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► SKILL-UP Ethiopia project and GPSL3

RPL



► Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Framework, Policy, Processes, and Procedures for the TVET Sector

Final Report

SKILLUP
Upgrading skills for the changing world of work

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Framework, Policy, Processes, and Procedures for the TVET Sector

Final Report

Rob Stowell is an advisor on technical and vocational education and training [TVET]. He has a particular interest in TVET assessment policy and practice, including recognition of prior learning. Rob has undertaken assessment related TVET assignments in Australia and internationally.

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Foreword

The SKILL-UP Program, which is funded by the Norwegian Development Cooperation Agency (NoRAD), has fostered innovative skill development programs in a range of countries including Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana, Malawi and Senegal.

In Ethiopia, the SKILL-UP Program, has supported the Government of Ethiopia's social and economic development agenda by strengthening the capacity of the nation's skills development system to support export-oriented growth, economic diversification and the creation of decent employment opportunities.

A key component of this work has been the design of a Recognition of Prior Learning [RPL] model for the TVET system in Ethiopia. It is envisaged that that this will provide an efficient, cost effective and quality assured mechanism for skilled but unqualified workers to gain national qualifications for the abilities they have acquired through formal, informal and non-formal learning. This in turn will assist them to gain decent work, access further skill development opportunities through the formal technical and vocational education and training [TVET] system and improve their livelihoods.

During 2019, the SKILL-UP Program, with support from the Federal TVET Agency, developed a draft national policy and framework on RPL for the TVET system and designed an RPL process which could be applied across all industry sectors.

The RPL policy, framework and process, outlined in this report, complements the existing assessment and certification arrangements in the TVET system and is consistent with both the National Qualification Framework and the government's strategic direction for the TVET sector and skills development in Ethiopia. It provides a new pathway for skilled but unqualified workers to gain full or part national qualifications without having to undertake further training. Under this new, quality assured pathway, applicants who provide evidence that they possess the skills identified in one or more national competency standards are able to awarded the relevant full or part national TVET qualification. Evidence may take a number of forms including samples of the applicant's work, reports from the applicant's employer and documentation of the skills the applicant has attained through formal and informal learning.

These RPL arrangements will benefit skilled workers in Ethiopia who have previously had limited access to national qualifications and will also provide a mechanism for recognising the skills attained by migrant workers who are returning to Ethiopia, particularly from the Middle East, as a result of COVID 19.

This report is intended to describe the key features of an RPL system and stimulate discussion on how RPL may be incorporated into the existing skill recognition arrangements in Ethiopia.

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Section 1

Status report

▶ 1. Purpose

To provide the International Labour Organization (ILO) Ethiopia Office with a progress report on the work undertaken to date on the project to develop a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process and resources, pilot it with workers in the garment-making industry and provide suggestions for progressing the project, given the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

▶ 2. Project Team

The Project Team consists of:

- ▶ Project Manager - Alemayehu Zewdie - ILO Ethiopia Office
- ▶ Consultant - Rob Stowell - Learning Australia Pty Ltd
- ▶ Administration - Shiferaw Bejie - ILO Ethiopia Office

▶ 3. Project situation

The ILO is implementing the SKILL-UP Programme, funded by Norway, which aims to deliver an innovative skills development programme in countries including Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana, Malawi and Senegal.

In Ethiopia, the aim of the project is to support the Government of Ethiopia's agenda of social and economic development by building the capacity of the country's skills development system to become market-driven and more inclusive, and to integrate skills policies with national development and sectoral strategies, so as to contribute to export growth, economic diversification and decent employment creation.

A key component of the country's skills agenda will be the establishment of a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system that provides an efficient, cost-effective and quality-assured mechanism to enable skilled but unqualified workers to gain national recognition of the skills that they have acquired through formal, informal and non-formal learning. This in turn will strengthen their position in the labour market, improve their access to work and

provide a pathway into the formal technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system.

The ILO Ethiopia Office commenced implementation of this project in February 2020. Since that time, the Project Team has:

- ▶ prepared an agreed action plan (see Inception Report);
- ▶ undertaken its first mission to Ethiopia (24 February - 8 March 2020);
- ▶ submitted the Inception Report (7 March 2020);
- ▶ submitted its First Draft Report (6 April 2020). This report, in keeping with the contractual requirements, included four products: an RPL Framework, an RPL Policy, an RPL Process and RPL Resources. In addition, the report included a programme outline and support materials for an RPL Assessor Training Programme.

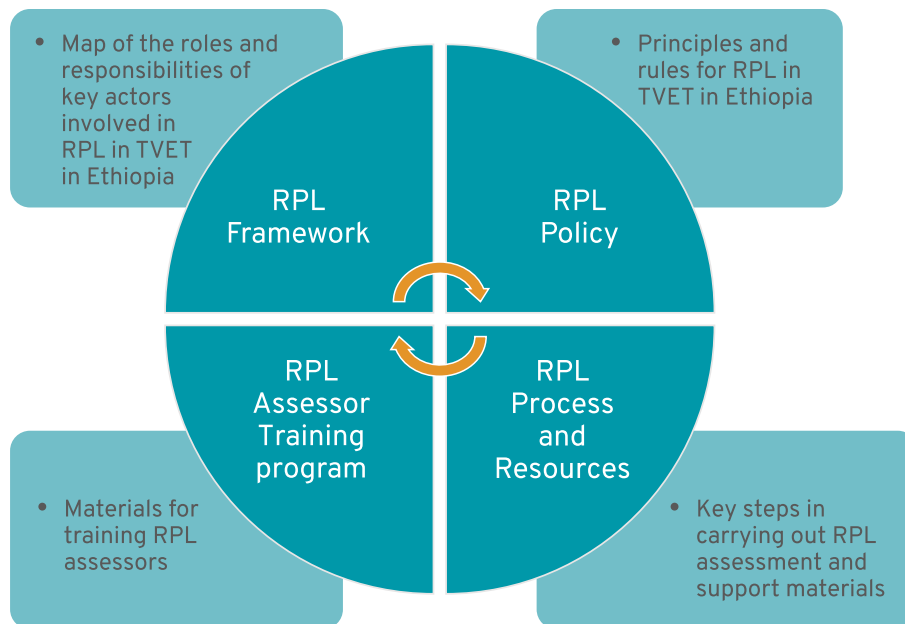
As detailed in the project action plan, it was initially agreed that the suite of RPL materials would be reviewed by the Federal TVET Agency and piloted with a group of companies and workers in the garment-making industry. However, with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated travel and meeting restrictions, these plans were put on hold and it was agreed that the project would focus on finalizing the RPL materials at this stage.

The RPL materials were submitted to the ILO Ethiopia Office for comment on 6 April 2020. The feedback received from the Office was considered by the Project Team and incorporated, as appropriate, into the final version of these materials, which forms the basis of this report (See sections 2-5). A key component of this feedback was that the materials developed by this project should be generic, so that they can be applied across a range of industry sectors, not just the garment-making sector. This feedback reflected, at least in part, the emerging need for the ILO Ethiopia Office to establish a flexible RPL mechanism for recognizing the diverse skills of migrant workers returning to Ethiopia, particularly from the Middle East, as a result of COVID-19.

▶ 4. Overview of RPL materials

As illustrated in the diagram below, the RPL materials included in this report comprise four interrelated products.

► **Figure 1 - RPL materials**



It should be noted that the RPL materials build on the existing assessment and certification arrangements in the TVET system in Ethiopia. In designing the RPL materials, particular attention was paid to ensuring that the approach to RPL is compatible with the advice on assessment and certification provided in the following regulatory documents:

1. *Technical and Vocational Education and Training Proclamation Number 954/2016*, published in Federal Negarit Gazette no. 78, 27 May 2016
2. Federal TVET Agency, *Occupational Assessment and Certification Directive*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa
3. Federal TVET Agency, *Assessment Tool Development Manual*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa
4. Federal TVET Agency, *Assessment and Certification Management Manual for Centers of Competency*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa
5. Federal TVET Agency, *Assessment Administration Manual for Assessment Centers*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa.
6. Federal TVET Agency, *Assessor's Manual for the Conduct of Assessment*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa.
7. Federal TVET Agency, *Occupational Standard development*, March 2014, Addis Ababa

As the RPL materials build on this earlier work, it is envisaged that the adoption of the RPL model outlined in this report will not require significant adjustments to the existing

regulations for TVET assessment and certification. It is understood that a companion piece of work being undertaken by the ILO will identify the changes that need to be made to the existing regulations to facilitate the implementation of this approach to RPL.

The RPL materials comprise four interrelated products. These are described below.

The RPL framework, which is detailed in Section 2, sets out the definition of RPL, the rationale for the RPL framework, the benefits of RPL for employers, trade unions, applicants, government and assessment and certification agencies, as well as the potential barriers to RPL implementation. The framework outlines a model of RPL which operates at four levels in Ethiopia: system, sectoral, regional and applicant. The framework also identifies the stakeholders at each level and their responsibilities in relation to RPL governance and implementation.

The RPL policy, detailed in Section 3, sets out the principles and rules which would govern the operation of RPL in the TVET system. The RPL policy builds on the RPL framework and is consistent with the Federal TVET Agency's Occupational Assessment and Certification Directive of November 2014 G.C. Under the proposed RPL policy, RPL is viewed as an applicant-led process, enabling people who have skills but lack qualifications to gain formal recognition under the National TVET Qualifications Framework. To ensure the integrity of both RPL assessments and the national qualifications issued to successful applicants, the RPL policy includes a clear and transparent quality assurance framework. This includes provision for the accreditation of RPL assessors, minimum standards for the delivery of RPL services and the external auditing of RPL providers. The policy, which includes a glossary of key RPL terms, also sets out the policy context for RPL, the requirements for the delivery of RPL services, and the roles and responsibilities of agencies engaged in the provision of RPL.

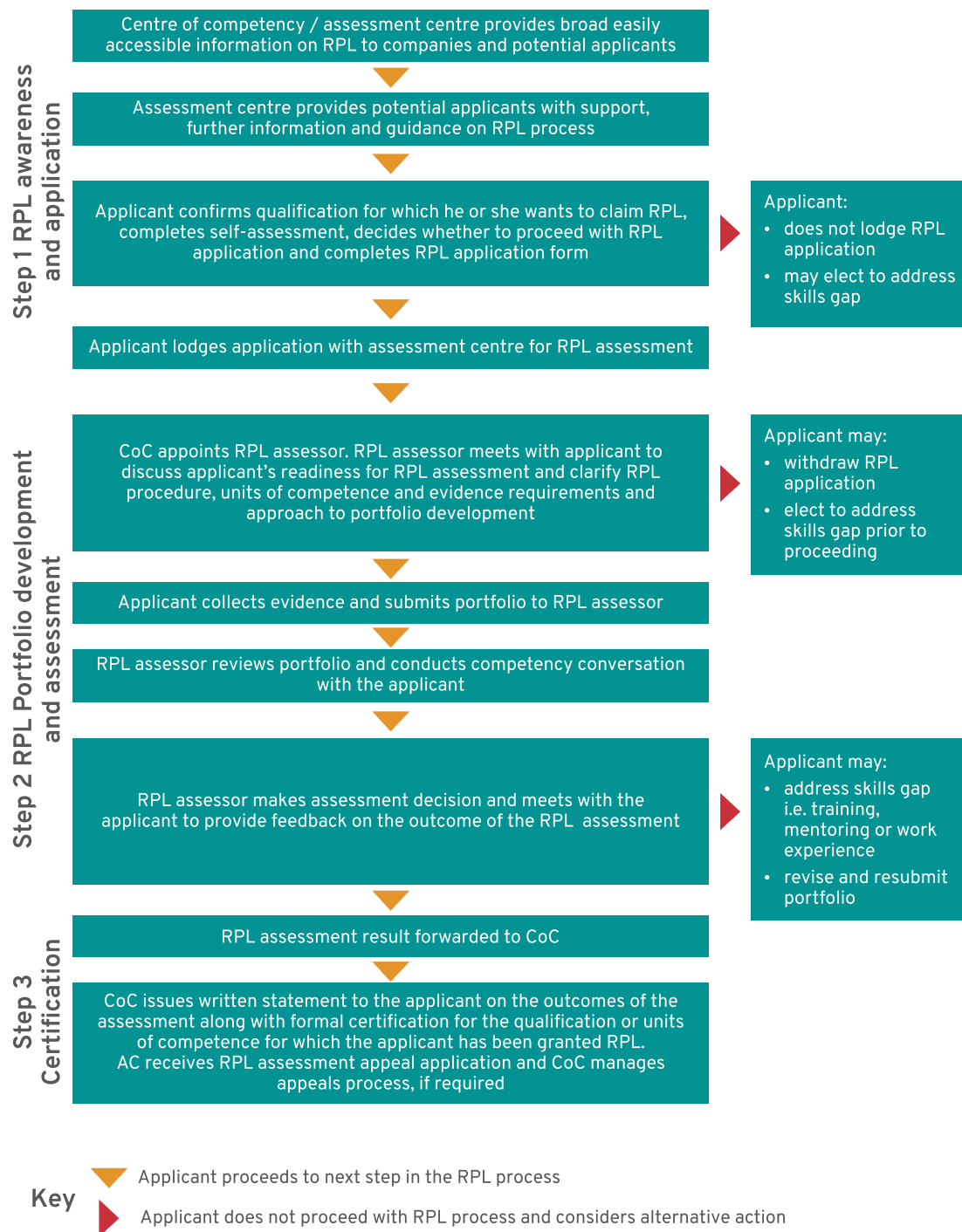
Taken together, the framework and the policy set out a vision for RPL in the TVET sector in Ethiopia and delineate the responsibilities of federal and regional government agencies, centres of competency and assessment centres, TVET providers and RPL assessors and applicants.

The RPL framework and RPL policy provide the basis for the RPL process and resources, detailed in Section 4. The RPL process is a three-stage, applicant-driven, quality-assured process, including detailed procedures for its implementation. This approach, illustrated in Figure 2, is supported by a set of thirteen customizable RPL resources that can be used by RPL applicants, RPL assessors and others engaged in the promotion, implementation and governance of the RPL process. These resources, which are provided in MS Word format, have been designed for use across a broad range of occupations and industry sectors.

The final component of this suite of materials is the RPL Assessor Training Programme, detailed in Section 5. This includes a programme outline, participant notes for each

workshop, facilitator notes for each workshop and a set of PowerPoint presentations. These have been designed to support face-to-face, online or self-directed delivery of the RPL Assessor Training Programme.

► **Figure 2 – The RPL process**



► 5. Next steps

As noted earlier in this report, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has led the ILO Ethiopia Office to reassess the plan for this project. It was agreed in April 2020 that:

- the Project Team should focus on finalizing the RPL materials with a view to completion by 30 June 2020, and
- tasks requiring face-to-face contact, such as the review of the RPL materials by the Federal TVET Agency and the piloting of the RPL materials with a group of companies and workers in the garment-making industry, should be put on hold.

The first of these tasks is now complete and attention needs to be given to progressing:

- the review of the RPL materials, specifically the RPL framework and RPL policy, by the Federal TVET Agency,
- the piloting of the RPL materials with a group of companies and workers in the garment-making industry. This includes the training of an initial group of RPL assessors.

5.1 Review of the RPL framework and RPL policy by the Federal TVET Agency

In the Inception Report, which was submitted on 7 March 2020, a proposal was made to conduct an expert workshop with the National TVET Agency, the ILO and other key stakeholders to [1] assess the RPL framework and RPL policy and [2] identify strategies for promoting further discussion and gaining industry and government support for the approach to RPL embedded in these documents.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- present the RPL framework and RPL policy;
- review the RPL framework and RPL policy for consistency with the National Qualification Framework and the Government of Ethiopia's strategic direction for the TVET sector and skills development;
- ensure that the RPL framework and RPL policy provide the basis for the development of flexible and quality-assured RPL models that can be applied across all industry sectors;
- ensure that the RPL framework and RPL policy provide an appropriate basis for the development of national procedures and resources for RPL assessments in the garment-making and textile sector, which are to be trialled in subsequent stages of the project;
- review a glossary of RPL terms forming part of the RPL policy document (see Section 3 of this report) to facilitate discussion of RPL across different industries and education and training sectors, and between Government and the private sector.

To date this workshop has not taken place, due to meeting and travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the current situation, the review of the RPL framework and RPL policy documents could be facilitated by circulating the documents to a limited group of stakeholders for comment. This group should include senior representatives of the Federal TVET Agency who have responsibility for assessment and certification, centres of competency, the ILO Ethiopia Office and others. Prior to circulating the documents, it is suggested that a short online briefing (30 minutes) be facilitated by the ILO Project Manager and the Project Consultant to inform participants about the two documents. Following the briefing session, participants would be invited to provide written feedback on the framework and policy. Feedback from the participants would be considered and incorporated in the next iteration of the documents. Provided that personnel in Ethiopia are available, it is suggested that this activity be undertaken during June 2020.

5.2 Piloting of the RPL materials with a group of companies and workers in the garment-making industry

Prior to piloting the RPL materials, a group of RPL assessors will need to be trained in the approach to RPL and the materials developed for this project. The original project action plan envisaged a three-day, face-to-face training programme for a group of accredited assessors in late March 2020. This programme was to be led by the project consultant, Rob Stowell from Learning Australia. Under the current travel restrictions put in place by the Australian Government, Australian citizens are not permitted to travel overseas. It appears that this restriction will remain in place until the end of 2020. Consequently, the consultant will not be available to facilitate the planned workshop until next year.

Given this situation, four alternative strategies for the delivery of the Assessor Training Programme have been developed. These are detailed on page 17 of Section 5: Training Programme for RPL Assessors in TVET. The benefits and limitations of each strategy are set out in the following chart.

Alternative delivery strategies	Benefits	Limitations
1 Postpone face-to-face delivery until 2021	- Facilitator with international experience of RPL and familiarity with TVET in Ethiopia conducts workshop - Interactive format that allows participants to share understandings	- Significant delay in project implementation - No certainty about date of workshop - Potential COVID-19 risk
2 Online delivery	- Facilitator with international experience of RPL and familiarity with TVET in Ethiopia conducts workshop - Interactive format that allows participants to share understandings - Limited delay in programme implementation	- Reliant on IT infrastructure - Reliability of Internet connectivity in Ethiopia - Participants may have limited access to IT hardware and software - Coordination of availability of programme participants
3 Self-directed learning	- Limited delay in programme implementation - Not reliant on IT infrastructure	- Limited access to facilitator with international experience of RPL - Reduced learning effectiveness
4 Face-to-face delivery managed by a local facilitator with mentor support	- Limited delay in programme implementation - Not reliant in IT infrastructure - Skilled local facilitator with sound knowledge of TVET in Ethiopia conducts workshop - International mentor support for local facilitator - Interactive format - Limited delay in programme implementation - Increased cost	Limited access to facilitator with international experience of RPL

Once a group of RPL assessors have been trained, the roll-out of the pilot programme in the garment-making sector could proceed, always dependent on local conditions.

5.3 Recommendations

Establishing a clear way forward at this stage is difficult, given the uncertainties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the following steps could be taken:

1. Proceed with the review of the RPL framework and RPL policy as described in Section 5.1, with a view to this being completed by the end of June 2020.
2. Proceed with the training of a group of RPL assessors in accordance with either Option 1 or Option 4, as described in Section 5.2. Option 2 is not seen as appropriate, given the high level of reliance on IT infrastructure, while Option 3 is not regarded as viable, given the complexity of the subject matter and the limited access to facilitator support.

Section 2

RPL Framework for TVET in Ethiopia

Document control sheet

Document preparation	
Name of person who prepared document	Date

Approval - Document sign-off			
Name	Role	Date	Signature

Revision history			
Change made by	Description	Version	Date

▶ 1. Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) provides formal recognition of vocational knowledge or skills gained on the job or as a result of other non-formal or informal learning experiences. RPL, if granted, may lead to the full or partial award of a nationally recognized technical and vocational education and training (TVET) qualification.

RPL acknowledges that competencies can be acquired in different ways, forms and settings. These include:

- ▶ Formal learning through programmes of study or training delivered by education or training providers, or in enterprises providing formal apprenticeship or dual training systems. Such training is structured, has precise learning objectives and is certified;
- ▶ Non-formal learning which takes place alongside mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification. Examples of non-formal learning are training activities undertaken in the workplace, the voluntary sector or the trade-union context, and in the community;
- ▶ Informal learning which results from activities undertaken daily at work, in the family or during leisure activities. Such learning is often unintentional and the individual concerned may not recognize at the time that it has contributed to his or her knowledge, skills and competences.

RPL in TVET is underpinned by six key ideas:

- ▶ RPL is for unqualified competent people.
- ▶ RPL focuses on the outcomes of the applicant's formal, informal and non-formal learning. It does not focus on the way competencies were acquired.
- ▶ Assessment is at the heart of RPL.
- ▶ RPL is a way of making individuals' competencies visible.
- ▶ RPL offers a new pathway to nationally recognized TVET qualifications.
- ▶ RPL is about equity and is a powerful tool for combatting poverty and disadvantage by providing all people with access to formal TVET qualifications and decent work.

▶ 2. Rationale of a national RPL framework for TVET

This framework is intended to encourage the development and expansion of processes for the recognition of prior learning in TVET. In particular it is designed to:

- ▶ communicate government, employer, trade-union and training-sector commitment to the recognition of prior learning in TVET;
- ▶ highlight the potential benefits of RPL;

- ▶ identify the key elements of a modern, quality assured RPL system at sector, organization and applicant level;
- ▶ identify the key groups involved in establishing, operating and maintaining the RPL framework, and define their responsibilities.

▶ 3. Benefits of RPL

The introduction of RPL reflects the Government of Ethiopia's commitment to broadening participation in TVET, building the skills profile of the nation's workforce and ensuring that all citizens have access to nationally recognized qualifications. Effective RPL systems also support efforts to stimulate industry. The educational partnerships to which they give rise ensure that qualifications are more relevant, enhance the employability of TVET graduates, reduce duplication in training and skills formation, and overcome poverty and disadvantage by providing individuals with access to training, skills and decent jobs.

