



ACQF

African Continental
Qualifications Framework

Session 5:

Validation of learning outcomes: focus on RPL

Zambia Case

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Understanding of RPL in the Zambian context

- Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process by which individuals can claim and **gain recognition** towards specific **nationally recognised qualifications** based on **demonstrated learning** that has occurred at some time **in the past**.
- It recognises knowledge, skills and attitudes that have been acquired in other forms of learning, which were **previously not verified**.
- RPL provides an alternative mode of assessing knowledge, skills and attitudes that someone has acquired through **non-formal or informal learning**.
- Helpful tool in **certificating competences** that are **acquired outside the formal education and training system**; e.g. work-based learning, community/ faith-based learning or life experiences.

History of RPL in Zambia (1)

- Historically, Trade Testing in Zambia has been said to have emerged as part of demobilization intervention after the Second World War.
- The contingent nature of the war had forced or enabled many individuals to acquire an assortment of skills for which at the time, no validation system existed.
- Under both British Government rule and Zambian Government rule, Apprenticeship training and learning was recognized through development and provision of relevant policy, legislative and/or regulatory instruments.

History of RPL in Zambia (2)

- 1969: The 1969 Statement of Intent on Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) - the first post-independence policy on TEVT.
- 1996: Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) Policy – second edition.
- 1997: In the 1997 Strategy Paper on Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training, Government of the Republic of Zambia adopted a TEVET Learner Progression path model that was underpinned by the following principles: 1. Life-long learning; 2. Open access to TEVET for any motivated individual within the labour force population; and 3. Flexible entry and exit from the TEVET system.
- 1998: Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Act, No.13 of 1998 – established TEVETA.
- 2005: Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (Amendment) Act No. 11 of 2005 – more functions to TEVETA, establishment of TEVET Fund through Skills Levy.
- 2011: Zambia Qualifications Authority Act No. 13 of 2011 – Establishment of ZAQA with mandate to develop national policy on RPL.
- 2020: National Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Policy – RPL comes out strongly.

- **National Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Policy (2020):** provides for inclusion of dropouts and the never been to school in the TEVET system. The policy also provides for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), including Life-Long Learning (LLL) and Work Based Learning (WBL).
- **Recognition of Prior Learning Policy in Zambia (2016, 2023):** provides a framework for recognition of all competencies gained on the job or as a result of informal or unstructured learning experiences – also includes formal learning through CATS.
- **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Guidelines (2021):** TEVETA has developed guidelines for implementation of RPL within the Trades and Occupations sub framework of the ZQF. It provides a framework within which RPL can be conducted.

- ❑ By virtue of being the custodian of all national qualifications and reference point for foreign qualifications, the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA) is mandated to develop National Policy Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Zambia.
- ❑ ZAQA ensures implementation of RPL during the registration and accreditation of qualifications on the ZQF, also during annual compliance audits of appropriate authorities.

The implementing agency of RPL (informal and non-formal learning) is the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA).

- Sets guidelines and standards for RPL in the TEVET sub sector.
- Accredits RPL centers and assessors.
- Awards recognition certificates at appropriate qualification levels to successful candidates.

Other key players in RPL

- **RPL beneficiaries** – employees/ trainees/ members of the general public.
- **Government (MOTS)** – overall policy direction/ legislation/ funding.
- **Training providers** – facilities/ tools and equipment/ skills development
- **Employers** – skills development/ funding/ facilities/ tools and equipment
- **NGOs/ Cooperating partners** – financing, skills development.
- **Assessors/ Moderators/ Verifiers** – assessment of candidates.
- **Mentors** – the mentor is a role model, a motivator and a counsellor to the RPL candidate, a more experienced employee in this case.
- **HEA** – for formal RPL only (CATS).

❑ Guidelines for the Registration and Accreditation of Qualifications on the Zambia Qualifications Framework state that for a qualification to be registered and accredited on the ZQF:

- 1) The entry requirements shall show how the institution has articulated its RPL policy.
- 2) Provisions should be made for awarding credit towards a qualification or exemptions from specific qualification requirements as a result of recognition of prior learning (credits awarded for relevant informal or uncertificated learning).

❑ Trade Test Level I Certificate is recognised at Level 3 of the ZQF.

❑ Recognition of prior formal learning (CATS) is applied across all levels of the ZQF – also a key requirement for placement of qualifications on the ZQF.

