

**YANGON UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS
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**A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ASSESSMENT
CENTERS ACCREDITED BY NATIONAL SKILLS STANDARD
AUTHORITY**

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EMPA - 67 (16th Batch)**

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**A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ASSESSMENT
CENTERS ACCREDITED BY NSSA**

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Master of Public Administration (MPA)

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to analyse the factors influencing on sustainability of assessment center accredited by National Skills Standard Authority NSSA and to make proper recommendations for future improvement. In this thesis, the survey was conducted based on 107 accredited assessment centers by National Skills Standard Authority NSSA. This survey mainly uses descriptive method based on qualitative and quantitative approaches. The survey found that assessment cost, preparation and monitoring efforts are important in running assessments successfully. Moreover, it found that appropriate fees to be considered to collect from the candidate and employers are important for sustainable assessment center. The survey found that Government should subsidize for improvement of occupation assessment system. Government regulation should be strongly. Certificate by occupational assessment process is very important. National Certificate is required for the employers. At the present employer need to skill worker accredited by assessment process because of productivity and company image. The survey found that that job opportunities is validity in ASEAN . Bench Marking System is on going process in regional as Thai and Myanmar , etc. This thesis analysis assessor and inspector fee by ACC (assessment and certification committee). The follow by employer and employee contribution.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	vii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Rationale of the Study	1
1.2 Objective of the Study	2
1.3 Method of Study	2
1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study	3
1.5 Organization of the Study	3
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Competency Framework, Related Practice and Human Resources Development	4
2.2 Importance of Assessment System	7
2.3 Designing and Developing the Competency Framework	9
2.4 Competency Certification System in ASEAN Practice	11
2.5 Empirical Studies	13
2.6 Review on Previous Studies	21
CHAPTER III ACCRETRATION OF ASSESSMENT CENTER UNDER NSSA IN MYANMAR	
3.1 Labour Administration, Employment and Overview of Labour Market in Myanmar	23
3.2 Employment and Skill Development Law	25
3.3 National Occupational Competency Standard Development Process	27
3.4 Assessment and Certification: Developing Assessment System	28
3.5 Occupation under Assessment	33

CHAPTER IV SURVEY ANALYSIS

4.1	Survey Profile	37
4.2	Survey Design	38
4.3	Survey Results	38

CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

5.1	Findings	52
5.2	Recommendations	54

REFERENCES

APPENDIX

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.	Title	Page
2.1	Type and Number of TVET Providers, and Student Enrollment	16
3.1	Labor Force, Labor Force Participation Rate and Unemployment Rate	24
3.2	Employed Population by Occupation Group	26
3.3	Description of yearly increment Accredited Assessment Center	30
3.4	Results of first round of NSSA Fast Track Skill Test	29
3.5	List of Assessment Center Accredited by NSSA (2012-2018)	35
4.1	Location of Accredited Assessment Center	37
4.2	Categories of Occupational Area	39
4.3	Owner Type of Assessment Center	40
4.4	Occupation Level provided by Assessment Center	41
4.5	Conduct of Assessment Center	42
4.6	Expected Needs for Assessment Center Improvement	43
4.7	Impression of the National Skills Certification System	44
4.8	Information for Application of Assessment Center	45
4.9	Reason to take NSSA Certificate.	45
4.10	Preference of the Existing Facilities	46
4.11	Fairness and Satisfaction of Occupational Assessment Process	46
4.12	Obstacles and Difficulties of Implementation of skill Test and Government Procedure	47
4.13	Necessity to Renew the Assessment Center Certificate Accredited by NSSA	45
4.14	Confidence Level After Getting the Certificate	48
4.15	Validity of Certificate to Apply Jobs in ASEAN	49
4.16	Expected Time Period Supported by Government Budgets	50
4.17	Expected Supporting Time Period by Development Partners	50
4.18	Type of Incentives for Volunteer, Assessor and Inspector	51

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	Accredited Assessment Centre
ACC	Assessment and Certification Committee
ADB	Asia Development Bank
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
AMS	ASEAN Member State
APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
AQF	ASEAN Qualification Frameworks
AQP	Assessment Quality Partner
AQRF	ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asia Nations
ASEC	ASEAN Secretariat
ASRA	ASEAN Skills Recognition Arrangement
BIBB	Bundes Institut für Berufs Bildung
DKM	Diploma Kemahiran Malaysia
DLKM	Diploma Lanjutan Kemahiran Malaysia
DoP	Department of Planning
DSD	Department of Skills Development
DTVET	Department of Technical Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESCO	European Skills, Competences and Occupations
ESD	Employment and Skill Development
ESDL	Employment and Skill Development Law
EU	European Union
Fed.MES	Federation of Myanmar Engineering Societies
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HEP	Higher Education Providers
HR	Human Resource
HRD	Human Resource Development
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MMAW	Manual Metal Arc Welding
MoE	Ministry of Education

MoI	Ministry of Industry
MOLES	Ministry of Labour Employment and Social Security
MoLIP	Ministry of Labour, Immigration and population
MQF	Malaysia Qualifications Framework
MRAs	Mutual Recognition of Arrangement
MRS	Mutual Recognition of Skills
MSCO	Myanmar Standard Classifications of occupations
MyAQRf	Malaysian AQRf
NC	National certificate
NOCS	National Occupational Competency Standard
NOCS	National Occupational Competency Standard
NQF	National Qualification Frameworks
NSDA	National Skill Development Agency
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
NSQF	National Skill Qualification Framework
NSQF	National Skills Qualification Framework
NSSA	National Skills Standards Authority
NSSB	National skills Standards Board(NSSB)
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
PPP	Public Private Partnership
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
RMCS	Regional Model Competency Standards
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SACC	Skills Assessment and Certification Committee
SC	Sectorial Committee
SDFMC	Skill Development Fund Management Committee
SKM	Sijil Kemahiran Malaysia
SRA	Skills Recognition Arrangement
SSDTC	Skill Standards Development and Training Committee
TC	Training Committee
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWG	Technical Working Group
UMFCCI	Union of Myanmar Federation of Commerce, Chamber and Industry
VET	Vocational Education and Training

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale of the Study

Myanmar needs to nurture quality workforce in order to uplift the country's economic growth and be in line with the ASEAN integration. By upgrading the skills level of the country human resources, Myanmar can pave the way to create the required landscape to attract the foreign direct investment. Possessing the skills of semi-professional and professional workforce is a determinant factor for investors to select the investment site and carry out the business affairs.

Investing in a strong, public vocational education and training sector (VET) and competency certification become crucial in knowledge-based societies as well as in developing countries. VET and skills recognition is an intended bridge between education and the labour market. Skills development mechanism including VET and skills recognition is important as it enriches a person for life and it provides the competences which are necessary in a democratic society. Societal and economic development partly depends on the strength of VET as it provides access to skills and entry routes into the labour market. For under-privileged and marginalized groups in particular, it can be an important route towards a better life.

The Education and Skill Development Services Sector broadly comprises of School Education, Higher Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Industrial/Technical Training, including Vocational Training. It should be noted that 'skill development' refers to the larger objective of 'equipping an individual with marketable skills', however, in recent times 'skill development' has been largely used in the context of technical/vocational training for the manufacturing/industrial or services sector.

Vocational training and skill assessments are important to improve overall skill level of the workforce in Myanmar. To improve employment opportunities for Myanmar workers as well as to increase participation of Myanmar workforce in ASEAN Economic community, Myanmar is required to have its own National

Qualification Framework (NQF) in order to link Regional Qualification Framework of ASEAN. Myanmar has already formed National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA) and has actively carried out the required tasks needed to recognize skills of Labour, including fixing the competency and issuing the recognition certificate.

Accordingly, it is obvious that promoting HRD and building mechanism for nurturing skilled workforce is vibrant area for public policy makers to formulate the relevant planning and take the practicable measures in order to generate the fruitful outcomes in future. As a developing country like Myanmar, policy makers should pay more attention to strengthen the foundational area like workforce skill development and encourage the engagement of employers in private sector.

The establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC 2015), with the goal of creating economic integration, a single market production base, and the free flow of skilled labour in the region, has increased the importance of recognizing the skills of migrant workers by both sending and receiving countries. Skills development and recognition can play a critical role in meeting the challenges of implementing the AEC 2015. But the negative impact of AEC free flow of skilled labor is big if the countries do not prepare well.

Myanmar has a lot of unskilled and uncertified workers, and thus, it must set up the competency standards for occupations and finally need to transform unskilled workers to skilled workers when Myanmar integrates in the member of AEC. Thus this thesis aims to make a study on the sustainability of assessment centers accredited by national skills standard authority.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this thesis is to analyse the factors influencing on sustainability of Assessment Center Accredited by National Skills Standard Authority (NSSA).

