



# **South African NQF: Features, Achievements, Future**

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*South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)*

**Presentation to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Training Week  
African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF)**

**8 September 2022**

**Session 25**





**Inequality**



**Unemployment**



**Poverty**





**POPULATION**

**60,6 Million**

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**YOUNG BLACK PEOPLE**

**51% below  
21 yrs**

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**LIFE EXPECTANCY**

**62 years**

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**PERCENTAGE BELOW NATIONAL  
POVERTY LINE**

**55,5%**

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**UNEMPLOYMENT**

**35% - 42%**

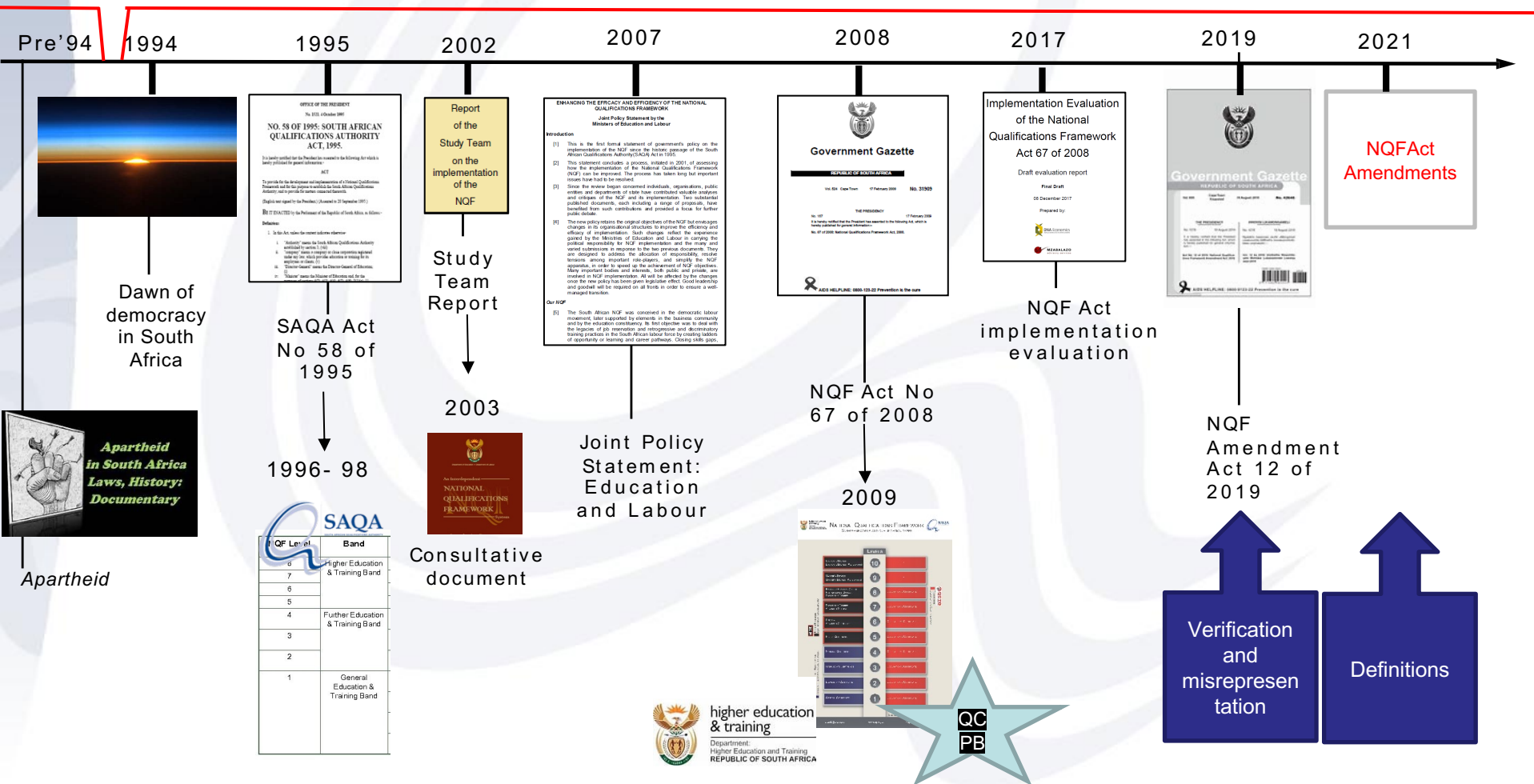
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**NOT IN EMPLOYMENT,  
EDUCATION, TRAINING 15-24 yrs**

**3,6 Million (35%)**



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# Snapshot of legislative evolution of the NQF



# SOUTH AFRICAN NQF

*The NQF is a comprehensive system approved by the Minister for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality assured national qualifications.*

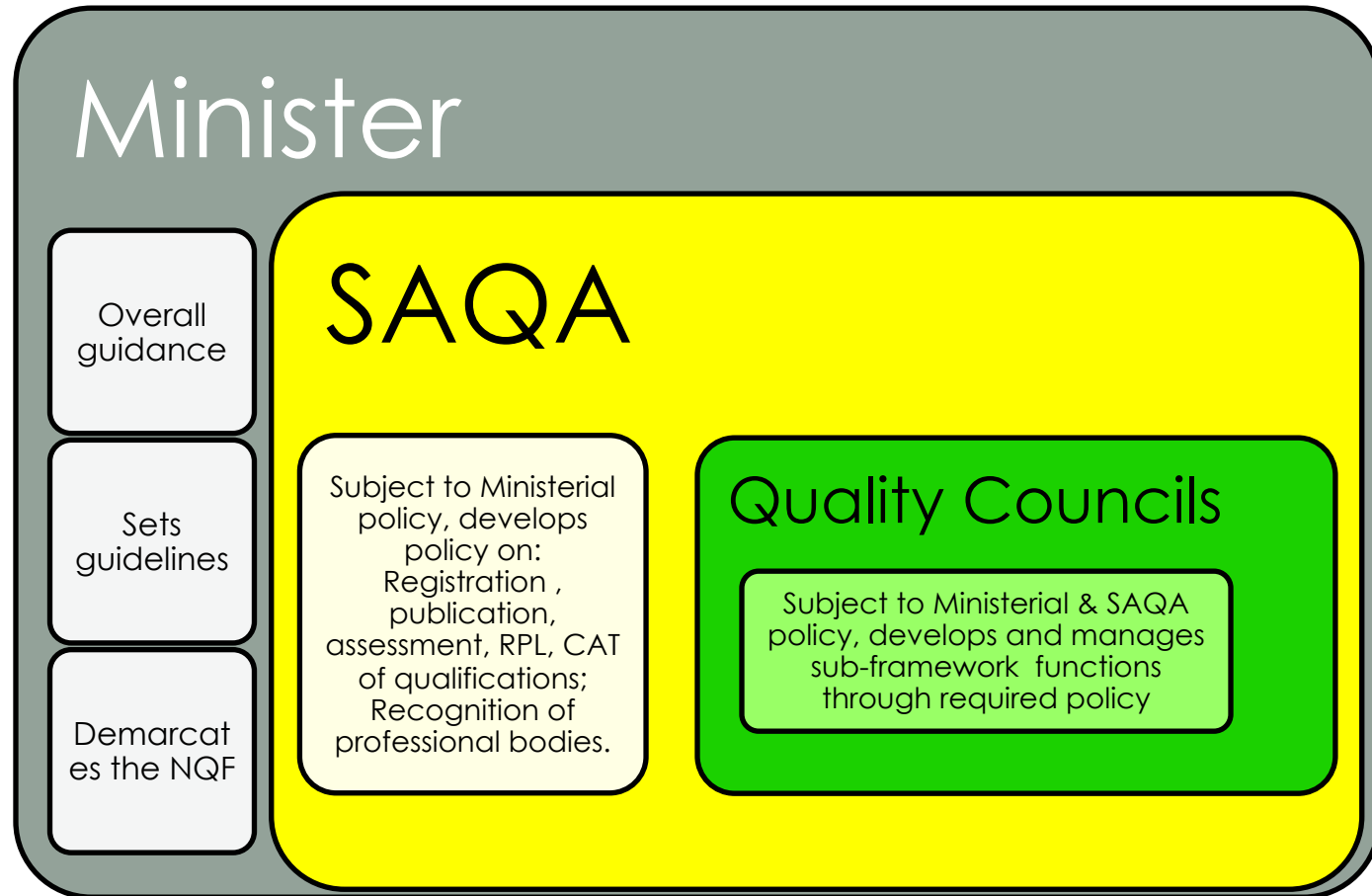
		NQF LEVELS	
<b>HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK</b> 	DOCTORAL DEGREE DOCTORAL DEGREE (PROFESSIONAL)	10	-
	MASTER'S DEGREE MASTER'S DEGREE (PROFESSIONAL)	9	-
	BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA BACHELOR'S DEGREE	8	SPECIALISED OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA
	BACHELOR'S DEGREE ADVANCED DIPLOMA	7	ADVANCED OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA
	DIPLOMA ADVANCED CERTIFICATE	6	OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA
<b>GENERAL FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK</b> 	HIGHER CERTIFICATE	5	HIGHER OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE
	NATIONAL CERTIFICATE	4	NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE
	INTERMEDIATE CERTIFICATE	3	INTERMEDIATE OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE
	ELEMENTARY CERTIFICATE	2	ELEMENTARY OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE
	GENERAL CERTIFICATE	1	GENERAL OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE



OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK



# Policy levels in the NQF environment



# Key lessons

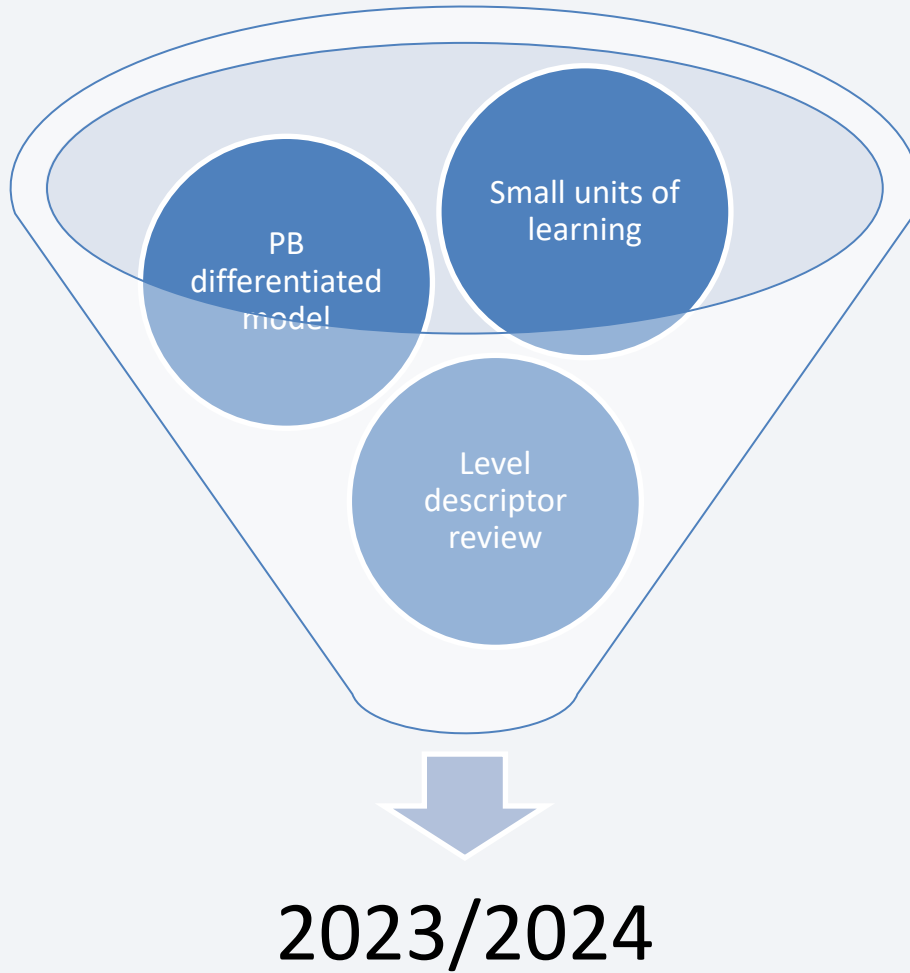


# Key Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing QFs

- NQFs need to take context into account
- NQFs are contested and negotiated – robust consultation and strong partnerships are required to ensure policy coherence and buy in
- Better balance required between institutional autonomy and national policies (e.g. RPL some entities innovate, others do not implement: institutional culture)
- While instruments and approaches are transferable across countries, policies and systems are not because notions of education/training and learning outcomes are culturally and socially embedded
- Principles of inclusiveness, access and progression/ mobility are crucial factors in justifying NQFs
- Implementation of NQFs is a multi-year process informed by continuous improvement



# Pipeline



**Automation**





- 100% complete record of learning on NQF MIS
- Interoperability e.g. PSET Cloud
- Enhanced continental harmonisation for African graduate mobility

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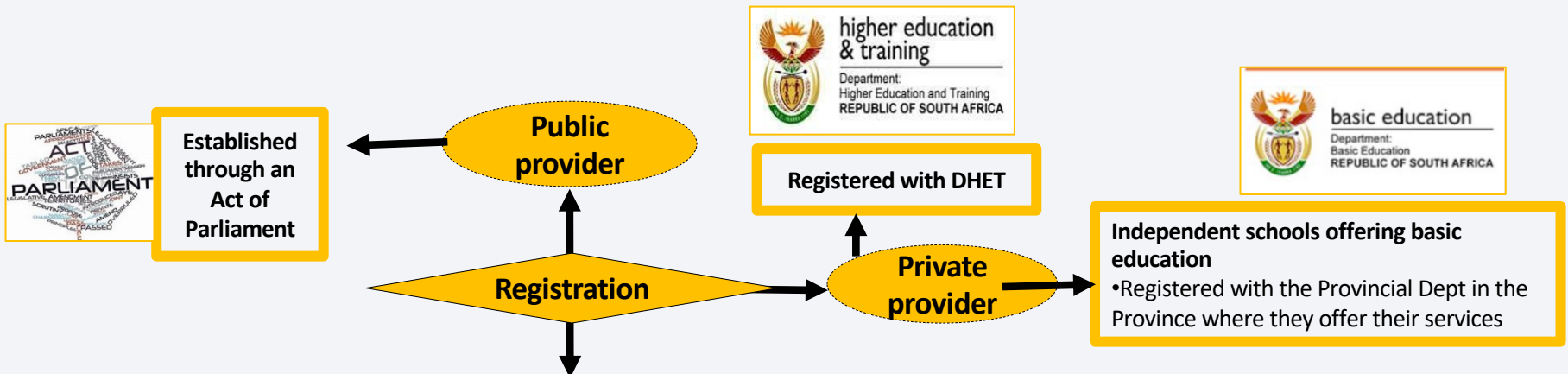
# **Registering Qualifications and Professional bodies on the qualifications framework**

**Mr Japie Nel, Snr Manager Registration and Recognition**

*South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)*

**Presentation to the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) on its Study Visit to SAQA, 8 September 2022**





**Established/ registered Providers of Education and Training in South Africa offering:**

**CHE**

**HEQSF qualifications**

- Providers develop their own qualifications, consult relevant stakeholders, and then seek **CHE accreditation for the programme.**
- CHE recommends registration of the qualification to SAQA.
- After registration of the qualification by SAQA, the provider may market and offer it.



