



SADCQF

QUALIFICATIONS FOR
REGIONAL INTEGRATION
AND PROSPERITY



SADCQF SURVEY 2026

Results, signals, recommendations



TCCA Meeting



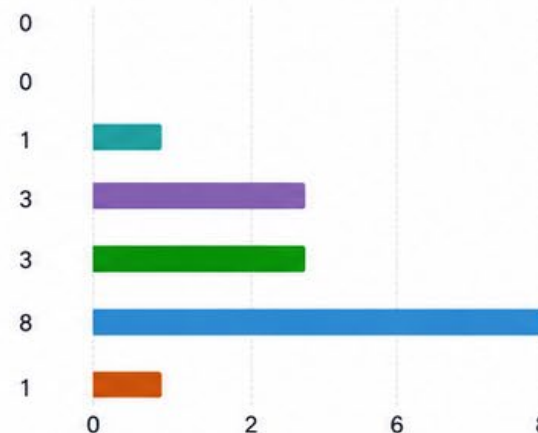
17–19 June 2026



Johannesburg

5. Status of development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

- NQF development is at an early stage of preparation
- NQF concept / document has not yet been developed
- Draft NQF document is complete and awaits approval
- NQF was approved and implementation started
- NQF implementation is ongoing but facing significant challenges
- NQF is well established, fully operational, demonstrates impact
- Other



SURVEY THEMES

- 1 National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)
- 2 Registers of qualifications and credentials
- 3 Quality Assurance
- 4 Micro-credentials
- 5 Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems
- 6 RPL
- 7 Harmonised occupational standards and qualifications
- 8 Green Skills
- 9 Cross-cutting



Presenter:
SADC Secretariat and SAQA



Date:
17 June 2026





SADCQF

QUALIFICATIONS FOR
REGIONAL INTEGRATION
AND PROSPERITY

SADCQF SURVEY 2026

1 First survey addressing all / most important areas related to the revised SADCQF

2 Future oriented:
evidence,
planning, review



3 Context and Purpose of the survey



In line with the recommendations of the second workshop on the revision of the SADCQF (10–12 February 2026, Windhoek, Namibia), the SADC Secretariat is conducting the first survey on the status of development and implementation of key policies related to qualifications and credentials across Member States.

This survey forms an integral instrument of the revised SADCQF and will be conducted on an annual basis, with the objective of collecting updated, structured and comparable information on NQFs, related policies, and their linkages to the SADCQF.



POLICIES &
FRAMEWORKS



EVIDENCE &
DATA



REGIONAL
COOPERATION



INFORMED
DECISIONS

4 Priority themes covered by the survey

Total: 50 questions



1 National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)



2 Registers of qualifications and credentials



4 Micro-credentials



5 Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems



7 Harmonised occupational standards and qualifications



8 Green Skills



3 Quality Assurance



6 RPL



9 Cross-cutting questions



Stronger Qualifications. Stronger Region. **Shared Prosperity.**



Report

Report based on 16 institutional responses and the validated analytical outline

- **Scope:** National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs), registers, quality assurance, micro-credentials, CATS, RPL, occupational standards, green skills, AI and cross-cutting priorities.
- **Data sources:** SADCQF Survey questionnaire, full response workbook, and MS Forms graph file.
- **Method:** Quantitative analysis of closed and multiple-choice questions; integrated qualitative synthesis of open-ended responses, including translation of Portuguese language responses into English.
- **Important note:** Counts are response-level frequencies (n=16 institutional responses), not country-level totals. Four Member States submitted two responses each.

Report (2)

Sixteen institutional responses were received from **twelve** SADC Member States. The Survey is a learning process. **Acknowledgements to all respondents for this effort and major contribution to SADCQF-NQFs.**

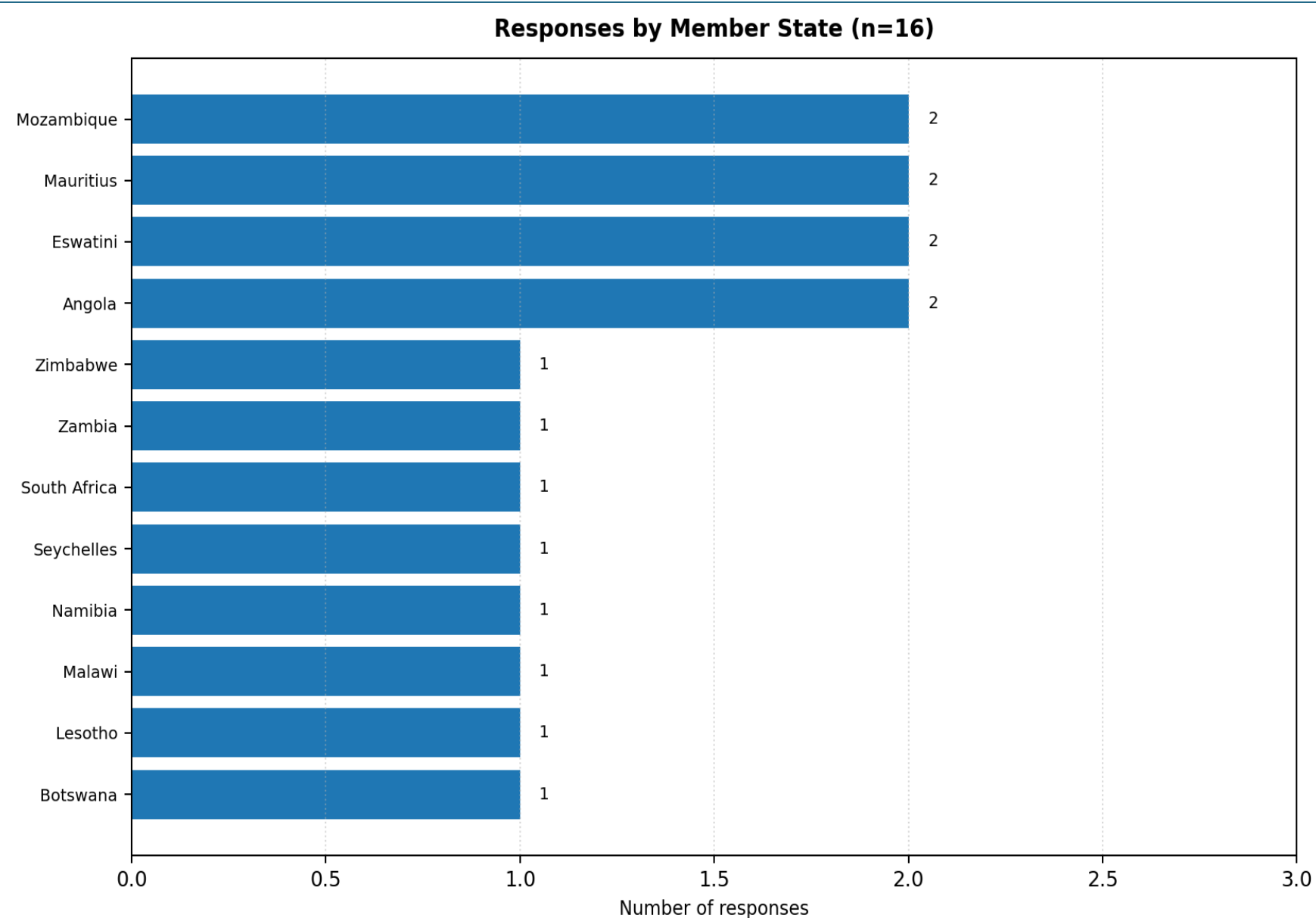
The **first SADCQF Survey 2026** generated a rich evidence base for the revised SADCQF and for the gradual construction of a regional information database on NQFs and related policies.

The response set is sufficiently diverse to reveal both **regional convergence and significant differences** in the maturity, scope and implementation capacity of national systems, and response to emerging areas (such as micro-credentials, AI, green skills)

Priorities for SADCQF roadmap: create a database for regular / annual surveys, country profiles, comparison tool accessible online. Use the data for regular monitoring of the evolution of NQFs and related policies. **Important:** a) Need to update and systematize information on all policy documents, legal acts, guidelines related to the SADCQF areas of work; b) Need to have functional, updated national websites – NQF and related policies

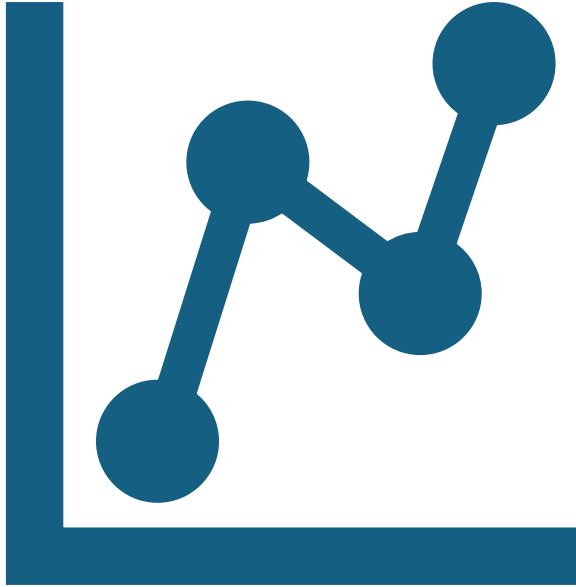
Responses: Member States and institutions

Council on Higher Education
Zambia Qualifications Authority
Ministry of Education and Human Resource
CNAQ
Seychelles Qualifications Authority
Botswana Qualifications Authority
Eswatini Qualifications Authority
Eswatini Qualifications Authority
South African Qualifications Authority and
Council on Higher Education
CNAQ- Conselho Nacional de Avaliacao de
Qualidade do Ensino Superior
INQ-National Institute of Qualification Angola
Instituto Nacional de Avaliação Acreditação e
Reconhecimento de Estudos do Ensino
Superior (INAAREES)
Ministry of Education, Science & Technology
Mauritius Qualifications Authority
Higher Education Examinations Council :
Ministry of Higher and Tertairy Education
Science and Technology Development
Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA)



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026 responses; n=16 institutional responses.

Report (3)



Results of multiple choice questions: presented in graphs, interpretation boxes

Combination of graphs: original from survey instrument + Excel Data analysis tool

Results of open questions: Coded graphs and interpretation boxes

1



National Qualifications
Frameworks (NQFs)

2



Registers of
Qualifications and
Credentials

3



Quality Assurance

4



Micro-credentials

5



Credit Accumulation
and Transfer Systems

6



Recognition of
Prior Learning (RPL)

7



Harmonised
Occupational Standards
and Qualifications

8



Green Skills

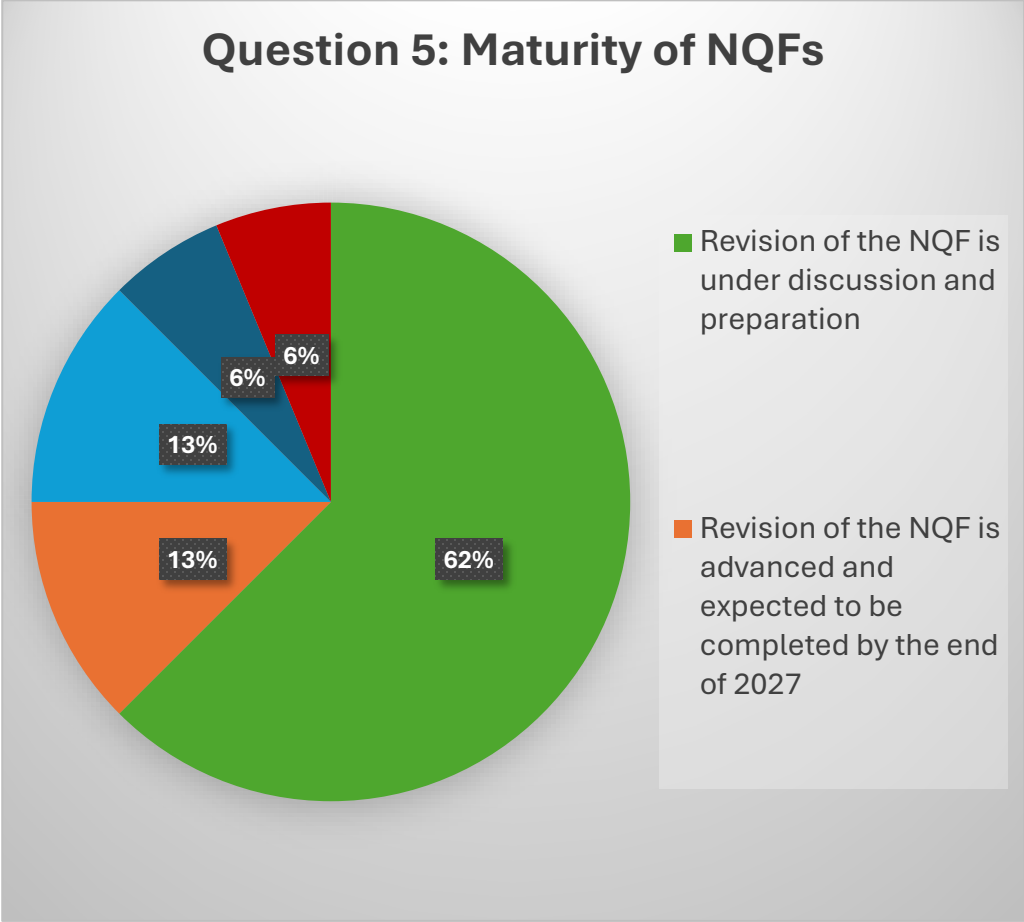
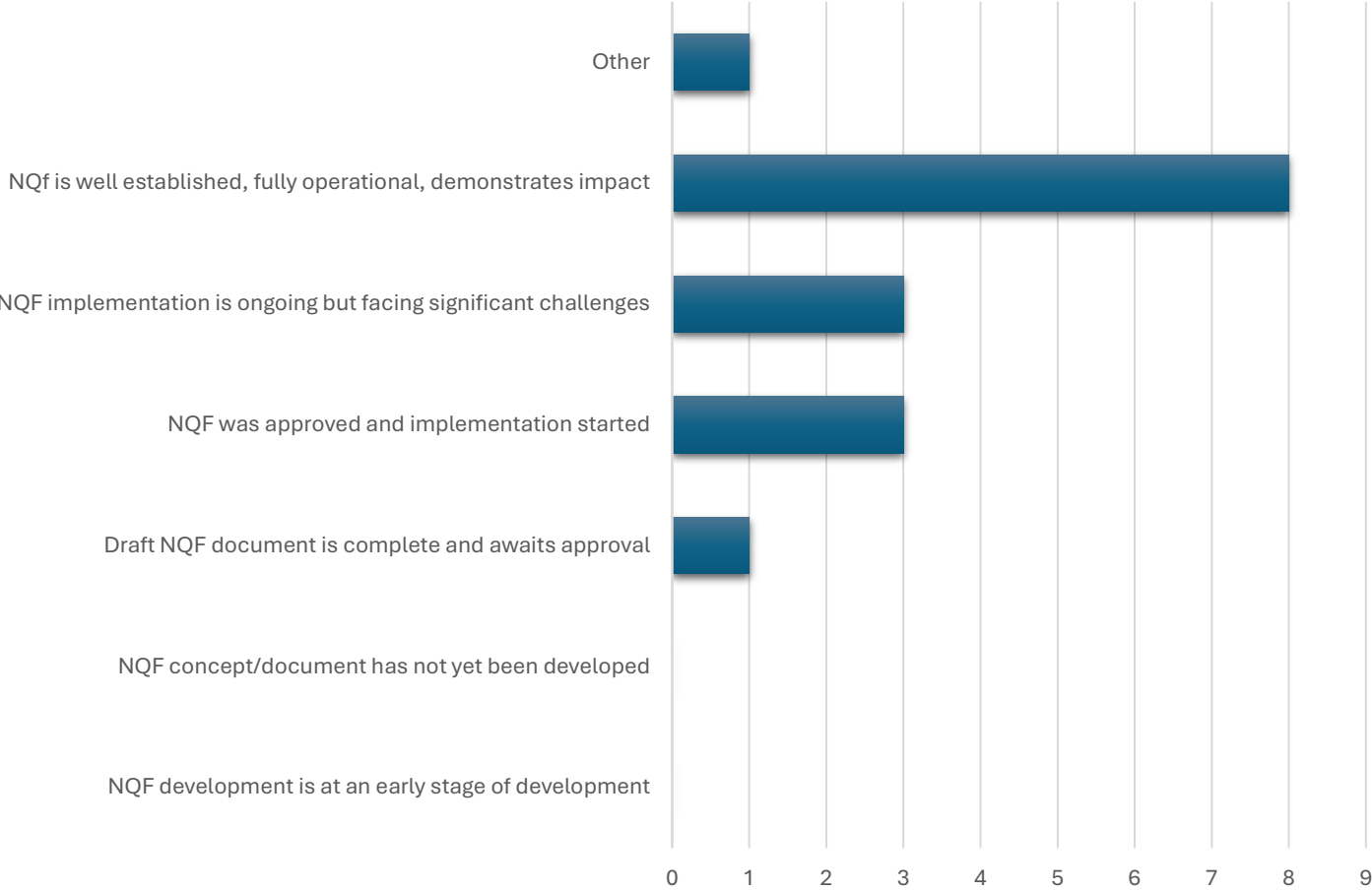
National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)

SADCQF Survey 2026 – Thematic Area 1



SADCQF Survey 2026

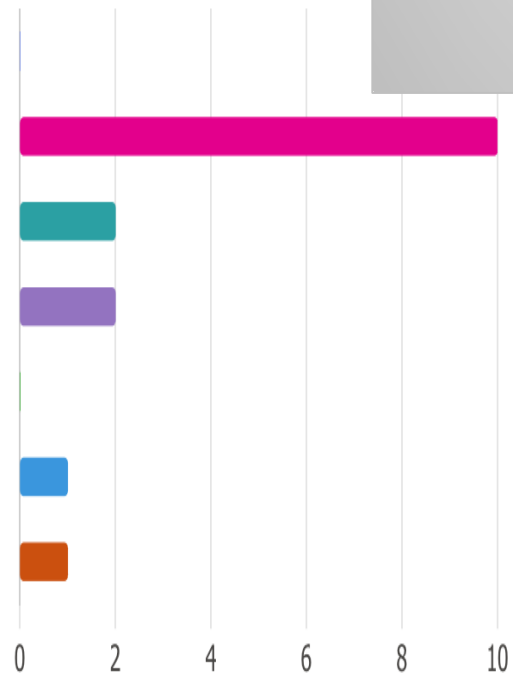
Question 5: Maturity of NQF



Question 6: Status of NQF revision

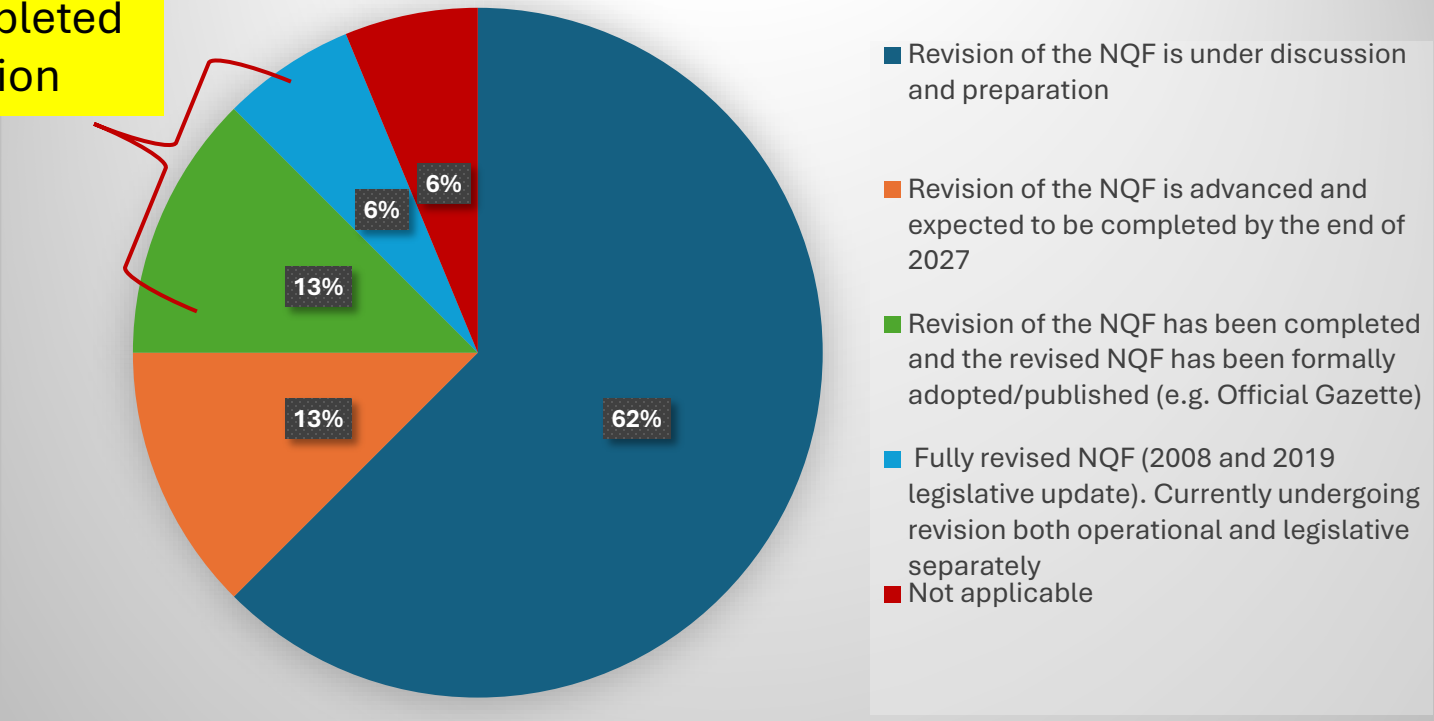
6. What is the status of the revision (reform) of your NQF?

- No revision of the NQF is currently planned 0
- Revision of the NQF is under discussion and preparation 10
- Revision of the NQF is advanced and expected to be completed by the end of... 2
- Revision of the NQF has been completed and the revised NQF has been formally... 2
- The NQF is not yet approved and operational 0
- Not applicable 1
- Other 1



19% resp.: completed revision

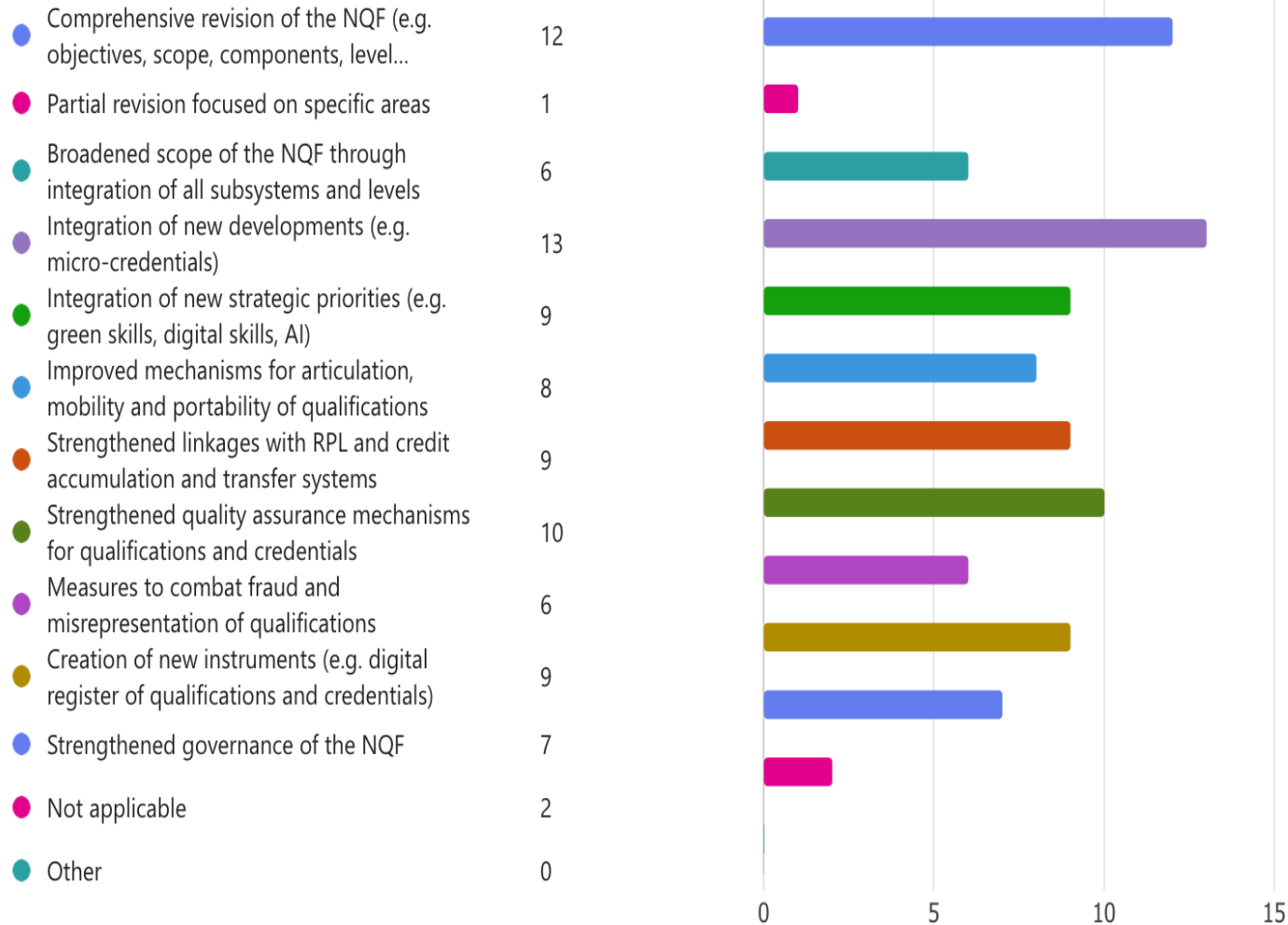
Question 6: Status of NQF revision



- 62% responses:** 6 MS are preparing the NQF revision: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia.
- 13% responses:** Zimbabwe – revision of NQF is well advanced – to be completed until 2027
- 19% responses:** 3 MS completed revision & legislated (Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia)

Question 7: What reforms in NQF?