1.3 Method of Study

Descriptive Method is used in this study. Primary data are collected from Accredited Assessment Centres and secondary data are also used in this study. Both Qualitative and Quantitative methods are to used in this survey. For collection of primary data questionnaires are distributed to responsible persons, who are managers from 107 Assessment Center. The survey questionnaire was based on three

components. They are (i) Assessment Center Profile (ii) Assessment Process of NSSA (iii) Advantages of NSSA Certificate. Secondary data are gathered from various sources such as assessment practice, education directories, text books, previous research paper and websites.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of the study covered 107 out of 146 assessment centers under National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA) in Myanmar. The respondents are managers from 107 assessment centers. The survey was conducted from September to November 2019. As a limitation, the sustainability of assessment centers was analysed by supply side including managers, owners, directors and assessors from 107 assessment centers. This study limits to find out the various opinion from certified candidate in different occupations (demand side), although NSSA already trained and certified 10936 candidates in 23 occupations until 2018.

1.5 Organization of the Study

This study organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 concerns about the introduction. Chapter 2 is literature review. Chapter 3 presents the review of NSSA in Myanmar, which including current status of assessment center explore for national skills standards authority and competency framework, skills assessment and certification in Myanmar. Chapter 4 is survey analysis and Chapter 5 is conclusion.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Competency Framework, Related Practice and Human Resources

Development

A competency framework defines the knowledge, skills, and attributes needed for people within an organization. Each individual role will have its own set of competencies needed to perform the job effectively. To develop the framework, it is need to have an in-depth understanding of the roles within the business. (ASEAN, 2007).

A competency framework contains definitions of all the behavioural competencies used in the whole or part of an occupation. It provides the basis for the use of competencies in such areas as recruitment, employee development and reward. (ASEAN, 2007).

Organizations often encounter difficulties in human resource (HR) development and effective assignment since they lack unified criteria for evaluation of the employees. Evaluation of work results does not provide enough information for the employee development. Evaluation of a large number of employees is time consuming and requires substantial resources, and it is not being used regularly. (ASEAN, 2007).

Personalized development is hard to provide, therefore organizations turn to less effective group development. Organizations do not use the knowledge of employees enough to achieve their strategic goals and gain competitive advantages. Finding a solution for these problems may improve the HR management process in the organizations and allow achieving better business results (ASEAN, 2007).

In order to deal with these problems proposes competences as unified measurements for employees. The competences required are calculated and used for employee development by creating individual and group development plans (ASEAN, 2007).

Personalized development is hard to provide for large groups of employees. Companies do not use the knowledge of employees enough to achieve their strategic goals and gain competitive advantages. Finding a solution for these problems may improve the human resource management process in the organization and allow achieving better business results. There is a way for prevention of the above mentioned problems using the competence based human resource development solution. The following tasks should set to establish the necessary solution. Establishment of unified criteria for evaluation of the employees. Establishment of solutions for individualized development for large groups of employees. Establishment of a solution for the provision of knowledge management. Each skill can be evaluated by a skill level and the competence level can be formed from all the skill levels forming the competence. The difference between the desirable and actual competence level is the competence gap. Establishment of full lists with competences necessary to employee and identification of the competence gaps leads to creation of a tool helping in suitability evaluation of employees for the position and the necessary competence development aimed at improvement of the employee's ability to perform his/her direct professional duties (ASEAN, 2007).

Human resource development is an integral aspect of building competence, developing and regenerating competencies. It is expected that the competence will be developed from three elements during the employee's life span, including education, training and experience. A certificate of a specific level of competence is separate from what has been described differently in different countries as legal registration or licensing, which is a legitimate registration of individuals by regional jurisdiction to protect the community from incompetent or dishonest operations of unqualified persons. (The ASEAN Member States (AMS) adopted the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint (ASEAN, 2007).

Competencies are developed through workplace training, based on a commitment to a range of activities that test the ability of employees to cope with different situations. Such experience improves an employee's ability to handle new problems and situations. As employees gain experience, they improve their ability to cope with unusual circumstances and thus achieve higher levels of competence. Developing competence is usually based on the required level of training (ASEAN, 2007).

Competency-based training is designed to help people achieve the results they need, regardless of the specific task they want to take. This training aims to avoid theoretical training and focus on skills development, so that after graduation the graduates have the necessary skills to perform the necessary work. Training must therefore be based on a set of competency standards. Competency standards can check the effectiveness of training, improve recruitment, and identify training gaps that should lead to improved efficiency, productivity, employee safety, and employee retention. They can also be used to develop business practices and procedures, performance management and quality management systems for licensing purposes. Training packages, in certain circumstances, may replace formal education and training systems (ASEAN, 2007).

Many professional organizations define competence in several levels or stages. The advantage of such a level is that a professional can go from an initial level of achievement shortly after graduation to a senior position in a job where he has held managerial and supervisory roles and has extensive experience in his / her professional life. These typically include the type of documented supervised experience, the scope of continuous professional development, and compliance with the ethical code (ASEAN, 2007).

Effective skill development systems that combine education with technical training, technical training in labour market entry and integration with lifelong learning can help countries to maintain productivity growth and translate this growth into more and better jobs (ASEAN, 2007).

The human resource development planning process is hard to formalize, since it is affected by a number of subjective human factors and interacts with other human resource management processes. Configurable and scalable system for human resource development planning, which could be adjusted for the needs of particular organizations must be able to describe the knowledge and skills necessary for the employees, to identify the actual level of skills and development needs of the employees, as well as to describe the possible development solutions in a unified manner. Establishment of such a system becomes possible by selecting a competence based approach (ASEAN, 2007).

Many companies use 'competencies.' These are the integrated knowledge, skills, judgment, and attributes that people need to perform a job effectively. By having a defined set of competencies for each role in business, it shows workers the

kind of behaviours, the organization values and which it requires to help achieve its objectives. Not only can the team members work more effectively and achieve their potential, but there are many business benefits to be had from linking personal performance with corporate goals and values (ASEAN, 2007).

The set of practices needed for effective performance by adding a competency framework to the talent management program. By collecting and combining competency information, a standardized approach to performance that's clear and accessible to everyone in the company. The framework outlines specifically what people need to do to be effective in their roles and it clearly establishes how their roles relate to organizational goals and success (ASEAN, 2007).

2.2 Importance of Assessment System

One of the most common types of certification systems related to human resource development is where a person is certified as being able to undertake specific job tasks related to an occupation. Certification is generally based on an assessment, which generally includes a test, a performance assessment and/or a portfolio. Certification may include evidence of workplace experience prior to assessment. Some certification systems include a valid period of recognition and therefore require re-certification, whereas others certify for a lifetime upon completing all certification requirements. Certification does not necessarily refer to being legally able to practice in a specific profession; this is generally termed licensing. Usually licensing is based on a legislative instrument, is a requirement of government, involves protection of public safety, and is administered by a regulatory body (ASEAN, 2007).

2.2.1 Accreditation of Assessment Centre in Context

An Assessment Centre means a centre accredited by the QCTO for the purpose of conducting external summative assessments for specified registered occupational qualifications. All final external integrated summative assessment for the QCTO occupational qualifications and trades will be conducted at accredited assessment centers. An application to be accredited as an assessment centre is submitted to the relevant Assessment Quality Partner (AQP). It is advisable that the institutions should at least be familiar with the qualification they would like to conduct assessments for. The institution interested to become one of the assessment centers must before approaching the Assessment Quality Partner to apply, familiarize

itself with the following documents: QCTO Policy on Accreditation of Assessment Centers; This document, minimum criteria for the accreditation of an assessment centre The assessment centre accreditation process; and the example of the application form below which the AQP will adjust where possible according to the requirements of the assessment specifications. Physical facilities the assessment facility must be housed in a solid structure with electricity, water and sanitation. The assessment venue must have adequate lighting and ventilation. The venue must be secure with adequate fencing and/or security provisions. The assessment venue must have doors which can be secured if necessary during the assessment. The surrounding area should be quiet and conducive to writing an examination. There must be a safe or an appropriate security arrangement for the storage of assessment material. There must be adequate toilets facilities that are clean with clean water available. The necessary health and safety provisions must be in place. Minimum Criteria for the accreditation of an assessment centre (ASEAN, 2007).

The assessment venue must be big enough to house the candidates who are writing the examination. There should be an allowance of approximately 1,5m square per candidate. There must also be space available for the invigilator/s/assessor/s. The assessment centre must be accessible by road. The centre must have proper equipment where required. Staffing and administration there must be a dedicated member of staff (centre manager) who is responsible for: Maintaining and updating information about the centre Registering learners Receiving, storing and returning assessment material Arranging and overseeing invigilation of the external integrated summative assessment Ensuring that assessment material is safely stored in a secure place, candidates are registered time ously for the assessment and serial numbers received from AQP, an invigilation/assessment schedule is drawn up .Ensuring the assessments are conducted in keeping with AQP requirements e.g. checking of IDs of candidates when they write the assessment, signing of the register, ensuring that candidates who write the assessment have been registered, invigilators are trained, no assistance is given to learners (ASEAN, 2007).

