Report on Alignment of Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) to SADC Qualifications Framework (SADCQF)

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The realisation of this report on the alignment of Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) to the SADC Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) would not have been possible without the commitment to the alignment process of the Seychelles National Alignment Committee (NAC) members and their key inputs. The NAC acknowledges the support of the staff of the SQA Secretariat.

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Authorisation

This report is the official statement that the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) is aligned to the Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF). The report has been endorsed by the National Alignment Committee (NAC) in Seychelles.

The alignment process has been conducted by the NAC. The NAC comprises representatives from the:
- Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD)
- Ministry of Employment, Immigration and Civil Status
- Tertiary Education Commission (TEC)
- Professional Centres
- University of Seychelles (UniSey)
- Seychelles Qualifications Authority Board
- Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA Secretariat)

The SQA also provided secretariat support to the NAC.

The NAC declares that all the criteria have been met and authorises Ms Fiona Ernesta to sign off on the report.

Fiona Ernesta
Chief Executive Officer
Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA)

Executive Summary

1. The Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF), a comprehensive Regional Qualifications Framework for schooling, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and higher education was established in 2011 by the SADC Ministers of Education.

2. The SADCQF is a ten (10) level reference framework and a regional mechanism for comparability and recognition of full qualifications, credit transfer, creation of regional standards, and facilitation of Quality Assurance (QA). It is underpinned by learning outcomes, a set of agreed quality assurance (QA) principles, practices, procedures and standardised terminology intended to: ensure effective comparability of qualifications and credits across SADC, facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications among Member States, harmonise qualifications, and create acceptable regional standards. Its purpose is to enable easier movement of learners and workers across the SADC region and internationally.

3. At their meeting in 1997, SADC Ministers responsible for Education and Training established a Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA) to follow-up on the implementation of the Regional Qualifications Framework. The TCCA is a group of experts from the SADC Member States and is supported by the SADC Secretariat. The TCCA is represented by Chief Executive Officers and Directors of National Qualifications Authorities, national Higher Education Councils and Ministries of Education responsible for Certification and Accreditation of education and skills training in SADC.

4. At the TCCA meeting of September 2016, the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the TCCA was revised so as to be more focused on the SADCQF and to take into consideration the new developments in the region. Encapsulated in its revised ToR the mandate of the TCCA is to develop and recommend to SADC Ministers responsible for Education and Skills Training, regional policy guidelines, instruments, structures, procedures that would facilitate equating, comparability, and developing a common understanding of accreditation and certification of qualifications to enhance mobility of learners and workers in SADC, and to follow-up on implementation of the SADCQF.

5. The TCCA proposed that Member States agree to align their National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) or National Qualifications Systems (NQS) and QA mechanisms to the SADCQF. The vision is that in the SADC region all new qualifications, certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent authorities will contain the relevant level on the SADCQF.

Alignment will enable this recognition of achievement at a regional level. The resulting transparency and information about the qualifications and QA of aligned Member States will further assist in embedding mutual trust amongst SADC Members. Regional alignment would also enable institutions and individuals to make comparisons of their learning and competence levels and would reduce unnecessary duplication of learning and effort when moving through the SADC for study or work purposes.

6. Ten alignment criteria and underlying sub-criteria were adopted by the TCCA to ensure consistency in the alignment across the SADC region.

7. Eight Member States volunteered to pilot the alignment of their NQFs/NQS and QA mechanisms to that of the SADCQF. The pilot countries are Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Eswatini and Zambia.

8. This report is the official authorised statement from the National Alignment Committee (NAC) that the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) is aligned to the SADCQF.

9. The report is a demonstration of the commitment of Seychelles to the recommendation of the TCCA that Member States align their NQFs/NQS and QA mechanisms to the SADCQF. The content of the Seychelles Alignment report provides a useful support tool for the further development and implementation of the SNQF and will inform QA practices nationally.

10. The National Alignment Committee (NAC) was appointed by the Minister for Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD) on 03 January 2018. The alignment process has been undertaken by the NAC which comprises representatives from the following:
   ▪ The Seychelles Qualifications Authority Board;
   ▪ Tertiary Education Commission (TEC);
   ▪ Professional Centres;
   ▪ MoEHRD;
   ▪ Ministry of Employment, Immigration & Civil Status;
   ▪ University of Seychelles (UniSey);
   ▪ The Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) that also provided the Secretariat to the process.

11. There has been involvement of stakeholder representatives through the NAC members, presentations and a public comment process.

12. The NAC has validated this alignment report and concludes that all the ten alignment criteria have been met on the grounds that the report:

(a) Specifies clearly the relevant national bodies that made up the NAC and drove the alignment process in Seychelles and the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the NAC;

(b) Establishes a clear demonstrable link between qualification levels in the Seychelles NQF and level descriptors of the SADCQF:

    i. The SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF structurally.
    ii. The SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF conceptually.
    iii. 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 as depicted in the Table below:

SADCQF		SNQF
Level 1		Level 1
Level 2		Level 2
Level 3		Level 3
Level 4		Level 4
Level 5		Level 5
Level 6		Level 6
Level 7		Level 7
Level 8		Level 8
Level 9		Level 9
Level 10		Level 10

(c) Illustrates that the SNQF is based on learning outcomes and links to non-formal and informal learning and that the Seychelles credit system is embedded in the SNQF;

(d) Describes clearly the published procedures for including qualifications in the SNQF and the place of qualifications in the SNQF;

(e) Establishes that the Seychelles National QA system for education and training is embedded in the SNQF and is consistent and compatible with the sixteen (16) Quality Assurance (QA) guidelines of the SADCQF;

(f) Gives clear information on the national authorities responsible for the verification of national and foreign qualifications;

(g) Provides evidence that the NAC certified the alignment of the SNQF to the SADCQF and endorsed the comprehensive report on the alignment and its evidence;

(h) Provided for a public comment process via the SQA website and electronic mail distribution to key stakeholders;

(i) Details plans that have been made to make changes to legislation and policy supporting alignment to SADCQF levels on qualification certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent local authorities.

13. The initial pages of the alignment report include the official authorization and sign-off, the executive summary, as well as the acronyms and abbreviations used in the report and the list of figures. The report contains five Chapters:

a) **Chapter One** provides an introduction and background to the alignment with the SADCQF, with a focus on the SADCQF including the TCCA, the NAC, and the SNQF;

b) **Chapter Two** details the profile of Seychelles and its education and training system and establishes the link with the SNQF;

c) **Chapter Three** describes the process of alignment in Seychelles, the activities contained therein and the milestones to alignment established by Seychelles;

d) **Chapter Four** details responses of the NAC to each of the ten (10) SADCQF alignment criteria and underlying sub-criteria, providing evidence of the Seychelles alignment to the SADCQF. It also describes the methodology and comparison adopted to demonstrate how the SNQF level descriptors align with the SADCQF level descriptors.

e) **Chapter Five** is the concluding chapter of the alignment report. It gives confirmation that all ten SADCQF alignment criteria have been met and that the SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF.

f) The Conclusions encapsulated in Chapter Five are followed by the References used in the report and the Annexures.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANHRD	Agency for National Human Resource Development
AU	African Union
BLM	Blended Learning Mode
CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CBA	Competency Based Approach
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EMIS	Education Management and Information System
EXCO	Executive Committee
GATS	General Agreement on Trades and Services
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HRD	Human Resource Development
IBE	International Bureau of Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IECD	Institute of Early Childhood Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
IT	Information Technology

LDs	Level Descriptors
LO/LOs	Learning Outcomes
MoEHRD	Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development
MQA	Mauritius Qualifications Authority
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
NAC	National Alignment Committee
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NIHSS	National Institute of Health and Social Studies
NQA	National Qualifications Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NQF LDs	NQF Level Descriptors
NQS	National Qualifications System
PC/PCs	Professional Centres
QA	Quality Assurance
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RQF	Regional Qualifications Framework
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADCQF	SADC Qualifications Framework
SADCQVN	SADC Qualifications Verification Network
SADC RQF	SADC Regional Qualifications Framework

SALS	School of Advanced Level Studies
SBSA	Seychelles Business Studies Academy
SIAD	Seychelles Institute of Art and Design
SIAH	Seychelles Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture
SIDOL	Seychelles Institute of Distance and Open Learning
SIDS	Small Island Development States
SIT	Seychelles Institute of Technology
SITE	Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education
SMA	Seychelles Maritime Academy
SNQF	Seychelles National Qualifications Framework
SQA	Seychelles Qualifications Authority
SQAIS	SQA Information System
STA	Seychelles Tourism Academy
TCCA	Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
TGMI	The Guy Morel Institute
ToR	Terms of Reference
TQF	Transnational Qualifications Framework
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UniSey	University of Seychelles

VAT   Value Added Tax

VUSSC   Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth

WTO   World Trade Organisation

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction and Background to Alignment with the SADCQF

1.1. Background and context

As early as 1997, when the SADC Protocol on Education and Training was signed, the idea of a SADC Regional Qualifications Framework (SADC RQF) surfaced in a number of regional policy directives and strategies. In 2000 a SADC Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA) was established, comprising nominated qualifications and quality assurance experts from Member States and with support from the SADC Secretariat. The purpose of the TCCA was "*to develop and recommend policy guidelines, instruments, structures and procedures that would facilitate equating, harmonising and eventual standardisation of accreditation and certification of qualifications in SADC"*.

In 2001 SADC Ministers of Education endorsed a Strategic Plan put forward by the TCCA to facilitate the development, implementation and harmonisation of national qualifications frameworks, to review and strengthen national assessment and accreditation systems, and to facilitate agreement on entry requirements to higher education in the region.

Between 1997 and 2011 the TCCA undertook a number of activities to support the SADC RQF process. This included the review of existing qualifications (2001 and 2010) which recommended the need for development of level descriptors for the SADC RQF, a framework for the improvement of quality assurance systems in the region, and a SADC Qualifications Portal. A regional Quality Assurance (QA) guideline was developed in 2008 informed by a review of the status of QA systems in Member States. The development of a SADC Qualifications Portal was started in 2009 and was initially populated with qualifications until 2011. The Region adopted a piece-by-piece approach to developing the SADC RQF by first focusing on QA. For some time however the development of the RQF remained dormant and was resuscitated in 2016.

The key component of the SADC RQF is that it is an overarching framework for regional integration, QA and global competitiveness of education and training systems in SADC Member States. Once established and implemented, the SADC RQF is to be extended to the rest of the continent in accordance with the continental coverage of the Addis Convention (Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States). The SADC RQF also holds numerous benefits to the various countries and these include:

- Promoting dialogue and mutual understanding;
- Creating a wider pool of knowledge, skills, values and experience in the region as countries can begin to fill their training gaps and collaborate in highly specialised training;
- Increasing access to skilled and knowledgeable personnel through a more efficient, rational and standardised system;
- Allowing learners and workers greater flexibility and mobility within the region and increasing the pool of learning opportunities;
- Facilitating determination of qualification comparability and credit transfer in the SADC region;
- Regulating cross-border provisioning;
- Streamlining and rationalising training resources leading to greater economies of scale in developing highly technical and rare skills and knowledge;
- Promoting greater co-operation and unity of purpose between SADC Member States and education and training stakeholders;
- Enhancing partnerships between governments and private education and training providers to improve QA practices and relevance of qualifications; and
- Ensuring more justice in access and equity of disadvantaged groups.

1.2. Purpose of the Seychelles alignment report

This alignment report seeks to achieve the following:

- Outline the SADCQF and its implementation model, which embeds the alignment;

- Detail the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF);

- Elaborate the profile of the Seychelles education and training system;

- Describe the process of alignment in Seychelles undertaken by the Seychelles National Alignment Committee (NAC); and

- Present evidence of Seychelles' alignment to the SADCQF.

1.3. The SADC Qualifications Framework

The SADC RQF was formally named the SADC Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) at a September 2016 meeting of the TCCA. It is a regional mechanism for comparability and recognition of full qualifications, credit transfer, creation of regional standards and facilitation of QA. It consists of a set of agreed principles, practices, procedures and standardised terminology intended to:

- ensure effective comparability of qualifications and credits across SADC;
- facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications among Member States;
- harmonise qualifications; and
- create acceptable regional standards.

1.3.1. Purpose of the SADCQF

The main purpose of the SADCQF then includes:
- Providing a mechanism for comparability and recognition of qualifications in SADC;
- Facilitating mutual recognition of qualifications in all Member States;
- Harmonising qualifications wherever possible;
- Promoting the transfer of credits within and among Member States and even beyond; and
- Creating SADC regional standards where appropriate;
- Contributing to the development and implementation of National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) in Member States;
- Harmonization between NQFs in Member States;
- Review and strengthening of national assessment and accreditation systems; and
- Facilitation of agreement on entrance requirements to higher education and training.

1.3.2. Scope of the SADCQF

The scope of the SADCQF includes all forms, levels and categories of education and training that exist in the region including in Member States. This includes provision by public and private sectors and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The main principle is one of inclusiveness to encompass all areas of general education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), higher education, lifelong and out-of-school or non-formal education, including but not limited to various modes of learning such as face-to-face, distance and online learning. Apprenticeships and industry-based training are also to be taken on board. Cross-border education and training as outlined under the General Agreement on Trades and Services (GATS) will not be excluded.

1.3.3. Design features of the SADCQF

The existing and emerging NQFs in Member States already exhibit a variety of design features best suited to the individual countries and in most cases agreed on by the stakeholders and role players in the country. The design features range from level descriptors, quality assurance and standards setting arrangements, databases, etc. The design features of the SADCQF are determined in a similar conciliatory

manner. Furthermore, the design features of the SADCQF are influenced by the structures of the NQFs in Member States and vice-versa. The SADCQF and the NQFs should be well linked and co-ordinated as a critical component of the harmonisation process.

The SADCQF includes standardised terminology for better understanding and improved implementation. The SADCQF recognises the variety of credits awarded by Member States and will develop a mechanism that will allow for comparability and transfer. This may ultimately evolve into a Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) system and should facilitate Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes.

The SADCQF is a reference framework. It consists of:

- Ten levels described by SADC level descriptors as contained in *Annexure 1;*

- A SADC qualifications portal that includes part qualifications and full qualifications, described through outcome statements and including credits where applicable, that are formally recognised in SADC Member States; and

- SADC Quality Assurance Guidelines as contained in *Annexure 8.*

1.4. Historical development of the SADCQF between 2016 and 2018

There have been several key milestones in the development of the SADCQF between 2016 and 2018:

- The SADC Ministers approved the SADC Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Guidelines in June 2016.

- At a meeting of the SADC TCCA in September 2016, Member States agreed to revive the SADC RQF. At the meeting:
    - The TCCA Terms of Reference (ToR) was revised;
    - A two-year milestone plan was developed;
    - An Implementation Model consisting of three programmes was developed and adopted;
    - Ten alignment criteria were agreed on and adopted;
    - Six Member States volunteered to pilot the alignment (two more volunteered at a later stage);
    - South Africa agreed to spearhead Programme 1 (Development and Alignment) of the Implementation Model.

- In December 2016 the TCCA Executive Committee (TCCA EXCO) was set up based on the SADC Troika Leadership Principles and it held its first meeting in South Africa.

- At the TCCA Meeting of April 2017:
  - A SADC Qualifications Verifications Network (SADCQVN) was launched;
  - The SADCQF Communication Strategy was approved;
  - The TCCA held an event to popularise the SADCQF.

- In June 2017:
  - SAQA hosted an alignment capacity building workshop for the eight pilot countries that focussed on the Self-assessment Report;
  - The SADC Ministers of Education officially launched the SADCQF at a Ministers Meeting held in Eswatini.

- At a TCCA Meeting held in September 2017 the SADCQF Implementation Model was expanded to include five (5) programmes *(see Figure 1)*. These are:
  - Programme 1: Development and alignment
  - Programme 2: Quality Assurance
  - Programme 3: Verification
  - Programme 4: Advocacy and communication
  - Programme 5: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT), and Articulation.

Figure 1: SADC Qualifications Framework Implementation Model
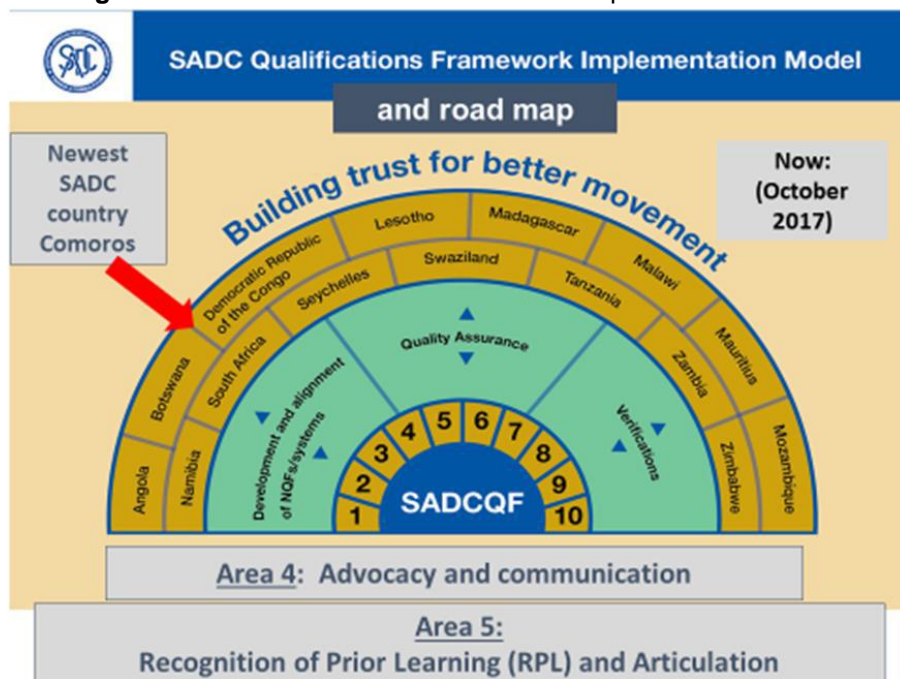
- There was a third meeting of the TCCA EXCO in December 2017 and this was held in South Africa.

- In April 2018 South Africa hosted an alignment report writing workshop for the eight countries piloting the alignment.

1.5. The Seychelles National Qualifications Framework

It has been national policy since 2000 to develop a National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and therefore appoint a National Qualifications Authority (NQA) to administer and develop the framework. When the government started on this path the 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 NQA, and stated that work would be done over the coming year to establish the groundwork for such an entity.

Accordingly, in 2005 the Ministry of Education and Youth assigned a team of education specialists to the task of preparing the legislation, and drawing up a proposal pertaining to the nature of the qualifications authority that would be set up. Human resource capacity for the task was built partly from the investment of the government of Seychelles, from 1999, and the assistance of the Canadian government, from 2004, for study visits and consultancies. Such investments led to the development of much framework related material. This occurred against a backdrop of the review and standardization of programmes in post-secondary institutions to the competency-based approach (CBA). With CBA development, the need for a framework became more marked.

1.5.1. Objectives of the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework

The Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) is designed 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 and regulate the development of qualifications based on unit standards which are linked to the workplace and society requirements;
- 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.

1.5.2. Definitions

The Act setting up the Seychelles Qualifications Authority defines the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) as *"a framework for the development, recognition and award of qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skills and competence to be acquired by learners."*

The SNQF establishes the regulations and principles that guide the development of qualifications. It states the criteria to be met for qualifications to be recognized nationally. It defines the conditions for learners to be certified. It is also a set of policies and regulations which guides all providers of education and training about the conditions necessary for them to operate.

1.5.3. Architectural features of the Qualifications Map

The Qualifications Map is the most visible aspect of the SNQF. It is, in a sense, the public face of the SNQF. For our purposes the Qualifications Map can be defined as:

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

The term level as used in the context of the Qualifications Map refers to "the particular level at which a unit standard or qualification is registered on the SNQF. The hierarchy of levels is built not only on the basis of increasing cognitive challenge but also on practical skills development and degree of autonomy. Levels descriptors are "statements used to describe a hierarchy of learning outcomes in terms of reasoning and problem solving, autonomy and responsibility, knowledge, and degree of complexity of tasks."

The term Qualification Type as used in the context of the Qualifications Map refers to "the specified nomenclature for qualifications at particular levels of the SNQF." Thus from the qualifications type of Master at Level 9, for example, can be derived Master of Public Administration, or Master of Science, as needed for that particular field or speciality.

The term Pathway as used in the context of the Qualifications Map refers to the "access route to a specified qualification". The pathway, for example, from Certificate to Advanced Diploma goes through the Advanced Certificate and the Diploma.

A qualification is firstly a planned combination of learning outcomes which may include Unit Standards (of which there are three types – essential, specific, elective). A unit standard is a minimum of 3 credits. Unit standards are registered statements of desired education and training competencies and their associated performance criteria together with administrative and other information (e.g. standard and level numbers, number of credits, etc.). A qualification at post-secondary/further and higher education level consists of a minimum number of 120 credits. A credit is equal to ten (10) notional hours of learning. A notional hour includes direct contact time with teachers and trainers, and non-contact time, which is time spent on independent study, working on assignments and on other forms of assessment.

1.5.4. The Seychelles National Qualifications Framework Qualifications Map

The SQA has adopted a ten (10) level Qualifications Map. The lowest qualification type on the Map is the Primary Qualification and the highest the Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Qualifications. Generally, the Map 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. This hierarchy of competencies is best seen in the level descriptors. It can be noticed that the Map is geared mostly at post-secondary/tertiary education level. This is understandable since the National Curriculum is already, in a sense, a framework for primary and secondary education. Therefore, for the time being, the Map addresses principally the tertiary levels of education and training.

Figure 2: The SNQF Ten (10) Level Qualifications Map

NQF level	Qualification type			Notional hours
10	PhD, Post-Doctorate			3600
9	Master			1600
8	Post Graduate			1200
7	Degree			3600
6		Advanced Diploma		1200
5		Diploma		3600
4	Higher School Certificate (A-Levels)		Advanced Certificate	2400
3			Certificate	1200
2	Secondary Certificate, IGCSE			
1	Primary Certificate			

Notional hours, for example, have been established for the tertiary education level and not for General Education. A minimum number of notional hours has been set for the qualification types to provide some flexibility in the design and implementation of programmes. Hours are used rather than days or weeks to take into consideration the different modalities in the implementation of courses. The shortest allowable length for the implementation of a qualification on the Map is 1200 notional hours, amounting to 120 credits.

CHAPTER TWO: Profile of Seychelles Education and Training System

2.1. Country Profile

The Republic of Seychelles is an archipelago situated in the Western Indian Ocean, 55.6 degrees east of the Greenwich Meridian and 4 degrees south of the Equator. It consists of 123 islands, including a number of new islands on the eastern coast artificially reclaimed to meet the increasing demand for land for emerging and present development needs. The islands have an estimated landmass of some 459 km2 spread over an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 1,374,000 km². The population of Seychelles was estimated at 94,677 in 2016 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017) – the smallest in Africa and the twelfth smallest in the world. The majority of the population (estimated at 75 percent) reside on the main island, Mahé.

The Seychelles is a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) since 2008 as well as a member of various other regional and international organizations including the United Nations (UN), the Commonwealth, the African Union (AU), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). Seychelles is therefore party to a number of conventions, protocols and instruments.

Seychelles continues to demonstrate strong political commitment, engagement and leadership in the area of sustainable development at national, regional and international levels. The Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy 2011-2020 is a key national framework guiding development in this area. The Seychelles is characterized as a Small Island Development State (SIDS) by various international organizations and, since mid-1994, as an upper middle-income country by the United Nations Development Programme on the basis of its per capita income, estimated at US$ 15,410 GDP per capita in 2016. Both categorizations pose some challenges to Seychelles ongoing efforts to achieve sustainable development for its population. In spite of that, the government expenditure over the last ten years reflects a staunch commitment to social welfare.

The Education Sector has been one of the top beneficiaries of Government annual budget. The budget allocation to education as a percentage of natural expenditure has been maintained at between 12 to 13.4% for the last ten years. However, since 2017 the budget allocated to the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD) has been decreased to 3.7 and 3.8 percent of GDP.[1]

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[1] The recommended UNESCO benchmark for education spending within the context of the Sustainable Development Goal Agenda 2030 is 4 to 6 percent GDP

2.2.   Financing of education and human resource development

The Seychelles Government regards Education as a critical driver of economic success and social progress in modern societies.   In addition, there is growing worldwide recognition that the provision of quality education and training is central to the creation of a highly skilled knowledge and innovation-based economy, which itself underpins ongoing and sustainable prosperity.   Education and training are also vital to building a society where all citizens have the opportunity and motivation to participate fully in the social and economic life of the country.   Central to future economic and social success is the further development of quality and inclusiveness in education.   This objective must be an integral part of any strategy to support lifelong learning with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competencies, and promoting personnel fulfilment.

Government is the main funder of state education through recurrent and capital projects as part of the Education Sector annual budget which is presented as a component of Government's annual budget approved yearly by the National Assembly.

Educational Institutions manage and supplement, where necessary, their allocated budget in line with Programme Performance Based Budgeting (PPBB) related financial guidelines and regulations.

To ensure that financial status of learners and/or their families do not become a barrier to access beyond the secondary stage of education, the Social Welfare Agency, established through the Social Welfare Agency Act (2008), has put in place mechanisms to facilitate access by these categories of learners.

Appropriate procedures and guidelines also cover subsidized accommodation and allowances for students from islands other than the mainland (Mahé) where all the tertiary education and training institutions are located.

In line with the relevant sections of VAT Act (2010), provisions exist for registered private educational institutions to benefit from tax exemptions on imported materials up to a certain value, namely in regards to construction and teaching and learning materials.

