



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION POLICY

A Framework for International Recognition of Uganda's Conformity Assessment Systems

MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES

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FOREWORD

Globally all Governments make policies, regulations and laws among others that processes, products and services conform to specific requirements before they can enter their country. These are usually implemented due to a number of reasons including protection of health, safety, welfare, the environment, fraud prevention or promote fair trade. To have confidence in the data, test report and certificates generated by the conformity assessment bodies namely the laboratories, certification and inspection bodies, the use of accredited conformity assessment is the only internationally accepted procedure to give the recognition and confidence to these services.

Accreditation is the impartial means for the verification and recognition of the competence of conformity assessment bodies to objectively demonstrate the conformity of products and services to specified requirements or standards. This is important because it reduces the costs associated with repetitive testing/inspection/certification resulting into reduced cost of doing business, reduction of Non Tariff Barriers and hence facilitates fair trade on equal terms globally leading to economic growth.

As you aware, Uganda neither has a regulatory frame work nor an accreditation body to provide accreditation services and currently, the conformity assessment bodies in Uganda get their accreditation from foreign accreditation bodies mainly South African National Accreditation Services which is very expensive to attain and maintain.

This National Accreditation Policy is a framework for the implementation of accreditation of conformity assessment services that will be internationally recognized. The policy is important in that it responds to the demand to strengthen the competitiveness of our goods and services in the national, regional and international markets through addressing the strategic bottlenecks that have constrained Uganda's Socio-economic development

including ; inadequate infrastructure, poor quality of goods and services, under developed agriculture and service sector among others.

The National Accreditation Policy is a product of extensive consultations involving Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Development partners together with the private sector, academia and consumer protection associations.

Finally, I am pleased to present to the people of Uganda and our Development Partners, this National Accreditation Policy and to all stakeholders to ensure its speedy implementation for socio-economic transformation of Uganda. In addition, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to all those who supported and worked tirelessly towards the development of this policy document. I hope and pray that this Policy will go a long way in concretizing actions for the effective implementation of the National Quality Infrastructure.



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MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES

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II LIST OF ACRONYMS

AB	Accreditation Body
AFRAC	Africa Accreditation Cooperation
AU	African Union
CAB	Conformity Assessment Body
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DSIP	Agricultural Sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan
EAAB	East African Accreditation Board
EAC	East African Community
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
ILAC	International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MLA	Multilateral Agreement
MRA	Mutual Recognition Arrangement
NAB	National Accreditation Body
NAFP	National Accreditation Focal Point
NIP	National Industrial Policy
NTP	National Trade Policy
NSQP	National Standards and Quality Policy
SQMT	Standardization Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing
SMCA	Standards Metrology Conformity assessment and Accreditation
WTO	World Trade Organization

III OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

ACCREDITATION

Third party attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks.

ACCREDITATION BODY (AB)

An authoritative body that performs accreditation. The authority of an accreditation body is generally derived from Government.

ASSESSMENT

A process undertaken by an accreditation body to assess the competence of a conformity assessment body (CAB), based on particular standard(s) and/or other normative documents and for a defined scope of accreditation. Assessing the competence of a CAB involves assessing the competence of the entire operations of the CAB, including the competence of the personnel, the validity of the conformity assessment methodology and the validity of the conformity assessment results.

ASSESSOR

A person assigned by an accreditation body to perform, alone or as part of an assessment team, an assessment of a CAB.

BEST PRACTICE

A superior method or innovative practice that contributes to the improved performance of an organization, usually recognized as best by other peer organizations.

CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT

Any activity to determine, directly or indirectly, that a process, product, or service meets relevant technical standards and fulfills relevant requirements.

CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT BODY (CAB)

A body that performs conformity assessment services and that can be the object of accreditation.

CONSUMER

The external customer to whom a product or service is ultimately delivered; also called end user.

FOREIGN AB

The accreditation body carrying out accreditation or assessment activity in an economy other than its own.

INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION FORUM (IAF)

The world association of Conformity Assessment Accreditation Bodies and other bodies interested in conformity assessment in the fields of management systems, products, services, personnel and other similar programs of conformity assessment.

INTERNATIONAL LABORATORY ACCREDITATION COOPERATION (ILAC)

A formal cooperation with a charter to establish a network of mutual recognition agreements among laboratory accreditation bodies with the aim of developing international cooperation for facilitating trade by promotion of the acceptance of accredited test and calibration results.

