



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



KENYA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

ANNUAL STATUS OF **NATIONAL** **QUALIFICATIONS**

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD
JULY 1, 2025 TO JUNE 30, 2026



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MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

The 2025/2026 Financial Year marked continued progress in strengthening Kenya's national qualifications system. The Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA) advanced the integrity, coherence and responsiveness of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) as the national instrument for coordinating and harmonising qualifications across education and training. During the year, the Authority strengthened implementation of key policies, standards and systems that support the quality, recognition and comparability of qualifications. This progress is particularly important as Kenya transitions to competency-based education and training, embraces diverse learning pathways, and responds to changing skills needs, technology and the world of work.

The Council recognises that an effective national qualifications system depends on strong collaboration. We therefore appreciate the continued support of the Ministry of Education, other Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Qualifications Awarding Bodies, education and training institutions, industry, professional bodies, development partners and other stakeholders in advancing implementation of the KNQF. As a Council, we remain committed to providing the strategic direction, governance and oversight required for the Authority to effectively deliver its mandate. Our focus remains on strengthening institutional capacity, accountability and stakeholder confidence, while supporting deeper implementation and institutionalisation of the KNQF across the qualification's ecosystem.

On behalf of the Council, I commend the Management and staff of KNQA for their dedication and achievements during the year under review. I also thank our stakeholders and partners for their continued support and collaboration as we work together to safeguard the quality, credibility and integrity of Kenyan qualifications and contribute to the country's human capital and socio-economic development.



Hon. Stanley Kiptis, EBS
Council Chairperson



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Kenya National Qualifications Authority has continued to execute its mandate with a steadfast focus on strengthening the quality, coherence and integrity of Kenya's National Qualifications system. During the reporting period, the Authority made notable progress in the registration and regulation of qualifications and Qualifications Awarding Bodies (QABs), development and implementation of national standards and guidelines, strengthening of quality assurance mechanisms, and improved stakeholder engagement across the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF).

Significant milestones were achieved in mapping qualifications across various sub-sectors, registering eligible programs into the National Qualifications Database (NQD), and expanding the capture of graduate records to enhance transparency and verification of qualifications. The Authority also operationalized the KNQF (General) Regulations 2025, approved national qualifications standards, and successfully validated the KNQF-ACQF Referencing Report, further strengthening the comparability and recognition of Kenyan qualifications nationally, regionally and internationally. Kenya also successfully hosted the 7th ACQF Continental Forum in Nairobi, reinforcing the country's leadership and contribution to qualifications reform in Africa.

In our commitment to equitable skills recognition and flexible learning, the Authority expanded Recognition of Prior Learning pathways to certify candidates including marginalized groups, informal sector workers, and refugees while expanding operational capacity across TVET institutions nationwide. The Authority also advanced the development of the National Micro-Credentials Framework and integration of the UNESCO Qualifications Passport to recognize the untracked credentials of forcibly displaced persons. These milestones reflect the Authority's dedication to building a flexible, inclusive, and globally comparable qualifications system that serves all learners.

Looking ahead, the Authority will build on the progress made in establishing the KNQF architecture by accelerating its full implementation, institutionalisation and compliance across the national qualification's ecosystem. Our priority is to entrench a trusted, inclusive, responsive, digitally enabled and internationally comparable qualifications system that supports lifelong learning, skills recognition, learner and labour mobility, and national development. The Authority will therefore continue to strengthen system integration, expand access to reliable qualification verification services, leverage data and innovation for evidence-based decision-making, and enhance monitoring and compliance mechanisms. Through sustained stakeholder

engagement and strategic partnerships, KNQA remains committed to safeguarding the quality, credibility, comparability and relevance of Kenyan qualifications, while ensuring that the national qualifications system remains responsive to the evolving needs of learners, industry, the economy and the world of work.



Dr. Alice Kande, PhD
Director General/CEO



ACRONYMS

Acronym / Abbreviation	Full Term
ACQF	African Continental Qualifications Framework
AU	African Union
BETA	Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda
CATS / KCATS	Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems / Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System
CBET	Competency-Based Education and Training
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CICan	Colleges and Institutes Canada
COEs	Centers of Excellence
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
CUE	Commission for University Education
ETF	European Training Foundation
GTT	Government Trade Test
IAC	Industry Advisory Committee
ICM	Institute of Commercial Management
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
KASNEB	Kenya Accountants and Secretaries National Examinations Board
KCBE	Kenya Certificate of Basic Education
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KISEB	Kenya Institute of Supplies Examination Board



KISEB	Kenya Institute of Supplies Examination Board
KJSEA	Kenya Junior School Education Assessment
KMTC	Kenya Medical Training College
KNQA	Kenya National Qualifications Authority
KNQF	Kenya National Qualifications Framework
KNQCS	Kenya National Qualifications Classification Standard
KPSEA	Kenya Primary School Education Assessment
MCP	Master Crafts Person
NAC	National Advisory Committee (for RPL)
NIC	National Implementation Committee (for RPL)
NITA	National Industrial Training Authority
NQD	National Qualifications Database
NSC	National Skills Certificate
NVC	National Vocational Certificate
QAB	Qualification Awarding Body
QMS	Quality Management System
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDTVET	State Department for Technical Vocational Education and Training
TTI	Technical Training Institute
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TVETA	Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority
TVET CDACC	TVET Curriculum Development, Assessment and Certification Council
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UQP	UNESCO Qualifications Passport

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2025/2026 financial year was a landmark year for KNQA, marking a decade since the rollout of the KNQF. Building on this milestone, the Authority deepened implementation of the Framework, expanded the registration of Qualifications Awarding Bodies and qualifications, accelerated Recognition of Prior Learning and convened the inaugural First National Qualifications Conference, the first of its kind, bringing together policymakers, regulators, employers, academics and international partners to chart the next decade of Kenya's qualifications system.

Key Highlights of the 2025/2026 Financial Year

72 Qualifications Awarding Bodies (QABs) Registered	2,606+ Qualifications Registered on the KNQF	640,725 Graduates Registered in the National Qualifications Database
4,239 Qualifications Aligned & Validated in 2025/26 – a record year	RPL Recognition of Prior Learning Implementation Scaled Up Nationwide	1st National Qualifications Conference Convened, 12–14 May, 2026

These achievements reflect the Authority's continued commitment to building a transparent, credible and globally comparable qualifications system that supports lifelong learning, strengthens the link between education, training and the labour market, and positions Kenya's qualifications for wider regional and international recognition. The sections that follow provide a detailed account of the Authority's performance against its statutory mandate for the period under review.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION



1.1 OVERVIEW

The Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA) was established in 2015 under the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) Act, Cap 214 as the body mandated to coordinate, harmonize, and oversee the national qualifications landscape. As part of Kenya's commitment to building a transparent, reliable, and integrated qualifications system, the Authority oversees the implementation of the KNQF to enhance consistency, quality, and credibility across all levels of education and training. Through its national framework and global partnerships, KNQA ensures that Kenyan qualifications align with national development priorities while promoting international recognition, comparability, and lifelong learning opportunities.

1.2 MANDATE

According to the KNQF Act Cap 214 the main functions of the Authority are defined in Section 8 (a) to (r) as follows;

- a. To coordinate and supervise the development of policies on national qualifications;
- b. To develop a framework for the development of an accreditation system on qualifications;
- c. To develop a system for the assessment of national qualifications;
- d. To establish and review inter-relationships and linkages across national qualifications in consultation with stakeholders, relevant institutions, and agencies;
- e. To maintain a national database of national qualifications;
- f. To publish manuals, codes, and guidelines on national qualifications;
- g. To advise and support any person, body, or institution that is responsible for the award of national qualifications;
- h. To publish an annual report on the status of national qualifications;
- i. To Set standards and benchmarks for qualifications and competencies, including skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values;
- j. To define the levels of qualifications and competencies;
- k. To provide for the recognition of attain mentor competencies, including skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values;
- l. To facilitate linkages, credit transfers, and exemptions, and vertical and horizontal mobility at all levels to enable entry, re-entry, and exit;
- m. To research equalization of qualifications;
- n. To establish standards for harmonization and recognition of national and foreign qualifications;
- o. To build confidence in the national qualifications system that contributes to the national economy;
- p. To provide pathways that support the development and maintenance of flexible access to qualifications;
- q. To promote the recognition of national qualifications internationally; and,
- r. To perform such other functions as may be provided under the KNQF Act.

1.3 GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

The Kenya National Qualifications Authority was established under the KNQF Act Chapter 214. The Authority is domiciled under the Ministry of Education, State Department for TVET, Kenya. Section 10 of the Act provides the governance structure of the Authority, with the KNQA Council serving as its apex governing body. Accordingly, the management and strategic oversight of the Authority are vested in the Council which comprises the following members:

- 1.a chairperson appointed by the Cabinet Secretary;
- 2.the Principal Secretary responsible for matters relating to education;
- 3.the Principal Secretary responsible for matters relating to labour;
- 4.the Principal Secretary responsible for matters relating to finance;
- 5.six persons appointed by the Cabinet Secretary as follows ;
 - a.one person representing the Commission for University Education;
 - b.one person representing the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority;
 - c.one person representing the Education Standards and Quality Assurance Council;
 - d.one person nominated by an organization representing professional associations in Kenya;
 - e.one person nominated by the Federation of Kenya Employers;
 - f.one person nominated by an organization representing workers unions;
6. the Director-General who shall be the secretary

Governance - KNQA Council Members



HON. STANLEY KIPTIS, EBS

Chairperson



**MRS. JACQUELINE
MUGO, EBS**

Vice Chairperson
(Rep. Federation of
Kenya Employers)



PROF. MIKE KURIA
Member

(Rep. Commission of
University Education)



ENG. JOSEPH NJAU
Member

(Alternate to Principal
Secretary Education)



MS. EVELYNE OWOKO
Member

(Rep. Education
Standards and Quality
Assurance Council)



MR. AMOS BITOK
Member
(Alternate for Principal
Secretary, Finance)



**CHRP. BEATRICE
CHEROTICH BII**
Member
(Rep. Professional
associations in Kenya)



MR. COLLINS OYUU
Member
(Rep. Organization
representing workers
union)



MR. TIMOTHY KATIAMBO
MEMBER
(Rep. Technical and
Vocational Education and
Training Authority)



**DR. RUKIA ATIKIYA,
PHD**
Member
(Rep. National Industrial
Training Authority)

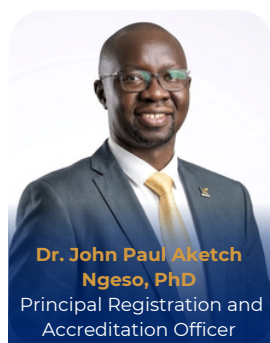
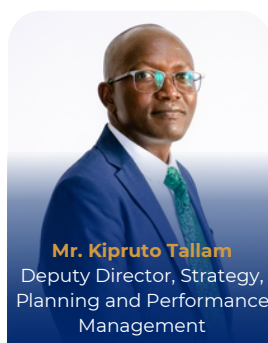


MR. MICHEAL MUTURI
Member
(Rep. Inspectorate of
state corporations)



**DR. ALICE KANDE,
PHD**
Director General/ CEO
**Secretary to the
Council**

KNQA Management



The Authority is organized into six (6) Directorates and two (2) Departments that report directly to the DG/CEO as indicated below:

1. Corporation Secretary and Legal Services Directorate;
2. Policy, Accreditation and Registration Directorate;
3. Standards, Alignment and Validation Directorate;
4. Corporate Services Directorate;
5. Strategy, Planning, Partnership and QMS Directorate;
6. Internal Audit Directorate;
7. ICT Department; and
8. Supply Chain Management Department.

The Internal Audit Directorate reports functionally to the Council and administratively to the DG/CEO.

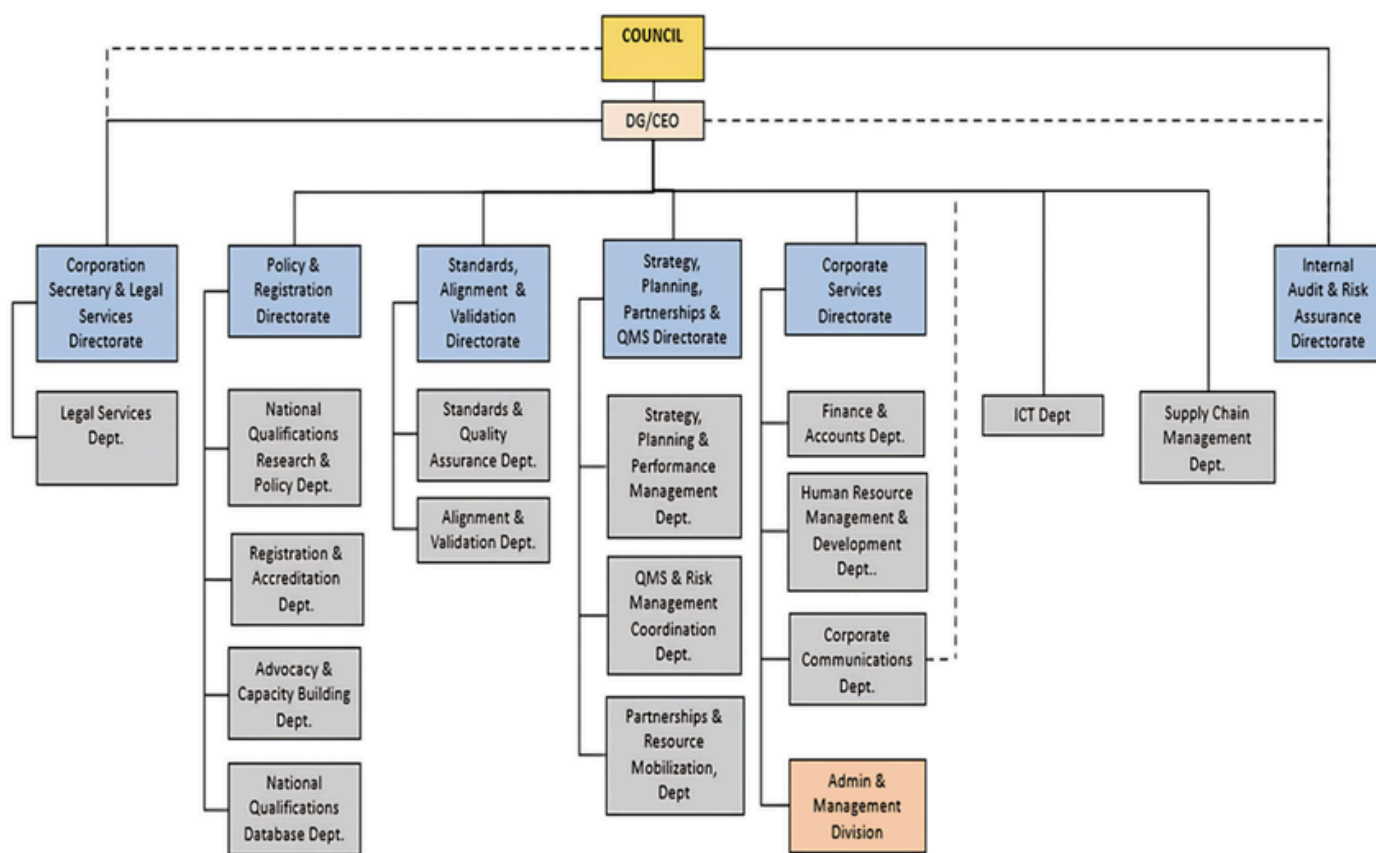


Figure 1: Institutional and organization Structure for the Authority

Source: KNQA Organizational Structure & Staff Establishment, 2024

1.4 MISSION, VISION & CORE VALUES:

VISION:

Globally Recognized and Competitive Qualifications Transforming Kenya

MISSION

To establish and manage the KNQF aimed at promoting globally recognized and competitive qualifications for sustainable development

CORE VALUES

- Equity
- Professionalism
- Quality
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Teamwork
- Relevance
- Responsiveness
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Collaboration

1.5 SCOPE

This report covers the 2025/2026 Financial Year and presents the status of implementation of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) and the performance of the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA) during the period under review. It has national geographic coverage, encompassing implementation of the KNQF across Kenya's education, training and qualifications ecosystem, while also capturing relevant regional, continental and international engagements.

SECTION 2:

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KENYA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (KNQF)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the KNQF has progressed significantly, with the Authority strengthening the national qualifications system through the registration of Qualification Awarding Bodies (QABs) and national qualifications, development and maintenance of the National Qualifications Database (NQD), and establishment of mechanisms for qualification alignment and validation. The Authority has also advanced key reforms, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems (CATS), micro-credentials, and harmonized quality assurance mechanisms, in collaboration with key actors across the education and training sector.

These interventions are aimed at enhancing the quality, comparability, recognition, portability, and mobility of qualifications. To effectively operationalize KNQF, clear and coherent policies, standards, guidelines, and quality assurance mechanisms have been instituted to guide all actors for a harmonized and standardized national qualifications system. This is to ensure that qualifications are understood, trusted, credible, and responsive to the needs of learners, employers, and society.

