Seychelles National Qualifications Framework & Alignment to the SADCQF

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Overview of the Presentation

❑ Context of NQF in Seychelles

❑ Overview and Structure of the Seychelles NQF

❑ Achievements

❑ Alignment of the Seychelles NQF to SADCQF and Lessons Learned

Context of NQF in Seychelles

- National policy of the Government since 2000 to develop a National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and therefore appoint a National Qualifications Authority to administer and develop the framework.

- Major rationale was that an NQF would form part of its "strategy to incorporate standards and quality into the national education and training system."

- In his budget address of 2004 the President underlined the commitment of the Government to a National Qualifications Authority.

- Seychelles Qualifications Authority Act enacted – 2005

- Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) established through enactment of the Act – start of 2006

- A public body with regulatory powers and operating "at arm's length" from the Ministry of Education.

- Governed by a Board and managed by a CEO.

Context of NQF in Seychelles

■ *The object of the SQA:*

  ❑ to develop, implement and maintain a national qualifications framework; and

  ❑ to provide for quality assurance of the education and training system nationally.

■ Establishment of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in 2008.

■ National Qualifications Framework Regulations signed into law and became operative in January 2009.

Structure of the Seychelles NQF

- *The National Qualifications Framework (NQF):*
  - ❑ a comprehensive system for the development, classification, registration, publication, evaluation and articulation of quality-assured qualifications;

  - ❑ establishes the regulations and principles that guide the development of qualifications, states the criteria to be met for qualifications to be recognized nationally, and defines the conditions for learners to be certified.

  - ❑ also includes a set of policies and regulations which guides all providers of education and training about the conditions necessary for them to operate.

Structure of the Seychelles NQF

Objectives of the Seychelles NQF:

To provide:

- ❖ quality assured, nationally recognized consistent training standards and qualifications

- ❖ recognition and credit for knowledge and skills acquired.

It aims to:

- ❖ Ensure comprehensiveness in the recognition of learning and qualifications attained in the country, while ensuring parity for occupational qualifications

- ❖ Promote a more integrated approach to education and training

- ❖ Increase articulation of qualifications and mobility of learners within a coherent learning system, considering the need for both national and international portability and comparability
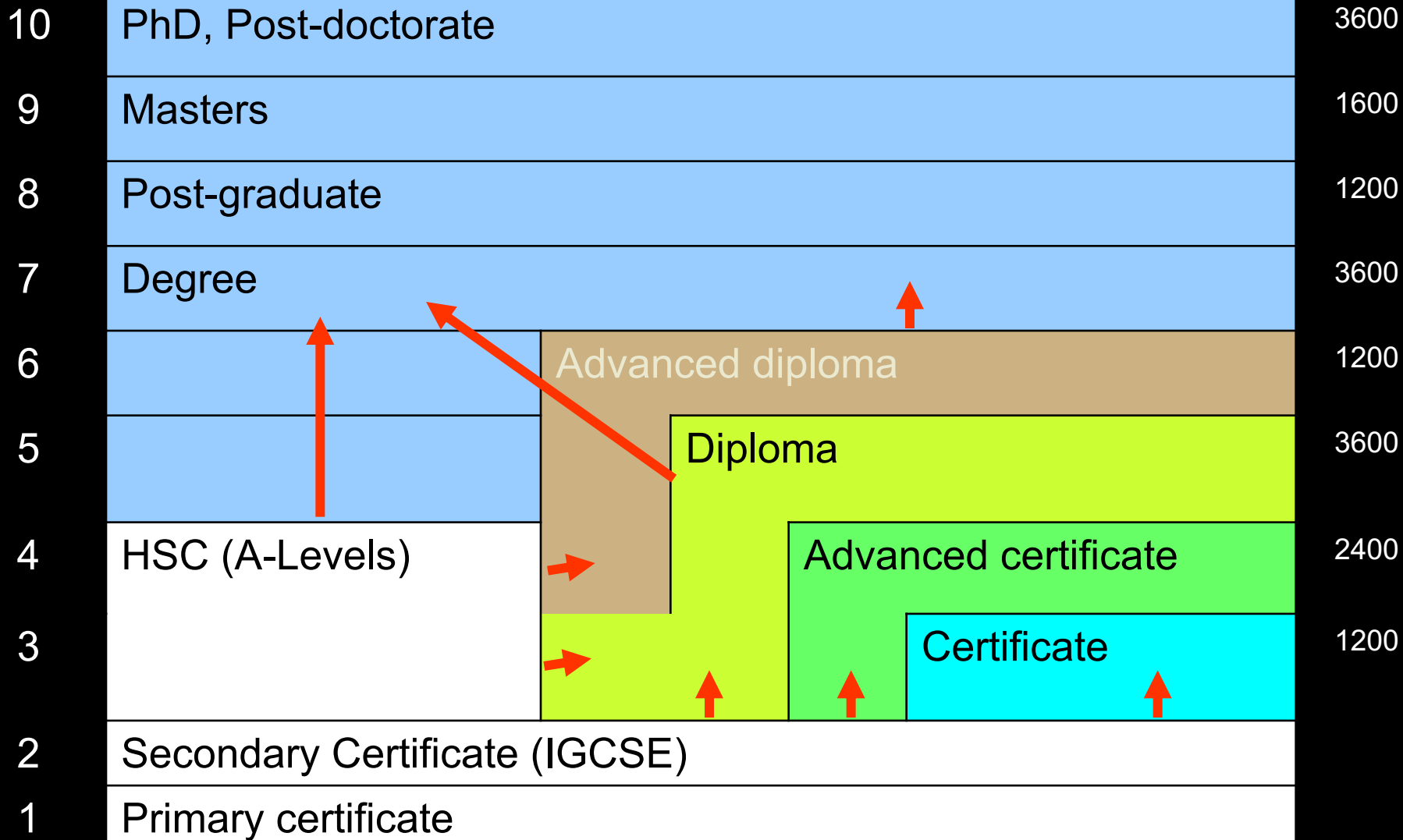
Structure of the Seychelles NQF