MUTUAL RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENTS (MRA)

An international agreement by which two or more countries agree to recognize one another's conformity assessments.

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT (MLA)

An agreement that provides industry and its customers with a means to ensure that certificates of conformance issued in one country/economy will be accepted in other countries/economies, where the relevant Accreditation Bodies are members of the IAF MLA.

QUALITY

Distinguishing characteristics that determine the value or degree of excellence or met expectation.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A formalized system that documents the structure, responsibilities and procedures required to achieve effective quality management.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Government of Uganda has 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 maintained economic growth with an average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about 7% per annum over the period 2003/04-2009/10.

The agricultural sector is estimated to have grown at an average rate of 1.25% for the period between 2003/04 to 2008/09 and its share contribution to GDP decreased from 8.0 to 5.8% during the same period, reflecting a shift to services and manufacturing. Despite the decrease in the GDP contribution, agriculture continues to be the largest employer in the country providing about 70% of employment in the country and contributed about 22.8% to the GDP in fiscal year 2009/10.

The industrial sector which includes manufacturing, construction and mining is estimated to have grown at an average rate of 12% during the fiscal year 2008/09 and the share contribution to GDP increased from 19.4% to 24.80% from the fiscal year of 2003/04 to 2008/09, respectively. Industrialization offers greater prospects for increased employment, more export earnings, increased integration with agriculture through value addition, product diversification, greater efficiency and higher productivity throughout the economy.

The services sector is estimated to have grown at an average rate of 9.6% and its share contribution to GDP increased from 47.2% to 47.8% in the year 2005/06 to 2009/10. The key drivers of this growth were trade, transport and communications, posts and telecommunications, and financial services. In addition, services such as financial, health, tourism and supply chains account for over 70% of the value added to agricultural and manufactured products.

With globalization in trade, the growth in the above highlighted sectors will be sustained with increased exports of value-added products which

meet international standards. This calls for a strong quality infrastructure to support industry, trade, environment and consumer's choice, health and safety; hence requiring building internationally recognized conformity assessment systems.

Government recognizes a number of challenges that hinder the national conformity assessment systems in giving effective support to competitiveness of Ugandan goods and services in the domestic, regional and international market. Among the challenges are few testing and calibration laboratories, certification, and inspection bodies, limited capacity in provision of these services as well as high cost for accreditation, and low awareness among stakeholders.

A prerequisite for trade on equal terms is that any product or service, accepted formally in one economy, must also be free to circulate in other economies without having to undergo extensive re-testing, re-inspection, re-certification, etc. This should be the case regardless of whether the product or service falls wholly or partly under the regulatory sector. In developed markets, there is a shift from manual and skilled labor practices in agriculture and manufacture to more sophisticated best practices utilizing advanced technologies. These best practices include, among others; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), Quality Management System (QMS), and Environmental Management System (EMS).

Both the World Trade Organization and the European Union have noted that the lack of acceptance of test results and certification are the most significant non-tariff barriers to trade. In respect to quality, studies by World Bank revealed that there is existence of big gaps in standards formulation, compliance and enforcement in Africa as compared to international norms and practices (Wilson and Abiola, 2003). Globally, the trend to reduce the above-mentioned trade barrier is by establishment of a world-wide network of national accreditation bodies. These bodies use common standards and practice mutual recognition arrangements to ensure that the competences of conformity assessment bodies are

assessed on the same principles regardless of their physical location. These assessments are based on harmonized International Organization of Standardization (ISO) standards. At the apex of the world accreditation pyramid is the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF). Accreditation bodies are established in many countries, often by Government or with the encouragement of Government, with the primary purpose of ensuring that conformity assessment bodies in the country are subject to oversight by an authoritative body that is impartial in relation to both the CAB and clients.

Government, therefore, recognizes the absence of national accreditation framework as the missing link that would enhance/maximize the impact of the above mentioned productive sectors and this gap needs to be addressed.

1.1 SUPPORTIVE POLICY ARRANGEMENT

The WTO TBT Agreement of 1995 advocates for market assurance of acceptable standards that conformity assessment systems must operate to in order to reduce non-tariff barriers to trade. Accreditation is the vehicle that can be used to deliver this assurance to the market. In a similar vein, the East African Community Standardization Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing (EAC SQMT) Act 2006 requires partner states to designate a national quality institution to function as, among others, a national accreditation body. Both the National Development Plan (NDP) and the National Industrial Policy (NIP) recommend the formation of a National Accreditation Service as one of the policy actions.

