REGIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS IN EAST AFRICA

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Presentation Outline

1. Background to the QA and QF System in East Africa

2. Legal Framework for Establishing a Regional QA and QF System

3. EAC as a Common Higher Education Area

4. Regional QA & QF Policies, Tools, Frameworks

5. Strategies for establishing harmonised regional QA and QF systems

6. Concluding Remarks

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

Burundi
Democratic Republic of Congo
Kenya
Rwanda
South Sudan
United Republic of Tanzania
Uganda

Background to the Harmonisation of QA and QF Systems in East Africa

❖The harmonization of quality assurance and qualifications systems in East Africa has been a gradual process.

❖The hallmark of this process has been the enactment of legal instruments, adoption of relevant policies, establishment of QA institutions/agencies and capacity building programme.

❖In 2006, IUCEA in conjunction with its partners agreed to jointly undertake an initiative in enhancing HE quality assurance in East Africa.

❖Initially, the QA initiative involved a consensus building process through engaging key stakeholders in consultative dialogue events.

The Legal Framework on QA and Harmonization of Higher Education in East Africa

Key Legal Instruments for Harmonisation of HE Quality Assurance & Qualifications in EAC:

a) The East African Community Treaty - Art. 102 (Partner States agreed to harmonise education and promote mobility).

b) The Common Market Protocol - Art. 11 (Free movement of people, labour and services; requiring mutual recognition of qualifications and cross-border education)

c) The IUCEA Act, 2009 - Art. 4 & Art. 6.

Harmonization of higher education entails the establishment of regional systems that would facilitate comparability of higher education systems in the East African Community Partner States.

East Africa Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA)

❑The Declaration was made by the *18th Summit of the EAC Heads of State* on May 20, 2017 in Dar Es-Salaam, Tanzania

❑The objective was to transform East Africa into a Common Higher Education Area characterized by comparable, compatible, coherent and harmonized systems of Higher Education thereby facilitating free mobility of student, staff, programmes, and institutions, and mutual recognition of qualifications.

Building Blocks for the EACHEA

1. **Regional Quality Assurance System, incorporating:**
   - ❖ QA policy framework
   - ❖ Standards, guidelines and procedures
   - ❖ Programme benchmarks

2. **East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, EAQFHE**
   - ❖ Platform for anchoring national qualifications frameworks for their harmonization
   - ❖ Provides for many policies and guidelines (including **QIP, CAT, RPL**)

3. **Regional Accreditation System (Quality-Based) for Academic Programmes**

4. **Students and Staff Mobility Programme** – facilitating HE mobility in the region.

4. **East African Quality Assurance Network for Higher Education, EAQAN** – An expanding family of QA practitioners

1. **Quality Assurance Policy Instruments**

a) Principles and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in East Africa

