Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation HAQAA (HAQAA Initiative)

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HAQAA Initiative

- EU Service contract 2015-2018
- Implementing consortium: University of Barcelona (coordinator), AAU, DAAD, EUA and ENQA (complimentary partners, ensuring outreach, expertise)

- Objective: “Contribute to and support the harmonisation of higher education programmes and the creation of a revitalised, distinctive, attractive and globally competitive African higher education space, through enhanced intra-African collaboration”
  - Development of a harmonised quality assurance and accreditation system at institutional level, national, regional and Pan-African continental level
QA Trends in Africa

• Consolidated agencies in national QA systems, seeking to adapt, improve, consolidate
• Countries without agencies, seeking to develop them
• Regional regulators, associations, networks and capacity builders (CAMES, IUCEA, EAQAN, SAQAN....)
• Regional communities with a higher education mandate and regional guidelines for QA (East Africa)
• Budding regional harmonisation initiatives (SADC)
• African Union interest in harmonisation: Continental Strategy for Education (CESA)
Pan African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF): Action Lines

- Facilitate collaboration, networking and capacity building between national and regional QA/accreditation agencies
- Development of African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance
- Advance the development of an African Credit Transfer System
- Development of an African Continental Qualifications Framework based on existing national and regional qualifications frameworks
- African register (for QA agencies) and QA agency reviews
- (Future) Continental Accreditation Agency

Red = Action is covered under the HAQAA Initiative
Blue = Covered under TUNING Africa
Black = not yet developed
HAQAA: Major Activities

1) DEVELOPING TOOLS FOR PAQAF:
   *African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ASG-QA)*

2) SUPPORTING A COMMON LANGUAGE FOR QA IN AFRICA
   *HAQAA Training Course*

3) SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY CULTURE
   *Institutional evaluations employing the AQRM*
HAQAA Training Course: In review

• 41 African countries represented: 21 anglophone, 20 francophone
• Including important African associations
• Representing accreditation bodies, ministries and universities: officially nominated
HAQAA Training Course: Content

- Quality in higher education (IQA/EQA)
  - Concepts, trends
- Framework for harmonising higher education in Africa/‘PAQAF’
  - Regional developments in QA
- Personal Action Plans (PAP)
- QA in the context of the European Higher Education Area
Personal Action Plan (PAP): Topics

- Establishment of National Agency
  - 10 PAP (e.g. Mali, Niger, Tchad)

- Institutional/ Program evaluation
  - 5 PAP (e.g. Mozambique, Gabon, Algeria)

- Capacity building for QA Agencies
  - Egypt

- Facilitate the Harmonization of cross border higher education and student mobility in the SAQAN countries

- Streamlining QA systems
  - Ghana

- Implementation of recommendations of accreditation agencies in Universities
  - Senegal

- Sensitize universities on QA
  - 3 PAP (Liberia, Burundi, RD Congo)
Some conclusions: Training Course

- EQA should strengthen IQA
- General consensus on relevance of training activities for QA in Africa at the continental level.
  - Bringing together different African language groups
  - Sharing good practices, and fostering networking through inter linguistic groups
- Emerging interest of national QA bodies to integrate expertise from other African countries into their own national QA trainings and external quality procedures
- Diversity of QA systems in Africa (emerging vs. established): ASG-QA can help to create a common understanding of QA on the continent. They can also be a first reference for some emerging systems.
- High commitment of all training course participants and experts for working together on strengthening the higher education system in Africa. “Ambassadors” for PAQAF, building on HAQAA for harmonisation activities.
**Supporting IQA: Institutional evaluations employing the AQRM**

- Support institutional quality culture and self-assessment in diverse institutions
- Promoted the politically endorsed self-assessment tool AQRM (African Quality Rating Mechanism), a tool under the PAQAF framework
- Technical workshop in March 2017 to prepare self-assessment (capacity building for self-assessment is in higher demand)
- Voluntary, improvement-oriented, not a ranking tool
- Reports are made public = transparency
## AQRM: Selected Institutions

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<tr>
<th>S/No.</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Country</th>
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Supporting EQA: Review methodology for QA agencies

- Developed by the Technical Working Group that also drafted the ASG-QA
- A means to assess agencies externally and ensure that they comply with the ASG-QA
- Improvement oriented/ Voluntary (as of present)
- Piloted under HAQAA in 2018: 4 agency reviews and 4 consultancy visits

Key factors:
- Self-assessment by the agency
- Expert panel
- Site visit
- Coordinating Body (One or several possible?)
- Decision-making Body (Continental agency?)
- External review report (Public?)
- Follow-up
Agency reviews and consultancy visits

- Agency visits: Egypt, Zimbabwe, Senegal, Mozambique
- Consultancy visits: Cameroon, Togo, Morocco, Mali

- Mixed African and European expert teams
- Formative exercise
- Feedback being generated on the agency review methodology
- Prospect to continue in HAQAA2
Impact of HAQAA

- A major impulse for developing various Action Lines of PAQAF, in cooperation between African regional and national stakeholder organisations and with European support and input
- Created a forum for generating debate and understanding regarding continental objectives, and to promote the AU policy agenda
- Created stronger links across regions and language groups around the topic of QA, though much work is still to be done
Observations and challenges

• No “one size fits all” solution: different regional contexts and stages of development need to be considered
• Regional and national partners play a critical role and synergies need to be sought (Advisory Board)
• Exchange and dialogue of higher education institutions and agencies / regulatory bodies is important for enhancing the systems.
• Change is slow both at institutional and policy level = A long-term financial investment needs to be driven by common interest of African EQA and IQA policy makers.
Implementing team

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