Enhancing Curriculum Responsiveness to Local Skills needs: Towards a manual for DHET

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OUTLINE

- What is the problem?
- Tensions between central and local
- International trends
- What is currently possible?
- Developing a progressively responsive model
- Alignment with Centres of Specialisation
- Going forward

What is the problem?

PART ONE

Responsiveness

- Employers' needs vary depending on company, locality and industry
- Students' needs vary depending on a range of individual, local and regional factors
  - Diversity
  - Language
  - Prior schooling
- Qualifications and their curriculum are centrally determined, assessment is managed centrally and textbooks are standardised

In a nutshell…

- Colleges and their lecturers have to manage a tension between local specificities (based on student, employer and community/environmental needs) and national and international demands for standardisation

Tensions

Local

- Local contexts require specific focus areas that may not be relevant elsewhere

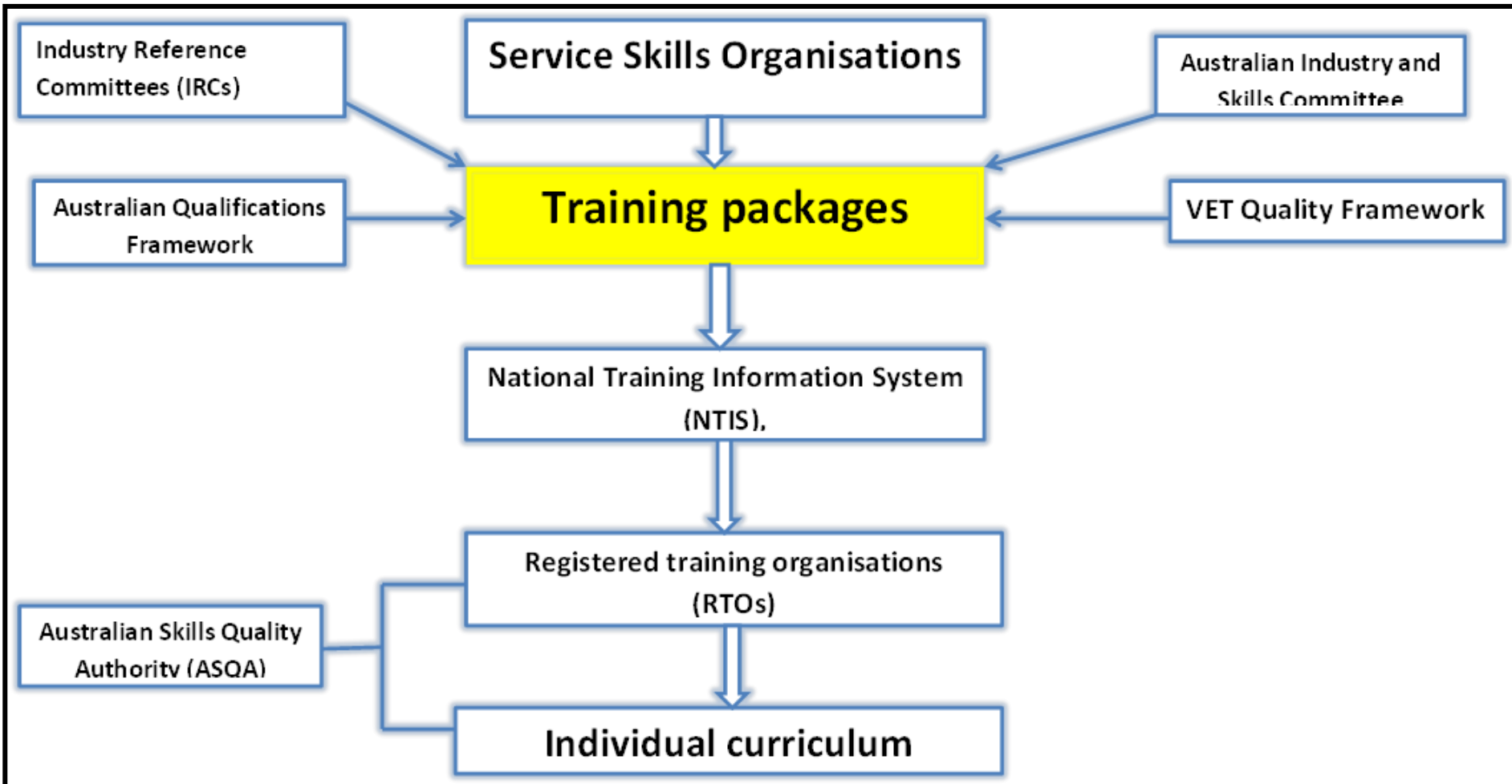- Lecturers are best equipped to make holistic judgments about student competence

