

ACQF

NEWSLETTER

Advising Qualifications Recognitions Across Africa

Transparency of qualifications and mutual trust between qualifications frameworks for lifelong learning in Africa.



JUNE 2026
EDITION

INTEGRATION

RECOGNITION

MOBILITY

QUALITY

RELEVANCE

FEATURE ARTICLE

Exclusive Interview with Ms Nadia Starr

The African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) Network is entering an exciting new phase as it continues to strengthen collaboration among qualifications authorities and education stakeholders across the continent. Recently appointed Troika President, and Chief Executive Officer of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), Ms Nadia Starr says the ACQF is focused on building stronger partnerships, expanding participation and creating a sustainable foundation for the future.



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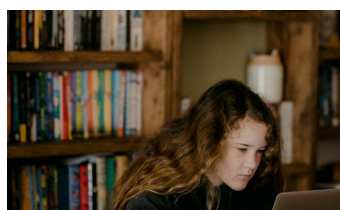
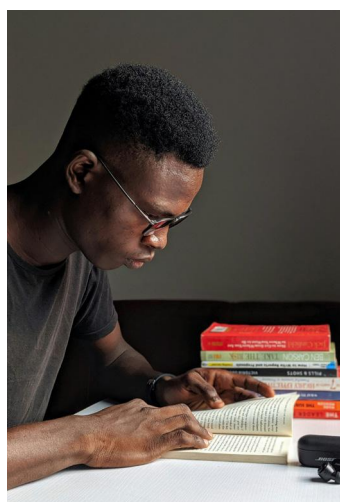
A continental initiative
led by the African Union



ACQF

African Continental
Qualifications Framework

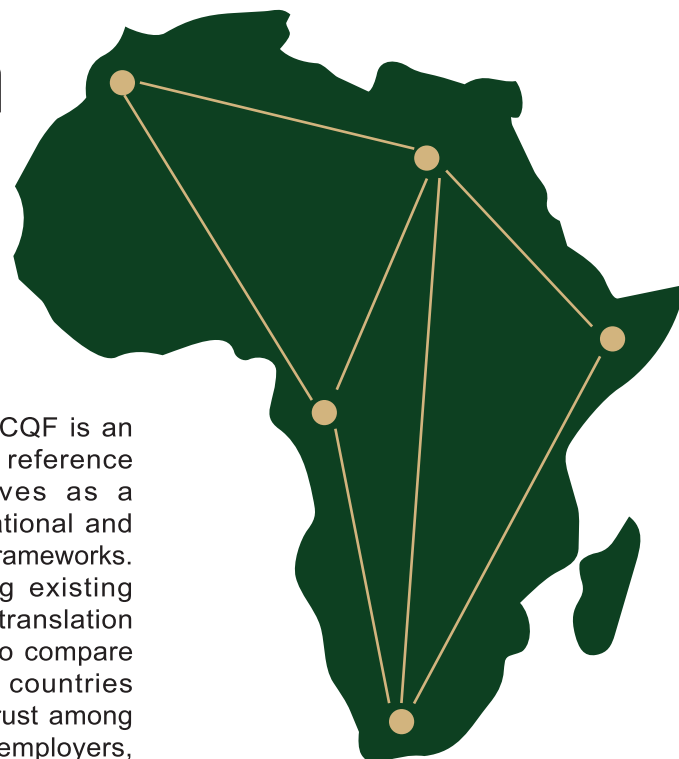
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EDITORIAL:

Connecting Africa through a qualifications network



As Africa continues to advance regional integration and strengthen its education and training systems, the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF Network) is laying the foundation for a more connected and trusted qualifications landscape.

A landscape where a qualification earned in one country is understood, trusted, and recognised across the African continent. It is envisioned that learners can pursue educational opportunities beyond their borders, and where skilled professionals can move freely to where their expertise is needed.

The ACQF is a continental initiative that promotes transparency, comparability, and the recognition of qualifications and credentials, supporting the mobility of learners and workers across Africa and beyond.

In 2023, a significant milestone was reached when the African Union Commission, together with African Union Member States and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), validated the ACQF Policy Document and committed to implementing the framework during the 2023–2026 period. This collective commitment reflects a shared ambition to create qualifications systems that respond to the continent's development priorities while supporting lifelong learning, skills development, and economic growth.

At the core of the ACQF is an overarching ten-level reference framework that serves as a connector between national and regional qualifications frameworks. Rather than replacing existing systems, it acts as a translation tool, making it easier to compare qualifications across countries and fostering greater trust among education institutions, employers, governments, and learners.

However, the ACQF's impact extends well beyond its ten levels. It provides a practical roadmap for strengthening qualifications systems throughout Africa by focusing on several strategic areas of work, which includes –

- supporting the referencing of national qualifications frameworks;
- advancing the recognition of prior learning;
- developing a continental digital qualifications database;
- creating common qualifications profiles;
- building the capacity of national qualifications frameworks;
- strengthening communication and advocacy; and
- promoting ongoing analysis, monitoring, and evaluation.

Together, these initiatives are helping to build qualifications systems that are more inclusive, responsive, and equipped to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving world of work.

The ACQF Network is bringing together policymakers, qualifications experts, education and training institutions, and development partners from across the continent, and provides an opportunity to exchange ideas, share good practices, and strengthen partnerships that support implementation of the framework.

The ACQF represents more than a technical framework. It is a catalyst for cooperation, innovation, and opportunity. By creating a common understanding of qualifications across borders, it is helping to unlock educational pathways, improve workforce mobility, and support inclusive social and economic development.

As the implementation of the ACQF continues, so too does the journey towards an integrated, prosperous, and knowledge-driven Africa.

STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION FOR AFRICA'S QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) Network is entering an exciting new phase as it continues to strengthen collaboration among qualifications authorities and education stakeholders across the continent. Recently appointed Troika President, and Chief Executive Officer of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), Ms Nadia Starr says the ACQF is focused on building stronger partnerships, expanding participation and creating a sustainable foundation for the future.

In an interview with the *ACQF Newsletter*, Ms Starr reflected on the opportunity to lead the Network and discussed the immense potential and importance of working together across Africa.