7. What are the main **reforms and changes** introduced in the revised NQF? *(Multiple responses possible)*



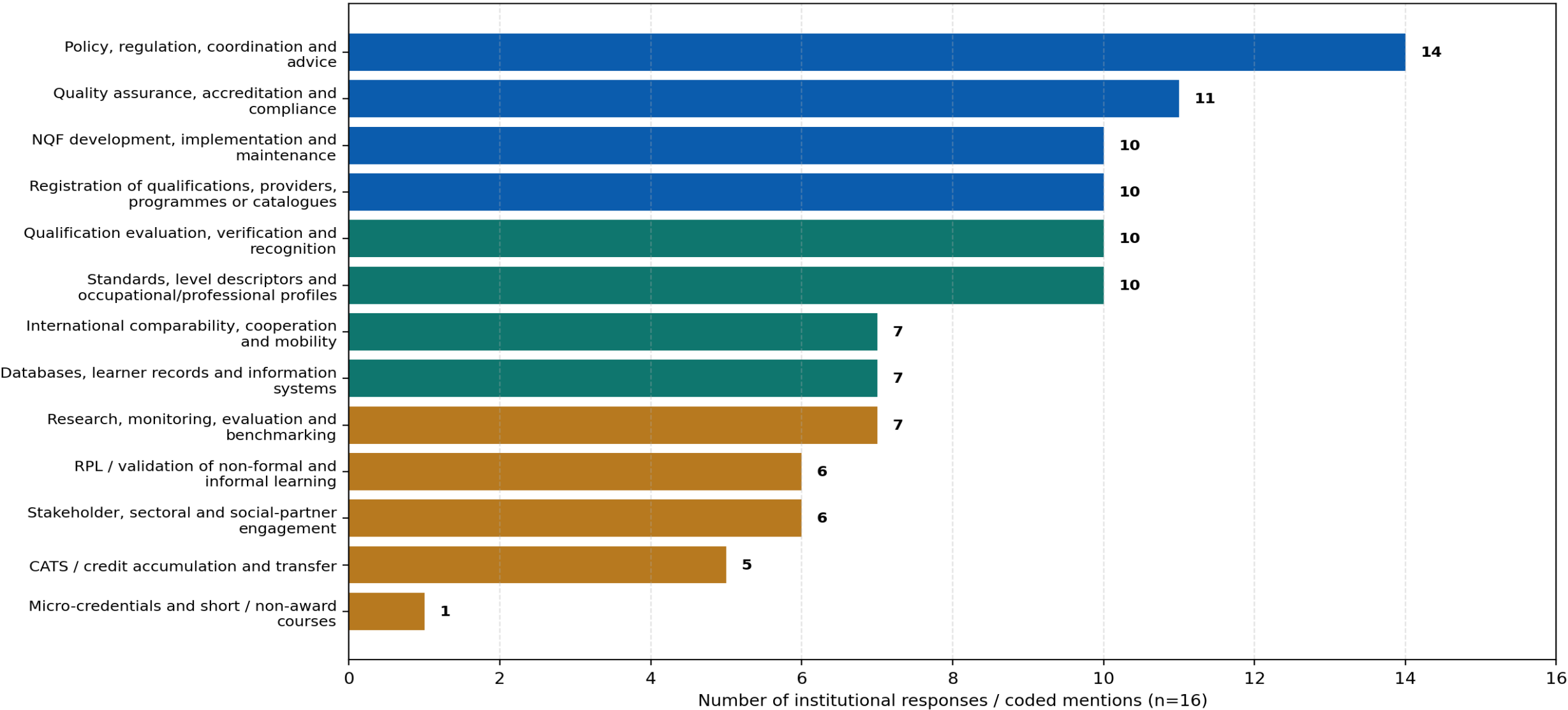
- Respondents selected between 3 and 10 options of changes, pointing to substantial scope and depth of planned and completed reforms

Top 5 reforms:

1. Integration of new developments (i.e. microcredentials) (13)
2. Comprehensive revision (e.g. objectives, scope, components, level descriptors...) (12)
3. Strengthened QA mechanisms (10)
4. Integration of new strategic priorities (i.e. Green skills, digital and AI skills) (9)
 - Strengthened linkages with RPL, CATS (9)
 - Creation of new tools (e.g.: digital register of qualifications & credentials) – (9)
5. Improved mechanisms for articulation, mobility, portability (8)

Question 9: Main specific functions of NQF lead institution (open question) - 1

Q9. Coded functions and activity areas of NQF lead institutions



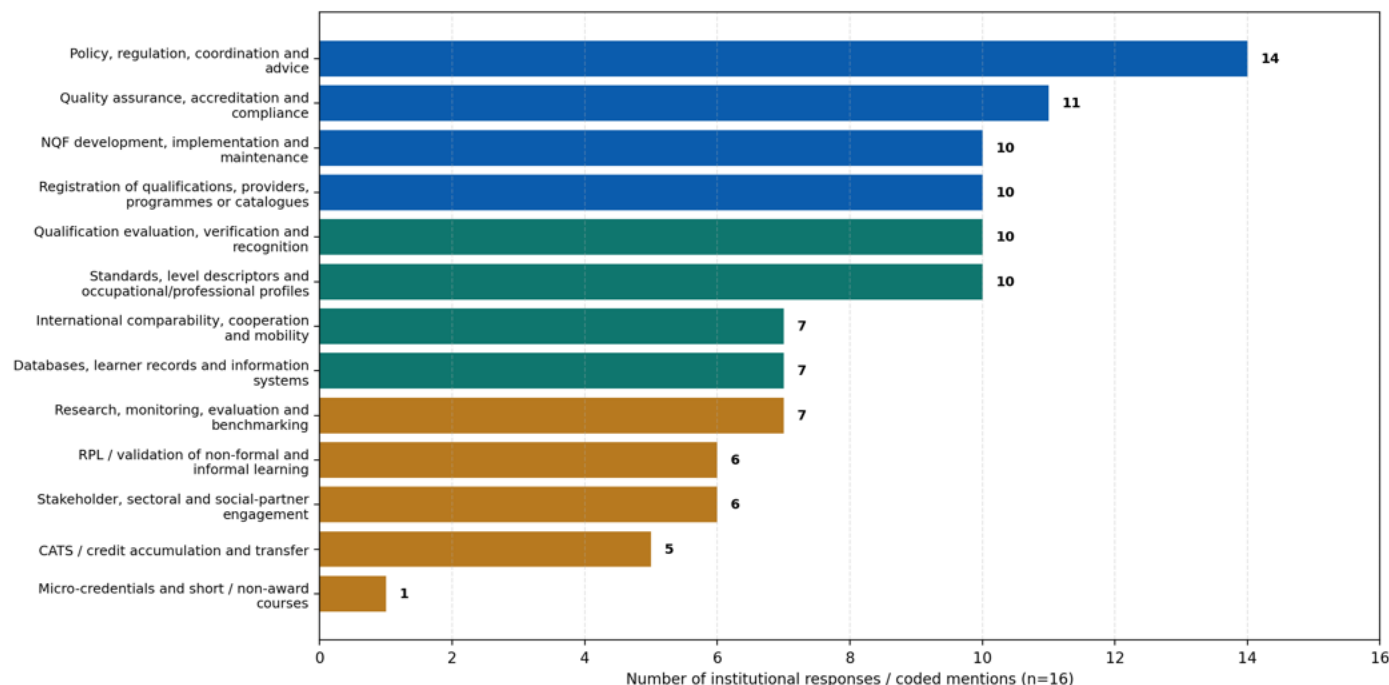
Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, Q9 open-ended responses. PT responses translated into EN. Multiple codes per response; counts are coded mentions.

SADCQF Survey 2026 — Open-ended responses

Question 9: Main functions and activity areas of NQF lead institutions

Coded synthesis of 16 institutional responses • Portuguese responses translated into English

Q9. Coded functions and activity areas of NQF lead institutions



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, Q9 open-ended responses. PT responses translated into EN. Multiple codes per response; counts are coded mentions.

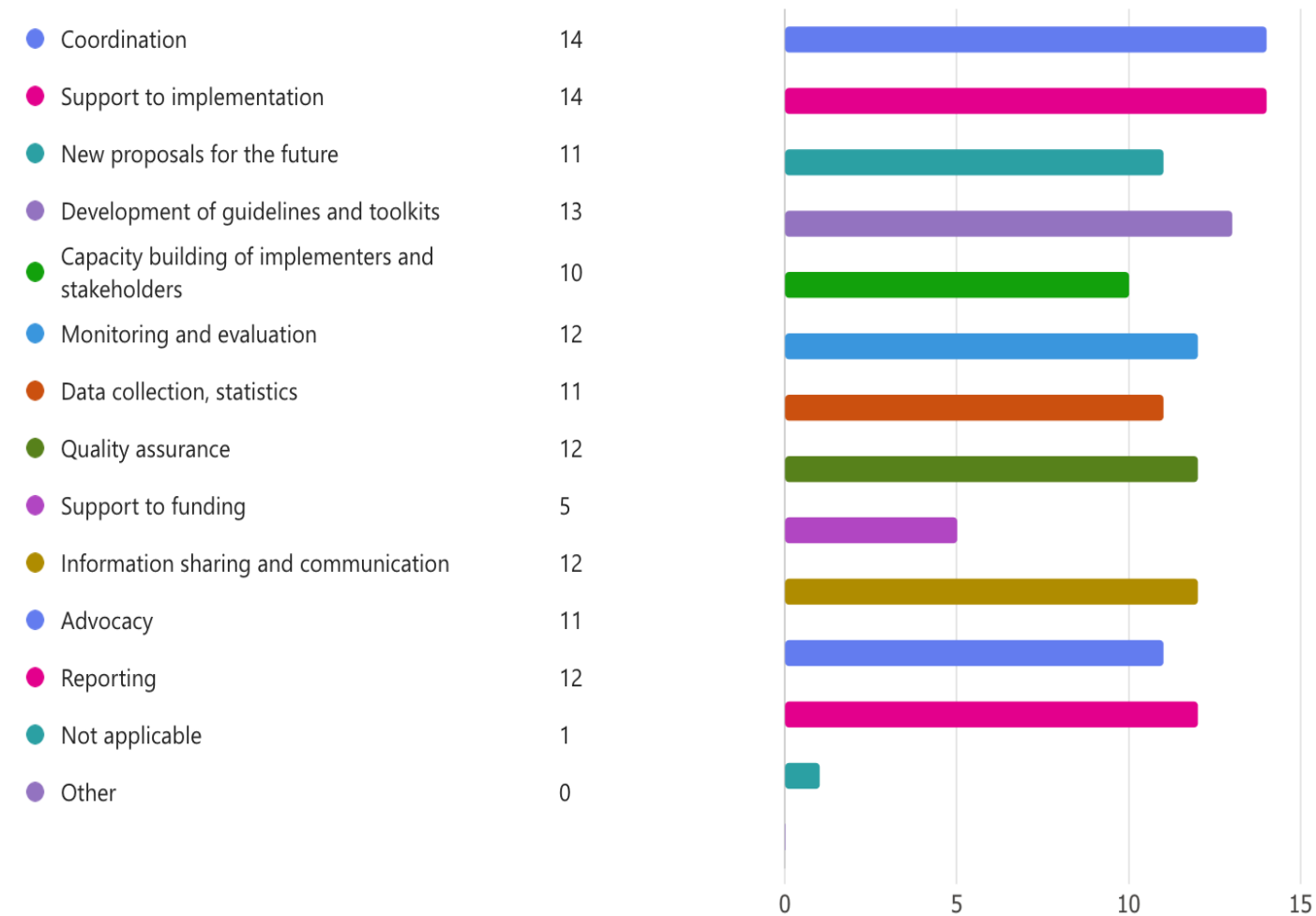
Question 9: Synthesis

- **Broad institutional mandates**
Lead bodies combine policy, regulation, QA, registration, recognition and data roles.
- **Strong governance signal**
Policy, regulation, coordination and advice appears in 14/16 responses.
- **Trust-building is central**
QA/accreditation (11) and recognition/verification (10) underpin mobility and comparability.
- **Clear SADCQF convergence**
Standards, CATS, RPL, learner records and comparability connect directly to the revised SADCQF.
- **Innovation agenda emerging**
Micro-credentials are explicit in one response, but related lifelong-learning and modular functions appear as foundations.

Method note: each response can be assigned to more than one code; counts indicate how many institutional responses mention a theme, not a single-choice ranking. Duplicate country responses are kept as separate institutional responses; 'Not applicable' was not coded.

Question 10: Role of NQF lead institution in respect to other connected policies (RPL, CATS, MC)

10. What is the role of the NQF lead institution in relation to other connected policies, such as RPL, Credit Accumulation and Transfer System, Micro-Credentials. *(Multiple responses possible)*

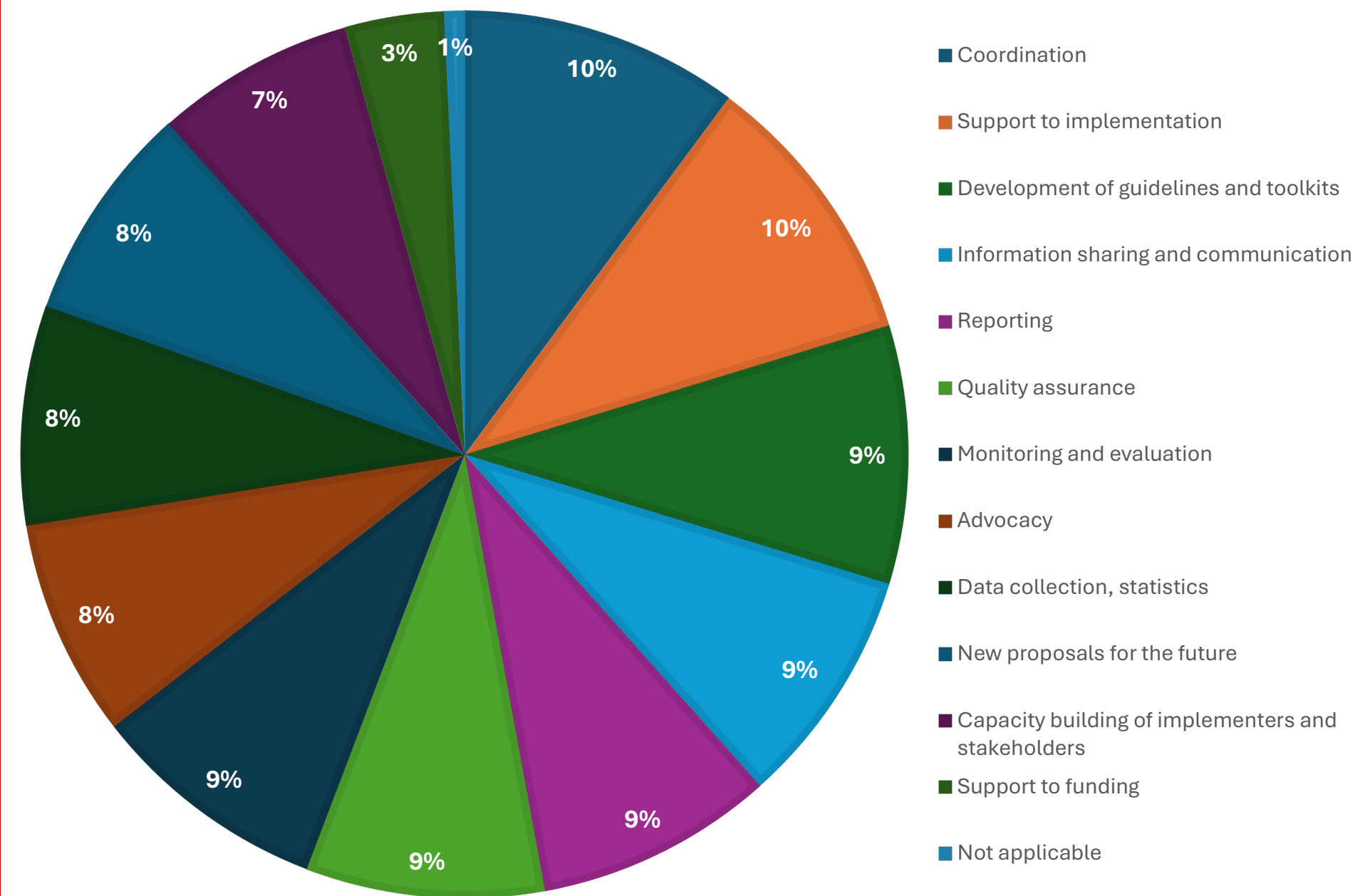


The functions of NQF lead institutions are broad and increasingly multi-dimensional.

Top Ranked functions :

1. Coordination and Support to implementation (14 each)
2. Development of guidelines and toolkits (13)
3. Monitoring/evaluation; Quality assurance; Info-sharing and Communication; Reporting (12 each)
4. Data/statistics, Advocacy and New proposals for the future (11 each).

QUESTION 10 (CONTINUED): FUNCTIONS NQF LEAD INSTITUTIONS IN RESPECT TO RELATED POLICIES (RPL, CATS, MC...)



- Frequency of responses: similar across Functions
- Comparable views across MS concerning functions of NQF lead institutions

1



National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)

2



Registers of Qualifications and Credentials

3



Quality Assurance

4



Micro-credentials

5



Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

6



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

7



Harmonised Occupational Standards and Qualifications

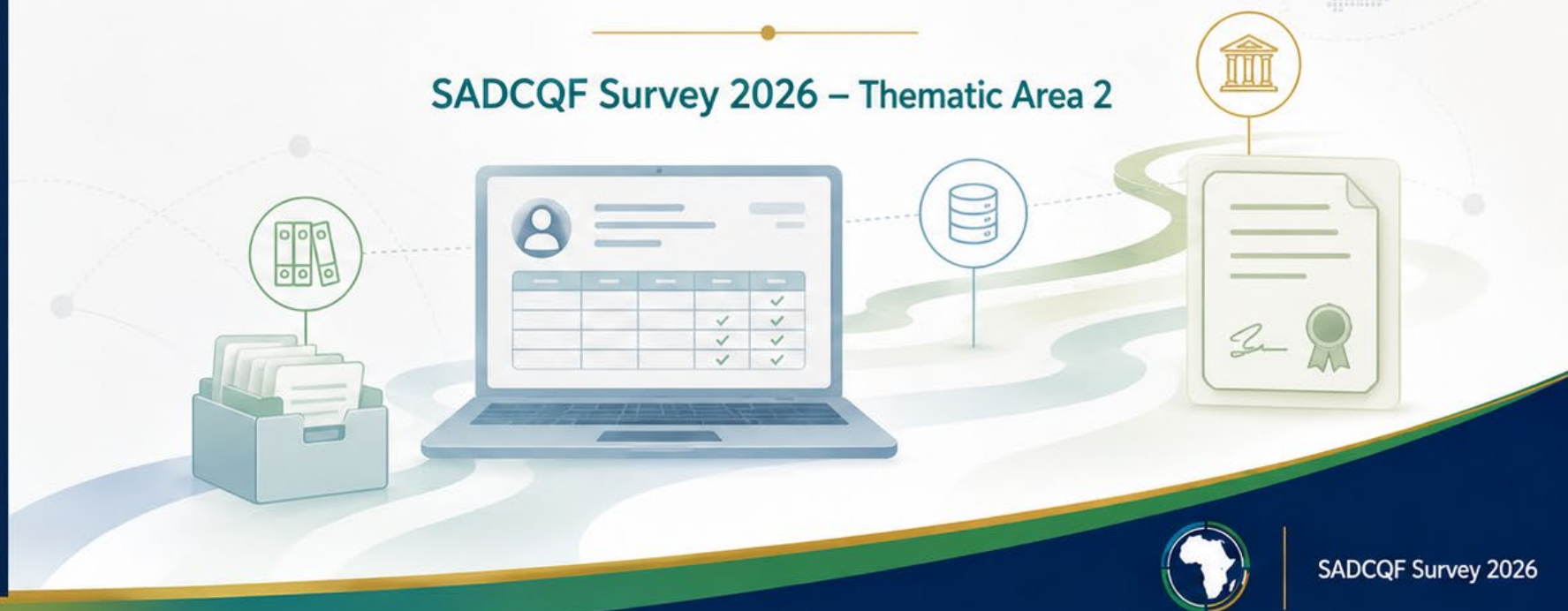
8



Green Skills

Registers of Qualifications and Credentials

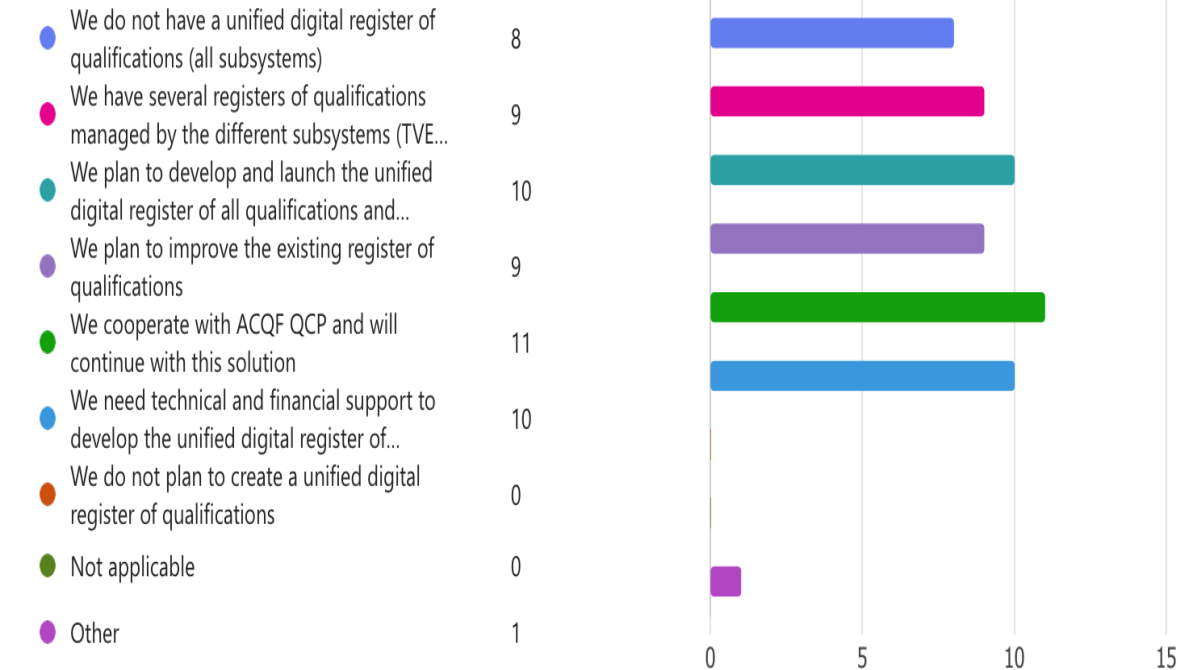
SADCQF Survey 2026 – Thematic Area 2



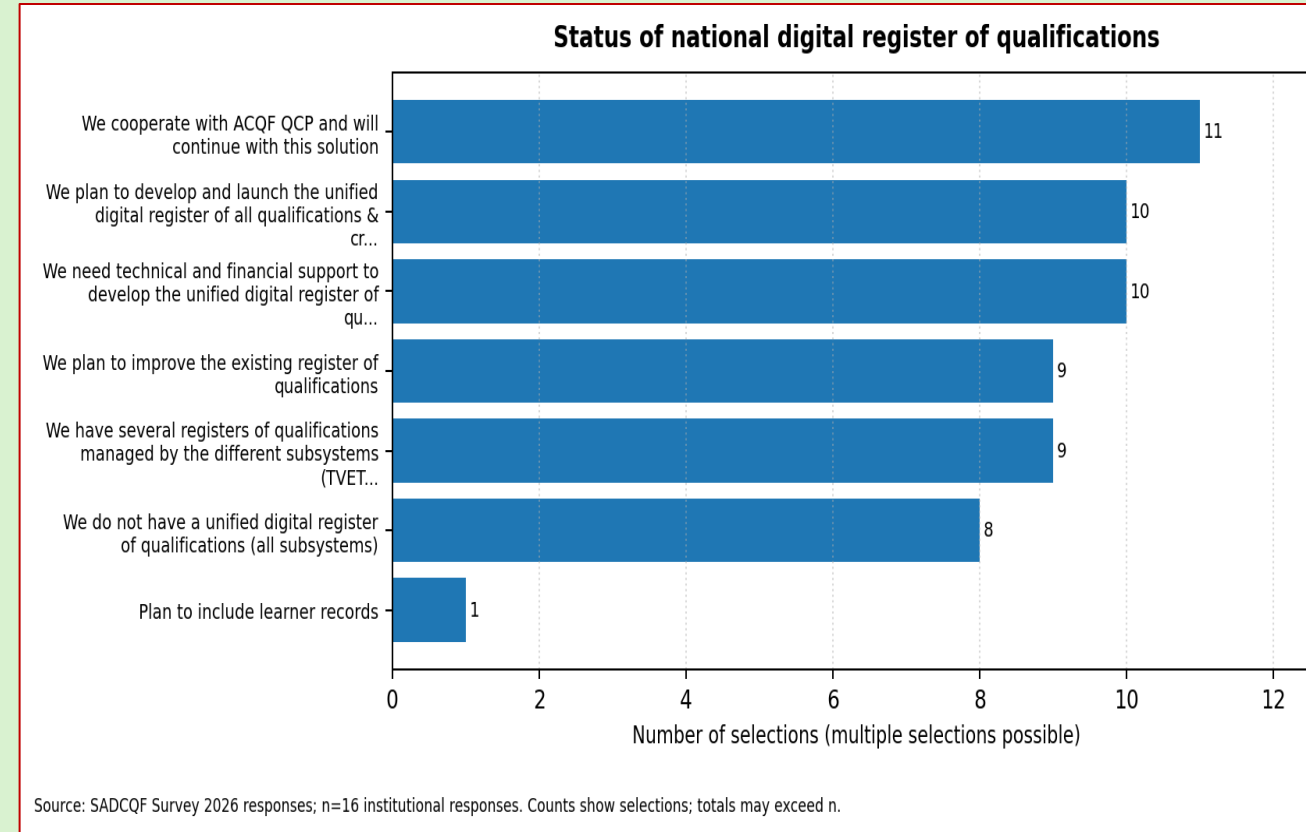
SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 11: Status of NQF Register

