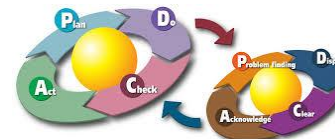


Consistency of Global and National Quality Assurance Systems: trends and challenges



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Content

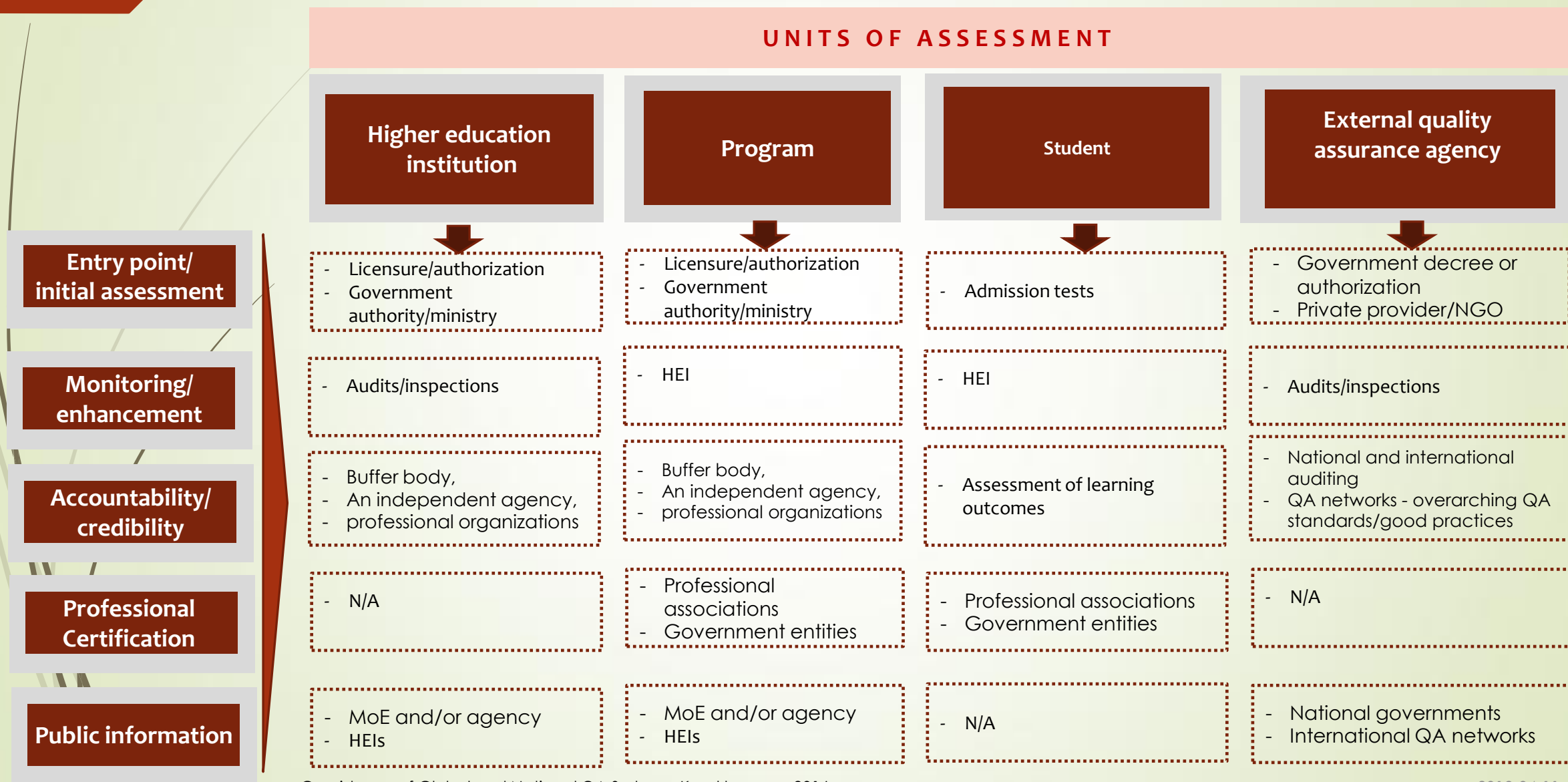
- National quality assurance: the framework theory vs. reality
- Global forces in external quality assurance
- Evaluation of evaluators: who and how
- Impact of the QA: HEI vs. EQAA

Content

National quality assurance: the framework theory

- Global forces in external quality assurance
- Evaluation of evaluators
- Impact of the QA: HEI vs. EQAA

Functions of national quality assurance framework



What is necessary for success at the national level?