"There is tremendous innovation, energy and commitment across our continent," she said. "While we often look beyond Africa for collaboration and exchange, there is value in learning from one another and working together to advance our shared goals."

The ACQF network plays a vital role in supporting the implementation of the ACQF by creating opportunities for dialogue, knowledge sharing and cooperation among African Union Member States. Through these partnerships, countries are strengthening qualifications systems, promoting transparency and enhancing the recognition and comparability of qualifications across Africa.

A key priority during the current leadership term is to establish the ACQF as a sustainable legal entity. Formalising the Network will strengthen its governance, ensure its long-term sustainability and enable it to continue supporting member countries well into the future.

Equally important is strengthening connections across all regions of the continent. "Our ambition is to build a truly connected community," Ms Starr explained. "The relationships formed through this Network, between countries, institutions and individuals, will be the foundation that enables the ACQF to achieve its long-term objectives."

While participation from the Southern Africa region has remained strong, Ms Starr is committed to broadening engagement across all African regions, particularly in West and North Africa. Planned regional advocacy initiatives will encourage wider participation and ensure that every region contributes to shaping the future of the Network.

Ms Starr also highlighted the importance of mutual learning among member states. She added that South Africa's qualifications system is often viewed as a benchmark internationally as one of the oldest qualifications frameworks, however, valuable lessons continue to emerge from newer and more agile qualifications frameworks across Africa. Innovations in areas such as micro-credentials and emerging approaches to qualifications development demonstrate that every country has knowledge and experience to contribute.

"The strength of this Network lies in our willingness to learn from one another, share experiences and develop solutions together," Ms Starr said.

Beyond strengthening qualifications systems, the ACQF ultimately seeks to create opportunities for Africa's citizens. By supporting alignment between national qualifications frameworks and the continental framework, the ACQF helps create an enabling environment that facilitates learner and worker mobility. This will promote trust in qualifications and support lifelong learning across Africa's borders.

Ms Starr emphasised that this work is about more than technical frameworks it is about empowering people.

"When individuals understand the pathways available to them, they are better equipped to pursue education, employment and lifelong learning opportunities. Qualifications frameworks create the conditions that make this possible by improving transparency and building confidence in qualifications across countries," she said. As the ACQF Network continues to grow, its success will depend not only on robust policies and technical implementation, but also on the strength of the relationships that underpin the Network.

"My hope is to leave behind a connected and inclusive Network that represents every region of Africa," Ms Starr concluded. "By strengthening our partnerships and supporting one another, we can ensure that the ACQF continues to advance mobility, recognition and lifelong learning for the benefit of all Africans."

As the ACQF moves forward, its collective commitment to collaboration, inclusion and shared learning will remain central to building an integrated qualifications landscape that supports Africa's social and economic development.



Kenya's First National Qualifications Conference Sets a New Benchmark for Qualifications Reform in Africa

Nairobi. Kenya hosted one of Africa's most significant conversations on the future of qualifications, skills, mobility, recognition, and lifelong learning. The inaugural National Qualifications Conference, organised by the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA) from 12–14 May 2026, brought together up to 445 delegates from more than 20 countries, including representatives from governments, qualifications authorities, regulators, industry, academia, development partners and international organisations. The conference reflected on a decade of implementing the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) while charting the next phase of qualifications reform for Kenya and the continent.

Held under the theme, “A Decade of Transformation and Reimagining Qualifications in Kenya: Advancing Quality, Relevance, Inclusion and Recognition in Kenya's Qualifications and Skills for Lifelong Learning and Employability,” the conference demonstrated how National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) are evolving beyond regulatory tools into strategic instruments for economic transformation, labour mobility, innovation and regional integration. As Kenya marks over ten years of implementing the KNQF, the conference showcased notable achievements, including the anchoring of 72 Qualification Awarding Bodies, registration of more than 2,600 national qualifications, and the digitisation of over 650,000 graduate records through the National Qualifications Database (NQD). These milestones are a testament of Kenya's commitment to building a trusted and internationally comparable qualifications system. At the same

time, delegates emphasised that the next phase of reform must focus on ensuring qualifications translate into employability, productivity, recognition, and lifelong learning opportunities.

A defining feature of the conference was its strong continental outlook. Experts from the European Training Foundation, International Labour Organization, South African Qualifications Authority, Zambia Qualifications Authority, Zimbabwe, Senegal and other regional institutions joined Kenyan policymakers to explore how African countries can strengthen mutual recognition, learner mobility, qualifications comparability among other crucial opportunities for African learners.

Throughout the discussions, the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) emerged as a vital reference mechanism for promoting trust among national systems while respecting each country's unique context. Participants agreed that strong National Qualifications Frameworks, supported by credible quality assurance systems, transparent qualifications registers and common learning outcomes, are essential for successful ACQF implementation. Rather than replacing national systems, ACQF was recognised as a framework that enables qualifications earned in one African

country to be understood and recognised across the continent, thereby supporting regional integration and labour mobility.

Another dominant theme was the need to strengthen the connection between qualifications and the labour market. Delegates agreed that qualifications should no longer be viewed merely as certificates but as strategic tools for economic growth, innovation and social inclusion. Employers, regulators and education providers called for greater use of labour market intelligence in curriculum design, stronger industry partnerships and competency-based approaches that validate practical skills. Discussions also highlighted the need to move beyond counting graduates towards measuring whether qualifications lead to decent work, entrepreneurship, progressive learning, and sustainable livelihoods.

The conference further showcased Kenya's commitment to creating more flexible and inclusive learning pathways. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), the Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS), modular learning and micro-credentials featured prominently as key reforms supporting lifelong learning. Delegates acknowledged that millions of Africans acquire valuable competencies outside formal



education and that strengthening RPL systems offers an opportunity to unlock this potential by recognising skills gained through work experience and informal learning.

Micro-credentials also received significant attention as flexible tools for upskilling and reskilling workers in response to rapidly changing labour market demands, particularly in digital technologies and artificial intelligence. Participants stressed that integrating micro-credentials into National Qualifications Frameworks will enhance their quality, portability and recognition across borders.

Digital transformation emerged as another key pillar of future qualifications systems. Discussions explored how digital credentials, interoperable qualifications databases, artificial intelligence and secure verification technologies can improve transparency, reduce fraud and strengthen public confidence in qualifications. Kenya highlighted its continued investment in the National Qualifications Database as part of a broader vision to enable secure, real-time verification while maintaining institutional ownership of learner records.

