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# African Continental Qualifications Framework ACQF MAPPING STUDY

## Country Report Working Paper

# Ethiopia

### SIFA Skills for Youth Employability Programme

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- **Reports on countries' qualifications frameworks:** Angola, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa and Togo
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# Acronyms

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ACQF	African Continental Qualifications Framework
ANFE	Adult and Non-formal Education
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CoC	Centre of Competency
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ENQF	Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework
EQF	European Qualifications
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme
FTA	Federal TVET Agency
HAQAA	Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation
HE	Higher Education
HERQA	Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency
HESC	Higher Education Strategy Centre
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MoE	Ministry of Education
NTQF	National TVET Qualifications Framework
OS	Occupational Standards
QA	Quality Assurance
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
TE	Teacher Education
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

# Introduction on the ACQF Mapping Study

## Policy context of this mapping study

This country report forms an integral part of the *Mapping Study on the state-of-play and dynamics of qualifications frameworks in Africa*, which lays the updated evidence foundation for development of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF). The purpose of this report is to provide an updated overview - not an evaluation - of policies, practices and instruments related with qualifications frameworks in Ethiopia.

The African Union Commission (AUC) initiated the ACQF development process in September 2019 working in partnership with the European Union (EU), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the European Training Foundation (ETF) over a period of 2.5 years (2019-2022). The ACQF-development activities are part of the African Union (AU)-EU project “Skills for Youth Employability”, which supports a holistic process building on evidence and analysis; AUC political leadership and consultation of African stakeholders (national, regional and continental); awareness raising and capacity development of African stakeholders.

The main planned output of the project by mid-2022 is the ACQF policy and technical document and action plan technically validated for decision making by the relevant organs of the AU.

The intermediate project outputs planned for 2019-2022 are:

- ACQF Mapping study (by mid-2020)
- ACQF Feasibility study (by mid-2021)

Other key activities:

- Stakeholder consultation workshops throughout the process (2019-2022)
- Awareness raising and capacity development actions (2020-2022)
- Website to support ACQF development and information sharing
- ACQF related policy and technical information for STC-EST meetings

## ACQF Mapping Study: brief overview of the scope and methodology

The ACQF mapping study aims to chart a comprehensive, specific and updated analysis of where Africa stands in respect to qualifications frameworks development, establishment, operationalisation and revision. The scope of the study is wide in terms of explored thematic domains; and inclusive, as it considers the broad range of countries’ dynamics and progression stages in developing and establishing qualifications frameworks.

The mapping study builds on a combination of sources of information and data:

- a) Desk research: collection and analysis of sources, including policy-legislative framework; methodology sources; qualifications websites, registers and catalogues; statistical data; analyses and studies.
- b) Online survey: conducted between beginning of November 2019 and mid-January 2020; a second round was conducted in May 2020. Responses were received from 33 countries.
- c) Technical visits to a group of ten countries and three Regional Economic Communities (RECs): carried out by a team of experts, in the period from mid-December 2019 to mid-March 2020.

Countries included in the technical visits: Angola, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Senegal, Togo and South Africa. Cabo Verde was included in March 2020, but due to the Coronavirus Pandemic the research did not include a country visit, and was based on online meetings, a presentation of the NQF and extensive desk research. Three Regional Economic Communities (RECs) contacted: EAC, ECOWAS and SADC.

#### Main reports of the mapping study

- Final comprehensive report, encompassing the full set of findings from the continental stocktaking and the thematic analyses on qualifications frameworks developments in Africa. Finalisation: September 2020.
- Synthetic report and infographics focused on key findings. Period: September 2020.

#### Thematic analyses contributing to the comprehensive mapping study

- Report of continental-wide survey on developments of qualifications frameworks encompassing all AU Member States (AU MS) and RECs
- Report of analysis of qualifications
- Country reports (11 countries) and REC reports (3 RECs)

**The list of participants to the technical visit in February 2020 and the list of members of the NQF advisory group and of the technical working group (2006-2008) are not inserted in this version of the report.**

#### **Acknowledgements**

*While this Ethiopian case study report has been prepared as part of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) mapping study in 2020, it draws on a foundation being laid since 2006 for the proposed Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework (ENQF). The Higher Education Strategy Centre (HESC) has been the leading agency in this process and its assigned staff have been able to hold the vision for the ENQF throughout this period. During February 2020, a set of stakeholder interviews were conducted (see Annexure 1) to determine the current state of play of the ENQF, culminating in this report. The research team would like to express its sincere gratitude to all these interviewees and their organisations. We are particularly appreciative of the participation of representatives from the African Union Commission, the Ethiopian Federal TVET Agency, Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce, City Government of Addis Ababa Occupational Competency Assessment and Certification Centre, Selam David Röschli and General Winget TVET Colleges, and Admas University. Our thanks also go to Aklilu Desta, Fabian Jaekel, Alemshet Berhane and Eduarda Castel-Branco for assistance in arranging the fieldwork in Ethiopia.*

# 1. Snapshot of the Ethiopian NQF

The **Ethiopian NQF (ENQF)** currently exists as a concept that has undergone several iterations of development since 2006. The proposed scope of the ENQF is comprehensive, including all sectors (Higher Education, General Education and TVET) and all national qualifications. A ten-level ENQF was proposed in 2008 but was later amended to eight levels. More recently, the *Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-30)* (Teferraet *al*, 2019) constituted the key policy directive for the Ethiopian government at present, but critically, the Roadmap makes little mention of the proposed ENQF and its developments.

The **National TVET Qualifications Framework (NTQF)**, a sub-framework of the ENQF, has been in place since 2010 (Ministry of Education 2010) rationalises all TVET provisions into a single nationally recognised qualification. The NTQF defines the different occupational qualification levels to be awarded. The NTQF level descriptors also provide a useful reference point for future planning as they have been in place since 2010. The descriptors are developed across five vertical levels, and four horizontal levels (domains), namely problem solving, accountability, knowledge and skills, and also tasks in operational environments (Ministry of Education 2010).

The proposed ENQF firmly promotes the **use of learning outcomes** across all levels and sectors of the Ethiopian education and training system. The ENQF defines qualifications in terms of broad characteristics of types of qualifications; specific differentiating characteristics and purpose of each qualification; minimum requirements for the award of the specific qualification in terms of level and credits that indicate duration; and entry requirements. The existing system in Ethiopia is a credit-hours system whereby credits are allocated according to the number of contact hours per week (ENQF Task Force 2008).

Through the ENQF process, **draft policies** were developed between 2012 and 2014. These include:

- Credit arrangement policy
- ENQF policy for assessment
- ENQF policy for registration
- ENQF policy for quality assurance
- Policy on qualifications and standards.
- ENQF policy for awarding of qualifications

The **ENQF was formally proclaimed** in 2010 but it is not clear if legislation has been enacted beyond the proclamation.

**Quality assurance practices** within the education system in Ethiopia are relatively immature. Providers are unfamiliar with concepts of quality management, internal quality assurance and moderation, and the society is accustomed to a high level of authoritative direction and lower levels of personal choice than are customary in some societies. Validation of programmes is currently practised separately in the three sectors, using various sector-specific guidelines and processes. Programme validation looks at issues of relevance/demand for the programme, as well as the consistency of the programme proposal with the technical requirements for framework qualifications.

A broad set of draft validation criteria for programmes leading to the award of ENQF qualifications is provided for consultation in the Implementation Plan.

The *Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-30)* (Teferra et al, 2019:25) suggests a very strong **emphasis on the non-formal sector**, including the development of adult and non-formal education programmes that have clear, independent, responsible and accountable structure. It even suggests the establishment of a separate national and regional agency or appropriate structure to organise adult and non-formal education, and the non-formal TVET in the country.

## 2. Introduction and context <sup>1</sup>

Ethiopia is the second-most populous country in Africa, with a population of just over 100 million people, and encompasses a significant landmass in the order of 1 000 000 square kilometres. The country has a 2.6% average population growth rate. Ethiopia's population is also noticeably young. According to projections based on the census in 2007, the population aged between 0–29 was estimated to constitute about 73% of the total 2016 population. A decade of higher economic growth has brought reduced poverty in urban and rural areas, with the proportion of the population living below the national poverty line decreasing from 30% in 2011 to 24% in 2016. Agriculture remains the dominant economic sector, employing about 80% of the population and generating about 90% of the country's exports.

Despite the economic progress of the past decade, finding productive employment opportunities for the country's youth continues to be a challenge. The average national unemployment rate is 4.5%, although this differs significantly between urban and rural areas. While rural unemployment was estimated at around 2% in 2018, urban unemployment in the same year was estimated at 6.5% (ILO, 2018). Variations have been observed in recent years in the share of the economically active population at the national level, as well as in labour market trends and characteristics at national and regional levels. Accordingly, at the national level the agricultural sector accounts for 72.7% of employment, while the service, manufacturing, and construction sectors cover 20.4%, 4.5%, and 1.9%, respectively (Oqubay, 2018:4).

The economic development process has been characterised by a deep structural shift in emphasis of activity away from traditional and primary sectors towards secondary and tertiary sectors. This has meant the steady weakening of agriculture, with concomitant increases in services, and good prospects for quickening in industries such as construction and manufacturing. In line with the manufacturing strategy, the industrial sector is set to expand by 20% on average, creating more jobs (World Bank, 2019). A strategic outcome of this shift among sectors is to reduce relative demand in the national labour market for low-skill jobs – such as those found in agriculture – and to increase

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<sup>1</sup> This section contains extracts from a forthcoming 2020 ILO report prepared by JET Education Services focusing on the IGAD region in Africa and will be used with permission should this country note be published. The mapping of the Ethiopian education and training landscape has been updated from a comprehensive report developed by SAQA for the Ministry of Education of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in 2008. [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_670542.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_670542.pdf) - WESO 2019 Trends int EN.indd%3A.144689%3A2737



demand for semi-skilled and high-skilled workers in the secondary and tertiary economic sectors. Jobs that are created in the services sector will be relatively more knowledge-intensive and offer higher wages, so the earnings gap between skilled and unskilled workers in Ethiopia will grow. In the medium to long run, this trend in the labour market is expected to have positive implications for poverty reduction and income distribution.