11. What is the status of development and operationalisation of the NQF register of qualifications? (Multiple responses possible)



RANKED RESPONSES

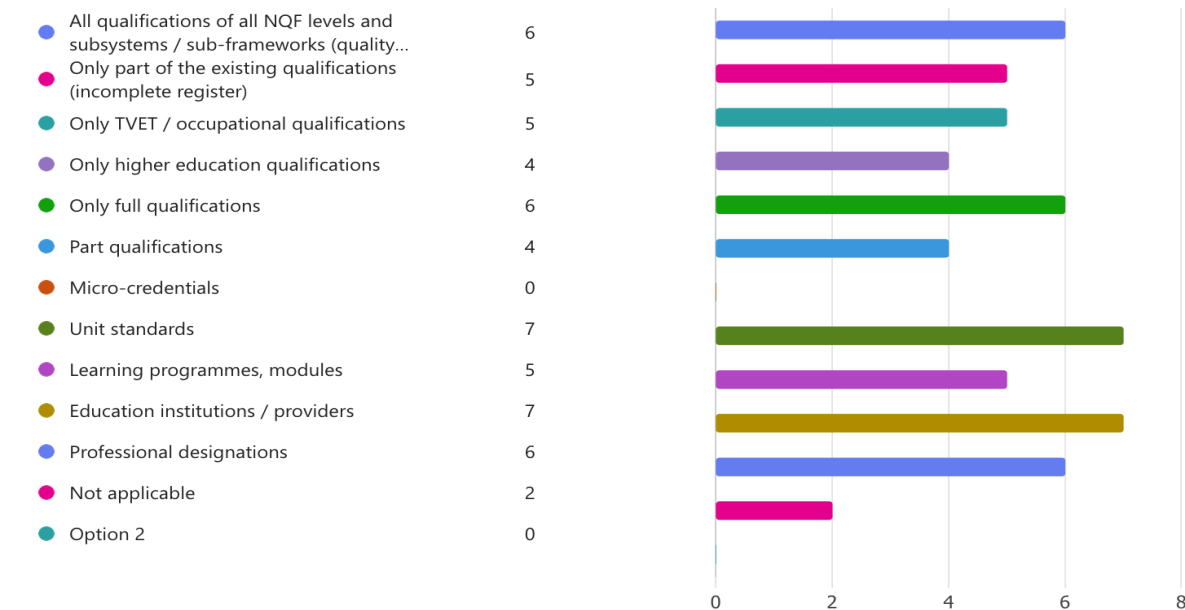


Important message for planning Most MS:

- Do not have a unified digital register; have several registers – per subsystem of education
- Plan to develop and launch the unified digital register of qualifications and need technical and financial support to do it. Many cooperate with QCP ACQF and wish to continue with this solution

Question 12: content of register(s) of qualifications

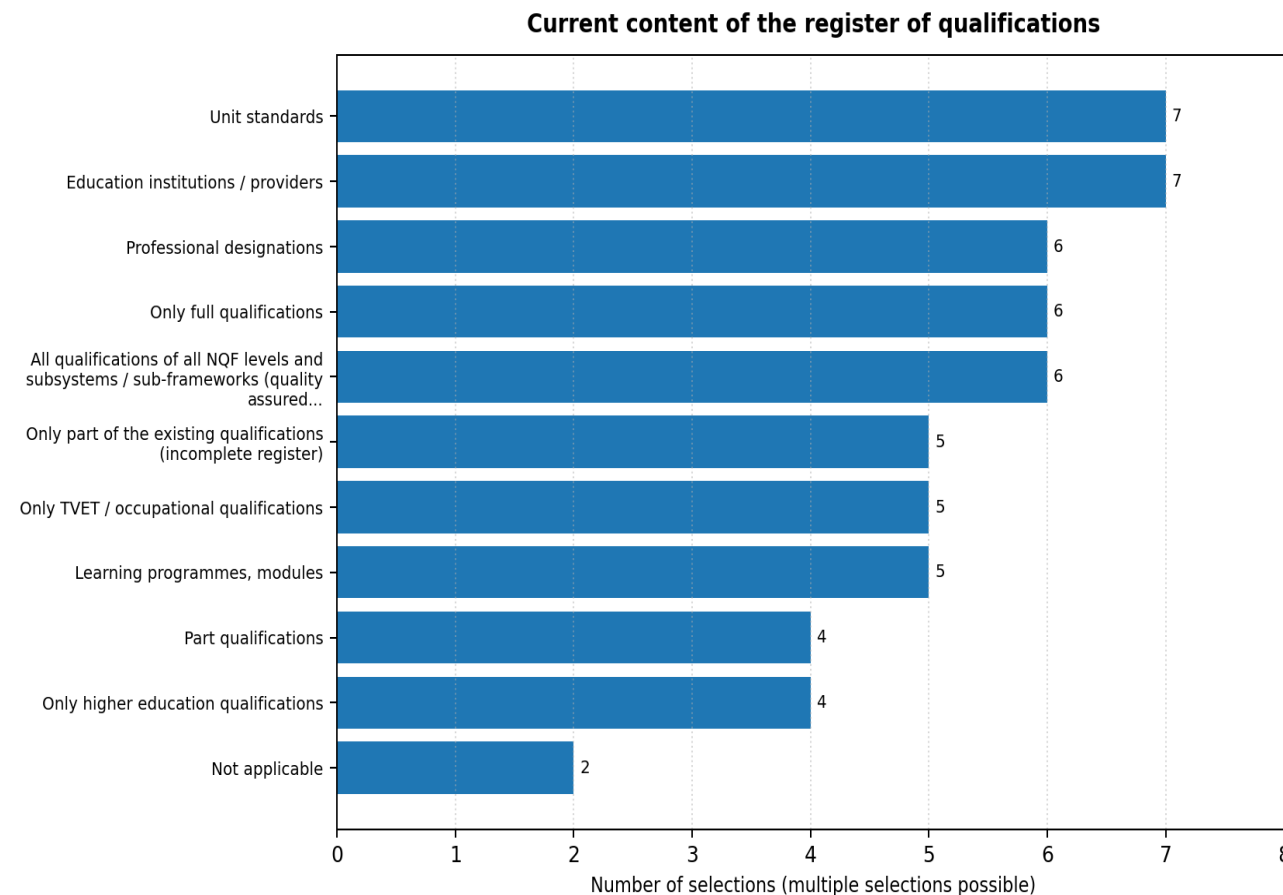
12. Please could you share information on the current **content** of your register of qualifications? It includes: *(Multiple responses possible)*



Incomplete coverage of qualifications landscape in existing registers

- 6 existing registers include all qualifications (all levels)
- 4 registers include only HE qualifications
- 5 registers include only TVET qualifications
- Only 4 registers include “part qualifications”

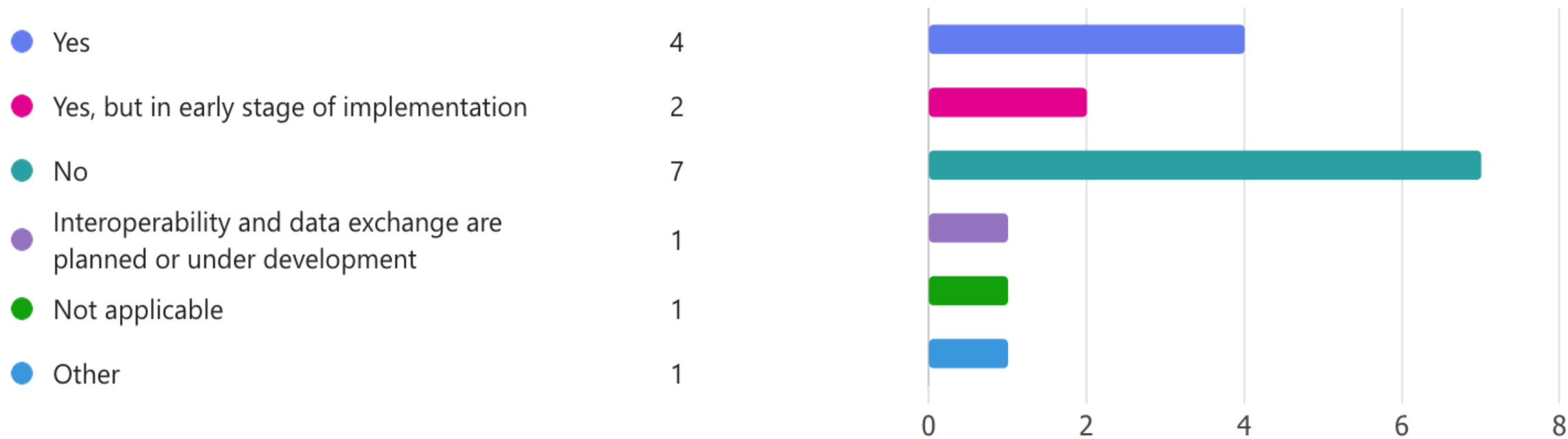
Ranked responses



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026 responses; n=16 institutional responses. Counts show selections; totals may exceed n.

Question 13: Interoperability and data exchanges with registers from other countries / regions

13. Does your country have agreements / operational arrangements with other countries, NQFs or regional qualifications frameworks (RQFs) regarding **interoperability and data exchange** with your NQF register?



Yes: Botswana, Eswatini, Mauritius, South Africa (not operational); **In early stage of implementation:** Zambia
No: Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles
Planned or under development: Mauritius, Zimbabwe

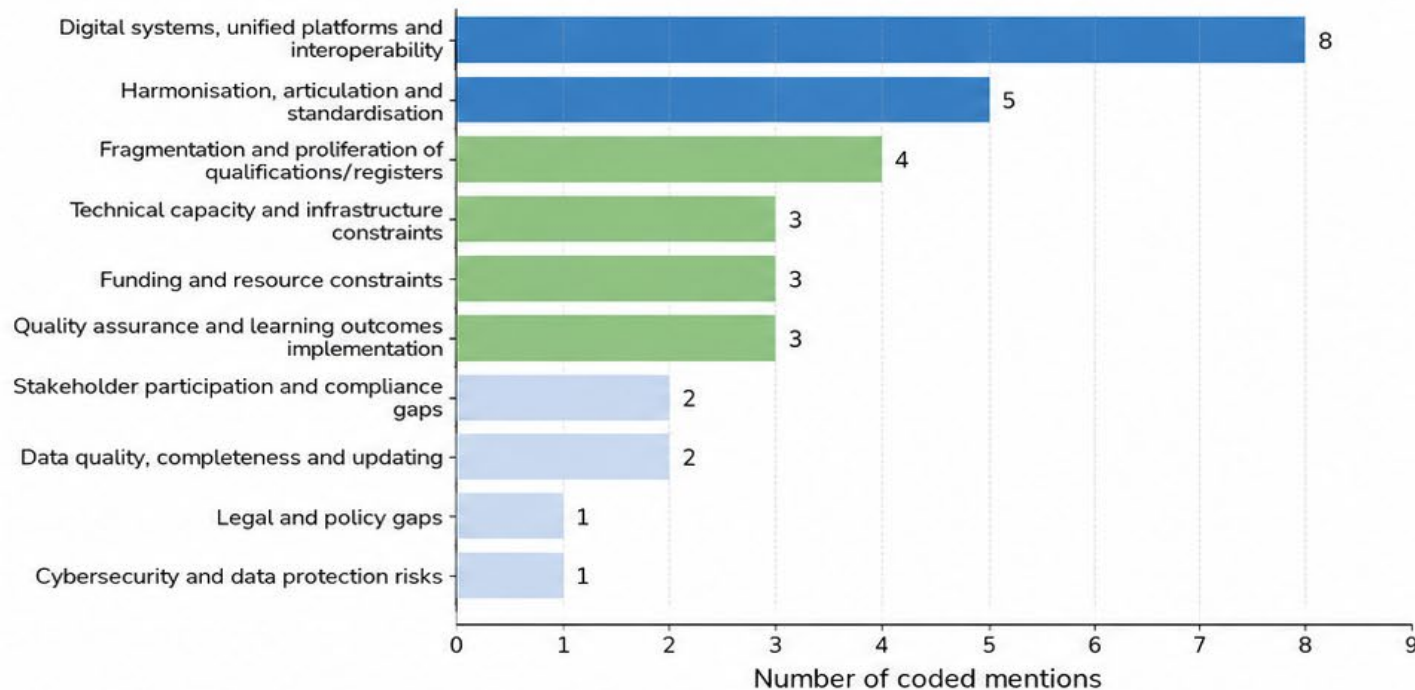
Question 14: Challenges affecting effectiveness of registers

SADCQF Survey 2026 — Open-ended responses

Question 14: Main challenges affecting the effectiveness of registers of qualifications

Coded synth 14 16 institutional responses • Portuguese responses translated into English

Question 13: Coded challenges affecting the effectiveness of registers of qualifications



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, Q13 open-ended responses.
Multiple codes per response; counts are coded mentions.



Smart interpretation



Digitalisation is the dominant challenge

Unified platforms, interoperability and system modernisation appear in 8 coded mentions.



Harmonisation remains a major issue

Standardisation across sub-frameworks, titling, credits and integration of learning-outcomes-based qualifications appears in 5 mentions.



Fragmentation reduces effectiveness

Multiple registers and qualification proliferation appear in 4 mentions, pointing to the need for more coherent national architectures.



Capacity and resources matter

Technical capacity/infrastructure, quality-assurance implementation and funding each appear in 3 mentions.



Specific but strategic risks remain

Data currency (2), stakeholder compliance (2), legal gaps (1) and cybersecurity (1) are less frequent but important issues.



Method note: each response can be assigned to more than one code; counts indicate how many institutional responses mention a theme, not a single-choice ranking. Blank, 'none' and 'not applicable' responses were not coded as challenge themes.

Question 14: Challenges affecting effectiveness of registers (2)

Synthesis – Register management and challenges

- Register management ranges from statutory electronic databases and online back-end systems to Word files, spreadsheets, subsystem registers and legacy information systems.
- The most recurrent challenges: legal framework, lack of a unified/interoperable national platform, fragmented registers across subsystems, incomplete or outdated data, weak mechanisms for immediate update/revision, limited technical capacity, insufficient infrastructure, cybersecurity and data-protection concerns, resource constraints, and harmonisation of qualification titles and learning outcomes.
- A politically useful conclusion is that register development should be treated as a regional public-good agenda: each country maintains its national system, but SADC supports common data principles, minimum fields, interoperability and QCP alignment.

1



National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)

2



Registers of Qualifications and Credentials

3



Quality Assurance

4



Micro-credentials

5



Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

6



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

7



Harmonised Occupational Standards and Qualifications

8



Green Skills

Quality Assurance

SADCQF Survey 2026 – Thematic Area 3

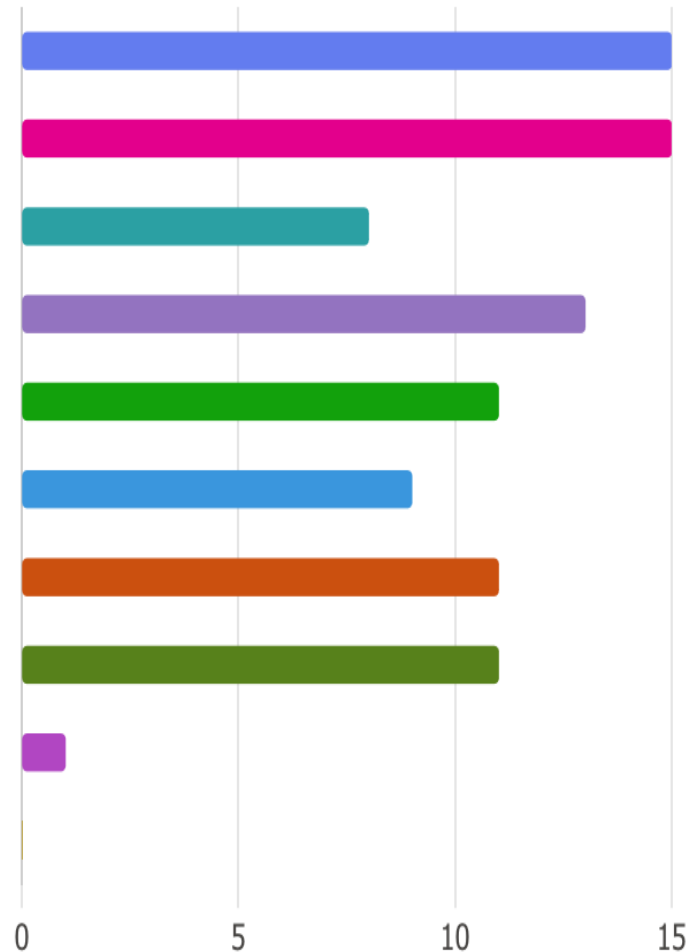


SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 18: Scope of QA system - themes

18. The existing system of QA of qualifications / NQF addresses the **following items**. (Multiple responses possible).

- Addresses the qualifications quality chain, from design of standards underpinning... 15
- Addresses the application of the learning outcomes approach 15
- Includes feedback instruments and processes supporting continuous quality... 8
- Addresses internal and external quality assurance, and the regular review of qual... 13
- Is based on measurable objectives, standards, and guidelines for quality... 11
- Is supported by resources; 9
- Provides transparent information-sharing on results of evaluation. 11
- Takes account of African Union policy orientations such as African Standards and... 11
- Not applicable 1
- Other 0



Responses indicate: comparability of QA systems

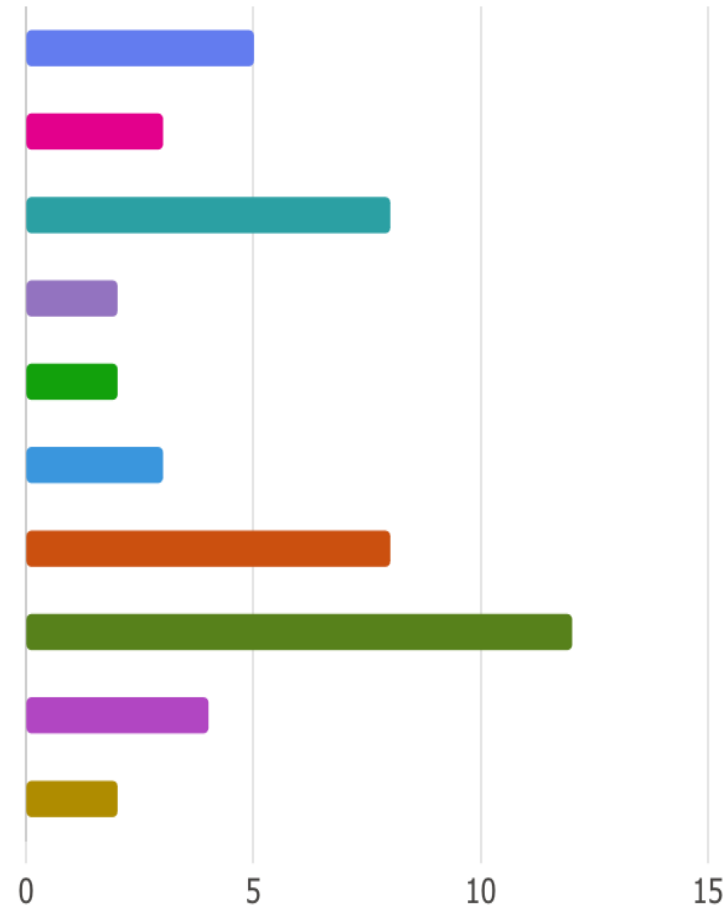
Highest proximity / comparability:

- QA addresses quality chain
- QA addresses application of learning outcomes approach
- QA addresses internal and external QA and regular review of QA agencies
- Is based on measurable objectives, standards.
- Provides transparent information on results of evaluation
- Takes account of AU policies – such as ASG-QA

Question 19: Challenges affecting QA of NQF

19. What are the **main challenges** affecting quality of the NQF and qualifications (all subsystems, types and levels). (*Multiple responses possible*)

- NQF is still a policy area with limited experience 5
- The NQF does not have a specific QA framework / mechanisms 3
- Each subsystem uses different QA policy and mechanisms 8
- The QA mechanisms of the NQF are not harmonised with those of the QA... 2
- Education and training providers are not aware of the NQF QA framework 2
- Burdensome procedures, overlaps 3
- Limited cooperation between institutions / subsystems 8
- Inadequate resources (human, technology) 12
- Lack of information and communication for stakeholders, providers 4
- Other 2



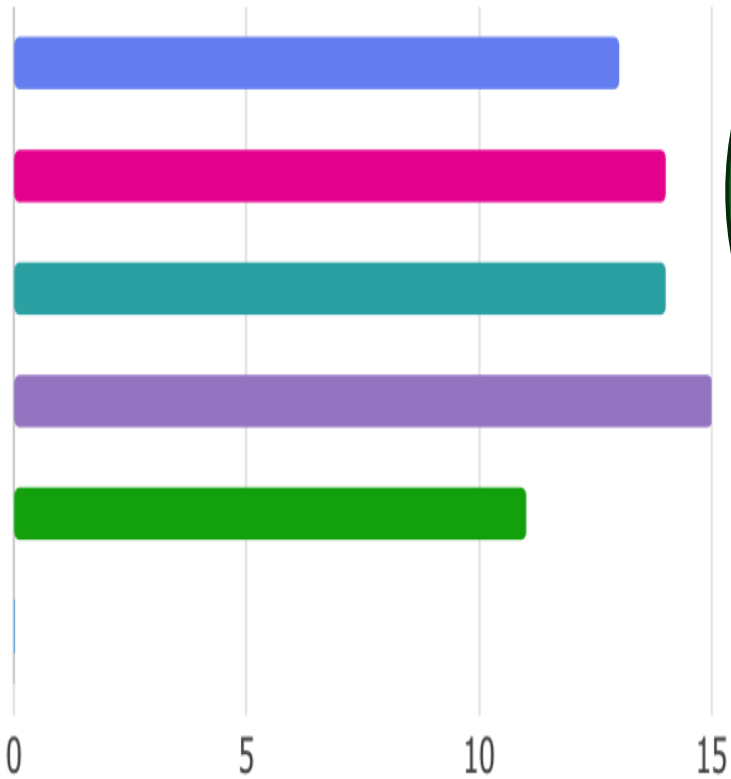
Top 3 challenges:

- Inadequate resources (human, technology)
- Limited cooperation between institutions / sub-systems
- Each sub-system uses different QA policy and mechanisms

Question 20: How can SADCQF support QA and enhancement of qualifications and the NQF?

20. How can **SADCQF support quality assurance and enhancement** of your qualifications and the NQF? *(Multiple responses possible)*

- Technical support specific for the country's context and its main issues and priorities 13
- Sharing of good practice and instruments among all Member States 14
- Learn from other regional communities and global networks 14
- Develop a Regional SADCQF Guideline on Quality assurance and enhancement of... 15
- Development of harmonised regional standards for qualifications 11
- Other 0



Convergence of responses

Top rank:
Development of SADCQF QA Guideline

Question 21: Recommendations for design of SADC QA Guideline (1)

– open question



SADCQF Survey 2026 – Question 21

Key messages for the future Regional SADCQF Quality Assurance and Enhancement Guideline



What the responses show



- The strongest shared expectation is a Guideline that builds **mutual trust, recognition, comparability and mobility** across Member States.



- Respondents want a forward-looking Guideline that explicitly covers **AI in education, micro-credentials, digital or online learning**, and other emerging practices.



- Digitalisation is a major design requirement:** digital tools, quality data systems, interoperable registers, digital learner records, and even virtual audits.



- The Guideline should **align with ASG-QA** and, where relevant, **ESG and ISG**, giving SADC a regionally grounded but internationally coherent QA reference point.



- Member States ask for **practical implementation support:** benchmarks, peer review, templates, monitoring indicators, and flexible approaches adapted to different national capacities.



- The scope should cover **all subsystems and forms of learning**, while supporting quality standards for qualification design, assessment, accreditation, and provider review.