2.2 THE KENYA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) provides a unified national system for the classification, coordination and comparability of qualifications in Kenya. It addresses the historical fragmentation of the education and training system by providing a common reference through which qualifications from different learning pathways can be understood, compared and recognised based on defined learning outcomes.

The Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) provides a unified national system for the classification, coordination and comparability of qualifications in Kenya. It addresses the historical fragmentation of the education and training system by providing a common reference through which qualifications from different learning pathways can be understood, compared and recognised based on defined learning outcomes.

The KNQF is structured into ten (10) qualification levels, with each level defined by descriptors covering the expected knowledge, skills and competencies. The revised KNQF architecture further strengthens the integration of the Academic, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Professional Qualifications and Skills pathways within a common framework, as illustrated in Figure 2. This provides greater clarity on the relationship between different types of qualifications while recognising that learning and skills can be acquired through diverse pathways.

A key feature of the Framework is the provision for progression and mobility within and across the different pathways. Rather than treating academic, technical, professional and skills qualifications as isolated routes, the KNQF provides a basis for establishing equivalence and facilitating progression, subject to applicable entry, credit and quality assurance requirements.

Its alignment with Kenya's competency-based education and training reforms further strengthens pathways from basic education into TVET, higher education, professional and skills-based qualifications.

The KNQF also supports vertical and horizontal mobility through instruments such as the Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). These mechanisms enable relevant prior learning, competencies and credits to be recognised towards qualifications, thereby reducing unnecessary duplication of learning and creating more flexible opportunities for progression and lifelong learning.

By locating qualifications within a common ten-level structure and applying nationally defined standards and level descriptors, the KNQF strengthens the transparency, comparability, portability and recognition of qualifications. It therefore provides an important bridge between education and training institutions, professional and regulatory bodies, industry and the labour market, while supporting learner mobility, employability and lifelong learning.

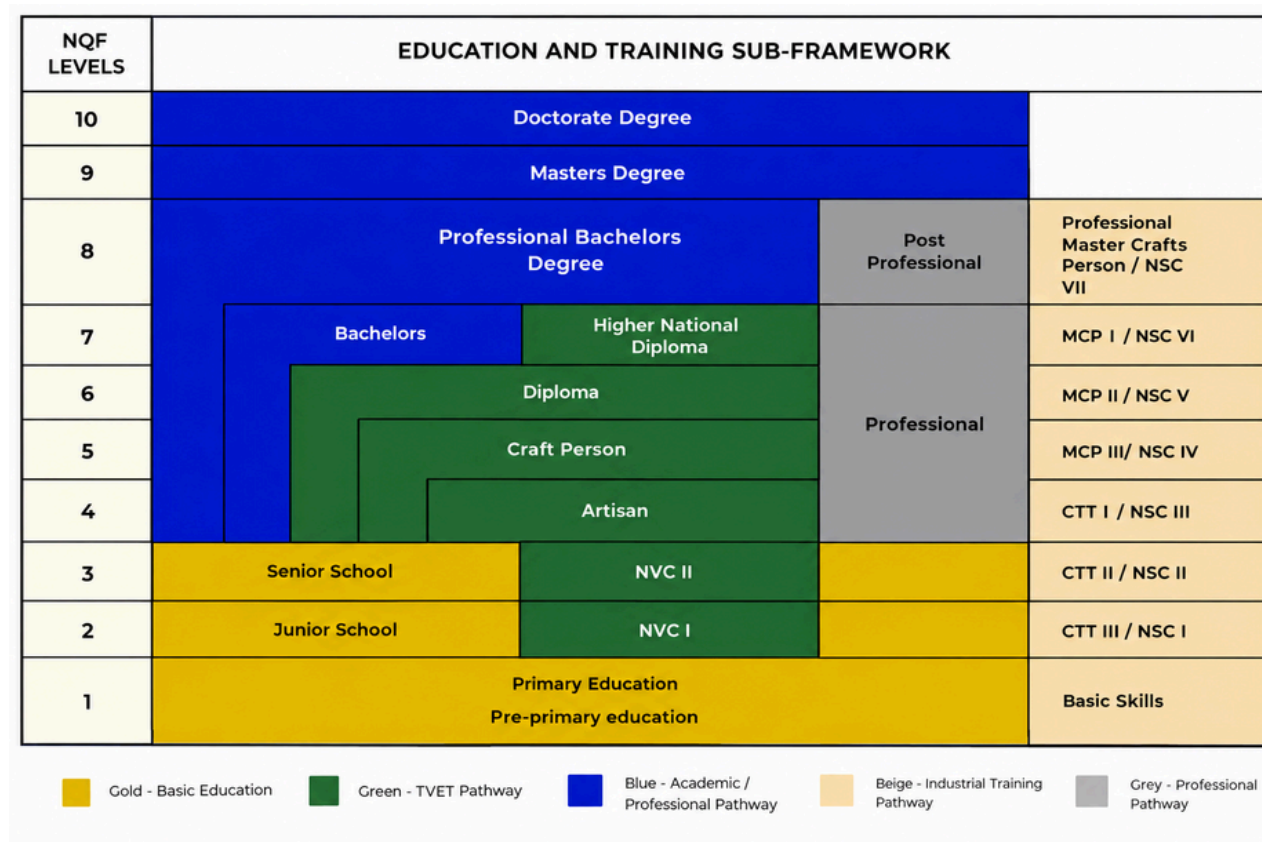


Figure 2: The KNQF structure (Adapted from The Kenya National Qualifications Framework (General) Regulations, 2025)

2.3 KNQF MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Figure 3 presents the Kenya National Qualifications Framework structure, comprising the ten (10) qualification levels and their corresponding qualification types, minimum entry requirements, credit values and indicative duration of learning. The Framework provides a coherent progression structure that integrates basic education, skills, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), academic and professional qualifications within a common national system. By applying standardised level descriptors and credit requirements, the KNQF facilitates the comparability, progression and recognition of qualifications across different learning pathways. The Framework further applies a common credit convention, where one (1) credit is equivalent to ten (10) notional hours of learning, providing a consistent basis for measuring learning volume across qualification levels.

NQF LEVEL	NQF NAME	MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENT	NOTIONAL HOURS	CREDITS	DURATION
NQF Level 1	Pre-Primary	Birth Certificate	-	-	Two Years
	Primary Education	Pre-Primary			Six Years
NQF Level 2	Junior School	KPSEA	-	-	Three Years
	National Vocational Certificate I	KCPE / Level 1	-	-	Three Months
	National Skills Certificate I				
	GTT III	Basic Skills			
NQF Level 3	Senior Secondary Certificate	KJSEA	-	-	Three Years
	National Vocational Certificate II	Level 2 Qualification/ KCPE(Level 1) / KCSE Mean Grade E	300 - 599	30 - 59	Three Months
	GTT II				
	National Skills Certificate II				
NQF Level 4	Artisan Certificate	KCBE / Level 3 Qualification / KCSE Mean Grade E	600 - 1199	60 - 119	Six Months
	GTT I				
	National Skills Certificate III				
NQF Level 5	Craft Certificate	KCBE / Level 4 Qualification / KCSE Mean Grade D	1200 - 2399	120 - 239	One Year
	Master Crafts Person III				
	National Skills Certificate IV				
NQF Level 6	National Diploma	KCBE / Level 5 Qualification / KCSE Mean Grade C-	2400 - 3599	240 - 359	Two - Three Years
	Master Crafts Person II				
	National Skills Certificate V				
NQF Level 7	Bachelors Degree	KCBE / Level 6 Qualification / KCSE Mean Grade C+	3600 - 4800	360 - 480	Three - Four Years
	Master Crafts Person I				
	Professional				
	National Skills Certificate VI				
	Higher National Diploma	Level 6 Qualification	2400	240	Two Years
NQF Level 8	Professional Bachelors Degree	KCBE / KCSE Mean Grade C+	6000	600	Five Years
	Post Graduate Diploma	Level 7 Qualification	1200	120	One Year
	Post Professional				
	Professional Master Crafts Person				
	National Skills Certificate VII				
NQF Level 9	Masters Degree	Level 7 or 8 Qualifications	2400	240	Two Years
NQF Level 10	Doctorate Degree	Masters Degree	3600	360	Three Years

GTT - Government Trade Test, KCBE - Kenya Certificate of Basic Education, KJSEA - Kenya Junior School Education Assessment, KPSEA - Kenya Primary School Education Assessment

* 1 Credit = 10 Notional Hours

Summary of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework Requirements

Figure 3 Summary of KNQF requirements (Adapted from The Kenya National Qualifications Framework (General) Regulations, 2025)

2.4 PROGRESSION PATHWAYS

The KNQF architecture provides five main progression pathways that recognise different forms and routes of learning and provide opportunities for vertical and horizontal mobility across the ten (10) KNQF levels. As illustrated in Figure 4, these pathways accommodate learners entering the qualifications system through formal, non-formal and informal learning, while providing opportunities for progression within and across pathways, subject to applicable entry, credit transfer and recognition requirements.

Learners progressing through the Academic Pathway move from primary, junior and senior secondary education into higher education qualifications, including Bachelor's degrees at Level 7, Master's degrees at Level 9 and Doctoral degrees at Level 10. Learners may also transition into the TVET Pathway, which provides progression through qualifications such as Artisan qualifications at Level 4, Craft Certificates at Level 5, Diplomas at Level 6 and Higher National Diplomas at Level 7.

The Skills Pathway provides an important route for individuals who acquire competencies through practical, workplace, informal or non-formal learning. Learners may progress from basic skills qualifications at the lower KNQF levels through Government Trade Tests (GTTs) and National Skills Certificates, and subsequently into higher-level skills and Master Craft Person qualifications. This pathway gives formal visibility and recognition to occupational competencies while creating opportunities for further learning and career progression.

The Professional Pathway accommodates qualifications awarded or recognised by professional and regulatory bodies. It provides progression from professional certificates and diplomas to higher-level professional qualifications, as positioned within the KNQF according to their learning outcomes, complexity and applicable national standards.

Together, the pathways illustrated below demonstrate that the KNQF is designed not as a set of isolated qualification routes, but as an integrated and flexible national system. Instruments such as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and the Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS) support movement within and across these pathways by recognising relevant prior learning, competencies and credits, thereby promoting progression, mobility and lifelong learning.

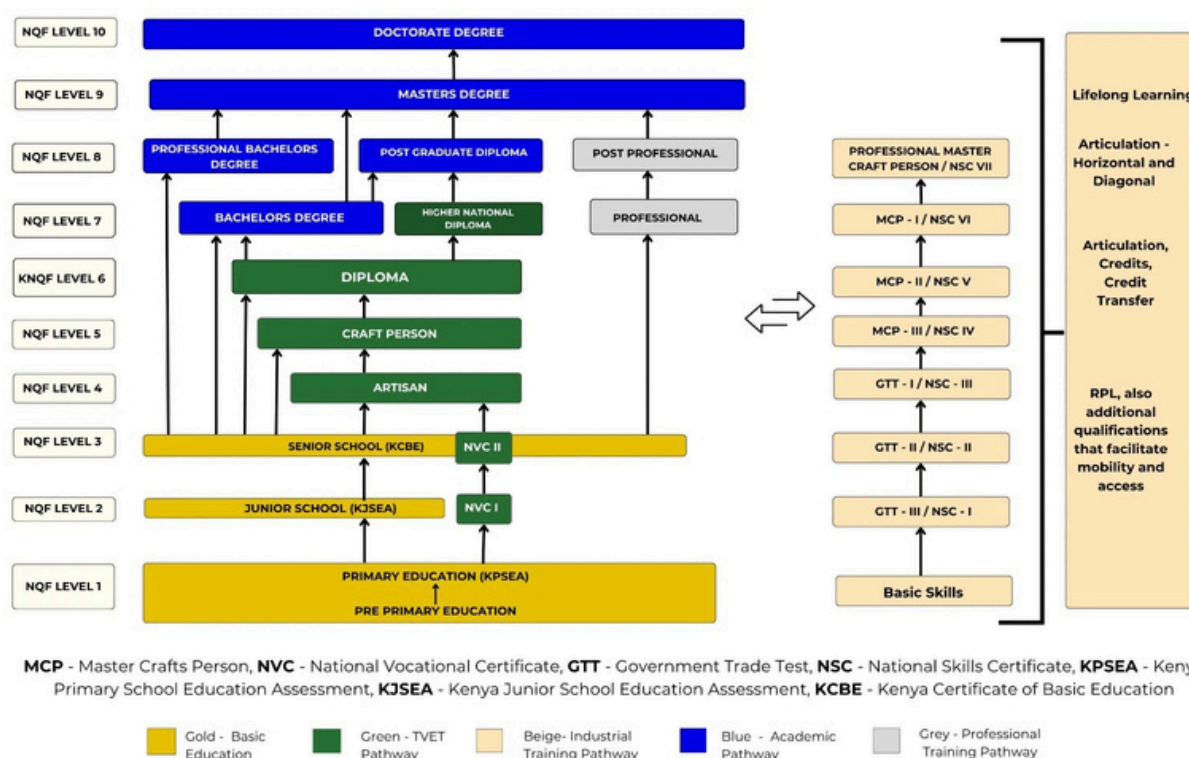


Figure 4 Progression pathways (Adapted from The Kenya National Qualifications Framework (General) Regulations, 2025)

2.5 NATIONAL POLICIES ON QUALIFICATIONS

Under the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) Act, Cap 214, KNQA is mandated to develop, coordinate and harmonise the policies, standards and guidelines that govern registration, recognition, alignment, quality assurance and portability of qualifications within the Framework. Clear policy instruments are essential to this mandate: they give KNQF functions a consistent legal and regulatory basis across institutions, and provide QABs, learners, employers and partners the certainty needed to engage with the qualifications system with confidence. During the year under review, the Authority advanced development and implementation of several key policies and standards, summarised below:

POLICY / STANDARD	DEPARTMENT	STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT
National Framework on Micro-Credentials and Implementation Guidelines	National Qualifications Research & Policy	Draft developed; at stakeholder validation stage
Policy Framework on the National Qualifications Database	Qualifications Database	In development

National Policy for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications	Standards & Quality Assurance	Developed
National Policy Framework for Accreditation System	Registration and Accreditation	Developed
National Policy and Standard for Quality Assurance of Qualifications	Standards & Quality Assurance	Developed
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy Framework	National Qualifications Research & Policy	Developed
National Policy and Standard for Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer system	Standards & Quality Assurance	Developed

Table 1 Mapped out National Policies and Standards

2.6 NATIONAL ACCREDITATION SYSTEM

Section 8(b) of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework Act (Cap. 214) mandates KNQA to develop a framework for an accreditation system of qualifications, as part of its broader mandate to strengthen the national quality assurance system and build confidence in Kenyan qualifications. The KNQF (General) Regulations, 2025 operationalize this mandate by requiring the Authority to establish and maintain an accreditation system for qualifications, with defined conditions, criteria and requirements for programmes and courses. The system is intended to complement, rather than duplicate, the accreditation functions of sector regulators such as Commission for University Education (CUE) and TVET Authority (TVETA), by providing a national mechanism for ensuring that qualifications offered across different education and training sub-sectors conform to common KNQF requirements.

Accreditation and registration of qualifications provide the national infrastructure through which Kenya translates its education, skills, labour-market and regional/international commitments into an operational qualifications system. . By establishing common quality requirements, positioning qualifications within the KNQF, and capturing qualifications and graduate records in the NQD, the system strengthens quality, credibility, transparency, comparability, portability, verification and recognition of qualifications thereby supporting learner mobility, employability, lifelong learning and Kenya's participation in regional and global qualifications systems.

2.6.1 REGISTRATION OF QUALIFICATIONS AWARDING BODIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The registration of Qualifications Awarding Bodies and their qualifications is a key component of KNQA's national oversight role in safeguarding the coherence, integrity and credibility of Kenya's qualifications system. Through this process, the Authority formally recognises institutions that are legally mandated to award qualifications and registers their approved qualifications within the Kenya National Qualifications Framework and the National Qualifications Database.

KNQA's oversight role is system-wide and complementary to the regulatory and quality assurance functions of sector regulators and other competent authorities. While the respective regulators oversee institutions, programmes and quality assurance requirements within their specific education and training sub-sectors, KNQA provides the overarching national framework for the coordination, harmonisation, classification and comparability of qualifications across these sub-sectors. The Authority also monitors compliance with KNQF requirements to ensure that qualifications registered within the national system meet prescribed standards.

This national oversight function brings qualifications from diverse awarding bodies and learning pathways into a coherent and transparent national qualifications system. It strengthens consistency across the qualifications ecosystem and enhances the recognition, comparability, portability, verification and credibility of Kenyan qualifications, thereby promoting confidence among learners, employers, education and training institutions, professional bodies and other users of qualifications. Table 1 summarises the key statutory functions of the Authority relating to registration and accreditation.

