



African Continental Qualifications Framework



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European Training Foundation
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<https://acqf.africa>



ACQF – Continental Tool, African Union Policy Initiative
based on [ACQF policy document](#) validated by member states in July 2023, in Addis Abeba

ACQF-II Project (2023 – 2026): Support to the implementation of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF II), financed by the European Union, implemented by ETF in cooperation with African Union Commission, the regional communities and member states



ACQF Network – launched in January 2025 to support and sustain the implementation of the ACQF and its Qualifications and Credentials Platform



**African Continental Qualifications Framework
(ACQF)**

ACQF Policy Document

**Submitted for African Union Member State Validation
Exercise**

Version: 17 November 2022



**Cadre continental africain des certifications
(ACQF)**

Document de politique de l'ACQF

Pour validation par les états membres de l'Union Africaine

Version du 17 novembre 2022



Quadro Continental Africano de Qualificações (ACQF)

Documento Político do ACQF

Para validação pelos Estados-membros da União Africana

Versão: 17 de novembro 2022

<https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-policy-document-upon-validation-by-au-member-states-en-fr-pt>

Challenge:

- Qualifications across countries and systems are very diverse
- ACQF provides a common reference frame for qualifications levels.

Objectives:

- improved **transparency and comparability** of qualifications
- improved mutual trust and **information-sharing** between qualifications frameworks and systems on the continent
- enhanced **recognition of skills and credentials**

Wider impact:

Improved mobility and lifelong learning opportunities

Main areas of activity of the ACQF

1. Referencing of national qualifications frameworks and systems to the ACQF, following agreed criteria and procedures.

2. Support Recognition of Prior Learning – development of guidelines and approaches, inventory of RPL systems on the continent, information campaign, up to five RPL pilot activities

3. ACQF Qualifications and Credentials Platform (QCP) – platform for ACQF countries to link their data on qualifications. An online course for users.

4. Common occupational profiles: Development of qualifications profiles adequate for common continental use (e.g.: related with economic integration / AfCFTA).

5. Capacity development in NQFs, RPL, CATS. Online, onsite, hybrid. Support to 16 countries in the development or revision of their NQF and related policies.

6. Advocacy, communication, networking and cooperation: among African stakeholders and other RQFs globally

7. Analysis, monitoring and evaluation: for continuous improvement.

African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF)

Inaugural workshop of the project ACQF-II (2023-2026)

11-13 July 2023 • Addis Ababa, Headquarters of the African Union

ACQF

African Continental
Qualifications Framework

Supporting and connecting Qualifications Frameworks
Transparency and Mutual Trust in qualifications
Facilitating lifelong learning and mobility



ACQF-II is:

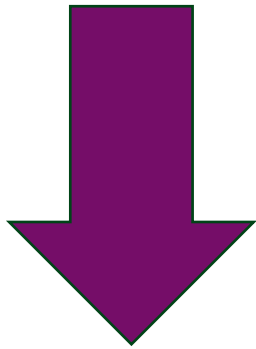
1. Capacity development.
2. Support countries and regions: NQF development and implementation.
3. Governance. ACQF Qualifications Platform. RPL Campaign. Referencing NQF-ACQF. Common profiles of qualifications

www.acqf.africa

1. Referencing – connecting and creating trust

Presentation and publication of a Referencing report explaining clearly:

- detailed information about national qualifications system and its core principles (QA arrangements, Recognition of Prior Learning, register of qualifications) and the NQF
- relationships between NQF and RQF levels



Possibility to indicate RQF levels next to the NQF levels in databases and on national certificates/diplomas

2. Support to Recognition of Prior Learning

- RPL Campaign: 3rd Forum in Nairobi (2024)
- Handbook on RPL for Practitioners
- Development of RPL policies, implementation roadmaps
- Pilot RPL schemes
- RPL in ACQF referencing criterion 2

3rd ACQF Forum: RPL for Practitioners

The 3rd continental "Forum of the institutions of National Qualifications Frameworks", is organised in partnership with the African Union, African countries, Regional Economic Communities. This workshop is co-organised with Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA), and will take place in Nairobi, from 1 to 4 October 2024, at the Hotel Fairview. The workshop languages are English, French, and Portuguese. Streaming is available to ensure wider participation.