At the time of the preparation of this report in April 2020, the *Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-30)* (Teferraet al, 2019) constituted the key policy directive for the Ethiopian government. The Roadmap is based on desktop research and consultations and is internationally benchmarked to Vietnam and Malaysia. The Roadmap proposes reforms across six thematic areas: (1) pre-primary and primary education, (2) secondary and preparatory education (3) teacher education and development, (4) higher education, (5) TVET, and (6) policy, governance and leadership. The table below provides a brief summary of key recommendations of relevance to this case study on the Ethiopian NQF developments.

Critically, the Roadmap makes little mention of the proposed ENQF and its developments since 2006.

Sector	Relevant recommendations
Pre-primary and primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) teacher education at diploma level after completion of grade twelve and at degree level as a long-term strategy;</li> <li>• Ensure that teacher training institutions are training ECE teachers in the relevant mother tongue;</li> <li>• Standardise the curriculum of the school readiness program;</li> <li>• Develop built-in continuous monitoring and evaluation system;</li> <li>• Make the starting or entry age of primary education to be (6+) and its duration six years (grades 1-6);</li> <li>• Introduce competence-based comprehensive approach shifting the focus from ‘what’ to ‘how’; and</li> <li>• Restructure adult and non-formal education (ANFE) in such a way that it has an independent organisational structure with clear accountability and budget across all levels, that is, from Federal to Woreda</li> </ul>
Secondary and preparatory education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit the structure of the schooling system (4-4-2-2) to allow secondary schooling to stretch from grade 9-12, in a 6-2-4 system, with six years of primary schooling, two years of upper primary/ lower secondary (or junior secondary schooling) and four years of secondary education. Extending the upper secondary education period to four years would allow provision of diverse pathways;</li> <li>• The traditional learning areas of the upper and lower secondary curriculum should be restructured, with the introduction of new learning areas such as Technology, and Citizenship Education, thereby creating a balance between the traditional knowledge-focus and a competence-based curriculum;</li> <li>• There must be a system of managing teachers’ performance and development in which teachers who are performing well are rewarded, and poorly performing teachers are identified and measures taken to improve their performance;</li> </ul>

Sector	Relevant recommendations
Teacher education and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examinations must test competence not accumulation of knowledge. School-leaving certification examinations for completion of primary and secondary education should provide direction for the future performance of the student. Examinations should focus on two or three subjects to test generic skills or vocational skills.</li> <li>Make sure that all prospective teachers are trained in public colleges and universities for at least three years;</li> <li>Establish a comprehensive quality assurance system for teacher education institutes and teacher education graduates;</li> <li>Introduce nationwide quality indicators for placement and exit tests administered in TE.</li> </ul>
Higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Universities must be allowed to choose their areas of specialisation and excellence based on their strengths and opportunities within local, national and international contexts;</li> <li>Encourage universities to have stronger university-industry linkages by employing industry leaders to teach part of the course so that students can get real work perspectives from the guest lecturers.</li> </ul>
TVET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop skills development policy encompassing the range from semi-skilled worker to technician, (technical) engineering training and education in TVET systems;</li> <li>Introduce a policy that creates, through a National Qualification Framework, comparability and pathways for transitioning and mobility between the academic and TVET systems;</li> <li>Introduce vocational content into general education to create awareness of vocational education in the schools;</li> <li>Establish TVET at secondary school and in post-secondary education and training programs; and</li> <li>Provide first level of certification for TVET secondary school completers.</li> </ul>
Policy, governance and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education policy objectives should be revisited and formulated to reflect the creation of holistic development in all citizens, including confident and competent citizens, critical thinkers, competent professionals who meet the requirements of the global market, entrepreneurs and innovators, strongly ethical and moral values, standing for justice, peace, and unity in diversity;</li> <li>Strengthening decentralisation at institution level by empowering schools and implementing school-based management with accountability;</li> <li>Institute adult and non-formal education programs that have clear, independent, responsible and accountable structure. It is suggested to have a separate national and regional agency or appropriate structure to organise adult and non-formal education, and non-formal TVET in the country;</li> </ul>

*Table 1: Selection of key recommendations from the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap 2018-2030 (Source: Teferra et al, 2019)*

## 3. Mapping of education and training system

The Ethiopian education and training system is structured as set out below. Both formal and non-formal sectors are included since both are important (ENQF Taskforce 2008 with updates).

### 3.1 Formal

- General Education consisting of Grades 1-12, divided into:
  - Primary Education - two cycles of four years
  - General Secondary Education – two years
  - Preparatory Secondary Education – two years;
- TVET with certification at Certificate and Diploma levels;
- Higher Education with certification at Degree and Post Graduate levels.

### 3.2 Non-formal

- Alternative Basic Education (ABE) which is a strategy to provide a flexible model of primary education to meet the needs of those who are unable to access the formal system, particularly pastoral and agricultural communities;
- Adult literacy programmes provided by a variety of governmental and non- governmental providers, which do not need to be accredited. These programmes include basic skills training; and
- Basic skills training provided through Community Skill Training Centres and other accredited providers.

Between 1994 and 2011 an education and training policy and accompanying strategy came into effect and this has guided a series of Education Sector Development Programmes (ESDPs). The vision for the education sector was to “realise the creation of trained and skilled human power” for the social and economic development of Ethiopia. The main thrust of the ESDP programmes was:

- Access – with focus on achieving universal primary education and increasing participation of marginalised groups including girls, rural/pastoral communities and people with special needs;
- Educational quality – standardised high-quality education and training programmes that support the development of well-rounded, competent, disciplined and educated people;
- Relevance – reform of the education system to “make education and training responsive to the country’s development strategy” (ESDP III), including involvement of different stakeholders (community, private investors, NGOs etc.); and
- Efficiency - including reduction of repetition and attrition rates.

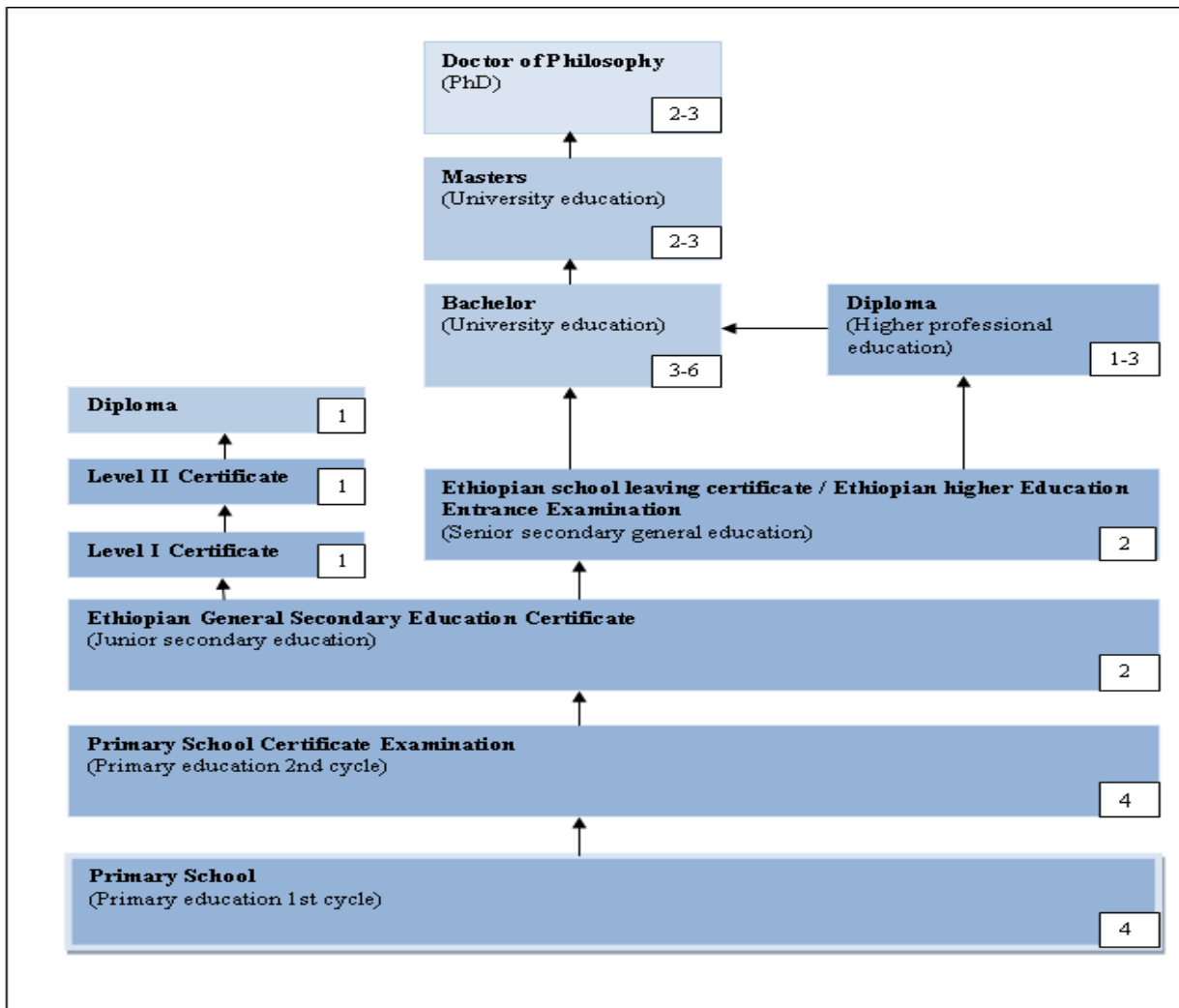


Figure 1: The Structure of Ethiopia's Education System (Source: Ministry of Education, Ethiopia in Mwiria 2019).

### 3.3 General Education

Implementation of the ESDP resulted in a massive expansion of the general education sector, including the establishment of over 6 000 primary schools (85% in rural areas). As a result, the student-teacher ratio also increased. Over 300 new secondary schools were established and total enrolment in secondary education increased by 123%. Overall, this rapid expansion resulted in the image of secondary education being tarnished by the perception of declining quality. At the same time, the proportion of private secondary schools increased to 17.9%, with a clear majority of private secondary schools in urban areas (up to 75%). Key challenges in the general education sector include scarcity of qualified teachers, crowded classrooms and inadequacy of teaching materials and equipment.

### 3.4 TVET

The TVET sector has historically been fragmented due to weak links between the various relevant ministries involved in TVET provision. In addition to formal TVET programmes offered in TVET Colleges (up to diploma level) and TVET Institutions (certificate level), non-formal TVET is offered to students

who may not have reached the Grade 10 entry requirements. Non-formal education and training are provided through Community Skills Training Centres, NGOs, employers and private training establishments. The number of TVET institutions offering formal TVET training increased from just 17 in 1996/7 to more than 250 in 2005/6. Enrolment increased from approximately 3 000 students to more than 123 557 students over the same period.

