



Update on Referencing to the ACQF

SADC QF TCCA meeting 19 June 2026

State of play

- **Seychelles, Kenya, South Africa, Lesotho** – shared drafts referencing for comments
- Presentation of the reports from Seychelles and Kenya scheduled at the 7th Forum in Nairobi in July
-> **ACQF will become operational**
- **Botswana, Capo Verde, Zambia** – drafting started, technical advice upon request
- **Capacity building:** webinar on Referencing for the ACQF Network, bilateral meetings with countries, bespoke capacity building workshops upon request (Botswana, Zimbabwe planned in July)
- **Support to national stakeholders' workshops**

NEW TOOLS

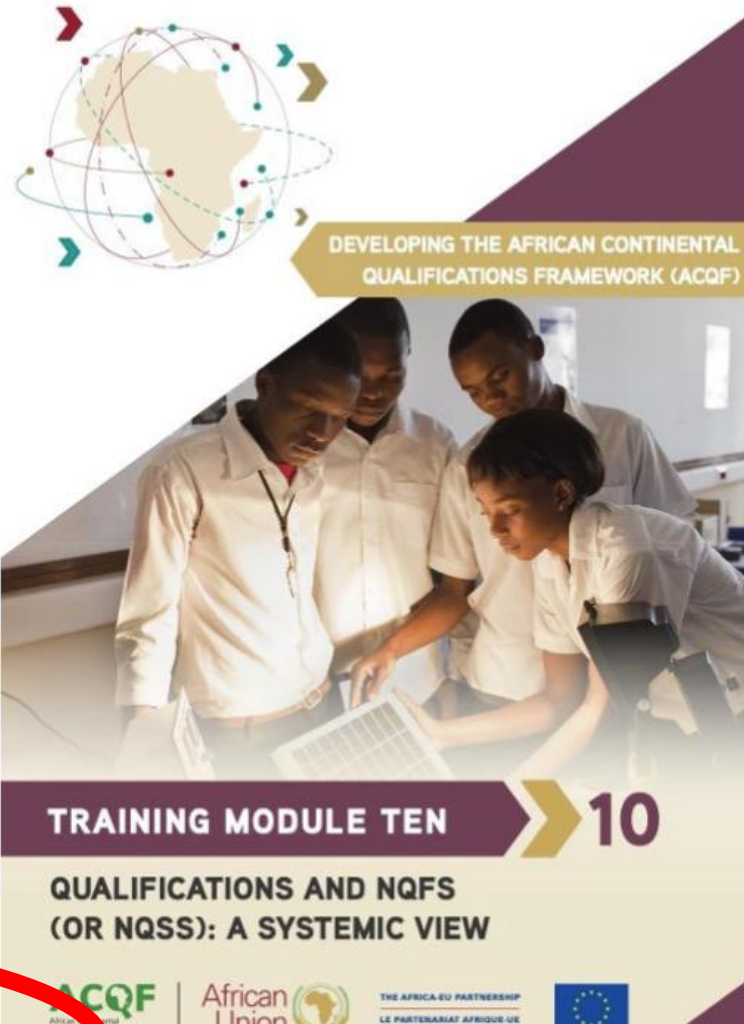
- **Procedure with roles of ACQF Network** developed and discussed
- **Checklist for quality assurance of the referencing reports** prepared
- **Materials available at:**
<https://acqf.africa/resources/referencing/referencing-to-acqf>

Capacity development materials - visit <https://acqf.africa>

Resources **Capacity Development** Skills data focus Qualifications Platform Events News

Training Modules 1 to 10_ENGLISH

The package of ACQF Training Modules is focused on key topics of the domain of qualifications, qualifications frameworks (national and regional) and functioning of ACQF. The Modules provide a comprehensive overview of the main concepts, principles, implementation steps and instruments, supported by cases and examples of application in different countries and regions in Africa and other continents. Each Training Module contains guidance for trainers and learners. To support interaction, autonomous learning and assessment of learning outcomes, the Training Modules include reflective questions, and assessment tasks. The Training Modules are designed for self-paced learning (individual); teacher-/trainer-/facilitator-directed learning – which may include group learning; or a combination of the above.



DEVELOPING THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (ACQF)

TRAINING MODULE TEN 10

QUALIFICATIONS AND NQFS (OR NQSS): A SYSTEMIC VIEW

ACQF African Qualifications Framework
 African Union
 THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE
 European Union

Webinars & Workshops

Training Modules and Handbooks

Micro-Credentials Handbook

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) - Handbook for RPL Practitioners

Training Module 1: Learning Outcomes

Comprehensive overview of the application of learning outcomes in NQFs, RQF and ACQF.

Training Module 2: Levels and level descriptors in the context of ACQF

Training Module 2 guides you through the development, construction and application of levels and level descriptors. It explains the details of the elaboration of ACQF level descriptors.

Training Module 3: Referencing to ACQF

Training Module 3 presents the goals, criteria and procedures for referencing of National Qualifications Frameworks to ACQF, and proposes self-assessment tools and questions to help your country engage with the referencing process.

Materials on referencing

Referencing is the first of 7 seven areas of activity of ACQF. Referencing is essential for comparison, transparency, mutual understanding between frameworks, to facilitate recognition and fair mobility of people. As a meta- and referencing qualifications framework for the African continent, the 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 national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) or systems to the ACQF, following agreed criteria and procedures and peer review by the member countries.