To make the circle round:

While designing a QA system the issue of the validity and credibility measurement as well as the value added should be already pre-defined and respective tools are to be developed along with the EQA mechanisms.

Next question to answer: how do we handle diversity of providers?

Unit of evaluation	Responsible	QA Level
Institutional	The ultimate responsible is the government	National
Program	The ultimate responsible is the HEI	National/International
Online and transnational	How about transnational providers? Who is responsible for them?	National/International

What happens in reality?

However....

the importance of enhancing the approaches to quality assurance of higher education performance, especially, making the latter fit the diversity of needs of particular HE systems and cultures, is still high.

If not addressed timely, the existing approaches risk becoming obsolete because of their inadequate capacity to fulfil their primary role set by the governments

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- ▀ National quality assurance: the framework theory

Global forces in external quality assurance

- ▀ Evaluation of evaluators
- ▀ Impact of the QA: HEI vs. EQAA

Academic quality is at the heart

Globalization and global economic competition caused emergence of international institutions or regimes promoting **academic quality** in higher education

Purposes

To tackle the uncertainties of assessing **academic quality** in this new world of academic commerce

With the internationalization and globalization agenda to facilitate the interactions between different systems and bodies)

To promote transparency, accountability and **credibility** of higher education systems in the increasingly demanding and competitive global marketplace

What is at the heart
is
ACADEMIC QUALITY

Global QA forces

Regulatory levels	Entities/policy documents	Requirement level	Consequences
Supra-national organizations	European Commission, OECD, UNESCO, World Bank, WTO	Compliance in case of acceptance	Non-compliance leads to reputational damage
Supra-national policies/systems	Bologna Process, Sorbonne Declaration Mercosur, U-Multirank *	Mandatory for the signatory states	Non-compliance leads to reputational damage
International and regional QA systems	INQAAHE	Voluntary	Improvement/enhancement
	ENQA, CHEA	Mandatory	Recognition
	Washington Accord	Voluntary	Mutual recognition
	ABET, AACSB		Recognition, enhancement

Global QA forces (continued)

Regulatory levels	Entities/policy documents	Requirement level	Consequences
Commercial	The Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) Financial Times ARWU, others	N/A	Reputation
	Government/Ministries	Mostly mandatory	Right to function
National	Buffer bodies (EQA, ENIC-NARIC)	Mostly mandatory	Links to funding/right to function (for EQAs)
	Private EQAs, Prof Ass.	Voluntary	Improvement/enhancement
	National level tests, surveys, KPIs	Mandatory	Links to funding
	National level rankings, league tables, etc.	N/A	Reputation

So what? Are we secure with all the diversity of actors? Is HE any better now?

Can it be
trusted?

What is valid?



What is the
value added?

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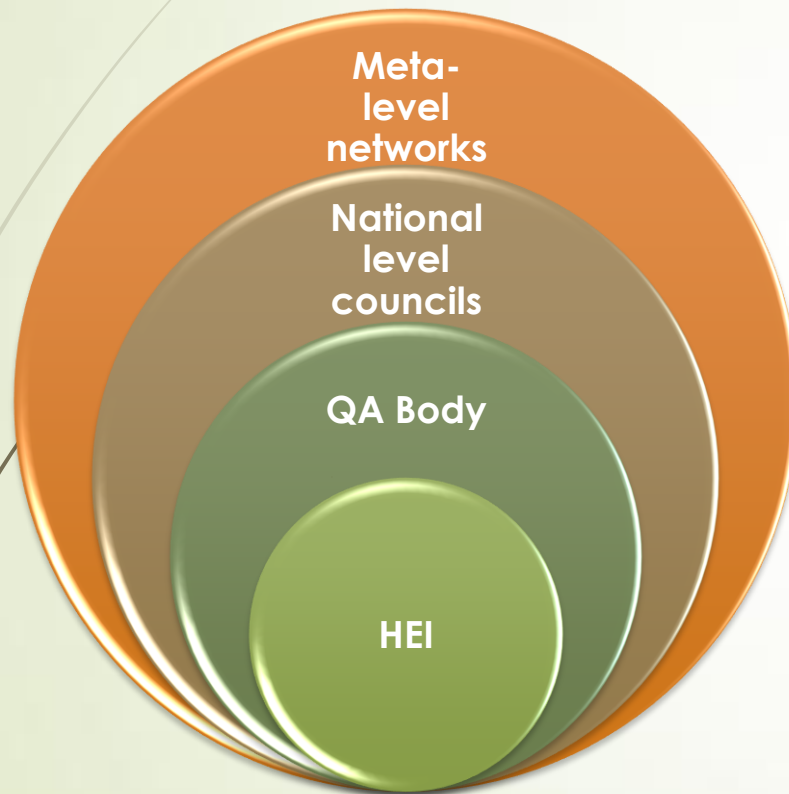
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Evaluate the evaluator: some history

