The ASEAN Quality Assurance
Framework: The Journey Continues

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
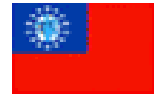
Understanding ASEAN

- It is home to more than 600 million people.

- Together, ASEAN's ten member states form an economic powerhouse with a large potential market.

- If ASEAN were a single country, it would be the seventh-largest economy in the world.

- Next to the People's Republic of China and India, ASEAN has the world's third largest labor force that remains relatively young.

- A total of 7,446 Higher Education Institutions exist in the region.

The Challenge

➢ There is a need to bridge the perceived "development divide" between the older and economically more advanced members - Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, known as the ASEAN-6, and the four newer members – Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam, also known as CLMV countries.

Establishment of Quality Assurance Agencies in ASEAN

Philippines	19999971957
Indonesia	1994
Malaysia	1997
Brunei	2000
Thailand	2000
Singapore	2000
Cambodia	2003
Vietnam	2003
Laos	2008
Myanmar	Developing

The ASEAN Quality Assurance Network (AQAN)

- Founded in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in July 2008

- A registered international association under the Societies Act 1966 of Malaysia

- Secretariat hosted by Malaysia Qualifications Authority

- 10 full members representing the ASEAN Member States and 7 Associate Members

- Member of INQAAHE

- Mission: To share information, to build capacity and to establish the ASEAN regional quality assurance framework

ASEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK (AQAF)

BACKGROUND

2008 - Ministers of Education during the SEAMEO Council
            Meeting endorsed the proposal on " The Structured
            Framework for Regional Integration in Higher Education :
            the Road towards a Common Space"

2008 -   Establishment of AQAN

2011 - AQAN Round Table Meeting in Brunei decided to
            develop an ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework and a
            Task Force was created

2013 - AQAN endorsed in principle the work being
            done by the Task Force

2014 -   Work of the Task Force continues….

2015 -   Formal political endorsement process is ongoing

Purposes of the ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework

- Serves as a common reference point to align quality assurance systems, higher education institutions and qualifications.

- Encourages national QA systems to benchmark against the Framework.

- Improves consistency of QA practices and builds a zone of trust to facilitate recognition of qualifications.

- Promotes regional harmonization in higher education.

Characteristics of AQAF

- Consists of four interrelated Principles
- Each Principle focuses on 10 core statements
- Inspirational document recognizing the diversity in ASEAN's culture, beliefs and values that shape higher education systems
- Not prescriptive but uses generic statements of good practice that can be adapted to various political, educational and socio- cultural settings.
- Serves as a link between Internal and external quality assurance as well as the Qualifications Framework.

Four Thematic Interrelated Principles

AQAF Four Principles

1. External Quality Assurance Agency – key player in maintaining and sustaining the quality of education in every nation.

2. External Quality Assurance Processes – core activities of the quality assurance agency (program or institutional)

3. Internal Quality Assurance – the responsibility for quality rests with the higher education institutions themselves

4. National Qualifications Framework – key instruments for the reform of education, training and qualification system across ASEAN member states

Principle 2 - External Quality Assurance Processes

- Interest of students and society should be at the forefront of external QA processes

- Standards must be comparable to international good practices and related to internal quality assurance of HEIs

- Development of standards must involve participation of relevant stakeholders

- Standards must be made publicly available and applied consistently and with due regard for cultural diversity

Principle 3 - Internal Quality Assurance

- The institution has the primary responsibility for quality.

- Quality assurance is a participatory and cooperative process which involves the academic staff, students, and other stakeholders.

- A quality culture underpins all institutional activities including teaching and learning, research, services and management.

- A structured and functional internal quality assurance system with clearly defined responsibilities is established.

Comparison: CIQG International Quality Principles vis-à-vis AQAF Principles

1 Quality and Higher Education Providers
   The institution has the primary responsibility for quality. (Quadrant 3)

2 & 3. Quality and Students & Quality and Society
   The interest of students and society must be at the forefront of external QA processes. (Quadrant 1)
   A quality culture underpins all institutional activities, including teaching and learning. (Quadrant 2)

4. Quality and Government
   The QA body has an established legal basis and is recognized and trusted by competent authorities in its home country. The QA body has autonomous responsibility for its operations and its decision making processes and judgments. (Quadrant 1).

