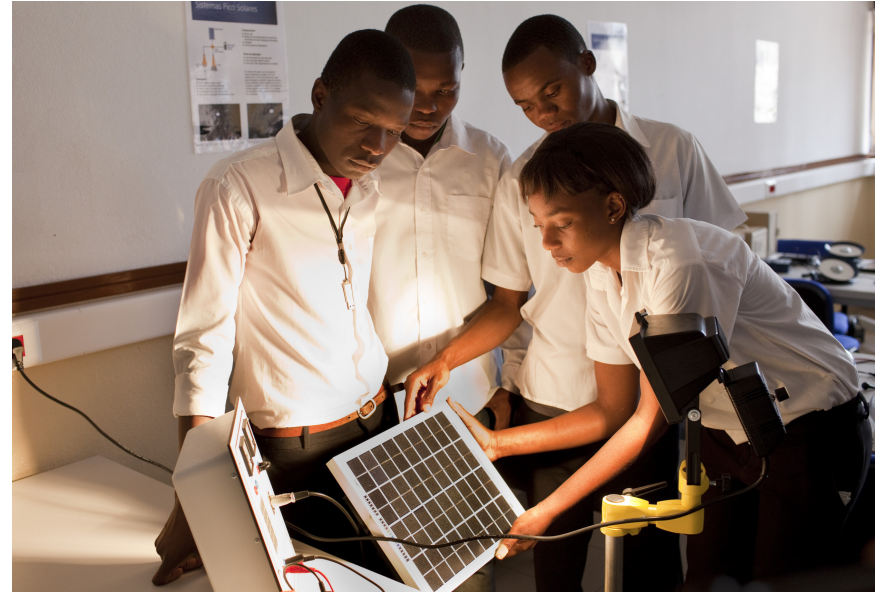**ACQF**

African Continental
Qualifications Framework

4th Meeting - ACQF Advisory Group (online)

13 January 2022

Welcome and introduction

- *Best wishes for 2022 and gratitude for the cooperation in 2021 in all ACQF activities and peer learning webinars*
- **Objectives of this meeting:**
  - Information on progress in 2021 and plans 2022 (Jan-Sept)
  - Consultation on key outputs of the project (drafts)
  - Action points

Agenda (1)

| Time (GMT+3)	Session – main topics	Responsible
12.30-12.45 **Session 1**	Opening and objectives of meeting Opening remarks Tour de table – Advisory Group	Mr Hambani Masheleni Acting Head of Education Division
12.45-13.10 **Session 2**	ACQF project: progress after the Advisory Group meeting № 3 (28 July 2021) a) Work plan update b) ACQF website c) Short overview on ACQF Guidelines d) Capacity development programme: Peer Learning Webinars; 2 ACQF conferences 2022; training programme 2022 e) Support to countries	AUC ESTI ACQF project expert Eduarda Castel-Branco
13.10-13.30 **Session 3**	ACQF policy and technical document: draft (version 1) a) Rationale, outline, status b) Questions and answers	ACQF project experts Eusebius J. Mukhwana, Eduarda Castel-Branco
13.30-13.40	Short break	

Agenda (2)

Time (GMT+3)	Session – main topics	Responsible
13.40-15.20 Session 4	ACQF Guidelines a) Guideline 10: NQF – systemic view (10 min) b) Guidelines 1, 2, 3 – Learning outcomes, level descriptors, referencing (25 min) c) Guideline 5 – Quality assurance (12 min) d) Guidelines 7, 9 – M&E, Innovation and Technology (22 min) e) Guidelines 4, 6 – Validation of learning, Qualifications register / database (22 min) Questions: 10 min	a) Ms Andrea Bateman b) Ms Coleen Jaftha c) Mr Kaylash Allgoo, Mr Jeffy Mukora d) JET Education Services e) ZAQA Team: Ms Mirriam Chiyaba, Mr Modest Hamalabbi
15.20-15.35 Session 5	Feasibility Study – Options for ACQF Governance Context, objectives, approach.	Ms Catherine Musakali
15.35-16.00 Session 6	Final discussion. Actions Points Closing remarks	ACQF project coordinator, AUC ESTI – Education division
	Closure	

Session 2

ACQF project: progress in 2021; plan 2022

ACQF – a very large RQF

- African Union Policy Initiative
- Based on AU policies (CESA, AU Free Movement Protocol, AfCFTA)
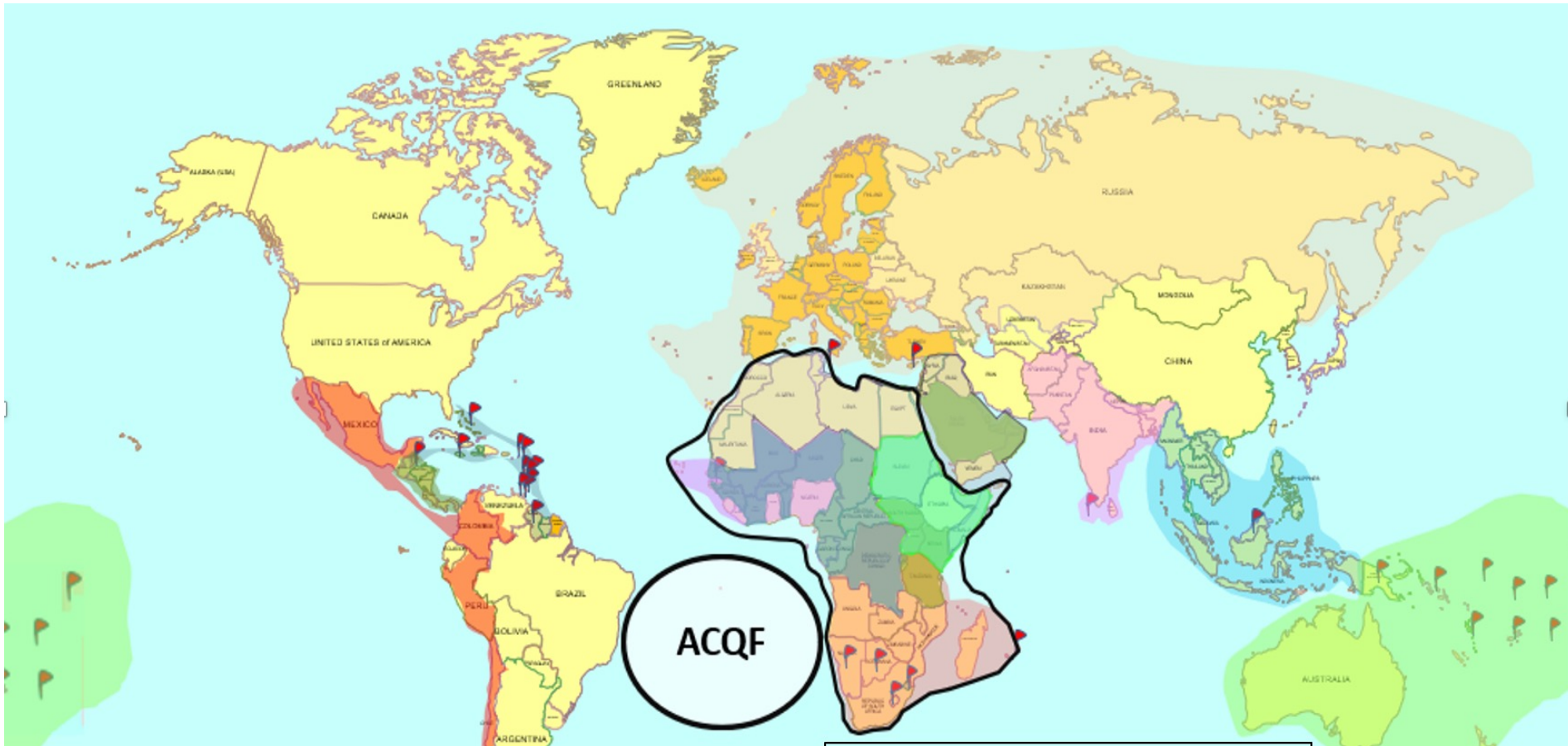
ACQF development – main outputs

ACQF Policy Document and Action Plan

- 10 Guidelines: synthesis, technical

- 10 Training Modules

Governance model - project time:
- AUC – steer and support
- Advisory Group
- Project team

ACQF website

Capacity development, networking, outreach
- Peer Learning activities
- Thematic briefs
- Newsletter
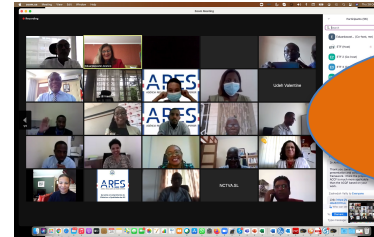- Training programme

Analysis
- Mapping Study
- Scenarios ACQF
- ACQF Feasibility study
- School curriculum study
- SADCQF: review and renewal study
- ACQF governance study
- Other studies in preparation

Building the ACQF (2020-2022)

Analysis, technical work

People, networking

Policy document and action plan

Governance ACQF

10 Guidelines

Feasibility study

Scenarios of ACQF

ACQF Mapping Study

ACQF Conference

Training programme

Support to countries

Working with RECs (SADC)

Networking with AQVN

Peer Learning Webinars

ACQF community - network

2021: Flash progress report

Feasibility study – based on Scenarios ACQF

ACQF policy document – 1st draft

10 Guidelines: 1st draft (G10: annotated outline)

ACQF Governance: feasibility study started

ACQF website: launched; further development

- Intranet: referencing, ACQF AG meetings, COPs

2 ACQF AG meetings: April and July

Capacity development

- 5 Peer Learning Webinars
- Support to countries NQF and 1 RQF (SADCQF)

Networking

- AQVN: joint organisation of 1st programme knowledge-sharing - 5 webinars (July-November)
- African Curriculum Association and CESA Cluster: 1st African School Curriculum Mapping

View of ACQF Intranet for AG members

2022: planned outputs

ACQF policy and Action Plan.

Completion: end June

ACQF Guidelines: full set (synthesis, technical and training modules).

Completion: July

Testing of some Guidelines with pilot countries

This applies especially to Guidelines 2, 3, 7

April-May

ACQF governance options - study.

Completion: June

Study on complementarities ACQF-AfCFTA.

Completion: July

Handbook on Competency-Based Training.

Completion: August

ACQF Capacity development programme (details in next slide)

SADC Qualifications Framework: completion of study and follow-up cooperation.

Completion: June

3 ACQF AG meetings:

January, April, July
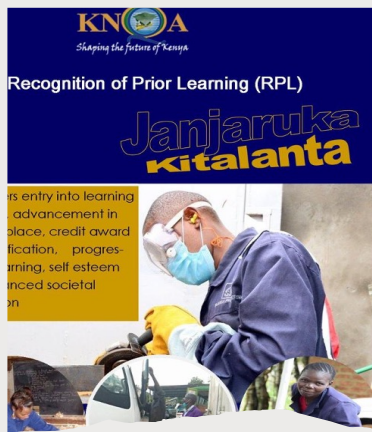
Capacity development programme 2022

- ACQF Peer Learning Webinars: thematic focus on Recognition of Prior Learning / VAE / RVCC (3 webinars).
	February-March
- ACQF in-depth training programme: two 5-days programmes.
	April (online) and July (hybrid)
- ACQF Conferences
	May and September
- Learning Management System (e-learning)
	February
- Thematic briefs on new themes (e.g.: RPL, common profiles of qualifications, involvement of stakeholders from world of work in NQFs and ACQF)

AfCFTA Agreement?

Country	Date
Ghana	10/05/2018
Kenya	10/05/2018
Rwanda	26/05/2018
Niger	19/06/2018
Chad	02/07/2018
Eswatini	02/07/2018
Guinea	16/10/2018
Côte d'Ivoire	23/11/2018
Mali	01/02/2019
Namibia	01/02/2019
South Africa	10/02/2019
Congo, Rep.	10/02/2019
Djibouti	11/02/2019
Mauritania	11/02/2019
Uganda	09/02/2019
Senegal	02/04/2019
Togo	02/04/2019
Egypt	08/04/2019
Ethiopia	10/04/2019
Gambia	16/04/2019
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Rep.	30/04/2019
Sierra Leone	30/04/2019
Zimbabwe	24/05/2019
Burkina Faso	29/05/2019
São Tomé & Príncipe	27/06/2019
Equatorial Guinea	02/07/2019
Gabon	07/07/2019
Mauritius	07/10/2019
Somalia*	14/08/2020
Central African Rep.	22/09/2020
Angola	04/11/2020
Lesotho	27/11/2020
Tunisia	27/11/2020
Cameroon	01/12/2020
Nigeria	05/12/2020
Malawi	15/01/2021
Zambia	05/02/2021
Algeria	23/06/2021
Seychelles*	25/06/2021
Burundi	26/08/2021
Tanzania**	09/09/2021

Legend:
- **Instrument of ratification deposited**
- **Parliamentary approval received or pending**
- **AfCFTA Agreement signed**
- **AfCFTA Agreement not signed**

Last updated: 4 October 2021

© tralac, 2021

tralac

* Confirmation of approval pending

** Deposit of instrument of ratification pending

Communication and outreach 2022

- New Guideline on Communication - forthcoming

- ACQF Website – new functionalities

- News from the countries – new developments in qualifications systems

- ACQF Newsletter: 3 issues – March, June, July (*you can send your articles!)*

- Events (Capacity Development Programme, Networking)

- Participation in thematic events of partner / other organisations

- Involvement of international institutions in ACQF events and news on website

- ACQF news on Websites of different organisations

- Interviews
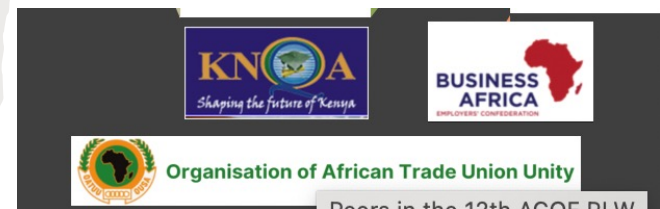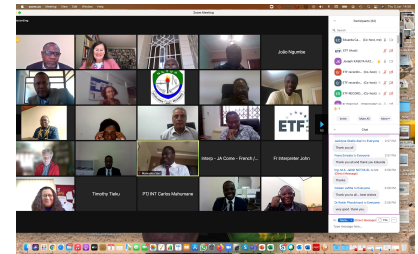
10 Guidelines and training modules

ACQF Handbook

Concept of ACQF Guidelines presented and discussed at ACQF AG-3 meeting, 28/07/2021

1. Learning outcomes

2. Level descriptors

3. Referencing NQF-ACQF: criteria, process, tools

4. Validation of learning: RPL, CATS, recognition

5. Quality assurance

6. Registration, databases of qualifications

7. Monitoring & evaluation in the context ACQF

8. Communication / users' outreach (draft: Feb/2022)

9. Innovation and technology in NQFs / ACQF

10. Qualifications, NQFs, NQS - systemic view

Building the ACQF level descriptors

- ACQF Mapping study
- Research on LD in Africa for feasibility study
- Thematic Brief on Level descriptors
- "Orientation Note on RQF" – overview and recommendations on LD
- Literature review: methodology notes on LD from different NQFs and RQFs (Bahrain, EQF, AQRF).
- Specific survey ACQF stakeholders and other experts: useful inputs for domains of learning, level structure (10 levels)
- Presentation of survey results at ACQF PLW 11 on 23/09/2021
- SG meetings: 1st orientation (Oct); 1st draft LD discussed; decision taken to create Matrix as a living work tool all versions LD and complementary content; 6 SG meetings focused on LD between 15/11 and 03/12. Total nr SG meetings G2: 8 + 1 LD survey preparatory meeting

ACQF Capacity development component

Brief overview

ACQF PLWs: Cases shared

2020	National Qualifications Frameworks	Regional Qualifications Frameworks
Africa (14 cases)	Angola, Cape Verde, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe – 12 cases	Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF), East Africa Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE) – 2 cases
Other regions, continents (8 cases)	Bahreïn, France, Ireland, Portugal, Slovenija – 5 cases	Arab Qualifications Framework (AQF), European Qualifications Framework (EQF), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Qualifications Reference Framework – 3 cases

2021

National Qualifications Frameworks	Quality Assurance frameworks	Recognition of learning / Qualifications	NQF MIS /Databases Qualifications	Thematic
Seychelles Namibia **NQF-TVET reform Mozambique**	CAMES (Regional) ANAQ-Sup (Senegal)	RPL (Kenya) AQVN Angola - INAARES **Cabo Verde - ARES**	South Africa Kenya	✓ Learning outcomes ✓ Levels and descriptors RQFs ✓ **School curriculum** ✓ **Micro-credentials**

Support to countries - overview

- **Objective**: build experience towards ACQF Objective 3 ("Work in cooperation and complementarity with countries, regions").

