

Global Gateway African Union ETF KNOQA

**ACQF**  
African Continental  
Qualifications Framework

Project ACQF-II: Supporting implementation of  
African Continental Qualifications Framework

**3rd ACQF Forum**  
**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for Practitioners**  
**Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience (VAE)**  
**Reconhecimento Validação e Certificação de  
Competências (RVCC)**

📍 Hotel Fairview - Nairobi, Kenya  
📅 1-4 October 2024



[www.acqf.africa](http://www.acqf.africa)

Angola, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, R.D. Congo, Eswatini,  
Ghana, Guiné-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal,  
Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe



ALL-AFRICA STUDENTS UNION  
UNION PANAFRICAINNE DES ETUDIANTS  
اتحاد طلاب عموم إفريقيا



# Session 2

## Introduction

### RPL in the context of ACQF-II

3rd ACQF Forum, Nairobi

1-4/October 2024

Speaker: Eduarda Castel-Branco

# 01

**Introduction - Agenda**  
**– Asante Sana**

# Welcome to the 3rd ACQF Forum – on RPL

1. To all representatives of African countries and regions
2. To all national institutions and experts

Angola, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, D R Congo, Eswatini, Ghana, Guiné-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe

ECCAS, SADC, UEMOA

# Countries Participating onsite

Alice Kande



# The 10th multi-country Workshop of ACQF-II – in 8 countries

2023

- Johannesburg, May
- **Addis, July (ACQF Policy document)**
- Nairobi, October
- Accra, November
- Maputo, December

2024

- Johannesburg, May
- Kinshasa, June
- Luanda, September
- Nairobi 2, October

## Upcoming:

- Seychelles, November

- 1. Support and boost the development and implementation of National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)** – inclusive and comprehensive, future-proof, adaptable to the demands of digital and green transformation, supporting employability, social inclusion and lifelong learning, and supported by evidence.
- 2. Support the connection and mutual trust between qualifications frameworks at the 3 levels (national-regional and continental):** through referencing, the ACQF platform of qualifications, innovations, the **RPL campaign**, and sharing of good practices. Support the establishment of the **African Network of Qualifications Frameworks**, to ensure the sustainability of the achievements of the ACQF-II project.
- 3. Create synergies and complementarities between the ACQF and the Addis and Global Recognition Conventions – with common objectives and practical actions.**
- 4. Harness the innovative power of the green and digital transformation of jobs and skills.** Joint policies and practices to develop green and digital skills: national, sectoral and specific (education and training, qualifications, innovation, academic research and links with industry). **Ensure an active role of NQFs, Regional Qualifications Frameworks and ACQFs as catalysts.**
- 5. An urgent call to action: explore, develop and implement micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability linked to National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs).**
- 6. Implement data systems and tools: interoperable databases of qualifications at all levels and sub-sectors; implementation of RPL;** Real-time data and analysis on skills demand. Learners' achievements.
- 7. Disseminate experiences and best practices through sharing platforms:** technical guidelines and documentation, qualifications standards and other achievements of interest for the success and impact of the NQF, RQF and ACQF.
- 8. Strengthen the capacities of institutions, human resources and stakeholders.**

# Luanda Forum: Recommendations



1. Green Skills: to develop recommendations towards Green NQFs, Green Curriculum (Policy, Guidelines).
2. Referencing: to prepare and start the pilot phase of referencing between RQFs and ACQF; continue the ongoing pilot phase (NQF-ACQF).
3. Lifelong learning: to seek and strengthen synergy and linkages between RPL-CATS-Microcredentials policies – enriching and strengthening the effectiveness of NQFs.
4. Sustainability of the governance model of NQFs: effective practices and requirement beyond support of international projects and partners what are
5. Reinforce the use of AI in the context of NQFs, Quality Assurance and Registration of qualifications.
6. Mutual learning between countries: continue exchanges – between new NQFs-older NQFs in Africa; NQFs in Africa-Europe.

## Day 1

- 1. Opening
- 2. RPL in ACQF context
- 3. RPL in LLL
- 4. Education & Training Theories RPL
- 5. Interaction, clarifications

## Day 2

- Recap day 1
- 6. How to do RPL: rules for practitioners
- 7. Implementation RPL: Zoom in QA, M&E
- 8. RPL process: step-by-step
- Interaction, clarifications

Eduarda

## Day 3

- 9. Recap of day 2
- RPL process. Step: information, guidance, registration, screening
- 10. RPL process: Step: Assessment
- 11. RPL process
- 12: Interaction, clarifications
- **13. Kabete National Polytechnic-Kenya RPL**
- **14. Conclusions, recommendations**



# ACQF Kabete National Polytechnic: agenda

**Facilitators and Speakers:** KNQA, TVET CDACC, NITA, Affordable Housing Programme, Base Titanium Mining Company, Akinyi Odongo Kenya Ltd, Turkana County Marginalised Lodwar VTC

## Agenda topics

- RPL Policy and Practice
- New demands and perspectives
- Linkages with CATS and micro-credentials
- Good practice from different Polytechnics
- Success factors for RPL in Kenya
- Digitalisation of RPL services, data and analytics
- Emerging impacts

**Stanley Maindi**



# ACQF **Our chairs, reporters**

## Chairs

- Alice Kande
- Sampson Dampthey Tetey
- João Dias
- Albert Sheku
- Eduarda

## Wrap-ups & conclusions

- Olfa Laaribi
- Laurent Ndaywel
- John Paul Kosiba
- Eduarda

## Recap

- Dazielle Laporte
- Earnest Simelane
- Molise Nhlapo
- Antonieta Fernandes

## Facilitators / trainers team:

**Eduarda Castel-Branco, Patrick Werquin, Stanley Maindi)**

- 15: Overview of ACQF implementation. Progress, plans. Green skills initiative. Microcredentials initiative
- 16: Use of Big Data and AI in Green skills anticipation and qualifications management
- 17: Referencing to ACQF: reports from pilot countries
- 18: Referencing: report from new countries



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QR code and **ACQF** logo with [www.acqf.africa](http://www.acqf.africa)

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- 19. ACQF QCP – Training 3
- 20. Closing session:
  - Final conclusions and recommendations
  - Distribution of participation certificates
  - Closure
- Coffee break

**Day 5**



## Topics



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Survey participants RPL Forum

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Why RPL in the ACQF?

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RPL in the ACQF Policy Document and Guidelines

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In Research of ACQF-II

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In Support to countries

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RPL – consistently addressed in all capacity development and knowledge-sharing activities

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Linkages and developments related to CATS and Micro-credentials