The 2006 Diagnostic Trade Integration Study and 2007 Country Economic Memorandum identified one of the constraints to production and trade as inadequate managerial skills in quality management and compliance with international standards. In addition, the National Trade Policy, (National Standards and Quality Policy) and Uganda National Health Laboratory Services Policy, Agricultural Development Strategy and Investment

Plan, amongst other national policies, point to the need for a national accreditation in trade and health related sectors. It is, therefore, imperative that Government puts in place a policy that will guide the development of a National Accreditation System.

1.2 BENEFITS OF ACCREDITATION

A national accreditation body is an authoritative body that gives formal recognition that a body or person is competent to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks. Accreditation assures the user of conformity assessment service that the accredited CAB is independent and competent, and delivers its services in the most timely, economic and effective way. Accreditation reduces risk for Government, businesses and customers by ensuring, through regular surveillance, that conformity assessment bodies are independent, authentic and competent.

a. Recognition of Competence

Accreditation is a means of determining the technical competence of CABs to perform specific types of conformity assessment. It also provides formal recognition to competent CABs, thus providing ready means for customers to identify and select reliable conformity assessment services able to meet their needs. Specifically, Government bodies and regulators are constantly called upon to make decisions related to protection of health and welfare of consumers and the public, protection of the environment and development of new regulations and requirements. These decisions require Government bodies and regulators to have confidence in the data generated by CABs.

b. A benchmark for performance

Accreditation benefits CABs by allowing them to determine whether they are performing their work correctly and to appropriate standards, and provides them with a benchmark for achieving and maintaining that competence.

A marketing advantage

Accreditation is an effective marketing tool for CABs and a vehicle for submission of tenders for contracts that require independently verified

CABs. Accreditation is highly regarded both nationally and internationally as a reliable indicator of technical competence.

c. Provision of quality goods and services to the consumer

Final consumers of goods and services are empowered and acquire good quality products from suppliers who are traceable to the accreditation body.

d. Standards harmonization and International recognition

Most accreditation bodies have now adopted international standards as the basis for accrediting their country's CABs. This has helped countries employ a uniform approach to determining competence. It has also encouraged CABs to adopt internationally accepted testing and measurement practices, where possible.

e. Promotion of good regulatory practices in Government

Accreditation supports the establishment of a well-structured national technical regulatory framework and is an important tool for regulators. The accreditation process helps provide assurance to regulators that a particular organization/individual is competent to perform a specified conformity assessment activity (scope) based on recognized and transparent criteria and procedures. A properly functioning technical regulation system can benefit the domestic economy by balancing regulatory and trade interests, improving the quality and consistency of technical regulations and supporting compliance with international requirements which supports good regulatory practice.

g. Participation in multilateral arrangements.

The use of accreditation systems provide an opportunity for a country to participate in voluntary agreements among accreditation bodies that operate on the basis of the recognition of equivalency of operations among signatories. An MLA is also a confidence building mechanism as it helps to ensure the competence of CABs in economies importing into another market. The use of MLAs can prove to be a better option for developing countries to improve market access to developed countries.

h. Political and economic autonomy

The most basic 'value-added' benefit to be derived from the implementation of a national accreditation program is the economic and political autonomy. Ownership of the accreditation program prevents other countries from using the threat of withdrawal of accreditation services for political and economic reasons. Uncertainties regarding future accreditation services are reduced and national pride is bolstered through a national accreditation body.

i. Direct monitoring of CABs

A country with its own independent accreditation body can directly monitor the work of domestically accredited conformity assessment bodies within the economy. In addition to the benefit of greater surveillance and transparency, a domestic accreditation system may also eliminate the potential scenario of a 'fly by night' foreign accreditation body which could hamper coordination efforts.

1.3 SCOPE OF POLICY

The establishment of an accreditation system is critical in providing confidence in Uganda's goods, services, management systems and personnel that make a significant contribution to the development of the economy, protection of health and safety of the people and safeguarding the environment.

The National Accreditation Policy will cover accreditation in respect to the World Trade Organization Technical Barrier to Trade (WTO TBT) Agreement of 1995. It is important that the market for goods and services has assurance that the conformity assessment systems operate to acceptable standards and this is the purpose of accreditation. ISO/IEC 17011 standard specifies the general requirements for accreditation bodies. The accreditation process determines the technical competence and integrity of organizations such as those offering testing, calibration, inspection, proficiency testing, certification services and manufacture of certified reference materials (CRM).