- **Approach**: in Concept Paper on ACQF Capacity Development Programme (presented to ACQF AG-2, 08/04/2021).

- **Your interest to participate, benefit: please contact us**

Support to countries

Main features and benefits of CDP 'support to countries':

- **Based on demand**: communication by countries or RECs with ACQF project;

- **Contextualised**: takes account of policy and strategy objectives, reforms, institutional and capacity features, availability of technical assistance resources;

- **Focus on**: Coaching, facilitation, advice, planning
  - facilitation of stakeholders´ dialogue
  - experience and knowledge-sharing
  - support to planning of key steps in NQF development and review roadmaps.

- Practical application for trained experts; and

- Reflection on lessons learned, cases of good practice, critical issues (briefs) from 'support to countries'.

Cases in 2021

Angola
(RETFOP)

Guiné-Bissau
(RESEN)

SADC
(Secretariat)

SADC

Contact started during ACQF PLW and ACQF AG

Secretariat contacted ETF (capacity development) and started inviting to TCCA meetings of SADCQF

Request 07/2021: Review of SADCQF Implementation and way forward.

Research started, analysis, report V1 presented on 27/11/2021 at TCCA meeting

Way forward: continue cooperation on the basis of Recommendations of the Review Report.

Session 3

ACQF Policy Document

Concept note on approach and outline – presented at ACQF AG-3 meeting (28/07/2021)

Scope and objectives

- Concept note on the approach and outline was presented at ACQF AG-3 meeting (28/07/2021)

- Policy document: Defines the vision, policy objectives, technical features of ACQF

- Proposes the set of ACQF implementation modalities and instruments

- Accompanied by technical annexes (10 synthesis guidelines), glossary

- Will be supported by an Action Plan

Sections

1. Introduction
2. Political and legal basis
3. Establishment of the ACQF
4. The ACQF: Objectives and principles
5. Scope of the ACQF
6. Conceptual-technical design
7. Main areas of activity of the ACQF
8. Referencing national qualifications frameworks or systems to the ACQF
9. ACQF Qualifications Platform (database)
10. Key elements of governance **(presented in session 5 – Governance)**
11. Complementarity with national / regional frameworks and systems
12. Sources
13. Annexes
    a) Glossary
    b) ACQF Guidelines: Synthesis Guidelines
    c) Recommendation on minimum elements in qualifications design and structure – included in NQF / NQS referenced to ACQF
    d) Other reference documents supporting implementation
    e) Action Plan
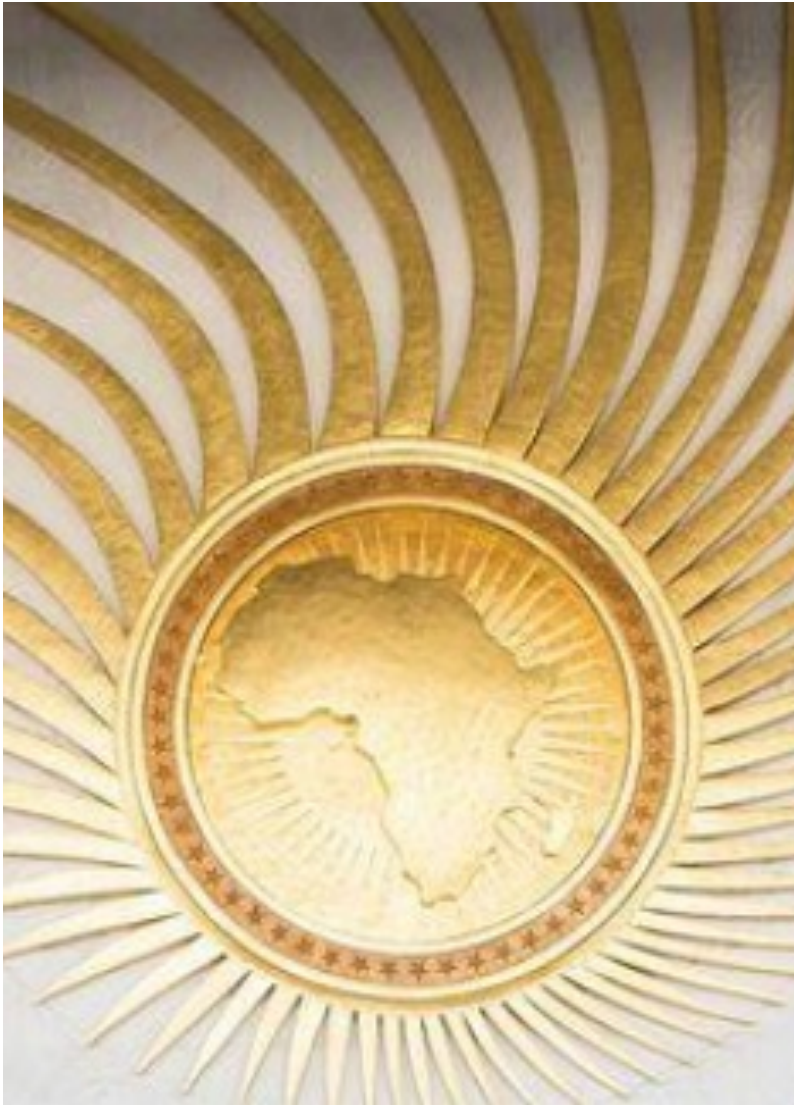
Political and legal basis

- Agenda 2063 and its First Ten Year Implementation Plan
- CESA 16-26
- AfCFTA
- AU Free Movement Protocol
- PAQAF

Establishment of ACQF

- ACQF will be established as a policy and instrument of continental scope to deliver on the objectives of enhanced transparency and comparability of qualifications and mutual trust between qualifications frameworks and systems for lifelong learning in Africa.

- The ACQF is defined as a **common meta-qualifications framework (for referencing)** of ten levels, expressed as learning outcomes, serving as a translation device between different qualifications frameworks or systems and their levels.

- Governance of the ACQF builds on the political support and steering of the African Union, the participation of all AU countries and regions, partnerships with stakeholders from the world of education, training, qualifications and work and sustainable implementation capacity.

The AUC, the AU member states and the regions pledge to jointly develop and implement the ACQF and to steer and sustain this cooperation assuring…

- The ACQF will offer **new horizons for African integration** through its continental scope, its function as a **connector of Africa's** national qualifications frameworks and systems, and as a promoter of **pan-African trust** and international transparency of skills and qualifications.

- The ACQF and the qualifications frameworks or systems referenced to it can facilitate and enhance existing practices of recognition of qualifications, **thanks to the strengthened trust, clarity and comparability of qualifications they provide.**

- The ACQF acts as a **catalyst for improved qualifications frameworks and systems** across the continent, supporting the twin transition (green and digital) in learning and work, parity of esteem between all modes of learning, contributing to credibility of African education and training and qualifications in the world.

- The development and implementation of the ACQF is **coherent with existing AU policies** and relevant international conventions and operates in synergy and complementarity with existing continental conventions, standards and guidelines.

- As a continental policy instrument, the ACQF promotes and supports qualifications frameworks and systems through relevant policies, levers and instruments without prejudice to national and regional diversity and policies, and **without replacing or superseding national and regional frameworks and systems**. The ACQF conforms to the principles of **subsidiarity and complementarity** to national and regional policies and systems.

The ACQF: Objectives and principles

Objectives:

- To support comparability, quality and transparency of qualifications and lifelong learning;

- To facilitate recognition of learning from different contexts, diplomas and certificates and support mobility (of learners, workers, services);

- To work in cooperation and complementarity with national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) and systems and regional qualifications frameworks (RQFs), support NQF development and the creation of a common African education and qualifications space; and

- To promote cooperation and mutual understanding, by means of referencing with qualifications frameworks in Africa and worldwide.

Principles:

Inclusiveness: all levels qualifications, modes of learning

Innovation: future-proof, new demands, emerging skills

Openness: to participation of all stakeholders, good practice (African, global)

Scope of the ACQF

- ACQF is a **comprehensive and inclusive meta-qualifications framework (referencing)**, designed to support a holistic and systemic vision of learning, qualifications and credentials. The ACQF is oriented to **lifelong learning, and to parity of esteem of learning outcomes acquired in formal, non-formal and informal contexts**, and all levels and sub-sectors of education and training.

- ACQF is open to **cooperate and undertake referencing activities** with all countries and qualifications frameworks and systems in Africa; and to compare with other regional qualifications frameworks globally, following transparent and fair criteria and processes.

- ACQF will establish a **continental platform (database)** for publication and dissemination of information on national qualifications of NQFs referenced to ACQF; and other qualifications and standards, according to guidelines and procedures decided by ACQF governing structure.

- ACQF processes will be based on **quality-assurance principles**, supported by a **set of guidelines**, and a **monitoring and evaluation tool**.

Conceptual-technical design of ACQF

- **10 levels**
- Level descriptors expressed as **learning outcomes**
- Domains: **Knowledge, Skills, Autonomy and Responsibility**
- **Learning outcomes orientation** support:
  - ➢ Improve **transparency and comparability** of qualifications of different national systems
  - ➢ **Transparency and credibility of RPL** and validation of outcomes from experience, access to quality RPL
  - ➢ **Application of credit accumulation and transfer systems** in different academic and vocational pathways.
    - Learning progression, lifelong learning, flexibility,
    - In design of qualifications: facilitate transfer of components of qualifications

Main areas of activity of the ACQF

1. **Referencing** of national qualifications frameworks and systems to the ACQF, following agreed criteria and procedures.

2. **Support recognition of prior learning** – for example, the development of common guidelines and approaches, updated inventory of RPL systems on the continent, and a wide information and support campaign.

3. **ACQF Qualifications Platform (database)**

4. **Qualifications**: a range of activities such as research and design of common approaches and methodologies. Development of qualifications profiles adequate for common continental use (e.g.: related with economic integration / AfCFTA).

Main areas of activity of the ACQF

5. Capacity development in the relevant thematic areas:

- Training programmes in hybrid and digital formats,

- Peer-learning activities

- E-learning platform

- Technical support to countries in developing, implementing and reviewing their national qualifications frameworks and systems and preparing for referencing with ACQF.

- Cooperation and mutual learning across African regions

6. Networking and cooperation:

- With African stakeholders: national and regional entities responsible for qualifications frameworks or systems, recognition bodies and committees, education and training providers, social partners, professional and sector associations, employment sector institutions, students' unions.

- International networking and cooperation with regional and national qualifications frameworks on other continents, international organisations active in certification, recognition and research in the domain.

7. Analysis, monitoring and evaluation on ACQF implementation and other themes (continuous improvement)

Referencing national qualifications frameworks or systems to ACQF

- ACQF aims at **connecting** the national (and regional) qualifications frameworks of the community of African Union (AU) member states. This core function is based on the process of **referencing to ACQF**.

- Referencing: process aimed at comparing national qualifications frameworks or systems to the ACQF following criteria and procedures (**Guideline 3 – in session 4**).

- At **national level**, referencing contributes to self-assessment of the status of the national qualifications framework or system to identify areas for reform and improvement

- At **continental level and between countries**, referencing to the ACQF of a significant and increasing number of national qualifications or systems leads to the <u>creation of a common area of trusted qualifications</u> and enables the transformative potential of the ACQF for the continent.
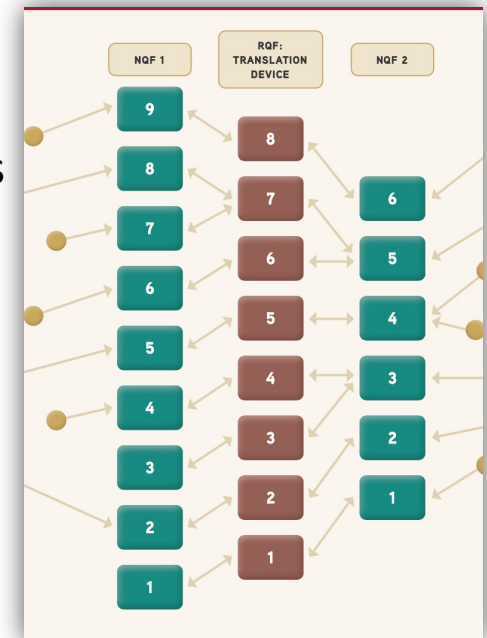
ACQF Qualifications Platform (database)

Issues

- The African continent is marked by a wide diversity of education and qualifications systems, with different structures and typology of qualifications and limited updated information on qualifications in the public domain.
- Continental free trade has started operations in a range of sectors, a process likely to trigger demand for new skills and qualifications, comparability and more efficient recognition.
- The informal sector of the economy shows no signs of abating and there is a vast need for good quality programmes of recognition of prior learning and access to modular skills development opportunities with certification.