The TVET reform agenda has attempted to achieve several objectives including the integration of different types of TVET into one coherent system in which all learner achievement can be recognised and recorded. Following the massive expansion of the sector, the need to focus on quality and relevance of TVET provision was recognised. The current TVET strategy proposes an outcome-based approach to learning, with occupational standards set by the relevant occupational groups. In order to achieve the strategy, the TVET sector finalised and implemented a TVET Qualifications Framework in 2010.

### **3.5 Higher Education**

The public higher education sector has increased from two universities to 22 in 2008. Public universities are established by law and no pre-accreditation or accreditation processes are required. Private HE providers are required to apply to the Ministry of Education for pre-accreditation (permit to operate) and for institutional/programme accreditation. Importantly, public universities accept students through a centralised placement system on academic merit. Full-time students are substantially subsidised, but a measure of cost-sharing takes the form of a graduate tax. Demands for university places by applicants who meet the entry criteria far exceed the capacity of the public institutions. Alternative routes to higher education are provided in the form of summer schools and evening classes but students attending these programmes pay full fees. Private institutions are not subsidised by the government and their students tend to be those who did not meet the entry requirements of the public institutions.

## **4. Scope and structure of the NQF**

### **4.1 Scope**

The proposed scope of the ENQF is comprehensive, including all sectors (Higher Education, General Education and TVET) and all national qualifications. A linked system which allows for differences between sectors is recommended over a unified system in which no difference between sectors is recognised. The undertaking of the ENQF Taskforce in 2008 was to build on existing systems, which includes recognising that the sectors have different approaches to the development of assessment standards, and that while all learning can be described in terms of outcomes, some types of learning are more suited to competency-based assessment than others. The scope of the framework includes some forms of what has been known as “non-formal” training (i.e. basic and junior skills training) which is now included in the framework and therefore included in the formal system. The scope includes all formal qualifications offered by private as well as public providers.

The National TVET Qualifications Framework (NTQF) in place since 2010 (Ministry of Education 2010) rationalises all TVET provisions into a single nationally recognised qualification. The qualification framework defines the different occupational qualification levels to be awarded. According to the assessment and certification directive of Ethiopia (Federal TVET Agency [FTA], 2014 unpublished), the occupational assessment and certification system is in support of the provisions of the Article 11 of the ‘Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)’ Proclamation No. 954/2008. It authorises the Federal TVET Agency to design, innovate and adopt processes suited for the development of occupational standards, and the proper implementation of the assessment and certification system. The National TVET Qualifications Framework (NTQF) allows for a national, comprehensive, and flexible certification system for the TVET sector as well as for lower and middle-level manpower of industry. It has three modalities to accommodate different interest groups, which are formal, non-formal and informal. Formal trainees join TVET after completing a minimum of grade 10. Outcome based training curricula are developed by Polytechnic Colleges in association with regional TVET Agencies and enterprises. In the Ethiopian system, TVET strategy stipulates that 70% of the training should consist of workplace experience and only 30% of school-based education. Cooperative Training (CT) is a new system that is being tried but has not gained traction overall. It is based on what is called the ‘German model’, a dual education and training system.

## 4.2 NQF levels

A ten-level ENQF was proposed in 2008 as summarised in the diagram below. The ten-level framework was later amended to eight levels (see next section).

ENQF Level	Grade	General and Higher Education	TVET
10		PhD (480 credits)	
9		Masters Degree (240 credits)	
8		Graduate Diploma (120 credits)	
7		Bachelor Degree (360 credits)	
6			Advanced Diploma (120 credits)
5		Diploma (120 credits)	Diploma (120 credits)
4	12	Higher Education Entrance Examinations Certificate (120 credits)	Level 4 Certificate (120 credits)
3	11		Level 3 Certificate (120 credits)
2	10	General Education Certificate (120 credits)	Level 2 Certificate (120 credits)
1	8	Primary School Leaving Certificate (120 credits)	Basic Certificate (40 credits)
Access	1- 4 Including ABE		

*Table 2: Levels of the ENQF (ENQF Task Force, 2008)*

According to Mwiria (2019), the NTQF (Ministry of Education, 2010) is designed to fit eventually within the more comprehensive national education framework that will incorporate the three education subsectors (general education, higher education and TVET). More recently (see Mwiria 2019), the development of the ENQF is recognised, and described as a ‘2013 draft awaiting approval by the government until the new curriculum, which is being reviewed is implemented. Its focus is restricted to TVET’. At this point the number of levels had been reduced from ten to eight.

ENQF Levels	Sub-framework <sup>2</sup> for General Education	Sub-framework for TVET	Sub-framework for Higher Education
8			Doctoral Degree
7			Postgraduate Diploma Masters
6			Bachelor Professional Graduate Diploma
5			TVET Certificate 5
4	<i>Diploma in Teaching</i>	TVET Certificate 4	
3		TVET Certificate 3	
2		TVET Certificate 2	
1		TVET Certificate 1	

Table 3: Ethiopia National Qualification Framework (Source: Education Strategy Centre (Draft, 2013) in Mwiria 2019).

### 4.3 Level descriptors

In 2008, the ENQF Taskforce reviewed the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) descriptors, existing Ethiopian National TVET Qualifications Framework (NTQF) descriptors, and examples from other countries (e.g. Namibia and South Africa), in relation to existing General Education profiles, strategic quality improvement priorities of the Ministry of Education, feedback from stakeholders about perceived skills and knowledge deficits in the existing Ethiopian Education System, and also the thinking on how to make academic qualifications more relevant to the modern world of work. Analysis of this information enabled the taskforce to propose a design template for qualification descriptors that draws on the main features of EQF level descriptors, but augments these with particular emphasis on knowledge and skills relevant to the development of civic society, and knowledge and skills relevant to creativity and entrepreneurship.

The NTQF level descriptors provide a useful reference point for future planning as they have been in place since 2010. The descriptors are developed across five vertical levels, and four horizontal levels

<sup>2</sup> The use of the term “sub-framework” is certainly open to interpretation and further discussion. On a more conceptual level the ENQF is design with three sub-frameworks, while in practice, each of the sectors have evolved their qualifications systems in a more organic manner, with the TVET NQTF probably closer to a sub-framework, while General Education and Higher Education are better described as sub-systems at this point.

(domains), namely problem solving, accountability, knowledge and skills, and also tasks in operational environments (Ministry of Education 2010). The table below is an example from Level 5 of the NTQF.

NTQF Level	Problem Solving Capabilities/ Information Processing	Level descriptors			
		Level of Accountability, Responsibility and	Level of Knowledge and Skills	Level of Tasks/ Environment	Operational
5	Develop creative solutions to abstract problems	Review and develop performance of self and others	Comprehensive, specialized, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work; awareness of limits of this knowledge Ability to apply expertise in a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills	Management and supervision in contexts of work where there is unpredictable change; self-directed application of knowledge and skills Very high degree of complexity, interconnection, transparency and dynamics	in- and

Table 4: NTQF Level 5 Descriptor (Source: Ministry of Education 2010)

#### 4.4 Use of learning outcomes

The proposed ENQF firmly promotes the use of learning outcomes across all levels and sectors of the Ethiopian education and training system. The extent to which the current system is ready for this move is more contentious, as noted in the *Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-30)*:

*It is puzzling however why learning outcomes are so low in Ethiopia in spite of the fact that many new initiatives such as book supply, teacher qualification, plasma education, new curriculum, school improvement packages, etc. are introduced. One possible explanation could be that the system was ‘accountability incoherent’ (vertically and horizontally) for learning outcomes. (Teferra et al, 2019:25)*

As mentioned above, the high-level policy intent inherent in both the NTQF (Ministry of Education 2010), and the ENQF Conceptual Framework (ENQF Task Force 2008), are clear in their approach to the use of learning outcomes and apply this principle across the formulations of standards, descriptors and also qualifications. The perceived low uptake of learning outcomes, as mentioned by Teferra et al (2019), requires deeper interrogation. Anecdotally, it may be that the system lacks the technical support to allow for the conceptual transition to be more explicitly manifested in documents. In practice the use of learning outcomes are not contested and could even be argued, has become pervasive in the Ethiopian system.



#### **4.5 Definition of ‘qualifications’**

The ENQF defines qualifications in terms of broad characteristics of types of qualifications; specific differentiating characteristics and purpose of each qualification; minimum requirements for the award of the specific qualification in terms of level and credits that indicate duration; and entry requirements. A full set of qualifications descriptions for further consultation were included in the ENQF Implementation Plan (Annexure 5)

#### **4.6 Development of qualifications, progression and credits**

Common assumptions fundamental to the design of the framework architecture (Young, 2003) have been used as a basis for the ENQF:

- It is possible to describe all qualifications in terms of a single set of criteria;
- All qualifications can be ranked on a single hierarchy;
- All qualifications can be divided into units or modules;
- All qualifications can be described in terms of learning outcomes that are independent of site, form of provision, type of pedagogy and curriculum content;
- Frameworks provide benchmarks against which all learning can be assessed; and
- Frameworks provide learner-centred systems in which there are no barriers to progression other than the learner’s own performance.

The existing system in Ethiopia is a credit-hours system whereby credits are allocated according to the number of contact hours per week (ENQF Task Force 2008). This system has some disadvantages, including being unsuited to the recognition of learning that is self-directed and occurs experientially, or through non-contact modes of delivery. A proposed alternative method of quantifying learning, based on notional learning hours, was proposed in 2008 (*Ibid.*).

The development of qualifications within the EQTF has been the most progressive, with a strong focus on a standards-based approach (Ministry of Education 2010: 23):

A qualification is a formal certification, issued by the center of competence, in recognition that a person has achieved competencies relevant to identified individual, professional, industry or community needs. It is based on occupational assessment against an occupational standard. The certificate specifies the nature of competence on a specific level for articulation depending on the competence and level.

A unit of competence is a coherent and explicit grouping of performance specifications within a qualification, which involves the application of knowledge, skills and attitude required in the workplace. A unit of competence is an assessable achievement in terms of outcomes based on a particular work function that focuses on what people are expected to perform (duties and tasks). A qualification consists of a series of units of competence being part of an occupation, and these units may be accumulated over time to achieve the full qualification.

