FINAL HAQAA2 EVENT BRIEF

The Harmonisation, Accreditation and Quality Assurance in African Higher Education final conference was held in Accra, Ghana on 6th - 9th December 2022 gathering over 100 participants representing over 31 African countries and representatives of partners from Europe. The HAQAA2 Implementing Team was represented by Nicolas Patrici, Elizabeth Colucci, Agustina Calabrese, Apiyo Okwiri and Pablo Beneitone (OBREAL Global), Stefan Benefeld, Sarah Lang and Tharane Thananchayen (DAAD) Douglas Blackstock (ENQA) and hosted by Association of African Universities led by Prof. Olusola Oyewole, Secretary General, and a dynamic support team. Marie Juru Eglantine, Project manager for quality assurance, served as the master of ceremonies.

The Conference theme was **Harmonisation, quality assurance and accreditation is Africa : Accomplishments and next steps,** showcasing and tying together key elements of the project: Capacity building and training for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and External Quality Assurance (EQA), and support for African higher education harmonisation (the policy component) and for CESA. The event featured HAQAA2 key strategic partners such as IUCEA, SARUA, CAMES, ANAQ-Sup/RAFANAQ, NAQAAE, and CNAQ covering regional and linguistical areas. The event engaged diverse stakeholders from the higher education

sector at institutional, country, and regional levels. It was proceeded by a meeting of the HAQAA2 Advisory Board, which gathered further important stakeholders such as UNESCO, the All Africa Students' Union and AUF.

HAQAA2 Participants / Stakeholders categories, including major working groups and task forces:

🐾	HAQAA2 Implementing Team and strategic regional partners (networks and associations)	🐾	Technical Working Group - TWG - members for the set-up of the Pan-African Agency (PAQAA)
🐾	HAQAA2 Advisory Board members	🐾	ASG-QA Task Force
🐾	ASG-QA Dissemination project coordinators	🐾	ACTS Task Force members
🐾	Experts/evaluators from agency reviews (European and African)	🐾	Policy-Data (PDU) Development Team
🐾	8 African Countries (QA agencies and ministries) participating in QA agency reviews and consultancy visits to support QA systems	🐾	Other relevant organizations, Ghanaian universities and authorities

The objectives of the event were:

- 🐾 Promote and disseminate the results of training and capacity building done in IQA and EQA
- 🐾 Discuss the future of the African Standards and Guidelines (ASG-QA) on this basis, as well as continued capacity building and training needs
- 🐾 Present a road map and clear vision for the future set-up of the Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency, according to a major stakeholder consultation
- 🐾 Present a road map for capacity building for coherent higher education data generation in Africa
- 🐾 Present a road map for how the African Credit Transfer System should be taken forward in Africa, and concrete actions that can be taken at institutional, national and regional level
- 🐾 Discuss the overall policy impacts of HAQAA2, both towards African regions and towards the African Union and the CESA agenda.

DAY 1: 06ᵀᴴ DECEMBER 2022

ADVISORY BOARD AND ACTS NATIONAL WORKSHOP

The three-day HAQAA2 Final event was preceded by the Advisory Board (AB) meeting in the afternoon the 6th of December 2022 at the AAU premises in Accra, Ghana. The AB is the main advisory body of the

initiative. It advises on strategic political decisions, outputs, and potential impact in African regions and countries. The AB was presented with a short overview of the HAQAA2 main outputs and discussed ways of consolidating, disseminating and promoting these outputs. Additionally, the HAQAA2 Technical Working Group presented to the proposal for the set-up of a Pan-African Quality Assurance Agency (PAQAA) providing updates on the consultation process and proposal highlighting key areas that need further discussion, such as the governance structure. An important debate was held on the composition and statutory bodies of the agency and the role of different stakeholders.

In addition, a national consultation workshop (Ghana) was held at the AAU premises on the African Credit Transfer System (ACTS) for international mobility and academic recognition, with clear identification of the main challenges for its implementation and proposals for its advancement. Around 30 representatives from Ghanaian higher education institutions and government stakeholders together with the HAQAA2 Implementing Team looked at the connection of ACTS with other Recognition mechanisms in Africa, the concept of Student Workload measurement as the basis of ACTS, and other key elements of ACTS proposal. Breakout groups discussed the potential for ACTS in Ghana, commenting that there is currently no defined, national credit system in Ghana, and that the country could benefit from a structured process to define credit transfer processes between Ghanaian universities as well as with international partners in Africa.

OPENING SESSION

The Final Conference opening session featured the HAQAA2 Implementing Team **Prof. Olusola Oyewole**, Secretary General, Association of African Universities (AAU), **Elizabeth Colucci**, Director of Global Projects and HAQAA2 Coordinator, OBREAL Global, **Stefan Bienefeld**, Head of Transnational Education and Cooperation Programmes, *German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and **Douglas Blackstock**, President, European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) with the Guest of Honour **Hon. John Ntim Fordjour,** Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Ghana. The speakers reiterated the need for African Higher Education stakeholders to continuously train and capacity build Quality Assurance personnel.

