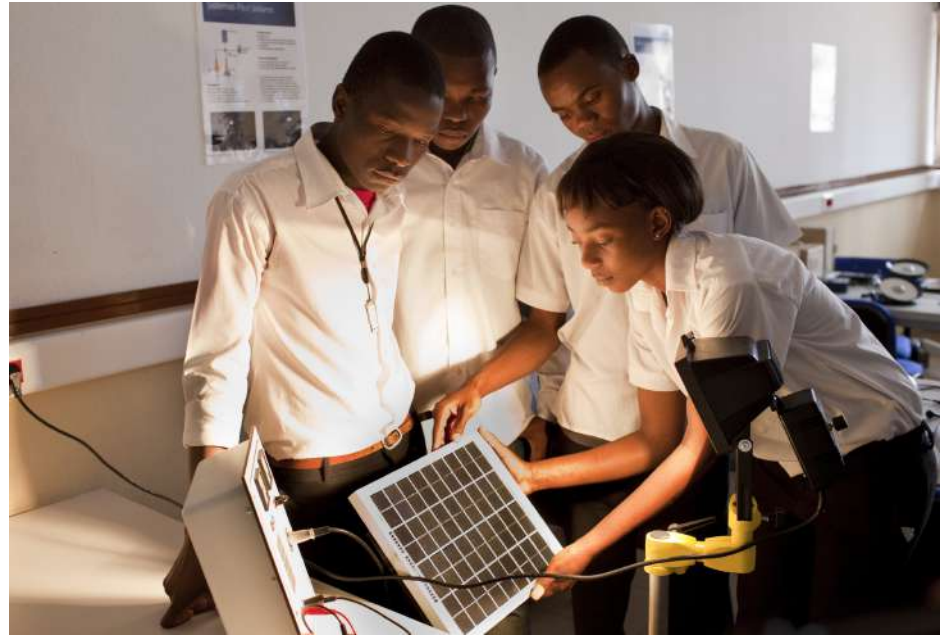


# African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF)

11<sup>th</sup> Peer Learning  
Webinar

Session 1

23/09/2021



# ACQF 11<sup>th</sup> Peer Learning Webinar

## 23 September 2021

We start at 10.00 GMT

- 11.00 RDC, 12.00 South Africa, 13.00 East Africa, 14.00 Mauritius, 12.00 CET

Nous commençons à 10.00 GMT

Vamos começar às 10.00 GMT

# ACQF Peer Learning Webinar 11

## 23 September

- **Welcome**
- We start soon
- Please use **TRANSLATION** – select your
- You can keep your camera on, but sound off, if not speaking
- If you did not give consent to record – please camera off

- **Bienvenu(e)s**
- Début sous peu
- Veuillez utiliser **TRADUCTION** – votre langue préférée
- Vous pouvez garder l'image – mais son éteint si vous ne parlez pas

- **Benvindo(a)s**
- Começamos em breve
- Por favor, use a **TRADUÇÃO** – selecione o seu idioma preferido
- Pode manter a sua imagem; mas o som apagado enquanto não fala

# Context of this webinar

**Webinar: part of the Capacity Development Programme of the project “Developing the ACQF”**

**ACQF development project (09/2019-09/2022)**

- Component of “Skills for Youth Employability Programme” / Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) – Technical cooperation
- Main objective: lay the foundations for the ACQF as a sustainable policy instrument, a reference qualifications framework, working in cooperation and complementarity with regional and national qualifications frameworks, contributing to relevant continental policies
- Main Output: ACQF Policy and Technical Document with Action Plan and a package of ACQF Guidelines (10)
  - Capacity development programme and networking
  - Analysis and evidence
  - Participative approach

# ACQF in the African Union policy context

- Skills and qualifications: at heart of African renaissance.
- Agenda 2063: integrated Africa
- Ten-Year Implementation Plan 2023
- **AU Free movement Protocol (Art 18)**
- **Free Trade: AfCFTA**
- **CESA 16-25**
- Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF) and Addis Convention on Recognition of Qualifications