The conference also recognised that qualifications systems must respond to global transformations driven by artificial intelligence and changing patterns of work. Sessions on AI, green skills and competency-based education reinforced the need to embed future-oriented competencies within qualifications frameworks while ensuring education systems remain agile, inclusive and learner-centred. Participants agreed that qualifications authorities have an increasingly important role in anticipating emerging skills needs and supporting workforce readiness

for the digital and green economies.

Beyond the technical discussions, the conference strengthened partnerships across Africa's qualifications community. Governments, qualifications authorities, quality assurance agencies, development partners, industry representatives and international organisations reaffirmed their commitment to building trusted qualifications systems that support lifelong learning, employability and labour mobility. The strong participation of continental and international partners demonstrated that advancing qualifications reform requires sustained collaboration across institutions and borders.

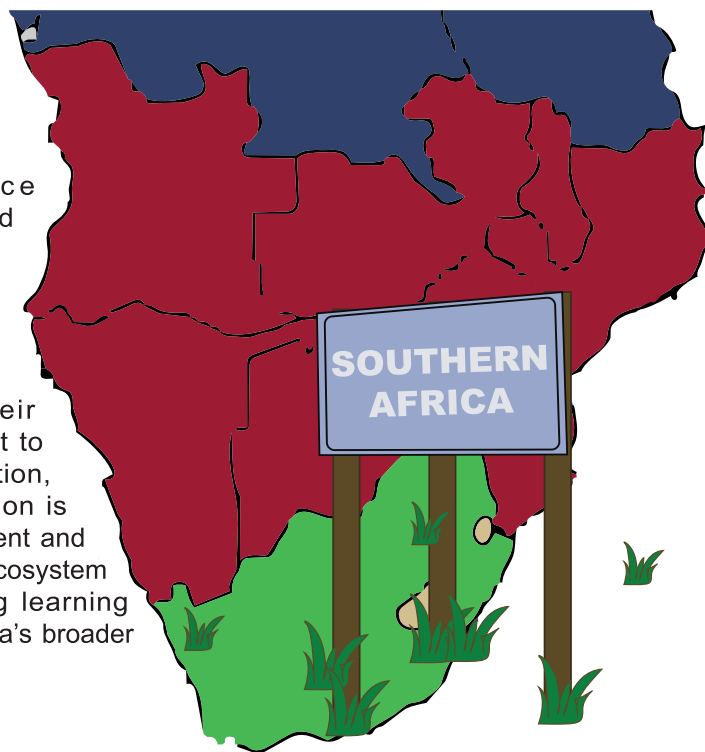
The First National Qualifications Conference concluded with a shared vision of qualifications as strategic infrastructure for national development and continental integration. Key recommendations included accelerating the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning, strengthening quality assurance, operationalising secure digital qualifications systems, expanding flexible learning pathways and deepening collaboration among governments, industry and development partners. For Kenya, the conference marked the beginning of a new chapter in implementing the Kenya National Qualifications Framework. For Africa, it demonstrated how national dialogue can generate practical solutions that advance the objectives of the African Continental Qualifications Framework. As countries continue strengthening their qualifications systems, Kenya's experience affirms that trust, quality, inclusion and recognition are the foundations of a skilled, mobile, trusted, and globally competitive African workforce.



REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT: SOUTHERN AFRICA

The Southern African region continues to play a leading role in advancing qualifications frameworks that promote quality, transparency, and the mobility of learners and workers across borders. Guided by the Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) and supported by the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF), countries across the region are strengthening their national qualifications systems, expanding recognition of prior learning, modernising

quality assurance mechanisms, and aligning qualifications with evolving labour market needs. While countries are at different stages of implementation, their collective commitment to collaboration, innovation, and regional integration is creating a more coherent and trusted qualifications ecosystem that supports lifelong learning and contributes to Africa's broader development agenda.



MOZAMBIQUE *Building a Comprehensive and Integrated Qualifications System*

Mozambique is gradually positioning itself as a key contributor to Africa's evolving qualifications landscape through a series of ambitious reforms designed to strengthen the quality, relevance, and recognition of qualifications. By establishing an integrated National Qualifications Framework (NQF), expanding Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and playing an active role in regional and continental initiatives, the country is laying a solid foundation for lifelong learning, labour market responsiveness, and cross-border mobility.

A major milestone in this journey came in 2022 with the formal approval of Mozambique's

National Qualifications Framework, providing a coherent structure for qualifications across the education and training system. The framework is coordinated by the National Council for Quality Assessment of Higher Education (CNAQ), while a dedicated Technical Coordination Commission oversees implementation across sectors under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Together, these governance structures are helping to ensure a coordinated and transparent qualifications system aligned with national development priorities.

Mozambique has adopted a comprehensive approach by establishing both a National

Qualifications Framework and a Professional Qualifications Framework. While the NQF provides an overarching structure for qualifications across all sectors, the Professional Qualifications Framework, approved under Decree No. 61/2022, strengthens vocational and occupational learning through a national catalogue of more than 100 professional qualifications. This dual-framework approach enhances the comparability, transparency, and quality of qualifications, making it easier for learners and employers to navigate the education and skills development landscape.

The country has also made significant progress in recognising learning that takes place outside

formal education. Through the Regulation for the Recognition of Acquired Skills, approved under Decree No. 58/2021, Mozambique is expanding opportunities for individuals to have skills gained through work experience and non-formal learning formally recognised. This important reform supports lifelong learning, broadens access to qualifications, and creates more inclusive pathways to employment and career progression.

Higher education reform remains another important pillar of Mozambique's qualifications agenda. Building on reforms introduced in 2010, the country has been reviewing its higher education qualifications framework since 2022 to ensure that qualifications remain relevant to changing economic and labour market needs. To date, 19 higher education qualifications have been developed in close collaboration with universities and industry partners, demonstrating a strong commitment to aligning education with workforce demands.