ACQF-II FACTSHEETS and
ACTIVITY REPORTS

Materials on referencing

Referencing to ACQF

Pilot phase 2024

NQF Inventory

[Referencing to ACQF](#)

[Pilot phase 2024](#)

Pilot phase 2024: guidance for a streamlined approach for referencing



Referencing to ACQF

ACQF-II FACTSHEETS and
ACTIVITY REPORTS

Materials on referencing

Referencing to ACQF

Pilot phase 2024

NQF Inventory

Surveys ACQF-II: NQF, RPL,
Micro-credentials

 [Etapas para a Referenciação ao ACQF \(01.04.26\) PT](#)

 [Steps in Referencing to the ACQF \(01.04.26\) EN](#)

 [Étapes à suivre pour le Référencement à l'ACQF \(01.04.26\) FR](#)

 [Checklist referencing to ACQF 18.03.2026](#)

 [ACQF Network Webinar on Referencing 14.04.2026](#)

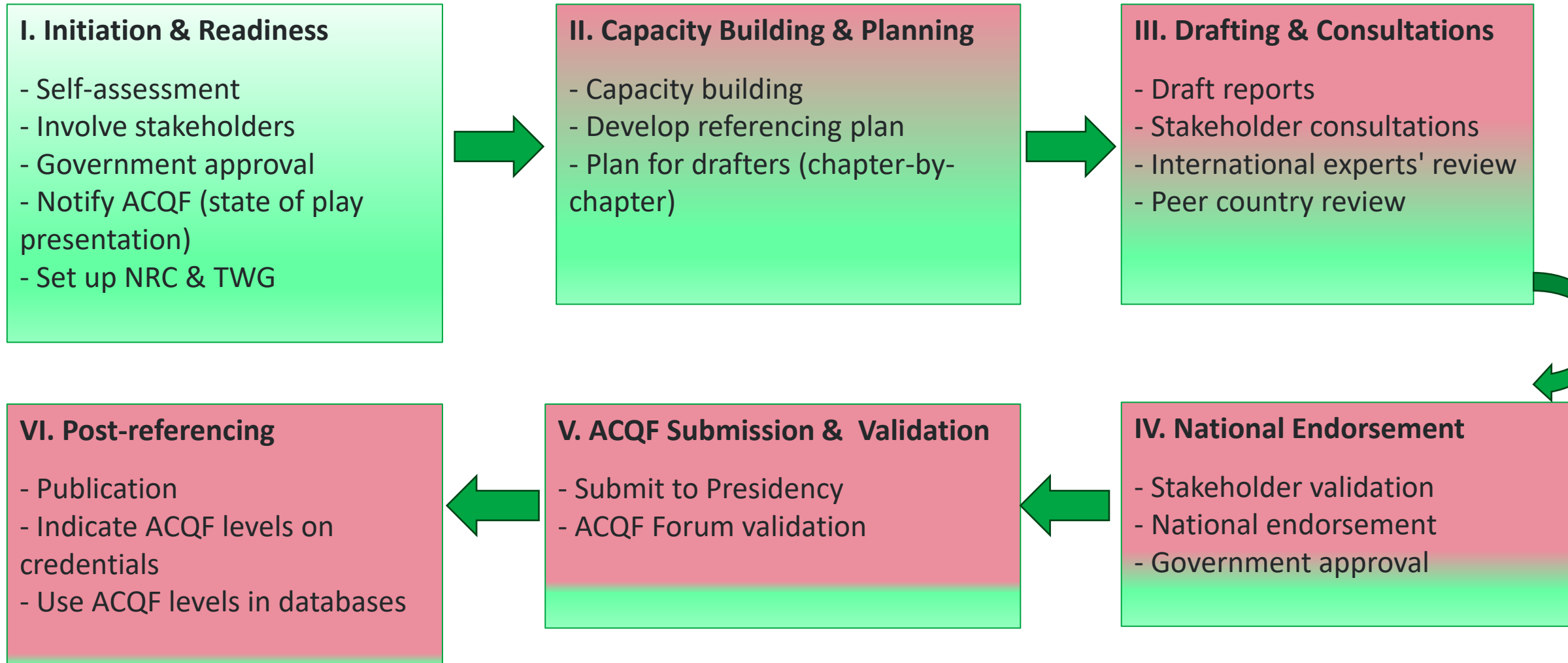
 [Checklist referencing to ACQF 18.03.2026 FR.docx](#)

 [ACQF Network Webinar Referencing 14.04.2026 FR.pptx](#)

