Global Gateway

Co-funded by the European Union

African Union

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa

HAQAA3

Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF)

Isabella Tetteh Ahinakwa,
Association of African Universities (AAU)
itahinakwa@aau.org

obreal

ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION DES UNIVERSITES AFRICAINES
اتحاد الجامعات الإفريقية

DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

enqa.
European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

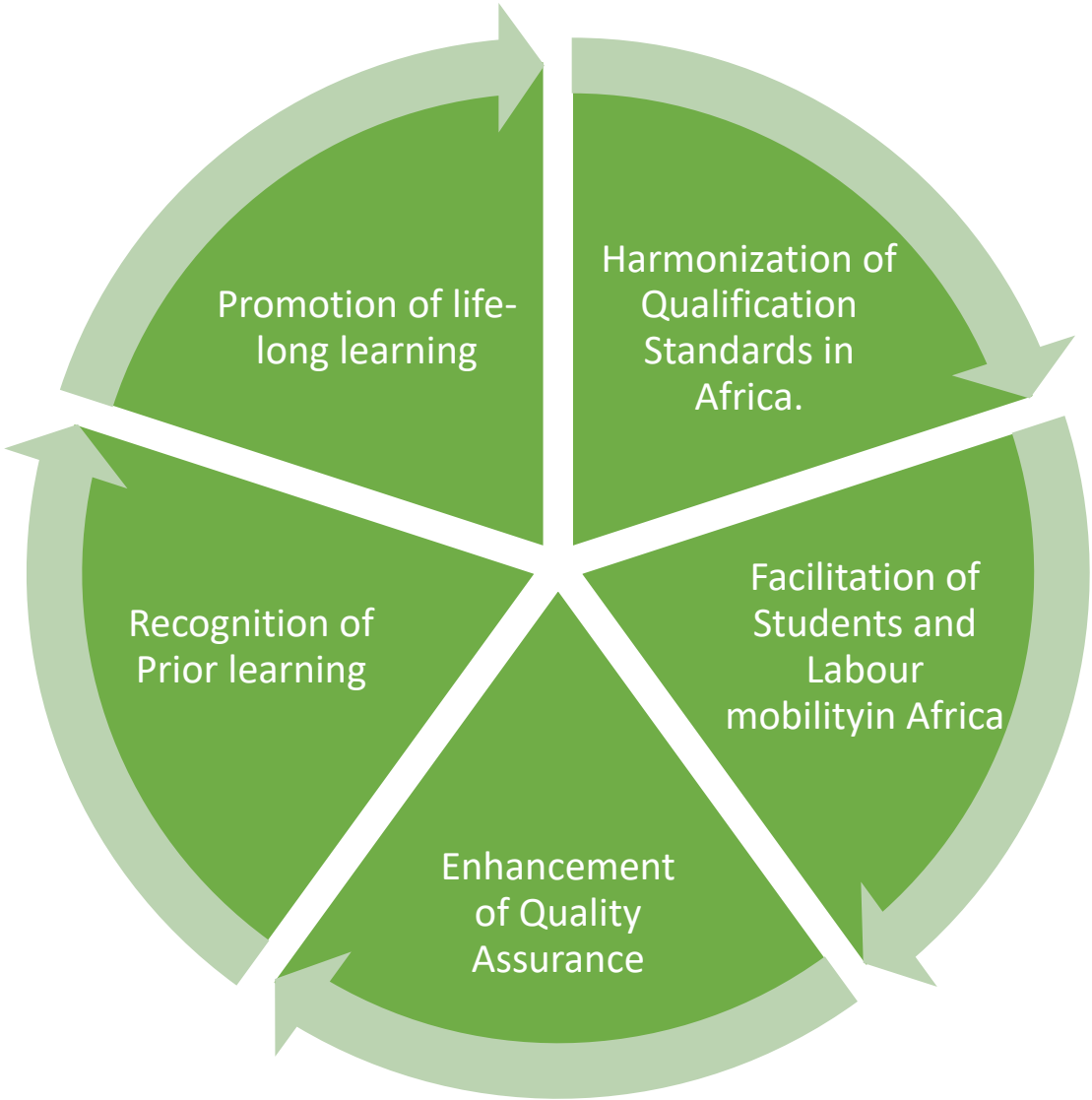
What is PAQAF?

Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF) is a major initiative of the African Union.

