The UIS held a consultative meeting on the data quality assessment framework (DQAF) to review the current DQAF matrix, methodology, and available country reports with a view to improve the usefulness of DQAF instrument, refine methodology and implementation strategy. The meeting also engaged expert consultants capable to provide inputs on all the above objectives.

1. Main highlights:
   - Presentation by UIS HQ (Montreal) Education Indicators and Data Analysis section on the importance of data quality and the role of the Data Plan.
   - Presentation of the current Data Quality Assessment Framework matrix – Dimensions 0 to 5 by UIS field staff with a view to make improvements to the current DQAF matrix.
   - Presentation by consultants on education statistics data quality and the IMF model of DQAF
   - Group Work activities that resulted in suggestions/ recommendations to improve the DQAF methodology, contents/changes to Dimensions 0 to 5.

   - Proposals to change to contents of the DQAF matrix to promote clarity, to reduce redundancies in terms and definitions within the matrix, and to promote relevance.
   - DQAF report and revised matrix to be made available in January.
   - DQAF Manual: plan to be proposed by UIS before further development
   - Planned DQAF to be conducted according to agreed planning with SADC and ECCAS - using enhanced methodology elements as and when they become available


   **DQAF Technical Committees:**
   - Composition of DQAF members should be drawn from national and international experts
   - National technical team should steer the DQAF study to support follow-up after publication of report – should consist of national statistical offices, competent national institutions
   - Regional resource persons to conduct DQAF should be identified.

   **Modalities to conduct DQAF:**
   - Request for DQAF should be initiated by the countries
   - Advocacy tools should target high level government officials, technicians, donors, describe benefits of DQAF study
   - Preferable to have orientation sessions to inform national stakeholders on the DQAF methodology
   - Duration of DQAF study to be determined by specific country conditions
   - Accurate information on each DQAF element should be informed by guidelines, norms standards and tools to be developed by UIS

   **Standards and Norms:**
Standardization of DQAF studies should be developed and based on weighting and scoring of the DQAF elements and sub-dimensions. Transparency through consultations between national and internal experts should be encouraged to judge relevance of sub-dimensions, dimensions and DQAF elements. Scoring method: has to be determinate by a collaboration between UIS and country to provide meaning to scores. DQAF assessment score should stand alone and independent of the assessor by using simple language and clear guidance on scoring categories. Need to determine level of detail around evaluable concepts that need to be measured.

Implementation of recommendations:
- Emerging Action Plans should be formulated through advocacy activities – seminars, national stakeholder workshops to assess DQAF findings.
- Develop an action plan under government authority, involving all stakeholders:
  - Mainstreamed into both the education and the national statistics agendas
  - Validated by the country
  - using a RBM approach and targeting objectives based on DQAF indicators
  - Monitored by nationals through an updated DQAF (every three years)
- DQAF should be updated as necessary by national technical teams.
- Periodicity to repeat DQAF – Use of a monitoring instrument, implication on overall score could be relevant.
- South-South cooperation to promote capacity development to be encouraged by UIS
- UIS to develop training materials, to create forum for information sharing e.g. Wiki, Assessment manuals, Education statistics recommendations

Reporting:
- External review and editing – highlight good practices
- Include an assessment capacity building component whenever feasible

Funding
- UIS and regional partners to mobilise funds to set up regional capacity programme on DQAF

4. Implementation of DQAF in Countries – Main Issues

- Purpose of conducting DQAF:
  (i) To collect baseline information – DQAF is a process based assessment tool.
  (ii) as capacity development exercise, advocacy (improvement to the current statistical system):
  (iii) Challenges (need for strong political commitment)

- DQAF implementation modalities:
  (i) UIS and external experts (support from national expert team),
  (ii) Peer reviews from countries, peer reviews from regional economic commissions, South-South cooperation,
  (iii) Technical reviews by external experts.
  (iv) Challenges: Need to strengthen national capacity.

- Modalities to implement DQAF country studies:
  (i) Clear identification of national focal points, communication of DQAF modalities, findings at high levels, orientation of DQAF objectives with national stakeholders,
  (ii) DQAF report to be made available to the countries within two months, recommended to have a de-briefing workshop

- Developing/ Strengthening national capacities: Technical committees at regional level, use/develop instruction manuals and tools e.g wiki, implementation of DQAF for other sectors of economy, participation in DQAF exercise by other countries within REC
• **Areas to be addressed:** DQAF as a regular monitoring tool, prioritising DQAF recommendations – in particular implementing most cost effective recommendations.