Detailed Steps

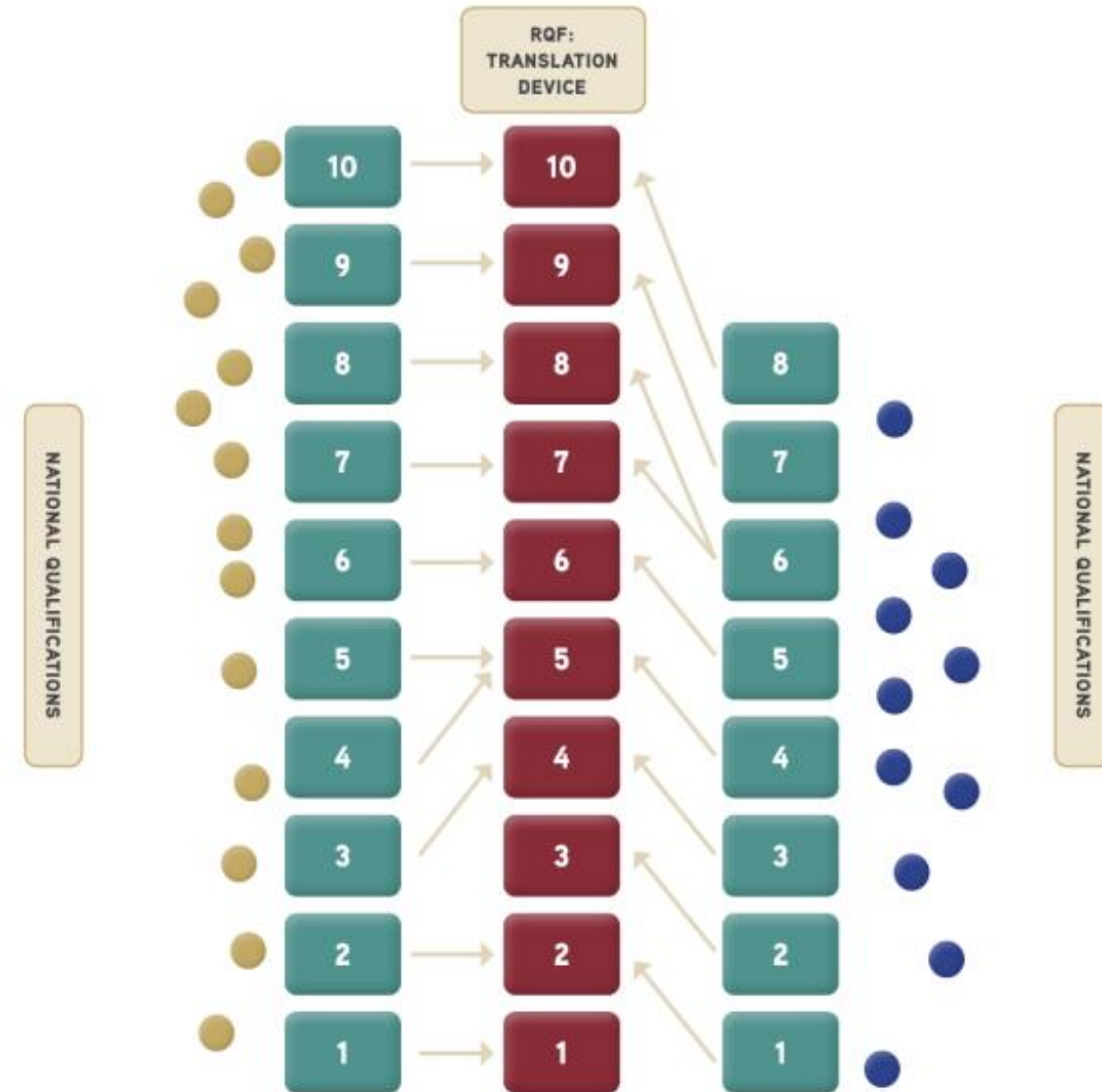


Summary - ACQF Referencing Process



Purpose

1. To systematically present and document the broader **qualifications system** and **the NQF** of the referencing country.
2. To establish a clear and transparent relationship between national qualification levels and the ten ACQF levels (level-to-level correspondence) → **Criterion 1**
3. To demonstrate alignment with agreed ACQF principles → **Criteria 2-4**
4. Fulfil governance procedures



Referencing criteria and procedures are specified in the [ACQF Policy Document \(Annex 2\)](#)

Referencing criteria: demonstrate that the NQF meets them...

Table 1: ACQF referencing criteria

Referencing criteria	
1	There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the ACQF.
2	The national qualifications frameworks or systems are based on learning outcomes principles and related to arrangements for recognition of prior learning (including 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 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).

To clarify the interplay between quality assurance and referencing, the following principles are recommended

Quality assurance – a criterion for ACQF referencing: the referencing to the 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 to 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; and
- provides transparent information-sharing on results of evaluation.
- takes account of African Union policy orientations such as African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (for higher education), to which both internal and external quality assurance adhere.

Governance and follow up procedures

1. **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.
2. The relevant national **quality assurance bodies state their agreement** with the referencing outcome and referencing report.
3. **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 implementation setting and AG on the involved **international experts**.
4. Competent national bodies certify the referencing to the ACQF and publish **one comprehensive, evidence-based referencing report**, which addresses all referencing criteria.
5. The **referencing outcome is published** by the participating country and the ACQF network upon its final validation by the ACQF implementation setting and AG, on the dedicated ACQF website.
6. Following the completion of referencing, all newly issued documents related to qualifications that are part of the national qualifications frameworks or systems (e.g.: certificates, diplomas, supplements) and qualifications registers issued by the competent national authorities will contain a clear reference to the **appropriate ACQF level**, based on national legislation and procedures.

What makes a good referencing report?