b) Handbook for Quality Assurance in Higher Education "Roadmap to Quality", in 5 Volumes
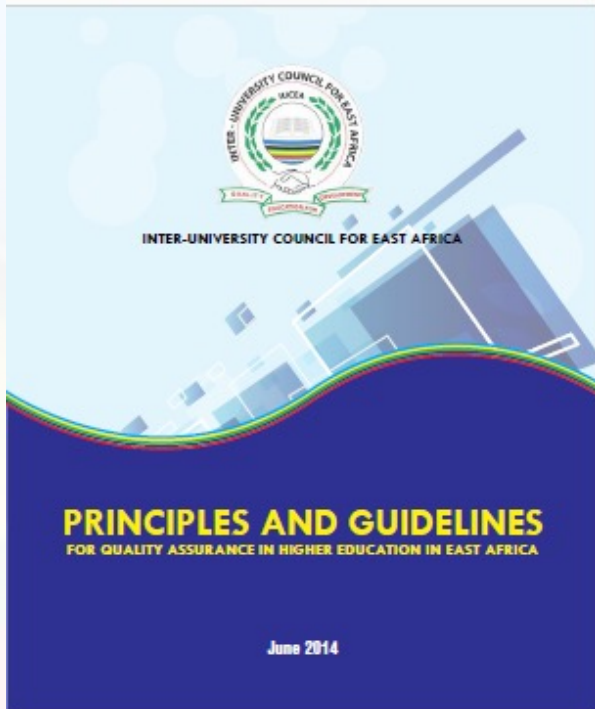
A common frame of reference guiding higher education institutions and national commissions and councils for higher or university education in developing and practicing a common quality assurance culture,
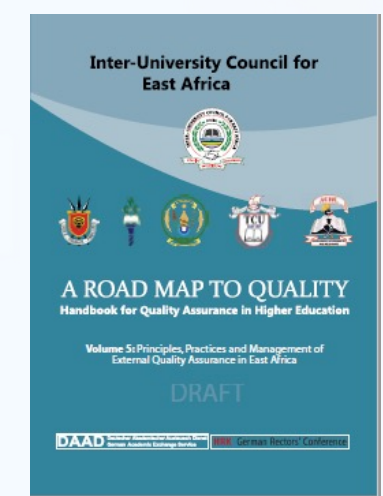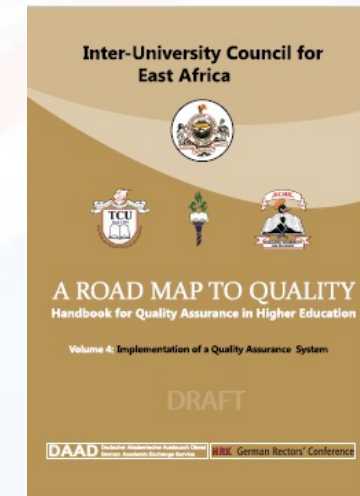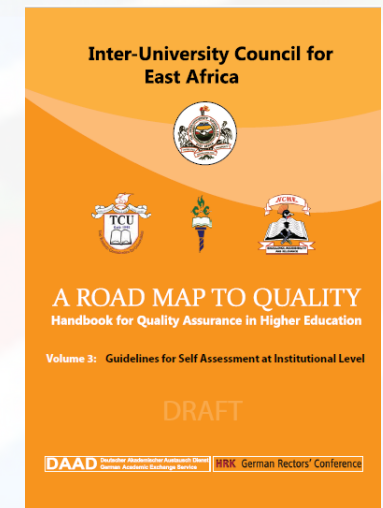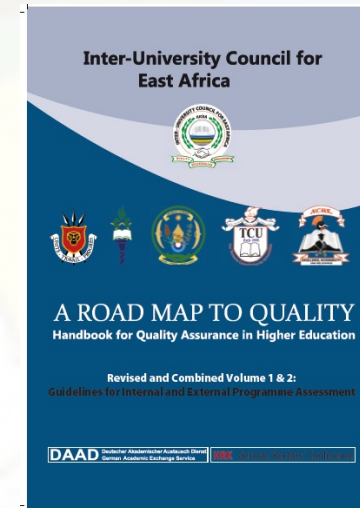
Other Relevant QA Instruments

❖ Adopted in 2015 as an overarching framework for harmonisation of higher education and training systems in the EAC region

❖ Provides the framework for mutual recognition of qualifications among the EAC Partner States, thereby enabling free movement of students and labour in the Partner States

❖ Provides international comparability of qualifications in EAC

❖ Promotes workers and learners' mobility in the Community – CATS and Mutual Recognition of Qualifications

❖ Facilitates lifelong learning through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

East African
Qualifications Framework For
Higher Education

APRIL 2015

East African
Qualifications Framework For
Higher Education

APRIL 2015

➢ The EAQFHE provides a set of qualifications framework policies, objectives and guidelines