# **1. Survey participants RPL Forum**

**7 questions**

**60 submissions (until 28/09/2024)**

# Countries

Angola

Botswana

Cabo Verde

Senegal

RD Congo

Seychelles

Sierra Leone

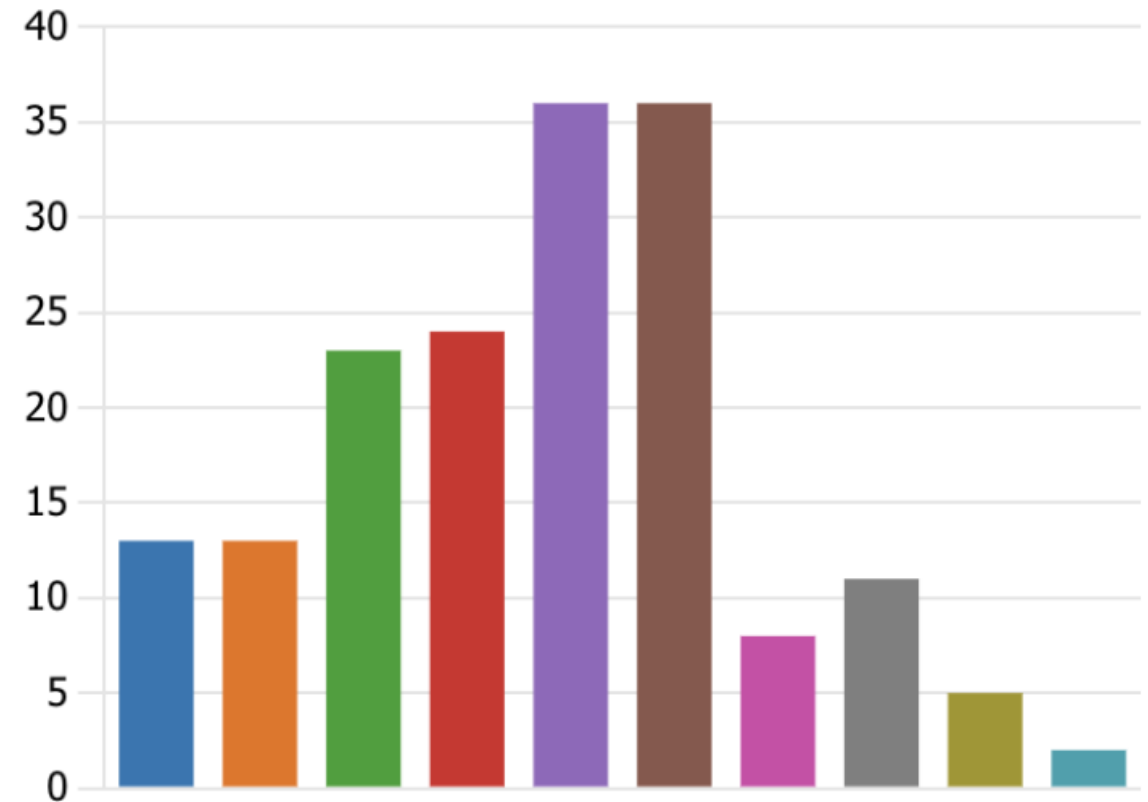
Uganda

Zambia

Kenya –  
55%

# 3. Your knowledge and experience in RPL

● I have several years of experienc...	13
● I have several years of experienc...	13
● I am a trainer of RPL for practiti...	23
● I conducted some RPL activities ...	24
● I have participated in several ca...	36
● I have read several guidance do...	36
● I have limited knowledge on RPL	8
● I have no practical experience in...	11
● I have never dealt with RPL	5
● Other	2





# 4. Main goals and benefits of RPL in your country

55 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	The importance of the RPL is to have confirmation by a competent authority that the learning outcomes, which an individual acquired in contexts of non-formal and informal learning, was measured against a relevant standard.
2	anonymous	To give dignity and opportunity for the skilled by issuing them certification that enables them to get into formal employment.
3	anonymous	The aim of recognising prior learning in Zambia is to allow individuals who have not been able to attend formal education but have managed to gain significant experience in a particular field to be given an opportunity to earn a qualification or to upgrade an existing qualification, which can be at any level of education and training. Some of the benefits of RPL in Zambia are: enhance employability; mobility; lifelong learning, social inclusion, self-esteem and avoidance of duplication of learning.
4	anonymous	The RPL as a system is part of our legislative framework. The country has great appetite for implementing RPL to facilitate skills development and recognition of skills. I believe RPL has the potential to reduce unemployment, which is a major issue in Botswana.

55 responses

5	anonymous	Recognition, certification and assessment of skills and knowledge in both the formal and informal sectors at affordable rates.
6	anonymous	To formalize by identifying and assessing and certifying previously acquired skills and competencies and allow individuals to access better employment and job opportunities and / or allow them to progress with Education.
7	anonymous	To help those who don't have skill to own certificate of these skills .
8	anonymous	It benefits people who have acquired skills while on job and were unable to continue with their education due to funding They can get a certificate to compete with others equally in the job market
9	anonymous	To Recognise and award a qualification to participant/candidate with skills pool who has not gone through formal education.
10	anonymous	To recognize other forms of training rather than the formal Training.
11	anonymous	1) For formal recognition of skills 2) For enhancing employability 3) For facilitating lifelong learning 4) For increasing Access to Education and training

# 4. Main goals and benefits of RPL in your country

42	anonymous	Recognize skills , certification so that people can aquire better paying jobs. Immigrants can also participate in nation building after their skills are recognized. To enable more women to enter into gainful employment.
43	anonymous	RPL in Seychelles was introduced to allow individuals who have not been able to attend, or have not fully benefitted from formal education but have managed to gain significant experience in a particular field to be given the opportunity to become qualified. Some benefits of RPL are: (a) Recognising and validating prior learning, experience, knowledge, skills and competencies acquired in work or life experiences, previous non-formal training and workshop environments; (b) Granting formal credit for learning regardless of where the learning was achieved; (c) Allowing individuals who have gained significant experience in a particular field to be given the opportunity to become formally qualified; (d) Encouraging lifelong learning in order to create a competent and adaptable workforce that can meet the challenges of a fast changing labour market and address skills shortages and gaps; (e) Fostering employability and thus increasingly decent jobs; (f) Improving efficiency and flexibility in education systems by allowing alternative learning pathways – workplace, non-formal, and informal learning – and fast-tracking the acquisition of qualifications;

49	anonymous	Help to certify people with skills
50	anonymous	Provide a Pathway for Practitioners without formal education acquire qualifications pertaining to their desired field of work. Regularize recognition of prior learning hence providing data pertinent to academic standards and quality.
51	anonymous	to help people to have a chance to change careers.
52	anonymous	For the participants to upgrade themselves according to their skill & knowledge.
53	anonymous	Referencing acquired knowledge to the NQF.
54	anonymous	The RPL has assisted numerous employees in obtaining higher qualifications or achieving recognized levels of qualification by acknowledging their years of acquired knowledge, skills, and work experience.
55	anonymous	To enable people who have many years of work experience but lack formal qualifications obtain one

# 5. Your practical experiences, achievements in RPL

60 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	I participated in the development of a Regional Framework Policy on RPL and also implementing some form of RPL, providing guidance etc
2	anonymous	Expertise in Recognition of Prior Learning Management Information Systems (RPL MIS)
3	anonymous	Não tenho experiências práticas praticas com RPL
4	anonymous	Actualmente, a instituição a qual pertença é a responsável pela implementação, coordenação e monitoria dos processos de RVCC no nosso país, estamos na fase de reflexão, definir e elaborar políticas para implementação dos processos.
5	anonymous	J'ai participé aux programmes de formation des formateurs de conseillers VAE dispensées par le Conservatoire national des Arts et Métiers de France (CNAM) dans le cadre du projet de mise en œuvre d'un dispositif de VAE au Sénégal. La formation s'est déroulée au CNAM de Paris (3 sessions d'une durée d'une semaine par session) et à Dakar (deux sessions d'une durée d'une semaine par session). Au cours de cette formation nous avons été formés sur les cadres législatifs de la VAE et France et dans d'autres pays, les enjeux de la

12	anonymous	It helped a lot of people since they are now aware of the program and are coming in large numbers. It is also a motivation to the country.
13	anonymous	More candidates are willing to be part of the program
14	anonymous	At Kisii National Polytechnic 1.Have established RPL office 2.Conducted RPL practitioner 1 training of trainers twice 3. Conducted publicity and awareness around Kisii, Nyamira, Homabay and neighboring areas within Kisii County 4. Established database for RPL applicants of about 300 Candidates who have filled expression of interest forms 5.Established 26 level 3-5 qualifications
15	anonymous	I participated in policy formulation in our institute. I was involved in RPL assessment in our institute that has presented the first graduands. Most of our candidates prefer RPL to other non formal training.
16	anonymous	I don't have much to report because at our institution we are just starting.
17	anonymous	My institution is in the final stages of implementation. I believe that very soon, I will be carrying out assessment of the candidates.
18	anonymous	OUR COUNTRY HAS GOOD WILL FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND SO FAR WE ARE IMPLEMENTING THE RPL POLICY
19	anonymous	Sensitization of TVET trainers on how to conduct RPL and its benefits.