Contribution of ACQF and Qualification Platform

- As a **transparency instrument** for users' information and guidance, the **ACQF Qualifications Platform (database)** serves and supports the national qualifications authorities and the awarding bodies, end-users (at all levels: countries, regions and the continent as a whole).
- The **ACQF Qualifications Platform (database)** – for distinct use cases, each supported by adequate and transparent procedures (to be developed). Refer to **Guideline 6 – Session 4**. Possible uses – as envisaged at this stage of the development process:
  - Use by National Qualifications Frameworks or systems (registers)
  - Listing of qualifications with value for labour market, society and technology, which are not included in NQF registers – according to criteria and rules to be defined
  - Listing of new common qualifications profiles for priority sectors of continental integration / AfCFTA

Complementarity with national & regional frameworks or systems

- By virtue of the provisions of strategic objective 4 of CESA (16–25) and in line with African Union cooperation and governance, the ACQF interacts, collaborates with and supports the national competent authorities and stakeholders, without prejudice to the established relationship of countries with regions and regional economic communities.

- For the countries, referencing to the ACQF is undertaken by the competent bodies responsible for national qualifications frameworks or systems. For the regions, comparison / referencing to ACQF can be planned as regional qualifications frameworks will increase in maturity.

- Planning and monitoring of implementation of ACQF activities with member countries and with regions will be facilitated by participation in coordination activities and the ACQF governing structure. ACQF representatives will participate in coordination activities and governing structures of the **regional** qualifications frameworks.

ACQF Guidelines

- Each Guideline is composed of: synthesis Guideline + technical Guideline + training module
- Team of authors:
  - ✓ Andrea Bateman
  - ✓ Coleen Jaftha
  - ✓ JET Education Services
  - ✓ ZAQA team
  - ✓ Jeffy Mukora, Kaylash Allgoo, Eduarda Castel-Branco
- Other contributors / reviewers – Steering group members: Deodonne Kunwufine, Eusebius Mukhwana, Jean Adotevi

Session 4 (1)

Guideline 10 – Qualifications and QFs: the systemic view

By: Andrea Bateman

Scope and aim

Aims:

- To provide a comprehensive systemic view of NQFs as policy instruments and the context of a National Qualifications System (NQS)
- To provide technical and methodological recommendations on development of qualifications and their alignment to the principles of the NQF/RQF

Scope:

- NQFs
- Qualifications
- RPL

Focus:

- Aims to include African continental examples of different approaches, but will also include international examples

Structure of the Guideline

- Key elements addressed within the Guideline include:
  1. Qualifications systems (includes NQFs [implicit or explicit] and quality assurance)
  2. NQFs
  3. Qualifications
  4. Recognition of prior learning

1. Overview – Qualifications systems

- This sections aims to:
  - Provide a definition for NQF and also quality assurance
  - Places an NQF within the qualifications system, and explain its linkages with quality assurance arrangements
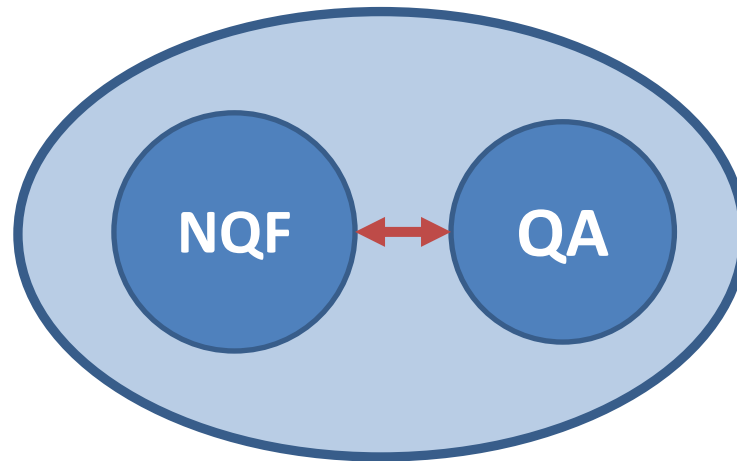
2. Overview – National qualifications frameworks (NQF)

- **This sections aims to provide an overview of an NQF, including**:

1. Role of NQFs

2. Key features of an NQF: purpose, structures [level descriptors, volume of learning measure and qualification type descriptors]

3. Developing an NQF

4. Linkages with other national strategies

5. Governance

6. Monitoring implementation

7. Communication strategies

3. Qualifications

- This section aims to provide an overview of the quality assurance arrangements for formulating, developing and approving (and re-approving) a qualification. It will address:

1. **Definition of qualifications**

2. **Types of qualifications/national variations**

3. **Quality assuring the formulation and approval/re-approval of qualifications**
   - Use of quality standards to inform and assure the formulation, development, approval/re-approval [separate concept from provider capacity to provide a program leading to a qualification]
   - Process for formulating and developing qualification specification
   - Determining the level and qualification type
   - Approval processes

4. Recognition of Prior Learning

- This section aims to:
  - Place RPL (and credit transfer) within the whole qualifications system and the aspirations of an NQF
- This section will focus on:
  - Unpacking the agreed definitions of RPL and credit transfer
  - Clarifying the difference between credit transfer and RPL

'The term RPL has been used in two slightly different ways in recent times. Discussion influenced by the OECD and the project of Lifelong Learning tends to restrict RPL to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning - with the result that the recognition of formal learning is called credit transfer. More traditional educational discussion uses RPL to include credit transfer and sometimes creates different terms for the narrower sense.' Source: https://unevoc.unesco.org/home/recognition+of+prior+learning&context=

- Considerations for system level implementation

Session 4 (2)

Guidelines 1, 2, 3

Guideline 1: Learning Outcomes

Guideline 2: Level descriptors

Guideline 3: Referencing
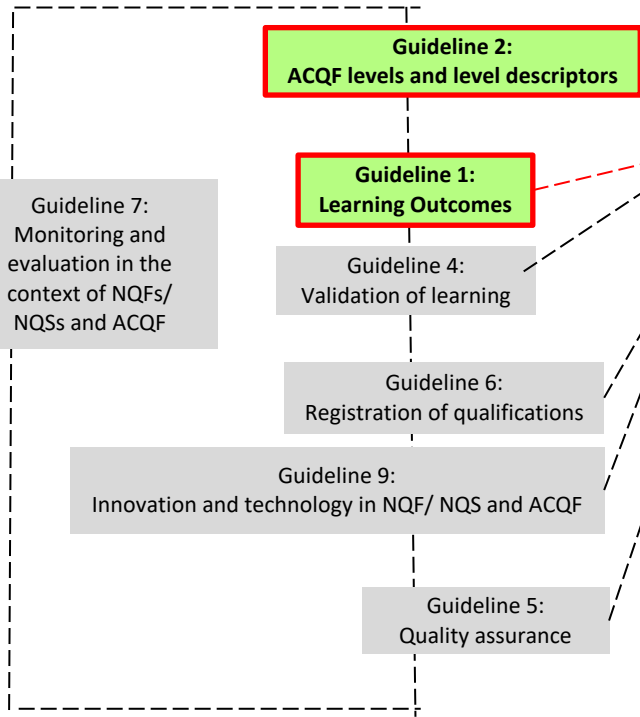
Links between the ACQF guidelines

Guideline 3: Revised and improved referencing criteria for the ACQF

**Guideline 2:
ACQF levels and level descriptors**

**Guideline 1:
Learning Outcomes**

Guideline 7:
Monitoring and
evaluation in the
context of NQFs/
NQSs and ACQF

Guideline 4:
Validation of learning

Guideline 6:
Registration of qualifications

Guideline 9:
Innovation and technology in NQF/ NQS and ACQF

Guideline 5:
Quality assurance

Guideline 8:
Communication

Guideline 10:
Integrative

Proposed ACQF referencing criteria

1. There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the NQF or NQS and the level descriptors of the ACQF.
2. The NQF or NQS are based on learning outcomes principles and related to arrangements for RPL (incl non-formal and informal) and, where appropriate, to credit systems**.**
3. There are transparent processes and procedures for including qualifications in the NQF or for describing the place of qualifications in the NQS and information on qualifications is accessible, trustworthy and verifiable in a national register(s) of qualifications.
4. The national QA system for education and training refers to the NQF or NQS and is consistent with the principles of QA of the ACQF.

Governance, procedures and follow-up

- Responsibilities and/or legal competence of relevant national bodies involved in the ACQF referencing process are clearly defined and published by the relevant competent authorities.
- The relevant national quality assurance bodies state their agreement with the referencing outcome and referencing report.
- People from other countries who are experienced in the field of qualifications are involved in certain aspects and steps of the referencing process. Their role is advisory and supports transparency, improvement and credibility. The national referencing committee informs the ACQF Governance Structure on the involved international experts.
- Competent national bodies certify the referencing to the ACQF and publish one comprehensive, evidence-based referencing report, which addresses all referencing criteria.
- The referencing outcome is published by the participating country and the ACQF network upon its final validation by the ACQF Governance Structure, on the dedicated ACQF website.
- Following the completion of referencing, all new qualification certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent national authorities will contain a clear reference to the ACQF level.

ACQF referencing criteria and governance

Four criteria: Interplay between ACQF-NQF/NQS

ACQF Criterion 1: There is a clear and demonstrable link between the **qualifications levels in the NQF or NQS and the level descriptors of the ACQF.**

ACQF Criterion 2: The NQF or NQS are based on **learning outcomes** principles and related to arrangements for **RPL (incl non-formal and informal)** and, where appropriate, to **credit systems.**

ACQF Criterion 3: There are transparent processes and procedures for **including qualifications** in the NQF or for describing the place of qualifications in the NQS and **information on qualifications** is accessible, trustworthy and verifiable in a national register(s) of qualifications.

ACQF Criterion 4: The national quality assurance **(QA) system** for education and training refers to the NQF or NQS and is consistent with the **principles of QA of the ACQF.**

Governance, procedures and follow-up

- Responsibilities and/or legal competence of relevant national bodies involved in the ACQF referencing process are clearly defined and published by the relevant competent authorities.
- The relevant national quality assurance bodies state their agreement with the referencing outcome and referencing report.
- People from other countries who are experienced in the field of qualifications are involved in certain aspects and steps of the referencing process. Their role is advisory and supports transparency, improvement and credibility. The national referencing committee informs the ACQF Governance Structure on the involved international experts.
- Competent national bodies certify the referencing to the ACQF and publish one comprehensive, evidence-based referencing report, which addresses all referencing criteria.
- The referencing outcome is published by the participating country and the ACQF network upon its final validation by the ACQF Governance Structure, on the dedicated ACQF website.
- Following the completion of referencing, all new qualification certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent national authorities will contain a clear reference to the ACQF level.

Referencing steps and capacity

Step 1:
Self-assessment and decision

Step 2:
Roadmap plan and short training

Step 3:
Referencing (ref) report part 1: Presentation via remote meeting

- Virtual meetings
- Digital referencing tools

Step 4:
Ref report part 2 - 80% complete

Step 5:
Ref report part 3: final validation, submission, presentation, publication

Referencing capacity and arrangements

based on:
- trust, transparency and integrity of the process,
- coordination, support and continuous improvement of the process and outcomes

Coordinated, managed and quality assured by the **ACQF governing structure**

Referencing will be encouraged and advanced through regular referencing briefs from the ACQF governance structure, including full use of various platforms and communication methods including:

- ACQF Website
- Dissemination of an ACQF handbook
- Established principles, templates and digital tools
- Training sessions (mostly virtual) in relevant languages
- Peer-sharing
- Coaching, online communication and e-meetings

Support will be provided through dissemination of a full set of support materials available on the ACQF website https://acqf.africa/
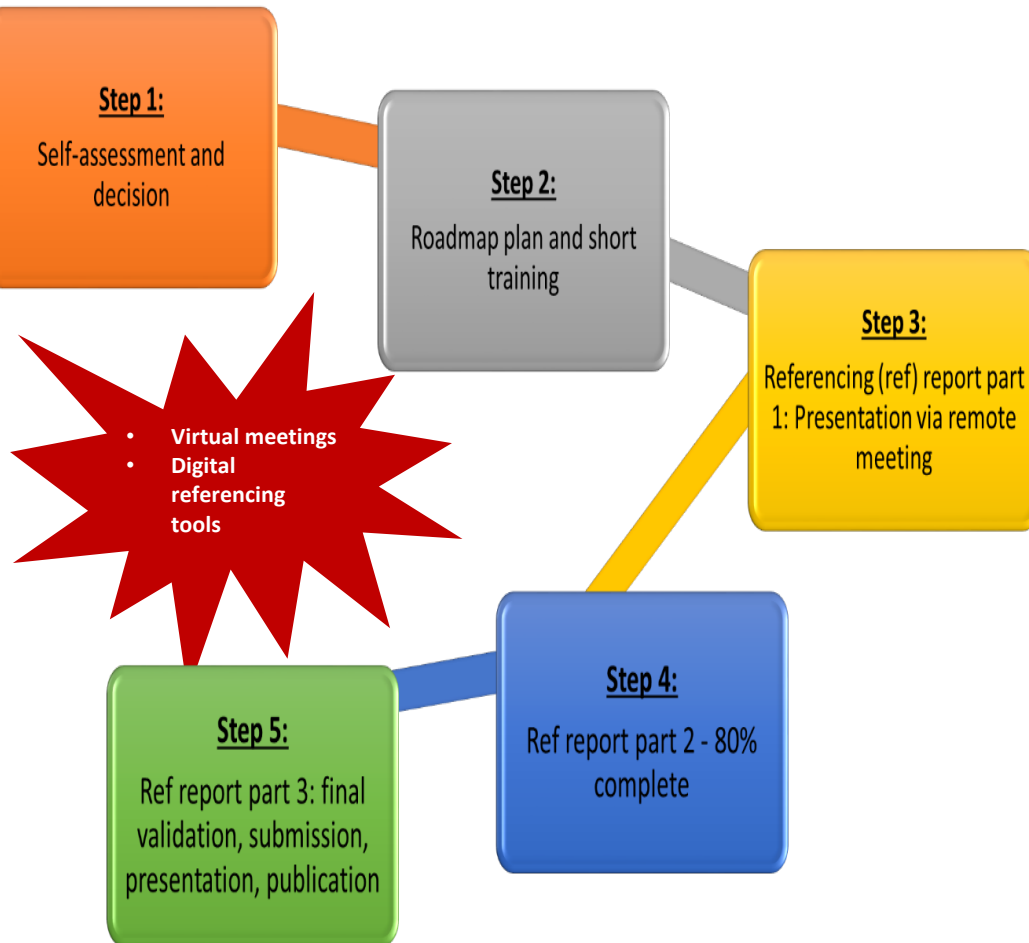
ACQF level descriptors (meta-descriptors)

10 meta-levels

Detailed glossary explaining terms in the ACQF meta-descriptors

Underpinning principles of ACQF LDs

- ACQF LDs play a role in referencing between RQFs and NQFs and encompass all components of **transparency**

- **All forms of learning outcomes** are covered, irrespective of the learning context or institutional context

- **Developmental and cumulative**

- **Conceptual and technical clarity** and consistency

3 domains

1. "Knowledge" includes various kinds of knowledge such as facts, principles and theories in various areas

2. "Skills" refer to the ability to use knowledge to respond to information and address problems. Skills include cognitive, communication, digital, green, innovation, practical and social skills.

