural produce have standards developed,
3. 50% of meat and meat products sold in standardized establishments,
4. At least 25 organizations engaged in the provision of testing, inspection and certification services accredited,
5. Increased public awareness of the role of standards on the development of the economy,
6. Support the development of 15 professional standards associations, such as association of professional engineers, lawyers, bankers, accountants, among other
7. UNBS should become the apex national standards organization with the sole mandate to publish national standards.
8. Support the development of product specific associations, whose aim should include self policing and self regulation on/regarding SMCA issues.

4.0 POLICY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This policy has been developed based on good practices and its implementation will be guided by the following principles;

4.1 *Ownership and Transparency*

Government shall ensure that all Standardization and Quality Assurance measures are implemented in a transparent, non discriminatory manner and avoid interruptions to trade, industrial development and other sectors of the economy. They shall represent the largest possible national consensus of opinion among concerned parties.

4.2 *Facilitation for Innovation, Production and Trade*

Government in partnership with the private sector shall prepare and administer technical regulations; conformity assessment procedures; metrology; and accreditation, adopt and apply standards that enhance innovations, competitiveness and access of local goods to domestic, regional and international markets without distorting trade.

4.3 *Promotion of Health, Safety and Environment Protection.*

Good regulatory practices compliant with WTO TBT Agreement shall be used in the development and implementation of technical regulations in order to promote Health, Safety and Environment protection.

4.4 *Public Private Partnerships*

The Government shall promote partnership with the private sector in the development and implementation of the National Standards and Quality Policy. The partnership shall also define frameworks and actions through which Government and the private sector will work together to develop and effectively administer technical regulations as provided for in the WTO TBT Agreement.

4.5 Harmonization, and Mutual recognition

Government of Uganda shall promote harmonization of national standards to regional and international standards; and the implementation of the relevant conformity assessment procedures as well as their adoption and use in technical regulations. In addition, Government shall promote equivalence and mutual recognition of its conformity assessment schemes by the trading partners.

4.6 Policy Synergies

Government will strengthen and exploit policy synergies between the national standards and quality policy and other relevant policies

4.7 Accountability

Standards shall be used as a tool to measure the level of compliance by those engaged in business to establish norms and practices. Those in breach shall be held accountable to authorities and beneficiaries of the standards.

5.0 POLICY ACTIONS

In order to realize the vision, mission and objectives of this policy, Government in partnership with the private sector shall implement the following strategies and actions;

5.1 *Harmonize and Strengthen the Standards and technical Regulation Framework*

Reviewing and aligning the standards and technical regulation framework will lead to an efficient and effective national quality infrastructure that supports regional, international trade and consumer and environmental protection.

To achieve the above, Government shall;

- i. Review, strengthen and harmonize all standards and technical related regulatory framework and laws that impact on health, safety, economic and environment protection.
- ii. Rationalize and streamline all regulatory agencies and standards development organizations (SDO) to clarify their mandates, roles, and responsibilities so as to avoid duplication, fragmentation, overlaps, gaps and conflicting mandates.
- iii. Develop and implement mechanisms to enhance the use of technical regulations in public procurement.
- iv. Establish and implement a national technical regulatory framework consistent with good practices.
- v. Strengthen standards development, technical regulations enforcement and deterrent mechanisms.
- vi. Develop and implement the national accreditation framework.
- vii. Promote mainstreaming of environment, safety, bio-safety, health and other systems in all Government institutions management and programmes.

5.2 *Establish a framework for coordination and collaboration among Quality Infrastructure organizations and regulatory agencies*

Effective coordination and collaboration among Quality Infrastructure organizations and regulatory agencies is needed for effective and efficient utilization of financial, technical and human resources. In order to maximize synergies among the regulatory agencies and related institutions, Government shall;

- i. Strengthen UNBS as a national authority on national standards to provide coordination of national positions, act as a single depository of national standards, publication of all national standards and also act as the national standards information center.
- ii. Establish a clear coordination and collaboration platform for planning, communication and interaction among all standards and standards-related agencies.
- iii. Provide a mechanism for setting national priorities for SMCA.
- iv. Disseminate information on the latest developments on standards and quality issues such as product recall and non conforming goods.

5.3 *Enhance public awareness on standards and quality*

Enhanced awareness on the importance of SMCA among the general public, Government authorities, private sector and civil society organizations is a key ingredient for compliance. This is particularly important for the dissemination of technology, improvement of the quality of goods and services; and the promotion of good business and management practices.

To create and strengthen public awareness on standards and quality, Government shall;

- i. Develop and implement a Communications Strategy for awareness creation on SMCA and enhance the general understanding of the benefits of producing and consumption of quality goods and services.
- ii. Raise the level of awareness in Government on the benefits of standards in all Government policies, regulatory system and public procurement.
- iii. Raise the level of awareness in the business sector and among the population on the benefits of using standards at the different levels of business such as purchasing, manufacture and

supply.