# 5. Your practical experiences, achievements in RPL

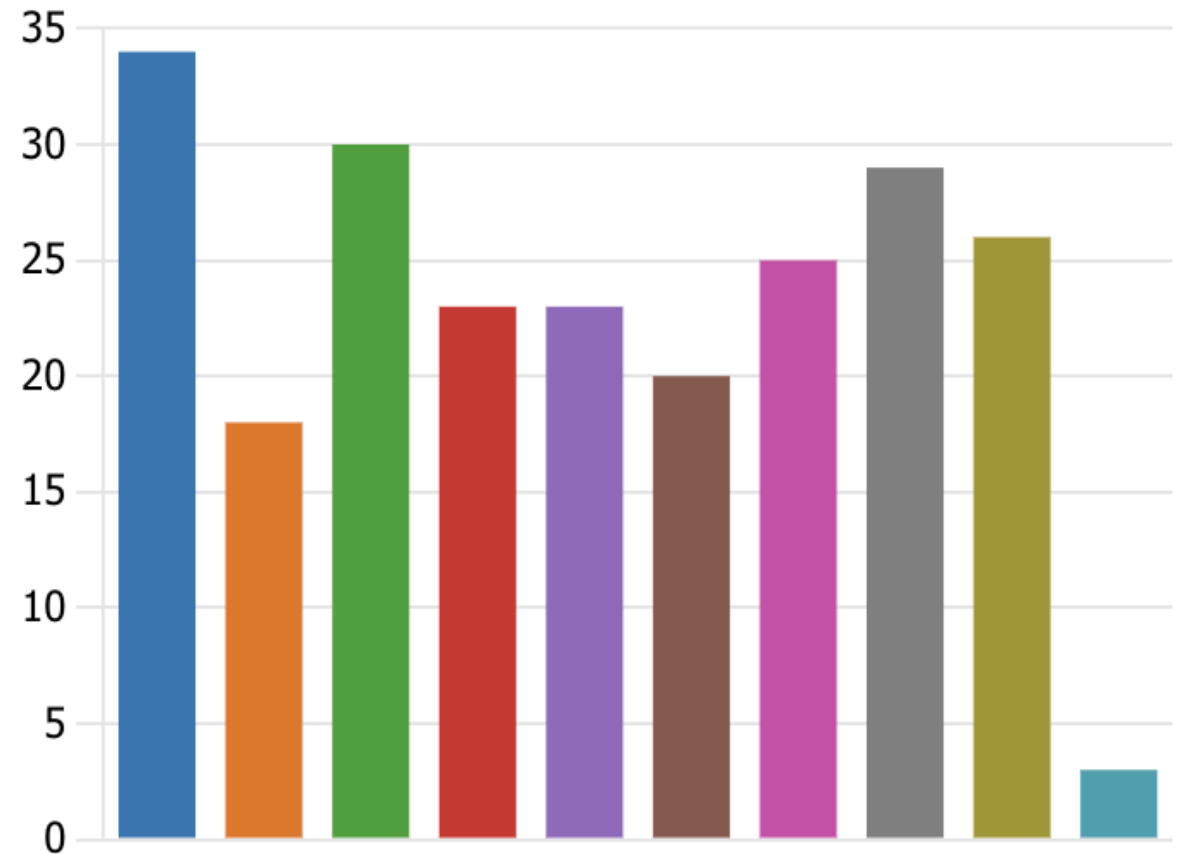
49	anonymous	Some of RPL is being don few institutions and projects who support the process of RPL. Working towards having a policy on that.
50	anonymous	Por enquanto estamos na fase de abordagem mais conceitual dos aspectos de RVCC para a seguir se proceder a implementação.
51	anonymous	Increased accessibility to formal education
52	anonymous	My institution is Higher Education and we didn't yet implement the RPL.
53	anonymous	We are eager to start and help community people
54	anonymous	Though it has not fully taken effect training has been done to equip trainers on the benefits of RPL
55	anonymous	Policy development has been led by the Seychelles Qualification Authority (SQA)in consultation and in partnership with international Jurisdictions in various countries.
56	anonymous	i do not know much about rpl
57	anonymous	We haven't started to implement the RPL program at my institution till now.
58	anonymous	Over 20 at-home child minders with no qualifications graduated from the local teacher training institution with a certificate in area of early childhood.

21	anonymous	I have been trained as a practitioner, have trained other RPL. I have practiced RPL : counselled, guided and assessed RPL candidates. I have also participated in the policy making and currently part of a task force to review the same Policy to re-align with the national RPL policy
22	anonymous	Assessment and Certification: Practical implementation of RPL in Kenya involves collaboration with institutions such as the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA). These bodies are responsible for assessing individuals' skills through practical evaluations, written tests, and interviews.
23	anonymous	Policy
24	anonymous	I recently trained RPL and our country launched RPL through KNQA so its underway to be implemented in our institution.
25	anonymous	A UC-SNQ é a entidade responsável pela coordenação, organização e funcionamento do processo RVCC Pro, e normalmente realizamos ações de formações para as entidades formadoras acreditadas para a implementação do RVCC Pro. No domínio de implementação orientamos e ajudamos as entidades na etapa de informação/orientação, reconhecimento de competências. Na primeira fase de informação e orientação, os candidatos são informados sobre o processo e como vai decorrer. A UC-SNQ fará todo seguimento do processo até a obtenção do certificado por parte do candidato.

59	anonymous	Implementing the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is becoming more common among employers, and many are considering their employees for the RPL. Furthermore, at SIAH, we are implementing the RPL under the guidance of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA). As a result, successful candidates are now eligible to graduate with a recognized qualification. SIAH has collaborated with the SQA to develop its internal RPL policy and procedures.
60	anonymous	I have researched about RPL and collaborated with colleagues to develop our institution's RPL policy. Some members of staff are trained RPL assessors and there is a coordinator who oversees the process. The quality assurance section monitors the process.