3. "Autonomy and responsibility" refers to the context and extent of the application of autonomy and responsibility

Vertical logic

1 simple

2 straightforward

3 familiar

4 varied

5 unfamiliar

6 complex and sometimes abstract

7 complex and abstract

8 highly complex

9 mastery

10 emergent, new

Types of problems

Horizontal logic

Meta-descriptor glossary

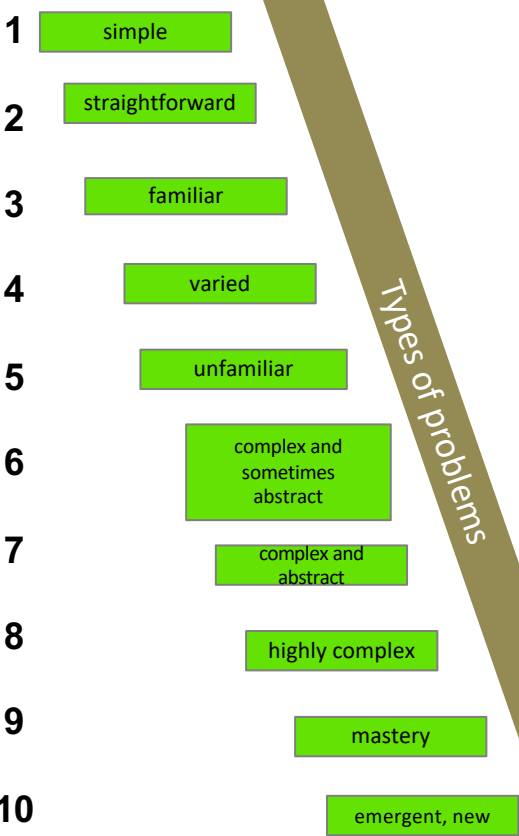| EXTRACT FROM DRAFT (levels 1 to 3)	Knowledge	Skills	Autonomy and responsibility
Level 1: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	**simple** knowledge, literacy and numeracy	simple communication, cognitive and practical skills required to follow simple instructions, and use simple, **repetitive** solutions to address simple problems	**highly structured,** repetitive contexts under **close** supervision and guidance taking **minimal** responsibility for self
Level 2: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	**basic** knowledge incorporating comprehension and recall of factual and operational knowledge in some areas	basic communication, cognitive and practical skills required to **use concrete** information, ideas and **known** solutions to address **straight forward** problems	**structured** contexts under **limited** supervision and guidance taking limited responsibility for self and group outcomes
Level 3: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	**factual and operational** knowledge incorporating some theoretical aspects in some areas	a **range** of communication, cognitive, practical and technical skills required to **interpret** and communicate ideas and detailed information and **select and use** known solutions to address **familiar** problems	**predictable** contexts under **routine** supervision and guidance, with **initiative** for self-responsibility and **some** responsibility for group outcomes

- MS will reference their qualifications levels to the ACQF levels
- Member states NQF levels must be expressed in terms of learning outcomes

Learning outcomes

Verbs

Learning outcomes indicate what a learner should <u>know, understand</u> and be able to do after a process of learning
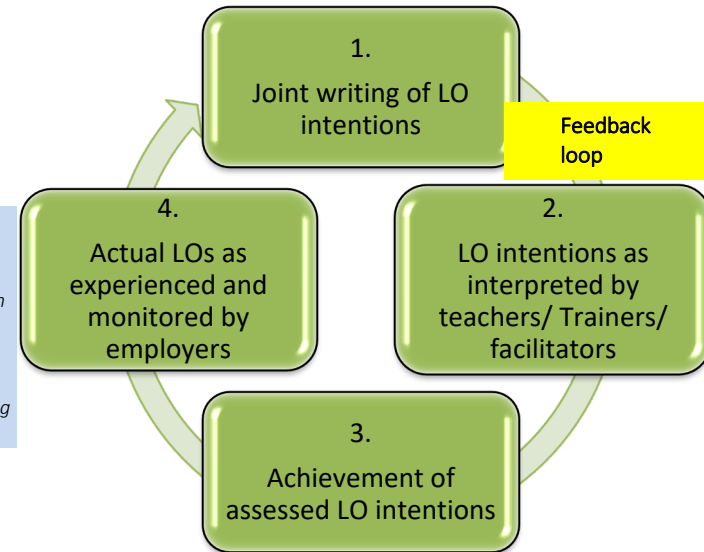
Quality assurance

Expected learning outcomes
- *statement of what an individual is <u>**expected**</u> to know, be able to do and understand after completing a learning process*

Achieved learning outcomes
- *Set of knowledge, skills and/or competences an individual has <u>**acquired**</u> and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process*

1. Joint writing of LO intentions

Feedback loop

2. LO intentions as interpreted by teachers/ Trainers/ facilitators

3. Achievement of assessed LO intentions

4. Actual LOs as experienced and monitored by employers

Application and roles of learning outcomes:

Level descriptors
- (meta-descriptors (international) and national descriptors)

Qualifications design:
- national qualifications descriptors/ profiles (Tuning)
- national subject benchmark statements
- individual qualifications descriptors
- modules
- associated assessment criteria

Occupational descriptors
Recognition of prior learning
Recognition of foreign qualifications

Set of principles

Voluntary

Common principles for inclusion in databases and supplementary qualifications documents
- Ease understanding and comparison of qualifications
- Technical requirements (word usage, structure, list of verbs)

Common principles for writing learning outcomes
- Scaffolding/ cascading
- lists of verbs
- Links between learning outcomes, teaching and learning and assessment
- Fit for purpose and achievable within resources and time

Next steps

Refinement of Guidelines

Testing:
- Referencing criteria
- Level descriptors

Training

Consolidation of guideline trios:
1. Technical
2. Synthesis
3. Training Module

Guideline 8:
Communication and outreach
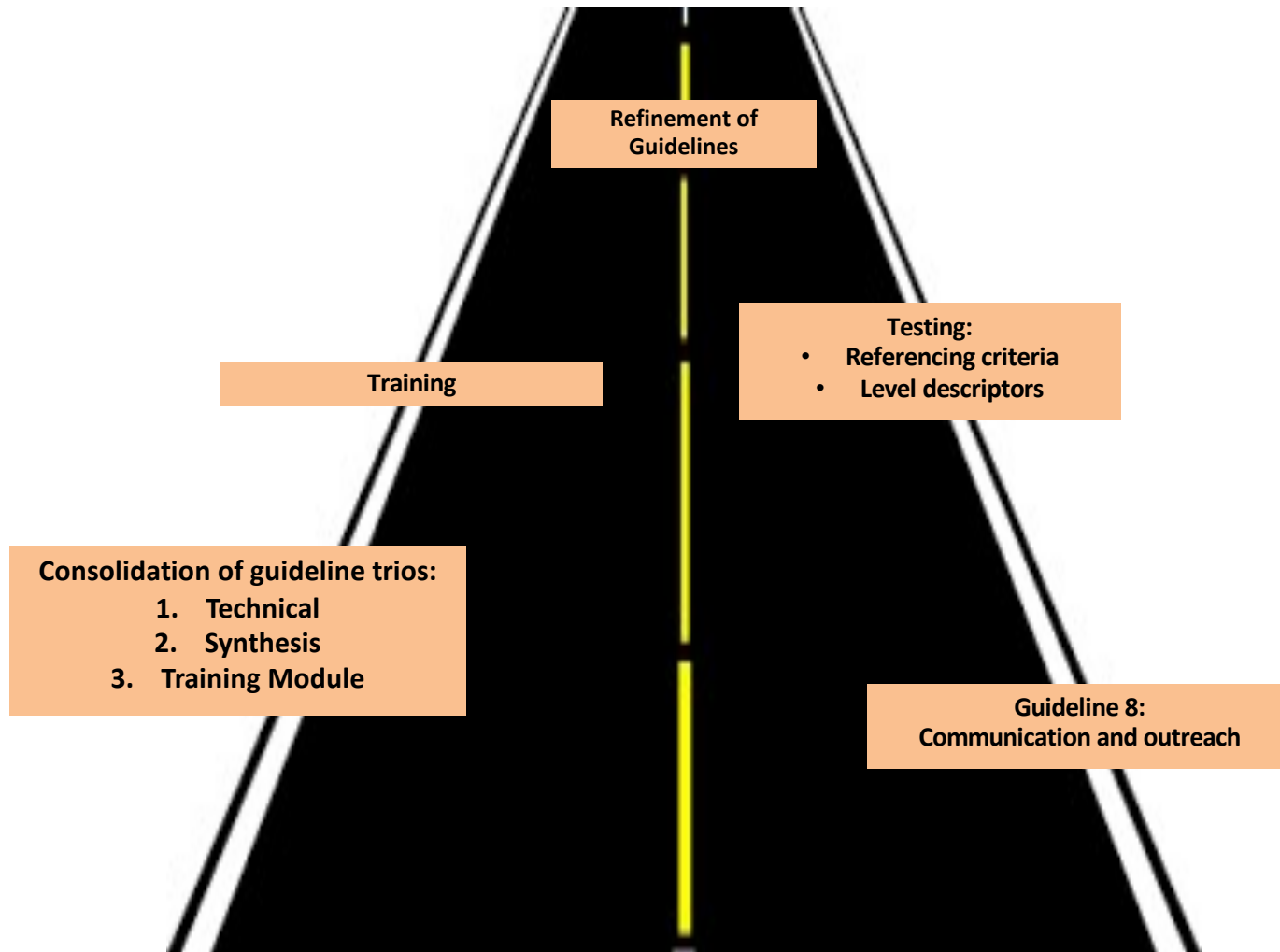
Session 4 (3)

Guideline 5

Guideline 5

Quality Assurance in the context ACQF

Objectives:

This Guideline defines the objectives, principles and application of quality assurance in the context of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF).

It also provides an overview of quality assurance approaches related with qualifications and qualifications frameworks and systems.

Links with other Guidelines:

This Guideline should be seen in synergy with other ACQF Guidelines, notably: Guidelines on learning outcomes, referencing to ACQF, monitoring and evaluation.

Structure of the Guideline 5

Chapter 1: context, scope and aims of the Guideline, and main concepts and rationale of quality assurance of qualifications.

Chapter 2: is the core chapter of the Guideline - defines the dimensions and principles of quality assurance in the context of ACQF.

Chapter 3: provides an overview of quality assurance in African Union policies in the domain of education and training, with emphasis on the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA).

Chapter 4: presents two cases of regional (continental) approaches to quality assurance, as examples with relevance for this continental Guideline.

Quality assurance of qualifications

Trust, confidence

- **Transparency and trust in qualifications** is key in a context of wides... international learner and labour mobility, and rapid transformation of typ... qualifications and credentials for different needs and contexts of lifelong learning. QA is key in a context of great change.

- **Quality assurance** – as part of a range of measures by governments and institutions – increases transparency and should underpin trust in the **relevance and quality of learning outcomes** (that is learners' knowledge, skills, autonomy and responsibility, as certified by qualifications). Such trust in learning outcomes is, in turn, based on trust in the quality of the institutions and providers of education and training at all levels and in all sub-sectors.

- **Qualifications have great value** - they are used to certify levels of competence, allowing people to progress in education and training and to find employment. Qualification holders who have completed a programme and passed the required assessment **must inspire confidence that they have acquired the learning outcomes associated with the qualification**. Moreover, the **role of certification** in safeguarding this confidence and trust is crucial.

Quality assurance in ACQF context

Based on internationally accepted concepts and practice.

Complementary to national and regional systems.

Consistent with AU policies, notably CESA 16-25 and ASG-QA.

Addressing qualifications of all levels, sectors and types of learning

QA and ACQF: considerable scope for dialogue

QA in the ACQF referencing process

QA of outcomes - qualifications

QA in ACQF referencing (1)

Criterion 4: The national quality assurance system for education and training refers to the national qualifications framework or system and is consistent with the principles of quality assurance of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF).

- **Principles governing ACQF referencing**: the referencing to ACQF of national qualifications frameworks or systems demonstrates the degree to which quality assurance of national qualifications:

  - ➤ Addresses the qualifications quality chain, from design of standards underpinning qualifications, learning, assessment and certification

  - ➤ Addresses the application of the learning outcomes approach

  - ➤ Includes feedback instruments and processes supporting continuous quality improvement

  - ➤ Addresses internal and external quality assurance, and the regular review of quality assurance agencies

  - ➤ Is based on measurable objectives, standards, and guidelines for quality assurance

  - ➤ Is supported by resources

  - ➤ Provides transparent information-sharing on results of evaluation

QA in ACQF referencing (2)

- **Promoting streamlined and efficient procedures for referencing to ACQF**: The quality assurance of referencing to ACQF as a process and outcome should promote streamlined and simplified criteria and procedures. Efficiency of the referencing process allows the available scarce resources of the national referencing committee / team to be used in meaningful analysis, stakeholders' dialogue, and peer review.

- **An opportunity for self-evaluation**: Referencing should be seen as an opportunity for countries (regions) to self-evaluate the qualifications framework or system, to plan and implement change and to boost meaningful debate on the conditions for impact and sustainability. In this sense, referencing contributes to systemic improvement; it is not an exam to pass or fail.

- **Highlighting the complementarity between referencing criteria**: In the context of referencing of national qualifications frameworks and systems to ACQF, countries should analyse and demonstrate the complementarity between referencing criteria, notably the question:

  – *"Can existing quality assurance arrangements support the shift to learning outcomes and also the classification and registration of qualifications?"*

QA in TVET qualifications: <u>some</u> proposed principles

The *qualifications quality chain* includes:

- Standards behind qualifications
- Inclusion of the qualification in the NQF
- Learning pathways
- Assessment
- Certification

Quality must be maintained:

- Holistic approach
- Measures at various levels: policy and system; providers and awarding bodies; governance; data and monitoring
- Anticipate the future - changing skills needs

Capacity development, peer-sharing, digital tools

- *Continuous* quality improvement culture, not limited to quality control measures

QA Indicators:

- To measure and monitor quality and support quality assurance;
- Coordinated with the performance indicators of the TVET system

More effective approaches to QA

AfCFTA Agreement?

- **Pursuing the objectives of continental integration**:

Quality assurance - within a framework of continuous quality enhancement - should support reforms and improvements of education and training systems to meet the objectives of continental integration, free movement of persons, mobility and portability of skills and qualifications.

- **Fostering cross-border cooperation**:

Cross-border cooperation: between quality assurance bodies in all sub-sectors and for all forms of education and training should be supported.

ASG-QA

- Developed to "support higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies in Africa in implementing good quality assurance practices by guiding them in the application of standards and guidelines in higher education".

- ASG-QA: composite of 3 interconnected parts:
    - Internal QA (13 standards)
    - External QA (7 standards)
    - Internal QA for QA agencies (9 standards)

- The ASG-QA are framed as minimum standards or requirements that must be complied with, but the individual institutions can complement them with additional standards reflecting their own context.

- The ASG-QA are based on the principle of autonomy, identity and integrity of higher education institutions.

