Transnational Frameworks

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Outline

An overview of:

Qualifications systems

- Quality assurance
  - Regional QA initiatives
- Qualifications frameworks
  - Regional qualifications frameworks

ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework

Qualifications system

▸ All aspects of a country's activity that result in the recognition of learning:

- ▸ national or sectoral policy on qualifications
- ▸ institutional arrangements
- ▸ quality assurance processes
- ▸ assessment and awarding processes
- ▸ skills recognition and other mechanisms that link education and training to the labour market and civil society.

▸ Qualifications systems may be more or less integrated and coherent.

▸ Qualifications framework may or may not be explicit within the system.

Source: Qualifications systems: Bridges to lifelong learning, OECD 2006

What is quality assurance?

▸ Refers to planned and systematic processes that provide confidence in educational services provided by training providers under the remit of relevant authorities or bodies.

▸ Is a component of quality management and is 'focused on providing confidence that quality requirements will be fulfilled'.

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Elements of quality assurance

▸ Systems typically quality assure different aspects of the TVET processes. They include:

  ▸ Accreditation of qualifications

  ▸ Registration of providers

  ▸ Monitoring of provider processes and outcomes

  ▸ Control, supervision or monitoring of assessment, issuance of certificates and graduation procedures

  ▸ System wide evaluations of TVET, including evaluations by external agencies

  ▸ Provision of public information on the performance of providers

Regional QA frameworks

▸ Key aim of a regional quality assurance framework is to develop mutual understanding amongst member countries.

▸ They act as:

  ▸ an instrument to promote and monitor the improvement of education and training systems