**QCTO**  
Quality Council for Trades & Occupations

**QQSF qualifications**

- The QCTO establishes a Qualifications Development Committee, consisting of representatives for the sector, which develops the qualification.
- QCTO recommends registration of the qualification to SAQA.
- After registration of the qualification by SAQA, providers apply for **QCTO accreditation** to offer it.



**UMALUSI**

**GFETQSF qualifications**

- Qualifications are developed by a committee established by Umalusi.
- Umalusi recommends registration of the qualification to SAQA.
- After registration of the qualification by SAQA:
- Public institutions may offer it;
- Private institutions must apply for **Umalusi accreditation** to offer it.

**All qualifications must be registered on the NQF**

**TRUST**



**Policy and Criteria for the  
Registration of Qualifications  
and Part-qualifications on  
the National Qualifications  
Framework  
(As amended, 2020)**



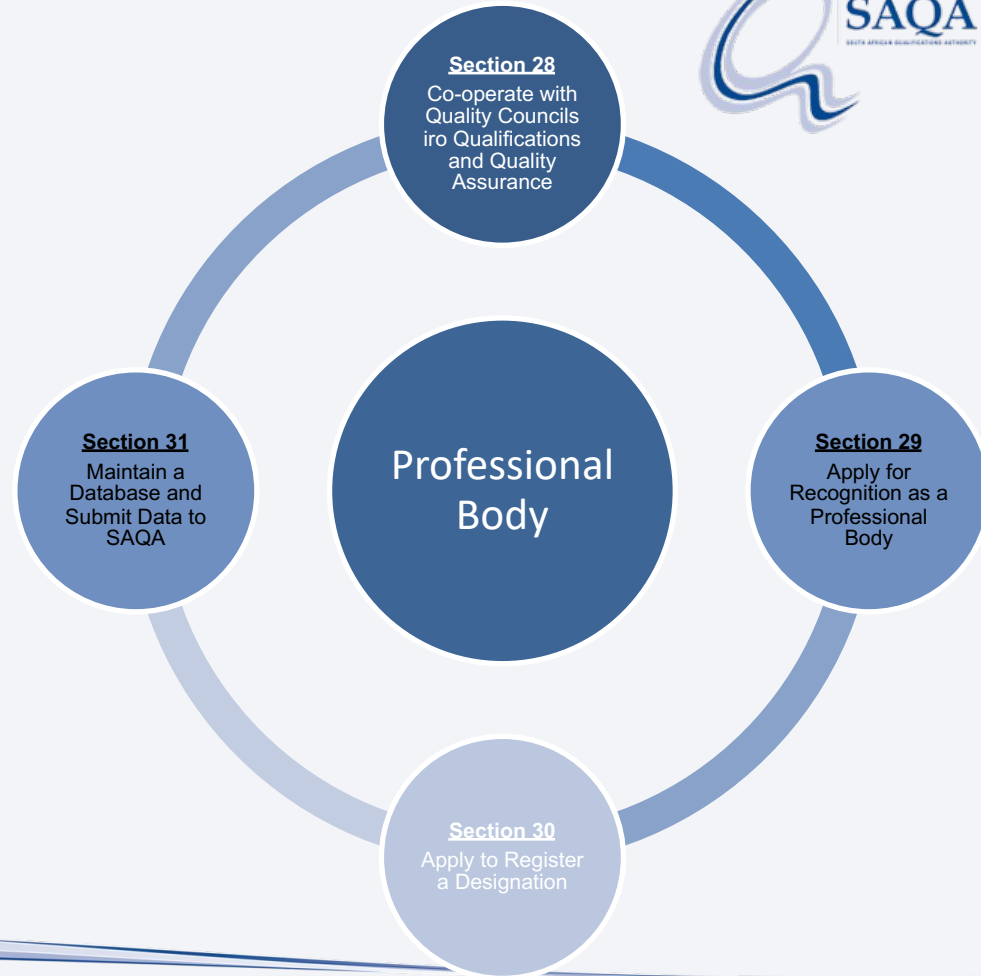
# Integrated, transparent, quality-assured, ten-level, learning outcomes-based South African NQF for registered qualifications

## NQF Amendment Act 2019: Strengthened NQF system:

- Any changes to the Sub-Framework, Quality Councils “in consultation with” SAQA
- Definition of authentic qualification:
  1. *Provider / programme accredited;*
  2. *Qualification registered on NQF;*
  3. *Authentic qualification holder*



Policy and criteria for the recognition of professional bodies and the registration of professional designations







**Statutory bodies** are established as a result of an Act of Parliament and govern the practice of specific occupations in South Africa. Anyone who is in a profession that is governed by a statutory body must be registered with the relevant South African professional body or council to practice their occupation in South Africa.



**Non-statutory bodies** are considered 'voluntary', as professionals are not required to be registered with the professional body in order to practice their profession. **Non-statutory body is not** through an Act of Parliament, but in response to a need identified by a collective of practitioners. No law compels anyone to be a member of a non-statutory body and recognition does not confer statutory status.

Both the statutory and non-statutory bodies must meet the criteria for recognition as a professional body as stipulated in the Policy and Criteria for the Recognition of a Professional Body and the Registration of a Professional Designation for the Purpose of the NQF.

No	Qualification	Designation
1	Awarded by an educational institution	Awarded by a professional body
2	Cannot be revoked	Can be revoked
3	No need to maintain	Must be maintained through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPD</li> <li>• Code of ethics</li> <li>• Membership fees</li> </ul>
4	Academic discipline is the focus	Profession is the focus
5	'Owned' by the individual	'Owned' by the profession
6	Does not necessarily lead to a profession	Qualification is a prerequisite
7	Linked to an NQF level	Not linked to an NQF Level

# The Case of Professional Designations – Lifelong Learning

Section 30 of the NQF Act, 67 of 2008 states that a recognized professional body must apply to SAQA to register a professional designation.