The education sector has recently developed its Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2018-2022) and realization of the Plan of Action will require sustained, targeted and adequate spending and efficient implementation arrangements. Whilst it is expected that government will remain the main funder of the MTS 2018-2022 of the MoEHRD, other sources of funding to complement government spending will be required.

2.3. The Seychelles education and training system

The SQA was set up at the start of 2006 to regulate all matters to do with qualifications in the country. Its main purpose is to develop and implement a National Qualifications Framework which is to guide the education system and education and training institutions about the standards and conditions that need to be met in order to operate, and for learners to be certified. The SQA regulates both public and private education and training institutions.

The Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) provides a structure, or a framework, by which all education and training can be included in one system and can be compared with one another.

The SNQF divides the education and training in Seychelles into three main bands:

2.3.1. General Education

General education encompasses levels 1 and 2 of the SNQF or primary and secondary education. This stage of the education system provides students with basic, broad based knowledge and skills ranging from operational literacy and numeracy to the development of more complex skills involving application of learning. Basic education or Primary Certificate forms the basis of the education system and is translated as Level 1 of the SNQF. The SNQF also makes provision for Upper Secondary or Advanced Level for students who wish to pursue the academic pathway. The Upper Secondary or Advanced Level programme is of two years duration and is pitched at Level 4 of the SNQF.

For curriculum purposes, the Education (Amended) Act (2017), organizes the basic education and training system as follows:

I.   Formal early childhood or crèche education
Formal early childhood education lasts for two years and is available for children aged 3½ to 5½ years free of charge by the state in all districts. Although this stage is non-compulsory, almost all children in this age group attend. Early childhood education classes are attached or adjacent to district primary schools and are administered by primary school head teachers. Fee-paying private providers registered with the MoEHRD also provide formal early childhood education. At present, there are 32 state and five private fee-paying registered crèches offering formal early childhood education.

II. *Primary education*

Primary education lasts for six years (Primary 1 – Primary 6) and is compulsory for all children. A system of zoning[2] in line with Section 56 of the Education Act (2004) makes it compulsory for children to attend state primary school in their parent's or guardian's district of residence.

For curriculum purposes, the primary stage is organized into lower, middle and upper primary. Both state and fee-paying private providers offer primary education. There are currently 24 public primary schools and four registered private schools offering primary education.

III. *Secondary education*[3]

Similarly to primary education, provision of secondary education by the state is non-fee paying. Secondary education (S1-S5) is compulsory and is delivered in regional secondary schools at the state level. Regionalization means that secondary-age students are concentrated in fewer regional centres, rather than remaining in relatively small district primary schools. Secondary education also includes the non-compulsory School of Advanced Level Studies (SALS).

For curriculum purposes, this stage is sub-categorized as lower, middle and upper secondary. Both state and fee-paying private providers offer secondary education. As of 2018, there are eleven (11) state regional secondary schools and one School of Advanced Level Studies, as well as three fee-paying registered private schools offering secondary education.

2.3.2. Non-university tertiary education and training

Non-university tertiary education and training are offered by Professional Centres (PCs). The PCs are mainly specialised education and training institutions offering programmes ranging from Level 3 to 6 of the SNQF. These lead to the award of vocational/occupational qualifications.

Over the years, the responsibility and management of PCs has shifted between the Ministry responsible for Education and other parent ministries. Currently, the following ten non-university tertiary education and training institutions (PCs) are in operation:

- Seychelles Business Studies Academy (SBSA)
- Seychelles Institute of Technology (SIT)
- Seychelles Maritime Academy (SMA)
- Seychelles Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture (SIAH)

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[2]Where justifiable, requests for exemption from zoning by parents may be approved by the Principal Secretary

[3]Since 2014, includes the School of Advanced Level Studies (SALS)

- National Institute of Health and Social Studies (NIHSS)
- Seychelles Tourism Academy (STA)
- Seychelles Institute of Art and Design (SIAD)
- Seychelles Institute of Distance and Open Learning (SIDOL)
- Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education (SITE)
- The Guy Morel Institute (TGMI) (following its demerger from the University of Seychelles in 2018).

With the exception of the Seychelles Tourism Academy (STA) which falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine, and the National Institute of Health and Social Studies (NIHSS) which falls under the Ministry of Health, the remaining PCs fall under the responsibility and management of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD).

Under the Tertiary Education Act (2011) provision has been made for PCs to have their own charter and statutes to govern their operations. PCs are governed by a board appointed by the Minister in charge of education and the necessary infrastructures are being set up for PCs (with the exception of TGMI) to have their autonomy, which means that they will have academic freedom and self-governance in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations. As dictated by its Charter (The Guy Morel Institute Charter 2018), TGMI is an autonomous institution with the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development as its parent Ministry.

2.3.3. Higher education and training or university tertiary education and training

Tertiary education and training at university level constitutes the fifth stage of education and training and programmes on offer are primarily from Level 7 to 10 of the SNQF. University education is in its infancy in Seychelles and falls under the Tertiary Education Act (2011).

From 2000 to 2010, the University of Seychelles–American Institute of Medicine (USAIM) was the only (private) university established in Seychelles, registered under the Education Act (2004), specifically the regulations on private schools. In September 2009, a new (public) university, the University of Seychelles (UniSey), came into operation. Traditionally, university-level education and training has been accessed overseas through government sponsored/approved scholarships in key fields matching the human resource needs of the country. The level of self-financed or privately sponsored university education and training has been on the increase in recent years although relatively insignificant. Additionally, a few non-university tertiary education institutions have operated partnership programmes for a number of years with selected overseas universities and/or Institutes of Higher Learning.

2.3.4. Additional features of the Seychelles education and training system

Non-formal early childhood (day care) education

In line with the Section 11(2) of the Education Act (2004) and the related regulations S.I.44 of 2005-Education (Non-Formal Early Childhood Education Centre) Regulations 2005, provision is made for the operation of private, fee-paying, non-compulsory non-formal early childhood education (day care) catering for children aged 0-3 years.

The MoEHRD is responsible for monitoring the quality of non-formal early childhood education and provides guidance for the development of this service. There are presently 26 registered private non-formal early childhood education (day care) centres.

In line with the Education (Amended) Act (2017) the responsibility for non-formal early childhood education became the legal responsibility of the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) in line with the provision of the IECD Act 2014. As of August 2018, there are 76 registered home-based childminding establishments offering a service for children aged 0-4 years. The registered private non-formal early childhood education centres will be migrated to and be regulated by IECD in a phased-approach commencing 2019.

Open and distance education and learning

In line with relevant provisions of the Tertiary Education Act (2011) and the Policy on Open and Distance Learning (2015), open and distance education is provided by the Seychelles Institute of Open and Distance Learning (SIDOL), formally the Adult Learning and Distance Education Centre (ALDEC).

Private education and training

The Constitution of Seychelles (1993) under the Right to Education and Part Three of the Education (Amended) Act 2017, Private Education Institutions, and the related regulations S.I.45 of 2005 – Education (Private Educational Institutions) Regulations 2005, provide for the establishment, operation and coordination of the development of fee-paying private education and training alongside the state system. As of 2018, there are 14 registered, private fee-paying education and training institutions in operation offering short specialized courses to full programmes leading to qualifications.

2.4. Progression and articulation between stages of education

Progression and articulation between early childhood, primary, and secondary stages of education is non-selective. Results of assessment where applicable are used essentially for orienting learners into appropriate courses of study. Provision for grade repetition as per related policy is made in particular at the primary stages of education. Progression from secondary to tertiary is competitive and selective depending on the interrelationship between student performance (based usually on international examinations) and availability of places in the Professional Centres (PCs).

Figure 3: Stages of education and training in relation to the SNQF

Age	Stages Assessment	SNQF Level	Progression between stages
From 18+	TERTIARY UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING	7-10	Selective/ Dependent on Student Performance in International Examinations
From 16+	International Examinations TERTIARY NON-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING	3-6	Selective/ Dependent on Intake Capacity and Student Performance in Assessments/ Examinations
16	International Examinations (IGCSE)/ National Examinations & Records of Achievement (ROA)	2	Selective/ Dependent on Intake Capacity/ International Examinations (S5 → A-Levels)
15 14 13 12	SECONDARY EDUCATION 5 years (S1 to S5)		Non-selective/ Not dependent on Student Performance in Assessments/Examinations
11	National Examinations and Student Profiling		Non-selective Not dependent on Student Performance in Assessment/Examination
10 9 8 7 6	PRIMARY EDUCATION 6 years (P1-P6)	1	
5 4	EARLY CHILDHOOD (CRECHE)	0	Non-selective/ Not dependent on Student Performance in Assessment/Examination
0-3	NON-FORMAL EARLY CHILDHOOD (Day Care Centres)		

Compulsory Years (bracket spanning Primary Education through Secondary Education)

At the end of secondary compulsory education, students in state schools sit National Examinations and/or IGCSEs while students of private schools sit IGCSE Examinations only, with the exception of students of L'école Française or French School that follow the secondary education system of France. IGCSEs are required to qualify for entry into Advanced Level Studies and many of the programmes of non-university tertiary education and training institutions (PCs). Government policy is to eventually develop the national examinations to replace IGCSEs.

Almost 100% of students proceed from primary to the secondary stage of education. On average, around 90% of the student cohort of secondary compulsory education of state schools progresses either to the tertiary education stage or to Advanced Level Studies annually, with the large majority joining PCs or non-university tertiary education and training institutions. Therefore, from secondary compulsory education, students can opt for two main learning pathways:

A. The Academic pathway or academic route by enrolling in upper secondary (Advanced Level Studies) then university studies for a degree and further studies or the world of work. These are usually the high achievers.

B. The vocational pathway to study for an occupational qualification at Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Diploma or Advanced Diploma, from which they can proceed to the world of work. Students who perform well on their Diploma or Advanced Diploma can link up with the academic pathway and enter a degree programme.

There is also the possibility for students to join the Apprenticeship Scheme which has been established for students who do not meet entry criteria for the two above options. The apprenticeship programme is at certificate level and learners enrolled on these programmes spend about half of their time at the institutions and the other half in the industry.

2.5. Teacher education and training

The first teacher training college in Seychelles was set up in 1959. Over the last 59 years, the institution has undergone a series of structural changes including two important mergers, the first with the Seychelles Polytechnic from 1983 to 1998 and the second with the University of Seychelles (UniSey) from January 2010 to December 2013. The new Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education (SITE) was set up in 2014 as a Professional Centre under the Tertiary Education Act (2011) with an approved mandate for teacher training and its own Charter and Governing Board. Before that (from 1999 to 2009) teacher training and curriculum development were under one institution known as the National Institute of Education. SITE is currently repositioning itself to deliver on its new mandate. SITE's vision is to be 'a highly reputable, accessible and recognized Centre of Excellence in teacher education and educational leadership in Seychelles committed to preparing competent and caring professionals to meet the needs of 21st Century learners and schooling.' SITE currently runs 3 Diploma in Education Programmes (Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary) and it runs the following programmes in partnership with the Department of Education of the UniSey:
- Advanced Diploma in Education
- Post-Graduate Certificate in Education
- Bachelor of Education-Primary

- Bachelor of Education-Secondary.

During the second term of 2018 SITE introduced the Blended Learning Mode (BLM), as a modality of training for in-service teachers with minimal disruption to teaching and learning. The BLM was officially launched on 3rd October 2017. It comprises (i) face-to-face training and (ii) distance education (i.e. on-line or self-contained e-learning materials saved on USB drive). The teachers are being released on two afternoons to move to their Training/Tutorial Centre which is set up in secondary schools around the country. This new strategy used by SITE will assist greatly in providing training for untrained teachers presently in the education system.

CHAPTER THREE: Process of Alignment in Seychelles

3.1. Introduction

The Seychelles being a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) stands to benefit tremendously through the alignment with the SADCQF as it will help in bringing the element of trust and enhance mobility of its qualifications across SADC and the rest of the continent through the many benefits that the SADCQF will bring to SADC Member States.

However, 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. This Chapter presents the timeline and focused actions involved in demonstrating Seychelles' alignment to the SADCQF.

3.2. Development and alignment programme of the SADCQF Implementation Model

Development and alignment of National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) or National Qualifications Systems (NQS) to the SADCQF is programme 1 of the five programmes of the SADCQF Implementation Model and this is being driven by South Africa. Eight SADC Member States agreed to pilot alignment of their NQFs / NQS to the SADCQF. The eight pilot countries are Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Eswatini, Zambia, and Seychelles.

The SADC TCCA developed an alignment plan and roadmap as well as alignment timelines to assist the eight pilot countries. The alignment plan included a self-assessment report intended to establish readiness to align. Pilot countries were provided support through capacity building workshops that included peer learning opportunities.

At the TCCA Meeting of September 2016, ten alignment criteria were agreed on and adopted. During the pilot phase the alignment criteria were revised. The revised alignment criteria are shown at *Table 1.*

Table 1: Ten alignment criteria (revised)

No	Alignment Criteria
1	Responsibilities of relevant national bodies involved in the alignment process are determined and published by the relevant competent authorities
2	There is a clear and demonstrable link between qualification levels in the NQF/ National Qualification System (NQS) and level descriptors of the SADCQF
3	The NQF/ NQS is based on learning outcomes and links to non-formal and informal learning and credit systems (where these exist)
4	Procedures for including qualifications in the NQF or describing the place of qualifications in the NQS are transparent
5	The National Quality Assurance System for education and training refers to the NQF or NQS and is consistent with quality assurance guidelines of the SADCQF
6	There is a clear indication of the relevant national authorities responsible for the verification of the qualifications obtained in the national system
7	The alignment process shall include a stated agreement of relevant quality assurance bodies
8	Competent national bodies shall certify the alignment of the NQF/NQS with the SADCQF. A comprehensive report on alignment and its evidence must be published by competent national bodies
9	The official platform of the country must provide for a public comment process for the alignment report
10	Clear plans have been made to make changes to legislation and policy supporting alignment to SADCQF levels on new qualification certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent authorities

The alignment criteria are intended to ensure that the alignment report published by Member States is relevant and fit for purpose, and that it is:

❖ endorsed by competent authorities;
❖ transparent;
❖ internationally comparable; and
❖ trustworthy.

The TCCA also identified generic steps to guide alignment across the SADC as shown at *Figure 4.*
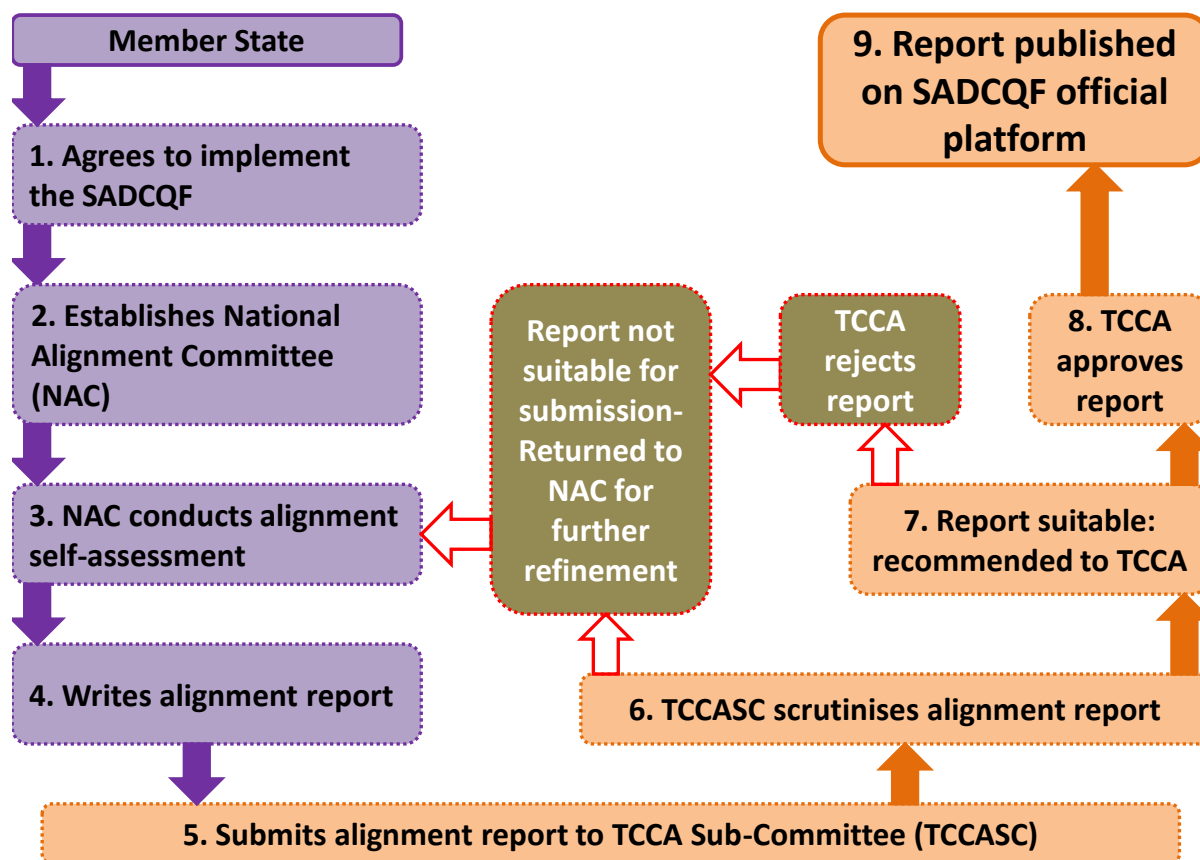
SADC Alignment Road Map

Figure 4: Generic alignment roadmap

3.3.   Seychelles activities and timelines to SADCQF alignment process

In September 2016 Seychelles attended a TCCA meeting that took place in Johannesburg, South Africa along with other SADC Member States. The implementation model and ten alignment criteria were agreed upon at the meeting. Seychelles was among the eight SADC countries that volunteered to pilot the alignment of their qualifications frameworks or qualifications systems to that of the SADCQF.

A clear two-year milestone plan was agreed on, and an Implementation Model initially comprising three areas namely (1) development and alignment; (2) quality assurance and (3) verification was adopted. In September 2017, two more dimensions relevant to regional development were added namely: (4) Communication and advocacy and (5) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) and Articulation.

In December 2016 the piloting countries received the alignment assessment tool which was developed to guide the Member States in the alignment and to ensure commonality across countries.

Pilot countries were required to complete a Self-Assessment tool to assess how ready they were to align with the SADCQF. Each of the 61 sub-criteria had a choice of three evidenced-based responses namely 'Yes', 'Partly' or 'No'.

The 'Yes' response indicated that the criterion has been fully met. In such cases clear evidence needed to be given.

'Partly', or 'No' responses indicated that the criterion has not been fully implemented or not yet implemented, in which case the roadmap and action plan section of the document needed to be completed to indicate the action to take to fully achieve the criterion.

At the TCCA Meeting of April 2017 Member States reported on their progress with the Self-assessment report and since there had been little progress, the TCCA recommended that an alignment capacity building workshop be held for all pilot countries.

The first self-assessment exercise was conducted on 7th and 8th June 2017 during the alignment self-assessment capacity building workshop held in Pretoria, South Africa, at the SAQA House. The purpose of the workshop was to assist member countries to have the opportunity to work through the ten criteria and sub-criteria and have the possibility to request for clarification and share ideas. All the eight pilot countries submitted the first draft of their Self-assessment Report at the end of the workshop.

On 30 June 2017, pilot countries received the approved NAC ToR from TCCA.

The second version of self-assessment report was completed on 10th August 2017 by the SQA staff and CEO-TEC as the Seychelles NAC had not yet been established. On 15th December 2017 the Seychelles submitted the third and final version of its Self-assessment Report to TCCA.

The Seychelles attended the TCCA meeting in September 2017 and the format of the Alignment Report was discussed and approved. The report format was revised by the TCCA EXCO in April 2018.

In November 2017 members of the Seychelles NAC were identified and names were forwarded to the Minister responsible for Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD) for approval. The NAC members consist of representatives from the SQA, SQA Board, TEC, Professional Centres, MoEHRD,

Ministry of Employment, Immigration & Civil Status, and University of Seychelles (UniSey).

The Seychelles NAC was appointed on 03 January 2018 by the Minister for Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD) (see **Annexure 2** for Terms of Reference for the NAC).

The Seychelles attended the SADCQF alignment report writing workshop for countries piloting the alignment to the SADCQF held from 10 to 11 April 2018 in Pretoria, South Africa, at the SAQA House. The workshop had been recommended by TCCA EXCO in December 2017. At the workshop Member States received the revised report format for the final SADCQF alignment report as shown at Figure 5

Figure 5: Report outline for the final SADCQF alignment report
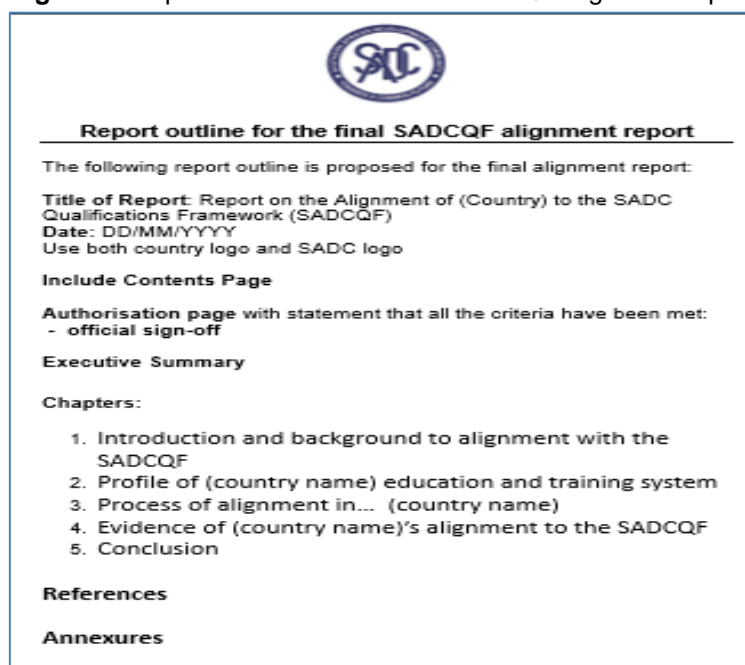
The workshop provided opportunities for:

- members to introduce, discuss and agree on the format of the alignment report;
- the countries piloting the SADCQF alignment to share their progress of alignment;
- pilot countries to share problem solving experiences on addressing barriers to alignment;
- addressing critical issues regarding descriptor alignment; and
- pilot countries to write, finalise and submit a first draft of the Alignment Report.

All eight pilot countries submitted a first draft of their Alignment Report on 11 April 2018.

During the first Seychelles NAC meeting, on 17th May 2018, the way forward was discussed, including the way forward with the first draft of the Alignment report, and the dates for the steps to SADCQF alignment were adjusted to meet the needs and specificity of Seychelles *(see Figure 6).*

Figure 6: Steps to SADCQF alignment
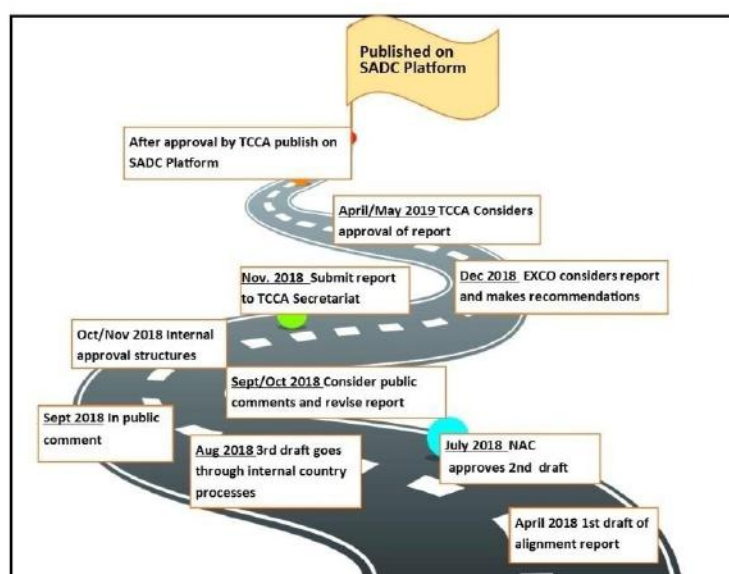
The first draft of the Alignment Report worked on during the workshop at SAQA House, Pretoria, was circulated to NAC members for their perusal prior to a presentation on the draft report by the three members who worked on the first draft. This was done on 30 May 2018. Members were then assigned specific responsibilities for the completion of the second draft of the report.

On 13 July 2018 a second meeting of Seychelles NAC took place. The second draft of the SADCQF alignment report was presented and it was agreed that the report is circulated to members for their further input.

A third meeting of the Seychelles NAC took place on 14 August 2018 following amendments to the alignment report to incorporate further input from members. The NAC endorsed the level-to-level alignment research between the SNQF and the SADCQF and adopted the third draft of the SADCQF alignment report. The draft report was approved by the SQA Board to be made available for public comment at its 29th August 2018 meeting.

The alignment milestones identified by Seychelles NAC are shown in *Table 2* which follows.