3. Qualifications and Credentials Platform (QCP)

<https://public.acqf-qcp.africa/>


ACQF
Qualifications and Credentials Platform

Qualifications [↔ Compare](#)


Filters Country ACQF level Thematic area Qualification type Recognition of Prior Learning Status [Reset](#)

70 Qualifications


Bachelor of Pharmacy

 South Africa | Published 2026-03-09 | [Pharmacy](#) [Copy link](#) [See similar](#) Select to compare

Diploma in Fire and Rescue Technology

 Zambia | Published 2026-02-24 | [Occupational health and safety](#) [Copy link](#) [See similar](#) Select to compare

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN MIDWIFERY (BSc MID)

 Zambia | Published 2026-02-24 | [Nursing and midwifery](#) [Copy link](#) [See similar](#) Select to compare

4. Common Skills Profiles:

- Skills Data Focus
- Online Job Adds Analysis: real-time labour market intelligence - data on occupations, sectors of economic activity, skills, education, digital skills, green skills.
- Green skills dashboard: a new data visualisation tool focused on green occupations and green skills
- 42 Occupational profiles currently visible with skills and trends
- Analytical report on Green and Digital Skills - [Green and Digital Skills in Africa: Insights from online labour market data — ACQF](#)



CHOOSE PROFILE TO ANALYZE

Energy Engineer

ISCO Level 3

(Tutti)

Occupation Profiles

ESCO Code	ONET Code	DESCRIPTION
2149.9	17-2199.03	An Energy Engineer designs and develops technologies that produce energy from sustainable sources such as wind and solar power. Develops ways for existing buildings and systems to become more energy efficient. May specialize in one type or field of energy production.

Digital Jobs Per 1000 postings: 233,8

AI Jobs Per 1000 postings: 7.318

Green Jobs Per 1000 postings: 52,92

Year-Month

Inspect or monitor energy systems, including heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) or daylighting systems to determine energy use or potential energy savings.

Monitor energy related design or construction issues, such as energy engineering, energy management, or sustainable design.

Monitor and analyze energy consumption.

Conduct energy audits to evaluate energy use and to identify conservation and cost reduction measures.

Identify and recommend energy savings strategies to achieve more energy-efficient operation.

Alternative Titles

- Energy Engineers
- Energy Efficiency Engineers
- Energy Project Engineers
- Renewable Energy Engineers
- Energy Conservation Engineers

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Demand in Africa

5. Capacity development

Continental Forums

- 3rd Forum, Nairobi, Kenya – October 2024 (RPL)
- 4th Forum, Victoria, Seychelles – November 2024 (Micro-credentials)
- 5th Forum, Johannesburg, South Africa – July 2025 (Digitalisation of credentials)
- 6th Forum, Port Luis, Mauritius – September 2025

**Thematic
campaigns**

Handbooks and Guidelines

Handbook on RPL for Practitioners

Handbook on Micro-credentials

Handbook on Green Skills and Qualifications (forthcoming)

5. Capacity development materials - visit <https://acqf.africa>

Resources **Capacity Development** Skills data focus Qualifications Platform Events News

Training Modules 1 to 10_ENGLISH

The package of ACQF Training Modules is focused on key topics of the domain of qualifications, qualifications frameworks (national and regional) and functioning of ACQF. The Modules provide a comprehensive overview of the main concepts, principles, implementation steps and instruments, supported by cases and examples of application in different countries and regions in Africa and other continents. Each Training Module contains guidance for trainers and learners. To support interaction, autonomous learning and assessment of learning outcomes, the Training Modules include reflective questions, and assessment tasks. The Training Modules are designed for self-paced learning (individual); teacher-/trainer-/facilitator-directed learning – which may include group learning; or a combination of the above.