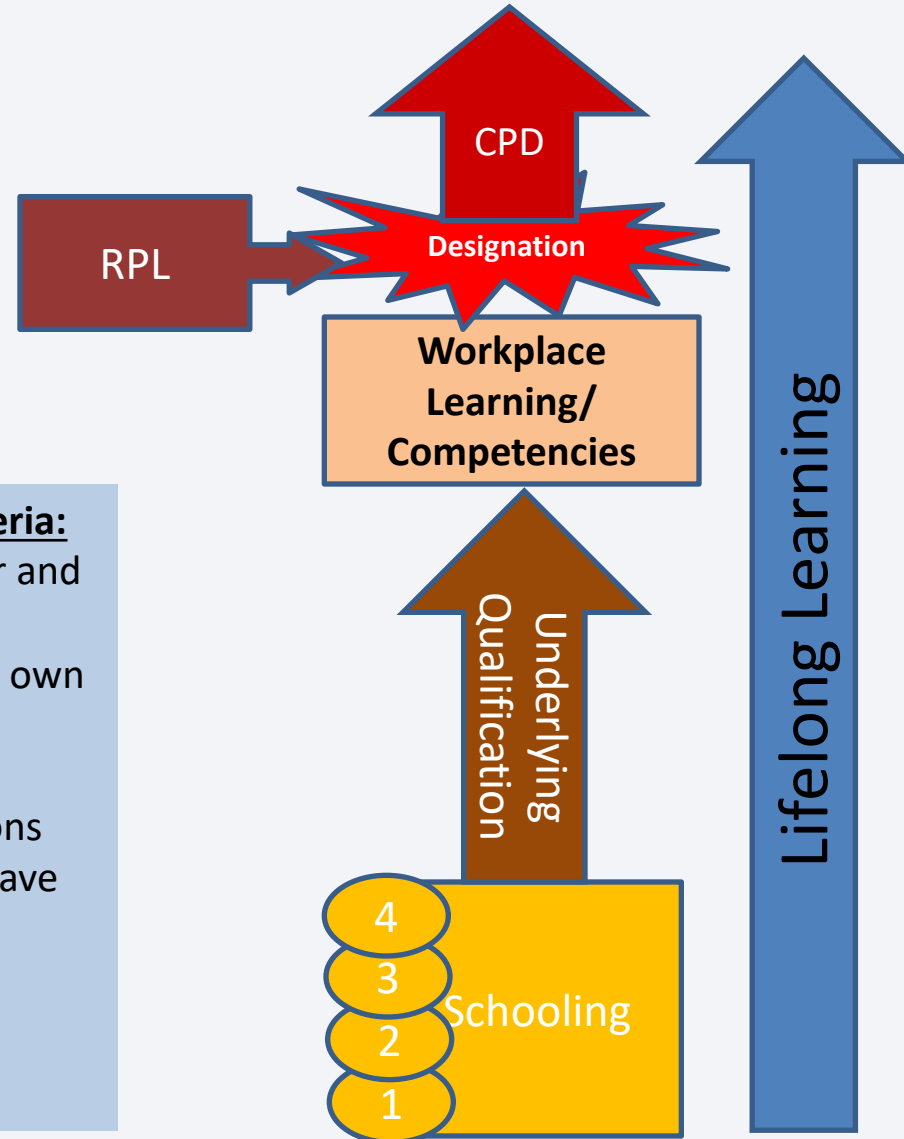
**“Professional designation”** means a title or status conferred by a professional body in recognition of a person’s expertise and/or right to practice in an occupational field

**PB must have policy and criteria:**

- to develop, award, monitor and revoke its professional designations in terms of its own rules, legislation and/or international conventions;
- on RPL to award designations for members who do not have the required underlying qualifications
- on CPD



Policy and Criteria for  
Recognising a Professional  
Body and Registering a  
Professional Designation for  
the Purposes of the National  
Qualifications Framework  
Act, Act 67 of 2008  
(As amended, 2020)





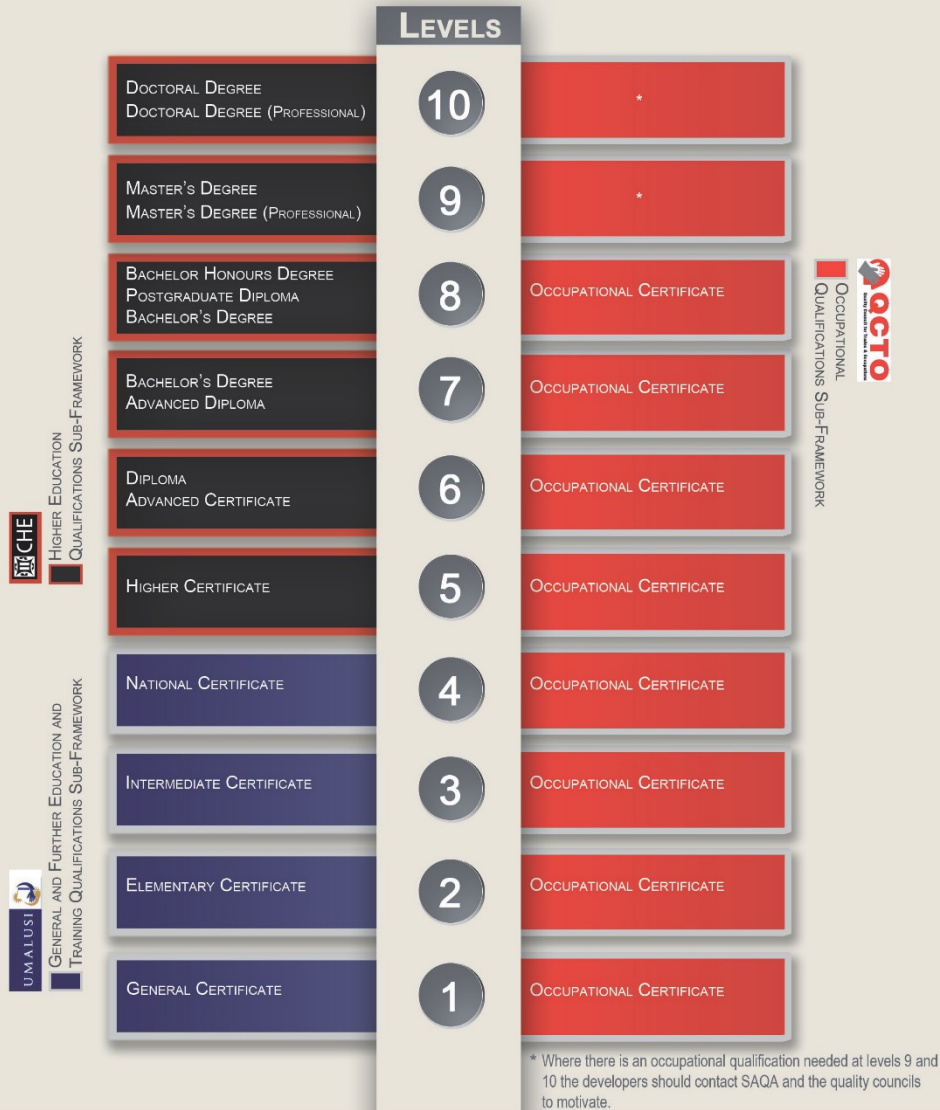
## **Registers of Qualifications:**

A focus on the South African National Qualifications Framework Management Information System (NQFMIS)

**Ms Omotola Akindolani, Manager and Snr  
Researcher**

*South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)*

**Presentation to the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) on its  
Study Visit to SAQA, 8 September 2022**



## With regards to information matters

- **The three Quality Councils (QCs) must:**
  - Maintain a database of learner achievements and related matters for the purposes of the NQF Act
  - Submit such data in a formatted determined in consultation with the SAQA for recording on the NQF MIS
- **SAQA-recognised Professional Bodies must (in consultation with SAQA) :**
  - Maintain a database for the purposes of the NQF Act
  - Submit such data in a formatted determined in consultation with the SAQA for recording on the NQF MIS

# Mandate

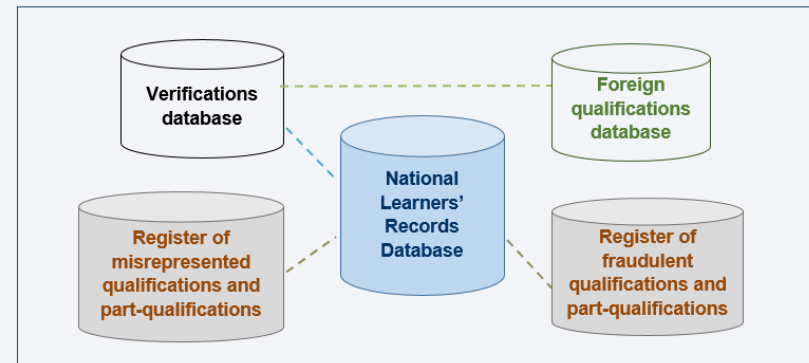
**The NQF Act of 2008: SAQA must** with respect to records of education and training, **maintain a National Learners' Records Database** which forms part of the overall **Management Information System (MIS)** comprising registers of:

- i. National qualifications and part-qualifications
- ii. Learner achievements
- iii. Details of the institution that awarded the qualification or part-qualification
- iv. Recognised professional bodies [professional designations]
- v. Associated information relating to registration, verification and accreditation;

AND in terms of the 2019 Amendment to the Act:

- (i) Establish and maintain a **register of misrepresented qualifications or part-qualifications**
- (ii) Establish and maintain a **register of fraudulent qualifications or part-qualifications**

# The NQF MIS (including the NLRD)



- **NQF MIS:**
  - An integrated information system which facilitates the management of NQF data
  - Contains all quality assured qualifications, people who achieve them, accredited providers, professional bodies
  - It is linked to everything that is the essence of how the NQF is described in the NQF Act (67 of 2008)
- **The NLRD:**
  - Developed in 1999 to enable SAQA be *'the only source of complete data on qualifications, providers, assessors and learners in South Africa'*
  - Serves as a repository for the collection and management of NQF-related achievement data
  - Guided by strict data loading requirements/standards and data loading regulations.
  - Widely considered the most comprehensive register of national learner achievements, and largest database of achievements on the continent

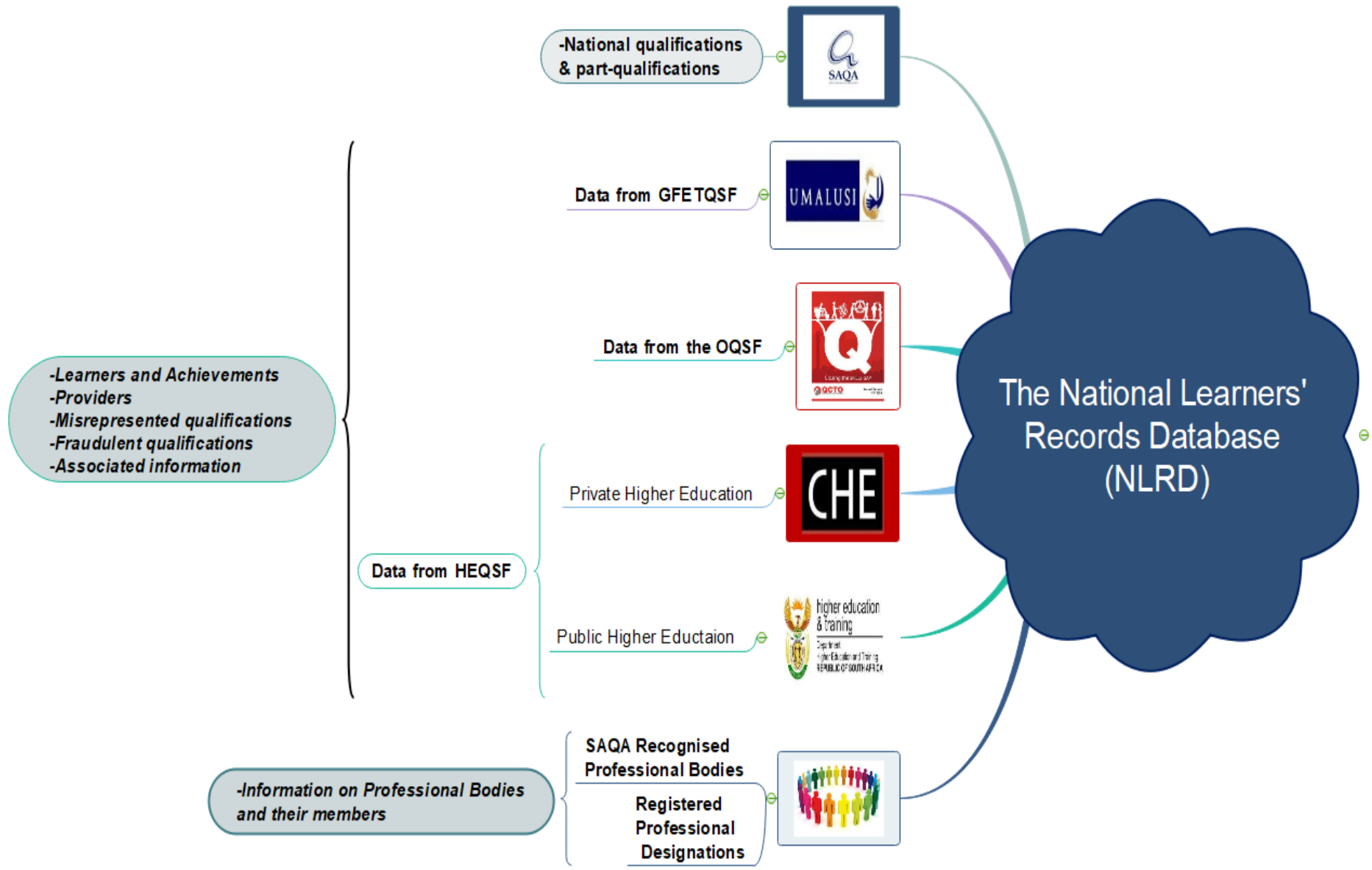
# The NQF MIS: Purpose

The information in the NQF MIS is used to:

- Provide information and progress made towards implementing the NQF
- Provide analysis at macro policy level
  - Provide insightful reports to policy makers, policy implementers, policy beneficiaries and other stakeholders
  - Inform research and answer NQF-related queries
- Provide various reporting and analysis capabilities
- Verify information for work and/or study