2.6.2 STATUTORY FUNCTIONS OF THE AUTHORITY RELATED TO REGISTRATION & ACCREDITATION

Cluster	KNQF Selected functions
Policy & Standards	<i>"The Authority shall establish and maintain an accreditation system for qualifications" KNQF Act CAP 214 section. 8(b)</i>
Registration & Database	Maintain the national database of national qualifications; KNQF Act 214 s.8(e) and r. 24(1) & 25(1) on registration of qualifications
Award of Qualifications	<i>"An institution shall not award national qualifications unless such an institution is recognised or accredited in accordance with this Act..." section. 5(1), KNQF Act CAP 214</i>
Recognition & Mobility	Define the levels of qualifications and competencies; (k) provide for the recognition of attainment or competencies including skills, knowledge, attitudes and values; International recognition — s.8(k),(j)(i)
Oversight & Reporting	Advise & support awarding bodies; build confidence in the qualifications system — s.8(g), (o)

Table 2 Statutory Functions of the Authority related to Registration & Accreditation

2.6.3 REGISTRATION AT A GLANCE

As of 30 June 2026, KNQA had cumulatively registered 72 Qualifications Awarding Bodies (QABs), 2,606 qualifications, and over 640,000 learner/graduate records in the National Qualifications Database (NQD). These milestones demonstrate the expanding coverage and implementation of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) across the national qualifications ecosystem. The growth in registered QABs, qualifications and learner/graduate records also strengthens the NQD as a reliable national repository for enhancing the transparency, verification, recognition and credibility of Kenyan qualifications.



Cumulative totals as of June 2026, ten years after the KNQF's establishment in 2015

2.6.4 REGISTERED QABS BY CATEGORY (TOTAL: 72 QABS & 2,606 QUALIFICATIONS)

The 72 registered QABs comprise 33 National Polytechnics, 16 Universities, 9 Specialized Institutions, 9 Foreign QABs, 2 National Assessment and Examination Bodies and 3 Professional Examination Boards. National Polytechnics therefore accounts for the largest share of registered QABs at 45.8%. The accompanying chart presents the distribution of the 2,606 qualifications registered by KNQA across the respective QAB categories providing an overview of the contribution of different education, training and professional sub-sectors to the national qualifications system.

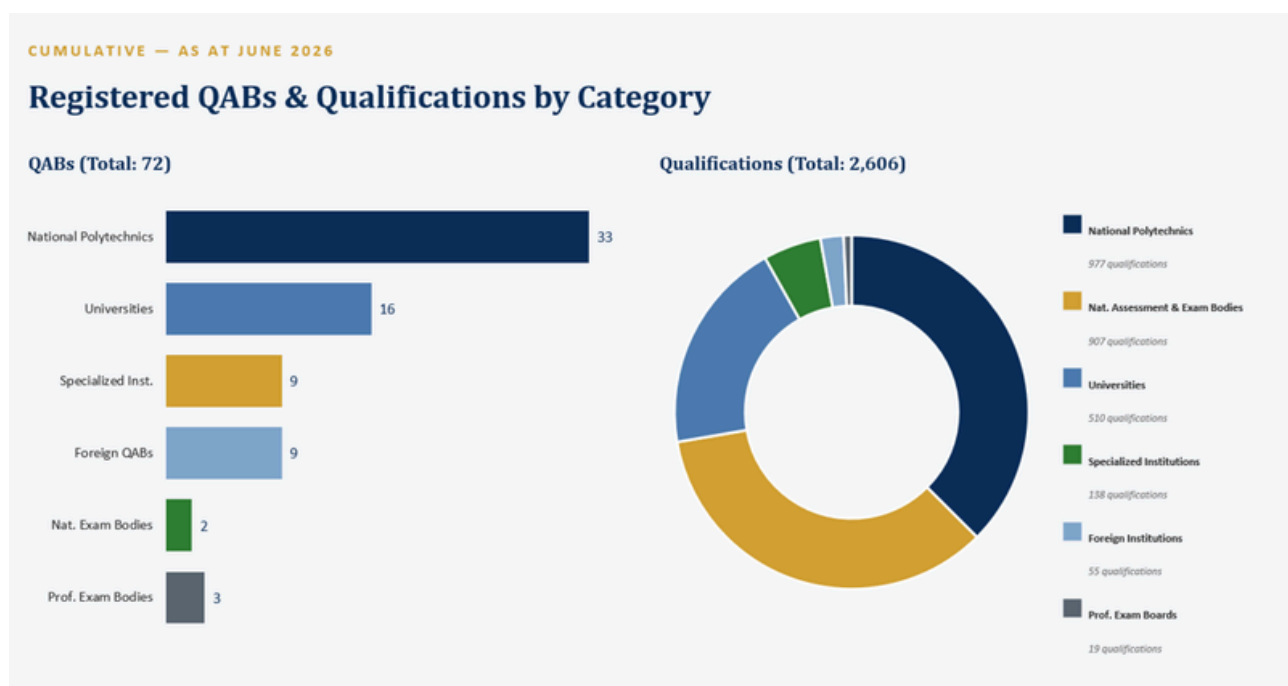


Figure 5 Registered QABs by category

2.6.5 GROWTH IN QAB REGISTRATION BY YEAR

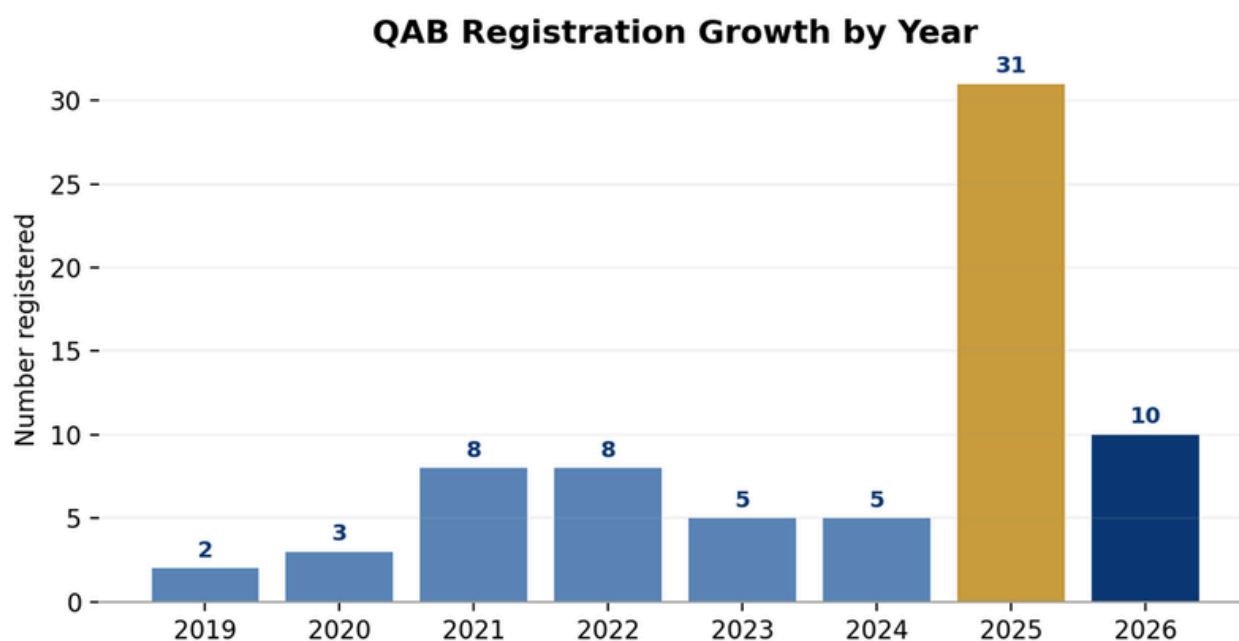


Figure 6 Growth in QAB registration over the years

Registration of QABs has grown steadily since 2019, with notable acceleration in recent years. Annual registrations increased from 2 QABs in 2019 to 3 in 2020, 8 in 2021, 8 in 2022, 5 in 2023 and 5 in 2024, before rising significantly to 31 in 2025, the highest annual registration recorded during the period. A further 10 QABs were registered in 2026.

The marked growth in 2025 and 2026 reflects the Authority's intensified efforts to expand KNQF coverage, particularly through the registration of National Polytechnics and Universities. This increased uptake has broadened institutional participation in the KNQF and strengthened the integration of qualifications from different education and training sub-sectors into the national qualifications system.

2.6.6 FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/2026 IN FOCUS

During the 2025/2026 Financial Year, the Authority registered 36 new Qualifications Awarding Bodies (QABs) and 1,041 qualifications. QAB registration was highest in the first quarter (Q1), with 19 registrations, followed by 8 in Q2, 4 in Q3 and 5 in Q4 as illustrated in figure 7.

Registration of qualifications accelerated significantly towards the end of the financial year. Of the 1,041 qualifications registered, 6 were registered in Q1, 235 in Q2, 15 in Q3 and 785 in Q4.

Consequently, Q4 accounted for approximately 75% of all qualifications registered during the year. The increase from 15 qualifications in Q3 to 785 in Q4 represents more than a 52-fold growth, reflecting a substantial acceleration in qualification registration during the final quarter.

Overall, the results demonstrate significant progress in expanding the coverage of the KNQF, both in terms of participating QABs and the number of qualifications integrated into the national qualifications system.

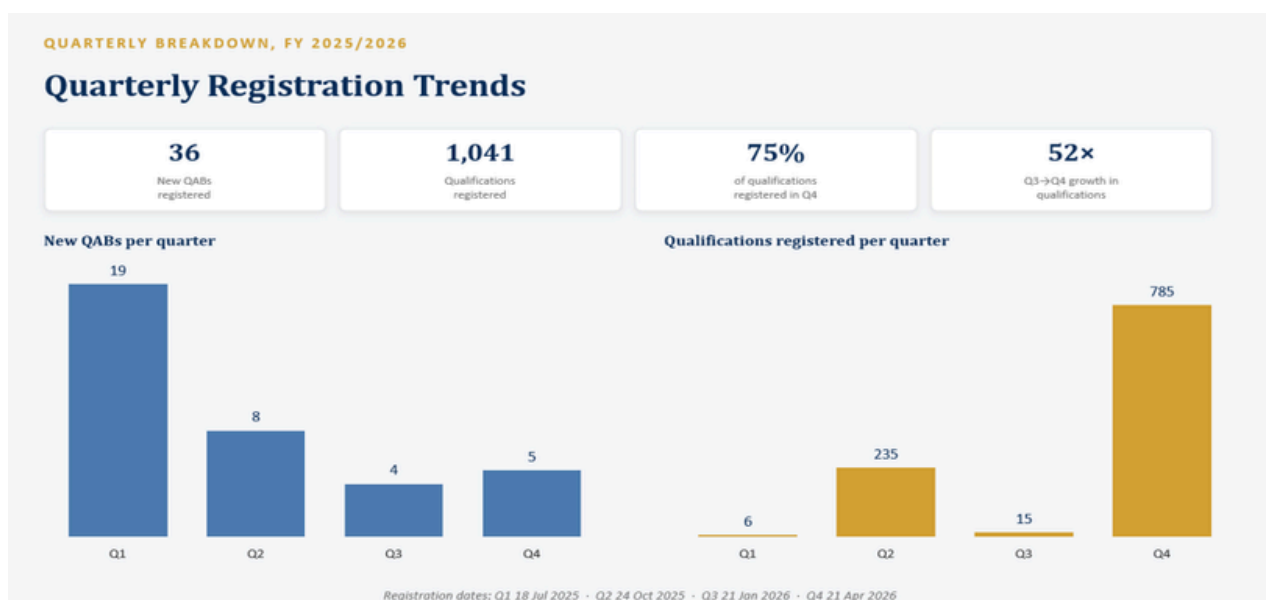


Figure 7 Quarterly registration trends

2.6.7 TIMELINE OF KEY MILESTONES

The timeline, illustrated in figure 8, highlights five key regulatory and strategic milestones that strengthened the implementation of the KNQF, particularly the registration and accreditation functions of the Authority. These include the approval of the Policy Framework for Accreditation on 20 January 2025; the gazettelement of the KNQF (General) Regulations, 2025; the approval of the National Standards and Guidelines on 24 October 2025; the validation of the KNQF–ACQF Referencing Report on 18 March 2026; and its subsequent presentation at the 7th ACQF Continental Forum held in Nairobi from 28–30 July 2026.

Collectively, these milestones have strengthened the policy, regulatory and standards framework for implementation of the KNQF and enhanced the alignment and comparability of Kenyan qualifications within the continental qualifications landscape.



Figure 8 Timeline of Key Milestones

2.6.8 REGISTERING A NATIONAL QUALIFICATION (PART VII, REGULATIONS 24–25)

Table 3 summarises the four key stages in the registration of a national qualification under the KNQF (General) Regulations, 2025. The process begins with the submission of an application through the National Qualifications Database (NQD), followed by evaluation against the prescribed KNQF requirements and criteria. Where necessary, the Authority may undertake an on-site inspection as part of the evaluation process. Upon successful evaluation, the qualification is approved for registration, a certificate of registration is issued, and the qualification is entered into the NQD.

Under Regulation 25, the Authority is required to evaluate an application within 90 days of receipt. Where an application is unsuccessful, the applicant is notified in writing within seven (7) days of the decision, providing clarity and transparency in the registration process.

STEP	ACTION	REFERENCE
1	Institution submits application through NQD (Form 3 + fee to the Authority)	r. 25(1)
2	Authority evaluates against KNQF statutory criteria within 90 days	r. 25(3)– (4)
3	Evaluation of application; On-site inspection visit (Where applicable); findings report prepared and shared	r. 25(4)(a)(i)–(iii)
4	Certificate of registration issued; qualification entered into the Database	r. 25(4)(a)(iv)–(v)

Table 3 The process of Registration of National Qualifications

If declined: the applicant is notified in writing within 7 days with reasons (r. 25(4)(b)). Awarding qualifications while unaccredited is an offence carrying up to KES 500,000 fine or 6 months' imprisonment, or both (s. 5, Act).

2.6.9 COMPLIANCE, OFFENCES & PENALTIES

The compliance framework sets out statutory obligations and sanctions aimed at safeguarding the integrity and credibility of the national qualifications system. Under section 5(2) of the KNQF Act, awarding a qualification without the requisite accreditation may attract a fine not exceeding KES 500,000, imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or both.

Further, Regulation 38 of the KNQF (General) Regulations, 2025 provides for sanctions relating to non-compliance with prescribed registration and reporting requirements, including failure to register, failure to submit required records, or provision of false or misleading information. Such offences may attract a fine not exceeding KES 1,000,000, imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or both.

These provisions reinforce the responsibility of Qualifications Awarding Bodies (QABs) to comply with applicable accreditation, registration and reporting requirements, thereby safeguarding the quality and authenticity of qualifications and strengthening public confidence in the KNQF.

INSTRUMENT	OFFENCE	PENALTY
KNQF Act (s. 5(2))	Awarding qualifications while unaccredited/unregistered	Up to KES 500,000 fine, or 6 months' imprisonment, or both
KNQF Regulations (r. 38)	Failing to register, submit records, or providing false information	Up to KES 1,000,000 fine, or 6 months' imprisonment, or both

Table 4 Compliance Framework

Revocation of a certificate of registration (r. 31): grounds arise (de-accreditation or conviction) → 21-day written notice with reasons → QAB may take corrective action → Authority rescinds if satisfied, otherwise the certificate is revoked

CAPACITY BUILDING AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENTS – THE YEAR IN PICTURES

The visual below provides a snapshot of selected capacity-building, stakeholder engagement and recognition activities undertaken during the 2025/2026 Financial Year. It is intended to illustrate how the Authority translated its mandate into practical engagement with institutions, QABs, professional bodies and regional and continental partners.

Featured activities include the KNQF sensitisation at Egerton University, engagement with ACCA and the subsequent certificate handover, the ICDL certificate handover, and the presentation of the KNQF–ACQF Referencing Report to the ACQF Network. These selected engagements demonstrate the Authority's efforts to build institutional understanding of the KNQF, strengthen stakeholder participation, recognise and integrate QABs within the national qualifications system, and advance the comparability and mobility of Kenyan qualifications.

The visual is therefore illustrative rather than exhaustive, highlighting selected engagements that reflect the breadth of the Authority's capacity-building and stakeholder engagement activities during the year under review.