• **Challenges:** Available national capacities to implement updated DQAF

5. **Areas for Consideration:**
   • What is the purpose of scoring?
   • Hierarchical dependencies between elements and therefore priorities can be determined on where they are in the hierarchy
   • Use of DQAF to determine priorities. Is this relevant?
   • Use of manuals to use the DQAF, identify priorities

6. **Presentation on Quality Issues – UIS Data Plan**
   • Use of the data plan in identifying national data quality issues, data gaps, improvement in international reporting of data.
   • Role of EIDA in collection and reporting of internationally comparable statistics.
   • UIS Main lines of Action
   • UIS annual education statistics surveys – role of EIDA in improving data quality

7. **Presentation on DQAF Dimensions and Framework**
   • Brief presentation on DQAF dimension and sub-dimensions
   • Review of the matrix and introduction to concepts and definitions.

8. **Presentation on Education Statistics Quality – DQAF – Main Issues**
   • European Foundation for Quality Management EFQM: Suited for results based management.
   • Strategies for the development of statistics e.g Designing sector statistics.
   • Common assessment framework: Improving an organisation through self—assessment.
   • Qualitative questionnaires for a domain and statistical unit.
   • Regional strategy for the Development of Statistics; (SICA, ANDEAN, OECS, ASEAN, EAC);
   • African Union strategy built on REC.
   • Quality management – ISO 9000, UIS use of DQAF (secondary to IMF), Use of peer reviews by EU, Peer reviews through national strategies for the development of statistics (Paris 21), National Quality Assurance Frameworks (NQAF), Generic Statistical Business process model (UNECE), European statistical system (peer reviews, internal quality assurance, act on European statistics.

9. **Presentation on Structure of DQAF Reports – Reporting in DQAF – Main Issues**
   • *IMF approach to DQAF:* summary DQAF's are presented by institutions, publication of the report follows country consensus, DQAF as an appendix to ROOSC
   • *Report Structure:* Less focus on highlighting the score – instead focus on outcomes of the Dimension, Executive summary should be complemented with information on sub-sector processes, standard template on executive summary should be adopted
   • *DQAF Audience:* High level audience, technicians, donor community, data users
   • **Presentation of elements:**
     (i) information for each sub-sector should be published – implies scoring for each sector, analysis of sub-sector data sets,
     (ii) develop user friendly reports including overview of each sector,
     (iii) DQAF matrix should be published for transparency and assessment basis
   • *Current DQAF Template (areas for consideration/improvement)*
Evaluation of each sub-sector, conducting full DQAF or abridged versions, repeating items for each data sets e.g. Dimension 0 and 1 would not be discussed multiple times, but Dimensions 2 and 3 would be.

Use of joint reporting – including those at country level that will implement DQAF.

DQAF should highlight best practices and not limitations alone.

Focus on concrete examples where the countries can improve.

**Country participation in DQAF**

(i) Validation should be planned and achieved through national workshops etc.

(ii) Process of engagement – UIS to promote interest in disseminating findings in a series of presentations – seminars.

(iii) Dissemination should be well planned to support implementation of recommendations.

**Report Writing**

(i) Reports should be edited by external editors.

(ii) Recommendations should be stated clearly in the executive summary.

(iii) Priority recommendations could be highlighted in the first section of the report – consider a reporting template for two audiences: executive summary for management and technicians.

(iv) Template to focus on changes to better address each sub-sector, highlight best practices.

10. Presentation on Next Steps for DQAF and other studies in SADC and ECCAS countries – Main Issues

**Maputo SADC Recommendations**

(i) September 2009; review of DQAF findings of 7 pilot countries: Participants; UIS, ADEA, Pilot Countries, UNESCO regional staff and SADC secretariat.

(ii) Objectives; identification of good practices and challenges, Sharing national experiences on DQAF, Define recommendations for future steps, DQAF validation.

**Workshop Outcomes:**

(i) Usefulness of DQAF instrument, Identification of areas for improvement, recommendations for action plan (national and regional).

(ii) MoE meeting recommendation to: Expand DQAF to remaining SADC and ECCAS countries (regional framework), Develop Action plans.

**Usefulness of DQAF**

(i) Identification of DQAF as capacity building tool to assess data quality, DQAF as advocacy tool to improve data quality (mobilise resources for EMIS).

(ii) Promote understanding of data gaps, Identification of strengths and areas for improvement.

(iii) Allows comparability between countries (identification of best practices), Promotes South – South cooperation.

**Areas for improvement**

(i) Promote awareness of the diagnosis tool with national technicians (transparency).