- iv. Integrate standards awareness into educational curricula at all levels.
- v. Develop and implement plans for provision of continuous training on standards implementation and promotion of quality culture.
- vi. Disseminate widely all approved national standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment requirements.
- vii. Develop; disseminate technical regulations and their compliance guidelines as provided for in WTO TBT Agreement.

5.4 Develop and improve SMCA Infrastructure

In order to effectively access markets; trade and protect consumers and the environment; as well as participate in international SMCA activities; progress shall be made at national level in developing and investing in the infrastructure and institutional framework. During the policy implementation, Government will take advantage of existing bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation that includes technology transfer and skills development.

To achieve the above, Government shall;

- i. Build and strengthen human resource capacity of key institutions, their technical and physical facilities to carry out their standards, metrology, accreditation, conformity assessment mandate.
- ii. Establish linkages and collaboration in research and development among SMCA institutions at national, regional and international level.
- iii. Disseminate and administer technical regulations.
- iv. Enhance Uganda's capacity and participation in harmonization and development of standards, technical regulations at regional and international level in areas of strategic importance.

5.5 Strengthening of the national conformity assessment system

Conformity assessment regimes have increasingly become important requirements for accessing international and regional markets and, in some cases, have become major technical barriers to trade. Government will ensure that adequate capacity is availed to all Quality Infrastructure organizations and regulatory agencies to carry out their mandates.

To strengthen national conformity assessment, Government shall undertake the following measures;

- i. Establish a national accreditation system to provide credibility and international recognition of conformity assessment services in Uganda.
- ii. Strengthen the capacity of the national inspection, testing and certification systems to demonstrate conformance of goods and services to standards and technical regulations.
- iii. Strengthen a national metrology and calibration system to support businesses.

Establish regional centers for conformity assessment schemes (inspection, testing and certification) to increase national coverage.

5.6 Support the private sector to conform to set standards

Government shall promote a public-private partnership approach in developing and implementing national standards and quality assurance measures, as well as establish an effective coordination and collaboration mechanism with the private sector, including consumer rights advocacy associations.

Government shall;

- i. Support the private sector to conform to national standards and adopt quality management systems in their operations in order to competitively produce and trade in quality goods and services.
- ii. Encourage and support enterprises to brand their goods and services in order to access international markets.

- iii. Support the private sector in the adoption of new and environmentally friendly technologies, acquisition of skills and work practices that facilitate quality improvement.
- iv. Where appropriate, design alternative financial credit services and other incentives accessible to private sector, especially for MSMEs development.
- v. Promote private sector, especially MSMEs to meet certification requirements.
- vi. Create awareness in the business community and sensitize consumers about the attributes of quality goods and compliance with standards and international codes.
- vii. Promote private sector investments in the national quality infrastructure to ensure adequate provision of services in the SMCA areas.
- viii. Strengthen and where appropriate promote formation of professional associations.

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE NATIONAL STANDARDS AND QUALITY POLICY

The Ministry of, Trade, Industry and Cooperatives will coordinate the implementation of the National Standards and Quality Policy in collaboration with other Ministries, Affiliated Institutions; Development agencies/partners and the private sector.

Some of the Government Ministries will include but not limited to; Ministries of: Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries; Finance, Planning and Economic Development; Health; Water and Environment; Education and Sports; Works and Transport; Information and communication Technology; Energy and Mineral Development; Gender, Labour and Social Development; Internal Affairs; Local Government; Local Governments and Lands, Housing and Urban Development.

In addition, the implementation of this policy will also involve a number of Government affiliated institutions such as UNBS, UIRI, UTB, NARO, DDA, UCDA, CDO, DGAL, URA, NDA, NPA, ERA, UEDCL, NWSC, NAF, NEMA, and DWD. In the private sector, Government will partner with various players, who include but not limited to; PSFU, UMA, UNCCI, CONSENT. Government will work with academic and research institutions both in the public and private sector.

The core functions of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives in relation to the implementation of this policy shall be;

- i. Policy dissemination and guidance to all stakeholder institutions.
- ii. Coordination and spearheading of implementation of all aspects of the policy.
- iii. Promote value addition, quality assurance and competitiveness.
- iv. Monitoring and evaluation of all SMCA activities and programmes.
- v. Integrate standards and quality issues in implementation of national development plans.
- vi. Over all supervision of the national quality infrastructure.
- vii. Spearhead the review of the policy implementation

7.0 CONCLUSION

Development of the National Standards and Quality Policy took into account the existing state of the national quality infrastructure laws, policies and technical regulations. Government will continue to undertake measures aimed at strengthening an enabling environment for the private sector to be more competitive in the domestic, regional and international markets. Strategic policy linkages and synergies are explicitly emphasized in this Policy, and their exploitation and enhancement shall be key to the policy implementation process.

The wide consultative process that has been followed in developing this Policy helped to identify, by consensus, the priority areas for strengthening the national quality infrastructure in particular and how it relates to national development. Strategic actions to help achieve these priorities have also been arrived at through a consultative mechanism.