The ACQF will be:



**INCLUSIVE**

qualifications of all levels  
and sub-systems of education  
and training

**RECEPTIVE TO  
INNOVATION**

from new trends  
and technologies



**OPEN**

to stakeholders' contribution;  
good practice from Africa and  
the world

The ACQF is vital to the  
processes that contribute to  
create an African education  
space:

► Advance the implementation  
of CESA 2016-2025

► Harmonise higher education  
in Africa and implement the

# 11th ACQF PLW

## Focus

- **Thematic** rather than on country or regional NQF experiences and examples of Quality assurance frameworks

## Main purpose of this webinar

- Working towards ACQF Levels and descriptors
- Understanding links Learning outcomes-Level descriptors in different contexts of learning, especially in the functioning of RQF-NQF

# 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  <b>New developments:</b> Angola	CAMES (Regional) ANQA-Sup (Senegal)	RPL (Kenya) AQVN Angola	South Africa Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning outcomes</li> <li>Levels and descriptors RQFs</li> <li>School curriculum</li> </ul>

# **Agenda 11<sup>th</sup> PLW**

**23 September  
2021**





# 3 main sessions

**Learning Outcomes:** some key lessons from Europe. From concepts to application in different contexts of learning, qualifications frameworks

- **Jean Bjornavold, Cedefop**

**Regional Qualifications Frameworks:** Orientation Note and overview.

- **Andrea Bateman**

**ACQF:** steps towards the conceptual-technical design (levels and descriptors)

- **Coleen Jaftha**

# Main topics of the sessions today

## Learning outcomes

- Role and influence at 3 main levels: a) national and EU policies; b) governance / management of institutions; c) pedagogical reform
- 5 main lessons, some tensions, suggestions

## Regional Qualifications Frameworks

- Main insights and views from "Orientation Note on RQFs".
- RQFs in a systemic view
- Dilemmas and wisdom on: levels, descriptors, referencing
- Learnings from RQF experiences globally

# Main topics of the sessions today

## Towards ACQF levels, descriptors

- Links the dots between learning outcomes, level descriptors – in the context and purposes of RQFs / ACQF
- Explores the results from the 1<sup>st</sup> ACQF survey on levels and descriptors
- Sums-up some key questions and challenges for further discussion

# Our speakers

Europe, Australia and Asia-Pacific, Africa

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Jens  
Bjørnåvold  
- Cedefop

**EQF – the key expert;** Learning Outcomes (European Handbook); Validation of non-formal and informal learning (EU Guidelines). Key expert in major research projects, e.g. a) Changing nature and role of VET in Europe and the Future of VET in Europe; b) Comparison of qualifications. Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks

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Andrea  
Bateman

**ASEAN QRF – the key expert** (phases 1, 2, 4, 5); Pacific Qualifications Framework and accompanying Pacific Register of Qualifications; contributed to various reviews of the Australian NQF, including analysis of the most recent review of 2019; co-author of Quality Assurance Guideline TVET qualifications Asia-Pacific; RQF Orientation Note

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Coleen  
Jaftha

**SAQA – 10 years professional experience** at SAQA, Head of International Liaison department, Registration and Recognition; major role in alignment programme of SADCQF; researcher, lecturer; ACQF expert (Guidelines)

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# ACQF Survey on learning outcomes, level descriptors, referencing (7-14/09/21)

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Thank you for the submissions

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Gathered views and information on all questions – processed into the ongoing development of the ACQF conceptual-technical basis


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Africa, Australia, Europe

Cedefop, Unesco

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Africa: Botswana, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Guiné-Bissau, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Seychelles, Togo, Uganda, South Africa. Organisations: ATUPA



# 10 Guidelines and training modules

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

9. Innovation and technology in NQFs / ACQF

10. Qualifications, NQFs, NQS - systemic view

# Website ACQF



Testing and review phase



Next week - online



# Home

## Who we are

The African Continental Qualifications Framework contributes to transparency of qualifications and trust between African qualifications frameworks.

