NATIONAL QUALITY POLICY (NQP) Cabinet Decision No.:13th /01.06.99/001

1. INTRODUCTION

Namibia, since gaining independence in 1990 is confronted with many challenges in its efforts to build a progressive, just and a prosperous society in the face of the far reaching political and social changes. Continuous improvement in the quality of life of the people of Namibia, as reflected in living conditions and quality of all type of products and service available, is the national focus and objective of many development projects which need substantial resources for implementation.

The need to enhance export performance of Namibia is recognised as a priority which demands substantial efforts on the part of the Government and the private sector. In international trade, Namibia is faced with challenges from the globalisation as well as emerging dominant regional markets and economic grouping that impose formidable demands and strictures on goods and services. The increasing effectiveness of the WTO agreement demands compliance with many guidelines and rules in international trade.

In meeting the above challenges and reaching our goals the need for effective and efficient use of all resources to improve quality and productivity is recognised as a national priority. Such effort demands the involvement of all sectors of the economy and all segments of the society.

For maximising the use of available resources and to co-ordinate activities of all organisations both in public and private sectors in achieving our goals and objectives, the Government of the Republic of Namibia recognises the need for a single policy framework embracing clear national guidelines and priorities on quality and productivity.

The national quality policy will revitalise the Namibian market concept by not focussing on local issues alone, but also taking into consideration the pressures of global competition and consumer expectations.

Government has resolved to design a national quality policy adopted by Cabinet on 1 June 1999 for implementation.

2. POLICY

The Government of the Republic of Namibia;

Recognising the need to harness all available resources to accelerate the social and economic development of Namibia;

Recognising the need to improve quality and productivity through the participation of all sectors of the economy in order to improve the quality of life of the community and improve export performance;

Conscious of the need to regulate the local market to protect Namibian consumers and to secure level playing fields for the economic operators on the Namibian market place;
Declares its commitments to develop and establish conformity assessment systems based on international principles;

Declares its commitments to promote and foster the quality and productivity movement of Namibia in the next decade; and

Resolves that the quality and productivity movement be accelerated with purpose and determination based on the following principles:

2.1 Extension and promotion of quality and productivity to all sectors of the economy and all segments of the population will be encouraged and supported.

2.2 Recognition for quality and productivity will be given in all national development plans and strategies and will be used as a tool in the effective implementation of the national development goals and objectives.

2.3 Necessary technical regulations will be promulgated and implemented by the respective ministries and other government institutions.

2.4 Institutional infrastructure will be developed and established based on internationally accepted principles and standards.

2.5 Both public and private sector institutions and establishments will be committed to quality and productivity improvement and to provide the leadership necessary to create and sustain a quality culture in organisations and within the national fabric.

2.6 Adequate provision will be made for human resources development in the field of quality and related technology to strengthen the foundation for quality building.

2.7 Entrepreneurial efforts at quality achievement and improvement will be fostered, encouraged and supported.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

Through the implementation of the National Quality Policy, the Government strives to achieve the following:

3.1 Continually improve the quality of life of people of Namibia reflected in the quality of products, services and living conditions available to the community.

3.2 Improve national productivity through enhanced resource utilisation in all sectors of the economy.

3.3 Provide better health, safety, consumer protection of a sustainable environment.

3.4 Enhance national export performance through quality and productivity improvement and enable Namibian products to be highly competitive internationally.
3.5 Support small and medium enterprises to improve quality, productivity and cost effective service delivery as a means for sustenance and growth in a competitive environment.

4. BUILDING THE INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR QUALITY

The Government, through the Ministry of Trade and Industry, shall enact legislation to establish a National Standards Body (NSB) and to regulate its functions. In the process of implementing the policy, the highest authority shall be the Cabinet through the relevant agency overseeing economic development.

An institutional infrastructure for conformity assessment, standardisation, metrology and quality will be developed and established for the purpose of enhancing and securing safety, wholesomeness, quality of products and services both for the domestic market and for exports. These activities would be organised and established to consistent with international principles and guidelines as follows:

4.1.1 Establishment of a National Standards Body (NSB) as an independent government institution under the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The institution will be fully supported by the Government at its inception and developed as a self supporting body through income generation activities in due course.

4.1.2 Establishment of Accreditation activities in an appropriate manner based on demand. Accreditation activity will be developed through co-operation with other Accreditation bodies with a long-term objective of establishing a National Accreditation body based on national needs and demands.