➢ E.G Qualifications Issuance Policy (QIP) - which provides a means for protecting qualifications issued in the EAC.
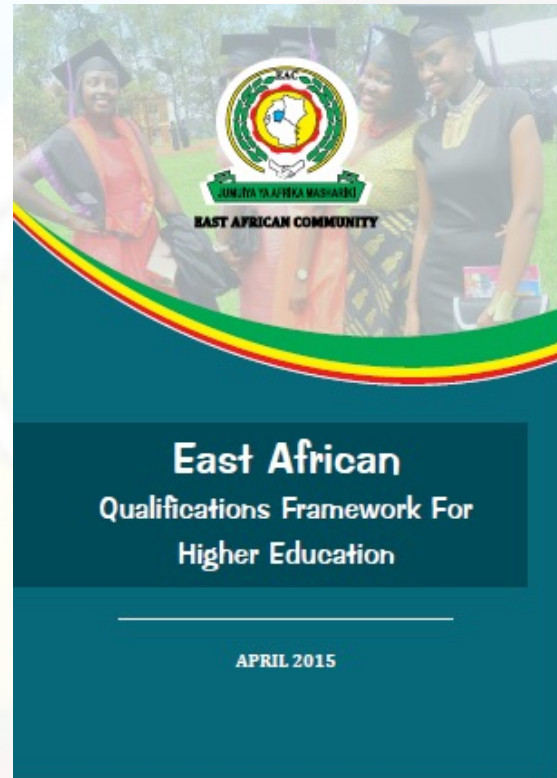
• *The protection of qualifications requires that any authorised qualifications issuing organisations delivering, assessing or issuing EAQFHE qualifications adheres to the regulatory and quality assurance arrangements for each qualifications type. (Policy No. 22 of QIP)*

Quality Assurance in EAQFHE and Programme Benckmarking

EAQFHE – Qualifications Programme Benckmarking Policy (Annex V)

- A useful policy for programme development and review
- Require benchmarks to set out the expected attributes and competencies of graduates (knowledge, skills, attitudes)
- Require benchmarks to defines the nature and extent of the programme content, teaching, learning and assessment
- Policy requires benchmarks to define expected learning outcomes; thus, it is outcome-based, learner-centred and allow for flexibility and innovation in programmes
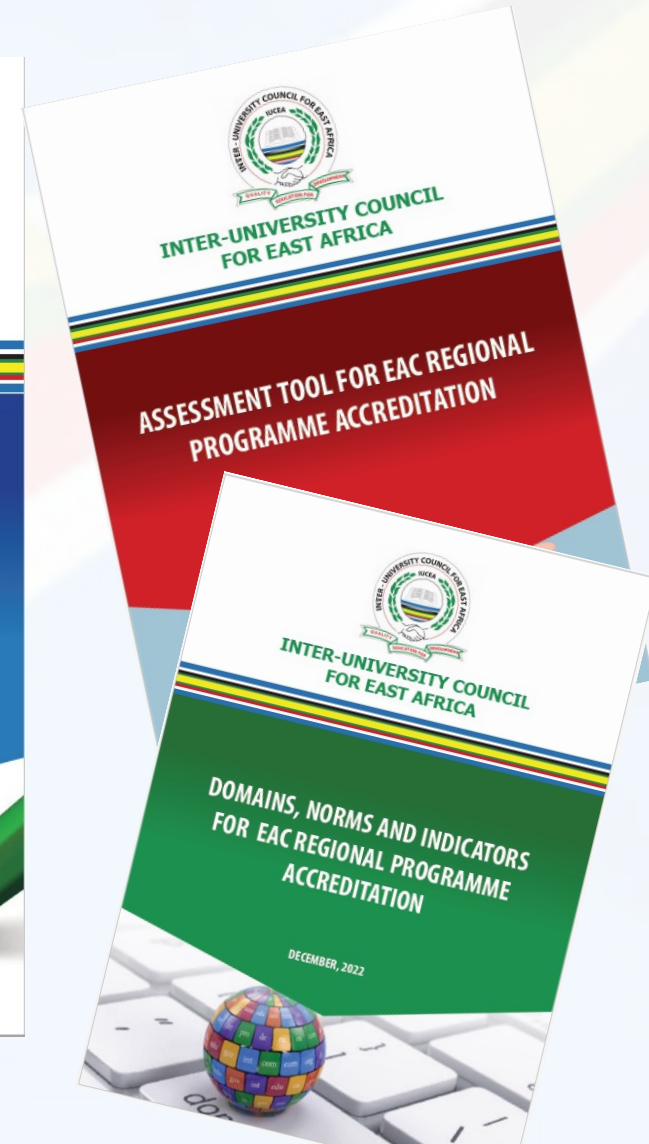
3. Quality Assurance in Programme Accreditation in East Africa

