



Session 9 - 5

# **ZAMBIA NQF REFERENCING TO ACQF: Toward Finalisation**

4<sup>th</sup> ACQF Forum, Mahe Seychelles  
13-14 November 2024

# Presentation Outline

- The benefit of Zambia Referencing to ACQF
- Reference Criterion 1
- Reference Criterion 2
- Reference Criterion 3
- Reference Criterion 4
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Way forward in Referencing
- Questions and Answers

# Benefits of Referencing the Zambia NQF to ACQF

- Adopt best practices in implementing the Zambia NQF
- Increase information-sharing on local and foreign qualifications to establish mutual understanding
- Improve portability of Zambia Qualifications in Africa and the world.
- Enhance mobility of learners and professionals
- Effectively implementation of Addis and Global Recognition Conventions
- Enhance collaboration and transparency



# REFERENCING CRITERION 1: Comparison of ZQF to ACQF Level Descriptors

Overall, the level descriptors of the current Zambia NQF are comparable to the ACQF 10 levels as shown.

Similarly, the credits and notional hours are also comparable.

ZQF		ACQF African Continental Qualifications Framework
Doctorate Degree	=	Level 10
Master's Degree	=	Level 9
Postgraduate Diploma	=	Level 8
Bachelor's Degree	=	Level 7
Diploma	=	Level 6
Level 5 Certificate	=	Level 5
Level 4 Certificate	=	Level 4
Level 3 Certificate	=	Level 3
Secondary Education Certificate	=	Level 2
Primary Education Certificate	=	Level 1

# REFERENCING CRITERION 2: Learning Outcomes RPL Systems



Both the ACQF and ZQF frameworks are based on level descriptors that outline the knowledge, understanding, and skills a learner is expected to achieve upon obtaining a qualification at a particular level. Both the ACQF and ZQF provide broad yet clear indicators of learning achievements and benchmarks suitable for specific qualifications and modules at each level



Similar to the ACQF, the ZQF uses learning outcomes to assess and validate knowledge gained in informal, non-formal, or formal learning environments.



The comparability and recognition of foreign qualifications are also based on ZQF learning outcomes, which align with descriptors from other national qualifications frameworks. Ultimately, the ZQF, like the ACQF, leverages learning outcomes to provide clear learning pathways, promote lifelong learning, and improve employment opportunities for learners.



The ZQF Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credits Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS) policies were revised to emphasize learning outcomes as central to recognizing a learner's knowledge and skills, regardless of the context in which they were acquired.

# REFERENCING CRITERION 3: Registration of qualifications on the NQF

Examinations  
Council of Zambia



Technical Education Vocational and  
Entrepreneurship Training Authority



Higher Education  
Authority



**NQF REGISTRATION**

- Appropriate Authorities in the general schooling and vocational training as well as Higher Education Institutions submit their qualifications for registration on the NQF.
- The registration process is a transparent procedure and is expected to be concluded in 60 working days
- The Registration of the Qualification on the NQF demonstrates that a qualification has met all quality assurance and standards

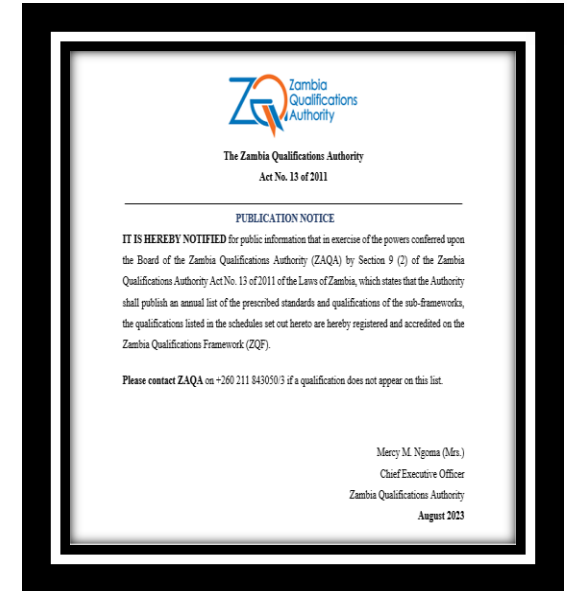
# REFERENCING CRITERION 3: Registration of qualifications on the NQF



ZAQA constitutes panels of Subject Matter Experts with industrial expertise to evaluate qualifications



The evaluation of the qualification is based on established criteria with 13 Parameters.



The ZAQA Board approves the registration of a qualification on the NQF based on expert recommendations. ZAQA maintains a register of accredited qualifications and publishes this register annually

Inline with the ACQF guidelines,

- the Register of Qualifications is accessible to the general public
- Various Stakeholder trust and use the register of qualifications to make decisions



# REFERENCING CRITERION 4

## The Quality Assurance System

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

MINISTRY OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE



**ZAQA**  
**ZAQA Act of**  
**2024**

Implement the NQF to enhance the quality of qualifications and ensure international comparability of  
Zambian  
Qualifications



