# ACQF-II
# RPL Survey Report

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## List of abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ACQF | African Continental Qualifications Framework |
| CATS | Credit Accumulation and Transfer System |
| MC | Micro-credentials |
| NQF | National Qualifications Framework |
| REC | Regional Economic Community |
| RPL | Recognition of Prior Learning |
| RQF | Regional Qualifications Framework |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |

# 1 Background and methodology

## 1.1 Background and objective of the survey

The African Continental Qualifications Framework-II supports development of National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) and related policies in African countries, working in close cooperation and coordination with the relevant national authorities and with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

This report presents the findings of the 2023 ACQF-II Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Survey.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (or Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience (VAE), Reconhecimento Validação e Certificação de Competências (RVCC), Reconhecimento de Competências Adquiridas (RCA), as also used in the African context) is the process for recognising learning that has come from previous non-formal, informal or even formal learning contexts. As such, RPL is a crucial tool to make non-formal and informal learning more visible. It is focused on learning outcomes, not on how skills and competences were acquired and as such is capable of addressing specific issues and needs with more flexibility and efficiency (International Labour Office, 2018). Some of these issues and needs are summarised by the 14th ACQF Thematic Brief (Eduarda Castel-Branco and ACQF 2022):

- Due to various socio-economic conditions, there is a significant number of early school leavers in Africa, who could benefit highly from validation of prior learning and from the pathways to return to learning that are provided by RPL,
- Labour migrants, who bring back various experiences, skills, competences to their home countries, which may subsequently be certified by RPL,
- Informal sector workers who acquire a range of practical skills and whose competences may be recognised and thus facilitating a movement toward the formal sector,
- Workers, job seekers, young women/ adults returning to work who may benefit from validating their already acquired skills and competences or facilitating access to further education and training
- Volunteers and youth activists who acquire soft skills that may be of high value in civil society and social spheres that can be made visible through RPL.

The aim of the survey was to collect data on the status quo of RPL policies and practices to assist the future efforts of ACQF in various activities related to RPL.[1] In more detail, the aim of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) survey is to gather data and insights regarding the effectiveness, accessibility, and impact of RPL policies and practices in Africa. This survey seeks to understand the extent to which individuals benefit from RPL processes in terms of educational and career advancement, as well as the overall alignment of RPL with national or regional goals. Additionally, it strives to identify areas for improvement and inform policy decisions, enhancing the quality of RPL practices, and contributing to the continuous improvement of education and training systems.

## 1.2 Data collection, analysis and methodology

**Dissemination and data collection**

The survey was distributed online, via an email campaign. The questionnaire form was open between October 23 – November 21, two targeted respondents submitted answers on December 7 and 14 respectively. The survey was opened for the receipt of additional responses between 5-12 of January, for securing additional responses.

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1 For an overview of some activities already concluded please see: ACQF supports knowledge-sharing on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) — ACQF

The survey was disseminated together with the Micro-credentials survey, in one questionnaire. This choice helped ease the workload of respondents, as both surveys were distributed to large similar target groups in the same time frame. Furthermore, using one dissemination link had the potential for a higher multiplier effect, as targeted respondents were requested to disseminate the survey further.

The survey was distributed in three languages, English, French and Portuguese, to key stakeholders among AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities. The contact database was provided by the ACQF-II Content Coordinator. The survey's design, dissemination, data collection, cleaning and analysis was concluded by PPMI, with the support of the ACQF-II Content Coordinator and the ACQF-II experts.

Together with the MC questionnaire, the survey had 76 questions. Out of the 76, 7 questions were 'common', surveying general aspects, such as the residence and organisation of respondents. The RPL section of the questionnaire contained 28 questions and included various branching and display conditions. Most questions were closed, single and multiple choice or involved importance ratings. Furthermore, the survey included several open-ended questions and, in multiple cases, a text box option for requesting further detailed information or for cases when the respondent intended to give an answer outside of the predetermined list of options.

**Methodological considerations**

In total, the Micro-credentials and Recognition of Prior Learning survey received 59 complete responses. Complete responses are considered those that have answered all obligatory questions and reached the end of the survey – thus, non-mandatory questions may not have been answered by all 59 respondents.

The total number of complete responses came from 28 countries. Subsequently, some countries received multiple responses. Initial analysis made clear that in certain cases, responses are conflicting, even if these are from the same country and organisation. Thus, the survey results were validated by the ACQF-II experts in case of the more factual questions. In such cases, we also present country-by-country results, alongside the original results. In the case of more subjective questions, that survey perceptions or attitudes, results are presented as is.

The report primarily presents results by frequencies and absolute values, instead of percentages. This choice is motivated by the number pf responses, which does not exceed the one-hundred limit, generally considered the lowest threshold for presenting non-distorted results in percentages.

In the case of country-by-country tables, results were recoded in cases where diverging answers were registered from respondents from the same organisation or country. Key questions were validated by a group of experts to reconcile diverging responses from respondents within the same country or the same organisation. In the case of multiple-choice questions, the country-by-country tables include the occurrence of each answer option that was selected at least once.

The data collected during the survey exercise was examined using descriptive analysis, cross-tabulation analysis and qualitative content analysis.

The RPL portion of the questionnaire was structured in the following sections:

- The current state of RPL policies,
- RPL processes, rationale and main outcomes,
- Operation and monitoring of RPL,
- Outcomes and impact of RPL,
- Needs, lessons and best practices.

## 1.3 Considerations on the incidence of diverging responses

A number of questions of the survey have shown that respondents from the same country or even the same organisation tend to have divergent or contradicting views on specific matters. This did not only include questions surveying attitudes and expectations, but also more factual ones. Most notably, this was observed in certain cases regarding the RPL stage of development or in the case of more technical questions such as the various preparatory works done for the RPL design or the assessment tools used. These diverging answers signal that not all respondents are fully aware of current developments, or, that answers may not be evident because of the complexities the current state on the field. Such an example for the latter is when respondents were asked about the responsible authorities for the overall coordination and development of RPL, which sometimes received diverging answers.

# 2 Analysis of respondents

## 2.1 Geography

The survey has received responses from 28 countries. Most were recorded from Zambia (7), Burkina Faso (4), Eswatini (4), Guinea-Bissau (4), Mozambique (4) and Seychelles (4). Angola, Kenya, Morocco, Tunisia all received 3-3 responses, South Africa and Uganda 2 responses, while all other countries have received 1 response. The table below presents the respondent frequencies across the countries.

**Table 1. Respondents across countries**

| Country | Respondent frequency |
|---|---|
| Zambia | 7 |
| Burkina Faso | 4 |
| Eswatini | 4 |
| Guinea-Bissau | 4 |
| Mozambique | 4 |
| Seychelles | 4 |
| Angola | 3 |
| Kenya | 3 |
| Morocco | 3 |
| Tunisia | 3 |
| South Africa | 2 |
| Uganda | 2 |
| Botswana | 1 |
| Cabo Verde | 1 |
| Chad | 1 |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | 1 |
| Djibouti | 1 |
| Egypt | 1 |
| Ethiopia | 1 |
| Ghana | 1 |
| Malawi | 1 |
| Mauritius | 1 |
| Namibia | 1 |
| Nigeria | 1 |
| Rwanda | 1 |
| Senegal | 1 |
| Somalia | 1 |
| Sudan | 1 |

**Figure 1. Geographic distribution of respondents**



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■ 1  ■ 2  ■ 3  ■ 4  ■ 7  ■ No data

## 2.2   Organisational background

Two types of organisations, both national institutions, make up the better part, more than half of the survey. Most respondents are affiliated with national institutions responsible for NQFs, with 17 responses (a bit less than a third of all responses) and with national government institutions (15 responses)

**Table 2. Frequency of respondent organisations**

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| National institution responsible for the national qualifications framework | 28.80% | 17 |
| National government institution (e.g. ministry) | 25.40% | 15 |
| Quality assurance agency | 10.20% | 6 |
| Public education and training provider (e.g. university, school) | 10.20% | 6 |
| Regional economic community or organisation | 6.80% | 4 |
| Private education and training provider | 5.10% | 3 |
| Employer organisation (e.g. professional associations, chamber of commerce etc.) | 3.40% | 2 |
| International development agency | 3.40% | 2 |
| Other | 3.40% | 2 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Career guidance body | 1.70% | 1 |
| Company | 1.70% | 1 |
| Total | | 59 |

# 3  Survey results

## 3.1  Current state of RPL policies

### 3.1.1  Stage of development

The survey differentiated between 5 stages of RPL development:

- Development not started
- Early thinking
- In development or consultation
- In place (fully developed, approved as a legal act, started implementation)
- Operational

Survey branching relied mostly on the self-reported stages of RPL development, in order to be able to extract the most useful information from each respondent. Below, we present the RPL development levels across countries.

As the map below shows, the majority of the responding countries do not have an RPL system developed (16 countries). Most countries in this group are either in a phase of development or consultation (10 countries), in early thinking (1) or development has not started at all yet (5). A smaller part of the responding countries, around 40%, responded that their RPL policy is at least in place (in either a specific learning and training sector or nationally). Half of these groups responded that the RPL policy is established but not yet functioning (6), while the other half reported that the RPL process is operations (6).

Therefore, the picture shows that RPL in Africa is generally not very well-developed, aside from a few countries. However, most of the responding states have indicated that at least preparatory steps have been taken, which signals that many more developments are to be expected on RPL.

**Table 3. Map of countries according to the RPL stage of development**
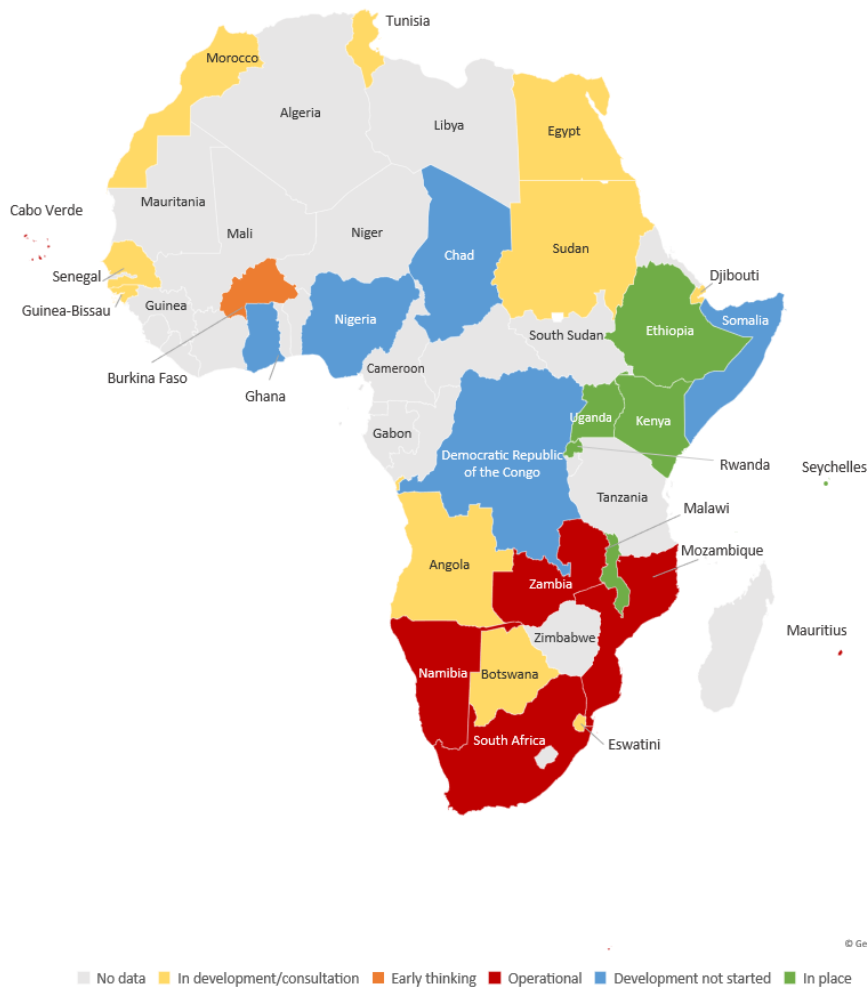


The table below presents the stage of development across the surveyed countries.