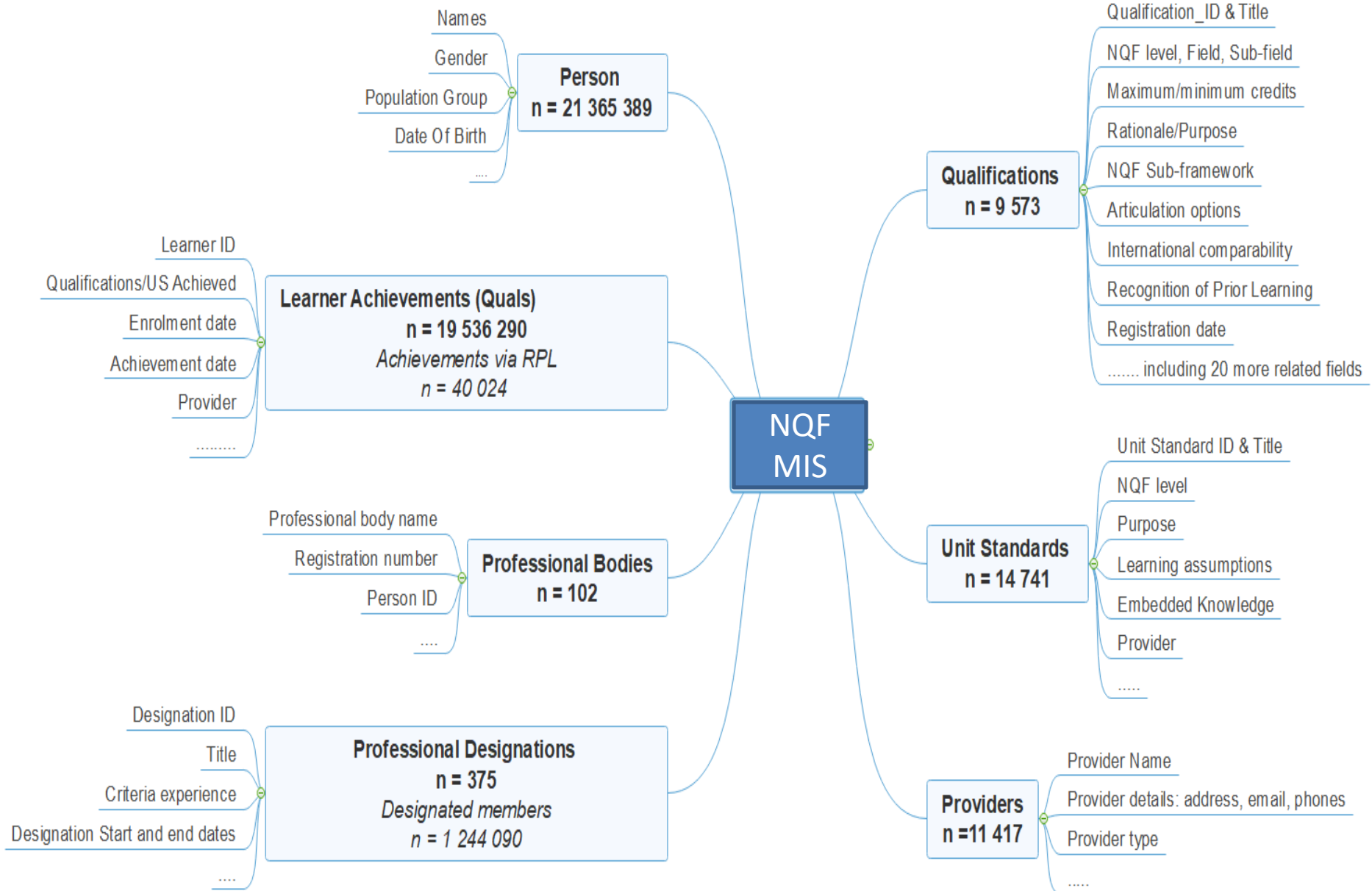


# The NQF MIS: Data Sources



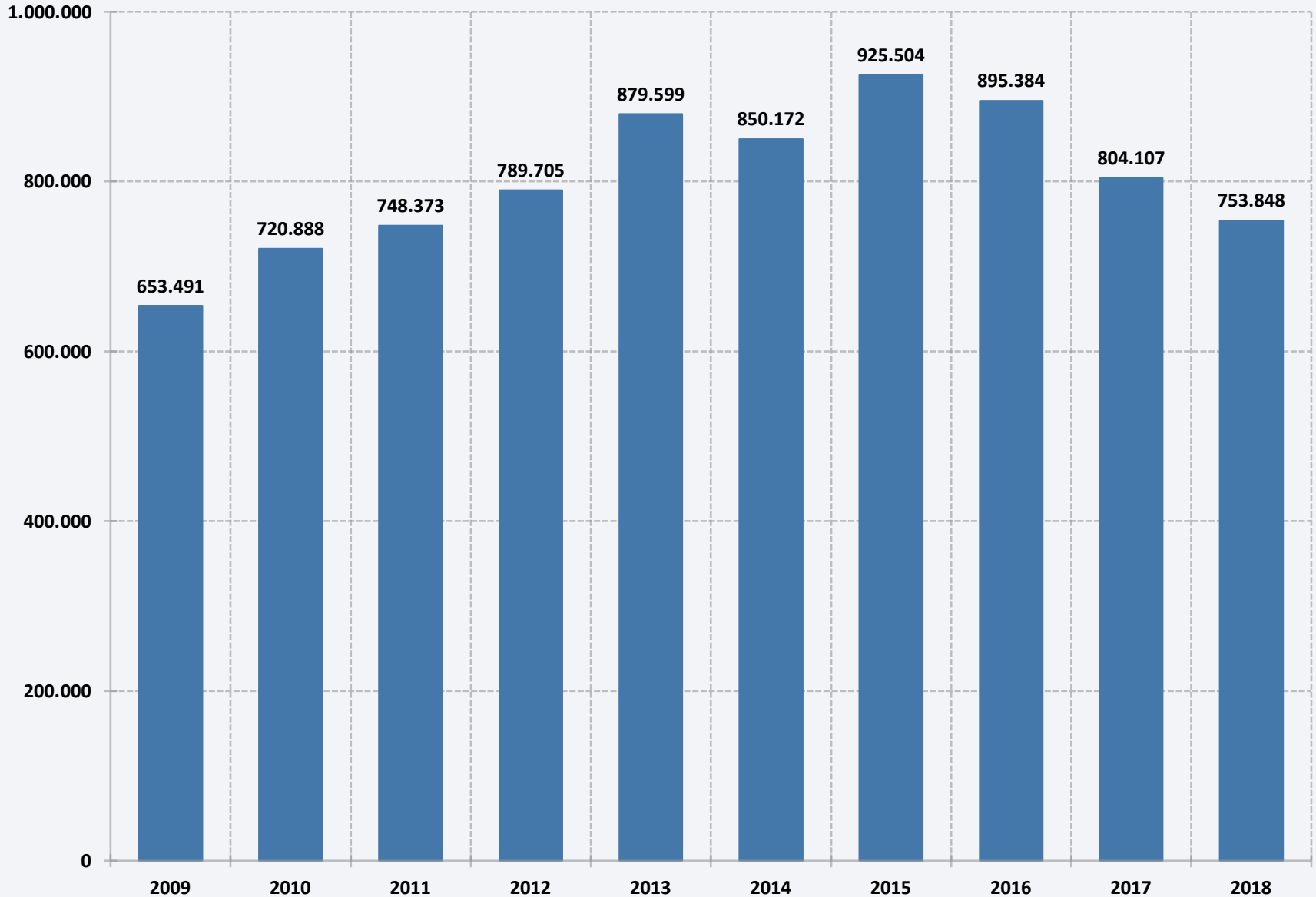
# The NQF MIS: Snapshot of Content

As at 30 June 2022



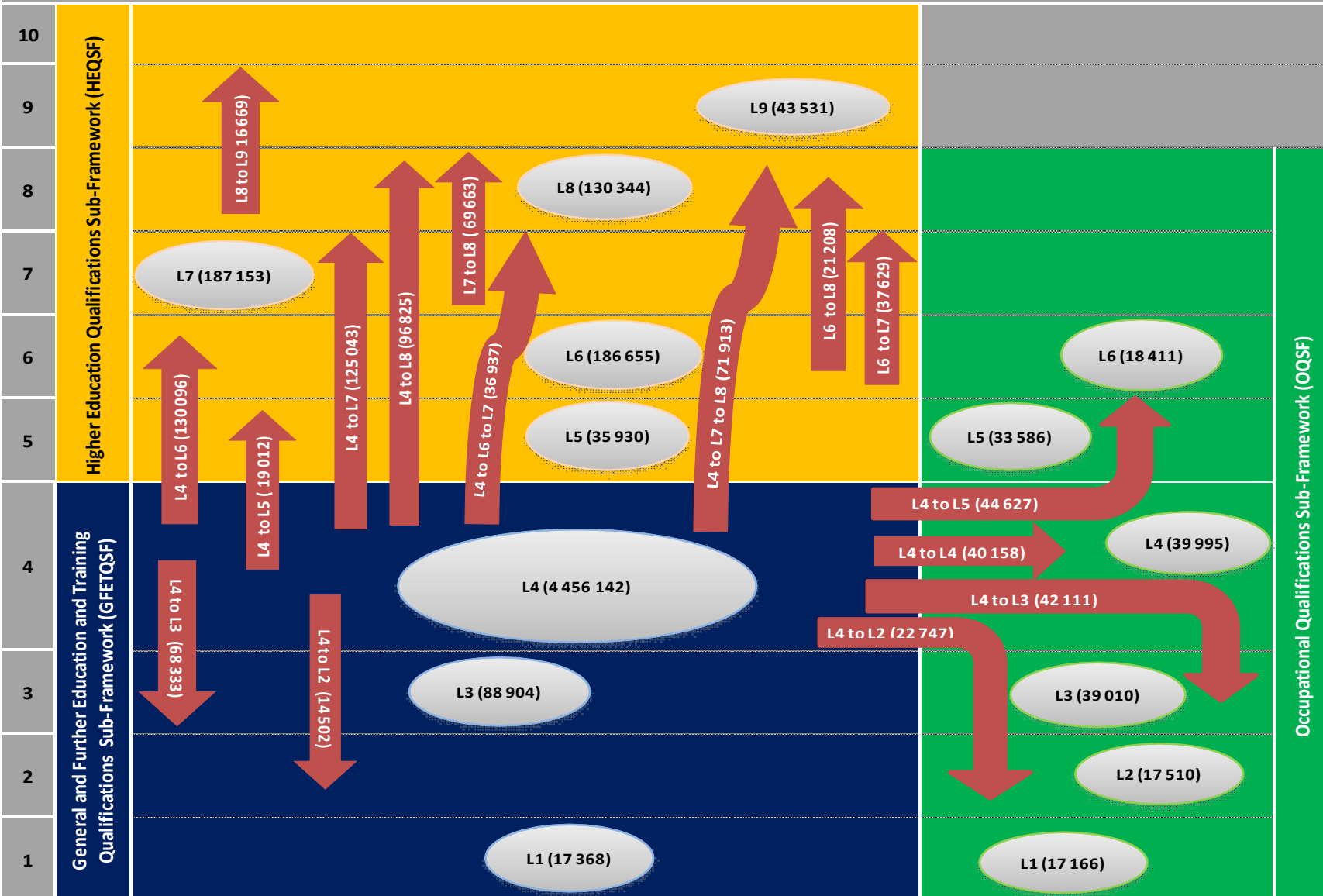
# The NQF MIS: Snapshot of Content

## Trends in achievement: 2009 to 2018



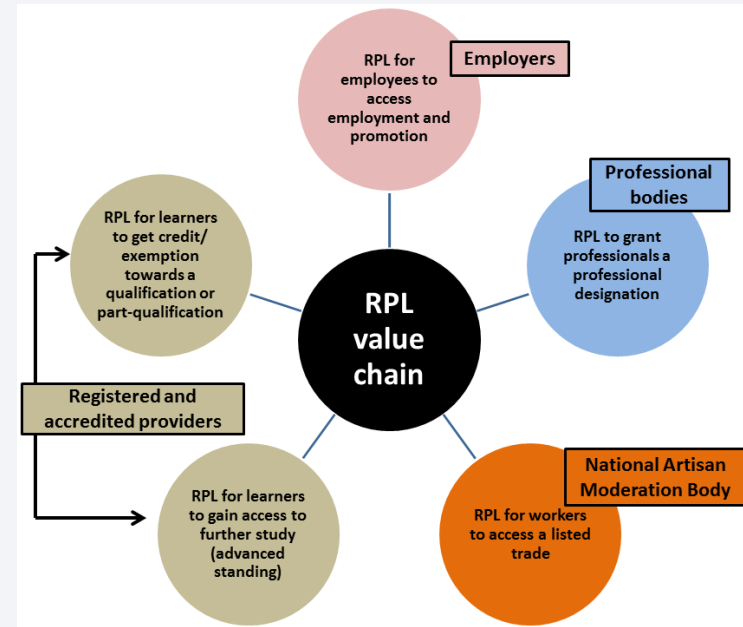
# The NQF MIS: Sample analysis

Top 30: Learning pathways through NQF Levels between 1995 and 2014



# Highlights

- Tracking the progress made in implementing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and articulation
- Learning pathways for three sectors have been developed
  - Early Childhood Development
  - Community Development
  - Engineering



LEARNING PATHWAYS FOR LEARNERS REGARDING ECD QUALIFICATIONS				
National Qualifications Framework				
SFW	NQF Levels	Qualification types		
HEQSF	10	PhD		OOQSF
	9	Master of Education		