DEVELOPING THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (ACQF)

TRAINING MODULE TEN 10

QUALIFICATIONS AND NQFS (OR NQSS): A SYSTEMIC VIEW

ACQF African Qualifications Framework
 African Union
 THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE
 European Union

Webinars & Workshops

Training Modules and Handbooks

Micro-Credentials Handbook

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) - Handbook for RPL Practitioners

Training Module 1: Learning Outcomes

Comprehensive overview of the application of learning outcomes in NQFs, RQF and ACQF.

Training Module 2: Levels and level descriptors in the context of ACQF

Training Module 2 guides you through the development, construction and application of level descriptors. It explains the details of the elaboration of ACQF level descriptors.

Training Module 3: Referencing to ACQF

Training Module 3 presents the goals, criteria and procedures for referencing of National Qualifications Frameworks to ACQF, and proposes self-assessment tools and questions to help your country engage with the referencing process.

Technical support to countries in 2025

Malawi:
Review of NQF
document

Botswana:
review of 9 policies
(RPL, referencing,
assessment...)

Eswatini:
Development of RPL
policy and roadmap

**Support to Regional
Communities**

SADC QF: CATS and
RPL Guidelines

EAC: Regional TVET
Framework

UEMOA: capacity
building on NQFs

Cameroon:
pilot RPL scheme,
operational
documents

Guinea-Bissau:
Operationalisation of
NQF Office, manuals,
procedures

Somalia:
policies on NQF, CATS
and RPL

**New collaboration
requests: Mauritius,
Zimbabwe**

Seychelles:
Micro-credentials
policy

Zambia:
NQF review,
consultations

7. ACQF Governance

Political Steering – African Union Commission, ESTI Unit
ACQF Implementation Body – ACQF Network

ACQF Network's Presidency:

- South African Qualifications Authority – Nadia Starr, CEO
- Kenya National Qualifications Authority – Dr. Alice Kande, DG/CEO
- Zambia Qualifications Authority – Mercy Ngoma, DG

5 Technical Clusters:

1. Cluster 1 – Referencing
2. Cluster 2 – QCP
3. Cluster 3 – Research and monitoring, support to NQFs
4. Cluster 4 – Communication and advocacy
5. Cluster 5 – Registration, strategy and funding

02

Call for partnerships

Developing Common (Multi-country) Occupational Profiles in Africa

What We Are Launching

ACQF-II is initiating a continental collaboration to develop **common (multi-country) occupational profiles and related qualifications**. These profiles will support AfCFTA labour mobility and skills recognition, align with Global Gateway priority sectors, be validated at continental level and published on the ACQF platform.

Priority Sectors – Call for Working Group Members

We are seeking experts and projects working in the following sectors:

- Renewable Energy & Energy Transition
- Green Hydrogen & Industrial Decarbonisation
- Sustainable Urban Mobility & Transport
- Agribusiness & Value Chains
- Cross-cutting Technical & Industrial Profiles: mechanical and electrical maintenance, instrumentation and control, supply chain and logistics
- Other sectors relevant to Global Gateway and AfCFTA priorities

Who We Are Looking For

We invite OP-VET and Global Gateway projects, industry and sectoral experts, VET providers and training institutions and qualifications authorities and regulators. Particularly those who:

- Are developing occupational profiles or curricula in 2026
- Can share existing materials
- Are interested in regional collaboration (with SADC, EAC, etc.)
- Aim to link profiles to formal qualifications or micro-credentials

What We Offer

Methodology & Expert Support

- ACQF methodology for multi-country occupational profiles
- Technical guidance from ACQF expert

Validation & Recognition

- Validation through the ACQF Network of qualifications authorities and Regional Economic Communities

Visibility & Dissemination

- Publication on the ACQF website with the acknowledgement of contributing partners, assuring continental-level visibility
- Presentation at regional communities' events and fora

Sustainability & Impact

- Scaling project outputs beyond national level
- Impact on qualifications development and micro-credentials in multiple countries
- Contribution to regional labour market integration

How the Collaboration Works

1. Identification of coordinating partners and sectors
2. Establishment of **sectoral, multi-country working groups**
3. Development and validation of methodological framework
4. Series of **online technical workshops**
5. Validation by the ACQF Network
6. Publication on the ACQF platform

Timeline: Spring – Autumn 2026

Expected Contribution from Partners:

- Participation of sectoral experts
- Contribution to coordination of workshops and validation
- Sharing of existing occupational profiles / curricula



Estimated effort: 5–10 working days per expert



Participation does not entail costs for partners; ACQF-II will support the contribution of experts in line with ETF procedures.