Table 2: Seychelles alignment milestones

Timeframe	Alignment milestones
03 January 2018	NAC fully established
10-11 April 2018	Alignment capacity building workshop for TCCA pilot Member States
11 April 2018	First Draft of Alignment Report
2 May 2018	NAC meeting agenda and meeting dates agreed
17 May 2018	First NAC meeting held and work plan agreed upon. NAC approves updated self-assessment report
30 May 2018	Presentation to NAC of the first draft of the Alignment Report worked on during the workshop at SAQA House, Pretoria. Members assigned specific responsibilities for the completion of the second draft of the report.
13 July 2018	Second NAC meeting to get approval of the second draft of Alignment Report
14 July 2018	Draft circulated to the NAC members for their further input
30 July 2018	Incorporation of comments from NAC
14 August 2018	Third NAC meeting to endorse the revised draft Alignment Report and preparation for SQA Board approval for public comment
29 August 2018	Board approves draft Alignment Report for public comment / specific stakeholder consultations
31 August-24 September 2018	Draft Alignment Report in public comment process and stakeholder consultations. E-mail alert to stakeholders of the draft Alignment Report available for public comment on the SQA website www.sqa.sc under **Documents for Public Comment** and the document "Call for Public Comments" uploaded in **Latest News** on the website. An electronic mail alert from the NAC Chairperson sent on 03 September 2018 to high level stakeholders, including the National Assembly, Directors of PCs and the UniSey Vice-Chancellor. Article placed in a national newspaper 'Seychelles Nation' newspaper of Wednesday 05 September 2018 *(newspaper VOL. XXXX NO. 170)* to sensitise the general public on the SADCQF and its implementation, the Seychelles NAC, the alignment process, and alert on the Alignment Report available for public comment on the SQA website. Presentations of the draft Alignment Report and consultation sessions with immediate stakeholders on 07, 11 and 12 September 2018.
27 September – 15 October 2018	Status Report detailing consideration of public comments prepared. Public comments detailed in the Status Report considered and draft Alignment Report revised.
18 October 2018	Fourth NAC Meeting to approve status report and revisions to the Alignment Report
19 – 21 October 2018	Edit and layout of report for final publication

Timeframe	Alignment milestones
24 October 2018	SQA Board approves for submission of Alignment Report to Cabinet of Ministers to enlist support for submission to TCCA EXCO
21 November 2018	Presentation on Alignment Report to Cabinet of Ministers to seek support for submission to TCCA EXCO
23 November 2018	Submission to TCCA EXCO
December 2018	TCCA EXCO considers recommendation to TCCA
April/May 2019	TCCA considers approval of alignment report. Possible presentation of the report by the SQA
2019	After TCCA approval, publication on the official SADCQF platform.

Although there appear to be a low frequency of NAC meetings, NAC members were heavily involved in the report writing process from the start. The Self-Assessment Report was circulated to members prior to the first meeting for their comments, and for them to collect information and documents to further enrich the report which would feed into the draft Alignment Report.

NAC members were involved in desk review of relevant documents, drafting, editing and critiquing sections of the draft Alignment Report outside the official NAC meetings.

Chapter 4: Evidence of Seychelles' Alignment to the SADCQF

Introduction

In this Chapter the alignment of the SNQF to the SADCQF in accordance with the ten alignment criteria and underlying sub-criteria *(Annexure 3)* approved by the SADC TCCA is presented.

The recommendation by the TCCA that Member States align their NQFs/NQS to the SADCQF is illustrated as evidence based responses to the alignment criteria.

Criterion 1:
Responsibilities of relevant national bodies involved in the alignment process are determined and published by the relevant competent authorities

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

Have all the relevant bodies and stakeholders been informed about the decision to implement the SADCQF?

All the relevant bodies and stakeholders have been informed on the decision to implement the SADCQF. It has been reported to the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD), Board of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA), Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and tertiary education institutions. The Cabinet of Ministers has also been informed since way back in 2011, when the Minister for Education made a commitment. The Cabinet was further informed during a presentation on RPL on 17 July 2018. The SQA Board includes representatives from several Ministries (MoEHRD, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Trade, Investment & Economic Planning, and Ministry of Employment, Immigration & Civil Status), Department of Public Administration (Office of the President), Department of Information & Communication Technology (Office of the Vice-President), Agency for National Human Resource Development (ANHRD), and Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). All Government Ministries and Departments and the general public have remained continually informed through the SQA Newsletter, its website and through an article in a national newspaper.

Which bodies will be part of the National Alignment Committee (NAC)?

The bodies that have representatives on the National Alignment Committee (NAC) are as follows: the SQA, SQA Board, MoEHRD, TEC, Professional Centres, University of Seychelles, and Ministry of Employment, Immigration and Civil Status.

The NAC is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the SQA and the alignment process has been spearheaded by the SQA.

The NAC has been appointed by the Minister for Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD) on 03 January 2018.

All NAC members occupy high level positions in their organisation and as such they were assigned the responsibility to conduct sensitisation meetings with their constituency to explain the SADCQF, the alignment process and the NAC ToR.

Is the country's NAC functional? Does the NAC have resources and a work plan for SADCQF-related activities?

The Seychelles NAC is functional and has resources and a work plan for SADCQF-related activities. The Seychelles NAC became functional with its first meeting held on 17 May 2018 and which took place at the SQA secretariat. The meeting agenda is at *Annexure 4.*

As the Authority responsible for spearheading the alignment process, the SQA has made provision for resources for NAC related activities. The SQA provides the Secretariat for all NAC meetings and is responsible for all correspondences. The NAC finalised its work plan for SADCQF related activities at its first meeting. The second NAC meeting occurred on 13 July 2018 and was held at the SQA Secretariat.

Are the NAC roles and responsibilities for alignment with the SADCQF clear and allocated through a decision / legal order?

The NAC roles and responsibilities for alignment with the SADQF are clear and are encapsulated in a standard Terms of Reference (ToR) which has been adopted by TCCA and Minutes of the Ministerial Meeting of 2011 approved the SADCQF. The ToR was adopted by the Seychelles NAC at its first meeting in May 2018. In addition, the SQA's mandate in terms of its Act of 2005 includes as one of its functions **Part 2 section 4.** (1)*(i) to promote international recognition of local qualifications*. As such, the ToR of the NAC is in accord with the SQA's responsibility under law and as per Ministerial decision.

Is the communication (about aligning with the SADCQF) with the broader public and stakeholders clear, prepared and organised?

The communication about aligning with the SADCQF with the broader public and stakeholders is clear, prepared and organized. There is a standard presentation received from SAQA which has been adapted and used by the SQA to sensitise several groups of stakeholders including the SQA Board, the high officials of the

MoEHRD and tertiary education and training institutions about aligning with the SADCQF. A standard article about the SADCQF was circulated by SAQA in December 2017 and this has been placed on the SQA website. Articles about TCCA, SADCQF and alignment with the SADCQF have also been published and are continuing to be published in the SQA bi-annual Newsletters. Newsletters can be downloaded from the SQA website (www.sqa.sc). There is also plan to use other forms of media to sensitise the broader public, and to continue the presentations.

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

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

Is the country NQF adopted and in application?

The Seychelles NQF is fully adopted through the NQF Regulations of 2008 and has been in application since. NQF policies are in place and being implemented (e.g. programme validation, foreign qualifications recognition and evaluation, institutional accreditation, standards setting and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)). Over 80% qualifications are now converted onto the NQF.

Are the country NQF Level Descriptors (LDs) clear, complete and understood by the relevant stakeholders?

The Seychelles NQF (SNQF) Level Descriptors (LDs) are clear and complete and understood by the relevant stakeholders. The LDs are used by stakeholders when developing qualifications and unit standards, during the development of curriculum documents and with RPL.

Are the country NQF LDs implemented in practice?

The SNQF LDs are implemented in practice through programme validation, qualifications recognition and evaluation, institutional accreditation, standards setting, RPL -all of which have to be undertaken with reference to the LDs. SNQF registered qualifications and unit standards are being awarded. All qualification/programme developers must use the LDs in order to develop programmes and recommend qualifications at a particular level of the SNQF. The SQA uses the LDs in its evaluation process to determine whether qualifications meet the criteria for registration on the SNQF.

Do the NQF LDs clearly indicate vertical progression?

The SNQF LDs clearly indicate vertical progression. It is a ten (10) level framework arranged in ascending order from Level 1 to Level 10 that is built on increasing cognitive challenge and there are qualification types for each level (See *Annexure 5 and 6)*

Are the LDs used in practice the same as those of the NQF LDs?

The LDs used in practice are the same as those of the SNQF LDs. All developers of programmes, qualifications and unit standards must adhere to the NQF LDs and all qualifications must meet standards prescribed by the relevant LDs.

Are the SADCQF (regional) level descriptors understood by stakeholders?

The SADCQF (regional) level descriptors are understood by stakeholders. Stakeholders internal to the MoEHRD, representatives of tertiary education and training institutions and representatives of several Ministries as well as the Cabinet of Ministers and Seychelles NAC have been sensitised and have understanding of the SADCQF level descriptors. There is a plan to conduct sessions with all relevant groups of stakeholders. The draft version of the level-to-level alignment research report was presented and disseminated to the NAC members in July 2018. The NAC adopted the final version of the comparison on 14 August 2018. This was followed by approval of the draft report for public comment by the SQA Board at a meeting of 29 August 2018.

Is there an agreed approach (method) to present the demonstrable link of the country LDs with that of the SADCQF?

There is an agreed approach (method) to present the demonstrable link of the Seychelles LDs with that of the SADCQF. The approach was agreed at the 'Sharing of experiences and Peer Learning Workshop on alignment of NQFs/NQS to the SADCQF', for the eight pilot countries which took place in June 2017 at SAQA House, South Africa. The approach involves demonstrating links between the two frameworks as follows:

  a. structural comparison/links;
  b. conceptual comparison/links; and,
  c. linguistic comparison/links.

The JET Education Services Report (SADC: 2016) was used as reference as well as other documents like the Referencing Tool for the Transnational Qualifications Framework of the Virtual University of Small States of the Commonwealth (COL:

2017). The level-to-level alignment research report is included as ***Annexure 7*** and the conclusions of the research are given below.
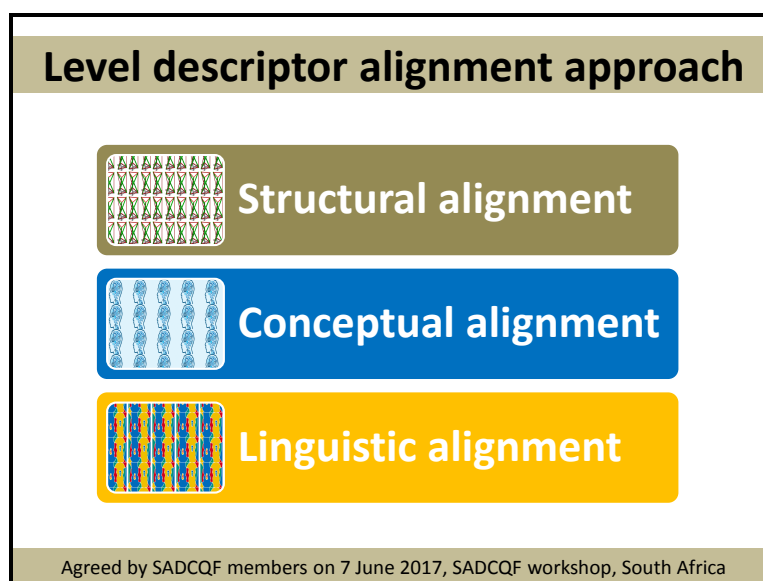

Level descriptor alignment approach

Structural alignment

Conceptual alignment

Linguistic alignment

Agreed by SADCQF members on 7 June 2017, SADCQF workshop, South Africa

Figure 7: Level-to-level alignment methodology

Structural alignment

To identify as to whether the two frameworks are structurally aligned, the architecture of the two frameworks was compared to ascertain the similarities and differences between the two frameworks.

The following similarities could be identified:

- Both Qualifications Frameworks have ten levels, the Seychelles NQF (SNQF) ranging level 1 (Primary Certificate) to 10 (Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Qualification), and the SADCQF ten levels, albeit without qualification types attached to it.
- Both have level descriptors for each stage of the framework which indicates broadly what a learner should know, be able to do and the extent to which they can exercise responsibility for the task.
- Both are based on learning outcomes rather than inputs of education and training. That is, both refer to the product of learning, after having obtained and processed information.
- Both are integrated and cover schooling, TVET and tertiary education. Both aim to be as inclusive as possible in terms of coverage of public, private and types of education and training whatever the mode through which it is offered.
- Both are underpinned by a qualifications database of part-qualifications and full qualifications, described through outcome statements, and include credits.

The differences between the two frameworks stem mainly from the fact that one is a reference framework whilst the other is a national framework on which qualifications

based on qualifications types are registered. The following articulates the differences:

- As a reference framework the SADCQF does not have a "qualifications map or ladder" showing the usual architecture of NQFs – which typically deal with issues specific to the country. It therefore does not show the inter-relationship of qualifications, in terms of common standard features found on most country specific frameworks.
- The SNQF 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. The SADCQF, not being a framework on which qualification types can be registered, has no tracks.
- Whilst the SADCQF is also built on the inclusivity principle, an aim which is made more explicit for the SNQF is to hoist the level of TVET, or occupational qualifications, within the education and training system. In other words the framework is the lever upon which its creators have attempted to improve the lot of TVET qualifications in comparison with academic qualifications, but there has also been equal emphasis on the fact that though equivalent the qualifications are different and have different orientations, one for the world of work and one for further academic or specialized education and training. This partly explains the decision to align the two tracks structurally against each other from level 3 to 6.
- As a national qualifications framework the SNQF has 11 qualification types, which are variants on the certificate, diploma and degree qualifications. Hence we have for example primary certificate at level 1, advanced diploma at level 6 and master's degree at level 9.
- The SNQF uses the notional hour concept to describe qualification duration or volume, something entirely missing on the SADC framework.
- Qualifications on the SNQF have to be expressed in terms of unit standards (level 1-6) or as whole qualifications (level 7-10) to be registered on the framework. Qualifications developed from unit standards (which can be essential, specific and elective) can then be developed into programmes of education and training to be offered to learners. The SADCQF cannot because of its very nature be built on the basis of such principles.

From the structural comparison, it is clear that there is a degree of similarity in terms of the architecture of both frameworks in terms of levels (number of), in the fact that both are underpinned by level descriptors and the learning outcome paradigm. Structurally then, the two bears comparison in spite of the many differences.

Conceptual alignment

The use of concepts was examined to see whether there were conceptual links between the two frameworks. The outcome statements were examined on both frameworks.

The similarities are:

- On both Frameworks the level descriptors are built around fairly similar categories. The SADCQF has the categories of autonomy and responsibility, skills and knowledge. Similarly the SNQF has autonomy and responsibility, and knowledge. The skills dimension is missing on the SNQF but it can be ascertained that the category can be equated to the categories of reasoning and problem solving and degree of complexity of tasks found on the SNQF. A perusal of the level descriptors under the categories in both qualification frameworks, when juxtaposed, show striking similarities in that both sets of level descriptors target what the learner should be able to know, do and the level of responsibility with which one can execute a task.

The differences are:

- On the surface there are differences between the two sets of level descriptors which, when we drill deeper, turn out not to be so great as to pose an insurmountable obstacle to the alignment exercise. For instance, as stated above, the SNQF has the category of reasoning and problem solving which is missing on the SADCQF. This however can be deemed to be skills oriented since it relates to such intellectual skills as judgement and evaluation which enable one to perform a task. To make a judgement or evaluation one must have the knowledge at hand, but the ability to use it intellectually (to judge, evaluate) is in and of itself a skill which is learnt and developed through time. The other category is "degree of complexity of tasks", also missing on the SADCQF, which indicates the difficulty level which attend processes that one undertakes at any given level and what one would require to complete such processes. An example is the carrying out of "processes that deal with hypothetical propositions involving abstract thinking and requires the combination of elements in a systematic way" (at secondary education level). Processes are carried on the basis of having the required information, but their execution is contingent on being able to use information effectively (in this instance using abstraction and combining elements) which again suggests that this category of the SNQF closely parallels, though admittedly not always, the SADCQF level descriptors falling under its skills category.

- Whilst the level descriptors and the concepts used on both frameworks remain at fairly broad level, the SNQF definitely drills deeper into the outcome

requirements at particular levels though it does not link to particular professions or groups of professions. For one, the fact that it has more categories for its level descriptors points in that direction. Conceptually, the SNQF tends to use more specific terms within the knowledge domain such as the ability to *conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss and compare specialized texts (*this is at level 6 as one example). In terms of reasoning and problem solving (at the same level) it refers to the demonstration *of interpersonal communication skills in the context of professional consultation.* Such detailed requirements cannot be articulated on the SADCQF since by its very nature it is very much broader than the SNQF.

In summary, comparison of the conceptual differences between the two qualifications frameworks shows that there is more in common than different. Both follow each other quite closely in terms of the outcome statements at various levels, though the SNQF drills deeper into certain requirements and is more specific. The SNQF has the categories of 'Reasoning and problem solving' and 'Degree of complexity of tasks', but this is partly made up by the fact that descriptors under these categories are mostly covered under the domain of skills on the SADCQF. In a few instances the SADCQF knowledge category also covers items of a similar nature that can be found under the SNQF's 'Reasoning and problem solving' category.

Linguistic alignment
This constituted a level-to-level analysis to see whether the ten (10) SNQF levels are aligned with the ten (10) SADCQF levels.

The basis of the comparison of the two sets of level descriptors was done using the three descriptors under the SADCQF categories of Knowledge, Skills, and Autonomy and Responsibility, and comparing these with the SNQF level descriptors under the categories of Autonomy and Responsibility, Knowledge, Reasoning and Problem Solving, and Degree of Complexity of Tasks.

It is to be noted that, by and large, the levels of the SNQF progresses upwards on the basis of increasing cognitive challenge, which, to the extent that it can be discerned on the SADCQF is an enabling factor in the comparison. Given the fact that both are fairly broad in terms of competencies required at each level, the task of comparison appears fairly straightforward, though the differences in terms of the use of categorization for level descriptors and how ostensibly similar outcome statements fall under different categories on both frameworks impacted on the exercise.

The process of comparing the SADCQF levels and the SNQF levels began by broadly comparing the categories of both frameworks so as to find out the similarities and differences and also what would be the best match. At the end of the day, and as articulated above, given that both categories of Degree of Complexity of Tasks,

and Reasoning and Problem solving could be classified as skills oriented they were both grouped under the 'Skills' category of the SADCQF framework. Categories of Knowledge, and Autonomy and Responsibility were aligned against each other for comparison. This enabled the work to proceed, however there were still differences and consequent difficulties in the work as that both take different angles and knowledge, as an example, can be seen as skills when seen through the angle of acquisition.

The below shows the level-to-level alignment:

The following conclusions can be made from the comparison:

1. Levels 1 and then 3 to 10 of both frameworks can be said to be aligned in terms of knowledge, skills and autonomy and responsibility. The match is by no means exact and within each level there are often categories which may not be aligned, however when the categories are taken together one can make a case for alignment. This is especially true at level 4 for the SNQF which has two sets of level descriptors, one for general education and one for the vocational track and it took the combination of both to align with the SADCQF at that level. The general tendency of levels 3 to 6 of the SNQF to be characterised by a TVET slant, as opposed to the more general and balanced descriptors of the SADCQF made the exercise that more difficult but not to the extent that matches could not be made. On a general note the similarities became sharper at levels 7 to 10 in the degree, master, PhD cycles, which goes to show that

there is quite a bit of harmonization at higher education levels across the region, if not much of the world.

2. Level 1 of the SNQF is also found to be more of a match for level 2 of the SADCQF which illustrates the high cognitive challenge of the general education descriptors. When a match is sought for level 2 of the SNQF, it is found that this is more or less equated with level 4 of the SADCQF which, because of the match of levels 3 on both frameworks, strongly suggests that between levels 2-4 on the SADCQF there is little progression of cognitive challenge. For the SNQF however it throws into relief the fact that its level 3 is a somewhat weaker level cognitively as compared to level 2 which means that level 3 interrupts the increase in cognitive challenge that is seen on the rest of the framework. This is an oddity of the SNQF.

3. Whilst we would put it to the TCCA EXCO that it accepts the above conclusions, it is noted that the exercise has demonstrated that if the SNQF were to match the SADCQF level for level, it would have to be reviewed. There is for certain work that needs to be done for the SADCQF to embrace a greater range of skills, for instance communication, at every level if it is to be used as a stronger regional qualifications framework. There is the need to bring in a more scholastic dimension to the descriptors given that education and training is at the heart of any qualifications framework since it can be adjudged to be too general in many instances. As for the SNQF, the TVET slant of levels 3-6, excepting level 4, needs to be reviewed to make clear the possibility of having general and academic qualifications at these levels. The need also remains to review the position of vocational certificates (level 3) on the SNQF since its cognitive challenge is hardly more than that of level 2 on the same framework.

Criterion 3:
The NQF/ NQS is based on learning outcomes and links to non-formal and informal learning and credit systems (where these exist)

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

The Learning Outcomes (LO) approach is included in/ enabled by relevant legislation.

The Learning Outcomes (LO) approach is included in/ enabled by relevant legislation. The SNQF is based on learning outcomes. The level descriptors provide the generic LOs and the qualification descriptors specify the specific outcomes. The SQA Act, 2005 and NQF Regulations of 2008 include the Learning Outcomes (LO) approach. The Act setting up the Seychelles Qualifications Authority defines 'qualification' as *"the formal recognition of a learner's achievement of the required*

number and range of credits or other requirements at a specified level of the qualifications framework" (Part 1- 2.).

The National Qualifications Framework Regulations, 2008 define Level Descriptors as *"a statement used to describe a hierarchy of learning outcomes in terms of reasoning and problem solving, autonomy and responsibility, knowledge, and degree of complexity of tasks".* Therefore, not only is the LO approach included but it is also embedded in the legislations.

There is a policy on non-formal and informal learning: National Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), 2017. UniSey has developed a first draft of its policy on non-formal and informal learning, derived from the National Policy on RPL and Professional Centres (PCs) will do the same as RPL is implemented.

The LO approach is agreed in all or in some sub-sectors / qualifications? Which ones?

The LO approach is agreed in all qualifications. Regulations of the NQF stipulate the following at ***7.**(1) Structure of qualifications*:

"Qualifications under the Qualifications Framework shall be structured in two ways, namely:
    (a) based on unit standards; or
    (b) not based on unit standards

The above refers to qualifications at levels 3 to 10 of the SNQF. The LO approach is also used for general education (SNQF levels 1 and 2). These are found in the National Curriculum Framework 2013 and the National Assessment Framework 2013.

The LO approach is being practised in all or in some sub-sectors / qualifications? Which ones?

The LO approach is being practised in all sub-sectors and qualifications. It is used by tertiary education institutions. In general education, LOs are defined in the National Curriculum Framework 2013 and the National Assessment Framework 2013.

Do the LOs of qualifications take account of societal and labour market needs?

The LOs of qualifications take account of societal and labour market needs. There is stakeholder (industry sub-sectors) engagements undertaken during programme development, and during programme review to ensure programmes remain abreast

of innovations in the labour market and new needs of the society. Stakeholder consultation and involvement are requirements for validation of programmes and SNQF registration of qualifications. The development of standards for qualifications also draws on societal and labour market needs through industry engagements and job analysis workshops. In addition, the Agency for National Human Resource Development provides Human Resource Development (HRD) projections that guide programme development and review. Therefore, programmes and qualifications are developed to meet current labour market and societal needs.

There is a growing move in the tertiary education and training system for lecturers who develop standards and programmes to spend time periodically in industry so that the knowledge and skills they acquire become more topical. This is currently being practised by the Seychelles Business Studies Academy (SBSA).

Is the classification of qualifications in the NQF based on a comparison of LOs of the qualification with the LDs of NQF?

The classification of qualifications in the SNQF is based on a comparison of LOs of the qualification with the LDs of the SNQF. All programmes are validated against the relevant LDs of the SNQF and all qualifications/unit standards are developed using the LDs of the SNQF. Therefore, the LOs of a qualification must meet the LDs of the SNQF for the qualification to be registered at a particular SNQF level. Structures of the SQA such as its Quality Assurance Committee and Executive Committee (EXCO) ensure that this is the case.

Is the recognition/ validation of non-formal and informal learning defined and agreed at policy level?

The recognition/ validation of non-formal and informal learning is defined and agreed at policy level. There is a National Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning (SQA, 2017), and Guidelines for National RPL Implementation (SQA, 2017). These have been endorsed by the SQA Board. The documents were presented to Cabinet of Ministers on 18 July 2018 where the Cabinet has pledged its full support for national implementation of RPL. There has been a series of sensitisation sessions with various groups of stakeholders and also media exposure to ensure all sections of the populace are made aware of implementation of the policy. The sensitisation sessions are continuing and an RPL implementation plan for 2018/2019 has been developed that will be monitored by a high level committee of the Cabinet of Ministers.

Is the recognition/ validation of non-formal and informal learning applied in all or some sectors / cases? Which ones?

In the past, Trade Tests have been used to recognise non-formal and informal learning, mainly in the vocational and occupational trades. Between 2008 and 2015 the recognition/ validation of non-formal and informal learning have been applied in some sectors during the RPL pilots. Sectors included Built Environment, Health, Maritime and Fisheries, and Business and Accounting. Implementation proper of RPL has started as of July 2018 and the SQA is currently recruiting from the Health and Business and Administration sectors in particular. This will be followed by gradual roll out to other sectors.

Does the assessment of LOs apply to formal and non-formal and informal learning?

The assessment of LOs applies to formal, non-formal and informal learning. This intention is demonstrated in the National Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), 2017 and the Regulations of the National Qualifications Framework, 2008. Formal, non-formal and informal learning are encapsulated in assessment for RPL purposes.

Is recognition/ validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning related to the NQF?

The recognition/ validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning is directly related to the NQF. RPL is done against a qualification registered on the SNQF and formal, non-formal and informal learning are included. This is demonstrated in the National Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), 2017.

Further, the functions of the SQA as stipulated in its Act 2005 include the following: Part 2 - **4.**(1) *(e):- ...to establish criteria for, and monitor the process of recognition of competencies outside formal education and training";*

Is the credit system implemented in all or some sub-sectors? Which ones?