❖ A **10 level** framework with qualification types. Primary Certificate Qualification at level 1 to Doctoral and Post Doctoral Qualifications at level 10.

❖ **The Qualifications Map** is the most visible part of the NQF. It shows its architecture in terms of the number of levels on the framework, the qualification types, the pathways to qualifications, the notional hours, and the level descriptors adopted for the qualifications on the map.

❖ **Defined as:**

"the structure of nationally approved qualifications in terms of defined levels and their descriptors, qualifications types, notional hours and pathways".

Seychelles NQF Qualifications Map

NQF Level		Notional hours
10	PhD, Post-doctorate	3600
9	Masters	1600
8	Post-graduate	1200
7	Degree	3600
6	Advanced diploma	1200
5	Diploma	3600
4	HSC (A-Levels) / Advanced certificate	2400
3	Certificate	1200
2	Secondary Certificate (IGCSE)	
1	Primary certificate	

Structure of the Seychelles NQF

The Qualifications Map gives a clear idea of:

- the potential academic or vocational route that a qualification offers.
- educational and training doors open and accessible
- possibilities in terms of education and training
- builds on the hierarchy of competencies, with each level of qualification becoming increasingly more complex as progress is made up the pathway of the map - best seen in the level descriptors.

Notional Hours

- Direct contact time and non-contact time
- 1 Credit = 10 Notional Hours of learning

Structure of the Seychelles NQF

Level descriptors *of the Framework*

Statements used to describe a hierarchy of learning outcomes of increasing cognitive challenge in terms of:

1. Degree of complexity of tasks
2. Reasoning and problem solving
3. Knowledge
4. Autonomy and responsibility

Sample Level descriptors

NQF level	Band	Qualification type	Level descriptors			
			Degree of complexity of tasks	Reasoning and problem solving	Knowledge	Autonomy and responsibility
6	Further Education and Training	Advanced National Diploma	Carry out processes that: require a command of highly specialised technical or academic, and basic research skills across a particular branch of a field of study. involve the application of a full range of procedures in the branch of study. are employed in highly variable routine and non-routine contexts	Propose appropriate responses to resolve given or contextual abstract problems. Provide adequate responses to unfamiliar situation requiring synthesis and consideration of heterogeneous data. Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of professional consultation	Demonstrate specialised knowledge with depth in a particular branch of a discipline Analyse, reformat and evaluate a wide range of information Conceive, write and discuss specialised texts Understand and interpret fundamental and highly technical information in a particular field of study	Involved in planning, resourcing and managing processes within broad parameters and functions with responsibility for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and / or group outcomes.

Achievements

❑ Since 2009, implementation of important elements of the NQF, including:

- o Standards Setting
- o Registration of national qualifications on the NQF
- o Evaluation of Existing Qualifications (EEQ)
- o Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- o Recognition/Evaluation of local and foreign qualifications
- o Programme Accreditation
- o Institutional Accreditation
- o School Inspection (as of 2019)
- o IQA structures and processes of institutions (quality assurance)
- o Capacity building of institutions
- o Development of manuals, policies, tools and instruments

Achievements

❑ Better and fairer employment payment, work progression schemes, and schemes of service since these are linked to NQF levels

❑ Rationalised qualifications landscape aligned with a national system.