**ECZ**  
**ECZ Act of**  
**2023**

Conduct Quality Assurance in assessment of primary and secondary qualifications



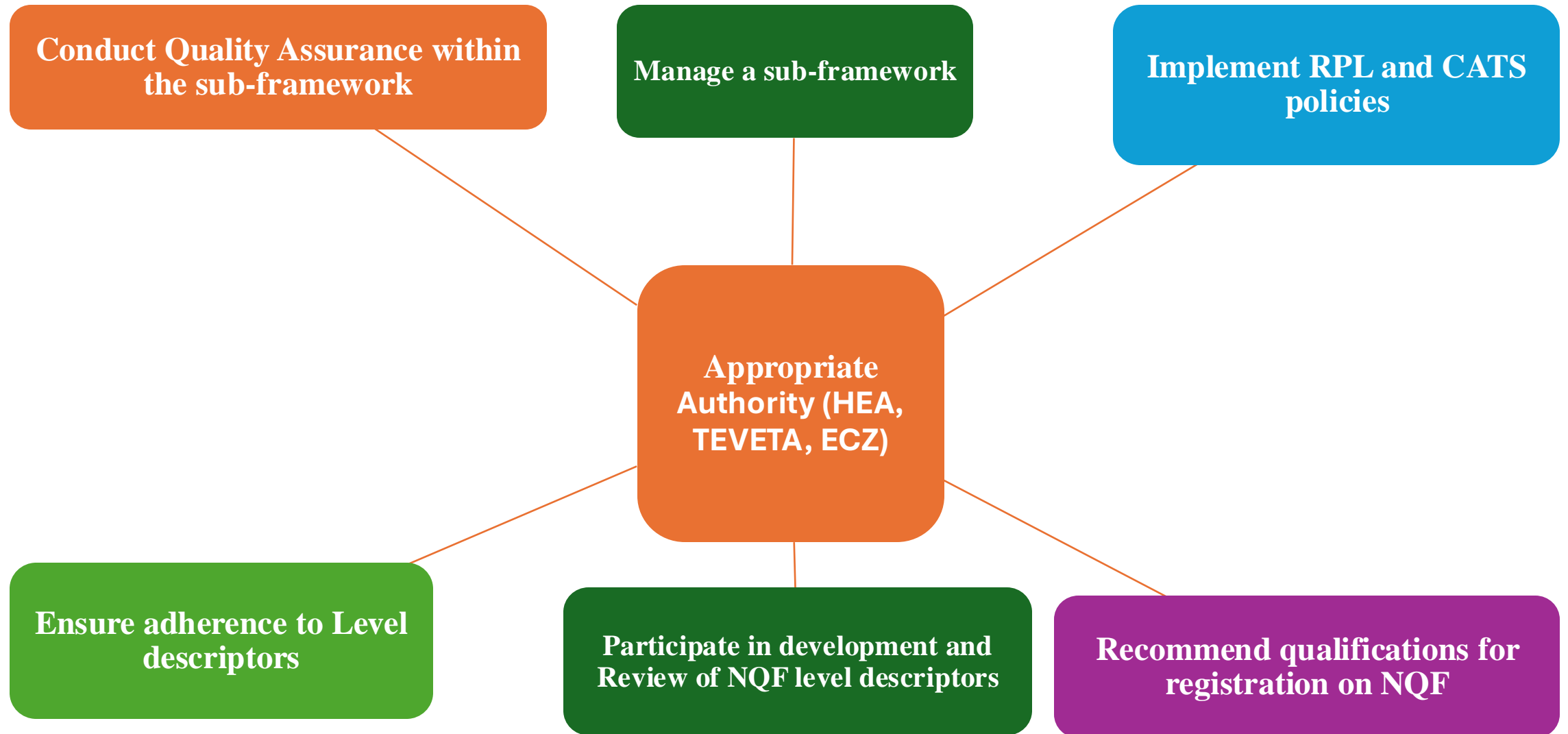
**HEA**  
**HEA Act of**  
**2021** Conduct  
Quality Assurance  
of HEIs and  
Learning  
Programmes



**TEVETA**  
**TEVET Act of**  
**1998 and 2005**  
Conduct Quality Assurance of vocational institutions, TVET training and Assessments



# REFERENCING CRITERION 4: The role of Appropriate Authorities



# REFERENCING CRITERION 4

## The NQF in Quality Assurance

- The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) has established standards for the quality of qualifications in Zambia and it serves as part of the key instruments for implementing quality assurance within the education system.
- All Appropriate Authorities responsible for quality assurance anchor their guidelines on the NQF Standards and Policies (RPL Policy etc.).
- All qualifications awarded by registered training institutions in Zambia, undergo quality assurance by the Appropriate Authorities and in turn are registered on the NQF.
- The NQF plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity and credibility of Zambia's education system by setting and enforcing clear, transparent standards for qualifications.

# Challenges and Opportunities

## Challenges/Gaps

- Limitations of the current NQF in recognising emerging qualifications and credentials
- Need to Revise the current NQF to align with the need for inclusion of Micro-Credentials
- Limited financial resources to conduct key activities in implementing the NQF effectively
- Inadequate resources for staff training on NQFs management and benchmarking visits: and
- Resistance to change among some stakeholders in the education sector.

## Opportunities

- The repeal and replacement of the ZAQA Act No. 13 of 2011 with ZAQA Act No.8 of 2024, which introduced enforcement mechanisms and penalties for non-compliance
- Plans to review the current NQF to encompass all qualifications offered in Zambia while aligning with emerging educational trends at regional and global levels.
- Availability of cooperating partners who are willing to support effective implementation of NQF
- Support from ACQF in the form of training and resources

# Way Forward in Referencing to the ACQF

- Review the current NQF to address gaps and enhance comparability of qualifications
- Appointment of a National Referencing Committee to spearhead the final referencing of the Revised Zambia NQF to ACQF
- Hold workshop/meetings for the National Referencing Committee to conduct the final referencing exercise for approval by the ZAQA Board
- Submit to the Ministry of Education the final reference reports and
- Publish the reference report and effectively implement all guidelines in the ACQF
- Engage All Stakeholders on the need to use NQF & ACQF Levels on certificates of award for all successfully referenced levels.



**ZIKOMO, THANK  
YOU**



you learn, we standardize