- Piloting ASG-QA is benefiting the African Union member countries and regions in multiple ways: capacity building for substantial numbers of stakeholders and higher education institutions; pilot review of national quality assurance agencies.

African Union

AFRICAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION (ASG-QA)

HAQAA INITIATIVE
Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation

This initiative is implemented on behalf of the European and African Union Commissions by:

EUA   DAAD   UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA   ENQA
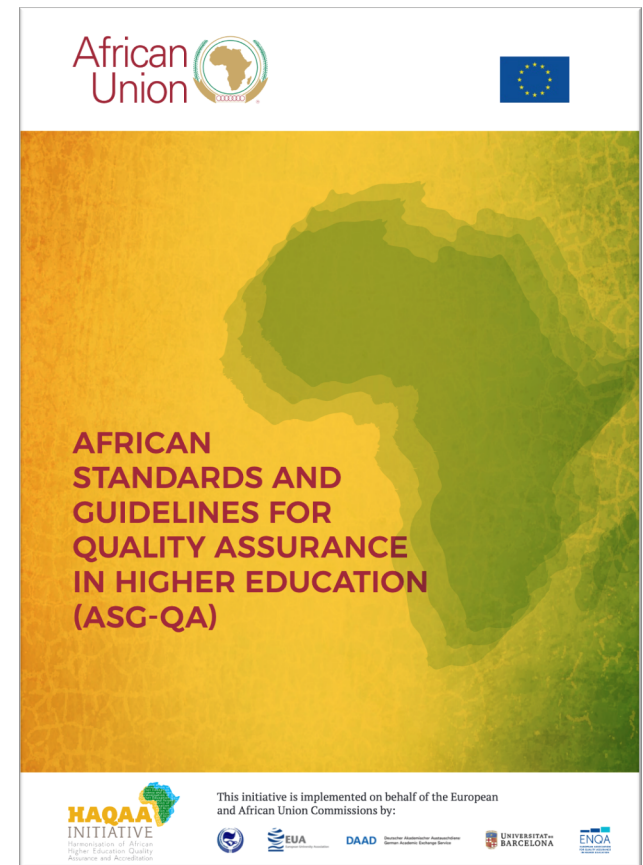
Session 4 (4)

Guideline 7

Guideline 7

MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN THE CONTEXT OF NQFS AND RQFS

Process of developing Guideline 7

Process of developing Guideline 7

Completed
1. Inception report agreed to by Steering committee
2. Community of Practice – 30 November 2021
3. First draft technical guideline and feedback from Steering committee

Current
5. Validation meeting feedback

To be completed
6. Second draft of technical guideline
7. Community of Practice – 22 February 2022
8. First draft training manual and synthesis guideline
9. Community of Practice – 12 April 2022

Structure and content of the M&E guideline

Structure and content of the M&E guideline

1 Introduction

2 Background to NQFs and relationship between NQFs and ACQF

3 Conceptual underpinnings of monitoring and evaluation

4 M&E system and use in the ACQF (elaborated on the next slide)

Section in Guideline on use of M&E in ACQF
Structure et contenu de la Ligne directice S&E
Estrutura e conteúdo da Diretriz M&E

4. Monitoring and Evaluation – use in the ACQF

4.1 Why monitor and evaluate NQFs and RQFs

4.2 Creating an M&E system

    4.2.1 Developing a results framework (shown on following slides)

    4.2.2 Identifying indicators

    4.2.3 Secondary data sources

    4.2.4 Data collection instruments

    4.2.5 Analysis methods

    4.2.6 Reporting and dissemination

    4.2.7 Evaluation
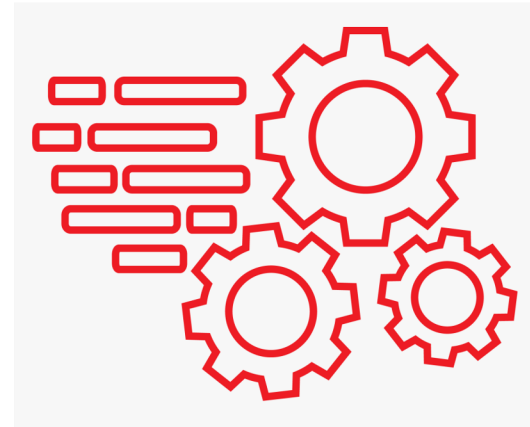
ACQF Results Framework and considerations for M&E
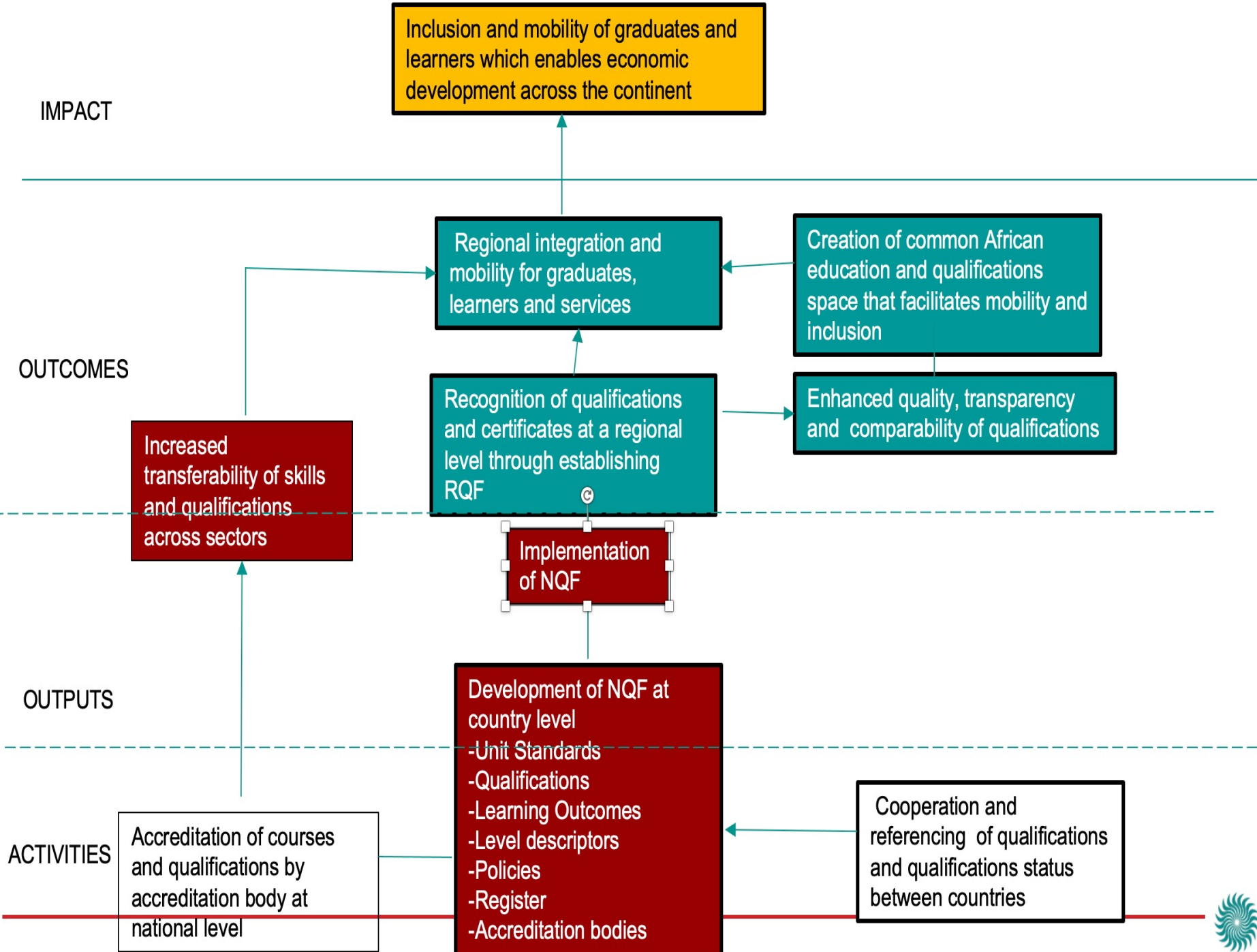
- Confirm who the targeted users are for the M&E system, and the information it will generate

- Ensure buy-in from those that are collecting and collating data through ensuring the purpose of M&E is understood and how information will be used (enable learning, accountability, reporting progress towards ACQF, inform strategy or implementation)

- Consider available organisational capacity (knowledge, people, systems) to be able to establish and implement an M&E system/process before developing the system

- Establish what relevant data sources may already exist to avoid a duplication of effort (Census, national statistical bodies, government M&E systems)

- Monitoring would be informed by where the respective NQF/RQF is according to the five stages of development

- Evaluation will consider progress in development, ease of use, extent to which it is meeting the purpose, and, where appropriate, the extent of review and redesign that has taken place

Examples of Output indicators

Types of Indicators	Purpose
Impact (Results)	Measure the extent to which the overall goals are being met
Outcome (Results)	Measure the extent to which objectives are being achieved
Output (Results)	Measure project deliverables
Input (Project)	Measure the extent to which resources are being used and activities developed.

Examples out Output Indicators – measured in the early stages

- Existence of a legal framework for an NQF at the national / regional level

- % of curricula that are based on learning outcomes

- Number of qualifications that have been incorporated into the NQF per country

- Number of qualifications on the national register

- Number of countries that have referenced their qualifications frameworks/ levels to the regional qualifications framework

Outcomes are specifically focussed on achieving change or benefits for target groups and can focus on different aspects of a policy or programme. These are

Behaviour: NQF policies, qualifications and unit standards may contribute to a change in how people perceive different qualifications and how these are treated

Attitude: This could focus on how the creation of an NQF has changed attitudes towards enabling continuous and lifelong learning

Knowledge: This can refer to increased knowledge pertaining to how an NQF can facilitate shared learning and open up opportunities across sectors

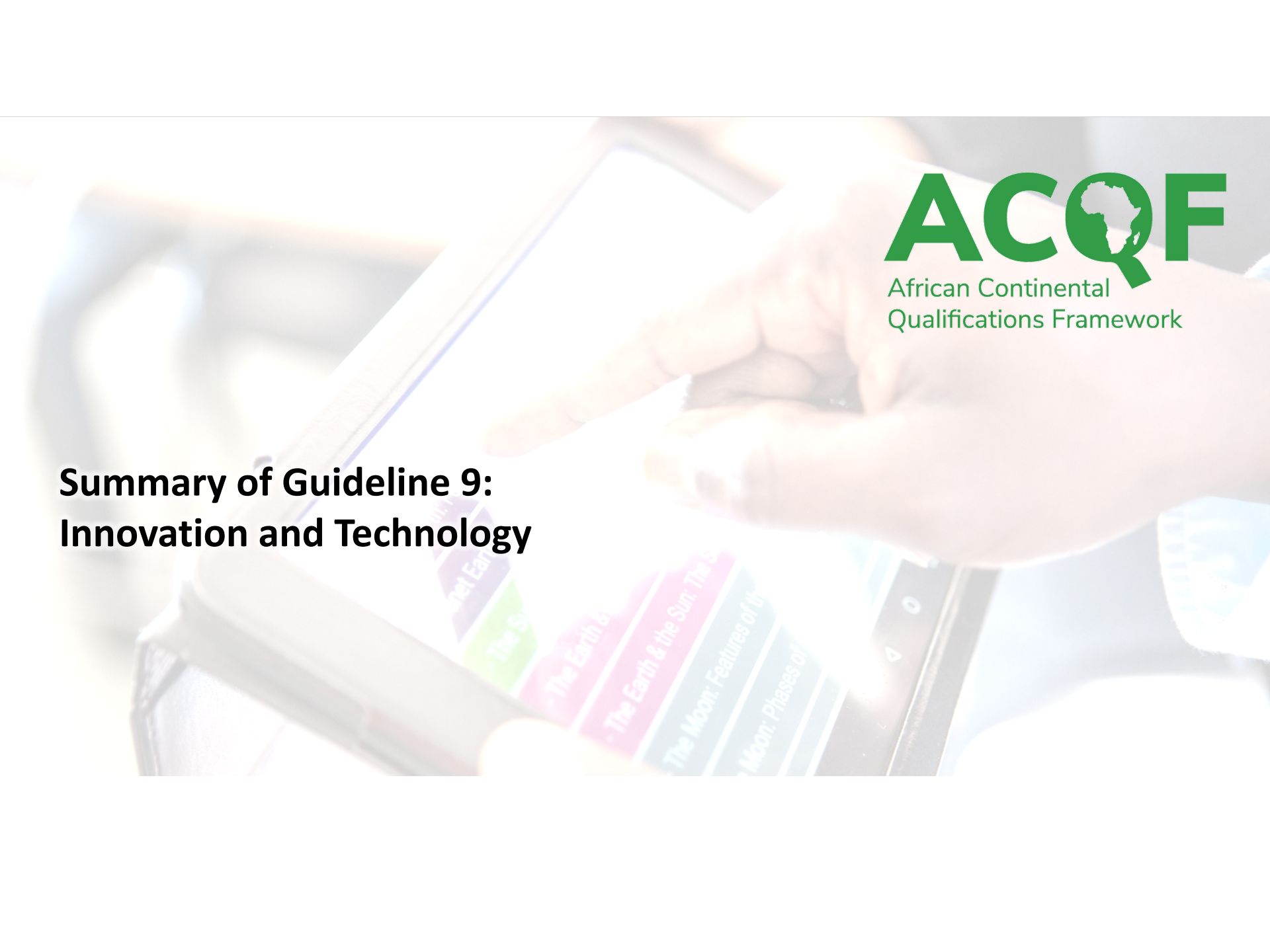**Skills:** Where different education or skills training programmes are being aligned based on qualifications and unit standards, changes in skills would refer to addressing gaps which may have existed in one qualification to be addressed in another.

Session 4 (5)

Guideline 9

Innovation and technology in the context of Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks

Summary of Guideline 9: Innovation and Technology

Objectives of the Guideline

- introduce a range of innovations in the context of NQFs and RQFs
- clarify the key requirements for countries looking to implement innovations
- present and elaborate on specific tools culminating in an ACQF handbook
- seek synergy between the innovation and technology guideline and complementarity with already existing AU policies and instruments
- provide conceptual and technical orientations to countries and regional economic communities (RECs) to support the improvement and consolidation of their own NQFs and links with the ACQF
- contribute to a common understanding of innovation and technology in the ACQF and its application across countries and regions

Structure of the Guideline

Table of Contents

- Glossary of terms
- Introduction
- Innovation examples
- Innovation readiness (Indicators, examples)
- Ethical considerations
- Key recommendations for responsive innovations
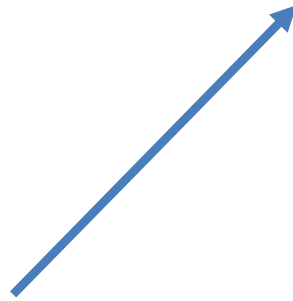
1. Development of qualifications, frameworks and standards
   Qualifications passports, flexible/personalized learning pathways, stackable credentials

2. Comparing and analysing qualifications
   Automated QF comparison, credential fluency

3. Registration and management of credentials
   Interoperability, credential banks, database types

4. Credentialing and recognition of learning
   RPL, micro and digital credentials, CBA, SSI, virtual and stealth assessment

5. Data and data use
   Scraping, crowd-sourcing, automated/AI-enhanced LMI, LMS

6. Communication
   Social media

7. Monitoring and evaluation
   Micro-narratives, data exhaust, data visualization

Recommendations for responsive innovations

Context reflection
- What are the different roles and needs of policy-makers, implementers, private and third sector stakeholders, and especially citizens in relation to:
    - ✓ Designing, implementing, monitoring and quality-assuring qualifications frameworks and standards?
    - ✓ Accumulating formal and informal records of learning achievements such as credentials?
    - ✓ Accessing, storing, retrieving and verifying credentials?