[Find out more](#)

## How does ACQF support your Qualifications Frameworks and Systems?

The ACQF will be the largest of the regional qualifications frameworks (RQFs), as it cooperates with 55 countries and 8 regional economic communities (RECs). ACQF will be the only RQF interacting with two different levels – national and regional qualifications frameworks.

The ACQF will support:

- Comparability, quality and transparency of qualifications and support people's lifelong learning;
- To facilitate recognition of diplomas and certificates, and support mobility (learners, workers, services):



# Latest updates and publications

## Latest updates from ACQF



African Continental  
Qualifications Framework  
Advisory Group very active

Sep 09, 2021

[Read more](#)



10 ACQF Guidelines are in  
development

Sep 09, 2021

[Read more](#)



ACQF Peer Learning  
Webinars continue in 2021

Sep 09, 2021

[Read more](#)



African Qualifications  
Verification Network  
(AQVN) activates  
knowledge-sharing

Sep 09, 2021

[Read more](#)

## Latest Publications



Kenya country  
report - ACQF  
Mapping

Sep 13, 2021



Abordagem estudo  
de cartografia sobre  
currículo escolar em  
Africa (CESA  
Cluster - ACA) - PT

Sep 13, 2021



Aperçu sur  
l'enquête sur les  
programmes  
scolaires (CESA  
Cluster - ACA) (FR)

Sep 13, 2021



Overview of African  
School Curriculum  
Mapping (CESA  
Cluster - ACA) (EN)

Sep 13, 2021



ACQF étude de  
faisabilité, 06/2021

Sep 13, 2021



More reference  
information on ACQF  
development project

# ACQF development - milestones

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2019

- Launch workshop and 1st meeting of ACQF Advisory Group (09/2019)
- ACQF Mapping study – continental survey

2020

- ACQF mapping study – analysis, consultation, publication
- Capacity development programme – 7 Peer Learning Webinars, ACQF network
- Start of reflection on ACQF scenarios

2021

- 3 meetings of ACQF Advisory Group (April, July, December)
- ACQF scenarios and Feasibility analysis presented to ACQF AG
- Start development ACQF Policy and technical document
- Start development of ACQF governance based on Network of NQF agencies
- 10 Guidelines and Training Modules ACQF
- ACQF Website
- Capacity development programme: 5 Peer Learning Webinars; start of Support to Countries' NQF; conference; series of thematic briefs; development of training modules

2022:

- Test selected Guidelines and finetune them
- Consultation on ACQF policy and technical document and completion
- Capacity development programme: launch E-Learning Platform; complete Support to countries; carry out ACQF Training Programme; create pool of trained experts.



# Building the ACQF (2020-2022)

**Output 1:** Scenarios and options for the ACQF

Feasibility analysis

**Output 2:** ACQF policy and technical document and action plan

Objectives and principles, architecture, functioning and governance of ACQF

**Output 3:** ACQF Capacity development programme & networking

## **Evidence**

ACQF Mapping Study

## **Technical foundations**

ACQF Guidelines; ACQF website;  
other analyses (AfCFTA-ACQF,  
School curriculum survey)

# Purposes of ACQF



## Enhance

Enhance comparability, quality and transparency qualifications of all types and levels, support people's lifelong learning outcomes.