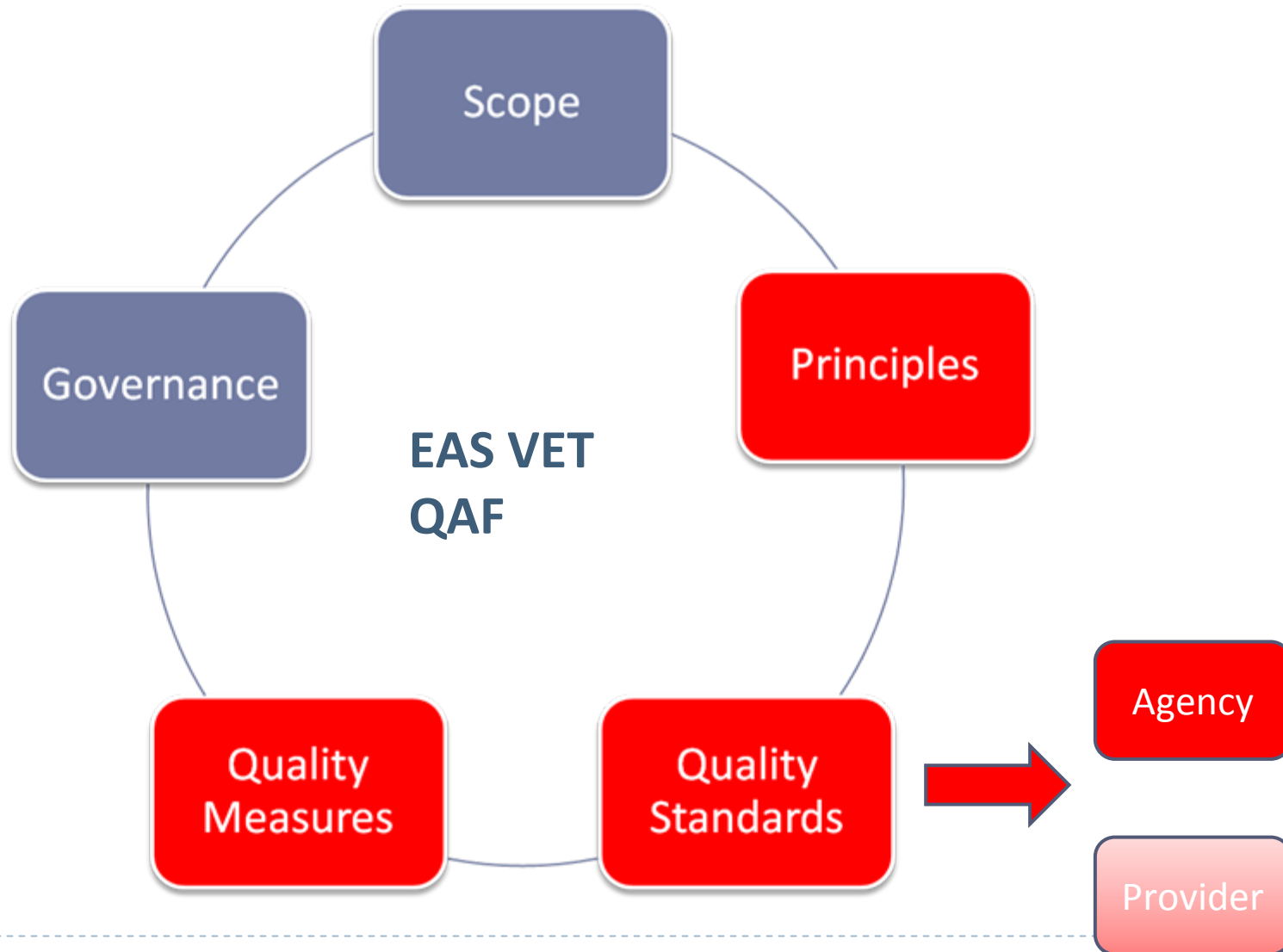 ▸ a reference instrument

  ▸ a self-assessment instrument.

TVET regional QA frameworks

▸ European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET

▸ Pacific Register of Qualifications and Standards: Quality Assurance Standards

▸ East Asia Summit VET Quality Assurance Framework

EAS VET Quality Assurance Framework

Qualification Frameworks

The Qualifications Landscape

International Classification of Education (ISCED)

Regional Frameworks (e.g. European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, Bologna Framework for higher education)

National Qualifications Frameworks (e.g The Hong Kong Qualifications Framework)

Sectoral Qualifications Frameworks (e.g. Indian National Skills Qualification Framework, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, UK)

Qualifications (e.g. school leaving certificates, bachelor's degrees, craft diplomas, awards by professional bodies, course completion certificates, licences to practice, language proficiency certificates)

Standards (e.g. occupational standards, institutional teaching standards, curriculum/training standards, job profiles, professional standards, qualifications criteria, assessment criteria)

Learning Outcomes (e.g. knowledge, skills and competence

Qualifications framework

An instrument for the development and classification of qualifications (e.g. at national or sectoral level) according to a set of criteria (e.g. using descriptors) applicable to specified levels of learning outcomes.
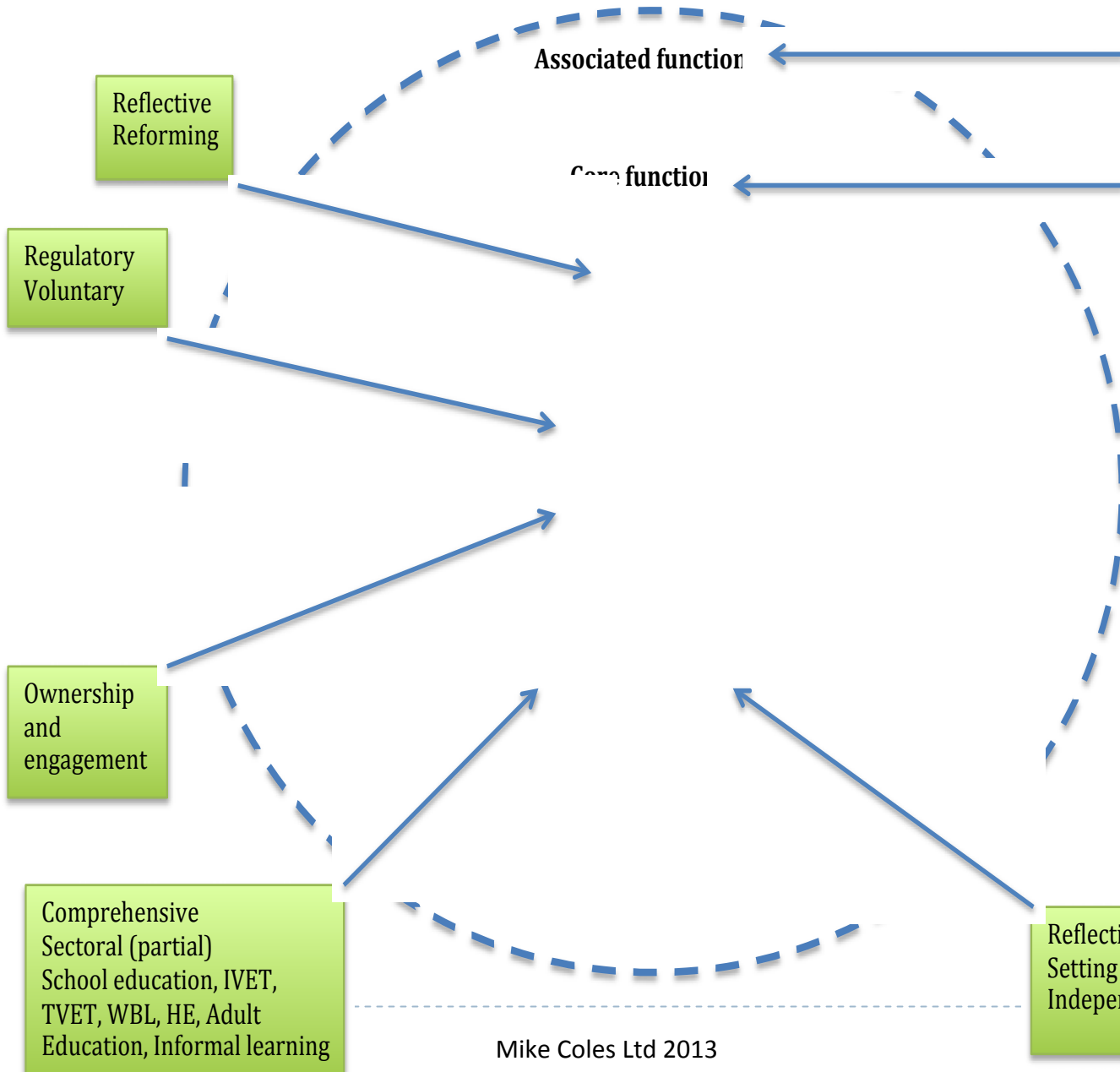
Source CEDEFOP 2011