National and Global

- Standards should conform to national and international norms to ensure transferability

- Quality concerns related to local assessment results in national standardised assessment
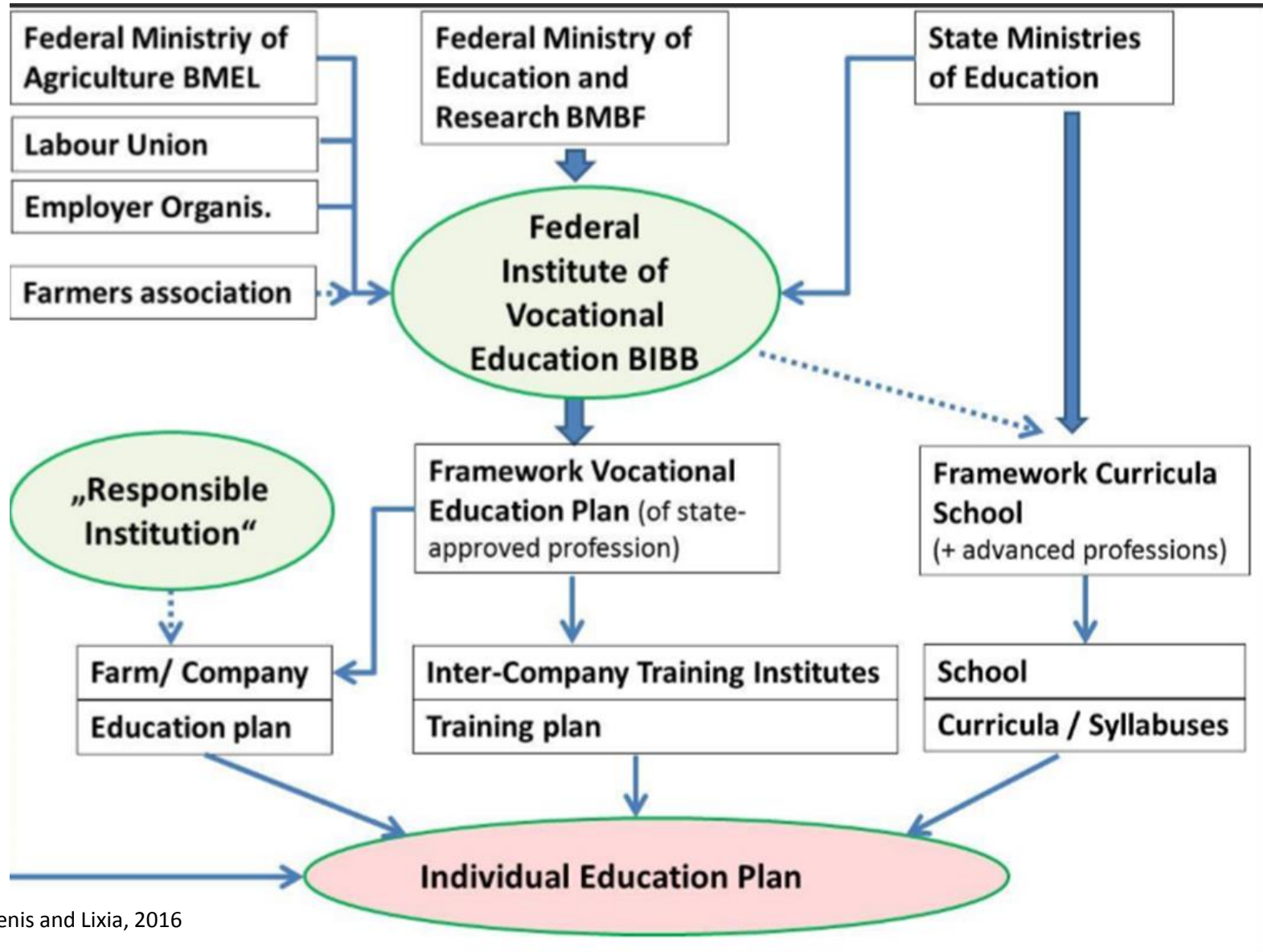
International Trends