Important specific proposals

1

Standalone regional QA Guideline

2

Common policy on titling qualifications

3

Clearer SADC targets on MRAs

4

Standardised quality data architecture



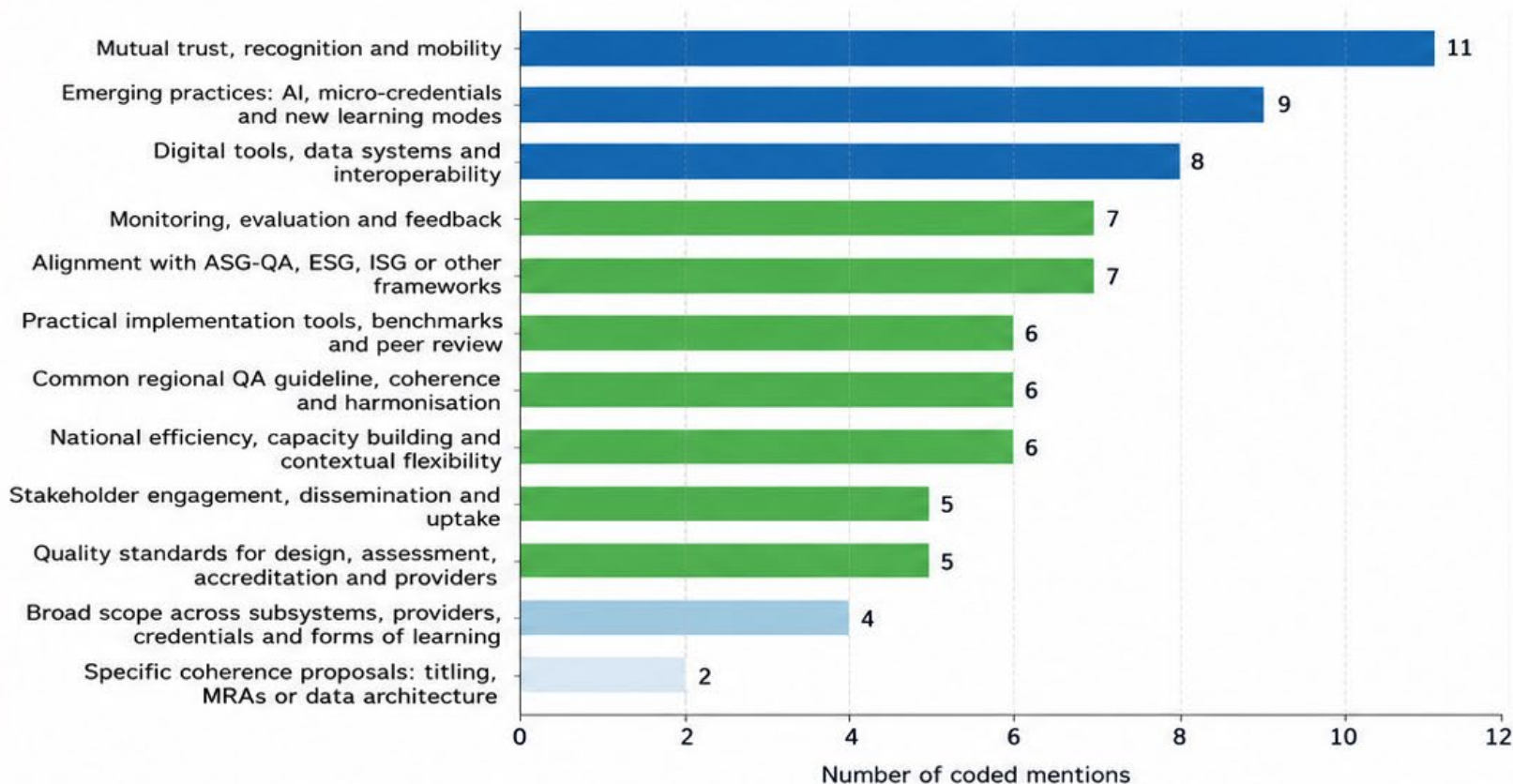
Based on 16 institutional responses, including 15 substantive responses.



SADCQF Survey 2026 – Question 21

Coded expectations for the future Regional SADCQF Quality Assurance and Enhancement Guideline

Number of coded mentions by theme



n=16 institutional responses; 15 substantive responses

Top signals from the coded results

- 1 Mutual trust, recognition and mobility**
11 mentions
- 2 Emerging practices: AI, micro-credentials and new learning modes**
9 mentions
- 3 Digital tools, data systems and interoperability**
8 mentions



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, Question 21 open-ended responses.
Counts show coded thematic mentions; one response may contain multiple themes.

1 National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)

2 Registers of Qualifications and Credentials

3 Quality Assurance

4 Micro-credentials

5 Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

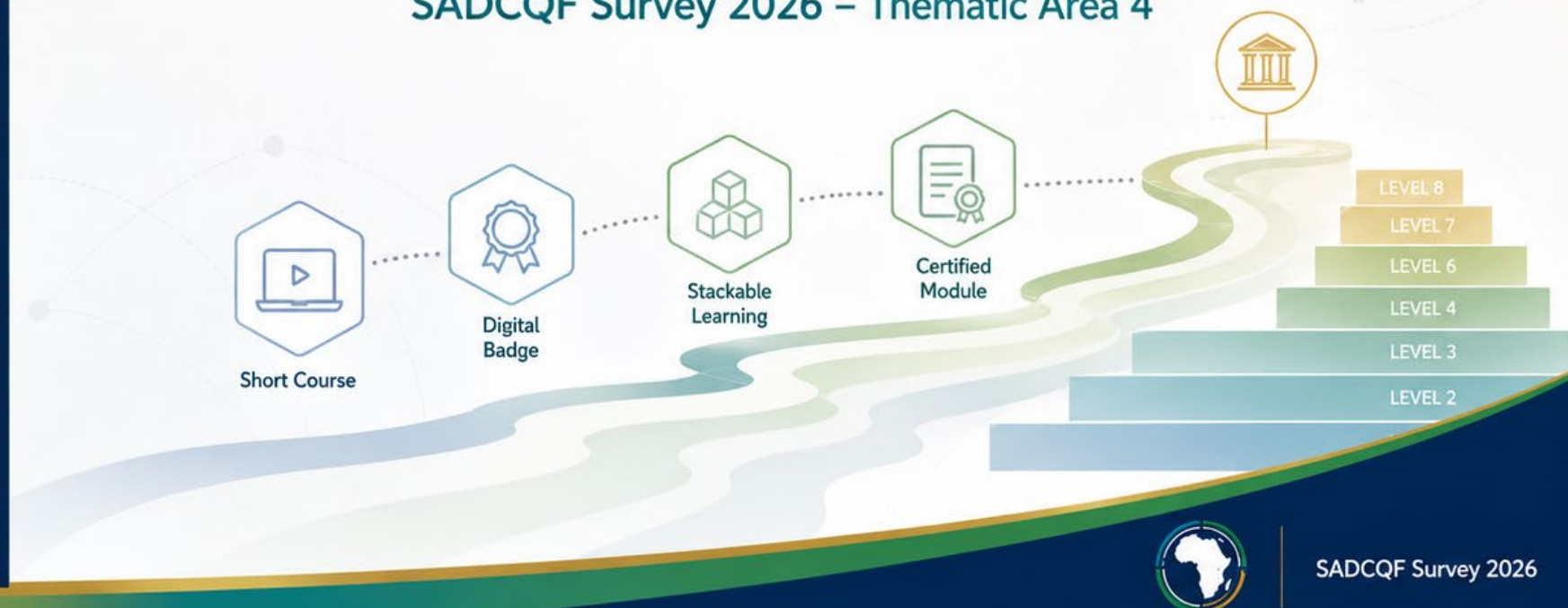
6 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

7 Harmonised Occupational Standards and Qualifications

8 Green Skills

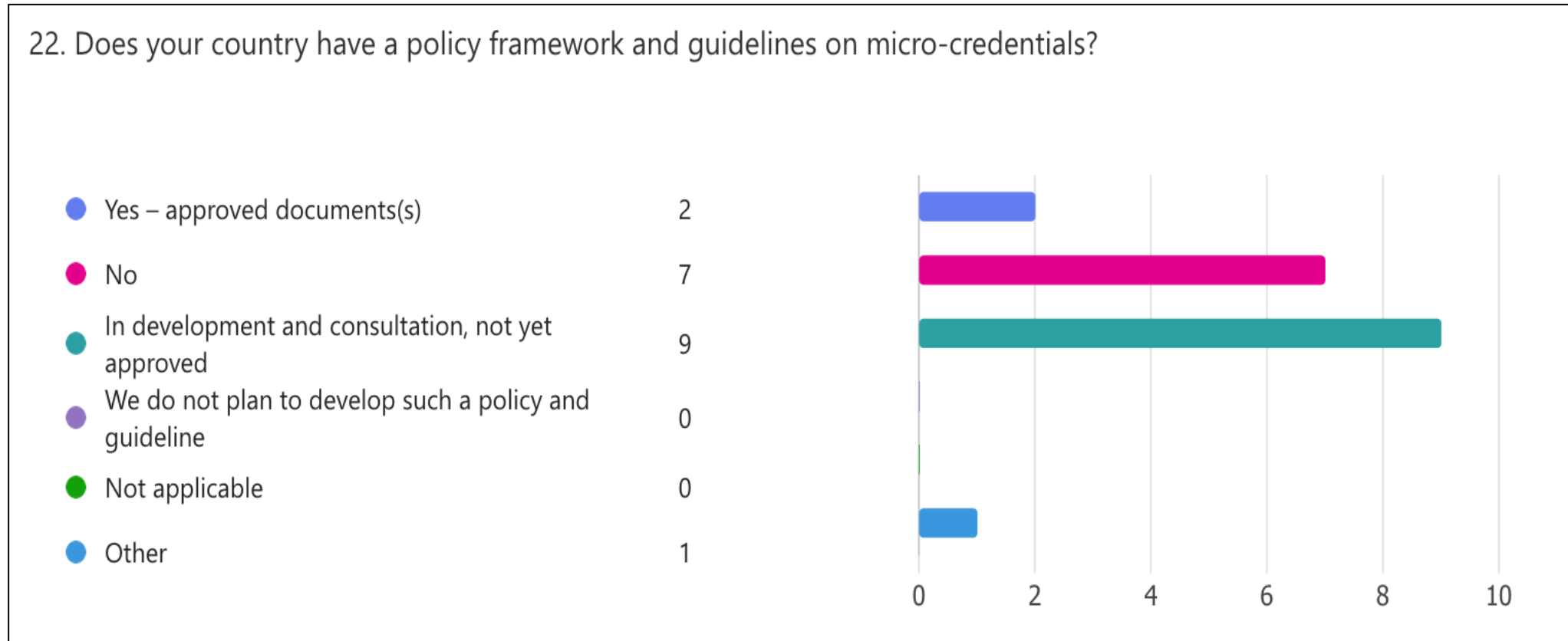
Micro-credentials

SADCQF Survey 2026 – Thematic Area 4



SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 22: Policy framework / guidelines on Micro-credentials

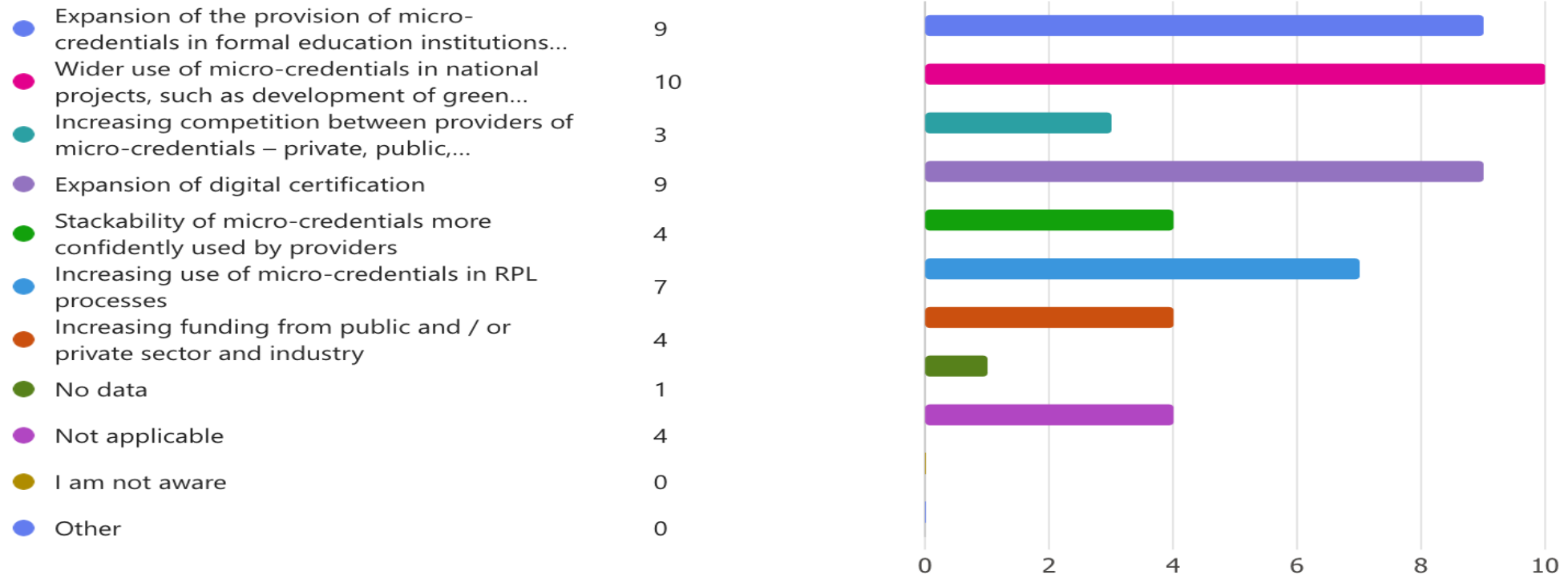


Main signals:

- The majority of Member States are developing Micro-credentials's policies / guidelines. This process is ongoing, the new policies / guidelines are not yet approved.
- Mauritius: SADC pioneer and only Member State with an approved Microcredential guideline.

Question 24: New developments in the national market of microcredentials

24. What **new / developments could** you highlight related to the market of micro-credentials in your country. (*Multiple responses possible*).

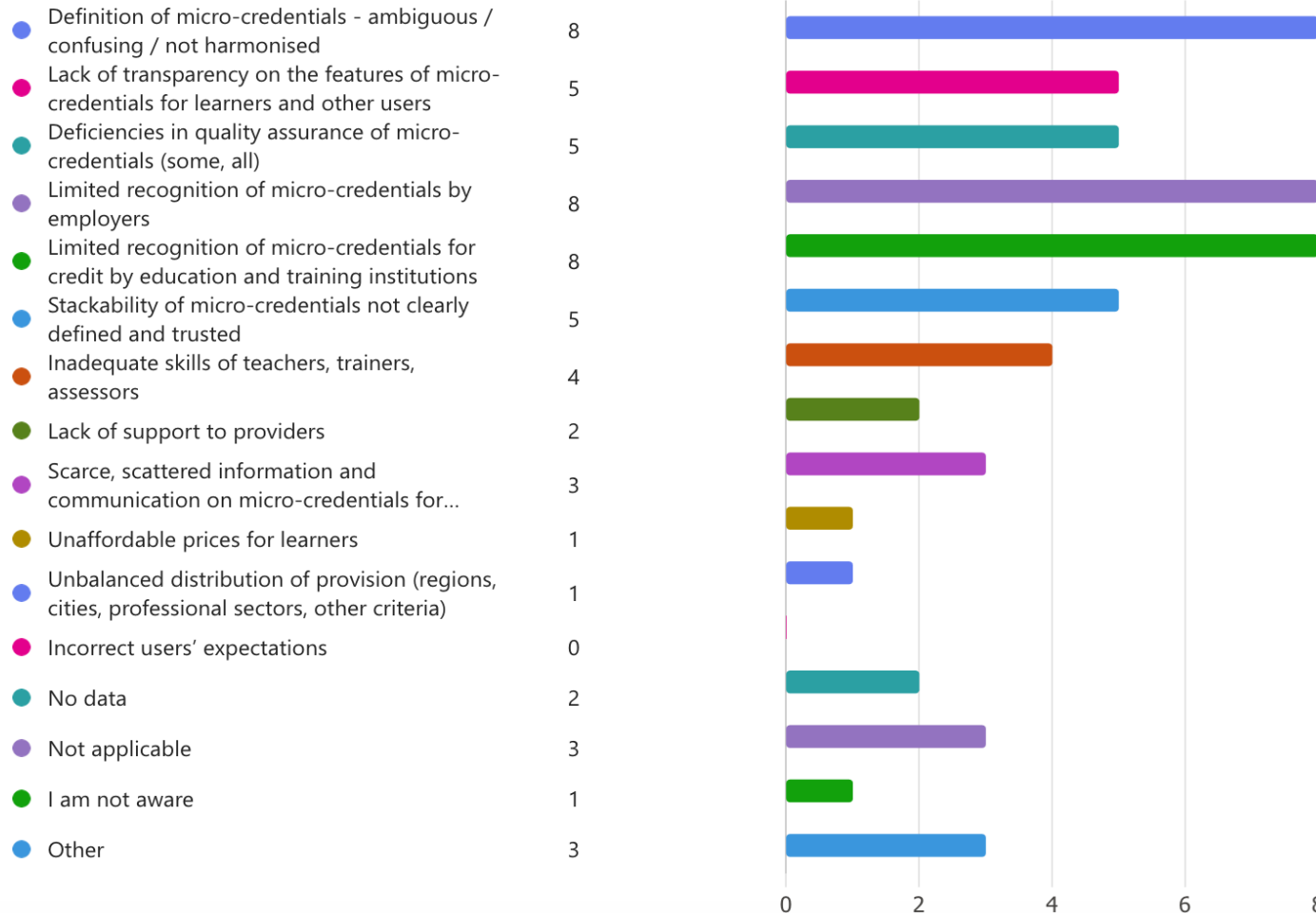


Main signals:

- **Top trends:** 1) Wider use of micro-credentials in national projects; 2) Expansion of provision of micro-credentials in formal education institutions; 3) Expansion of digital certification; 4) Increasing use of MC in RPL processes.
- This shows that Micro-credentials are **used and expanding in different forms of provision**, preceding and ahead of development of policy frameworks.

Question 25: Issues and challenges related to provision of Micro-credentials currently

25. What important **issues and challenges** can you highlight related to the provision of micro-credentials in your country. (Multiple responses possible).



Main signals:

- **3 top ranked issues and challenges:**
a) Ambiguous / confusing / not harmonised definition of MC; b) Limited recognition of MC by employers; c) Limited recognition of MC by education institutions.
- **Other issues and challenges acknowledged by respondents:** a) Lack of transparency of Micro-credentials for learners / users; b) Deficiencies in QA of MC; c) Stackability of MC not clearly defined and trusted

1 National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)

2 Registers of Qualifications and Credentials

3 Quality Assurance

4 Micro-credentials

5 Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

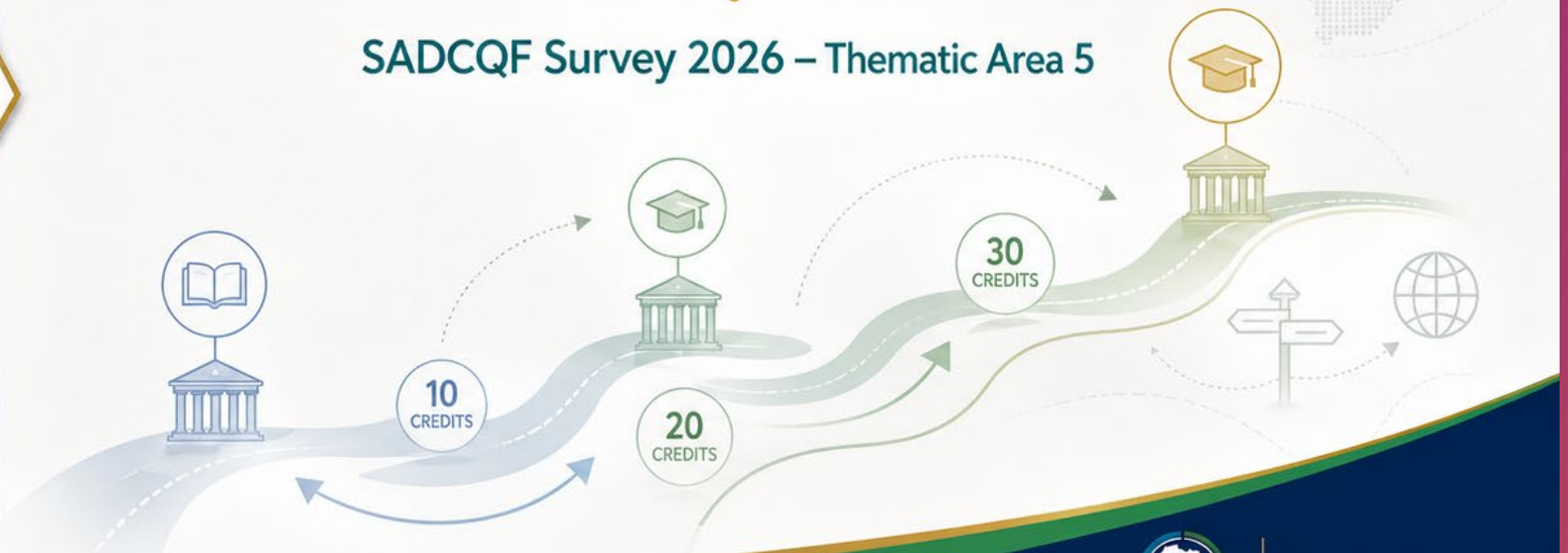
6 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

7 Harmonised Occupational Standards and Qualifications

8 Green Skills

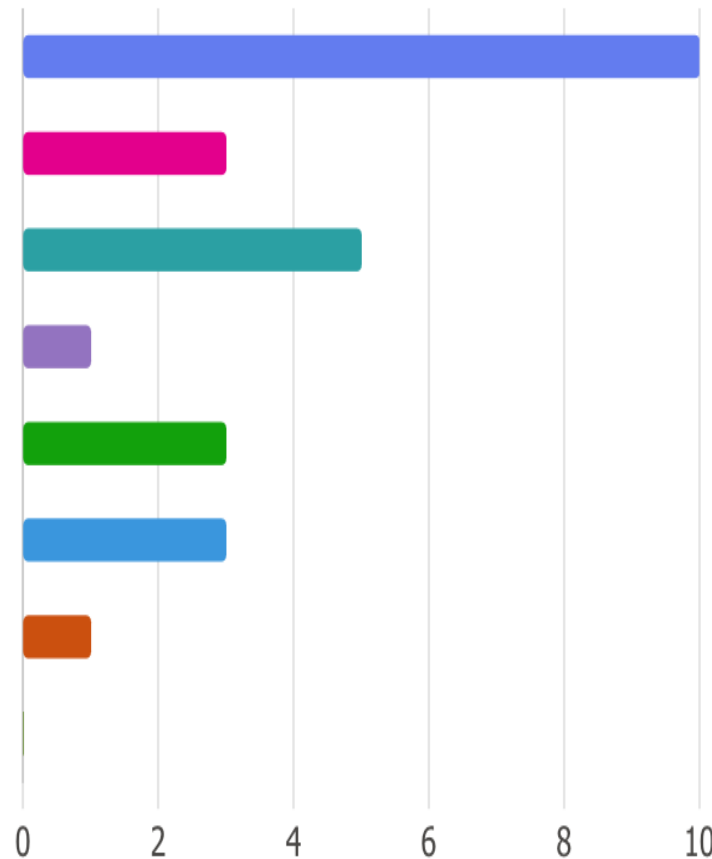
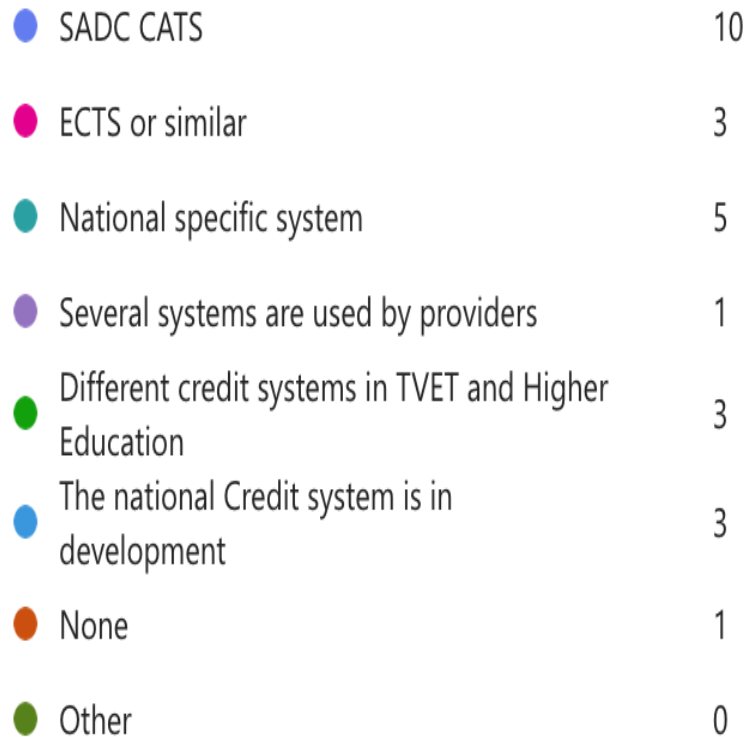
Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

SADCQF Survey 2026 – Thematic Area 5



Question 27: What credit systems are used?

27. What credit accumulation and transfer system(s) is (are) applied in your national education and training system?
(Multiple responses possible).



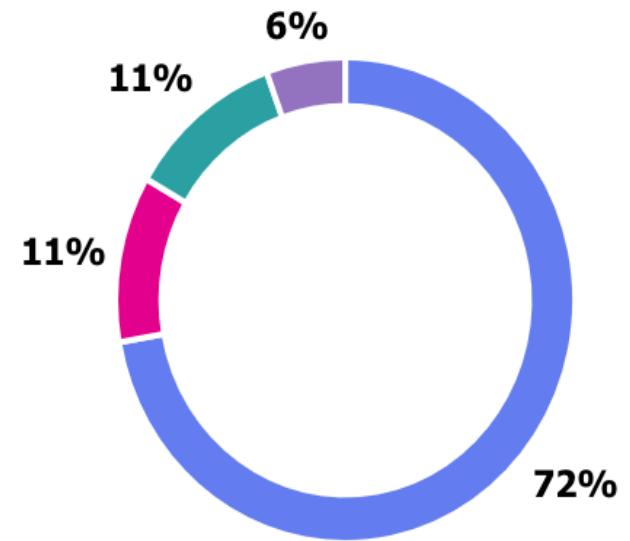
Main signals:

- **SADC CATS is the system more widely used across the region.**
- **But there are other systems in use: ECTS or similar; and national specific systems.**
- **In some countries the credit system is in development - not yet functional.**
- **2 countries (Mauritius and Mozambique) use 2 different officially recognised credit systems: lack of harmonisation at national level.**

Question 28: Credit value in the used systems

28. What is the value of 1 credit in nominal hours in the system(s) currently used in your country? (*Multiple responses possible*).