Purposes of NQFs

- Make national qualifications systems easier to understand
- Clarify and strengthen the links between qualifications within systems
- Support lifelong learning by aiding access, participation and progression
- Aid recognition (credit transfer, recognition of prior learning, including those acquired through non-formal and informal learning)
- Strengthen the link and improve the communication between education and training and the labour market
- Create a platform for cooperation and dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders
- Provide a reference point for quality assurance.

National Qualifications Frameworks

Associated function

Core function

Reflective Reforming

Regulatory Voluntary

Ownership and engagement

Comprehensive
Sectoral (partial)
School education, IVET, TVET, WBL, HE, Adult Education, Informal learning

Reflecting standards
Setting standards
Independent of specific qualifications and programmes

1. Organising education and training
2. Bringing coherence to qualification design
3. Creating a coherent view of qualifications
4. Making the qualification system transparent
5. Supporting lifelong learning
6. Shifting the focus from inputs to outcomes
7. Promoting competence based learning and assessment
8. Enhancing progression, making learning pathways clear (removing dead ends)
9. Creating better access to qualifications
10. Facilitating better linkage between qualification and the labour market
11. Promoting the status of VET
12. Helping with employee recognition and employer recruitment
13. Improving linkage between different sectors of education
14. Providing a forum for stakeholder engagement
15. Improving the quality of qualifications
16. Improving the quality of education and training
17. Adding value to qualifications
18. Creating a basis for credit and credit transfer
19. Creating a basis for validating learning gained outside formal education and training programmes (e.g. from life and work)
20. Enabling linkage to a regional framework
21. International benchmarking
22. Supporting a wider reform agenda

Mike Coles Ltd 2013

Variations across NQFs

▸ Coverage – sectors and qualification types

▸ Purpose and vision of NQFs (e.g. reflective of status quo, reforming, transparency, mobility, regional solidarity, national identity, coherence of education and training etc)

▸ Descriptors (learning outcomes focussed):

  ▸ Levels

  ▸ Domains

▸ Volume measures

▸ Links to quality assurance

▸ Arrangements for recognising informal learning and for credit

▸ Governance

▸

Lessons learned

- Limitations to the learning outcomes approach
- Dangers in over specifying or over engineering NQFs
- NQFs need to be transparent, free from jargon and easily understood
- NQFs should be developed in consultation with education and training providers, and other key stakeholders (employers, relevant government agencies and professional bodies)
- NQFs must be supported with effective infrastructure for assuring standards and quality
- NQFs need to evolve within national education and training and qualifications systems.