A deeper analysis of the available standards and qualifications was beyond the scope of this country visit, but is strongly recommended to avoid duplication.

## 5. Legislation

Through the ENQF process, draft policies were developed between 2012 and 2014. These include:

- Credit arrangement policy
- ENQF policy for assessment
- ENQF policy for registration
- ENQF policy for quality assurance
- Policy on qualifications and standards.
- ENQF policy for awarding of qualifications

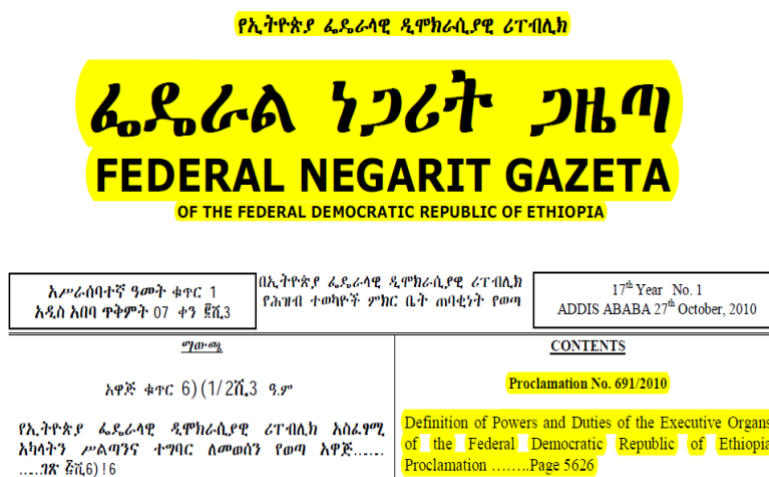


Figure 2: Extract from the ENQF proclamation No. 691/2010 (Kebede 2020)

The ENQF was formally proclaimed in 2010 but it is not clear if legislation has been enacted beyond the proclamation. The draft text of the proclamation in English is attached as Annexure 6 of this report.

## 6. Organising systems: governance, institutions, stakeholders

The development of an inspection system for general education has been underway to cater for the need for institutional accreditation and ongoing monitoring for all schools, including public and private. Manuals for inspection of schools, including standardised methodology and procedures for inspection, have been planned.

A model of governance, which is centrally coordinated and provides the broad parameters within which good practice could be achieved consistently across all sectors, was recommended in 2008.

The Higher Education Strategy Centre (HESC) is an autonomous body with activities that include: (1) strategies for the development of the academic staff of HE institutions; (2) gathering and provision

of information about the HE sector; (3) management of block funding grants to public institutions and development of future funding mechanisms; and (4) responsibility for HE curriculum development. HESC has also been the leading government agency in Ethiopia overseeing the development of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework (see further sections in this report).

The Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA), a sister agency to HESC, is mandated by the Ministry of Education to conduct pre-accreditation and accreditation. HERQA also conducts quality audits and is involved in QA research and strategy and policy development.

The Federal TVET agency has been in place since 2010 and plays a key role in the oversight of the NTQF, while the National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency has oversight of the general education sector.

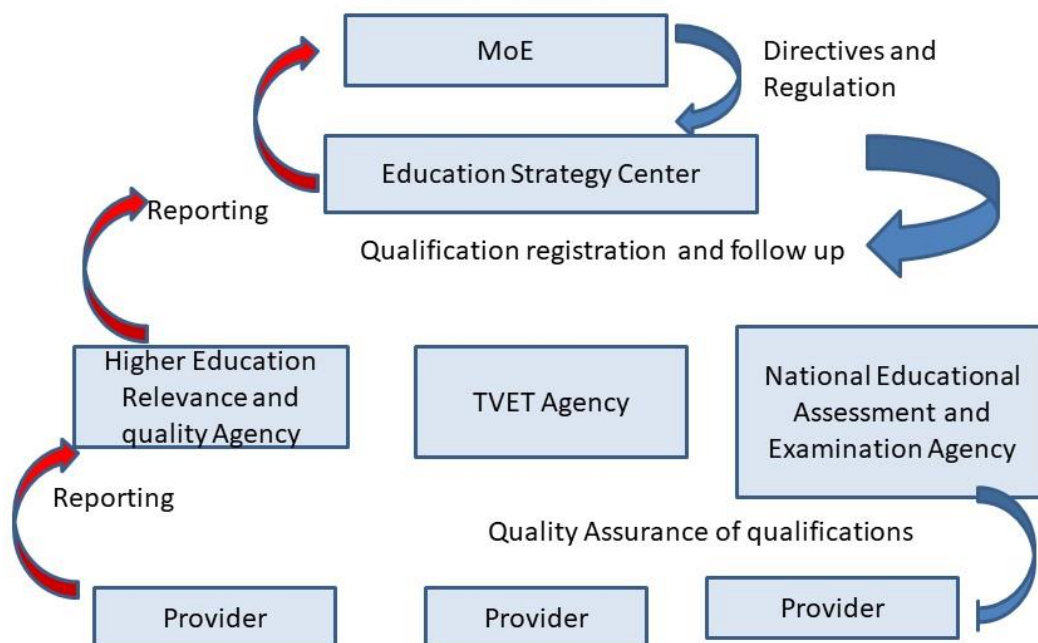


Figure 3: Proposed governance of the sub-frameworks of the ENQF (Kebede 2020)

## 7. Quality assurance of qualifications

Quality assurance practices within the education system in Ethiopia are relatively immature. Providers are unfamiliar with concepts of quality management, internal quality assurance and moderation, and the society is accustomed to a high level of authoritative direction and lower levels of personal choice than are customary in some societies. Validation of programmes is currently practised separately in the three sectors, using various sector-specific guidelines and processes. Programme validation looks at issues of relevance/demand for the programme, as well as the consistency of the programme

proposal with the technical requirements for framework qualifications. A broad set of draft validation criteria for programmes leading to the award of ENQF qualifications is provided for consultation in the Implementation Plan.

Moderation ensures that required standards of attainment are appropriate and are consistently applied. The use of external examiners (HE) or externally administered examinations (General Education) or centralised testing (TVET Centers of Competence) all provide for moderation of assessment. External moderation of programmes needs strengthening, especially in HE (for example through arrangements overseen by HERQA with other universities in Ethiopia and in other countries which offer the same or comparable programmes), and all providers should make arrangements for internal moderation of continuous assessment. Examples of pre- and post-moderation of assessment questions are included in the Implementation Plan.

The table below summarises key quality assurance practices, and while dated, this still largely represent the current regime:

	General Education	TVET	Higher Education
<b>Central QA body</b>	General Education Quality Assurance and Examinations Agency	Federal TVET Agency	HERQA
<b>Registration</b>	Private institutions only	Private institutions only	Private institutions only
<b>Accreditation</b>	Inspection model in development. Central oversight and regional implementation	Private institutions only No post accreditation audit or monitoring	Private institutions only Audit for both public and private
<b>Validation</b>	Central and regional implementation of national curriculum framework	Regional development of curricula based on Occupational Standards	Programmes accreditation for private institutions
<b>Moderation</b>	National exams at Grades 10 and 12 only	Centres of Competence	Only where external examiners are involved

**Table 4: Quality assurance arrangements in the three sectors (Updated from ENQF Task Force, 2008)**

A major shift was made in the Ethiopian TVET system after the launching of the 2008 TVET strategy which was supported by the revised TVET proclamation No. 954/2016. An outcome based TVET approach has been practiced in Ethiopia and is characterised by the occupational standards that are developed by practitioners who represent companies. The assessment and certification system is designed to be independent from training, and is regulated by an autonomous and independent body called the Center of Competency (CoC). Occupational Standards (OS) are the most important quality assurance documents and provide the bases for training, assessment and certification according to Occupational Competency Assessment and Certification Directive (MoE, 2014 unpublished).

Introducing the occupational standards, assessment and certification system in the Ethiopian TVET system has helped to improve quality and relevance of TVET provision. Government reports (FTA,

2016, unpublished) have shown that there has been improvement in the quality of institutional infrastructure and training supplies for outcome-based training. This has led to improvement in the quality and flexibility of training based on occupational standards as an outcome. The process of quality assurance of TVET qualifications takes two forms: internal and external competency assessment. External assessments are open for everyone, regardless whether they attended TVET institutions or not, which facilitates recognition of prior learning (RPL). One of the main concerns is the veracity of internal assessments and how this relates to the quality of assessors (UNESCO, 2019).

## 8. NQF implementation

The conceptual work, and wide consultations necessary for ENQF implementation, has been underway for some 14 years, since 2006. The rather extended period, stopping short of finalisation and implementation, bears testimony to the difficulties many developing countries have in allocating sufficient resources to such processes. The timelines below provide a high-level account of the process, up to the point where several draft policies have been developed, and extensive national consultation has been undertaken. The process has largely been led by HESC, which also suffered high levels of staff turnover. Of concern is the fact that the Ethiopian *Education Development Roadmap* (2018-30) (Teferra et al, 2019:25) makes little mention of the ENQF and its development over this extended period.