## 6. In which domains did you face challenges / difficulties in RPL activities

Technical capacity of institutions	34
Information and guidance for e...	18
Cost of RPL services for end users	30
Understanding of Equal value of...	23
Acceptance of parity of esteem ...	23
Clarity and coherence of RPL po...	20
Linkages between NQF and RPL	25
Financing, support, methodolog...	29
RPL has limited scope (not appli...	26
Other	3



# 7. Your views and expectations concerning further support of ACQF-II to RPL

5	anonymous	Soutenir l'implémentation de la VAE dans l'enseignement supérieur Soutenir le partage d'expérience dans le domaine de l'assurance qualité des dispositif de VAE Soutenir l'intégration de la VAE dans le futur Cadre national de qualification.
6	anonymous	The added value is the expansion/dissemination of knowledge and experience to more/others.
7	anonymous	RPL is a great milestone but the general public have no much information about it. The information should be decentralised.
8	anonymous	Training workshop/ capacity building for RPL practitioners/ centers and other stakeholders in Zambia
9	anonymous	In Botswana, we need technical support in improving the quality of our Draft policy, capacity Building on implementation, monitoring and Evaluation to Providers, staff of the NQF Authority, employers, as well as public education to all including. W also are in need of funding for RPL activities.

		tiques et accompagnement des pays
		for RPL
		is an eye opener for lots people who have ances and certificates to grow So what I would to extend their kindness in supporting RPL in and host communities
		ance support to quality assurance of RPL and eption towards informal, and non-formal
		It will strengthen the trainings on our institutions and make learning very important
		Capacity building on RPL implantation

36	anonymous	It will strengthen the trainings on our institutions and make learning very important
37	anonymous	Capacity building on RPL implantation

# 7. Your views and expectations concerning further support of ACQF-II to RPL

44	anonymous	Funding of RPL resources Recognition of informal sector skills Creating awareness of RPL
45	anonymous	We desire to scale up RPL across all Nigeria
46	anonymous	For the future, I expect to see the Government put more money into the national qualifications systems SQA of the country in employing more people to help in this organisation.
47	anonymous	KNQA to certify new polytechnics asQAIS
48	anonymous	More sharing of good practices of RPL from different countries. More training workshops for RPL practitioners.
49	anonymous	Technical assistance to countries for the development and implementation of RPL.
50	anonymous	1. Guias conceituais/orientadores sobre as melhores práticas na implementação de processo de RVCC 2. Implementação de processo de RVCC com base nas realidades sociais e culturais de cada país

		ion and assessor Developing guide lines and tools
		ACQF-II's support can enhance the recognition and validation of that skills and knowledge acquired through non-formal learning systems are formally acknowledged. By aligning Cabo Verde's systems with international standards, ACQF-II can help ensure that skills are recognized and valued globally, facilitating better job opportunities for individuals.
		the cost of certifying the persons with skills be lowered or if any of them are low income earners
		Moderators in Institutions should be given opportunities to manage programmes or training in other jurisdictions.

56	anonymous	bring clarity on how rpl works
57	anonymous	We will be grateful to have further assistant and support of ACQF-II to RPL / RVCC / VAE in the near future for us to be able for the implementation of the RPL at my institution level.

## **2. Why RPL in the ACQF?**



# Your views...

GUIDELINES FOR  
IMPLEMENTATION  
OF RECOGNITION  
OF PRIOR  
LEARNING IN  
KENYA

June, 2021



- What percentage of the adult labour force (approx. 18-60 years) in your country / region has professional skills and competences based on experience and non-formal and informal learning, but does not have a corresponding /appropriate qualification document?

% Very high

% High

% Low

## Many factors in favour of effective, accessible RPL



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High number of population in informal sector production activities – gained knowledge, skills, autonomy and responsibility

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Employees in formal sector enterprises without a qualification – but with many years of professional experience

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Need to enter / re-enter formal education and training – for young people, women, workers. A new opportunity for personal development

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Social-professional inclusion of labour migrants, including returning – with knowledge, skills from migration experiences

---

Need for better regulation of the labour market

---

Competitiveness of productive activities in key economic sectors

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Large investment programmes requiring employees, workers with qualifications (construction, mining, transport, tourism...)

## A time of deep and multi-dimensional change requires:

- Learning
- Upskilling
- Reskilling
- Recognition of skills
  - Certification
  - Lifelong learning
  - Lifewide learning

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/05/future-of-jobs-2023-skills>

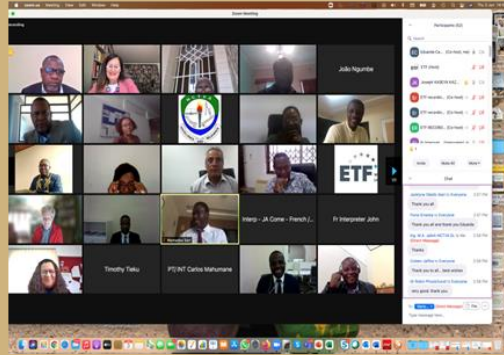
## Reskilling needs

# 44%

of workers' core skills are expected to change in the next five years



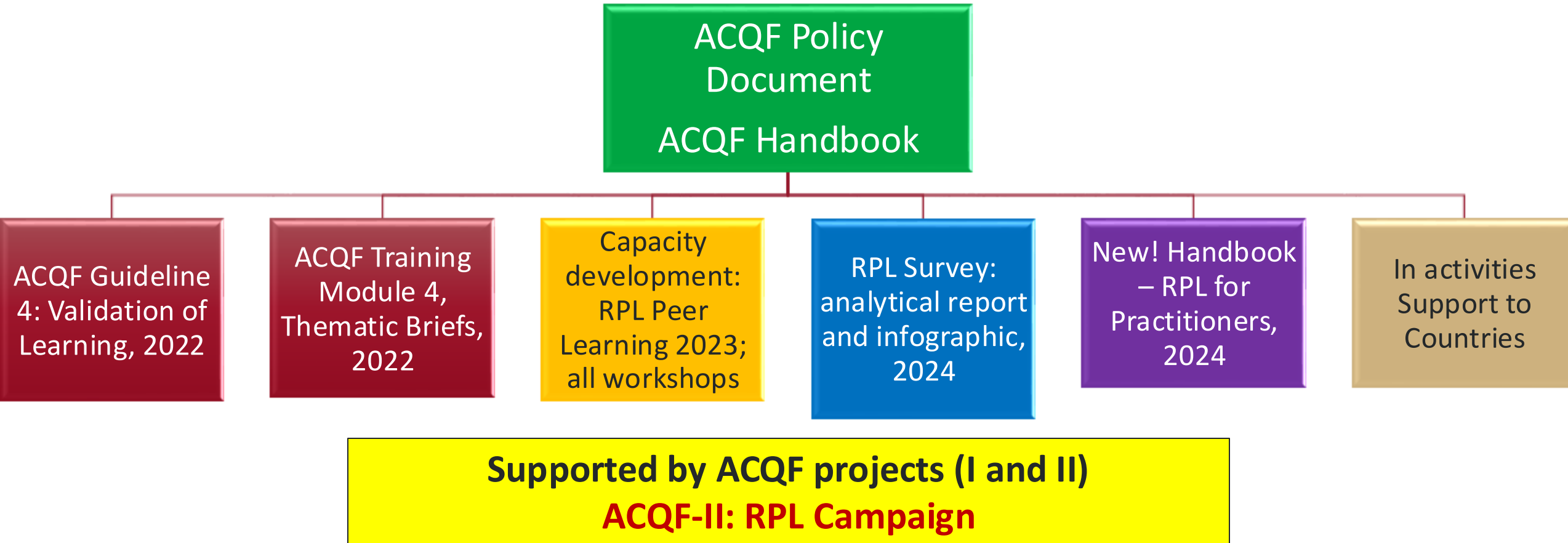
Source: World Economic Forum,  
*Future of Jobs Report 2023.*



# **3. RPL in the ACQF Policy Document and ACQF Guidelines and Handbook**

## 2. Overview – RPL in ACQF context

[ACQF Website:  
www.acqf.africa](http://www.acqf.africa)