**Table 4. RPL stages of development across countries[2]**

| | Stage of RPL development |
|---|---|
| Angola | In development/consultation |
| Botswana | In development/consultation |
| Burkina Faso | Early thinking |
| Cabo Verde | Operational |
| Chad | Development not started |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | Development not started |
| Djibouti | In development/consultation |
| Egypt | In development/consultation |
| Eswatini | In development/consultation |
| Ethiopia | In place (fully developed, approved as a legal act, started implementation) |

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[2] Responses were recoded in case of Burkina FAaso

| | |
|---|---|
| Ghana | Development not started |
| Guinea-Bissau | In development/consultation |
| Kenya | In place (fully developed, approved as a legal act, started implementation) |
| Malawi | In place (fully developed, approved as a legal act, started implementation) |
| Mauritius | Operational |
| Morocco | In development/consultation |
| Mozambique | Operational |
| Namibia | Operational |
| Nigeria | Development not started |
| Rwanda | In place (fully developed, approved as a legal act, started implementation) |
| Senegal | In development/consultation |
| Seychelles | In place (fully developed, approved as a legal act, started implementation) |
| Somalia | Development not started |
| South Africa | Operational |
| Sudan | In development/consultation |
| Tunisia | In development/consultation |
| Uganda | In place (fully developed, approved as a legal act, started implementation) |
| Zambia | Operational |

### 3.1.2 Preparatory work

The formulation of a strategic framework for RPL requires the involvement of various kinds of stakeholders with different responsibilities and functions for RPL. These groups may include: individuals and users, civic society, volunteering and youth organisations, the business sector, education and training institutions, regional and local stakeholders, as well as national- and continental-level stakeholders (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2023). The inclusion of these groups and especially of the informal sector (International Labour Office, 2018) will depend on the various institutional set-ups and is key to guarantee that RPL matches the needs of the labour market. To this end, the various kinds of preparatory works are crucial to taking the right "first steps".

The most widely performed preparatory work are stakeholder consultations and review of best practices which are employed by more than half of the survey respondents.

If RPL is in development, early thinking or development did not start yet, stakeholders' consultations have been reported to be concluded by the majority of respondents (38 or 79.2% of the respondents), as well as a review of best practices (29, 60.4%). To a somewhat lesser extent, pilot programmes (20 or 41.7%) and needs assessments (20) have been conducted as well.

**Figure 2. Preparatory work implemented towards the elaboration of a strategy or policy for RPL (multiple choice, by respondents)**
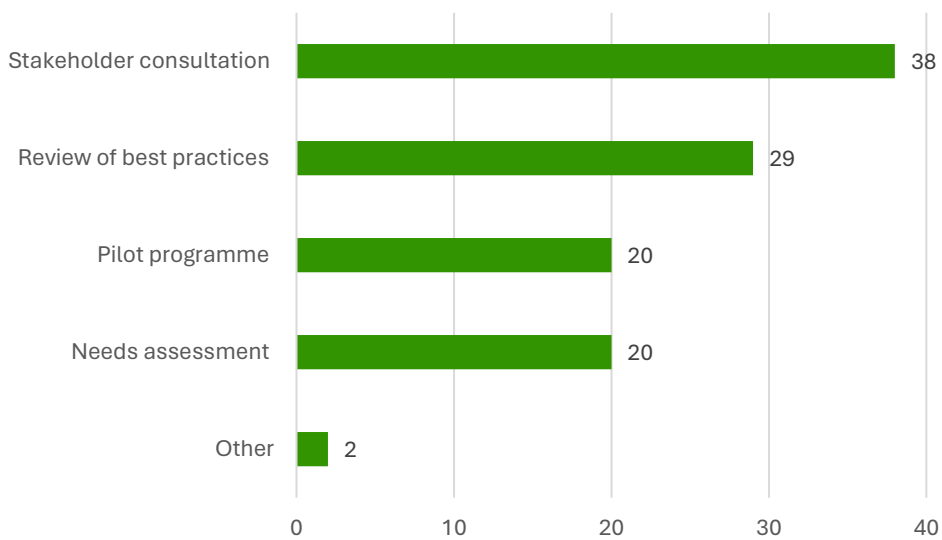


While stakeholder consultations and the review of best practices are the most frequently concluded preparatory steps, the picture varies considerably across the countries. While the kinds of preparatory tests are not necessarily indicative of the RPL design itself, Kenya, Morocco, Tunisia, Rwanda and the Seychelles stand out as countries which have done a wide variety of preparatory steps. In turn, certain countries which are also at the beginning of designing an RPL process based on the question presented above, have done fewer kinds of consultation activities.

**Table 5.Preparatory work implemented towards the elaboration of a strategy or policy for RPL (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Needs assessment | Pilot programme | Stakeholder consultation | Review of best practices | | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Angola | + | | + | + | | |
| Botswana | | | + | | | |
| Burkina Faso | + | | + | + | | |
| Cabo Verde | + | + | | | | |
| Djibouti | + | | | | | |
| Egypt | | | | + | | |
| Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) | + | | + | + | | |
| Guinea-Bissau | + | | + | | | + |
| Kenya | + | + | + | + | | |
| Malawi | | + | + | | | |
| Mauritius | | | | + | | |
| Morocco | + | + | + | + | | |
| Mozambique | | + | + | + | | |
| Namibia | | + | | | | |
| Rwanda | + | + | + | + | | |
| Senegal | | + | + | | | |
| Seychelles | + | + | + | + | | |

| Country | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| South Africa | | + | + | + | | |
| Sudan | + | | + | + | | |
| Tunisia | + | + | + | + | | |
| Uganda | | | + | + | | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | | |

The table below displays the description of preparatory steps undertaken by the countries.

**Table 6. Detailed description of preparatory steps (by countries)**

| Country | Description of preparatory steps |
|---|---|
| Angola | As far as this thematic area is concerned, we are counting on the support of the ACQF-II project for the conceptual and political document, the technical/methodological guide and capacity building. We have already received the initial conceptual notes as a starting point for drawing up the technical proposal. But at the level of the institution, research has been carried out into RVCC and good practices in order to understand what is intended internally with the development of RVCC Processes and we have already held several meetings to reflect on lifelong learning and the recognition of this learning through RVCC Processes. |
| Burkina Faso | Trial of VAE in certain formal qualifications such as the Certificat de Qualification de Base (CQB) and the Certificat de Qualification Professionnelle (CQP) |
| | The preparatory stages were carried out by the Vocational Training Department and were the subject of reviews and consultations with all the stakeholders in the vocational training system in Morocco. |
| | Reviews and consultations with all the stakeholders in the vocational training system in Morocco, rhe preparatory stages were carried out by the Vocational Training Department. |
| | National Studies and Stakeholders Consultations on Qualifications systems were conducted. Key lessons were that there were fragmentations in qualifications in the formal education and training. A lot of skills and qualifications attained non-formally and informally were not captured in national qualifications. |
| Djibouti | Consultation is in progress |
| | Engagement of a consultant to conduct research. 2. Benchmarking with other countries |
| Eswatini | A training workshop was conducted 2. Stakeholder consultations ongoing |
| Guinea-Bissau | At the moment, our institution is in the process of drawing up model legislation/regulations on RVCC, in partnership with the main organisations involved in the education and professional sectors, through consultations and workshops. |
| Kenya | Creation of awareness by the training institution, government agencies, industries and private sectors. 2. Training of RPL counsellors, carrying out assessments on various individuals across the nation and accrediting them through recognised training providers. |
| Malawi | Development of the guidelines  2. Benchmarking visits to Tanzania 3. Training of Assessors  4. Launch of the pilot programme 5. Development of the RPL application forms |
| | A consultancy was carried out to analyze RPL Systems in other countries and propose our National System od RPL (RCA in our country). Sectoral Technical Committees were consulted on the relevance of RCA in the country. |
| | A pilot was carried out in 3 areas that were found to be most sought-after: electricity, plumbing and welding. |
| Mozambique | Workshop for all stakeholders in RPL including industry. 2. Bilateral meetings with stakeholders.  Lessons - There is great demand for a national blueprint for recognizing knowledge, skills and competences acquired through informal approaches and work-based learning. Employer organizations are keen on supporting activities on RPL. |
| Senegal | Focus group workshops involving all stakeholders and led by the Ministry of Higher Education |
| Seychelles | Development of a draft policy on RPL and related tools. 2. Piloting on selected groups of employees Review of policy and tools and further piloting. 3. Finalisation of policy, implementation guidelines and tools. 4. Endorsement of Cabinet. 5. Full implementation |
| | Development of requisite documents. 2. Involvement of stakeholders. 3. Capacity building of RPL Practitioners. 4. Pilot testing with a small group |
| | Different stakeholders were engaged in a meeting |
| South Africa | Pilot programme – RPL for refugees and asylum seekers with incomplete/ absent documentation (Pilot is at Phase II) [Groups of refugees and asylum seekers in three provinces were taken through an RPL process successfully] Lessons: a. Due to a backlog in visa applications by the Department of Home Affairs, asylum seekers experience delays in getting |

| | |
|---|---|
| | their asylum-seeker status renewed. This leads to closed bank accounts, missed employment opportunities and job losses. Further, a long immigration status wait affects asylum seekers (cannot access rights provided to refugees). b. Applicants lack fluency in English, digital literacy skills and understanding of the South Africa labour landscape, and this as well as access to resources makes finding information on employment difficult. Also, employers and institutions lack understanding of the South African asylum process and such issues affect access to opportunities. c. Non-standard entry requirements across tertiary institutions and professional bodies create misunderstanding (and usually exclude asylum seekers). Moreover, lack of access to bursary funding restricts access to further education. d..Increasing xenophobia within South Africa, exacerbated by 'anti-foreigner' rhetoric from community leaders, political parties and the general public, makes access to, not only employment but education and healthcare difficult. A related issue includes concerns about safety and fear of being "outed" and their families being punished. e. Several asylum seekers & refugees possess skills that have been published by the government in SA, for example, doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, geologists and IT professionals. |
| | Stakeholder consultation (DHET Consultations, 2021-2022) [Different stakeholders described the benefits and challenges relating to the national RPL policies, in a series of consultations] Lessons: (a) people do not necessarily know how to conduct, quality assure and resource RPL, and (b) it is time-consuming, (c) achievements via RPL are not universally recognized in all South African contexts. |
| | Review of best practices [2019-2020 SAQA-UNESCO research] SAQA, supported by UNESCO, documented and interrogated three examples of known good practices. Lessons: (a) RPL resources were too thin/ RPL is not funded (b) there is not universal buy-in for RPL; it relies on champions (c) there were contradictions between national RPL policies of DHET and SAQA on one hand, and the Quality Councils on the other – these have since been addressed. |
| | Other: a. Sharing good practice via conference in 2014 and Bulletin in 2019 b. Documenting good practices in depth, including successes, recognized enablers, and challenges and how these could be/ are being addressed [SAQA-UNESCO, 2020] c. Assessing the impact of national RPL policy on the practices of the Quality Councils and providers of learning (e.g. SAQA's (2023; 2019) NQF Impact Studies d. Aligning national RPL policies (2019-2022) e. Reviewing the apex RPL Coordination Policy through analysis/ research Main lesson: An RPL Framework is needed, against which statutory bodies, institutions, and others, can develop sectoral RPL policy and criteria. |
| Sudan | Stakeholders were gathered and discussions took place where current practices were discussed and the ideal model presented |
| Tunisia | Brainstorming workshops |
| Uganda | Stakeholders' workshops conducted by IUCEA. 2. Experts drafted policy documents which were validated by wider stakeholders |
| | The Authority engaged a consultant sponsored by the Commonwealth of Learning. Key stakeholders from Academia, Industry, Professional associations, Trade Unions and other interest groups were involved in the consultative process. The main lesson learnt was that all stakeholders are critical for the acceptability of RPL certification. This increased awareness and appreciation of this mode of validation of learning |
| | The assistance of experts to develop the policy and hold consultative meetings with different stakeholders and institutions that had used RPL as a form of assessment in the past.  2. Attended various workshops about RPL |
| | Stakeholders were called for a review of the current policy and useful discussions and inputs were suggested until validation of the draft policy was done |

### 3.1.3   Organisational framework

Qualifications agencies or institutions are in most cases the main responsible bodies for RPL development and implementation is the national Qualifications Agency or Institute (56% or 28 responses). Yet, these do not have exclusive ownership over RPL, reflecting the continent-wide variations across Africa.  To a lesser extent, in a quarter of the cases, respondents indicated that the competent authority is the Department or Ministry of Education (28%, 14 responses), the Education quality assurance or accreditation agency (28%, 14 responses) or the Department or Ministry of TVET and Occupations (26%, 13).