● SADC CATS: 10 hours	13
● ECTS: 25 hours	2
● National specific value: for ex. 15 hours, 30 hours	2
● Not applicable	1
● Other	0

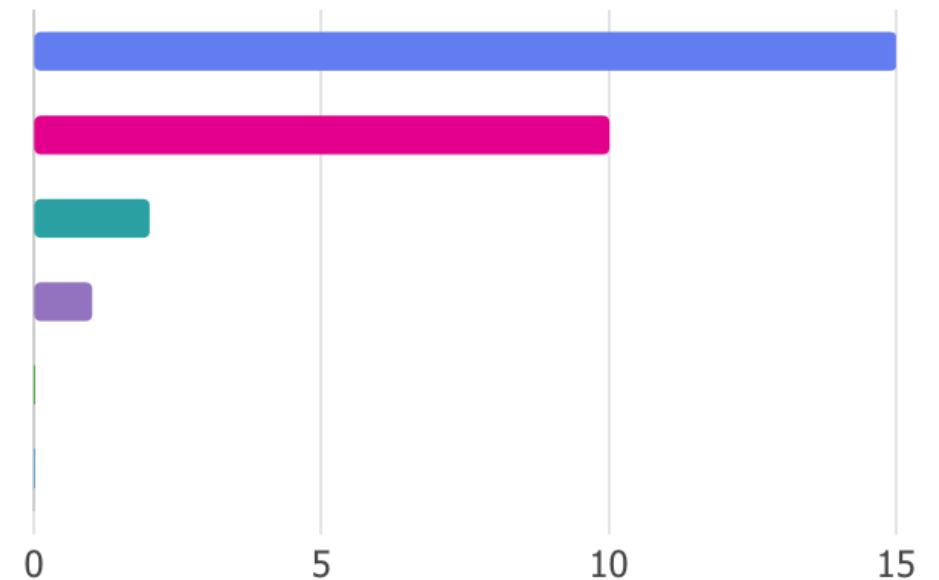


- Differences with the results of Question 27 indicate that a number of countries are in a transition phase, where uncertainties exist regarding: the preferred system, the conceptualisation of a unified national system, or the harmonization of the used credit systems across sub-systems.

Question 29: Subsystems where the credit system is currently implemented

29. In which subsystems is credit accumulation and transfer currently implemented in your country? *Multiple responses possible)*

Higher education	15
TVET	10
General education	2
Not implemented in any subsystem	1
Not applicable	0
Other	0

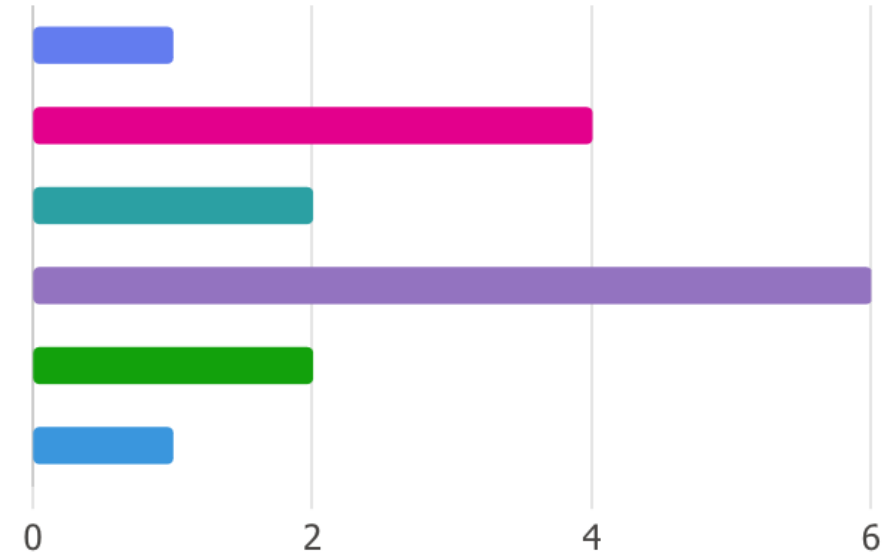


- In Higher Education: all countries implement a credit system.
- In TVET: a small number of countries have no credit system in implementation.
- In General Education: only 2 countries implement the credit system (South Africa and Zimbabwe)

Question 30: How much credit can be transferred

30. How much credit can be transferred?

● Max. 2/3	1
● Max. 1/2	4
● Max. 1/3	2
● Discretionary	6
● Not applicable	2
● Other	1

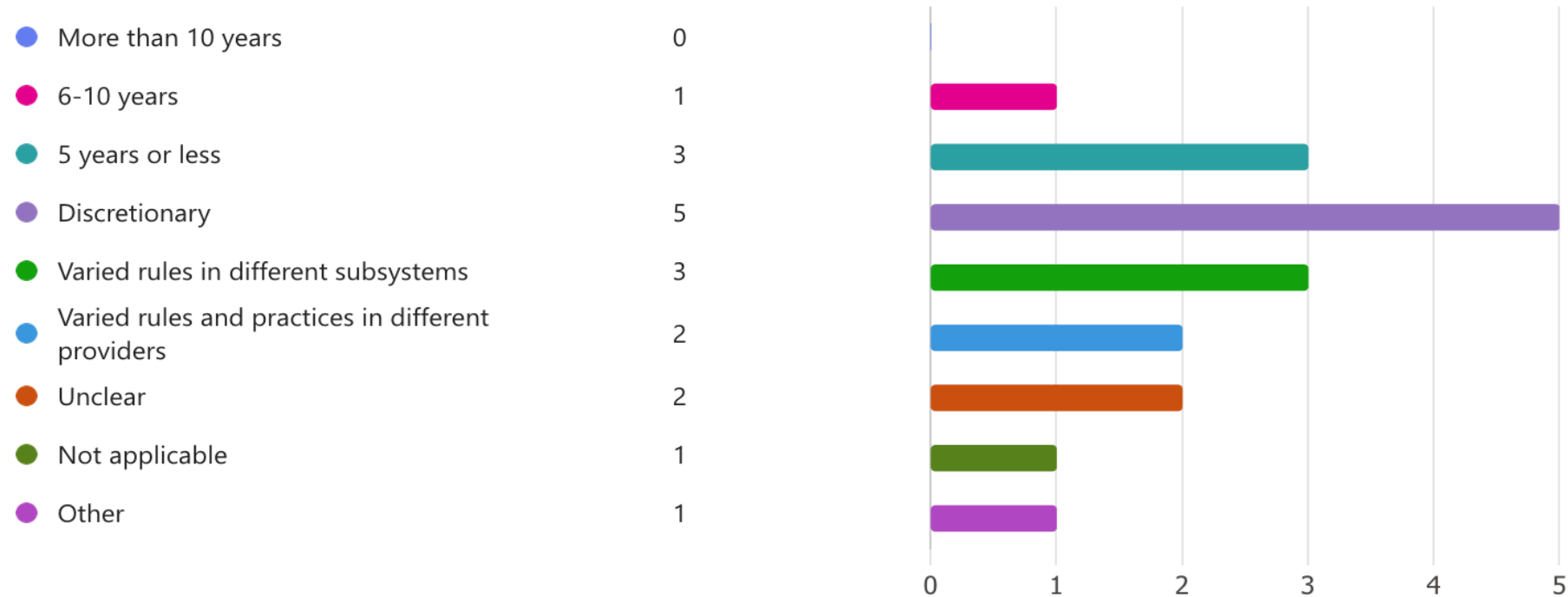


Responses indicate a diverse, not-harmonised landscape

- 5 countries (6 responses) use a discretionary approach (countries using several credit systems)
- Eswatini (2 responses), Namibia and Zimbabwe allow the transfer of max. 1/2 of credits (all SADC CATS countries)
 - Lesotho allows transfer of max. 1/3 of credit; and Botswana: max. 2/3 of credit
 - 1 country has no clear definition yet

Question 31: Time limit on credit transfer

31. What is the time limit on credit transferred? (Multiple responses possible)

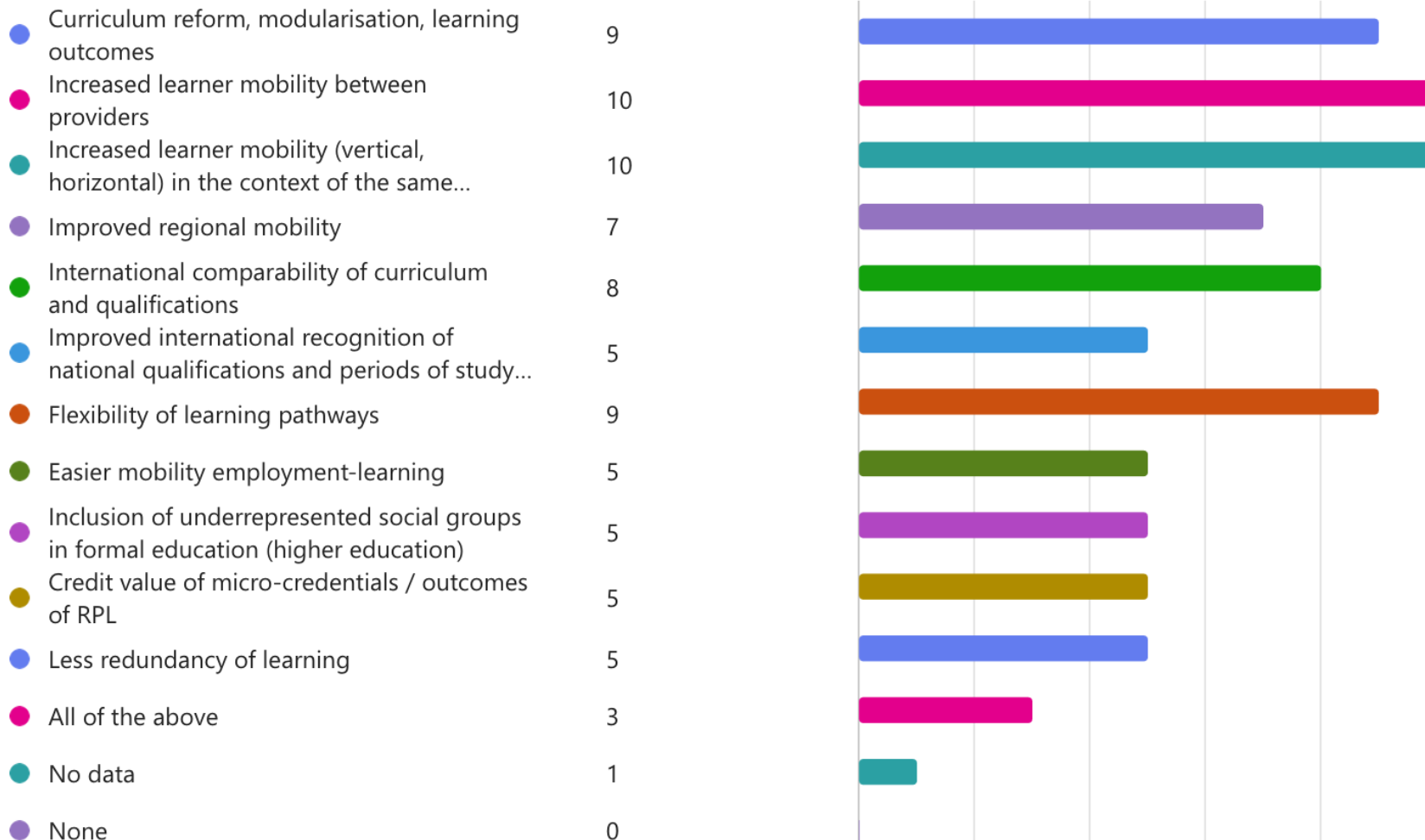


Responses indicate a diverse, not-harmonised landscape

- Top ranked (6 responses): discretionary approach
- Varied rules in different subsystems (3 responses)
 - 5 years or less (3 responses)
 - Unclear rules: 2 countries
 - No limit (Other): 1 country

Question 32: Main achievements and benefits of Credit System implementation

32. What are the main **achievements and benefits** of the application of credit accumulation and transfer in your country? (Multiple responses possible).

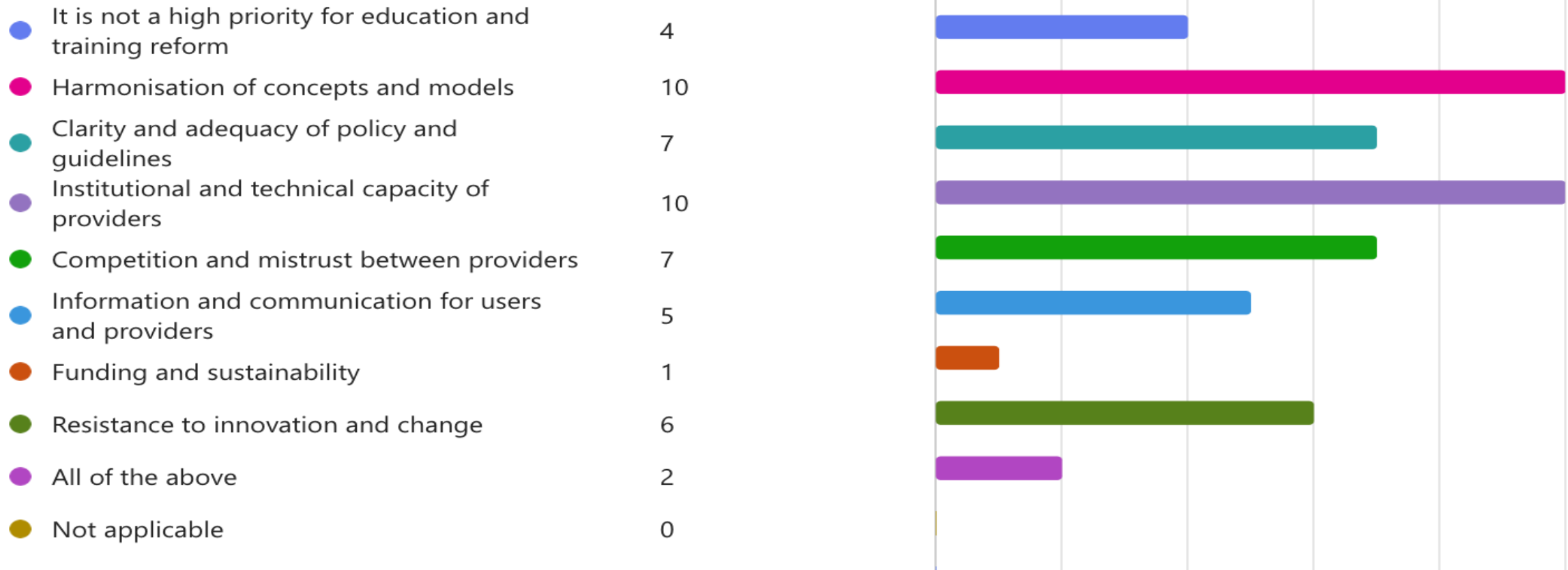


- **All countries have declared a number of benefits. 3 countries selected all benefits.**

- **Top 5 benefits:**

1. Mobility: increased learner mobility between providers (10 resp.);
2. Vertical & horizontal mobility (10)
3. Curriculum reform, modularisation, learning outcomes approach (9 resp.)
4. Flexibility of learning pathways (9)
5. International comparability of curriculum & qualifications (8)

33. What are the main **issues and challenges** affecting the implementation of credit accumulation and transfer in your country? *(Multiple responses possible).*



- **All countries identified several issues and challenges in the implementation of credit systems.**
- **Top 5 issues:** 1) Lack of harmonisation of concepts and models of credit (10 resp.); 2) Limited institutional and technical capacity of providers (10); 3) Lack of clarity and adequacy of policy and guidelines (9); 4) Competition and mistrust between providers (9); 5) Resistance to innovation and change (6).
 - **3 countries (4 resp.) acknowledged:** credit system is not a high priority for education reform

1 National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)

2 Registers of Qualifications and Credentials

3 Quality Assurance

4 Micro-credentials

5 Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

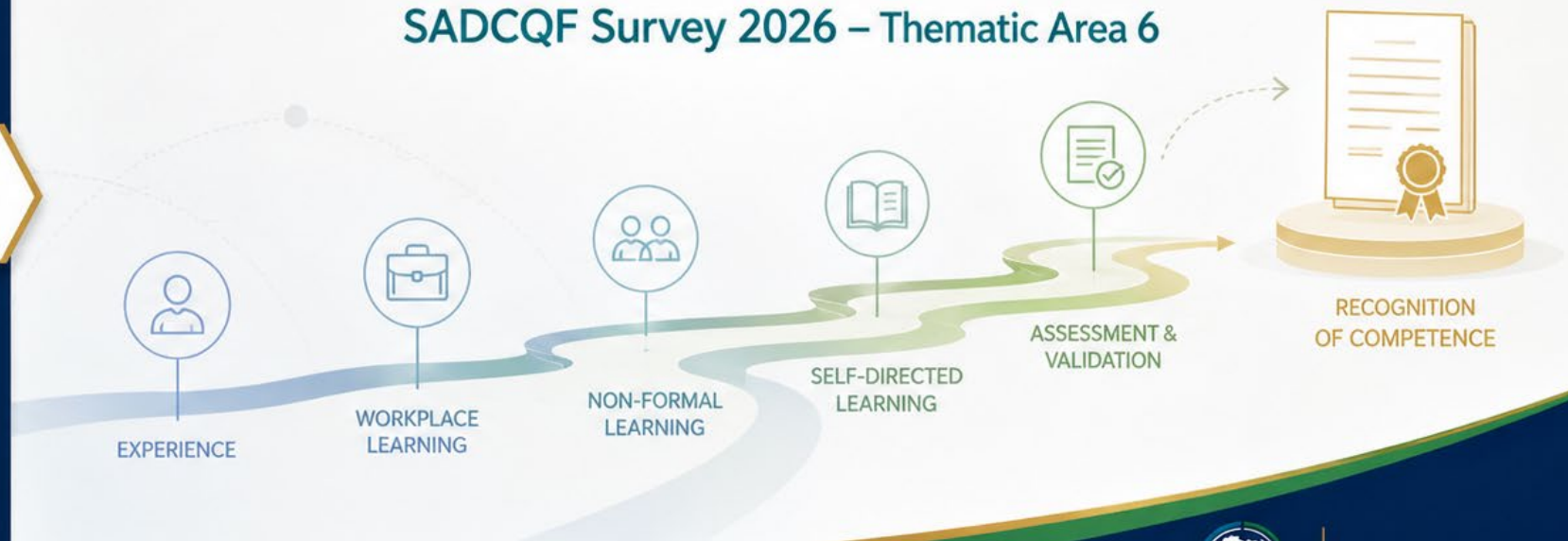
6 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

7 Harmonised Occupational Standards and Qualifications

8 Green Skills

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

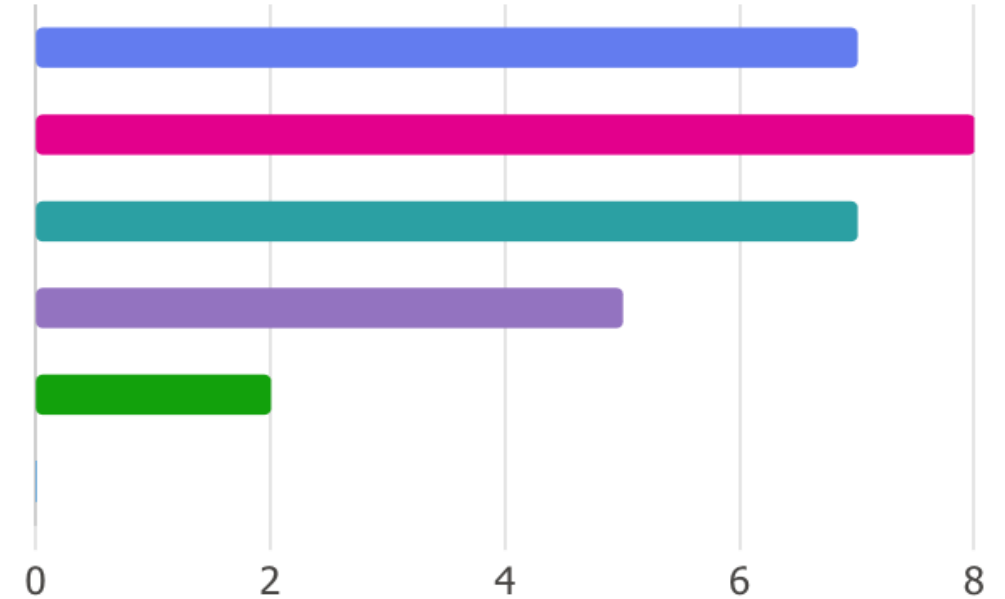
SADCQF Survey 2026 – Thematic Area 6



Question 35: RPL policy framework

35. Does your country have: *(Multiple responses possible)*.

● Stand-alone National RPL Policy	7
● RPL provisions within the NQF legislation	8
● RPL Guidelines / regulations	7
● Institutional-level guidelines only	5
● No RPL framework	2
● Other	0

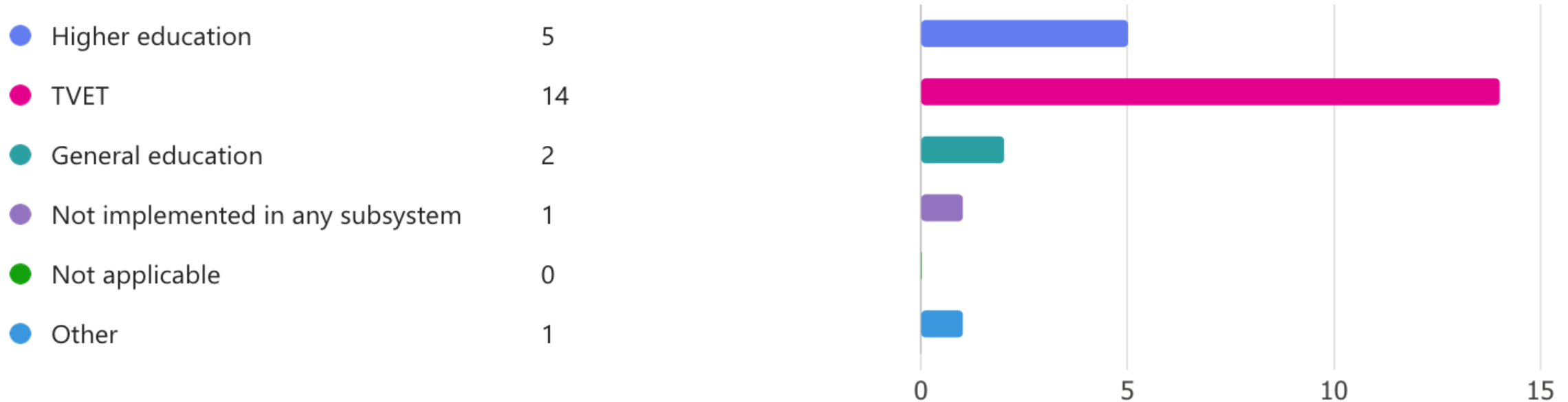


All countries have 1 or more forms of RPL legislation / Guidelines.

- **RPL and NQF are closely related - RPL Provisions within NQF legislation (8 responses – 8 countries)**
 - **Stand-alone National RPL Policy: 7 responses (6 countries)**
 - **RPL Guidelines / regulations exist in 6 countries**
- **2 responses declare “No RPL framework” – but this response applies to 1 subsector only (HE) – not to the whole education and training system**

Question 37: Subsystems in which RPL is effectively implemented

37. In which subsystems is RPL currently effectively **implemented** in your country? *(Multiple responses possible)*



All countries have 1 or more forms of RPL legislation / Guidelines.

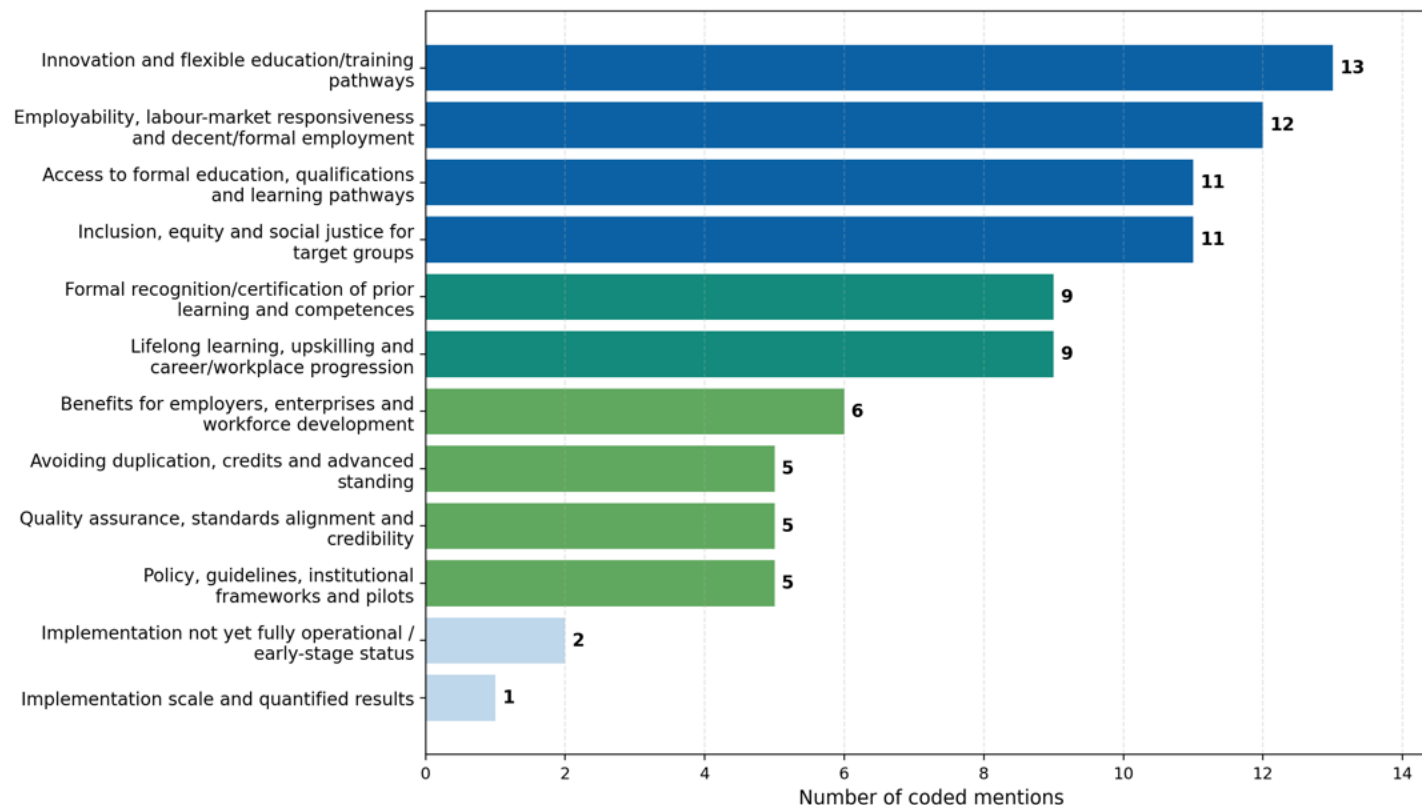
- **RPL and NQF are closely related - RPL Provisions within NQF legislation (8 responses)**
 - **Stand-alone National RPL Policy: 7 responses**
 - **RPL Guidelines / regulations exist in 7 cases**
- **2 responses declare “No RPL framework” – but this response applies to 1 subsector only (HE) – not to the whole education and training system**

SADCQF Survey 2026 — Open-ended responses

Question 38: Main achievements and benefits of RPL implementation

Coded synthesis of 16 institutional responses • Portuguese responses translated into English

Coded mentions by theme



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, Q38 RPL open-ended responses. Multiple codes per response; counts are coded mentions.