3.1 Benefits for employers

- ▶ Identification of employees' skills
- ▶ Identification of skills gaps
- ▶ Identification of appropriate training opportunities for workers and management
- ▶ Reduction in training time by minimizing duplication of learning
- ▶ New ideas and developments as a result of applicants reflecting on work activities
- ▶ Broadening and deepening the skills pool in Ethiopia so that over time companies gain access to more relevant, higher-quality skills needed to boost productivity

3.2 Benefits for trade unions

- ▶ Formal recognition of skills acquired by workers through work and life experience
- ▶ Identification of workers' skill gaps and training needs in technical and generic skills
- ▶ Support for development of training pathways that provide access to decent jobs for skilled but unqualified workers
- ▶ Certification gained by workers is linked to the national TVET qualifications framework
- ▶ Documentation of skills possessed by existing workers facilitates evidence-based labour negotiations in relation to wages, training and job progression

3.3 Benefits for applicants

- ▶ Full or partial award of nationally recognized qualifications
- ▶ Increased self-esteem and confidence resulting from recognition of achievements
- ▶ Boost to career and promotion opportunities from gaining nationally recognized qualifications

- ▶ Identification of learner pathways by recognizing learning that can be mapped to occupational standards
- ▶ Shortening of the normal period of study thanks to evidence of existing knowledge, technical skills and soft skills needed in work

3.4 Benefits for government

- ▶ Improved skills profile of the nation's workforce
- ▶ Expansion of people's employment prospects
- ▶ Increased participation in skills formation due to improved access to education and training
- ▶ Greater equity by giving access to decent work
- ▶ Greater social cohesion achieved by improving individuals' access to work and in so doing addressing disadvantage and poverty
- ▶ Promotion of learning and personal and professional development as an inherent part of employers' business activity
- ▶ Enhanced collaboration between sectors.

3.5 Benefits for training, assessment and certification agencies

- ▶ Greater efficiency in the use of scarce training resources achieved by not training individuals in areas where they already have skills
- ▶ Facilitation of education/industry training partnerships
- ▶ Promotion of more flexible entry routes to nationally recognized qualifications
- ▶ Enhanced relevance of training and certification resulting from better understanding of industry training needs and approaches to skills development
- ▶ Greater relevance for national certification as it gives clear indication that graduates can perform work, deploying both technical and soft skills, to the standard required in industry.

▶ 4. Barriers to RPL

There are several barriers that could limit the development and implementation of RPL in the TVET sector in Ethiopia. These include:

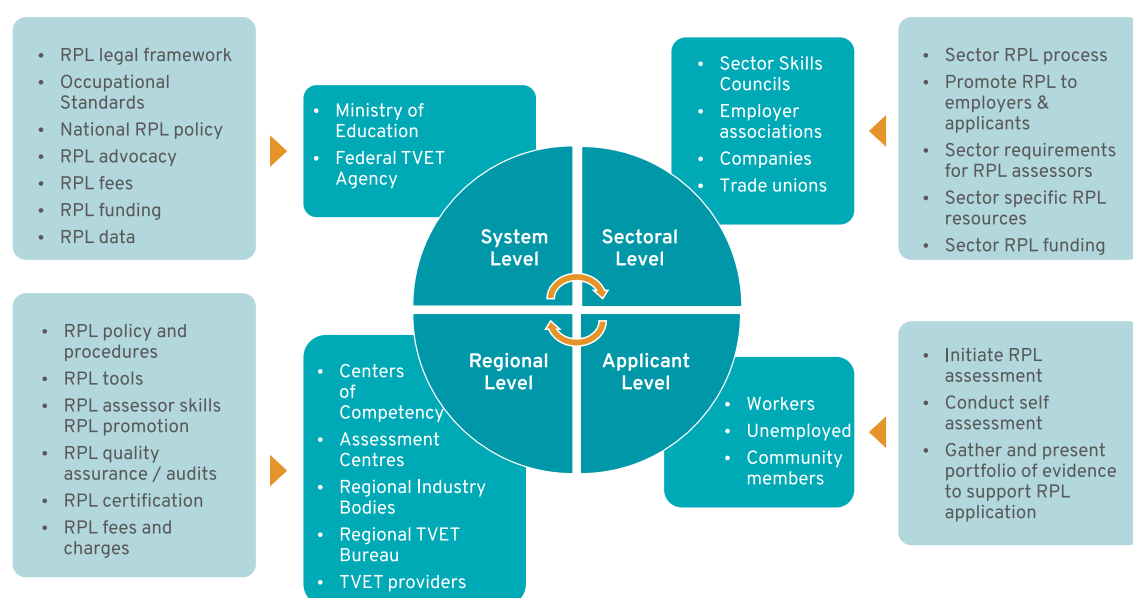
- ▶ limited awareness of what RPL is and the opportunities it provides for employers and workers;
- ▶ a lack of trained RPL assessors and the need to build RPL capacity in the sector;
- ▶ perceptions that informal and non-formal learning are less important than formal learning;
- ▶ the absence of a national RPL policy.

► 5. RPL framework for TVET

Figure 1 illustrates the national RPL framework for the TVET sector, indicating the key stakeholders and their roles in supporting a modern, quality-assured RPL system. The RPL framework operates at four interrelated levels:

- system
- sectoral
- regional
- applicant

► **Figure 3 - RPL framework for TVET**



► 6. Responsibilities within the RPL framework

Responsibility for RPL in the TVET context in Ethiopia rests with a range of stakeholders operating at system, sectoral, regional and applicant level. The responsibilities of each of these stakeholders is set out below.

6.1 System level

The Ministry of Science and Higher Education acting through the Federal TVET Agency:

- ▶ oversees the legal framework for RPL, ensuring that full or partial TVET qualifications issued to applicants on the basis of an RPL assessment are nationally recognized under the Ethiopian National Qualifications Framework;
- ▶ approves the industry competency standards that are the benchmarks for RPL assessments;
- ▶ develops and maintains the national RPL policy;
- ▶ develops and implements the national RPL quality-assurance arrangements;
- ▶ audits RPL assessments to ensure the transparency and fairness of RPL processes and the quality and consistency of RPL assessment outcomes;
- ▶ provides national guidelines on the cost and funding of RPL assessments;
- ▶ promotes RPL to employer associations, trade unions, sector skills councils, regional TVET bureaus, TVET providers, centres of competency and the wider community as a means of supporting national skills formation and broadening participation in education and training;
- ▶ collects, analyses and disseminates data on RPL assessment activity.

6.2 Sector level

Sector skill councils, working in collaboration with relevant employer associations, trade unions and companies:

- ▶ develop and implement sector-specific communication and promotion strategies for RPL;
- ▶ develop sector-specific RPL resources;
- ▶ provide sector-specific training for RPL assessors;
- ▶ source and allocate funding for RPL assessments;
- ▶ collect, analyse and disseminate data on sectoral RPL assessment activity;
- ▶ advise on ways of presenting evidence for use in RPL assessments;
- ▶ participate in RPL quality assurance arrangements at national and regional level to ensure the quality and consistency of RPL assessment outcomes.

6.3 Regional level

Centres of competency:

- ▶ develop and implement RPL policy and procedures consistent with the requirements of the Federal TVET Agency;
- ▶ accredit assessment centres (ACs) and assessors to offer RPL services;

- ▶ develop and implement external RPL quality assurance arrangements by conducting compliance audits of ACs in conjunction with regional industry bodies;
- ▶ issue full or partial certification recognized under the NTQF to successful RPL applicants;
- ▶ provide capacity-building for RPL assessors;
- ▶ develop and implement communication and promotion strategies for RPL;
- ▶ monitor the use and impact of RPL.

Assessment centres:

- ▶ deliver RPL services;
- ▶ ensure that RPL services are available for all nationally recognized TVET qualifications within their scope of accreditation;
- ▶ develop and maintain a documented RPL process;
- ▶ develop and implement internal RPL quality assurance arrangements;
- ▶ ensure that RPL assessments are undertaken by accredited RPL assessors;
- ▶ provide targeted, easily accessible information on RPL to companies, community organizations and potential applicants;
- ▶ establish, implement and effectively communicate the reasonable adjustment policy to applicants and RPL assessors;
- ▶ establish, implement and effectively communicate the RPL fees and charges policy to applicants and RPL assessors;
- ▶ establish, implement and effectively communicate the RPL assessment appeals policy to applicants and RPL assessors;
- ▶ establish, implement and maintain the centre's RPL plan.

Regional industry bodies:

- ▶ participate in RPL quality assurance arrangements at regional level, including compliance audits, to ensure the quality and consistency of RPL assessment outcomes;
- ▶ communicate the benefits of RPL and advocate for RPL.
- ▶ Accredited TVET providers, including both Government and private institutions:
- ▶ embed RPL in the context of widening participation in education and training, and promoting flexible curriculum initiatives;
- ▶ develop flexible, learner-centred curricula to enable RPL applicants to access training targeting skills gaps identified through RPL assessments.

6.4 Applicant level

Applicants:

- ▶ initiate the RPL process;
- ▶ conduct self-assessments to determine their personal readiness to undertake RPL assessments;
- ▶ gather and present evidence which illustrates their capacity to meet the requirements of the qualifications or units of competence for which recognition is sought;
- ▶ comply with the RPL process established by the relevant assessment centre.

Section 3

RPL Policy for TVET in Ethiopia

Document control sheet

Document preparation	
Name of person who prepared document	Date

Approval - Document sign-off			
Name	Role	Date	Signature

Revision history			
Change made by	Description	Version	Date

► 1. Policy context

The *Technical and Vocational Education and Training Proclamation No. 954/2016*, herein referred to as the Proclamation, is the primary policy document dealing with assessment and certification practices in technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

The Proclamation spells out the Government of Ethiopia's commitment to creating a competent workforce by providing an outcomes-based TVET system. Under the Proclamation, the key objectives of the TVET system are to:

- make training institutions incubators of micro and small enterprises,
- provide capacity-building programmes to enhance the competitiveness of micro and small enterprises,
- support the adoption of new technologies,
- improve and maintain the quality of the TVET system,
- expand TVET provision,
- strengthen the linkages between enterprises and the TVET system,
- promote effective management of the TVET system,
- facilitate cost-effective approaches to TVET financing, and
- improve access to and equity in the TVET system.

Under the Proclamation, the Federal Government has responsibility for occupational standards development and occupational assessment. The coordination of occupational assessments lies with the centres of competency [CoCs]. These centres accredit assessment centres [ACs] and assessors. The ACs conduct occupational assessments using prescribed assessment tools. Individuals who successfully complete an assessment are issued with a nationally recognized certificate by the relevant CoC on behalf of the Federal TVET Agency.

The Federal TVET Agency is responsible for overall coordination of the TVET system. The mandate of the Federal TVET Agency in relation to occupational assessment and certification is set out in the *Occupational Assessment and Certification Directive* of November 2014 G.C. This Directive provides specific advice on:

- the accreditation of assessment centres,
- the accreditation of assessors,
- assessment methods and tools,
- assessment procedures,
- certification,
- assessment fees, and
- assessment reporting and data management.

Within this framework, both trainees who successfully complete a training programme at a TVET institution and persons already in work may apply for an occupational competence assessment in order to obtain an occupational competence certificate. This ensures that the benefits of national recognition are available to both new entrants to the workforce and existing workers. Under the current directive, experienced workers may gain recognition of their prior learning by completing a skills assessment based on the relevant set of prescribed assessment tools.

The intention of this policy document is to build on the existing occupational assessment and certification arrangements by providing for an evidence-based RPL system.

The introduction of evidence-based RPL will provide an efficient, cost-effective and quality-assured mechanism for skilled but unqualified workers to gain national recognition for the skills that they have acquired through formal, informal and non-formal learning. This in turn will strengthen their position in the labour market, improve their access to work and provide a pathway into the TVET system. The implementation of a quality-assured RPL system will enhance the nation's skills formation system, expand TVET provision, and improve access to TVET for women, individuals with special needs and people from rural communities.

▶ 2. Scope

This policy identifies the approach to and quality assurance of RPL assessments leading to the issue of full or partial qualifications under the National TVET Qualifications Framework [NTQF].

▶ 3. Responsibility and authority

The Federal Government, through the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, is responsible for oversight of the National Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning for TVET.

The Federal TVET Agency is responsible for advising the State Minister of Science and Higher Education on all policy matters related to RPL assessment in TVET, including the establishment, implementation and maintenance of the National Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning for TVET.

▶ 4. Abbreviations

AC	Assessment centre
CC	Competence certificate
CoC	Centre of competency
FTA	Federal TVET Agency
NQC	National qualification certificate
NTQF	National TVET Qualifications Framework
OS	Occupational standard
RPL	Recognition of prior learning
TP	Training provider
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training

▶ 5. Definitions

In this document, unless the context requires otherwise:

Accreditation, in relation to assessment and certification, is the process of recognizing and/or empowering a person and/or an entity/organization to perform certain roles or responsibilities as authorized in accordance with the Occupational and Assessment Certification Directive of November 2014.

Applicant means the person seeking recognition; also referred to as the candidate.

Assessment means determining if a candidate possesses the required competencies for an occupational qualification as stated in the relevant occupational standard (OS). It is a process of collecting evidence/s and making a judgment on whether such competence has been achieved.

Assessor means a technical expert from industry who is accredited by the CoC. His or her responsibility is to determine whether a person seeking certification at a certain qualification level or in certain specific competencies in fact possesses the required knowledge, skills and attitude, as indicated in the OS. (See also RPL assessor).

Appointed Assessor means a practitioner of the occupation concerned, in industry, who has been especially chosen by the industry sector, through its representatives, to provide assistance to the CoC in assessing other experts in the same occupation who are to be trained and accredited as assessors. Appointed assessors are chosen in this way because there are as yet no accredited assessors for the occupation in question. The function and responsibility of these experts ends when regular assessors have been accredited.

Assessment centre means an establishment officially accredited by the CoC in collaboration with industry to manage assessment of certain specific competencies or qualifications.

Assessment method means the way in which an assessor gathers evidence in order to make a decision as to whether a candidate is competent or not.

Assessment tool means the assessment task given to a candidate that will provide the assessor with evidence of competence and enable him to judge whether the candidate in fact possesses the competencies being assessed.

Audit (see Compliance audit).

Candidate (see Applicant)

Centre of competency means a regional government organization established and recognized to implement assessment and certification activities, as delegated by the Federal TVET Agency.

Certification means a formal process of recognizing an individual's competence, measured against occupational standards.

Certifying body means the organization responsible for issuing certification to a person who has exhibited the necessary competence during assessment.

Competence means possession and application of the knowledge, skills and attitude required to perform an occupation as indicated in the occupational standard.

Compliance audit means a systematic and documented process of obtaining evidence on whether implementation of occupational assessment and certification is compliant with the provisions of the Occupational and Assessment Certification Directive of November 2014.

Curriculum vitae (CV) means a written summary of the applicant's employment history, education and qualifications.

Evidence is information gathered to make a judgment about the achievement or non-achievement of the outcomes specified in occupational standards.

Fairness means consideration of an applicant's needs and characteristics in the assessment process, and any reasonable adjustments that need to be applied to take account of them. Fairness assumes that the applicant is informed about, understands and is able to participate in the assessment process, and agrees that the process is appropriate.

Formal learning means learning through programmes of study or training delivered by education or training providers, or by enterprises in formal apprenticeship or dual-training systems. Such training is structured, has precise learning objectives and is certified.

Informal learning results from activities undertaken daily at work, in the family or during leisure activities. Such learning is often unintentional and the individual may not recognize at the time that it has contributed to his or her knowledge, skills and competences.

Learning outcomes are statements of what an applicant knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process; they are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Learning programme means the sequential learning activities associated with curriculum implementation, leading to the achievement of a particular qualification.

Moderation is the process of bringing assessment judgments and standards into alignment. It ensures that the same standards are applied to all assessment results within the same unit(s) of competency. It is an active process, in that adjustments to assessor judgments are made to overcome differences in the difficulty of the tools involved and/or the severity of judgments.

National qualification certification is certification granted to individuals who are found to be competent in all the units of competence of an occupational qualification level as defined in the occupational standards.

National TVET Qualifications Framework (NTQF) is an outline of the system of TVET qualifications; it defines qualification levels and rules for assigning levels to a qualification or part of a qualification.

Non-formal learning is learning which takes place alongside mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification. Examples of non-formal learning are learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace, the voluntary sector or the trade-union context, and in the community.

Occupation means the type of work an individual does to earn a living, often defined in terms of the broad range of competences or duties required to do it.

Occupational standards are standards defined by experts in an industry sector. They indicate the competencies and respective performance criteria required for a worker to perform the various tasks associated with the occupation concerned.

Portfolio means a collection of different types of evidence relating to the work being assessed.

Qualification means a defined set or group of units of competence identified by an industry which meets workplace requirements.

Reasonable adjustment means adjustments that can be made to the way in which evidence of candidate performance is collected. While reasonable adjustments can be made in terms of the way in which evidence of performance is gathered, the evidence criteria for making competent/not-yet-competent decisions (and/or awarding grades) should not be altered in any way. In other words, the standards expected should be the same irrespective of the group and/or individual being assessed; otherwise, comparability of standards would be compromised.

Recognition is the process of assessing an individual's skills and knowledge, with the aim of being able to award that individual a full or part qualification which is recognized in Ethiopia.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is acknowledgment of a person's competence acquired through previous training, work or life experience through assessment against an occupational standard, leading to the award a TVET qualification.

Regional industry body means a regional sector-specific body comprised of senior managers from the respective bureaus/agencies/commissions and public/ private companies, as well as representatives of professional associations

Reliability is the extent to which assessment results are consistent from one candidate to the next, from one assessor to the next and from one occasion to the next, for example with a different assessor. It is a measure of the accuracy of the score achieved if another test from a bank of ostensibly equivalent items is used.

RPL assessor means an individual who has been accredited by a centre of competency to conduct RPL assessments that lead to national recognition under the NTQF.

Third-party report means a written report by a workplace supervisor, client or colleague or other to be used as a reference document.

Training provider (TP) means a person or entity that provides or organizes a programme of training.

Unit of competence means a description of the skills and knowledge required to perform a work or job function.

Validity refers to the accuracy of an assessment. It means that the assessment is appropriate for its purpose; has been designed to allow candidates to show that they have the required knowledge, understanding and skills to meet the standards of the qualification; and that any interpretation and use of the assessment results are supported and can be justified.

Workplace supervisor means a person in the workplace to whom the RPL applicant reports a daily basis and who is responsible for allocating the applicant's work.

▶ 6. References

Technical and Vocational Education and Training Proclamation No. 954/2016, published in Federal Negarit Gazette No, 78, 27 May 2016

Federal TVET Agency, *Occupational Assessment and Certification Directive*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa.

Federal TVET Agency, *Assessment Tool Development Manual*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa.

Federal TVET Agency, *Assessment and Certification Management Manual for Centers of Competence*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa.

Federal TVET Agency, *Assessment Administration Manual for Assessment Centers*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa.

Federal TVET Agency, *Assessor's Manual for the Conduct of Assessment*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa.

Federal TVET Agency, *Occupational Standard development*, March 2014, Addis Ababa

▶ 7. Policy description

People who have skills but lack formal qualifications are often unable to gain decent jobs, advance in their careers, migrate to other regions or access further education and training.

RPL provides a mechanism whereby people can be awarded TVET qualifications for the knowledge and skills they have gained through formal, non-formal and informal learning, without having to undertake further education and training.

The provision of a well-planned and quality-assured RPL system has significant benefits for workers, companies and governments. Workers benefit in having improved access to and inclusion in the labour market, as well as further education and training. Employers benefit by being better able to access and retain skilled and motivated workers. Federal and regional governments benefit as a result of more efficient use of scarce training and educational resources, improved economic competitiveness and enhanced social inclusion and equity.

RPL focuses on the skills and knowledge which applicants possess and the evidence that they can present to show that they meet the outcomes of nationally recognized qualifications. As such, RPL has no entry requirements, is open to all, is evidence-based, and acknowledges that skills may be acquired in a variety of ways.

7.1 Definition of Recognition of Prior Learning

RPL provides formal recognition of vocational knowledge or skills gained on the job or as a result of other non-formal or informal learning experiences. RPL, if granted, may lead to the full or partial award of a nationally recognized TVET qualification.

RPL acknowledges that competencies can be acquired in different ways, forms and settings that may involve:

- ▶ Formal learning through programmes of study or training delivered by education or training providers, or by enterprises in formal apprenticeship or dual-training systems. Such training is structured, has precise learning objectives and is certified.
- ▶ Non-formal learning which takes place alongside mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification. Examples of non-formal learning are learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace, voluntary sector or trade-union context, and in the community.
- ▶ Informal learning which results from activities undertaken daily at work, in the family or during leisure activities. Such learning is often unintentional and the individual may not recognize at the time that it has contributed to his or her knowledge, skills and competences.

7.2 Principles of Recognition of Prior Learning

RPL in TVET is underpinned by seven core principles. These are:

- ▶ RPL provides for national recognition – RPL assessment is benchmarked against occupational standards to ensure that successful applicants gain full qualifications or credit towards nationally recognized qualifications.
- ▶ RPL is applicant-centred – RPL is a voluntary process driven by the applicant. RPL processes are user-friendly, uncomplicated and designed to facilitate access to TVET qualifications.
- ▶ RPL is accessible to all – RPL is available and easily accessible to all prospective applicants.
- ▶ RPL is collaborative – RPL Assessors work in partnership with Applicants and their employers to facilitate RPL processes.
- ▶ RPL is quality-assured – RPL quality assurance mechanisms are clear and transparent in order to ensure stakeholder confidence in RPL decisions.
- ▶ RPL is flexible – the RPL assessment process may be varied to take into account the assessment context and the diversity of applicants' needs and requirements.
- ▶ RPL is outcome-focused – RPL focuses on what has been learned and not on the status of the institution or place where the learning took place.

7.3 Principles of assessment

All RPL assessments must comply with certain principles. This means that all aspects of the RPL assessment process must be:

- ▶ Valid - an RPL assessment process is valid when it assesses the outcome it claims to assess.
- ▶ Reliable – an RPL assessment process is reliable when assessment results are consistent from one applicant to the next, from one RPL Assessor to the next, and from one occasion to the next.
- ▶ Fair – an RPL assessment process is fair when it is designed and implemented in a way that does not prevent an applicant from completing it due simply to personal factors such as age, gender, disadvantage or disability.
- ▶ Flexible – an RPL assessment process is flexible when it can be applied in different contexts and still address the relevant occupational standard and meet the needs of individual applicants.

7.4 Rules of evidence

All evidence used in RPL assessments must comply with the rules of evidence. This means that all evidence used to make RPL assessment decisions must be:

- ▶ Valid – the evidence directly relates to the occupational standards being assessed.
- ▶ Sufficient – there is enough evidence to make a valid judgement regarding an applicant's achievement of the occupational standards being assessed.
- ▶ Authentic – the evidence is the applicant's own work, behaviour or performance.
- ▶ Current – the evidence shows that the Applicant currently possesses the knowledge, skills and capabilities required to meet the occupational standards being assessed.

Only evidence that is less than five years old and complies with these rules may be used in RPL assessment.