Other national Departments or Ministries, such as the Labour Ministry (18% or 9 responses), and the Science and Higher Education Ministries (14% or 7 responses) are much less often tasked with the coordination and development of RPL policies. Among the other cases, respondents mentioned that the Quality Assurance Agency for TVET is responsible for overseeing the process of assessment and awards (Zambia), the National Authority for Professional Bodies, including employee unions, the Department of Public Service Administration can be responsible as well.

Furthermore, as Table 10 shows below, quite many countries have multiple national bodies responsible for the RPL policy. Shared responsibility over different authorities may lengthen the policy-making process as it sometimes can lead to difficulties in cooperation, agreement or competition.

**Table 7. Organisations responsible for the overall coordination and oversight of the RPL development / implementation**

|  | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Qualifications Agency or Institute | 56.00% | 28 |
| Department/Ministry of Education | 28.00% | 14 |
| Education quality assurance, accreditation agency | 28.00% | 14 |
| Department/Ministry of TVET and Occupations | 26.00% | 13 |
| Department/Ministry of Labour | 18.00% | 9 |
| Department/Ministry of Science and Higher Education | 14.00% | 7 |
| Other | 12.00% | 6 |
| Council (commission, task force) of stakeholders (public, private, civil society) | 6.00% | 3 |
| Another government department/ministry | 2.00% | 1 |
| Cannot answer / I don't know | 2.00% | 1 |

The organisation framework for delivering validation services to beneficiaries may take various forms, depending on the local context. In most countries where an RPL has been developed, public education and training institutions are in one way or another implied in the validation services (90% or 17 of the responses). It is much less frequent that universities or colleges (42% or 8 responses) and private training providers (37% or 7 responses) are taking part in the delivering validation. Other parts of society tend to be even less frequently tasked with providing validation services, these include: employer organisations or companies (26% or 5 responses), industry councils (21%, 4 responses) as well as other organisations, summarised in the table below.

**Table 8. Organisations responsible for delivering validation services to beneficiaries (multiple choice)**

|  | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Public education and training institutions | 89.50% | 17 |
| Universities/colleges | 42.10% | 8 |
| Private training providers | 36.80% | 7 |
| Employer organisations or companies | 26.30% | 5 |
| Industry councils or associations | 21.10% | 4 |
| Professional / sectoral organisations | 21.10% | 4 |
| Other | 15.80% | 3 |
| Workers' organisations | 10.50% | 2 |
| Regional/local authorities | 5.30% | 1 |

The tables below present country-by-country responses in more detail.

**Table 9. Organisations responsible for delivering validation services (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Public education and training institutions | Universities/colleges | Regional/local authorities | Industry councils or associations | Private training providers | Employer organisations or companies | Workers' organisations | Professional / sectoral organisations | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya | + | + | | | + | | | + | |
| Malawi | + | | | | + | | | | + |
| Morocco | + | | | | | | | | |
| Mozambique | + | | | | + | + | | | |
| Namibia | | | | | | + | | | |
| Rwanda | | + | | + | + | | | | |
| Seychelles | + | + | | | | | | | |
| South Africa | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Tunisia | + | | | | | | | | |
| Uganda | + | + | | + | | + | | + | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |

**Table 10. Organisations responsible for the overall coordination and oversight of the RPL development / implementation (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Qualifications agency or institute | Department/ Ministry of Education | Department/ Ministry of Labour | Department/Ministry of Science and Higher Education | Department/Ministry of TVET and Occupations | Another government department/ministry | Education quality assurance, accreditation agency | Council (commission, task force) of stakeholders | Other | Cannot answer / I don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Angola | + | | + | | | | | | | |
| Botswana | + | | | | | | | | | |
| Burkina Faso | + | | | + | | | | | | |
| Cabo Verde | + | | | | | | | | | |
| Djibouti | | + | + | | | | | | | |
| Egypt | | | | | | | | | | + |
| Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) | + | | | | | | | | | |
| Guinea-Bissau | + | + | + | + | | + | | + | | |
| Kenya | + | + | + | | + | | + | | | |
| Malawi | | | + | | | | | | | |
| Mauritius | + | + | | | | | | | | |
| Morocco | + | | + | + | + | | | + | | |
| Mozambique | + | | | | | | + | | + | |
| Namibia | | | | | | + | | | | |
| Rwanda | | + | | | + | | + | | | |
| Senegal | | | | + | | | | | | |
| Seychelles | + | + | | | | | + | | | |
| South Africa | + | + | | + | | + | + | | + | |
| Sudan | + | + | + | + | + | | | | | |
| Tunisia | | | | | + | | | | | |
| Uganda | + | | | | | | + | | | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | |

### 3.1.4 Integration with NQF

Oftentimes, RPL systems benchmark candidates against standards used in NQFs or other types of standards from industries (International Labour Office, 2018). Hence, it is important to establish to what extent are NQF used as a basis for standards for RPL. Of the responding countries, 15 out of the 28 countries responded that the country has an NQF developed past the design stage. Out of the remainder 13, 12 responded that the NQF is not developed past a design stage (see Table 11 in Annex for more details).

As the table shows below, almost all of the countries which have developed and RPL and have a developed NQF did link the two systems together. Thus, RPL in these cases is well-embedded in qualifications systems, ensuring its relevance.

**Table 11. RPL linked to the NQF**

|  | RPL linked to the NQF |
| --- | --- |
| Kenya | Yes |
| Morocco | Cannot answer / I don't know |
| Mozambique | Yes |
| Namibia | Yes |
| Rwanda | Yes |
| Seychelles | Yes |
| South Africa | Yes |
| Tunisia | Yes |
| Zambia | Yes |

## 3.2 RPL processes and rationale

### 3.2.1 Definitions and phases of the RPL process

In cases where an RPL is either in development, in place or in operation, the survey has asked respondents to indicate, in an open question, the main definitions of RPL used by the country or the institutions whom they are representing.

Some countries indicated the official national terms used, according to which there are slight variations, ranging from "Recognition of Prior Learning" to "Validation of professional experience" or "Recognised Prior Learning".

Most definitions agree on the basics of RPL: that it is a process to identify, assess and certify prior knowledge or skills, that were acquired outside of formal education and training. Some definitions also make reference to competencies acquired, while in one case, RPL is seen as a service provided by employers. Furthermore, certain approaches and definitions (listed below) focus on this minimal definition, others do make reference to the outcomes of RPL in terms of alternative access and admission to formal learning opportunities, obtaining partial or full qualifications, and gaining credits towards a qualification.

**Table 12. Main definitions reported across countries**

|  | Definitions |
|---|---|
| Kenya | The process used to identify, assess, and certify an individual knowledge, skills and competencies acquired in no-formal or informal learning against prescribed standards or learning outcomes. |
|  | A system of identifying, documenting, assessing and certifying skills and competencies acquired informally and non-formally against pre-determined performance criteria, learning outcomes or occupational standards. |
| Malawi | Recognition of Prior Learning |
| Morocco | Validation of professional experience VAEP |
| Namibia | Recognition of Prior Learning |
| Rwanda | All kinds of training and further training that an employer provides to the employees. As this kind of workplace learning targets the existing workforce, it is not dealt with in this policy. |
| Seychelles | RPL means principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development. |
|  | Recognition of Prior Learning means principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development. |
|  | "Principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development" |
|  | RPL means to recognise and validate knowledge, skills and competencies gathered inside or outside the formal education and training systems, for the purposes of certification. |
| South Africa | To recognise individuals who don't have formal qualifications for admission, or advanced standing and to gain credits towards a qualification |
|  | "RPL is the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated, and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development" (SAQA, 2019 'Policy and Criteria for Implementing RPL') |
| Tunisia | This service enables people who do not hold an educational or training qualification and who have at least three years' professional experience in a craft trade to obtain a certificate of validation of their acquired experience after passing an examination organised for this purpose. |
| Uganda | RPL is a process used to identify, assess and certify a person's knowledge, skills and competencies regardless of how, when and where the learning occurred against prescribed certain standards for a part or full qualification. |
| Zambia | Recognised Prior Learning |
|  | Allow learners 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 |

The internationally used validation processes and phases recognise either three or four stages. The process as outlined by ILO comprises of: 1) Awareness and information, 2) Counselling and facilitation, 3) Assessment and certification (International Labour Office, 2018), while Cedefop distinguishes: 1) Identification, 2) Documentation, 3) Assessment, 4) Certification (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. 2023). As seen before, most definitions from the surveyed countries include the main stages of RPL, although in a different configuration: the identification of prior experience, assessment and certification. Furthermore, based on survey results, we can observe that more detailed RPL stages are practically applied in each of the respondent's countries. Accordingly, Providing information and guidance on the RPL process to candidates; identification of existing knowledge, skills and experiences, gathering and evaluation of relevant evidence (e.g. portfolios, documents etc.), the assessment phase as well as the certification are essential steps in the process in most countries. This was reported in the case of Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia. In general, Namibia and Tunisia have less distinct RPL phases. The latter noted that an experimental stage is also included in the RPL process. Please see more country-by-country details in the table below. Other phases not captured in the question were mentioned by Kenya, about candidates' expression of interest and South Africa, on giving feedback to candidates and a gap-fill training that is provided or recommended where the RPL process identifies gaps in learning.

**Table 13. Phases of the RPL process (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Information and guidance | Identification | Documentation | Assessment | Certification | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Malawi | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Morocco | + | + | + | | + | |
| Mozambique | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Namibia | | | | | + | |
| Rwanda | + | + | | + | + | |
| Seychelles | + | + | + | + | + | |
| South Africa | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Tunisia | | | | | | + |
| Uganda | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | |

## 3.2.2  Coverage of education and training sectors

The picture shows that validation strategies tend to focus on different (sub)sectors of the education and training area (Cedefop, ICF, and European Commission 2019). Recognition of Prior Learning policies may cover various areas of the education and training sector. Results from respondents that have a developed RPL indicate that, in the African context, TVET is a priority sector for RPL, selected twice as many times as compared to the higher education sector (20 responses).

Higher education (10), second-chance courses for adults (9), labour market initiatives (9) and general education (6) are less often included in RPL frameworks.

**Figure 3. Education and training sectors included in the RPL policy (multiple choice, by respondents)**



| Sector | Value |
|---|---|
| Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) | 20 |
| Higher education | 10 |
| Second-chance courses for adults on non-formal education | 9 |
| Labour market initiatives | 9 |
| General education | 6 |
| Other | 3 |
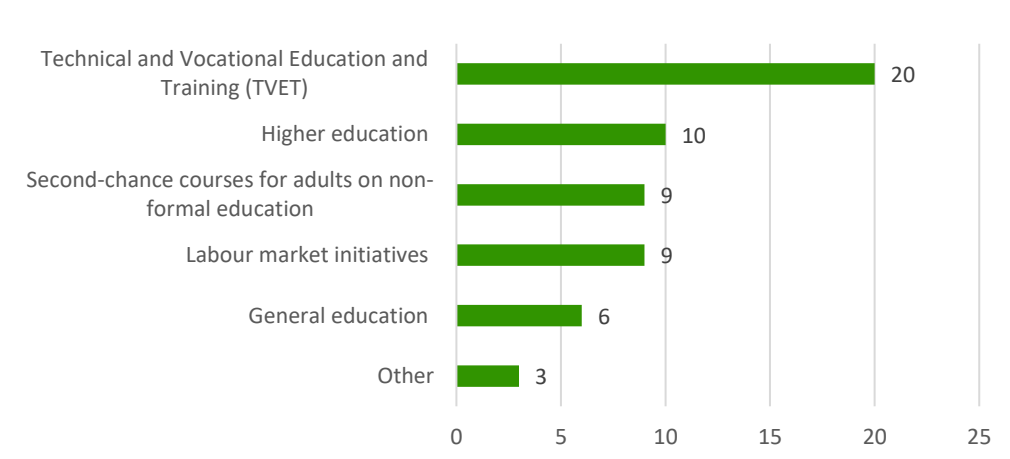
The table below summarises results across the different countries. The picture shows that South Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Zambia have currently the most comprehensive RPL policies, capturing even some other fields such as adult education, worker education in the case of South Africa; apprenticeships in Kenya or working with employers and industries in Zambia.