Expert Profile (Summary)

We are looking for:

- a) **Sectoral Working Groups Coordinators, and**
- b) **Working Group Members.**

We invite industry and sectoral experts, VET providers and training institutions, qualifications authorities/ regulators and other experts in the field. Partners' Experts should have 5+ years sector or skills development experience, worked on occupational standards, curricula or qualifications, understand learning outcomes and NQF approaches, can contribute to multi-country collaboration and are available between spring and autumn 2026.

03

Proposed approach

Development of common (multi-country) occupational profiles: methodology, results, application

Vidmantas Tūtlys, 24-03-2026

Outline

- The concept of a multi-country occupational profile.
 - Benefits and potential for the application of multi-country occupational profiles.
 - Methodology for developing multi-country occupational profiles.
 - Organization of the design process.
 - Template multi-country occupational profiles.
-

The concept of multi-country occupational profile

- Multi-country occupational profiles are connecting elements of national qualifications systems across countries in a given geographical region, used to promote transparent, sustainable, and mutually beneficial labor migration, facilitate corporate investment and cross-border cooperation between educational and training institutions in the region.
 - Multi-country occupational profiles focus only on the general requirements for competencies and learning outcomes typical of qualifications in countries within the region and do not cover all elements of national qualifications. Thus, Multi-country occupational profiles serve as a key benchmark for the comparability of national qualifications.
 - This tool is preferably complemented by regional qualifications frameworks, which allow for the seamless definition of qualification levels across the various NQFs within a region.
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Benefits of multi-country occupational profiles for regional qualifications systems

- Strengthen more intensive and targeted cooperation between stakeholders and experts involved in the development of qualifications and their systems in the countries of region.
 - Increase the transparency and quality of national qualifications and their systems in the countries.
 - Facilitate the mutual recognition of competencies and qualifications acquired by students and skilled workers.
 - Maintain and strengthen mutual trust between stakeholders and institutions of qualifications systems.
 - Create better conditions for the recognition of qualifications from the region worldwide, by making these qualifications easier identifiable.
 - Facilitate the exchange and development of experience and know-how in the design and development of qualifications between the countries of region.
-

Methodology of design

Collection, selection and analysis of secondary data and information on specific qualifications and related occupations

Search, collection and selection of relevant documents.

Content analysis of documents using the provided template.



Drafting a Multi-country Occupational Profile

Comparison and synthesis of national information sources.

Comparison of the intermediate project with international qualification standards, synthesis.



Testing and external validation of a multi-country occupational profile

Testing and review of the occupational profile by relevant national institutions and stakeholders.

Adjusting the occupational profile based on the feedback received.

The process of developing prototypes of multi-country occupational profiles - the choice of occupations

- Demand for occupations in the labor market of countries
 - International migration/mobility of specialists in the occupation within and outside the region
 - Coverage of the occupation by the training programmes of vocational education and/or higher education
 - Availability of relevant qualifications in the national qualifications systems
-

Stages of developing multi-country occupational profiles

1. Collecting and analyzing secondary sources of information and compiling an introductory section of the profile containing information about the occupation, work processes, and qualifications;
 2. Compiling a list of profile units, competencies, associated knowledge, skills, autonomy, and responsibility;
 3. Drafting proposals for assessment specifications and references to national and international qualification standards;
 4. Reviewing and approving profiles with the involvement of local national external experts and stakeholders.
-