7.5 Reasonable adjustment for applicants with disabilities or those who have experienced disadvantage

The principles of fairness and flexibility are central to RPL assessment. As such, CoCs and ACs may adjust RPL assessment practices to ensure that assessment is inclusive and all applicants, including those with disabilities and those who have experienced disadvantage, are able to demonstrate the skills and knowledge required to meet specified outcomes and gain full qualifications or credit toward qualifications under the NTQF.

Disability in the context of this policy includes physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, sensory disabilities, neurological disabilities, learning disabilities, physical disfigurement, and the presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

Disadvantage refers to the situation of applicants whose family, social, or economic circumstances hinder their ability to demonstrate competency. Disadvantage may include matters related to gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, AIDS / HIV status, poverty, lack of adequate family support or discrimination.

RPL applicants exhibiting one or more of these characteristics may apply for reasonable adjustment to the RPL assessment process. This may involve:

- ▶ varying the RPL process, for example by allowing for alternative forms of portfolio, such as e-portfolios;
- ▶ providing RPL assessment materials and tools in alternative formats, such as braille or large format;
- ▶ providing assistive technology, readers, scribes and other forms of support for applicants;
- ▶ using trained support staff, including note-takers and interpreters, to support the applicant in the RPL assessment process;
- ▶ applying flexible scheduling for RPL assessments.

CoCs and ACs must establish local policies and procedures in relation to reasonable adjustment. These must simultaneously respect the applicant's needs and the integrity of the occupational standards for which the applicant is seeking recognition, and promote equity, fairness and consistency for all.

7.6 Minimum requirements for delivery of RPL services

RPL services must be provided by accredited assessment centres, which must meet the following minimum requirements:

- ▶ The assessment centre must have a documented RPL plan (see Section 7.9) which includes a documented assessment process consistent with the guidance on conducting RPL assessments provided by the Federal TVET Agency (see Section 7.12).
- ▶ Targeted, easily accessible information on RPL must be provided to all RPL applicants.
- ▶ RPL assessment must be conducted by an accredited RPL assessor appointed by the relevant CoC (see Section 7.7).
- ▶ RPL assessments must:
 - comply with the principles of assessment (see Section 7.3);
 - be moderated.
- ▶ RPL applicants must submit a portfolio of evidence to substantiate their claim to competency. Evidence submitted by RPL applicants will be considered for assessment only if it complies with the rules of evidence (see Section 7.4).
- ▶ RPL applicants must be supported by the RPL assessor and be:
 - advised on how to prepare a portfolio of evidence to substantiate their claim to competency against the relevant occupational standards;

- assisted in their preparation for assessment;
 - provided with feedback after assessment;
 - advised on how to address skills gaps identified through the RPL assessment.
- ▶ All assessment centres offering RPL services must have a documented:
- reasonable adjustment policy (see Section 7.5);
 - RPL fees and charges policy (see Section 7.9);
 - RPL assessment appeals policy (see Section 7.10).
- ▶ Successful RPL applicants must be issued with part and full qualifications under the NTQF by the relevant CoC. These qualifications must not specify that the achievement was obtained through RPL (see Section 7.8).

7.7 Accreditation of RPL assessors

Centres of competency are responsible for accrediting RPL assessors and for appointing RPL assessors to undertake RPL assessments.

All RPL assessors must be accredited. To gain accreditation, RPL assessors must:

- ▶ meet all the accreditation requirements for assessors specified in the Federal TVET Agency's Assessment Administration Manual for Assessment Centers (November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa or as updated)
- and
- ▶ have successfully completed a training programme in RPL assessment methodology recognized by the Federal TVET Agency.

All accredited RPL assessors must undertake continuing professional development to maintain the currency of their technical / professional skills and competency in RPL assessment.

7.8 RPL certification

The centres of competency are responsible for ensuring that applicants who successfully complete a RPL assessment are issued with the relevant nationally recognized certification on behalf of the Federal TVET Agency.

RPL certification must:

- ▶ be the same as certification offered in other assessment pathways
- and
- ▶ comply with the certification specifications in the Federal TVET Agency's Assessment Administration Manual for Assessment Centres (November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa or as updated).

7.9 RPL fees and charges

All assessment centres must have a documented RPL fees and charges policy. A schedule of a centre's RPL fees and charges must be posted on the centre's website.

RPL fees and charges set by assessment centres must be equitable and based on advice provided by the Federal TVET Agency.

7.10 RPL appeals

All assessment centres must have a documented RPL appeals policy.

All applicants have the right to appeal a RPL assessment decision if they feel that the assessment process was unfair or that the decision made by the RPL assessor does not accurately reflect their competence.

7.11 RPL quality assurance

RPL quality assurance involves two processes: internal quality assurance and external quality assurance.

Internal quality assurance serves to ensure that ACs make valid and reliable RPL assessment decisions. External quality assurance, which is carried out by CoCs in conjunction with the relevant regional industry body, is to ensure that ACs maintain robust internal quality assurance systems and processes.

Internal quality assurance is an integral component of the RPL assessment arrangements of all ACs. It provides reassurance to applicants and other interest groups / stakeholders, including Government, employers and the broader community, that the occupational standards against which applicants are seeking recognition are effectively adhered to.

The Federal TVET Agency has established criteria and guidelines for the accreditation of ACs. Among other things, these set out the internal quality assurance measures that ACs must have in place to ensure the quality of their assessments.

In line with these requirements, all ACs must have a documented RPL plan that sets out their internal quality assurance arrangements for RPL assessment. This plan must comprise:

- ▶ a documented RPL assessment process,
- ▶ evidence that RPL assessors are accredited,
- ▶ documented RPL assessment tools based on the set of RPL templates provided by the Federal TVET Agency,
- ▶ a documented RPL assessment moderation process,

- ▶ evidence that clear, targeted information on RPL is made available to employers and potential applicants,
- ▶ a statement setting out how the RPL assessment process addresses the principles of RPL (see Section 6.2), the principles of assessment (see Section 6.3) and the rules of evidence (see Section 6.4), and the requirement of reasonable adjustment for applicants with disabilities or who have experienced disadvantage (see Section 6.5),
- ▶ a schedule of RPL fees and charges (see Section 6.9),
- ▶ procedures for the secure storage of RPL assessment records,
- ▶ procedures for RPL assessment appeals (see Section 6.10).

Each AC must have an RPL assessment plan. These plans may be developed by individual ACs, clusters of ACs or CoCs at regional level. Regardless of the way in which these plans are developed, individual ACs must actively implement their RPL assessment plan and ensure that all RPL assessment activities are conducted in line with the requirements of the plan.

The Federal TVET Agency will provide guidelines for the development and self-evaluation of RPL assessment plans that will be made available to all CoCs and ACs.

External quality assurance will be provided through the existing compliance audits managed by the regional CoC in conjunction with the regional industry body. The compliance audits will comprise:

- ▶ an initial review and approval of an AC's assessment plan undertaken at the time when the AC is accredited by the CoC to offer RPL assessments
- and
- ▶ audits that focus on the implementation of the AC's RPL assessment plan. These will form part of the annual compliance audits conducted by the CoCs.

7.12 Roles and responsibilities for the implementation of RPL

7.12.1 Responsibilities of the Federal TVET Agency in relation to RPL

The Federal TVET Agency is responsible for:

- ▶ development and maintenance of the national RPL policy,
- ▶ overall coordination of RPL implementation,
- ▶ collecting, analysing and disseminating data on RPL assessment activity,
- ▶ communicating the benefits of RPL and advocating for RPL,
- ▶ providing overarching leadership to the CoCs and ACs on implementing RPL,
- ▶ ensuring that the CoCs develop certification policies that treat qualifications gained via RPL in the same way as other qualifications, so that there is no differentiation on the basis of how a qualification was achieved.

7.12.2 Responsibilities of centres of competency [CoC] in relation to RPL

Centres of competency are responsible for:

- ▶ accrediting assessment centres to provide RPL services,
- ▶ monitoring the quality of the delivery of RPL services by conducting annual compliance audits of ACs,
- ▶ communicating the benefits of RPL and advocating for RPL at regional level,
- ▶ ensuring that applicants who successfully complete RPL assessments are issued with the relevant nationally recognized certification on behalf of the Federal TVET Agency.

7.12.3 Responsibilities of regional industry bodies in relation to RPL

Regional Industry Bodies are responsible for:

- ▶ participating in RPL quality assurance arrangements at regional level, including compliance audits, to ensure the quality and consistency of RPL assessment outcomes,
- ▶ communicating the benefits of RPL and advocating for RPL, particularly among companies at regional level.

7.12.4 Responsibilities of Assessment Centres in relation to RPL

Assessment centres are responsible for:

- ▶ facilitating the delivery of RPL services,
- ▶ ensuring that RPL services are available for all nationally recognized TVET qualifications within their scope of accreditation,
- ▶ developing and maintaining a documented RPL process,
- ▶ ensuring that RPL assessments recognize learning regardless of how, when and where it was acquired, provided that the learning is relevant to the occupational standard for which the applicant is seeking RPL,
- ▶ ensuring that RPL assessments are undertaken by accredited RPL assessors,
- ▶ ensuring that targeted, easily accessible information on RPL is provided to companies, community organizations and potential applicants,
- ▶ establishing and effectively communicating the reasonable adjustment policy to applicants and RPL assessors,
- ▶ establishing and effectively communicating the RPL fees and charges policy to applicants and RPL assessors,
- ▶ establishing and effectively communicating the RPL assessment appeals policy to applicants and RPL assessors,
- ▶ establishing, implementing and maintaining the centre's RPL plan (see Section 7.6).

7.12.5 Responsibilities of RPL assessors in relation to RPL

RPL assessors are responsible for:

- ▶ conducting RPL assessments in line with the requirements set out in this policy and other relevant policies and directives determined by the Federal TVET Agency, the CoC and AC in relation to RPL assessment,
- ▶ gaining and maintaining accreditation as an RPL assessor through the relevant CoC,
- ▶ participating in continuing professional development (CPD) in relation to RPL to maintain competency in RPL assessment and in technical / professional matters.

7.12.6 Responsibilities of RPL Applicants in relation to RPL

RPL applicants are responsible for:

- ▶ initiating the RPL process by lodging an RPL application,
- ▶ conducting a self-assessment to determine their personal readiness to undertake RPL assessments,
- ▶ gathering and presenting evidence in the form of a portfolio illustrating their capacity to meet the requirements of the qualifications or units of competence for which recognition is sought,
- ▶ complying with the RPL process established by the relevant AC.

▶ 8. Policy review

The Federal TVET Agency, acting on behalf of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, is responsible for conducting a comprehensive review of this policy at least every five years.

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the policy:

- ▶ is still necessary and accurate,
- ▶ should be combined with another policy or should be rescinded,
- ▶ is up to date,
- ▶ should be amended to improve the effectiveness or clarity of the policy.

▶ 9. Related documents

- ▶ RPL Framework for TVET in Ethiopia
- ▶ RPL Procedures and Resources for TVET in Ethiopia

Section 4

RPL Procedures and Resources for TVET in Ethiopia

Document control sheet

Document preparation			
Name of person who prepared document			Date

Approval - Document sign-off			
Name	Role	Date	Signature

Revision history			
Change made by	Description	Version	Date

▶ 1. Introduction

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process that enables individuals to gain recognition of competencies acquired through formal, informal and non-formal learning.

To achieve recognition, in the form of a full or part TVET qualification, applicants must provide evidence that they:

- ▶ have attained the competency, and
- ▶ can currently perform the skills involved to the standard expected in the workplace.

Applicants seeking RPL must lodge an application with the relevant assessment centre [AC] and present a portfolio of evidence demonstrating that they possess the competency for which they are seeking RPL.

The relevant CoC will appoint an RPL assessor, who will advise the applicant on the requirements of the qualification / units of competence and the types of evidence that might be needed. While the RPL assessor may assist the applicant, the onus is on the applicant to gather, organize and present the portfolio of evidence.

RPL assessors assist applicants to identify suitable evidence by encouraging them to think about:

- ▶ the tasks they do at work,
- ▶ how well they perform these tasks,
- ▶ what evidence they can provide to show that they perform these tasks competently.

This document sets out the procedures that should be followed in implementing RPL in the TVET sector. The document also includes a series of thirteen templates designed to support the implementation of RPL in entry- and mid-level occupations. Although these resources have been designed for use in the garment-production sector, they may be applied across a broad range of occupations and industry sectors.

▶ 2. Responsibility for delivery of RPL services

Delivery of RPL is coordinated through the centres of competency [CoC], and their associated assessment centres.

▶ 3. RPL process

The RPL process is described in Figure 1 and the ensuing text. This material should be considered in conjunction with the thirteen templates provided to assist CoC staff, assessment centre staff, RPL assessors and applicants in implementing the process.

Step 1 – RPL awareness and application

Accredited assessment centres provide basic, easily accessible information on RPL to potential applicants, their employers and other stakeholders. This includes information on:

- ▶ who can access RPL,
- ▶ the benefits of RPL to the target group,
- ▶ the RPL process,
- ▶ sources of further information on RPL.

This information may be distributed in a variety of forms, including print and electronic media, information sessions conducted in workplaces, at trade union meetings and other venues, and via social media. Templates 1a and 1b provide the basic information on RPL required by potential applicants and employers. These templates may be edited or reformatted to suit different groups of employers and applicants.

TEMPLATE 1A – Introductory information on RPL for applicants

TEMPLATE 1B – Introductory information on RPL for employers

Individuals who wish to proceed with a RPL assessment must be provided with information and guidance on the RPL process by the relevant assessment centre. This advice must be provided prior to the individual lodging his/her RPL application. The guidance may be delivered face to face, in print or online.

Some potential applicants will require a greater level of support and guidance than others. Potential applicants with limited language skills or limited experience of formal education may require highly personalized, face-to-face assistance and support, while highly skilled / experienced workers may simply require the guidance to be provided in print or online.

Regardless of the mode or level of guidance provided, all potential applicants must be provided with the following information:

- ▶ An outline of the RPL process which clearly describes the roles of the applicant and the RPL assessor
- ▶ Specific information on the qualification or units of competence for which the applicant wants to claim RPL.

Note: The Assessment centre must provide the potential applicant with a completed version of the self-assessment form (Template 3) that includes [1] the details of the qualification, [2] the units of competence and [3] a simple explanation of the work task described in each unit

- ▶ Instructions on how to complete the self-assessment form (Template 3), including guidance on what type of evidence may be used to show proof of competence
- ▶ How to decide whether or not to proceed with the RPL application
- ▶ Instructions on how to complete the RPL application form (Template 4)
- ▶ Details of the enrolment procedure with the AC
- ▶ Details of the fees for RPL (if any).

Note: Applicants will be given precise information on how to construct a portfolio and select and present evidence during the initial meeting with the RPL assessor – see Step 2.

In some cases, the assessment centre may need to assist the potential applicant in completing the self-assessment form (Template 3) and the RPL application form (Template 4).

Individuals who are interested in applying for RPL must:

- ▶ complete the self-assessment form (Template 3),
- ▶ decide whether to proceed with the RPL application after completing the self-assessment,
- ▶ complete the RPL application form,
- ▶ send the completed RPL application form and the self-assessment form to the relevant assessment centre,
- ▶ enrol with the AC and pay the required fee.

Note: RPL fees are set in line with advice provided by the Federal TVET Agency.

TEMPLATE 2 – Checklist of guidance to be provided to potential applicants prior to lodging RPL application

TEMPLATE 3 – RPL self-assessment form

TEMPLATE 4 – RPL application form

Step 2 – RPL portfolio development and assessment

Once the applicant has lodged an RPL application, the CoC will appoint an RPL assessor to work with him or her. The RPL assessor has two main tasks. These are to:

- ▶ provide the applicant with advice on the RPL process,
- ▶ conduct the RPL assessment.

The RPL assessor must keep a record of the dates on which the following items are either submitted by the applicant or conducted by the RPL Assessor:

- ▶ RPL application Form and RPL self-assessment form
- ▶ Report of initial meeting
- ▶ Portfolio
- ▶ Competency conversation
- ▶ RPL assessment report
- ▶ Feedback meeting

This information should be progressively recorded on the RPL assessment report (Template 9)

TEMPLATE 9 – RPL assessment report

The RPL assessor must arrange an initial meeting with the applicant. The purpose of this meeting is to:

- ▶ establish rapport with the applicant and gather information on:
 - the applicant's job role,
 - what evidence the applicant can provide,
 - how that evidence relates to the units of competence in the relevant qualification;
- ▶ review the applicant's self-assessment and discuss his or her readiness for RPL assessment;
- ▶ explain the RPL process;
- ▶ confirm the qualification and / or units of competence for which the applicant is seeking RPL;
- ▶ describe the different types of evidence that may be used in a RPL assessment;
- ▶ explain the purpose of the portfolio and the way in which the portfolio should be presented.

Following this meeting, the applicant must confirm whether he or she wants to proceed with the RPL process. Some applicants may decide that they are not ready to proceed. In this case, the RPL assessor should discuss with the applicant:

- ▶ ways of preparing for a RPL assessment in the future,
- ▶ strategies for addressing skills gaps, such as training with a TVET provider, coaching or mentoring in the workplace, or obtaining further work experience.

The RPL assessor must complete a report on the outcomes of the initial meeting with the applicant (Template 5).

TEMPLATE 5 – Report on initial meeting between RPL assessor and applicant

Applicants who decide to proceed with the RPL process must prepare a portfolio of evidence showing how they are able to meet the requirements of the qualification / units of competence for which they are seeking RPL.

A portfolio is a systematic collection of work and related material that supports the applicant's claim of competency in relation to one or more units of competence.

Portfolio evidence can take many forms, including:

- ▶ workplace records,
- ▶ details of paid work performed,
- ▶ data supplied by the workplace on work performance, such as individual or work-team production rates, rework rates, quality assurance indicators and occupational health and safety compliance,
- ▶ work samples,
- ▶ reports from workplace supervisors (use Template 6 – Third-party report),
- ▶ awards, certificates and qualifications,
- ▶ resume, curriculum vitae (CV),
- ▶ job description,
- ▶ workplace forms used by the applicant,
- ▶ workplace policies and procedures,
- ▶ work instructions,
- ▶ job sheets,
- ▶ completed job cards,
- ▶ training diary,
- ▶ checklists,

- ▶ booking sheets,
- ▶ picking slips,
- ▶ schedules,
- ▶ copy of “to do” lists,
- ▶ photographs of the applicant’s work/workplace,
- ▶ videorecording of applicant performing the task.

TEMPLATE 6A – RPL portfolio – Applicant portfolio record sheet

TEMPLATE 7 – Third-party report

After the applicant submits the portfolio, the RPL assessor must review the portfolio and arrange to meet with the applicant to conduct a competency conversation.

The purpose of the competency conversation is to:

- ▶ clarify any matters that may have arisen during the review of the portfolio,
- ▶ confirm the applicant’s claim to competency by asking questions directly related to the qualification / unit of competence for which RPL is sought.

It is important to note that this meeting is a conversation focusing on the applicant’s portfolio and the qualification / unit of competence for which RPL is sought. It is not a test – the purpose is to confirm the applicant’s claim of competency.

Prior to the meeting, the RPL assessor must prepare a list of questions that will form the basis on the meeting. The RPL assessor must take notes of the applicant’s response to the questions.

TEMPLATE 6B – RPL portfolio – Portfolio evaluation form

TEMPLATE 8 – Questions to guide competency conversation

After the meeting, the RPL assessor must consider the evidence in the applicant's portfolio and the applicant's responses to the questions posed in the meeting and use this information to make the assessment decision.

The RPL assessor must complete the RPL assessment report (Template 9). The assessor must:

- ▶ list the units for which RPL was and was not granted,
- ▶ summarize the feedback given to the applicant on the outcome of RPL assessment, including recommendations for addressing skill gaps.

The RPL assessor must meet with the applicant to provide feedback on the RPL assessment report. In some cases, the RPL assessor and the applicant may agree that the applicant should resubmit his or her portfolio to strengthen his/her claim to competency. If resubmission is agreed, this must be noted in the RPL assessment report. Only one resubmission is permitted. Both the RPL assessor and the applicant must sign the RPL assessment report to confirm that they have discussed the outcomes of the RPL assessment. The RPL assessor must submit the RPL assessment report to the assessment centre for forwarding to the CoC.

TEMPLATE 9 – RPL assessment report

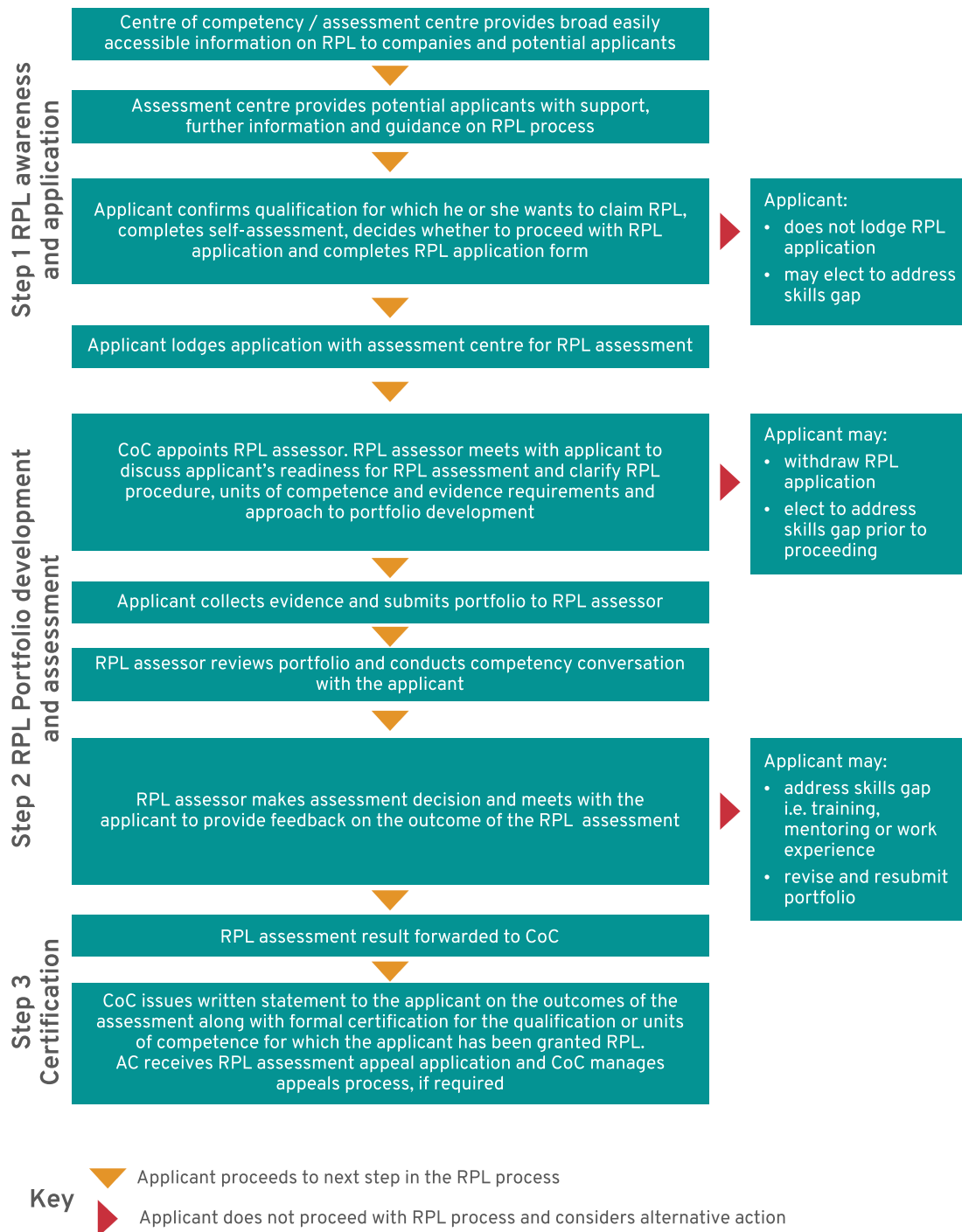
Step 3 – Certification

Once the RPL assessor has submitted the RPL assessment report, the CoC will provide a written statement to the applicant on the outcomes of the assessment, together with formal certification for the qualification or units of competence for which RPL has been granted.