❑ Value of each qualification has been clarified. Employers are aware what their employees need to attain to arrive at certain levels of education and training.

❑ Lifelong learning is facilitated.

New Developments:

    ❑ Repeal and new SQA Act

    ❑ Review of QA Manual (incorporates programme and institutional accreditation)

    ❑ Review of the NQF and NQF Regulations (following enactment of new Act)

Alignment of Seychelles NQF to SADCQF

- Alignment with the SADCQF requires a number of targeted actions by Member States that address each of the established alignment criteria to ensure that evidence of alignment is presented in a structured and logical format.

- The SADC TCCA developed an alignment plan and roadmap, and alignment timelines to assist the eight pilot countries.

- Alignment plan included a *Self-Assessment report* intended to establish readiness of countries to align.

- Pilot countries were provided support through *capacity building workshops* (x 2) that included peer learning opportunities.

- The Seychelles National Alignment Committee (NAC) appointed on 03 January 2018 by the Minister responsible for Education.

SADCQF Alignment Report Format

Report outline for the final SADCQF alignment report

The following report outline is proposed for the final alignment report:

Title of Report: Report on the Alignment of (Country) to the SADC
Qualifications Framework (SADCQF)
Date: DD/MM/YYYY
Use both country logo and SADC logo

Include Contents Page

Authorisation page with statement that all the criteria have been met:
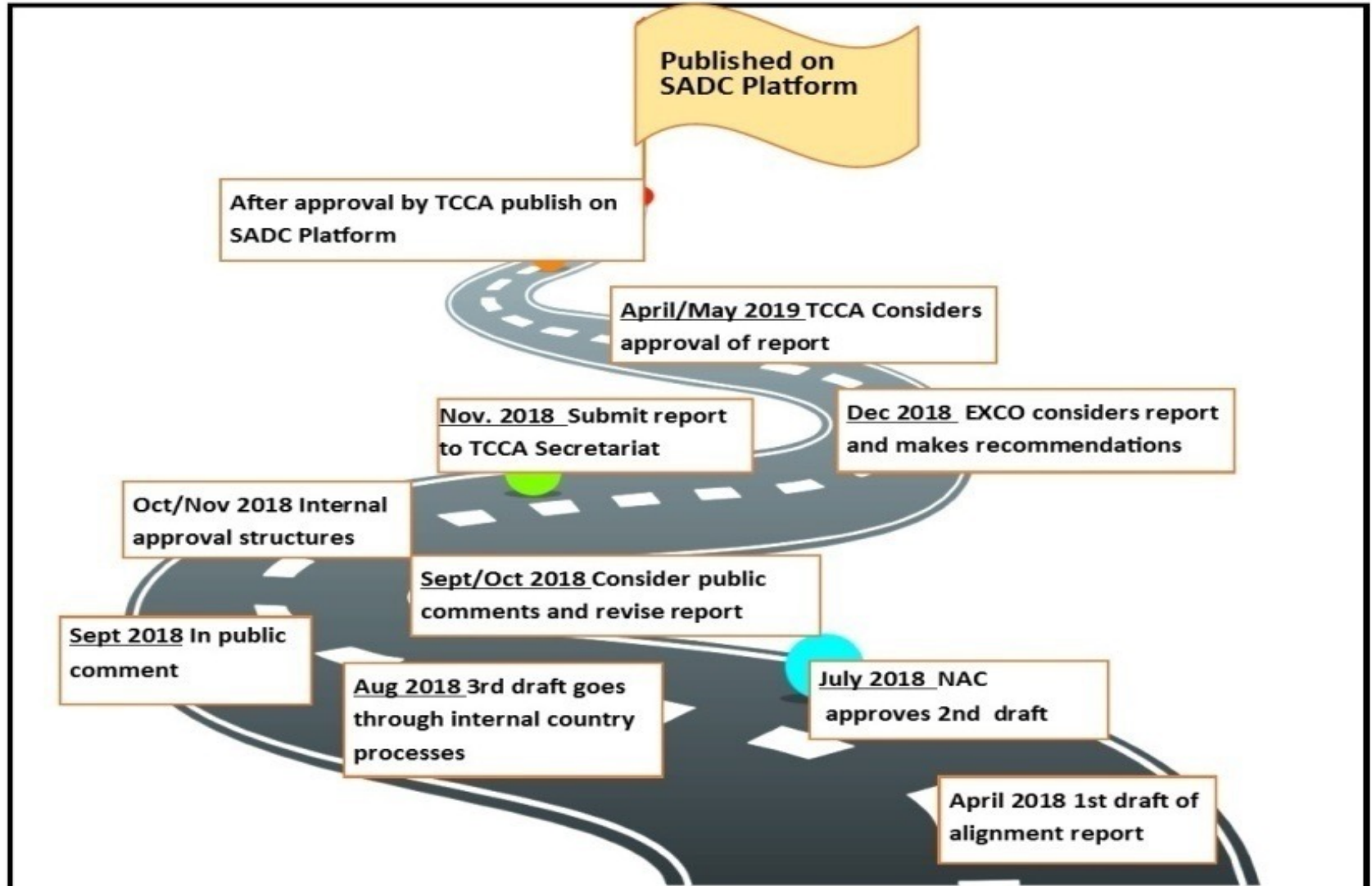 – official sign-off