Regional qualifications frameworks

Regional qualifications frameworks

Regional common reference qualifications frameworks can:

▸ Deepen integration and harmonisation

▸ Create a common identity

▸ Facilitate:

  ▸ transparency of multiple complex systems

  ▸ mobility of workers and students

  ▸ recognition and credit transfer

▸ Support economic imperatives such as removal of barriers to trade

▸

Regional Qualification Frameworks

RQF	
Caribbean Community (CARICOM)	Focussed upon the development of standards & qualifications, including a Competency Based Education and Training model & the sharing of materials
Southern African Development Community (SADC) framework	Purpose is to support the regional integration and mobility of labour
Transnational Qualifications Framework for the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth	Translation device for the classification of VUSSC qualifications
European Qualifications Framework (EQF)	Common reference framework which links different country qualification systems and frameworks
Pacific Qualifications Framework (PQF)	Common reference framework that links to a regional register for national qualifications underpinned by QA arrangements, agency and provider standards
ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework	Proposed as a common reference framework, will function as a translation device to enable comparisons of qualifications across participating ASEAN countries.

Regional qualifications frameworks

▸ Vary in purpose, design and functionality (and level of implementation):

▸ Generally are a common reference framework or 'meta' framework

▸ 'a means of enabling one framework of qualifications to relate to others and subsequently for one qualification to relate to others that are normally located in another framework' Ref: Commission of European Communities 2005

▸ have very different functions to that of NQFs and aim to add value to the NQFs

Components of a RQF

- Voluntary code of practice
- Agreed levels and descriptors
- Agreed range of functions
- Quality assurance arrangements
- Referencing process
- Collaborative management
- Monitoring arrangements

Referencing

▶ Referencing is a process that results in the establishment of a relationship between the levels of the common reference framework and that of the national qualifications framework (NQF) or system

▶ EQF:

  ▶ 'Only national qualifications *levels* are formally linked' Ref: Coles et al 2011.

  ▶ Referencing is best achieved through a national qualifications framework (NQF).