Top signals

1 Innovation and flexible pathways
13 mentions

2 Labour-market responsiveness
12 mentions

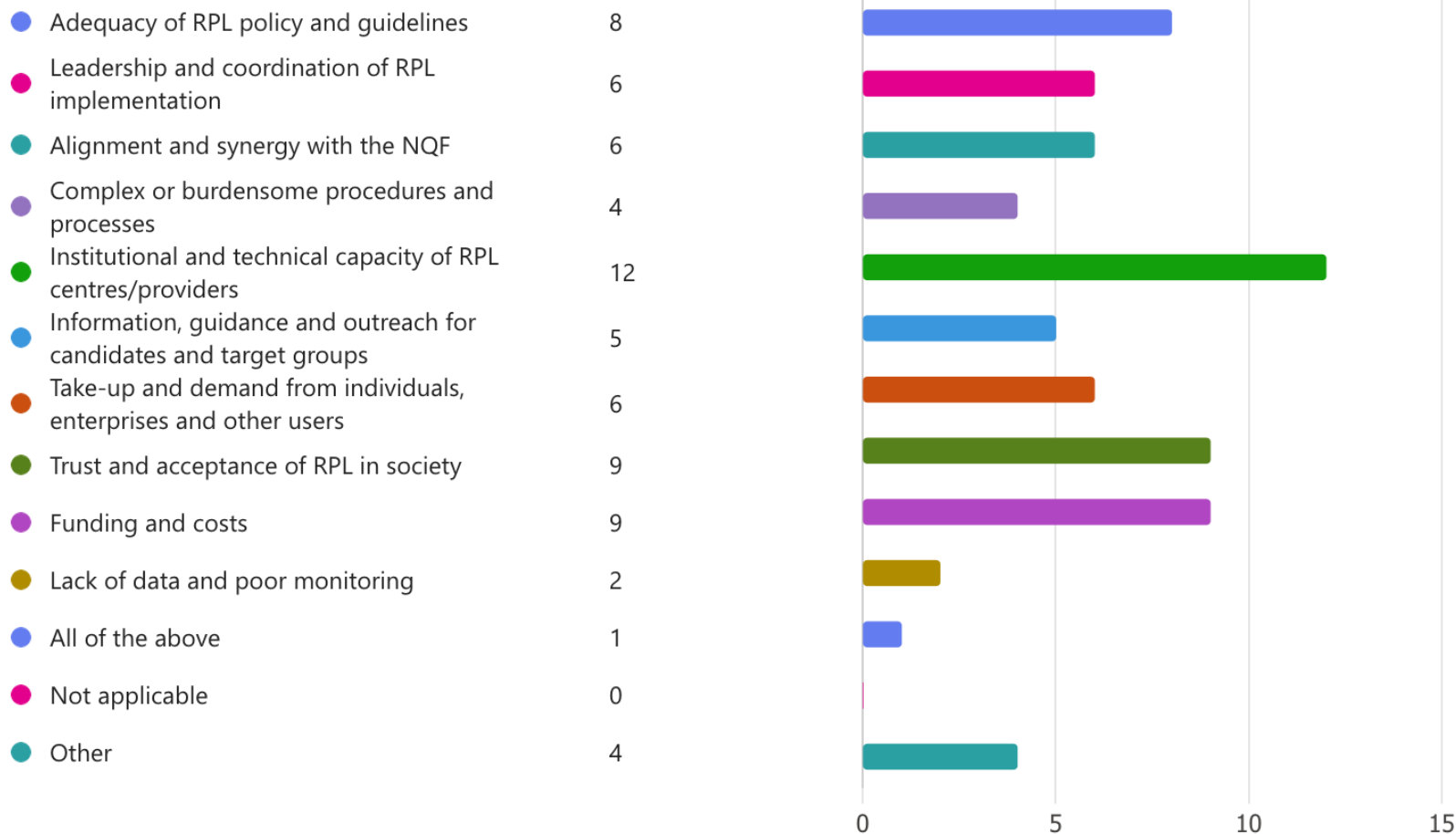
3 Access, inclusion and progression
11 mentions each



Method note: each response may receive several codes; counts show institutional responses mentioning each theme, not a single-choice ranking.

Question 39: Main issues and challenges in implementation of RPL

39. What are the main **issues and challenges** in implementing RPL in your country? *(Multiple responses possible)*



- **All countries declared a number of issues and challenges.**

- **Top 5 issues and challenges:**

1. Institutional and technical capacity of RPL centres / providers (12 resp)
2. Trust & acceptance in society (9 resp)
3. Funding & costs (9)
4. Adequacy of RPL policy & guidelines (8)

1



National Qualifications
Frameworks (NQFs)

2



Registers of
Qualifications and
Credentials

3



Quality Assurance

4



Micro-credentials

5



Credit Accumulation
and Transfer Systems

6



Recognition of
Prior Learning (RPL)

7



**Harmonised
Occupational Standards
and Qualifications**

8



Green Skills

Harmonised Occupational Standards and Qualifications

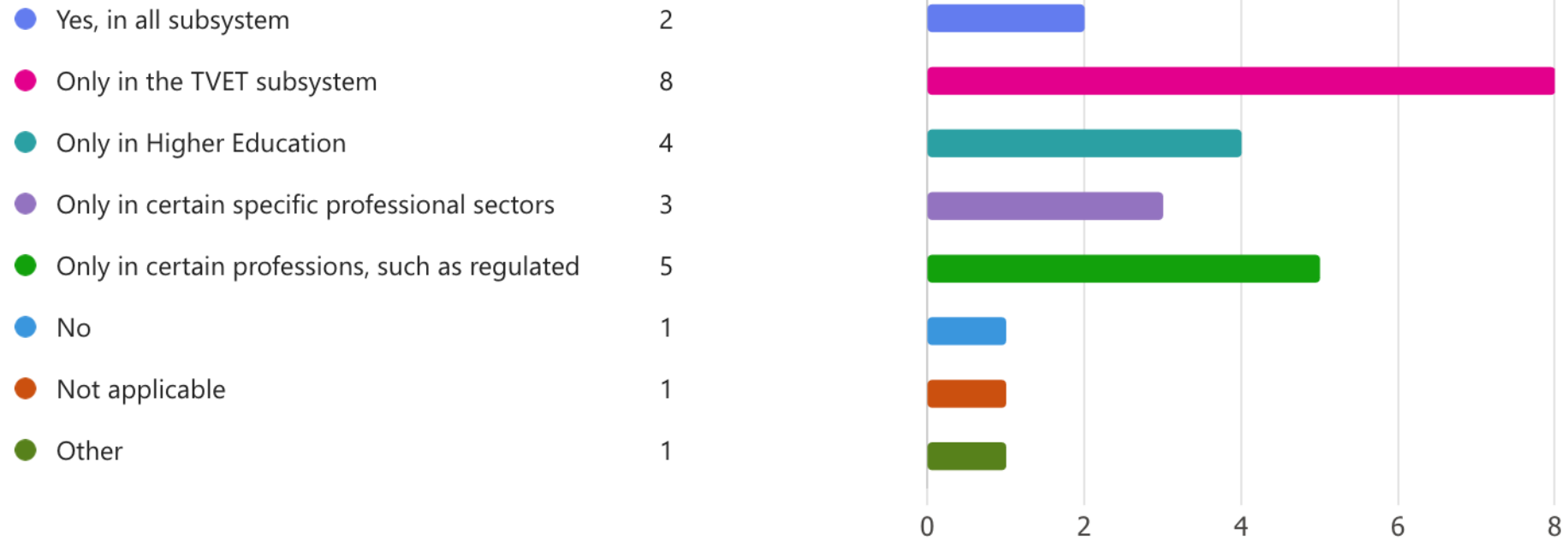
SADCQF Survey 2026 – Thematic Area 7



SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 40: Occupational standards (OS) / profiles in the context of NQF / education

40. Does your country use occupational standards / profiles in the context of the NQF, education and training programmes?

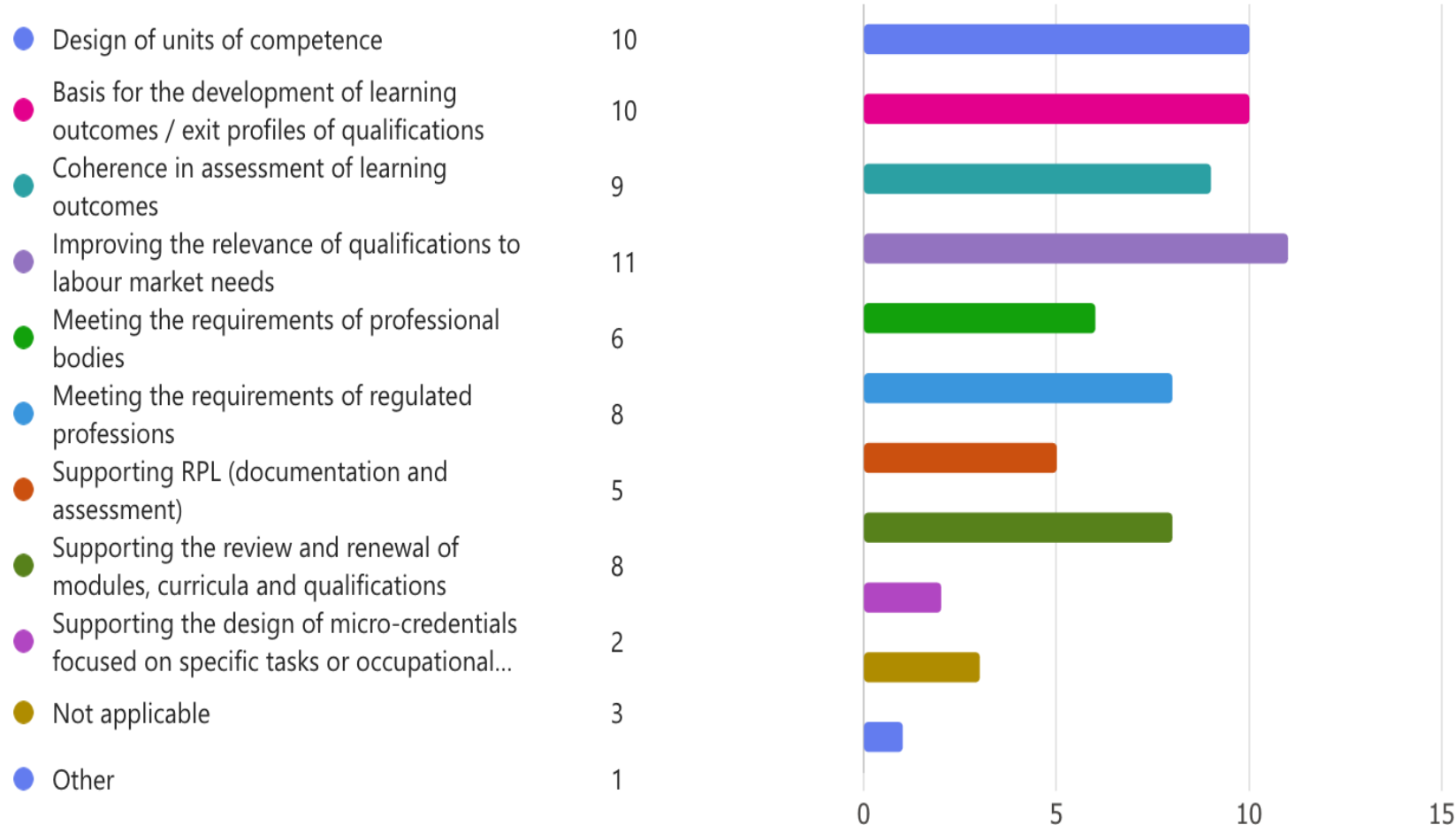


Main signals:

- Only 2 countries have OS in all subsystems
- OS only in TVET (8 resp,) and only in HE (4 resp.)
- OS only in certain specific professional sectors (3); Only in certain professions, such as Regulated (5 resp.)

Question 41: Purposes of occupational standards

41. For what **purposes** are occupational standards / profiles used in your country? *(Multiple responses possible)*



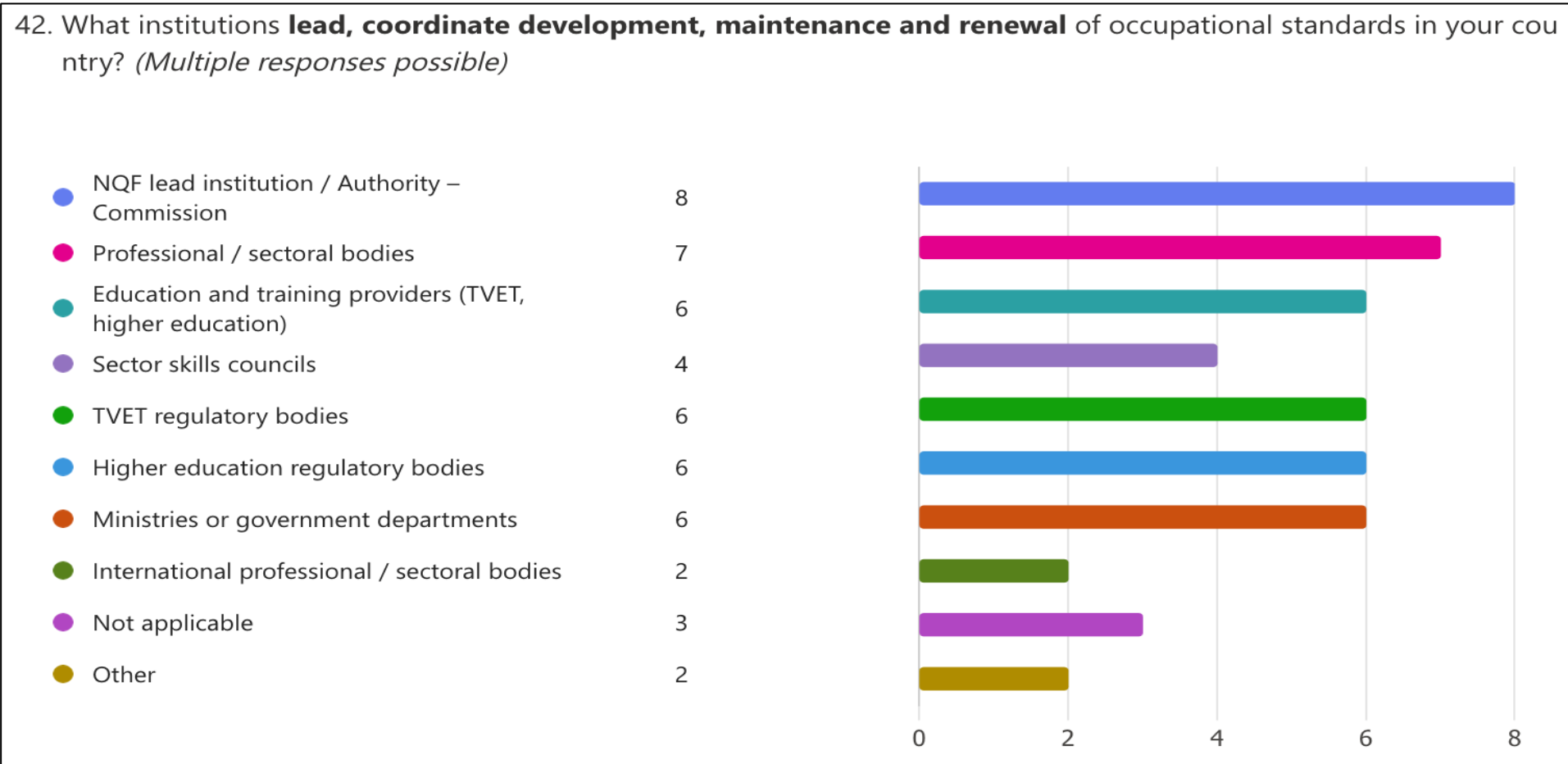
Main signals:

- For 3 countries: not applicable question

Top 6 purposes of OS:

1. Improving relevance of qualifications to Labour Market needs (11 resp).
2. Design of units of competence (10)
3. Basis for design of learning outcomes / exit profiles of qualifications (10)
4. Coherent assessment of learning outcomes (9)
5. Meet requirements of regulated professions (8)
6. Support review and renewal of modules, curricula & qualifications (8)

Question 42: What institutions lead, coordinate OS' development, maintenance and renewal



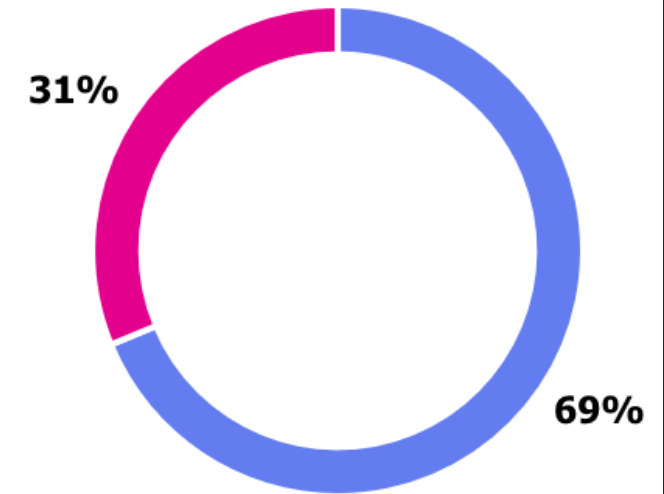
Main signals:

- For 3 countries: question not applicable
- **Institutions top ranked by the responses:** NQF lead institution (8 resp); Professional-sectoral bodies (7); Education and training providers (6); TVET regulatory bodies (6); HE regulatory bodies (6); Ministries / government departments (6).

Question 43: Cooperation SADC in development and harmonisation of occupational standards in certain sectors

43. To what extent do you agree that cooperation among Member States and SADC in the development and harmonisation of **occupational standards** in selected sectors could improve regional comparability, integration and mobility?

● Strongly agree	11
● Agree, but need more information on methods, regulatory aspects, priority sectors	5
● Neutral / Not sure	0
● Disagree	0
● Other	0



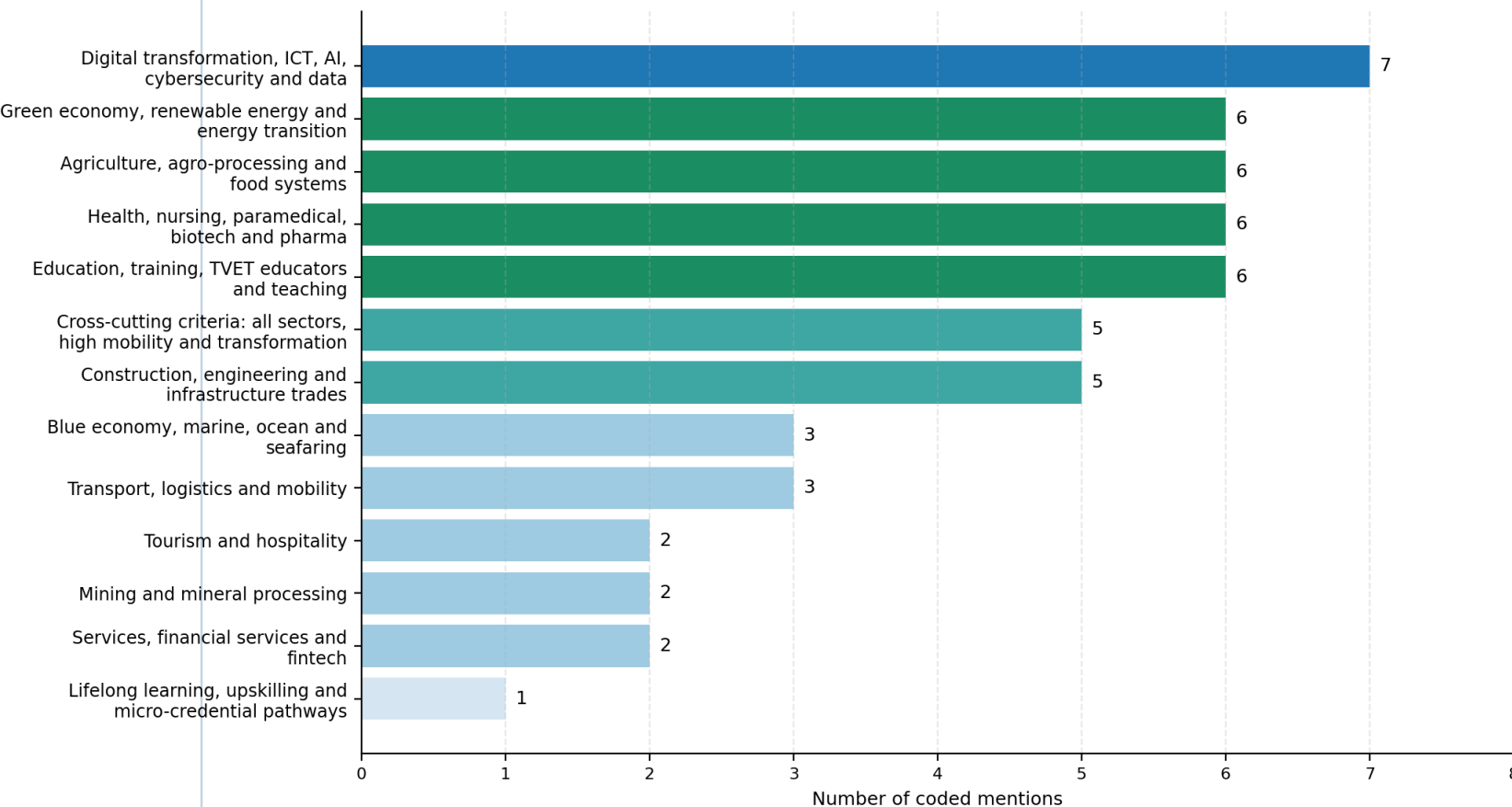
Strong and 100% support for regional cooperation on OS

SADCQF Survey 2026 — Open-ended responses

Question 44: Preferred sectors and occupations for regional cooperation on common occupational standards

Coded synthesis of 16 institutional responses • Portuguese responses translated into English

Number of coded mentions by sector / cooperation criterion



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, Q44 open-ended responses. Multiple codes per response; counts are coded mentions.

Signals from the coded results

1

Digital transformation leads

ICT, AI, cybersecurity and data roles appear in 7 coded mentions.

2

Four strong sector clusters

Green/energy, agriculture/food, health and education/TVET each appear in 6 mentions.

3

Criteria matter

All sectors, high labour mobility, significant transformation and regional priorities appear in 5 mentions.

4

Practical trades remain central

Construction and engineering are identified in 5 responses; transport/logistics and blue economy each in 3.

5

Strategic niches are visible

Tourism, mining, services/fintech and upskilling pathways are less frequent but relevant for targeted cooperation.

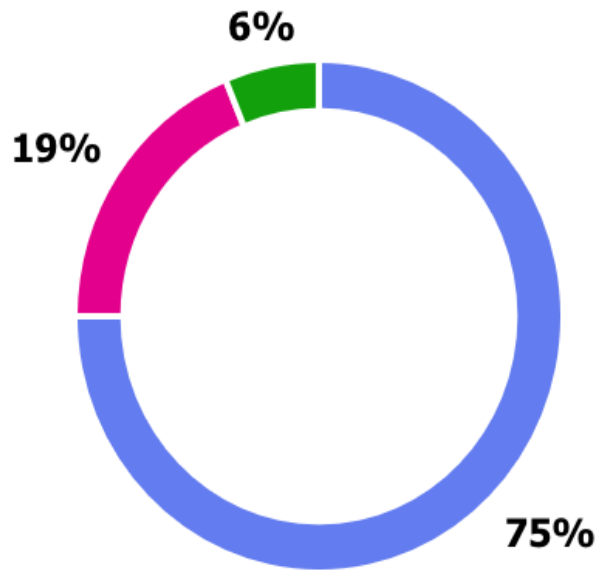
Method note: responses may be assigned to more than one code; counts show coded mentions, not a single-choice ranking. “Neutral” was not coded as a sector theme.