The credit system is implemented for the qualifications that have been transposed to the SNQF. These are qualifications from SNQF levels 3 to 10. The concept of notional hours is used where 1 credit is equivalent to 10 notional hours. The credit system is not yet applicable to the school system (i.e. Levels 1 and 2 of the SNQF).

It has been scheduled that all existing qualifications of tertiary education institutions will have been transposed to the SNQF by mid 2019 and the credit system is implemented in all sub-sectors where qualifications/programmes exist. Over 80% of existing qualifications have been transposed to the SNQF.

Government has all providers submit their programmes leading to qualifications and part qualifications for accreditation to the SQA. As such, their qualifications/ part qualifications have to use the definition and use homogeneous variables to weigh or calculate credits.

Is the credit system related to the NQF?

The credit system is embedded in the SNQF. The SNQF credit system is applied to all SNQF registered awards.

Are there studies/ research/ analyses to support this criterion?

There have been reports (e.g. Lloyd S. report of 2014 on the review of the SQA RPL policies and guidelines), conference presentations, articles and analyses for pilots that together have enabled the finalisation of the National Policy on RPL, National Guidelines on RPL implementation, and other related documents. There is a Minister's Brief on the Recognition of Prior Learning produced in 2011.

The SQA is currently exploring ways in which NQF research to support the link between learning outcomes and non-formal and informal learning and credit systems can be undertaken. An NQF impact study and NQF review has been scheduled for 2020. The SQA will consult other Qualifications Authorities on how best to proceed.

Criterion 4:
Procedures for including qualifications in the NQF or describing the place of qualifications in the NQS are transparent

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

The existing legislation defines key principles and roles / responsibilities for developing, approving, and accrediting qualifications. What are the key institutions / stakeholders – and their roles?

The existing legislation defines key principles and roles / responsibilities for developing, approving, and accrediting qualifications. The key institutions / stakeholders and their roles include the following:

- The development of programmes by tertiary education institutions and industry is guided by the SQA. The latter has developed several guides for this purpose.

- Development of unit standards making up qualifications/ part qualifications is at the level of committees identified by the SQA and approval of standards for

qualifications/ part-qualifications is by the Executive Committee (EXCO) acting on behalf of the SQA Board.

- Validation of programmes is the responsibility of validation sub-committees trained by the SQA for this purpose while approval of recommendations of the validation sub-committees is by the SQA Quality Assurance (QA) Committee acting on behalf of the SQA Board. There must be prior endorsement by institutional Boards and Professional Bodies where these exist.

- The key principles and roles / responsibilities for developing, approving, and accrediting qualifications are detailed in the Quality Assurance Manual of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority, 2011 and Policy Guidelines on Standards Setting (SQA: May 2008).

- The SQA Act of 2005 stipulates that (Section **14**) *'The Board may establish committees —to advise the Board on such matters as may be specified; [and] to discharge functions delegated to them.'*

- Seychelles qualifications are registered on the SNQF as detailed in the National Qualifications Framework Regulations of 2008.

NQF decision-making is based on a clear institutional setting (Agency, department, Board, Council). Is this operational?

NQF decision-making is based on a clear institutional setting and is operational.

The Seychelles Qualifications Authority Act, 2005 makes provision for a Board as stated at Part 3 **– 6**.(1): *"The affairs of the Authority shall be administered by a Board..."* and a Secretariat that implements the decisions of the Board. Further, it is stipulated at Part 3 **- 14**.that: *"The Board may establish committees –*

(a) to advise the Board on such matters as may be specified;
(b) to discharge functions delegated to them.

Board and the various committees appointed for specific functions are all operational. The committees all have clear and established Terms of Reference.

It is also stated in the National Qualifications Framework Regulations, 2008 **(15.)** that: *"The Board may delegate any of its powers but shall not be divested of any power so delegated and may at any time withdraw the delegation".*

The procedures and method(s) for pegging a qualification at a particular NQF Level/ levelling are agreed, transparent and applied.

The procedures and method(s) for pegging a qualification at a particular NQF Level/ levelling are agreed, transparent and applied by the different levels of SQA committee. The Level Descriptors of the SNQF are applied to ensure that qualifications are pegged at the proper NQF level.

The procedures and method(s) for pegging a qualification at a particular NQF Level is communicated/ explained to clients to ensure their understanding. In addition, through operationalising of the SQA Information System (SQAIS) it is planned to make transparent to the public the procedures and method(s) for pegging a qualification at a particular NQF Level/ levelling.

Leveling / inclusion of qualifications in the NQF is based on transparent interactions of the relevant bodies (e.g. in charge of Quality Assurance, sectoral committees, certification, NQF decision making bodies)

The leveling / inclusion of qualifications in the NQF is based on transparent interactions of the relevant bodies which include the SQA QA Committee, EXCO for approval of Standards for qualifications, and tertiary education and training institutions.

The leveling and inclusion of qualifications in the NQF is quality-assured. By whom (specificities by sub-sector)?

The leveling and inclusion of qualifications in the SNQF is quality-assured by a hierarchy of moderating committees and the EXCO.

The scope of the NQF: The NQF is inclusive of various types of qualifications. Which types can be included? Are qualifications outside of the formal system included?

The scope of the SNQF is inclusive of various types of qualifications. The SNQF caters for qualifications at level 1 to level 10 of the SNQF. It makes provision for both academic and vocational pathways. Only qualifications that are registered are included. Qualifications achieved outside of the formal system are also included as there are no distinctions between qualifications achieved through the formal and those achieved outside the formal system. Provided the level descriptors are met the qualification can be recognized, and registered, no matter the mode of offering. Hence, the NQF formalises qualifications obtained through RPL. Institutions are being pressured by the SQA to have all their programmes validated so as to be registered on the SNQF and be recognised.

Database(s) of qualifications are up-to-date, accessible and transparent for users.

Database(s) of qualifications are up-to-date, accessible and transparent for users. The SQA Information System (SQAIS) became functional/operational in January 2018. Qualifications are being uploaded in the system and will be accessible to users in 2019 (2019 budget caters for this). The Assessment and Certification Section of the MoEHRD maintains an excel database of results of examinations for Secondary and Upper Secondary including international (Cambridge) examinations. The MoEHRD is also developing an Education and Management Information System (EMIS) that provides annual statistical information which encompasses Early Childhood (Crèche), Primary, Secondary, Tertiary Non-University (Professional Centres) and Tertiary University Education (University of Seychelles) institutions in the country. The details of these subsectors include the number of education institutions, enrolment figures, teaching staff as well as results of national and international examinations (MoEHRD: 2018). It is planned (as approved by the SQA Board) for the SQA to link with the EMIS so as to avoid duplication of data.

Are there studies/ research/ analyses to support this criterion?

There are studies/analyses to support this criterion. For example, research is undertaken to support policy development and policy decisions. Also, articles on the SQAIS are published in the SQA Newsletter.

Criterion 5:
The National Quality Assurance System for education and training refers to the NQF or NQS and is consistent with quality assurance guidelines of the SADCQF

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

The national QA systems are operational. The various relevant institutions act in a co-ordinated and linked manner.

The national QA systems are operational. The national QA system is embedded in and derives from the SNQF. There is one national QA system and that is the SQA. The various tertiary education institutions are well coordinated and linked with the national QA system despite the fact that the internal quality assurance system of some institutions are still in the process of development in the endeavour to meet the quality assurance requirements of the SQA. A QA Policy for Professional Centres (PCs) is at the finalisation stage. Other institutions, for example the University of Seychelles (UniSey) are implementing quality assurance and quality enhancement systems, and have well resourced quality assurance sections. UniSey has

developed its QA Manual which has been anchored on the SQA Quality Assurance Manual (SQA, 2011) as well as on those of international Higher Education Institutions (HEI's). This manual covers QA components including Annual programme review, Periodic programme review, Evaluation of student learning, and Dissertation and defence.

The SQA has facilitated several workshops for providers on internal quality assurance systems in its effort to build internal/institutional capacity for quality assurance. Also, following several years of lobbying by the SQA, in 2018 all PCs have secured at least one post for a Quality Assurance Officer and they are in the process of recruiting for the post.

The design and award of qualifications are quality-assured and use explicit and transparent procedures and arrangements.

The design and award of qualifications are quality-assured and use explicit and transparent procedures and arrangements. The SNQF and the SQA Quality Assurance Manual of 2011 are used for quality assurance for the design and award of qualifications. Programmes leading to award of qualifications undergo the SQA validation process and there are guidelines produced by the Authority to assist institutions with programme design and development.

Within tertiary education and training institutions there are different levels of moderation (moderation committees) and a policy and procedures for assessment, all aimed at ensuring that award of qualifications are quality-assured and use explicit and transparent procedures and arrangements. UniSey has a set of clear and smooth processes and procedures to protect the integrity of its qualifications - from assessment to marking and right up to the award of a degree. This process includes post marking moderation through the involvement of External Examiners prior to going to the Exam Board and eventually the Senate for final approval. Degrees are awarded in compliance with the University's own Degree Classifications that have been endorsed by the SQA.

Quality assurance procedures refer to context, inputs, process and output dimensions while giving special emphasis to outputs and learning outcomes.

Quality assurance procedures refer to context, inputs, process and output dimensions while giving special emphasis to outputs and learning outcomes. Quality assurance procedures referring to context, inputs, process and learning outcomes are elaborated in the criteria for programme development found in the SQA Quality Assurance Manual of 2011. The Manual does not fully elaborate a process to ensure quality assurance of outputs (moderation of final scores, confirmation of results, etc). However, this is ensured at the level of provider institutions through the Moderation Committees and their policy and procedures for assessment. Quality

assurance procedures are applied to all provider institutions by the SQA and this is through accreditation of the provider to ensure that the provider is equipped to deliver programmes and provide certification. The process and evaluation criteria are detailed in the SQA QA Manual of 2011.

There are plans to review the SQA QA Manual and a process to ensure quality assurance of outputs will be incorporated in the review. Funding in part for the review of the QA Manual has been secured in the SQA 2018 budget and the review in part of the Manual has been scheduled for December 2018. The SQA has secured funding in its 2019 budget to complete the review of the document and this will be done in the second quarter of 2019.

Quality assurance of learning outcomes refers to: planning; implementing; reviewing; feedback.

Quality assurance of learning outcomes refers to: planning; implementing; reviewing; and feedback. The SQA's framework for quality assurance contained in its QA Manual of 2011 covers the whole cycle of quality assurance of learning outcomes, that is, planning; implementing; reviewing; and feedback.

Quality assurance measures include qualification requirements for teachers / trainers, assessors; accreditation; and external evaluation of providers of programmes.

Quality assurance measures include qualification requirements for teachers / trainers, assessors; accreditation; and external evaluation of providers of programmes. Qualification requirements for teachers / trainers are embedded in the programme validation criteria of SQA QA Manual of 2011.

There are qualification requirements for assessors of international examinations, such as International General Certificate in Secondary Education (IGCSE). These follow a specific programme of training as dictated by the overseas provider. The SQA makes provision for specialised training for RPL Practitioners, Accreditors for accreditation and external evaluation of tertiary education and training providers. However the national education system still has some way to go to ensure that assessors are sufficiently trained to assess at all levels of the system. This is a lacunae that the SQA will address on completion of its programme validation exercise.

Labour market and society stakeholders are involved in relevant phases / aspects of quality assurance of qualifications.

Labour market and society stakeholders are involved in relevant phases / aspects of quality assurance of qualifications. This includes at the development stage; the

approval stage; and the review stage of qualifications. The SQA Board is composed of representatives from several Ministries (MoEHRD, Ministry of Finance, Trade, Investment & Blue Economy, Ministry of Employment, Immigration & Civil Status, and Ministry of Health), Department of Public Administration (Office of the President), Department of Information & Communication Technology (Office of the Vice-President), Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), and Agency for National Human Resource Development (ANHRD). Programmes leading to qualifications must have the endorsement of the Provider's Governing Board/Council and the Professional Body (where these exist) prior to approval and registration on the SNQF by the SQA. The SQA QA criteria of its QA Manual of 2011 dictate labour market consultation/engagement at the development and review stages. There are content specialists outside providers (from work organisations) that form part of committees for qualification development (e.g. unit standards developers are also drawn from industry).

The sixteen common quality assurance (QA) guidelines of the SADCQF are compatible with the national QA framework (legislation, institutions, policy).

The sixteen common quality assurance (QA) guidelines of the SADCQF are compatible with the Seychelles QA framework (legislation, institutions, policy). Refer to ***Annexure 8*** for compatibility of the Seychelles QA framework with the sixteen common QA guidelines of SADCQF. The SQA also completed the Self-assessment questionnaire that was submitted by Botswana in 2017. It forwarded the completed questionnaire to Botswana in January 2018.

Are there studies/ research/ analyses to support this criterion?

There are studies/ research/ analyses to support this criterion. These include: Institutional Accreditation reports; Programme Validation reports; SQA annual reports; reports to the SQA Board; the SQA quarterly and mid-year reports.

Criterion 6:
There is a clear indication of the relevant national authorities responsible for the verification of the qualifications obtained in the national system

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

The contact details of the body/ies responsible for the country's qualifications framework is accurate and accessible

The contact details of the body/ies responsible for the country's qualifications framework are accurate and accessible. The contact details of the SQA, the body responsible for the country's qualifications framework can be found in its

correspondence (all official documents which bears SQA's letterhead), website (www.sqa.sc) and facebook page. The contact details that have been submitted to the SADC Qualifications Verification Network (SADCQVN) are as follows:

- Ms Fiona Ernesta: Chief Executive Officer: Tel: (+248)4324055: Email: ceosqa@email.sc
- Ms Joan Amade: Principal Quality Assurance Officer: Tel: (+248)4324055: Email: qao.sqa@email.sc

The contact details of the body or bodies responsible for QA is accurate and accessible

The contact details of the body or bodies responsible for QA are accurate and accessible and this is as per the above. The SQA has the details of its Quality Assurance committees and teams pertaining to the quality assurance work that it undertakes, whether of institutional accreditation, programme validation, qualifications verification, recognition and evaluation, or qualifications (unit standards) development.

There is a central qualifications information system in the country

There is a central qualifications information system in country. The SQA information system (SQAIS) is operational. There are also scattered agencies having data on qualifications for instance the Examination Section of the MoEHRD that is responsible for school leaving certificates. A developing EMIS in the MoEHRD also has learner accounts. The intention is that at the end of the day (timeline is yet to be established) the country's repository of all qualifications will be under the roof of the SQA, hence in the SQAIS.

In this line, the SQA Act (2005): Part 2 **4.** (1) states accordingly that:
The functions of the Authority shall be ─
(b) to keep and maintain a register of recognised qualifications;
(h) to maintain a database on all providers of education and training.

Also, the Regulations of the National Qualifications Framework, 2008, stipulate that:
At 38. 'The Seychelles Qualifications Authority shall undertake to establish a national information management system to assist in the implementation and maintenance of the National Qualifications Framework in collaboration with relevant partners, and by participating in other national initiatives'.
39. The database shall contain information pertaining to:
   a. Registered unit standards
   b. Registered qualifications
   c. Accredited education and training providers
   d. Validated learning programmes
   e. Recognised foreign qualifications

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f. Learner records

g. Other particulars as necessary.

Full details of the central qualifications information system is accurate and accessible

Full details of the central qualifications information system (SQAIS) are accurate. It is however only available to the SQA staff at this stage.

The plan is to build the necessary security features and to allow access to information and documents that need to be public information and to link it with the SQA website. Provision for this project will be made in the SQA budget for 2019, and implementation will start as of August 2019 for a period of four months. The public domain platform will be functional as of January 2020.

The contact details of the body or bodies responsible for verification of national qualifications is accurate and accessible

The contact details of the body responsible for verification of national qualifications are accurate and accessible. This body is the SQA itself. It deals, through one of its section, with the verification of national qualifications and has the necessary details that can be accessed through its website: www.sqa.sc.

The contact details of the body or bodies responsible for verification of foreign qualifications is accurate and accessible

The contact details of the body responsible for verification of foreign qualifications are accurate and accessible in that this is the SQA itself. The SQA deals with the verification of foreign qualifications and has the necessary details that can be accessed through its website: www.sqa.sc. Details have also been published in the SADCQVN booklet and can be accessed via the SADCQVN.

Do you have policies regarding your national and foreign verification/validation/evaluation/recognition? Describe.

There are policies regarding Seychelles national and foreign verification/validation/evaluation/recognition. The SQA has a Manual for the Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications (SQA 2009) which contains the said policy and it details the principles, criteria, procedures and the like. The document has been reviewed in 2018 and at the time of writing it awaits approval of the SQA Board.

The alignment process shall include a stated agreement of relevant quality assurance bodies

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

All relevant QA bodies are adequately involved and informed about the SADCQF alignment process and plans.

All relevant QA bodies are adequately involved and informed about the SADCQF alignment process and plans. It is to be borne in mind that the SQA is the national external QA body in the country. Its constituent committees and teams responsible for quality assurance and the SQA Board have been kept abreast of the SADCQF alignment process and plans. The CEO of the Tertiary Education Commission is the Vice-chairperson of the Seychelles NAC.

Level to level alignment and the way the system is described: The relevant QA bodies agree and validate the content of the report

The relevant QA bodies agree and validate the content of the report. A first draft of the level-to-level alignment was presented and disseminated to the NAC members in July 2018. Members were presented with the first draft of the comparison at the NAC meeting of 13 July 2018. The revised draft of the SADCQF alignment report was endorsed by the NAC at its meeting of 14 August 2018.

Criterion 8:
Competent national bodies shall certify the alignment of the NQF/NQS with the SADCQF. A comprehensive report on alignment and its evidence must be published by competent national bodies.

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

The institutions/ competent national bodies that will certify the SADCQF alignment are clearly defined.

The institutions/ competent national bodies that will certify the SADCQF alignment are clearly defined. The Alignment Report has been endorsed by the Seychelles NAC and the SQA Board approved the Report prior to submission of a Memorandum and presentation to the Cabinet of Ministers. The Memorandum sought Cabinet's approval of the Report on the Alignment of Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) to the Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) prior to submission to TCCA EXCO. Cabinet advised that the recommendation of the Memorandum be approved and the President concurred

and ordered accordingly[4]. Cabinet's decision was a news item on the main national television and radio (Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation). This enhanced awareness and publicity for the alignment to the SADCQF.

There was extensive exposure and critic of the draft report at various levels, from the SQA Officers, the SQA Board, MoEHRD, TEC, and a copy was circulated to the National Assembly. The completed draft report was presented to the Cabinet of Ministers for securing national and political will and commitment.

Roadmap for SADCQF alignment and target date for presentation of the final report: Is there a general / broad agreement?

There is general agreement on the roadmap for SADCQF alignment and the target date for presentation of the final report:

- *8 June 2017:* First draft of the Self-assessment completed at alignment workshop, SAQA House, Pretoria
- *23 November 2017:* Submitted documents to the Minister for MoEHRD for appointment of the NAC
- *03 January 2018:* NAC established by the Minister for MoEHRD
- *11 April 2018:* First draft of the Alignment Report produced
- *17 May 2018:* First NAC meeting held and work plan agreed upon
- *17 May 2018:* NAC agrees on updated Self-assessment document
- *13 July 2018:* NAC reviews the second draft of the Alignment Report
- *14 July 2018:* Draft Alignment Report submitted to the NAC members for further input
- *30 July 2018:* Incorporation of comments from NAC
- *14 August 2018:* NAC endorses the revised draft Alignment Report
- *29 August 2018:* SQA Board approves draft Alignment Report for public comment and specific stakeholder consultation
- *31 August - 24 September 2018:* Draft Alignment Report in public comment process and specific stakeholder consultations. E-mail alert to stakeholders of the draft Alignment Report available for public comment placed on the SQA website www.sqa.sc under **Documents for Public Comment** and the document "Call for Public Comments" uploaded in **Latest News** on the website. Electronic mail alert on 03 September 2018 to high level stakeholders, including the National Assembly, Directors of PCs and the UniSey Vice-Chancellor. Comments to be forwarded to the NAC Chairperson via e-mail at ceosqa@email.sc.

- *27 September – 15 October 2018:* Produce status report on public comments and consider public comments and revise Alignment Report

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[4] Cabinet Meeting **C18/ II /M15** of Wednesday, 21st November, 2018 **C18/MEM/402**

- *18 October 2018:* NAC endorses status report and revisions to the Alignment Report
- *19 – 21 October:* Edit and layout of Report for final publication
- *24 October 2018:* SQA Board approves for submission final Alignment Report to Cabinet of Ministers
- *21 November 2018:* Cabinet of Ministers gives approval for submission of Alignment Report to TCCA EXCO
- *December 2018:* TCCA EXCO considers recommendation to TCCA
- *April/May 2019:* TCCA considers approval of alignment report. Possible presentation of the report by the SQA
- Following TCCA approval, publication on the official SADCQF platform.

Structure of the alignment report: is it relevant, placing the criteria and procedures at the core of the report?

The Structure of alignment report is relevant, placing the criteria and procedures at the core of the report. The following report structure has been used:

- Title of Report: Report on the Alignment of (Country) to the SADCQF
- Date: DD/MM/YYYY
- Use country logo and SADC logo
- Include Contents Page
- Authorisation page with statement that all the criteria have been met: -Official sign-off
- Executive Summary
- Chapter One: Introduction and background to alignment with the SADCQF
- Chapter Two: Profile of the education and training system of the Seychelles
- Chapter Three: Process of alignment in Seychelles
- Chapter Four: Evidence of the Seychelles' alignment to the SADCQF
- Chapter Five: Conclusion
- References
- Annexures

Criterion 9:
The official platform of the country must provide for a public comment process for the alignment report

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

There is a clear plan to revise and finalise the alignment report before publication on the country's official platform.

There is a clear plan to revise and finalise the alignment report before publication on the country's official platform. This is encapsulated in the NAC road map/steps to alignment towards finalisation of the report *(Figure 6).*

Responsibility for timely publication of the final version of the report is agreed upon by the relevant structures in the country.

Responsibility for timely publication of the final version of the report is agreed upon. It has been proposed that on successful presentation to the TCCA the report will be published in 2019 so that it can be in the public domain.

Final national published version of the report takes account of the received comments and recommendations.
Possible presentation of the final report is planned.

The final national published version of the report takes account of the received comments and recommendations. The Seychelles NAC road map towards completion of the report made provision for a public comment period and time to analyse and consider public comments. A status report on the public comment process was produced.

Presentations of the final Alignment Report have been considered in the planning. There has been a presentation of the report to the NAC members, the SQA Board and the Cabinet of Ministers. A revised version of the presentation that reflects the final Alignment Report will be delivered to the TCCA EXCO and TCCA should there be a need.

Criterion 10:
Clear plans have been made to make changes to legislation and policy supporting alignment to SADCQF levels on new qualification certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent authorities

Sub-criteria and Evidence:

Legislation and policy supporting the alignment with the SADCQF levels on new qualifications documents: Has this been discussed?

Legislation and policy supporting the alignment with the SADCQF levels on new qualifications has been discussed at the level of TCCA. The proposal is to place the SADCQF level on the transcript. The proposal has been discussed at the level of the SQA Board and will be presented to the Cabinet of Ministers so that it becomes policy.

The roadmap/ plans for discussion/ agreement among stakeholders. Has this been defined, agreed?

The roadmap/ plans for discussion/ agreement among stakeholders has been defined and agreed at the first meeting of the NAC and as per plan. The NAC members will keep stakeholders at their level informed. It has also been planned to hold discussions with key stakeholders (e.g. education and training providers) prior to finalisation of the proposal for Cabinet consideration.

Are the key conditions for implementation of this Criterion in place?

The key conditions for implementation of this Criterion are in place. The SQA and TEC will, in collaboration with providers amend certification standards/ policies/ procedures as required once the proposal to have SADCQF levels on qualification documents becomes a government policy.

The communication and information of users and stakeholders on the meaning/ advantages of having SADCQF levels on qualifications documents. Has this been prepared?

The communication and information of users and stakeholders on the meaning/ advantages of having SADCQF levels on qualifications documents has been prepared. Seychelles has started on this road since a decade ago. This has been done through presentations and it will now be escalated. There has been a presentation to SQA Board in July 2017 and at this meeting it was agreed that the NAC be appointed by the Minister for MoEHRD. There are plans to develop information leaflets, to conduct presentations to various ministries, agencies and other work organisations. An article will also be placed on the SQA website.

Networking with other countries about greater mobility and the meaning of future adjustments in qualifications documents: Has this been done?

Networking with other countries about greater mobility and the meaning of future adjustments in qualifications documents has been done. There have been discussions at TCCA level. Eight SADC Member States are engaged in an alignment pilot and these countries are fully conversant with the alignment concept and what it entails. The issue was further elaborated at the Alignment Report Writing workshop for pilot countries on 10 and 11 April 2018.

CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusions

This report presents the Seychelles response to the recommendation from the SADC TCCA that Member States align their NQFs / NQS and QA mechanisms to the SADCQF. It contains the official authorised statement from the Seychelles NAC that the SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF.

The report had as objectives to:

- Outline the SADCQF and its implementation model, which embeds the alignment;

- Detail the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF);

- Elaborate the profile of the Seychelles education and training system;

- Describe the process of alignment in Seychelles undertaken by the Seychelles National Alignment Committee (NAC); and

- Present evidence of Seychelles' alignment to the SADCQF.

It can be concluded that the objectives set have been met as evidenced in this report and as summarised herein:

Chapter One situates the SADCQF in context, mapping out the journey from the SADC RQF to the SADCQF including its scope, purpose and design features, the establishment of the TCCA and its purpose. The Chapter also provides a description of the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF), its objectives and the SNQF Qualifications Map.