**Table 14. Education and training sectors included in the RPL policy (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) | Higher education | General education | Labour market initiatives | Second-chance courses for adults on non-formal education | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya | + | | + | + | + | + |
| Malawi | + | | | | | |
| Morocco | + | | | + | + | |
| Mozambique | + | | | | | |
| Namibia | + | | | | | |
| Rwanda | + | | | + | + | |
| Seychelles | + | + | + | | + | |
| South Africa | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Tunisia | + | | | | | |
| Uganda | + | + | + | + | | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | + |

### 3.2.3 Learning outcomes

A crucial aspect of RPLs is the various forms of learning outcomes accepted for the assessment process, defining the RPL's comprehensiveness in terms of accessibility and openness to various forms of learning experiences. Results show at least four types of learning outcomes are more widely accepted for RPL assessment.

Accordingly, most of the existing RPLs (in place, operational) accept non-formal learning experiences and acquired occupational skills or competences (20 respondents have selected the options in both cases). Slightly fewer respondents have reported that portfolios/evidence of projects or work (17) and prior work experiences or employment history (17) are accepted during assessment. In much less of cases are formal education from other institutions accepted for RPL (13). Other learning outcomes mentioned are experiences in various crafts and informal learning.

**Figure 4. Types of learning outcomes accepted during RPL assessment (multiple choice, by respondents)**



As the table below summarises clearly, all of the relevant 11 countries accept acquired occupation skills or competences, as well as non-formal learning experiences. As follows, these are the universally accepted experiences that are included in all of the current RPL systems across the continent. In terms of the variety of learning outcomes that are accepted, Kenya, Seychelles, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia accept the widest range for RPL assessment. In turn, RPL systems in Malawi, Namibia and Tunisia are more restrictive, while the other countries stand somewhere in-between. In this respect, the acceptance of formal education from other institutions is the most important differentiating factor, which is accepted by around half of the countries surveyed for this question.

Among the other possible types of learning outcomes craft experience (Zambia), informal learning or learning through other life experiences (South Africa) and similarly, informal learning experiences (Kenya) were mentioned.

**Table 15. Types of learning outcomes accepted during RPL assessment (multiple choice, by countries**

|  | Acquired occupational skills or competences | Non-formal learning experience | Formal education from other institutions | Prior work experience or employment history | Portfolio/evidence of projects or work | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Malawi | + | + | | + | | |
| Morocco | + | + | + | + | | |
| Mozambique | + | + | | + | + | |
| Namibia | + | + | | | + | |
| Rwanda | + | + | | + | + | |
| Seychelles | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| South Africa | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Tunisia | + | + | | | | |
| Uganda | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | + |

Existing RPL processes show that a wide range of outcomes are available widely throughout, with minimal differences between the various possible outcomes. Options range from recognition of credits towards a qualification (18), full qualification attainment (16), partial qualifications (16), credit transfer entry to an education programme (15). Somewhat less frequent, but exemption from certain modules or courses (13) is also available as a possible outcome of RPL.

Only a small portion of the respondents indicated that RPL is not leading to any kind of recognition (2).

**Figure 5. Possible outcomes of RPL processes (multiple choice, by respondents)**
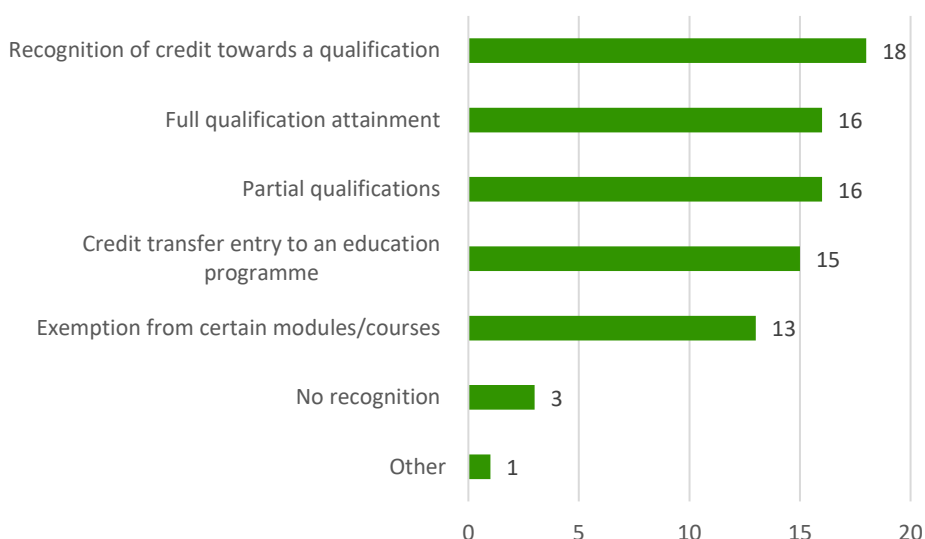


As expected from the analysis of response frequencies above, the country table shows that the picture across is fairly similar. Most countries offer various types of outcomes at the end of the RPL process, ranging from exemptions to modules or courses to full qualification attainment. In this respect, the current state shows that Morocco, Rwanda and Tunisia offer somewhat fewer types of possible results. In South Africa, RPL may also guarantee promotions in the workplace or access to work opportunities.

**Table 16. Possible outcomes of RPL processes (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Exemption from certain modules/courses | Recognition of credit towards a qualification | Credit transfer entry to an education programme | Partial qualifications | Full qualification attainment | No recognition | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya | + | + | + | + | + | | |
| Malawi | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Morocco | | + | + | | + | | |
| Mozambique | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Namibia | + | + | + | + | + | | |
| Rwanda | | + | | + | + | | |
| Seychelles | + | + | + | + | + | | |
| South Africa | + | + | + | + | + | | + |
| Tunisia | | | | | + | | |
| Uganda | + | + | + | + | + | | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | + | |

### 3.2.4 Main priorities of RPL policy

Increasing the employability of beneficiaries was selected as the most important aspect of an RPL policy (47 respondents or 79.7% indicated to be very important). 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. To report the priorities in decreasing order of the share of 'Very important' responses, the other aspects can be ordered as follows: ensuring possibilities of lifelong learning(43), new opportunities for the informal sector (41), increased labour market mobility (40), social inclusion of beneficiaries (39), strengthened qualifications system (35) and improved access to formal education or training (34).

**Figure 6. Main priorities for RPL policies (by respondents)**
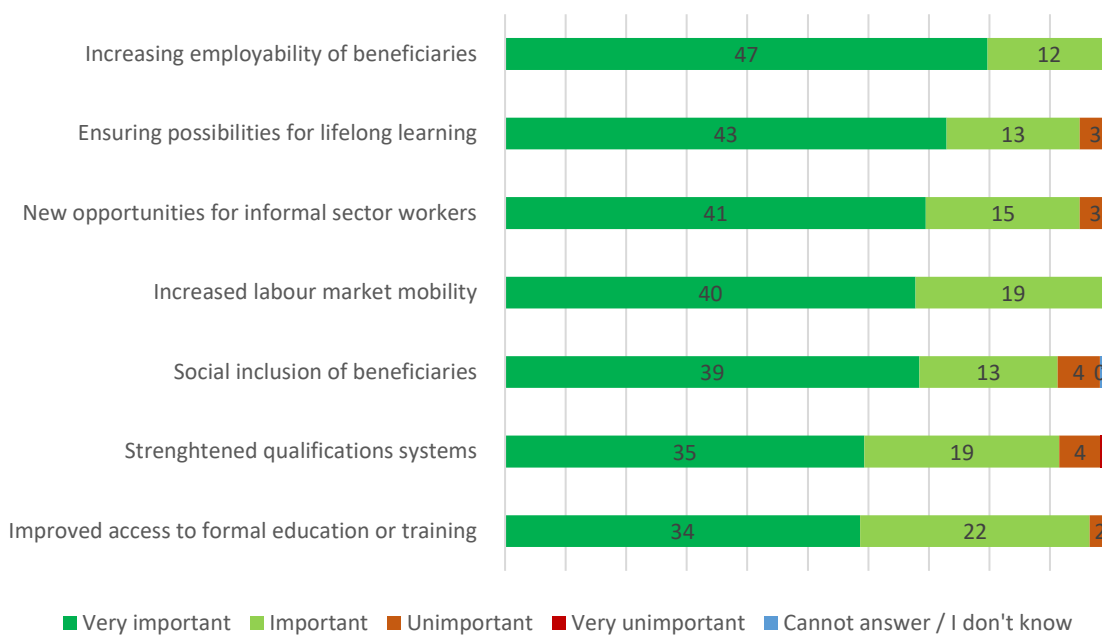
**Table 17. Main priorities for RPL policies (by countries)**

| | Increased labour market mobility | | Improved access to formal education or training | | Social inclusion of beneficiaries | | Strengthened qualifications systems | | New opportunities for informal sector workers | | Ensuring possibilities for lifelong learning | | Formalisation of the non-formal sector | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Count | % of total | Count | % of total | Count | % of total | Count | % of total | Count | % of total | Count | % of total | Count | % of total |
| Angola | 3 | 100.00% | 2 | 66.67% | 3 | 100.00% | 3 | 100.00% | 3 | 100.00% | 3 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Botswana | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Burkina Faso | 1 | 25.00% | 1 | 25.00% | 2 | 50.00% | 3 | 75.00% | 2 | 50.00% | 1 | 25.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Cabo Verde | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Chad | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Djibouti | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Egypt | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) | 3 | 75.00% | 2 | 50.00% | 3 | 75.00% | 2 | 50.00% | 4 | 100.00% | 4 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Ethiopia | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Ghana | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Guinea-Bissau | 3 | 75.00% | 1 | 25.00% | 4 | 100.00% | 3 | 75.00% | 3 | 75.00% | 4 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Kenya | 3 | 100.00% | 1 | 33.33% | 2 | 66.67% | 3 | 100.00% | 3 | 100.00% | 2 | 66.67% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Malawi | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% |
| Mauritius | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Morocco | 1 | 33.33% | 3 | 100.00% | 3 | 100.00% | 1 | 33.33% | 1 | 33.33% | 1 | 33.33% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Mozambique | 3 | 75.00% | 1 | 25.00% | 1 | 25.00% | 1 | 25.00% | 2 | 50.00% | 1 | 25.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Namibia | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Nigeria | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Rwanda | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Senegal | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Seychelles | 3 | 75.00% | 2 | 50.00% | 1 | 25.00% | 1 | 25.00% | 3 | 75.00% | 4 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Somalia | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| South Africa | 2 | 100.00% | 2 | 100.00% | 2 | 100.00% | 2 | 100.00% | 2 | 100.00% | 2 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Sudan | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 1 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Tunisia | 2 | 66.67% | 2 | 66.67% | 1 | 33.33% | 0 | 0.00% | 3 | 100.00% | 1 | 33.33% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Uganda | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 50.00% | 1 | 50.00% | 1 | 50.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 50.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Zambia | 5 | 71.43% | 7 | 100.00% | 5 | 71.43% | 5 | 71.43% | 6 | 85.71% | 7 | 100.00% | 0 | 0.00% |

## 3.3 Operation and monitoring of RPL

### 3.3.1 Validation process

RPLM systems may use a wide variety of assessment methods and tools. A shorter list of assessment methods that are used for a wide selection of candidates can make the process easier, both in terms of quality assurance and fairness. On the other hand, a more varied selection can be beneficial in tailoring assessment better to candidates and thus increasing accessibility as well as the RPL's receptiveness to more types of informal and non-formal learning outcomes. Nonetheless, these methods have particular advantages and disadvantages (OECD 2023).