Question 45: Development of common or harmonised qualifications improve regional comparability, recognition and mobility of learners and workers

45. To what extent do you agree that the development of **common or harmonised qualifications** among SADC Member States could improve regional comparability, recognition and mobility of learners and workers?

Strongly agree	12
Agree, but need more information on methods, regulatory aspects, priority sectors	3
Neutral / Not sure	0
Disagree	0
Other	1

South Africa: test in certain regulated areas

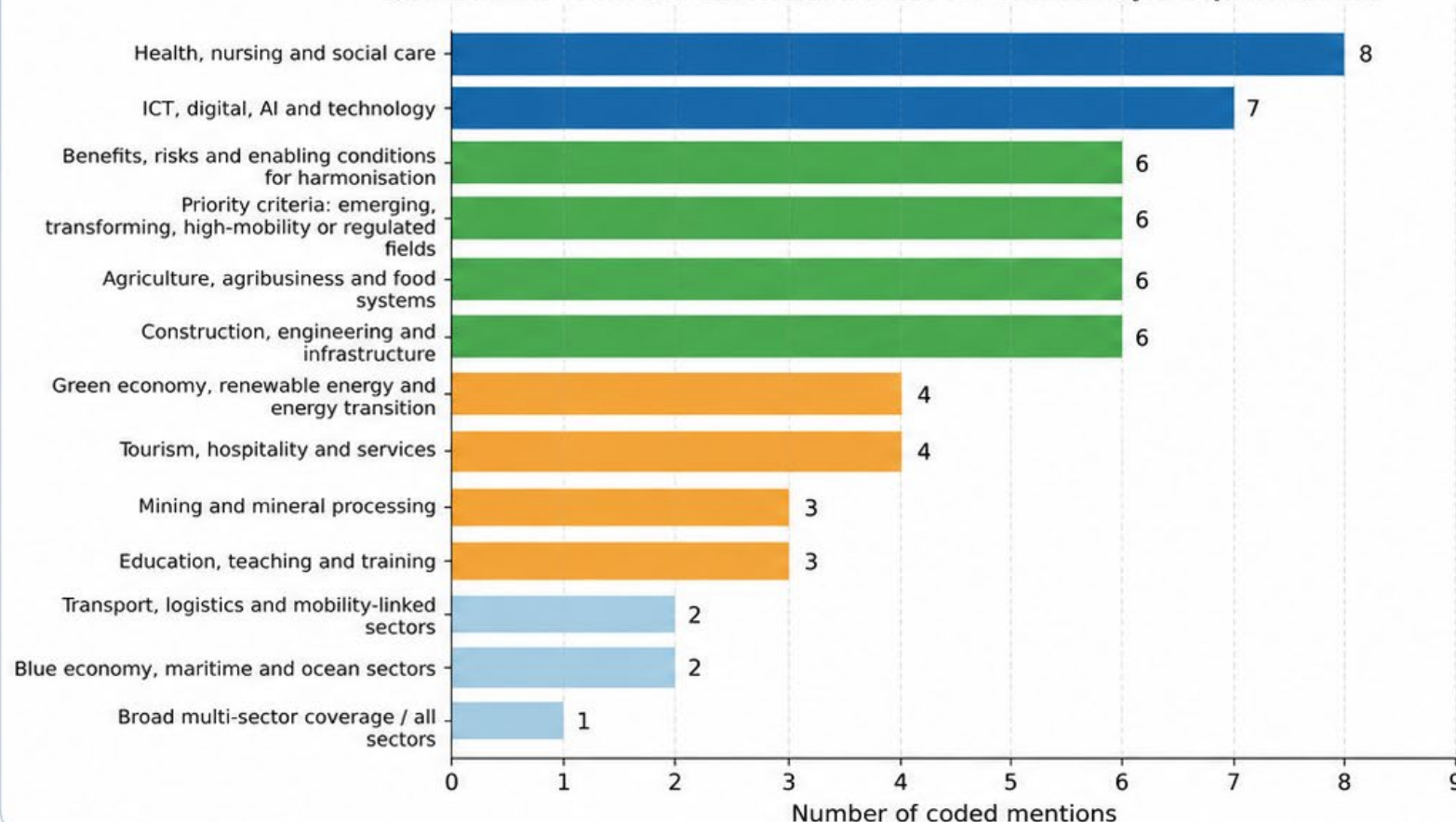


Strong and 100% support

Question 46. Preferred sectors and areas for common / joint qualifications

Coded overview of open-ended responses from 16 institutional submissions

Question 46: Preferred sectors and areas for common / joint qualifications



What the coded graph shows



Health, nursing and social care is the **strongest shared priority** (8 mentions).



ICT, digital, AI and technology follows closely (7 mentions).



Agriculture, construction, and the **priority-selection criteria** each received 6 mentions.



Several responses also stressed **benefits, risks and enabling conditions** for harmonisation (6 mentions).



Tourism and green economy form secondary clusters (4 each), while mining, education, transport and blue economy appear as targeted **niches**.



Question 46. Signals from Member States

Where common / joint qualifications could bring the highest regional value

1



Health first

Health, nursing and paramedical qualifications are the clearest shared priority because mobility is high but mutual trust remains uneven.

2



Digital acceleration

ICT, digital, AI and technology-related qualifications are a major frontier for regional harmonisation.

3



Productive sectors matter

Agriculture, agribusiness, construction and engineering remain core sectors for economic integration, jobs and resilience.

4



Select strategically

Member States advise starting with emerging sectors, regulated professions, occupations in transformation and fields with high labour mobility.

5



Pilot opportunities

Tourism, green economy, mining, education, transport and blue economy provide targeted opportunities for pilot regional qualifications.

6



Harmonisation needs enablers

Quality assurance, mutual trust, funding, digital tools, capacity building and phased implementation are necessary to reduce risk.



Overall signal: respondents support a phased, trust-based approach that begins with high-mobility and high-impact sectors.



1



National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)

2



Registers of Qualifications and Credentials

3



Quality Assurance

4



Micro-credentials

5



Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

6



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

7



Harmonised Occupational Standards and Qualifications

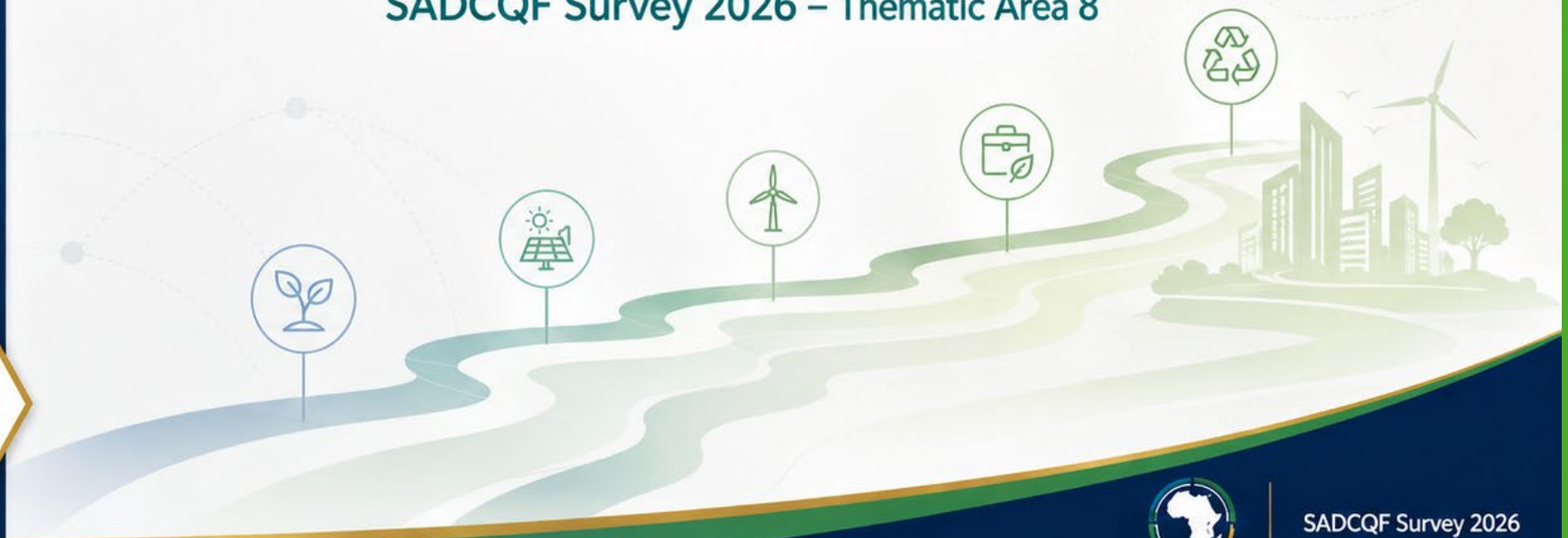
8



Green Skills

Green Skills

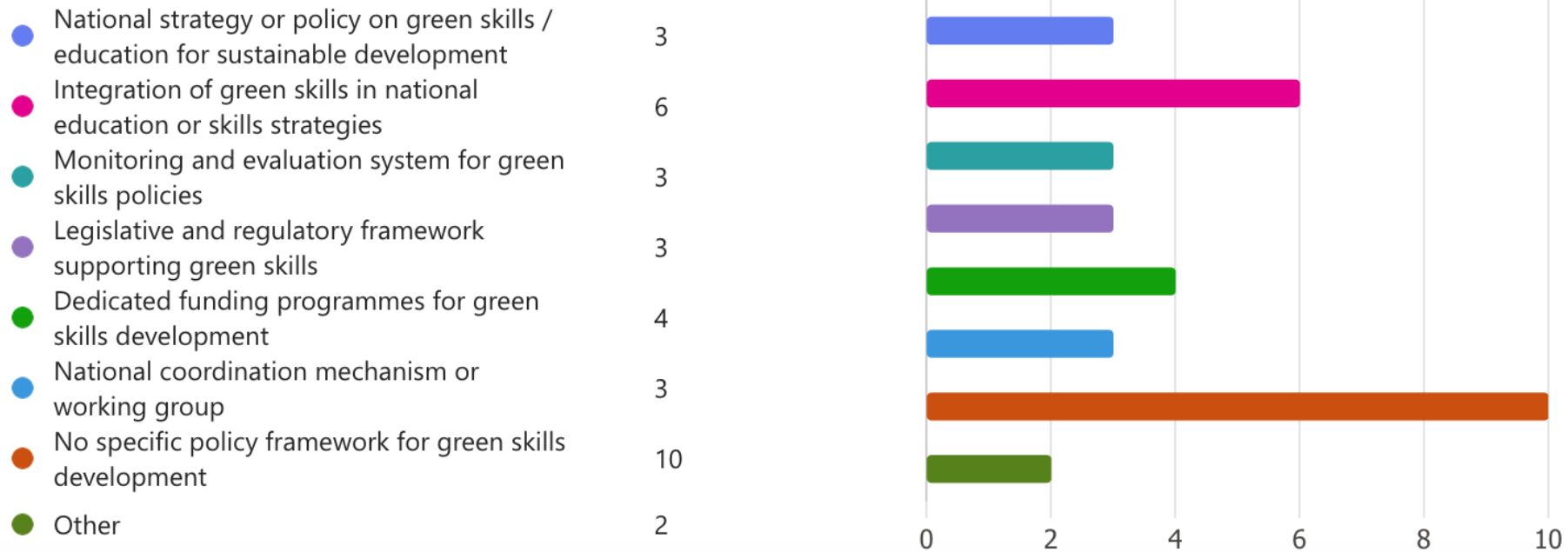
SADCQF Survey 2026 – Thematic Area 8



SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 47: Green skills – Policy framework and other support mechanisms

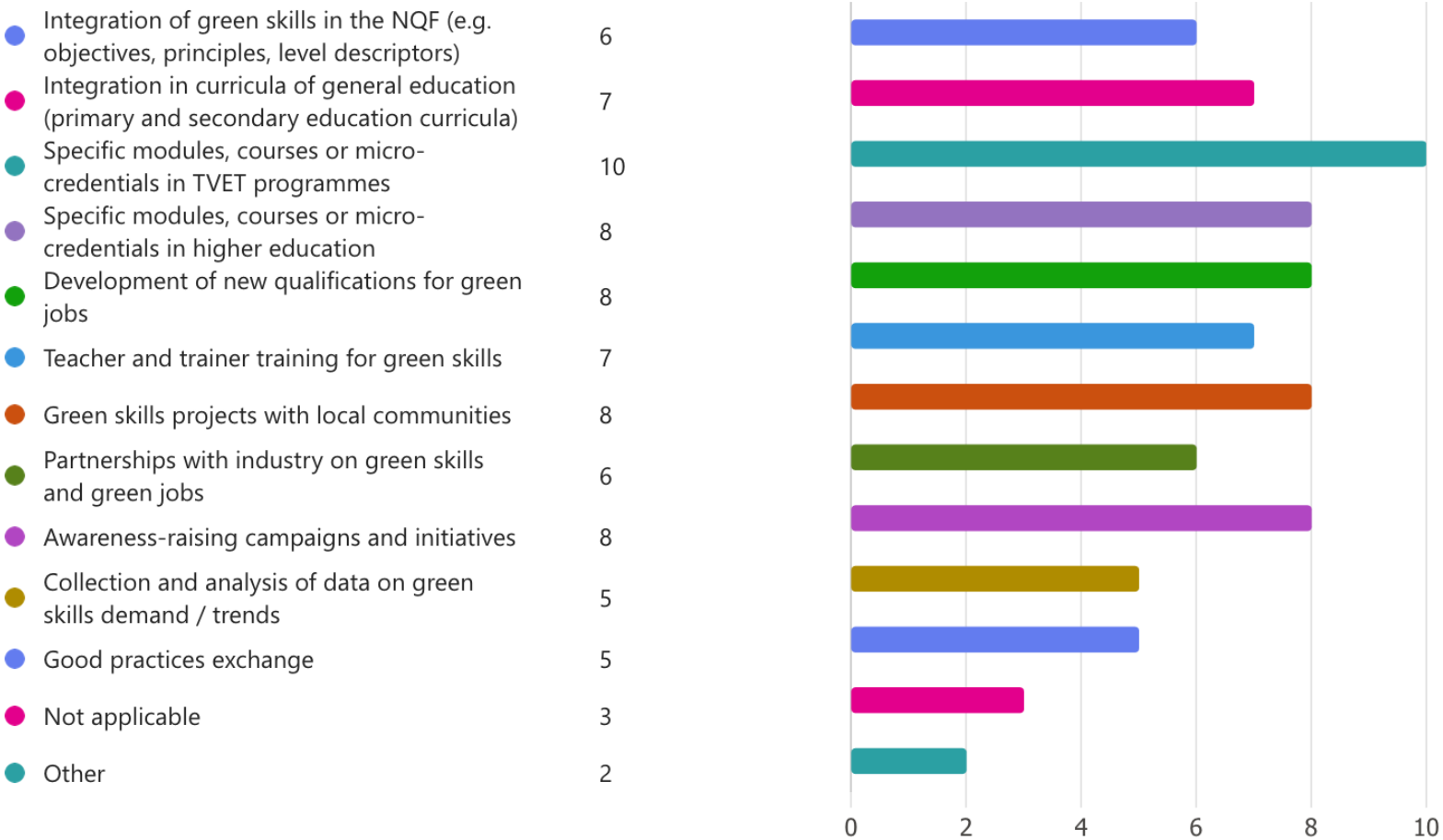
47. Does your country have a policy framework supporting the development of green skills and education for sustainable development? *(Multiple responses possible)*



- Although the landscape is diverse as regards Green Skills policies and other support mechanisms, the survey shows that in the **large majority of countries there is no Specific policy framework for Green skills development (10 responses)**.
- **There are Green skills initiatives and actions**, such as: a) integration of green skills in national education strategies (6 resp.); b) funding programmes (4 resp); c) national coordination mechanism / working group (3 resp).

Question 48: How are green skills developed across the education system?

48. How are green skills developed across the subsystems of education and training in your country? (Multiple responses possible)

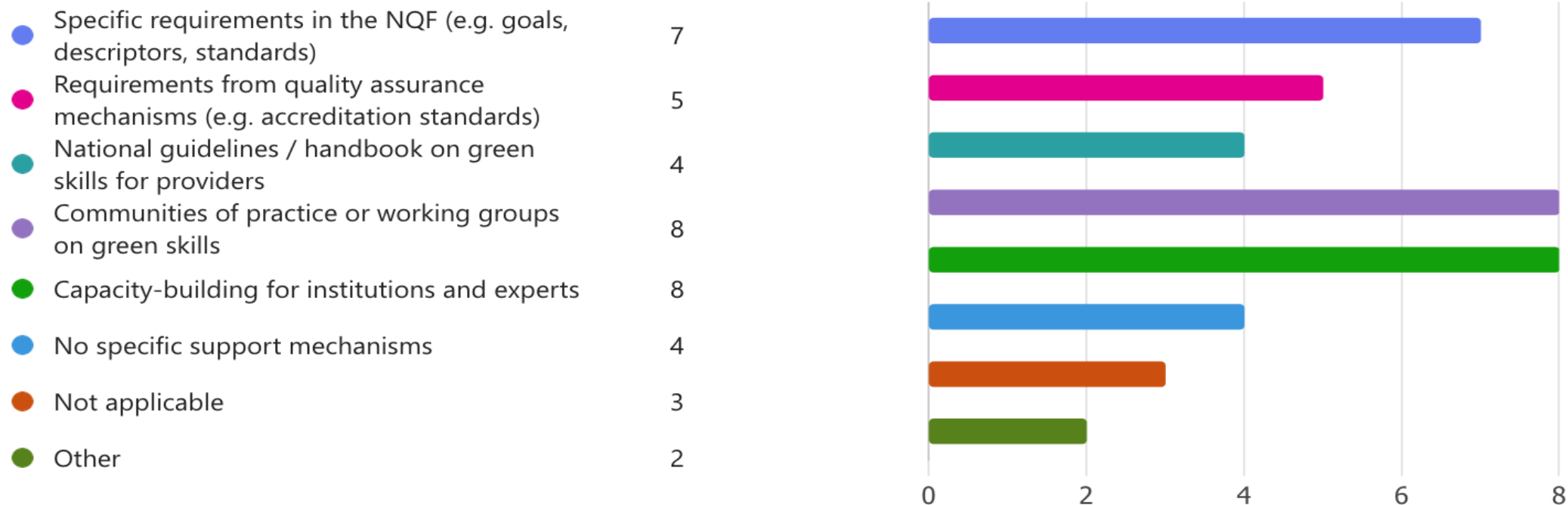


Main signals:

- Most countries: use several mechanisms
- 3 countries: not applicable question
- Top 5 mechanisms, methods to develop green skills:
 1. Use of specific modules, courses in TVET programmes (10 resp)
 2. Use of specific modules, courses in HE programmes (8 resp.)
 3. Development of new qualifications for green jobs (8)
 4. Green skills projects with local communities (8)
 5. Awareness-raising campaigns (8)

Question 49: Regulatory and methodological support to promote integration of green skills in design of qualifications

49. **What regulatory and methodological support exists to promote the integration of green skills in qualifications (design and renewal)?** *(Multiple responses possible)*



Main signals: mixed situation

- **Existing support mechanisms: Top 3** - a) Capacity-building for institutions and experts; b) Communities of practice / Working Groups; c) NQF's requirements.
- **No specific support mechanisms: 4 countries** and **Not Applicable: 3 countries**

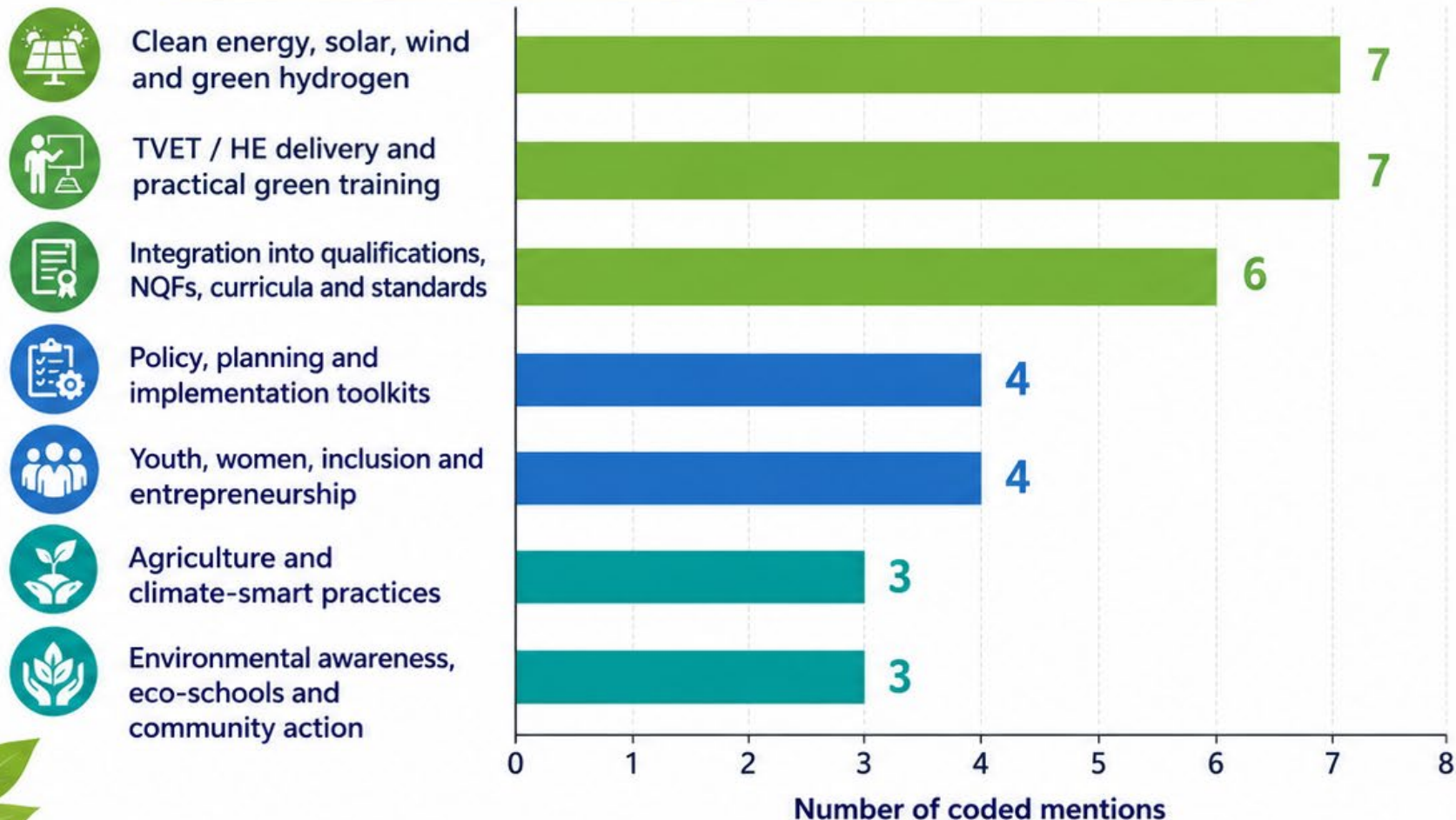


SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 50: Good practices related to green skills and education



Number of coded mentions (out of 16 institutional responses)



MAIN SIGNALS



Renewable energy and practical green training are the strongest shared patterns.



Green skills are increasingly embedded in qualifications, curricula, standards and NQF-related tools.



Several practices combine inclusion goals, especially for youth and women, with employability and entrepreneurship.



Agriculture, eco-school/community action and planning tools show that green skills are developing across multiple parts of the system.



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026; coded thematic mentions from open-ended responses (16 institutional responses).



SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 50: Good practice cases by country – green skills and education



1. Lesotho

- No case reported.



2. Zambia

- Not applicable / no concrete case reported.



3. Mauritius

- Green skills introduced within TVET courses.
- National Certificate Level 5 in Solar Energy Technology validated.



4. Mozambique

- Green competencies integrated into higher-education qualification design and curricula.
- Guidance on green skills included in independent professional qualification modules and in the qualification design manual.



5. Seychelles

- Eco-School Seychelles: practical whole-school model for sustainability learning and awareness.



6. Botswana

- No concrete case yet; intention to begin policy development is clear.



7. Eswatini

- UNDP Green Skills Training Programme at the University of Eswatini: renewable energy and entrepreneurship training for youth and women.
- Climate-smart agriculture training in water conservation, sustainable farming, irrigation, organic production and digital agricultural marketing.
- Another respondent noted this area is still at an early stage.



8. South Africa

- Broad portfolio of practice: Green Skills Programme / National Environment Skills Planning Forum; Environmental Sector Skills Plan; Just Transition Skills Plan.
- Examples also include Youth Jobs in Waste, Zero Waste Community Programmes, Youth Environmental Services, Environmental Monitors, solar and wind installation in TVET colleges, green hydrogen training, EV technician training, and nature-based solutions training.



9. Angola

- Green skills linked to renewable energy, sustainable agriculture and environment.
- Examples include UNICEF's Desafio Genial – Geração Verde; the UNDP Matala renewable energy project; and integration of green skills into the QNQ/CNQF.
- Additional initiatives mentioned: EcoAngola, Angola Verde and FormPro.



10. Malawi

- Zantchito Skills for Jobs Programme embeds sustainability and solar skills in TVET.
- Aligns training with labour-market needs, supports women and vulnerable groups, and links green skills with standards and formal qualifications.



11. Zimbabwe

- Greening TVET Toolkit developed with ILO (2019).



12. Namibia

- Green dimensions reflected in NQF requirements, the new National Policy on Qualification Standards, and standards on Green Hydrogen.