**African Continental Qualifications Framework  
(ACQF)**

## **ACQF Policy Document**

**Submitted for African Union Member State Validation  
Exercise**

Version: 17 November 2022



**Cadre continental africain des certifications  
(ACQF)**

## **Document de politique de l'ACQF**

**Pour validation par les états membres de l'Union Africaine**

Version du 17 novembre 2022



**Quadro Continental Africano de Qualificações (ACQF)**

## **Documento Político do ACQF**

**Para validação pelos Estados-membros da União Africana**

Versão: 17 de novembro 2022

<https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-policy-document-upon-validation-by-au-member-states-en-fr-pt>

# ACQF RPL definitions: ACQF Thematic Brief 1 (2021)

- The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a **process through which formal, non-formal and informal learning is measured, mediated for recognition** across different contexts and certified against the requirements for **credit, access, inclusion or advancement** in the formal education and training system or workplace.
- The aim is to make it possible to **obtain formal recognition for knowledge gained throughout life, such as in workplaces and own reading or experiences.**
- The RPL process also entails providing support to a candidate to ensure that knowledge is discovered and displayed in terms of a **relevant qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).**



# RPL: in the objectives and principles of ACQF

- The objectives of the ACQF are:

- To support comparability, quality and transparency of qualifications and foster lifelong learning.
- **To facilitate validation of learning from different contexts, contribute to recognition of diplomas and certificates and support mobility (of learners, workers, services);**
- To work in cooperation and complementarity with national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) and systems and regional qualifications frameworks (RQFs), support NQF development, strengthen human and technical capabilities, and the creation of a common African education and qualifications space; and
- To promote cooperation, trust, and mutual understanding, by means of referencing with qualifications frameworks in Africa and worldwide.

- The ACQF is driven by the following principles:

- ***Inclusiveness: encompass all levels and types of qualifications, all forms and stages of learning and modalities of certification;***
- ***Innovation: support new developments related to green, digital, and other emerging skills, new roles and occupations, new technologies and societal demands, and digital and micro-credentials for learning; and***
- ***Openness: to participation of all stakeholders and AU member states, to learn from experiences and good practice from Africa and other regions and continents.***

## Scope

- The ACQF is a comprehensive and inclusive meta-referencing qualifications framework, designed to support a holistic and systemic vision of learning, qualifications, and credentials. **The ACQF is oriented to lifelong learning and supports parity of esteem of learning outcomes acquired in formal, non-formal and informal contexts**, and all levels of education and training.

## Learning outcomes orientation

- The ACQF levels and learning outcomes-based descriptors contribute to improving transparency and comparability of qualifications of different national systems. ACQF levels support a general application of learning outcomes in different sectors and contexts of education and training systems.

## Recognition of prior learning

- **The learning-outcomes orientation contributes to enhancing the transparency and credibility of recognition of prior learning (RPL) and validation of learning outcomes from experience, for purposes of further study, employment, and acquisition of a full or part qualification. The ACQF supports quality and accessible RPL, as a key component of lifelong learning policies and a mechanism for equity and social inclusion.**



Level	Domains of learning		
	Knowledge	Skills	Autonomy and responsibility
<b>Definition of the domains of learning</b>	<i>In the context of ACQF "Knowledge" includes various kinds of knowledge such as facts, principles, theories, concepts, and areas</i>	<i>In the context of ACQF "Skills" refer to the ability to use knowledge to respond to information and address problems. Skills include communication, cognitive, digital, green, innovation, practical and</i>	<i>In the context of ACQF "Autonomy and responsibility" refers to the context and extent of the application of autonomy and responsibility</i>
Level 1: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	simple, factual and operational knowledge in some areas	basic communication, cognitive and practical skills required to follow instructions, and use simple, repetitive solutions to address straightforward problems	highly structured, repetitive contexts under close supervision and guidance taking minimal responsibility for self
Level 2: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	operational knowledge in some areas	basic communication, cognitive and practical skills required to use concrete information, ideas and known solutions to address straightforward problems	structured contexts under limited supervision and guidance taking limited responsibility for self and group outcomes
Level 3: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	factual and operational knowledge incorporating some theoretical aspects in some areas	a range of communication, cognitive, practical and technical skills required to interpret and communicate ideas and detailed information and select and use known solutions to address familiar problems	predictable contexts under routine supervision and guidance, with initiative for self-responsibility and some responsibility for group outcomes
Level 4: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	mainly factual, operational or technical knowledge incorporating theoretical aspects in one or more areas	well-developed technical skills required to analyse information and new ideas, make informed judgements, communicate outcomes and apply varied solutions to varied (familiar and unfamiliar) problems	varied (predictable and unpredictable) contexts with adaptability and initiative for self-direction under general guidance, taking full responsibility for self, some planning and responsibility for group outcomes and initiative for responsibility for others
Level 5: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	mainly technical or theoretical knowledge with substantial depth in a discipline/ area	a range of well-developed technical skills, with some specialisation, required to analyse information and new ideas, construct and communicate a coherent argument, and apply a range of solutions, often in combination, to address unfamiliar problems	unpredictable contexts with full autonomy and full responsibility for self and group outcomes, and some responsibility for others
Level 6: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	highly technical or theoretical knowledge, with specialisation in a discipline/ area	highly technical and specialised skills required to collate, analyse, synthesise and communicate a range of information and new ideas, and formulate or adapt different solutions to address complex and sometimes abstract problems	highly variable contexts with well-developed autonomy and responsibility for self and group outcomes and responsibility for resources and processes
Level 7: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	advanced analytical and/ or specialised knowledge of a discipline/ area	advanced, specialised skills required to demonstrate advanced analysis and initiative for new insights and ideas in research and/ or innovation, and formulate advanced solutions to address complex and abstract problems	complex and variable contexts with advanced autonomy and responsibility
Level 8: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	highly advanced, complex knowledge of a discipline/ area	highly advanced, complex skills required to demonstrate highly advanced analysis, communicate new insights and ideas in research and/ or innovation, and formulate highly advanced solutions to address highly complex and abstract problems	highly complex contexts with some specialisation demonstrating highly advanced autonomy and responsibility
Level 9: the learning outcomes related to formal, non-formal and informal learning at this level include:	mastery of a complex body of knowledge at the forefront of a discipline/ area	skills mastery required to demonstrate originality and new insights in research and/ or innovation and formulate and test theories to show	highly specialised contexts demonstrating mastery in autonomy and responsibility

# RPL in the 7 areas of activity of ACQF



Referencing NQF to ACQF



**RPL Campaign**



Qualifications and Credentials Platform / database (QCP)



Qualifications and credentials: common profiles between countries



Capacity development, peer learning, training



Communication, networking, advocacy



Analysis; Monitoring and evaluation



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New Handbook on RPL for Practitioners

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Training programme for RPL Practitioners: Oct 2024, Nairobi

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RPL Survey and analysis

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RPL National Policies

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RPL in all capacity development activities – workshops

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Next: Call for Good Practices

# New! Handbook – RPL for Practitioners

<https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/recognition-of-prior-learning-rpl-handbook-for-rpl-practitioners>



## RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) HANDBOOK FOR RPL PRACTITIONERS



# 4. RPL in ACQF Research

# ACQF Surveys 2024

- NQF
- RPL
- Micro-credentials
  
- 28 countries submitted full responses

<https://acqf.africa/resources/surveys-acqf-ii-nqf-rpl-micro-credentials>

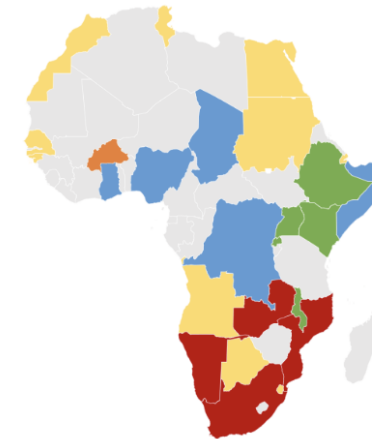
## RPL Survey Report

### ► Main objectives of the Recognition of Prior Learning survey (RPL)

The project African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF-II), implemented in partnership with the European Training Foundation (ETF) and the African Union (AU) continues the regular mapping of qualifications frameworks and related policies across the continent. The present report **summarises the state-of-play and main features of current RPL systems, and countries' needs related to RPL.**

### ► Key findings of the survey

#### ▷ Stage of development



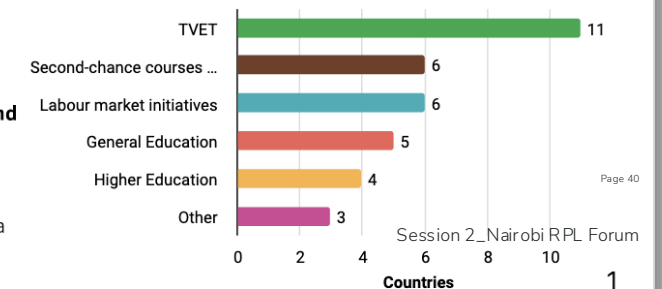
- The **majority of the responding countries do not have an RPL system developed** (16 countries). These are either in a phase of development or consultation (10 countries), in early thinking (1) or development has not started at all yet (5).
- Around **40% responded that their RPL policy is at least in place** (in either a specific learning and training sector or nationally). Half responded that the RPL policy is established but not yet functioning (6), while the other half reported that the RPL process is operational (6).

#### ▷ Preparatory work

Among countries which at least have begun developing an RPL, the **most popular preparatory works were stakeholder consultations** (17 out of 22) and a **review of best practices** (15). More than half of the countries have also concluded needs assessments and pilot programmes

#### ▷ RPL coverage of education and training sectors

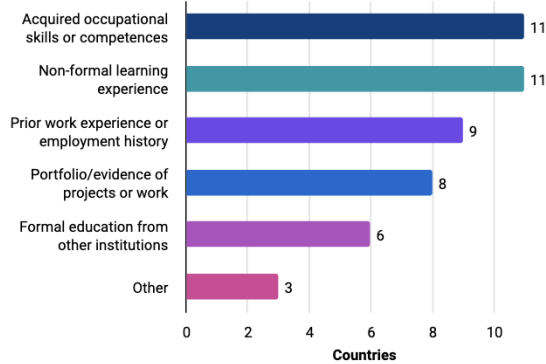
- Among the developed RPL systems, **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is an evident priority sector** in Africa. All 11 responding countries cover this sector.
- South Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Zambia have currently the most comprehensive RPL policies.



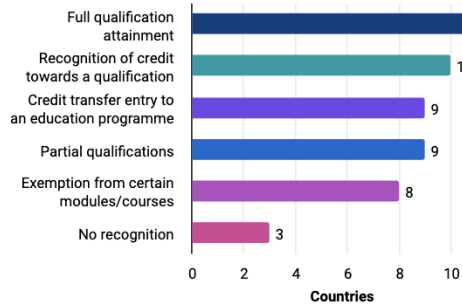


## Previous experience

- All of the responding countries accept acquired occupational skills or competences, as well as non-formal learning experiences during RPL assessments.
- Other types of learning outcomes are less universally accepted other countries, such as prior work experience, evidence of previous works.
- Kenya, Seychelles, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia accept the widest range for RPL assessment.



## Outcomes of RPL processes

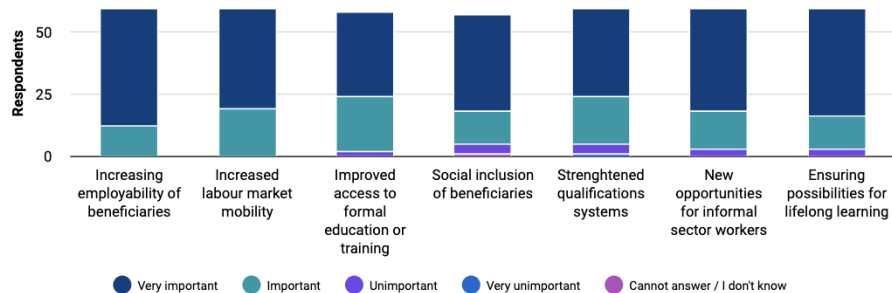


There is much less variation across countries in terms of the possible outcomes of RPL. The overwhelming majority provide various kinds of outcomes, ranging from full qualification attainment to exemptions from certain courses or study modules, recognition of credits etc.

One country also indicated that promotion in the workplace may also granted via RPL.

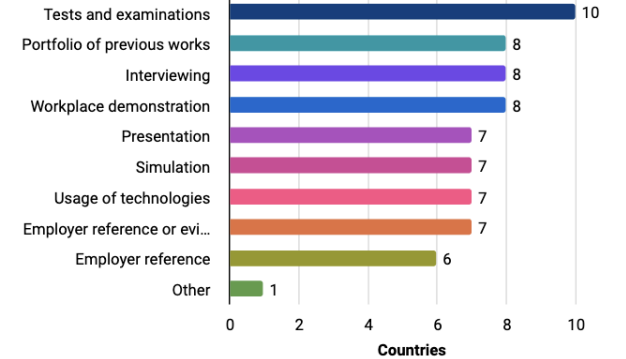
## Main priorities for RPL policies

Increasing the employability of the beneficiaries has been the most selected priority (47 respondents or 79.7%). The more systemic benefits that RPL policies, such as improved access to formal education and strengthened qualifications systems were ranked somewhat less important. Nevertheless, all the listed aspects were deemed to be very important by the majority of respondents, signalling that RPL is expected to have a great impact and should tackle many different areas.

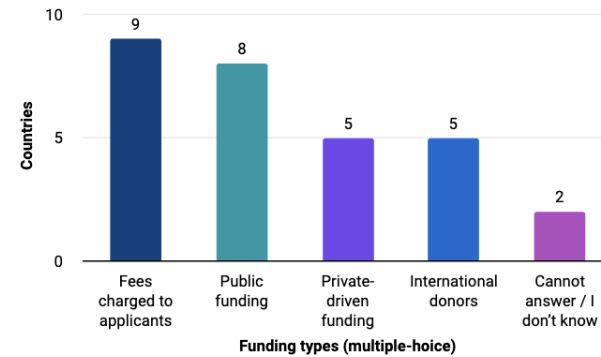


## Assessment tools

- A wide range of RPL assessment tools were reported to be used during the validation process. Overall, fact-based or practice-oriented methods are more frequently used assessment tools, while presentations and simulations are less used.
- Tests and examinations (10 countries), portfolio of previous works (8), workplace demonstrations (8) and interviewing (8) were the most typical assessment tools for RPL.



## Financing arrangements



- Financing arrangements are another crucial dimension when it comes to RPL, as many candidates may not be able to afford to pay for the validation by themselves. Yet, institutions often do not have sufficient financial resources to be able to sustain the policy.
- Most countries operate with a mixed-funding model, whereby most often a combination of fees charged to the applicant and public funding is applied. In a smaller group of countries private-funding is more dominant.