Referencing
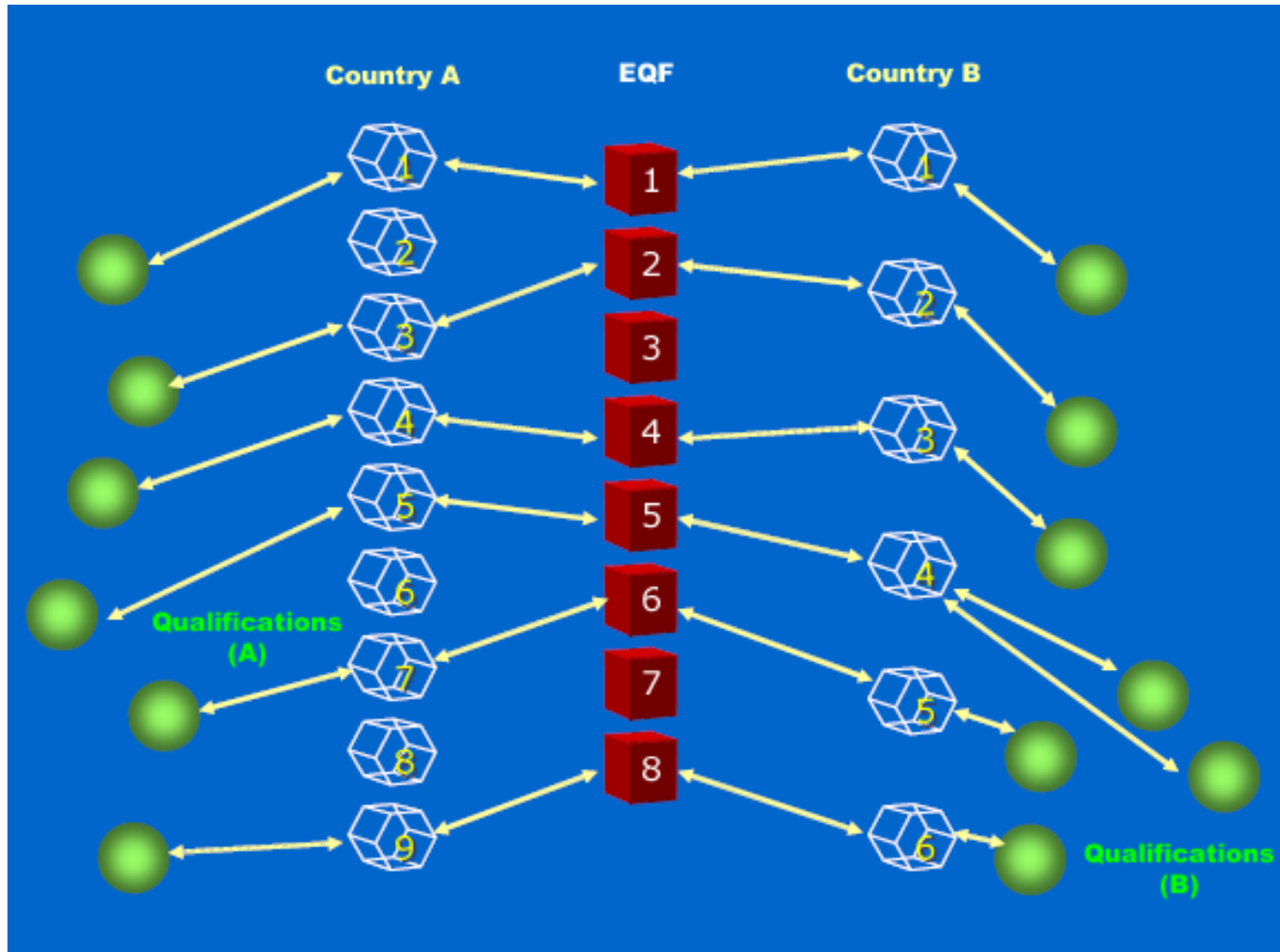
EQF portal

http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/compare_en.htm

ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework

- ASEAN is a robust regional group of countries that has been active in building mutual economic and social cooperation

- The ASEAN region is typical of other global regions in the patterns of NQF development across countries. Some countries have established comprehensive NQFs, while others have well established sectoral frameworks, and others are yet to develop or are in the process of developing qualifications frameworks.

- The framework is still in the final stages of confirmation, with finalisation early 2014.

Background

▸ May 2010, Manila: 1st AANZFTA Joint Committee Meeting considered the draft of the concept proposal for the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework

▸ Creation of Task Force for the AQRF

Phase 1: Policy concept paper

Regional forum

National consultation workshops

Phase 2: Refinement of the model

Additional regional fora / meetings

Finalize the framework

Structure - 1

- Scope
  - Will function as a translation device
- Purpose
  - Support recognition of qualifications
  - Encourage the development of qualifications frameworks that can facilitate lifelong learning
  - Encourage the development of national approaches to validating learning gained outside formal education
  - Promote and encourage education and learner mobility
  - Promote worker mobility
  - Lead to better understood qualifications systems
  - Promote higher quality qualifications systems.

Structure - 2

▸ **Principles**
- ▸ Voluntary engagement
- ▸ Neutral

▸ **Quality assurance**
- ▸ East Asia Summit Vocational Education and Training Quality Assurance Framework (includes the quality principles, agency quality standards and quality indicators)
- ▸ INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice for Quality Assurance (International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education)
- ▸ ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework for Higher Education (ASEAN Quality Assurance Network).

▸

Structure - 3

▶ Level descriptors

▶ Two domains:

  ▶ Knowledge and skills: includes the various kinds of knowledge such as facts and theories as well as the skills used, such as practical and cognitive skills

  ▶ Application and Responsibility: defines the context in which the knowledge and skills are used in practice; as well as the level of independence including the capacity to make decisions and the responsibility for oneself and others.

Referencing - 1

▸ The referencing process requires that each country sets up a referencing panel of key stakeholders. This panel is to include at least one international representative, plus an additional observer from one of the other ASEAN member states.

▸ The international expert could be external to the ASEAN member states or internal to the ASEAN member states but the international expert should not be a representative of the referencing country or the observer's country. The international expert representative should play an active role in the referencing process.

Referencing - 2

▸ Implementation of referencing - may be in a selective and staggered manner according to national priorities (and resources)

▸ The referencing process includes a single report that is approved by major stakeholders.

▸ The ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework includes detailed referencing guidelines to inform and support the referencing process.

Desired outcomes

▸ Develop zone of mutual trust

▸ Enhance recognition of qualifications

▸ Lessen barriers for learner and labour mobility

Thankyou

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