1



National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)

2



Registers of Qualifications and Credentials

3



Quality Assurance

4



Micro-credentials

5



Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems

6



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

7



Harmonised Occupational Standards and Qualifications

8



Green Skills

9



Cross-cutting Issues

Cross-cutting Issues

SADCQF Survey 2026 – Thematic Area 9



SADCQF Survey 2026

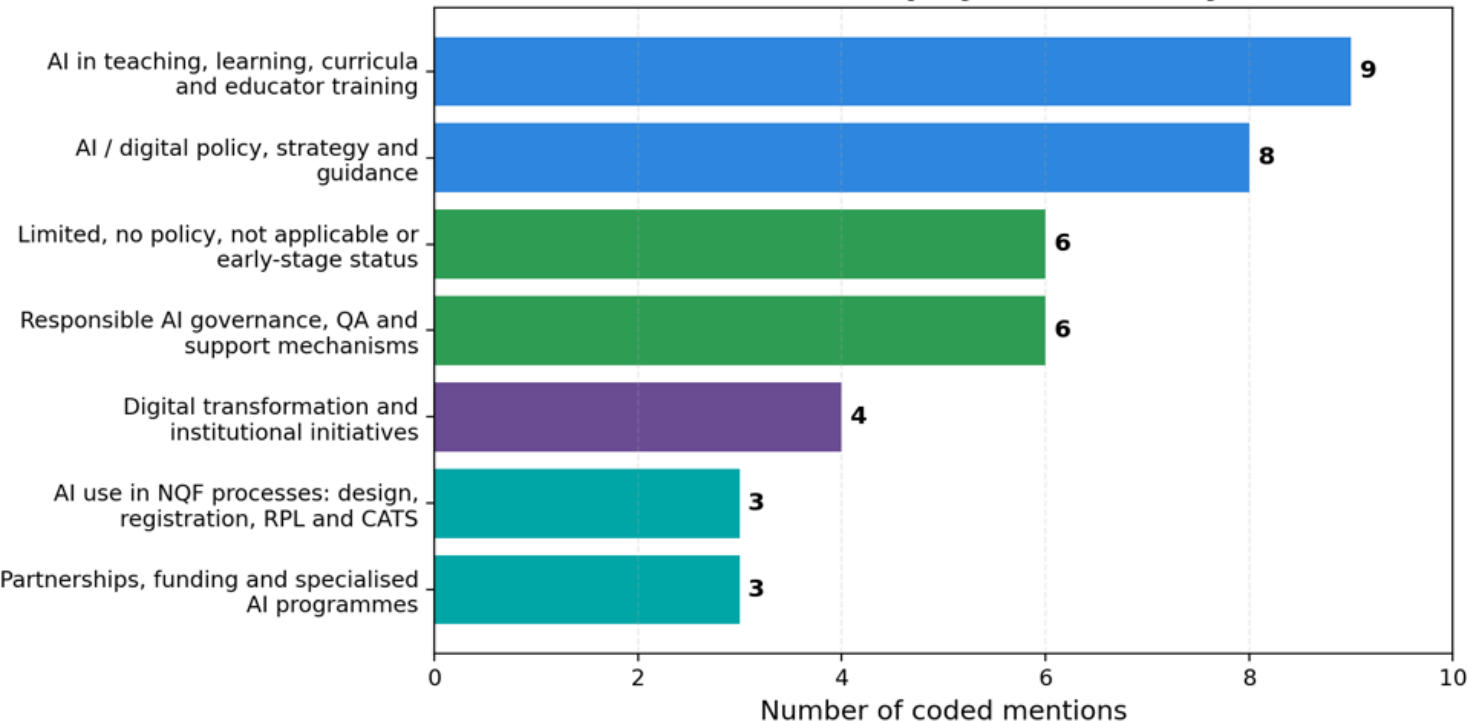


SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 51: AI literacy, AI in education and NQF-related initiatives

Number of coded mentions (16 institutional responses)

Question 51: Coded state of play on AI literacy and education



MAIN SIGNALS



Education use is most visible

AI appears most often in teaching, learning, curricula and educator training.



Policies are uneven

Some Member States report policies, guidelines or strategies; others report no policy or no integration yet.



NQF links are emerging

AI is being linked to qualification design, registration, RPL/RCA/RVCC, CATS and QA support.



Capacity and governance matter

Responsible AI use will require guidance, quality assurance, support mechanisms and capacity building.

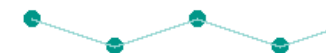
Source: SADCQF Survey 2026; coded thematic mentions from open-ended responses to Question 51.

Method note: one response may contain multiple codes.



SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 51: AI literacy and use of AI in education — country overview



AI literacy
& education

1 Lesotho

- N/A / no initiative reported.

2 Zambia

- Not applicable / no initiative reported.

3 Mauritius

- National AI policy launched in education.
- HEC/COL guidelines for AI in HE teaching/learning.
- HRDC refunds 90% of approved AI training costs.

4 Mozambique

- AI in teaching/learning and classroom applications.
- AI linked to QNQ, design, RPL/RCA/RVCC and credits.
- Teacher training and digital acceleration include AI.

5 Seychelles

- Strategic Plan includes AI integration in education.
- ODL policy includes AI; AI governance framework planned.
- Curriculum review includes AI, robotics and coding.

6 Botswana

- No deliberate integration yet.

7 Eswatini

- AI training for teachers/trainers and curricula integration.
- ESHEC integrated AI into core QA documents.
- Digital Strategy and UNESWA AI Academy reported.

8 South Africa

- Draft National AI Policy; AIISA and SAAIA initiatives.
- AI in schools, TVET and HEI programmes.
- Occupational Certificate: AI Software Developer registered.

9 Angola

- AI literacy is emerging across education and TVET.
- AI relevant for NQF modernisation, design/registration, RPL and CATS.
- Some policy/strategy coverage and classroom use reported.

10 Malawi

- Not applicable / no initiative reported.

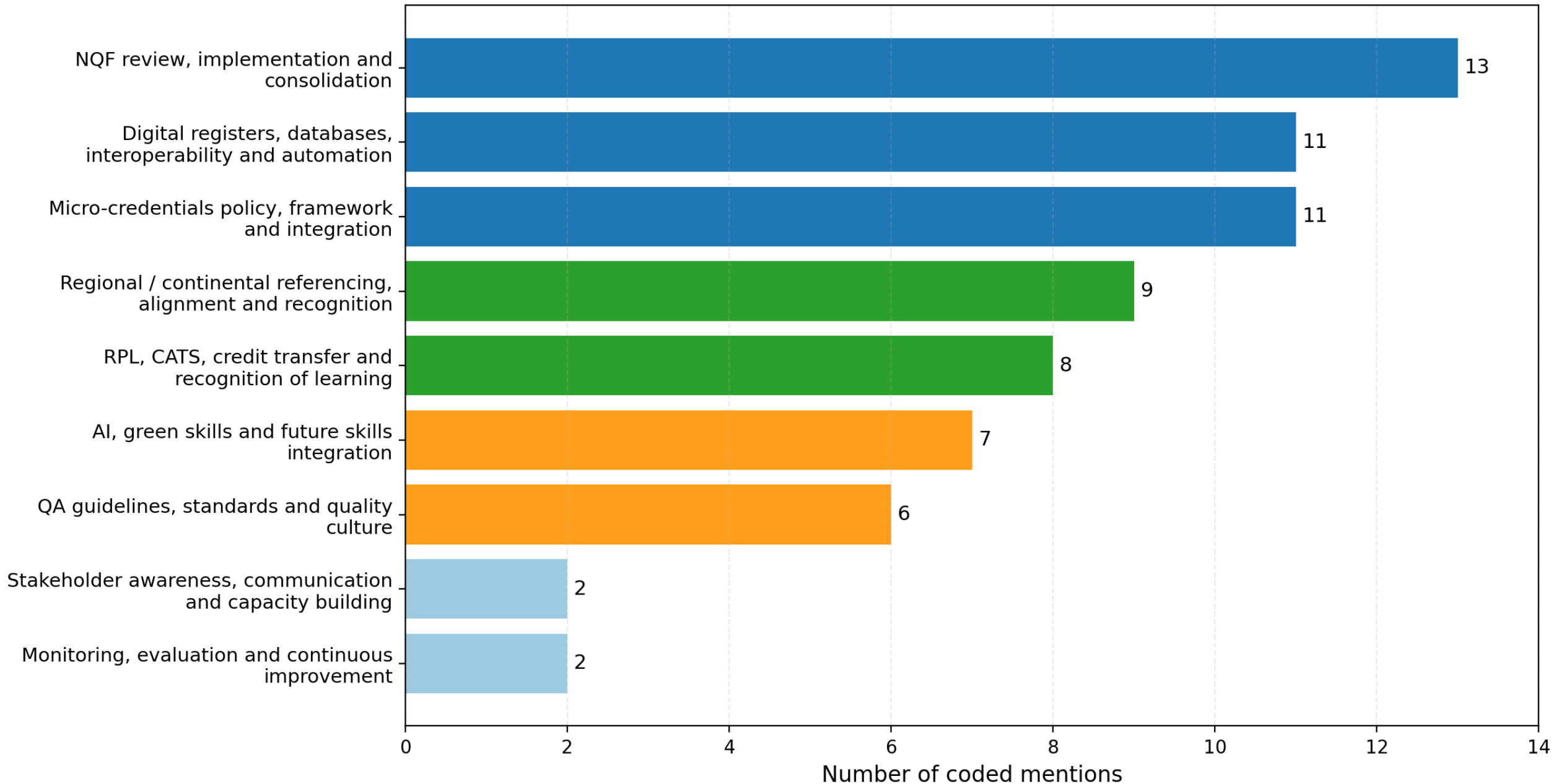
11 Zimbabwe

- Supports AI use in NQF implementation, design/registration, RPL and CATS.
- Support mechanisms identified as needed.

12 Namibia

- No AI policy at the moment.

Question 52: Coded policy priorities for the next 3 years

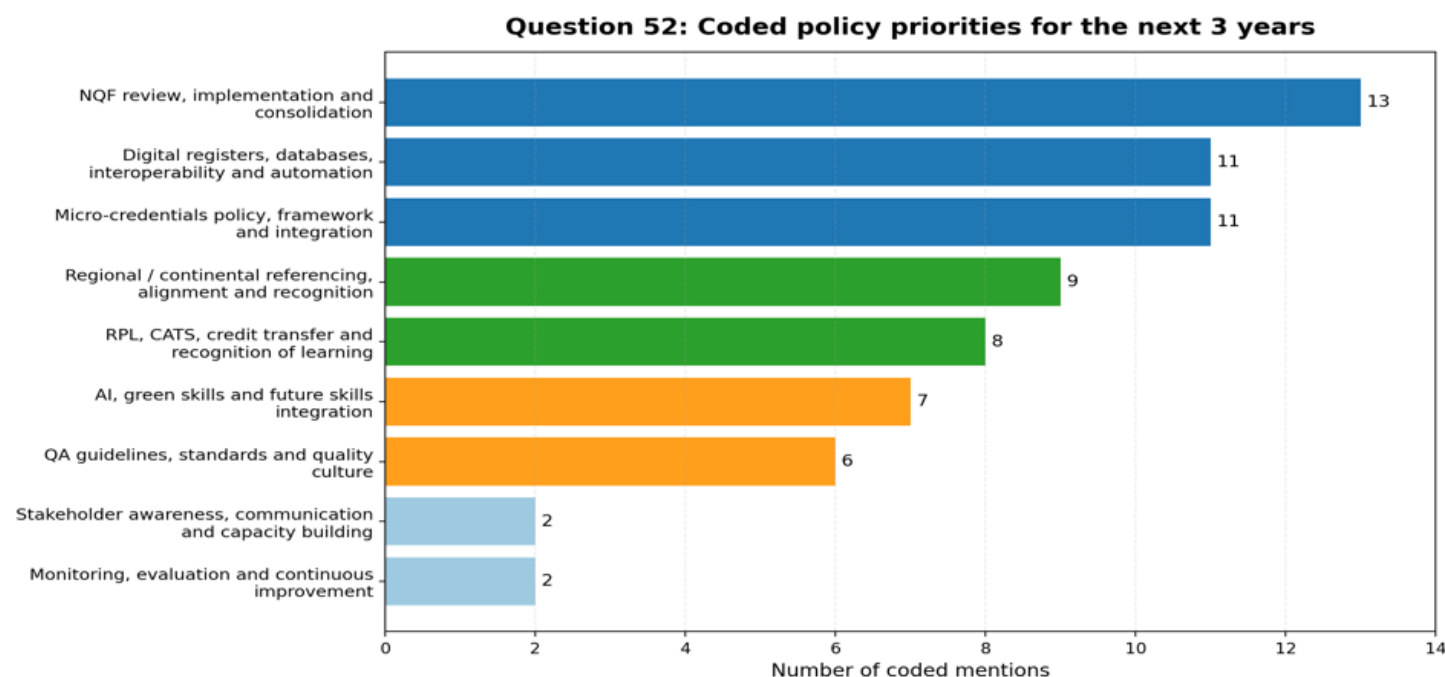


SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 52. Policy priorities for the next 3 years

Coded results from open-ended responses • 16 institutional submissions

Number of coded mentions by priority theme



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, Question 52 open-ended responses. Counts show coded thematic mentions; one response may contain multiple themes.



MAIN SIGNALS



NQF renewal is the dominant policy horizon

Review, implementation, consolidation and referencing appear as the leading shared priority.



Digital systems are core infrastructure

Registers, IMS, interoperability, learner records and automation are central to the next phase.



Micro-credentials are mainstream

Policy frameworks and integration of micro-credentials are now a recurring national priority.



Pathways and future skills matter

RPL, CATS, green skills, QA, standards, connect policy priorities with Lifelong learning and mobility



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026; coded thematic mentions from open-ended responses. One response may contain

SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 52: policy priorities by country

Top 3-5 priorities for NQFs and related policies in the next 3 years

1 Lesotho

- Revision of the LQF policy.
- Registration of qualifications in the LQF.
- Development of a national learner records database.

2 Zambia

- Full implementation of the revised NQF.
- Micro-credentials policy and regional referencing.
- Register strengthening and digital transformation of recognition services.

3 Mauritius

- Review of the MQF, with micro-credentials and RPL alignment.
- Implementation of the National Credit Value Transfer System.
- Referencing of the MQF to the revised SADCQF.

4 Mozambique

- QNQ revision, referencing and wider dissemination of level descriptors.
- Unified catalogue / register platform, plus RPL, credit system and QA system.
- Micro-credentials regulation, manuals and stakeholder mobilisation/capacity building.

5 Seychelles

- Strengthen IT infrastructure and IMS for the qualifications register.
- Build QA, data management and digital-tool capacity.
- Advance stakeholder engagement, referencing / recognition and policy review incl. micro-credentials and AI.

6 Botswana

- Promote and implement RPL and CAT systems.
- Develop micro-credentials policy.
- Reference the NCQF to SADCQF / ACQF and integrate AI and green skills.

7 Eswatini

- Develop the micro-credentials framework.
- AI in education and training; greening / review of the ESQF.
- Develop databases and pilot / roll out the RPL policy.

8 South Africa

- Complete revision of NQF level descriptors.
- Revise policy suite for AI, green economy, sustainability, soft skills and micro-credentials.
- Publish WIL Framework, enhance recognition of learning and data interoperability.

9 Angola

- Implement, consolidate, expand, monitor and revise the NQF.
- Integrate micro-credentials, green skills and digital competences.
- Continue NQF revision, renewal and implementation.

10 Malawi

- Consolidate MAQF and align it with SADCQF.
- Develop a national register and strengthen QA within regional guidelines.
- Develop CATS and scale up RPL to support mobility and lifelong learning.

11 Zimbabwe

- Develop QA guidelines for SADCQF.
- Advance AI use in NQF administration.
- Strengthen SADC / ACQF QCP mastery.

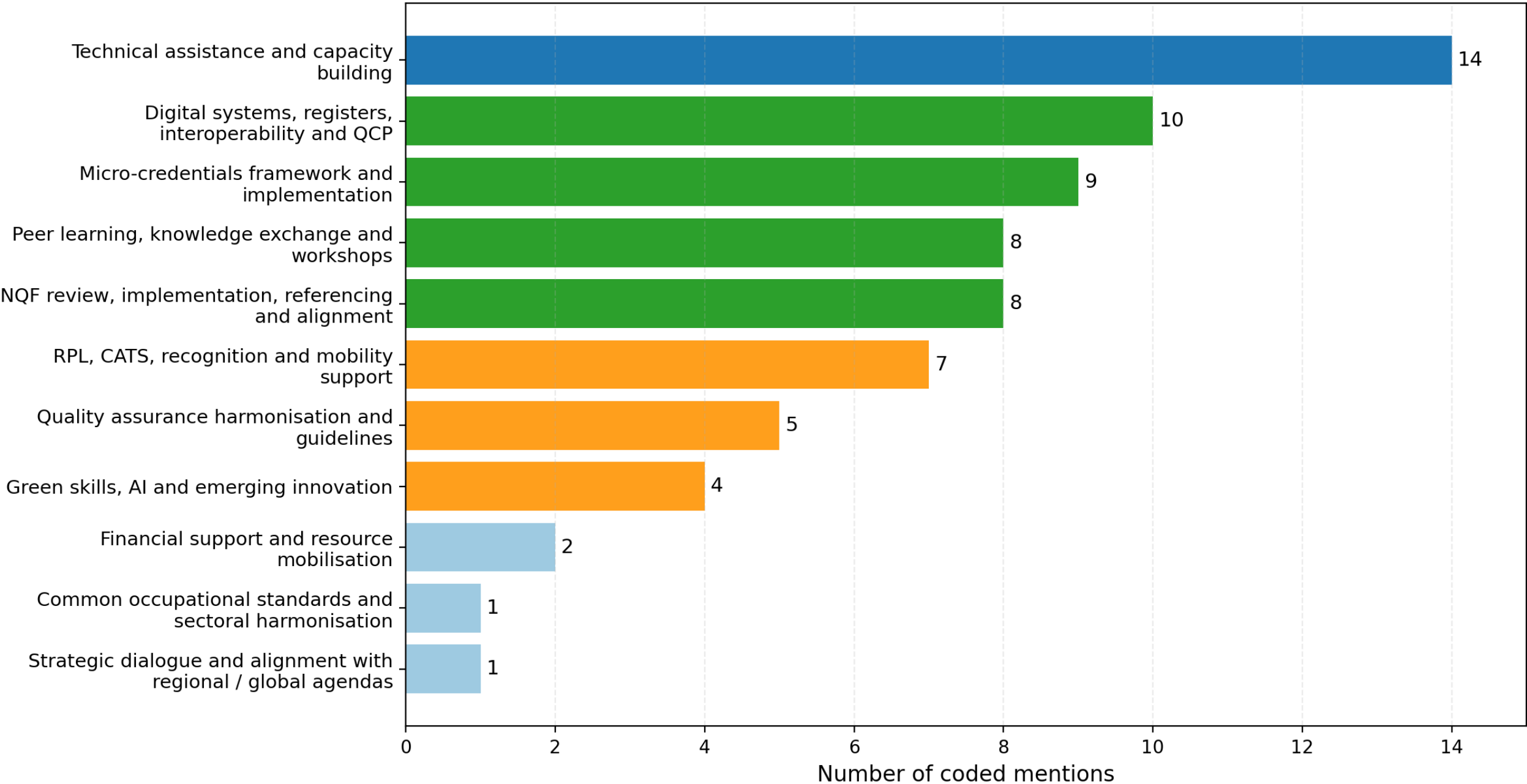
12 Namibia

- Review the NQF.
- Set standards for all qualifications.
- Develop AI policy and automate services.



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, open-ended responses to Question 52. Portuguese responses translated into English.

Question 53: Regional support most useful for the national level

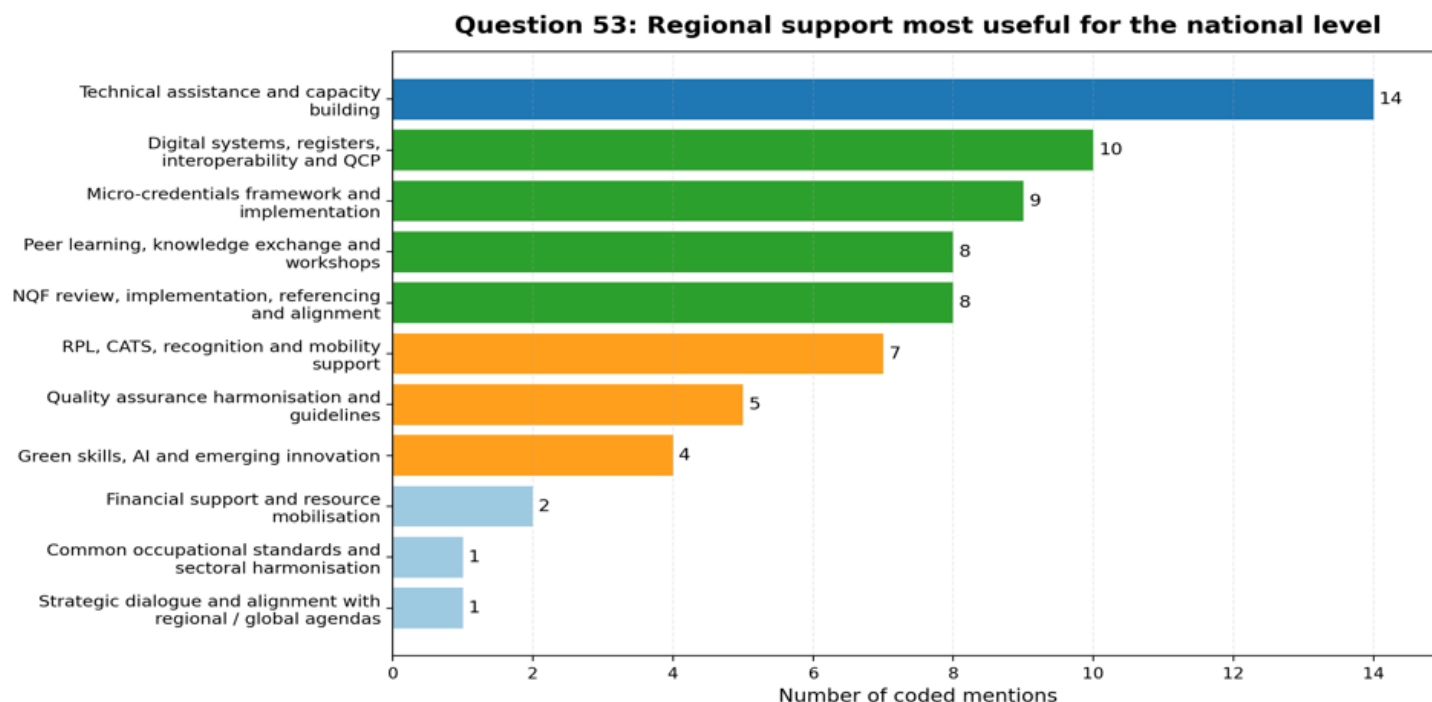


SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 53. Regional support most useful for the national level

Coded overview of open-ended responses • 16 institutional submissions

Number of coded mentions by support theme



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, Question 53 open-ended responses. Counts show coded thematic mentions; one response may contain multiple themes.



MAIN SIGNALS



Capacity is the strongest request

Member States ask for training, expert support and technical assistance.



Digital infrastructure is a priority

IMS, registers, QCP, learning accounts and interoperability require regional support.



Peer learning builds trust

Workshops, communities of practice and knowledge exchange are valued support mechanisms.



Recognition needs practical tools

Micro-credentials, RPL, CATS, QA and referencing require guidelines and implementation support.



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026; coded thematic mentions from open-ended responses. One response may contain multiple codes.

SADCQF Survey 2026

Question 53: regional support requested by country

Most useful SADC support for national implementation

1 Lesotho

- Capacity building for efficient management of qualifications.

2 Zambia

- Capacity-building and peer exchange for regulators and practitioners.
- Training on qualifications design, learning outcomes, digital registers, RPL, micro-credentials and emerging QA issues.

3 Mauritius

- SADCQF TWG workshop with relevant stakeholders.
- Technical support for MQF review, micro-credentials implementation and a national database of learning accounts.

4 Mozambique

- Institutional cooperation for instruments and guidelines on micro-credentials and QNQ referencing.
- Technical assistance for QNQ priorities: referencing, revision, unified catalogue/register, RPL, credits, QA and micro-credentials regulation.

5 Seychelles

- Capacity building in QA, data management and digital tools.
- IMS/shared register support, harmonised QA guidelines, mutual recognition frameworks and knowledge sharing on micro-credentials and AI.

6 Botswana

- Support for frameworks on micro-credentials, green skills and AI integration.

7 Eswatini

- Technical support for the micro-credentials framework, RPL policy operationalisation and greening of the ESQF.
- Support for national databases feeding the QCP and other priority areas.

8 South Africa

- Regional standards for digital and data interoperability, NQF registers, credentials information and digital credentials.
- Structured knowledge sharing and capacity development in QA, RPL, CATS, micro-credentials and green skills.

9 Angola

- Technical support and knowledge-sharing on NQFs among SADC Member States.
- Continuous policy dialogue aligned with SDG 4, SDG 8, AU Agenda 2063 and SADC 2050.

10 Malawi

- SADC-led training and peer learning for NQF authorities, TVET institutions and QA agencies.
- Support for regional registers/digital tools, QA harmonisation, CATS, RPL and common occupational standards.

11 Zimbabwe

- Technical and financial support for SADC/ACQF QCP.

12 Namibia

- Support for the NQF Information Management System.
- Expertise sharing and financial support.



Source: SADCQF Survey 2026, open-ended responses to Question 53. Portuguese responses translated into English.



SADCQF

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNITY QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

THANK YOU

Together, we are shaping the future of
qualifications in SADC.



For the learners, workers and citizens of SADC,
we build a framework of **trust, opportunity,
sustainability and innovation.**



With gratitude for the collective intelligence,
commitment and dialogue of the TCCA meeting
working to validate the Revised SADCQF Policy
and Guideline.



SADC Secretariat



TCCA Meeting



June 2026



UNITY
IN DIVERSITY



LIFELONG
LEARNING



MOBILITY &
RECOGNITION



TRUST &
QUALITY



SUSTAINABILITY
& PROGRESS