It is a framework of initiatives and tools designed to harmonize and improve the Quality and Comparability of Qualifications across the African continent

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Objectives of PAQAF



Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

PAQAF Importance

- PAQAF is central to the African Union Agenda 2063, which envisions a prosperous, united, and integrated Africa

- PAQAF is aligned with the Continental Strategy for Africa (CESA) and the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA), which emphasize the need for a well-coordinated educational system that supports lifelong learning, innovation, and Economic development

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Framework and Tools of PAQAF

- Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework consists of several tools that have been developed or are in the process of being developed to ensure quality provisions in higher education in Africa

7 Tools of PAQAF

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Tools of PAQAF

1. **African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance**
   - ASG-QA (developed under HAQAA1)
   - Under HAQAA2, a User's Guidelines was also developed

2. **African Continental Qualification Framework**
   - Framework showing flexible study pathways and educational systems in countries, regions, and the continent

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Tools of PAQAF – cont.

3. **African Quality Rating Mechanisms (AQRM)**
   - Internal Quality Assurance tools.
   - Uses the ASG-QA as standards for benchmarking

4. **Addis-Convention for Recognition of Qualification**
   - Focused on comparability of degrees, certificates and diplomas

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Tools of PAQAF – cont.

5. **African Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems (ACTS)**
   - Still being developed under HAQAA3 program
   - Will facility transfer of Knowledge credit and life-long learning in Africa

6. **Continental Registers for Quality Assurance Agencies**
   - This register would serve as a clearing house for Quality Assurance agencies in Africa that comply with African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

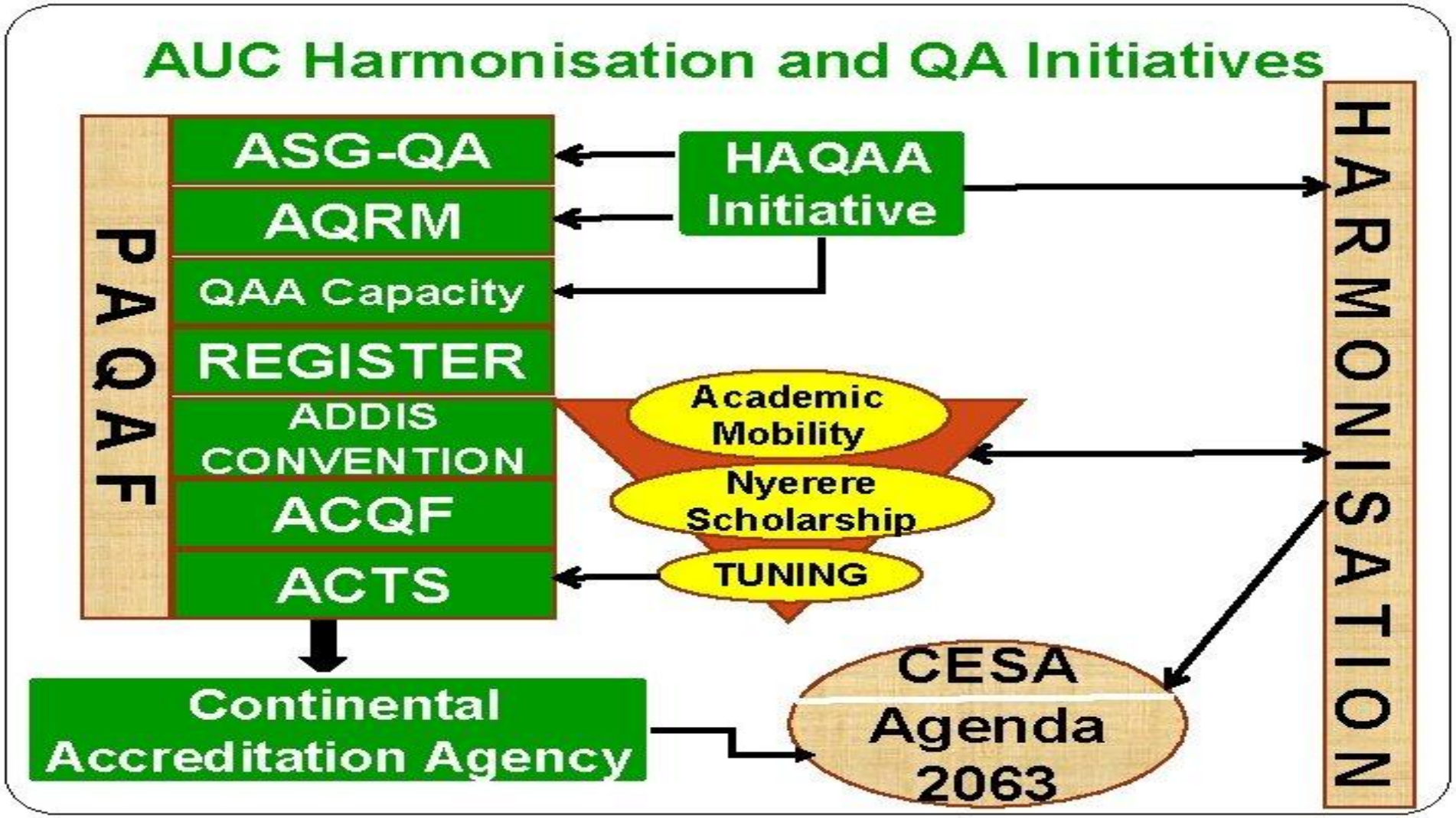
Tools of PAQAF – cont.