A good report is:

- a policy narrative explaining your system
- a legal + QA evidence dossier
- a technical demonstration of alignment; it provides argumentation and evidence per criterion
- a communication tool for international readers

ACQF Referencing: What it is NOT

- **Not automatic recognition** of qualifications across countries
- **Not a replacement for national recognition procedures**
- **Not harmonisation or standardisation** of national systems or qualifications (some RQFs have mandate it – not ACQF) – it is not changing your NQF to copy ACQF
- **Not a ranking or evaluation exercise** of countries' systems

Example: EQFs as a translation device

Improved transparency and comparability

[Source: Compare Qualifications | Europass](#)

Ireland	EQF Levels	Austria
NQF 10 Doctoral Degree ▼ Higher Doctorate ▼	EQF Level 8	NQF 8 Doctorate (Doctorgrade) Clinical Psychology Healthcare Psychology Specialised doctor (medical) ▼
NQF 9 Master Degree ▼ Postgraduate Diploma ▼ Professional Award ▼		EQF Level 7
NQF 8 Honours Bachelor Degree ▼ Higher Diploma ▼ Professional Award ▼	EQF Level 6	NQF 6 Bachelor Degree (Bachelorgrade) Master Craftsman ▲ Meister/in für das Handwerk Fleischer Meister/in für das Handwerk Friseur und Perückenmacher (Stylist) Meister/in für das Handwerk Kraftfahrzeugtechnik Meister/in für das Handwerk Orthopädienschuhmacher Meister/in für das Handwerk Spengler
NQF 7 Ordinary Bachelor Degree ▼ Professional Award ▼		Graduate professional agriculture ▼
		Engineer Certified Masterchef

Readiness for referencing

Operational NQF

The country has an established and functioning National Qualifications Framework that is formally adopted and actively used to classify qualifications.

Level descriptors in use

Clear level descriptors based on learning outcomes are defined and consistently applied across qualifications within the NQF.

Quality assurance (QA) arrangements

Robust and transparent quality assurance mechanisms are in place to ensure the credibility, consistency and reliability of qualifications.

Institutional coordination

Relevant stakeholders (ministries, qualifications authorities, QA bodies, social partners) are effectively coordinated and engaged to support the referencing process.

Where do most challenges arise?

- **Hesitation** about meeting the criteria
- **Insufficient system readiness**
- **Limited stakeholder involvement** and its documentation
- **Limited resources** – too few drafters

Concerning the report:

- **Overly descriptive** reports with limited analysis and justification
- **Weak or missing evidence** to support claims
- **Inconsistent structure and formatting** (e.g. missing sections, numbering issues)
- **Unclear methodology** for level comparison



“What if we do not fully meet the criteria?”

Common concerns:

“Our system is not fully implemented”

“We have gaps in QA / RPL / registers”

“We are not aligned in all sectors”

“Will we fail the referencing?”

Proposed approach:

Be transparent about limitations

Clearly distinguish:

- what is implemented
- what is planned

Include:

- Gaps
- Plans for improvement

This **strengthens credibility** and contributes to building the zone of trust

When is the system not fully ready?

Typical situations

- NQF exists but:
 - is not fully operational (empty)
 - limited implementation across sectors
- Gaps identified in:
 - level descriptors
 - QA arrangements
 - registers / data systems

Countries realise during self-assessment that **referencing may be premature**

What next?

Countries take different approaches:

- Implementation-first:**
Strengthen application of the NQF before referencing
- Revision-first:**
Adjust NQF design (e.g. descriptors, structure) before referencing
- Sometimes a parallel approach:**
Start of referencing while improving system

02

**Referencing report –
Proposed structure and
content**

Example report's structure

Introductory elements:

Introduction and rationale
Executive Summary
Table of content
List of acronyms

REPORT'S CORE

I. System narrative

II. Technical referencing

- Criterion 1
- Criterion 2
- Criterion 3
- Criterion 4

III. Governance procedures

IV. Conclusion/ Issues to be addressed and how

Annexes:

Supporting evidence of choice
List of regulatory documents
References
Lists of tables
List of figures
Glossary of terms

PART I — SYSTEM NARRATIVE

I.1. Context & system overview:

- socio-economic context
- labour market trends, key challenges
- human capital development strategies

I.2. Education and training system:

- **For each sub-system** -General Education, TVET, Higher Education, Non-formal learning: governance, main legal acts, qualifications types, pathways and articulation, quality assurance arrangements, application of learning outcomes approach, RPL, core statistics with sources.

I. 3 NQF in depth:

- Purpose
- Governance and functions
- Structure, Level descriptors, Qualifications types
- Stage of development and implementation

PART II — REFERENCING CORE

Each criterion section should preferably follow the **same internal logic**:

- Restate the criterion verbatim
- Explain national approach
- Present evidence (legal acts, operational documents, templates of standards process charts, research) with links in the footnotes, additional pieces of evidence in the Annexes
- Provide analysis
- Conclusion: criterion met / mostly met/ how
- Address gaps transparently with proposals for further actions

II. 1. Criterion 1: There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the ACQF.

- (1) Conceptual comparison of the NQF and ACQF
- (2) Detailed level-to-level analysis in a table
- (3) **For each level – a narrative section** with analysis and judgement on best-fit
- (4) Level mapping matrix

	Domains of learning		
Level	Knowledge	Skills	Autonomy and responsibility
	Type of knowledge Scope of knowledge	Type of skills Response to information Addressing types of problems	Context Autonomy Responsibility
Definition of the domains of learning	<i>“Knowledge” includes various kinds of knowledge such as facts, principles, and theories in various areas</i>	<i>“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.</i>	<i>“Autonomy and responsibility” <u>refers</u> to the context and extent of the application of autonomy and responsibility</i>
<u>Level 1</u> : 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
...
...
<u>Level 6</u> : the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	highly technical or theoretical knowledge, with specialisation in a discipline/ area	highly technical and specialised skills required to collate, analyse, synthesise and communicate a range of information and new ideas, and formulate or adapt different solutions to address complex and sometimes abstract problems	highly variable contexts with well-developed autonomy and responsibility for self and group outcomes and responsibility for resources and processes

Analysis of levels and domains:

- How many?
- Domains' definitions (sub-domains)
- Structural differences with ACQF domains and levels in terms of:
 - vertical progression;
 - horizontal dimensions?