## Facilitate

Facilitate validation of learning, recognition of diplomas and certificates and mobility of learners and workers

## Cooperate

Work in cooperation and complementarity with national and regional qualifications frameworks, and support African continental integration and creation of African Education common space

## Promote

Promote cooperation and referencing between qualifications frameworks (national, regional) in Africa and worldwide

# Principles and functions ACQF



## Principles

- Inclusive: all levels qualifications, types of learning
- Innovation-ready
- Open: users', stakeholders' needs; good practice others

## Functions

- Referencing Qualifications Framework – NQF / NQS – ACQF
- Hub, catalyst, support for development of NQFs and their instruments
- Overarching framework against which NQF and RQF / LD can be calibrated, if needed / relevant
- Reference for comparison with other international frameworks

# 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://www.nepad.org/skillsportalfor youth/publication/african-continental-qualifications-framework-acqf-mapping-study>

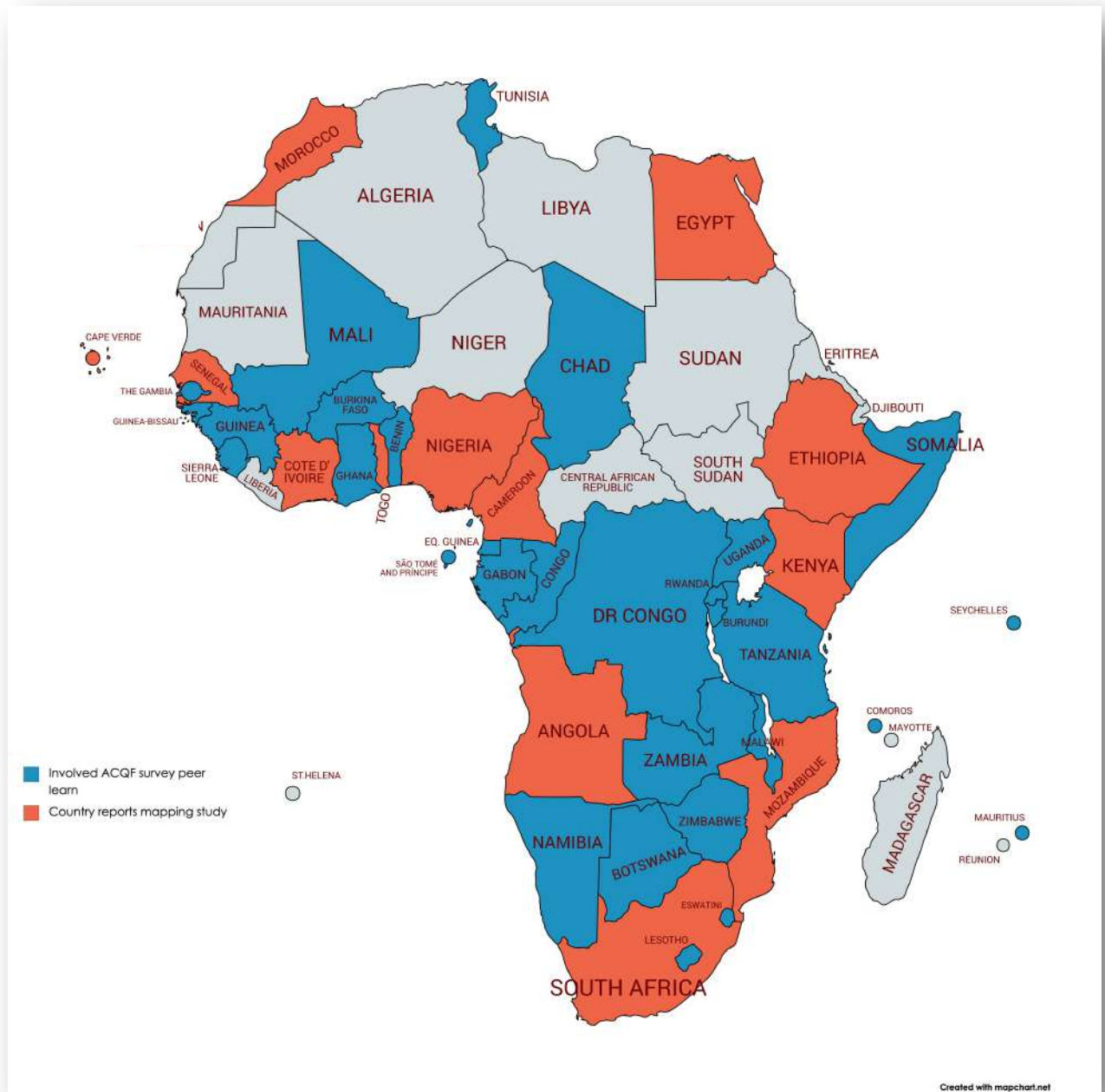
## Countries and RECs – peer learning, updates, meetings:

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



# Mapping study: outputs

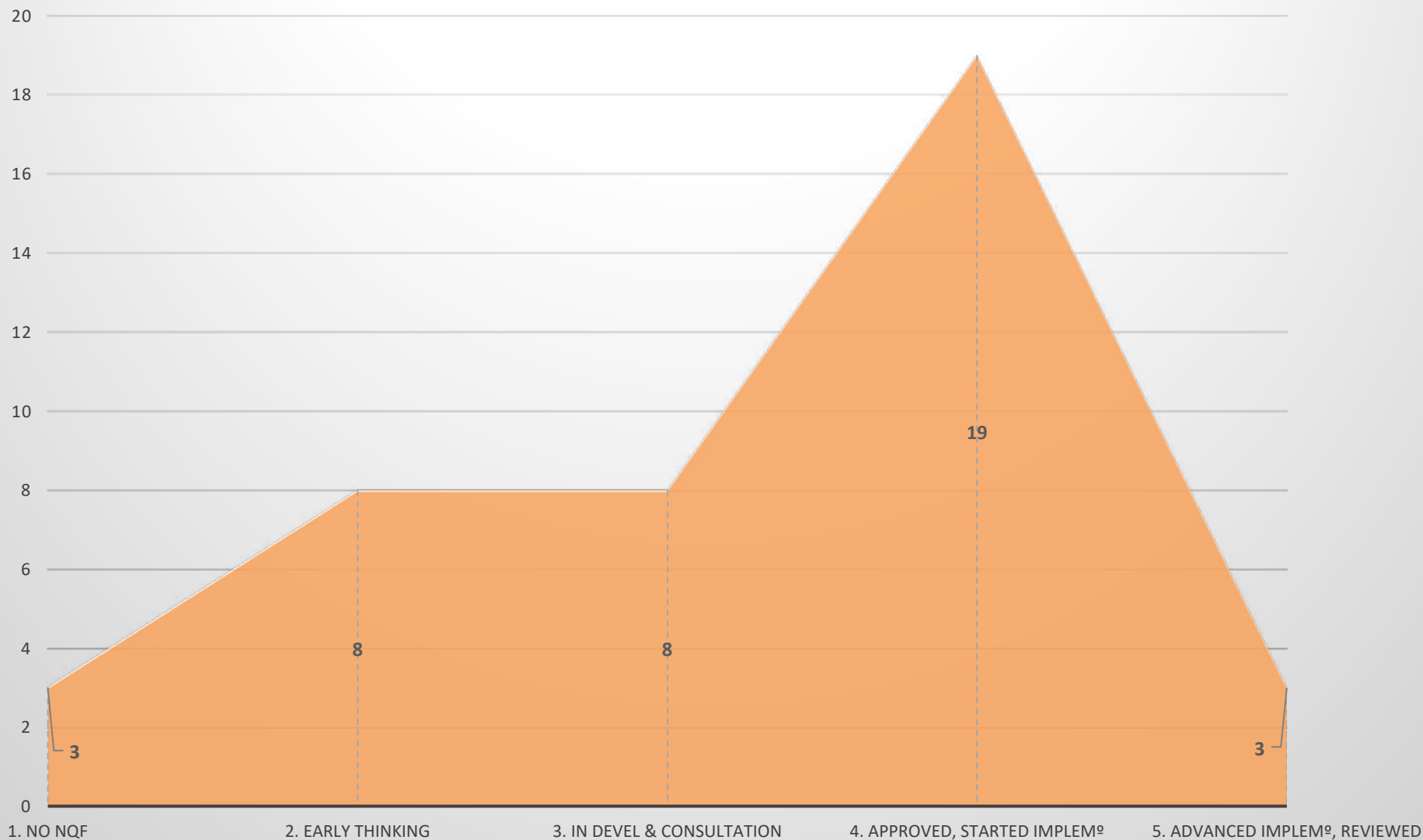
- 13 country reports
- 3 REC reports
- Comprehensive report
- Synthesis report
- Analysis LD
- Analysis Qualif
- Inventory NQFs