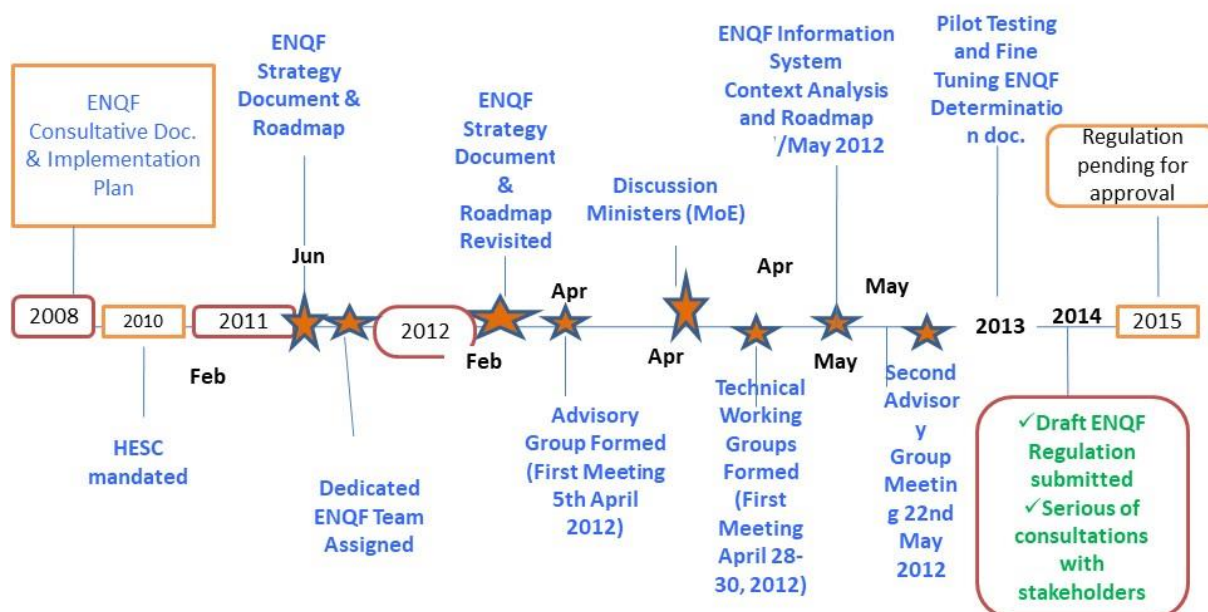


Figure 4: ENQF as part of education reform in Ethiopia (Kebede 2020)

## 9. Validation of prior learning, non-formal and informal learning

According to Mwiria (2019), the NTQF provides for recognition of prior learning (RPL), as it is designed to fit eventually within a more comprehensive national education framework that will incorporate the three education subsectors (general education, higher education and TVET). He adds that:

*... in addition to testing knowledge, skills and competencies, the framework will also recognize historical and foreign Ethiopian qualifications and prior learning. The assessment system will promote flexible learning pathways and will allow for credit accumulation and transfer within the TVET system, both horizontally and vertically. (Mwiria, 2019:10)*

The *Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-30)* (Teferra et al, 2019:25) suggests a very strong emphasis on the non-formal sector, including the development of adult and non-formal education programmes that have clear, independent, responsible and accountable structure. It even suggests the establishment of a separate national and regional agency or appropriate structure to organise adult and non-formal education, and the non-formal TVET in the country. Of importance is also the development of skills development policy that encompasses the range of programmes for semi-skilled workers to technicians, (technical) engineer training and education in the TVET system.

## 10. Recognition of foreign qualifications

Information on the processes and agencies involved in the recognition of foreign qualifications is limited to the role of the Ministry of Education. The methodologies being used warrant more investigation than was possible in this case study. From what could be determined, the approaches are of a more administrative nature, and it would be valuable to explore how the learning outcomes approaches being foregrounded, have been able to impact on these practices.

The Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications on Higher Education in African States (Addis Convention), adopted on 12 December 2014 in Addis Ababa, has not yet been ratified by Ethiopia.

## 11. Interrelationships with other countries and regions

The interview conducted in 2020 starkly illustrated the very limited regional and continental engagement of Ethiopia, despite it hosting the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa. Some involvement in the East Africa Community (EAC) (UNESCO, 2019) is noted, and the Ethiopian Education

Development Roadmap (2018-30) (Teferra et al, 2019) notes international benchmarking with Vietnam and Malaysia.

Ethiopian institutions are also involved in AU-EU partnership education projects (HE) at continental level, as well as a range of continental and international initiatives, such as Tuning Africa, and the Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA). The Erasmus Mundus Joint master's degree programme is also well supported, with capacity building projects under Erasmus+ (international partnerships) and a multitude of Erasmus bilateral agreements with EU Member States (Wondwosen and Teferra 2018).

## 12. Conclusions and future plans

Ethiopia is well positioned both to contribute to, and benefit from, the ACQF process underway. The ENQF has been in development since 2006, and is well poised for being legislated and implemented. The reasons for this not happening are largely of a political nature, and consequent lack of capacity and resources. Continental momentum and buy-in for the qualifications frameworks will encourage Ethiopia to break this deadlock and move ahead. Key will be to ensure that the *Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-30)* is finalised and broadened to include the ENQF as a core policy lever. In turn, the ENQF in its current form, will need to be reviewed and updated to reflect the intentions of the Roadmap.

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# Annexure 1: Draft ENQF-MIS Strategy and Roadmap (2012)

## Introduction

The ENQF-MIS is a management information system of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework which aims to gather, process, and produce information relevant to the ENQF for decision making. The main purpose of this document is to outline and get approval for strategy for the development and implementation of this system.

The initiative involves several stakeholders necessitating HESC to establish a national ENQF-MIS forum representing the major ENQF-MIS stakeholders that could serve as a platform for collaboration, communication and cooperation.

The heart of this strategy is to get an international consulting company to develop the database and train HESC staff on how to manage, maintain and enhance the system in accordance with specifications to be provided. We propose that it would be suitable to get someone, at the earliest stage of the initiative, from a well-established National Qualifications Framework, probably from SAQA, to put some specifications for the database developer and assist the ENQF Unit to develop the organisation model and information flow designs for the ENQF-MIS.

In addition to these strategies, this document also showcases the critical success factors, information requirements, design approach, role of IT, internal organisation, development schedule, management process, resources requirement for the development of the implementation of the ENQF-MIS.

## Background

In 2010 the Higher Education Strategy Center (HESC) was mandated by the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop and implement the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework (ENQF). Since then, HESC has been engaged in several endeavours to accomplish what it had been mandated with. The intention of having an information management system stems from the beginning of the work, through the ENQF-HESC Project<sup>3</sup>, and special consideration was given to the need for international expertise for the development and implementation of an information management system for the ENQF.

In May, 2012, a context analysis and road map for the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework Management Information System (ENQF-MIS) was developed. A team of two experts was also sent to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) to learn about, among other practices, the experience of their National Qualifications Framework Management Information System. Therefore, this document presents a strategy and implementation plan for the development and implementation of the ENQF-MIS, drawing the knowledge from both the Context Analysis and the experiential learning visit at SAQA and also considering other new developments which happened quite recently.

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<sup>3</sup> ENQF-HESC is a project which is part of the Netherlands Initiative for Capacity development in Higher Education (NICHE) whose aim is to capacity build HESC, particularly the ENQF Unit, for the development and implementation of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework.

### *The Ideal of the ENQF-MIS*

The ENQF is a set of national policies for regulated qualifications within the country which requires certain NQF information to be registered on it. This makes the NQF the central point of reference for genuine information necessitating the establishment of a proper Management Information System (MIS) for effective information management.

The sort of information to be found in the ENQF is very delicate, cumbersome, and highly essential for national policy provisions and other decision-making processes. Therefore, it is impossible to consider the ENQF without a management information system that brings all the relevant information into an integrated system.

### *Objectives*

The main objective of this initiative is to support the ideals put in the ENQF Strategy Document and Roadmap by establishing an information management system that:

- Is a database driven system which serves as a resource center for relevant information related to the ENQF for research and decision-making purposes
- contributes to the strengthening of cooperation, collaboration and communication by creating an ENQF-MIS Partners' Forum representing major stakeholders.

### *Critical Success Factors*

In order to establish a fruitful ENQF-MIS, one has to consider the things that might hinder its success and point out the means to tackle them. There are at least four major areas of hindrances: first, we have to realize there is lack of local expertise to design the system (the database). This requires soliciting international expertise which could be very demanding in terms of financial capability. This could be resolved by acquiring external financial support from donors.

Second, even if there is sufficient fund to solicit international expertise, maintaining and enhancing the system relies on the internal capacity of HESC. HESC could recruit and train new staff to manage, maintain and enhance the system but still the scenario is worrisome given the high employee turnover rate at HESC due to low salary and benefit pay scales. This risk could be minimized by developing an employee retention scheme which includes attractive salary and other benefits.

Third, successful management of ENQF related information relies on the capacity of those organizations providing the necessary data; in organizing and submitting data in a specific manner. Most of the education and training providers lack the capacity to do so and unless cured this could result in always deficient information management system. Providing hands on and sustained support to the data providers in terms of training and close consultation is crucial for the system to realize its objectives. Fourth, establishing an information management system that incorporates all key ENQF players from all sub sectors also requires resources. Procuring server, cooling system, electricity power generator and other power backups, data backup hard ware, soft ware, etc. is very expensive which costs HESC thousands of dollars. This problem (and most of the other problems stated above) can be overcome by seeking donor funds. The ENQF team together with the Projects and Resource Mobilization unit should work to secure donor fund(s) solely dedicated for the establishment and maintenance of the ENQF-MIS.

### *Strategies*

Given the scarcity of resources and time, the best way to establish the ENQF-MIS is to recruit an international organization that develops, with support from the ENQF Team, the organization and

information modelling and then design a relational and integrated database based on the information/data modelling. This should include training the ENQF-MIS staff on the management, maintenance and enhancement of the system once it is designed and implemented. HESC lacks the expertise to put the specifications for the database development process. Hence, we suggest that HESC gets some experts from a well-established national qualifications framework organization, preferably from SAQA, to put the specifications and support the ENQF Unit to develop the organization model and information flow processes of the ENQF-MIS.

Such efforts have to be accompanied by the establishment of a national forum which represents the key stakeholders of the ENQF-MIS. This helps in creating a platform for cooperation, collaboration and communication thereby creating a sense of belonging and ownership towards this particular initiative. Once the international developers test the system and train HESC staff involved, the sole responsibility of managing, maintaining and enhancing the system shifts from the developers to HESC staff. The whole initiative would suffer greatly if there is a high ENQF-MIS/Database Specialist turnover. Therefore, HESC should: I) provide an attractive pay scheme to retain these specialists; and II) consider employing two or more specialists in the area with plenty of room for building the capacity of junior staff members who can replace those specialists who leave HESC.

Until the ENQF-MIS could be accommodated by the national project initiated by the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology, it is necessary to consider hosting the ENQF-MIS server(s) at HESC premises. This necessitates the acquisition of server(s), electricity power backup (a generator), UPSs, server room cooling system, data backup drives, etc. It is possible to use the brand new server that HESC purchased quite recently for the initial phase of testing the database system and then procure another one for the full implementation, if necessary.