Comparison: CIQG International Quality Principles vis-à-vis AQAF Principles

5. **Quality and Accountability**
   The EQAA's policies and management practices are based on good governance, transparency and accountability . (Quadrant 1)

6. *Quality and Quality Assurance Bodies*
   Standards must be comparable to international good practices and related to internal quality assurance of higher education institutions. (Quadrant 2)
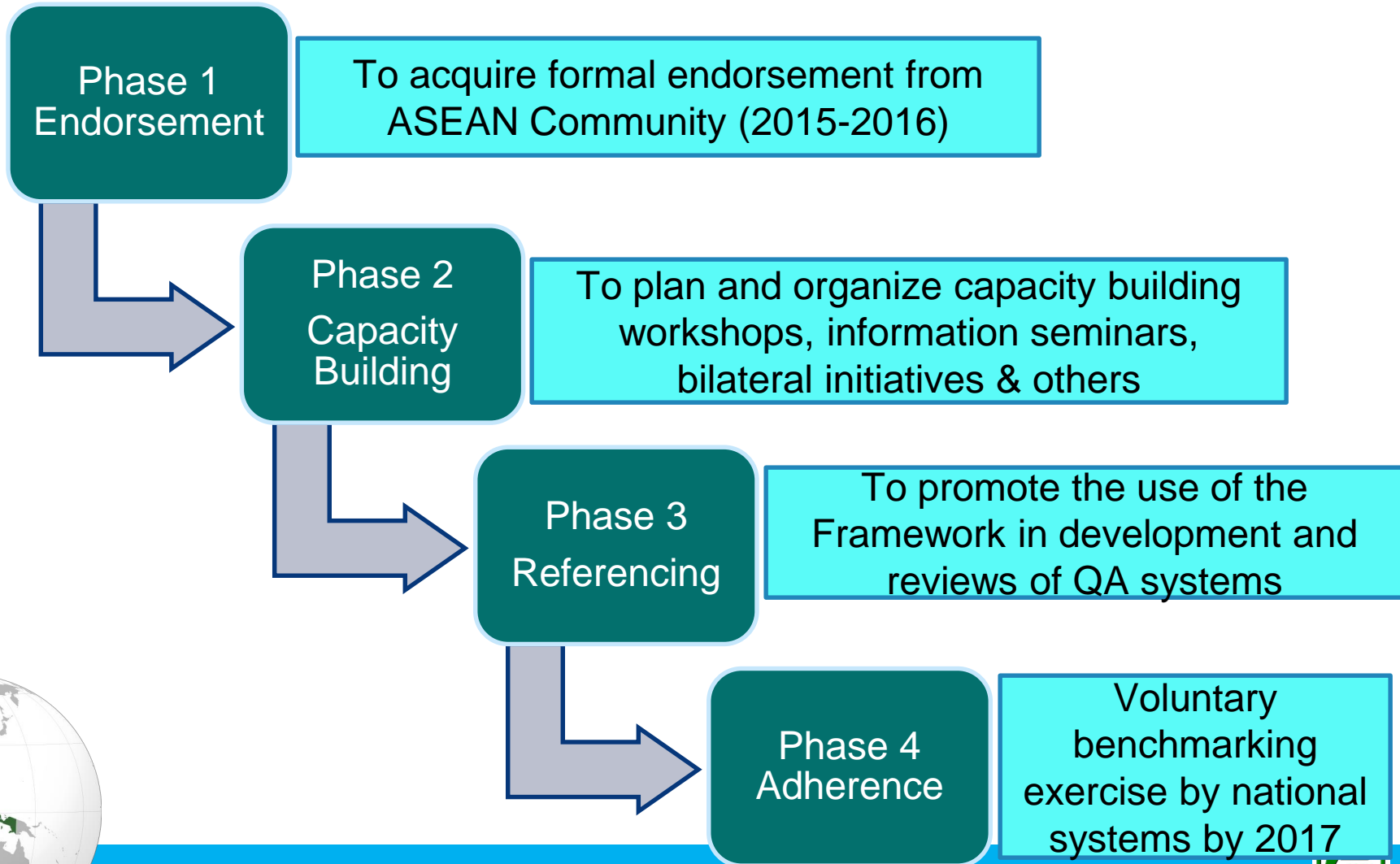   *Development of standards must involve participation of relevant stakeholders to meeting current needs and demands. (Quadrant 2)*

Comparison: CIQG International Quality Principles vis-à-vis AQAF Principles

7. Quality and Change

The QA body keeps abreast with new developments and innovations in quality assurance as part of its internal continuous improvement system. (Quadrant 1)

Next Steps

Phase 1 Endorsement

To acquire formal endorsement from ASEAN Community (2015-2016)

Phase 2 Capacity Building

To plan and organize capacity building workshops, information seminars, bilateral initiatives & others

Phase 3 Referencing

To promote the use of the Framework in development and reviews of QA systems

Phase 4 Adherence

Voluntary benchmarking exercise by national systems by 2017

1957

SHARE – THE BASICS (III)

- **EU Grant Contract**
- **Value EUR 10 million**
- **4-year initiative from Jan 2015 to Jan 2019**
- **Consortium comprised of:**
  - **British Council (consortium leader)**
  - **Campus France**
  - **DAAD**
  - **Nuffic**
  - **European University Association**
  - **European Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education**

Thank you.

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