(2) More detailed comparison of level descriptors

- ❑ In addition to the conceptual comparison of the two frameworks a more detailed comparison **of the contents** of NQF descriptors and ACQF descriptors must be carried out - for each level
- ❑ It will analyse level-to-level similarities and differences for each of their domains
- ❑ **Correspondences**, **partial fit** and **differences** between ACQF level descriptors and NQF level descriptors can be indicated in colours.

Key: Green = perfect fit of terms; Blue: partial fit of terms; Red: important differences

SNQF				ACQF			
Level	Knowledge	Skills	Autonomy and responsibility	Level	Knowledge	Skills	Autonomy and responsibility
2	<p>Apply procedures and/or techniques related to language, mathematical, ICT, scientific, historical, socio-cultural and environmental domains.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to gain and apply a range of knowledge and skills at a detailed level. • Determine the proper methods and procedures to respond to a variety of problems. 	<p>Deal with propositions which will be directly linked to a concern, topic or theme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate concrete thinking skills to solve simple problems. • Demonstrate general communication skills, which are familiar and routine, to inform, recall and express facts, ideas, views, opinions and feelings. • Apply a simple understanding of the values and ethics in carrying out basic tasks. 	<p>Involved in independent learning but will often require input or guidance from others to complete tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display qualities and transferable skills useful in situations requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and judgement. 	2	<p>basic knowledge incorporating comprehension and recall of factual and operational knowledge in some areas</p>	<p>basic communication, cognitive and practical skills required to use concrete information, ideas and known solutions to address straightforward problems</p>	<p>structured contexts under limited supervision and guidance taking limited responsibility for self and group outcomes</p>

(3) Narrative justification accompanying each level-to-level comparison

Narrative section includes an analysis of the degree of correspondence between the descriptors of each framework by referring to **specific descriptor elements**.

This section documents the reasoning and provides a justification why this ACQF level is the best fit.

The “best-fit” principle

- Identify **closest alignment across level descriptors**
- Accept **minor differences with justification**

Knowledge

Knowledge at Level 2 of the two frameworks show important differences rather than similarities in that whilst the ACQF refers to basic knowledge which incorporates comprehension of recall of factual and operational knowledge, the SNQF refers to application of a range of knowledge and skills at a detailed level. The latter is more specific in the application of procedures and techniques within the school (in relation to subjects) and in relation to responding to a diversity of problems which is absent in the ACQF.

Skills

There are similarities in that both frameworks refer to demonstration of communication skills at basic or general level and the demonstration of concrete thinking skills to solve simple problems or the use of cognitive skills to utilise concrete information, ideas and known solutions to address straightforward problems. The SNQF goes further and elaborates on application of simple understanding of values and ethics whilst engaged in basic tasks.

Autonomy and responsibility

Level descriptors of both frameworks show very close similarities. The SNQF avers that learners would be involved in independent learning, but with input or guidance from others with some personal responsibility and judgment. Similarly, the ACQF promotes structured context under limited supervision and guidance with limited responsibility for self.

Summary

There are important differences for knowledge. The level descriptors of the SNQF go further than comprehension of recall of factual and operational knowledge. In that respect, the SNQF presents a picture of a learner having gained or gaining knowledge in the diverse school subjects and responding to a multiplicity of problems.

In terms of skills, there is a partial fit of terms. Both frameworks emphasise basic or general communication skills, concrete thinking skills, addressing simple or straightforward problems, in spite of the fact that the SNQF also requires application of values and ethics in the discharge of tasks. With regards to level descriptors for Autonomy and Responsibility, there is almost a perfect match. Terms, although different, mean the same.

It is determined that despite some differences in the level descriptors for the knowledge domain at Level 2 of the two frameworks, there is a match.

(4). Level mapping matrix (output)

Example:

ACQF	NQF
10	8
9	7
8	6
7	6
6	5
5	4
4	3
3	2
2	1
1	1

II. 2. Criterion 2: The national qualifications frameworks or systems are based on learning outcomes principles and related to arrangements for recognition of prior learning (including non-formal and informal) and, where appropriate, to credit systems

II.2.1. LOs in NQF design

II.2.2. Use of LOs across sub-systems

II.2.3. LOs in qualification design (standards)

II.2.4. LOs as basis for assessment and certification

II.2.5. LOs and Quality Assurance (e.g. in accreditation)

+ chapters on credit system

II. 2. 6....NQF related to RPL

Demonstrate that:

- RPL is recognised in national legislation
- The NQF explicitly includes RPL as a pathway to qualifications

Describe level of implementation across subsystems

Evidence:

NQF law / policy document

RPL policy or guidelines

RPL procedures

Qualification award rules

Pilot projects examples, statistics

11.3. 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.

1. Legal and institutional framework

Legal basis for inclusion of qualifications in the NQF / NQS

Roles and responsibilities of:

- Qualifications authority
- Awarding bodies
- QA agencies

Show step-by-step process (flow or table)

2. Processes for inclusion of qualifications

Procedures for:

- development
- evaluation
- approval
- registration

Criteria used for inclusion:

- learning outcomes
- level assignment
- QA requirements

+ EVIDENCE

IV. Conclusion / Issues to be addressed (examples)

7. Further Actions

Consultations and discussions during updating of the referencing report, have highlighted the challenges in implementing the LTQF and the areas where the actions are needed to address these challenges.