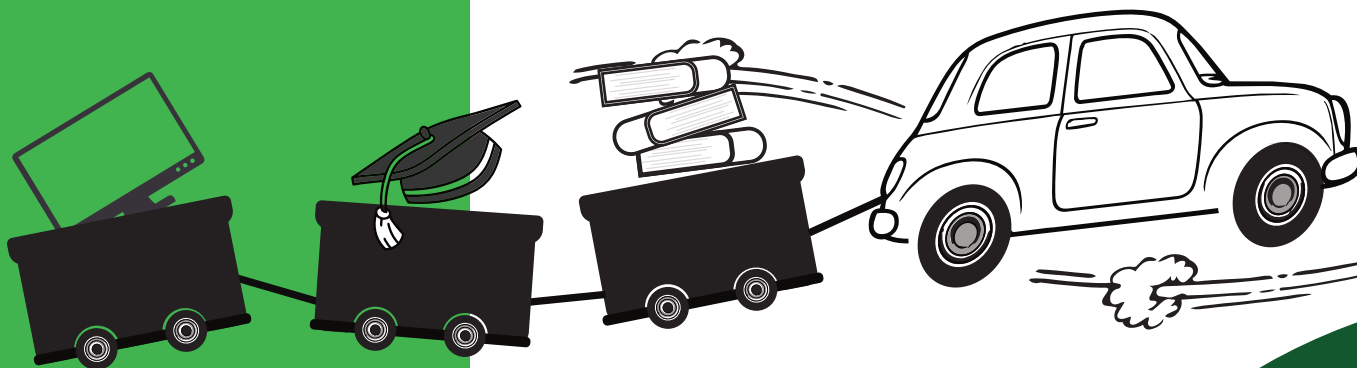
Beyond its national achievements, Mozambique continues to play an

influential role in advancing qualifications harmonisation across Africa. The country has made valuable technical contributions to the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF), sharing its experience in qualifications framework development and implementation with other member states. Mozambique also served as Chair of the SADC Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA), leading the development of the Policy Paper on the African Qualifications Framework presented to the African Union in 2022. More recently, it has continued to support regional implementation of the ACQF roadmap while contributing to emerging discussions on innovative areas such as micro-credentials.

Mozambique's experience demonstrates how a coordinated qualifications system can strengthen education quality, improve skills recognition, and enhance workforce mobility. Through continued investment in qualifications reform and active participation

in regional and continental cooperation, the country is helping to shape a more integrated, transparent, and trusted qualifications ecosystem.

As the ACQF continues to drive harmonisation across Africa, Mozambique's leadership and commitment provide an important example of how national reforms can contribute to broader continental goals of economic integration, lifelong learning, and the free movement of skills.



TAKING QUALIFICATIONS TO THE PEOPLE: SAQA EXPANDS ACCESS THROUGH COMMUNITY OUTREACH

As African countries continue to strengthen their National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs), ensuring that citizens understand and can access these systems remains just as important as developing them.

In South Africa, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is advancing this objective through its #NQFToThePeople campaign, an initiative designed to bring qualifications information directly into communities and help learners make informed decisions about their education and career pathways.

The latest outreach took place during June in Modimolle, Limpopo, where hundreds of learners gathered at Phagameng High School for a Career Expo that connected young people with universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), professional bodies and other skills development stakeholders.

The initiative reflects SAQA's commitment to ensuring that information about qualifications, learning pathways and career

opportunities is accessible to all, particularly learners in underserved communities.

Addressing learners, SAQA Chief Operating Officer Dr Makhapa Makhafola encouraged young people to recognise that there are multiple routes to success.

"Higher education is not a one-size-fits-all journey. Universities, TVET colleges, occupational qualifications, apprenticeships and workplace-based learning all provide valuable pathways into employment, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning."

A central message of the campaign was the importance of choosing recognised qualifications and verifying institutions before enrolling. Through practical guidance, learners and parents were encouraged to make use of SAQA's verification services to protect themselves from fraudulent qualifications and unaccredited providers.

The Career Expo also highlighted the important role of professional bodies and qualifications authorities in supporting lifelong learning and career progression. Learners

engaged directly with institutions to explore study options, funding opportunities and the qualifications required across a range of professions.

Beyond career guidance, the initiative demonstrates how qualifications authorities can play an active role in bridging the gap between national qualifications frameworks and the communities they serve.

By taking information directly to schools and local communities, SAQA is strengthening public awareness of the National Qualifications Framework while supporting informed educational choices. As countries across Africa continue implementing and strengthening their NQFs and the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF), initiatives such as #NQFToThePeople illustrate how community engagement can complement policy development, ensuring that qualifications frameworks are not only robust in design but also meaningful and accessible to the citizens they are intended to serve.

#NQFTOTHEPEOPLE



THE ZAMBIA QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (ZAQA)

“A strong qualifications framework is more than a classification system, it is a catalyst for lifelong learning, workforce mobility, and economic transformation,” – ZAQA.

Another country in the southern part of the continent that continues to make significant progress in strengthening its qualifications system is Zambia. The country has positioned itself as one of Southern Africa’s key contributors to qualifications reform and harmonisation. Through the leadership of the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA), the country has established a transparent, credible, and internationally comparable qualifications framework that is improving access to education, enhancing workforce mobility, and supporting regional integration.

Since its establishment, ZAQA has spearheaded the development and operationalisation of the Zambia Qualifications Framework (ZQF), creating a unified system that classifies and standardises qualifications across all education and training sectors. The framework has improved the comparability and recognition of qualifications

within Zambia while strengthening confidence in the country’s education and training system across the Southern African region.

A cornerstone of Zambia’s qualifications reform has been its commitment to lifelong learning through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). By recognising knowledge and competencies acquired through work experience, community learning, and other non-formal pathways, ZAQA is helping to expand access to qualifications for thousands of learners while creating more flexible progression routes into education and employment.

“Recognition of Prior Learning is opening doors for learners whose knowledge and skills have been acquired beyond traditional classrooms, ensuring that experience is recognised as a valuable pathway to qualifications,” said ZAQA.

Quality assurance remains central to ZAQA’s mandate. The Authority has developed robust policies, regulatory frameworks, and quality assurance mechanisms that safeguard the integrity and credibility of qualifications. Working closely with education and training institutions, professional bodies, employers, and industry partners,

(ZAQA)

ZAQA continues to ensure that qualifications remain responsive to national development priorities and evolving labour market needs.