TEMPLATE 10 – Centre of competency statement of RPL assessment outcomes

TEMPLATE 11 – RPL appeal application

► **Figure 1 – The RPL process**



► 4. Roles in the RPL process

The roles of the key stakeholders in the RPL process are set out in the table below.

Stakeholder	Role in the RPL process
RPL applicant	- Initiates RPL assessment process - Completes RPL self-assessment - Lodges RPL application and RPL self-assessment with assessment centre - Gathers, organizes and presents portfolio of evidence - Participates in meetings with RPL assessor
RPL assessor	- Advises RPL applicant on RPL process, units of competence, evidence and portfolio development - Conducts RPL assessment - Provides feedback to RPL applicant on outcomes of RPL assessment, including ways of addressing skill gaps, e.g. training with TVET provider, mentoring, work experience - Completes RPL assessment report - Contributes to appeals processes
Assessment centre	- Facilitates delivery of RPL services - Provides targeted, easily accessible information on RPL to companies and potential applicants - Provides potential RPL applicants with RPL application and RPL self-assessment forms - Receives RPL assessment application from applicant - Coordinates RPL assessment in cooperation with CoC, RPL assessor and applicant - Receives RPL assessment appeal applications
Centre of competency	- Appoints accredited RPL assessor to undertake RPL assessment - Issues certification - Manages RPL assessment appeals - Conducts RPL compliance audit
Employer	- Provides information to potential RPL applicants on benefits of RPL and RPL process - Provides support to RPL applicants by facilitating access to workplace information that may be used as evidence in RPL applications
TVET provider	Provides flexible training options to address skills gaps identified through RPL assessments

► 5. RPL compliance audits

Centres of competency in conjunction with regional industry bodies must conduct RPL compliance audits of accredited assessment centres. These audits should form part of the annual compliance audits conducted under the arrangements described in the Federal TVET Agency 's Assessment and Certification Management Manual for Centers of Competency (November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa).

TEMPLATE 12 – RPL audit

► 6. Costing model for RPL

Centres of competency and assessment centres must establish a schedule of RPL fees and charges. Identifying the cost of RPL is complex.

A full costing model for RPL services should take into account all costs associated with establishing, operating and maintaining the RPL process. However, it is unlikely that all these costs will be met by the RPL fees charged to applicants. Almost inevitably, the cost associated with RPL will be met through a mix of applicant fees and government funding.

One approach to costing RPL is to assume that government funding will support the establishment and maintenance costs associated with RPL, while RPL fees paid by companies and individual applicants should cover the operational costs incurred by assessment centres in conducting RPL assessments.

Template 13 provides an approach to identifying the operational cost of conducting a RPL assessment for an individual seeking recognition of a set of four units of competence.

This template may be customised by:

- adding or deleting cost items,
- varying the cost basis of each item,
- adjusting the cost per hour,
- changing the assumption about the number of units of competence covered by the RPL assessment.

In using this template, it should be noted that the costs do not include those associated with establishing and maintaining the RPL process.

TEMPLATE 13 – An approach to costing RPL

7. Resources to support the RPL process

The following templates are to be used by applicants and RPL assessors to support the RPL process.

TEMPLATE 1A Introductory information on RPL for applicants

TEMPLATE 1B Introductory information on RPL for employers

TEMPLATE 2 Checklist of guidance to be provided to potential applicants prior to lodging RPL application

TEMPLATE 3 RPL self-assessment Tool

TEMPLATE 4 RPL application form

TEMPLATE 5 Report of initial meeting between RPL assessor and applicant

TEMPLATE 6 RPL portfolio

TEMPLATE 7 Third-party report

TEMPLATE 8 Questions to guide competency conversation

TEMPLATE 9 RPL assessment report

TEMPLATE 10 Centre of competency statement of RPL assessment outcomes

TEMPLATE 11 RPL appeal application

TEMPLATE 12 RPL audit

TEMPLATE 13 An approach to costing RPL

TEMPLATE 1A – Introductory information on RPL Applicants

Skills and knowledge are gained in many ways. For example, skills may be gained through participation in a training programme, informal learning, independent study, and work or life experience.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process whereby your existing skills and knowledge (your learning) are assessed against the outcomes of a qualification or one or more units of competence. If your skills and knowledge meet some or all of the outcomes, these can be recognized by the award of a full or part TVET qualification.

This qualification is recognized by the Federal TVET Agency and has the same status as TVET qualifications obtained by completing a training programme with a TVET provider and undertaking an assessment with one of the centres of competency (CoCs)

You can get a RPL assessment by applying to any of the CoCs which assess people for qualifications in your industry sector. The CoC will provide you with information on:

- ▶ the RPL process,
- ▶ how long the RPL assessment takes,
- ▶ how much the RPL assessment costs,
- ▶ what you will be required to do to provide evidence of your skills.

The CoC will appoint an RPL assessor, who is qualified, has significant work experience in your occupational area and is trained in RPL assessment. The assessor will work with you to:

- ▶ discover your existing skills and knowledge,
- ▶ assess your skills and knowledge against the outcomes of the qualification / units you seek RPL for,
- ▶ assist you in identifying and filling any gaps in your existing skills.

You will be asked to produce a portfolio of evidence to show what you have learned and are able to do. The RPL assessor will advise you on what documents and evidence you will need to provide.

During the RPL assessment you will:

- ▶ complete a self-assessment of your skills and knowledge,
- ▶ present a portfolio of evidence,
- ▶ participate in a conversation or interview with the RPL assessor.

After considering this information, the RPL assessor will give you feedback and tell you which units of competence you have achieved. Your assessor may also discuss any gaps in your skills and how you may fill these. You should discuss the assessment outcome with your RPL assessor. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may be able to use the CoC's appeal process to have the decision reviewed.

You can obtain further information on RPL by contacting *[insert name and contact details as appropriate]*.

TEMPLATE 1B – Introductory information on RPL for employers

A lot of learning occurs at work. Your employees acquire skills by:

- ▶ performing work tasks,
- ▶ participating in company induction programmes,
- ▶ undertaking soft-skills training in areas such as communication, customer service and teamwork,
- ▶ working with more experienced staff, who provide on-the-job coaching in technical skills,
- ▶ taking part in supplier-led in-company training on new products,
- ▶ applying new processes, new materials and new technologies.

This learning is critical to company success but is often not assessed or certified.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) provides a way in which your employees can have this learning formally recognized without undertaking additional training. This helps to avoid duplication and reduces the cost of training.

RPL is a process whereby your employees' existing skills and knowledge are assessed against the outcomes of a qualification. If their skills and knowledge meet some or all of the outcomes, these can be recognized by the award of a full or part TVET qualification. This qualification is recognized by the Federal TVET Agency and has the same status as TVET qualifications obtained by completing a training programme with a TVET provider and undertaking an assessment with one of the centres of competency [CoCs].

Your employees can get a RPL assessment by applying to any of the CoCs which assess people for qualifications in your industry sector. The CoC will provide them with information on:

- ▶ the RPL process,
- ▶ how long the RPL assessment takes,
- ▶ how much the RPL assessment costs,
- ▶ what they will be required to do to provide providing evidence of their skills.

The CoC will appoint a qualified RPL assessor to conduct the assessment. This will involve your employees in completing a self-assessment of their skills and knowledge, presenting a portfolio of evidence and participating in a conversation or interview with the RPL assessor.

After considering this information, the RPL assessor will give your employees feedback and tell them which units of competence they have achieved. The assessor will also discuss any gaps in their skills and how these may be addressed.

You can obtain further information on RPL by contacting *[insert name and contact details as appropriate]*.

TEMPLATE 2 – Checklist of guidance to be provided to potential applicants prior to lodging RPL application

Assessment centres must ensure that all applicants are provided with information and guidance on the following **prior** to submitting an application for RPL:

- ▶ The RPL process, including a clear description of the roles of the applicant and the RPL assessor
- ▶ The qualification and units of competence for which the applicant wants to claim RPL

Note: The Assessment centre must provide the potential applicant with a completed version of the self-assessment form (Template 3), including:

- the details of the qualification,
 - the code and title of the units of competence,
 - a simple explanation of the work task described in each unit of competence.
- ▶ How to complete the self-assessment form (Template 3), including guidance on what type of evidence may be used to provide proof of competence
 - ▶ Deciding whether or not to proceed with the RPL application
 - ▶ How to complete the RPL application form (Template 4)
 - ▶ The enrolment procedure with the assessment centre
 - ▶ The fees for RPL (if any)

Note: Applicants will be provided with precise information on how to construct a portfolio and select and present evidence during their initial meeting with the RPL assessor. This meeting will be conducted after the applicant has lodged the application for RPL with the assessment centre.

TEMPLATE 3 – RPL self-assessment tool

This self-assessment tool is designed to help you assess your skills and knowledge against the qualification requirements. Please provide as much information as you can.

To complete the self-assessment, you need to do three things:

1. Think about how often you perform each task - frequently, sometimes or rarely.
2. Briefly explain what you do when you perform this task at work.
3. List any evidence you can provide that shows you can do this task competently.

Remember, evidence can include:

- ▶ Resume, curriculum vitae (CV)
- ▶ Job description
- ▶ Certificates/ qualifications
- ▶ Workplace forms that you use
- ▶ Workplace policies and procedures
- ▶ Work instructions
- ▶ Job sheets
- ▶ Data on your personal or work-team production supplied by your employer
- ▶ References from supervisors or peers
- ▶ Completed job cards
- ▶ Training diary
- ▶ Feedback sheets/surveys
- ▶ Checklists
- ▶ Samples of work
- ▶ Booking sheets
- ▶ Picking slips
- ▶ Schedules
- ▶ Copy of “to do” lists
- ▶ Photographs of your work
- ▶ A video-recording of you performing the task

TEMPLATE 3 – RPL self-assessment tool (continued)]

Date	
Name of applicant	
Code and name of qualification	
Unit code	
Unit title	
How often do you perform this task? [tick the relevant box]	☐ Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely – I need further training or work experience
What evidence can you provide that you can do this task competently?	
Will you apply for RPL for this unit? (Yes or No)	

TEMPLATE 4 – RPL application form

Instructions

Complete this form to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for *(insert name of qualification)*

Return the completed form together with your completed RPL self-assessment to the *(Insert name of Centre of Competency)*

Section 1 - Applicant details

Name

Address

Telephone number

Email address

Section 2 - Current employment *(If you are not employed, please go on to the next section of this form)*

What is your current job title?

How long have you been in this job?

Who is your current employer?

Briefly list your duties in this job.

Section 3 - Previous employment and other work roles *(including voluntary and unpaid work)*

Job title	Employer or organization

Section 4 - Related (non-work) experience

RPL recognizes that you may have gained skills and knowledge in activities such as informal training, community work or volunteer work. For example, in informal roles you might have used people and communications skills, handled money, participated in community activities, spoken to stakeholders or participated in informal training or self-development activities. If you have relevant experiences, please list these below.

Section 5 - Other information

Is there any more information you wish to provide in support of your application to participate in RPL?
(Attach additional pages if needed)

Section 6 - Curriculum vitae [CV] or resume

I have attached a CV or resume (circle the correct answer)	Yes	No
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Section 7 - Units of competence for which RPL is sought

Code	Title

Applicant declaration

I declare that the information contained in or provided with this application is true and correct.

Applicant's signature	Date
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TEMPLATE 5 – Report of initial meeting between RPL assessor and applicant

Applicant's name

TVET qualification

Date of initial meeting

	Yes	No
The RPL assessor met with the applicant and completed each of the following tasks:		
• gathered information on the applicant's job role, the evidence the applicant is able to provide and how that evidence relates to the units of competence in the relevant qualification		
• reviewed the applicant's self-assessment and discussed his or her readiness for RPL assessment		
• explained the RPL process to the applicant		
• confirmed the qualification and / or units of competence for which the applicant is seeking RPL		
• described the different types of evidence that may be used in a RPL assessment		
• explained the purpose of the portfolio and the way in which the portfolio should be presented		
Does the candidate confirm that he or she intends to proceed with the RPL process		
If no, did the RPL assessor discuss with the applicant:		
• ways of preparing for a RPL assessment in the future,		
• strategies for addressing skills gaps, such as training with a TVET provider, coaching or mentoring in the workplace or obtaining further work experience.		

Notes

RPL assessor's signature

Date

TEMPLATE 6 – RPL portfolio

What is a portfolio?

A portfolio is a collection of evidence that is presented to a RPL assessor to demonstrate your competence in a job or task.

What do I have to do?

As part of your RPL assessment, you have been asked to gather evidence to show that you can competently perform the tasks described in one or more units of competence.

This means that you must collect evidence that proves you can do the work described in the unit of competence.

What is evidence?

- Training results / certificates
- References
- Photos / videos
- Awards
- Training workbooks
- Job descriptions / work experience
- Work journal / diary
- Work samples

How do I match my evidence to the work?

When collecting evidence and putting it together in a portfolio, you need to let the RPL assessor know the aspect of work that each item of evidence relates to. You can do this by using the cover sheet attached (Template 5a). Number each item of evidence and tick the aspect of work that it relates to. You can add information to support your case by attaching notes to each piece of evidence to explain how it shows that you can do the work described.

Choosing your evidence

It is important that the RPL assessor can see more than one type of evidence demonstrating that you can do the work. The evidence you use must be:

- related to the work described,
- your own evidence,
- enough to show you can do all aspects of the work,
- current evidence (if your evidence is more than three years old, it may not be acceptable).

Some hints:

- Get your diary / journal entries signed by a supervisor or experienced colleague.
- Describe any photos, videos or products and explain how they relate to the work.
- References from employers/colleagues should describe the work you have done; they should not be personal and general. They should also include a telephone number or email address so the person can be contacted.
- Training certificates / workbooks are more useful if you can also provide a description or outline of the course.

TEMPLATE 6B – Portfolio evaluation form

Applicant's name

RPL assessor's name

TVET qualification *[insert title of TVET qualification]*

Unit[s] of competence *[insert title of unit of competence]*

The evidence provided by the applicant is:

☐ valid ☐ authentic ☐ sufficient ☐ current

The contents of the portfolio provided satisfactory evidence that the applicant [tick the box]:

Item numbers

• *[insert evidence requirements]*

RPL assessor's signature

Date

TEMPLATE 7 – Third-party report**Applicant's name****Name of third party****Contact number****Position**

Relationship with applicant

☐ employer☐ supervisor☐ colleague☐ other*Please specify* _____*Please do not complete the form if you are a relative, close friend or have a conflict of interest***Dates the applicant worked with you**

From

To

TVET qualification*[insert code and title of TVET Qualification]***Unit[s] of competence***[insert name of unit[s] of competence]*

The candidate is seeking Recognition of Prior Learning against the *[insert code and title of qualification]*. We are seeking your support in judging this applicant's competence. Please answer these questions honestly as a record of the applicant's performance while working with you. Thank you for your time.

Comments regarding candidate's performance and experience

I can verify the candidate's ability to:
(tick the correct response)

Yes

No

Not
sure

Comments to support my responses

- [insert evidence requirements]*

Third party's signature

Date

TEMPLATE 8 – Questions to guide competency conversation

Applicant's name

Unit[s] of competence *[insert title of unit of competence]*

TVET qualification *[insert title of TVET qualification]*

QUESTIONS	Satisfactory response	
	Yes	No

The applicant must answer the following questions:

1. *[insert questions to be asked]*

Applicant's response

[insert summary of Applicant's response]

☐☐

2.

Applicant's response

☐☐

3.

Applicant's response

☐☐

4.

Applicant's response

☐☐

5.

Applicant's response

☐☐

The applicant's responses were:

Satisfactory

☐

Not satisfactory

☐

Feedback to candidate:

RPL assessor's signature

Date

TEMPLATE 9 – RPL assessment report**Applicant's name****TVET qualification****Applicant's telephone
number****Applicant's email address****RPL Assessor's name****Name of centre of
competency****Record of RPL assessment process**

RPL assessor must enter the date on which the following the items were either submitted by the applicant or conducted by the RPL assessor

RPL application form and RPL self- assessment form	Report of initial meeting	Portfolio	Competency conversation	RPL assessment Report	Feedback meeting

Final RPL assessment outcome

Units of competence		Final outcome			
		RPL assessor to tick "competent" of "not yet competent" and initial and date			
Code	Title	Competent	Not yet competent	Assessor initial	Date

Summary of feedback provided to applicant

Applicant's signature

RPL assessor's signature

TEMPLATE 10 – Centre of competency statement of RPL assessment outcomes

[Insert name of centre of competency]

RPL assessment outcome statement

Applicant's name

TVET qualification *[insert title of TVET qualification]*

RPL assessment results

Units of competence		Outcome of RPL assessment [granted or not granted]
Unit code	Unit title	
• <i>[Insert code]</i>	• <i>[Insert title]</i>	

[Insert signature]

[Insert name of authorizing officer]

[Insert position of authorizing officer]

[Insert date]

TEMPLATE 11 – RPL appeal application*[Insert name of centre of competency]***RPL assessment appeal application****Applicant's name****TVET qualification** *[insert title of TVET qualification]***RPL assessment details****Name of RPL assessor****Date RPL assessment
result issued****Details of appeal**

Units of competence		Reason for appeal against assessment result for each unit of competence
Unit code	Unit title	
• <i>[Insert code]</i>	• <i>[Insert title]</i>	

Applicant's signature**Date**

TEMPLATE 12 – RPL Audit

Section 1 - Assessment centre details

Name of assessment centre		
Location		
Contact details	Tel:	Email:
Officer in charge		

Section 2 - Members of compliance audit team

Name	Organization
Name	Organization
Name	Organization
Name	Organization

Section 3 – Date and location of compliance audit

Location of compliance audit
Date compliance audit conducted

Section 4 – RPL system

Feature of RPL system	Satisfactory evidence		Comment
	Yes	No	
RPL assessment plan and assessment process			
Is there a documented RPL assessment plan as outlined in the National Policy on TVET?			
Is there a documented RPL assessment process?			
Accredited RPL assessors			
Are all RPL assessors accredited? Is there evidence that accredited RPL assessor are undertaking continuing professional development?			
RPL assessment tools			
Is there a full set of documented RPL assessment tools based on the set of RPL templates provided by the Federal TVET Agency?			
RPL assessment moderation			

Feature of RPL system	Satisfactory evidence		Comment
	Yes	No	
Is there a documented RPL assessment moderation process?			
Is there evidence that RPL assessment moderation is implemented?			
Support for applicants and employers			
Is there evidence that applicants are supported in the RPL assessment process through: • advice on portfolio preparation • provision of feedback after RPL assessment • provision of advice on how to address skills gaps identified through RPL?			
Is there evidence that clear, targeted information on RPL is made available to employers and potential applicants?			
Compliance with RPL and assessment principles			
Is there evidence of how the RPL assessment process addresses the principles of RPL?			
Is there evidence of how the RPL assessment process addresses the principles of assessment?			
Is there evidence that the RPL assessment process complies with the rules of evidence?			
Inclusive RPL assessment process			
Is there a documented reasonable adjustment policy?			
Is there evidence that the reasonable adjustment policy is applied?			
RPL fees and charges			
Is there a publicly available schedule of RPL fees and charges?			
Do the RPL fees and charges comply with FTA advice?			
Maintenance of RPL assessment records			
Are there documented procedures for the secure storage of RPL assessment records?			
Is there evidence that RPL assessment records can be easily retrieved?			
RPL appeals			
Is there a documented RPL assessment appeals process?			
Is there evidence that RPL assessment appeals are processed without undue delay?			

NTQF certification

Is there evidence that successful RPL applicants are issued with NTQF certification that complies with FTA advice?			
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Section 5 - Actions taken in response to previous compliance audit

Is there evidence that the assessment centre has addressed areas of non-compliance identified in the previous compliance audit?

Section 6 – Recommendations for addressing non-compliance issues related to RPL identified in the compliance audit

Section 7 - Declaration

The officer in charge of the assessment centre and the compliance audit team have met and agreed on the outcomes of the compliance audit. We have discussed the areas of non-compliance identified through the audit and have agreed on the recommended actions to address these matters.

Assessment centre officer in charge -
name and signature

Date

Lead compliance audit team –
name and signature

Date

TEMPLATE 13 – An approach to costing RPL

RPL operational cost item	Cost basis	Total hours	Cost per hour [Birr]	Total cost [Birr]
RPL Assessment				
Planning a RPL assessment	0.5 hour per RPL assessment	0.5	RPL assessor = X Birr per hour	
Meeting with RPL applicant	3 meetings @ 0.5 hours per meeting = 1.5 hours	1.5	RPL assessor = X Birr per hour	
Analysing RPL evidence	1 hour per RPL assessment	1	RPL assessor = X Birr per hour	
Preparing report on RPL assessment	0.5 hour per assessment	0.5	RPL assessor = X Birr per hour	
Travel time for assessor	Equivalent of 0.5 hour per assessment	0.5	RPL assessor = X Birr per hour	
Administrative support for RPL assessment				
Provision of administrative services associated with RPL assessment, i.e. processing of RPL application, record-keeping, certification.	0.5 hour per assessment	0.5	Admin officer = X Birr per hour	
RPL quality assurance				
Participation of centre staff in compliance audits	0.1 hour per assessment	0.2	Centre manager = X Birr per hour	
Infrastructure and overhead costs				
TVET infrastructure to support RPL assessment – cost of RPL assessment materials, ICT charges, office space, RPL promotion expenses	Add 20% to total costs			
Total cost per RPL assessment [Birr]				

Section 5

Training Programme for RPL assessors in TVET

► Introduction

Who is this programme for?