- **Start:** the history goes back to 1964, USA;
 - By then accreditation was already recognized as a regulatory tool for the US government;
- **Initiator:** US Government
- **Reason:** to check for the validity of accreditation when allocating federal funds;
- **Consequence:** in case of denial the accreditation results would not be valid for decision-taking on allocation of funds



Massification and emergence of meta-level QA bodies



Establish a platform for experience exchange and dialogue on QA

Capitalize on enhancement , improvement, and capacity building

Safeguard systems

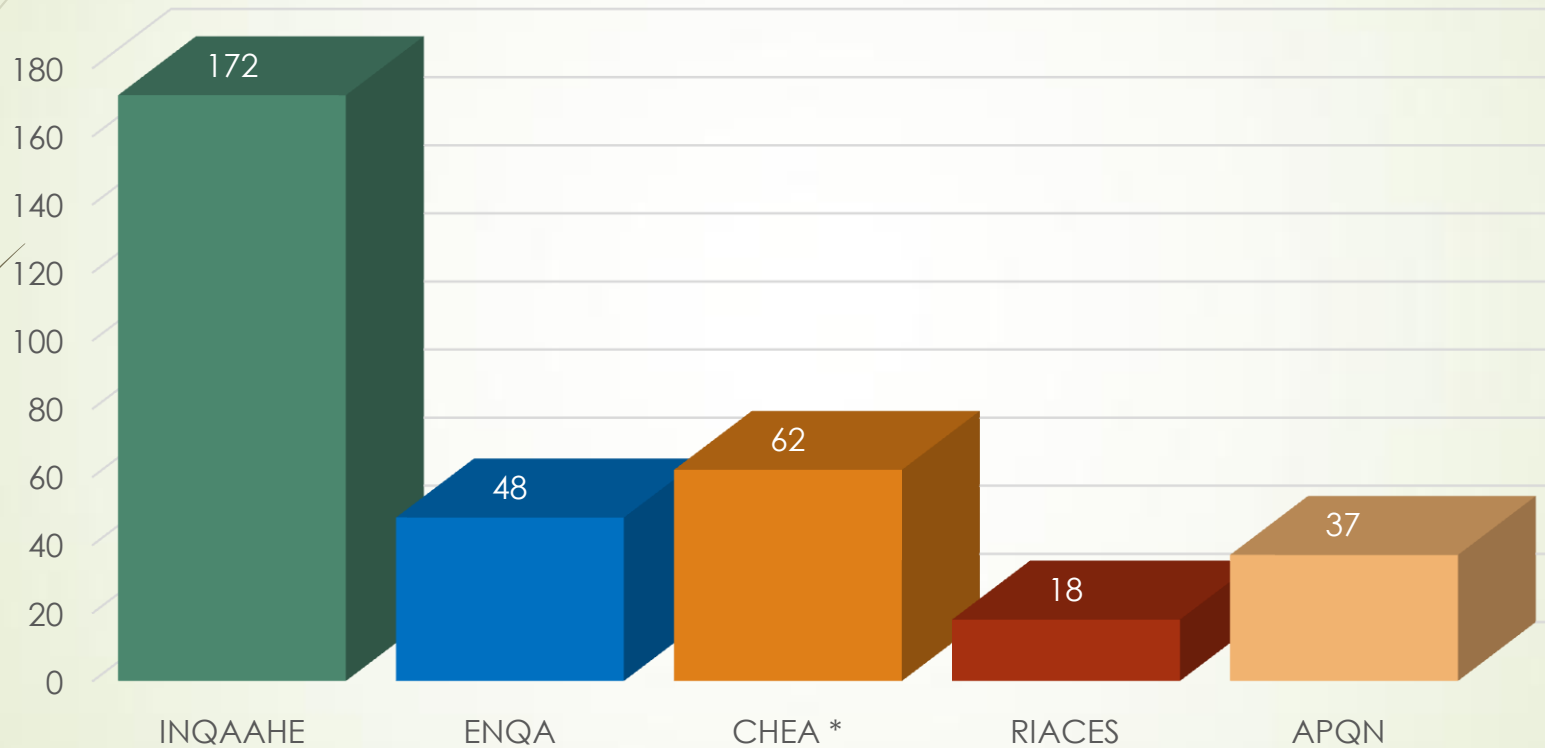
Disseminate good practices

Evaluate the actual impact of the QA on the HE systems in general and EQA in particular

Overview of major QA networks/associations

	INQAAHE	ENQA	CHEA	RIACES	APQN
Coverage	Worldwide	Europe	The USA and beyond	Ibero-America	Asia-Pacific
Year of establishment	1991	2000	1996	2003	2003
Standards/guidelines	Guidelines of Good Practice	ESGs	CHEA Eligibility standards and Principles for HE Internationally	Guidelines of Good Practices	Chiba Principles

Full members of the networks: 2015-2016



* Only CHEA recognized US based QA agencies

International Reference Points

OVERARCHING STANDARDS/GUIDELINES

INQAAHE GGP
(under revision)

ESGs
(revised in 2015)

CHEA guidelines
(revised in 2010 and
additions are made in
2016)

RIACES