Furthermore, the ENQF-Team, together with Projects and Resource Mobilization Unit, should develop a project proposal for funding whose sole purpose is to support the establishment and implementation of the ENQF-MIS. The project should be designed in such a way that it could cover costs such as:

- Fees for international consultants for designing the system
- Costs of procuring server(s), cooling system, power and data backup devices, etc.
- Costs of training ENQF-MIS/Team staff members on management, maintenance, and enhancement of the system
- Costs of providing support to ENQF-MIS stakeholders, especially, the data/information providers

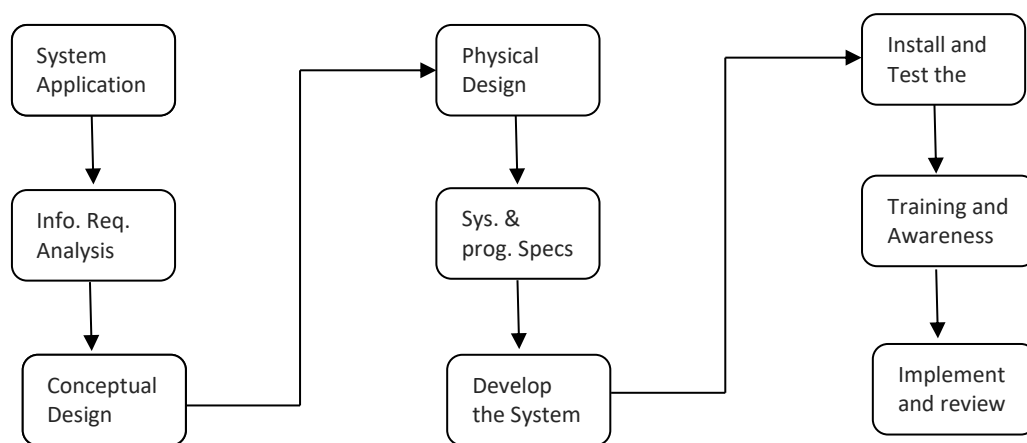
#### *Key information requirement*

The ENQF-MIS will hold information such as learners' achievement; quality assured qualifications, accredited education and training providers, recognized foreign qualifications, qualifications standards, Learner Satisfaction and Graduate Destination information, Record of complaints, Retention, success, progression statistics, Access, progression and employment pathways, etc. This information is provided by education and training providers, education and training quality assurance bodies, regional centers of competence, NEAEA, regional education bureaus, and Ministry of Labor and social affairs.

### *Design Approach*

The design approach should start from determining the system application; and the ENQF-MIS should be a database and batch processing approach which uses the database as its integral part of managing information relating to the ENQF. In order to pursue this approach, one has to have a high level of certainty what the information requirements are. As discussed earlier in section 6, the information requirements are clearly known, and the database developer would further work with the ENQF Team to elaborate on it while designing the information/data modelling.

The next step is a conceptual design of the system, including the organization and information/data modelling, followed by physical design which is the actual designing. Once the system and program requirements are determined and the system is developed then the system can be installed and tested. The diagram below depicts the design approach described above.



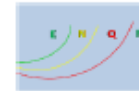
### *The role of Information Technology*

Information Technology is the most key player in the design and implementation of the ENQF-MIS. In fact, it is impossible to consider the ENQF-MIS without a proper architecture which is basically Information Technology. It provides the skeleton through which the whole system is built and implemented. The kind of software and hardware we use determines the kind of system we develop and implement and hence precaution is necessary in choosing the technology. The kind of Information Technology the ENQF-MIS uses should be the most advanced and flexible to the dynamism of the information age.

# Annexure 2: Example of a newsletter (2012)



**ENQF**  
**Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework**  
 Newsletter Number 3



November 2012

## The purposes of the ENQF

The Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework contributes to social and economic goals of the Government of Ethiopia by:

- a) Encouraging increased relevance of Ethiopian qualifications to industry and the labour market
- b) Promoting equity and access to education for all Ethiopians and providing mechanisms which promote lifelong learning by recognizing learning achievements in formal, non-formal and informal settings
- c) Establishing national standards of knowledge and skills and the outcomes expected of graduates of all ENQF qualifications
- d) Promoting the quality of programme development and delivery, and the credibility of Ethiopian Qualifications, through the establishment of national quality standards and quality assurance processes
- e) Harmonizing the three subsectors through the provision of common standards and systems; making transparent the comparability of qualifications; developing progression pathways between them; and enhancing collaborative development.

## Policy development for ENQF implementation

In order to achieve these purposes the ENQF is supported by a suite of policies through which its purposes will be achieved. The policies currently under development are the ENQF policies on:

- Registration of Qualifications
- Registration of Short Duration Training Programmes
- Qualification Standards
- Assessment
- Credit Arrangements
- Quality Assurance
- Awarding ENQF Qualifications

Prior to developing the first drafts of these policies discussions were held with the implementing bodies HERQA, the Federal TVET Agency and the Office of the State Minister for General Education to discuss the ENQF Team's intention to develop policies which have important implications for the future operations of the implementing bodies. The discussions provided some initial information about issues relevant to the development of the policies.

The first draft of five policies was developed and circulated to the members of the ENQF Technical Working Groups prior to the planned meeting at Adama in the week of 14-19 October 2012.

## Technical working group meeting 14-19 October

The Technical Working Groups met over five days to discuss the first drafts of the ENQF policies in detail. The following participants engaged in rigorous and constructive discussion, provided excellent feedback, raised a number of important issues and made recommendations which support the development of the ENQF:

- General Education:** Ato Solomon Belayneh  
 Ato Solomon Andargie  
 Ato Yasabu Berkeh  
 Ato Masresha Zerihun
- TVET:** W/ro Seblewongel Haregewoin  
 Ato Shewakena W/Amanuel  
 Ato Yitbarek Kehail
- Higher Education:** Ato Asmare Demilew  
 Ato Dejenie Nigusie  
 Ato Zeru Bekele  
 Ato Demewoze Degerfa  
 Ato Biratu Tolossa
- ENQF Team:** Ato Assegidew Tesfaye  
 Ato Ephrem Bekele  
 W/ro Amarech Kebede  
 Mrs Alison Schmidt  
 W/ro Tesfayenes Lemma
- Gender Expert**



Figure 1: Members of the recent ENQF Technical Working Group meeting

## Next steps: Advisory Group Meeting

After the Technical Working Group meeting the Team has produced second drafts of the policies, incorporating the feedback of the Technical Working Groups. These second draft policies have been sent to the members of the ENQF Advisory Group for their consideration in preparation for a meeting scheduled for 6 November 2012.

## Annexure 3: Revisiting the Strategy and Road Map: Observations and Comments (2012)

### Interim Governance: Development and approval of the NQF Bill to Proclamation

HESC has been given responsibility, together with the Ministry of Education and the Higher Education Recognition and Quality Assurance Agency (HERQA) to develop the National Qualifications Framework. In a separate Proclamation, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Agency (TVET) has been given responsibility to develop a TVET framework for inclusion on the ENQF. A crucial first step is to ensure HESC's legal and mandated right to develop and implement the ENQF on behalf of the MoE, and once this is confirmed, to develop a draft ENQF bill which must be passed as a Proclamation. Once this legislative process has confirmed HESC as the body responsible to develop and implement the ENQF, HESC can then move forward to engage with key stakeholders in the education and training sub-sectors, i.e. HERQA, TVETA, and the MoE and the heads of institutions in TVET, HE and other agencies which will be directly affected by the introduction of the ENQF.

Towards fulfilment of this key step, HESC has produced a document submitted to the MoE to be proclaimed as a Regulation, which provides HESC with the mandate to manage the process to develop and implement the ENQF. Although an initial attempt regarding the design of the ENQF is produced in the strategy and road map document on p 20, a second and equally important step is for HESC to confirm the design details and specification of the most appropriate NQF for Ethiopia. This must be done in consultation with key stakeholders already named. Towards partial fulfilment of this deliverable HESC has engaged with TVET already in discussion about the first draft ENQF design and process. Feedback from this session with TVET reports the following:

- The TVET agency debated the name of the proposed Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework (ENQF) as they have been mandated to develop a qualifications framework for TVET (Regulation 199/2011, section 6.3: Federal Negarit Gazette. To be read in conjunction with Articles 5 and 34 of Proclamation No. 691/2010). They are also mandated to develop a qualifications framework for TVET leaders and trainers (TLTQF) which is published in a document of March 2010. There is already an accepted qualification framework (QF) for teachers, which is linked to qualification types such as Masters and Bachelors and A-levels (TLTQF, 2010: 22/30). HESC will need to ensure that the linked model of NQF development, which appears to be the chosen model at this stage, is clearly defined and communicated to TVET, to mitigate against possible confusion, and fears expressed by TVET re possible undermining of their mandate as per the proclamation of 2011. HESC could also assist the TVETA to map the TLTQF qualifications to the ENQF and level descriptors;
- The TVET Agency queries the types and names of qualifications set out in the draft ENQF, assigned to the TVET sub-framework, in particular the diploma in the higher education level. It is clear that there needs to be positive and cooperative engagement between the parties to identify exactly which types of qualifications are delivered through the institutions accredited by the TVET agency;

- NQF- type terminology needs to become understood and user-friendly in order to mitigate the risk of confusion and resistance due to lack of understanding;
- Articulation of pathways between TVET and Schooling were disputed. TVET representatives disputed the accuracy of the draft framework which showed that learners could embark on TVET programmes from level 1/grade 8, or at the end of the Primary school leaving certificate. They indicated that learners have to have completed level 2/grade 10 before embarking on TVET studies; and
- There are numerous consultants from, inter alia, Germany, and the Philippines who are working with the TVET sector to develop their framework.

The ENQF strategy document and Roadmap was presented to the MoE and to Parliament in 2011 and was noted by both these structures. A positive outcome of this was that the MoFED approved funding for the ENQF as one of their programmes which would receive funding for the next three Ethiopian budget years. A third key deliverable will be the development of the draft ENQF bill. Very initial and basic work towards the achievement of this deliverable will be done during the 7-10 February 2012 mission, to be refined in the long-term mission of March to May 2012. The design of the draft Bill draws on examples from other countries.

### **Staff and material resourcing**

A key deliverable is for HESC to provide dedicated HESC staff to work with SAQA, whose responsibility will be to capacity building the HESC team and later on, a broader ENQF team, to develop and implement the ENQF. Minimum requirements would be staff who could:

- Manage the development of draft bills, regulations, policies and criteria, i.e. the legal and conceptual framework documents which will underpin the development and implementation of the ENQF;
- Manage the development of the recording and registration of qualifications onto the ENQF in the desired and agreed format;
- Manage the design and implementation of the ENQF learner records database or equivalent;
- Manage the information, advocacy and strategic secretarial support to the ENQF Board, and for the ENQF; and
- A dedicated secretary to the ENQF 'directorate'.