Strategic selection and user-centred design
- How will this innovation respond to the identified need(s)?
- How will citizens benefit from this innovation?
- What are the implementation requirements of this innovation?
- How ready is our system in terms of policy, finances, infrastructure and human capital to implement this innovation? What steps need to be taken to ensure the system is ready?

Ethical deployment and routine monitoring and evaluation
- Is the proposed innovation ethical? What are the concerns in terms of sustainability and energy use, cost-benefit, privacy (including data privacy) and other human rights?
- What processes will we put in place to test this innovation throughout its development and deployment?
- What data will we gather, and how will we gather that data? Who will analyse it?

Session 4 (6)

Guidelines 4 and 6

Presented by ZAQA team

ACQF Guideline 4: Validation and Recognition of Learning

ACQF AG-4 meeting (13/Jan/2022)
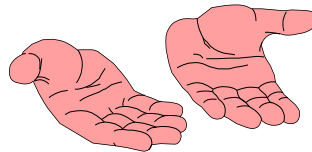
Presented by: Mirriam Chiyaba, ZAQA
13th January 2022

Chapter 1: Introduction to Guideline 4

Presentation Outline

Chapter 1: Introduction to Guideline 4

Chapter 2: Concepts, Principles, and Benefits of Validation and Recognition of learning

Chapter 3: Validation & Recognition of Learning

Chapter 4: Systematic exchange of Information

Purpose of Guideline 4
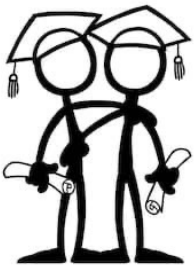
To provide member States with a framework for fair and transparent validation and recognition of learning

To facilitate mobility of persons from one country to another to study, research, teach or work. .

Target users

Competent recognition authorities

Quality assurance agencies

Competent authorities involved in curriculum development

Other related stakeholders in the management of qualifications
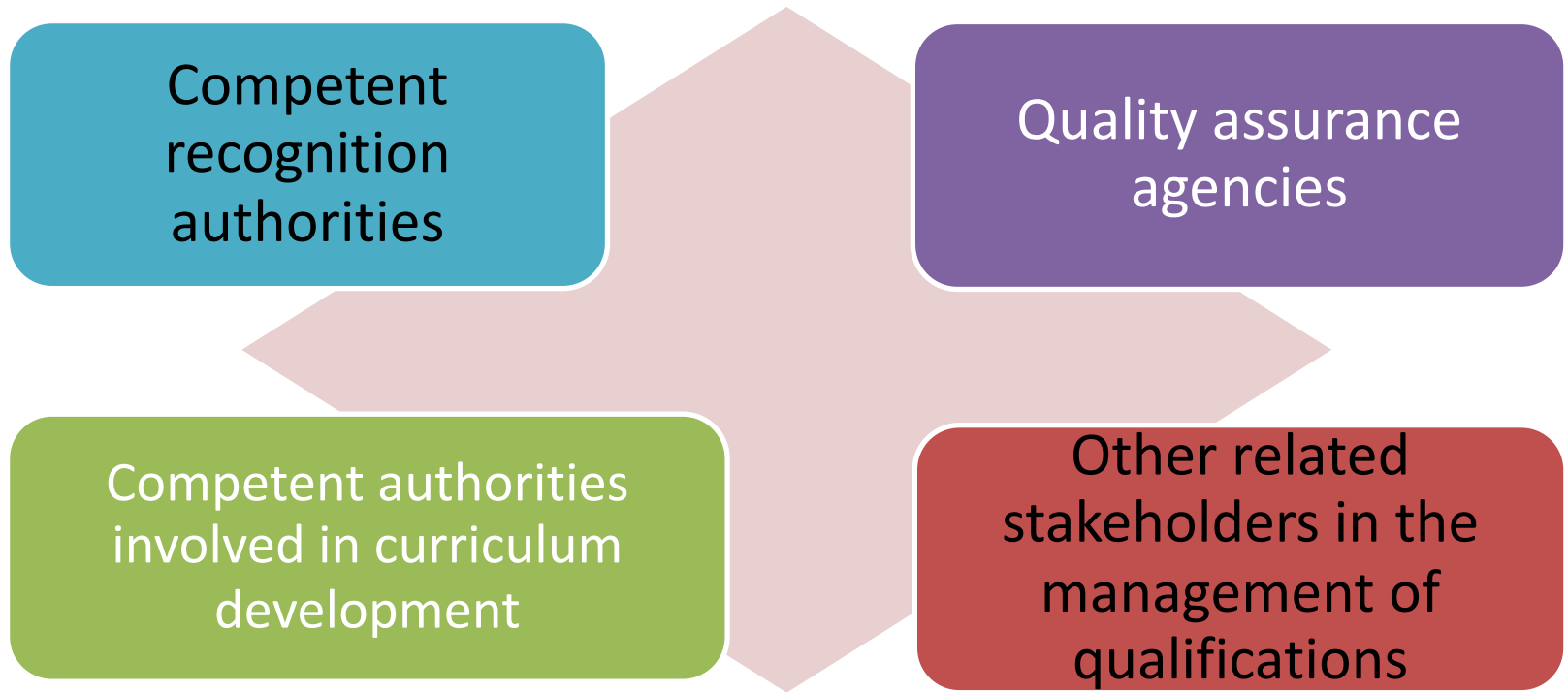
Objectives of Guideline 4

Facilitate Recognition of qualifications among African states

Facilitate RPL within and among African states

Facilitate Systematic exchange of information between ACQF, NQF and recognition structures

Facilitate Implementation of CATS in Africa

Links with other ACQF Guidelines

Guideline 1 on Learning Outcomes

Guideline 2 on Level Descriptors

Guideline 3 on referencing NQFs to ACQF

Guideline 5 - Quality Assurance;

Guideline 6 - Registration, Databases Of Qualifications

Guideline 10 - Qualifications, NQFs, NQS - Systemic View

Chapter 2: Concepts, principles and benefits of validation and recognition of learning

Validation and Recognition of Learning

Procedures by which competent authorities recognise qualifications, credits and prior learning in accordance with norms and standards recognised nationally or internationally

Purpose of Validation and Recognition of Learning

Provides opportunities to apply for further education

Provides applicants the possibility to seek employment opportunities

Benefits of validation and recognition of learning at national, regional and continental levels

Surety to Stakeholders	Identifies level at which qualification is recognised on NQFs/RQFs	In Case of RPL, Confirmation of possession of appropriate knowledge, skills and Competencies	Affirmation of possession of appropriate Competencies
Contributes to quality of Education, Institutions and Qualifications	Promote international understanding of Education Systems	Enhances right to education, training and employment	Helps in identification of diploma and accreditation mills

Factors affecting validation and recognition of learning

Diversity of validation and recognition procedures

Diversity of education systems

Scarcity of information in some jurisdictions

Language barriers

Pandemics such as the Covid-19.

Chapter 3: Validation and recognition of learning in the context NQFs and ACQF

Modes of validation and recognition of learning

Recognition of qualifications → Recognition of Prior Learning → Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

Validation and Recognition of Learning in the context of ACQF

Formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the validity and academic level of a qualification, partial studies or prior learning

Role of Competent Authorities in Validation and Recognition of Learning

Make decisions on recognition of Qualifications.

Establish and maintain National Databases of Learning Achievements

Role of Education Institutions in Validation and Recognition of Learning

Confirmation of award of qualification

Provide records of Learning Achievements

CATS in the Context of ACQF

Proposes a common framework of principles, criteria and processes on implementation of Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

To inspire and orient the national and regional authorities and stakeholders in developing CATS

Improving and consolidating already existing systems

CATS in the context of ACQF

Eight (8) CATS principles have been proposed in the guidelines

CATS Principles

| Promotes Learner Mobility –do not duplicate learning | Systems and Procedures – Transparent, fair, Flexible & easy to use | Decisions are timely, academically defensible, equitable and based on learning outcomes | Credits for non formal or informal learning equal to credits for formal learning | Promotes Institutional Autonomy | Academic Rigour and Integrity of Qualifications Not Undermined | Institutional Commitment and Cooperation is Key | Subject to Rigorous Quality Assurance |
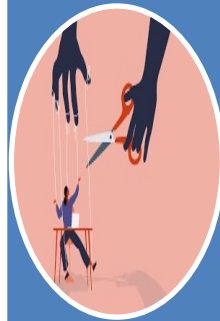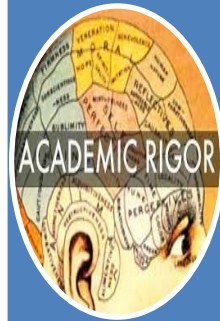
RPL in the context of ACQF

Recommends the recognition of equivalences rather than a precise match between experience and academic learning.

support countries in domesticating or adapting the principles and procedures at national level

RPL in the context of ACQF

Guideline proposes four (4) principles to guide the implementation of RPL

Policies and Procedures

Information

Roles and Responsibilities

Monitoring and Review

RPL in the context of ACQF

Guideline proposes four (4) stages to guide the implementation of RPL

Identification **Documentation** **Assessment** **Certification**

Chapter 4: Systematic Exchange of Information

Systematic Exchange of Information

- Member States to provide adequate and clear information on their education and training system and NQF.
- To promote information-sharing thereby building on the enhanced transparency and comparability of qualifications and qualifications frameworks or systems.

ACQF Guideline 6: Registration and Databases of Qualifications

Presented by: Modest Hamalabbi,
ZAQA
13th January 2022

Presentation Outline

Chapter 1 Introduction to Guideline 6

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

Chapter 3: Technical Design and Main Specifications of Database

Chapter 4: Use of ACQF levels in Qualifications Registers

Chapter 1: Introduction to Guideline 6

Purpose of Guideline 6
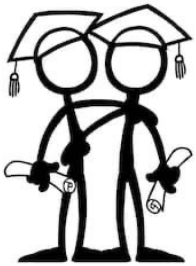
Recommends common principles, tools and sources for further qualifications reference among member states

Provides the approach to the creation of the database of qualifications.

Intended users

Objectives of Guideline 6

Describe procedures for registration of qualifications on the ACQF

Prescribe eligibility criteria for registration of qualifications on the ACQF;

Provide for a fair and transparent Qualifications Registration process on the ACQF

Links with other ACQF Guidelines

Guideline 1 on Learning Outcomes

Guideline 2 on Level Descriptors

Guideline 3 on referencing NQFs to ACQF

Guideline 9 on Innovation and Technology in NQFs/ACQF
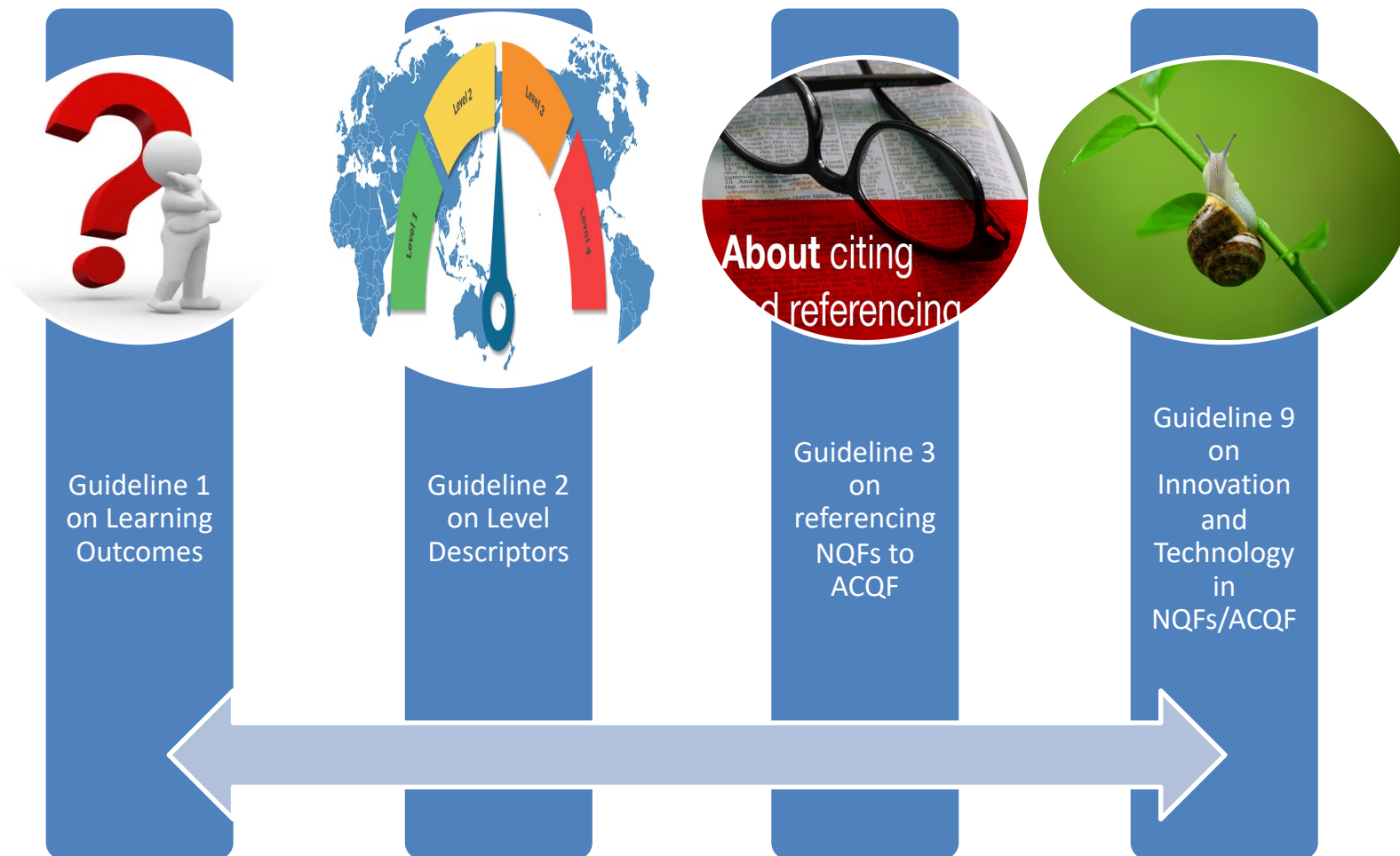
Chapter 2: Conceptual framework

