



UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

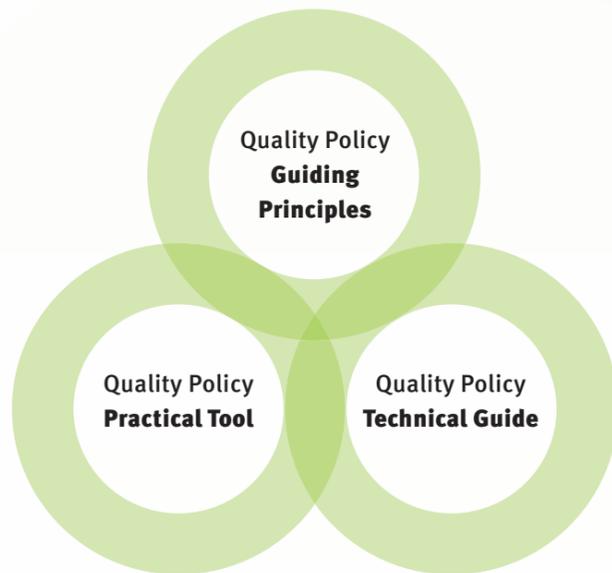
# **QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Good Governance in  
Quality Policy Design**

## Introduction

To assist developing countries and countries in transition in creating a robust quality infrastructure, based on quality policy, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in collaboration with its technical partners, has developed a set of three guiding documents. These guiding documents will help stakeholders to develop a quality policy and a robust quality infrastructure to promote national, regional and international trade, environmental sustainability and societal wellbeing.

This brochure gives an introduction to these documents.



## Foundations for a robust Quality Infrastructure

To become a successful global exporter, a country needs to comply with international quality requirements for goods and services. Quality infrastructure helps domestic and global producers and consumers to fulfil their mutual quality goals. It also stimulates industrial development, trade competitiveness, innovation and efficient use of resources, while ensuring food safety and protecting human health and the environment.

Establishing an appropriate quality infrastructure system can foster prosperity, improve health and overall quality of life, and thus help to achieve several of the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the 2030 global development agenda. Creating strong quality infrastructure systems is also part of the Organization's concerted efforts to promote inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID).

UNIDO is helping a growing number of developing countries to design quality policies so that they could build viable and resilient quality infrastructure, achieve sustainable economic growth, and succeed in job creation.

### QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The quality infrastructure is “the system comprising the organizations (public and private) together with the policies, relevant legal and regulatory framework, and practices needed to support and enhance the quality, safety and environmental soundness of goods, services and processes. The quality infrastructure is required for the effective operation of domestic markets, and its international recognition is important to enable access to foreign markets. It is a critical element in promoting and sustaining economic development, as well as environmental and social wellbeing. It relies on metrology, standardization, accreditation, conformity assessment, and market surveillance.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This definition was agreed upon by the Network on Metrology, Accreditation, Standardization and Conformity Assessment for Developing Countries (DCMAS) in 2017

Quality infrastructure components may evolve in isolation and overlap in functions and responsibilities, resulting in policy gaps and lacking synergies. This may lead to operational and cost inefficiencies.

A quality policy sets the framework for joint efforts of the national and regional quality infrastructure institutions on fostering development and trade, while clearly assigning roles and responsibilities to each stakeholder. A quality policy actively promotes a culture of quality to bring sustainable balance between the infrastructure offered and the demand of quality services.

### QUALITY POLICY

Countries have increasingly developed quality policies as a means to reform, consolidate, refine and maintain an effective and efficient quality infrastructure. Instilling the culture of quality, a vital element of any quality initiative, not only promotes global trade, but also boosts the national market and addresses human, animal and plant health as well as related safety needs. Quality policy is often rightly seen as part of a wider development strategy.

UNIDO has helped 26 countries and three regional groups to devise viable quality policies. Together with its partners from governments and industry, UNIDO completes the whole cycle of policy development: from inception and strategic planning to design, awareness raising, implementation and monitoring.

### IMPACTS OF QUALITY POLICIES INTRODUCED WITH UNIDO'S ASSISTANCE

In **Pakistan**, the quality policy improved the food safety of fishery products by streamlining standardization and technical regulations, internationally recognized accreditation, testing and inspection.