Zambia has also strengthened the international recognition of its qualifications through the ratification of the Addis Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications. This important milestone enhances opportunities for learners and professionals to pursue further studies and employment across borders while reinforcing Zambia’s commitment to regional and global cooperation in higher education and skills development.

Beyond its national achievements, Zambia continues to make valuable contributions to the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) Network. Drawing on its experience in developing and implementing the Zambia Qualifications Framework, ZAQA actively shares technical expertise and best practices in qualifications design, quality assurance, and recognition systems. The Authority also supports peer learning and capacity-building initiatives, helping other countries strengthen their own qualifications frameworks while advancing the broader objectives of continental harmonisation.

As an active participant in both the Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) and the ACQF, Zambia is contributing to the creation of a more integrated African qualifications ecosystem. Through the alignment of national, regional, and continental frameworks, the country is helping to improve the comparability of qualifications, facilitate academic and professional mobility, and build greater trust in qualifications across Africa.





National Institute of Qualifications of Angola - INQA

The process of implementing the NQF of Angola has been a positive experience, as the National Institute of Qualifications of Angola (INQA) has observed the necessary steps for the effective implementation and consolidation of an NQF, through the design and regulation of the different mechanisms of capital importance for the success of the implementation of the NQF, as it is our understanding that it will be a model to be followed by countries that intend to implement their NQFs, as well as for those who are in their initial phase. The INQA has brought

together the different stakeholders of the National Qualifications System, to train them in matters related to the NQF, so that they can understand its relevance and feel part of the NQF implementation process.

As for the expected contributions from the ACQF Network, they will be welcome, because the implementation process of the NQF of Angola is at a crucial stage, as the necessary foundations are created for its full operationalisation, hence we count on the expertise of the ACQF Network, with regard to

the full operationalisation of some instruments and mechanisms linked to the NQF.

Since 2022, Angola, through the INQA, has been developing a broad program to disseminate the NQF at national level and in the training of its stakeholders. In 2024, in partnership with the ACQF, it organized the 2nd Forum of Qualifications Frameworks in Africa.

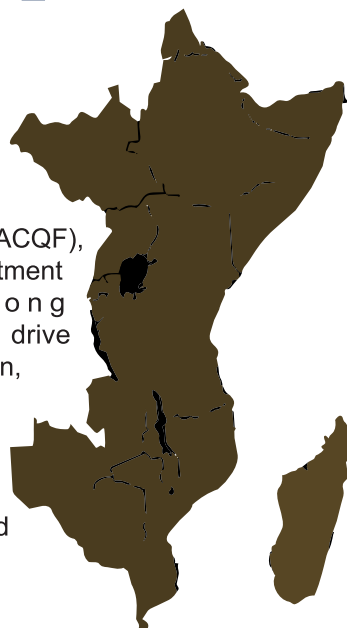


REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT: EAST AFRICA

East Africa has emerged as a dynamic force in advancing qualifications frameworks through strong institutional leadership, innovative policy reforms, and sustained regional collaboration. Countries across the region are also strengthening their national qualifications systems by promoting quality assurance, Recognition of

Prior Learning (RPL), credit transfer, and qualifications recognition, while aligning their frameworks with regional initiatives such as the East African Qualifications Framework (EAQF) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Regional Qualifications Framework. Kenya, in particular, has established itself as a regional leader through the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA), demonstrating how strategic partnerships, continental engagement through the African Continental Qualifications

Framework (ACQF), and a commitment to lifelong learning can drive harmonisation, mobility, and skills recognition across East Africa and beyond.



EAST
AFRICA

ADVANCEMENTS ON SEYCHELLES

The Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) continues to advance key initiatives aimed at strengthening quality assurance, qualifications recognition, and lifelong learning opportunities. In this article, we highlight the recent developments in the area.



Validation workshop marks milestone for Seychelles NQF

The SAQ hosted a national validation workshop on 24 April 2026 to validate the report on the referencing of the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) to the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF).

The workshop gathered government ministries, education and training providers, professional bodies, civil society and learner representatives to review and

validate the national referencing report. This milestone strengthens transparency, trust, and recognition of Seychelles' qualifications across Africa.

Highlights of the workshop included:

- Strategic investment: Dr Justin Zelime, Principal Secretary for General Education and Curriculum, emphasised that referencing enhances recognition, supports mobility, and builds confidence in the national system.
- International trust: SQA Chief

Executive Officer, Fiona Ernesta, highlighted that referencing ensures Seychelles' qualifications are comparable and understood internationally.

- Collaborative validation: Stakeholders reviewed the report, provided feedback, and strengthened national ownership of the process.

The referencing exercise is expected to deliver increased benefits, including, improved recognition across Africa, greater mobility for learners and works,

as well as enhanced credibility of education and training systems within the Seychelles.

Going forward, stakeholder feedback will be incorporated into the final referencing report, which will be submitted for national and continental endorsement. This marks a significant step in advancing Seychelles' role within the continental qualifications landscape.

Seychelles Strengthens SNQF with Micro Credentials Framework

The Seychelles has reached a new milestone in its journey to establish a national micro credentials framework. As of 11 May 2026, the final policy and guidelines on micro

credentials have been completed by the SQA, with technical support from the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) Network.

The process began in 2024 with a national survey to map existing micro credentials and similar qualifications. Findings were shared at the 4th ACQF Forum, and subsequent workshops have helped define a practical pathway for implementation.

The draft framework was circulated to public and private providers of education and training for input. Their feedback was instrumental in refining the document, ensuring that the final policy reflects the realities of Seychelles' training landscape and supports inclusive adoption.