In the field of general education, in the context of the recently initiated curriculum reform and the start of the indication of the LTQF levels in primary and lower secondary education certificates and Matura certificate, it is recommended to:

- Raise awareness among the general education schools community about the LTQF and the referencing of primary, lower and upper secondary educational attainment levels to the LTQF levels, about the LTQF level information provided in the educational documents and the benefits of this information for the learner. To organise targeted information campaigns for career professionals and teachers to convey and explain this information to parents/guardians and pupils;
- Analyse and further develop the definitions of learning outcomes in the curricula, to increase their recognition and understanding in the society, thus also strengthening the perception of the importance of educational attainment levels and of the opportunities for further learning.

8. Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Future Developments

Targets Set	Target Period
<p>Studies on Developing the TQF and Keeping It Up-To-Date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is planned to undertake thematic studies on updating the TQF Regulation, • To promote establishment and operation of quality assurance systems for qualifications under the TQF, • To control whether or not the qualifications requested to be included in the TQF by Responsible Bodies meet the necessary requirements and placing those that meet such requirements in the TQF. • To raise collaboration with relevant Institutions/Organizations for the qualifications that are not yet included in TQF, • To validate non-formal and informal learning. 	2025-2029
<p>Including new qualification types in the TQF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is planned to conduct preliminary surveys on the possibility to place new qualification types in the TQF, • To complete necessary studies on legislation in case that new qualification types are identified, • To analyze the current situation of Türkiye through field research regarding micro credentials discussed under the new qualification types, create an inventory for micro credentials, executing consultation on micro credentials with stakeholders, identify the potential activities as part of the TQF and developing guide books and legislation with relevant Institutions in order to achieve quality assurance about micro credentials. 	2025-2027
<p>Ensuring Horizontal and Vertical Transfer between Qualifications Placed in the TQF</p>	

03

**Stakeholders
engagement**

Stakeholder Engagement — Who Must Be Involved

The referencing report must document ALL stakeholder involvement with evidence

Government & Policy

- Ministry of Education (MOET)
- Ministry of Labour & Employment
- Cabinet / responsible minister
- Other relevant ministries

Political mandate and budget authority. Ministry provides the approval to proceed and endorses the final report.

Education & Training Sector

- Universities and higher education institutions
- TVET providers and TVET Authority
- Basic education authorities
- Industry training bodies

Validate level correspondences from the provider perspective. Confirm that descriptor language reflects delivery reality.

NQF & QA Bodies

- Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA)
- Relevant QA agencies by sector
- Professional bodies and councils
- Accreditation bodies

QA bodies must provide formal written agreement statements. Their endorsement is a mandatory annex — not optional.

Social Partners & Civil Society

- Employer organisations and chambers
- Labour unions and worker representatives
- Learner representative bodies
- Community and informal learning bodies

Provide labour market perspective on level correspondence. Confirm that qualifications at each level are recognised by employers.

Full stakeholder coverage and documentation

All relevant quality assurance bodies must be involved, especially where multiple sub-systems exist (HE, TVET, general education) and different regulators oversee qualifications

 **Good practice:**

QA bodies draft /validate **sections related to their own** sub-systems:

Table 2 — Technical Working Group (TWG)

Institution	Role	Contribution
Qualifications Authority	Lead drafting	Report coordination
QA Bodies	QA input	Sections on QA arrangements
Universities / TVET	Technical input	Descriptor interpretation

Record of meetings

Table 4 — Record of Meetings and Consultations

Date	Meeting Type	Participants	Purpose	Output
	NRC Meeting	NRC members	Approve roadmap	Minutes
	TWG Workshop	Experts	Draft mapping	Draft text
	Consultation	Stakeholders	Validate content	Feedback report

Evidence of endorsement

Include as ANNEXES in the Report:

- ✓ List of endorsing institutions
- ✓ Scans of signed declarations of endorsement by QA Bodies
- ✓ Scan of official approval (if applicable)



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS
CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION
Budgetary institution, A. Goštauto g. 12, LT-01108 Vilnius, Lithuania, tel. +370 5 211 3694, www.skvc.lt, e-mail: skvc@skvc.lt.
Data has been accumulated and stored in the Register of Legal Entities, code 111959192

To whom it may concern 27 December, 2023
S-603

REGARDING INFORMATION IN THE REFERENCING REPORT OF THE LITHUANIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND THE EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) acts as a national quality assurance agency for higher education and academic information and recognition centre. Among other tasks, SKVC carries out external evaluation and accreditation of higher education institutions and their study programmes, advises higher education institutions within its competence, publishes accreditation results, carries out the follow-up of the external evaluation, analyses indicators related to the quality of studies, and performs other thematic analysis.

We confirm that the information provided in the report on referencing the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area on quality assurance in higher education is consistent with the relevant national quality assurance arrangements, provisions and practice.