	8	Bachelor of Education (Hons)		
	7	Bachelor of Education		
	6			
GFETOSF	5		Higher Certificate: ECD National Diploma :ECD	
	4	National Senior Certificate National Certificate: Vocational	FETC: ECD	
	3	National Certificate: Vocational		
	2	National Certificate: Vocational		
	1	General Education Certificate	GETC: ABET: ECD Basic certificate: ECD	

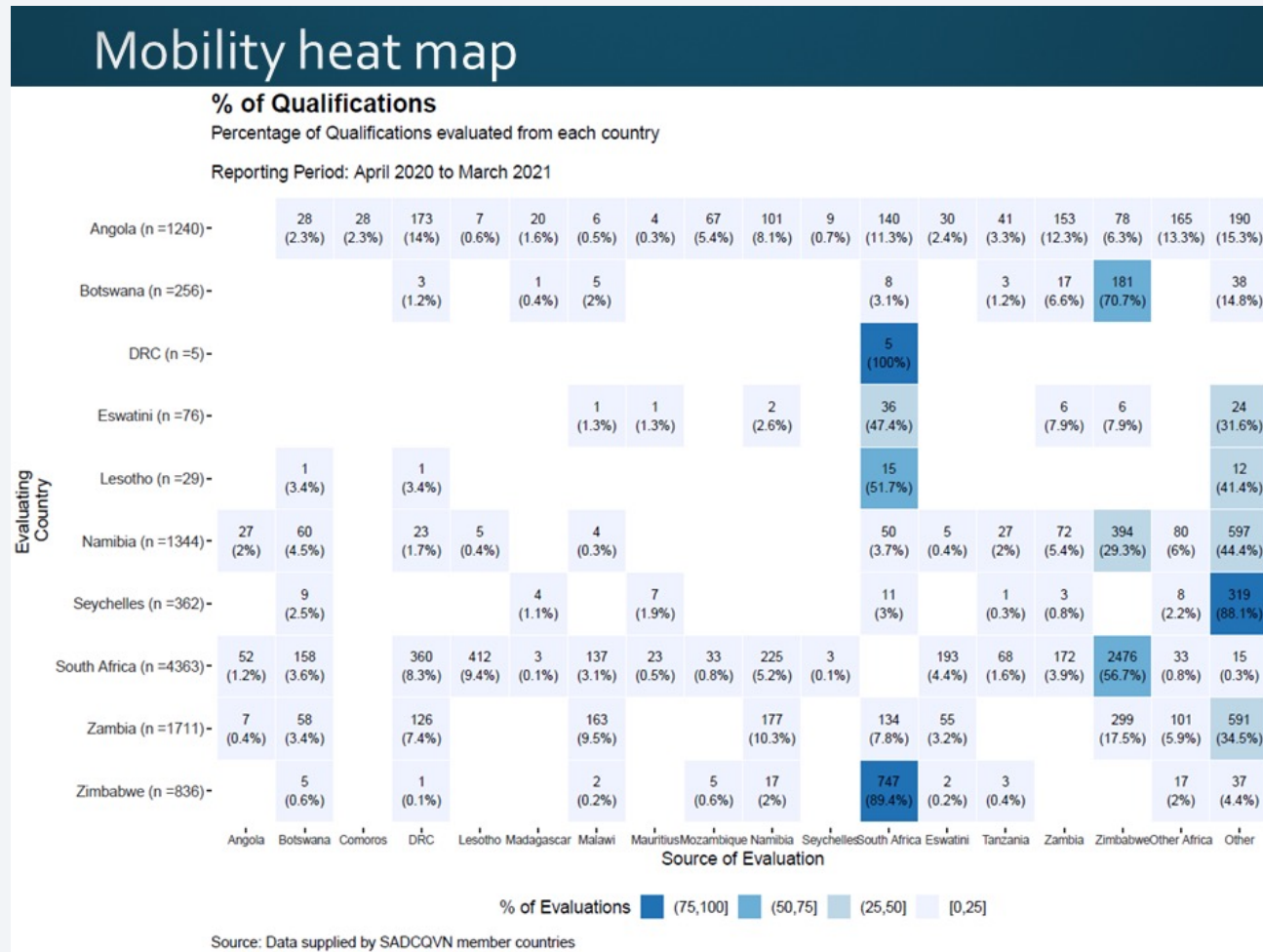
Pathways as seen on the NLRD				
GETC: ABET: ECD/Basic Certificate: ECD (n = 5 630)				
SFW	NQF Levels	Qualification types		
HEQSF	10	PhD		OOQSF
	9	Master of Education		
	8	Bachelor of Education (Hons)		
	7	Bachelor of Education		
	6			
GFETOSF	5		Higher Certificate: ECD National Diploma :ECD	
	4	National Senior Certificate National Certificate: Vocational	FETC: ECD	
	3	National Certificate: Vocational		
	2	National Certificate: Vocational		
	1	General Education Certificate	GETC: ABET: ECD Basic certificate: ECD	