7. Pan African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (PAQAA)

- Agency Review Ongoing
- Coordinates all the components of PAQAF
- Technical unit at AAU

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Execution of the Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF)



Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA)

What is CESA 2026–2035?

The **Continental Education Strategy for Africa,** the AU's second-generation education framework, building on CESA 2016–2025.

Strategic Alignments

SDG 4

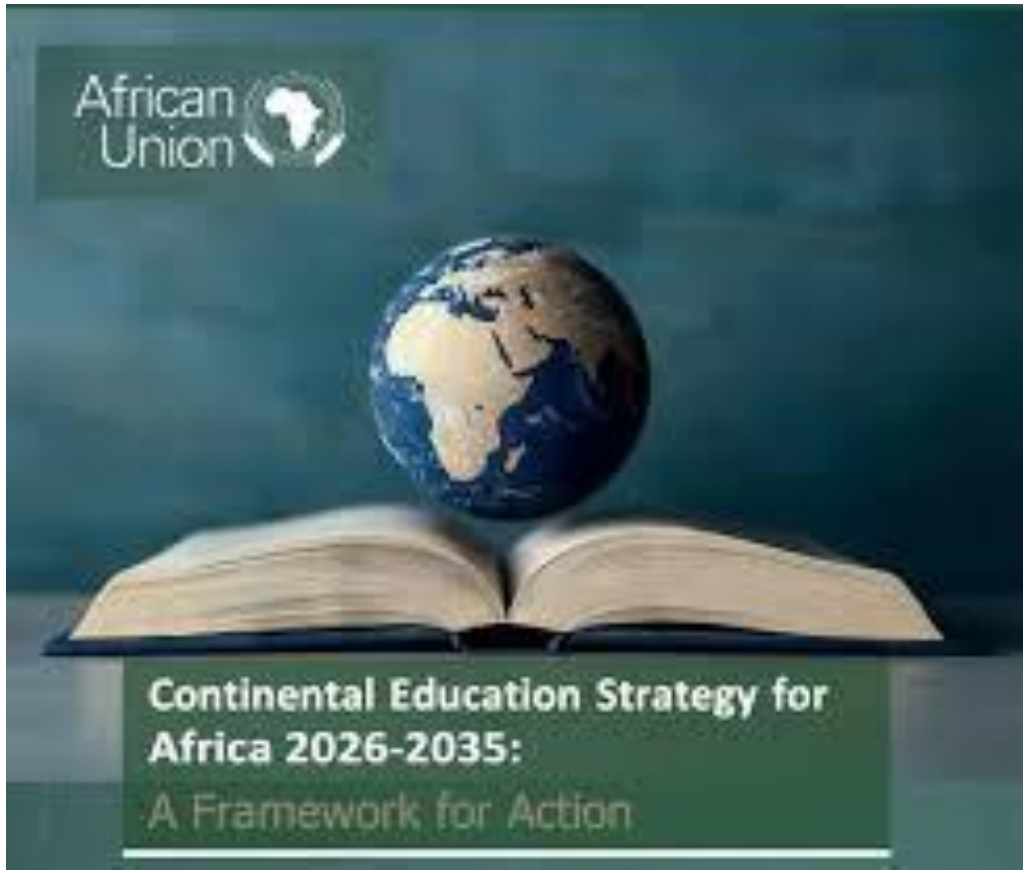
Quality education for all by 2030.

Agenda 2063

Africa's continental development blueprint.

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Vision of CESA



- Lifelong Learning
- Skills for the Future
- Social Cohesion & Development

> "Inclusive, equitable, quality education for Africa's transformation"

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Political Priorities of CESA

1. **Education as a Human Right**

Access to quality education is a fundamental entitlement for every African citizen.

2. **Government Commitment & Domestic Financing**

Strong political will and increased domestic investment are essential to implementation.

3. **Evidence-Based Policy & Continental Coordination**

Data-driven decisions and cross-border alignment ensure coherent progress.