Australian competency based TVET

Chinese TVET

- **The curriculum is divided into three parts**
- About one third for general academic
- skills defined nationally by the ministry of education.
- Another third is defined nationally associated with the particular occupation.
- The final third, also in the occupational field, determined locally according to local needs sometimes at school level.
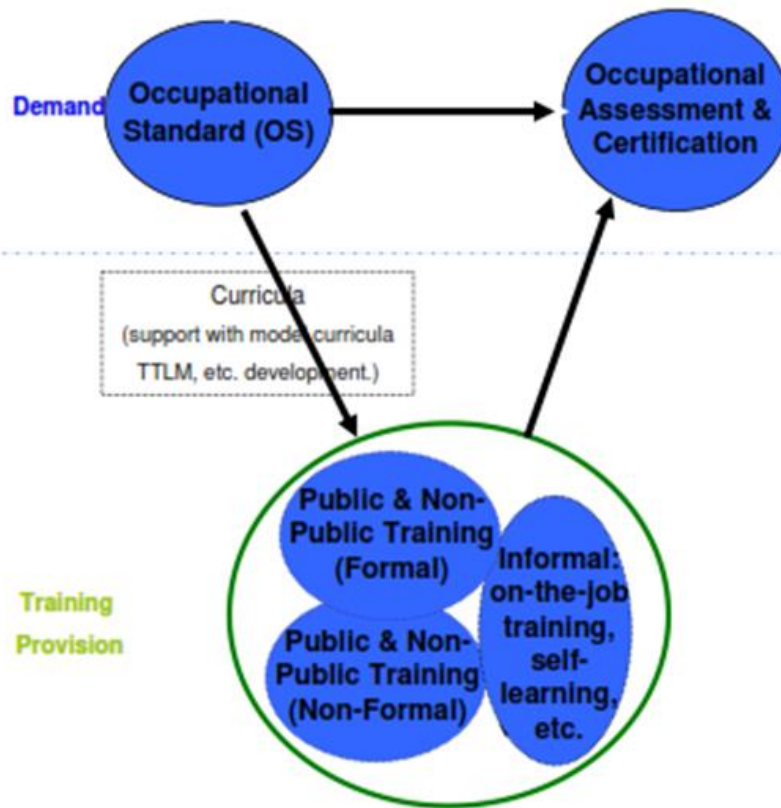- Vocationalism" and "localism" Chine TVET

GERMANY TVET

Source: Aenis and Lixia, 2016

Ethiopian outcome-based TVET

Common features

- A common framework.
- Curriculum decentralisation to industry, occupation, business and geographic regions.
- Quality assurance.

What is Currently Possible?

PART TWO

Classroom autonomy

- All teachers, even within the most restrictive curriculum, have space to add, make strategic selections and enrich the curriculum
  - Lecturers may need support through professional development activities to enhance this capability
- Lecturers can develop their own materials or use existing materials that are not prescribed
- Extra curricula activities, practicals and work exposure
- Gaps and additional areas not covered can be pointed out to students

Industry Linkages

- Colleges and lecturers are already being encouraged to develop strong industry linkages

- Lecturers are being exposed to work-places

- Industry are making resources available either through donations, staff time or site visits

A Process for Greater Curriculum Autonomy

PART THREE

Options

- A completely decentralised model where curriculum and assessment determined at local level (similar to universities)

- A centralised model with clear components that can be varied at college level

- A centralised model which takes greater account of industry and other drivers of responsiveness

A Proposal

- Build on concept of Centres of Specialisation
- Designate a Programme Convenor College based on COS
  - Requires support from College Council
  - Based on sustained expertise and demonstrated linkages to industry
- Convenor hosts annual meeting with all programme leaders from participating colleges
  - Includes appointed national examiner and regional DHET staff

A Proposal cont.

- National Forum will examine curriculum and determine what is core, what needs to be examined nationally and where variations may be allowed
- Criteria for the assessment of CAT determined
- Employer bodies invited to participate in Forum, along with appropriate SETA and QCTO/Umalusi
- Individual colleges link to employers and provide feedback to National Forum with support from SETAs

A Proposal cont.

- National Forum provides guidelines to colleges on accommodating variations

- As far as possible, staff from the colleges should be involved in the national marking process and provide direct input into the examination process.

- The CAT component should be moderated and interrogated through regional and national clusters

- Colleges that are not COS/COE but have human and other resources that make it appropriate to involve them in the process can apply to join the process.

What is Needed?

- The definition of Centres of Specialisation and Centres of excellence needs to be adjusted to include this role
- A pilot programme should be identified
- QCTO, Umalusi and SETAs need to be consulted on their role
- Activities of the Convenor and Forum need to be aligned to the policy on professional development
- DHET examiners need to be brought on board

Financial Implications

- The costs of a national meeting and local meetings need to be budgeted for
  - Suggest relevant SETA funds national meeting and regional meetings covered by colleges
- Including staff in assessment processes and moderation needs to be costed and budgeted

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Pilot scheme to be fully studied before this is rolled out further
- Can be restricted to a limited number of colleges while processes are developed
- Service provider should be appointed to do a full developmental evaluation

We would welcome as much feedback as possible!

Thank you!