Statistical data from the NLRD table:

- Level 1: 2 064 (37%)
- Level 2: 159 (3%)
- Level 3: 187 (3%)
- Level 4: 521 (9%)
- Level 5: 2 107 (37%)

# Highlights

- International benchmarking - *SADC Mobility report*



- SAQA has assisted countries with conceptualising similar systems and model (recently supported Namibia)

# Highlights

- Enables the tracking of articulation and progress made in implementing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
  - *Learning Pathways for three sectors have been developed (Early Childhood Development, Community Development and Engineering)*
- Used for national policy-making and analysis
- International benchmarking
  - *SADC Mobility report*
- SAQA has assisted countries with conceptualising similar systems and model
  - *Recently developed and handed over the specification requirements for a similar model to Namibia*

# Challenges

- Historical data gaps:
  - *Due to the history of the country, fragmented records still exist on paper only*
  - *Digitisation initiatives are underway to ensure these paper records are digitised and recorded on the NQF MIS*
- Occasional and structural delays with data submissions
  - *Resulting in delays with the verifications process, and incomplete information*
  - *Gazette data regulations*
- Data quality and integrity:
  - *Consistent and extensive updates to the data through data cleaning processes/projects*
- Other registers exist in the 'NQF-universe'
  - *But not fully integrated into the MIS*
  - *Introduction of a phased in project that focuses on the integration of other databases*
  - *Provides an opportunity to further improve, enhance, expand/enrich the NQF MIS*

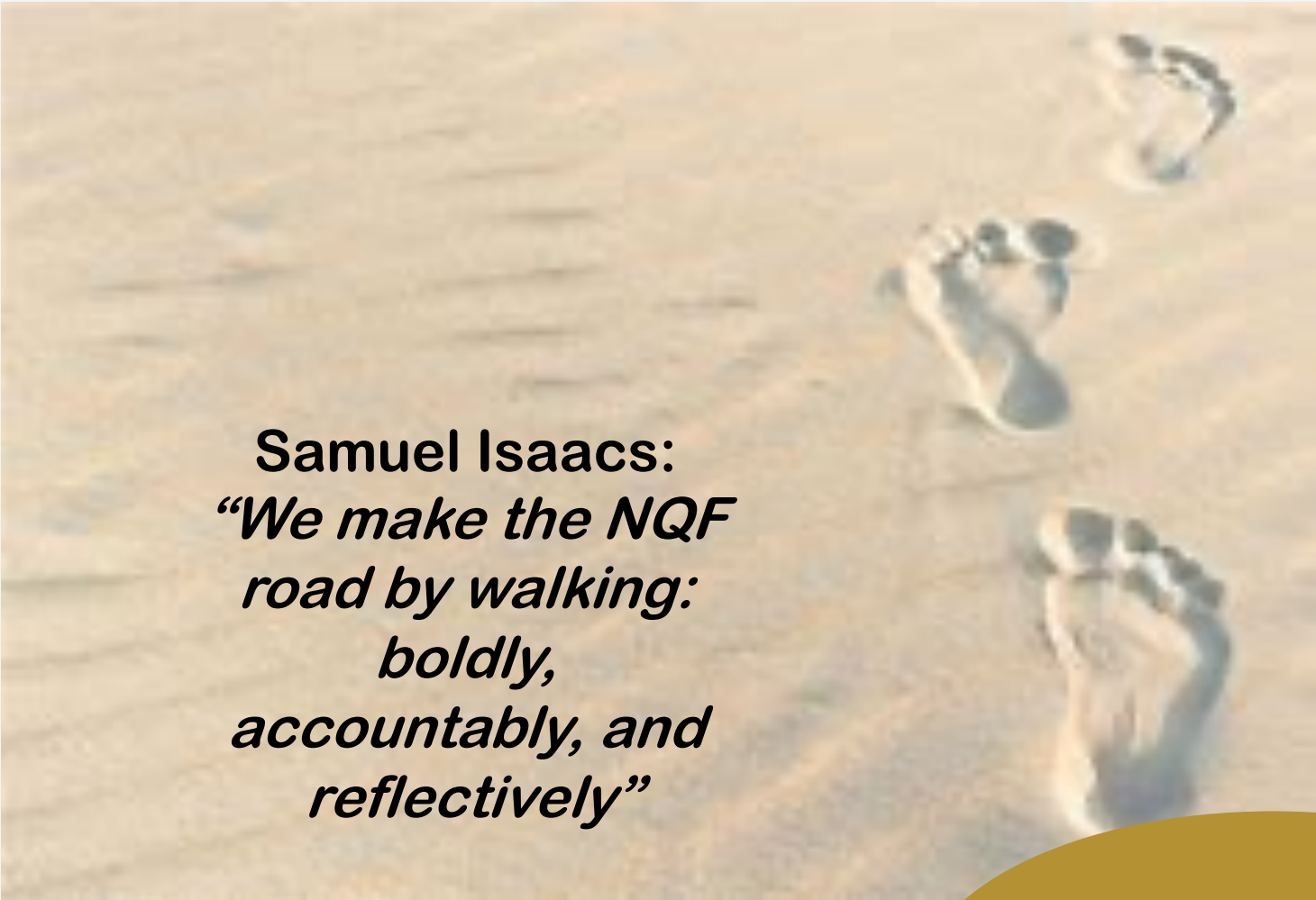


# Lessons learned

- The transition to an integrated NQF MIS needs to take context into account
  - An NQF MIS must be guided and informed by the information needs of the national education and training systems to which it is linked and unified through a ‘System of Collaboration’
  - While instruments and approaches are transferable across countries, policies and systems are not because notions of education/training and learning outcomes are culturally and socially embedded
- Further development of information systems is a multi-year process, informed by continuous improvement
- Shift from procedural data loading to a more strategic use of the data

**Thank You!!!**

**?**

A photograph of a sandy beach with several footprints in the sand, receding into the distance. The footprints are arranged in a line, suggesting a path walked on the beach. The sand is light-colored and the lighting is soft, creating gentle shadows.

**Samuel Isaacs:**  
***“We make the NQF  
road by walking:  
boldly,  
accountably, and  
reflectively”***

**NQF =**  
***“No Quick Fixes”***  
**Gino Govender**



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