ACCA engagement & Official Handover of registration certificate, FY 2025/2026



Nairobi Hosts Landmark 7th ACQF Forum as Africa Advances Qualifications Recognition and Skills Mobility

KNQF ACQF Referencing Report presented to ACQF Network



KNQA Champions Excellence in Digital Skills Quality at ICDL Accreditation Certificate Award Ceremony

Certificate of Registration handover to ICDI



Egerton University Registers in the National Qualifications Database

Egerton University sensitisation, 30–31 Mar 2026

2.6.10 REGISTRATION OF QABS & QUALIFICATIONS

The visual highlights selected milestones in the registration of Qualifications Awarding Bodies (QABs) and their qualifications during the year under review. Featured are certificate handovers to Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST), the Kenya Water Institute (KEWI), and the Institute of Commercial Management (ICM).

These examples illustrate the diversity of institutions participating in the KNQF, spanning university, specialised training and foreign/professional qualifications contexts. They also demonstrate the continued expansion of institutional participation in the national qualifications system and the integration of registered qualifications into the National Qualifications Database.



KNQA Strengthens Strategic Partnership with MMUST as University Registers as a Qualification Awarding Body

Certificate of registration handover to MMUST



KNQA Presents Registration Certificate to KEWI at 37th Graduation Ceremony

QAB registration ceremony on Official handover



Official Handover of registration certificate to Institute of commercial management (ICM)

2.6.11 SUPPORT TO NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES AND POLICIES

The table below demonstrates how the Authority's Registration & Accreditation functions contribute to the implementation of key national, continental and international policy frameworks and commitments: These include the Constitution of Kenya, Kenya Vision 2030 and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 16-25, the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF), the UNESCO 2019 Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education and the East African Community (EAC) Common Market Protocol. Across these seven frameworks, registration, graduate-data management and KNQF-ACQF referencing support quality education, human-capital development, qualifications comparability and learner and labour mobility.

Across these frameworks, the Authority's work in registration of Qualifications Awarding Bodies (QABs) and qualifications, management of graduate records through the National Qualifications Database (NQD), and referencing of the KNQF to the ACQF contributes to broader national and international objectives relating to quality education and training, human capital development, transparency and comparability of qualifications, skills recognition, and learner and labour mobility.

The table below illustrates the strategic contribution of the Authority's registration and accreditation functions to Kenya's national development priorities, continental integration agenda and international commitments on education, qualifications recognition and mobility.

FRAMEWORK / INITIATIVE	KEY PROVISION REFERENCED	STRATEGIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE REGISTRATION COMPONENT OF THE KNQF
Constitution of Kenya, 2010	Art. 55 (youth access to education/training); Art. 10 (national values — equity, non-discrimination)	Registration of qualifications across TVET, university and specialised pathways widens verifiable access and mobility for learners nationally.
Kenya Vision 2030 / BETA	Human capital development pillar; skills-for-jobs agenda	KNQF registration standardises skills recognition, supporting labour-market matching and human capital planning.
UN Sustainable Development Goals	SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)	NQD-based tracking of graduates and qualifications provides data to monitor equitable access to technical, vocational and tertiary education.

AU Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16–25)	Harmonisation of education and training systems across Africa	Referencing of the KNQF to the ACQF (validated 18 March 2026) and presentation to the ACQF network (29 July 2026) advances continental comparability of Kenyan qualifications.
African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF)	Comparability and mutual recognition of qualifications across AU member states	Kenya among early countries to complete and validate a referencing report, strengthening cross-border recognition of Kenyan qualifications.
UNESCO 2019 Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education	Fair, transparent recognition of qualifications globally	KNQF registration and NQD verification infrastructure support Kenya's readiness to engage international recognition mechanisms.
East African Community (EAC) Common Market Protocol	Free movement of labour and mutual recognition of qualifications within the EAC	Standardised registration and credit-referencing lay groundwork for regional recognition of Kenyan-awarded qualifications.

Table 5 Strategic Contribution of KNQF to National, Continental and Global Integration Agenda

2.7 NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS DATABASE

The NQD is a national digital infrastructure that provides a trusted, centralized and interoperable repository for QABs, Qualifications, Graduates and related qualifications information, supporting the implementation of the KNQF and improving the integrity and usability of Kenya's qualifications ecosystem. NQD facilitates system integration, data analytics, reporting, and the development of digital credentials. By providing a reliable and authoritative source of qualifications information, the NQD helps strengthen quality assurance, combat fraudulent qualifications, support skills and workforce planning, improve qualification verification, and promote the recognition and portability of Kenyan qualifications nationally and internationally.

2.7.1 GRADUATES REGISTERED

The table below presents the status of graduate registration in the NQD across the mapped qualification categories as at 30 June 2026. A total of 4,705,233 graduate records had been mapped, of which 640,725 had been registered, leaving 4,064,508 records pending registration. This represents an overall graduate registration rate of approximately 13.6%.

The significant gap between mapped and registered graduate records underscores the need to accelerate the submission and verification of graduate records by QABs. Expanding the coverage of graduate records in the NQD is critical to strengthening the traceability and verification of qualifications, while providing reliable data to support national skills intelligence, labour-market planning, learner and labour mobility, and evidence-based policy and decision-making within the KNQF.

No	Category	Mapped Graduates	Registered Graduates	Unregistered Graduates	Registration Rate
1	Universities	500,000	169,561	330,439	34%
2	National Polytechnics	91,006	1,568	89,438	2%
3	Professional Examination Boards	190,310	675	189,635	0%
4	Specialized Institutions	198,815	184,773	14,042	93%
5	Foreign Institutions	20,000	820	19,180	4%
6	National Assessment and Examination Bodies	3,705,102	283,328	3,421,774	8%
TOTAL		4,705,233	640,725	4,064,508	

Table 6 Registration of Graduates as at June 30, 2026

2.7.2 GRADUATES REGISTRATION BY CATEGORY

Figure 9 illustrates significant variation in the registration of graduate records in NQD across the different categories of QABs. Specialized Institutions recorded the highest registration rate at 93%, followed by universities at 34%. Registration rates among National Assessment and Examination Bodies stood at 8%, while Foreign Institutions and National Polytechnics recorded 3% and 2% respectively. Professional Examination Boards recorded less than 1%, indicating very limited submission of graduates within this category. Overall, the findings demonstrate that graduate registration remains uneven across QAB Categories.

There is therefore a need to accelerate the submission and registration of graduate records, particularly among National Polytechnics, Professional Examination Boards, Foreign Institutions, and National Assessment and Examination Bodies. Improving coverage across these categories will enhance the completeness, reliability and utility of the NQD as the national repository for qualifications and graduate records.



Figure 9:Registration of Graduates

2.7.3 OVERALL GRADUATE REGISTRATION

Figure 10 presents the overall status of graduate registration in the National Qualifications Database (NQD). As at 30 June 2026, approximately 14% of mapped graduate records had been registered in the NQD, while 86% remained unregistered. While this reflects progress in operationalising and populating the NQD, it also highlights a significant gap in achieving comprehensive national coverage of graduate records.

The findings underscore the need to accelerate the submission, verification, and registration of graduate records by QABs. Expanding graduate data coverage will strengthen the completeness, reliability and utility of the NQD, enhance qualification verification and traceability, and provide more robust data to support national skills and labour-market intelligence, workforce planning, learner and labour mobility, and evidence-based policy and decision-making within the KNQF.

GRADUATES REGISTRATION

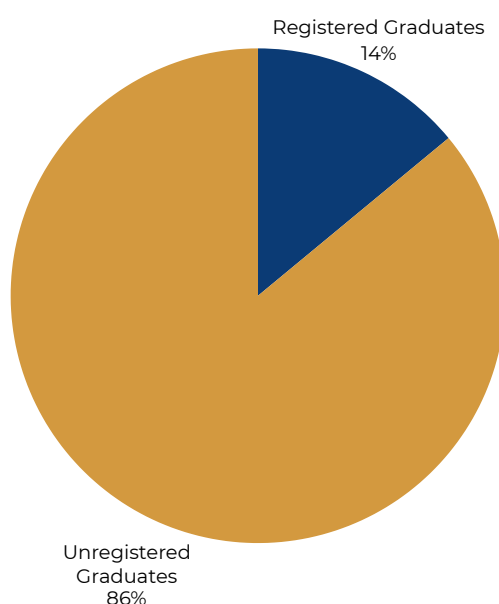


Figure 10: Registration of Graduates

2.7.4 GRADUATES REGISTERED BY QABS

National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) recorded the highest number of graduates registered followed closely by the Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC) and Mount Kenya University (MKU). Other QABs with registered graduate records include Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya School of Revenue Administration, Kenya Institute of Mass Communication, Nyeri National Polytechnic, AMREF International University, Kenya Red Cross Training Institute, and Kiambu National Polytechnic although their numbers are comparatively lower.

The distribution shows that graduate registration is concentrated among a relatively small number of QABs particularly NITA, KMTC and MKU. This underscores the need to strengthen engagement with QABs and accelerate the submission, verification and registration of outstanding graduate records. Comprehensive registration will enhance the completeness and reliability of the NQD and strengthen its use for qualification verification, graduate tracking, labour-market and skills intelligence, workforce planning and evidence-based policy and decision-making.

2.7.5 GRADUATES REGISTERED OVER THE YEARS

Graduate registration in the National Qualifications Database shows a generally upward trend from 2009 to 2021, although with fluctuations across individual years. Registration accelerated notably from 2020, reaching approximately 75,000 records in 2021, before rising sharply to a peak of about 230,000 in 2022. The significant increase in 2022 reflects a substantial expansion in the submission and registration of graduate records, including historical records submitted by Qualifications Awarding Bodies.

Following the 2022 peak, annual registrations declined considerably to approximately 35,000 in 2023, before recovering to about 45,000 in 2025. Registrations recorded in 2026 were comparatively lower, reflecting variations in the timing, volume and frequency of graduate data submissions by QABs. Overall, the trend demonstrates progress in populating the NQD, but also reveals considerable year-to-year variation in graduate data submission. This underscores the need for more systematic and timely submission of graduate records by QABs to ensure that the NQD remains comprehensive, current and reliable as the national repository for qualifications and graduate data.

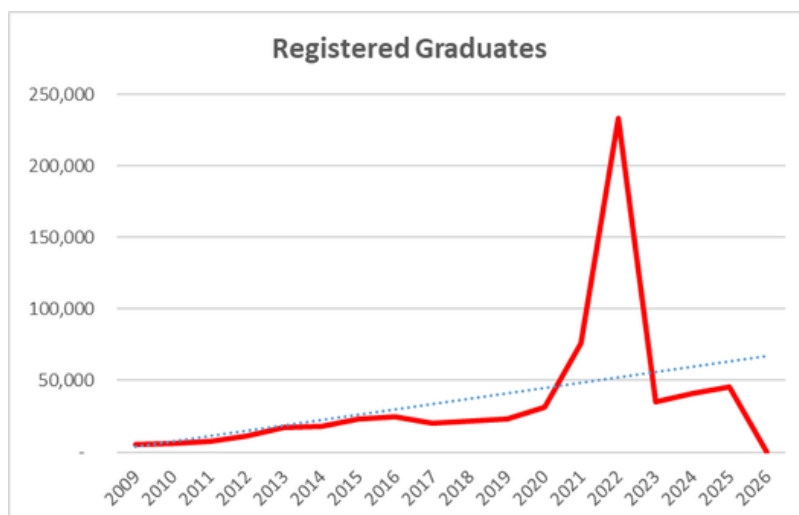


Figure 11 Registered Graduates Over the Years

2.8 QUALIFICATIONS ALIGNMENT AND VALIDATION

Qualifications alignment and validation are key mechanisms for strengthening the recognition, comparability and portability of qualifications within the KNQF. Alignment involves determining and assigning the appropriate KNQF level and classification to a qualification based on established national criteria and level descriptors, while validation confirms the authenticity, legitimacy and comparability of the qualification for purposes such as further education, employment, professional registration and mobility. These mechanisms provide learners, employers, institutions and other stakeholders with greater confidence that qualifications are credible, transparent, comparable and appropriately positioned within the national qualifications system, thereby supporting learner progression, labour mobility and lifelong learning.

There was a steady increase in the number of qualifications aligned and validated by KNQA between Financial year 2020/2021 and 2025/26. The number increased from 1450 in 2020 to 2318 in 2021, 2,297 in 2022, 2,869 in 2023, and 3,193 in 2024, reaching a peak of 4,239 qualifications in 2025. This trend demonstrates growing demand for qualification alignment and validation services and increasing reliance on KNQA for qualification recognition.

During the period under review, 4,239 had been aligned and validated as reflected in the data. Overall, the trend demonstrates a substantial expansion of qualification alignment and validation activity, reinforcing the importance of efficient systems and adequate institutional capacity to meet the growing demand for qualification recognition under the KNQF.

QUALIFICATIONS ALIGNED TO KNQF

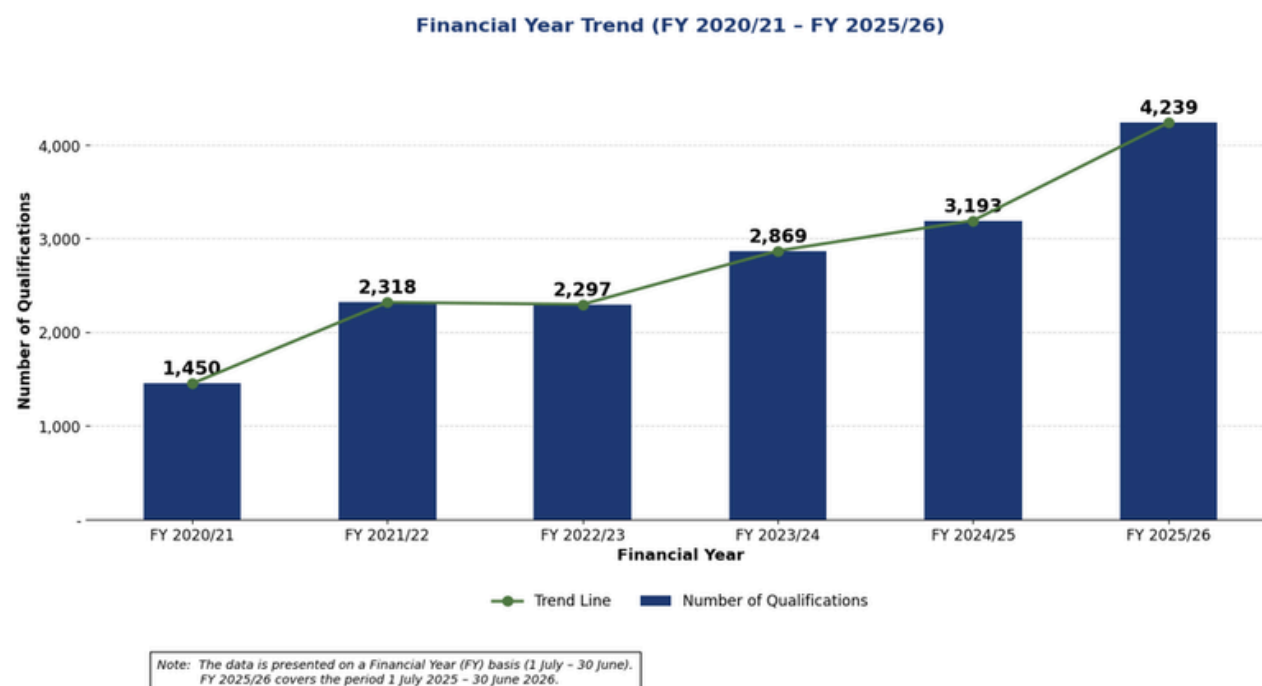


Figure 12 Qualifications Aligned to the KNQF

During the period under review, applications received from South Sudan recorded the highest number continentally while Central Africa recorded the lowest as seen in the figure below:

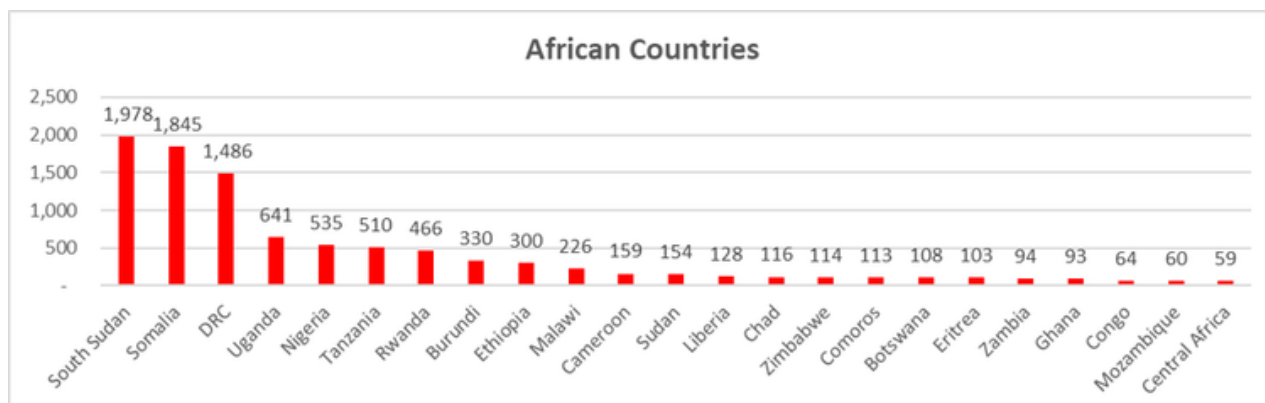


Figure 13:Qualifications Alignment & Validation African Countries

Outside Africa, India recorded the highest number of applications while Switzerland recorded the lowest as seen below:

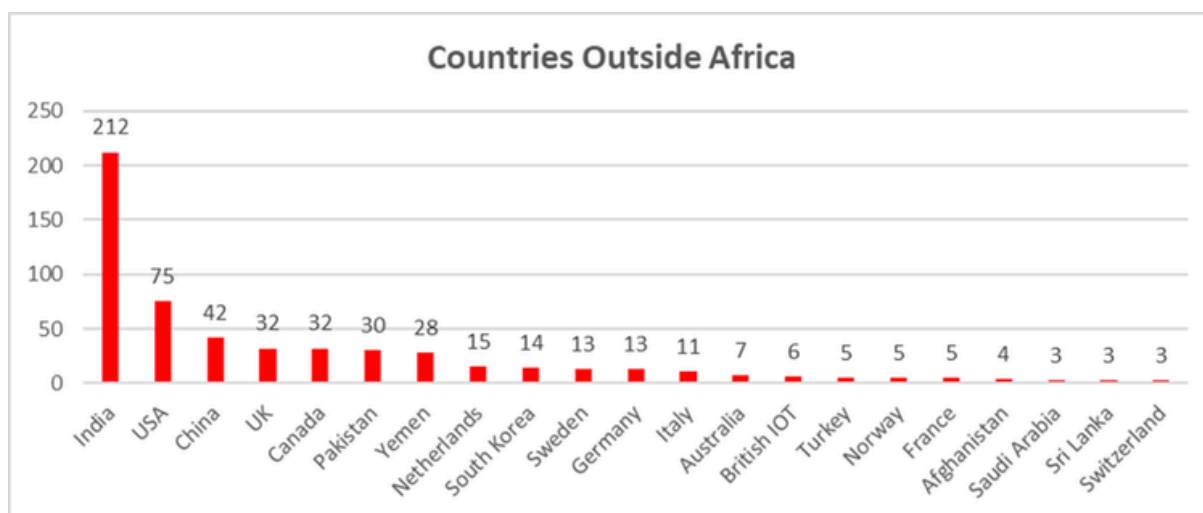


Figure 14:Qualifications Alignment and Validation outside Africa

The radar chart below illustrates the number of qualifications aligned and validated across a selection of international countries. The shaded blue region highlights that a specific group of nations spanning clockwise from Bosnia and Denmark through to Malaysia and Iran holds a constant total of 2 validated qualifications each. In contrast, the remaining listed countries, stretching from Portugal counter-clockwise around to Syria, show no shaded area, reflecting zero aligned or validated qualifications within this dataset.

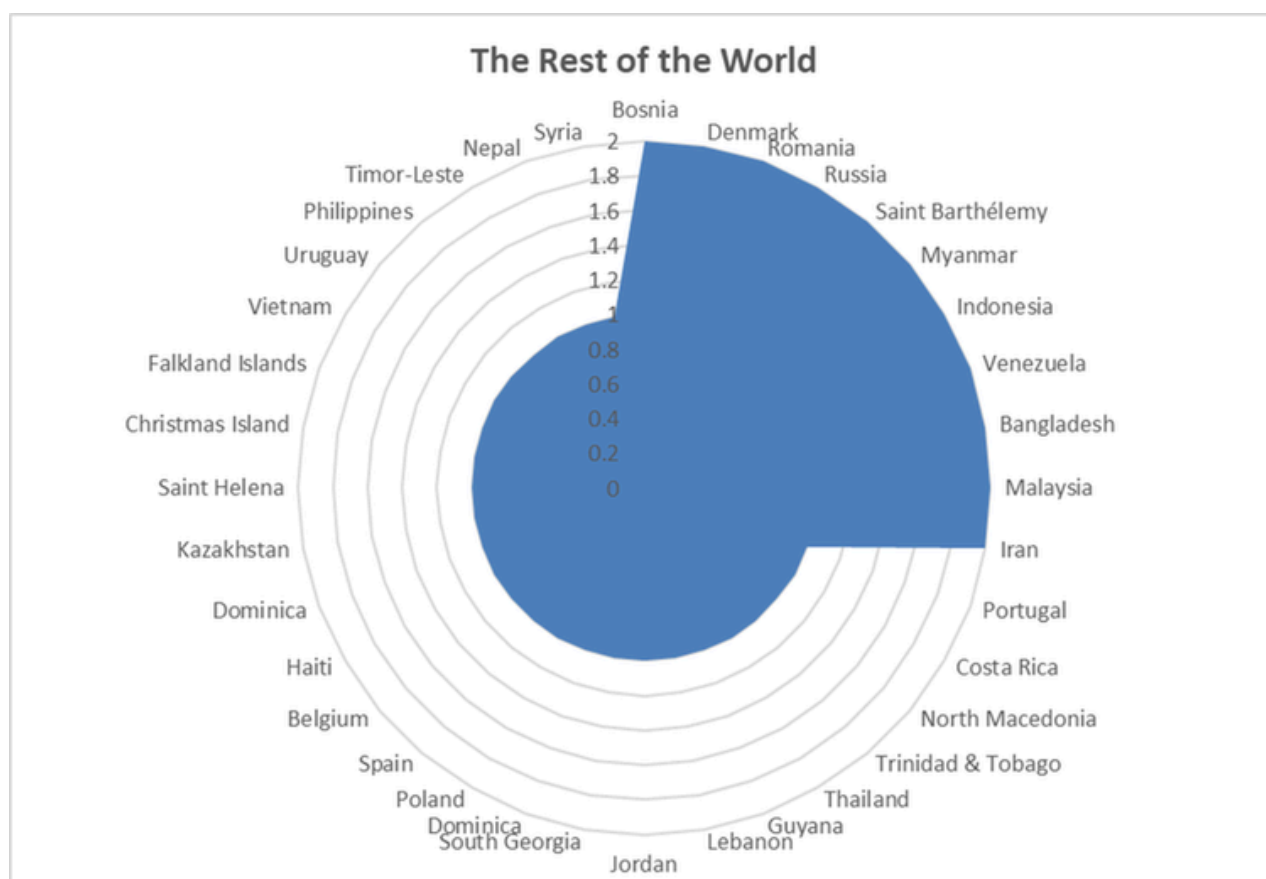


Figure 15: Qualifications Alignment and Validation in the world

Beyond the numbers presented above, qualifications alignment and validation directly advance several national, continental and global frameworks that Kenya has committed to. Table 6 sets out how this function contributes to the Constitution of Kenya, Kenya Vision 2030/the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and other regional and international commitments – illustrating that alignment and validation is not a technical back-office activity, but a strategic lever for equitable access, human capital development and Kenya's global competitiveness.

2.9 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

2.9.1 OVERVIEW

Pursuant to Section 8(k) of the KNQF Act (Cap. 214), the Authority provides for the recognition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning. To operationalise this mandate, KNQA developed the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy Framework, which provides a national mechanism for identifying, assessing, validating and certifying competencies acquired through work, apprenticeships, life experience, self-learning and other experiential pathways.

RPL shifts the emphasis from where and how learning was acquired to what an individual knows and can demonstrate against nationally approved standards. This is particularly important in Kenya, where many people possess valuable skills but lack formal certification to demonstrate their competence.

By converting previously unrecognised competencies into nationally recognised qualifications, RPL expands access to decent work, further learning, career progression and labour mobility. It also supports social inclusion and lifelong learning while contributing to the skilled, productive and adaptable workforce envisaged under Kenya Vision 2030 and BETA

2.9.2 STATUS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RPL IN KENYA

Since the launch of the National Recognition of Prior Learning Policy in March 2024, Kenya has made substantial progress in translating the policy into practical implementation. RPL has moved from a policy commitment to an increasingly established pathway for the assessment, recognition and certification of competencies acquired through non-formal and informal learning, with implementation firmly on course.

Significant milestones have been realised in expanding RPL across diverse occupations, sectors and beneficiary groups, particularly workers in the informal economy, artisans, youth and women whose competencies have largely been acquired outside conventional education and training systems. Implementation has also deliberately targeted marginalised and underserved populations, including refugees, forcibly displaced persons and host communities, thereby strengthening inclusion and equitable access to nationally recognised qualifications.

Importantly, the period since March 2024 has seen growing participation by Qualifications Awarding Bodies, industry, training institutions and other stakeholders, alongside the use of workplaces, industry settings and national development projects, including Affordable Housing sites, as avenues for assessment. These developments demonstrate that Kenya is progressively institutionalising RPL as an integral component of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) and as a practical mechanism for making existing skills visible, portable and trusted.

2.9.3 CURRENT STATUS ON RPL IMPLEMENTATION IMPLEMENTATION BY TVET SUB-SECTOR

RPL implementation has taken root across the TVET sub-sector, covering National Polytechnics as well as Technical and Vocational Colleges/Technical Training Institutes (TVCs/TTIs). Capacity has now been built in 85% of institutions, and RPL is being actively implemented in 35% of TVET institutions, with over 8,800 candidates already assessed and certified. A further 9,000 candidates are currently undergoing assessment, including learners in refugee camps, urban informal settlements and their host communities – underscoring RPL's role in extending recognition to skills gained outside formal education.

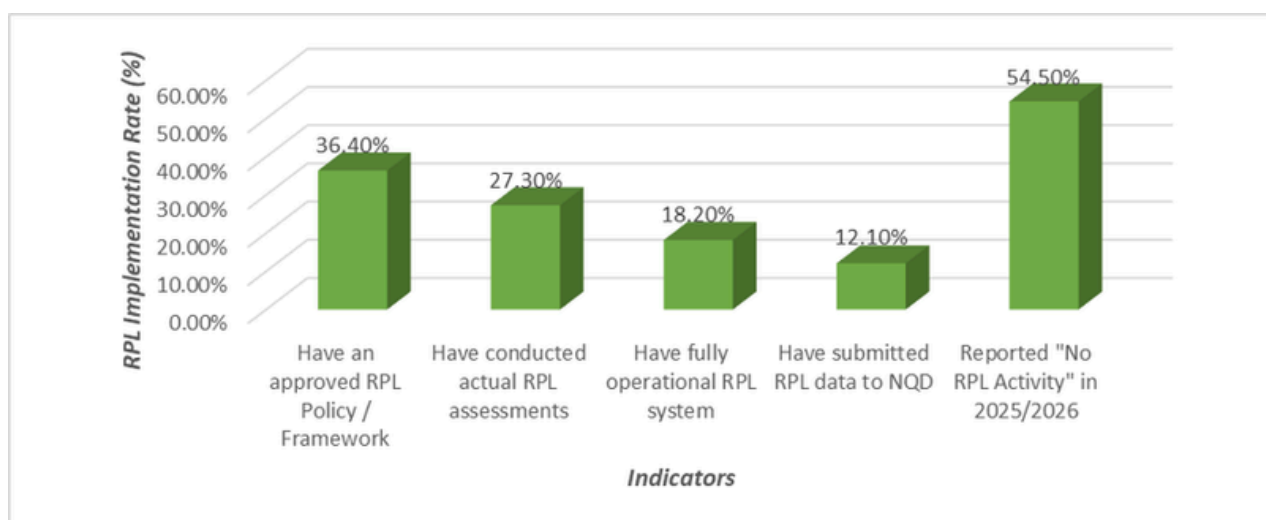


Figure 16: RPL implementation rate

2.10 STANDARDS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Pursuant to Section 8(1)(a) of the KNQF Act, the Ministry of Education through KNQA overseen developed National Policy Frameworks to strengthen the coordination, quality assurance and recognition of qualifications within the Kenya National Qualifications Framework.

2.10.1 CREDIT ACCUMULATION, TRANSFER AND EXEMPTIONS

The KNQF Act, Cap. 214, established KNQA to harmonize and coordinate the qualifications awarding system. Section 8 mandates KNQA to facilitate linkages, credit transfers, exemptions, and vertical and horizontal mobility of credits across all levels. To operationalize this mandate, KNQA has developed the Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS) Standard . Requirements and Guidelines and the National Policy Framework for Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer.

Sustainable Development Goal 4 promotes equitable access to quality education and lifelong learning. However, learner mobility across and within qualification levels remains fragmented and inconsistent. KCATS provides a framework for credit accumulation and transfer, exemptions, learner progression and mobility, and recognition and portability of learning achievements across all KNQF levels and education and training sub-frameworks. It further advances Kenya's commitment to the African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda on mobility of learners, skills, labour and qualifications.

2.10.2 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Section 4(e) of the KNQF Act Cap 214 identifies strengthening quality assurance systems for national qualifications as a key objective of the KNQF. In fulfilment of this mandate, KNQA has led the development of the National Policy Framework and Standard – Requirements and Guidelines on Quality Assurance of Qualifications.

While the KNQF provides a national structure for aligning qualification standards, the absence of an overarching framework to harmonize quality assurance practices and processes has affected the trust, comparability, credibility, and mutual recognition of qualifications, limiting learner and worker mobility. The Policy Framework establishes minimum benchmarks across the qualifications awarding value chain and for internal

and external quality assurance processes. It seeks to enhance coherence, credibility, public confidence, comparability, and national, regional, and international recognition of Kenyan qualifications.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), through Sustainable Development Goal 4, emphasizes inclusive and equitable quality education that is responsive to learners' needs, real-life experiences, and evolving workforce demands.

2.10.3 ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

Under Section 8(c) of the KNQF Act, Cap. 214, KNQA is mandated to develop a system for assessing national qualifications in Kenya. In fulfilment of this mandate, KNQA developed the National Policy Framework, Standard – Requirements and Guidelines for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications as a strategic tool to guide stakeholders in implementing consistent, transparent, and outcomes-based assessment practices. Kenya applies diverse assessment and certification processes across institutions and sub-sectors, reflecting the structure of the education and training system and the specialised mandates of sub-sector regulators, assessment bodies, and QABs.

The Policy Framework seeks to strengthen the comparability of qualifications through consistent assessment of competence, credible certification, comparable interpretation of learner achievement, and authentication and verification of certification outcomes through the National Qualifications Database. It complements the KNQF by enhancing the credibility, trust, and comparability of assessment and certification processes.

Globally, the legitimacy of qualifications is underpinned by transparent, fair, and outcomes-based assessment systems. The European Standards and Guidelines provide benchmarks for quality and consistency, while UNESCO's Guidelines on Learning Assessment emphasise inclusive and equitable approaches that generate reliable data to strengthen education quality and inform responsive policymaking.

2.10.4 CODING AND CLASSIFYING PROGRAMMES AND THEIR RESULTING QUALIFICATIONS

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) provides a global benchmark for organising education systems and enhancing the comparability of qualifications across borders. However, education and training institutions have historically applied varied approaches to coding and classifying programmes and qualifications, hindering their comparability, recognition, transferability, and mobility of learners and workers.

Section 8(1)(f) of the KNQF Act mandates KNQA to publish manuals, codes, and guidelines on national qualifications, while Section 8(1)(q) requires KNQA to promote the international recognition of national qualifications. In fulfilment of these functions, KNQA developed the Kenya National Qualifications Classification Standard (KNQCS), aligned to Kenya's 10-level National Qualifications Framework (NQF), to provide a standardised system for classifying and coding national qualifications.

The KNQCS enhances transparency, comparability, recognition, and transferability of qualifications within Kenya and internationally.

It further supports quality education and training in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4. The Standard shall guide the education and training sector in identifying and classifying fields, programmes, and qualifications awarded in Kenya, thereby facilitating the mobility of qualifications, learners, and workers.

2.10.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATING IMPLEMENTATION OF KENYA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

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2.10.6 CODING AND CLASSIFYING PROGRAMMES AND THEIR RESULTING QUALIFICATIONS

To ensure effective delivery of KNQA's statutory mandate with efficiency, transparency, and strategic impact, there is a need for a structured and evidence-based approach to measure performance, track progress, and inform continuous improvement. Regionally, initiatives such as the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Qualifications Framework emphasise harmonisation, with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) serving as a key mechanism for tracking progress and promoting consistency across borders.

KNQA developed the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework for the KNQF to support ongoing education reforms aimed at enhancing the quality, relevance, and labour market alignment of national qualifications. The development of the Framework marks a significant step towards strengthening KNQF implementation and enhancing the quality and relevance of qualifications awarded in Kenya. It aligns with the objectives of the ACQF to promote harmonisation, mutual recognition, and mobility of qualifications across the continent. The Framework provides a structured mechanism for generating timely and reliable data and information, supporting continuous

learning, and enhancing accountability and transparency in KNQF implementation. On monitoring the implementation of the KNQF, KNQA undertakes regular monitoring and evaluation of Qualification Awarding Bodies and training institutions to assess compliance, track implementation progress, and promote continuous improvement.