The validation process is of varying complexity based on the open-ended answers provided. Below, we present the answers in a curated form.

**Table 18. Description of the steps or stages of the validation process according to the national RPL process**

| | Reported RPL stages |
|---|---|
| Kenya | 1. Designing the process. 2. Conducting planned validation. 3. Analysing the results. 4. Reporting the results. |
| | 1. Awareness creation and publicity. 2. Counselling and Facilitation. 3. Assessment and Certification. |
| Morocco | 1. Information and advice stage. 2. Eligibility stage. 3. Support stage. 4. Validation stage based on a certification reference framework. |
| Mozambique | 1. Design, by ANEP, of the Referential of RPL 2. Training of Facilitators/Assessors of RPL 3. Accreditation, by ANEP, of the Centres for RPL. 4. Public Announcement by CRCA of initiatives of RPL. 5. Reception and registration of candidates. 6. Assessment of candidates (general interviews, technical interviews, portfolio, practical tests). 7. Announcement to the candidates about their results. 8. Validation (or no) of the results by External Verification. 9. Certification of the successful candidates. 10. Feedback and orientations do no successful candidates |
| Rwanda | 1. Getting information. 2. Identification. 3. Retraining. 4. Assessment Certification. |
| Seychelles | 1. Application and information. 2. Portfolio development and assessment. 3. Preparation for and assessment of competencies. 4. Certification. |
| | First phase takes place at the SQA. It includes: 1. Application for the RPL process 2. Portfolio Development 3. Pre-screening of portfolio 4. Assessment of Portfolio. Second Phase takes place at the Education and Training Provider. It includes: 1. Verification of Portfolio Assessment by RPL Assessor 2. Planning and designing of assessment by RPL Assessor 3. Assessment of competencies and moderation. 4. Issuing of Recognition transcript (if candidates have passed all assessments) and Letter of Recommendation to RPL candidate (if candidates need to gap bridge) 5. Submission of results and reports to SQA. |
| | 1. Initiation of the process of RPL. 2. Application for RPL. 3. appointment of the RPL coordinator of the SQA. 4. Meeting of RPL coordinator and RPL candidate 5. Development of the RPL portfolio. 6. Submission of a portfolio to SQA, identification of qualification and its unit standards or programme and its learning outcomes for the RPL process 7. Preparation for the meeting of RPL assessors and RPL candidates. 8. Selection of assessors 9. Registration of assessors 10. Planning and organising assessments for the RPL candidate by the provider 11. Assessment process 12. Issuing of recognition transcript and letter of recommendation to RPL candidate |
| South Africa | 1. Information and guidance. 2. Preparation, in which RPL candidates are taken through a process to translate knowledge and skills gained non-formally and informally, into the forms needed in the formal context. 3. Portfolio development or other preparation for assessment. 4. Assessment. 5. Moderation. 6. Feedback. 7. Gap-fill training. 8. Certification. |
| Zambia | 1. Approach institutions or community self-employed. 2. Identify the interested persons 3. Interview to ascertain skill level 4. Hands-on observation 5. Supervisors Evaluation/employer HRM Recommendation 6. Hands-on test 7. Certification. The process may vary. |
| | 1. Application with supporting documents if available 2. Interview 3. Practical Assessment |
| | 1. Assessment of prior learning already attained by a certified institution 2. Issuance of a certification |

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.

In more detail, tests and examinations (19 respondents indicated to utilize this option), portfolio of previous works (17), workplace demonstrations (16) and interviewing (15) were the most typical assessment tools for RPL. Employer references and employer evidence (12), usage of technologies (11), presentations (11), simulations (10) and employer references (8) are used somewhat less often. Nonetheless, the differences between these various assessment tools are not substantial. Another respondent mentioned that demonstration or live work observations are used as assessments.

**Figure 7. Assessment tools used during the validation process (multiple choice, by respondents)**
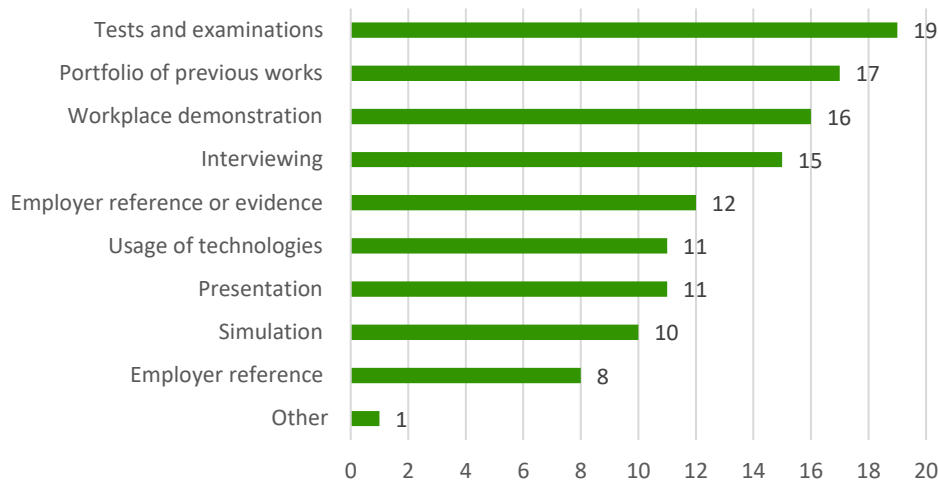


In most countries, a wide range of assessment tools are used. All the listed tools are implemented in Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia. Kenya, Namibia and Rwanda employ somewhat fewer types of tools, around 6-8 of the listed 10 options. In turn, Malawi and Tunisia are relying on a smaller set of assessment tools, such as tests and examinations and workplace demonstrations.

As a minimum, all countries perform tests and examinations, while the usage of employer references is the least consensual currently. More details are provided below.

**Table 19. . Assessment tools used during the validation process (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Portfolio of previous works | Presentation | Simulation | Tests and examinations | Interviewing | Usage of technologies | Employer reference | Workplace demonstration | Employer reference or evidence | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | |
| Malawi | | | | + | | | | | | |
| Mozambique | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Namibia | + | + | + | + | + | + | | | | |
| Rwanda | + | | | + | + | + | | + | + | |
| Seychelles | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| South Africa | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Tunisia | | | | + | | | | + | | |
| Uganda | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |

### 3.3.2 Quality assurance

Quality assurance is key to ensuring trust in the results of the RPL process and it must be a systematic, all-encompassing feature of RPL. Thus, it is often emphasised that the quality assurance framework should involve and consider all stakeholders, and operate at different levels and in different contexts (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2023).

There are multiple quality assurance mechanisms that countries can employ to ensure the consistency and credibility of RPL certifications. Among respondents whose country is in place or operational, ensuring the availability of competent RPL professionals, that are able to guide the candidate and make appropriate assessments was the most often selected option (18). Furthermore, developing assessment tools and methodologies, aimed to help assessors and the establishment of common standards and quality codes, aimed to ensure an objective assessment environment are also similarly frequently selected (17 times each).

Nevertheless, all listed mechanisms are used to a wider extent, by at least half of the respondents. As such, moderating assessments (14), collaborating with employers' and workers' organisations (e.g. through ensuring that RPL is aligned with industry needs, acquiring insights into the design of assessment tools), monitoring and evaluation frameworks (12) and accrediting dedicated RPL centres (9) are some of the other assessment tools used. Other than the listed quality assurance mechanisms are not much used, there was only 1 other response submitted on using external verification and assessment services by Mozambique.

**Figure 8. Mechanisms of quality assurance used (multiple choice, by respondents)**
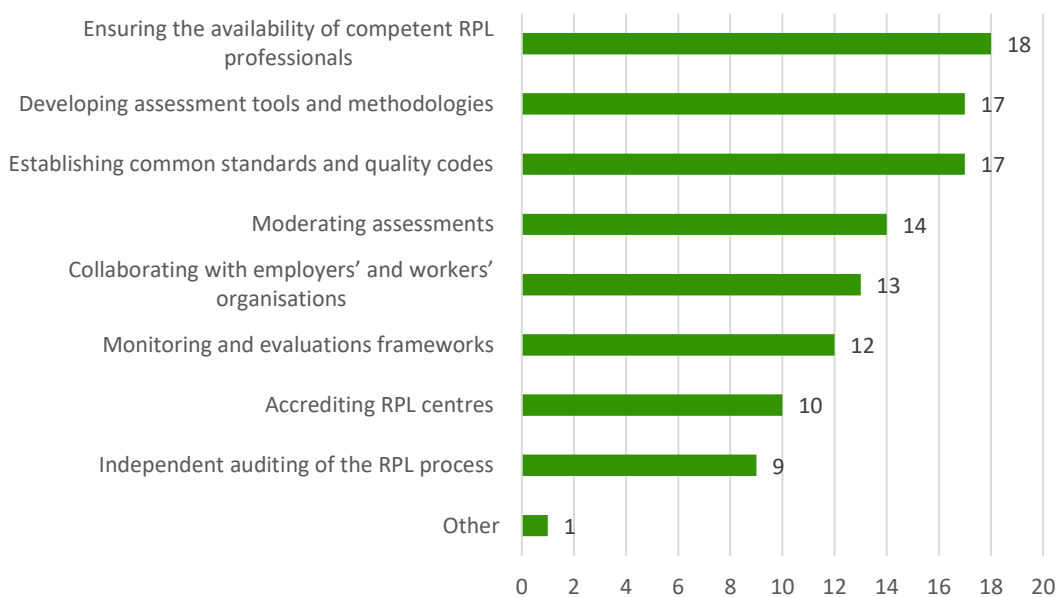


The table below shows the usage of the listed mechanisms across countries. Accordingly, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda and Zambia have selected all the available options. Accrediting RPL Centres and Collaborating with employers' and workers' organisations are the least consensual solutions among the countries to ensure quality.

**Table 20. Mechanisms of quality assurance used (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Establishing common standards and quality codes | Ensuring the availability of competent RPL professionals | Collaborating with employers' and workers' organisations | Developing assessment tools and methodologies | Accrediting RPL centres | Moderating assessments | Monitoring and evaluations frameworks | Independent auditing of the RPL process | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Malawi | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | |
| Mozambique | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Namibia | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Rwanda | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Seychelles | + | + | + | + | | + | + | | |
| South Africa | + | + | + | + | | + | + | + | |
| Tunisia | | + | | | | | | | |
| Uganda | + | + | | + | + | + | + | | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |

### 3.3.3 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. This is underlined by the OECD as well, mentioning that the two main barriers to potential RPL beneficiaries are a lack of time and the financial or economic cost (OECD 2023). Yet, institutions often do not have sufficient financial resources to be able to sustain the policy.

The picture shows that in most of the respondents' opinion, RPL implies some kind of feed charged to applicants (17 respondents). A smaller share of respondents also reported that RPL is supported by public funding (10 responses), international donors (9) or by the private sphere (5).