The International Labour Organization Ethiopia Office, in conjunction with the Federal Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority [FTVET Agency], has developed this programme to assist with the implementation of recognition of prior learning [RPL] in the technical and vocational education and training [TVET] system in Ethiopia.

This programme is for assessors who wish to be accredited by a centre of competency [CoC] on behalf of the Federal TVET Agency to conduct RPL assessments.

This programme will assist assessors in offering efficient RPL processes and enable them to help employers and applicants to be better informed about RPL.

This programme is intended for accredited assessors who are familiar with key aspects of competency-based assessment practice, including the principles of assessment, the rules of evidence and the processes for making assessment decisions.

This programme is not a substitute for initial training in competency-based assessment.

What is in this guide?

This guide comprises:

- Programme structure
- Facilitator notes for each session
- Participant notes for each session
- PowerPoint presentations for each session

► Programme structure

The programme is designed to be delivered as a three-day, facilitator-led workshop. The programme comprises 13 sessions. Participant notes and a PowerPoint presentations have been prepared to support the delivery of each session. The programme structure is outlined below.

Day 1

Time	Session	Key themes
9.00 – 9.30	Introduction	• Welcome to participants • Purpose of workshop • Overview of programme for Day 1
9.30 – 10.30	Session 1- What is RPL?	• Definition of RPL • Benefits of RPL for different stakeholders • Different ways of acquiring and strengthening skills • Alternative terms used for RPL
10.30 – 11.00	Break	
11.00 – 12.30	Session 2 - Features of a quality RPL process	• Best-practice features of a quality RPL process • How RPL supports qualification, work and training pathways • Principles of assessment and how these relate to RPL processes • Use of qualified RPL assessors • RPL appeals process • Internal and external RPL quality-assurance processes
12.30 – 1.30	Lunch	
1.30 – 3.00	Session 3 - FTVET RPL framework and policy	• Key features of RPL framework • Relationship between RPL framework and FTVET Agency assessment and certification policy • Key features of RPL policy • Roles and responsibilities in the RPL process
3.00 – 3.30	Break	
3.30 – 4.30	Session 4 - Thinking about RPL evidence	• What it means to be competent • Definition of evidence • Types of evidence • Rules of evidence • Identifying evidence requirements in a unit of competence
4.30 – 5.00	Where to from here?	• Key points from today • Preparing for the next session
5.00	Close	

Day 2

Time	Session	Key themes
9.00 – 9.30	Recap session	- Review key themes covered on Day 1 - Outline of programme for Day 2
9.30 – 10.30	Session 5 - Overview of RPL process	- RPL process - Responsibility for delivery of RPL services - Roles in the RPL process - Guidelines and templates to support the RPL process
10.30 – 11.00	Break	
11.00 – 12.30	Session 6 - RPL process Step 1 - RPL awareness and application	- RPL awareness-raising – Employers - RPL awareness-raising - Applicants - RPL self-assessment - RPL application process - Use of templates to support RPL awareness and application
12.30 – 1.30	Lunch	
1.30 – 3.00	Session 7 - RPL process Step 2 - RPL Portfolio development and assessment	- Review of RPL application - Initial meeting with the RPL applicant - Portfolio preparation - Portfolio review and evaluation - Conducting a competency conversation - RPL assessment report - Use of templates to support portfolio development and assessment
3.00 – 3.30	Break	
3.30 – 4.30	Session 8 - RPL process Step 3 - Certification	- RPL certification process - RPL appeals process - Use of templates to support RPL certification and appeals processes
4.30 – 5.00	Where to from here?	- Key points from today - Preparing for the next session
5.00	Close	

Day 3

Time	Session	Key themes
9.00 – 9.30	Recap session	- Review key themes covered on Day 2 - Outline of programme for Day 3
9.30 – 10.30	Session 9 – Thinking about portfolios	- What is a portfolio? - Process and product portfolios - Purposes of portfolios - Types of portfolio - Authors and audience for portfolios - Limitations of different types of portfolios
10.30 – 11.00	Break	
11.00 – 12.30	Session 10 – Question and answer session on RPL portfolios	- Whole group discussion of key issues surrounding development and evaluation of RPL portfolios. This may include matters such as: - Format and content of a RPL portfolio - Responsibility for the portfolio - Use of templates to support portfolio development - Portfolio evaluation
12.30 – 1.30	Lunch	
1.30 – 2.15	Session 11 - RPL quality assurance	- Approach to RPL quality assurance - Responsibility for RPL quality assurance - RPL internal and external quality assurance - Templates available to support RPL quality assurance
2.15 – 3.00	Session 12 - Costing RPL services	- Identifying the costs associated with providing RPL services - Funding RPL services - Model for costing RPL services - Use of template to cost RPL services
3.00 – 3.30	Break	
3.30 – 4.30	Session 13 - Action plan for RPL implementation	- Key features of an action plan - RPL assessor action-planning for conducting RPL assessments in the garment-making industry
4.30 – 5.00	Where to from here?	- Key points from today - Key outcomes of the programme - Programme review
5.00	Close	

► Alternative delivery strategies

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been necessary to rethink the delivery arrangements for this programme. With this in mind, four alternative delivery strategies have been devised. These are outlined below.

Alternative delivery strategy 1 – Postpone face-to-face delivery until 2021

Under this option, the planned three-day RPL Assessor Training Programme would be delivered by the project consultant after the existing travel restrictions are relaxed. At this stage, no date can be suggested for this activity, but it is unlikely that the programme would be conducted until 2021.

Alternative delivery strategy 2 – Online delivery

In this case, the programme will be delivered over a two-week period as six online sessions. Between sessions, participants will undertake the learning activities detailed in the participant notes on an individual or small-group basis. It is envisaged that each online session will be between 60-90 minutes in duration. The online sessions may be scheduled as shown below. It is envisaged that a moderated WhatsApp group will be established to facilitate communication between participants outside of the online sessions.

Online session	Programme sessions	Schedule
1	Session 1- What is RPL? Session 2 - Features of a quality RPL process	Week 1 - Monday
2	Session 3 - FTVET RPL framework and policy Session 4 - Thinking about RPL evidence	Week 1 - Wednesday
3	Session 5 - Overview of RPL process Session 6 - RPL process Step 1 – RPL awareness and application	Week 1 - Friday
4	Session 7 - RPL process Step 2 – RPL Portfolio development and assessment Session 8 – RPL process Step 3 – Certification and appeals	Week 2 - Monday
5	Session 11 - RPL quality assurance Session 12 - Costing RPL services	Week 2 - Wednesday
6	Session 9 – Thinking about portfolios Session 10 – Question and answer session on RPL portfolios Session 13 - Action plan for RPL implementation	Week 2 - Friday

Alternative delivery strategy 3 – Self-directed learning

In this case, participants will be provided with a copy of this guide, the support materials listed on page 7 and the PowerPoint presentations. The participants will work through these materials on an individual, self-directed basis. Participants will also have access to up to two hours of individual online support via Skype or Zoom. In addition, it is envisaged that a moderated WhatsApp group will be established to facilitate communication between participants.

Alternative delivery strategy 4 – Face-to-face delivery managed by a local facilitator with mentor support

In this case, the three-day face-to-face programme will be delivered by a local facilitator who will have mentoring / coaching support from an international consultant with expertise in RPL. Under this option the mentoring / coaching support will be provided to the local facilitator via Skype or Zoom. The local facilitator would need to have:

- ▶ knowledge of the Ethiopian TVET system and, in particular, the assessment and certification policies of the Federal TVET Agency;
- ▶ experience of international TVET systems and developments in relation to RPL, assessment and certification;
- ▶ high-level group facilitation skills.

▶ Support materials

All participants undertaking this programme require access to this guide, including the participant notes and the thirteen PowerPoint presentations, and the following documents:

- ▶ *Technical and Vocational Education and Training Proclamation No. 954/2016* published in Federal Negarit Gazette No 78, 27 May 2016
- ▶ Federal TVET Agency, *Occupational Assessment and Certification Directive*, November 2014 G.C., Addis Ababa.
- ▶ RPL Framework for TVET in Ethiopia
- ▶ RPL Procedures and Resources for TVET in Ethiopia
- ▶ Policy on RPL for TVET in Ethiopia
- ▶ Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, *Occupational Standard Basic Garment Production NTQF Level 1* or latest equivalent version

Participant notes - Session 1: What is RPL?

► Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to define and explain the benefits of recognition of prior learning (RPL).

This means that you will be able to:

- define the term RPL;
- identify the benefits of RPL;
- describe the different ways in which workers gain and strengthen their work skills;
- identify the different terms that are used for RPL.

1.1 What is RPL?

People are always learning. Much learning takes place outside the formal education and training system. However, this learning is often not well understood or valued.

Participating in on-the-job training, being coached in a work skill, taking part in an informal apprenticeship, contributing to a work team and engaging in community activities are all ways in which people gain work skills. However, these skills are often not formally recognized.

RPL provides a mechanism whereby people can be awarded TVET qualifications for the knowledge and skills they have gained through formal, non-formal and informal learning, without having to undertake further education and training.

Reflection

Think about and write a response to each of the following questions:

1. How do people acquire the skills they use at work?
2. Do some workers have skills but no formal qualifications?
3. Are skilled workers disadvantaged if they do not have formal qualifications?
4. Who might benefit if skilled but unqualified workers could gain formal qualifications?
5. What things might help or hinder the introduction of RPL in Ethiopia?

1.2 Benefits of RPL

Recognizing all types of learning has benefits for:

- ▶ workers,
- ▶ employers,
- ▶ Government, and
- ▶ training and certification agencies.

▶ Figure 1 - Benefits of RPL for different stakeholders

Employers	Workers
• help in identifying employees' skills • help to in identifying skill gaps • help in identifying appropriate training opportunities for workers and management • reductions in training time by minimizing duplication of learning • generation of new ideas and developments as a result of applicants reflecting on work activities • broadening and deepening the skills pool in Ethiopia so that over time companies gain access to the more relevant, higher-quality skills needed to boost productivity	• award of a full or part nationally recognized qualification • increased self-esteem and confidence through recognition of achievements • improved career and promotion prospects through gaining nationally recognized qualifications • identification of learner pathways as learning is recognized and can be mapped to occupational skills standards • normal period of study is shortened thanks to evidence of the knowledge, technical skills and soft skills needed in work
Government	Training, assessment and certification agencies
• improved skills profile of the nation's workforce • expansion of people's employment prospects • participation in skills formation boosted by improved access to education and training • greater equity as individuals' access to decent work is increased • social cohesion improved by better access to work and so addressing disadvantage and poverty • promotion of learning and personal and professional development as an inherent part of the business activity of employers • enhanced collaboration between different sectors	• greater efficiency in the use of scarce training resources by not training individuals in areas where they already have skills • development of education/industry training partnerships • promotion of more flexible entry routes into nationally recognized qualifications • the relevance of training and certification is enhanced by better understanding of industry training needs and approaches to skills development.

1.3 Different ways of acquiring and strengthening skills

RPL acknowledges that competencies can be acquired in different ways, forms and settings, which may involve:

- ▶ Formal learning through programmes of study or training delivered by education or training providers or by enterprises in formal apprenticeship or dual-training systems. Such training is structured, has precise learning objectives and is certified.
- ▶ Non-formal learning which takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification. Examples of non-formal learning are learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace, in the voluntary-sector or trade-union context, or in the community.
- ▶ Informal learning which results from activities undertaken daily at work, in the family or during leisure activities. Such learning is often unintentional and the individual may not recognize at the time that it contributed to his or her knowledge, skills and competences.

1.4 Alternative terms for RPL

RPL is given different names in different countries. The following terms are sometimes used to describe RPL:

- ▶ RNFIL – recognition of non-formal and informal learning (OECD)
- ▶ RVA – recognition, validation and accreditation (of non-formal and informal learning)
- ▶ VNFIL – validation of non-formal/informal learning (European Training Foundation)
- ▶ APEL – assessment of prior experiential learning (United Kingdom)
- ▶ APL – assessment of prior learning (United Kingdom)
- ▶ PLAR – prior learning assessment and recognition (Canada)
- ▶ RAC – recognition of acquired competencies (Quebec, Belgium)
- ▶ RVCC – recognition, validation and certification of competencies (Portugal)
- ▶ VAE – validation des acquis de l'expérience (France)
- ▶ RLO – recognition of learning outcomes (European Commission)

Reflection

Think about and write a response to each of the following questions:

1. What are the different ways in which individuals learn or strengthen their work skills, including both technical and soft skills?
2. How might learning that takes place outside the formal education and training system be recognized and certified?
3. What would be required to give both employers and employees confidence in this certification?

Participant notes - Session 2: Features of a quality RPL process

► Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to identify and explain the features of a quality RPL process.

This means that you will be able to:

- list the best practice features of a quality RPL process;
- explain how RPL supports qualification, work and training pathways;
- identify the principles of assessment and how these relate to RPL processes;
- explain the reasons for using accredited RPL assessors;
- explain the importance of having an RPL appeals process;
- outline the reasons for establishing internal and external RPL quality-assurance processes.

2.1 Best-practice features of quality RPL processes

Quality RPL processes are underpinned by eight best-practice features. These are:

- RPL is for unqualified competent people.
- RPL provides pathways to qualifications, further training and work.
- RPL processes must comply with the principles of assessment.
- RPL assessments must be conducted by experienced and qualified assessors.
- RPL assessments must be based on quality evidence.
- RPL processes must include provision for reasonable adjustment.
- RPL processes must include an appeals mechanism.
- RPL assessments must be quality assured.

These best-practice features are outlined below.

RPL is for unqualified competent people

RPL is for any applicant who has acquired relevant competencies through work experience and/or informal or non-formal learning, but who does not have a related qualification/certificate.

RPL provides pathways to qualifications, further training and work

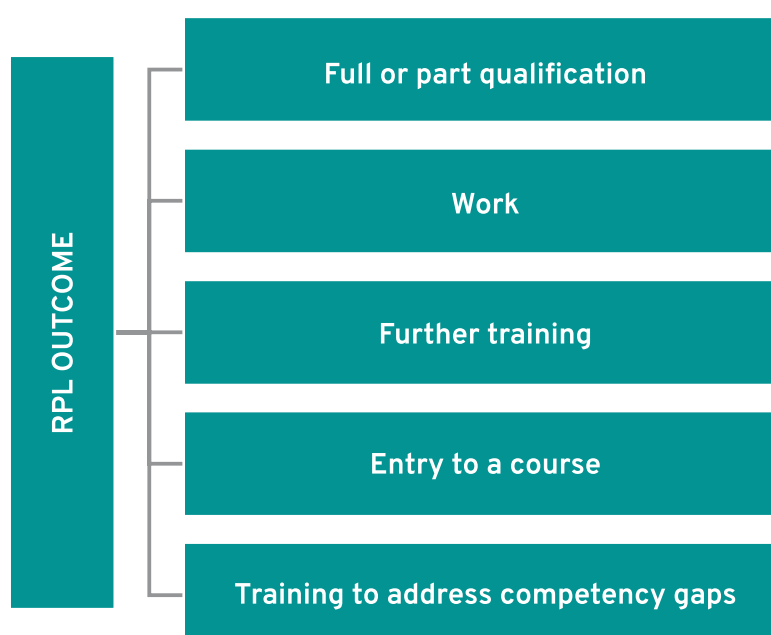
RPL processes should make a range of options or pathways available to applicants, depending on the outcomes of the RPL assessment. For example, if the applicant is successful, pathways may include the issuing of a full or part qualification recognized by the Federal TVET Agency.

However, if gaps are found in an applicant's competence, pathways may include action to address the gap, such as:

- further training,
- structured work opportunities with mentoring and coaching,
- directed self-study with a tutor or coach,
- counselling on career options that better match the competencies actually demonstrated.

Quality RPL processes always provide a pathway for applicants. Some of the possible pathways are illustrated below.

► **Figure 2 - RPL pathways**



RPL processes must comply with the principles of assessment

Best-practice RPL processes comply with the principles of assessment. This means that all aspects of the RPL assessment process must be:

- Valid - a RPL assessment process is valid when it assesses the outcome it claims to assess.
- Reliable – a RPL assessment process is reliable when assessment results are consistent from one applicant to the next, from one RPL assessor to the next, and from one occasion to the next.
- Fair – a RPL assessment process is fair when it is designed and implemented in a way that does not prevent an applicant from completing it due simply to personal factors such as age, gender, disadvantage or disability.
- Flexible – a RPL assessment process is flexible when it can be applied in different contexts and still address the relevant occupational skill standard and meet the needs of individual applicants.

RPL assessments must be conducted by experienced and qualified assessors

The use of experienced and qualified assessors is a key feature of a quality RPL process. The requirement to use qualified assessors may be met by appointing:

- an individual with technical expertise and the relevant assessment competencies,
- an assessment team including people with technical expertise and the relevant assessment competencies, who work collaboratively, or
- a technical expert who collects evidence, which is then considered by a qualified assessor who coordinates the evidence collection and makes the assessment decision.

The most efficient RPL processes generally involve the use of individual qualified assessors with extensive recent experience in the competency areas being assessed. These assessors can judge quickly whether applicants have the required skills and knowledge to be deemed competent.

The key to efficient and accurate judgements is the ability of assessors to quickly identify the critical aspects of competence and recognize deficiencies in the evidence presented by applicants.

RPL assessments must be based on quality evidence

In best-practice RPL processes, all assessment decisions are based on quality evidence. This means that all evidence used to make RPL assessment decisions must be:

- Valid - the evidence directly relates to the occupational skill standards being assessed.

- Sufficient - there is enough evidence to make a valid judgement as to the applicant's achievement of the occupational skills standards being assessed.
- Authentic - the evidence is the applicant's own work, behaviour or performance.
- Current - the evidence shows that the applicant currently possesses the knowledge, skills and capabilities required to meet the occupational skills standards being assessed.

RPL processes must include provision for reasonable adjustment

In best-practice RPL processes, the principles of fairness and flexibility are central to RPL assessment. As such, RPL processes must allow RPL assessors to adjust the process so that it is inclusive and all applicants, including those with disabilities and who have experienced disadvantage, are able to demonstrate the skills and knowledge required to meet specified outcomes and gain full qualifications or credit toward qualifications.

Disability in this context includes physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, sensory disabilities, neurological disabilities, learning disabilities, physical disfigurement, and the presence in the body of disease-causing organisms. Disadvantage refers to cases in which applicants' family, social, or economic circumstances hinder their ability to demonstrate competency. Disadvantage may include matters related to gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, AIDS / HIV status, poverty, lack of adequate family support or discrimination.

In best-practice RPL, applicants with one or more of these characteristics are able to apply for reasonable adjustment to the assessment process. This may involve:

- varying the RPL process, for example by allowing for alternative forms of portfolio, such as e-portfolios;
- providing RPL assessment materials and tools in alternative formats, such as braille or large print;
- providing assistive technology, readers, scribes and other forms of support for applicants;
- using trained support staff, including note-takers and interpreters, to support the applicant in the RPL assessment process;
- applying flexible scheduling for RPL assessments.

RPL processes must include an appeal mechanism

In best-practice RPL, the person being assessed, or other interested party such as an employer, may dispute the outcome of an assessment and request reassessment. In such circumstances, it is the responsibility of RPL assessors to inform applicants about the appeal

process and how they can initiate it if they feel they have been unfairly treated or have concerns about the outcome.

RPL quality assurance

Best-practice RPL is quality-assured. The process is designed to ensure the quality and consistency of assessment outcomes. In most cases, RPL quality assurance involves a mix of internal and external measures, which frequently include:

- setting quality criteria for the RPL process,
- auditing the RPL process against specified quality indicators,
- gathering user feedback on the RPL process,
- identifying ways of improving the RPL process.

Reflection

Think about and write a response to each of the following questions:

1. Which of the eight best-practice features of quality RPL processes is most important? Why?
2. Which is least important? Why?
3. Are there any other best-practice features you consider critical to a quality RPL process?

Participant notes - Session 3: Federal TVET Agency RPL framework and policy

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to describe the key elements of the RPL framework and policy.

This means that you will be able to:

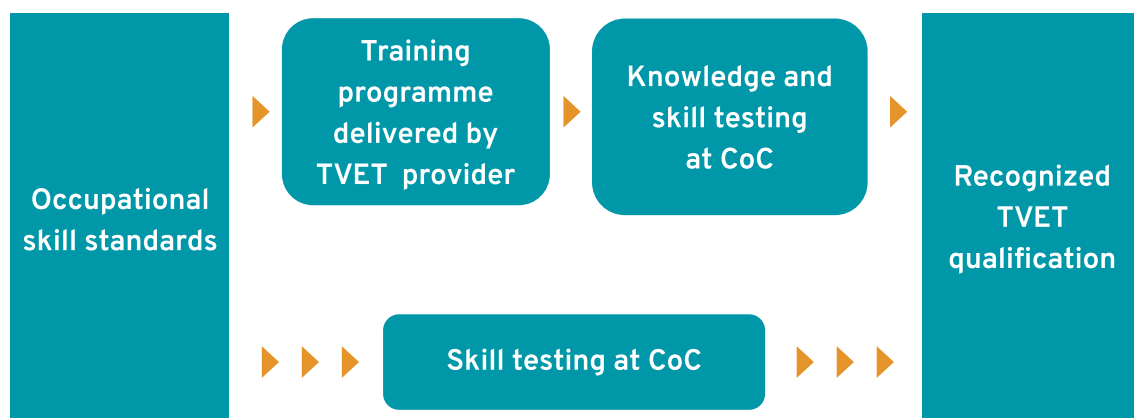
- identify key features of RPL framework;
- explain the relationship between the RPL framework and the FTVET Agency's assessment and certification policy,
- identify the key features of RPL policy.

3.1 Context

Currently there are two pathways which people can follow to gain nationally recognized qualifications in the national TVET system. These are:

- ▶ the training and testing pathway,
- ▶ the skill-testing pathway.

▶ Figure 3 Existing TVET qualification pathways



In both pathways, learners and applicants must show that they have successfully attained the skills and knowledge described in the relevant national occupational skill standards [OSS]. The OSS describe the outcomes which a person must be able to demonstrate in work. These outcomes, which are detailed in units of competence, are grouped to form nationally recognized qualifications for particular occupations.

When OSS have been developed by the Federal TVET Agency in collaboration with industry experts, and approved by the lead ministry for the industrial sector concerned, an accompanying assessment tool package is designed. This package sets out the skill test and, if required, the knowledge test that applicants must complete in order to gain the relevant nationally recognized qualification.