Below figures give a summary of monitoring and evaluation activities undertaken during the FY 25/26. A total of 33 institutions were monitored, comprising National Polytechnics, Universities, Professional Examination Bodies, and Specialized Qualifications Awarding Bodies.

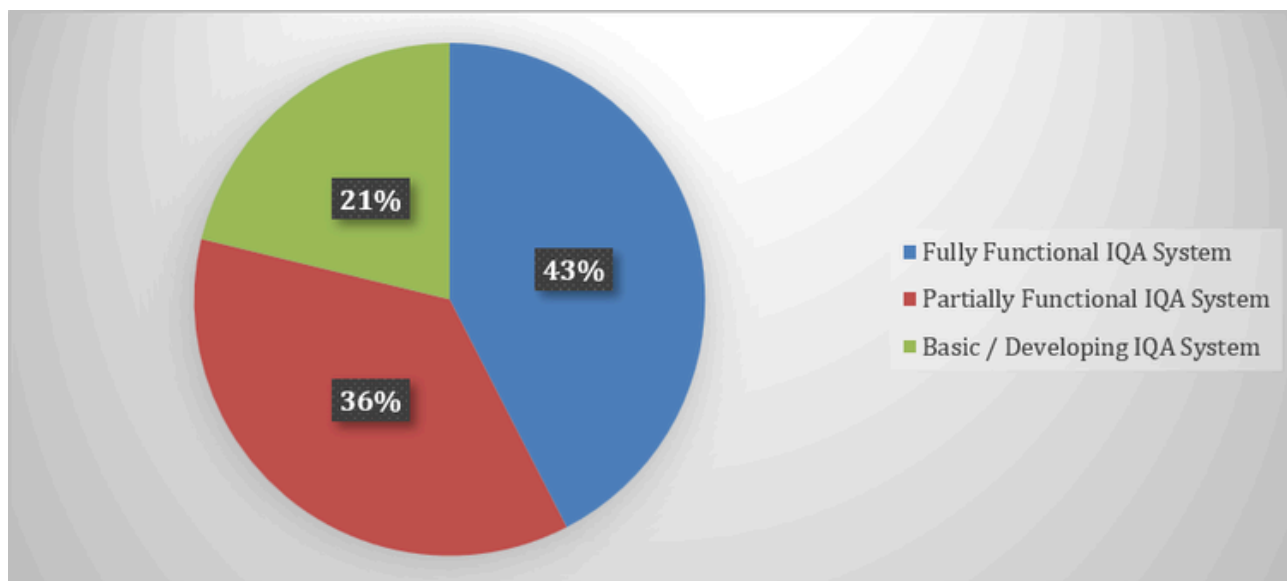


Figure 17 Percentage of Internal Quality Assurance Implementation Status among the 33 Institutions

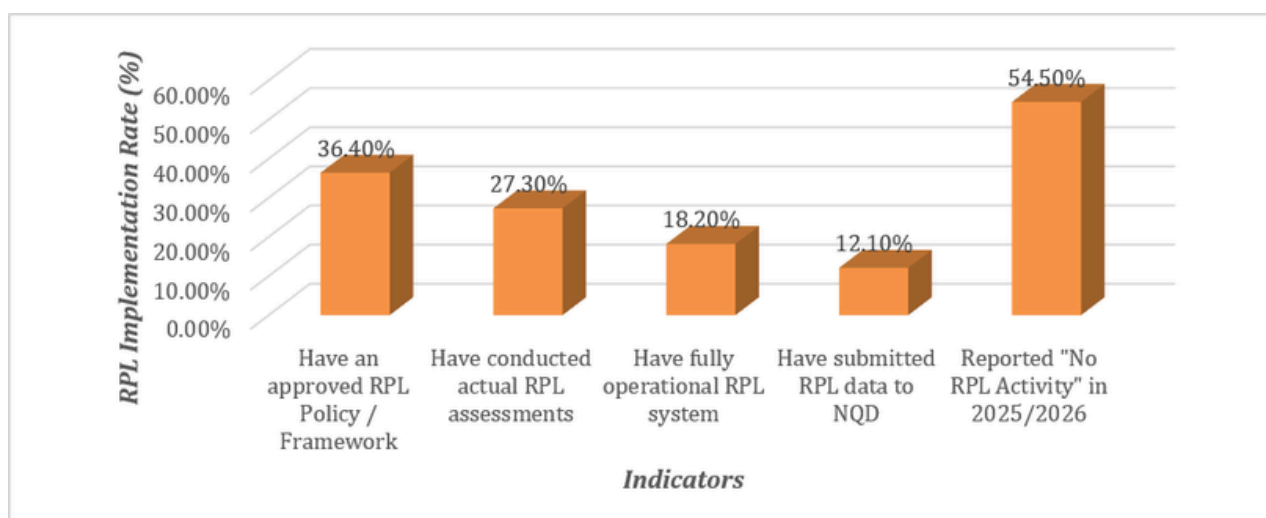


Figure 18 Level of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Implementation

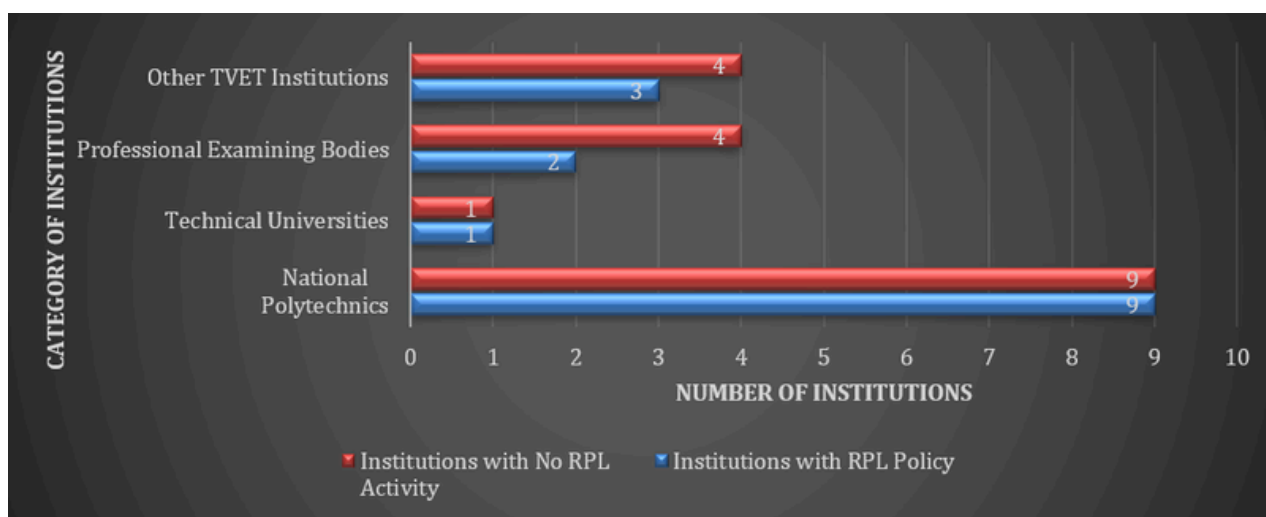


Figure 19 RPL implementation per institution category

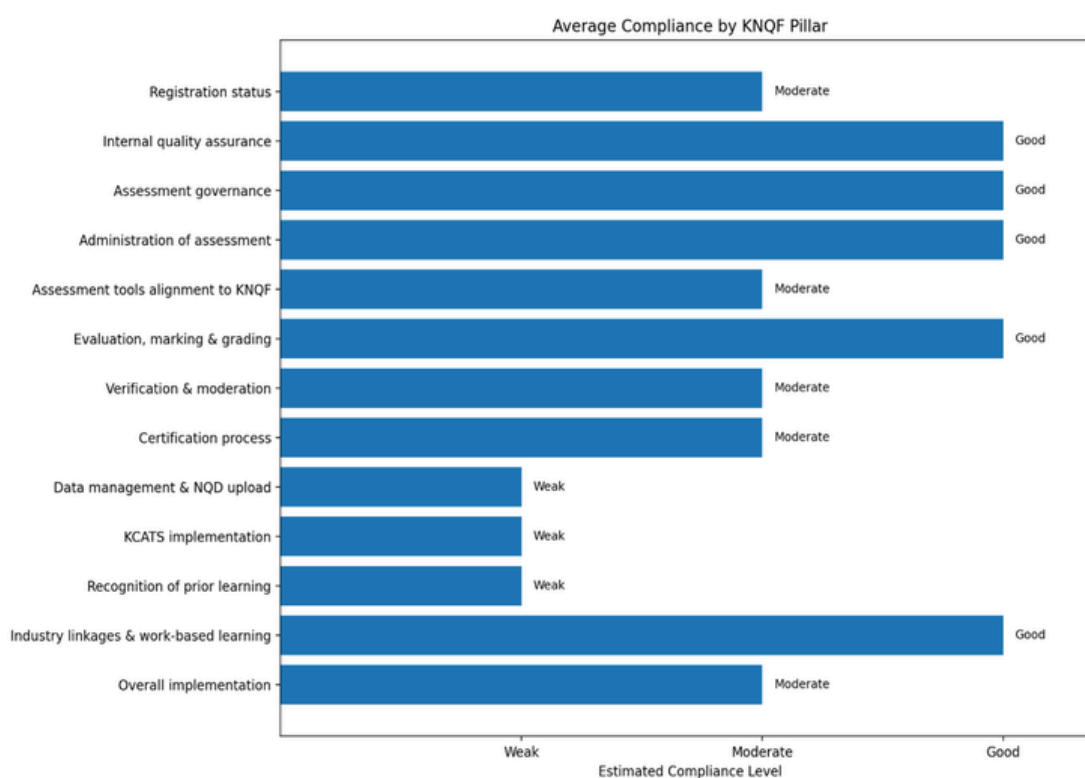


Figure 20 Summary of performance per KNQF pillars

The monitoring exercise revealed a mixed but generally positive picture of KNQF implementation.

There has been significant progress in several important areas. Many institutions have made commendable efforts in strengthening internal quality assurance, improving assessment practices, and expanding industry linkages. Some National Polytechnics, in particular, demonstrated relatively high levels of compliance as indicated by various analysed KNQF pillars.

However, the findings also highlight significant and persistent gaps that continue to hinder full and effective implementation of KNQF. Key challenges include incomplete programme registration, limited application of KNQCS codes, inconsistent maintenance of Portfolios of Evidence (PoE), absence of KCATS in many institutions,

and the failure to upload graduate records to the National Qualifications Database (NQD).

While the overall direction is encouraging, the pace and depth of implementation remain uneven. Full operationalization of the KNQF is still a work in progress. The gaps identified, particularly in registration, data management, and standardization, continue to limit the national recognition, portability, and credibility of qualifications.

2.11 NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS RESEARCH AND POLICY

Under Section 8(1)(m) of the KNQF Act Cap. 214, KNQA is mandated to conduct research through the National Qualifications Research and Policy Department. The Authority conducts evidence-based research to generate data-driven policies that enhance the implementation of the KNQF. During the period under review, the following research projects were undertaken;

2.11.1 IMPACT OF ALIGNMENT AND VALIDATION OF QUALIFICATIONS TO THE KNQF ON LEARNER PROGRESSION AND EMPLOYMENT IN KENYA

This empirical research study directly evaluated the real-world impact of KNQF alignment and validation on educational mobility and graduate labor-market outcomes between 2018 and 2025. Drawing on a primary sample of 118 respondents across applicants, qualification awarding bodies, and major public/private employers, the study found that 66.3% of validation applicants are youth under 35 years old seeking workforce entry or mobility.

61.0% of respondents in full-time employment secured their positions after completing qualification validation, demonstrating that KNQF recognition serves as a vital signal of trust, skill assurance, and credential authenticity for employers. While 77.5% of requests involved local qualifications and 20.2% represented foreign qualifications, the report revealed an operational bottleneck with a 50.6% validation success rate, 22.5% pending applications, and severe digital/communication challenges requiring urgent portal optimization and customer support integration.

Scope & Objectives: Assessed the impact of KNQF alignment and validation on learner progression (vertical and horizontal mobility) and graduate employment outcomes in Kenya from 2018 to 2025.

KEY FINDINGS:

- **Demographic Driver:** Youth under 35 years represent 66.3% of applicants (with 38.2% aged 25–34), driving demand for credential standardization during early career stages.
- **Direct Employment Impact:** 61.0% of full-time employed respondents secured their roles after receiving qualification validation, confirming high employer trust in KNQF credentials.
- **Geographic Origin:** Local qualifications comprised 77.5% of submissions across examining bodies, while foreign qualifications represented 20.2% for local mobility.
- **Systemic Turnaround Rate:** Achieved a 50.6% alignment success rate, with 22.5% remaining pending and 27.0% rejected or returned due to documentation friction.
- **Primary Bottlenecks:** 31.5% of stakeholders cited communication delays and 28.1% reported digital portal inefficiencies ('Server 500' errors) as key operational hurdles.

Geographic Origin of Primary Qualifications (2018–2025)

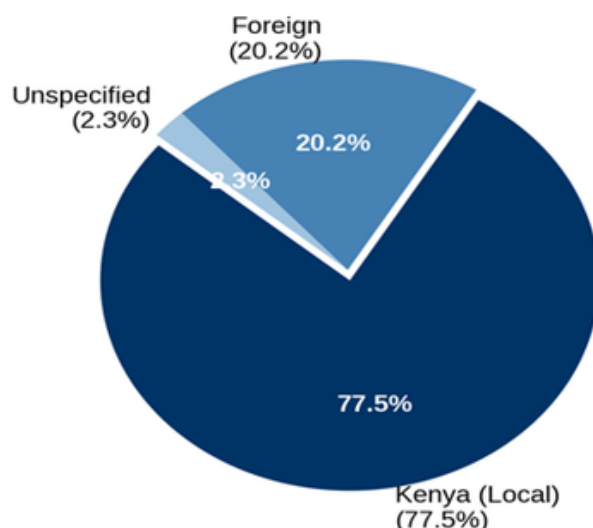


Figure 21 Geographic Origin of Primary Qualification

2.11.2 EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF RPL CERTIFICATION ON EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA: A TRACER STUDY REPORT

This tracer study evaluated the post-certification outcomes of the pioneer RPL pilot cohort across 24 counties in Kenya to measure its transformative impact on workplace mobility, formal academic progression, and self-empowerment. The study demonstrated exceptional social inclusion, with youth comprising 52.5% of beneficiaries, women representing 38.0%, and forcibly displaced persons/refugees making up 21.3%. RPL certification served as a powerful economic bridge: 75.5% of certified candidates successfully transitioned into formal higher education pathways previously locked by a lack of entry credentials, 72.0% reported improved access to entry-level employment, and 76.0% experienced enhanced personal empowerment and professional recognition.

Scope & Objectives: Evaluated post-certification trajectories of the pioneer RPL pilot cohort across 24 counties in Kenya.

Key Findings:

- **Marginalized Inclusivity:** Reached 52.5% youth (ages 25–34), 38.0% female participants, and 21.3% forcibly displaced persons/refugees.
- **Workplace Outcomes:** 72.0% of certified candidates achieved improved entry-level job placement, with 63.0% reporting enhanced work performance and wage retention.
- **Academic Articulation:** 75.5% unlocked formal higher education pathways previously restricted by formal entry requirements.
- **Personal Empowerment:** 76.0% noted significant personal empowerment and industry recognition of informal skill sets.

