

MESSAGE 1

WHAT IS THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (SADCQF)?

It is an overarching ten-level qualifications framework underpinned by learning outcomes and quality assurance mechanisms in SADC. The SADC Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) was approved and launched by Ministers responsible for Education and Training, Science, Technology and Innovation to set minimum standards for quality assurance and to facilitate the recognition of qualifications in the SADC region. The SADCQF is a comprehensive Regional Qualifications Framework (RQF) for Schooling, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Higher Education. The vision is that, in the SADC region, all new qualifications - certificates, diplomas and other documents issued by competent authorities will contain the relevant descriptors on the SADCQF. Its purpose is to enable easier movement of learners and workers across the SADC region and internationally.

MESSAGE 2

PURPOSE OF THE SADCQF

The main purpose of the SADCQF is to:

- ✓ Provide a mechanism for comparability and recognition of qualifications in SADC;
- ✓ Facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications in all Member States;
- ✓ Harmonise (develop a common understanding of comparability of) qualifications wherever possible;
- ✓ Promote the transfer of credits within and among Member States and even beyond; and
- ✓ Create SADC regional standards, where appropriate.

MESSAGE 3

WHAT ARE THE SIX (6) IMPLEMENTATION AREAS OF THE SADCQF AND WHICH COUNTRY IS COORDINATING EACH ONE?

1. Governance – SADC Secretariat
2. Development and Alignment - **South Africa**
3. Quality Assurance – **Botswana**
4. Verification - **Eswatini**
5. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) , Credit Accumulation, Transfer (CAT) and Articulation - **Namibia**
6. Advocacy and Communication and - **Zambia**

MESSAGE 4

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE SADCQF?

The SADCQF holds numerous benefits to the beneficiaries. These include:

- ✓ Promoting dialogue and mutual understanding,
- ✓ Creating a wider pool of knowledge, skills, values and experience in the region as countries can begin to fill their training gaps and collaborate in highly specialised training,
- ✓ Increasing access to skilled and knowledgeable personnel through a more efficient, rational and standardised system,
- ✓ Allowing learners and workers greater flexibility and mobility within the region and increasing the pool of learning opportunities,
- ✓ Facilitating determination of qualification comparability and credit transfer in the SADC region,
- ✓ Regulating cross-border provisioning,
- ✓ Streamlining and rationalising training resources leading to greater economies of scale in developing highly technical and rare skills and knowledge,
- ✓ Promoting greater co-operation and unity of purpose between SADC Member States and education and training stakeholders,
- ✓ Enhancing partnerships between governments and private education and training providers to improve QA practices and relevance of qualifications, and
- ✓ Ensuring more justice in access and equity of disadvantaged groups.

MESSAGE 5

The principles on which the SADCQF are based on are:

1. Regional solidarity and co-operation
2. Interaction with global and local frameworks of qualification reference
3. Strengthening of national education and training systems
4. Quality enhancement and strengthening of education and training in the region
5. Respect for regional and multilateral decisions
6. Autonomy and interrelatedness of the sectors of learning
7. Pragmatism in development
8. Prioritisation of projects
9. Position in terms of globalisation and internationalisation
10. Transparency, flexibility and validity
11. Mobility

12. Relation to national education systems
13. Equity within and among Member States
14. Responsiveness and relevance

MESSAGE 6

Principle 1 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Regional solidarity and co-operation

The SADCQF will at all times work within its core mandates of promoting regional solidarity and co-operation, peace and prosperity among Member States and ensure unity and better understanding both in SADC and the broader initiatives of the African Continent. This includes commitment to the broader social and economic goals of combating poverty and promoting equity and global competitiveness. It also allows policy-makers and educational institutions in SADC Member States to compare their systems and qualifications and enhance transparency and mutual trust between and among the systems.

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Principle 2 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Interaction with global and local frames of reference

The SADCQF will facilitate interaction with relevant international developments and standards in a way that enhances the global standing of and respect for the region while effectively affirming local cultures, values and good practices.

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Principle 3 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Strengthening of national education and training systems

The SADCQF is a resource for each Member State, offering essential support for reviewing education and training provision, goal setting and planning in relation to skills needs and the securing of investment in learning to the greatest benefit of society and the learner.

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Principle 4 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Quality enhancement and strengthening of education and training in the region

The SADCQF is aimed fundamentally at using the qualifications dynamic to enhance the quality, relevance and impact of education and training throughout SADC and to serve the interests of all

the citizens of the region. It will also assist Member States to ensure investments in qualifications (whether through public sector or corporate and international provision) are properly designed, nurtured and used to the benefit of society and the people of SADC.

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Principle 5 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Respect for regional and multilateral decisions

The SADCQF will have respect for national sovereignty as advocated by the Treaty and the Protocol on Education and Training. National governments will be responsible for agreeing on actions to fulfil the intentions and principles of the SADCQF. Collaborative programmes and external interventions are undertaken only with mutual understanding and respect and at the invitation of the national governments or delegated authority.

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Principle 6 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Autonomy and interrelatedness of the sectors of learning

The sectors of learning (general, academic, technical and vocational) have different needs and different ways of designing and using qualifications. They also have common interests and a need for articulation of different kinds. The proposed SADCQF will actively promote work towards harmonisation undertaken within and across these sectors.

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Principle 7 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Pragmatism in development

It is a fundamental principle of the SADCQF (in the spirit of the SADC Protocol) that its development should occur in a pragmatic, phase-by-phase manner, which gradually becomes more delineated and comprehensive. Feasible, practical steps to attain the vision should be taken so that positive and concrete achievements can be measured as the vision is fulfilled.

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Principle 8 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Prioritisation of projects

The creation of a comprehensive and fully harmonised system of qualifications across borders is an important but also challenging task. The question of feasibility demands that projects

undertaken to develop the SADCQF be prioritised on an informed basis according to a pre-determined set of principles.

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Principle 9 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Position in terms of globalisation and internationalisation

In the context of the opportunities and threats of globalisation where an aggressive trade in knowledge and skills is expressed actively and commercially there are potential benefits for Africa if taken up and well managed, but they also present a great and obvious challenge.

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Principle 10 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Transparency, flexibility and validity

The understanding of the term framework should be very broad and based on a set of agreed principles, practices, procedures and standardised terminology. The SADCQF should be continually revisited and adjusted if necessary if it is to remain valid, relevant and competitive.

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Principle 11 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Mobility

The SADCQF should allow learners and workers greater flexibility and mobility within the region. Accreditation systems would allow transfer of credits across the SADC countries. It will help citizens to navigate within and between complex national systems of education and training and therefore support their lifelong learning.

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Principle 12 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Relation to national education systems

The SADCQF recognises the principle that development should occur in a pragmatic phase-by-phase manner. Feasible practical steps should be taken to reach the outlined vision. The development of the SADCQF will take place alongside the simultaneous development of NQFs.

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Principle 13 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Equity within and among Member States

Equity within SADC will be attained once a variety of courses are recognised and approved for the attainment of equivalent levels of qualification.

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Principle 14 of the SADCQF is as follows :

Responsiveness and relevance

It is important and fundamental that the development of the SADCQF is “homegrown” and guided by the demands of education and training in the region and driven by the local experts. Improved co-operation and sharing of ideas and promising standards will go a long way to facilitate a relevant and effective SADCQF.