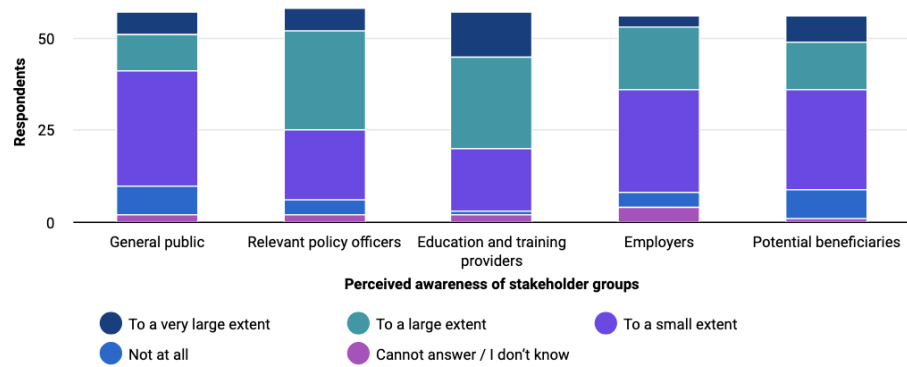
## Main beneficiaries

The survey has compared who the current main beneficiary groups are in the case of countries with a developed RPL vis-a-vis who the main beneficiaries should be, in the case of countries without an RPL.

- The current main beneficiary groups are low-qualified people (15 respondents have selected this group), workers in specific sectors or professions (10), and adult learners (10). A second group, less likely to be beneficiaries, are early school leavers (8), young people (7) and unemployed or economically inactive people (6).
- According to the result, low-qualified people (32 respondents selected this option) should be the main beneficiary group, which is in line with those respondents where an RPL is at least being implemented. Nonetheless, respondents, where an RPL is not yet implemented, would prefer to target migrants or refugees more (24 respondents selected the option) and unemployed or economically inactive people (24) which scored lower on the ranking of current main beneficiaries.

# RPL Survey

## RPL awareness



- Based on the perception of the respondents, **none of the stakeholder groups are sufficiently knowledgeable of the possibilities of RPL**. This observation is further corroborated by respondents' qualitative feedback on the **significance of awareness-raising**. Only two of the five groups were reported to be aware at least to a large extent or very large extent of the possibilities of RPL.
- Education and training providers were rated as having the highest overall awareness, if ranked according to those who are aware of the various possibilities of RPL to a large extent (37 out of 57). Policy officers, working on a relevant area, were evaluated as having similarly high levels of awareness as education and training providers do.

## Other stakeholder views

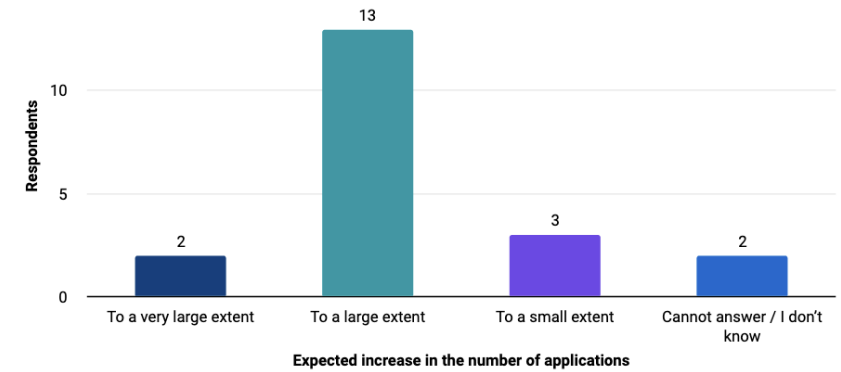
### Challenges

- Securing **stable and sufficient funding** was one of the most mentioned challenges by the respondents
- Key stakeholder groups, such as end beneficiaries are **not aware of the benefits of the RPL process**, nor are other key groups.
- Stakeholder involvement**, seen as a crucial part of RPL design, carries multiple challenges with it. Current low involvement, reaching a consensus between education and employment sectors, and developing a common vocabulary were seen as some of the main challenges here.
- Some noted a **lack of trust regarding certifications received through RPL**. Thus, establishing clear standards, a reliable evaluation system and quality assurance processes is crucial for success.
- Multiple facets of accessibility** were pointed out, such as accessibility across various segments of society, local and regional contexts, as well as languages. Striking a balance between complexity and accessibility therefore is crucial.
- Inter-ministerial and -departmental cooperation**, ownership of the program and coordination between various governmental bodies were seen as a hindering factor.
- Competent human capital**, know-how, and challenges with the training of RPL assessors and facilitators were in some cases noted as hindering factors.
- Some noted a need to secure a commitment from the government. Other respondents mentioned that training institutions might be resistant to RPL, as there is a fear of losing hold of the sector.

### Lessons learnt

- The need for **simplicity and clarity of the RPL assessment process** was mentioned as a lesson by more respondents, which can facilitate wider adoption and an easier recognition process. Granted, streamlining the process should not mean a lack of adaptation to various contexts.
- Appropriate **quality assurance mechanisms** should be put in place **from the beginning** to ensure credibility.
- Subsidies for beneficiaries** are an important tool for ensuring accessibility, as confirmed by multiple respondents.
- Early involvement of stakeholders and engagement of the labour market** was a key aspect for many, to ensure the relevance and viability of RPL.