ACQF Levels of qualifications obtained through RPL

ZQF Level 3 Certificate (Trade Test I Certificate)

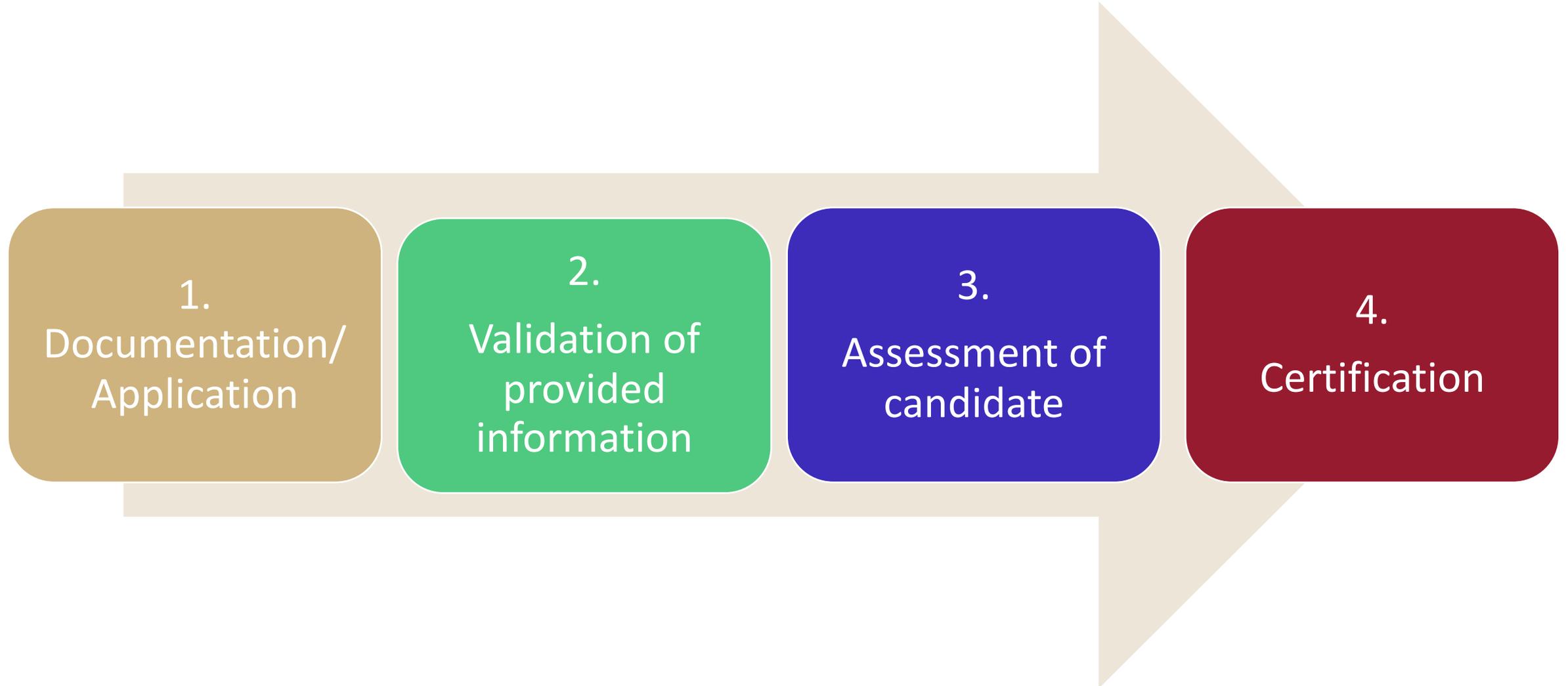


Trade Test II Certificate (not catered on the current ZQF)