2.2.2 Assessment System: Practical Tests and Theory Test

The time allocated for practical tests should be sufficient for an average performer to complete the assignments successfully. It is common international practice to even allow slower performers some overtime and in turn deduct some

marks for late finishing. In this regard, skills assessments differ from skills competitions where time may play a more prominent role (ASEAN, 2007).

For all occupations, the assessment panel teams conducted two types of orientation programs for the candidates: Refresher courses (2-3 days) and familiarization (1 day). The rationale behind both types of activities appeared to be essential: Since the pilot assessment focused on candidates from work life who had acquired their skills and knowledge informally in their work places (recognition of prior leaning), some preparatory training or familiarization with the tools, equipment and materials to be used in the practical tests was deemed necessary(ASEAN, 2007).

However, there is a risk to ‘drill’ the candidates too narrowly on the very special tasks to be performed in the actual assessment. In addition, to include two to three day refresher courses into the practical skills assessment increases the cost per candidate significantly. In the longer run it may be worthwhile to encourage public and private training providers to offer preparatory training for skills assessments on the market and against fees (ASEAN, 2007).

2.3 Designing and Developing the Competency Framework

There are three principles when designing a competency framework:

Involve the people doing the work – These frameworks should not be developed solely by HR people and make sure to involve the person doing the job, as well as getting a variety of other inputs into what makes someone successful in that job.

Communicate – People tend to get nervous about performance issues. Let them know why it is need to develop the framework.

Use relevant competencies – Ensure that the competencies included apply to all roles covered by the framework.

There are four main steps in the competency framework development process. Each step has key actions that will encourage people to accept and use the final product.

Step One: Prepare

Define the purpose – Before starting the analysing jobs and figuring out what each role needs for success, make sure the purpose for creating the framework. How we plan to use it and how we determine its scope.

Step Two: Collect Information

This is the main part of the framework. Generally, the better the data we collect, the more accurate your framework will be.

Step Three: Build the Framework

This stage involves grouping all of the behaviours and skill sets into competencies.

It is need to add levels for each competency. This is particularly useful when using the framework for compensation or performance reviews. To do so, take each competency, and divide the related behaviours into measurement scales according to complexity, responsibility, scope, or other relevant criteria.

Step Four: Implement

It is important to explain to the employee why the framework was developed, and how it will be used. Discuss how it will be updated and which procedures are put in place to accommodate changes (ASEAN, 2007).

The following some factors for implementing the framework:

1. Link to business objectives.

Make connections between individual competencies and organizational goals and values as much as possible.

2. Reward the competencies.

Check that your policies and practices support and reward the competencies identified.

3. Provide coaching and training.

Make sure there's adequate coaching and training available. Employees need to know that their efforts will be supported.

4. Keep it simple.

Make the framework as simple as possible.

5. Communicate.

Most importantly, treat the implementation honestly. The more open and honest are made throughout the process, the better the end result and the better the chances of the project achieving the objectives.

Creating a competency framework is an effective method to assess, maintain, and monitor the knowledge, skills, and attributes of people in your organization. The framework allows you to measure current competency levels to make sure your staff members have the expertise needed to add value to the business. It also helps managers make informed decisions about talent recruitment, retention, and succession strategies. By identifying the specific behaviours and skills needed for each role, it

enables to budget and plan for the training and development what company really needs.

The process of creating a competency framework is long and complex. To ensure a successful outcome, involve people actually doing carrying out the roles to evaluate real jobs, and describe real behaviours. The increased level of understanding and linkage between individual roles and organizational performance makes the effort well worth it (ASEAN, 2007).

2.4 Competency Certification System in ASEAN Practice

The ASEAN Charter was signed by the ten ASEAN Leaders in Singapore on 20 November 2007. It aims to create a single market and production base which is stable, prosperous, highly competitive and economically integrated with effective facilitation for trade and investment. In which there is free flow of goods, services and investment; facilitated movement of business persons, professionals, talents and labour; and free flow of capital and to develop human resources through closer cooperation in education and life-long learning and in science and technology, for the empowerment of the peoples of ASEAN and for the strengthening of the ASEAN Community (Bateman, 2011).

It called for cooperation, including the recognition of professional qualifications. In addition to Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) in Engineering and Nursing signed in 2005 and 2006 respectively, five MRAs were concluded between 2007 and 2009 in the fields of architecture, surveying, medical and dental practitioners and accountancy. Another important component of the AEC Blueprint was the creation of the free flow of skilled labour through harmonisation and standardisation, particularly in preparation for the AEC in 2015 (ASEAN 2007).

For the ASEAN Economic Community, human resource development (HRD) related activities will play a significant role on the economic growth in each ASEAN economy that brings significant contribution to the regional development at large. As known, the success of all HRD activities depends highly upon a sustainable and continuous process of life-long learning, training, and employability. Since there will be an intensive mobility and an exchange of labour within the ASEAN market, one of the key success factors is the recognition of people's competence and skills. The real problem faced by each economy in recognising individual competence and skills is the absence of proper policy and guidelines that can be used as a reference for such

cross-acknowledgement needs. Without the existence of such policy and guidelines and certification system, it is anticipated that there will be many issues potentially encountered by all economies related to HRD activities such as: (i) human resource recruitment; (ii) project requirements; (iii) qualification compliancy; (iv) competence/skill standard (Bateman, 2011).

Presently, each ASEAN Member States (AMS) has its own national framework with regards to its HRD activities. One of the functions of such frameworks is as a reference for recognising various types of human resource qualifications and skills within cross industrial territory. There are 10 (ten) different frameworks within ASEAN Economic Community that have their own unique characteristics. Upon the integration of one ASEAN market, all of these ten frameworks will be used simultaneously by the economies as the infrastructure in HRD activities (Bateman, 2011).

As ASEAN Member States (AMS) implement their quality assurance system for TVET using different approaches and with different levels of implementation it is difficult to assumptions about the type of organisation that is responsible for competency certification schemes (Bateman, 2011).

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

Across the ASEAN Member States, there is no uniform level of development or implementation of National Qualification Framework NQFs. Each country is at different stages of planning or implementation of either a sector QF or a NQF and there may be no explicit or national systematic intention to develop an NQF (Bateman, 2011).

Competency certification systems across the ASEAN Member State are focused on the development and acquisition of competence. Competency certification systems across the region generally focus on lower to middle skill levels (Bateman, 2011).

Across the ASEAN Member State states competency certification systems generally fall under the remit of the ministry responsible for labour development. Most ASEAN Member States are developing competency or occupational standards within the TVET sector, although in most instances countries use the terms competency standards and occupational standards interchangeably. The process for

development of competency standards in most ASEAN Member State follows similar processes. Countries are documenting processes either in formal directives or guidelines, and in all instances a government entity is responsible for the development of the competency standards. All ASEAN Member State use private sector industry representation in some form (e.g. technical working groups, industry sector endorsement meetings, employer groups, labour groups) and often used trainers or training organizations. The process for development includes functional analysis and job task analysis plus international research and reliance on existing training programs. Final endorsement is generally confirmed by the commissioning government agency, but in some instances final endorsement is a committee that includes industry sector representation (Bateman, 2011).

In general, the format for standards in the broader vocational education and training sector follow a similar format. Most ASEAN countries tend to align their competency or occupational standards format with the ILO regional model competency standards (Bateman, 2011).

2.5 Empirical Studies

(a) Malaysian Practice

This is a comprehensive report referencing the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF), 2007 to the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF). The report establishes the referencing to the AQRF in accordance with the eleven Referencing Criteria endorsed by the AQRF Committee. It describes the education and training system in Malaysia, the bodies responsible for various roles and functions, and most importantly, the qualifications system and quality assurance mechanisms that underpin the MQF. This report analyses the conceptual and technical features of the MQF and the AQRF to identify the key aspects of similarities and differences, and thereby, determine the comparability between the two. In summary, the report establishes strong evidence of a good fit between the eight levels of the MQF and the eight levels of the AQRF, notwithstanding some non-substantial differences (AQRF Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

The Malaysian AQRF Committee (MyAQRF) oversees the referencing process and the report. The Committee comprises government bodies responsible for education, training, labour, trade, foreign affairs and tourism; providers of higher education and training as well as representatives of employers, employees and

industries. The referencing process began in June 2017 with the formation of the Working Committee by the MyAQRf to draft the referencing report. Wide consultations of various key stakeholders were undertaken in October 2018 to solicit their views, feedback as well as acceptance of the referencing outcomes. Concurrently, an online consultation was also initiated to enable wider stakeholder participation. As required, the report was sent to two international experts for their reviews of the referencing processes and findings vis-a-vis the international practices. Two observers from Indonesia and Brunei as ASEAN members were invited to the stakeholder consultation session in line with the referencing guideline and to provide further feedback on the process (AQRf Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