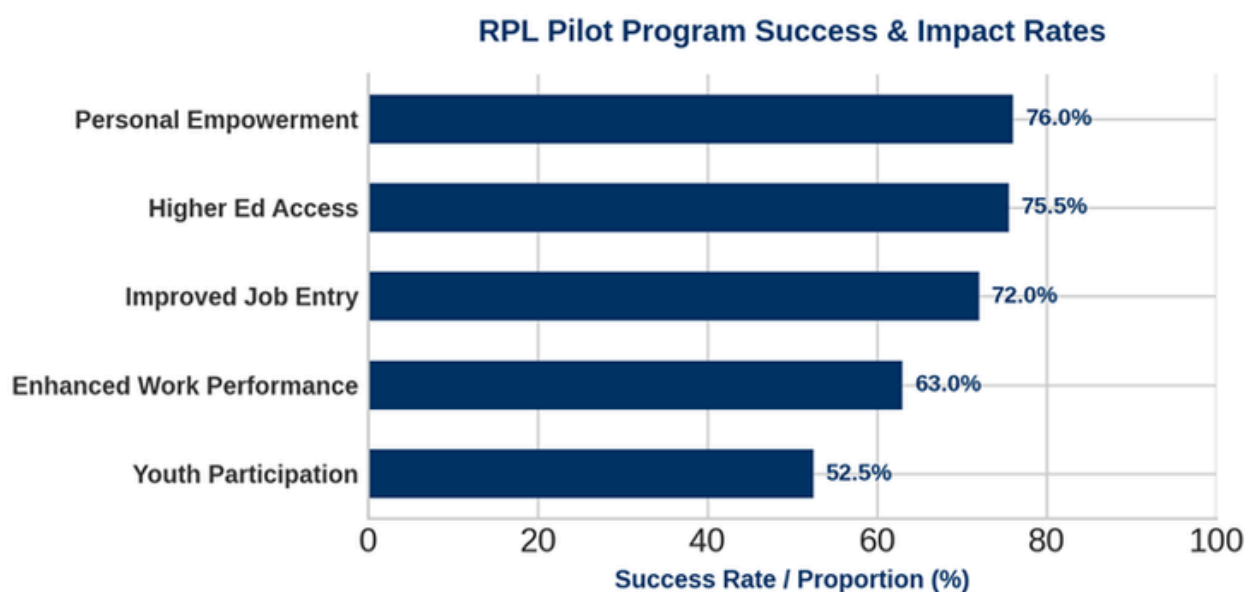


Figure 22: RPL Pilot Program Success & Impact Rates

2.11.3 EVALUATION OF INDUSTRY READINESS FOR COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CBET) IMPLEMENTATION IN TVET INSTITUTIONS

This evaluation measured institutional readiness, Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) engagement, and curriculum alignment across TVET Centers of Excellence (COEs) in Kenya. The findings established strong curricular alignment, with 83.2% of evaluated TVET programs matching industry skill needs and institutions implementing 86.6% of Sector Skills Advisory Committee recommendations. However, active participation among registered industry committee members stood at 53.7%, and a major structural vulnerability was identified in graduate tracking 43.2% of TVET institutions lacked institutionalized tracer mechanisms to verify graduate employment in CBET-aligned roles.

Scope & Objectives: Evaluated institutional readiness, Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) engagement, and curriculum alignment in TVET COEs.

Key Findings:

- Curriculum Relevance: 83.2% of TVET programs directly aligned with industry-identified competency needs.
- Recommendation Adoption: Institutions adopted 86.6% of Sector Skills Advisory Committee recommendations.
- Industry Engagement: 53.7% of registered IAC members actively participated in curriculum reviews and practical assessments.
- Tracking Deficit: 43.2% of institutions lacked graduate tracking mechanisms to evaluate post-graduation CBET employment.

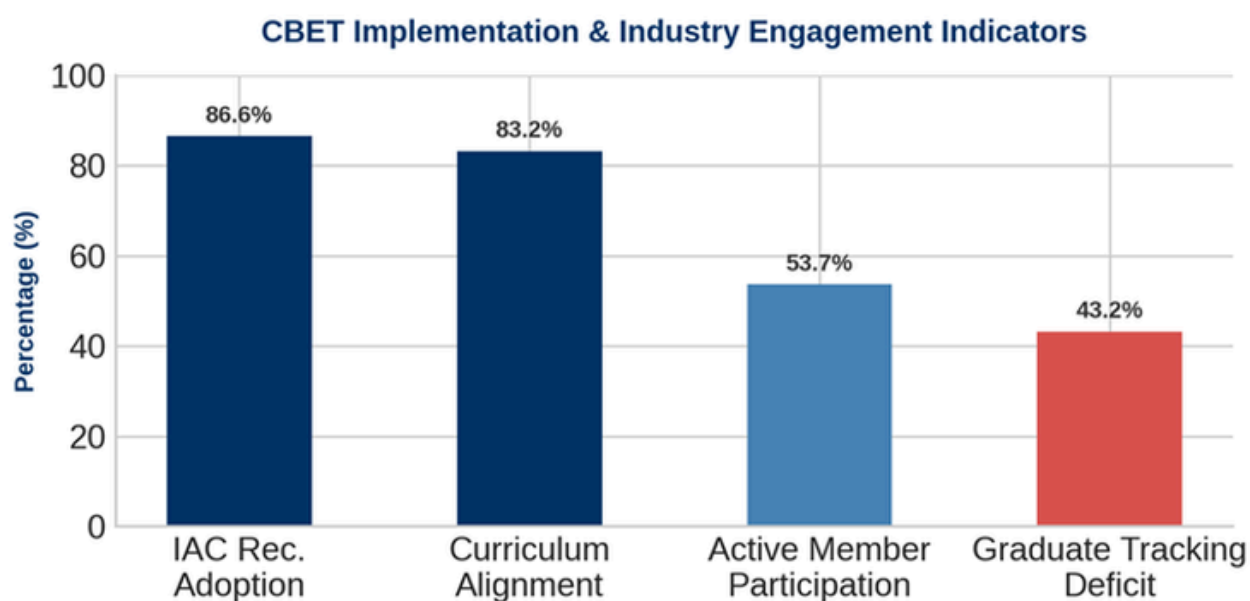


Figure 23 RPL Pilot Program Success & Impact Rates

INSTITUTIONAL METRICS SUMMARY

RESEARCH AREA	TARGET POPULATION	KEY OUTCOME METRIC	PRIMARY OPERATIONAL CHALLENGE
Impact of Qualification Alignment & Validation Report (April 2026)	Local & Foreign Qualification Applicants (N=118)	61.0% Full-time Employment Post-Validation	Digital Portal Bottlenecks & Turnaround Delays
Evaluating the Impact of RPL Certification: A Tracer Study Report	Pilot RPL Beneficiaries across 24 Counties	75.5% Progression to Formal Higher Education	Assessment Financing & System Scalability
Evaluation of Industry Readiness for CBET Implementation	TVET COEs & Industry Advisory Committees	86.6% IAC Recommendation Adoption Rate	Graduate Tracking Deficit (43.2% Lack Systems)

Table 7 Institution Metric Summary

2.12 FIRST NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS CONFERENCE

KNQA successfully convened the inaugural National Qualifications Conference from 12th to 14th May 2026 at the Ole Sereni Hotel, Nairobi, under the theme:

"A DECADE OF TRANSFORMATION AND REIMAGINING QUALIFICATIONS IN KENYA: ADVANCING QUALITY, RELEVANCE, INCLUSION AND RECOGNITION IN KENYA'S QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND EMPLOYABILITY."

The conference marked a historic milestone as the first national platform dedicated to reflecting on the implementation of the KNQF over the past decade while providing strategic direction for the future of qualifications, skills development, and lifelong learning in Kenya. The conference brought together over 300 delegates from more than 20 countries, representing government ministries, qualification awarding bodies, regulators, education and training institutions, industry, development partners, professional bodies, researchers, and civil society.

2.12.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference sought to:

- Reflect on the achievements, challenges, and lessons learned from over ten years of implementing the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF).
- Strengthen collaboration among stakeholders involved in qualifications development, quality assurance, and skills recognition.
- Promote national, regional, and international recognition and comparability of qualifications.
- Enhance alignment between qualifications, labour market needs, and national development priorities.
- Promote flexible learning pathways through RPL, the KCATs, UNESCO Qualifications Passport (UQP), modularisation, and micro-credentials.

2.12.2 CONFERENCE DELIBERATIONS

The conference was organised around six thematic areas reflecting the core pillars of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework:

- KNQF implementation: governance, policy and practice;
- Industry linkages, employability and skills development;
- Lifelong learning and recognition of qualifications;
- Emerging trends in qualifications awarding systems;
- Digital transformation, data systems and the National Qualifications Database; and
- Quality assurance and relevance of qualifications.

The conference featured keynote addresses, high-level panel discussions, technical paper presentations, and breakout sessions led by national, regional, and international experts. Deliberations focused on strengthening qualifications systems to support labour mobility, quality assurance, digital transformation, lifelong learning, and recognition of skills acquired through formal, non-formal, and informal learning. Emerging issues such as artificial intelligence, digital credentials, blockchain technologies, green skills, micro-credentials, and competency-based education were also explored as critical enablers of future-ready qualifications systems.

2.12.3 KEY OUTCOMES

The conference generated several strategic outcomes that will guide the continued implementation of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework, including:

- Enhanced stakeholder collaboration in strengthening Kenya's qualifications ecosystem.
- Increased commitment towards recognition, portability, and comparability of qualifications nationally, regionally, and internationally.
- Greater emphasis on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), micro-credentials, and flexible learning pathways as mechanisms for promoting lifelong learning.
- Reinforced commitment to aligning qualifications with labour market needs through stronger industry engagement and labour market intelligence.
- Recognition of digital transformation, including digital credentials, artificial intelligence, and the National Qualifications Database, as critical enablers of quality assurance, transparency, and qualifications verification.
- Positioning of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework as a strategic national instrument for quality assurance, human capital development, employability, labour mobility, and socio-economic transformation.



2.12.4 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

INDICATOR	DETAILS
Conference	First National Qualifications Conference 2026
Dates	12th –14th May 2026
Venue	Ole Sereni Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya
Theme	<i>A Decade of Transformation and Reimagining Qualifications in Kenya: Advancing Quality, Relevance, Inclusion and Recognition in Kenya's Qualifications and Skills for Lifelong Learning and Employability</i>
Host	Kenya National Qualifications Authority
Chief Guest	Deputy Head of the Public Service (Representing the Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service)
Participants	Over 300 delegates
Countries Represented	Over 20 countries
Keynote Addresses	8
Panel Discussions	8
Breakout Sessions	8 parallel sessions
Technical Paper Presentations	52 approved abstracts
Conference Themes	6 thematic areas
Exhibitors	16 institutions
Development Partners Represented	International Labour Organization (ILO), European Training Foundation (ETF), Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Microsoft, DataFlow Group, among others
Key Outputs	Conference Report, Book of Abstracts, Conference Communiqué, Strategic Recommendations for Strengthening the KNQF
Major Focus Areas	KNQF implementation, Quality Assurance, Industry Linkages, Employability, RPL, KCATS, Micro-credentials, Digital Credentials, AI, Labour Mobility, Lifelong Learning and Qualifications Recognition

Table 8: Conference Highlights

2.13 KENYA NATIONAL MICRO-CREDENTIALS FRAMEWORK & IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

Pursuant to Section 8(k) and 8(p) of the KNQF Act, Cap. 214, KNQA is mandated to provide for the recognition of attainment and competencies, and to establish pathways that promote flexible access to qualifications. In furtherance of this mandate, a National Situational Analysis (SITAN) on Micro-Credentials was undertaken in January–February 2026 to assess Kenya’s micro-credentials landscape and provide an evidence base for a national framework.

The SITAN established that micro-credentials are already emerging across Kenya’s education, training and industry landscape, driven by rapid technological change, evolving labour-market needs, demand for shorter and flexible learning opportunities, and the growing need for continuous reskilling and upskilling. However, their development and delivery remain largely fragmented, with variations in terminology, design, duration, credit value, assessment, quality assurance and recognition. The absence of a common national framework therefore creates risks relating to quality, comparability, portability, recognition and learner protection, while limiting the potential for micro-credentials to accumulate or stack towards recognised qualifications.

The National Micro-Credentials Framework is therefore necessary to provide a coherent national approach for the design, development, quality assurance, recognition and integration of micro-credentials within the KNQF. It will enable micro-credentials to complement traditional qualifications by providing flexible and modular pathways for upskilling, reskilling, lifelong learning and progression, while strengthening links with the Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Importantly, the Framework will ensure that micro-credentials respond to demonstrated labour-market and industry needs while remaining credible, portable and nationally recognised.

In response to the findings of the SITAN, a multi-agency Technical Working Committee (TWC), with support from the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), developed the draft National Micro-Credentials Framework. The Framework is currently at the stakeholder validation phase, bringing together key actors from education and training, industry, professional bodies, quality assurance agencies and other stakeholders to review and strengthen its relevance, quality and implementability. The validation process will pave the way for pilot implementation, through which the Framework will be tested and refined based on practical experience, before progressing to the final approval and national implementation stages.

SECTION 3:

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

3.1 PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

During the year under review, KNQA continued to strengthen strategic partnerships and collaborations with regional, continental and international institutions to enhance the effectiveness, responsiveness and global positioning of Kenya's qualifications system. The collaborations focused on areas including qualifications recognition and portability, RPL, micro-credentials, emerging and future skills, lifelong learning, skills development, quality assurance, labour mobility and inclusive access to qualifications. Through these engagements, KNQA continued to facilitate knowledge exchange, technical cooperation and adoption of good practices while contributing to regional and international dialogue on the evolving role of qualifications systems.

The partnerships also provided opportunities to apply the KNQF to emerging national and global priorities, including reskilling and upskilling, digital and AI skills, recognition of skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning, and inclusion of refugees and host communities. During the reporting period, collaboration with partners including the International Labour Organization (ILO), Commonwealth of Learning (COL), UNESCO, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Rescue Committee (IRC), African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) supported various initiatives aimed at strengthening the national qualifications ecosystem. KNQA also initiated discussions with the Kenya Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on potential areas of collaboration, particularly in relation to inclusive skills recognition and support for vulnerable and displaced populations.

3.2 KEY AREAS OF PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

PARTNER / PLATFORM	KEY AREA OF COLLABORATION	STRATEGIC CONTRIBUTION TO THE KNQF
International Labour Organization	Micro-credentials and RPL	Flexible learning pathways, reskilling/upskilling and recognition of emerging competencies
Commonwealth of Learning	National Micro-Credentials Framework	Development of flexible, stackable and quality-assured credentials

UNESCO	UNESCO Qualifications Passport and recognition of learning	Inclusive recognition of qualifications and prior learning
UNHCR	RPL implementation for refugees and host communities	Recognition and certification of existing skills; access to learning and employment
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	RPL and skills recognition/ Research	Inclusive pathways for refugees and underserved populations
Inter-University Council for East Africa	Regional harmonisation and recognition of qualifications	Qualifications comparability, recognition and regional mobility
African Continental Qualifications Framework	Continental qualifications cooperation	Portability, transparency and mutual learning across African qualifications systems
Intergovernmental Authority on Development	Regional qualifications initiatives	Recognition and mobility of qualifications and skills within the IGAD region
Colleges and Institutes Canada	Skills development and institutional capacity	Knowledge exchange and strengthening of qualifications systems
Kenya Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement	Research	Exploring inclusive skills recognition and support for vulnerable and displaced populations

Table 9: Key Areas of Partnership and Collaboration

The successful delivery of the 1st National Qualifications Conference 2026 was strengthened by the support and collaboration of partners drawn from Government, industry, employers, Qualifications Awarding Bodies, development partners and other stakeholders within the qualifications ecosystem. Their contributions, through financial and technical support, participation, knowledge sharing and stakeholder mobilisation, demonstrated the value of partnership in advancing implementation of the KNQF.

The Authority particularly acknowledges organisations that provided direct sponsorship and institutional support towards the Conference. This partnership enabled KNQA to convene a broad spectrum of national, regional and international stakeholders to exchange experiences, showcase progress and build consensus

around emerging priorities in qualifications development, quality assurance, skills recognition and lifelong learning.

Beyond supporting the Conference, these partnerships strengthened the Government education and training–industry nexus that is essential for ensuring that Kenya's qualifications remain relevant, credible and responsive to changing labour-market needs. KNQA will continue to deepen such strategic partnerships and diversify resource mobilisation to support future National Qualifications Conferences and the wider implementation of the KNQF.

CATEGORY	PARTNER / SPONSOR
Government Ministries & Agencies	- Ministry of Education – State Department for Technical Vocational Education and Training (SDTVET) - National Research Fund (NRF), Kenya
Technology & Private Sector	- Microsoft Elevate - Pathways Technologies (Data Technology Innovation) - DataFlow Group
International & Regional Development	- International Labour Organization (ILO) - African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF)
Educational, Examination & Professional Bodies	- Institute of Commercial Management (ICM) - TVET Curriculum Development, Assessment and Certification Council (TVET CDACC) - Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA) - Kenya Accountants and Secretaries National Examinations Board (KASNEB) - Kenya Institute of Supplies Management (KISEB) - Chartall Business College
Training Institutions & Academies	- Mawego National Polytechnic - Bandari Maritime Academy - Kenya Red Cross Training Institute

Table 10 Key partners that supported the 1st National Qualifications Conference

SECTION 4:

FINANCING THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

4.1 OVERVIEW

The implementation of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) requires sustainable financing to support regulatory oversight, institutional capacity building, qualifications recognition, and maintenance of the National Qualifications Database. During the Financial Year 2025/2026, the Authority continued to rely on funding from Exchequer allocations, Appropriation-in-Aid (A-in-A), and support from development partners and sponsors.

Financial resources were utilized to support key mandate areas including:

- Registration and accreditation of Qualifications Awarding Bodies (QABs)
- Recognition and alignment of qualifications to the National Qualifications Framework
- Development and maintenance of the National Qualifications Database
- Policy harmonisation and stakeholder engagement
- Institutional capacity strengthening.