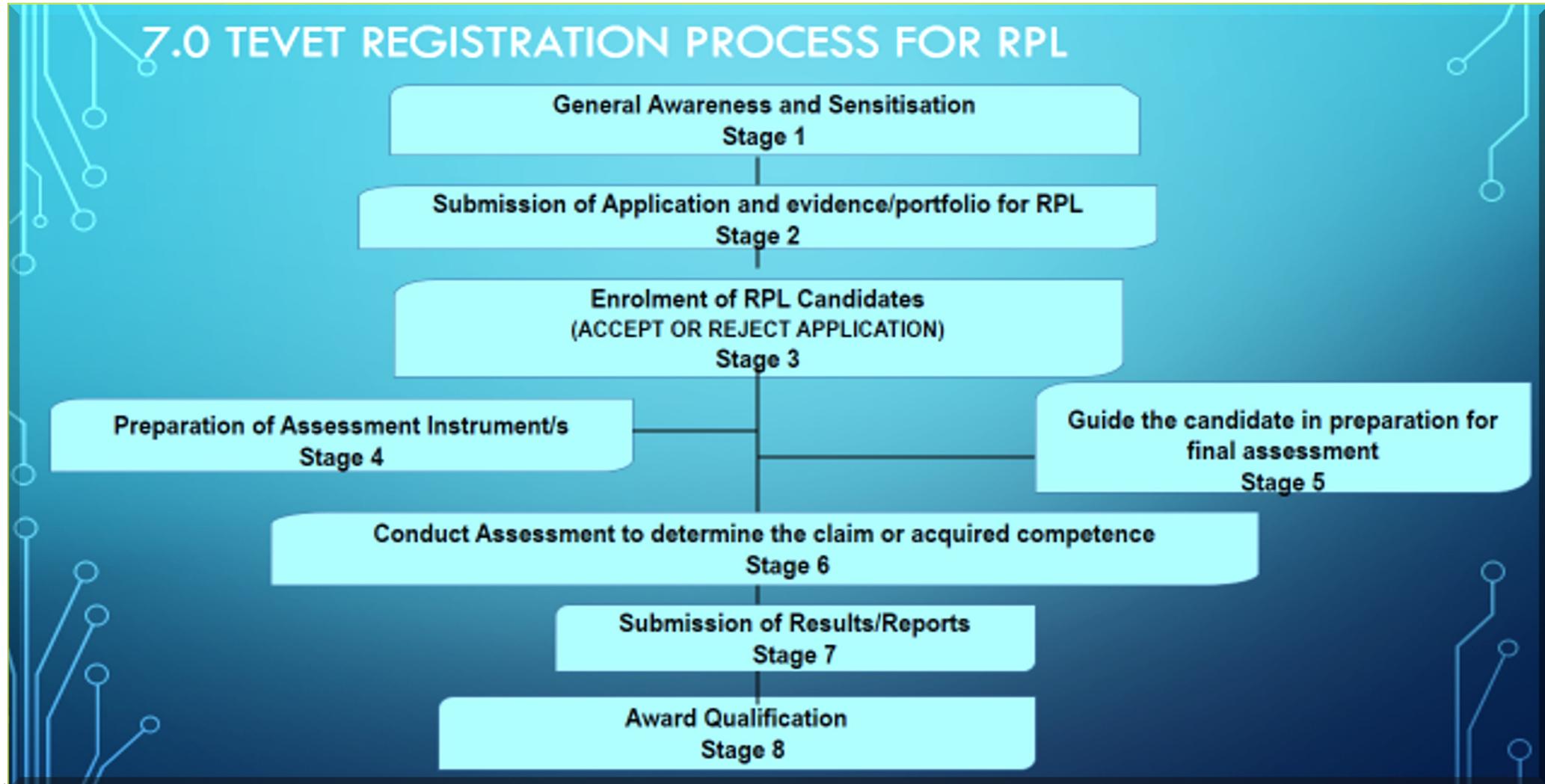


Trade Test III (not catered on the current ZQF)

RPL implementation process: phases (1)



RPL implementation stages (2)



Main sectors where RPL is implemented



Key challenges to RPL implementation

- Inadequate awareness and knowledge about RPL.
- Lack of trust in the quality of the qualifications gained through RPL – by employers and society.
- Inadequate assessment centres.
- Inadequate funding.
- Limited number of RPL professionals.
- Inadequate up-skilling or skills gap training opportunities.

New perspectives

- National coordination of RPL that will focus on awareness and publicity, advocacy and the main-streaming of RPL in the Zambian Education and Training System.
- Support expanded engagements in RPL by Government agencies, employer and employees, training institutions and RPL practitioners.
- Enhance quality assurance in the recognition of prior learning.
- Increase access to acquisition of nationally recognised qualifications through RPL.

RPL is for you!

Thank you