# NQFs in Africa – stage of development and implementation (from 41 countries)

Qualifications Frameworks, Africa - stage of development implementation (01/2021; total = 41 countries)



# Overview levels and level descriptors in African NQF-RQFs

## Levels

- **10** (12 NQFs)
- **8** (6 NQFs)
- **7** (1 NQF)
- **6** (1 SQF)
- **5** (1 SQF)

### 2 RQF:

- **10** (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

# 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

# ACQF: main pillars

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A Network of NQF agencies (authorities, councils) working together with Quality Assurance and Recognition agencies and institutes to drive and implement the ACQF, and with supporting / policy guidance role of AUC.

Referencing between NQFs / NQS and ACQF

ACQF levels on qualifications and databases – upon successful referencing NQF-ACQF

Support countries developing and strengthening their NQFs – with quality-assured qualifications. The ACQF own level structure and descriptors can inspire countries. Countries can use the ACQF Guidelines for their own home NQF.

A continental database (DB) of qualifications – all interested countries can connect to it; countries can directly link their qualifications to this DB

A sustainable capacity development basis to create knowledge, mutual learning and sustainable solutions on qualifications and skills

Each  
Guideline  
has 2  
sides

For use at  
NATIONAL  
(regional) level

For ACQF's use

# 1 Guideline =

1. Users: countries / regional authorities, QF-working groups, stakeholders, AUC, NQF Network
2. The topic – what is it? State-of-art, knowledge base, principles. Conceptual+theoretical foundations, applications in the Qualifications - QF domain, literature, cases
3. How the given theme / policy area relates to / applies in ACQF context
4. Recommendations on application
5. Tools (e.g. templates, self-assessment questions, check-lists...)

## Synthesis Guideline

**2-3 pages**

- Concept(s)
- Users
- Recommendations related with ACQF
- Links with other ACQF Guidelines

## Technical Guideline

**15-30 pages + annexes**

- Comprehensive presentation of the topic
- Recommendations on application in ACQF context
- Links with other ACQF Guidelines
- Literature
- Annexes

## Training Module

Purpose, users

LO

What

Why

How

Cases

(Self)-assessment

Sources

# Guidelines: complementary formats

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- **A) Synthesis guideline:** main objectives, definition(s), applications, mechanisms and tools, main requirements for alignment, referencing to the ACQF, linkage to existing relevant AU policies and tools (PAQAF, ASG-QA, CESA 16–25) – approximately 2–3 pages;
- **B ) Technical guidelines:** 15–30 pages (additionally: annexures, sources, technical instructions, examples), depending on the subject or policy area. Complements the synthesis guideline.
  - Purpose: deepen, clarify, and provide technical orientation for national implementing bodies and stakeholders, especially the lead institutions managing the NQF and interacting with the (future) ACQF implementation structure (unit)
  - The technical guidelines combine features of a) technical document and b) short application handbook.