The two international experts have given very strong support for the description of the national quality and qualifications systems, and the analytical rigour in the comparison of the level descriptors. Their inputs have further improved the clarity of the report. The two observers from ASEAN provided positive comments about the process of consultation which they observed. The final complete report has been endorsed by the MyAQRf on the 19th March 2019. The Council of MQA and Ministry of Education have also taken cognizance of the report pending submission to the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) for the AQRf Committee's evaluation and endorsement (AQRf Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Recognising the importance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in addressing the industry demand, TVET pathways are provided at upper secondary level through vocational colleges, secondary and technical schools. Further TVET pathways for post-secondary level are provided by various skills and technical-vocational providers i.e., polytechnics, community colleges and public as well as private skills training centres. Technical-vocational education is career-oriented and prepares students for careers requiring a specific set of competencies. It also prepares students for higher education particularly in science and technology related courses and careers in engineering and other professional fields (AQRf Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

The skills sector, on the other hand, emphasises practical work to develop competency in occupational or trade skills required by related industries. The students are prepared for Sijil Kemahiran Malaysia (SKM) awarded by the Department of

Skills Development of the Ministry of Human Resources through 1,272 training institutions all over the country. Students pursuing skills qualifications may enrol for SKM Level 1 up to Diploma Kemahiran Malaysia (DKM) and Diploma Lanjutan Kemahiran Malaysia (DLKM) which are at Level 4 and Level 5 of the MQF, respectively. There is also an opportunity for DKM and DLKM holders to further their study in engineering technology at the bachelor's level (AQRF Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

The descriptors at Level 1 to 5 of the MQF provide for both technical-vocational and academic (general) learning pathways and use the same qualification titles. The technical and vocational programmes provide more specialised technical knowledge and skills, are industry/occupational standards-oriented and have a higher practical component. The entry requirements are as generally prescribed or subjected to specific programme standards or professional body requirements or via Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) (AQRF Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

Malaysian Occupational Skills Qualifications Framework (MOSQF)

The KAPPK explains the certification under the skills sector which is based on the concept and structure of the Malaysian Skills Certification System consisting of five (5) levels as shown in the MOSQF. The DSD has developed the MOSQF to articulate skills competencies within the levels 1 to 5 of the MQF. A trainee equipped with required competencies as prescribed in the standards will be entitled to obtain qualifications as stipulated in the MOSQF. The MOSQF is divided into five levels with descriptors (AQRF Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

The requirements for the certification are as follows:

Level 5 - Malaysian Skills Advanced Diploma - competent in applying a significant range of fundamental principles and complex techniques across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources feature strongly, as do personal accountabilities for analysis and diagnosis, design, planning, execution and evaluation. Specialised technical skills should be demonstrated.

Level 4 - Malaysian Skills Diploma - competent in performing a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities performed in a wide variety of

contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and allocation of resources is often present. Higher level of technical skills should be demonstrated

Level 3 - Malaysian Skills Certificate - competent in performing a broad range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts, most of which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable responsibility and autonomy and control or guidance of others is often required

Level 2 - Malaysian Skills Certificate - competent in performing a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. Some of the activities are non-routine and require individual responsibility and autonomy.

Level 1 - Malaysian Skills Certificate - competent in performing a range of varied work activities, most of which are routine and predictable.

Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF)

The MQF is a national instrument, which develops and classifies qualifications based on a set of criteria that is nationally agreed and internationally benchmarked, and which clarifies the academic levels, learning outcomes and credit system based on student academic load (AQRF Referencing Report Malaysia, 2019).

The recognition function is carried out by authorised bodies based on the purpose of recognition which includes, among others, employment (e.g., Public Service Department), education funding (e.g., Higher Education Fund Corporation and Skills Development Fund Corporation) and professional practice (AQRF Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

Malaysian Quality Assurance System

Quality Assurance results are essential for regulatory and recognition bodies to make informed decisions within their respective remit. In some cases, the regulatory, Quality Assurance and recognition functions are invested in one body. In the case of professional bodies, the quality assurance of programmes within the remit and also recognise qualified persons for professional practice. The DSD regulates and registers skill centres, accredits skills programmes and also certifies trainees (AQRF Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

The Quality Assurance system in Malaysia conceptually involves four components. The first component is the MQF, which is the overarching benchmark

that defines the qualifications system in Malaysia. The second component is the standards in higher education and training that provides operational benchmarks capturing various learning contexts and orientations in the national system. The third component is the implementation of audits and assessments for assuring quality based on established standards. The fourth component is qualification referencing where Quality Assurance results are accessible to various parties within and outside the country for various related purposes (AQRF Referencing Report of Malaysia, 2019).

(b) European Union (EU) Practice

At European level, in the framework of the New Skills for New Jobs initiative, a group of independent experts recommended the development of a common language between education/training and the world of work. This commitment has recently been affirmed at the highest level through Europe 2020: 'A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' and the conclusions adopted by the Education Council on 13 May 2010 which call for a common language and an operational tool (EU, 2017).

Employers are increasingly as concerned with what employees know, understand and are able to do in practice as they are with formal qualifications and complementing occupational skills. At the same time, education and training systems are moving away from approaches defined around the time spent on learning and where the learning takes place (an input approach) towards a focus on the knowledge, skills and competences achieved through the learning (an outcomes approach). In line with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), all Member States are in the process of developing National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) which describe qualifications in terms of learning outcomes. To respond to these shifts and improve matching between supply and demand, a number of Member States have felt it necessary to develop systems that classify skills and competences and enable these to be related to qualifications, occupations and job vacancies (EU, 2017).

ESCO help to bridge the gap between the world of education and training and the labor market. By introducing a standard terminology for occupations, skills, competences and qualifications, ESCO can help education and training systems and the labour market to better identify and manage the availability of required skills, competences and qualifications. Its multilingual character facilitates increased

international transparency and cooperation in the area of skills and qualifications (EU, 2017).

ESCO is the multilingual classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations. It identifies and categorizes skills, competences, qualifications and occupations relevant for the EU labor market and education and training, in 25 European languages. The system provides occupational profiles showing the relationships between occupations, skills, competences and qualifications. ESCO has been developed in an open IT format, is available for use free of charge by everyone and can be accessed through an online portal (EU, 2017).

ESCO will build on and link with relevant international classifications and standards, such as the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) and will complement existing national and sectorial occupational and educational classifications and enable exchange of information between them. It is expected that ESCO will be structured around three pillars:

1. Occupations;
2. Skills/Competences;
3. Qualifications

Work on ESCO is still in the early developmental stages. Constructing an operationally useful European standard terminology of skills/competences, qualifications and occupations is a long-term project and can only be done gradually, step by step. It is essential to work in close partnership with the relevant stakeholders to ensure it is based on real needs. Actors from the worlds of education/training and work must be able not only to link their existing classifications to ESCO but also to create around the ESCO standard enriched tools/applications that reflect the latest market developments and provide more and better options for matching, up-skilling and exchange of information and co-operation (EU, 2017).

While ESCO will be resourced by the Commission in the form of a secretariat, responsible for the technical management and dissemination systems and other support, it requires the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders to shape it into a tool which meets practical needs and is kept up-to-date. All stakeholders willing to participate and contribute will be able to influence the way ESCO evolves (EU, 2017).

The idea of ESCO was tested and confirmed at a Stakeholders conference held in March 2010 and additional consultation has taken place with a range of European

committees, advisory groups and networks. Practical examples of uses that could be supported by ESCO include:

1. Employers can use ESCO to define the set of skills, competences and qualifications their vacancies require when they are developing a job description.
2. Learners, whether already employed or not, can use it to record their learning outcomes, whether acquired through formal, non-formal or informal learning and build personal knowledge, skills and competences profiles.
3. Workers and learners can use the ESCO Occupational profiles to help identify “skills gaps” against target occupations.

Education and training institutions can use ESCO in curriculum development and assessment.

1. Other organizations developing and/or awarding qualifications can use ESCO to express the learning outcomes of their qualifications, to reflect emerging skill needs and to facilitate the understanding of their qualifications across borders.
2. Human resources managers and people offering career guidance can use ESCO to enhance planning and make aptitude or ability tests and skills and interest inventories more accurate.
3. Employment services can use ESCO to exchange relevant labor market information (CVs and vacancies) in a meaningful way.
4. Trade unions and Professional Associations can use ESCO to help improve job design, the content of qualifications and opportunities for mobility.
5. Software developers can use the ESCO Occupational profiles to develop new Career Information and Guidance tools, such as career pathways.

ESCO will help employers, jobseekers and labor market stakeholders such as public and private employment services to access a larger number of CVs or job vacancies.

Stakeholders potentially concerned by ESCO include public, private and third sector employment services, the Social Partners, national education, training and qualification authorities and institutions, as well as sector skill councils, human resource management, recruitment and career guidance professionals, research organizations, promoters of other taxonomy and classification system, developers of ICT HR applications (including other web-based job search tools) and international

organizations such as the International Labour Organization and the OECD (EU, 2017).