Chapter Two provides an introduction to the Republic of Seychelles, followed by a detailed description of the country's education and training system and the progression between the stages of education and training. Of particular importance to this report, the link between the stages of education and training and the SNQF levels is established.

Chapter Three describes the process of alignment in the Seychelles, the activities contained therein and the milestones to alignment as established by Seychelles.

Chapter Four details responses of the NAC to each of the ten SADCQF alignment criteria and underlying sub-criteria, providing evidence that the alignment criteria

have been sufficiently met. In essence, the evidence as contained in Chapter Four demonstrates as follows:

- The responsibilities of the relevant national bodies that were involved in the process of alignment in Seychelles were determined and published by the relevant competent authorities;

- There is a clear and demonstrable link between qualification levels in the SNQF and level descriptors of the SADCQF as shown in the structural, conceptual and linguistic comparisons:

  a) **The Structural link:** The architecture of the two frameworks was compared and it was concluded that the SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF structurally in spite of several differences.

  b) **The Conceptual link:** The use of concepts was examined to see whether there were conceptual links between the two frameworks. It was concluded that the SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF conceptually.

  c) **The Linguistic link:** A level-to-level analysis to see whether the ten (10) SNQF levels are aligned with the ten (10) SADCQF levels revealed that levels 1 and 3 to 10 of the SNQF are aligned to the SADCQF linguistically, whilst level 2 of the SNQF closely matches level 4 of the SADCQF.

  d) The below shows the level-to-level alignment:

- The SNQF is based on learning outcomes and links to non-formal and informal learning and the Seychelles credit system of 1 credit = 10 notional hours;

- The procedures for including qualifications in the SNQF are clear and transparent;

- The National QA system for education and training refers to the SNQF and is consistent and compatible with the QA guidelines of the SADCQF;

- There is clear indication of the national authorities responsible for the verification of national and foreign qualifications;

- The alignment process includes a stated agreement by the relevant QA bodies in Seychelles;

- Competent national bodies that make up the NAC certified the alignment of the SNQF to the SADCQF. A comprehensive report on the alignment and its evidence was published;

- The official platform in Seychelles made provision for a public comment process for the alignment report; and

- Clear plans have been made to make changes to legislation and policy supporting alignment to SADCQF levels on qualification certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent local authorities.

Chapter Five ascertains that all ten SADCQF alignment criteria have been met and that the SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF. It provides a brief summary of the key points in the report.

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Annexures

Annexure 1: SADCQF Level Descriptors

Level	Knowledge	Skills	Autonomy and responsibility
10	Makes a substantial and original contribution to knowledge in the field of study through research and scholarship.	Conducts original research which is evaluated by independent experts against international standards. Demonstrates problem solving ability and critical evaluation of research findings for academic discussion.	Demonstrates full responsibility and accountability for all aspects of advanced research work.
9	Demonstrates mastery of theoretically sophisticated subject matter, showing critical awareness of current problems and new insights at the forefront of the discipline area.	Conducts original research deploying appropriate research methods and processes primary and secondary source information using rigorous intellectual analysis and independent thinking and applies knowledge in new situations; and demonstrates independent thinking, problem solving, critical evaluation of research findings and ability to make judgements based on knowledge and evidence.	Shows independence, initiative and originality and the ability to manage own and group outcomes in complex and unpredictable situations.
8	Demonstrates critical understanding of the principles, theories, methodologies, current research and literature of the discipline.	Demonstrates capacity to use a coherent and critical understanding of the principles, theories and methodologies of a particular discipline. Selects and applies appropriate research methods and techniques, and critical analysis and independent evaluation of information.	Operates within the context of a strategic plan with complete accountability for management of resources and supervision of others.
7	Demonstrates knowledge of a major discipline with possible areas of specialisation, including command of the ideas, principles, concepts, chief research methods and problem-solving techniques of the recognised discipline.	Demonstrates intellectual independence, critical thinking and analytical rigor, and advanced communication and collaborative skills in complex and variable contexts.	Designs and manages processes and works with broad accountability for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and group outcomes
6	Demonstrate specialist knowledge in more than one area and ability to collate, analyse and synthesise a wide range of technical information.	Demonstrate ability to apply specialist knowledge and skills in highly variable contexts and formulate responses to concrete and abstract problems.	Manages processes and works with complete accountability for personal and group outcomes.
5	Demonstrate a broad knowledge base with substantial depth in some areas, ability to analyse information and construct a	Applies a wide range of technical and/or scholastic skills in variable contexts using standard and non-standard procedures, often in combination.	Works independently under broad guidance and can take some responsibility for supervising the work of others and group outcomes.

	coherent argument.		
4	Demonstrates a broad knowledge base, incorporating some abstract and technical concepts, and ability to analyse information and make informed judgements.	Applies a moderate range of technical and/or scholastic skills which are transferable in familiar and unfamiliar contexts, using routine and non- routine procedures.	Shows ability for self-direction, requiring little supervision, and complete responsibility for own outcomes and some responsibility for group outcomes.
3	Demonstrates basic operational and theoretical knowledge and ability to interpret information	Demonstrates a range of well-developed skills and ability to apply known solutions to familiar problems	Works under general supervision with some responsibility for quality and quantity of output
2	Demonstrates recall and a narrow range of knowledge and cognitive skills	Can carry out processes that are limited in range, repetitive and familiar	Apply in directed activity under close supervision
1	Demonstrates basic general knowledge and numeracy and literacy for everyday purposes	Can follow simple instructions and perform actions required to carry out simple concrete tasks requiring no special skills	Works under close supervision in familiar situations and structured contexts

Annexure 2: Terms of Reference of the National Alignment Committee

Terms of Reference:
SADC National Alignment Committee (NAC)

Compiled by SAQA on behalf of the SADC Secretariat
30 June 2017

_____

Introduction

1. The Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) was established in 2011 by the Ministers of Education in the SADC region.

2. The purpose of the SADCQF is to enable easier movement of learners and workers across the SADC region and internationally.

3. The SADCQF is a reference framework consisting of 10 Regional Qualifications Framework (RQF) Levels based on learning outcomes.

4. The SADCQF will provide a regional benchmark for qualifications and quality assurance (QA) mechanisms in SADC.

Implementation of the SADCQF

5. To give effect to the Ministers' decision, a Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA) was given the task of implementing the SADCQF.

6. The TCCA is a group of experts from the 15 SADC Member States and is supported by the SADC Secretariat.

7. At a September 2016 TCCA meeting, the SADCQF was positioned for implementation:
    a. A clear two-year milestone plan was developed, and
    b. An implementation model was adopted.

8. The SADCQF implementation model comprises three key focus areas:
    a. Development and alignment;
    b. Quality assurance and

       c.   Verification.

9.   Communication and advocacy is a fourth focus area that was added later as an overarching dimension that cuts across the three key implementation focus areas.

Alignment with the SADCQF

10.   To assist the alignment process, the TCCA adopted ten alignment criteria.

11.   Member States are expected to align their National Qualifications Frameworks/ National Qualifications Systems and quality assurance mechanisms with the SADCQF.

12.   Alignment will be enabled by mutual trust and recognition of achievement at a regional level.

13.   Regional alignment would enable individuals to make comparisons of their learning and competence levels and reduce unnecessary duplication of learning and effort when moving through SADC for study or work purposes.

14.   An essential criterion for alignment is the establishment of a National Alignment Committee (NAC) in each of the SADC Member States.

The National Alignment Committee

15.   The National Alignment Committee (NAC) is an ad hoc group of experts operating in the Member State and coming together for the sole purpose of assisting the SADC Member State to align with the SADCQF.

16.   The purpose of the NAC is to oversee alignment of the National Qualifications Framework/ National Qualifications System (NQF/NQS) (of the Member State of which it is a part) with the SADCQF.

17.   The lead agency in the Member State is part of the NAC and drives the alignment process.

Responsibilities of the National Alignment Committee

18. The key purpose of the NAC is to produce a report that provides evidence that the country has met the ten alignment criteria.

19. In conducting its work, the NAC will:
    a. Support the alignment process;
    b. Attend meetings where necessary;
    c. Make inputs into written drafts of the alignment reports;
    d. Represent their sector's views when making inputs into written drafts of the alignment report;
    e. Ensure written drafts are consistent with national education policies;
    f. Effect research where necessary; and
    g. Ensure sign-off of the reports submitted to the TCCA.

20. The NAC will determine when the alignment report has been completed and is ready for submission:

    a. Alignment reports must be submitted to the TCCA Executive Committee (TCCA EXCO):
    b. The TCCA EXCO also serves as the Regional Alignment Sub-Committee;
    c. The TCCA EXCO meets twice a year, usually in June/July and November/December;

21. The NAC will make a recommendation to the TCCA EXCO for the alignment report to be recommended to the TCCA.

22. The lead agency, which is part of the NAC, will ensure that the alignment report is placed on the agenda of the TCCA EXCO meeting and must keep the NAC informed of all developments.

Composition of the NAC

23. The NAC operates within the Member State and has expertise in the NQF/NQS of the country. Invitations to serve on the NAC may be sent to:
    a. Quality Councils;
    b. Ministries;
    c. Relevant Departments dealing with qualifications;
    d. Professional bodies; e. Learning institutions;

e. Employers;

f. Organised labour;

g. Industry; and

h. Student organisations.

24. Each country may determine who will comprise the NAC in their country.

25. The work of the NAC is complete once the alignment report is published on the SADC website.

26. The NAC may reconvene at a later stage in order to review the alignment report as and when necessary.

Annexure 3: Ten alignment criteria and underlying sub-criteria

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Criterion 1:
Responsibilities of relevant national bodies involved in the alignment process are determined and published by the relevant competent authorities

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Sub-criteria:

- Have all the relevant bodies and stakeholders been informed about the decision to implement the SADCQF?

- Which bodies will be part of the National Alignment Committee (NAC)?

- Is the country's NAC functional? Does the NAC have resources and a work plan for SADCQF-related activities?

- Are the NAC roles and responsibilities for alignment with the SADCQF clear and allocated through a decision / legal order?

- Is the communication (about aligning with the SADCQF) with the broader public and stakeholders clear, prepared and organised?

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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

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Sub-criteria:

- Is the country NQF adopted and in application?

- Are the country NQF Level Descriptors (LDs) clear, complete and understood by the relevant stakeholders?

- Are the country NQF LDs implemented in practice?

- Do the NQF LDs clearly indicate vertical progression?

- Are the LDs used in practice the same as those of the NQF LDs?

- Are the SADCQF (regional) level descriptors understood by stakeholders?

- Is there an agreed approach (method) to present the demonstrable link of the country LDs with that of the SADCQF?

Criterion 3:
The NQF/ NQS is based on learning outcomes and links to non-formal and informal learning and credit systems (where these exist)

Sub-criteria:

- The Learning Outcomes (LO) approach is included in/ enabled by relevant legislation.

- The LO approach is agreed in all or in some sub-sectors / qualifications? Which ones?

- The LO approach is being practised in all or in some sub-sectors / qualifications? Which ones?

- Do the LOs of qualifications take account of societal and labour market needs?

- Is the classification of qualifications in the NQF based on a comparison of LOs of the qualification with the LDs of NQF?

- Is the recognition/ validation of non-formal and informal learning defined and agreed at policy level?

- Is the recognition/ validation of non-formal and informal learning applied in all or some sectors / cases? Which ones?

- Does the assessment of LOs apply to formal and non-formal and informal learning?

- Is recognition/ validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning related to the NQF?

- Is the credit system implemented in all or some sub-sectors? Which ones?

- Is the credit system related to the NQF?

- Are there studies/ research/ analyses to support this criterion?

Criterion 4:
Procedures for including qualifications in the NQF or describing the place of qualifications in the NQS are transparent

Sub-criteria:

- The existing legislation defines key principles and roles / responsibilities for developing, approving, and accrediting qualifications. What are the key institutions / stakeholders – and their roles?

- NQF decision-making is based on a clear institutional setting (Agency, department, Board, Council). Is this operational?

- The procedures and method(s) for pegging a qualification at a particular NQF Level/ levelling are agreed, transparent and applied.

- Leveling / inclusion of qualifications in the NQF is based on transparent interactions of the relevant bodies (e.g. in charge of Quality Assurance, sectoral committees, certification, NQF decision making bodies)

- The leveling and inclusion of qualifications in the NQF is quality-assured. By whom (specificities by sub-sector)?

- The scope of the NQF: The NQF is inclusive of various types of qualifications. Which types can be included? Are qualifications outside of the formal system included?

- Database(s) of qualifications are up-to-date, accessible and transparent for users.

- Are there studies/ research/ analyses to support this criterion?

Criterion 5:
The National Quality Assurance System for education and training refers to the NQF or NQS and is consistent with quality assurance guidelines of the SADCQF

Sub-criteria:

- The national QA systems are operational. The various relevant institutions act in a co-ordinated and linked manner.

- The design and award of qualifications are quality-assured and use explicit and transparent procedures and arrangements.

- Quality assurance procedures refer to context, inputs, process and output dimensions while giving special emphasis to outputs and learning outcomes.

- Quality assurance of learning outcomes refers to: planning; implementing; reviewing; feedback.

- Quality assurance measures include qualification requirements for teachers / trainers, assessors; accreditation; and external evaluation of providers of programmes.

- Labour market and society stakeholders are involved in relevant phases / aspects of quality assurance of qualifications.

- The sixteen common quality assurance (QA) guidelines of the SADCQF are compatible with the national QA framework (legislation, institutions, policy).

- Are there studies/ research/ analyses to support this criterion?

Criterion 6:
There is a clear indication of the relevant national authorities responsible for the verification of the qualifications obtained in the national system

Sub-criteria:

- The contact details of the body/ies responsible for the country's qualifications framework is accurate and accessible

- The contact details of the body or bodies responsible for QA is accurate and accessible

- There is a central qualifications information system in the country

- Full details of the central qualifications information system is accurate and accessible

- The contact details of the body or bodies responsible for verification of national qualifications is accurate and accessible

- The contact details of the body or bodies responsible for verification of foreign qualifications is accurate and accessible

- Do you have policies regarding your national and foreign verification/validation/evaluation/recognition? Describe.

Criterion 7:
The alignment process shall include a stated agreement of relevant quality assurance bodies

Sub-criteria:

- All relevant QA bodies are adequately involved and informed about the SADCQF alignment process and plans.

- Level to level alignment and the way the system is described: The relevant QA bodies agree and validate the content of the report.

Criterion 8:
Competent national bodies shall certify the alignment of the NQF/NQS with the SADCQF. A comprehensive report on alignment and its evidence must be published by competent national bodies

Sub-criteria:

- The institutions/ competent national bodies that will certify the SADCQF alignment are clearly defined.

- Roadmap for SADCQF alignment and target date for presentation of the final report: Is there a general / broad agreement?

- Structure of the alignment report: is it relevant, placing the criteria and procedures at the core of the report?

Criterion 9:
The official platform of the country must provide for a public comment process for the alignment report

Sub-criteria:

- There is a clear plan to revise and finalise the alignment report before publication on the country's official platform.

- Responsibility for timely publication of the final version of the report is agreed upon by the relevant structures in the country.

- Final national published version of the report takes account of the received comments and recommendations.

- Possible presentation of the final report is planned.

<table>
<tr><td>Criterion 10:
Clear plans have been made to make changes to legislation and policy supporting alignment to SADCQF levels on new qualification certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent authorities</td></tr>
</table>

Sub-criteria:

- Legislation and policy supporting the alignment with the SADCQF levels on new qualifications documents: Has this been discussed?

- The roadmap/ plans for discussion/ agreement among stakeholders. Has this been defined, agreed?

- Are the key conditions for implementation of this Criterion in place?

- The communication and information of users and stakeholders on the meaning/ advantages of having SADCQF levels on qualifications documents. Has this been prepared?

- Networking with other countries about greater mobility and the meaning of future adjustments in qualifications documents: Has this been done?

Annexure 4: Agenda of first meeting of the Seychelles NAC

Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA)

FIRST MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL ALIGNMENT COMMITTEE (NAC)
_____

Date: Thursday 17th May 2018

Time: 1.30 pm

Venue: SQA Conference Room

PURPOSE

The key purpose of the meeting is to:
- Establish the NAC;
- Adopt the self-assessment report; and
- Adopt the way forward

AGENDA

1. Opening and welcome

2. Attendance

3. Background to the SADC Qualifications Framework (SADCQF)

4. The Role of the NAC (See Annexure A – ToR of NAC)
    4.1 Adoption of the NAC membership

5. Seychelles' Self-assessment report (See Annexure B- Seychelles' Self-assessment report)
    5.1 Adoption of Self-assessment report

6. Way forward: Alignment timelines (See Annexure C- Alignment timelines)
    6.1 Adoption of way forward

7. Closing

Annexure 5: Summary Level Descriptors of the Seychelles NQF

Qualification type	Descriptors	Type of Occupation
PhD, Post-Doctorate	• Conduct cutting edge research in the field of study • Develop new techniques, ideas or approaches • with **complete autonomy**	Doctor, Researcher
Master	• Mastery of knowledge in the field of study • Propose solutions based on critical analysis of complex issues and research • **involving management of resources and supervision of others**.	Expert/Specialist
Post Graduate	• In-depth specialised knowledge in the field of study • Apply specialized skills and principles based on systematic analysis of data in the field of study • **Within broad autonomy**	Specialist
Degree	• In-depth knowledge in the field of study • Apply well-established principles, requiring a wide variety of data to solve problems in different contexts • **within broad autonomy**	Manager/supervisor
Advanced Diploma	• Specialised knowledge in the field of study • Apply varied and specialized procedures and techniques in the field of study requiring basic research • **within broad parameters and a certain autonomy**	Technician specialized
Diploma	• Broad knowledge in the field of study • Apply varied procedures and techniques, to solve concrete problems, in non-routine contexts • **under broad guidance**	Technician
Advanced Certificate	• Operational knowledge in the field of study • Apply a range of procedures and techniques in the field of study, to solve familiar problems in fairly routine contexts • **under general supervision**	Trades person/ Specialised at intermediate level
Certificate	• Basic operational knowledge in the field of study • Apply basic procedures and techniques in response to precise instructions • **under direct supervision**	Apprentice/ skilled at basic level
General Advanced Certificate	• In-depth knowledge in particular subject areas • Apply a range of procedures and techniques in the field of study, to solve problems in a wide range of contexts • **under general supervision**	Specialised general education
Secondary Certificate	• Broad-based knowledge • Apply basic procedures and techniques • in a **controlled environment and under direct supervision**	General education
Primary Certificate	• Basic knowledge • Apply basic procedures and techniques related to literacy, numeracy and IT skills involving development of desirable attitudes and values • **under continuous guidance, regular checking and limited autonomy**	Basic educational foundation

Annexure 6: Level Descriptors of the Seychelles NQF

NQF level	Band	Qualification type	Level descriptors			
			Degree of complexity of tasks	**Reasoning and problem solving**	**Knowledge**	**Autonomy and responsibility**
10	Higher Education and Training	PhD, Post-Doctorate	Carry out processes that: require originality and mastery in the application of in-depth and specialized knowledge involve substantial contribution to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches in research and enquiry in the field of study demonstrate initiative and employ a wide range of advanced research skills applied to complex tasks in highly specialized contexts	Generate new knowledge and applications through conceptualizing, designing and implementing a research project at the forefront of the field of study Make sound judgement on and provide new insights into complex issues based on systematic and supported analysis in specialist fields involving aspects of uncertainty Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultation and dissemination of new findings to specialist and non-specialist audiences	Demonstrate evidence of creating and interpreting new knowledge based on original and advanced research at the forefront of the field of study, to satisfy peer review and merit publication Analyze and synthesize comprehensively and critically a substantial body of knowledge in the field of study in order to elicit and establish relationships between the elements of the subject in the area of research Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss, compare specialized texts, propose new insights into the field of study and generate new knowledge Understand the limits of the knowledge and the necessity for further research and continuous development in the field of study	Operate in accordance with broad development or strategic plan and budget in a completely self directed manner with full responsibility and accountability for all aspects of advanced research work and including management of resources and supervision of others
9		Master, Post Graduate	Carry out processes that: require a measure of originality and mastery in the application of in-depth and specialized and/or broad knowledge Involve the use of established techniques of research and enquiry, to internationally recognized standards, to create and interpret knowledge in the field of study require the application of a wide range of skills applied to tasks in highly varied and/or highly specialized contexts.	Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different problem solving approaches, the underpinning methodologies, and where appropriate, propose new hypotheses or solutions Make sound judgement on complex issues based on systematic and innovative analysis in contexts involving aspects of uncertainty Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultative and/or supervisory role	Demonstrate evidence of critical and systematic understanding of knowledge and current problems and/or insights at the forefront of their field of study or area of specialization Analyze and synthesize comprehensively and critically current research and advanced scholarship in the field of study Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss, compare specialized texts, propose new insights into the field of study and possibly generate new knowledge Understand limits of the knowledge and the necessity for further research and continuous development in the field of study	Operate in accordance with broad development or strategic plan and budget in a completely self directed manner with responsibility and broad ranging accountability for management of resources and supervision of others.

NQF level	Band	Qualification type	Level descriptors			
			Degree of complexity of tasks	**Reasoning and problem solving**	**Knowledge**	**Autonomy and responsibility**
8		Post Graduate	Carry out processes that: require a mastery in the application of in-depth and specialized knowledge Involve the development and adaptation of procedures to specific and professional context in the field of study require the application and the consolidation of a wide range of skills applied to tasks in highly specialized contexts.	Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different problem solving approaches and where appropriate, propose a range of solutions Make sound judgement on complex issues based on systematic analysis in specialized contexts involving aspects of uncertainty Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultative and/or supervisory role	Demonstrate knowledge and intellectual independence in the critical and systematic understanding of ideas, principles and concepts of their area of specialization Analyze and synthesize critically current research and advanced scholarship in the field of study Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss and compare specialized texts Understand limits of the knowledge acquired, its influence on analysis and interpretation and explore lines of research	Operate in accordance with broad development or strategic plan and budget Within a context of broad autonomy with responsibility and broad ranging accountability for management of resources and supervision of others.
7		Degree	Carry out processes that: require self-directed application of knowledge with substantial depth in some areas. involve the development and adaptation of standard procedures to specific context in the field of study. require the application of a range of technical and other skills to tasks in both varied and highly specific contexts.	Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different problem solving approaches in the field of study. Provide appropriate responses to new situations requiring synthesis and evaluation of heterogeneous data in contexts involving aspects of uncertainty. Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of supervisory and collaborative role.	Demonstrate knowledge and intellectual independence in the critical understanding of ideas, principles and concepts of the field of study, and of area of specialization Analyze, synthesize and evaluate rigorously a wide range of information including consideration of areas of uncertainty. Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss and compare specialized texts. Understand the limits of the knowledge acquired and its influence on analysis and interpretation.	Involved in the planning, resourcing, managing processes and guiding or supervising the work of others. within a context of broad autonomy with complete accountability for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and /or group outcomes.

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.
5		National Diploma	Carry out processes that: require a wide range of specialized technical and/or academic skills involve a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures are employed in a variety of routine and non-routine contexts	Research, adapt and implement innovative and creative processes Determine appropriate methods and procedures in response to a range of concrete problems and with reference to some theoretical concepts. Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in order to train or supervise	Employ broad knowledge base with substantial depth in some areas Analyse and interpret a wide range of data and make informed judgement Prepare, present and discuss oral and/or written reports Understand and interpret relatively complex technical information	Involved in activities with full responsibility for the nature, quantity and quality of outcomes, under broad guidance, with possible responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes with some responsibility for the supervision of others.
4		Advanced National Certificate	Carry out processes that: cover a range of well developed technical and/or academic skills involve a significant choice of procedures are executed within a range of familiar contexts.	Use a range of known responses to solve familiar problems Have a range of sometimes innovative responses to concrete but often unfamiliar problems. Demonstrate interpersonal skills in order to communicate information, to convince or care for others	Employ broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts Analyse and interpret information and make informed judgement. Prepare oral and written reports on work done or on incidents Understand working instructions and simple technical documents	Involved in directed activities, with some autonomy, under general supervision, with some responsibility for the quantity and quality of output for self and others with possible responsibility for supervising others.
3		National Certificate	Carry out processes that: cover a range of specialized technical skills in a precise field of study involve repetitive and familiar procedures are executed within closely defined parameters	Apply procedures and/or techniques in response to precise instructions in order to obtain expected results Propose new solutions, adjustments and adaptations Exchange factual information	Employ basic operational knowledge Refer to readily available information Use known solution to familiar problems Fill in working forms or other relevant formats Understand working instructions	Involved in directed activities under general supervision and quality control with limited responsibility for the quantity and quality of their work with no responsibility for guiding others

NQF level	Band	Qualification type	Level descriptors			
			Degree of complexity of tasks	**Reasoning and problem solving**	**Knowledge**	**Autonomy and responsibility**
4	General Education	Advanced level	Carry out processes that: deal with advanced hypothetical propositions which will be directly linked to a concern, topic or theme require developed abstract thinking skills to solve complex problems Involve a wide range of procedures, often in non - standard combinations	Demonstrate the ability to gain and apply a range of knowledge, skills and understanding at a detailed level Show evidence of the ability to analyze, synthesize a range of data and to comprehend material of reasonably complex nature Determine the proper methods and procedures to respond to a variety of problems Articulate the results of their study and research clearly, accurately, and in a balanced and rational manner	Demonstrate wide -ranging understanding of the subject(s) at hand but with in depth knowledge of certain areas Prepare oral and written essays with coherency on research done	Involves a high degree of independent learning, but will often require input or guidance from others to complete of tasks Displays qualities and transferable skills useful in situations requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and judgement
2		Secondary	Carry out processes that: deal with hypothetical propositions involving abstract thinking and requires the combination of elements in a systematic way	Apply procedures and/or techniques related to language, mathematical, ICT, scientific, historical, socio-cultural and environmental domains Transfer skills in multiple contexts according to set procedures and use them to learn more effectively Apply critical and creative thinking to solve problems Communicate information, instructions, ideas and feelings in a range of different cultural, language and social contexts	Acquire broad-based knowledge and skills and develop desirable attitudes, to provide the basis for independent and future learning, and application of learning.	Involved in directed learning under guided autonomy and with close supervision with limited responsibility aiming towards increased autonomy by taking positions
1		Primary	Carry out processes at a concrete (hands-on) level based on familiar content and involving logical groupings	Apply basic procedures and techniques related to language, mathematical, ICT, scientific, historical, socio-cultural and environmental domains Apply repetitive and other learning skills to instil sound elementary knowledge, attitudes and values Demonstrate basic communication skills to inform, recall and express facts, ideas, views, opinions and feelings	Acquire basic, broad-based knowledge and skills (operational literacy in terms of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) and develop desirable attitudes and values.	Involved in basic directed learning under continuous guidance with close supervision with limited responsibility and autonomy

Annexure 7: Level-to-level alignment

Comparison of the Level Descriptors of the Seychelles NQF with the Level Descriptors of the SADC Qualifications Framework (SADCQF)

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Introduction

The Seychelles NQF

The National Qualifications Framework of Seychelles (SNQF) broadly has as its aims to increase access, quality, articulation and portability of qualifications as well as to promote technical and vocational qualifications within the education and training system. The foundation document of the NQF (The National Qualifications Framework: An Introduction, 2008) articulates the guiding principles of the Seychelles NQF as follows:

The National Qualifications Framework is designed 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 and regulate the development of qualifications based on unit standards which are linked to the workplace and society requirements*
- *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.*

The SADCQF

The SADCQF, a comprehensive Regional Qualifications Framework (RQF) for schooling, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and higher education, was established in 2011 by the SADC Ministers of Education. Its purpose is to enable easier movement of learners and workers across the SADC region and internationally. It is a 10-level reference RQF, underpinned by learning outcomes and quality assurance (QA) principles that will provide a regional benchmark for qualifications and QA mechanisms in SADC.