(ii) Refine instrument (user friendly instrument, contextualise tool to African context), Scoring guidelines (define ranking standards).

(iii) Document process of conducting DQAF (manuals and guidelines).

(iv) Timeline for conducting DQAF.

(v) Inclusion of high level managers in diagnosis process, National roster of regional experts.

**Recommendations for Action Plan**

(i) Promote national DQAF dissemination workshops.

(ii) Promote development of EMIS policy, Promote better collaboration between EMIS and national data producing agencies (framework of NSDS).
Promote use of DQAF recommendation as background guideline for development of action plan

11. Group Work on Dimensions 0 – 5

Group Work: Dimensions:

Discussion Points on Dimensions 0 and 1 – comments embedded within DQAF matrix (as presented in Cape Town)

Discussion Points on Dimensions 4 and 5 – Presented below:

DQAF Revision: Dimension 4 Serviceability, Dimension 5 Accessibility
- Focus should be on the management of the production of official education statistics only
- Framework should be as generic as possible or more data set specific – tools should assess any information system versus being EMIS specific, however that is defined
- Should reflect latest thinking and could make reference to Dim 0 to inform 4, 5, sub-dimensions should be correlated (criterion validity)
- DQAF text should be edited to ensure language is clear and easily understood. Original DQAF contains Relevance, which is not in the current version and should be in Dimension 0 (Prerequisites of Data Quality)
- Outputs should be useful to users and could be part of Dimension 0 and as part of a general management process. User orientation: It should be determined who users are, have a process in place to engage them, to incorporate their feedback into production and assessment processes e.g. user surveys, independent advisory councils on advising on programs and activities etc etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
- Relevance should be added back in to DQAF - Relevance is more than just scope and a single round of data release; it should include elements of assessing user needs, feedback.
- Relevance as part of a process for checking that outputs are relevant to users and could be modified, dropped or changed.
- Relevance as part of a larger management process; capability of checking is part of Dim 0.

1. Relevance:
   a. should have in place a process for determining
      i. Determine audience (users)
      ii. For managing their user needs
      iii. Determine if there is an assessment of whether the outputs meet the needs of users
      iv. Determine if there is an advisory council in place to advise on new and emerging user issues?
      v. Consider linking production and capacity to produce; therefore, need for management to balance demand with capacity to respond to that demand; even if resources are low, the quality is still there; volume is a function of amount of resources – quality should not be a function of the amount of resources available.
      vi. Suggestion: make a manual of best practices on how to produce data and use DQAF as tool to assess process of producing education statistics is under proper control.
Dimension 4: Serviceability: Statistics are timely and consistent:

Main Discussion Points:
- Dimension 4.1.1 should be viewed as an input issue.
- Keep Serviceability dimension and restrict its meaning to timeliness and periodicity and consistency as separate sub-dimensions;
- Drop preliminary, final and international publications as artificial in a way because ministries typically release only one round of data.

Recommendations:
- There is a unit accountable for compiling official ministry statistics: add to Dimension 0 timeliness.
- Official statistics derived from an annual school census should be disseminated within 6-12 months after the start of the school year.
- Periodicity: The official school census statistics are published at least annually. The finance statistics are published at least annually” Note: there should be a document that establishes what the international norms are.
- Data source assessment belongs in Dimension 3 (Accuracy and reliability).
- Timeliness: Official Audited education finance statistics should be disseminated within 18 months of the start of the school year.
- Imputation should be in Dim 2 methodology (row 170 in SADC DQAF).

Consistency:
- Revise Rows 180-184 as below
- Data are compared against other reliable sources to confirm consistency (e.g. comparing age distributions between population and enrolments).
- Intra-agency consistency: departmental entities reconcile their data when different processes are using different information to produce similar outputs.
- Revision practice: recommendation Drop as an assessment element.

Dimension 5: Accessibility

- Data and metadata are easily available and there is adequate client support.
- Public awareness around data dissemination products - Ease of access to information:
  - Metadata:
    - Existence of metadata
    - Dimension 5.2.1 should be revised to read: Do metadata include discussions about concepts, scope, classification, definitions, base of recording, data sources, methodology, statistical techniques and any other issues affecting interpretability.
    - Are they current?
    - Are they easily accessible?

Assistance to users: Recommendations:
- Availability of client support systems, user satisfaction surveys.
- Combine 5.1.3, 5.1.4: The data are released according to a fixed schedule to the public at the same time.
- Revise 5.1.2: Data are available in a format suitable to every type of user.
- Delete 5.2.2 redundant.
- Drop row 201: too specific and which product?