❖ EAC has, since 2022, adopted a Regional Programme Accreditation Framework.

❖ The Framework is defined by Standards, Guidelines, procedures, and assessment tools.

❖ This accreditation process is **Voluntary**, **Quality-based** mechanism, anchored on **National Accreditation** process.

INTER-UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EAST AFRICA

STANDARDS, GUIDELINES, PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE EAC REGIONAL PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

KAMPALA, JUNE 2021

ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR EAC REGIONAL PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

INTER-UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EAST AFRICA

DOMAINS, NORMS AND INDICATORS FOR EAC REGIONAL PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

DECEMBER, 2022

Strategies for Intersection of QA and Qualifications Systems in EAC

- **Development** of relevant QA and QF policies to align ELO and to establish clear and transparent criteria and standards based on international practices as a way of harmonizing higher education systems in the region.

- **Capacity building** for operationalization of the system and provision for sustainability.

- **Holding QA dialogue events** with key stakeholders for continues sharing of information, policy reviews and adoption of best practices.

- **Quality Assurance Networking** for entrenching a quality culture in the education system
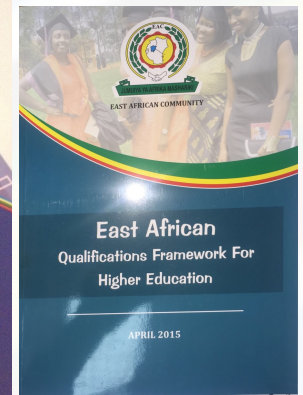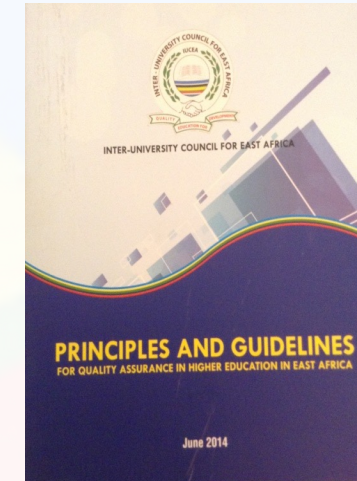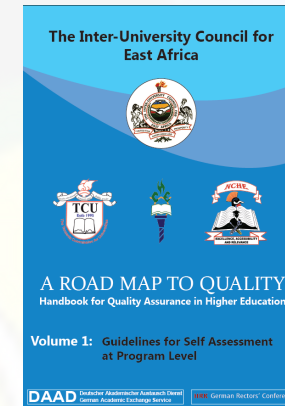
Concluding Remarks

➢ The QA and Qualifications Frameworks in EAC are key educational frameworks designed to:

  ❖ guide educational stakeholders in defining quality of qualifications

  ❖ compare QA & QF systems and quality of qualifications

  ❖ harmonise higher education QA and QF systems in the region

  ❖ promote transparency and accountability in the provision of education service and the qualifications obtained, thus facilitating mutual trust

  ❖ facilitate mobility of learners and labour force across different countries

➢ National and regional authorities need to keep the complementarity of QA and Qualifications frameworks always in focus

Thank You Asanteni Sukuran Merci