Sincerely yours,
Director 
Almantas Šerpatauskas

04

**Common Issues
Concerning Report**

Methodological and Analytical Weaknesses

Level comparison:

- not fully systematic
- missing side-by-side analysis
- unclear justification of “best-fit”
- Missing analytical narrative

Strategies to address this issue:

- **Use a clear, repeatable methodology:**
domains and levels →
comparison → judgement
- **Combine:**
tables (technical clarity)
narrative (interpretation)
- **Provide:**
examples of descriptors
explanation of differences

Weak Evidence: “Policy aspirations vs reality” gap

- Claims not supported by:
 - data
 - examples
 - legal references
- Confusion between:
 - **policy intention vs**
 - **actual implementation**
- Lack of:
 - statistics (e.g. register usage, RPL uptake)
 - case studies

Strategy to address it:

Always ask:

👉 “What is the evidence?”

Add:

- concrete examples (qualifications, QA cases)
- references to laws (articles, regulations)
- basic statistics

Governance, Stakeholders and Validation Issues

- Limited evidence of:
 - stakeholder consultations
 - involvement of industry / providers
- Unclear:
 - roles of committees
 - governance of referencing process
- Weak validation:
 - reports not formally endorsed
- missing signatures / authorisation

Strategies to address:

Clearly document:

- who was involved
- how consultation was done
- what feedback was integrated

Distinguish:

- technical drafting
- stakeholder validation

Include:

- meeting records
- stakeholder lists
- endorsement statements

Structural and clarity issues

Poor navigation:

- incomplete table of contents
- missing numbering
- unstructured sections

Key information:

- hidden in annexes
- not linked to main text

Lack of:

- glossary
- diagrams
- clear visuals

Strategies to address these issues:

Ensure:

- consistent structure
- complete table of contents
- clear section titles

Improve usability:

- add diagrams (system, processes)
- move key content into main text
- include glossary

 Use the ACQF checklist

Checklist Overview

Six sections covering all ACQF referencing quality requirements

A

Structural Compliance

Documentation, evidence trail, references

B

Terminology and Consistency

Glossary, abbreviations, consistent use of ACQF terms

C

Presentation and Accessibility

Structure, formatting, cross-referencing, figures

D

Criterion-Specific Requirements

Criteria 1–4: level correspondence, LO, qualifications, QA

E

Governance Procedures and Follow-Up

National bodies, QA statements, experts, certification, publication

F

Sign-Off

NRC endorsement before submission to ACQF Network Presidency

REFERENCING TO THE ACQF

QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECKLIST

Version 18/03/2026

ACQF Referencing Report — Self-Assessment Tool

STRUCTURAL COMPLIANCE

- All legal, regulatory, policy, and operational documents cited in the report are identified with full references
- Links to official sources or references to document repositories are provided
- The status of each evidence source is indicated (e.g., legislation, regulation, policy document, operational template, institutional document)
- The report demonstrates a clear evidence trail for each ACQF referencing criterion

TERMINOLOGY AND CONSISTENCY

- A glossary of key terms is included, reflecting both national and ACQF terminology
- National terminology is clarified where it diverges from ACQF or continental terminology

CRITERION-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

CRITERION 1: There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the ACQF.

- Evidence supporting each level-to-level correspondence between the national NQF and the ACQF is provided
- Reasoning for each level correspondence is clear, transparent, and defensible
- The methodology used to establish level correspondences is described
- A level correspondence table is included, mapping each national level to the corresponding ACQF level
- Where a national level does not correspond to an ACQF level, the gap is clearly identified and explained

CRITERION 2: The national qualifications frameworks or systems are based on learning outcomes principles and related to arrangements for recognition of prior learning (including non-formal and informal) and, where appropriate, to credit systems.

- The national framework/system is demonstrated to be based on a learning outcomes approach, consistent with ACQF principles
- A description of how learning outcomes are defined and used in each education and

What matters most

- Clarity
- Honesty about the current state
- Clear methodology and justification
- Strong evidence and examples
- Inclusive stakeholder process



Referencing is not just about alignment — it is a **tool for system development, transparency and trust**

Links to Referencing Reports

[European Qualifications Framework Referencing Reports | Europass](#)



europass Europass tools Learn in Europe Work in Europe About Europass Stakeholders

EQF Referencing Reports

Select the country to see the EQF Referencing Report.

- EQF Referencing Report | Albania
- EQF Referencing Report | Austria
- EQF Referencing Report | Belgium - Flemish Community
- EQF Referencing Report | Belgium - French Community
- EQF Referencing Report | Croatia
- EQF Referencing Report | Cyprus
- EQF Referencing Report | Czechia
- EQF Referencing Report | Denmark
- EQF Referencing Report | England and Northern Ireland
- EQF Referencing Report | Estonia
- EQF Referencing Report | Finland
- EQF Referencing Report | France

[ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework - ASEAN Main Portal](#)

AQRF Referencing Report of ASEAN Member States:

1. [Malaysia](#)
2. [Philippines](#)
3. [Thailand](#)
4. [Indonesia](#)
5. [Viet Nam](#)

[EQF Referencing Report | Turkey | Europass](#)