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🦅 The HAQAA Initiative is funded by the European Commission through the Africa-EU Partnership. In her address, **Claire Herrmann**, Directorate for Education and Culture (DG EAC), European Commission, highlighted the accomplishments and future investments under the 'Global Gateway' and flagship programmes for Africa (announced at the Africa-EU Summit in February 2022) and emphasized the importance of HAQAA2 as a flagship for EU-Africa cooperation in education and skills. **Caseley Olabode Stephens**, African Union Commission, focused on the contribution of HAQAA2 to CESA and the PAQAF, as well as the work that the AUC Department of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation is spearheading for the revitalization of education systems within the continent to drive the development and management of continental education information systems linked to regional and national levels.

THE ASG-QA AND INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE (TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION PROJECTS)

🌱 A session on **Training for IQA - Approaches, successes and lessons learned** was chaired by Stefan Bienefeld, Head of Transnational Education and cooperation Programmes, DAAD and featured HAQAA2 strategic partners Gaspard Banyankimbona, Executive Secretary, IUCEA, Martin Oosthuizen, CEO, SARUA (virtual), Youhansen Eid, President NAQAAE, Egypt (virtual), Zakare Lire, CAMES, Lamine Gueye, Secretary General, ANAQ-Sup, Senegal and Maria-Luisa Chicote, President, CNAQ, Mozambique

The HAQAA2 consortium offered graduates of the HAQAA1 and HAQAA2 training courses on internal and external QA the chance to apply for grants to implement dissemination and capacity-building projects to strengthen the implementation of the Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF).

🌱 The dissemination projects aim was to support the dissemination and multiplication of the outcomes of training activities across the continent; and to encourage collaboration between all HAQAA training course graduates and to link IQA and EQA professionals, as both are critical to vibrant QA systems. The dissemination projects allowed the course graduates a unique opportunity for to implement activities that facilitate the transfer and multiplication of skills and knowledge in their local context, while receiving funding and coaching through the HAQAA2 Initiative. A main focus was on the African Standards and Guidelines (ASG-QA) and their implementation is systems and HEI.

🌱 A subsequent session was chaired by Sarah Lang, Project Manager, DAAD on Dissemination Projects as a means to strengthen QA Culture in HEIs. She presented short videos from each project and the poster session of the 14 projects. Also presented was the first findings of the 'overarching report' summarizing impacts and the results of the Quality Assurance-Network Project carried out by East Africa Quality Assurance network (EAQAN), Francophone African Network of National Quality Assurance Agencies

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(RAFANAQ) and National Council for Quality Evaluation of Higher Education (CNAQ), covering three key linguistical areas of Africa.

❦ While looking at the Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) training needs for the future, three Dissemination Project coordinators - Fatoumata Keita, Université des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines de Bamako, Mali, Beatrice Odera-Kwach, Commission for University Education, Kenya and Devarajen Venethethan, Head of Quality Assurance, University of Technology, Mauritius - narrated their experiences. The session was chaired by Marie Eglantine Juru, Association of African Universities (AAU).

🐾 An update was also provided by the AAU on the AQRM as a tool for African institutional self-assessment. The AAU has re-developed the tool in a robust online version and is making it available to African universities across the continent.

DAY 3: 08TH DECEMBER 2022

THE ASG-QA AND EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE (AGENCY REVIEWS AND CONSULTANCY/ THE FUTURE OF THE PAQAA)

🐾 The day began with a Keynote speech on **Higher education innovation in a rapidly changing context: The importance of building Quality Assurance systems** by Fred Swaniker, Founder, African Leadership Group. He highlighted the importance of African leadership, and education and training systems that think outside the box and exploit technology for global connections and relevance.

🐾 Prof. Lamine Gueye, Executive Secretary, ANAQ-Sup, Senegal then chaired a session on **Quality Assurance Agency Self-Assessment and External Assessment: Lessons learned and training needs for the future**, featuring Maria Chimpolo, INAAREES, Angola Abdel Kader Keïta, AMAQ-SUP, Mali and Mohamed Lemine Haless AMAQ-ES, Mauritania, all of which lead QA agencies in countries that have received external evaluation visits and strived to assess their compliance with the ASG-QA. The need for

more support in self-assessment, peer exchange between QA agencies in Africa, and building a culture of 'evaluating the evaluators' was agreed.

♟ Douglas Blackstock, President, ENQA presided over the session on **Overview presentation of the overarching report** on QA agency reviews, by Amine Allal, Algeria, a member of the HAQAA2 ASG-QA Task-Force on Agency reviews and consultancy visits. The report, when published in February, will highlight key findings and make recommendations on: Capacity building and training needs of QA agencies and countries, future adjustments to the review methodology and process, including strengthening the pool of African evaluators, further discussion on assessing compliance with the ASG-QA, the role of consultancy visits (as opposed to full agency reviews) as a softer mechanism for country assessment and development of emergent QA systems.