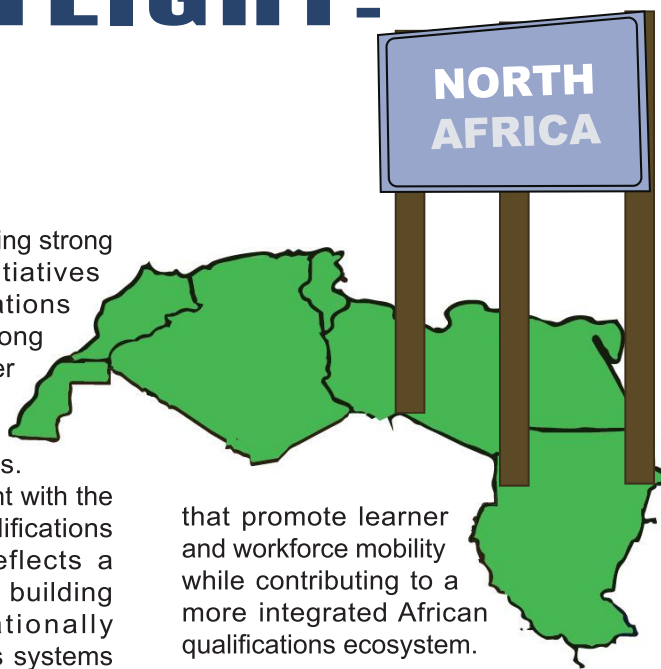
REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT:

NORTH AFRICA

North Africa continues to play an increasingly influential role in shaping Africa's qualifications landscape through ambitious reforms, innovation, and stronger alignment with continental priorities. Countries across the region are modernising their National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs), strengthening quality assurance systems, and embracing emerging trends such as micro-credentials, digital credentials, and competency-based learning. Egypt and Algeria, in

particular, are demonstrating strong leadership through initiatives that enhance qualifications recognition, support lifelong learning, and foster closer links between education, skills development, and labour market needs. Their growing engagement with the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) reflects a shared commitment to building transparent, internationally comparable qualifications systems

that promote learner and workforce mobility while contributing to a more integrated African qualifications ecosystem.



Algeria Launches (NQF) National Qualifications Framework to Advance Skills Recognition

Algeria reached a significant milestone in its higher education reform journey with the official launch of its first National Qualifications Framework (AQF) in July 2025. Introduced by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the framework marks a transformative step towards a more transparent, competency-based and internationally aligned qualifications system, while laying the foundation for future engagement with the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF).

The launch represents more than the introduction of a new policy instrument. It signals Algeria's commitment to modernising its qualifications system to better reflect learning outcomes, improve the recognition of qualifications and strengthen links between education, training and the labour market.

Developed through extensive collaboration with universities, higher education institutions, labour market stakeholders and national experts on qualifications and competency standards, the Algerian Qualifications Framework provides a common structure for classifying qualifications and recognising knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through different learning pathways. The framework is expected to improve the transparency and comparability of qualifications while making it easier for learners, employers and education institutions to understand qualification levels and progression pathways.

A key objective of the framework is to strengthen the relevance of higher education by supporting competency-based learning and aligning qualifications more

closely with labour market needs. By clearly defining learning outcomes, the framework will help improve graduate employability while enhancing the national and international recognition of Algerian qualifications.

The launch of the framework also positions Algeria to contribute to broader continental integration efforts through the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF). Designed using internationally recognised qualifications framework approaches, the AQF creates a strong foundation for future referencing to the ACQF, supporting greater transparency, comparability and recognition of qualifications across Africa.

In preparation for implementation, Algeria has convened a series of national seminars and technical

workshops focused on qualifications framework development, implementation and harmonisation with international standards. These engagements have brought together policymakers, higher education leaders, qualifications experts and labour market representatives to build a shared understanding of the framework and its role in supporting education reform.

The country's commitment to innovation has also been demonstrated through the launch of a pilot National Certification and Qualifications Framework digital platform in 2026.

The platform is expected to strengthen the classification, management and digital recognition

of qualifications, improving access to reliable qualifications information for learners, institutions and employers.

Looking ahead, Algeria's priorities include rolling out the qualifications framework across higher education institutions, expanding the digital qualifications platform and continuing efforts to harmonise qualifications and competency standards with regional and international frameworks. Future engagement with the ACQF referencing process will further strengthen the comparability and recognition of Algerian qualifications across the continent.

The official launch of the Algerian Qualifications Framework marks

an important milestone not only for Algeria's education system but also for Africa's broader qualifications agenda. As more countries develop and strengthen their national qualifications frameworks, initiatives such as Algeria's demonstrate the growing momentum towards a more connected African qualifications landscape, one that supports learner mobility, workforce development and lifelong learning while advancing the shared objectives of the African Continental Qualifications Framework.



MICROCREDENTIALS TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT EGYPT'S INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS CONFERENCE

The future of qualifications in Africa was firmly on the agenda when Egypt's National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) hosted its 8th International Conference in April 2026. Under the theme, "Microcredentials and the National Qualifications Framework: Bridges Across Borders," the conference highlighted the growing importance of flexible learning pathways and reinforced the role of national qualifications frameworks in advancing the objectives of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF).

The conference brought together policymakers, quality assurance agencies, higher education institutions, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) providers, researchers and international partners to examine how microcredentials can respond to rapidly evolving labour market demands while strengthening national qualifications systems.

Discussions focused on creating more flexible, inclusive and responsive

education pathways that support lifelong learning, skills development and employability.

As Egypt's lead institution responsible for the development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), NAQAAE used the conference to reaffirm the strategic importance of microcredentials as an emerging component of qualifications systems. The discussions explored how microcredentials can complement traditional qualifications by recognising shorter, targeted learning experiences that enable individuals to upskill, reskill and continuously adapt to changing economic and technological needs.

The conference also underscored Egypt's continued commitment to the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF). Through its active participation in ACQF initiatives, NAQAAE is working to ensure that Egypt's qualifications system aligns with continental efforts to improve the transparency, comparability and recognition of qualifications across Africa.

Egypt's National Qualifications Framework, established as an eight-level framework encompassing general education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), higher education and professional qualifications, is currently in its activation phase.

While the legal and institutional foundations are firmly in place, the country is preparing for the placement of qualifications onto the framework and its eventual

referencing to the ACQF. These developments will strengthen the recognition of Egyptian qualifications while facilitating greater learner and worker mobility across the continent.

Beyond highlighting national progress, the conference demonstrated how qualifications frameworks are evolving to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. By integrating microcredentials into its National Qualifications Framework, Egypt is building a more agile qualifications system that recognises diverse learning pathways and supports lifelong learning for people at every stage of their careers.