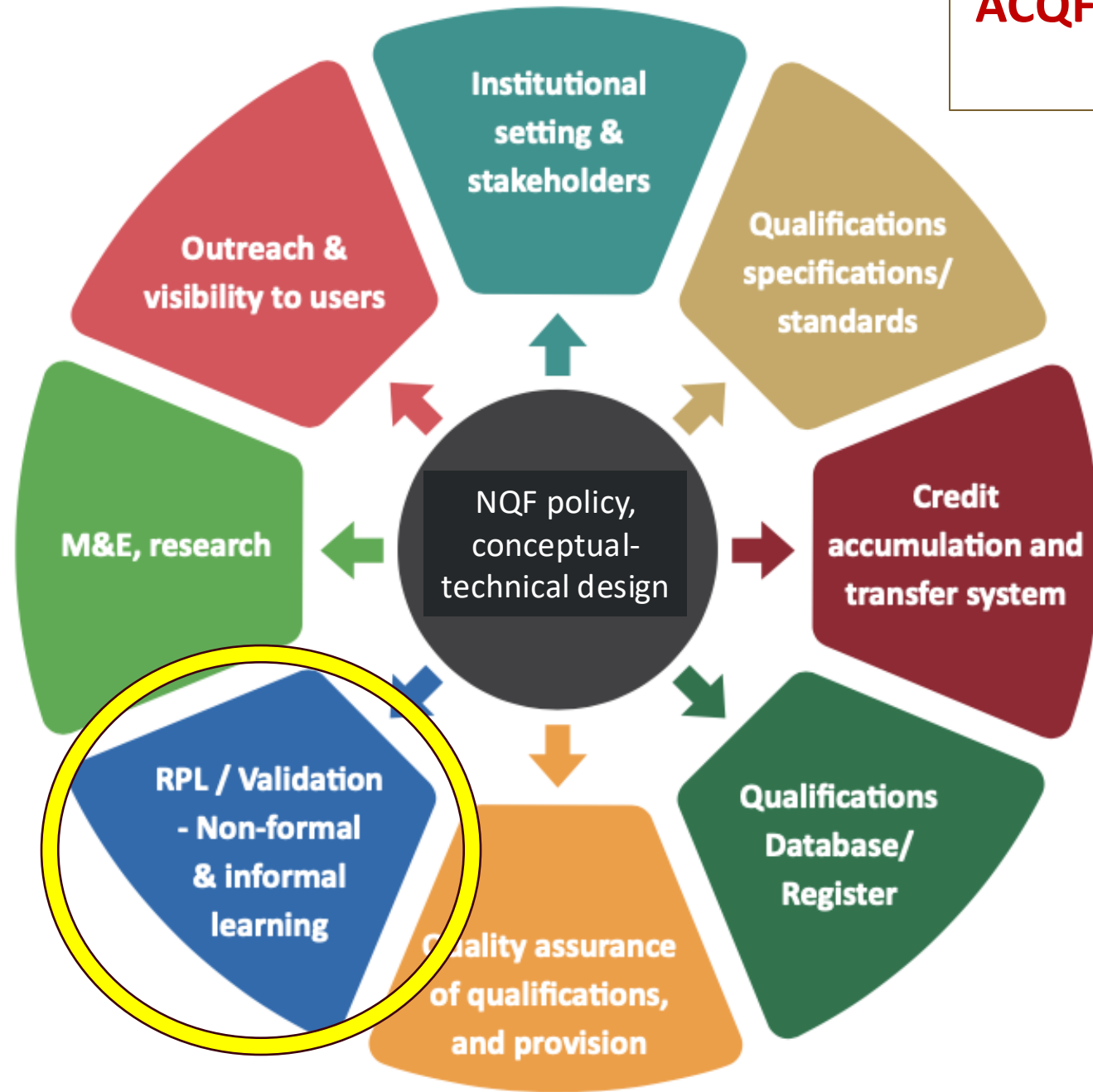
## Future expectations and monitoring



- The **future prospects of RPL are seen very positively**. The overwhelming majority (15 respondents) think that yearly applications will rise at least to a large extent, while only a small portion (3) expect applications to rise to a small extent. No respondents said that applications will not rise.

# **5. RPL in ACQF activities of support to countries**

**ACQF approach on NQF: a systemic view or an eco-system**

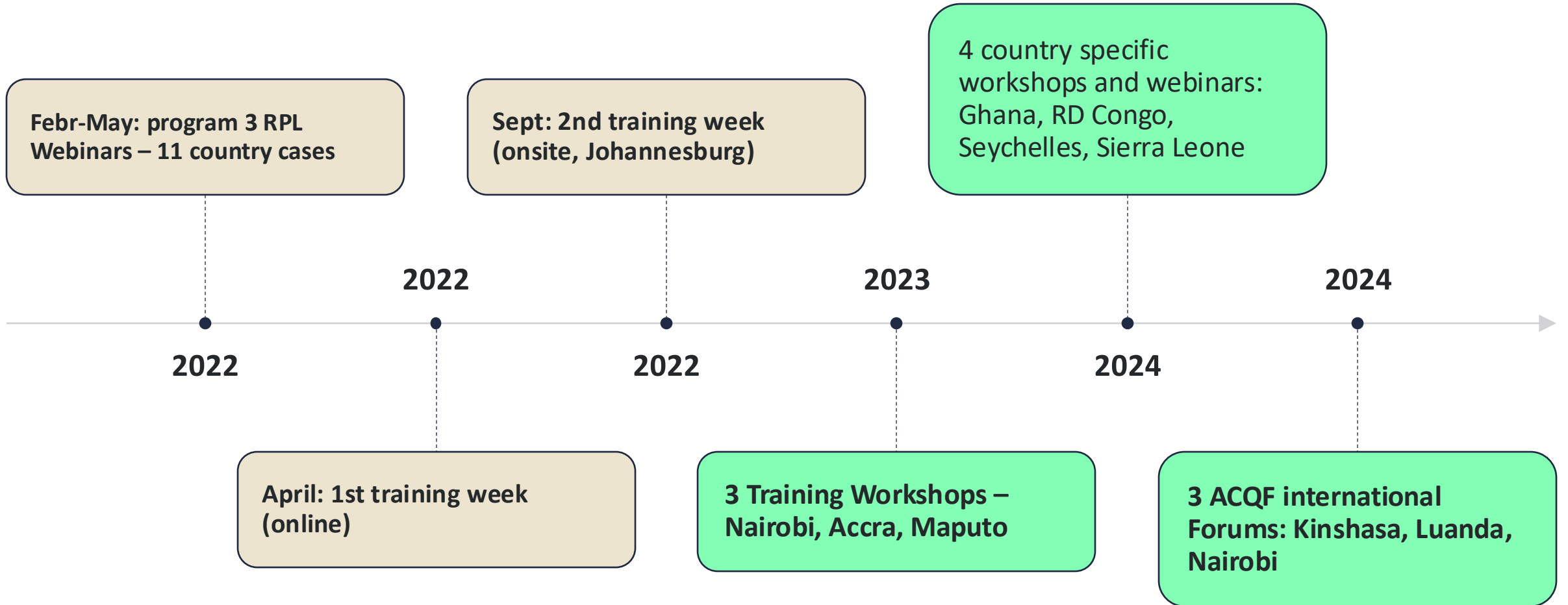


- NQFs do not work in isolation
- NQF must adapt to change and meet new demands from the transformation of work, technology, learning, climate, demography
- NQFs and RQFs belong to all stakeholders

Country	Scope (ongoing, planned)	RPL specific (ongoing, planned)
Angola	NQF implementation, NQF Register, CATS, RPL; QCP	RPL Orientation note delivered;
RD Congo	NQF concept; NQF development planning; NQF Authority – inputs on organisation; QCP	RPL as a component tbd
Eswatini	RPL Policy; QCP	RPL Policy Document completed; RPL Pilot design
Ghana	Eco-system 3 Policies: Compreh. GhNQF + RPL + CATS: developed; advanced stakeholder consultation; QCP	RPL Policy document
Guiné-Bissau	NQF Concept; NQF Policy document approved. QCP	RPL as a component – Policy tbd
Mozambique	NQF M&E; NQF capacity development; QCP	RPL in the M&E Results Framework
Senegal	NQF Concept Document - in consultation. QCP	RPL as a component
Sierra Leone	NQF Cap dev; RPL, CATS Policy; QCP	RPL Policy – discussion to support development
Seychelles	SNCATS Policy and Guidelines – completed; Micro-credentials; QCP	RPL and Micro-credentials – strong presence in the SNCATS
Somalia	Eco-system: NQF-RPL-CATS – to start development	RPL – a key component - tbd
Zambia	NQF review – in planning	RPL as a component
Zimbabwe	QCP	RPL as a component

# **5. RPL – consistently addressed in all capacity development and knowledge-sharing activities**

## RPL in all capacity development activities



# **6. Some developments in ACQF related to linkages between NQF-RPL-CATS-Micro-credentials**



# NQF-RPL-CATS-Microcredentials

Policy complementarity and coherence: in terms of concepts, goals, principles – for: holistic scope, effectiveness for end-users / target groups, impact in LLL and employment policies

Interdependence: NQF needs RPL; RPL needs NQF

Learning outcomes approach: a key common building block

Units of competence – modular training: can facilitate application and access to CATS and RPL

QCP: information-sharing on qualifications and micro-credentials (country and connected continental)

Quality assurance and relevance (labour market, society): the common link towards trust, credibility and recognition

Learner-centered emphasis: assuring empowerment and buy-in.

**Thank you!**  
**Merci!**  
**Obrigada!**  
**Asante sana!**

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