Registration of Qualifications in Context of ACQF

Registration is a process through which national quality assured and registered qualifications are placed on the ACQF

PURPOSE OF REGISTRATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

Mutual understanding, acceptability and recognition of qualifications

Smooth verification and evaluation of qualifications

Protects recipients from receiving non-recognized qualifications

Promote the quality of education and training provision

Information for Study and Career Choices

Mobility and portability of qualifications
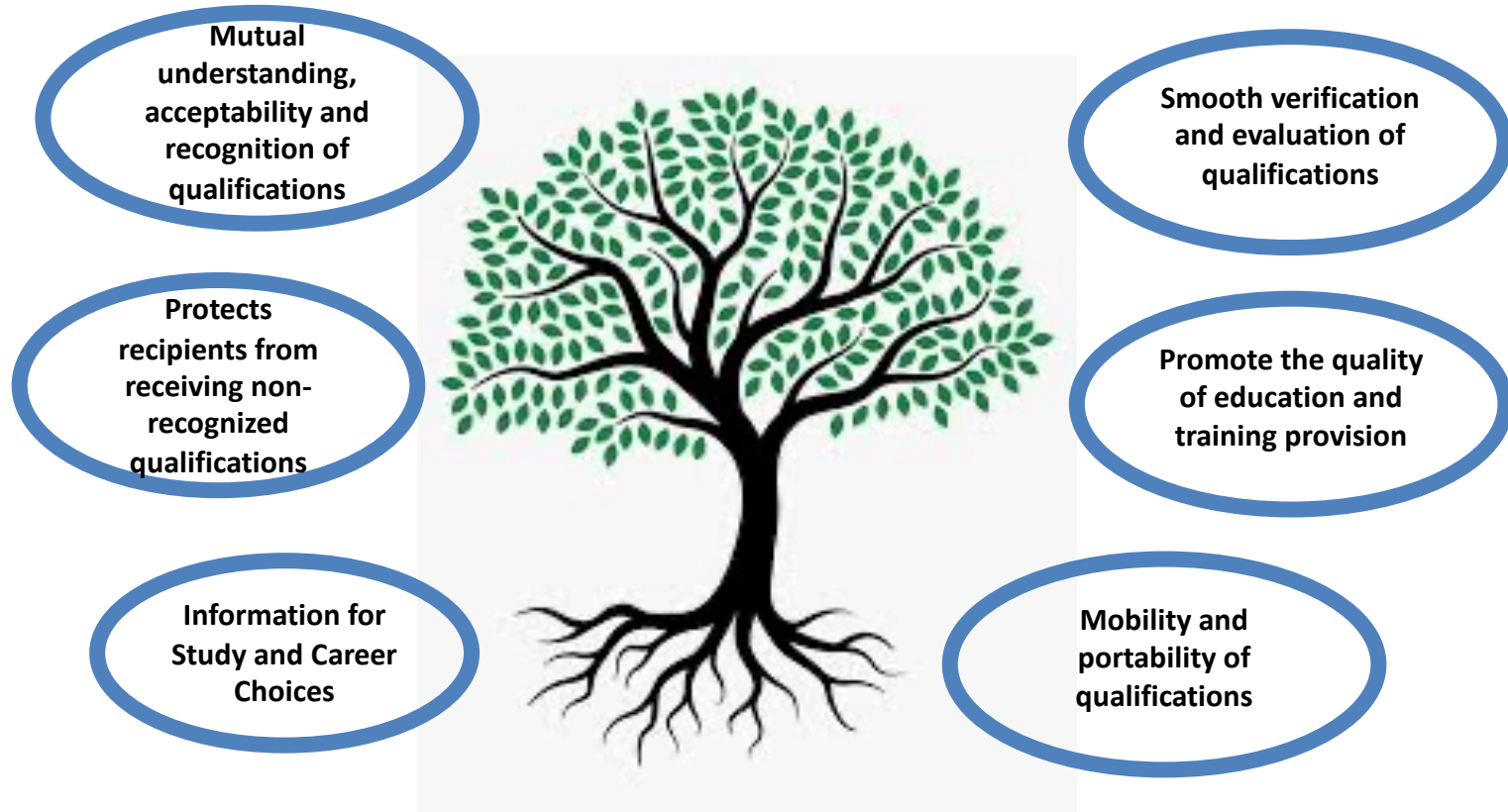
Benefits of registration of qualifications

Transparency of information on qualifications

Enhances quality and recognition of qualifications

Facilitates mobility of learners and workers

Protecting recipients from receiving non-recognised qualifications

Protecting employers and the public from misrepresented qualifications

Deepens integration and harmonisation of qualifications

Eases recognition and transfer of credits

Facilitates for a smooth verification and evaluation of qualifications

Chapter 3: Technical design and main specifications for the ACQF Database

Why ACQF Database of Qualifications?

Strategic Tool

Generate and Access Vital Information & Statistics of Qualification in Africa

Support National Qualifications Authorities, Regional and Continent

Main features of Register/Database of Qualifications

Security

Accessibility

Usability

Stability

Interoperability

Dependability

Flexibility

Recoverability

ACQF Database uses

- Information sharing/referencing to ACQF
- ACQF Platform/ infrastructure used at national level for free

National Qualifications Frameworks or Systems

International Qualifications

- **High labour market, technological value and currency. Awarded by legally established international bodies**
- **May not be included in NQF**

- **Free for states to use in designing national courses and programmes**

Common continental Qualifications profiles

Qualifications from Sectorial organizations/Micro-credential

- **Qualifications first registered in member states where the award will take place**

Elements of the ACQF Database of Qualifications - Required

Title of Qualification	Field of Education and Training	Country of Origin	Level (NQF,RQF,ACQF)

Type of Qualification	Competent Recognition Authority or Awarding body	Description of Qualification

Study Hours/Credits	Expiry Date	Link to National Qualification Database

Elements of the ACQF Database of Qualifications – Optional
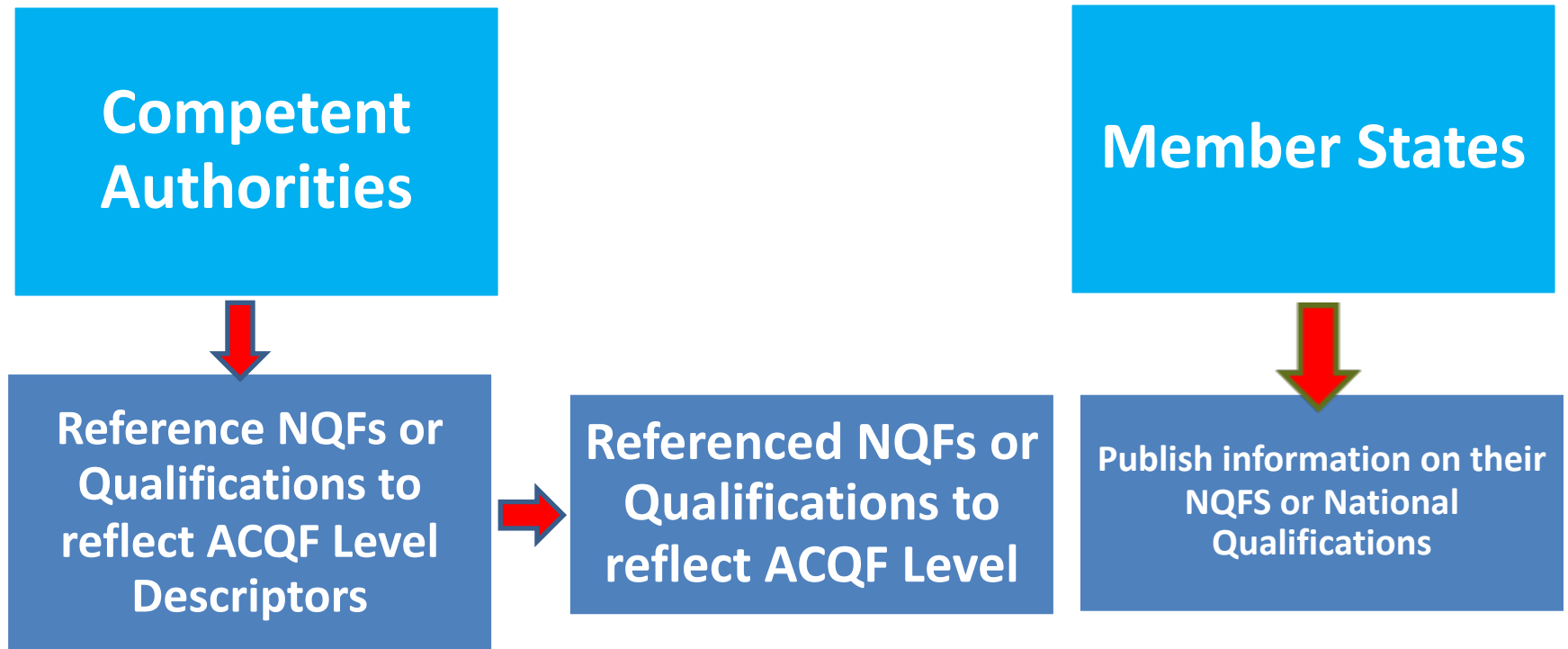
Unique qualification Code	**External quality assurance/regulatory body**
Ways to acquire the qualification	**Relationship to occupations or occupational classification**

Chapter 4: Use of ACQF levels in qualifications registers and databases

---

Use of ACQF Levels in Qualifications Registers

Competent Authorities

Member States

Reference NQFs or Qualifications to reflect ACQF Level Descriptors

Referenced NQFs or Qualifications to reflect ACQF Level

Publish information on their NQFS or National Qualifications

Session 5

ACQF Governance Study
Author: Catherine Musakali

ACQF

ACQF

- Connector of the NQFs

- The common point of reference of qualifications in Africa

- The point for cooperation and comparability.
  MUTUAL TRUST
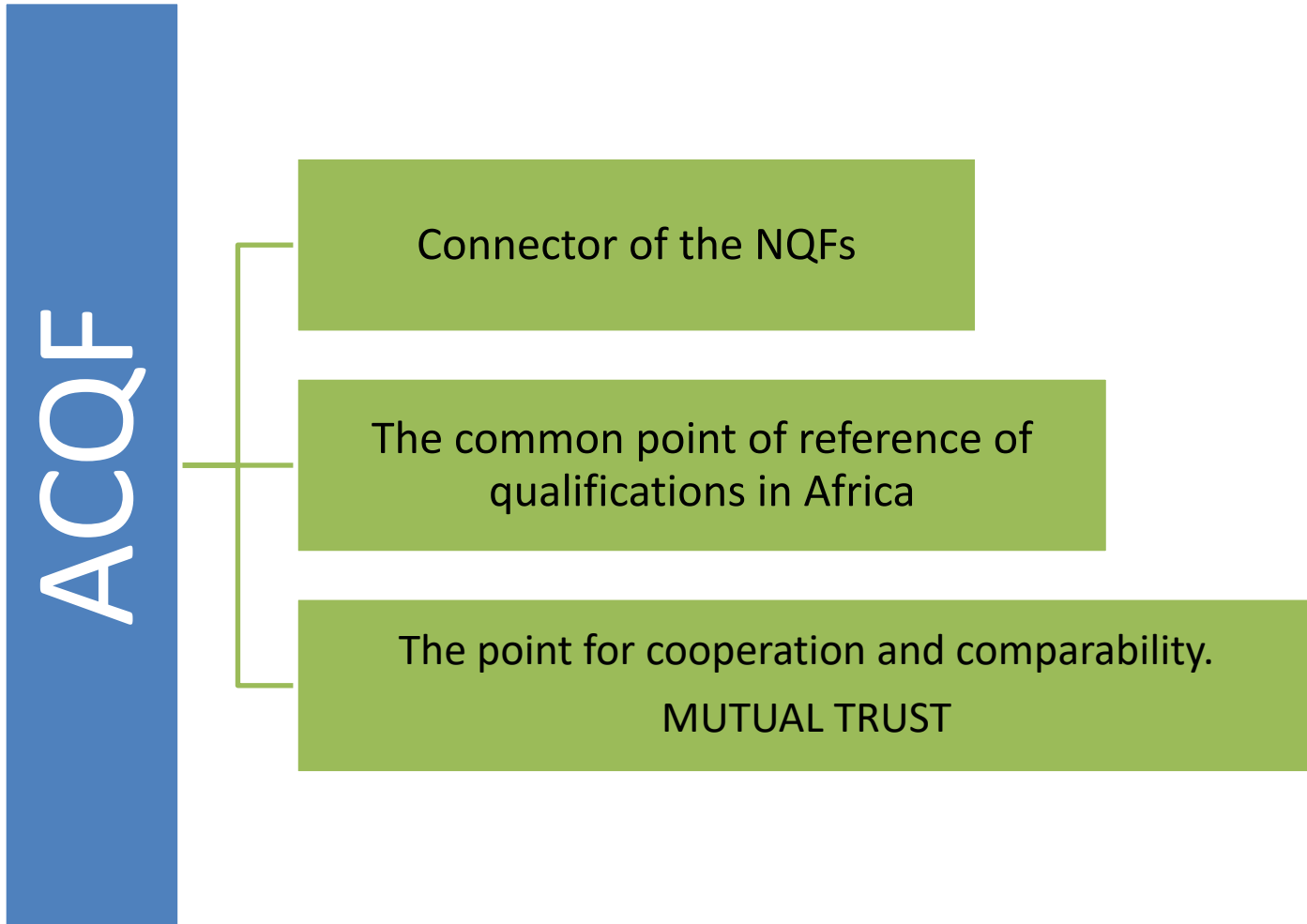
Enablers of ACQF