NAQAAE's collaboration with government ministries, education and training institutions, quality assurance bodies and international partners, including the European Training Foundation (ETF) and the ACQF Network, continues to strengthen Egypt's qualifications ecosystem while contributing to broader continental cooperation.

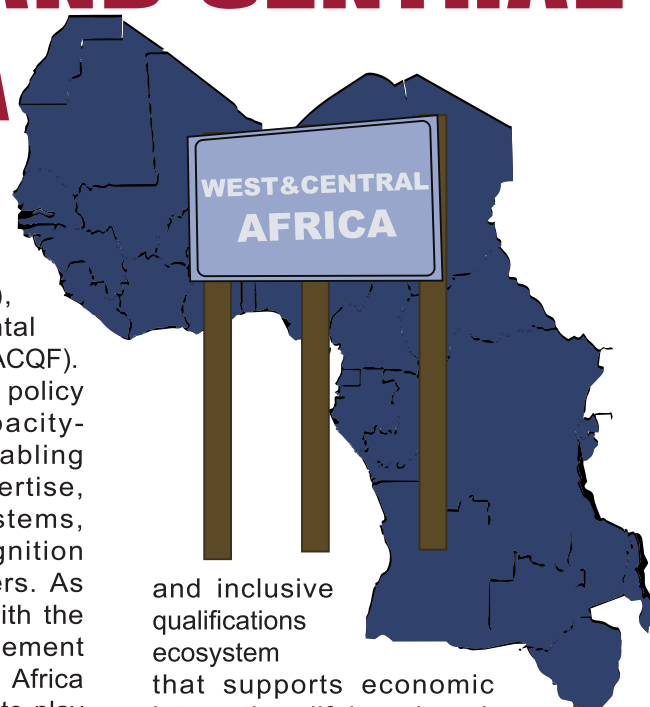
As African countries continue to advance the implementation of the ACQF, Egypt's experience offers valuable insights into how national qualifications frameworks can embrace innovation while maintaining quality and credibility. Through initiatives such as its annual international conference, NAQAAE is helping to shape a more integrated, future-ready qualifications landscape that supports mobility, lifelong learning and skills recognition across Africa.



REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Countries in the West and Central Africa are also making inroads, steadily advancing the development of qualifications frameworks, reaffirming the foundations for greater qualifications recognition, quality assurance, and skills mobility. Although progress varies from one country to another, there is a growing commitment to building robust National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs), supported by regional cooperation through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA



African States (ECCAS), and the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF). Increasing collaboration, policy development, and capacity-building efforts are enabling countries to share expertise, align qualifications systems, and promote the recognition of learning across borders. As more countries engage with the ACQF Network and implement reforms, West and Central Africa are positioning themselves to play an increasingly important role in creating a harmonised, transparent,

and inclusive qualifications ecosystem that supports economic integration, lifelong learning, and the free movement of skills across the continent.

SENEGAL ADVANCES NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS REFORM THROUGH PARTNERSHIP AND INNOVATION

The development of qualifications frameworks is gathering pace across West Africa, with Senegal taking important steps to modernise its higher education and skills landscape. Backed by strong national leadership and strategic collaboration with continental and international partners, the country is laying the foundations for a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that will strengthen qualifications recognition, support lifelong learning, and improve the alignment between education, training and labour market needs. At the centre of this work is the National Authority for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, Research and Innovation (ANAQ-Sup), whose leadership in

development continues to shape Senegal's contribution to Africa's broader qualifications agenda.

Established in 2012 and later expanding its mandate in 2018 to include research and innovation, ANAQ-Sup has become one of Francophone Africa's leading quality assurance agencies. Over the past decade, it has played a pivotal role in promoting quality across higher education institutions, strengthening accreditation systems, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement that enhances the credibility and international recognition of Senegalese qualifications.

A significant milestone in this journey has been the country's progress towards developing a

In 2026, Senegal, with technical support from the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) initiative and the European Training Foundation (ETF), convened a series of national consultations to advance discussions on qualifications framework development, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), learning outcomes, and quality assurance. These engagements brought together policymakers, education providers, qualifications experts and social partners to build consensus around a framework that reflects national priorities while aligning with continental standards.

The proposed National Qualifications Framework

transparency and comparability of qualifications, create clearer learning pathways, and recognise competencies acquired through both formal and non-formal learning. By strengthening links between education, skills development and employment, the framework will also support workforce development and lifelong learning.

Alongside qualifications reform, ANAQ-Sup continues to champion innovation within Senegal's higher education system. The Authority has been at the forefront of initiatives that strengthen research governance, modernise quality assurance practices, and explore emerging areas such as micro-credentials and flexible learning pathways. These efforts are helping to ensure that qualifications remain relevant in a rapidly evolving knowledge economy while responding to the changing needs of learners and employers.

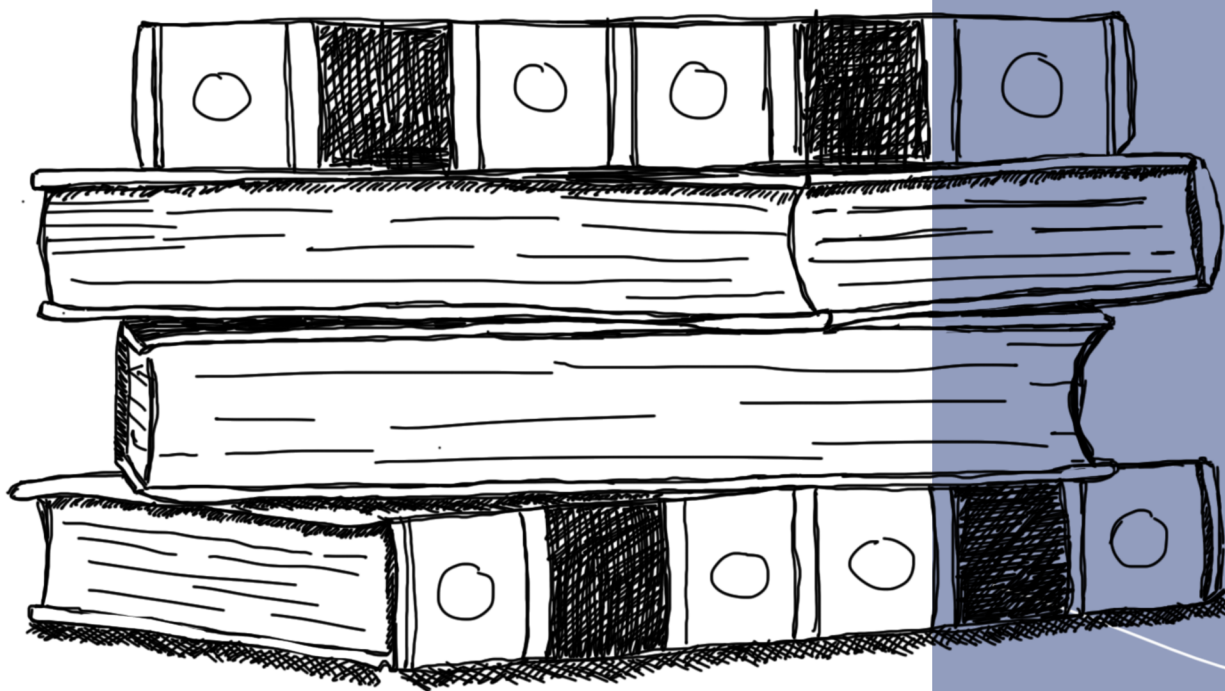
Senegal's growing influence also extends beyond its national borders. Through active participation in the ACQF Network, ANAQ-Sup contributes to peer learning,