In the Ethiopian system, there is a distinct split between training and assessment for certification purposes. Training programmes, which comprise modules of learning based on the relevant OSS, are delivered by training providers, whereas assessment for formal national certification is conducted by accredited assessors appointed by assessment centres nominated by the relevant regional centre of competency (CoC).

In the training and assessment pathway, represented by the upper path in Figure 3, learners enrol in either a full training programme or a short course offered by an accredited TVET provider. Learners must complete the training programme or short course, including any provider-based assessment. Once this requirement is met, learners undertake a competency-based assessment administered by accredited assessors at an assessment centre nominated by the relevant regional CoC. Learners who successfully complete this assessment, which comprises both a skill test and a knowledge test, then receive the relevant nationally recognized qualification. This pathway typically applies to entry-level formal training programmes undertaken by school leavers. In this case, learners can only enter the relevant TVET training programme if they have completed Grade 10 or Grade 12 of general education.

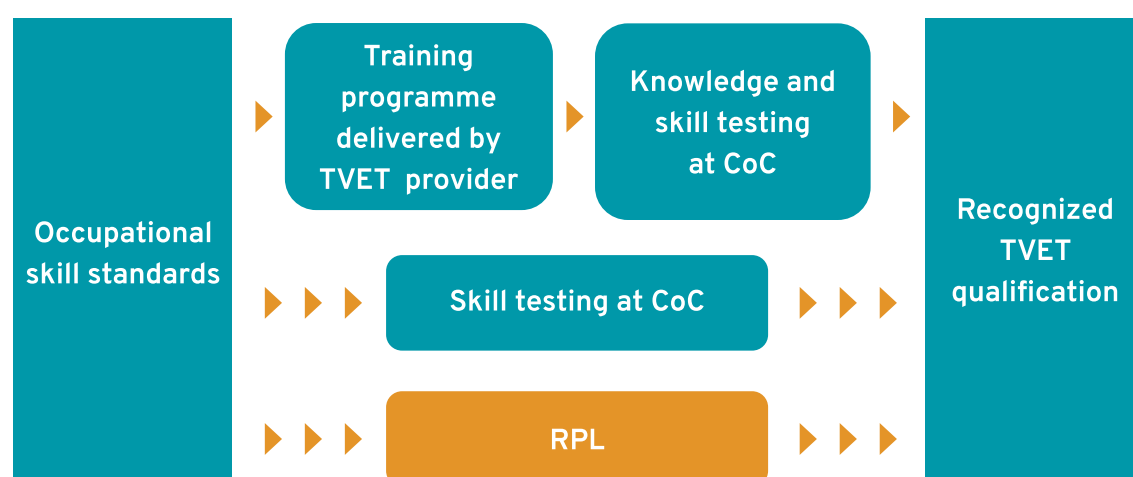
The skill-testing pathway, represented by the lower path in Figure 3, provides an alternative pathway for those with skills acquired in ways other than current formal training, including experienced workers who wish to gain nationally recognized qualifications. In this case, applicants apply to an assessment centre nominated by the relevant CoC to undertake a skill test for the qualification concerned (there is no knowledge testing within this pathway). Applicants who successfully complete the skill test are awarded the relevant nationally recognized qualification or certificate for the units of competence.

In both pathways, assessment of competency rests entirely on the learners' or applicants' test results. While these pathways provide access to nationally recognized qualifications for many learners and applicants, they act as a barrier to others. People who do not hold Grade 10 or Grade 12 certificates are effectively excluded from the training and testing pathway (this is likely to be the case for many workers employed in low or semi-skilled jobs or who are unemployed in Ethiopia). Similarly, the skill-testing pathway tends to exclude people as

the assessment tool packages do not include portfolio assessment. Furthermore, many of these people are not familiar with the formal TVET training system, as they have acquired their skills through informal and non-formal learning.

Given this situation, the ILO and the Federal TVET Agency have worked together to develop another pathway to nationally recognized qualifications – an RPL pathway. This pathway enables people who have acquired skills through formal, non-formal and informal learning to provide evidence that they meet the requirements of nationally recognized qualifications. In the RPL pathway, illustrated in Figure 4, there is no formal training requirement. Test results, if used at all, are just one of the items of evidence that may be submitted by applicants to support their claim to competence.

► **Figure 4 New TVET qualification pathways**



The new RPL pathway is especially relevant to the garment-making sector, which is expanding and employing significant numbers of people who do not hold formal qualifications but have acquired skills through work, quality-assured but non-accredited company- and supplier-based training and other non-formal learning.

3.2 RPL framework

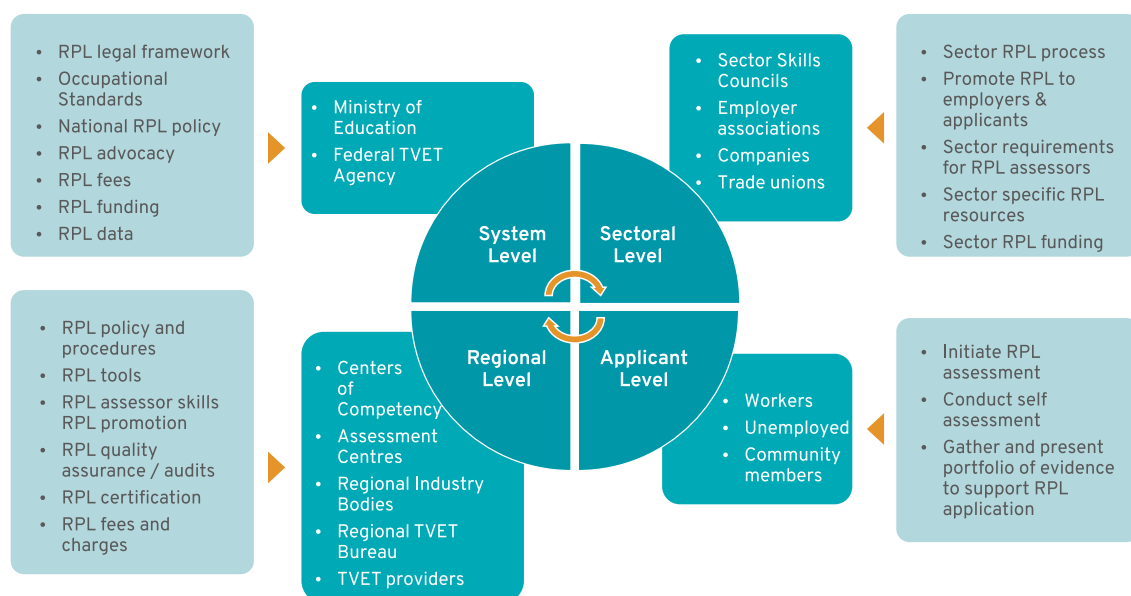
The ILO and the Federal TVET Agency have developed a RPL framework which is designed to:

- communicate Government, industry and training-sector commitment to the recognition of prior learning in TVET,
- highlight the benefits of RPL,
- identify the key elements of a modern, quality-assured RPL system at system, sectoral, organization and applicant level,
- identify key groups and their responsibilities in establishing, operating and maintaining the RPL framework.

Amongst other things, the RPL framework, as shown in Figure 5, defines the key stakeholders and their roles in supporting the RPL system. The RPL framework operates at four interrelated levels:

- ▶ System level
- ▶ Sectoral level
- ▶ Regional level
- ▶ Applicant level

▶ **Figure 5 - RPL framework**



3.3 RPL policy

The ILO and the Federal TVET Agency have also developed a RPL policy. This policy is consistent with the *Technical and Vocational Education and Training Proclamation Number 954/2016* (the primary policy document dealing with assessment and certification in TVET).

The Proclamation spells out the Government of Ethiopia's commitment to creating a competent workforce by providing an outcomes-based TVET system. Under the Proclamation, the key objectives of the TVET system are to:

- ▶ make training institutions incubators of micro and small enterprises,
- ▶ provide capacity-building programmes to enhance the competitiveness of micro and small enterprises,
- ▶ support the adoption of new technologies,
- ▶ improve and maintain quality in the TVET system,
- ▶ expand TVET provision,

- ▶ strengthen the linkages between enterprises and the TVET system,
- ▶ promote effective management of the TVET system,
- ▶ facilitate cost-effective approaches to TVET financing, and
- ▶ improve access and equity in the TVET system.

Under the Proclamation, the Federal Government has responsibility for occupational standards development and occupational assessment. The coordination of occupational assessments lies with the centres of competency [CoCs]. These centres accredit assessment centres [ACs] and assessors. The ACs conduct occupational assessments using prescribed assessment tools. Individuals who successfully complete an assessment are issued with nationally recognized certification by the relevant CoC on behalf of the Federal TVET Agency.

The Federal TVET Agency is responsible for overall coordination of the TVET system. The mandate of the Federal TVET Agency in relation to occupational assessment and certification is set out in the *Occupational Assessment and Certification Directive* November 2014 G.C. This Directive provides specific advice on:

- ▶ accreditation of assessment centres,
- ▶ accreditation of assessors,
- ▶ assessment methods and tools,
- ▶ assessment procedures,
- ▶ certification,
- ▶ assessment fees, and
- ▶ assessment reporting and data management.

Within this framework, both trainees who successfully complete a training programme at a TVET institution and persons already in work may apply for an occupational competency assessment in order to obtain an occupational competency certificate. This ensures that the benefits of national recognition are available to both new entrants to the workforce and existing workers. Under the current Directive, experienced workers may gain recognition of their prior learning by completing a skills assessment based on the relevant set of prescribed assessment tools.

The purpose of the RPL policy document is to build on the existing occupational assessment and certification arrangements by providing an evidence-based RPL system.

The introduction of a system of this kind will provide an efficient, cost-effective and quality-assured mechanism whereby skilled but unqualified workers can gain national recognition of the skills they have acquired through formal, informal and non-formal learning. This in turn will strengthen their position in the labour market, improve their access to work and provide a pathway into the TVET system. The implementation of quality-assured RPL will enhance the nation's skill formation system, expand TVET provision, and improve access to TVET for women, individuals with special needs and people from rural communities.

The RPL policy provides specific information on:

- ▶ the definition of RPL,
- ▶ the principles of RPL,
- ▶ the principles of assessment,
- ▶ the rules of evidence,
- ▶ reasonable adjustment of the RPL process for applicants with disabilities or those who have experienced disadvantage,
- ▶ the minimum requirements for the delivery of RPL services,
- ▶ accreditation of RPL assessors,
- ▶ RPL certification,
- ▶ RPL fees and charges,
- ▶ RPL quality assurance,
- ▶ roles and responsibilities for RPL implementation.

Activity

Read the RPL framework and policy. Complete the following chart by indicating how the RPL framework and policy address the best-practice features of RPL described in Session 2.

RPL best-practice feature	How this is met in RPL framework and policy
RPL is for unqualified competent people.	
RPL provides pathways to qualifications, further training and work.	
RPL processes must comply with the principles of assessment.	
RPL assessments must be conducted by experienced and qualified assessors.	
RPL assessments must be based on quality evidence.	
RPL processes must include provision for reasonable adjustment.	
RPL processes must include an appeals mechanism.	
RPL assessments must be quality assured.	

Participant notes - Session 4: Thinking about RPL evidence

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to explain what is meant by competence and identify the characteristics of quality evidence used in RPL assessments.

This means that you will be able to:

- explain the meaning of competence,
- define the term “evidence”
- distinguish between direct and indirect evidence,
- explain the rules of evidence.

4.1 What is competence?

People are considered to be competent when they are able to apply their knowledge and skills to successfully complete work activities in a range of situations and environments, in accordance with the standard of performance expected in the workplace.

This view of competency:

- ▶ emphasizes outcomes,
- ▶ focuses on what is expected of an employee in the workplace,
- ▶ highlights the application of skills and knowledge to workplace tasks,
- ▶ focuses on what people are able to do in a range of contexts,
- ▶ includes the ability to apply soft skills, such as working in teams and communicating effectively with others when performing work tasks.

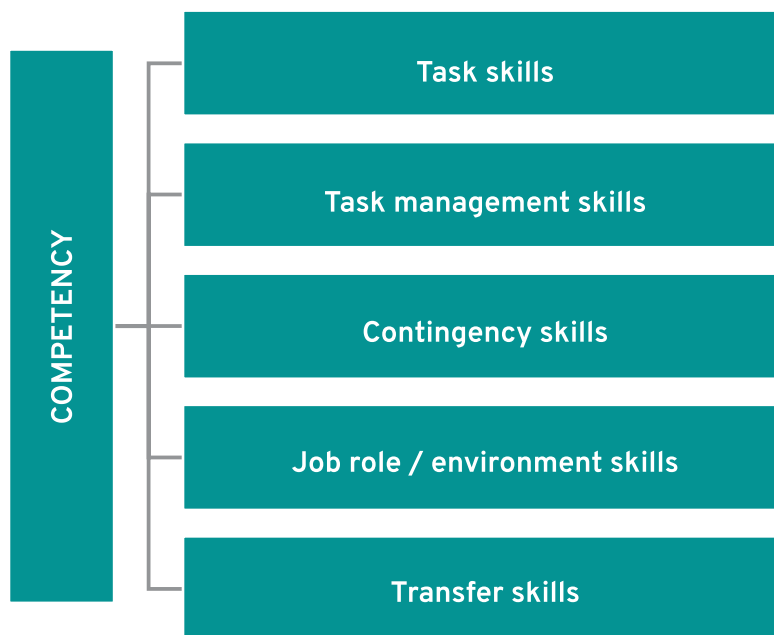
Competency involves successful work performance. As illustrated in Figure 6, there are five dimensions of competency. These are:

- ▶ Task skills – involving the performance of a specific workplace task(s).
- ▶ Task management skills – being able to manage a number of different tasks to complete a whole work activity.
- ▶ Contingency management skills – being able to respond to problems and irregularities when undertaking a work activity. This may involve dealing with:
 - breakdowns,
 - changes in routine,
 - unexpected or atypical results or outcomes,

- difficult or dissatisfied clients.
- ▶ Job/role environment skills – being able to deal with the responsibilities and expectations of the work environment when undertaking a work activity. This may involve:
 - applying soft skills, such as working with others and interacting with clients,
 - following workplace procedures, such as complying with safety procedures and observing enterprise policy and procedures.
- ▶ Transfer skills –being able to transfer one’s skills and knowledge to a number of different contexts

In performing any work task, a competent person will display each of these dimensions of competency.

▶ **Figure 6 - Dimensions of competency**



Activity

Identifying the dimensions of competency

Select a unit of competence from the *Occupational Standards for Basic Garment Production NTQF Level 1*, such as *IND BGP1 08 0218 - Produce simple garments*, or similar level of unit from another industry sector.

Read the unit title, unit descriptor and elements, and performance criteria.

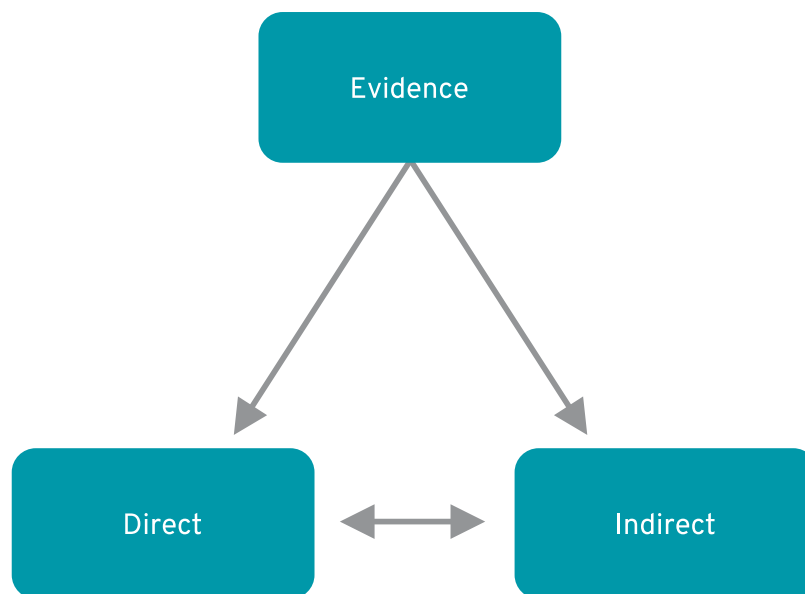
Complete the table below. Do this by writing down two task skills, two task management skills, two contingency management skills, two job / role environment skills and two transfer skills that are incorporated in the work activity described in the unit of competence.

Code and title of unit of competence	
Dimension of competence	Work tasks
Task skills	
Task management skills	
Contingency management skills	
Job / role environment skills	
Transfer skills	

4.2 Understanding evidence

Evidence is information gathered to provide proof of competency. Evidence can take many forms and be gathered from a variety of sources. As illustrated in the following diagram, evidence may be either direct or indirect.

► **Figure 7 - Types of evidence**



Direct evidence is evidence that can be observed or witnessed by the RPL assessor. This may include:

- observations by the RPL assessor of the applicant carrying out work activities,
- oral questioning of the applicant,
- demonstration by the applicant of specific skills needed to complete a task.

Indirect evidence is evidence of the applicant's work that can be reviewed or examined by the RPL assessor. This may include:

- assessment of the technical qualities of a finished product,
- a written test of underpinning knowledge,
- a review of work previously performed,
- testimonials from employers,
- reports from colleagues, clients and/or supervisors,
- work diary / journal,
- evidence of training.

4.3 Evidence used in RPL

Evidence used in RPL falls into three broad groups:

- Evidence of current competence obtained during the RPL process itself

- ▶ Relatively recent evidence presented by the applicant that provides a good indication of current competence
- ▶ Historical evidence provided by the applicant showing proof of prior learning at an earlier time.

The exact mix of evidence used will depend upon the context of the assessment and the background of the applicant.

All evidence must be evaluated against the rules of evidence. This means that the RPL assessor must ensure that the evidence used in RPL assessments is:

- ▶ valid,
- ▶ current,
- ▶ consistent,
- ▶ sufficient,
- ▶ authentic, and
- ▶ recent.

To determine whether or not the evidence submitted meets these criteria, the RPL assessor should ask the following questions:

Valid	Is the evidence related to the unit of competence that is being assessed?
Current	Does the evidence reflect the applicant's current knowledge and/or skills in the relevant aspect of work?
Sufficient	Does the evidence: • cover the full range of the elements and performance criteria? • illustrate that the candidate can meet the four dimensions of competency - task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills, and job/role environment skills?
Authentic	Is the evidence the applicant's own work or contribution?
Consistent	Does the evidence presented by the applicant and/or collected by the RPL assessor show that the applicant consistently meets the standards under workplace conditions?
Recent	Is the evidence less than three years old?

Evidence that meets the rules of evidence is called quality evidence and is suitable for use in making RPL decisions.

Activity

Identifying evidence

Select a unit of competence from the *Occupational Standards for Basic Garment Production NTQF Level 1*, such as *IND BGP1 08 0218 - Produce simple garments*.

Read the unit title, unit descriptor and elements and performance criteria.

Write down five examples of evidence that you think an applicant could present to prove that he or she is competent in the unit. Provide a brief explanation of why you think each item of evidence would be suitable for inclusion in a RPL application.

Participant notes - Session 5: Overview of the RPL process

► Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to explain the RPL process.

This means that you will be able to:

- describe the key stages in the RPL process;
- identify who is responsible for the delivery of RPL services;
- describe the roles of applicants, RPL assessors, centres of competency and assessment centres in the RPL process
- be familiar with the templates provided to assist RPL assessors and applicants in implementing the RPL process.

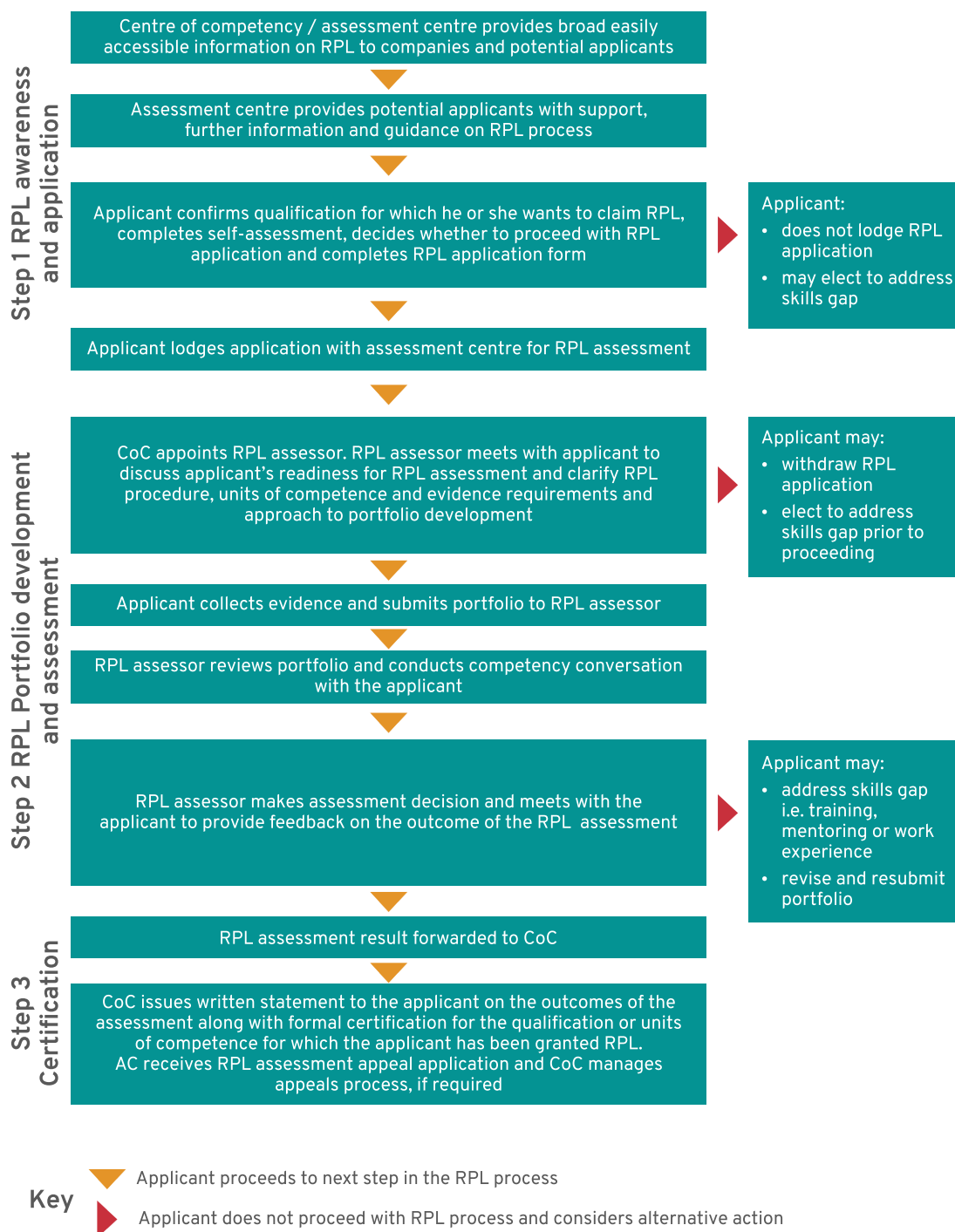
5.1 The RPL process

The RPL process, described in Figure 8, is the series of steps that the applicant must pass through in order to gain RPL. The RPL process consists of three key steps:

Step 1 – RPL awareness and application

Step 2 – RPL portfolio development and assessment

Step 3 – Certification.