Collecting and analyzing secondary sources of information: national sources

- Available national occupational standards, assessment standards and qualification profiles.
 - Available VET curricula.
 - Occupational /qualification profiles and competence frameworks developed by the sectoral bodies and stakeholders (when available).
 - Legal acts stipulating the work/activity related to analysed occupation (health and safety protection, hygienic requirements, ergonomic specifications, minimal age, qualification requirements, etc.).
-

Collecting and analyzing secondary sources of information: international sources

- International occupational standards or qualification profiles (if available).
 - International sectoral qualifications and competence frameworks developed by the sectoral bodies and stakeholders (when available).
 - International quality standards related to the analysed activity.
 - Articles, papers and other publications on the technological, organizational, ergonomic and other changes in the given occupation or occupational area.
 - International/regional databases on occupations, skills and qualifications.
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International/regional databases on occupations, skills and qualifications

- ACQF Dashboard: Common Occupational profiles
<https://acqf.africa/skills-data-focus/occupation-profiles-dashboard>
 - The International Classification of Occupations (ISCO): [International Standard Classification of Occupations \(ISCO\) - ILOSTAT](#)
 - Skills for Jobs Database: [ILO Skills for Jobs](#)
 - UNEVOC-UNESCO Global Skills Tracker
<https://unevoc.unesco.org/home/Global+Skills+Tracker/lang=en/>
 - European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO)
<https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/classification>
-

Compiling a list of profile units, competencies, associated knowledge, skills, autonomy, and responsibility

- Online teamworking of the expert groups in the countries with the coordination by the selected moderator(-s) (or moderator and expert responsible for drafting of the profile).
 - Deciding about the list of units, competences and their elements (knowledge, skills, autonomy and responsibility).
-

Template of multi-country occupational profile

- Title
 - Reference levels of corresponding qualification to the NQF of countries
 - Brief description of occupation and work processes related to the professional profile
 - Role and place of qualifications related to the professional profile in the relevant sector of the economy
 - **Units of occupational profile and competence**
 - Specifications for the assessment and recognition of competencies, qualifications related to the occupational profile in the involved countries: evaluation and recognition bodies, procedures, resources
 - References to national qualifications and standards of countries.
 - References to other international qualifications and standards
-

Brief description of occupation and work processes related to the professional profile

- Code of occupation in the national classifiers and ISCO.
 - Objective of the work process.
 - The main objects and results of work (products, services, tools and devices, necessary resources).
 - Key characteristics of work processes: typical workplaces, forms of labor organization, special requirements for the performance of work, labor protection requirements, environmental impact.
-

Role and place of qualifications related to the occupational profile in the relevant sector of the economy

- Distribution of profile jobs in different types of enterprises (SMEs, large enterprises, national capital/international capital, geographical distribution).
 - Role/place of qualifications in the context of technological and organizational development of the industry (digitalization, automation, robotization of labor processes, greening the economy and labor processes, etc.).
 - Workforce and Job Mobility Related to Qualifications: mobility within the region, mobility outside the region (only indication of trends, statistical data are not required).
-

Units of occupational profile and competences

- Unit:

Competence:		
Knowledge	Skills	Autonomy, responsibility, cross-cutting / transversal competencies
Assessment criteria:		

Specifications for the assessment and recognition of competencies, qualifications related to the countries involved in the profile

- evaluation and recognition bodies
 - procedures
 - resources
-

Questions to methodology?

vidmantas.tutlys@gmail.com

04

Next steps

Next steps

I. Confirm your interest by responding to this short (1-minute) poll:

[ACQF collaboration – expression of interest – Fill in form](#)

until 15 April indicating sectors are you most interested in, what you could contribute and what is your readiness to engage.

II. ACQF-II will organise **short bilateral meetings** with interested partners to agree on collaboration in more detail.

III. ACQF-II in collaboration with the ACQF Network will:

- consolidate the working groups – **by mid-May**
- launch of activities - shortly after.

You are most welcome to also contact us by e-mail: maria.rosenstock@etf.europa.eu

ACQF

Thank you!
Merci!
Obrigada!