technical cooperation and policy dialogue aimed at harmonising qualifications systems across Africa. The Authority regularly shares its expertise while benefiting from the experiences of other member countries, reinforcing a collective commitment to building trusted and internationally comparable qualifications systems.

Partnerships have become a defining feature of Senegal's qualifications journey. Collaboration between ANAQ-Sup, the ACQF, the European Training Foundation, and other continental partners has provided valuable technical support for the country's reform agenda while strengthening institutional capacity and promoting knowledge exchange. These partnerships are helping to accelerate the development of a qualifications system that is both nationally relevant and internationally connected.

As Senegal moves closer to implementing its NQF, it is establishing a solid foundation for greater qualifications recognition, learner mobility and regional

cooperation. Its experience demonstrates the value of combining strong national leadership with continental collaboration to build qualifications systems that are responsive, inclusive and future-oriented. Through its continued engagement with the ACQF Network, Senegal is contributing to the shared vision of a harmonised African qualifications ecosystem that supports economic integration, skills development and lifelong learning.



S **AQA SUPPORTS DHET WITH BOGUS COLLEGES AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN THE CITY OF TSHWANE**

Pretoria, 4 March 2026 – The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has intensified its efforts to curb the mushrooming of unregistered and fraudulent institutions by joining forces with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in a Bogus Colleges Awareness Campaign conducted in the City of Tshwane.

The multi-stakeholder oversight initiative was led by Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Mimmy Gondwe. The campaign brought together key regulatory and enforcement bodies, including the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Employment and Labour, the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), and the Council on Higher Education (CHE).

Oversight visits to several institutions in the Pretoria central business district exposed ongoing challenges related to unregistered

providers offering so-called “in-house” programmes that are neither quality assured nor recognised on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). These unlawful practices place students and parents at significant risk of financial loss, wasted time, and compromised employment prospects.

As the custodian of the NQF, SAQA plays a central role in safeguarding the integrity, credibility, and international comparability of South African qualifications. During the campaign, SAQA emphasised the critical importance of verifying both the registration status of institutions and the recognition status of qualifications before making any payments. The joint operation also highlighted the standards expected within the post-school education and training system by showcasing a compliant and duly registered institution, reinforcing that quality and regulatory compliance remain

non-negotiable. SAQA urges members of the public to:

- Verify that qualifications are registered on the NQF.
- Confirm that private institutions are registered with DHET.
- Check the official SAQA Qualification ID (SAQAID) number.
- Report suspicious or fraudulent institutions to the relevant authorities.

Through strengthened collaboration with DHET, Quality Councils, and law enforcement agencies, SAQA remains resolute in protecting students and upholding the integrity of the education and training system, ensuring that South Africa's qualifications remain credible and globally competitive. SAQA further reiterates that protecting students and safeguarding the integrity of the post-school education system is a shared national responsibility.





SENEGAL ADVANCES NQF AND RPL

With support from the ACQF and European Training Foundation (ETF), Senegal continues to strengthen its National Qualifications Framework and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). A technical mission in May 2026 explored qualifications governance, learning outcomes, quality assurance and skills recognition, while also considering a pilot RPL project to expand lifelong learning and recognise skills gained through work and informal learning.

EAC STRENGTHENS REGIONAL TVET FRAMEWORK

The East African Community (EAC) met in Nairobi from 1–5 June 2026 to refine its TVET Qualifications Framework. Supported by the ACQF-II Project and ILO, delegates agreed to strengthen regional qualifications recognition through ten qualification levels, improved credit transfer, Recognition of Prior Learning, micro-credentials and enhanced digital systems to support labour mobility and regional integration.

SADCQF MEETING REINFORCES REGIONAL COOPERATION

The first 2026 SADCQF Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA) meeting was held in Johannesburg from 17–19 June. Hosted by the SADC Secretariat and SAQA, participants validated revised policy guidelines, advanced work on the Qualifications Verification Network and Recognition of Prior Learning, and agreed on a regional implementation roadmap through 2027, strengthening qualifications transparency and lifelong learning across Southern Africa.



ACQF EVENTS

7TH ACQF CONTINENTAL FORUM | 28–30 JULY 2026 | NAIROBI, KENYA

The 7th ACQF Continental Forum will bring together qualifications authorities, policymakers and education experts from across Africa under the theme "Building Future-Ready Qualifications Systems for Africa." Discussions will focus on qualifications recognition, micro-credentials, green skills, digitalisation, quality assurance, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and the ACQF Qualifications and Credentials Platform. The hybrid event will be held in English, French and Portuguese with live streaming available.

AUGUST -

3RD TWG SADCQF MEETING
28 - 30 AUGUST 2026

SEPTEMBER -

CEO FORUM AND TROIKA MEETING
SEYCHELLES 22 - 24 SEPTEMBER 2026



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