The TBT Agreement tries to ensure that regulations, standards, testing and certification procedures do not create unnecessary obstacles by balancing between the goals of trade facilitation and national autonomy in technical regulations. The Agreement says that the procedures used to decide whether a product conforms to relevant standards have to be fair and equitable. It discourages any methods that would give domestic products an unfair advantage. The agreement also encourages countries to recognize each other's procedures by establishing Mutual Recognition Arrangements. Without recognition, products might have to be tested twice, first by the exporting country and then by the importing country.

1.4 POLICY FORMULATION PROCESS

The wide consultative process that has been followed in developing this policy has helped to identify, by consensus, the priority areas that relate to national development. The Policy institutionalizes consultation so as to ensure that the spirit with which this Policy was developed is the same spirit with which it shall be implemented. An effective and efficient private sector participation arrangement is envisaged for implementation of this policy.

2.0 SITUATION ANALYSIS

The absence of a national accreditation system is a key factor which is a constraint to full integration into the established world trading system and thereby stunting overall economic development. The low level of recognition of national export certificates is clear testimony. For example, in the early 1990s, there was a ban on export of fish and fish products to the EU when it invoked the Agreement on Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures. Accreditation of a fish testing laboratory in Uganda was one of the major requirements that led to lifting of the ban.

Many developed countries currently enjoy the trade benefits which flow from national accreditation systems and the greater market access which they allow. The absence of an accreditation structure has thus been recognized by many developing countries as a key development priority to be addressed.

This section of the policy describes some of the main features of the existing environment.

2.1 STRENGTHS

2.1.1 Conducive Political Environment

2.1.2 Conducive Economic Environment

A number of economic reforms introduced since 1990 have over the years created macroeconomic stability in Uganda. In addition, Government has progressively increased budgetary allocation to the standards, metrology, conformity assessment and accreditation (SMCA) sector.

2.1.3 Regulatory Framework

There are a number of complementary policies, laws and regulations that address specific issues that are related to conformity assessment and standards. These include; National Development Plan, National Industrial Policy 2008, National Trade Policy 2007 and the EAC SQMT Act 2006.

These policies, laws and regulations provide the regulatory platform for the development and implementation of the National Accreditation policy.

2.1.4 Institutional Framework

The SQMT Act 2006 mandated the Ministry responsible for Industry and Trade to oversee and coordinate issues related to accreditation. Consequently, the Ministry has designated a National Accreditation Focal Point to implement the establishment of an accreditation system. In addition, Uganda is a member of regional and international bodies such as EAC Customs Union, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), African Union (AU), World Trade Organization TBT Agreement and International Organization for Standardization (ISO). At the EAC regional level, the East African Accreditation Board was established in 2009 to oversee the process of establishing national accreditation bodies in the partner states. Africa Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) is the continental association for all accreditation bodies in Africa.

These institutional mechanisms provide linkages to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF) which are the apex bodies for accreditation at the international level.

2.1.5 Existence of trained human capital

Already there exists a pool of trained assessors arising from the PTB EAC regional quality infrastructure project. This pool of assessors is available for use by the AB at reduced cost. There also exist trained technical managers and operators in the conformity assessment bodies who will expedite the necessary activities for these bodies to be accredited.

2.1.6 Presence of Accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies

A number of organisations providing a range of conformity assessment scopes in the country have been accredited by foreign accreditation bodies from Europe and South Africa. This is evidence of the need and importance of accreditation in the national economy.

2.2 WEAKNESSES

2.2.1 Accreditation Regulatory Framework

Uganda's Accreditation Regulatory framework is lacking. The absence of a law on accreditation makes establishment and operation of an AB difficult.

2.2.2 Institutional structure

Currently there is only a desk coordinating the activities of NAFF with no clear system to guide it. There is limited coordination between the NAFF in the Ministry and other Government Ministries, and conformity assessment bodies, both in the public and private sectors. The collaboration among the conformity assessment service providers would provide information and enhance resource sharing.

2.2.3 Unaccredited Regulatory Institutions

Some of the CABs in Uganda operate as national regulators but are not accredited. Without accreditation, confidence in data used by these regulators is lacking and their conformity assessment results cannot be recognized internationally.