🐾 Apiyo Okwiri, HAQAA2 Project Manager, OBREAL Global presided over the session on **Impressions from experts/reviewers in Conducting agency reviews and consultancy visits in Africa: Towards a sustainable process**. The panelists were El Mokhtar Bakkour, Director, ANEAQ, Morocco and also an expert for the consultancy visit to ANAQ-GN, Guinea; Alexis Vermote, Officer, AEQES, Belgium, as well as Nkiama Ekisawa Constant, ANAQ-ESU - DR Congo, also an expert for the consultancy visit to ANAQ-GN, Guinea. The panelists emphasized on the need to be passionate about being an expert, sharing of workload, trust among the stakeholders, political support, importance of the Self-Evaluation phase and most importantly the quality of the final report delivered to agencies. The need for follow-up visits to track implementation of recommendations was also suggested.

🐾 **The ASG-QA User's Guide: A new tool for universities and QA agencies** was presented Prof. Florence Lenga, Kenya and chaired by Jefy Mukora, ASG-QA Task Force, Mozambique (two members of the ASG-QA Task Force). The Guide is avialble in four African languages. Subsequently, Abdou Cissé, RAFANAQ, Abdallah Baguma, EAQAN and Jeffy Mukora, CNAQ presented on Quality Assurance agency network dissemination project as a means to further dissemination of the ASG-QA across QA Agencies. The session was presided over by Saturnin Enzonga Yoca, CAMES. The study they conducted demonstrated that the ASG-QA have become largely known across QA agencies and countries in the continent, but that more nuanced work must be done to understand the notion of compliance the ASG-QA. Agency reviews and consultancy visits, as well as targeted training at the level IQA, was suggested. The User's Guide will be an important tool going forward.

THE FUTURE OF THE PAQAA)

🔹 Prof. Ana Maria Nhampule and Prof.Peter Okebukola, Co-Chairs of the Technical Working Group (TWG) for the PAQAA conducted the session on The **Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (PAQAA) Update and next steps.** The session began with a presentation that covered: What is PAQAF and what is PAQAA?; Stages of work - PAQAA Mission and Objectives; The Four Phases of PAQAA- Features – Structure – Functions; Architecture - Framework – governance – setup and the Next steps. In particular, a proposal for the governance model was presented, which had been refined since the Advisory Board discussions. Participants approved the model but commented that more work was needed to determine the composition of the General Assembly and the financing model. The TWG committed to continuing their work through January and revising and sharing their recommendations to the AUC about the next steps. All inputs from stakeholders would continue to be welcome.

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DAY 4: 09ᵀᴴ DECEMBER 2022

HAQAA AND POLICY IMPACTS ON HARMONIZATION (ACTS AND NEXT STEPS, REGIONAL INTEGRATION, DATA FOR POLICY, AND CESA) PARTICIPATION

🐾 Prof. Ramon Torrent President OBREAL Global and Coordinator of HAQAA2 project presented the background and objective of the **MOOCs Series on Regional Integration** based on the HAQAA2 "Materials on African Regional and Continental Integration in Higher Education", emphasizing HAQAA2's contribution to situating quality assurance in regional integration dynamics. The chair, Olusola Oyewole, Secretary General, AAU gave opportunity for testimonials from authors and moderators of the HAQAA2 MOOC on comparative regional integration in HE, who discussed impacts and commented on the platform for participants. Testimonials were given from Kenya, Zambia, Mauritius and Cameroun. The MOOC series was highly appreciated and it was communicated that a French and Portuguese version were to come in

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2023, and that the a formal discussion network for African higher education integration would be created.

🔸 Nicolas Patrici, Director for Strategy, OBREAL Global presided over the session "A Road Map for enhanced data collection in Africa: The PDU" with two panelists: Nodumo Dhlamini, Director for Communications, AAU and Kibrome Makonnen, PDU Development Team. They highlighted eight priority action areas identified for a data collection approach in a regional context, based on their extensive mapping study:

    🔸 Establishing / Strengthening Regional databases

    🔸 Streamlining national HEMIS architectures

    🔸 Standardizing institutional level processes

    🔸 Linking institutional statistical processes with regional database

    🔸 Aligning national HEMIS ecosystem with regional database requirements

    🔸 Alignment of national HEMIS structures to realities in HEI data collection at institutional level

    🔸 Aligning the regional HEMIS and related databases to the to the Continental HEMIS and databases coordinated by the AAU

    🔸 Establishing and strengthening the continental coordination of the PDU at AAU

🍂 The final session was **Making the African Credit Transfer System a reality: Next steps in order to promote regional dialogue on the importance of ACTS for international mobility and academic recognition**. The session presented the work done to 'relaunch' the dialogue on the ACTS proposal that was tabled by Tuning Africa in 2018, with clear identification of the main challenges for its implementation and also proposals for its advancement. A commentary was provided by Prof.Olusola Oyewole, Secretary General, AAU on the history of the ACTS discussions with a short presentation of the 'ACTS relaunch activities' by Pablo Beneitone, OBREAL Global. Both discussed a possible road map for the way forward, with political sensitization and university pilot exercises.

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The HAQAA2 Final conference four-day event came to an end with messages of gratitude from the HAQAA2 Implementing Team- OBREAL Global, AAU, and DAAD - and a message of continued support from the European Commission and the African Union Commission

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