► **Figure 8 – The RPL process**

5.2 Roles and responsibilities in the RPL process

The roles of the key stakeholders in the RPL process are set out in the table below.

Stakeholder	Role in the RPL process
RPL applicant	- Initiates RPL assessment process - Completes RPL self-assessment - Lodges RPL application and RPL self-assessment with assessment centre - Gathers, organizes and presents portfolio of evidence - Participates in meetings with RPL assessor
RPL assessor	- Advises RPL applicant on RPL process, units of competence, evidence and portfolio development - Conducts RPL assessment - Provides feedback to RPL applicant on outcomes of RPL assessment, including ways of addressing skill gaps, e.g. training with TVET provider, mentoring, work experience - Completes RPL assessment report - Contributes to appeals processes
Assessment centre	- Facilitates delivery of RPL services - Provides targeted, easily accessible information on RPL to companies and potential applicants - Provides potential RPL applicants with RPL application and RPL self-assessment forms - Receives RPL assessment application from applicant - Coordinates RPL assessment in cooperation with CoC, RPL assessor and applicant - Receives RPL assessment appeal applications
Centre of competency	- Appoints accredited RPL assessor to undertake RPL assessment - Issues certification - Manages RPL assessment appeals - Conducts RPL compliance audit
Employer	- Provides information to potential RPL applicants on benefits of RPL and RPL process - Provides support to RPL applicants by facilitating access to workplace information that may be used as evidence in RPL applications
TVET provider	Provides flexible training options to address skill gaps identified through RPL assessments

5.3 Resources to support the RPL process

A set of thirteen templates is available to support the RPL process. Applicants and RPL assessors are required to use these templates when implementing the RPL process.

TEMPLATE 1A	Introductory information on RPL for applicants
TEMPLATE 1B	Introductory information on RPL for employers
TEMPLATE 2	Checklist of guidance to be provided to potential applicants prior to lodging RPL application
TEMPLATE 3	RPL self-assessment Tool
TEMPLATE 4	RPL application form
TEMPLATE 5	Report of initial meeting between RPL assessor and applicant
TEMPLATE 6	RPL portfolio
TEMPLATE 7	Third-party report
TEMPLATE 8	Questions to guide competency conversation
TEMPLATE 9	RPL assessment report
TEMPLATE 10	Centre of competency statement of RPL assessment outcomes
TEMPLATE 11	RPL appeal application
TEMPLATE 12	RPL audit
TEMPLATE 13	An approach to costing RPL

Copies of the templates are provided in the supporting document “RPL Procedures and Resources for TVET in Ethiopia”. The templates are in MS Word format so that they can be easily customized for use by applicants and RPL assessors.

Reflection

Read through the RPL process and describe the process from the point of view of:

- The applicant
- The RPL assessor

Look through the list of templates and complete the following chart by identifying which templates must be completed by the applicant and which by the RPL assessor

Templates completed by applicant	Templates completed by RPL assessor

Participant notes - Session 6: RPL process – Step 1 RPL awareness and application

► Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to explain the first step in the RPL process: RPL awareness and application.

This means that you will be able to:

- describe the ways of increasing applicant and employer awareness of RPL;
- outline the procedure for lodging a RPL application;
- be familiar with the templates used in supporting this step in the RPL process.

6.1 Step 1 RPL awareness and application

There are two key activities in this step in the RPL process:

1. The centre of competency / assessment centre must provide targeted, easily accessible information on RPL to companies and potential applicants about:
 - the benefits of RPL,
 - the RPL process.
2. The applicant must:
 - identify a qualification for which he or she wants to claim RPL,
 - complete a self-assessment,
 - decide whether to proceed with RPL the application.

If the applicant decides not to lodge an RPL application, he or she may approach the assessment centre for advice on how to address any existing skills gaps identified through the self-assessment process.

6.2 RPL awareness

As indicated in the preceding section, the centre of competency / assessment centre must provide basic, easily accessible information on RPL to companies and potential applicants.

One way of providing this information is for the centre of competency / assessment centre to produce basic information sheets on RPL for applicants and employers using Templates

1a and 1b. These templates may be customized to provide specific information on the centre's RPL process, contact details and fees.

Activity

Read Template 1a – “Introductory information on RPL for applicants” and Template 1b – “Introductory information on RPL for employers”. Use this information to produce one basic information sheet on the RPL process for applicants and another for employers, as provided by your centre of competency / assessment centre.

6.3 RPL self-assessment form

Before the applicant can undertake a self-assessment, the assessment centre must prepare the self-assessment tool. To do this the assessment centre must:

1. obtain a copy of Template 3 - RPL self-assessment tool;
2. identify the set of occupational skill standards, qualification and units of competence for which the applicant is seeking RPL;
3. complete Template 3 by adding in:
 - the code and name of the qualification,
 - the codes and names of the units of competence that make up the qualification,
 - a brief description of the work task that is described in each unit of competence.

The completed version of *Template 3 - RPL self-assessment tool* must be provided to the applicant.

The applicant should then perform the self-evaluation. After completing the self-assessment, the applicant must decide whether he or she wishes to proceed with lodging an application for RPL.

Activity

- ▶ Read Template 3 – “RPL self-assessment tool”.
- ▶ Identify the sections of the self-assessment tool that must be completed by the RPL assessor and by the applicant.
- ▶ Complete the sections of the self-assessment tool that must be completed by the RPL assessor. To do this, you will need a copy of the relevant occupational skill standards, qualification and units of competence.
- ▶ Share your work with a colleague and note any suggestions for improvement.

6.4 RPL application

Having completed the self-assessment tool (Template 3) and decided to proceed with the RPL assessment, the applicant must lodge a completed RPL assessment form (Template 4) and return it to the assessment centre together with the completed self-assessment tool.

Activity

Read the RPL application form and complete the following tasks.

- ▶ Complete the RPL application form (Template 4) as if you were an RPL applicant.
- ▶ Review your completed form and answer the following:
 - Are there any changes you think should be made to this form?
 - Are there any aspects of this form that applicants may find difficult to complete?
 - What support could be provided to the applicant in completing this form?
 - Is there any other information that might be required from the applicant?

Participant notes - Session 7: RPL process – Step 2 Portfolio development and assessment

► Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to explain the second step in the RPL process: portfolio development and assessment.

This means that you will be able to:

- describe the information required in a RPL application;
- explain the process involved in conducting the initial meeting with the RPL applicant;
- explain the steps involved in portfolio development, review and evaluation;
- prepare an RPL assessment report;
- be familiar with the templates used in supporting this step in the RPL process.

7.1 Step 2 Portfolio development and assessment

There are five key activities in this step of the RPL process:

1. The CoC appoints an RPL assessor.
2. The RPL assessor holds an initial meeting with applicant to discuss the applicant's readiness for RPL assessment and clarify the RPL procedure, units of competence, evidence requirements and approach to portfolio development.
3. The applicant collects evidence and submits his/her portfolio to the RPL assessor.
4. The RPL assessor reviews the portfolio and holds a competency conversation with the applicant.
5. RPL assessor makes an assessment decision and meets with the applicant to provide feedback on the outcome of the RPL assessment.

If the applicant decides not to proceed with the RPL application at any stage during this part of the process, the RPL assessor must provide the applicant with advice on ways of addressing skills gaps, such as:

- training,
- mentoring,
- work experience.

7.2 CoC appoints RPL Assessor

Once the RPL application form has been received, the relevant centre of competency will appoint an accredited RPL assessor to conduct the RPL assessment. The RPL assessor must be accredited and have the skills and qualifications identified in the RPL policy.

Activity

Read the relevant section of the RPL policy and note down the requirements for accredited RPL assessors.

The two main tasks of the RPL assessor are to:

- ▶ provide advice to the applicant on the RPL process,
- ▶ conduct the RPL assessment.

The RPL assessor must keep a record of the dates on which the following items are either submitted by the applicant or conducted by the RPL assessor:

- ▶ RPL application form and RPL self-assessment form
- ▶ Report of initial meeting
- ▶ Portfolio
- ▶ Competency conversation
- ▶ RPL assessment report
- ▶ Feedback meeting

This information should be recorded stage by stage in the RPL assessment report (Template 9).

Activity

Read the RPL assessment report (Template 9) and note the information that the RPL assessor must record.

7.3 Initial meeting between the RPL assessor and the applicant

The RPL assessor must arrange an initial meeting with the applicant. The purpose of this meeting is to:

- ▶ establish a rapport with the applicant and gather information on:
 - the applicant's job role,
 - the evidence the applicant can provide,
 - how that evidence relates to the units of competence in the relevant qualification;
- ▶ review the applicant's self-assessment and discuss his or her readiness for RPL assessment;
- ▶ explain the RPL process;
- ▶ confirm the qualification and / or units of competence for which the applicant is seeking RPL;
- ▶ describe the different types of evidence that may be used in an RPL assessment;
- ▶ explain the purpose of the portfolio and the way in which the portfolio should be presented.

Following this meeting the applicant must confirm that he or she wants to proceed with the RPL process. Some applicants may decide that they are not ready to proceed. In this case, the RPL assessor should discuss with the applicant:

- ▶ ways of preparing for a RPL assessment in the future,
- ▶ strategies for addressing skills gaps, such as training with a TVET provider, coaching or mentoring in the workplace, or obtaining further work experience.

The RPL Assessor must complete a report on the outcomes of the initial meeting with the Applicant using Template 5 - Report of initial meeting between RPL assessor and applicant

Activity

Working in pairs, discuss the process involved in planning for, conducting and reporting on the initial meeting with the applicant. Prepare a brief report on what you think are the critical steps involved in this part of the RPL process.

7.4 Applicant collects evidence and submits portfolio to RPL assessor

Applicants who decide to proceed with the RPL process must prepare a portfolio of evidence showing how they are able to meet the requirements of the qualification / units of competence for which they are seeking RPL.

A portfolio is a systematic collection of the applicant work and related material that supports the his or her claim of competency in relation to one or more units of competence.

Portfolio evidence can take many forms:

- ▶ Workplace records
- ▶ Details of paid work performed
- ▶ Data supplied by the workplace which provides information on work performance, such as individual or work-team production rates, rework rates, quality assurance indicators and occupational health and safety compliance
- ▶ Work samples
- ▶ Reports from workplace supervisors (use Template 6 – Third-party report)
- ▶ Awards, certificates and qualifications
- ▶ Resume, curriculum vitae (CV)
- ▶ Job description
- ▶ Workplace forms used by the applicant
- ▶ Workplace policies and procedures
- ▶ Work instructions
- ▶ Job sheets
- ▶ Completed job cards
- ▶ Training diary
- ▶ Checklists
- ▶ Booking sheets
- ▶ Schedules
- ▶ Copy of “to do” lists
- ▶ Photographs of the applicant’s work
- ▶ A video recording of the applicant performing the task.

During this stage of the RPL process, applicants will use two templates:

- ▶ Template 6a – RPL applicant portfolio record sheet
- ▶ Template 7 – Third-party report

The RPL assessor must prepare the complete version of Template 6a – “Applicant portfolio record sheet” for the applicant. This will identify the skills and knowledge of which the applicant is required to provide evidence to support his/her claim of competency.

Activity

- ▶ Read Template 6a – “Applicant portfolio record sheet”.
- ▶ Identify the sections of the template that must be completed by the RPL assessor and by the applicant.
- ▶ Complete the sections of the portfolio record sheet that must be completed by the RPL assessor. To do this, you will need a copy of the relevant occupational skills standards, qualification and units of competence.
- ▶ Share your work with a colleague and note any suggestions for improvement.

The RPL assessor should then prepare the complete version of Template 7 - “Third-party report” for the applicant to provide to third parties, such as employers and workplace supervisors, who can comment on the applicant’s capacity to perform the task identified in the relevant unit(s) of competence.

Activity

Select the same unit of competence as you used in the previous activity and prepare the completed version of Template 7 – “Third-party report”. Show your completed template to a colleague and identify any areas for improvement.

The RPL assessor must explain to the applicant:

- ▶ how to complete the portfolio record sheet,
- ▶ who can complete the third-party Report,
- ▶ how the portfolio is to be presented.

Note: Further information on portfolios is provided in Sessions 9 and 10.

7.5 RPL assessor reviews portfolio and conducts competency conversation with the applicant

After the applicant has submitted the portfolio, the RPL assessor must review the portfolio and arrange to meet with the applicant to conduct a competency conversation.

The purpose of the competency conversation is to:

- ▶ clarify any matters that may have arisen during the review of the portfolio,
- ▶ confirm the applicant's claim to competency by asking questions directly related to the qualification / unit of competence for which RPL is sought.

It is important to note that this competency conversation between the RPL assessor and the applicant should be focused on the applicant's portfolio and the qualification / unit of competence for which RPL is sought. It is **not** a test – the purpose is to confirm the applicant's claim to competency.

Prior to the meeting the RPL assessor must prepare a list of questions that will form the basis of the meeting. The RPL assessor must take notes of the applicant's answers to the questions.

Two templates are provided to assist the RPL assessor with these tasks:

- ▶ Template 6b – RPL portfolio – Portfolio evaluation form
- ▶ Template 8 – Questions to guide competency conversation

Activity

Select the same unit of competence as you used in the previous activity and prepare the completed version of Template 6b – “RPL Portfolio – Portfolio evaluation form” and Template 8 – “Questions to guide competency conversation”. Show your completed template to a colleague and identify any areas for improvement.

7.6 RPL assessor makes assessment decision and provides feedback to RPL applicant

After the meeting, the RPL assessor must consider the evidence in the applicant's portfolio and the applicant's responses to the questions posed in the meeting, and use this information to make the assessment decision.

The RPL assessor must complete the RPL assessment report (Template 9),

- ▶ listing the units for which RPL was and was not granted,
- ▶ summarizing the feedback given to the applicant on the outcome of the RPL assessment, including recommendations for addressing skills gaps.

The RPL assessor must meet with the applicant to provide feedback on the RPL assessment report. In some cases, the RPL assessor and the applicant may agree that the applicant should resubmit his or her portfolio to strengthen his/her claim to competency. If resubmission is agreed, this must be noted in the RPL assessment report. Only one resubmission is permitted. Both the RPL assessor and the applicant must sign the RPL assessment report to confirm that they have discussed the outcomes of the RPL assessment. The RPL assessor must submit the RPL assessment report to the assessment centre for forwarding to the CoC.

Activity

Working in pairs discuss the process involved in planning for, conducting and reporting on the meeting with the applicant. Prepare a brief report on what you think are the critical steps involved in this part of the RPL process and comment on the usefulness of Template 9 – “RPL assessment report”.

Participant notes - Session 8: RPL process – Step 3 Certification and appeals

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to explain the RPL appeal and certification process.

This means that you will be able to:

- describe the information required in a statement of RPL assessment outcomes;
- explain the RPL appeal process;
- be familiar with the templates used in supporting this step in the RPL process.

8.1 Step 3 Certification and appeals

There are two key activities in this step in the RPL process:

6. Issuing of RPL certification
7. Applicant appeals against RPL outcomes

8.2 RPL certification

Once the RPL assessor has submitted the RPL assessment report, the CoC will provide a written statement to the applicant on the outcomes of the assessment, together with formal certification for qualifications or units of competence for which RPL has been granted.

Activity

Review and complete a copy of Template 10 – “Centre of competency statement of RPL assessment outcomes”.

8.3 RPL appeals

Applicants who disagree with the outcomes of the RPL assessment may lodge an appeal with the assessment centre.

In this case, the applicant's portfolio will be reviewed by an independent RPL assessor, who may also choose to interview the applicant. The appeal process is managed by the CoC and the result is final.

Activity

The RPL policy states that:

All applicants have the right to appeal a RPL assessment decision if they feel that the assessment process was unfair or that the decision made by the RPL assessor does not accurately reflect their competence.

Working in pairs discuss the following:

- ▶ Should the RPL policy and procedures include provision for appeals?
- ▶ Under what circumstances might an appeal be lodged by an applicant?
- ▶ Should applicants have to pay a fee if they want to lodge an appeal?
- ▶ What are your views on the appeal process as it is described in the RPL policy and procedures?

Participant notes - Session 9: Thinking about portfolios

► Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to identify and explain the purpose and limitations of the different types of portfolios used in education and training.

This means that you will be able to:

- define the term “portfolio”;
- distinguish between process and product portfolios;
- identify the purposes of a portfolio;
- distinguish between different types of portfolio;
- identify the authors and audience for portfolios;
- discuss the limitations of different types of portfolio.

This session is a facilitator-led presentation on portfolios based on the information contained in the accompanying PowerPoint presentation.

The materials covered in this presentation include:

- What is a portfolio?
- Process and product portfolios
- Purposes of a portfolio
- Types of portfolio
- Authors and audience for portfolios
- Limitations of different types of portfolio.

The presentation is designed to provide participants with an opportunity to broaden their knowledge of the use of portfolios in education and training, and in particular in RPL assessment. This session is also intended to serve as stimulus for Session 10, which will cover the question-and-answer session on RPL portfolios.

Participant notes - Session 10: Question and answer session on RPL portfolios

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to describe the key features and process for developing and evaluating an RPL portfolio.

This means that you will be able to:

- describe the format and content of a RPL portfolio;
- explain the roles of applicants and RPL assessors in the development and evaluation of RPL portfolios;
- explain the process of portfolio evaluation;
- be familiar with the templates used to support RPL portfolio development and evaluation.

This is a facilitator-led question and answer session. At the outset of the session, the facilitator will give the participants time to consider the questions listed below. Depending on the nature of the group this discussion could be organized in pairs, small groups or on a one-to-one basis.

- ▶ What is the role of the applicant in RPL portfolio development?
- ▶ What is the role of the RPL assessor in RPL portfolio development and evaluation?
- ▶ What information should be included in an RPL portfolio?
- ▶ How should an RPL portfolio be structured?
- ▶ How much time should an applicant be given to prepare a RPL portfolio?
- ▶ Are there any other things you would like to have explained about portfolios?
- ▶ What are the five key questions you would like to ask about RPL portfolio development and evaluation?

After considering these questions, the facilitator should work with the participants and identify a set of questions to be discussed by the whole group. It is envisaged that this session will provide participants with the opportunity to raise any questions they may have about RPL portfolios.

Participant notes - Session 11: RPL quality assurance

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to explain RPL quality assurance procedures.

This means that you will be able to:

- explain the approach to RPL quality assurance;
- identify who is responsible for RPL quality assurance;
- distinguish between internal and external RPL quality assurance;
- be familiar with the templates available to support RPL quality assurance.

11.1 Approach to RPL quality assurance

RPL quality assurance involves two processes:

- ▶ Internal quality assurance
- ▶ External quality assurance.

The aim of internal quality assurance is to ensure that assessment centres (ACs) make valid and reliable RPL assessment decisions. The purpose of external quality assurance, carried out by centres of competency (CoCs) in conjunction with the relevant regional industry body, is to support ACs in maintaining robust internal quality assurance systems and processes.

11.2 Internal quality assurance

Internal quality assurance is an integral component of the RPL assessment arrangements of all ACs. It provides reassurance to applicants and other interest groups / stakeholders, including Government, employers and the broader community, that the occupational skill standards against which applicants seek recognition are being adhered to.

The Federal TVET Agency has established criteria and guidelines for the accreditation of ACs, which, among other things, set out the internal quality-assurance measures ACs must have in place to ensure the quality of assessment.

In line with these requirements, all ACs must have a documented RPL plan that sets out their internal quality assurance arrangements for RPL assessment. This plan must comprise:

- ▶ a documented RPL assessment process,
- ▶ evidence that RPL assessors are accredited,
- ▶ documented RPL assessment tools based on the set of RPL templates provided by the Federal TVET Agency,

- ▶ a documented RPL assessment moderation process,
- ▶ evidence that clear, targeted information on RPL is made available to employers and potential applicants,
- ▶ a statement that sets out how the RPL assessment process addresses the principles of assessment, the rules of evidence, and reasonable adjustment for applicants with disabilities or who have experienced disadvantage,
- ▶ a schedule of RPL fees and charges,
- ▶ procedures for the secure storage of RPL assessment records,
- ▶ procedures for RPL assessment appeals.

Each AC must have a RPL assessment plan. These plans may be produced by:

- ▶ individual ACs,
- ▶ clusters of ACs,
- ▶ CoCs at regional level.

Regardless of the way in which these plans are produced, individual ACs must actively implement their RPL assessment plan and ensure that all RPL assessment activities are conducted in line with the requirement of the plan.

The Federal TVET Agency will provide guidelines for the development and self-evaluation of RPL assessment plans, which will be made available to all COCs and ACs.

11.3 External quality assurance

External quality assurance will be provided through the compliance audits currently managed by the regional CoC in conjunction with the regional industry body. The compliance audits will comprise:

- ▶ an initial review and approval of the AC's assessment plan, undertaken when the AC is accredited by the CoC to offer RPL assessments
and
- ▶ audits that focus on the implementation of the AC's RPL assessment plan. These will form part of the annual compliance audits conducted by the CoCs.

Activity

Template 12 – “RPL Audit” is provided to assist assessment centres in reviewing their RPL process. Consider the following questions.

- ▶ What aspects of the RPL process are covered by the RPL audit tool?
- ▶ Are there other areas that should be covered by the RPL audit tool?
- ▶ How would you plan and implement an audit of an assessment centre's RPL process using this tool?
- ▶ Would using this tool help assessment centres in preparing for the compliance audits managed by the regional CoCs?

Participant notes - Session 12: Costing RPL services

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to explain the procedures for costing RPL services.

- This means that you will be able to:
- identify the costs associated with providing RPL services;
- describe the sources of funding for RPL services;
- identify and apply a model for costing RPL services;
- be familiar with the templates available to support the costing of RPL services.

12.1 Approach to costing RPL services

Centres of competency and assessment centres must establish a schedule of RPL fees and charges.

A full costing model for RPL services should take into account all costs associated with establishing, operating and maintaining the RPL process. Some of these costs are illustrated in the following diagram.