Towards the achievement of this deliverable HESC has already dedicated three staff members to the ENQF development, as follows:

- AtoAssegdew Tesfaye (full time dedicated) but no portfolio allocated yet;
- AtoEphreme Bekele (full time dedicated) but no portfolio allocated yet
- Vacant and in process of being filled.

Three other people are also working in the ENQF space, i.e.

- Dr Solomon Mogus;
- AtoAyalewTeklehymanot (project unit expert)
- AtoYayehyiradBiazin (not full time) ICT.



The planned capacity building visit to SAQA in June or July 2012 will provide action learning for the team, which could possibly result in additional resources being allocated or a strategy being developed to work with key stakeholders to grow the ENQF.

## **Benchmarking**

It is important for HESC to agree on the design and scope of their ENQF. The strategy and road map document suggested a 10-level linked framework, with level descriptors per level and based on an outcomes-based approach (*Strategy and road map document, 2011: p20*). Ethiopia has a federal system of government and it was proposed that HESC staff also read about similar systems and NQF developments to gain insight and understanding about the processes followed in those contexts to develop a NQF. In partial fulfilment of this deliverable, HESC staff have sourced a number of documents about NQFs and NQF design from other countries such as Australia, the UK, SADC countries, the European Qualifications Framework. They have read widely and have accumulated information which they have used to refine their thinking about NQFs.

A benchmarking project managed by the British Council, using the Leeds Metropolitan University and three Ethiopian partner universities, ran from 2008 to 2011. Through this project HESC was able to benchmark higher education levels and level descriptors, and curriculum development which could be useful as the ENQF is developed. A report has been written and is available in hard copy.

## **Outstanding issues**

There are four key items from the strategy and road map which need to be completed. It is envisaged that the original items and time frames as per the road map are still achievable. The outstanding items are:

### **Establishment of the ENQF Board/Council**

For the ENQF to be implemented it is crucial that a Board be established. The Board would normally be the accounting authority and the governance authority for the ENQF. The 'construct' of the Board as well as its establishment should be stipulated in the ENQF bill, for consideration before Parliament or the MoE.

HESC could consider various approaches to establishment of NQF boards and decide what is best for the Ethiopian situation. Models exist where NQF boards are representative of various organs of society such as Business, Labour, Education and training providers, interest groups, et cetera. Other models exist where the MoE invites people to serve on the Board based on their expertise and governance experience. Other models exist where the representatives of sub-framework agencies or organizations form the Board of the NQF. It is important for HESC to be clear on the type of model they want, and to write this into the draft ENQF bill.

### **Pilot projects**

In the absence of a fully-fledged ENQF it will be difficult to initiate pilot projects in the first mission. HESC will need to be clear about the design of the ENQF, as well as the names of qualifications, level descriptors, and the type of information that the qualification would need to have in order

for qualifications to be registered on the ENQF. Models exist about what various countries record and register on their databases, to populate their database for their NQF.

Once HESC has found general agreement with the TVET sector, the higher education sector and the general schooling sector, about what could reasonably be required in an initial implementation period, for uploading onto a database, then a pilot project can be initiated. During the February to June mission, each of the three sub-framework agencies could be supported to 'upload' a qualification in the agreed format onto a database set up for such a purpose.

The visit to SAQA later in the year will consolidate the learnings from the pilot phase and provide deeper insights into how a database can function. HESC should also contact *Qrossroads* (the EQF system), the SADC portal intern, currently hosted on behalf of the SADC secretariat at SAQA, and other countries of their choice to examine what is uploaded onto their databases and which IT platforms are used.

After the initial pilot, and after the visit to SAQA, more widespread implementation of the pilots can be undertaken with specific universities and TVET institutions. The exact scope of the extent of future pilots can form the basis of part of the work of the second long-term mission undertaken by the specialist consultant, in the latter quarter of 2012.

### **Information campaign**

Initial information about the current development plans for the ENQF has been provided by HESC and other structures, such as the MoE. The information campaign for the ENQF should however, be more planned and there should be a coordinated communication and advocacy campaign launched and implemented. NQFs remain largely unknown to the majority of people of a country where a NQF operates because the language of the NQF is often obtuse, and the advocacy and information campaigns are not targeted for a variety of audiences.

HESC could consider the various stakeholders and communities with whom they wish to communicate, or inform or advocate the message, benefits, possibilities and actualities of the ENQF. These should at least include the MoE, other Ministries, Business, Labour, education and training agencies, professional bodies, students and parents, the media, et cetera.

Making the benefits of a NQF visible to a wide audience in clear and straightforward language will be a challenge but can be achieved. The visit to SAQA will assist and guide HESC further in this aspect, and it is envisioned that HESC will then have the capacity to develop and implement their own advocacy and communications strategy in Ethiopia. The information campaign could also allow HESC to gauge the level of understanding and buy-in from the public, as well as gain insight into areas where the ENQF could need 'tweaking' or amendment, to meet the needs of the Ethiopian society and economy.

It could be beneficial to include the internal HESC staff who are not directly involved on a daily basis with the ENQF, updated as to the ENQF matters and progress.

A key part of the information campaign is linked to career advice. NQFs have the potential to be positive mechanisms/tools to enable career path planning, recognition of prior learning, general career advice and issues of articulation to be addressed in a systemic way. A career advisory centre or service is a positive way through which to inform the public about the NQF, how it operates and affects the life of the learning public. The visit to SAQA to discuss how the NQF is central to the work of a career advisory centre or service (CAS) should grow HESC's capacity to consider how to implement a CAS, especially to address the strong focus on gender related issues in the development of the ENQF, which is a key 'cross-curricular' theme of this particular project. The second long-term mission in the latter part of 2012 can build on the learning from the visit to the CAS at SAQA.

### **Development of the ENQF database and website**

Once the ENQF is promulgated, the visibility of the ENQF will be found in its searchable database and website. There are models in countries which HESC can read about and research. SAQA's own NLRD is seen as one of the leading models in the world of NQFs. Key issues to note in the development of the database will be the following:

- The capacity of the database to manage the input of data. HESC will need to decide on what data will need to be placed on the website and what data will be on the database;
- The management of the data once it is uploaded onto the database, to ensure that the data is authentic, relevant, and valid and up to date; and
- The output of the data; who may access which aspects of the data.

Other considerations will be the IT platform which HESC will need to use. Many different platforms exist, and learnings from regional qualifications frameworks such as that of SADC, the EQF, the developing Asian Pacific regional framework could provide useful information about what works and what does not work. Consideration of cloud computing options and open source may be useful where there are bandwidth and connectivity challenges. The visit to the SADC Qualifications Portal may be useful to frame HESC's thinking, as will a visit to *Qrossroads*, linked to the EQF.

# Annexure 4: Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework Draft Proclamation (2012)

Council of Ministers Regulation No ...../2012

## Council of Ministers Regulation for the Establishment of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework

### PREAMBLE

**Whereas** the Ministry of Education has the power and duty to formulate a national qualification framework  
**Whereas** the Ministry of Education has delegated to the Education Strategy Centre the responsibility to prepare a National Qualifications Framework for education and training and evaluate its implementation  
**Whereas** the Ministry of Education has delegated to HESC the duty to advise the Minister on quality and standards of the national education system and prepare directives for implementation  
**Whereas** the enhancement of quality, relevance, access and effectiveness of the education and training system for the benefit of all Ethiopians are strategic priorities of the Ministry of Education  
It is therefore regulated that:

### Arrangement of the Regulation

### Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation:

<b>Assessment Standard</b>	shall mean a statement of knowledge, understanding and skills that assessors expect a candidate to display in an assessment task demonstrating the achievement of learning outcomes
<b>Awarding Body</b>	shall mean an organisation that has the right to award qualifications and/or statements of attainment
<b>Credit</b>	shall mean the value assigned for the recognition of learning achievement, which can be measured in terms of the amount of total learning time or in terms of achievement of a number of competencies, or both
<b>Credit Accumulation</b>	shall mean the incremental process of achieving credit for learning outcomes achieved over time
<b>Credit Transfer</b>	shall mean the mechanism by which credit awarded towards the requirements of one qualification can be transferred and recognised towards meeting the requirements of another qualification, which may be offered by the same provider or a different provider
<b>Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework (ENQF)</b>	shall mean an instrument for the development, classification and comparison of Ethiopian qualifications and for the recognition of learning in terms of agreed national standards.
<b>Field of Learning</b>	shall mean a defined branch of study or learning or work activities used for classification purposes
<b>Formal Learning</b>	shall mean learning outcomes achieved in institutional environments through formal programmes leading to the award of qualifications
<b>General Education</b>	shall mean education leading to the award of primary and secondary school qualifications, the achievement of Alternative Basic Education (ABE) and the achievement of Functional Adult Literacy (FAL). General Education also includes training leading to the award of qualifications for teachers
<b>Higher Education</b>	shall mean education leading to the award of a Bachelor or graduate degree qualification
<b>Informal Learning</b>	shall mean learning that results incidentally through engagement in daily social, family, leisure or work related activities