# Guidelines 1, 2

Guideline	Theme and broad overview of topics, issues and contextualisation
<b><u>Guideline 1</u></b> Learning outcomes	<p>Learning outcomes approach</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. theoretical, conceptual and technical underpinnings</li><li>2. application in different contexts, such as level descriptors, qualifications standards, qualifications documents, curriculum, training documents, assessment</li><li>3. Issues specific to different subsectors of education and training: higher education, school education, vocational education and training</li><li>4. guiding principles to define and describe learning outcomes</li><li>5. application in the context of the ACQF and NQFs</li></ol>
<b><u>Guideline 2</u></b> ACQF Levels and level descriptors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. theoretical, conceptual and technical underpinnings</li><li>2. domains and sub-domains; horizontal and vertical logic</li><li>3. making level descriptors user-friendly: understanding the applications of level descriptors for qualifications standards, curriculum and assessment; use of level descriptions in different contexts</li><li>4. guiding principles to define and write level descriptors. Issues, for example, understanding competence; integrative/domain-specific level descriptors</li><li>5. ACQF level descriptors: comprehensive draft proposal of descriptors for all levels and domains (sub-domains)</li><li>6. proposal for testing ACQF level descriptors and reviewing and fine-tuning based on feedback from test</li></ol>



# Guidelines 3, 8

Guideline	Theme and broad overview of topics, issues and contextualisation
<p><b><u>Guideline 3</u></b></p> <p>Criteria and procedures for referencing /alignment of NQFs (or RQFs) to ACQF</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. conceptual and technical underpinnings; rationale, purposes of referencing/alignment; benefits for the involved parties (national, regional, continental). Contribution to transparency, comparability, common concepts and trust, while respecting diversity of education and training systems across Africa. Contribution to development, implementation and consolidation of NQFs</li> <li>2. criteria, procedures, process, governance, efficiency and quality assurance of alignment and referencing to ACQF. Transparency and robustness of referencing/alignment process and outcomes. Publication of information on results of referencing/alignment on ACQF website</li> <li>3. suggestion on use of digital tools to ease and streamline referencing/alignment</li> <li>4. proposal on the use of ACQF levels on qualifications documents, qualifications databases of NQFs upon successful referencing/alignment to ACQF</li> </ol>
<p><b><u>Guideline 8</u></b></p> <p>Communication</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purposes, benefits and uses of communication in the context of NQFs and the ACQF. Contribution to buy-in, performance and impact</li> <li>2. Target groups, end-users: policymaking, implementation institutions, education and training institutions, NQF authorities</li> <li>3. Examples, sources (from African and international literature and experiences)</li> <li>4. Proposal for ACQF communication plan, with main objectives, instruments, outreach modalities with some target-group differentiation, interactions continental-regional-national levels</li> </ol>

# Guideline 4

## Guideline 4 Validation of learning

1. Credit accumulation and transfer system(s)
2. Validation/RPL; non-formal and informal learning
3. Recognition of qualifications: brief chapter, with focus on the text and application of the Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States 2014 ([Addis Recognition Convention](#))

Conceptual and technical underpinnings, main features and application mechanisms

Proposal for application of credit accumulation and transfer system in the context of NQFs and ACQF

Proposal for application of RPL (VAE) in the context of NQFs and ACQF

Proposal on systematic exchange of information between ACQF, NQFs and qualifications recognition structures (agencies, departments) (at national level) to ease and streamline recognition processes and improve efficiency of outcomes

Examples, sources (from African and international literature and experiences)

# Guideline 6

## **Guideline 6**

### Registration / registers of qualifications

Conceptual and technical underpinnings, main features and application mechanisms

Approaches, requirements (classifications, others)

Proposal for technical design and main specifications for ACQF register/database of qualifications of various types (formal education and training, international-sectoral qualifications, new types of credentials, qualifications of the context of non-formal learning). Elements of data fields for electronic publication of qualifications. Use of ACQF levels in qualifications registers and databases (link with Guideline 3)

Examples, sources (from African and international literature and experiences)

# Components Capacity Development Programme (CDP)

## Combination of modalities for different needs (2021)



# 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)

# 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.

## Aims of Regional Qualifications Frameworks (RQF)

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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'.

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

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Seek commonalities and clarify differences.

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Build mutual trust across the community of countries.

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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).

# Referencing NQFs to a Regional QF (example)