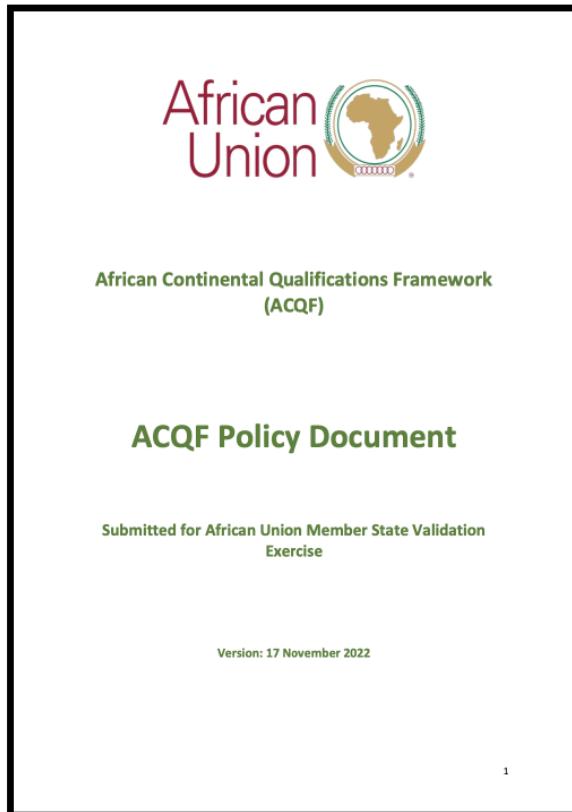
asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025_02_ASEAN-QUALIFICATION-REFERENCE-FRAMEWORK-Viet-Nam.pdf

Questions, comments,
clarifications?

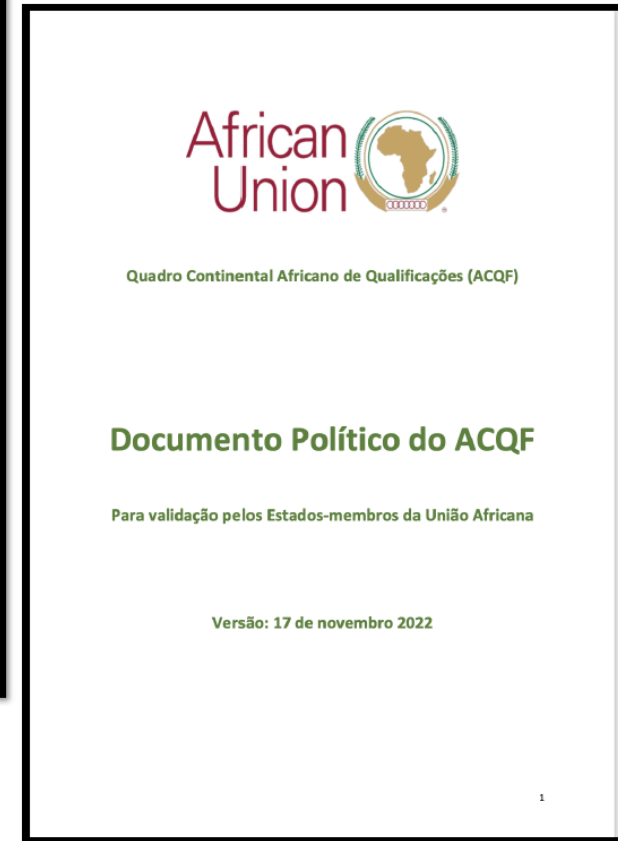
05

**ACQF-II Activities
until completion**

Formal adoption of the ACQF policy – - November, AUC ministerial meeting



<https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-policy-document-upon-validation-by-au-member-states-en-fr-pt>



7th ACQF Forum, 28-30 July, Nairobi

- Registrations closed
- Pool of sponsorships – decision until end of June
- Invitations will be sent out early July

Topics:

- Migration
- Assistance to refugees
- Presentation of referencing reports
- QCP
- Reports from ACQF Clusters
- Discussion on sustainability

Common Occupational Profiles

Two coordinating bodies selected:

- Namibia (NQA, NTA) for: green hydrogen, renewable energy
- Zambia for: mining, agriculture
- Discussions with Kenya

Nex steps: constituting working groups with additional countries, vetting experts, contractual arrangements with agencies.

Development of assessment criteria.

Target: 3 working groups, 8-10 common standards

Work mostly on existing materials

Some outstanding research

- NQF survey (2022, 2024, ...)
- Recognition
- Feedback from employers

Stage of NQF development and implementation	Number of NQFs in Africa	Countries
Stage 1: NQF development not started	4	Burkina Faso Chad, Gabon, S. Tomé and Príncipe
Stage 2: NQF in early thinking	4	Senegal, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan
Stage 3: NQF in development and consultation	14	Cameroon, Djibouti, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda Madagascar Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Morocco, Republic of Congo
Stage 4: NQF in place (fully developed, approved as a legal act, started implementation)	12	Angola, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Tunisia, Zimbabwe Burundi, Egypt, Lesotho, Rwanda
Stage 5: NQF operational and reviewed	8	Cabo Verde, Kenya, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia Botswana, Mauritius
TOTAL number of countries in this overview	42	

<https://acqf.africa/resources/surveys-acqf-ii-nqf-rpl-micro-credentials/survey-of-national-qualifications-frameworks-in-africa-analytical-report>

RPL Pilot projects

- Cameroon
- Tunisia
- Botswana
- Seychelles
- Senegal
- Eswatini

Completion of TA support to countries and regions

- Malawi, Rwanda, Seychelles, Senegal, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Zambia
- East African Community (EAC TVET QF)

Continuation of support for linking data to QCP

Quick revamp of the ACQF website

Project exit strategy:

- Formal registration of the ACQF Network
- Sustainability of digital tools: QCP, ACQF website
- Funding for meetings in the future
- Support from AUC discussed
- Online meeting with all EU Delegations in Africa
- Continuation of referencing, linking data on qualifications