



ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION DES UNIVERSITÉS AFRICAINES

اتحاد الجامعات الافريقيه

African Quality Assurance Network *(AfriQAN)*

REPORT ON THE AfriQAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE CAMES SECRETARIAT, OUAGADOUGOU, BURKINA FASO, 27-28 SEPTEMBER 2011

1. Introduction and Objectives of the Advisory Committee Meeting:

As a sub-committee of the Executive Board of the African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN), the Advisory Committee met in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso during 27 – 28 September 2011 at the Secretariat of the Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES). The Network was launched as an official platform for the cooperation of African quality assurance organizations to enable them to address the challenges confronting higher education in Africa. As AfriQAN seeks to assure and enhance the quality higher education in Africa through strengthening the work of quality assurance bodies and other associated organizations with similar objectives, the Advisory Committee Meeting was convened to take stock of the activities of the Network and brainstorm on possible ways to strengthen its activities and enhance its visibility on the continent's higher education arena.

2. Attendance and Welcome Remarks:

The Advisory Committee members who attended the meeting were Prof. Florence Lenga from the Commission for Higher Education, Kenya; Prof. Timothy Ngwira from the Higher Education Quality Management Initiative for Southern Africa, Malawi (HEQMISA); Prof. Jean Koudou of CAMES, Burkina Faso; and Dr. Felix O'mara from the Tertiary Education Council (TEC), Botswana. The AfriQAN Secretariat at AAU was represented by the Coordinator who also chaired the meeting.

The Chairperson welcomed the Advisory Committee members to the meeting. He thanked the members for responding positively to his invitation to the meeting which he said was very important for facilitating the planning of the activities of AfriQAN. The circulated agenda of the meeting was adopted, and thereafter the members started the meeting with a courtesy call to the Secretary General of CAMES, Prof. Bertrand Mbatchi.

The Secretary General of CAMES, Prof. Bertrand Mbatchi, welcomed the Committee members to CAMES. He applauded the idea of the meeting being held at CAMES to discuss issues relating to quality assurance in Africa, which has become critical in ensuring the quality and competitiveness of the continent's human resource development. He pointed out that quality assurance in higher education would promote mobility of

students and professionals across borders in Africa. He wished the meeting success in its deliberations.

3. Deliberations and Decisions:

3.1 PROPOSED WORKSHOP BY AFRIQAN AND INQAAHE: The Committee started by deliberating on the proposed workshop by AfriQAN and INQAAHE, which was scheduled to take place for three (3) days in Nairobi (Kenya) from 15th to 17th February 2012. It was decided that:

- a) The theme of the workshop would be "**Strengthening the Capacity of Quality assurance Agencies through the Development and Implementation of Good Practices**".
- b) A total of 65 participants would be invited to the workshop; comprising of 54 people from the National QA agencies and 11 resource persons and secretarial staff.
- c) The workshop would involve presentations on good practices in quality assurance which are practiced by national QA agencies followed by reflections and determination of the way forward.

It was agreed that the outcome of the workshop would produce two deliverables namely;

1. Good Practice Principles that will form the cornerstone of quality assurance activities among members of AfriQAN
2. The development of a common quality framework to guide quality assurance initiatives on the continent by AfriQAN.

3.2 FUNDING OF AfriQAN: The Chairman reported that AfriQAN's main funding agency was UNESCO / GIQAC. He noted that funding was limiting and was a great challenge for AfriQAN to carry out its stipulated mandate. He however indicated that funds were available to address some activities, including the following:

1. Capacity building of four (4) Executive Board members through attendance to quality assurance related conferences/workshops/seminars/symposiums;
2. Capacity building of staff, up to a maximum of four (4), from national regulatory agencies (NRAs).

It was decided that the money available should be used to assist emerging QA agencies in getting them started on their work; and the money should be used to train peer review teams that would be used in external quality assurance in tertiary education institutions.