Member States agreed to align their qualifications and quality assurance (QA) mechanisms to the SADCQF. The vision is that in the SADC region all new qualifications, certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent authorities will contain the relevant level on the SADCQF. Alignment will enable this recognition of achievement at a regional level. The resulting transparency and information about the qualifications and QA of aligned Member States will further assist in embedding mutual trust amongst SADC Members. Regional alignment would also enable institutions and individuals to make comparisons of their learning and competence levels and would reduce unnecessary duplication of learning and effort when moving through the SADC for study or work purposes. Eight countries volunteered to pilot the alignment of their Qualifications Frameworks or Education and Training systems to that of the SADCQF. The pilot countries are Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Eswatini and Zambia.

SADC Alignment Road Map

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┌──────────────────────┐                                          ┌──────────────────────────┐
│    Member State      │                                          │  9. Report published     │
└──────────────────────┘                                          │  on SADCQF official      │
            │                                                     │        platform          │
            ▼                                                     └──────────────────────────┘
┌──────────────────────┐                                                        ▲
│ 1. Agrees to implement│                                                        │
│ the SADCQF           │                                          ┌──────────────────────────┐
└──────────────────────┘                                          │  8. TCCA                 │
            │                          ┌──────────────┐ ┌────────┐│  approves                │
            ▼                          │ Report not   │ │ TCCA   ││  report                  │
┌──────────────────────┐              │ suitable for │ │rejects ││                          │
│ 2. Establishes National│            │ submission-  │◄│report  │└──────────────────────────┘
│ Alignment Committee  │              │ Returned to  │ └────────┘            ▲
│ (NAC)                │              │ NAC for      │      ▲                │
└──────────────────────┘              │ further      │      │     ┌──────────────────────────┐
            │                         │ refinement   │      │     │ 7. Report suitable:      │
            ▼                         │              │      │     │ recommended to TCCA      │
┌──────────────────────┐◄────────────│              │      │     └──────────────────────────┘
│ 3. NAC conducts alignment│          └──────────────┘      │                ▲
│ self-assessment      │                      ▲             │                │
└──────────────────────┘                      │             │     ┌──────────────────────────┐
            │                                  │             │     │ 6. TCCASC scrutinises alignment report │
            ▼                                  │             │     └──────────────────────────┘
┌──────────────────────┐                                                    ▲
│ 4. Writes alignment report│                                               │
└──────────────────────┘                                                    │
            │                                                               │
            ▼                                                               │
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│ 5. Submits alignment report to TCCA Sub-Committee (TCCASC)                     │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Ten alignment criteria, an alignment plan and roadmap, as well as alignment timelines were developed to assist the eight pilot countries. Criterion 2 states that there should be a clear and demonstrable link between qualification levels in the NQF/ NQS and level descriptors of the SADCQF. Sub-Criterion 2.7 indicates that there should be an agreed approach (method) to present the demonstrable link of the country level descriptors (LDs) with that of the SADCQF.

At a regional workshop (7-8 June 2017) with the eight pilot countries, there was agreement on a specific approach that would be used to show the clear and demonstrable link. The approach would include three components:

1. Structural alignment
2. Conceptual alignment
3. Linguistic alignment

Level descriptor alignment approach

Structural alignment

Conceptual alignment

Linguistic alignment

Agreed by SADCQF members on 7 June 2017, SADCQF workshop, South Africa
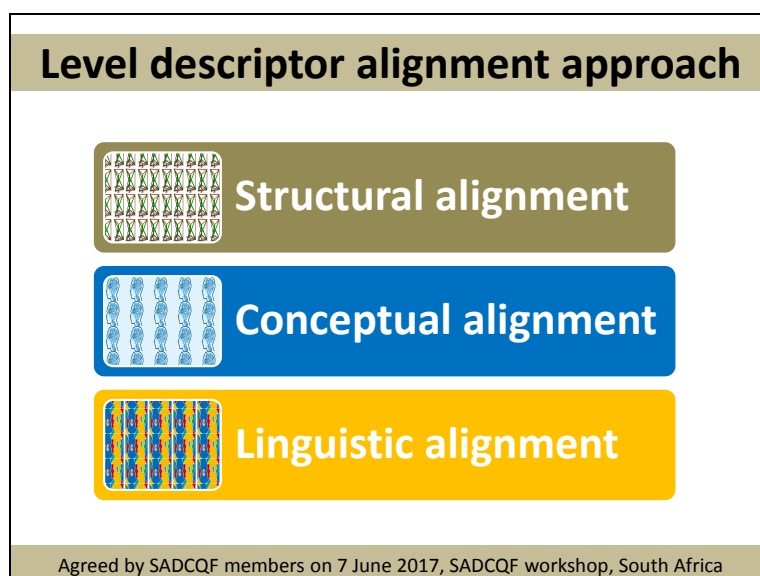
Structural comparison

To identify as to whether the two frameworks are structurally aligned, the architecture of the two frameworks was compared to ascertain the similarities and differences between the two frameworks.

In essence the following similarities could be identified:

- Both Qualifications Frameworks have ten (10) levels, the Seychelles NQF ranging level 1 (Primary Certificate) to 10 (Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Qualification), and the SADCQF ten levels, albeit without qualification types attached to it.

- Both have level descriptors for each stage of the framework which indicates broadly what a learner should know, be able to do and the extent to which they can exercise responsibility for the task.

- Both are based on learning outcomes rather than inputs of education and training. That is, both refer to the product of learning, after having obtained and processed information. Inputs such as resources provided in the context of learning or how the learning takes place is secondary in this scheme of things.

- Both are integrated and cover schooling, TVET and tertiary education. Both aim to be as inclusive as possible in terms of coverage of public, private and types of education and training whatever the mode through which it is offered. At SADC level, as in Seychelles, the move to address the bifurcation between vocational

and academic qualifications is particularly strong. The SADC descriptors are particularly generic so as to be "catch all" in nature, while the Seychelles' less so but aims to cover all types of education and training nevertheless.

- Both are underpinned by a qualifications database of part-qualifications and full qualifications, described through outcome statements, and include credits. In the case of Seychelles this is the SQAIS (Seychelles Qualifications Authority Information System) whereas for SADC this will be the SADC Portal

The differences between the two frameworks stem mainly from the fact that one is a reference framework whilst the other is a national framework on which qualifications based on qualifications types are registered.

The following articulates the differences:

- As a reference framework the SADCQF does not have a "qualifications map or ladder" showing the usual architecture of NQFs – which typically deal with issues specific to the country. It therefore does not show the inter-relationship of qualifications, in terms of common standard features found on most country specific frameworks.

- The SNQF 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. The SADCQF, not being a framework on which qualification types can be registered, has no tracks.

- Whilst the SADCQF is also built on the inclusivity principle, an aim which is made more explicit for the framework in Seychelles is to hoist the level of TVET, or occupational qualifications, within the education and training system. In other words the framework is the lever upon which its creators have attempted to improve the lot of TVET qualifications in comparison with academic qualifications, but there has also been equal emphasis on the fact that though equivalent the qualifications are different and have different orientations, one for the world of work and one for further academic or specialized education and training. This partly explains the decision to align the two tracks structurally against each other from level 3 to 6.

- As a national qualifications framework the SNQF has 11 qualification types, which are variants on the certificate, diploma and degree qualifications. Hence we have

for example primary certificate at level 1, advanced diploma at level 6 and master's degree at level 9.

- The SNQF uses the notional hours concept to describe qualification duration or volume, something entirely missing on the SADC framework.

- Qualifications on the SNQF have to be expressed in terms of unit standards (level 1-6) or as whole qualifications (level 7-10) to be registered on the framework. Qualifications developed from unit standards (which can be essential, specific and elective) can then be developed into programmes of education and training to be offered to learners. The SADCQF cannot because of its very nature be built on the basis of such principles.

Summary

From the structural comparison, it is clear that there is a degree of similarity in terms of the architecture of both frameworks in terms of levels (number of), in the fact that both are underpinned by level descriptors and the learning outcome paradigm. Structurally then, the two bears comparison in spite of the many differences.

Conceptual comparison

The use of concepts was examined to see whether there were conceptual links between the two frameworks. The outcome statements were examined on both frameworks.

The similarities are:

- On both Frameworks the level descriptors are built around fairly similar categories. The SADCQF has the categories of autonomy and responsibility, skills and knowledge. Similarly the SNQF has autonomy and responsibility, and knowledge. The skills dimension is missing on the SNQF but it can be ascertained that the category can be equated to the categories of 'reasoning and problem solving' and 'degree of complexity of tasks' found on the SNQF. A perusal of the level descriptors under the categories in both qualification frameworks, when juxtaposed, show striking similarities in that both sets of level descriptors target what the learner should be able to know, do and the level of responsibility with which one can execute a task. Indeed concepts expressed in the outcome statements through such terms as broad knowledge, basic knowledge or basic operational knowledge, and carry out basic or specialist processes tend to find

echo across both frameworks. Both tend to use concepts which are very broad and this is more understandable at the level of the SADCQF which has to be broad to accommodate a wide range of differences across the region.

The differences are:

- On the surface there are differences between the two sets of level descriptors which, when we drill deeper, turn out not to be so great as to pose an insurmountable obstacle to the alignment exercise. For instance, as stated above, the SNQF has the category of 'reasoning and problem solving' which is missing on the SADCQF. This however can be deemed to be skills oriented since it relates to such intellectual skills as judgement and evaluation which enable one to perform a task. To make a judgement or evaluation one must have the knowledge at hand, but the ability to use it intellectually (to judge, evaluate) is in and of itself a skill which is learnt and developed through time. The other category is 'degree of complexity of tasks', also missing on the SADCQF, which indicates the difficulty level which attend processes that one undertakes at any given level and what one would require to complete such processes. An example is the carrying out of "processes that deal with hypothetical propositions involving abstract thinking and requires the combination of elements in a systematic way" (at secondary education level). Processes are carried on the basis of having the required information, but their execution is contingent on being able to use information effectively (in this instance using abstraction and combining elements) which again suggests that this category of the SNQF closely parallels, though admittedly not always, the SADCQF level descriptors falling under its skills category. From the exercise, it can be deemed that the SADCQF would have benefitted from the use of such categories to both strengthen the progression of cognitive challenge on the regional framework and to be a stronger mirror for the SNQF, or indeed most frameworks in the region.

- Whilst the level descriptors and the concepts used on both frameworks remain at fairly broad level, the SNQF definitely drills deeper into the outcome requirements at particular levels though it does not link to particular professions or groups of professions. For one, the fact that it has more categories for its level descriptors points in that direction. Conceptually, the SNQF tends to use more specific terms within the knowledge domain such as the ability to *conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss and compare specialized texts (*this is at level 6 as one example). In terms of reasoning and problem solving (at the same level) it refers to the demonstration *of interpersonal communication skills in the context of*

professional consultation. Such detailed requirements cannot be articulated on the SADCQF since by its very nature it is very much broader than the SNQF. As further examples, using level 1 of both frameworks, and in spite of the many similarities, it may be observed that the SNQF articulates skills outcome in terms of specific subjects (*Apply basic procedures and techniques related to language, mathematical, ICT, scientific, historical, socio-cultural and environmental domains*) whilst the SADCQF remains only at the level of the three Rs (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic).

Summary

A comparison of the conceptual differences between the two qualifications frameworks shows that there is more in common than different. Both follow each other quite closely in terms of the outcome statements at various levels, though the SNQF drills deeper into certain requirements and is more specific. The SNQF has the categories of 'Reasoning and problem solving' and 'Degree of complexity of tasks', but this is partly made up by the fact that descriptors under these categories are mostly covered under the domain of skills on the SADCQF. In a few instances the SADCQF knowledge category also covers items of a similar nature that can be found under the SNQF's 'Reasoning and problem solving' category.

Linguistic comparison

Notes on linguistic comparison

The basis of the comparison of the two sets of level descriptors is done using the three descriptors under the SADCQF categories of Knowledge, Skills, and Autonomy and Responsibility, and comparing these with the SNQF level descriptors under the categories of Autonomy and Responsibility, Knowledge, Reasoning and Problem Solving, and Degree of Complexity of Tasks.

It is to be noted that, by and large, the levels of the SNQF progresses upwards on the basis of increasing cognitive challenge, which, to the extent that it can be discerned on the SADCQF is an enabling factor in the comparison. Given the fact that both are fairly broad in terms of competencies required at each level, the task of comparison appears fairly straightforward, though the differences in terms of the use of categorization for level descriptors and how ostensibly similar outcome statements fall under different categories on both frameworks impact on the exercise. Comparison is not made easier by the lack of clear definitions on both frameworks as to what exactly is meant by skills, knowledge, degree of complexity of tasks, reasoning and problem solving and in what instance therefore that one would place an outcome statement in one category and not another. At

the end of the day, one has to deduce the logic of level descriptor placement under the different categories.

The contradiction in the logic from which the tracked system of the SNQF was conceived and implemented is thrown into relief by the exercise and has not helped to facilitate comparisons between the two frameworks. The SNQF was developed as both a descriptive and prescriptive framework. Descriptive meant that it recognized elements within the present system, for instance, a first year vocational post-secondary (at level 3) that is, primarily because it has been a stage where basic technical knowledge and skills was imparted at the TVET institutions, ostensibly conceptually weaker than the secondary schooling which had preceded it. This has caused part of the framework to be at odds with the concept of increased cognitive challenge. Prescriptive meant that, for example, the system would have to cater for a secondary certificate level underpinned by the SNQF level descriptors that would apply equally to all students who exit the secondary schools, something our educational system is yet to resolve.

On the SNQF the general education track (level 1-4) is parallel to the vocational track at level 3 to 4 since vocational education and training starts at level 3 and goes on to level 6. The academic track (level 5-10) also goes parallel to the vocational track from level 5 to 6. Beyond level 6 the academic track is the sole track on the framework. From level 3 to level 6 it is mainly vocational qualifications which are pitched on the levels of the framework, except for level 4 where general education ends, signalling the end of a two year high school cycle (Advanced Levels). Level 5 on the academic track signals the start of the undergraduate degree cycle which finishes at level 7. This is in parallel with the first and second year of the degree, respectively, the final year of the Diploma (which finishes at level 5) and the Advanced Diploma which finishes at level 6. The TVET institutions do not award degrees and this is recognized on the (descriptive) framework by the fact that the vocational track ends at level 6.

But, to understand the tracked system of the SNQF it is necessary to take into account different factors. General education (level 1-4) provides a general grounding in education, preparing for further studies whether in the vocational or academic (higher education) field. In the context of the SNQF, one may exit general education at the end of level 2 (secondary), then move on to the vocational track (3-6) or one may continue on a two year, high school programme (advanced level) before progressing on to the academic or vocational track. It is a peculiarity of the SNQF's tracked system that, because level descriptors are only assigned to the final year of a qualification on the framework, there are two sets of level descriptors at level 4, one for general education and one for vocational. This is the only level on the framework where the end of a qualification pitched on the general education track coincides with the end of a qualification pitched on the vocational track. In Seychelles it has not generally been conceivable (because of the attachment to two

year advanced levels) to have a general education certificate at level 3, and this is shown in the fact that level 3 descriptors are vocationally oriented. To note that from level 5 to 6, though the qualifications (diploma, advanced diploma) are inserted only on the vocational track of the framework, the thinking has been that such qualifications used should be equally applied as academic qualifications. In other words the term advanced diploma at level 5 could be used either for vocational or academic type qualifications. To return to the point however, the upshot for the exercise is that at level 4, comparison with the SADCQF is complicated because its level descriptors have then to be compared with two sets of level descriptors from the SNQF.

From level 4 of the general education track one may choose to enrol on a vocational or academic, tertiary non university, or tertiary university level programme. It is equally possible for students to proceed from the vocational to the academic track, particularly those who have completed a diploma programme at level 5. This signals the fact that it is generally recognized, and a perusal of the level descriptors reveals, that an advanced certificate on the vocational track is less cognitively challenging than its corresponding advanced level qualification on the general education track. It is only in the combination of the two sets of the level descriptors on the SNQF at level 4 that alignment can be made with the same level of the SADCQF. If level 4 vocational on the SNQF is deemed weaker than the same level on the general education track, it means that level 4 vocational builds on a weak vocational level 3 (as adduced above). Not to put too fine a point on it, this is an unfortunate consequence of the compromise which resulted from competing aspirations of what a framework should do for the country at a specific point in time, but the end result is that the idea of parity of esteem for all types of qualifications on the framework has been compromised.

The tracked system of the framework has made it that TVET qualifications dominate from level 3 to 6. As noted above, this is not to say, for instance, an academic diploma or advanced diploma cannot be developed specifically to populate the academic track. Indeed we have had an academic advanced diploma developed for managers in schools. However, for one, on the qualifications ladder qualifications are only pitched on the vocational track. Secondly, there is a marked tendency for qualifications at this level to be TVET oriented and this comes through in a fine reading of outcome statements. One would suppose that this would be normal given the trend of most of the world to have what may be termed as "craft or technician" oriented qualifications at these levels (3-6) of the framework, but this can be seen as isolating the TVET qualifications, a descriptive aspect of the framework that is at odds with the use of the framework to bridge the academic vocational divide, and promotion of parity of esteem. Inadvertently, we may have ended up "shooting ourselves in the foot" judging from the fact that the construction of the SNQF has helped entrench rather than solve the problems that it was meant to remedy.

Apart from structural issues impacting on the linguistic comparison, it can be stated at the outset however that there are many similarities of wording (use of the same words, sometimes the same sentence or expression) which facilitated the task and made it easier to come to a conclusion as to whether the corresponding levels are aligned or not. But the generality of the SADCQF descriptors contrasted with the more institutional oriented wording of the descriptors of the SNQF made it that the comparisons made must be treated with care and always in the full knowledge that one could be barking up the wrong tree. On a surface level, certain comparisons should be straightforward, however the issue of different interpretation and different ways of using a simple category, like knowledge (acquired as opposed to used/demonstrate for instance), made comparison difficult.

From the linguistic angle, the process of alignment from level 7 to 10 where the degree cycles are located on the framework was relatively straightforward save for the fact that certain outcome statements of a similar nature were not always located under the same category (this is especially under knowledge) on the two frameworks. In terms of the creation of knowledge, from using existing information in an original way to generating new and peer reviewed knowledge, the increased sophistication in the skills dimension both in terms of the manipulation of tools and knowledge, and the progression from broad to full autonomy in the execution of tasks, there is a certain synchronicity that comes through in the linguistics comparison. This is certainly the part of the two frameworks upon which pronouncement of alignment seemed more straightforward in comparison to the general and vocational tracks.

The process of comparing the SADCQF levels and the SNQF levels began by broadly comparing the categories of both frameworks so as to find out the similarities and differences and also what would be the best match. At the end of the day, and as articulated above, given that both categories of 'Degree of Complexity of Tasks', and 'Reasoning and Problem solving' could be classified as skills oriented, they were both grouped under the 'Skills' category of the SADCQF. Categories of 'Knowledge', and 'Autonomy and Responsibility' were aligned against each other for comparison. This enabled the work to proceed, however there were still differences and consequent difficulties in the work as that both take different angles and knowledge, as an example, can be seen as skills when seen through the angle of acquisition.

The SADCQF statement	The relevant Seychelles NQF statements on the same level

This is a level-to-level analysis to see whether the ten (10) SNQF levels are aligned with the ten (10) SADCQF levels.

Analysing Level 1

Level 1 Knowledge	
	Recognising your Competencies
Demonstrate basic general knowledge and numeracy and literacy for everyday purposes	Acquire basic, broad-based knowledge and skills (operational literacy in terms of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) and develop desirable attitudes and values

Discussion

There is an obvious similarity in the level descriptors of both as the emphasis is on the demonstration and acquisition of basic knowledge, though it is to be noted that for the SNQF the issue of attitudinal change or socialization is considered important at this level. The SNQF stresses more on scholastic knowledge (the three R's) whilst the SADCQF dwells on knowledge, numeracy and literacy for everyday purposes.

Level 1 Skills	
	Recognising your Competencies
• Follow simple instructions • Perform actions required to carry out simple concrete tasks requiring no special skills.	Carry out processes at a concrete (hands-on) level • based on familiar content and • involving logical groupings Apply basic procedures and techniques related to language, mathematical, ICT, scientific, historical, socio-cultural and environmental domains Apply repetitive and other learning skills to instil sound elementary knowledge, attitudes and values Demonstrate basic communication skills to inform, recall and express facts, ideas, views, opinions and feelings.

Discussion

There is a similarity in both in that both have what may be termed a Piagetian view of that level of learning being at concrete operational, or hands-on, level as we know it. The SNQF is more specific on these skills (recall, communicate, group, express facts, etc.) and in the

applications of procedures within the school (in relation to the subjects) and the general context (child needs to have familiarity with the content) in which the child is being socialized and taught.

Level 1 Autonomy and responsibility	
work under close supervision in familiar situations and structured contexts	Involved in basic directed learning • under continuous guidance with close supervision • with limited responsibility and autonomy

Discussion

Both aver to working under close supervision, and therefore within a context of continuous guidance, with limited responsibility and autonomy, the latter elaborated by SNQF. The SNQF level descriptors articulate the competency more in a schooling context whereas the SADCQF brings in structured and familiar contexts.

Summary

In terms of skills, knowledge, autonomy and responsibility there is a definite match between the two levels and the descriptors can be well aligned to one another. The additional SNQF category of reasoning and problem solving can be integrated well under the SADCQF skills category. Overall though, the SNQF level descriptors articulate in more depth the required competencies at this level and tend to stress the schooling context whilst the SADCQF remains at a general level.

Analysing Level 2

Level 2 Knowledge	
Demonstrate recall and a narrow range of knowledge and cognitive skills.	Acquire broad-based knowledge and skills and develop desirable attitudes, to provide the basis for independent and future learning, and application of learning.

Discussion

The two appear to differ in that whilst the SADCQF refers to the demonstration of recall and a narrow range of knowledge, the SNQF caters for the acquisition of broad based knowledge, and the latter sees the second level as a platform for building, acquiring

knowledge and skills, for the future. Again the SNQF situates the descriptor in terms of the scholastic context whilst the SADCQF keeps it on a general level.

Level 2 Skills	
Carry out processes that are limited in range, repetitive and familiar	Apply procedures and/or techniques related to language, mathematical, ICT, scientific, historical, socio-cultural and environmental domains Transfer skills in multiple contexts according to set procedures and use them to learn more effectively Apply critical and creative thinking to solve problems Communicate information, instructions, ideas and feelings in a range of different cultural, language and social contexts Carry out processes that: • deal with hypothetical propositions • involving abstract thinking and • require the combination of elements in a systematic way.

Discussion

There is a clear difference in that the level 2 of the SADCQF looks to be more confined and targeted at a lower level than that of the SNQF. It harks to repetitive and familiar processes whilst the SNQF focuses on the application of skills in multiple contexts, the application of critical and creative thinking and the ability to communicate effectively. It goes further in that the following (dealing with hypothetical propositions involving abstract thinking and requiring the combination of elements in a systematic way) looks to be streets ahead of the SADCQF's limited range. There is a mismatch here.

Level 2 Autonomy and responsibility	
Apply in directed activity under close supervision	Involved in directed learning • under guided autonomy and with close supervision • with limited responsibility • aiming towards increased autonomy by taking positions

Discussion

Learners pitched at level 2 of both frameworks would work under close supervision and in directed learning. However the SNQF already looks towards the future by averring that learners should be aiming towards increased autonomy and at that stage would take positions.