In **Malawi**, quality policy enhanced the delivery of quality infrastructure services for agricultural products.

In the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**, a regional quality policy helped to strengthen regional economic integration and trade of 16 West African countries by promoting compliance with international trade rules and technical regulations while ensuring consistency between all national quality policies.

By 2018 UNIDO has helped 26 countries and three regions to develop their Quality Policies

### THREE REGIONAL QUALITY POLICIES

- » **Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) region** (Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan)
- » **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region** (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and Mauritania)
- » **Economic and Monetary Community for Central Africa (CEMAC) region** (Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe)

### 26 NATIONAL QUALITY POLICIES

- |                 |                 |              |                |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|
| » Angola        | » The Gambia    | » Mali       | » Pakistan     |
| » Bangladesh    | » Ghana         | » Mauritania | » Senegal      |
| » Benin         | » Guinea        | » Mozambique | » Sierra Leone |
| » Burkina Faso  | » Guinea-Bissau | » Myanmar    | » South Sudan  |
| » Cabo Verde    | » Liberia       | » Namibia    | » Swaziland    |
| » Côte d'Ivoire | » Malawi        | » Niger      | » Togo         |
|                 |                 | » Nigeria    | » Zambia       |



## Quality Policy Guiding Principles

Every country operates within its unique context. It is therefore impossible to provide a universally applicable template. A set of experience-based key principles allows each country to adapt and tailor its policy to its specific needs.

This document offers policymakers a set of quality policy guiding principles to help them find holistic and need-driven solutions to facilitate integration into global markets. Each country, based on its context, can adapt the key principles to create an effective quality policy and quality infrastructure, addressing the country's need, priorities and development challenges.

These Quality Policy Guiding Principles were developed through a broad consensus-building process in cooperation with the International Network on Quality Infrastructure (former DCMAS Network) and in collaboration with the World Bank Group.

The International Network on Quality Infrastructure (INQI) comprises ten international organizations:

- » International Organization for Standardization (ISO)
- » International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)
- » International Telecommunications Union (ITU)
- » International Accreditation Forum (IAF)
- » International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC)
- » International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM)
- » International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML)
- » International Trade Centre (ITC)
- » United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
- » United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

## FIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR QUALITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Various quality infrastructure components should exploit synergies and complement each other in achieving the objective. This also includes alignment with other national, regional and international quality related policies.

Defines the way the quality policy and the associated quality infrastructure are managed and overseen at the national and regional levels.

Highlights the need to consider multiple factors that could influence the development of the quality policy. An inclusive consultation process is required to assign areas of responsibility and follow-up action.



Effective and efficient use of national, regional and international condition(s) and/or resource(s) when creating a quality policy.

Ensuring that the quality policy provides consistent support of its political and economic objectives and the associated quality infrastructure.

## Quality Policy Technical Guide

Many countries have identified the need to re-engineer their quality infrastructure system to address economic, environment and social challenges as well as to effectively connect with international trading regimes. Without a solid government policy the required alignment of the country's quality infrastructure system with that of their main trading partners is seriously hampered.

The Technical Guide explains the relevance of quality policy and describes its context, main elements, actors and implementation measures. It serves as a reference document for all-level stakeholders who wish to develop a quality policy. The guide also provides an insight into the governmental policymaking in the areas of quality infrastructure and technical regulation. Governments can use this document as a "good practice" reference when developing quality policy.

The Quality Policy Technical Guide further outlines the elements of a viable quality infrastructure system: governance and quality infrastructure institutions related to standardization, metrology and accreditation; quality infrastructure services, such as conformity assessment, calibration and verification; and markets and consumers who benefit from higher-quality products.

The Guide also explains how a quality policy is linked to various other policies (e.g. development, trade, industrial, environmental, consumer protection, science, research and innovation and environment policies). This shows clearly that the quality policy needs to be linked to the broader policy framework.