**Figure 9. Financing arrangements of RPL (multiple choice, by respondents)**
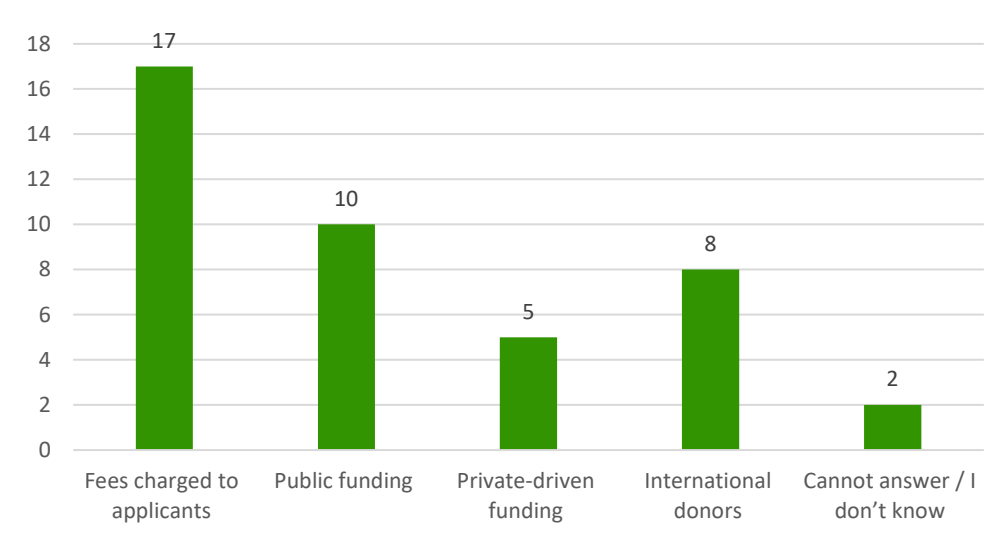


The country table shows a more detailed picture of financing. It can be observed that most countries operate with a mixed-funding model, whereby most often a combination of fees charged to the applicant and public funding is applied. In a smaller group of countries private-funding (Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa) or international donors (Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique and Rwanda) are also contributing to the maintenance of RPL.

**Table 21. Financing arrangements of RPL (multiple choice, by countries)**

|  | Fees charged to applicants | Public funding | Private-driven funding | International donors | Cannot answer / I don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya | + | + | + | + |  |
| Malawi | + | + | + | + |  |
| Morocco |  |  |  |  | + |
| Mozambique | + | + | + | + |  |
| Namibia | + |  |  |  |  |
| Rwanda | + | + |  | + |  |
| Seychelles | + | + |  |  |  |
| South Africa | + | + | + |  |  |
| Tunisia | + | + |  |  |  |
| Uganda |  |  |  |  | + |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + |  |

## 3.4 Outcomes and impact

### 3.4.1 Number of beneficiaries

Monitoring RPL is a crucial tool to better understand the state of implementation, use and impact. If an RPL is in place or operational, the slight majority (11 out of 20) of the respondents indicated that statistics in validation beneficiaries or the impact of RPL is collected. Another third (6) have reported to not be able to answers the question and 3 reported to not be collecting statistics.

**Table 22. Collection of statistics on validation beneficiaries or the impact of RPL**

|              | Collection of statistics       |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Kenya        | Yes                            |
| Malawi       | Yes                            |
| Morocco      | Yes                            |
| Mozambique   | Yes                            |
| Namibia      | Cannot answer / I don't know   |
| Rwanda       | Yes                            |
| Seychelles   | Yes                            |
| South Africa | Yes                            |
| Tunisia      | No                             |
| Uganda       | Cannot answer / I don't know   |
| Zambia       | Yes                            |

Based on the self-reported value of RPL certifications issued, Rwanda and South Africa are clear forerunners in the RPL process (see table below). Other countries have issued a magnitude lower number of certifications, within the range of 500-31.

**Table 23. Self-reported values of the approximate number of RPL certifications issued**

|              | Approximation of RPL certifications issued |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Kenya        | 500                                        |
| Malawi       | 35                                         |
| Morocco      | 1700                                       |
| Mozambique   | 31                                         |
| Rwanda       | 45000                                      |
| Seychelles   | 119                                        |
| Seychelles   | 100                                        |
| South Africa | 40022                                      |

In case where RPL is in operation or in place (developed, approved as a legal act or started implementation), the general expectation is that RPL applications will rise in the future. According to the results, 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.

**Figure 10. Expected increase in the number of yearly applications (by respondents)**
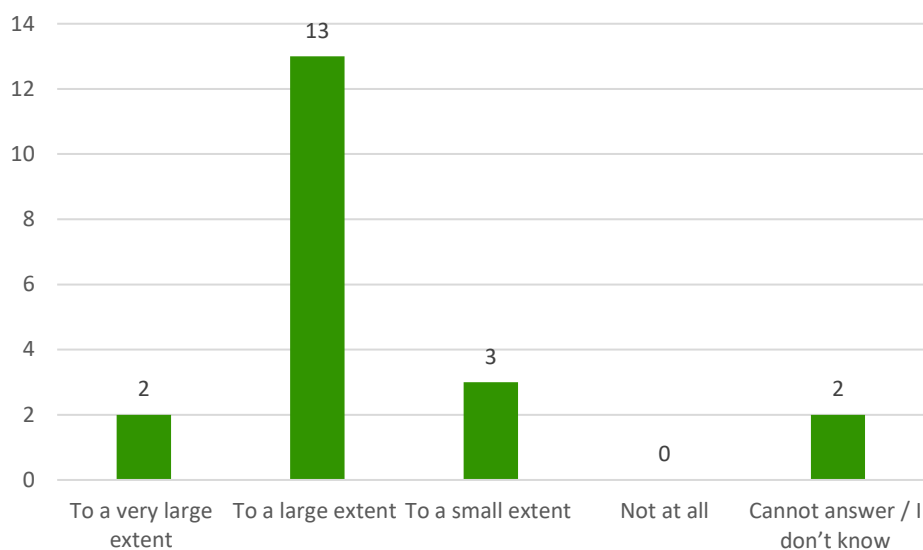


The table below shows stakeholders' opinions on the expected increase in the number of yearly applications across the various countries which have an RPL developed.

**Table 24. Expected increase in the number of yearly applications (by countries)**

|  | Expected increase |
|---|---|
| Kenya | To a large extent |
| Malawi | To a very large extent |
| Morocco | To a large extent |
| Mozambique[3] | To a large extent |
| Namibia | To a small extent |
| Rwanda | To a large extent |
| Seychelles | To a large extent |
| South Africa | To a large extent |
| Tunisia | To a large extent |
| Uganda | Cannot answer / I don't know |
| Zambia | To a large extent |

## 3.4.2  Main beneficiary groups

RPL may take two forms based on its target groups: universal – aiming at the entire population or targeted – at certain sub-groups of the population (OECD 2023). Below, we present information on how wide current RPL systems are in this respect.

The main beneficiary groups of RPL may currently be divided into three main groups, according to respondents who indicated that the national RPL is in place (developed, approved as a legal act, started implementation,

---

[3] When recoding, the highest indicate value was used from the available responses.

operational) or operational. The current main beneficiary groups are low-qualified people (15), 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). Thirdly, migrants or refugees (3), volunteers (3), students (2) and other groups (2) are much less likely to be beneficiaries of the RPL process.

**Figure 11. Current main beneficiary groups of RPL (multiple choice, by respondents)**
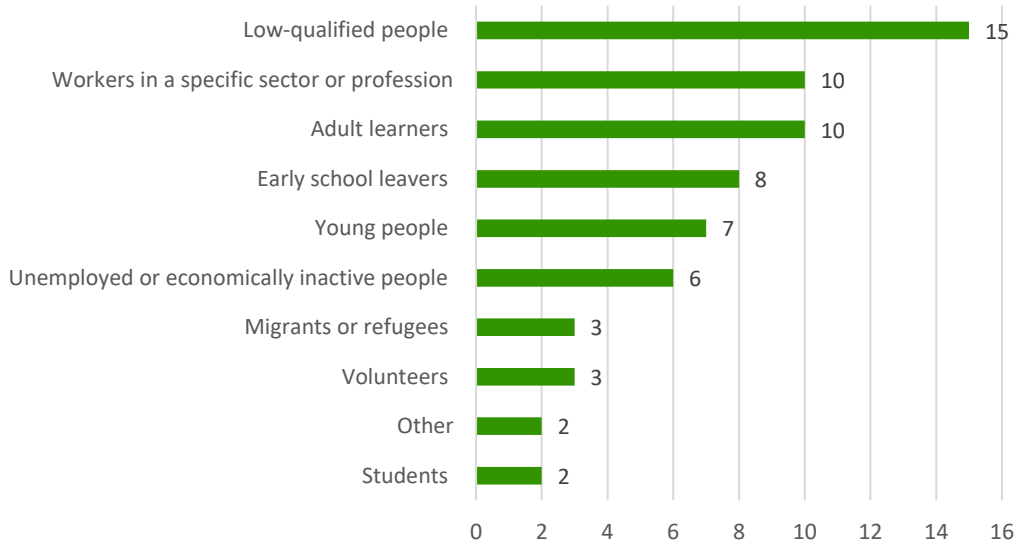


The table below summarises the main beneficiary groups (according to the perceptions of the respondents) across the countries.

Accordingly, low-qualified people are beneficiaries in all countries, except Tunisia. Furthermore, other groups such as early school leavers and workers in a specific sector or profession are also widely targeted beneficiaries of RPL. In turn, somewhat fewer countries have young people, adult learners, volunteers, migrants or refugees and students (in decreasing order) as beneficiaries.

**Table 25. Current main beneficiary groups of RPL (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Young people | Low-qualified people | Early school leavers | Students | Adult learners | Unemployed or economically inactive people | Volunteers | Workers in a specific sector or profession | Migrants or refugees | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya | | + | | | | | | + | + | + |
| Malawi | + | + | + | | + | + | | | | |
| Morocco | + | + | | | | | | | | |
| Mozambique | | + | + | | | + | + | + | | |
| Namibia | | + | + | | + | + | | + | | |
| Rwanda | + | + | | | | | | + | | |
| Seychelles | | + | + | | + | | | + | | |
| South Africa | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + |
| Tunisia | + | | | | | | | | | |
| Uganda | | + | + | | + | | | + | + | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | |

The survey asked a similar question from respondents whose RPL development has not started or is in a phase of early thinking or in development or consultation. In comparison to the current beneficiary groups, the question referred to groups that ought to be targeted by RPL.

The results partially overlap with the current main beneficiaries presented above, however, some crucial differences arise in the case of migrant or refugee groups, as well as unemployed or economically inactive people, which scored a higher rank.

According to the result, low-qualified people (32 respondents selected this option) should be the main beneficiary group, which is in line with the opinion of 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.

Adult learners (23) and young people (21) and early school leavers (20) are placed in a similar position as in the case of current main beneficiary groups. Similarly, students (13) and volunteers (10) are placed on the lower end of the ranking as well.

In comparison to the current main beneficiaries, workers in a specific sector or profession are placed lower on the expected groups of beneficiaries (18 responses), while migrants or refugees have been evaluated as a higher priority.

**Figure 12. Groups that should be the main beneficiaries of RPL (multiple choice, by respondents)**
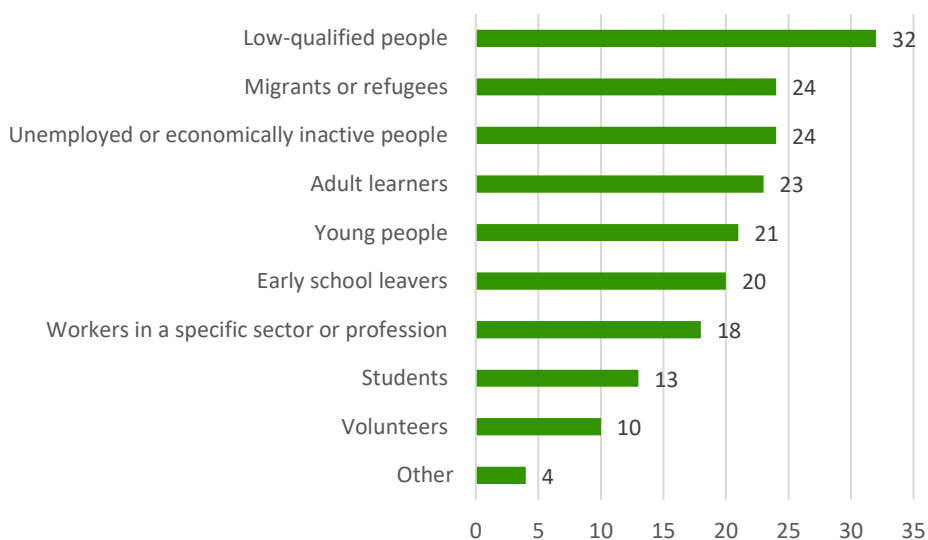


The table below summarises responses across the different countries.