4.2 SOURCES OF FUNDING

During the reporting period, the Authority mobilised financial resources from the following sources:

SOURCE OF FUNDS	BUDGET ALLOCATION (KSHS 000'S)	ACTUAL RECEIPTS (KSHS 000'S)	VARIANCE (ACTUAL-BUDGET)	PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION
Exchequer Grant	175,693	131,770	(43,923)	81.50%
Appropriation in Aid (A-in-A)	40,000	37,285	(2,715)	18.50%
Total Funding	215,693	169,055	(46,638)	100.00%

Table 11 Sources of Funding, FY 2025/2026

4.2.1 KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Exchequer funding remained the primary source of financing, supporting the Authority's core operational functions.
- Appropriation-in-Aid (A-in-A) was generated through service-related fees, including accreditation, qualification recognition, and certification services.
- Sponsor support contributed to strategic initiatives such as system development, awareness creation, and institutional strengthening.

4.3 GROSS REVENUE PERFORMANCE

Over the past 5 years, data indicates that the Authority remains largely dependent on Exchequer Grants, although notable shifts have occurred over the period.

Exchequer funding increased significantly from 270,000 (000's) in 2021/2022 to a peak of 300,000 (000's) in 2023/2024, reflecting strengthened government support. However, this trend reverses sharply thereafter, declining to 235,215 (000's) in 2024/2025 and further to 175,693 (000's) in 2025/2026, suggesting reduced fiscal allocation or budget rationalization.

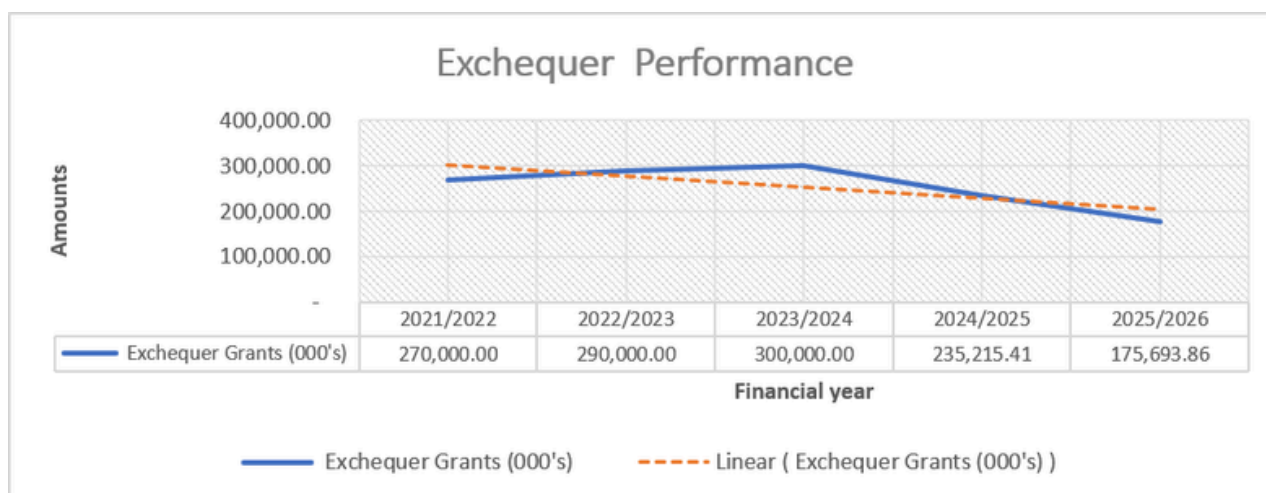


Figure 24 Revenue Performance, FY 2021/2022 – FY 2025/2026

Appropriation in Aid (A-in-A) shows a generally upward but fluctuating trend, rising from 31,425 (000's) in 2021/2022 to 42,002 (000's) in 2023/2024, then declining to 36,583 (000's) in 2024/2025 and then rising to 53,459 (000's) in 2025/2026.

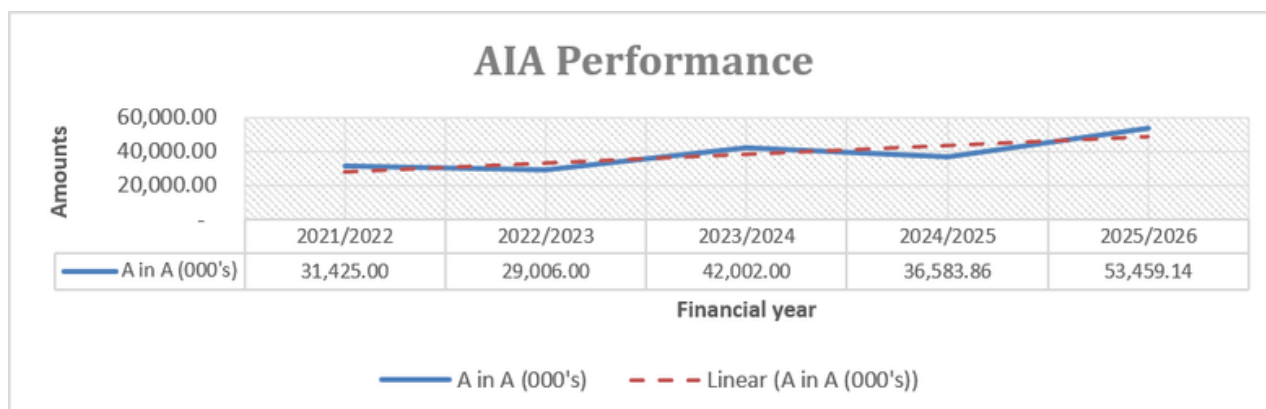


Figure 25 A-I-A performance

4.4 APPROPRIATION IN AID (A-IN-A) PERFORMANCE

Over the past 5 years, the Authority registered fluctuating but generally strong performance in revenue collection against the approved budget. Actual collections exceeded the approved budget in several years, notably 2023/2024 (120%), and 2024/2025 (105%), indicating effective revenue mobilization. However, underperformance is observed in 2021/2022 (90%), 2022/2023 (83%), and 2025/2026 (111%), suggesting challenges in meeting revenue targets during these periods as shown below.

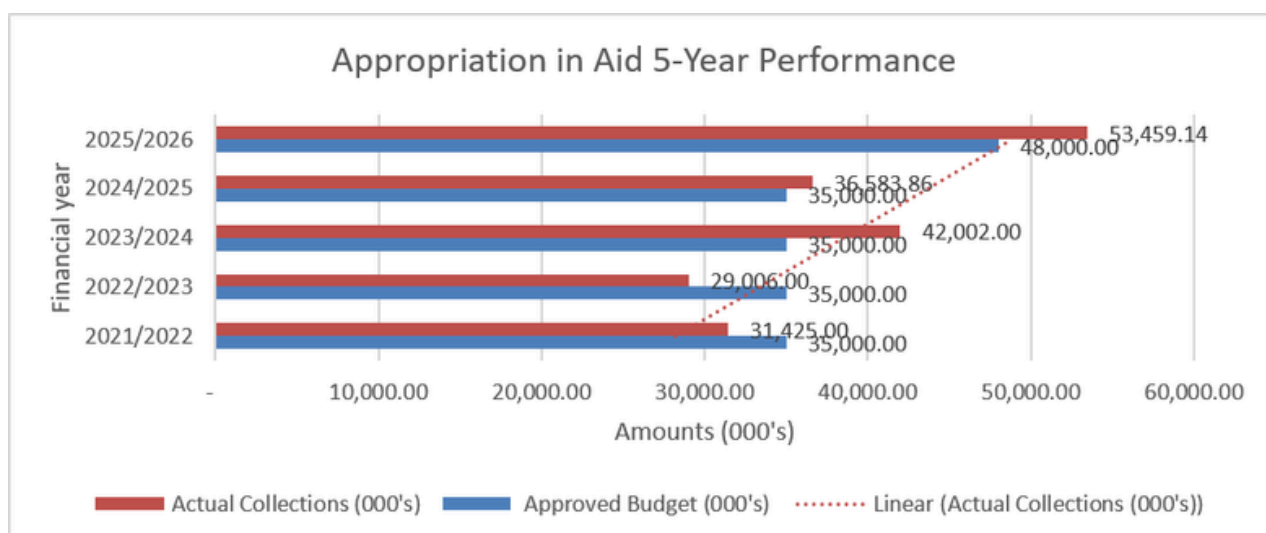


Figure 26 A-I-A 5 year performance

Overall, while the Authority demonstrates a strong capacity to exceed revenue targets in certain years, the inconsistencies point to the need for improved forecasting and more stable revenue planning to ensure consistent budget absorption.

4.5 REVENUE DISTRIBUTION

The funding composition of the Authority is predominantly reliant on Exchequer funding. The Exchequer contributes the largest share at 85%, indicating that the Authority is predominantly financed through government allocations. In contrast, Appropriation in Aid (A-in-A) accounts for only 13% while donors and sponsors accounts for only 2%, reflecting relatively low internally generated revenue or alternative funding sources. Overall, the data suggests limited diversification of income streams, with a strong dependency on public funding, which may pose sustainability risks if government allocations fluctuate.

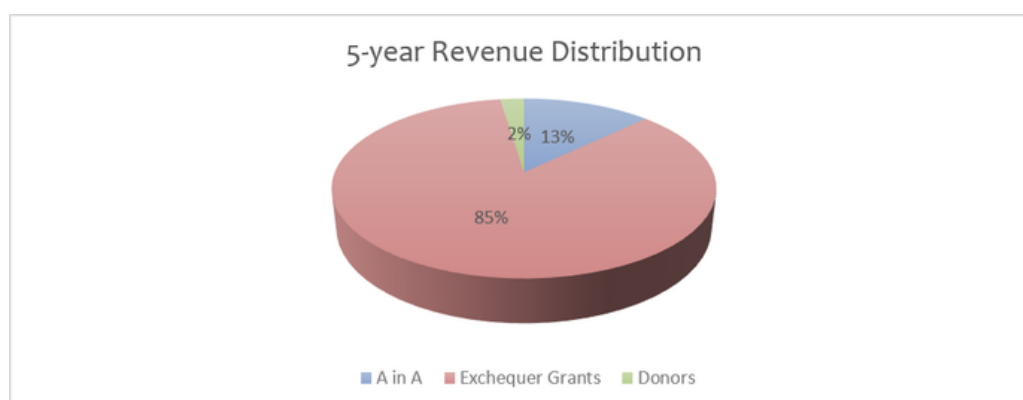


Figure 27: 5 year revenue distribution

4.6 KEY FINANCIAL RISKS

Financial risks refer to the possibility of losses or adverse impacts on an organization's financial position arising from uncertainty in financial management, funding, market conditions, or operational activities. These risks affect an entity's ability to meet its financial obligations, achieve its objectives, and maintain sustainability. They commonly include risks related to revenue shortfalls, cost overruns, funding volatility (such as reliance on Exchequer support), liquidity constraints, and inefficiencies in resource utilization.

RISK	IMPACT	MITIGATION
Delayed Exchequer releases	Disruption of operations	Cash flow planning
Low A-in-A revenue	Increased reliance on government funding	Revenue diversification
Donor dependency	Programme sustainability risks	Strengthen internal funding mechanisms
Increasing operational costs	Budget pressure	Cost optimisation measures

Table 12 Key Financial Risks and Mitigation Measures

4.7 FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE

The Authority continued to uphold high standards of financial accountability and transparency in the utilisation of public resources. Financial management during the reporting period complied with:

- The Public Finance Management Act, Cap. 412A
- National Treasury financial reporting guidelines
- Applicable International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)
- Internal financial management policies and procedures.

Regular internal controls, financial monitoring, and audit processes were undertaken to ensure prudent use of resources.

4.8 KEY CHALLENGES

Despite the progress made, several financial challenges were experienced during the reporting period:

- Dependence on Exchequer funding, which may be subject to delayed disbursement.
- Limited internal revenue generation compared to growing operational demands.
- Increasing costs associated with maintaining national data systems and regulatory functions.
- Resource constraints affecting the scale of stakeholder outreach and awareness programmes.

4.9 STRATEGIC FINANCIAL PRIORITIES

Moving forward, the Authority will focus on strengthening financial sustainability through:

- Enhancing Appropriation-in-Aid revenue streams.
- Strengthening partnerships with development partners and sponsors.
- Prioritising funding towards digital systems and the National Qualifications Database.
- Improving financial planning and performance monitoring.

4.10 CONCLUSION

The financial resources mobilised during the 2025/2026 Financial Year enabled the Authority to make significant progress in advancing the implementation of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework. Continued investment in institutional capacity, stakeholder engagement, and digital systems will be essential to further strengthen the credibility, transparency, and mobility of qualifications within the national education and training system.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I:REGISTRATION OF QUALIFICATIONS AND GRADUATES

REGISTERED QABs & QALIFICATIONS PER QUARTER FY 2025 2026				
S/No	Qualification Awarding Body registered	QABs	Qs Registered	Date Registered
Quarter 1 (19 QABs & 6 Qs)				
1	Kericho National Polytechnic	Bandari Maritime Academy	6	18th July 2025
2	Bungoma National Polytechnic			
3	Nairobi National Polytechnic			
4	Tseikuru National Polytechnic			
5	Michuki National Polytechnic			
6	Mawego National Polytechnic			
7	Shamberere National Polytechnic			
8	Kiambu National Polytechnic			
9	Kaiboi National Polytechnic			
10	Ol'Lessos National Polytechnic			
11	Baringo National Polytechnic			
12	Jeremiah Nyagah National Polytechnic			
13	Taita Taveta National Polytechnic			
14	Kenya Water Institute			
15	KCA University			

15	KCA University			
16	Great Lakes University			
17	Egerton University			
18	Presbyterian University of East Africa			
19	Nyamira National Polytechnic			
Quarter 2 (8 QABs and 235 Qs)				
20	Aga Khan University	National Industrial Training Authority	70	24th October, 2025
21	Garissa University	Kenya Water institute	12	
22	Africa Nazarene University	Rift Valley National Polytechnic	152	
23	Mitunguu National Polytechnic	Learning resource Network	1	
24	Kisiwa National Polytechnic			
25	Siaya National Polytechnic			
26	Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training			
27	Learning Resource Network			
Quarter 3 (4 QABs & 15 Qs)				
28	Bumbe National Polytechnic	Learning resource network	1	21st January 2026
29	Kipsoen National Polytechnic	Kenya Water institute	1	
30	Riara University	Business & Hotel management	5	

ANNEX 2: ALIGNED AND VALIDATED QUALIFICATIONS PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

NO	COUNTRY	QUALIFICATIONS
1	South Sudan	1,978
2	Somalia	1,845
3	DRC	1,486
4	Uganda	641
5	Nigeria	535
6	Tanzania	510
7	Rwanda	466
8	Burundi	330
9	Ethiopia	300
10	Malawi	226
11	India	212
12	Cameroon	159
13	Sudan	154
14	Liberia	128
15	Chad	116
16	Zimbabwe	114
17	Comoros	113
18	Botswana	108
19	Eritrea	103
20	Zambia	94
21	Ghana	93
22	United States of America	75
23	Congo	64
24	Mozambique	60

25	Central African Republic	59
26	China	42
27	Sierra Leone	33
28	United Kingdom	32
29	Canada	32
30	Madagascar	32
31	Pakistan	30
32	Yemen	28
33	Burkina Faso	25
34	Djibouti	21
35	Togo	21
36	Côte d'Ivoire	20
37	Namibia	19
38	Egypt	19
39	South Africa	18
40	Gambia	15
41	Gabon	15
42	Netherlands	15
43	Angola	14
44	South Korea	14
45	Lesotho	13
46	Benin	13
47	Sweden	13
48	Germany	13
49	Italy	11
50	Senegal	10

51	Mali	10
52	Eswatini	8
53	Australia	7
54	Niger	6
55	British Indian Ocean Territory	6
56	Turkey	5
57	Norway	5
58	Guinea	5
59	France	5
60	Libya	4
61	Afghanistan	4
62	Equatorial Guinea	4
63	Saudi Arabia	3
64	Sri Lanka	3
65	Switzerland	3
66	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2
67	Mauritius	2
68	Denmark	2
69	Romania	2
70	Russia	2
71	Saint Barthélemy	2
72	Myanmar	2
73	Indonesia	2
74	Venezuela	2
75	Bangladesh	2

76	Malaysia	2
77	Iran	2
78	Guinea-Bissau	1
79	Portugal	1
80	Costa Rica	1
81	North Macedonia	1
82	Trinidad and Tobago	1
83	Thailand	1
84	Guyana	1
85	Lebanon	1
86	Jordan	1
87	South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands	1
88	Dominican Republic	1
89	Poland	1
90	Spain	1
91	Belgium	1
92	Haiti	1
93	Dominica	1
94	Kazakhstan	1
95	Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha	1
96	Christmas Island	1
97	Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	1
98	Vietnam	1
99	Uruguay	1
100	Philippines	1
101	Timor-Leste	1
101	Nepal	1
103	Syria	1

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