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

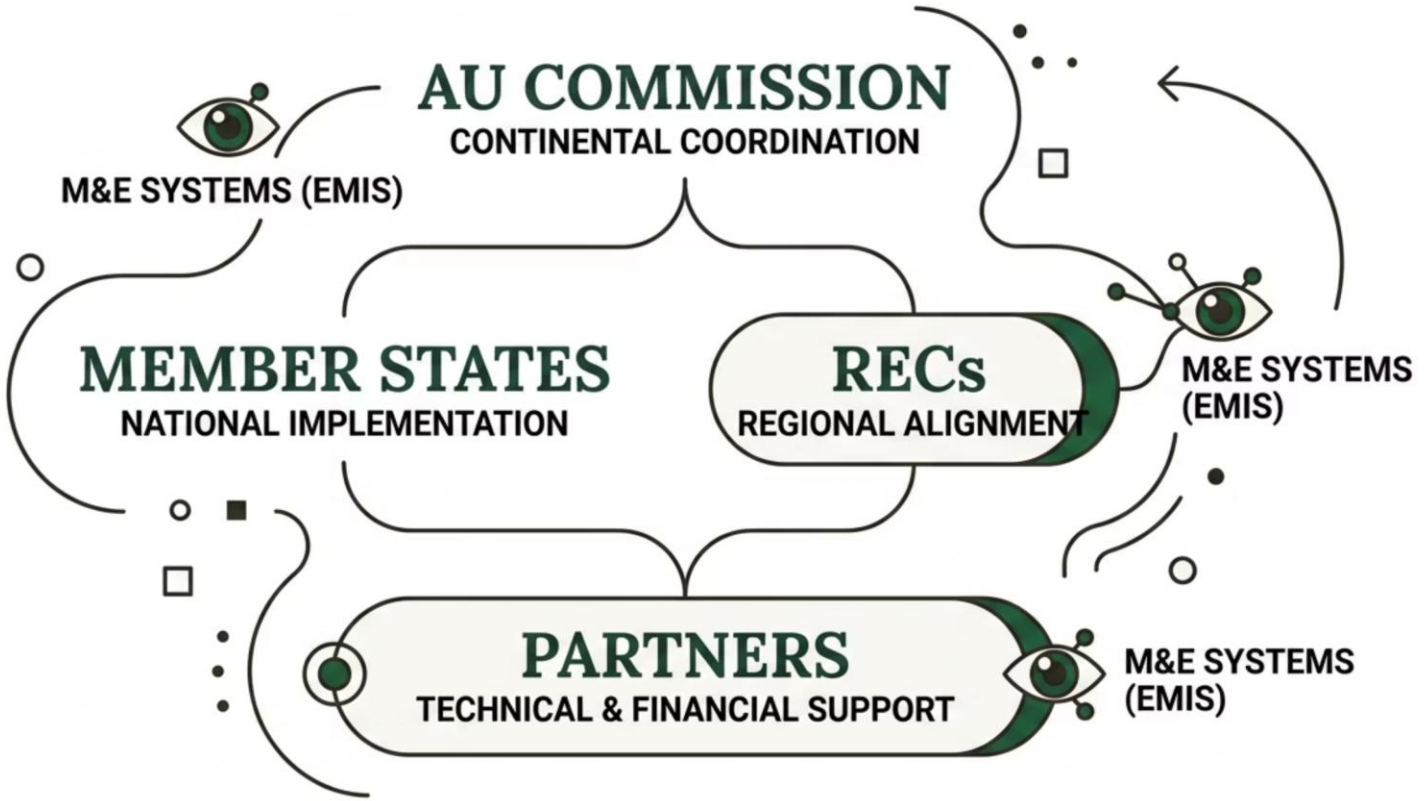
CESA Strategic Architecture

CESA is structured around **6 Strategic Areas** and **20 Objectives**, organized into **four core pillars**:

- Governance & Financing
- Teachers & Workforce
- Skills & Innovation
- Inclusion & Lifelong Learning

Governance Structure of CESA

Effective implementation relies on a multi-level governance architecture with clear roles at every tier.



Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Linkages Between CESA and PAQAF

Continental Education Strategy for Africa

Provides the overarching **education policy framework** — setting goals, priorities, and strategic direction for African education.

Pan-African Quality Assurance Framework

Serves as the **quality assurance mechanism** that operationalizes CESA's goals through standards, tools, and governance structures.

Together, CESA and PAQAF ensure **quality + access + relevance**, support **continental integration**, and enable **student and labour mobility** across Africa.

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Political Significance of CESA & PAQAF

Strengthens

- Regional cooperation
- Policy harmonization

Drives

- Knowledge economy
- Skilled workforce

Positions Africa Globally

Elevates Africa's standing in international education and economic competitiveness.

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Future Directions

- Strengthen Political Commitment
- Digitalization of Qualification Systems
- Expand Regional Cooperation
- Build Institutional Capacity
- Address Skills Mismatch

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa
HAQAA3

Conclusion

CESA + PAQAF

Transformation + Quality

Political will is the critical engine driving Africa's education agenda forward.

Africa's Future Depends On

→ Strong Education Systems

→ Trusted Qualifications

→ Integrated Frameworks

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa

HAQAA3

THANK YOU!

More information at

www.haqaa3.obreal.org

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa

HAQAA3