**Table 26. Groups that should be the main beneficiaries of RPL (multiple choice, by countries)**

| | Young people | Low-qualified people | Early school leavers | Students | Adult learners | Unemployed or economically inactive people | Volunteers | Workers in a specific sector or profession | Migrants or refugees | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Angola | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Botswana | | + | | + | + | + | | | + | |
| Burkina Faso | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Cabo Verde | + | | | + | + | | | | | |
| Chad | + | + | + | | | + | | + | + | |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | | + | | | | | | + | | |
| Djibouti | | + | + | | + | | | | | |
| Egypt | | + | + | | | | | + | | |
| Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Ethiopia | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Ghana | + | + | | | + | + | + | | + | |
| Guinea-Bissau | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Kenya | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Mauritius | + | | | + | + | | | + | | |
| Morocco | + | + | | | + | + | | + | | + |
| Mozambique | + | | | | | | | | | + |
| Nigeria | + | | | + | | | | | + | |
| Senegal | | + | + | | | | | + | + | |
| Somalia | + | + | + | | + | | | | | |
| Sudan | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Tunisia | + | + | + | | + | + | + | + | + | |
| Uganda | + | + | + | | | + | | | + | |
| Zambia | + | + | + | + | + | + | | | | |

In line with the number of certifications issued, Kenya and South Africa have the highest numbers of validation providers. In the case of Rwanda, a country which has also issued a relatively higher number of certifications, the number of validation providers is much lower. The table below captures the reasons in more detail.

**Table 27. Self-reported approximate number of validation providers**

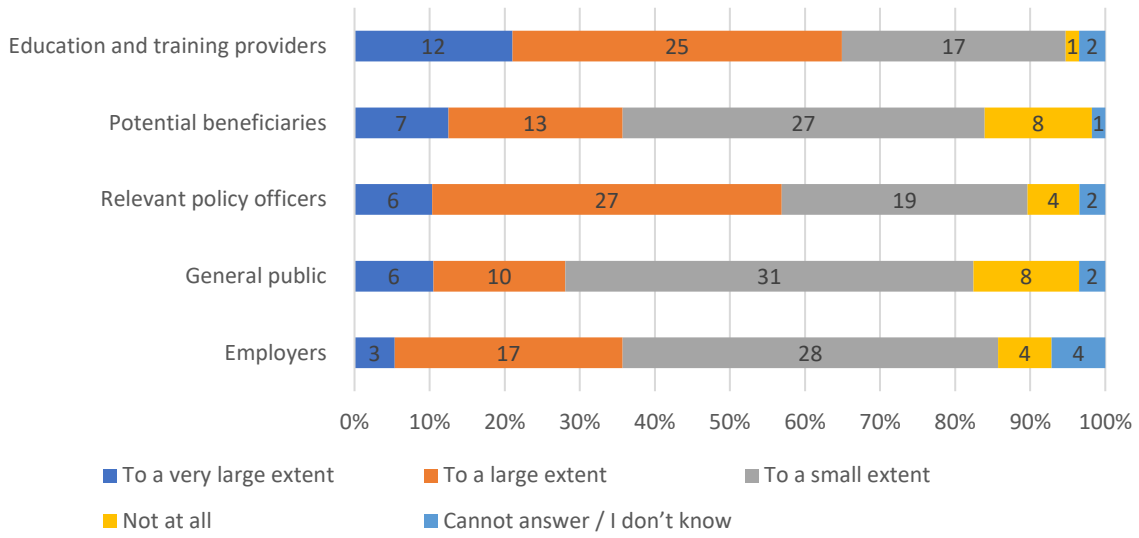|  | Approximation |
|---|---|
| Kenya | 30 |
| Mozambique | 11 |
| Rwanda | 2 |
| Seychelles | 11 |
| Seychelles | 9 |
| Seychelles | 10 |
| South Africa | 200 |

### 3.4.3   Awareness of RPL

The question of stakeholder awareness is discussed frequently as an important pre-condition for ensuring participation in RPL systems (OECD 2023). Based on the perception of the respondents, none of the stakeholder groups are sufficiently knowledgeable of the possibilities of RPL. As the figure shows below, 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. This observation if further corroborated by respondents' qualitative feedback on the significance of awareness raising (detailed under 3.5). Importantly, potential beneficiaries and employers have similar levels of low awareness as the general public.

Education and training providers were rated as having the highest overall awareness, if we 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.

Potential beneficiaries, employers and the general public are the groups with the lowest levels of awareness. In the case of these groups, less than half of the respondents thought that they were aware of the possibilities of RPL at least to a large extent. 20 of the respondents see potential beneficiaries and employers as aware to a very large or large extent and 16 think that this holds in the case of the general public as well.

**Figure 13. Awareness of various stakeholder groups about the possibilities of RPL (by respondents)4**



Legend:
- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To a small extent
- Not at all
- Cannot answer / I don't know

Data:

| Stakeholder group | To a very large extent | To a large extent | To a small extent | Not at all | Cannot answer / I don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Education and training providers | 12 | 25 | 17 | 1 | 2 |
| Potential beneficiaries | 7 | 13 | 27 | 8 | 1 |
| Relevant policy officers | 6 | 27 | 19 | 4 | 2 |
| General public | 6 | 10 | 31 | 8 | 2 |
| Employers | 3 | 17 | 28 | 4 | 4 |

## 3.5  Stakeholder needs, lessons and best practices

### 3.5.1  Main challenges

The survey probed respondents about what they saw as the main challenges in the design and adoption of an RPL policy.  Below, we summarise the main recurrent topics and the associated explanations

- Lack of funding: securing stable and sufficient funding was one of the most mentioned challenges by the respondents. This was discussed by respondents both in relation to the design and adoption stages as well as the continued sustainability of operation and RPL policy.
- Awareness raising: many respondents mentioned that key stakeholder groups, such as end beneficiaries are not aware of the benefits of the RPL process, nor are other key groups. Efforts made in order to ensure that skills acquired outside the formal sector are recognised and seen as an important asset
- Stakeholder involvement: often, respondents noted that it is crucial to involve the various representatives of the employment sector from early on. In line with this, some respondents note that the current involvement of stakeholders is minimal. Some mentioned that reaching a consensus between the employment and education sectors or various segments of the education sector (e.g. higher education practitioners may have diverging views on RPL) is key for moving forward. Others noted that the RP concept, a general understanding of it and a common vocabulary is not yet achieved among all stakeholders. In general, many respondents remarked that awareness-raising of RPL should be intensified.
- Standards and quality assurance: A few respondents noted that there is a lack of trust regarding certifications received through RPL. Therefore, one main challenge is establishing clear standards, a reliable evaluation system and quality assurance processes, in consultation with professional stakeholders, which was seen as a crucial point for success in increasing credibility.
- Accessibility: respondents noted that RPL should be accessible for all the various segments of society and adaptation to specific local and regional contexts may be a challenge. Respondents pointed out multiple facets of accessibility, including financial costs to people with various socio-economic backgrounds, languages as well as other specific needs, such as the case of people suffering from disabilities. Devising and adapting and RPL that works in a specific context was thus one challenge that was mentioned by some respondents.
- Buy-in and political will: Some respondents noted that there is 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 on their part.
- Inter-ministerial and -departmental cooperation: ownership of the program and coordination between various governmental bodies was seen as a hindering factor. In certain cases, ministries are not aligned with each other on RPL, while others reported a lack of national consensus among key policy-makers. Thus, the adoption of a national strategy was seen as a probable solution by respondents
- Competent human capital: competent human capital, know-how, and challenges with the training of RPL assessors and facilitators were in some cases noted as hindering factors.
- National directory/database: Some respondents also noted that a national directory of certifications should be created.

### 3.5.2  Lessons learnt

In an open-ended question, we surveyed respondents about the main lessons learnt during the implementation and operation of RPL. To summarise the responses, we received observations on the following topics:

- Securing buy-in and awareness raising from early on was seen as a crucial lesson by many respondents. Some remarked that it is a lengthy process and RPL professionals should be involved in awareness raising and sensitization. Another respondent summarised that constant advocacy, and communication is extremely important for the wider acceptance of RPL.

- 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. Nevertheless, respondents mentioned that streamlining the process should not result in a lack of adaptation to the local context.
- Other respondents noted that quality assurance mechanisms should be put in place at the very beginning, and many noted the importance of monitoring at all stages of RPL.
- Subsidies for beneficiaries are an important tool for ensuring accessibility, as confirmed by multiple respondents. One respondent outlined that citizens are often unwilling to pay fees.
- Early involvement of stakeholders and engagement of the labour market was a key aspect for many. One respondent also outlined that integrating RPL in the labour market is best done via a focus on learning outcomes. This may be further underlined by a respondent who claimed that the introduction of new methods, such as RPL, may face resistance from some stakeholders.
- RPL works best if it is implemented in an active work environment for workers, as opposed to an education or training service.
- One respondent noted how parallel RPL processes were detrimental, as some institutions have also begun the RPL process on their own, which devalued the RPL quality.

# 4  Summary

To summarise, the findings show that in most countries, RPL is not yet developed, while a larger set of countries are currently developing or in consultation to develop an RPL. Thus, the current systems are not well developed but a large set of countries are evolving in this respect. Various kinds of preparatory works have been conducted already, most notably stakeholder consultations and the review of best practices.

With regards to the institutional arrangements, the findings show that in several countries, there is more than one authority for coordinating the development of RPL, as well as for delivering validation services as well. In cases where an NQF and RPL are developed, the overwhelming share of countries have linked the two together.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is the priority sector for RPL across all responding countries which have a developed RPL. To a lesser extent, labour market initiatives and second-chance courses for adults in non-formal education are also targeted sectors.

Furthermore, most countries with RPL policies accept non-formal learning experiences and acquired occupational skills or competencies, these being the most consensual types of accepted prior experiences. On the other end of the process, RPL typically now leads to the recognition of credits towards a qualification or full qualification attainment. Nonetheless, most countries offer a wide variety of possible outcomes that can accommodate various use cases. The most notable assessment tools currently include tests and examinations, interviewing, workplace demonstrations and portfolios of previous works. Other assessment methods, such as employer references or simulations are less widely used among the countries.

Stakeholders agree that increasing the employability of beneficiaries should be the first priority of an RPL policy, followed by some other systematic benefits, such as improving access to formal education and lifelong learning. The current main beneficiary groups in countries with a developed RPL are low-qualified people, workers in a specific sector or profession and adult learners. In contrast, countries without an RPL would prefer to target migrants and refugees as well as the unemployed or economically inactive, alongside the previously mentioned groups.

A lack of funding, involvement of all stakeholders in the policy-making process, securing political buy-in and accessibility across various social and regional contexts were some of the main challenges mentioned in the survey by stakeholders.

Lastly, the results have shown that RPL awareness is indeed low, thus signalling a clear need for further awareness-raising campaigns both among professionals and beneficiaries.

# 5 References

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OECD. 2023. 'Recognition of Prior Learning: A Practical Guide for Policy Makers.'