(c) German Practice

In Germany a two-step accreditation system has been put into practice, consisting of certification and accreditation procedures. In the regulatory framework the external assessment of VET providers and their training courses is called ‘certification’ and ‘licensing’ and the bodies which do the licensing are called ‘certification agencies or ‘centres of expertise’ . To carry out their activities, these agencies or centers have to be ‘accredited’ first by the Federal Agency for Labour, the former public employment service), which acts (2) For an overview, (BIBB – Bundes Institut für Berufs Bildung, 2006).

Germany, reform of the employment system through the Hartz laws has also affected the context for vocational training in general and in particular for publicly-funded continuing training. Reorganisation of VET has been undertaken to create more competition and greater transparency among VET providers and to improve the quality of continuing training. Both amendment of the Vocational Training Act and European level to increase transparency of certificates, skills and quality in VET have contributed to making quality and quality assurance hot topics of discussion. Since July 2004 VET providers are obliged to have an internal quality management system and must be assessed against a number of quality criteria by a recognised body. Detailed criteria have been established by a regulation of the Federal Ministry of Economy and Labour for both external assessments of VET providers and to regulate bodies permitted to carry out this assessment (EU, 2017).

VET providers have to apply for their certification and for the licensing of their courses to a private agency, which must be accredited by the national body. Certification agencies can apply for nationwide accreditation but also for accreditation that is limited to a specified economic or educational sector or regional territory. Accreditation of certification agencies is temporary, only for a period of three years at the most. Additionally, every year the system for quality assurance and quality development has to be verified by the national accreditation body (EU, 2017).

2.6 Review on previous Studies

Many researchers have analyzed the NSSA certification system from various points of views.

In a thesis conducted by Thiri Nandar Aung's (2018), the objectives are to assess the process of NSSA test and to analyse the effectiveness of NSSA certificate in Myanmar. This thesis made a questionnaires survey 350 to actual workplace certificates holder. This thesis found that, the passion of finding new job on the 55.71 percentages of the certificates holder. There are 89 percentages of the candidate holder who expert to increase job markets in ASEAN. All the stakeholders are necessary to cooperate to improve the NSSA certificate. The survey found that, 51.42 percentages of the skills labours are denied to increase their salary. The rest of 34 percentages of certificates holders are merely paid between 3000 Ks and 5000Ks. The survey found that there are lacks of commitments of the stakeholder to cooperate with the National Skills Standard Authority.

Khin Su Su Htun (2018), described the current outcomes of the employment opportunities and income generation of the trainees after graduated from No-1, Industrial Training Centre (Sinde) and is to highlight the current situation of the industrial training centres under the Directorate of Industrial Collaboration, the Ministry of Industry. This thesis found that there is low ratio of female participants in training programmes in every academic year. It was traditionally accepted that the nature and type of jobs were suitable of male only. After graduation trainees in both public and private sector industries found it easy to access jobs. It was due to the fact that there was an industrial coordination team led the principal of the ITC Sinde which matches up the skills of trainees with the available jobs. It was also found that the salary of respondents were quite sufficient for cost of living but not more than 300,000 Kyats per month. Respondents from the workplace side also showed the willingness to accept ITC graduates in their employs. Views of respondents upon the selection of trades, teaching methods and practice exercise in the courses conducted at ITC was found that much satisfaction on training centre. It was found that the respondents had satisfaction on the workplace.

Moreover, review on previous studies of TVET Kyaw Myat Khaing (2010) state that the Importance of Vocational Education and Training. This paper studied the progress of Technical and Vocational Education with their current situation of

Technological Universities, Government Technological Colleges, Government Technical Institutes and Government Technical High School under the Ministry of Science and Technology. It found that the graduates can be assigned to domestic public and private industrial sectors and some are working abroad for the well-paid jobs.

CHAPTER III

ACCRETION OF ASSESSMENT CENTER UNDER NSSA IN MYANMAR

3.1 Labour Administration, Employment and Overview of Labour Market in Myanmar

After 1998, following the introduction of the market oriented economic system; there has been an upsurge in private sector investments by both local and foreign entrepreneurs resulting in establishment of many private businesses and industries. This has increased employment considerably in the production as well as the service sector. In addition the extensive development projects undertaken by both public and private sectors have contributed to the increase in wage employment (HRDI, 2017).

The Labour Administration System in Myanmar has been part of the public Administration System and involves various organizations concerned. The Ministry of Labour is the focal Ministry in matters of Labour Administration at the national level. It is also the leading organization that plays a vital role in pertaining the labour affairs and to lay down the labour policy appropriate to the socio-economic need in Myanmar (HRDI, 2017).

To fulfill the measures of labour policy, the Ministry of Labour has the key responsibilities such as: - ensuring that workers enjoy rights and protection granted under the various labour laws, providing social services for the workers, promoting higher productivity of labour, and active participation in international labour matters.

Under Ministry of Labour, the Department of Labour operates to serve the area of labour relations, workmen's compensation, minimum wage fixation, workers' welfare, employment service, skill training, international Labour matters, dissemination of information related to Labour matters and HR information service including compilation of labour statistics and surveys (HRDI, 2017).

So Information on labour force in Myanmar is usually obtained from two sources: Labor Force Surveys and Population Censuses. The volume of labor force and the rate of unemployment by sex were projected on the basis of information collected in the 1990 Labor Force Survey. With changing economic conditions a labor mobility patterns, reliability of the projected labor force and unemployment rates are in question(HRDI,2017).

Table 3.1: Labor Force, Labor Force Participation Rate and Unemployment Rate

Indicator		2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016
Labour Force Participation Rate (%)	T	66.06	66.04	66.28	66.94	67.00	64.70
	M	82.36	82.38	82.67	83.50	85.20	80.20
	F	50.04	50.02	50.23	50.73	50.50	51.60
Unemployment Rate (%)	T	4.00	4.01	4.01	4.01	4.00	0.80
	M	3.66	3.66	3.66	3.66	3.90	0.70
	F	4.55	4.59	4.58	4.58	4.10	0.90

Source; HRDI report 2017, Department of Labour

Although the total labor force can be projected, characteristics of labor force such as labor force by education level, employed population by occupation and industry and employment status could not be projected. However the structural characteristics of labor force, the employed population by occupation and industry groups as observed in the 1990 Labor Force Survey are presented in the following tables.

Table 3.2 Employed Populations by Occupation Group

Sr.	Occupation	Percent (%)
1.	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	34.0
2.	Elementary occupations	25.1
3.	Service and sales workers	16.9
4.	Craft and related trades workers	11.2
5.	Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	5.3
6.	Professionals	3.3
7.	Technicians and associate professionals	1.5
8.	Clerical support workers	1.9
9.	Managers	0.7
10.	Armed forces occupations	0.1
	Total	100.0

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2017, Department of Labour

The most employed populations are skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers because of Myanmar country is base on agriculture, forest and fishery. The second most occupations are elementary occupations such as sanitary and general workers.

3.2 Employment and Skill Development Law

In August 2013, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw enacted the Employment and Skills Development (ESD) Law. Such provided the NSSA with a legal framework. Furthermore, Ministry for Labour, Immigration and Population increased its efforts to enhance NSSA's capacity to engage with the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015. The Federal Republic of Germany and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar proceed with the Exchange of Notes which includes Ministry for Labour, Immigration and Population and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) agreed upon the provision of technical assistance for strengthening the NSSA organizational structure and it's quality assurance system in the context of National Qualifications Framework as well as for drawing up rules related to the skills development of the ESD Law (ESD law, 2013).

The objective of the law is to enhance workforce development. The responsible ministry for this law is the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population. This law is composed of ten chapters as follow:

According to ESD Laws, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are discussed in detail since these chapters cover the skill development. Organization Structure as per ESD law is mentioned get a better understanding of the law. According to ESD Law, Chapter 4 mentions the formation of Central Committee and two Sub-Committees, in addition to defining their responsibilities. According to the law, all committees are formed on tripartite basis. To be specific, there will be ESD Central Body that is chaired by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population while the Deputy Minister will serve as the Secretary (ESD Law, 2013).

The major responsibility of ESD Central Body is to set policies for:

1. Creating job opportunity
2. Reducing unemployment rate
3. Promoting the disciplines and efficiency for the workforce
4. Improving workforce skill development
5. Establishing Employment Development Committee and Skill Development Committee and issuing guidelines for them

Under the central body, two sub-committees— namely Employment Promotion Body and National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA) are to be established. ESD Law, National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA) is to consist of 7 members, chaired by the Deputy Minister of a certain Union Ministry. The role of secretary will be taken by the Deputy Director General of Department of Labor. The experts in relation to the workforce skill development can be appointed if necessary (ESD Law, 2013). The stipulated responsibilities of the NSSA are as follow:

1. Categorize, establish and prescribe the Occupational Competency Standard for each occupation
2. Set the policies for skills training and identifying the level of priority for the workforce skill development
3. Identify the procedures for Skill Assessment Plan
4. Issue registration cards for Accredited Training Schools and Skills Assessment Centers
5. Identify the plan to issue the Skills Recognized Certificates
6. Develop the Skills Development Fund for employees and manage the fund
7. Supervise the committees and sub-committees founded under NSSA

According to ESD Law, NSSA is required to form three sub-committees such as -

8. Skill Standards Development and Training Committee (SSDTC)

9. Skills Assessment and Certification Committee (SACC)

10. Skill Development Fund Management Committee (SDFMC)

Chapter-5 stated that employers are required to deliver in-house training, on-the-job training, outside training, and e-learning to the employees. The training programs can be organized by an individual enterprise or a group of enterprises (ESD Law, 2013).