2.2.4 Lack of coordination framework of foreign accreditation service providers and local CABs

There exists a small number of CABs in the country that are accredited by foreign recognized ABs mainly from Europe and South Africa. However, often times, traceability of conformity assessment from industry through CAB to an AB is difficult or non-existent because some industry uses unaccredited CABs. The lack of a coordination mechanism of industry, CABs and the foreign ABs exacerbates the practice of dubious and underhand conformity assessment by some players.

2.2.5 Lack of Framework for national coordination and collaboration for acceptance

The principle of monopole demands that an economy has only one national recognized accreditation body. There is lack of a strategy to lobby acceptance by all stakeholders in Government as well as the private

sector to ensure no rival bodies are set up. There is lack of organization and coordination of training for technical experts for accreditation. Despite the presence of trained assessors, the training has not been focused on identified priorities.

2.2.6 Low level of public awareness

Accreditation is fairly a new concept in Uganda and public awareness is low. It is necessary to ensure that all stakeholders involved in accreditation understand it and are able to play their roles accordingly. This requires sensitization of the stakeholders. However, there IS no strategic awareness program in place to sensitize the regulators and industry about the important role accreditation plays in promoting domestic, regional and international trade by way of creating public confidence on quality of goods and services on the market as well as enhancing business efficiency.

2.2.7 Limited skilled human resources

Skilled human resource is required to plan, implement and coordinate accreditation activities. There are limited skilled human resources in accreditation roles of management, auditing and assessment.

2.2.8 Limited participation in regional and international accreditation fora

Participation in regional and international fora helps in networking, contribution to policies and adoption of best practices, among other benefits. In the absence of a functional AB, Uganda does not consistently participate in fora such as EAAB, AFRAC, IAF and ILAC and miss out on the above opportunities.

2.2.9 Government support

The AB shall require Government support, especially funding on a long term basis. In the absence of this funding, the initial operations of the AB may never take off. Considering the public sector's diverse responsibilities in ensuring health, water quality, food, consumer goods or transport safety, these services are bound to suffer from lack of a functional accreditation body.

2.3 OPPORTUNITIES

2.3.1 Existence of trainable human resource

Following the introduction of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE) school enrolment is on the increase. Consequently, the number of graduates from tertiary institutions continues to rise. The above state of affairs offers an opportunity for trainable human resource base for present and future needs.

2.3.2 Membership to Regional and International Accreditation fora

Uganda is a member of EAAB. Other regional and international bodies related to accreditation that Uganda can join and collaborate with are; South African Development Community Accreditation (SADCA), AFRAC, ILAC and IAF. These bodies support the growth of accreditation system by providing avenues for capacity building and advocacy.

2.3.3 Regional Markets for Accreditation Services

Once established, Uganda's Accreditation body has a potential market nationally, regionally and internationally. At the EAC and other regional levels, partner states can develop a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to specialize in complementary scopes of accreditation to one another.

2.3.4 Donor Support

There is goodwill by development partners in providing technical and financial assistance in support of accreditation service.

2.3.5 Standardization in International Trade

A prerequisite for trade on equal terms is that any product or service, accepted formally in one economy, must also be free to circulate in other economies without having to undergo extensive conformity re-assessment. Furthermore, globally there is increased demand of quality products. Accreditation is one of the pillars of the quality infrastructure in standardization that can be used to achieve the above.

2.4 THREATS

2.4.1 Lack of resources for development

A mature and fully fledged AB should be autonomous and self supporting through generation of revenue from its clients. In its initial stages of development, an AB needs a vast amount of resources. Lack of resources will hamper development and operations of the AB.

2.4.2 Small revenue base

About 200 to 250 clients need to be accredited before an accreditation body breaks even in its cash flows. Insufficient client base will lead to low levels of revenue which hinders financial self sustainability. In the absence of complementary funding, the AB will become dysfunctional.

2.4.3 High accreditation costs

Cost incurred in using foreign ABs is extremely high as their distant geographical location translates into high travel and accommodation expenses. These costs are transferred to the applicant CABs which become a financial burden and reduces their competitiveness.

3.0 POLICY VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

This section of the Policy highlights the Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives.

3.1 VISION

The vision of the policy will be:

An internationally recognized accreditation system that enhances national development

3.2 MISSION

To establish and sustain an accreditation system that is internationally recognized in order to facilitate trade by providing confidence in conformity assessment systems.

