



## Summary of Deliberations

### **Meeting of the SADC Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA)**

- 1.0 The SADC Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA) held a meeting from 20 – 23 September 2016 in Johannesburg, South Africa under the theme: “Accelerating Implementation of the SADC Regional Qualifications Framework (RQF)”.
- 2.0 The meeting brought together Chief Executive Officers and Directors of national institutions responsible for Certification and Accreditation of education and skills training, and experts from UNESCO, JET Education Services and the SADC Secretariat to review progress made by Member States to align National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) to the RQF. The RQF provides regional standards and guidelines that enable common understanding, greater co-operation and integration in education and skills training in SADC. It enables comparability and recognition of qualifications and credit transfers, and facilitation of quality assurance on qualifications among all Member States. Furthermore, the implementation of the RQF will contribute to the implementation of the Addis Convention adopted in 2014 on the recognition of higher education qualifications across the African continent.
- 3.0 Delegates agreed that full implementation of the RQF is an urgent priority to equip the predominantly youthful labour force of SADC with relevant skills and expertise required for the region. It will also facilitate mobility of learners and workers in the region to realise its objectives for socio-economic development and alleviation of poverty as articulated in the revised SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2015-2020. In particular, SADC has agreed on an

Industrialisation Strategy and Road Map 2015-2063 committing the region to industrial transformation through value addition of raw materials, and beneficiation of its abundant mineral wealth. This requires the development, quality assurance and imparting of new skills and competencies that are not currently available in the region, while upgrading existing ones.

- 4.0 The TCCA reviewed its Terms of Reference to strengthen its technical and advisory mandate to Member States to accelerate implementation of the RQF to ensure that adequate skills and competencies are timely available to realise the demands of the renewed sense of urgency and focus for regional industrialisation and development.
- 5.0 As part of providing technical support and common understanding among Member States to fast-track alignment to the RQF, the TCCA developed a set of Regional Guidelines for Aligning NQFs to the RQF.
- 6.0 Delegates also deliberated and agreed on a comprehensive two-year Plan of Action which sets out the urgent actions that should be implemented to effectively coordinate, facilitate and expedite implementation of the RQF. The priority actions include:
  - a. Establishing and strengthening the institutional mechanism to effectively coordinate and support implementation of the RQF. As an interim in the short to medium term, some Member States offered to provide human resources/experts at institutional level, each for a period of six months on a rotational basis beginning October 2016 to support the SADC Secretariat, while a long term proposal is being explored to establish the Implementation Unit for the RQF as approved by the Ministers in 2011;
  - b. Popularizing and facilitating understanding of the benefits of the RQF and NQFs among different stakeholders at regional and national levels through distributing of the RQF, conducting national consultative forums, developing and maintaining a web portal, and information dissemination and sharing through social media platforms;

- c. Building capacity of Member States and supporting the development and alignment of NQFs to the RQF in all Member States;
- d. Establishing and facilitating the work of a SADC Network of agencies for verifying qualifications at national and regional levels, and ensuring collaboration on verification in the African continent; and
- e. Monitoring and reporting progress on the development and alignment of NQFs to the RQF in SADC.

7.0 The meeting ended on a high note, with delegates committing to expedite full implementation of the RQF in their countries. A follow-up meeting of the TCCA will be held on 19-20 April 2017 in South Africa.

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