Chiba Principles

Operational

Section I: The EQAA: accountability, transparency, and resources
Section IV: External activities: collaboration with other agencies and transnational/cross-border education

- **III.** Standards and guidelines for quality assurance agencies

Standard B: Demonstrates Accountability
Standard D: Employs Appropriate and Fair Procedures in Decision Making
Standard E: Demonstrates Ongoing Review of Accreditation Practices
Standard F: Possesses Sufficient Resources

Section 1: Guidelines for the EQAA:
- Mission and purposes,
- Organization and resources
Section 3: The agency and its environment
- Publicity of decisions,
- Monitoring of the operation of the EQAA,
- Networking and links with other bodies.

- **Quality Assurance Agencies:** key principles guiding the structure of quality assurance agencies and their management if they are to effectively conduct assessments for the accreditation and auditing of institutions and programs. The principles evolve around EQA operations.

Functional

Section III: Institutions of higher education and the EQAA: relationship, standards, and internal reviews
Section II: EQAA review of institutions: evaluation, decision and appeals

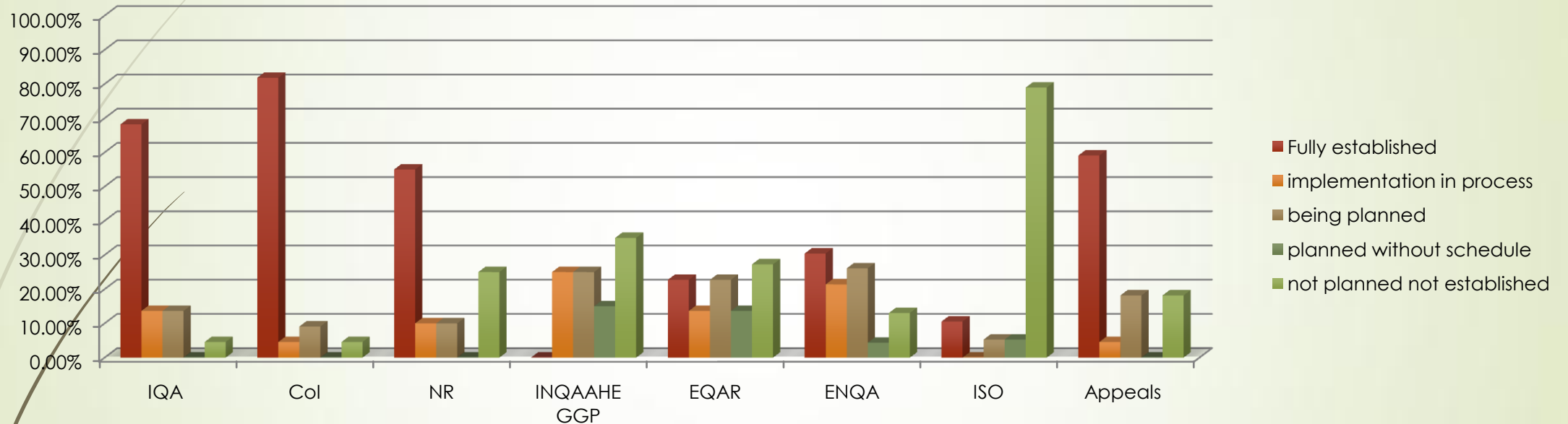
- I. Standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance of HEIs
- II. Standards and guidelines for external quality assurance of HEIs