- The ACQF cannot grow to its full operational capability without enablers.
- To ensure that the ACQF is operational and substantive, there is need to come up with a functional structure for governance.
- **Aim of the feasibility study on options for governance of ACQF**: to assess and propose options able to support the successful transition of the ACQF to the operational phase, focussing on membership, organisational structure, roles and responsibilities and the resource funding for the ACQF.
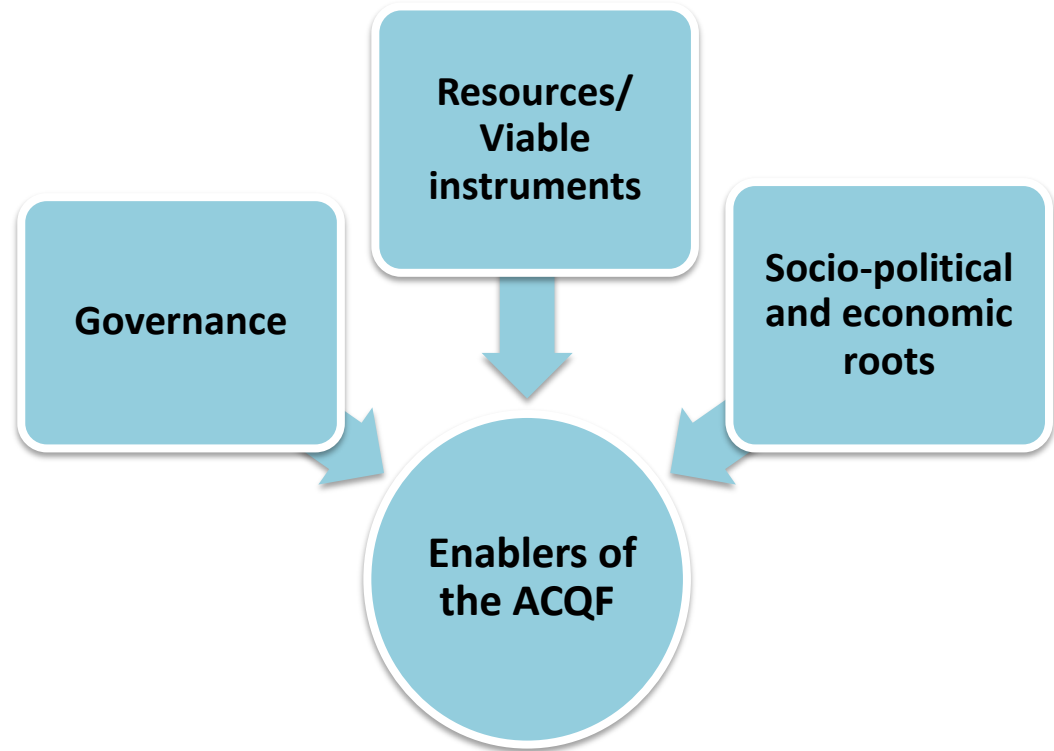
Approach of the study

- **STEP 1** - Undertaking an analysis of the types and models of the governance structure for the NQFs in Africa in order to;
  - Gain an understanding of the governance structures in place for the NQFs.
  - Understand the strengths, challenges and opportunites in view of the ACQF governance setting.
- **Deliverable:** A report inventorizing the types and models of governance for the NQFS. (**Cluster 1 Report**)

- **STEP 2** – A focus on coming up with 2-3 options for the governance of the ACQF, based on the models of governance revealed in step 1.
- **Deliverable:** A comprehensive report setting out the options for governance and directions towards the most viable options of governance for ACQF. (**Cluster 2 Report**)

- **STEP 3** – A focus on the most viable option and an organisational structure for the same.
- **Deliverable**: A comprehensive report in the form of a charter or statute, demonstrating the organisational structure, membership, main tasks and responsibilities and the resource funding of the ACQF. (**Cluster 3 Report**)

This feasibility study (Cluster 1) will focus on eight countries: Cape Verde, The Gambia, Egypt, Namibia, Zambia, Kenya, Botswana and Mozambique

Methodology

Desktop review of reports, ACQF research / mapping study

Consultations through webinars & survey with various stakeholders.

(at this stage will majorly include the NQFs institutions and agencies)

Consultations with the AUC-Education Division and the ACQF Advisory Group.

Questions on models NQF governance

- **The strategic policy framework**: What are the main objectives, scope and structure of the NQFs?
- **Legal framework**: What are the different legal instruments that guide the NQFs?
- **Management Framework**: Who are the main stakeholders in terms of governance? What body is responsible for the general management, planning and execution of activities of the NQFs? What is the involvement of the different partners in the governance of the NQFs? Costs and funding?
- **Analytical, monitoring and evaluation framework**: Are there data, researches, analyses, impact assessments, and feedback on the governance of the NQFs? What is the monitoring and evaluation framework in place?
- What have been the **successes / challenges** of the set-up governance structures?
- What is **changing** in functioning and governance of NQFs?
- What are the **expectations and suggestions of member countries regarding ACQF governance**?

- These questions are not new, there is data and information in the literature and in ACQF own research **(information accessible)** – used for a 1st concise mapping of governance models
- But we need to deepen and update information to complete the step 1 (**information gaps**)

Key elements of ACQF Governance
From ACQF Policy Document (draft 1) – presented at session 3

As a public policy instrument underpinned by AU policies, governance of the ACQF is based on the following principles:

- **No country is left behind**: All AU member countries are invited to participate in the activities on equal footing. Such ACQF activities notably include referencing to the ACQF, peer reviews, deliberations in the context of the governing structure, capacity-development programmes, dissemination and outreach, and collaboration on the ACQF Qualifications Platform (database).

- The **AUC provides political support and steering**, and participates in the ACQF governing structure.

- **Technical implementation** is assured by a **competent unit** responsible for ACQF functions and operations.

- **Networking and collaboration** between African national qualifications entities, social partners, professional associations, recognition centres, students' unions and other relevant stakeholders.

- Governance and management are based on **accountability and integrity**.

- The ACQF process is supported by **monitoring and evaluation**.

Governance: important considerations

- **Ease of implementation**
  - ✓ There is need for a governance set-up that can be deployed rapidly taking into consideration short-term, medium-term and long-term needs
  - ✓ Implementation of the structure may be staggered for this purpose
  - ✓ Consider: efficiency, economy, feasibility of the governance set-up
- **Linkages with other AU Initiatives**:
  - ✓ There is need to keep in mind and to consider linkages / coordination with other AU initiatives such as PAQAA
- **Sustainability**:
  - ✓ There is need to ensure long-term sustainability of ACQF

Session 6

Discussion

Action points

- Stakeholders from employment and labour market domain: contacts for invitation to activities in 2022
- Your orientations and suggestions and Your interest
- **ACQF survey on: RPL, micro-credentials, international qualifications (scope: country)**
- ACAG AG-4 Meeting report: until 30 January
- Next AG meetings:
    - 5th meeting: 28 April
    - 6th meeting: 12 July
- ACQF Training programmes:
    - 18-22 April
    - 4-8 July
- ACQF Conferences:
    - 1st conference: 11-12 May
    - Final: 15 September

Your views through a Poll

Link:
https://www.menti.com/ngogr5dm7o/0

Your orientations, suggestions

In respect to the ACQF Policy document

In respect to the ACQF Guidelines

Your interest in…

Participating in testing ACQF Guidelines

Registering to ACQF training programmes

Contributing to ACQF conference (as speaker, or session facilitator)

Sending articles for ACQF Newsletter

Sending news on your developments and initiatives (national / REC)

Poll - Questions

Question 1

On the ACQF Policy Document: Please write your main comments and suggestions on the 1st draft. What can be improved?

Question 2

On the ACQF Guidelines: Please write your main comments and suggestions on the 1st draft. What can be improved?

Question 3 (multiple choice – all options can be selected):

❑ Please choose the activities, in which your country / organisation would like participate:

❑ Testing the ACQF Guidelines (one or more)

❑ Registering your representatives / staff in ACQF training programmes

❑ Contributing to ACQF Conferences (as speaker, session facilitator, other role)

❑ Drafting articles for ACQF Newsletter

❑ Sending news on your developments and initiatives (national / region)

Question 4

On testing the ACQF Guidelines: if you are interested to test, please write your country or organisation, and the theme of the guideline.

Question 5

On participation in ACQF training programme: if you are interested, please write your country or organisation, and period of training (April or July).

Question 6

Please write any other suggestions to expand and improve communication and outreach of ACQF activities in your country / region.

ANNEX: For your further reference (not for presentation)

ACQF
Mapping
study

ACQF Mapping Study (2020 complete)

Countries online survey (33 countries responded):

Angola, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Union Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, D R Congo, Egypt, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Guinea, The Gambia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé e Príncipe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia; Chad, Republic of Congo, Ghana, Zimbabwe

Countries and RECs – visits and reports:

Angola, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Togo. EAC (EAQFHE), SADC (SADCQF), ECOWAS (mentions CAMES, LMD). New started: Ivory Coast and Nigeria.

Review process in 3 rounds (external, project expert, country and REC). Published: https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study

Countries and RECs – peer learning, updates, meetings:

Eswatini (meeting), Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tunisia; Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Cape Verte, South Africa. SADCQF and EAC. CAMES (meetings)

Mapping study: outputs

- 13 country reports
- 3 REC reports
- Comprehensive report
- Synthesis report
- Analysis LD
- Analysis Qualif
- Inventory NQFs
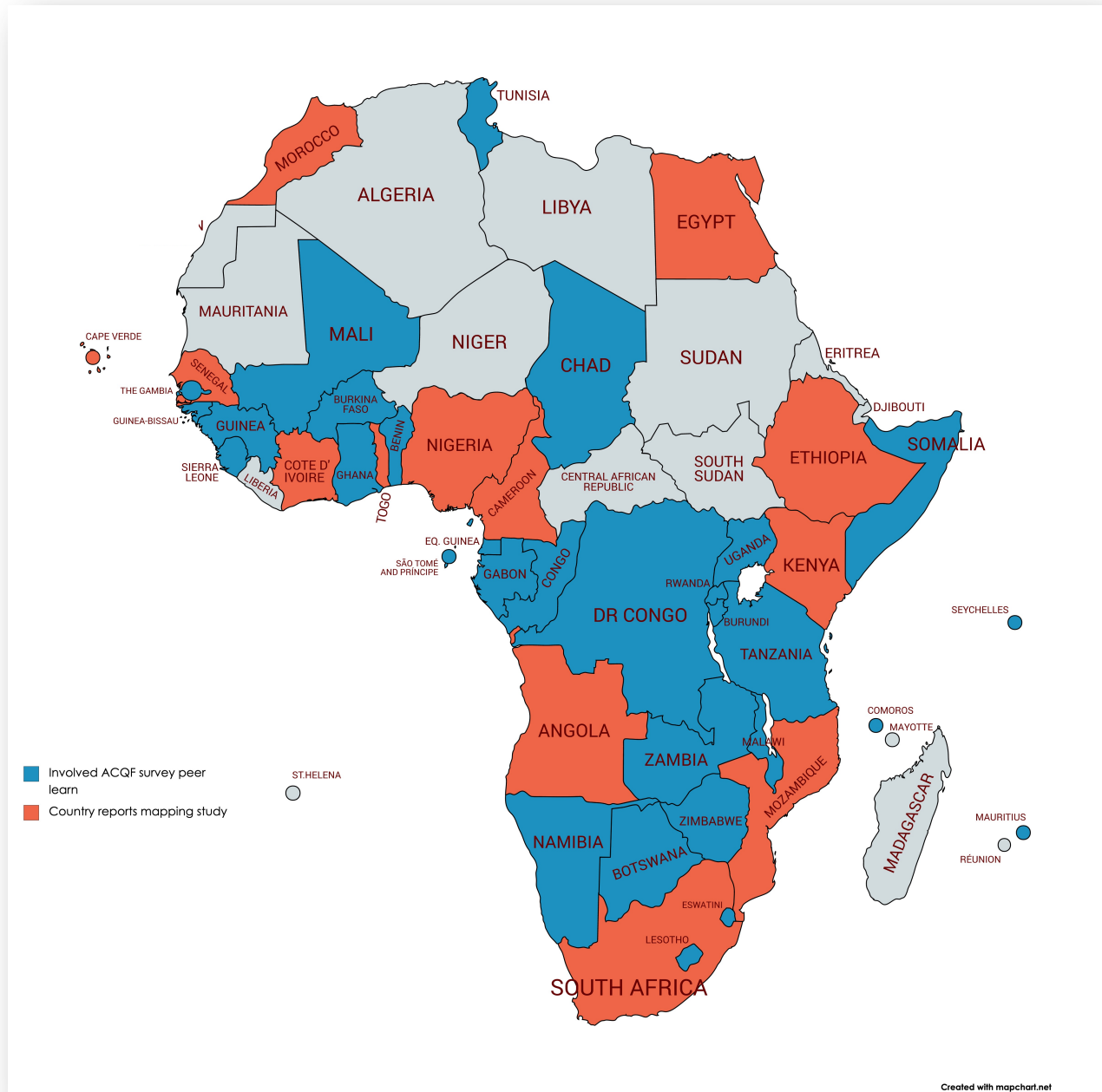
Stage of QF development and implementation (from 41 countries)

Stage of NQF (QF) development and implementation	Countries
No NQF	Chad, Republic of Congo, São Tomé e Príncipe
NQF in early thinking	Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Union of Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Togo
NQF in development and consultation	Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Madagascar, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Somalia
NQF legal act approved, implementation started	Botswana, Eswatini, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Zambia
NQF in advanced implementation and reviewed	Cape Verde, Mauritius, South Africa Given developments in 2021, a number of contries can be included in this group: Botswana, Namibia, Seychelles, Zambia

Overview levels and level descriptors in African NQF-RQFs

Levels

- **10 Levels** (<mark>15</mark> NQFs)
- **8** (5 NQFs)
- **7** (1 NQF)
- **6** (1 SQF)
- **5** (1 SQF)

<u>2 RQF:</u>

- **10** levels (1 RQF)
- **8** (1 RQF)

Domains LD – some examples

- Knowledge, skills, competence
- Knowledge, Skills, Autonomy-responsibility
- Knowledge, Skills, Personal attitudes
- Learning demand - processes
- Areas of knowledge (depth, breadth, complexity); nature of skills; agency & context
- KS, complexity, autonomy-respons, adaptability, communication
- Competence, skills, autonomy
- Degree complexity; reasoning & problem solving; knowledge; Autonomy-responsibility

National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks

Some concepts

Regional Qualifications Frameworks (RQF)

ACQF too is a RQF

MAPPING REPORT

Towards the African Continental Qualifications Framework

African Union

THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP
LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE

Aims of Regional Qualifications Frameworks (RQF)

RQFs, have grown out of communities of countries with an aim 'to facilitate mutual trust in qualifications and promote student and worker mobility; therefore, they are linked to other initiatives related to mutual recognition of qualifications, of goods and of services'.

To develop a common understanding and strengthen transparency of member country qualifications.

Seek commonalities and clarify differences.

Build mutual trust across the community of countries.

Countries that have a regional, economic or social identity, or wish to see one develop, have cooperated in the development of regional qualifications frameworks (RQFs).

Regional Qualifications Framework

- A broad structure of levels of learning outcomes that is agreed by countries in a geographical region.

- A means of enabling one national framework of qualifications to relate to another and, subsequently, for a qualification in one country to be compared to a qualification from another country.

NQF - as a system

- NQF: A policy and instrument for the development and classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims at integrating and coordinating national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.
- Pillars and components of NQFs:
  - Objectives, principles, contribution to reforms and policies (LLL, HRD, TVET, employment, HE)
  - Levels and descriptors
  - Qualifications Map
  - VAE - RPL
  - Qualifications DB / register
  - Quality assurance
  - Contribution to recognition of qualifications
  - Monitoring & evaluation
  - Governance and implementation set-up: public (education, employment) & private sectors
  - Cooperation and comparison with other NQFs (same region and beyond)