3.3 ALTERNATIVE FUNDING STRATEGIES: The Committee noted the need for AfriQAN to find alternative strategies of raising funds. It was proposed that funds could be raised through:

1. Sourcing of funds from the African Union Commission
2. National government contributions to support the work of AfriQAN
3. Research undertaking and facilitation of researches in higher education issues by member institutions
4. Payment of membership fees set at US\$300 for full members and US\$200 for associate members ; and

5. Charges for services rendered to clients by the network

It was agreed that the fees schedule should be reflected in the AfriQAN Constitution and that the AfriQAN Constitution be amended to allow institutions to become full members instead of associate members.

3.4 PEER REVIEW OF EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES (or NRAs):

The Committee expressed the desire to have at least one (1) of the external quality assurance agencies (EQAAs) or NRAs peer reviewed in line with the expectations of INQAAHE. The chairman was tasked to solicit views about the issue of peer reviewing by writing to the following NRAs which were deemed to be advanced in the area of quality assurance implementation: Council for Higher Education (CHE) of South Africa); Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) of Mauritius; CAMES of Burkina Faso; Commission for Higher Education (CHE) of Kenya; National Universities Commission (NUC) of Nigeria; and National Accreditation Agency (NAA) of Ghana. The committee agreed that the process of external peer review be on voluntary basis.

3.5 DOCUMENTATION OF QA IN EAST AFRICA, SOUTHERN AFRICA AND CAMES:

Presentations were made by Professors Lenga, Ngwira and Koudou that clearly demonstrated that the different regions were involved in promoting quality assurance in tertiary education (see Appendices I, II, III). It was noted that AfriQAN should take cognizance of these good practices and begin to work towards coordinating and harmonizing them.

3.6 VISIBILITY OF AfriQAN: The Committee noted that AfriQAN should be made more visible and play an effective role in promoting Quality Assurance in Africa. A number of strategies were suggested to enhance the profile of AfriQAN. Among the strategies suggested were:

- Deliberate promotion of AfriQAN by the Executive Board Members;
- AfriQAN lobbying for recognition by the Africa Union Commission (AUC) in order to get support in its effort to undertake quality assurance in Africa; and
- Engaging in smart partnership with other agencies.

3.7 PROPOSED AfriQAN ACTIVITIES: The Chairman presented the activities lined up for the 2011 / 2012 period. The activities were:

1. Peer review
2. Training of peer reviewers
3. Capacity building of staff in QA Agencies
4. Building capacity of Board Members through attendance of QA related conferences, or exposure to established QA agencies for skills enhancement
5. Strengthening the capacity of AfriQAN Secretariat
6. Organization of an annual workshop and the Annual General Meeting (AGM)


The members unanimously adopted and approved the outlined activities for the year.

3.8 Any Other Business (AOB): Prof. Lenga informed the committee that as the Chair of the INQAAHE Liaison and Regional Networks Committee, she had been tasked to seek information from QA networks on the following issues:

1. An update on the mission and objectives of each respective network.
Respondents were required to complete the factsheet available on the INQAAHE website under the Quality Networks domain(<http://www.inqaahe.org/main/quality-networks/fact-sheet>)
2. Ongoing and planned activities that may be of mutual interest to INQAAHE
3. Suggested areas within the prioritized activities in number 2 above
4. Any other issues that the agencies wanted to share with the committee.

Though the deadline for submission had elapsed, members were informed that those networks that had not yet submitted their information should do so expeditiously and that the networks information would be evaluated in early October 2011. As a result of this, the AfriQAN Secretariat submitted the requested information by 29th September 2011 to INQAAHE Secretariat.

4.0 ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING: The meeting of the Advisory Committee adjourned on 28th September 2011 at 4.45 p.m, after paying a final courtesy call on Prof. Bertrand Mbatchi, the Secretary General of CAMES.



Jonathan C. Mba.
MRCI/QA Coordinator
October 3, 2011.