## FIVE KEY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

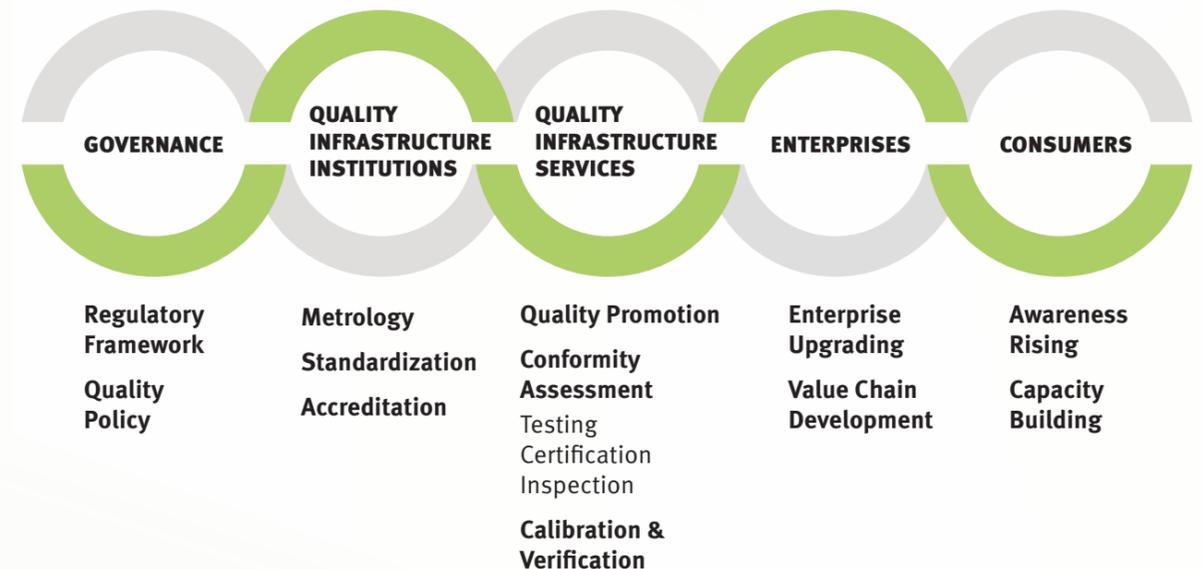
**WHY?** The guide explains how quality policy and quality infrastructure support effective trade.

**WHAT?** It lists all the main elements of a quality policy: vision, goals, objectives, outcomes and measures; and stresses government's commitment as a prerequisite for success.

**WHERE?** The guide highlights the need for national, regional and international contextualization and can be used for the development of national and regional quality policies.

**WHO?** All stakeholders, including government, private sector, non-governmental organizations, civil society, international development partners and media should participate in quality policy development.

**HOW?** By presenting various elements of a quality policy, the Guide offers policymakers "building blocks" and clarifies the available options for quality policy and quality infrastructure development.



# Quality Policy Practical Tool

In contrast with the Guiding Principles and the Technical Guide, which focus on the content of a quality policy document, the Practical Tool outlines the process of quality policy development. Indeed, an inclusive, open, transparent and well-managed process is as important as the resulting policy.

The quality policy development process comprises of five stages; each stage includes several steps. For every step, the Tool defines intended outcomes, relevance of the action (why?), responsible actors (who?) and measures needed to complete the step successfully (what and how?). The Practical Tool also indicates potential challenges and suggests mitigation measures for every step.

Although there is no “one-size-fits-all” template, the development stages are similar to all countries. The Practical Tool offers a step-by-step approach to developing (or improving) countries’ or regions’ quality policies in an inclusive and sustainable way. It draws on and is designed to be used in conjunction with the Guiding Principles and the Quality Policy Guide.

The resulting quality policy should set a legal framework for the quality infrastructure system. It needs to be reviewed and updated regularly as the country’s/region’s development priorities, needs and targets evolve.

When drafting a quality policy, all the factors that may influence the policy’s successful implementation should be considered. It is therefore advisable to develop simultaneously an implementation plan that takes into consideration the financial viability of the quality policy, its priorities (cost- and benefit-based) and other resource implications.

## FIVE STAGES OF QUALITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT





MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

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of Foreign Affairs of Finland**



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**Department of Trade, Investment and Innovation (TII)**  
Vienna International Centre,  
P.O. Box 300, 1400 Vienna, Austria  
Email: [tii@unido.org](mailto:tii@unido.org)  
[www.unido.org](http://www.unido.org)