# 6 Annex A. Summary tables

**Table 28. NQF stage of development in countries**

|  | NQF developed past the design stage |
| --- | --- |
| Angola | Yes |
| Botswana | Yes |
| Burkina Faso | No |
| Cabo Verde | Yes |
| Chad | No |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | No |
| Djibouti | No |
| Egypt | No |
| Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) | Yes |
| Ethiopia | Yes |
| Ghana | Cannot answer |
| Guinea-Bissau | No |
| Kenya | Yes |
| Malawi | No |
| Mauritius | Yes |
| Morocco | Yes |
| Mozambique | Yes |
| Namibia | Yes |
| Nigeria | No |
| Rwanda | Yes |
| Senegal | No |
| Seychelles | Yes |
| Somalia | No |
| South Africa | Yes |
| Sudan | No |
| Tunisia | Yes |
| Uganda | No |
| Zambia | Yes |

**Table 29. Awareness of various stakeholders' groups about the possibilities of RPL (by country tables, sum of 'To a very large extent' and 'To a large extent' responses)**

| | General public | | Relevant policy officers | | Education and training providers | | Employers | | Potential beneficiaries | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Angola | 1 | 33.3% | 2 | 66.7% | 1 | 33.3% | 1 | 33.3% | 1 | 33.3% |
| Botswana | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Burkina Faso | 2 | 50.0% | 3 | 75.0% | 3 | 75.0% | 3 | 75.0% | 2 | 50.0% |
| Cabo Verde | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% |
| Chad | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | 1 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Djibouti | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% |
| Egypt | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) | 0 | 0.0% | 3 | 75.0% | 3 | 75.0% | 2 | 50.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Ethiopia | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Ghana | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Guinea-Bissau | 1 | 25.0% | 1 | 25.0% | 2 | 50.0% | 1 | 25.0% | 2 | 50.0% |
| Kenya | 1 | 33.3% | 3 | 100.0% | 3 | 100.0% | 1 | 33.3% | 2 | 66.7% |
| Malawi | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Mauritius | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Morocco | 2 | 66.7% | 1 | 33.3% | 2 | 66.7% | 1 | 33.3% | 2 | 66.7% |
| Mozambique | 1 | 25.0% | 2 | 50.0% | 3 | 75.0% | 1 | 25.0% | 2 | 50.0% |
| Namibia | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Nigeria | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Rwanda | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Senegal | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% |
| Seychelles | 2 | 50.0% | 2 | 50.0% | 4 | 100.0% | 2 | 50.0% | 1 | 25.0% |
| Somalia | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| South Africa | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 100.0% | 1 | 50.0% | 1 | 50.0% | 0 | 0.0% |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sudan | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% |
| Tunisia | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 66.7% | 1 | 33.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 3 | 100.0% |
| Uganda | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 50.0% | 1 | 50.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Zambia | 1 | 14.3% | 4 | 57.1% | 4 | 57.1% | 2 | 28.6% | 1 | 14.3% |

**Table 30. Main lessons learnt during the implementation or operation of RPL (answers submitted across countries)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Angola | As we are in the phase of development, we are able to collect our examples of various countries so that we are expected to meet the need for the Angolan national context. |
| | Where your Jurídico Regime is available |
| Burkina Faso | RPL process not clearly defined, which devalues it |
| | RPL assessments are complex |
| | The lessons are as follows:  the importance of mobilizing stakeholders; the need for quality information for recipients of the RPL;  training of administrative staff and trainers;  strengthening political support for RPL; taking into account the needs of the informal economy. |
| Chad | Promote the experience acquired by people who do not have a diploma by giving them the opportunity to obtain one. Give people who have left the system without qualifications the opportunity to resume training through the RPL. |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | 1. The establishment of the CNC; 2. Harmonization of micro-certifications; 3. The use of common languages; 4. Alignment with the ACQF or SADCQF to facilitate the mobilization of Congolese professionals; |
| Djibouti | State and businesses |
| Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) | Knowledge dissemination |
| | Lessons - whilst the national RPL Policy is being developed, institutions have been implementing their own RPL policies that are divergent and not conforming to any national standard, as there is none at the moment. - This leads to doubtful quality of graduates admitted through RPL |
| Ethiopia | Not yet |
| Guinea-Bissau | We will now come to our implementation. |
| Kenya | Our piloting experienced participants not fully aware about RPL |
| | Misinterpretation of the concept interferes with the intended purpose; it is critical to involve all stakeholders early enough; Get the buy in of |

| | |
|---|---|
| | employers |
| | RPL best works if it is implemented in an active labour market environment for workers as opposed to as an education and training service |
| Malawi | We are still in pilot phase and the main lessons from the pilot phase . |
| Mauritius | How to submit evidence |
| Morocco | A new chance for participation and inclusion |
| | Quite cumbersome implementation process. Few complete RPLs (return to training), support requires significant funding, stakeholder buy-in is difficult. |
| | Need for consolidation of regulatory texts. Need to develop a procedures manual for RPL. |
| Mozambique | RPL, provide an alternative mode of assessing knowledge, skills and attitudes that someone has acquired through non-formal or informal learning. |
| | Difficult to train facilitators and assessors. |
| | 1. It is important to establish  the referentials for RPL 2. RPL will be sought if occupations are regulated and certificates are required 3. In our country, RPL must be subsidized as candidates generally do not have the financial resources to do so. |
| Namibia | RPl has a lengthy process. |
| Rwanda | Some participants can finance their testing and validation. Some donors can support RPL. Professional bodies can sensitize their members. |
| Senegal | Need to simplify the approach. Need to adapt to the specificities of potential beneficiaries (local language, vulnerable person, etc.) |
| Seychelles | Convincing people of the benefits of RPL is a very long and sometimes frustrating process. |
| | RPL is not as easy as it may seem. Candidates have to be motivated and determined to be able to complete the process successfully. |
| | Constant advocacy/communication/sensitisation is extremely important for the success of RPL implementation and acceptance. Constant training/sensitisation of RPL coordinators and assessors is vital. Monitoring at all stages of RPL is important . Quality assurance mechanisms |

| | |
|---|---|
| | need to be put in place at the very beginning. |
| South Africa | We have just embarked on the RPL process. However, it has taken me time to develop instruments and to complete the PoE |
| | The good practices observed are te see for example:  Practices documented in, and used to develop a maximally inclusive RPL model (applicable across sectors), as documented in the first peer-reviewed RPL book 'RPL as Specialised Pedagogy: Crossing the Lines' – an output of the long-term SAQA-University of the Western Cape (UWC) Research Partnership, Cooper, L. and Ralphs, A. (Eds.). Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council [HSRC]-UWC-SAQA. * SAQA Bulletin 2019 * SAQA-UNESCO, 2020 – 'Flexible learning pathways in higher education' Research report. * NQF Impact Study (SAQA, 2023) |
| Sudan | Engagement of labor market is crucial. It must focus on learning out comes |
| Tunisia | Not yet operational in Tunisia |
| | The matter must concern the social partners but to date the employers are not well involved |
| | RPL applicants are very qualified people |
| Uganda | RPL needs buy in and acceptability |
| Zambia | Employees were eager when ILO sponsored some tourism programs. On the other hand employers felt a relief as certification boosted working morale two years ago. I was an assessor as an expert |
| | Limited literacy and numeracy skills among some beneficiaries hinders them from  progressing towards higher level skills that require that level of operation. |
| | There is need for serious monitoring of every  project at any stage. |
| | Realization of the need skills audit as an organ to ensure quality.  Women and girls in rural areas need more micro-credentials because they get discontinued from primary schools due to either custom or early pregnancies |
| | On going awareness, institutional domestication of the same and recognition are needed |
| | People are not aware of the availability of RPL as a means to obtain formal qualifications.   Citizens are not willing to pay fees for assessment |

| | and certification |
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**Table 31. Main challenges in design and adoption of an RPL policy (answes submitted across countries)**

| Angola | Definition of the target audience Criteria for identifying needs for RVCC qualifications and competencies Methodological Guide/Manual for implementing RVCC The nature of Centers for RVCC References for RVCC professionals |
|---|---|
| | Its Legal Regime is being developed |
| | Identify the target audience as well as a source of funding for RVCC processes |
| Botswana | Buy-in by government |
| Burkina Faso | Establish standards and quality assurance for implementation in consultation with professional circles |
| | Political will, resistance of training institutions |
| | The challenge of standardizing practices given that sectoral ministries each practice their own VAE The challenge of economic accessibility The challenge of regulation |
| | We need to participate in your activities to plan it with us. |
| Chad | - Reduction of unemployment; - Possibility of resuming studies Possibility of retraining Increased chance of employability of people removed from employment |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | Put the Ministries of the employment sector and those of education on the same table to work together and clearly define the VAE criteria |
| Djibouti | Political will is needed |
| Egypt | We still in step one.development of National policy for RPL |
| | convincing everybody about the importance of RPL/ recognition of skills acquired outside of the formal sector/ making people |

| | |
|---|---|
| Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) | realise that skills acquired informally and non formally are equally important as those acquired formally  reaching out to every stakeholder so you can have their buy inn |
| | Lack of knowledge within the relevant groups |
| | Challenges - capacity building of stakeholders - establishing consensus among stakeholders on certain elements of RPL e.g. higher education practitioners may have diverging views concerning some RPL imperatives |
| Ethiopia | 1.Lack of awareness and expertise 2.lack of motivation and commitment |
| Ghana | Stakeholder, understanding of the concept, cooperation and implementation. Generation, understanding and use of common vocabulary to prevent misunderstandings of meanings may not be easy in the early stages until there is one national policy document. Education and awareness can help to bring a common understanding on matters and issues to do with the RPL. |
| Guinea-Bissau | We are mainly interested in the consultation and design of RVCC, but we do not believe that we are interested in the population and as professional training institutes that are currently being tested for adoçaodalegislaçao/regulations. |
| | Abranger significant numbers of children, which are encountered in the situation of early school dropout having socio-economic and cultural conditions, already with some knowledge, skills and skills that can be documented, validated and certified. |
| | No four laws and standards, based on a set of procedural criteria; Alinhada com o padrão Continental; |
| Kenya | Involvement of stakeholders is minimal |
| | Interpretation of the concept by all the implementers |
| | Lack of national consensus among key policy makers, especially Ministry of Education and Labour |
| Malawi | We need to intensify on creating awareness of the RPL programme . |
| Mauritius | recognition and assessment |
| Morocco | The absence of a well-defined benchmark for the validation of acquired knowledge; The organization responsible for this validation |
| | Regulations Membership of stakeholders in the education sector Implementation of a quality system Organization of the system in |

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| | a homogeneous manner |
| | Involvement of professionals Development of a single VAEP reference system Development of a national directory of professional certifications accessible to the VAEP Financing |
| Mozambique | Awareness and awareness |
| | Is very important |
| | Non formal economy |
| | The resources: for the assessments there is a high need of consumables and the RCA becomes expensive; To guarantee the quality and seriousness of the process, avoiding at all the corruption, for example; To be credible by the society |
| Namibia | Lack of Financial resources and Competent Human Capital. |
| Nigeria | Lack of database. |
| Rwanda | Low awareness Resistance to change Low financing |
| Senegal | Development of a CNCQ Political support from all stakeholders Adaptation of the system to the specificities of potential beneficiaries |
| Seychelles | To identify a model that will work in your specific context. |
| | The policy and guideline were designed before the implementation of the process, and were based on pilot exercises done. Now, when the process is actually taking place, there are some areas that need to be reviewed as they do not reflect the reality. |
| | * lack of awareness of the benefits of RPL * lack of trust regarding the certifications received through RPL * it is sometimes difficult to provide evidence to support learning, esp. in cases of non-formal learning * limited availability of programmes against which candidates can be RPLed |
| Somalia | 1. Lack of standardization and quality assurance systems 2. There is limited awareness and understanding of RPL among stakeholders. 3: Limited both human and financial resources |

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| South Africa | Lack of direction from regulatory bodies on how to design standardised instruments |
| | (1) Buy-in (2) Resources (3) Know-how (4) Quality assurance |
| Sudan | Lack of data base lack of nation strategy political commitment |
| Tunisia | The design of a reliable evaluation system (allowing specific skills to be validated) - The recognition of VAE (or even skills) by higher education authorities |
| | the predisposition of public training institutions there is a fear of losing its hold on the sector |
| | a policy that responds to individuals regardless of their status |
| Uganda | Funds to organise regional and national validation workshops |
| | Narrow in focus and not comprehensive enough |
| Zambia | Funding and ownership of the program; communities not very much aware, Cost to employers not welcome to most fear to spend just incase a worker would live if not remunerated sufficiently to meet the current cost of living |
| | Financing at implementation stage is a challenge for potential beneficiaries.. |
| | Funding could be a problem And implementation |
| | The inhouse fighting between the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA), Zambia Higher Education Authority (HEA) and Technical Vacation Education Training Authority (TEVETA) as to which institution must be in charge of micro- credential management. |
| | Lack of awareness by general public |
| | Having buy-in from the implementers of RPL. Development has to ensure that it includes all the key stakeholders |