<b>Learning Outcome</b>	shall mean a statement of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do after completing a process of learning
<b>Level</b>	shall mean a formally designated location on the ENQF which indicates the degree of complexity and depth of knowledge and skills; and the degree of autonomy and responsibility expected at that level in relation to the other levels
<b>Level descriptor</b>	shall mean a statement, , of the expected outcomes of a graduate at that level in terms of complexity and depth of knowledge and skills; and degree of autonomy and responsibility.
<b>Lifelong Learning</b>	shall mean a multi-dimensional concept of learning as a continuous, ever-deepening and all-inclusive process of individual and societal development throughout life
<b>Moderation of assessment</b>	shall mean a quality assurance process which ensures that assessment tasks are valid, fair, relevant, credible in relation to the specific learning outcomes and assessments are accurate, consistent and fair. Moderation usually includes pre-assessment and post-assessment procedures.
<b>Module or course</b>	shall mean a self-contained teaching/learning component of a programme that is integral to that programme and represents a discrete part of the learning to be achieved, based on an overall clear aim, specific learning outcomes, content and assessment procedures.
<b>Non-formal Learning</b>	shall mean learning that is acquired in an unstructured manner through personal development or professional development activities, which may not be formally recognised.
<b>Programme of learning</b>	shall mean the process by which learners acquire competencies, knowledge, and skills leading to a qualification or part qualification, and includes modules or courses of study or instruction, apprenticeships, training and employment
<b>Qualification</b>	shall mean a qualification registered on the ENQF and leading to a recognised award made by a registered awarding body attesting the achievement of a body of knowledge and skills and signifying a level of competence and ability to perform particular jobs or tasks
<b>Qualification Descriptor</b>	shall mean a statement which defines the qualification type in terms of the distinct purpose; differentiating characteristics; and specifications of the qualification type, stated in terms of level(s) at which the qualification is listed and the number of credits required at each level
<b>Qualification Standard</b>	shall mean a statement of the specific knowledge, skills and abilities that those graduating with a specific qualification are expected to demonstrate in order to perform effectively in the work for which they are qualified, the profession in which they function, or in the next level of education. Qualification Standards may be called Reference Points or Subject Benchmark Statements (in Higher education); Occupational and Training Standards (in TVET); or Minimum Learning Competencies and Graduate Profiles (in General Education)
<b>Qualification Type</b>	shall mean a distinct type of qualification listed as a recognised type for ENQF registration purposes and <i>defined by a qualification descriptor</i>
<b>Qualifications sub-framework</b>	shall mean one of the three linked qualifications sub-frameworks, namely the General Education sub-framework, the TVET sub-framework (which includes both the TVET Qualifications Framework and the TVET Leaders and Trainers Qualifications Framework) and the Higher Education sub-framework, which are regulated by overarching ENQF regulations and policy
<b>Quality Standard</b>	shall mean a statement or indicator of the expected quality of inputs, processes and outcomes in the development and delivery of all education and training leading to the award of qualifications or statements of attainment
<b>Recognition of Prior Learning</b>	shall mean formal recognition, through a process of assessment, of a person's achievement of learning outcomes in formal, informal and non-formal learning environments. Learning is recognised with the award of credit at a specified level

<b>Short duration education and training</b>	shall mean programmes of learning which do not lead to the award of an ENQF qualification but to achievement which is recognised through the award of a Statement of Attainment
<b>Standards based assessment</b>	shall mean an assessment where an individual's performance is assessed in relation to a specific learning outcome or assessment standard and not to the performance of other learners.
<b>Statement of Attainment</b>	shall mean an award issued by an awarding body in recognition of the achievement of a discrete group of learning outcomes or competencies which do not amount to a complete qualification
<b>Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)</b>	shall mean education and training leading to the award of qualifications which are directly relevant to employment in a trade, occupation or vocation. TVET also includes training leading to the award of qualifications for TVET leaders and trainers

## **Establishment of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework**

1. The Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework is hereby established.

### **Purpose of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework**

2. The Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework recognises and accommodates three distinct sub-sectors of education and training in Ethiopia and contributes to personal, social and economic goals of the people of Ethiopia, by:

- a) Promoting access to education for all Ethiopians and providing mechanisms which promote lifelong learning by recognizing learning achievements in formal, non-formal and informal settings
- b) Establishing national standards of knowledge and skills and the outcomes expected of graduates of all ENQF qualifications
- c) Encouraging increased relevance of Ethiopian qualifications to industry and the labour market
- d) Promoting the quality of programme development and delivery, and the credibility of Ethiopian Qualifications, through the establishment of national quality standards and quality assurance processes
- e) Harmonizing the three subsectors through the provision of common standards and systems of collaboration; making transparent the comparability of qualifications; and developing progression pathways between them

### **Structure of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework**

3. The Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework shall consist of one Access level and ten numbered levels, which shall be titled Level One (L1) to Level Ten (L10).

4. Each level shall be described by level descriptors in terms of:

- a) Knowledge
- b) Skills
- c) Autonomy and Responsibility

5. The Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework shall consist of three linked sub-frameworks governed by ENQF regulations and policy

- a) The sub-framework for General Education
- b) The sub-framework for TVET
- c) The sub-framework for Higher Education

6. The Education Strategy Centre shall allocate a unique field description to each organising field of learning and shall divide each field of learning into sub-fields with a unique sub-field description.

## Implementation of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework

7. Overall co-ordination of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework; development and dissemination of ENQF policy and directives; and monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness, shall be the responsibility of the Education Strategy Centre, under the Minister of Education, until such time as a National Qualifications Authority/Agency, having regulatory powers, is established
8. The Education Strategy Centre shall constitute an ENQF Advisory Group with representation from all three sub-frameworks to provide a national forum for communication, and discussion of issues pertaining to ENQF implementation
9. The design, maintenance and implementation of the **sub-framework for General Education** in accordance with ENQF policy and directives, shall be the responsibility of the State Minister for General Education
10. The design, maintenance and implementation of the **sub-framework for TVET** in accordance with ENQF policy and directives, shall be the responsibility of the TVET Agency, under the State Minister for TVET.
11. The design, maintenance and implementation of the **sub-framework for Higher Education** in accordance with ENQF policy and directives, shall be the responsibility of the Education Strategy Centre under the State Minister for Higher Education
12. With the exception of named qualifications specifically excluded from the ENQF, the development and award of all qualifications and statements of attainment in Ethiopia shall comply with ENQF policy directives issued by the Education Strategy Centre

## Qualifications of the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework

13. There shall be fourteen qualification types on the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework:
  - a) Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLE)
  - b) Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate (EGSEC)
  - c) Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Certificate (EHEEC)
  - d) Certificate
  - e) TVET Certificate I
  - f) TVET Certificate II
  - g) TVET Certificate III
  - h) TVET Certificate IV
  - i) TVET Certificate V
  - j) Diploma
  - k) Bachelor Degree
  - l) Post-graduate Diploma
  - m) Masters Degree
  - n) Doctorate Degree
14. Each qualification type is defined by a set of criteria which includes distinct purpose; differentiating characteristics; and specifications stated in terms of level(s) at which the qualification is listed and the credit requirements at each level
15. The title of a qualification registered on the ENQF shall include the qualification type (as per Article 13 above) and a designator which identifies the main discipline or subject field
16. The title of a qualification registered on the ENQF (excluding school-based qualifications) may include the ENQF level and/or a qualifier indicating achievement in areas of specialisation
17. The following information shall be required for a qualification to be registered on the ENQF
  - a) Title

- b) Qualification type
- c) Qualification number
- d) Awarding body
- e) Level
- f) Entry level
- g) Credit value and/or duration
- h) Field and subfield(s) of the qualification
- i) Registration and review dates
- j) Purpose of the qualification
- k) Outcome statements
- l) Provision for RPL and/or entry with credit
- m) Provision for flexible delivery (e.g. part-time, distance, block mode etc.)
- n) Evidence of labour market demand for the qualification
- o) Evidence of relevant stakeholder participation in the development of the qualification
- p) Evidence of international benchmarking/comparability of the qualification

18. All qualifications registered on the ENQF shall be reviewed at intervals not exceeding five years

### **Structure of Qualifications**

19. All qualifications registered on the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework shall be described in terms of the expected qualification outcomes; including Graduate Profile, employment pathways and further education pathways where appropriate.

20. All qualifications shall be based on learning outcomes

21. There shall be no unnecessary barriers to entry to programmes leading to ENQF qualification and all ENQF qualifications shall articulate with entry and exit qualifications offered locally, with clearly stated progression pathways

22. The assessment of all ENQF qualifications shall be standards based, and systems of pre assessment moderation and post assessment moderation shall be used to assure fairness, validity and reliability of assessment

23. All qualifications registered on the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework shall consist of component courses or modules and each course or module will be assigned to a level and quantified in terms of a credit value or nominal duration

### **Statements of Attainment**

24. ENQF policy shall include criteria for the registration of short duration training courses which do not meet the credit requirements of full qualifications, but are recognised with the award of a Statement of Attainment

### **Qualification Standards**

25. The Education Strategy Centre shall develop the national policy for qualification standard setting and monitor and evaluate sub-sector compliance with the policy requirements

26. The body responsible for each sub-framework (as stated in article 9-11) shall be responsible for implementing the qualification standard setting policy in each of the sub-sectors



## **Quality Assurance**

27. The Education Strategy Centre shall develop the national policy for quality assurance of qualifications, including minimum standards for qualification development and delivery; and recommended quality assurance processes

28. The bodies responsible for quality assurance in the three subsectors shall implement the national policy for quality assurance of qualifications

29. The Education Strategy Centre shall monitor and evaluate subsector compliance with the national quality assurance policy

30. All qualifications registered on the ENQF are subject to quality assurance of development, delivery and assessment processes

31. All qualifications registered on the ENQF shall be awarded by recognised awarding bodies which are quality assured by recognised quality assurance bodies

## **Recognition of Foreign and Historical Ethiopian Qualifications**

32. The equivalence of Foreign Qualifications to ENQF qualifications shall be recorded on the ENQF database.

33. The equivalence of obsolete and historical Ethiopian qualifications to ENQF qualifications shall be recorded on the ENQF database.

## **Recognition of Prior Learning**

34. Learners can achieve credit towards ENQF qualifications through quality assured Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment processes against the learning outcomes of the ENQF qualification.

35. The maximum amount of credit awarded through Recognition of Prior Learning shall not exceed fifty percent of the requirement for the achievement of the qualification, except in the TVET sub-sector where specified whole qualifications may be awarded through RPL.

## **Credit Accumulation and Transfer**

36. Accurate and up-to-date records of accumulated credit for learning outcomes achieved shall be maintained for all learners enrolled in ENQF qualifications

37. The amount of credit awarded through transfer of credit shall not exceed fifty percent of the total requirement for achievement of the qualification

38. Criteria for awarding credit through credit transfer shall include:

- a) 80% match of the learning outcomes
- b) Equivalent level
- c) Comparable balance of theory and practice
- d) Provider of previous training is quality assured/accredited in own country by recognised quality assurance body
- e) The learning to be credited was achieved not more than a maximum of 10 years prior to the application for credit transfer

## **Information Management System**

39. The Education Strategy Centre shall establish and maintain a national information management system to support the implementation of the ENQF.

40. The information management system shall contain information pertaining to:

- a) Register of quality assured qualifications
- b) Register of qualification standards
- c) Register of approved workplace assessors
- d) Register of approved moderators
- e) Register of approved assessment centres and assessment tools
- f) Register of recognised awarding bodies

- g) Quality assurance status of education and training providers
- h) Register of recognised foreign qualifications
- i) National student and graduate survey data
- j) Record of Learner Achievement
- k) Historical qualifications?