Summary

By and large there is a difference between level 2 of both frameworks in spite of the fact that at that level their degree of autonomy and responsibility is almost similar. In terms of knowledge and skills the SNQF presents a picture of a learner having gained, or gaining, competencies at a level where they have attained a range of critical and fairly advanced, even abstract competencies which puts them in a position to attain the necessary grades for entry to post-secondary (or tertiary) education, whilst that of SADCQF harks towards learning in a repetitive, or drill like scenario. Broadly and even given for the fact that SADCQF articulates descriptors in broader and more general fashion, the SNQF is more advanced. In many ways, the SADCQF level 2 can be deemed more of a match for level 1 of the SNQF. For example, in terms of autonomy at level 2 there is a reference to learners undertaking "directed activity under close supervision" whilst the SNQF at level 1 refers to learners involved in basic directed learning working "under continuous guidance with close supervision." In terms of skills, level 2 SADCQF refers to learners being able to "carry out processes that are limited in range, repetitive and familiar" whilst level 1 of the SNQF refers to the application of "repetitive and other learning skills to instil sound elementary knowledge, attitudes and values." Both hark to fairly basic processes. It is to be noted that when compared with other levels of the SADCQF it can be seen that level 2 of the SNQF is more of a match for level 4 of the SADCQF since they both refer to the acquisition of a "broad based knowledge." The SNQF at level 2 refers to carrying out processes that "deal with hypothetical propositions" and "involving abstract thinking" whilst for its part the SADCQF at level 4 refers to the ability to incorporate "some abstract and technical concepts." Again at level 4 the SADCQF refers to "skills which are transferable in familiar and unfamiliar contexts, using routine and non- routine procedures" whilst the SNQF refers to the ability to "transfer skills in multiple contexts according to set procedures."

Analysing Level 3

Level 3 Knowledge	
• Demonstrate basic operational and theoretical knowledge and • Ability to interpret information	Employ basic operational knowledge Refer to readily available information Use known solution to familiar problems Fill in working forms or other relevant formats Understand working instructions

Discussion

There is a definite correspondence on the level of knowledge given that both relate to the learner/person demonstrating or employing basic operational knowledge. Having the ability to interpret information as articulated on the SADCQF is consonant with the ability to refer to readily available information, use known solutions to familiar problems, and understand working instructions. The difference is that on the SNQF the context (work, school) is made more explicit.

Level 3 Skills	
• Demonstrate a range of well-developed skills and • Ability to apply known solutions to familiar problems.	Carry out processes that: • cover a range of specialized technical skills in a precise field of study • involve repetitive and familiar procedures • are executed within closely defined parameters Apply procedures and/or techniques in response to precise instructions in order to obtain expected results Propose new solutions, adjustments and adaptations Exchange factual information

Discussion

Within the skills domain there is broad alignment, though in terms of the application of known solutions to familiar problems, the SNQF articulates this particular descriptor within the knowledge or knowledge application domain. However the application of known solutions to familiar problems can also be taken to mean being skills which are repetitive, executed within closely defined parameters and techniques applied in response to precise instructions in order to obtain expected results (SNQF). The SNQF, however, goes further than the SADCQF in that the learner/person is also able to propose new solutions to challenges. The TVET orientation of the SNQF in the skills domain is very apparent in contrast to the more generic SADCQF skills category in that it refers to the ability to execute "a range of specialized technical skills in a precise field of study involving repetitive and familiar procedures" and which are "executed within closely defined parameters". Procedures are also applied "in response to precise instructions".

Level 3 Autonomy and responsibility	
	Recognising your Competencies
Works under general supervision with some responsibility for quality and quantity of output	Involved in directed activities • under general supervision and quality control • with limited responsibility for the quantity and quality of their work • with no responsibility for guiding others

Discussion

Whilst the learner/person would both work under general supervision, and as such in a context of being guided closely (involved in directed activity) it is to be noted that under the SADCQF the individual would have some responsibility for the quality and quantity of their work/output, but within the context of the SNQF that responsibility would be limited.

Summary

Broadly there is correspondence at this level, especially in terms of the skills and knowledge domains which would mean the level of the two frameworks matches one against the other. At points even the wording of the two sets of descriptors are similar. It is a given that scholastic and other contexts for the application of skills, knowledge and the execution of responsibility are made clearer in the country specific framework. But it is also very clear that the SNQF has a strong TVET orientation due to the fact that its skills domain for example contains a preponderance of outcome statements articulated in the contexts of execution of basic technical tasks.

Analysing Level 4

Level 4 Knowledge	
Demonstrates a broad knowledge base, incorporating some abstract and technical concepts, and the ability to analyse information and make informed judgements.	**Vocational Track:** Employ broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts Analyse and interpret information and make informed judgement. Prepare oral and written reports on work done or on incidents Understand working instructions and simple technical documents **General Education Track:** Demonstrate wide -ranging understanding of the subject(s) at hand but with in depth knowledge of certain areas Prepare oral and written essays with coherency on research done

Discussion

There is some alignment in the levels for SADC and Seychelles in that on a general level both, more so on the SNQF's vocational track, call for a broad knowledge base, both stress the ability at this level to make informed judgement which can only be done on the basis of the ability to analyze information and apply abstract thinking. The general education track of the SNQF though, goes into greater depth, harking to greater cognitive challenge, by indicating that learners/persons should show in-depth knowledge of certain areas and being able to write and narrate on issues at length.

Level 4 Skills	
Applies a moderate range of technical and/or scholastic skills which are transferable in familiar and unfamiliar contexts, using routine and non-routine procedures.	**Vocational Track:** Carry out processes that: • cover a range of well-developed technical and/or academic skills • involve a significant choice of procedures • are executed within a range of familiar contexts. Use a range of known responses to solve familiar problems Have a range of sometimes innovative responses to concrete but often unfamiliar problems. Demonstrate interpersonal skills in order to communicate information, to convince or care for others **General Education Track:** Carry out processes that: • deal with advanced hypothetical propositions which will be directly linked to a concern, topic or theme • require developed abstract thinking skills to solve complex problems • involve a wide range of procedures, often in non -standard combinations Demonstrate the ability to gain and apply a range of knowledge, skills and understanding at a detailed level Show evidence of the ability to analyze, synthesize a range of data and to comprehend material of reasonably complex nature Determine the proper methods and procedures to respond to a variety of problems Articulate the results of their study and research clearly, accurately, and in a balanced and rational manner

Discussion

On the level of skills there is a definite dissonance between the two frameworks at this level, and this is both within the vocational and general education domains. Whilst the

moderate range of skills, as stated on the SADC Framework, being applied in "familiar and unfamiliar" context is parallel to the extent that the same SNQF level calls for the execution of processes within a "range of familiar contexts", the demands of the SNQF is higher in that it calls, for instance, for the ability to carry out processes that "cover a range of well-developed technical and/or academic skills, and shows evidence of the ability to analyze, synthesize a range of data and to comprehend material of reasonably complex nature", and even require "developed abstract thinking skills to solve complex problems". It is noticeable that here the SADCQF skills alignment is more with the vocational track of the SNQF as SNQF's general education outcome statements are slightly at a more advanced stage than its corresponding vocational statements, in referring for instance to the ability to "demonstrate the ability to gain and apply a range of knowledge, skills and understanding at a detailed level." However, by and large this level of the SNQF is definitely of a higher order than the moderate range of skills required at the level of the SADC framework. (Refer to discussion above where level 2 of the SNQF is also matched to level 4 of the SADCQF).

Level 4 Autonomy and responsibility	
Shows ability for self-direction, requiring little supervision, and complete responsibility for own outcomes and some responsibility for group outcomes.	**Vocational track:** Involved in directed activities, • with some autonomy, • under general supervision, • with some responsibility for the quantity and quality of output for self and others • with possible responsibility for supervising others **General Education Track:** Involves a high degree of independent learning, but will often require input or guidance from others to complete tasks Displays qualities and transferable skills useful in situations requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and judgement.

Discussion

There is a certain amount of alignment between the two sets of level descriptors which is indicated through such phrase as having the ability to "have complete responsibility for own outcomes and some responsibility for group outcomes" (SADCQF) with "some responsibility for the quantity and quality of output for self and others" (SNQF). The ability for self-directed learning, requiring little supervision as indicated on the SADCQF, is akin to some

extent to the high degree of independent learning that is indicated on both the general education and vocational tracks of the SNQF.

Summary

On a general level, except for the skills domain where it is fairly clear that the SNQF posits a higher order of competencies to be mastered (as evidenced in the SNQF's general education descriptors), there is alignment between the two frameworks. In certain instances the almost exact wording is used on both frameworks, though not necessarily under the same category. Different interpretation of the categories being used make for some of the differences indicated above. The complicating issue at this level is that the vocational and general education competencies of the SNQF though quite similar, indeed word for word in many instances, show the general education track of the SNQF at a more advanced level than its corresponding vocational track. This in itself explains why the SNQF's general education competencies are at a slightly higher level than the SADCQF's competencies but that both (vocational, general education) when taken together can be argued to be aligned with the SADCQF.

Analysing Level 5

Level 5 Knowledge	
Demonstrates a broad knowledge base with substantial depth in some areas and analyse information and construct a coherent argument	Employ broad knowledge base with substantial depth in some areas Analyse and interpret a wide range of data and make informed judgement Prepare, present and discuss oral and/or written reports Understand and interpret relatively complex technical information

Discussion

There are many similarities at this level, notably in that both seek the demonstration or employment of a "broad knowledge base", with "substantial depth in some areas". Both also refer to the ability to analyze information, or understand and interpret information which is at complex technical level. It is to be noted that at this level as at level 3, there is a tendency for the existing qualification type on the SNQF to be more of a TVET type

qualification and so the outcome statements (see for example "Understand and interpret relatively complex technical information") tend to be oriented towards this domain. In contrast the SADCQF orients itself towards more general descriptors.

Level 5 Skills	
Applies a wide range of technical and/or scholastic skills in variable contexts using standard and non-standard procedures, often in combination."	Carry out processes that: • require a wide range of specialized technical and/or academic skills • involve a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures • are employed in a variety of routine and non-routine contexts Research, adapt and implement innovative and creative processes Determine appropriate methods and procedures in response to a range of concrete problems and with reference to some theoretical concepts Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in order to train or supervise

Discussion

At the level of skills there are quite a few similarities at this level (albeit in a more balanced generic way). Both are oriented towards the application or undertaking of processes that require a wide range of technical or academic skills and using standard and non-standard procedures. In addition the SNQF brings in the element of research, innovation, and, as importantly, the demonstration of interpersonal skills. Again there is a definite TVET slant to the outcome statements of the SNQF (see for example the emphasis on methods and procedures, the latter word used twice, harping on the involvement of "a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures" which "are employed in a variety of routine and non-routine contexts"). The SNQF puts emphasis on communication (Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in order to train or supervise) which the SADCQF does not. Broadly, though, the SNQF could be judged slightly above the SADCQF but not to the extent of saying the two cannot be aligned.

Level 5 Autonomy and responsibility	
Works independently under broad guidance and can take some responsibility for supervising the work of others and group outcomes	Involved in activities with full responsibility for the nature, quantity and quality of outcomes, • under broad guidance, • with possible responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes • with some responsibility for the supervision of others.

Discussion

There is alignment in the area of autonomy and responsibility given that both refer to the ability to work within a context of independence and "under broad guidance, with possible responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes with some responsibility for the supervision of others." (Same words used at this level in both Frameworks).

Summary

Level 5 on the SNQF matches level 5 on the SADCQF, though the SADCQF tends to be more generic and the SNQF more oriented to TVET related outcomes. Within the skills domain, the SNQF can be judged to be slightly more advanced than the SADCQF though not to the extent that it would render the two not aligned.

Analysing Level 6

Level 6 Knowledge	
Demonstrate specialist knowledge in more than one area and ability to collate, analyse and synthesise a wide range of technical information.	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

Discussion

There is definite synchronicity at this level for the domain of knowledge given that both refer to the demonstration of specialist/specialized knowledge, though the SNQF goes further with reference to in-depth knowledge in a particular branch or discipline. Both use broadly similar terms in reference to the application of knowledge like analyze, interpret, synthesize, collate or reformat information. Both have a TVET leaning in that the SADCQF refers to ability to "collate, analyse and synthesise a wide range of technical information." The TVET orientation on the SNQF is shown through for instance in the understanding and interpreting "fundamental and highly technical information in a particular field of study."

Level 6 Skills	
	SQ A Recognising your Competencies
Demonstrate ability to apply specialist knowledge and skills in highly variable contexts and formulate responses to concrete and abstract problems.	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

Discussion

There are quite a few elements of similarity within the skills domain given that both refer to the application of specialized knowledge and skills, though one (SADCQF) in a more general fashion whereas the SNQF refers to it within the context of a particular branch of a field of study and involving the application of a full range of procedures (the TVET slant) in the branch of study. Both though do refer to the application of skills and the elaboration of response in variable, or routine and non-routine contexts. As in other instances, the SNQF places due emphasis on the interpersonal skills (especially communication), which are almost entirely absent from the SADCQF.

Level 6 Autonomy and responsibility	
Manages processes and works with complete accountability for personal and group outcomes	Involved in planning, resourcing and managing processes • within broad parameters and functions • with responsibility for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and / or group outcomes.

Discussion

In terms of autonomy and responsibility there is an element of alignment in that both sets of level descriptors stresses accountability for personal and/or group outcomes, though in the SADCQF the concept of complete accountability which is used means that the person is a step up as compared to that on the SNQF (which refers to "with responsibility for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and / or group outcomes."). Both manage processes but one within broad parameters (SNQF) and the other with complete accountability.

Summary

Given the fact that the level descriptors of the two frameworks are quite similar at this level, sometimes to the extent where they can be substituted for one another (they often use exactly the same terms), we can pronounce that this level of the SNQF is aligned to the SADCQF. For both frameworks at this level there is a slight slant to the requirements of technical and vocational education and training.

Analysing Level 7

Level 7 Knowledge	
• Demonstrates knowledge of a major discipline with possible areas of specialisation, and • Have a command of the ideas, principles, concepts, chief research methods and	Demonstrate knowledge and intellectual independence in the critical understanding of ideas, principles and concepts of the field of study, and of area of specialization Analyze, synthesize and evaluate rigorously a wide range of information including consideration of areas of uncertainty.

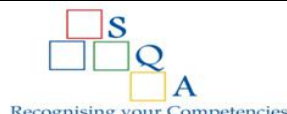| problem-solving techniques of the recognised discipline.	Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss and compare specialized texts.
	Understand the limits of the knowledge acquired and its influence on analysis and interpretation.

Discussion

In that it is clear when both frameworks refer to the demonstration of knowledge of a major discipline (SADCQF) or field of study (SNQF), with an area of specialization, then therefore both frameworks are aligned. They are further aligned in the context that both refer to the critical understanding/or command of the ideas, concepts and principles of that field of study/discipline and specialization. Furthermore, in the context of both, the application of well-developed skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, to knowledge at hand within the discipline is clearly important. And finally, both SADCQF and SNQF state the fact that knowledge is often subjective, has its limits and can be contested.

Level 7 Skills	
Demonstrates intellectual independence, critical thinking and analytical rigor, and advanced communication and collaborative skills in complex and variable contexts.	Carry out processes that: • require self-directed application of knowledge with substantial depth in some areas. • involve the development and adaptation of standard procedures to specific context in the field of study. • require the application of a range of technical and other skills to tasks in both varied and highly specific contexts. Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different problem solving approaches in the field of study Provide appropriate responses to new situations requiring synthesis and evaluation of heterogeneous data in contexts involving aspects of uncertainty Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of supervisory and collaborative role.

Discussion

Whilst there are some similarities in the skills category at level 7 such as the demonstration of intellectual independence on the SADCQF level (which is brought out in the knowledge

domain at this level of the SNQF) and the self-directed application of knowledge which require critical thinking and analytical rigour (SADCQF) and the ability to evaluate critically the problem solving approaches, the two sets of level descriptors seem somewhat different in instances in that whilst one (SADCQF) pertains to what one should have in terms of intellectual assets when undertaking a task, the other set of level descriptors (SNQF) articulates what one should be able to achieve when these intellectual assets are applied (for example, by providing appropriate responses to new situations requiring synthesis and evaluation of heterogeneous data in contexts involving aspects of uncertainty- SNQF). There is also some parallel in the communication and collaboration spheres in that one (SADCQF) refers to the demonstration of "advanced communication and collaborative skills in complex and variable contexts", whilst the other emphasises the ability to demonstrate "interpersonal communication skills in the context of supervisory and collaborative role", the latter indicating high order communication.

Level 7 Autonomy and responsibility	
	Recognising your Competencies
Designing and managing processes and works with broad accountability for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and group outcomes	Involved in the planning, resourcing, managing processes and guiding or supervising the work of others • within a context of broad autonomy • with complete accountability for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and /or group outcomes.

Discussion

There is an element of similarity in that both refer to the learner/person planning/designing, managing processes and working in a context of autonomy but being accountable for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and /or group outcomes as articulated in both sets of level descriptors. The difference is that whilst the SNQF refers to complete accountability of the learner/person at that level, the SADCQF refers to broad accountability which is somewhat at a lower level.

Summary

Whilst there are obvious lines of difference, for instance, in terms of accountability, it can be concluded that at the level of all three domains for level 7 there is definite synchronicity. For the SNQF, as it appears for the SADCQF, this looks to be the degree level, and as such mastery of one area of study with its attendant skills set, finds agreement in both.

Analysing Level 8

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Level 8 Knowledge</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates critical understanding of the principles, theories, methodologies, current research and literature of the discipline</td>
<td>Demonstrate knowledge and intellectual independence in the critical and systematic understanding of ideas, principles and concepts of their area of specialization

Analyze and synthesize critically current research and advanced scholarship in the field of study

Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss and compare specialized texts

Understand limits of the knowledge acquired, its influence on analysis and interpretation and explore lines of research.</td>
</tr>
</table>

Discussion

It can be argued definitely that both sets of level descriptors bear quite a bit of similarity in that both articulate the critical understanding of ideas, principles and concepts required at this level. Critical understanding can only be manifested in a context of intellectual independence, and so to that end, there is similarity again. Elaboration of the specific skills to be applied to knowledge at this level is undertaken in the context of the SNQF level descriptors and provides a more balanced picture of the knowledge set required.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Level 8 Skills</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates capacity to:

use a coherent and critical understanding of the principles, theories and methodologies of a particular discipline,
select and apply appropriate research methods and techniques,
critically analyse and independently evaluate information.
</td>
<td>Carry out processes that:

require a mastery in the application of in-depth and specialized knowledge
involve the development and adaptation of procedures to specific and professional context in the field of study
require the application and the consolidation of a wide range of skills applied to tasks in highly specialized contexts.

Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different problem</td>
</tr>
</table>

	solving approaches and where appropriate, propose a range of solutions
	Make sound judgement on complex issues based on systematic analysis in specialized contexts involving aspects of uncertainty
	Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultative and/or supervisory role.

Discussion

The level descriptors of the SADCQF and that of SNQF go on different tangents but at certain points they are reconciled. The SADCQF approach is to demonstrate the capacity to use certain intellectual assets, whilst that of the SNQF focuses in instances on the end result of the use of such assets, that is of processes being carried out through the application of certain intellectual tools (propose solutions, make sound judgements). This may seem like splitting hairs but provides a certain amount of challenge in the interpretation of what a person should be able to do at a particular level. At this level it is clear that for both a critical understanding of the principles, theories and methodologies of a particular discipline, or broadly equated as mastery of the subject, is at the heart of these the level descriptors. To critically analyze and evaluate information means being able to make sound or reasoned judgements on complex issues. To evaluate critically the appropriateness of a problem solving approach (SNQF) means being able to select the appropriateness of research methods of techniques and to that end there is alignment. As at level 7, the SNQF stresses, which the SADCQF does not, the communication aspect which again has to be high order to demonstrate "interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultative and/or supervisory role."

Level 8 Autonomy and responsibility	
	S Q A Recognising your Competencies
Operates within the context of a strategic plan with complete accountability for management of resources and supervision of others	Operate in accordance with broad development or strategic plan and budget, • within a context of broad autonomy • with responsibility and broad ranging accountability for management of resources and supervision of others.

Discussion

There is consonance at this level in the autonomy and responsibility domain. Within the context of the level descriptors on both frameworks, the learner/person should be able to

operate in accordance with a strategic plan and in a context of "accountability for management of resources and supervision of others" (SADCQF, SNQF). However, as to the latter, at the level of the SNQF the term used is broad accountability whilst at the level of the SADCQF the term used is complete accountability which is a higher order.

Summary

At level 8 in terms of mastery of the subject, the ability to critically use and evaluate information and the ability to work almost solo or independently there is definite alignment. However, given the different context in which the descriptors are articulated makes for a certain difficulty to match the requirements of the level descriptors.

Analysing Level 9

Level 9 Knowledge	
Demonstrates mastery of theoretically sophisticated subject matter, showing critical awareness of current problems and new insights at the forefront of the discipline area.	Demonstrate evidence of critical and systematic understanding of knowledge and current problems and/or insights at the forefront of their field of study or area of specialization Analyze and synthesize comprehensively and critically current research and advanced scholarship in the field of study Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss, compare specialized texts, propose new insights into the field of study and possibly generate new knowledge Understand limits of the knowledge and the necessity for further research and continuous development in the field of study.

Discussion

"Demonstrates mastery of theoretically sophisticated subject matter, showing critical awareness of current problems and new insights at the forefront of the discipline area" (SADCQF) and "Demonstrate evidence of critical and systematic understanding of knowledge and current problems and/or insights at the forefront of their field of study or area of specialization" (SNQF) are almost equivalent and are word for word in parts. Mastery of a theoretically sophisticated subject matter implies the ability to critically analyze, synthesize, and somewhat going further, as the SNQF does, to propose new insights

and to generate new knowledge. There is consonance between both frameworks in relation to knowledge at this level.

Level 9 Skills	
Conducts original research deploying appropriate research methods and processes and primary and secondary source information using rigorous intellectual analysis and independent thinking • applying knowledge in new situations • independent thinking and problem solving, • critical evaluation of research findings and • make judgements based on knowledge and evidence	Carry out processes that: • require a measure of originality and mastery in the application of in-depth and specialized and/or broad knowledge • involve the use of established techniques of research and enquiry, to internationally recognized standards, to create and interpret knowledge in the field of study • require the application of a wide range of skills applied to tasks in highly varied and/or highly specialized contexts. Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different problem solving approaches, the underpinning methodologies, and where appropriate, propose new hypotheses or solutions. Make sound judgement on complex issues based on systematic and innovative analysis in contexts involving aspects of uncertainty Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultative and/or supervisory role.

Discussion

Both are in agreement that at this level, the issue of originality of research and therefore output is a crucial element. Both are at the level of knowledge creation, and the ability to apply knowledge and current tools, techniques of research and enquiry, to new situations, therefore requiring independent thinking and problem solving, become important. Judgments from the angle of the SADCQF are made on the basis of knowledge and evidence whilst on the SNQF this involves systematic and innovative analysis which is akin to using rigorous intellectual analysis and independent thinking as described on the SADCQF. Again there is a difference in the sense that the requirements of this level is more elaborated for the SNQF and it also brings out the element of communication which is not often brought out by the SADCQF (Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultative and/or supervisory role).

Level 9 Autonomy and responsibility	
• Shows independence, initiative and originality and • Ability to manage own and group outcomes in complex and unpredictable situations.	Operate in accordance with broad development or strategic plan and budget • in a completely self-directed manner • with responsibility and broad ranging accountability for management of resources and supervision of others

Discussion

There is consonance between the independence mentioned in the SADCQF with operating in a completely self-directed manner. Both aver to operating in an environment in which one has virtually complete responsibility (SNQF mentions broad ranging accountability) in the management of others.

Summary

Level 9 on the SNQF matches that of the SADCQF in the three categories of knowledge, skills and autonomy and responsibility. Both underline the fact that originality in the creation, evaluation and management of information, are key at this particular level.

Analysing Level 10

Level 10 Knowledge	
Makes a substantial and original contribution to knowledge in the field of study through research and scholarship	Demonstrate evidence of creating and interpreting new knowledge based on original and advanced research at the forefront of the field of study, to satisfy peer review and merit publication. Analyze and synthesize comprehensively and critically a substantial body of knowledge in the field of study in order to elicit and establish relationships between the elements of the subject in the area of research Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss, compare specialized texts, propose new insights into the field of study and generate new knowledge

	Understand the limits of the knowledge and the necessity for further research and continuous development in the field of study.

Discussion

There is alignment in the knowledge domain insofar as both adhere to the notion that at the ultimate level, new knowledge is created through research. The SNQF is more explicit in that it delves into the analytical aspects (conceive, write, critically analyze, discuss, compare specialized texts) and advances the position that the person also has to have an understanding of the limits of knowledge.

Level 10 Skills	
Conducts original research which is evaluated by independent experts against international standards. Demonstrates problem solving ability and critical evaluation of research findings for academic discussion.	Carry out processes that: • require originality and mastery in the application of in-depth and specialized knowledge • involve substantial contribution to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches in research and enquiry in the field of study • demonstrate initiative and employ a wide range of advanced research skills applied to complex tasks in highly specialized contexts Generate new knowledge and applications through conceptualizing, designing and implementing a research project at the forefront of the field of study Make sound judgement on and provide new insights into complex issues based on systematic and supported analysis in specialist fields involving aspects of uncertainty Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultation and dissemination of new findings to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

Discussion

Within the knowledge domain the SNQF had stated that knowledge creation needs to be peer reviewed which is replicated on the SADCQF in the skills domain. There is agreement

on the element of originality on both frameworks. In the same vein, the ability to critically evaluate research or scholarship is evident in both within different domains – one (SADCQF) under the skills whilst for that of the SNQF is under the knowledge domain. In terms of skills the SNQF goes further than the SADCQF and places great importance on such dimensions as judgement, communication, and initiative.