3.3 GOALS

When the AB is established and fully functional, the following goals could be achieved:

- i. Provision of effective and efficient accreditation service
- ii. Increased number and scope of domestically accredited CABs
- iii. Progressive reduction in the cost of providing accreditation services

3.4 OBJECTIVES

3.4.1 Overall objective

To develop a robust and sustainable national accreditation system that is able to achieve and maintain the requirements for international recognition.

3.4.2 Specific objectives

- i. Develop a national accreditation regulatory framework
- ii. Operationalise the accreditation body
- iii. Strengthen human resource capacity in accreditation
- iv. Provide institutional infrastructure for accreditation
- v. Carry out awareness programs

4.0 POLICY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Implementation of the Policy will be guided by the following principles;

- i. Accreditation is applicable to both the regulated and non-regulated sectors and is increasingly becoming a requirement for trade in goods and services. Accreditation should remain voluntary unless required by specific legislation Accreditation should be operated with integrity; independent of the organizations that are accredited and impartial and free from all pressures.
- ii. The National Accreditation Body should operate to recognized international standards and applicable technical requirements
- iii. Accreditation should be used to facilitate trade but not to become a non-tariff barrier
- iv. Accreditation should provide an authoritative statement of the technical competence of CABs
- v. Accreditation should be self-supporting and not-for-profit activity. Government funding is required in the formative years.
- vi. Involvement of key stakeholders (public and private) in the implementation of the policy is a pre-requisite to success.
- vii. Government commitment to utilizing accredited conformity assessment service providers in areas with a public responsibility dimension will enhance successful implementation

5.0 POLICY ACTIONS

In order to realize the objectives of this policy, Government shall collaborate with the private sector to implement the following policy actions;

5.1. DEVELOP A NATIONAL ACCREDITATION REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- i. Develop a harmonized regulatory framework on accreditation
- ii. Establish a National Accreditation Body (NAB) to manage, coordinate and supervise accreditation activities

5.2. OPERATIONALIZE THE ACCREDITATION BODY

- i. Prepare documentation for establishment of the accreditation body
- ii. Recruit sufficient number of personnel for NAB
- iii. Facilitate technical and managerial trainings for the staff of the NAB
- iv. Facilitate training for technical experts

5.3. PROVIDE INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ACCREDITATION

- i. Articulate institutional relationships between key Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) and also with the private sector
- ii. Establish mechanisms for coordination of activities of all conformity assessment bodies operating within the country.
- iii. Facilitate operations of the NAB by providing financial and institutional support
- iv. Facilitate and advocate for the development and international recognition of the National Accreditation System
- v. Establish Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA) and Multilateral Agreements (MLA).

5.4 CARRY OUT AWARENESS PROGRAMS

- i. Develop a communication strategy on accreditation
- ii. Carry out sensitization workshops and meetings to various stakeholders
- iii. Provide information on accreditation in public domains such as Government Ministry websites and other publications in the print and electronic media.
- iv. Carry out marketing of accreditation.

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives will lead the implementation of the National Accreditation Policy in collaboration with other Ministries, Departments and Agencies and Private sector. These will include, among others; Ministries and Departments such as: Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries; Health; Information and Communication Technology, Internal Affairs; Finance, Planning and Economic Development; Gender, Labour and Social Development; Education and Sports; Energy, Justice and Constitutional Affairs and East African Affairs; and the Directorate of Government Analytical Laboratories.

Agencies in the implementation will include among others, Uganda National Bureau of Standards, Uganda Industrial Research Institute, National Drug Authority. The Private sector institutions involved in conformity assessment activities such as testing, calibration, inspection and certification will be partners in the implementation of this policy. The monitoring of the implementation of the Policy will be in accordance with the framework set out in the Policy Implementation Plan.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Globalization and increased export of value-added products which meet international standards calls, for a strong quality infrastructure that supports industry, trade, environment and consumer's choice, health and safety; hence requiring building internationally recognized conformity assessment systems. Government recognizes the challenges that hinder the national conformity assessment systems in giving effective support to competitiveness of Ugandan goods and services.

The establishment of an accreditation system is critical in providing confidence in Uganda's goods, services, management systems and personnel that make a significant contribution to the development of the economy, protection of health and safety of the people and safeguarding the environment. The wide consultative process that has been followed in developing this policy has helped to identify, by consensus, the priority areas that relate to national development.