An effective and efficient Public-Private Partnership arrangement is envisaged for implementation of this Policy.

To achieve socio-economic transformation, sustainable productivity improvement, fair trade, job creation, consumer and environmental protection as well as prosperity for all, the policy interventions must be implemented.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accreditation is the internationally accepted procedure that recognizes the competence of testing and calibration laboratories, product certification bodies, quality system certification bodies and inspection bodies. Accreditation schemes minimize the duplication of re-testing and re-certification reduces cost and eliminates non-tariff barriers to trade and market access delays.

Calibration refers to a written process of verification that an instrument is within its designated accuracy. This is accomplished by formal comparison with a measurement standard that is traceable to national or international standards.

Certification, Based on the results from an accredited laboratory or body and the specifications from a documentary standard, certification is the operation intended to assure the conformity of products, services, etc. by means of technical evaluation consisting of the proper combinations of defined operations and includes issuance of a written statement by a third party based on a decision following review, that goods, processes, systems or persons have fulfilled specified requirements.

Conformity Assessment is the process of deciding whether or not a product or system conforms to a standard and/or complies with a regulation. Conformity assessment procedures are technical activities such as testing, verification, inspection, and certification which confirm that products or processes fulfill the requirements laid down in regulations and standards.

Consumer means the final purchaser of a good or service

Metrology is the science of measurement and includes scientific, industrial and metrology. No testing would be possible unless the characteristics of the product or service in question can be measured in a way, which compares them against physical or chemical reference of known values. Therefore, adequate methods for measuring the properties of products and services are fundamental to the quality assessment process.

Legal Metrology The entirety of the legislative, administrative, and technical procedures established by, or by reference to public authorities, and implemented on their behalf in order to specify and to ensure, in a regulatory or contractual manner, the appropriate quality and credibility of measurements related to official controls, trade, health, safety, and the environment.

Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA's) or **Multilateral Agreements (MLA's)** are formal agreements between parties whereby they agree to recognize the results of each other's testing, inspection, certification, or accreditation. MRA's/ MLA's are an important step towards reducing the multiple conformity assessment that products, services, systems, processes and materials may need to undergo, especially when they are traded across borders.

Quality is defined as fitness for use or conformance to requirements.

Quality infrastructure (QI) is the totality of the institutional framework (public or private) required to establish and implement standards, metrology (scientific, industrial and legal), accreditation and conformity assessment services (inspection, testing and product- and system certification) necessary to provide acceptable evidence that products and services meet defined requirements, as may be demanded by regulatory authorities (i.e. in technical regulation) or the market place (i.e. contractually or inferred). The quality infrastructure is therefore a holistic domain serving both the public and private interests in the country.

Private sector means businesses privately owned, umbrella business associations and civil society organizations such as consumer's rights advocacy and protection associations.

Standards According to ISO/IEC Guide 2, a standard is a document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context. In addition, as defined in the WTO TBT Agreement, compliance with a standard is voluntary. Compliance with a standard is always a choice that the supplier has to make, either due to contractual arrangements with the purchaser, or as a unilateral decision in order to gain market acceptance. Non-compliance with a standard, whether it is a national, regional or international standard, does not disqualify the supplier from legally marketing the product or service, but it may limit the success the product or service enjoys.

Standardization According to ISO/IEC Guide 2, standardization is the activity of establishing, with regard to actual or potential problems, provisions for common and repeated use, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context. In particular, the activity is considered to consist of the processes of formulating, issuing and implementing standards.

Technical regulation According to WTO TBT Agreement is utilized, namely a document which lays down product characteristics or their related processes and production methods, including the applicable administrative provisions, compliance with which is mandatory. It may also include or

deal exclusively with terminology, symbols, packaging, marking or labeling requirements as they apply to a product, process or production method. Technical regulation may be based on standards, may reference a standard or parts thereof or may be a totally stand-alone document. Technical regulations are developed and implemented by authorities, and embodied in the legislative framework or constitution of the state and are a sovereign decision of the state. Mandatory or compulsory standards and legal metrology measures are technical regulations.

Testing means determination of one or more characteristics of an object of conformity assessment, according to a procedure.

Total Quality Management is a set of management practices throughout the organization, geared to ensure the organization consistently meets or exceeds customer requirements. TQM places strong focus on process measurement and controls as means of continuous improvement.

Quality Management System certification The most well known examples are the certification of quality management systems and environmental management systems as conforming, respectively, to ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 standards.

Technical Barrier to Trade Technical barriers to trade are non-tariff barriers that generally result from the preparation, adoption, and application of different technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures.

TBT Agreement The World Trade Organizations Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) - sometimes referred to as the Standards Code - aims to reduce impediments to trade resulting from differences between national regulations, standards, and conformity assessment procedures.

Traceability of Measurement The result of a measurement or the value of a standard that can be related to stated references, usually national or international measurement standards through an unbroken chain of comparisons; all having stated uncertainties.