Chapter-6 consists of 8 sections which are related to the registration and establishment of Training Schools and Skills Assessment Centers. Those who are interested to operate a Training School or Assessment Centre must apply for registration certificate to NSSA through related committees. It is also applicable for foreign-owned centers. NSSA will approve or reject the application based on the report submitted by SSDTC and SACC. If approved, the applicant will be granted the registration certificate upon payment the regulated registration fees. If rejected, the applicant can reapply within 30 days (ESD Law, 2013).

According to ESD Law, Chapter-7 is about Skills Competition for different kinds of occupation to be organized by SACC. In addition, SACC must conduct research based on the competition results. The employees who achieve skills-recognized certificates are allowed to take part in all skills competitions home and abroad (ESD Law 2013).

Skills Development Fund and Fund allocation are discussed in Chapter 8. In establishing the Skills Development Fund Management Committee, it shall comprise of representatives from the Government, Employees and Employers. Duties of the Fund Management Committee are:

1. Supervise the subscription fees collection process
2. Manage the fund with the consent of NSSA
3. Deposit the capital fund at a bank or save by purchasing the government treasury bonds
4. Receive the donated money with the approval of the NSSA
5. To be audited for fund receiving and using

Chapter 9 discusses penalties and fines. Anyone who counterfeits or imitates skills-recognized certificate can be sentenced to imprisonment (not more than 7 years) and to pay fine (ESD Law, 2013).

3.3 National Occupational Competency Standard Development Process

The standards must be developed based on the outcomes of a consultation process that comprised of industry representatives, occupational experts and any other key stakeholders. They are identified by the NSSA and Sectorial Committees beforehand (NSSA, 2014).

A range of methodologies may be involved to develop Competency Standards but referencing method is mainly used. Below are some examples:

1. Interviews
2. Surveys
3. Group processes
4. Functional analysis/task analysis
5. Referencing

Regarding OCS development, NSSA project team in consultation with national experts with the support of GIZ and Swiss contact has developed one guideline manual for drawing up OCS (NSSA, 2014).

3.4 Assessment and Certification: Developing Assessment System

(a) Criteria for Assessment Center Manager

Potential assessment centres and enterprises applying for accreditation need to meet the following requirements:

1. Organisational structure and facilities allow to follow the testing, assessment and certification procedures with the desired level of quality
2. Facilities allow to conduct of written tests for a group of at least 16 candidates under supervision of an examiner
3. Facilities (work stations) and necessary tools, materials and equipment which will allow conducting of practical tests for a group of at least 8 candidates; training centres which do not have the required facilities, tools, materials and equipment may enter into a written agreement with a company/workshop/industry which can provide the necessary infrastructure for practical assessment
4. Resources to provide consumables and tools and maintain / replace the equipment (depreciation should be taken into consideration) needed for practical tests

5. Work areas where occupational health and safety are ensured (required especially for practical tests)
6. A documentation system where the information and documents concerning testing and certification can be maintained (an archiving/reservation infrastructure and space are necessary if test papers and other related written materials are to be preserved within the accredited institutions for the stipulated period of time (5 years); alternatively: test papers are archived by and at NSSA only)
7. Effective access to the databases for standards and test items
8. Resources to make changes/improvements in order to meet the testing and certification system requirements
9. A good reputation (being a trusted and professionally recognized institution/enterprise)
10. Communication means to inform candidates and other related parties about test dates, test results and other activities (testing and certification dissemination system); if to be done by Assessment Centre; alternatively: to be done by NSSA only
11. Adequate transportation means during testing periods if they are located outside a central area and if no mass transport facilities are available (Gerhard Kohn, 2014).

Assessment centres need to meet the following requirements in terms of management structure and personnel in order to be eligible for accreditation:

1. Ability to put together testing panels according to the prescribed composition (tri-partite structure of the panels: state, employers and employees) – if that should be done by the Assessment Centre; during “probation period” that may be done by NSSA only.
2. Ability to accommodate audits both internally and externally when necessary.
3. Arrangements to assure confidentiality at all times (there should be “safe rooms” to keep test papers before and after the actual testing in order to preserve confidentiality and to prevent any cheating or fraud) – alternatively: panels, composed by NSSA will bring the test papers at testing day.
4. Provision of a special “Testing and Certification Unit” which will work in close cooperation with the NSSA.

5. Sufficient number of specialists who have experience in subjects related with testing and certification (within the "Testing and Certification Unit").
6. Organisational structure and facilities allowing the centres to follow the testing, assessment and certification procedures with the desired level of quality.
7. Dedication to provide equal opportunities to all people applying for assessment (record of no-discrimination practice).
8. Commitment and resources to cooperate with other accredited institutions and/or other related institutions.
9. Avoidance of conflict of interest in professional, financial and work-related terms with the NSSA.
10. Centre staff with qualifications and professional experience in vocational training.
11. Maintenance of good and close relations between industry and institution.

(Gerhard Kohn, 2014)

Table 3.3 Description of yearly increment Accredited Assessment Center

No	Occupation	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
1	Air con	1		1	1	1	1	5
2	Electrician	1	1	1	7	3	2	15
3	Sale Person		1			1		2
4	Cashier		2					2
5	Cabinet Maker	1		1				2
6	Waiting Staff	1	2	1	7	5	2	18
7	Room Attendant		1	2	8	5	1	17
8	MMAW	1	2	3	3	3		12
9	Carpenter	1		1	1	1	2	6
10	Brick Layer		1	1	1	3	5	11
11	Tiler			1		1		2
12	GMAW			2	2	2	1	7
13	FCAW					1		1
14	Automotive Mechanic			1	2	1		4
15	Small Engine			1				1
16	Garment		1	1	6	5	18	31
17	Foundry Worker			1		1		2
18	Hydraulic Excavator				2	1		3
19	Motorized Farm Mechanic			1				1
20	Pneumatic Technician			1	1	2		4
21	Machinist			1	1			2

22	Forklift				1			1
23	Rubber Latex Harvesting					1		1
24	Power Loom Weaver						1	1
25	Hand Loom Weaver						1	1
26	Traditional Loom Weaver						1	1
27	Bamboo Coiling Craftsman						1	1
28	Black Body Craftsman						1	1
29	Wood Craftsman						1	1
30	Incised Lacquer ware Craftsman						1	1
31	Gold- Leaf Craftsman						1	1
32	Embossing Craftsman						1	1
33	Public Area Attendant						1	1
34	Bell Person						1	1
35	Poultry Farm Worker						1	1
36	Bar bender						1	1
Total		6	11	21	43	37	45	163

Source: Assessment and Certification Committee ACC of NSSA

Skill assessment and development are essential in order to equip the workers with necessary technical expertise. With strong technical knowledge and experiences, the skilled workforce could contribute Myanmar's development efficiently. After the country's opening up since 2011, there is a surge in need of skilled workforce in every industry, who not only has experiences but also obtains relevant technical certificate. To fulfill the gap between demand for skilled labour and supply of existing workforce, various ministries and organizations carry out vocational evaluation, testing as well as certification process to inspect the capacity of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. However, they have been doing with their own standards and different approaches to meet the real need by the industry.

Currently, there is no official or recognized platform for skill certification for the occupation of semi-professional levels in Myanmar. From 2004 to 2008, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security participated in the ASEAN project "Enhancing Skills Recognition Systems in ASEAN" which aimed to develop National and Regional Qualification Framework (NQF and AQF) for recognition of skills in the semi-professional level occupations. With the upcoming ASEAN Economic Community, AQF will act as a regional reference point which will make it easier to understand, compare and recognize qualifications across the different systems of ASEAN countries during the free skilled labour flows. The ASEAN

project recommended the establishment of NSSA in line with NQF and AQF and to develop occupational competency standards for certification at (4) levels.

Level 1 Semi- skilled worker/ Assistant

Level 2 Skilled worker/Journeyman

Level 3 Advanced skilled workers

Level 4 Technicians/Supervisors

The ASEAN Qualification Framework not only enables comparisons of qualifications across all ASEAN countries but also promotes the importance of education and training sectors and the wider objective of lifelong learning. According to the competency standard, the semi- skilled worker could work hard from assistant to supervisor level through various technical know-how, working experiences, trainings and assessment.