Executive Summary

Chapters:

1. Introduction and background to alignment with the
   SADCQF
2. Profile of (country name) education and training system
3. Process of alignment in... (country name)
4. Evidence of (country name)'s alignment to the SADCQF
5. Conclusion

References

Annexures

Alignment to SADCQF: Steps to Alignment

Alignment to SADCQF: Lessons

❑ Government support and national commitment a must.

❑ Extremely time consuming and must be super focused

❑ Dedicated blocks of time needed and stick to the action plan as much as humanly possible

❑ Scattered information and documentation – division of labour among members of NAC and meetings in-between.

❑ National involvement resulted in increased public awareness/knowledge of the NQF and qualifications.

❑ Website posting for Public comments not embedded in the Seychelles culture – had to use supporting measures.

❑ Must be innovative in ways and means to involve stakeholders due to the technical nature of the process.

Alignment to SADCQF: Lessons

➤ *10 Alignment Criteria* and underlying sub-criteria.

Included:

Criterion 5: Compatibility of the 16 common QA guidelines of the SADCQF with our national QA Framework

Criterion 2:

➤ **There is a clear and demonstrable link between qualification levels in the NQF/ National Qualification System (NQS) and level descriptors of the SADCQF.**

*This is where we had to demonstrate **the link** between our NQF's level descriptors with that of the SADCQF.*

Issues which impacted the alignment exercise

▶ *Essentially have to do with differences between frameworks under alignment, in this instance SNQF versus SADCQF:*

- **One is a reference framework** whilst the other is a **national framework** on which qualifications based on qualifications types are registered. In a sense it was a bit like comparing apples with oranges, though both are fruits and have similar characteristics.

- The SADCQF does not have a "qualifications map or ladder" showing the usual architecture of NQFs. In fact it has no qualifications at all, so comparison had to be made between level descriptor and level descriptor. This was problematic as qualifications embody in and of themselves what level descriptors mean in reality and so comparison becomes difficult.

Issues which impacted the alignment exercise

- On the surface there is a ***difference in categorization of the level descriptors*** (The SADCQF has the categories of autonomy and responsibility, skills and knowledge. Similarly the SNQF has autonomy and responsibility, and knowledge, but also has reasoning and problem solving and degree of complexity of tasks (which are skills oriented).

- The Seychelles NQF though integrated has a tracked system, with 3 tracks consisting of a general education track, a vocational track and an academic education and training track. There is no track on the SADCQF since the aim is not to cater for a specific type of qualification, or to hoist the level of one qualification type. The aim of the SADCQF is more generalized which is simply to broadly compare and translate competency levels so as to enable qualifications to travel. This compounded the difficulty of comparison.

- While it was not always easy to decipher the increasing cognitive challenge of the SADCQF (because of the loose/looser language being used), one could state that it was present mostly from level to level.

Alignment to SADCQF

Alignment to SADCQF

Alignment demonstrated a clear demonstrable link between qualification levels in the Seychelles NQF and level descriptors of the SADCQF:

- The SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF ***structurally*** (comparison in terms of architecture of the two frameworks) in terms of levels (number of), in the fact that both are underpinned by level descriptors and the learning outcome paradigm.

- The SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF ***conceptually*** (concepts were examined to see whether there were conceptual links between the two frameworks) - that there is more in common than different.

- ***Linguistic alignment*** (a level-to-level analysis to see whether the 10 NQF levels are aligned with the 10 SADCQF levels) - Levels 1 and 3-10 of the SNQF are aligned to the SADCQF linguistically whilst level 2 of the SNQF closely matches level 4 of the SADCQF.

Alignment to SADCQF: Conclusion

- Confirmed gaps/areas of weakness with our NQF and identified other areas of weakness

- Identified good practices with our national QA system

- Need for easy access to information/documentation

- Who appoints the NAC – for government commitment

- Alignment as a basis for review of our NQF and strengthening of our national QA system

Thank you

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Recognising your Competencies