4.1.3 Establishment of a National Metrology System through well-defined links to established metrology systems in the region. Calibration services required by the Namibian industry and trade will be developed and established based on needs and demands.

4.1.4 Testing and calibration services required by the industry and trade, where they exist, will be developed and if needed, new ones will be established based on needs and demands. Active participation of the private sector will be sought in providing these services.

4.1.5 Encourage and support the private sector in providing certification and inspection services required by the industry and trade, and for regulatory activities where possible.

4.1.6 Encourage and seek participation of Quality Association and National Chamber Commerce and Industry, to develop a resource pool of assessors, inspectors, consultants/trainers required to undertake conformity assessment and quality improvement activities.

4.1.7 Regulatory established bodies under various Ministries will be responsible for promulgation of technical regulations to ensure health, safety, consumer protection, and protection of environment and would seek the services of conformity assessment bodies, wherever appropriate in implementation of such regulations.
4.1.8. Seek financial and technical assistance from friendly countries and donor agencies to establish and strengthen the Institutional Infrastructure for quality as envisaged in this policy.

4.2. FOSTERING THE NATIONAL QUALITY POLICY

The national quality movement will be fostered and enhanced;

(a) To disseminate awareness of quality and productivity in all sectors of the economy and among the general public.
(b) Develop appropriate attitudes towards quality among members of all sections of the society.

To achieve these objectives, the government will support the following activities:

4.2.1 Create awareness and accelerate the development of a quality culture through consciously designed programmes, with effective use of the media.

4.2.2 Establish awareness programmes, which are aimed at changing the work attitudes and practices of the productive work force in respect of such day to day issues as positive attitude towards work in general, orderliness, cleanliness, hygiene, punctuality, and timeliness of service.

4.2.3 Encourage and support organisations, both private and public, to incorporate training on quality as a component in their human resources development plans.

4.2.4 Introduce basic elements of general quality education and orientation in the school education system with a view to inculcating desirable attitudes in the young, which would contribute to a quality culture.

4.2.5 Encourage the establishment, and support existing activities of Association of Industry personnel and other personnel and other professionals working on the promotion and application of quality.

4.2.6 Declare a National Quality Week for Namibia to create national awareness on quality issues and promoting quality, enlisting the participation and support of both the public and private sectors.

4.2.7 Establish a National Quality Awards programme for recognition of those industries and enterprises (including the service sector), which perform excellently on quality.

4.2.8 Foster the publication of consumer news and bulletins to educate consumers on quality issues and consumer rights.

4.2.9 Allocate adequate media time in all state electronic media for effective dissemination of concepts, principles, practices and developments of quality, consistently, for reinforcing a national quality culture.
4.3 INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Active involvement of the private sector in the implementation of this policy will be promoted and encouraged through the following:

4.3.1 Representation of Chambers and Associations of Industry and Commerce will be sought and encouraged to participate in the appropriate policy making, advisory and consultative bodies dealing with quality and productivity.

4.3.2 Seek and encourage non-governmental organisation initiatives in quality education and training.

4.3.3 Encourage the conduct of meetings, seminars, for and relating to the dissemination of information on quality, by private sector agencies.

4.3.4 Seek the assistance of the Chambers and Association of Commerce and Industry in the dissemination of quality and productivity related information through newsletters, bulletins and journals.

4.3.5 Encourage and seek active participation of the Chambers of Trade, Commerce and Industry to promote officially national quality events such as National Quality Week and National Quality Awards programmes.

4.4 CAPACITY BUILDING

Education and training in quality concepts and attitudes will be introduced at all levels in all sectors of society to deal with and contribute to the ever changing demands of the future. By translating the principles of quality into an interactive learning process throughout the education and training system, a generation of managers, employees, and citizens will be created who will build, strengthen and sustain a favourable national quality culture.

To achieve these goals the government of Namibia will support the following activities:

4.4.1 Introduce concepts and elements of quality and productivity into the school and education system at the primary and secondary education levels.

4.4.2 Introduce concepts of standardisation and quality management suitably into the entirety of the tertiary education system comprising universities, technical colleges and vocation training institutions.

4.4.3 Education and Training of employees at all levels in industry, business and commerce state-of-the-art quality and continuous upgrading of knowledge for boosting productivity.

4.4.4 Develop training facilities and opportunities in partnership with the public and private sector organisations. To support this activity a resource pool of trainers to undertake education and training activities in quality will be developed.