However, the rules and regulations pertaining to the assessment of skills at different levels were still being drafted. To acknowledge the urgency of assessing and certifying skilled workers needed in current workforce, the National Skills Standard Authority (NSSA) team conducted a "Fast Track Skills Assessment Pilot Project" in November 2014 with supports from GIZ, Swisscontact and international experts from Singapore Polytechnic International (SPI) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

(b) National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA)

The National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA) was formed in 2007 to regulate, lead, establish competency standards and conduct assessments for workforce development in Myanmar. It is headed by the Deputy Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MOLES) and comprised of representatives of the various Ministries concerned with skills development as well as Non-Governmental Organizations. Its aim is to lay down competency standards and promote the systematic training and certification of skilled workers. After it was established, the NSSA formed 15 Sectorial Committees, comprised of representatives of the concerned Ministries as well as the private sector, with the objective to draw up competency standards for a variety of priority occupations in 15 economic sectors. The Sectorial Committees drew up Occupational Skills Standards at four levels for 175 occupations with the help of local and

international consultants and organizations (NSSA, 2007).

3.5 Occupations under Assessment

However, the rules and regulations pertaining to the assessment of skills at different levels were still being drafted. To acknowledge the urgency of assessing and certifying skilled workers needed in current workforce, the National Skills Standard Authority (NSSA) team conducted a "Fast Track Skills Assessment Pilot Project" in November 2014 with supports from GIZ, Swiss contact and international experts from Singapore Polytechnic International (SPI) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The pilot team is comprised of members of the NSSA, Sectorial Committees, employers and employer associations, national occupational experts, the NSSA Technical Working Group and its Advisory Committee members, national consultants and experts from GIZ and Swisscontact. The team is further supported by the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) and the Myanmar Engineering Society and Asian Development Bank (ADB) (NSSA, 2015).

To pilot a system of assessment and certification of skilled workers, who are already in the workforce and have acquired their occupational skills through experience and learning on- the-job, the National Skills Standard Authority (NSSA) has conducted the first round of "Fast Track Skills Assessment Pilot Project" in late 2014 and presented the certificates to those who are competent in early 2015. NSSA has planned to conduct 2 more rounds of the Fast Track Skills Assessments Pilot Project, with implementation lead by the TVET team experts.¹

The intention to conduct 3 rounds is to learn from each round through evaluation and gradually improve the capacity of the NSSA. As a government-lead organization, it is important to progress the skill assessments in both a technical and organizational perspective (NSSA, 2015).

The first round of assessments to the semi-skilled workers was conducted during late 2014 and assessed 157 individuals from 51 organizations. A total of 133 have been issued Level-1 National Competency Standard Certificates (NSSA, 2015).

Table 3.4 Results of first round of NSSA Fast Track Skill Test

Occupation	Assessed Candidates	Competent Candidates	Participation of Organizations & Companies
Waiting staff	18	18	10
Welder	24	19	12
Carpenter	16	16	7
	31	31	
Cabinet maker	20	16	4
Air-con installer	24	9	5
Electrician	24	24	13
Total	157	133	51

Source: Assessment and Certification Committee ACC of NSSA

For the first Round and second Round Part A, B (2014-2015) the NSSA decided to implement the assessments only for the first level (semi-skilled worker), the following eleven occupations were selected: Air-Con Installer, Arc Welder occupations selected from Metal and Engineering related Occupational Competency Standard Committee. Construction related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Carpenter and Brick layer occupation. Electrician related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Electrician occupation. Woodworking related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Cabinet Maker occupation. Hotel and Tourism related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Waiting staff and Room attendant occupations. Commercial related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Sales person and Cashier occupations. Manufacturing related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Garment Sewing Machine Operator occupation (NSSA, 2015).

For the Third Round (2016), the NSSA decided to implement the assessments for the Level 1(semi-skilled worker) and Level 2 (skilled worker). The following 19 occupations were selected: Automotive Mechanic, Foundry, Small Engine Mechanic, Machinist and GMAW welder occupations (Level 1) and Air Con Installer, Arc welder, GMAW Welding and Pneumatic occupations (Level 2) selected from Metal and Engineering related Occupational Competency Standard Committee (NSSA,

2016).

Construction related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Carpenter, Brick layer, Forklift, Tiller, Hydraulic Excavator occupations for Electrician related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Electrician Level (1) occupation. Woodworking related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Cabinet Maker Level (1) occupation. Agriculture related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Motorized Farm Equipment Mechanics Level (1) and Rubber Latex Level (1) occupations. Manufacturing related Occupational Competency Standard Committee selected Garment Sewing Machine Operator Level (2) occupation (NSSA, 2015).

Table 3.5 List of Assessment Center accredited by NSSA (2012 -2018)

No	Assessment Center	Level 1	Level 2
1	Electrician Building Assessment Center	8	2
2	Air-Con Installer Assessment Center	2	1
3	Cashier Assessment Center	2	-
4	Carpenter Assessment Center	4	1
5	Brick Layer Assessment Center	3	1
6	Manual Metal Arc Welder Assessment Center	7	2
7	Gas Metal Arc Welder Assessment Center	4	-
8	Cabinet Maker Assessment Center	1	-
9	Sale Person Assessment Center	2	-
10	Waiting Staff Assessment Center	15	-
11	Room Attendant Assessment Center	15	-
12	Garment Sewing Machine Assessment Center	15	1
13	Small Engine Assessment Center	1	-
14	Tiler Assessment Center	2	-
15	Machinist Assessment Center	2	-
16	Foundry Worker Assessment Center	1	2
17	Automotive Mechanic Assessment Center	4	-
18	Motorized Farm Mechanic Assessment Center	1	-
19	Pneumatic Technician Assessment Center	-	2
20	Hydraulic Excavator Operator Assessment Center	3	-
21	Forklift Operator Assessment Center	1	-
22	Rubber Latex Harvesting	1	-
23	Flux Cored Arc Welding Assessment Center	1	
Total		95	12
		107	

Source: Assessment and Certification Committee ACC of NSSA, 2018

Table 3.5 mention that lists of assessment center including level 1 and level 2 in Myanmar.

Quality Policy

National skills & standards authority is committed to develop national occupation competency standards, assessment center & skill competition. To achieve this and The Management of NSSA identifies requirements and expectation of all applicable law, interested stakeholders and Clients. Commit to provide comprehensive range of our national level quality workforce in order to comparable to the best. For maintain, support and develop the quality workforce in order to comparable to the best in region and beyond to that level through systematic process approach, systematic management approach. Establishment of organization's Vision, Mission, Goals, departmental KPI and objectives and will strive to achieve it by using all available resources, including effectively communicating and involving with people at all levels who are the essence of an organization. The strictly complying with all applicable National Laws and regulations, to be recognized as highly competent skills standards in order to achieve at the forefront of national level skills standards in Myanmar and region. Continuously attempt to improve our Quality Management skills, Health, Safety, Environmental friendly and Human Resources functions. The principles and objectives of the statement or quality policy will be communicated and available to all employees at all times. It is a part of every employee's duty to adhere quality policies. All employees are able to perform their duties effectively through an ongoing training and development program (NSSA, 2019).

Moreover, NSSA has recently established and implemented a Quality Management System (QMS), and ISO 9001:2015 certifications was awarded in February 2019. Along with this QMS, NSSA is currently facing challenges to increase NOCS-based short-term re-skilling training as well as RPL-based assessment for workers in selected priority occupations, and a continuous quality improvement of its services through collaboration with industries and employers (NSSA, 2019).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Findings

NSSA skills assessments are important to improve the workforce in Myanmar. In order to improve employment opportunities for Myanmar workers as well as to increase participation of Myanmar workforce in ASEAN Economic Community, Myanmar is required to have its own National Qualification Framework (NQF) in order to link Regional Qualification Framework of ASEAN. Myanmar has already formed National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA) and has actively carried out the required tasks needed to recognize skills of Labor, including setting up the competency standard and issuing the recognition certificate. All the 107 managers respondents are positively engaged in the survey with regard to skills assessment processes.

The survey finds that, at the present the twenty three occupations active including the skills level 1 & level 2. Most of the occupations are under Metal & Engineering sartorial committee. The certificated holder is getting more decent job opportunities in labor markets of ASEAN. That is why, the author recommend that, all the stakeholders are necessary to cooperate the skills assessment. Moreover, The survey finds that there are lacks of commitments of the stakeholder to cooperate with the NSSA skills assessment. Assessment Centers are all over the country except Kachin State , Kayar State, Chin State and Rakhin State. List of Assessment Centers improvement is yearly. Accredited Assessment Center Location mention that the survey profile covered the assessment centers where 60 centers are located in Yangon, followed by 14 centers in Mandalay. The others assessment centers are located in Bago, Ayeyarwaddy, Mon, Magwe, Nay Pyi Taw, Sagging, Kayin and Shan State. Therefore, most of Assessment Center are based on the Yangon and Mandalay.

The survey found that there are 33 respondents 30.8 % are occupied in Metal and Engineering category which is the highest percent among the respondents. The second largest occupational area is Hotel and Tourism which covers 25 respondents

and represents 23.4% of the respondents. In addition, respondents occupied in Electrical and Engineering is the third highest number of 14 respondents which represents 13.1% of the respondents. However, respondents from Woodworking and Agricultural categories are the smallest percent which represents 1.9% among overall respondents. So that the most occupations under Metal and Engineering sector is in line with the market need. A substantial number of respondents in this study had electrical installation occupation demand is the highest, follow by garment (sweing machine operator) and waiting staff occupation, and then room attendant , air con installation, welder MMAW (manual metal arc welding), brick layer occupation.