Level 10 Autonomy and responsibility	
	Recognising your Competencies
Demonstrates full responsibility and accountability for all aspects of advanced research work	Operate in accordance with broad development or strategic plan and budget • in a completely self-directed manner • with full responsibility and accountability for all aspects of advanced research work and including management of resources and supervision of others

Discussion

There is consonance definitely in this domain as both frameworks refer to the demonstration of full responsibility and accountability for all aspects of advanced research work at this level. The SNQF develops this further by putting this in the context of the ability to operate in a completely self-directed manner as well as the ability to operate according to a strategic plan and budget.

Summary

The SNQF and the SADCQF are almost the same at this level, and can be adjudged to be aligned. Both articulate qualities to do with the high level of research and scholarship.

Conclusion and recommendations

The following conclusions can be made from the comparison:

1. Levels 1 and then 3 to 10 of both frameworks can be said to be aligned in terms of knowledge, skills and autonomy and responsibility. The match is by no means exact and within each level there are often categories which may not be aligned, however when the categories are taken together one can make a case for alignment. This is especially true at level 4 for the SNQF which has two sets of level descriptors, one for general education and one for the vocational track and it took the combination of both to align with the SADCQF at that level. The general tendency of levels 3 to 6 of the SNQF to be characterised by a TVET slant, as opposed to the more general and balanced descriptors of the SADCQF made the exercise that more difficult but not to the extent that matches could not be made. On a general note the similarities became sharper at levels 7 to 10 in the degree, master, PhD cycles, which goes to show that there is quite a bit of harmonization at higher education levels across the region, if not much of the world.

2. Level 1 of the SNQF is also found to be more of a match for level 2 of the SADCQF which illustrates the high cognitive challenge of the general education descriptors. When a match is sought for level 2 of the SNQF, it is found that this is more or less equated with level 4 of the SADCQF which, because of the match of levels 3 on both

frameworks, strongly suggests that between levels 2-4 on the SADCQF there is little progression of cognitive challenge. For the SNQF however it throws into relief the fact that its level 3 is a somewhat weaker level cognitively as compared to level 2 which means that level 3 interrupts the increase in cognitive challenge that is seen on the rest of the framework. This is an oddity of the SNQF.

3. Whilst we would put it to the TCCA EXCO that it accepts the above conclusions, it is noted that the exercise has demonstrated that if the SNQF were to match the SADCQF level for level, it would have to be reviewed. There is for certain work that needs to be done for the SADCQF to embrace a greater range of skills, for instance communication, at every level if it is to be used as a stronger regional qualifications framework. There is the need to bring in a more scholastic dimension to the descriptors given that education and training is at the heart of any qualifications framework since it can be adjudged to be too general in many instances. As for the SNQF, the TVET slant of levels 3-6, excepting level 4, needs to be reviewed to make clear the possibility of having general and academic qualifications at these levels. The need also remains to review the position of vocational certificates (level 3) on the SNQF since its cognitive challenge is hardly more than that of level 2 on the same framework.

ANNEXURE 8: Alignment with SADC Quality Assurance Guidelines

Principle 1

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall participate in initiatives intended to lead to the harmonisation and quality assurance (QA) of education structures, frameworks for content selection and organisation, teacher training and quality, teaching and learning resources, course delivery systems, students' achievement and performance standards, nomenclature and framework of certification and governance and management of institutions. This harmonization should include recognition of the three tier degree structure in higher education – namely, Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees, and the diploma supplement to add labour market value to credentials held.

The Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) was set up to regulate all matters to do with education and training in Seychelles. The SQA is the national quality assurance agency for tertiary education, with responsibility for: quality audits of tertiary education institutions; validation of programmes to determine their qualification level; reporting on performance and outcomes; assisting in quality enhancement; advising on quality assurance; and liaising internationally with quality agencies in other jurisdictions, for the benefit of tertiary education in Seychelles.

The SQA Act 2005, states at *4(1) (c)* that as part of its functions SQA needs *"to promote the quality and standards of education and training through a system of accreditation, validation and quality assurance."*

The nomenclature and qualification types to be offered in Seychelles are made explicit through the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which includes recognition of the three tier degree structure in higher education – namely, Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees. This ensures harmonisation.

Diploma supplement is not used in the context of Seychelles but transcript is used instead. The format for transcript is established by the SQA.

All local qualifications are quality assured by the SQA before provision. Quality assurance during provision is undertaken internally by institutions and is an area of focus during institutional quality/accreditation audits by the SQA.

It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD) to set Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications. However, the SQA's programme validation criteria establish that to teach at any level of the SNQF the person must hold a qualification which is at least one SNQF level higher than the programme level they teach.

In addition:
- Tertiary education and training institutions conduct quality assurance of delivery and assessment according to their internal quality assurance processes.
- Tertiary education and training institutions are required by law (their Charter) to have councils/governing boards to oversee operations and approve programmes for submission to the SQA for validation and registration at a particular level on the SNQF.
- There is provision in the programme validation criteria for articulation possibilities.
- The National Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning (2017) is applicable to all qualification levels of the SNQF.
- Private institutions must meet standards laid down by the MoEHRD for them to be registered as providers of education and training.

Participation in initiatives include membership of INQAAHE, benchmarking of quality assurance guidelines with other countries in the region, and benchmarking of the RPL Policy and Guidelines with International Labour Organisation's (ILO) RPL Guidelines (2015) and the Policy and Guidelines on Recognition of Prior Learning of Mauritius Qualifications Authority (2014 and 2016 respectively). Experts from other countries are used for institutional accreditation/audits and for review of policies.

Grosso modo, the development and the implementation of the SNQF, and the national QA system (external and internal QA systems), because embedded in the SNQF, has been an exercise in the harmonization and alignment of the national education and training system. In Seychelles this is probably easier done than elsewhere given both the size and centralized nature of education and training nationally.

Principle 2

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall ensure the planning for and provision of adequate financial resources for the provision of high quality education and training at all levels in the region.

The SQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) are both funded by Government as they are public bodies. Both are mandated to improve and regulate standards across the system, TEC having the additional responsibility to lobby for resources for the sector in line with national priorities.

Funding and the provision of financial resources for public institutions is the responsibility of the Government through the MoEHRD. Institutions may raise

additional funding. Education is free of charge up to pre-university for all Seychelles citizens.

The University of Seychelles (UniSey) which is a public university is self-funding. There is a Government scholarship system for university studies and this constitutes the main bulk of the UniSey annual budget.

The Guy Morel Institute (TGMI) is the only Professional Centre (PC) that is a body corporate and as such it is self-funding. A main source of its revenue is training of in-service personnel.

Private schools are self-funding and must meet minimum physical, financial and staffing standards to be registered by the MoEHRD.

Students of upper secondary (Advanced Level Studies) and tertiary education and training institutions of both public and private institutions receive a monthly bursary allowance from the Government. Pre-service trainee teachers receive an allowance higher than that of other institutions as it is the Government's policy to encourage youth to opt for the teaching profession as a career. Students also receive a bus pass and cost is borne by the Government. In-service full-time students of the public sector enjoy their full salary while studying.

The Teachers' Council of Seychelles was launched during Teachers' Week in October 2016. The Council aims to raise the status of the teaching profession in Seychelles by promoting best practice of high quality standards in teaching and enhance learning and student attainment. In partnership with the MoEHRD, the Council is working on a framework for Teacher Standards and Competencies that will be aligned with those of the SADC countries. The Council is at the stage of finalising its Act which when enacted will imply that all teachers will need to be registered by the Council to practice.

The timetable of primary and secondary state/public schools makes provision for one professional development session for staff per week. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is also organised for staff during school holidays by the MoEHRD.

The MoEHRD has a Teachers' Scheme of Service for public/state institutions and this is reviewed regularly. There is a separate scheme for teacher trainers.

Principle 3

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall ensure improved designs, scopes, quality and adequacy of programmes, courses and curricula at all levels of education and training and hold those programmes and courses accountable for the results realised by the learners.

The Level Descriptors for the SNQF apply to all qualifications registered on the Framework. Registration of qualifications on the SNQF is within the mandate of the SQA.

The tertiary education and training institutions and curriculum developers must ensure that programmes, course and curricula developed are in line with the relevant Level Descriptors of the SNQF. There is stakeholder/industry involvement in qualification and programme development to ensure they meet workplace needs. Programmes and courses are held accountable through onsite visits and accreditation of programmes. Institutions are accountable for learner results. It is also to be remarked that through employment tracer studies of graduates the relevancy of the programmes are also determined.

Curricula for state primary and secondary education are developed by the Curriculum and Assessment Division of the MoEHRD. This also has responsibility for monitoring the implementation of curricula and for CPD to improve curriculum teaching and assessment performance. Institutions are accountable for learner results.

The SQA ensures improved designs, scopes, quality and adequacy of programmes and courses of tertiary education and training institutions through its quality assurance processes:

- Accreditation of the provider that certifies, for a specified period of time, that the provider has the capacity to provide education and training programmes leading to the award of qualifications to be registered on the SNQF; and to assess the performance of learners participating in such programmes.

- Validation of the provider's programme to ensure that qualifications offered in Seychelles are aligned with the requirements of the SNQF, and that programmes of learning leading to the award of such qualifications have been through a rigorous development process and are fully documented.

- Monitoring of programme delivery by providers and moderating of their assessments through their internal quality assurance processes established jointly with the SQA.

Principle 4

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall ensure ideal standards of infrastructures, facilities, teaching and learning resources and generally conducive environments for the different forms and levels of education and training within the region.

Funding and the provision of financial resources for public/state institutions to ensure ideal standards of infrastructures, facilities, teaching and learning resources and generally conducive environments for the different forms and levels of education and training is the responsibility of the Government through the MoEHRD (with the exception of TGMI). Institutions may raise additional funding or seek sponsorship.

There is considerable effort by the Government to ensure uniform provision of physical infrastructure and resources. This is particularly apparent with new and refurbished institutions. There are standards for construction of new schools.

Government and institutional investment in facilities and resources for teaching and learning has also consistently increased to meet standards set by the SQA and also TEC, as well as internationally. The accreditation requirements of the SQA Quality Assurance Manual 2011 ensure that all of this takes place at the level of tertiary education.   The Inspectorate Section of the MoEHRD has the delegated responsibility to ensure standards are maintained as regards Primary and Secondary schools.

Health and safety provisioning/equipment are provided to institutions centrally by the MoEHRD. It is the responsibility of institutions to liaise with relevant agencies for necessary training and certificates of compliance. They have also developed their 'Emergency Plan'.

It is the MoEHRD's policy to ensure that all public institutions are equipped with adequate ICT resources to support teaching and learning. Also, for several years Government has been implementing a 'laptop scheme' for teachers and students.

Principle 5

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall promote quality and relevance of education to the needs and expectations of individual learners, member states, the region and international community as a whole and hence facilitate staff and brain retention as well as competitiveness of qualifications earned in the SADC region.

The creation of the SQA, the SNQF and TEC as well as the Inspectorate Section of the MoEHRD give evidence of Government's commitment to the promotion of quality

and relevance of education to suit needs and expectations nationally, across the region, and internationally. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that policies, legislations and tools being used in the education and training arena are robust and internationally comparable. And this is clear, for instance, in the development of quality assurance criteria, in RPL and the adoption of a national indicator system for tertiary education and training. As noted above, tracer studies of graduates assist in ensuring relevancy of programmes and competitiveness of graduates.

There are different stakeholders involved in the design and development of programmes leading to qualifications of the SNQF including industry, and in programme review. This helps to ensure that learning outcomes are relevant and qualifications address labour market and human resource needs.

The criteria for programme validation make provision for international comparability. This helps to ensure that the qualification is comparable to qualifications at the same level on offer in other countries.

Qualifications are registered on the SNQF for a period of five years after which they need to be reviewed to ensure that they continue to be relevant. These are registered following review. However, qualifications can be reviewed at any time during the registration period should it become apparent that there are gaps in relevance to industry and societal needs or that there are new developments on the international landscape.

Principle 6

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall ensure improved, safe, secure environments for the delivery of education and training through assured high quality, learner friendly infrastructure and facilities including water, sanitation facilities, arrangements for good nutrition and health support, accountable institutional leadership and management, and general cohesion of students and staff.

These are catered for through Government budget for implementation of the Medium Term Strategy. The MoEHRD works in partnership with relevant ministries and agencies to address issues such as water, sanitation, good nutrition and health support (through its Health Promoting Schools project for example that was initiated in 2013). These aspects also fall under the institutional accreditation criteria of the SQA found in its Quality Assurance Manual of 2011.

The MoEHRD has established standards for tuck shops in schools (both public and private) and together with the Ministry of Health has defined the National Nutrition Policy (2008) to which they must abide. Food handlers in schools must have a licence and have valid medical certification as well as maintain hygienic standards.

The health support programme at school level is managed and delivered by the Ministry of Health as established in the National School Health Policy 2017. It includes screening as well as vaccination in schools.

Accountable institutional leadership and management are supported by School Councils and Professional Centre Governing Boards and Senate (for UniSey).

Principle 7

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall promote improved and effective teaching and learning across the region through better training, retraining, remuneration and retention schemes for committed teachers and university lecturers, appropriate and relevant curricula, suitable teaching and learning resources, use of learner-centred course delivery methods, appropriate class sizes, sufficient learning time, and student learning support.

One of the targets of the Medium Term Strategy (MTS) (2018-2022) as well as MTS of the previous five years of the MoEHRD is to ensure that all teachers hold at least the minimum teacher education qualification (which is a Diploma in Teacher Education). A Teachers' Council has been set up in 2015 and its Act is at the 'gazetting' stage (still as a Bill). Once enacted, all teachers and lecturers will have to register with the Council to obtain a licence to practice should they meet the criteria established.

The MoEHRD compiles annual training plans which feed into the annual national training plans for purpose of funding amongst others. The MoEHRD annual training plan makes provision for training and retraining of teachers of Government funded education and training institutions. There is also provision for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) organised at institution level and centrally by the MoEHRD.

The UniSey, TGMI and private education institutions are responsible for the training, retraining and professional development of their teaching staff. However, the Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education (SITE) is the only teacher training institution in the country which would imply that it trains teachers and lecturers for the whole country as opposed to government funded institutions only.

Remuneration and retention schemes for committed teachers of Government funded institutions are addressed by the Teachers' Scheme of Service of the MoEHRD that is regularly revised to encourage retention and attract new recruits to the teaching profession. Indeed given the rate of attrition of teachers nationally the government remains under pressure to do its utmost to attract and retain teachers through better

remuneration and through other modes like capacity building. Private institutions, TGMI and the UniSey have their own remuneration and retention schemes.

Focussing on tertiary education, appropriate and relevant curricula, suitable teaching and learning resources, use of learner-centred course delivery methods, appropriate class sizes, sufficient learning time, and student learning support all fall under the institutional accreditation and programme validation criteria of the SQA found in its Quality Assurance Manual of 2011.

As relate to public primary and secondary schools, these are addressed in part by the MTS (2018-2022) of the MoEHRD. The MoEHRD has established maximum class size for primary and secondary schools as well as set times per week for every subject in the school syllabus and the number of teaching weeks per term and year. There are three school terms in a year.

Private institutions must meet the standards established by the MoEHRD to be registered.

It is a requirement for all public tertiary education and training institutions to have a Learner Support Section or Unit. There are Special Needs Coordinators for each of the public schools, and a Student Support Section and Counsellors based at the MoEHRD Headquarters.

Principle 8

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall ensure periodic reviews and improvement of policies, plans and programmes for training, re-training and induction of education personnel including supporting initiatives for the establishment of a regional centre for professional training of education personnel for the region.

In Seychelles policy review is a constant activity especially in view of the recent move to revise the legal frameworks for TEC, SQA, and the MoEHRD. That this is being synchronized is no accident given the need to harmonize the sector. It is taken nationally that the life span of a policy is set at five years after which review is necessary, and this is applicable in education.

The SQA has currently started the process of review of its policies and Manuals. It has drafted a revised Policy on Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications in July 2018 and this will be tabled for endorsement of the SQA Board in December 2018. It has started the process of review of the Policy Guidelines on Standard Setting in November which will result in a Standards Manual, and this will be submitted for SQA Board endorsement in early 2019.

Review of plans and programmes for training and retraining of teachers is undertaken jointly by the MoEHRD and the Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education (SITE). Degree and higher level programmes fall under the purview of the UniSey. TEC has the mandate for overseeing the development and review of statutes for Professional Centres (PCs) in line with the Tertiary Education Act (TEA) and Charters of PCs and UniSey.

Nationally, SITE has the responsibility for teacher training and retraining of teachers up to Advanced Diploma (Level 6 of the Seychelles NQF) and it collaborates with the UniSey for offering of the university's degree programmes. Both SITE and UniSey are accredited by the SQA and their programmes leading to qualifications are validated by the Authority.

SITE and the Curriculum and Assessment Division of the MoEHRD offer CPD for teachers of public schools to improve teaching performance and student learning.

Principle 9

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall promote and ensure the sharing and exchange of information and best practices on all issues pertaining to education and training for purposes of achieving high standards of achievement and mastery while enabling students in the region to promote interpersonal understanding, peace and conflict resolution and to cope with change, diversity, promoting intra-state and inter-state relationships and enhancing their abilities to learn throughout life.

There exist a number of initiatives at national/governmental, non-governmental, Ministry levels aimed at promoting the above. The SQA as well as TEC hold workshops and sessions regularly with PCs and UniSey aimed at sharing and exchanging of information. Policy is developed conjointly and approval of such must come with an information strategy. The MoEHRD as well as public schools and tertiary education institutions organise staff and student exchange programmes with overseas institutions as applicable. There are schools and tertiary education institutions that have institutionalised annual staff and student exchange programmes with overseas institutions (Seychelles Tourism Academy (STA and La Digue School are two examples).

Principle 10

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall promote an understanding of quality and the establishment and enhancement of a quality culture as an ideal, and characterising standards of education and training outcomes throughout the SADC Region.

The Seychelles NQF and the SQA Quality Assurance Manual 2011 promote understanding of quality and the establishment and enhancement of a quality culture, especially through the criteria for programme validation, institutional accreditation and the prerequisites for all institutions to have an internal quality assurance system and dedicated QA personnel. It is in the application of such that the quality culture is being developed. The standards set are regionally comparable as adjudged by comparative quality assurance exercises.

A National Alignment Committee (NAC) has been set up by the Minister for Education and Human Resource Development (MoEHRD) in January 2018 to advance and promote the SADC Regional objectives. NAC held its first meeting on 17 May 2018.

Principle 11

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall develop, induce and, where necessary, enforce adherence to defined and regionally agreed education quality and performance standards and indicators, learning outcomes and programme monitoring criteria and procedures.

National standards are enforced through registration of educational institutions by the MoEHRD, accreditation of institutions, validation of programmes and registration of qualifications by the SQA as encapsulated in the SQA Act, NQF regulations and SQA policies. Regular monitoring ensures standards are adhered to.

All qualifications adopt the learning outcome approach in line with the Level Descriptors of the SNQF. Monitoring and assessment of educational institutions at all levels is central to the quality assurance loop.

Expansion to include regional standards will be initiated with the SADCQF alignment.

Principle 12

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall promote and support education quality research and evaluation efforts that lead to improved regional mechanisms and performance.

The organisational structure of the MoEHRD provides for a Research Section for conduct of education quality research to inform practice and policy development and there have been a number of positive initiatives. One such active initiative is the SACMEQ project which is ongoing.

The UniSey is required to engage in research and has an active Research Department. Several of its research papers and scholarly articles are available on the UniSey website: www.unisey.ac.sc

The UniSey also organises and hosts regional and international conferences and colloquia to encourage research in a variety of fields. In October 2018 it hosted the 16th International Creole Studies colloquium to stimulate research in Creole Studies, languages, cultures and society.

TEC has a dedicated research section, with a view to provide validated data to relevant instances (ministry and institutions) to develop informed policies. TEC ensures that its research and recommendations arising are benchmarked against international norms. In terms of evaluation, an annual indicator report is published by TEC to situate the progress of institutions, using standard indicators.

Principle 13

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall participate in sponsoring, hosting and or attending periodic regional meetings to facilitate reaffirmed collaboration, sharing information and experiences, solving common problems, considering and adopting new plans, criteria and procedures and removing obstacles to further collaboration, and planning for the future.

Seychelles has participated and is participating in a number of regional and international initiatives intended to facilitate reaffirmed collaboration, sharing of information and experiences, solving common problems, considering and adopting new plans, criteria and procedures and removing obstacles to further collaboration, and planning for the future. Such initiatives include participation in the development of Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) for the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)-Procedures and Guidelines (COL, 2015) and the Referencing Tool for the TQF of VUSSC (COL, 2017), implementation of the Addis Convention (which Seychelles is in the process of ratifying), implementation of

the SADCQF and the SADC Qualifications Verifications Network (SADCQVN), member of the African Qualifications Verification Network (AQVN) and the Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA). The SQA is also a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

The SQA remains committed to benchmarking its quality assurance policies and thereby participates in regional gatherings to that end.

Tertiary education and training institutions have together a number of collaborative and support initiatives with key regional and international partners and stakeholders. For example, the Seychelles Institute of Technology (SIT) has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with key international partners and is a member of International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education (UNEVOC) since 2016, which provides a forum for networking and training; Seychelles Maritime Academy (SMA) has a Memorandum of Agreement with Colombo International Nautical and Engineering College since 2012, which provides for capacity building, sharing of expertise and human resource and exchange visits; Seychelles Tourism Academy (STA) has a partnership agreement with Shannon College of Ireland, to name a few.

Principle 14

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall foster strategic approaches for stronger partnerships for education development and promotion, maximum use of available facilities and resources in the region, dissemination of information on successful collaboration arrangements and provide on-site technical assistance for QA where it is needed and requested for.

The SQA has MoU with Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA) and close collaborative engagements with several partners including SAQA and Botswana Qualifications Authority. The Authority enlists technical assistance for QA from several regional Authorities and Agencies and international experts.

The Government and tertiary education institutions are participating in a number of collaborative initiatives and projects with regional and international counterparts.

Principle 15

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall solicit and encourage international organs and institutions to:
- **support regional initiatives for an integrated and harmonised education and training system for the realisation of regional human ideals, ideas and values that build sustainable futures in which individuals and communities develop in unity and in full respect of each other,**
- **support cultural and linguistic diversity of the region in building a common education system based on the richness of those diverse cultures and languages while giving due recognition and focus on the development and use of African languages as a means of delivery and acquisition of education.**

Programme validation criteria contain an international comparability component, to ensure that Seychelles qualifications are comparable to similar qualifications internationally.

International providers offering qualifications in Seychelles must have their qualifications recognised by the SQA and registered on the SNQF.

Seychelles has a long history of relationship with international organisations like United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and COL. Given the remarkable achievements and progress in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), the Seychelles Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) has been designated the 'Best Practice Hub' for Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) by the International Bureau of Education (IBE), UNESCO, in February 2017.

Creole, the mother tongue of Seychellois, is taught in Crèche (pre-school) and throughout the primary school (years 1 to 6). It is also the medium of instruction for several subjects in the primary curricula (such as Personal, Social and Civic Education, Physical Education, The Arts). It also acts as a support language for subjects in English and French. The Creole Institute is a key driver in the promotion of Creole and publications in the Creole language.

Seychelles is involved in a number of international collaborative initiatives. These include the implementation of the Addis Convention (which Seychelles is in the process of ratifying), implementation of the SADCQF and the SADCQVN, member of the AQVN, the SADC TCCA, and the SADC Regional Framework for Teacher Standards and Competencies.

Principle 16

The Government and relevant institutions in Seychelles shall participate in the development of a database, linkages and networking systems through e-mails, websites, telephone contacts to facilitate prompt advice and information on matters of regional importance in education development and quality assurance

The SQA was part of the development of the SADC portal. It contributed qualifications for uploading on the portal. The SQA liaises extensively with its partners through e-mails, websites and telephone contacts. It has its own website and facebook page. Government entities and several tertiary education and training institutions have their own website.

The SQA has an Information System (SQAIS) which is intended to facilitate management and reporting on the processes of the SNQF involving:
- Qualifications, unit standards and its supporting units such as providers and SNQF levels
- Evaluation and Recognition of qualifications (Foreign and National)
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Local Education and Training Provider Accreditation
- Programmes and Short Courses Validation.

The Assessment and Certification Section of the MoEHRD maintains an excel database of results of examinations for Secondary and Upper Secondary including international (Cambridge) examinations. The MoEHRD also has a developing Education and Management Information System (EMIS) that has the mandate of collecting information from all private and state educational institutions in the country (Day Care, Crèche, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary Non-University and University). The details of these subsectors include the number of education institutions, enrolment figures, teaching staff as well as results of national and international examinations (MoEHRD: 2018). The information collected by EMIS Section through excel templates that have been formalised in all educational institutions along with an Annual School Census, enable informed decisions to be made by providing necessary data and information to enact meaningful changes in education. One very important annual publication that contains statistical information about all the education institutions in the country, which EMIS Section uses for reporting nationally and internationally, is the 'Education Statistics Booklet'.

Seychelles is involved in a number of international collaborative initiatives including the implementation of the Addis Convention (which Seychelles is in the process of ratifying), implementation of the SADCQF and the SADCQVN, member of the AQVN

and the SADC TCCA. These together ensure that countries are kept informed on matters related to quality assurance and qualifications.