Standard A: Advances Academic Quality
Standard C: Encourages, Where Appropriate, Self-Scrutiny and Planning for Change and for Needed Improvement

Section 2: The agency's review processes:
- Relationship with HEI,
- External review procedures (Quality criteria, procedures, external review teams);
- Documentation, decision making process.

- **Institutional Quality Assurance:** key principles guiding institutions in assuring their own quality. The principles evolve around two major domains: 1. Internal quality assurance of HEs, and 2. external quality assurance of HEs.

Internal quality assurance of EQAs: the state of affairs



(IQA) internal quality assurance of EQAA
 (Col) conflict of interests
 (NR) national review by auditing bodies
 (GGP) INQAHE Guidelines of Good Practice

(EQAR) European Quality Assurance Register
 (ENQA) European Network of Quality Assurance
 (ISO) International Organization for Standardization
 Appeals system

* UNESCO Scoping Study: 2012-2014

Consistency of Global and National QA Systems: Karakhanyan, 2016

External quality assurance of EQAAs: recognition procedure, costs and implications



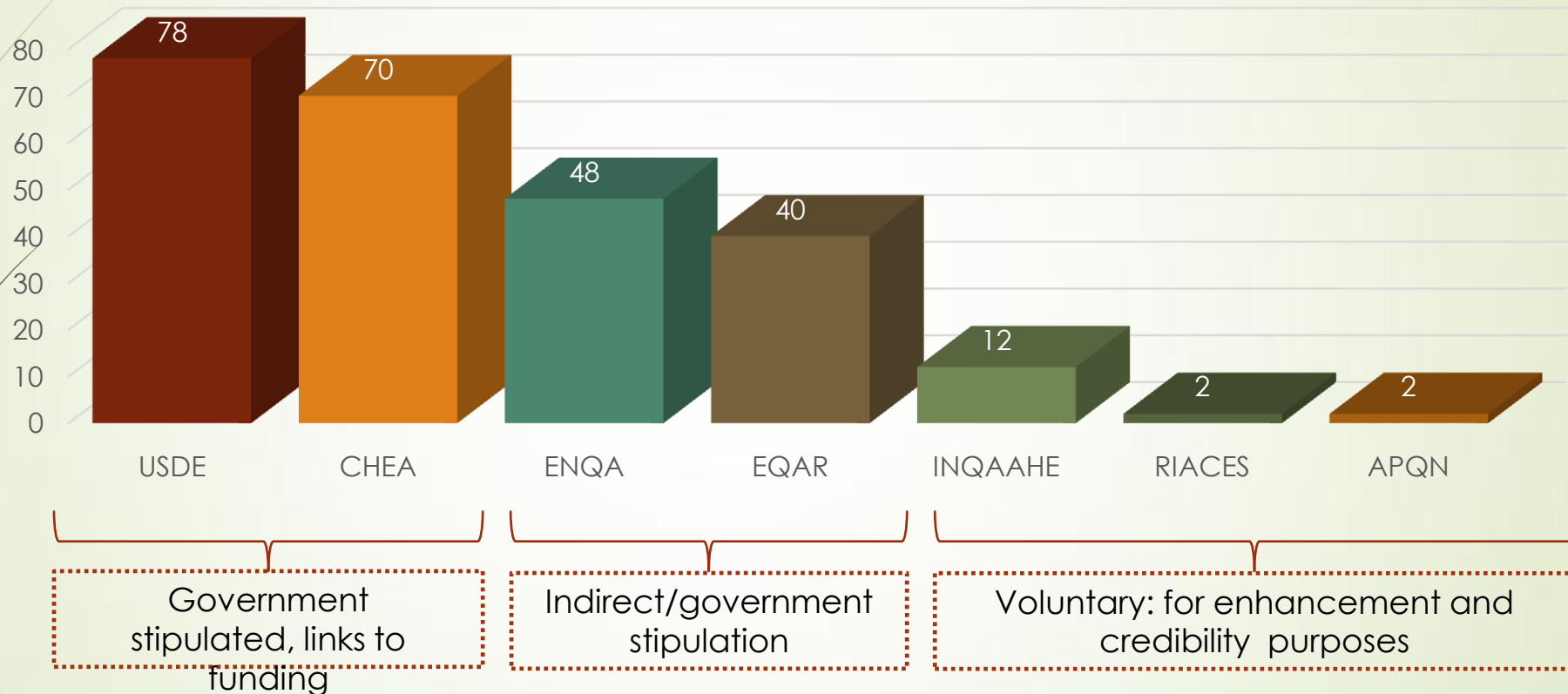
Expert panel: international peers

Consequence: Recognition and inclusion in the register

Cost range: \$15000 - \$40000

Frequency: cyclical

External quality assurance of EQAs: data as of 2015



Need to link to consequences to ensure the critical mass follows the procedure

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Impact of the QA: HEI vs. EQAA

Legitimate question: how can we better understand the value and credibility of such evaluations?

Validity

Credibility

Value added

Do we evaluate what we are supposed to evaluate?

Can we trust the results?

How does it make us better?

- Good practices are only good within the context they originated – there is a need for empirical analysis of their functionality and effectiveness in different contexts
- How can a good practice in one system be diffused and transferred to other systems with the same positive results?
- Or is it possible at all, considering the contextual peculiarities of different systems?
- How do we ensure the good practice in a different context ensures solution of the system-wide problems in the context where it is planned to be planted?

What is the impact? Or, is there an impact?

Intervention

- Criteria and procedures
- Peer reviewers