This survey mention that level 1 and level 2 out of level 4. Level 1 is semi-skills worker 91(85.0%). Level-2 is skills worker 16(15.0%). So that most of the assessment center assess by level 1 semi-skills worker. Some occupation step up level 2 skills worker. Moreover AAC(Accredited assessment center) is Own by Government Center base, 2.8% Government Workplace base, 31.8% and 31.8% is Private Center base and 25.2% is Private Workplace base. This table shows that, the most of assessment centers are the Government Centers. Assessment center managers know Ethic. The rest of 29 respondents do not know assessment center manager ethic. So that, all assessment centers need to understand the assessment center manager ethic. Most of the respondent are workforce development 61(57.0%). The second most of the respondent answer company image 25(2.4%). This table mentions that workforce development is very important. In addition most of the respondent are between 76(71.0%). The second most of the respondent answer is between 10 to 30 is 29(27.1%) and occupational assessment less than 10 times is the most. So that assessment center manager need to more assessment. Assessment number of candidate less than 30 are the most assessed per batch because assessment per batch is depend on recruitment of candidates and assessment center facilities. Mostly Assessment center Extend in the future. Most of the respondent have difficulties/ challenges of assessment center.

Moreover, the most assessment center expectation is require regulation. The second expectations are financial, other incentive; require regulation and quality assurance mechanism. The thesis analysis 51 (47.7 %) number say ASEAN free flow of labour, after that benchmarking for salary in the region. Occupational assessment is strongly need because of skill worker had acquired their skills and knowledge

informally in their work places recognition of prior leanings. the present assessment center facilities is reasonable. Occupational assessment practice is in-line with the regional standard. fairness and satisfaction of assessment process is higher by candidate, assessor and assessment center manager. Mostly respondent answer weakness of employer participation, follow by no obstacle 41(38.3%). The interesting of employee is poor So that the Government Policy need to strongly. This thesis survey meet the job specification by NSSA assessment. In addition more advantage after getting the certificate and follow by more confidence. So that, certificate by occupational assessment process is very important. National Certificate is required for the employers. At the present employer need to skill worker accredited by assessment process because of productivity and company image. The survey found that that job opportunities is validity in ASEAN . Bench Marking System is on going process in regional as Thai and Myanmar , etc. Supporting of government budges and development partners on 1 to 2 years. The follow by 2 to 3 years. So that Government budges and development partners need to support for the occupational assessment process. This thesis found that assessor and inspector fee by ACC (assessment and certification committee). The follow by employer and employee contribution.

5.2 Recommendations

According to the findings in the literature review, current practices and surevey analysis, to extend the accredited assessment centers based on socio-economic growth of the states and regions. To more conduct skills assessment and certification programs for more demanded occupations required in the industry and to extend up to higher levels. To encourage the private sector participation and to facilitate the development of public - private partnerships. To deliver the required capacity building programs for quality assurance of NSSA assessment centers including ethics and quality management procedure. To create incentives and give the support programs for assessment center based on findings about difficulties of actual implementation. To develop the training programs for candidates in order to well access the NSSA assessment schemes. To develop the renewal system of NSSA certification required in some occupations as specified by the concerned industry. To create proper system for career development to get decent job opportunities and to engage with free flow of skill labours within ASEAN. To build up the effective management system in order to accelerate the current and future working process for

demanded occupational areas to be expanded. And then assessment center sustain by contribution both employer and employee in the future. So that Government policy as rule and regulation about the assessment process should be strongly. Government agency should establish to sustain the development of assessment center in Myanmar.

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APPENDIX 1

Survey Questionnaire

Section 1 General characteristics of respondent

Questionnaire Form

Survey for Accredited Assessment Center of National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA)

Assessment Center

Accredited No

Address

.....

.....

Occupation Areas

.....

Respondee's Name

Position

Ages

Division/State/City

Race

Phone

E-mail Address

I. Center Profile

Q1. Does the assessment center own by

- a. Government Center Based
- b. Government Workplace Based
- c. Private Center Based
- d. Private Workplace Based

Q2. Do you know about the assessment Center Manager Ethic?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q3. Does the institution conduct other skills assessment certification or training certification?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q4 Why did the institution conduct NSSA assessment?

- a. Company image
- b. Workforce development
- c. Manpower requirement
- d. Business
- e. Other

Q5 How many times conducted in these occupations?

- a. Less than 10
- b. Between 10 to 30
- c. Between 30 to 50
- d. Greater than 50

Q6 How many candidates are assessed per batch?

- a. Less than 30
- b. Between 30 to 100
- c. Between 100 to 200
- d. Greater than 200

Q7. Do you have any difficulties / challenges as the assessment center?

- a. Yes
- b. No

if Yes, what are the difficulties / challenges as the assessment center?
.....
.....

Q8. What do you expect from NSSA in order to conduct skills assessment and to become functional and effective? Ticked the number without limitation (You can tick more than one answer)

- a. Financial
- b. Other Incentive e.g.(recognition/Appreciation Certificate)
- c. Required regulation
- d. Quality Assurance Mechanism
- e. Above all

Training Programmes / Courses

Q9. Does your assessment centre provide training programmes or courses which are to meet industry, national or international standards / requirements?

- a. 100%
- b. 75%
- c. 50%
- d. 25%
- e. None

National Skills Certification System

Q10. How do you impress the national skills certification system?

- a. ASEAN free flow of Labour
- b. Bench Marking for Labour productivity
- c. Bench Marking for Training Effectiveness
- d. Bench Marking for salary
- e. Other.....

Skills/ Occupations Demand

Q11. Does the your NSSA assessment occupation really need in this region ?

- a. Strongly need
- b. Need
- c. Neutral
- d. No Need
- e. Totally no need

Q12. How do you consider to extend your institute for other new occupations assessment center in the future?

- a. Extend
- b. Stagnating
- c. Downsizing

II. Assessment Process of NSSA

Q13. Where did you get the information of application of assessment center?

- a. Media
- b. Association
- c. Collage
- d. Other

Q14. How about to Refresher, and Familiarization by the Assessment Centre before assessment of candidates?

- a. Should
- b. Should not

Q15. What are your reasons to take (National Skills Standards Authority NSSA Certificate)?

- a. To take from instruction of top level management
- b. To develop the workforce
- c. To wiliness and image of the organization
- d. Others

Q16. Do you need assessment center guideline Books and/or Assessment Center Manager training for Assessment Center implementation?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q17. Do you prefer the existing Facilities for Practical Test at the assessment centre?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Do you have any Comment?

.....
.....

Q18. Do you have enough Materials; Tools in the Assessment centre in-line with the standards?

- a. 100%
- b. 75%
- c. 50%
- d. 25%

Q19. Do you think the Assessors are doing tests fairly?

- a. 100%
- b. 75%
- c. 50%
- d. 25%

Q20. Do you satisfy feedback of the test after your practical test?

- a. 100%
- b. 75%
- c. 50%
- d. 25%

Q21. Did you have any obstacles in implementation of skill test?

- a. Weak of cooperation of Employer.
- b. Lack of Employee interesting
- c. Other (any comment)
- d. No obstacle

Q22. Do you have any difficulties to take with government procedure?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes,

.....

.....

.....

III. Advantages of NSSA Certificate

Q23. Does the NSSA assessment to meet the job specifications or requirement of the Industry?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q24. Can the candidates say their confidence level is difficult after they get certificate? How about your opinions?

- a. More confidence
- b. More and advantage
- c. No difference
- d. Lose

Q25. Is it necessary to renew the NSSA Certificate, what is the time period? If you think it is necessary

- a. 1 year period
- b. 2 years period
- c. 3 years period
- d. other

Q26. Are the NSSA Certificate are required for the employers?

- a. Yes
- b. No, why?

Q27. Do you think the certificate is valid to apply jobs in ASEAN?

- a. Yes, I think
- b. No, I don't thin
- c. Any comment

Q28. Regarding job opportunities, what is your impression for the NSSA assessment?

- a. More opportunities
- b. Less opportunities

- c. Can't say

Q29. Do you think how long the support will be by Government Budgets from now?

- a. 1 to 2 years
- b. 2 to 3 years
- c. 3 to 4 years
- d. 4 year and above
- e.

Q30. Do you think how long the support will be by development partners?

- a. 1 to 2 years
- b. 2 to 3 years
- c. 3 to 4 years
- d. 4 year and above

Q31. What types of incentive to give the volunteer assessor and inspector?

- a. Fees by ACC
- b. Order by Government(ACC)
- c. Opportunity
- d. Contribute by employee and employer

Q32. When assessment center don't get the support from government and development partners when do you think how to run the assessment center?

.....

.....

.....