- Self-assessment
- Conditions and follow up
- Capacity building events
- Consequences

Structural and operational

- IQA systems are put in place
- Supports strategic development
- Staff capacity is built

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- What is the impact on academic quality?
- Are the employers satisfied?
- Are the graduates happy?

Major findings as warning signs

Relevance

- Many systems still have to work on the relevance and coherence of their QA frameworks;
- What works for one system, can have little to no effect on another, and often can make a third one even worse.
- International accreditors use their own standards, and the legitimate question is to what extent those generic standards solve the system level problems!!!

Consistency

- Factors related to the reviewer background, interpretation of standards, agency's interference question consistency of evolutions;
- Not all international QA providers ensure the same quality of review both in the home and host countries, which results granting an accreditation label to the programs that are not equal.

Validity

- There is an impact, however, no empirical data on the actual impact on academic performance;
- Are we actually measuring what we are supposed to measure?

Credibility

- In many systems transparency and independence issues create favorable background for corruption leading to the damaged credibility;
- Most of the times the agencies that are far from being credible are listed in the same register along with the credible ones.

Conclusions

Achievements

Structural changes are tangible
Investments are made to improve the quality

Need to take to the next level

Revision of approaches is crucial

- To keep up with the pace of rapid changes
- Ensure a holistic and context driven national quality assurance framework

System-wide capacity building

For empirical analysis on the impact, needs and system-wide problems to be solved drawing on which the changes need to be made

Challenges for EQA

Holistic approach to QA to attend to country's socio-economic targets and needs:
one model, surely, does not fit all!!!

Credibility, validity, value added

Financial implications

Capacity building needs

Handling trans-national EQAAs:
how do we make sure they are valid, credible and bring in value-added

Thank you and Questions?

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