▶ Figure 9 - Examples of the costs involved in providing RPL services

Establishment	Operation	Maintenance
OSS development	Fees for RPL assessors	Maintaining currency of OSS
RPL policy development	Materials used in RPL assessments	Continuing professional development of RPL assessors
RPL resource development	Administration and record keeping	Maintaining RPL templates
RPL assessor training	Marketing and promoting RPL services	
	Travel costs for RPL assessors	

It is unlikely that all these costs will be covered by RPL fees charged to applicants. Almost inevitably, the costs associated with RPL will be met through a mix of applicant fees and government funding.

One approach to costing RPL is to assume that government funding will support the establishment and maintenance costs associated with RPL, while the RPL fees paid by

companies and individual applicants should cover the operational costs incurred by an assessment centre in conducting RPL assessments.

Template 13 provides an approach to identifying the operational cost of conducting a RPL assessment for an individual seeking recognition for a group of four units of competence.

This template may be customized by:

- ▶ adding or deleting cost items,
- ▶ varying the cost basis of each item,
- ▶ adjusting the cost per hour,
- ▶ changing the number of units of competence covered by the RPL assessment.

In using this template, it should be noted that the costs do not include the costs associated with establishing and maintaining the RPL process.

Activity

Use Template 13 – “An approach to costing RPL” to calculate the cost of an RPL assessment for an applicant seeking RPL for four units of competence from the *Occupational Standards for Basic Garment Production NTQF Level 1*. When you have calculated the cost, consider the following questions:

- ▶ What is the cost of providing the RPL service?
- ▶ How useful was the costing model?

Participant notes - Session 13: Action plan for RPL implementation

► Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, you should be able to develop an action plan for RPL implementation.

This means that you will be able to:

- define the term “action plan”;
- identify the key features of an action plan;
- develop an action plan for implementing a RPL assessment in the garment-making industry.

13.1 What is an action plan?

An action plan is a document that lists the steps that must be taken to achieve a specific goal. The purpose of an action plan is to identify what resources are required to reach the goal and formulate a timeline for when specific tasks need to be completed.

Action plans provide a framework for thinking about how to complete a project efficiently. Action plans are useful because they:

- identify the tasks that need to be undertaken to complete an activity,
- organize these tasks in a sensible order,
- ensure that key steps in completing the overall activity are not missed,
- enable decisions to be made about how long tasks take and the resources needed to complete them.

Action plans need not be complex. The following chart provides one way of setting out an action plan.

Actions	Person responsible	Start date	Finish date	Resources	Desired outcome

Activity

Think about the steps involved in planning and implementing an RPL assessment in a garment-making company. Prepare an action plan showing the steps and responsibilities involved, and time required to implement the RPL assessment.

Facilitator notes - Session 1: What is RPL?

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to define and explain the benefits of recognition of prior learning (RPL).

This means that they will be able to:

- define the term “RPL”;
- identify the benefits of RPL;
- describe the different ways in which workers gain and strengthen their work skills;
- identify the different terms that are used for RPL.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 1 (9 slides)
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 1: What is RPL?

Duration

60 minutes

1.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**. Facilitator welcomes participants to the workshop, introduces the participants to each other, and briefly outlines the purpose of the training programme. Facilitator notes that the aim of the programme is to:

- ▶ train a group of RPL assessors,
- ▶ promote RPL as an alternative pathway to national qualifications,
- ▶ improve individuals’ access to national qualifications, decent work and career paths.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2** and briefly outlines the objectives of Session 1.

1.1 What is RPL?

Facilitator displays **Slide 3** and highlights the following points:

- ▶ People are always learning.
- ▶ Much learning takes place outside the formal education and training system. However, this learning is often not well understood or valued.
- ▶ Participating in on-the-job training, being coached in a work skill, taking part in an informal apprenticeship, contributing to a work team and engaging in community activities are all ways in which people gain work skills. However, these skills are often not formally recognized.

Facilitator displays **Slide 4**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains the definition of RPL:
"RPL provides a mechanism whereby people can be awarded TVET qualifications for the knowledge and skills they have gained through formal, non-formal and informal learning, without having to undertake further education and training."
- ▶ Facilitator highlights the following points:
 - RPL leads to formally recognized qualification.
 - RPL is for skilled people who lack qualifications.
 - RPL does not require individuals to undertake further training.

Facilitator displays **Slide 5**.

- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to form groups (4 to 5 people) and asks them to discuss the following five questions, then report back to the whole group.
 1. How do people acquire the skills they use at work?
 2. Do some workers have skills but no formal qualifications?
 3. Are skilled workers disadvantaged if they do not have formal qualifications?
 4. Who might benefit if skilled but unqualified workers could gain formal qualifications?
 5. What factors might help or hinder the introduction of RPL in Ethiopia?
- ▶ Facilitator summarizes key points raised in the reports as feedback to the whole group. This may include points such as:
 - People acquire skills at work in different ways.
 - Many workers lack formal qualifications.
 - Individuals who lack qualifications / certification are often disadvantaged, e.g. they are paid lower wages, their work tends to be less secure, they have little opportunity for career progression.
 - Beneficiaries of RPL: workers, companies, society.

- Factors that might support RPL: government funding, simple RPL process, company support, marketing of RPL, trade union advocacy for RPL.
- Factors that may act as barriers to RPL: cost of RPL, lack of information, lack of employer support, RPL certification not accepted by government or employers, lack of rigour in RPL process means it is seen as a “soft option”.

1.2 Benefits of RPL

Facilitator displays **Slide 6**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains the benefits of RPL for each of the following four groups using the notes below.

Employers

- Help in identifying employees' skills
- Help in identifying skills gaps
- Help in identifying appropriate training opportunities for workers and management
- Reductions in training time by minimizing duplication of learning
- Generation of new ideas and developments for companies as a result of applicants reflecting on work activities
- Broadening and deepening of the skills pool in Ethiopia so that over time companies gain access to the more relevant, higher-quality skills needed to boost productivity

Workers

- Award of a full or part nationally recognized qualification
- Increase self-esteem and confidence through recognition of achievements
- Boost to career and promotion opportunities by gaining nationally recognized qualifications
- Identification of learner pathways as recognized learning can be mapped to occupational skill standards
- Normal period of study is shortened by provision of evidence of existing knowledge, technical skills and soft skills.

Government

- Improvement in the skills profile of the nation's workforce
- Expansion of people's employment prospects
- Participation in skills formation boosted by improving access to education and training
- Greater equity as individuals gain access to decent work

- Greater social cohesion and reduction in disadvantage and poverty as a result of individuals' access to work
- Promotion of learning and personal and professional development as an inherent part of the business activity of employers
- Enhanced collaboration between different sectors

Training, assessment and certification agencies

- Greater efficiency in the use of scarce training resources as a result of not having to train individuals in areas where they already have skills
- Facilitation of the development of education/industry training partnerships
- Promotion of more flexible entry routes into nationally recognized qualifications
- Relevance of training and certification enhanced by better understanding of industry training needs and approaches to skills development.

1.3 Different ways of acquiring and strengthening skills

Facilitator displays **Slide 7**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that competencies can be acquired in different ways, forms and settings.
- ▶ Facilitator explains the three different forms of learning
 - Formal learning through programmes of study or training delivered by education or training providers, or by enterprises in formal apprenticeship or dual-training systems. Such training is structured, has precise learning objectives and is certified.
 - Non-formal learning which takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification. Examples of non-formal learning are learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace, in the voluntary sector or trade-union context and in the community.
 - Informal learning which results from activities undertaken daily at work, in the family or during leisure activities. Such learning is often unintentional and the individual may not recognize at the time that it contributed to his or her knowledge, skills and competences.
- ▶ Facilitator asks the group to identify think of examples of when they themselves have engaged in formal, informal and non-formal learning.

1.4 Alternative terms for RPL

Facilitator displays **Slide 8**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that RPL is called by different names in different countries.
 - RNFIL – recognition of non-formal and informal learning (OECD)
 - RVA – recognition, validation and accreditation (of non-formal and informal learning)
 - VNFIL – validation of non-formal/informal learning (European Training Foundation)
 - APEL – assessment of prior experiential learning (United Kingdom)
 - APL – assessment of prior learning (United Kingdom)
 - PLAR – prior learning assessment and recognition (Canada)
 - RAC – recognition of acquired competencies (Quebec, Belgium)
 - RVCC – recognition, validation and certification of competencies (Portugal)
 - VAE – validation des acquis de l'expérience (France)
 - RLO – recognition of learning outcomes (European Commission)
- ▶ Facilitator notes that while there are some differences in the RPL processes used in different countries, the basic RPL process is basically the same.

Facilitator displays **Slide 9**.

- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to form groups (4 to 5 people) and asks them to discuss the following three questions, then report back to the whole group.
 - What are the different ways in which individuals learn or strengthen their work skills, including both technical and soft skills?
 - How might learning that takes place outside the formal education and training system be recognized and certified?
 - What would be required to give both employers and employees confidence in this certification?

Facilitator notes - Session 2: Features of a quality RPL process

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to identify and explain the features of a quality RPL process.

This means that they will be able to:

- list the best practice features of a quality RPL process;
- explain how RPL supports qualification, work and training pathways;
- identify the principles of assessment and how these relate to RPL processes;
- explain the reasons for using accredited RPL assessors;
- explain the importance of having an RPL appeals process;
- outline the reasons for establishing internal and external RPL quality-assurance processes.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 2 (4 slides)
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 2: Features of a quality RPL process
- ▶ The following materials will be needed for each small group in the group activity that forms part of this session:
 - One copy of the RPL cards (Attachment 1)
 - One sheet of poster-size paper
 - One marking pen
 - One pair of scissors
 - One glue / adhesive stick
 - One copy of the ranking diagram (Attachment 2)

Duration

90 minutes

2.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces workshop.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 2.

2.1 Best-practice features of quality RPL processes

Facilitator displays **Slide 3**.

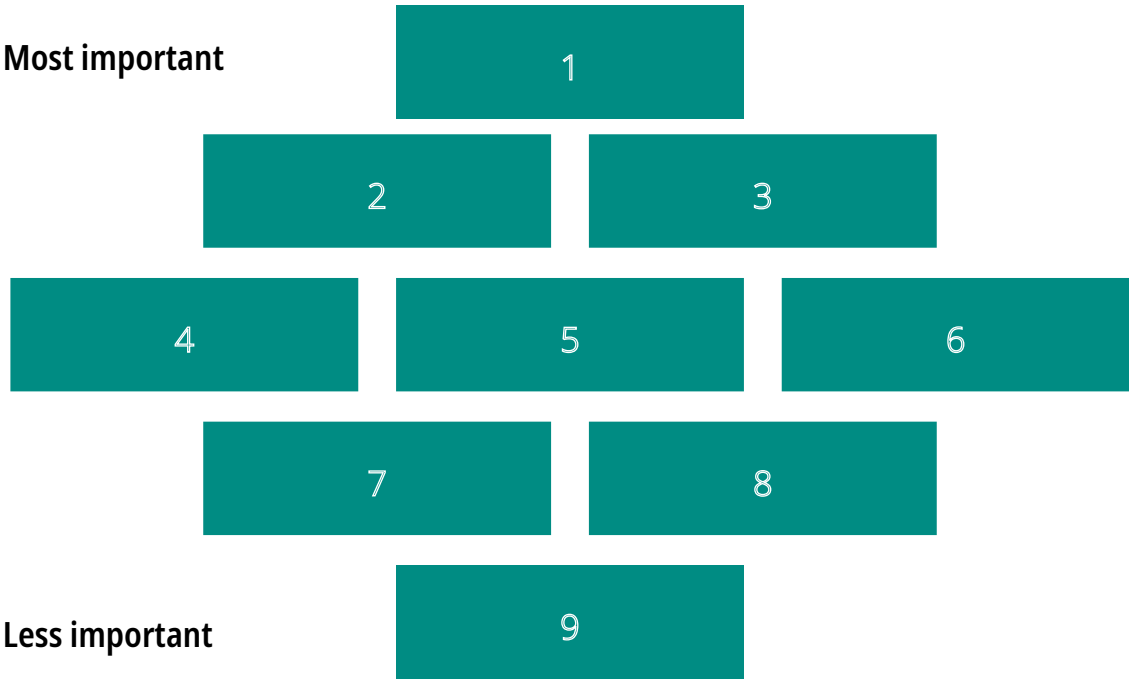
- ▶ Facilitator explains that quality RPL processes are underpinned by eight best practice features:
 - RPL is for unqualified competent people.
 - RPL provides pathways to qualifications, further training and work.
 - RPL processes must comply with the principles of assessment.
 - RPL assessments must be conducted by experienced and qualified assessors.
 - RPL assessments must be based on quality evidence.
 - RPL processes must include provision for reasonable adjustment.
 - RPL processes must include an appeals mechanism.
 - RPL assessments must be quality assured.
- ▶ Facilitator briefly explains each of the best-practice features, making reference to the key points listed in the Participant notes for Session 2.
- ▶ Facilitator organizes a group activity by implementing the following steps:
 1. Ask the participants to form groups (4 to 6 people).
 2. Provide each group with the following:
 - a. a set of RPL cards (Attachment 1)
 - b. a sheet of poster-size paper
 - c. a marking pen
 - d. a pair of scissors
 - e. a glue / adhesive stick
 - f. a copy of the ranking diagram (Attachment 2)
 3. Ask each group to cut out a set of eight RPL cards and draw a large copy of the ranking diagram on the sheet of poster paper.
 4. Ask the groups to consider each of the eight best-practice features of quality RPL processes and to rank them from 1 (most important) to 8 (least important) and then paste the cards onto the ranking diagram.

Note: the groups may refer to the notes on the quality criteria in the Participant notes for Session 2.
 5. Ask the small groups to report back to the whole group on the reasons for their rankings.
 6. After the small groups have reported back, the facilitator displays **Slide 4** and leads a whole-group discussion focused on the following questions:
 - Which of the eight best-practice features of quality RPL processes is most important? Why?
 - Which is least important? Why?
 - Are there any other best-practice features that you think are critical to a quality RPL process?

Attachment 1 – RPL cards

Card 1 RPL is for unqualified competent people
Card 2 RPL provides pathways to qualifications, further training and work
Card 3 RPL processes must comply with the principles of assessment
Card 4 RPL assessments must be conducted by experienced and qualified assessors
Card 5 RPL assessments must be based on quality evidence
Card 6 RPL processes must include provision for reasonable adjustment
Card 7 RPL processes must include an appeals mechanism
Card 8 RPL assessments must be quality assured.

Attachment 2 – Ranking diagram



Facilitator notes - Session 3: Federal TVET Agency RPL framework and policy

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to describe the key elements of the draft RPL framework and policy.

This means that they will be able to:

- identify key features of draft RPL framework;
- explain the relationship between the draft RPL framework and the FTVET Agency Assessment and Certification Policy;
- identify the key features of the draft RPL policy.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 3 (10 slides),
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 3: Federal TVET Agency RPL framework and policy,
- ▶ the RPL framework document,
- ▶ the RPL policy document.

Duration

90 minutes

3.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces workshop.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 3.

3.1 Context

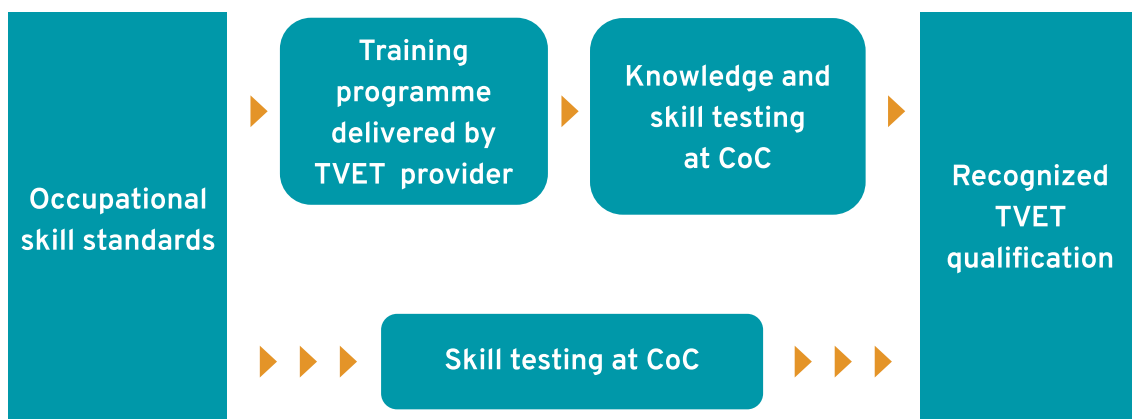
Facilitator displays **Slide 3**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains the existing pathways to qualifications in the TVET system in Ethiopia (see diagram below). These are:

1. a training and testing pathway for new entrants to the workforce,
2. a testing-only pathway for skilled persons already in work.

Note: Facilitator should refer to Participant note 3, as required, for information on these pathways.

▶ Slide 3 - Existing TVET qualifications pathways

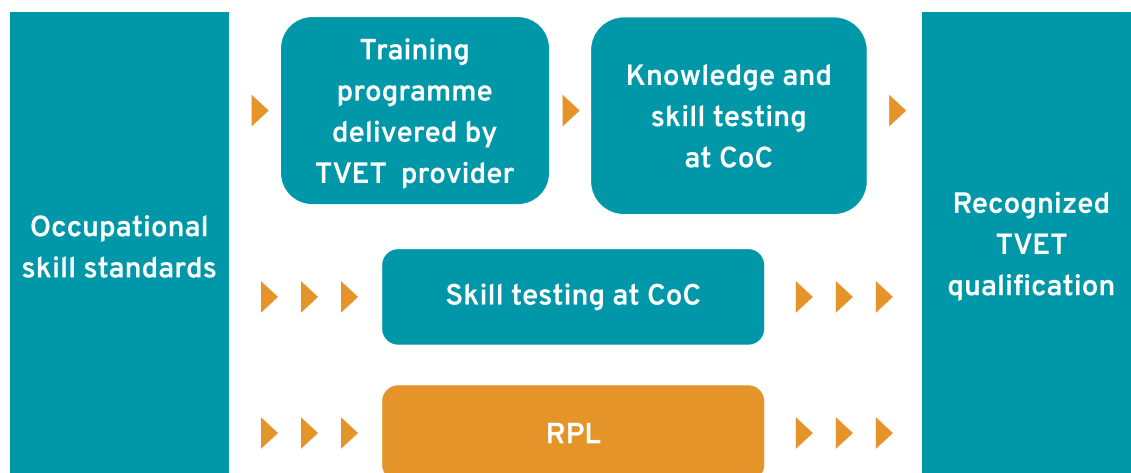


Facilitator displays **Slide 4**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains proposed RPL pathway to qualifications (see diagram below).

Note: Facilitator should refer to Participant note 3, as required, for information about these pathways.

► Slide 4 - New TVET qualifications pathways



3.2 RPL framework

Facilitator displays **Slides 5 and 6**.

► Facilitator explains RPL framework.

Note: Facilitator should refer to Participant note 3, as required, for information on the RPL framework.

► Slide 6 - RPL Framework



3.3 RPL policy

Facilitator displays **Slides 7 and 8**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains key features of RPL policy, including:
 - The definition of RPL
 - The principles of RPL
 - The principles of assessment
 - The rules of evidence
 - Reasonable adjustment of the RPL process for applicants with disabilities or who have experienced disadvantage
 - The minimum requirements for the delivery of RPL services
 - Accreditation of RPL assessors
 - RPL certification
 - RPL fees and charges
 - RPL quality assurance
 - Roles and responsibilities for RPL implementation.

Note: Facilitator should refer to Participant note 3, as required, for information about the RPL policy.

Facilitator displays **Slides 9 and 10**.

- ▶ Facilitator organizes a group activity by implementing the following steps:
 1. Ask the participants to form groups (2 to 3 people).
 2. Provide each group with a copy of the following worksheet.
 3. Ask participants to read the RPL framework and policy and complete the worksheet by indicating how the draft RPL framework and policy address the best-practice features of RPL discussed earlier in the session.
 4. Debrief by reviewing the groups' responses.

RPL best-practice feature	How this is met in RPL framework and policy
RPL is for unqualified competent people	
RPL provides pathways to qualifications, further training and work	
RPL processes must comply with the principles of assessment	
RPL assessments must be conducted by experienced and qualified assessors	
RPL assessments must be based on quality evidence	
RPL processes must include provision for reasonable adjustment	
RPL processes must include an appeals mechanism	
RPL assessments must be quality assured.	

Facilitator notes - Session 4: Thinking about RPL evidence

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to explain what is meant by competence and identify the characteristics of quality evidence used in RPL assessments.

This means that they will be able to:

- explain the meaning of competence;
- define the term “evidence”;
- distinguish between direct and indirect evidence;
- explain the rules of evidence.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 4 (11 slides),
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 4: Thinking about RPL evidence,
- ▶ A unit of competence from the *Occupational Standards for Basic Garment Production NTQF Level 1*, such as IND BGP1 08 0218 “Produce simple garments” or equivalent from another industry sector.

Duration

60 minutes

4.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces workshop.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 4.

4.1 What is competence?

Facilitator displays **Slides 3, 4, 5 and 6**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains the notion of competence and the five dimensions of competency:
 - Task skills
 - Task management skills
 - Contingency management skills
 - Job/role environment skills
 - Transfer skills
- ▶ Facilitator organizes a group activity by implementing the following steps:
 - Ask participants to form pairs.
 - Provide each pair with a copy of a unit of competence from the Occupational Standards for Basic Garment Production NTQF Level 1, such as IND BGP1 08 0218 “Produce simple garments”.
 - Provide each pair with a copy of the worksheet (Attachment 3).
 - Ask each pair to read the unit title, unit descriptor and elements and performance criteria. Then complete the worksheet by writing down two task skills, two task management skills, two contingency management skills, two job / role environment skills and two transfer skills that are incorporated in the work activity described in the unit of competence.
 - Debrief by reviewing the groups’ responses.

Attachment 3

Code and title of unit of competence	
Dimension of competence	Work tasks
Task skills	
Task management skills	
Contingency management skills	
Job / role environment skills	
Transfer skills	

4.2 Understanding evidence

Facilitator displays **Slides 7 and 8**.

- ▶ Facilitator provides a definition of evidence and explains the difference between direct and indirect evidence.

4.3 Evidence used in RPL

Facilitator displays **Slides 9 and 10**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains the types of evidence used in RPL processes, the rules of evidence, how RPL Assessors can determine whether or not evidence fulfils the rules of evidence and what constitutes quality evidence.

Note: Facilitator should refer to Participant note 3, as required, for information about the RPL policy.

Facilitator displays **Slide 11**

- ▶ Facilitator organizes a group activity by implementing the following steps:
 - Ask the participants to form pairs.
 - Provide each pair with a copy of a unit of competence from the Occupational Standards for Basic Garment Production NTQF Level 1, such as IND BGP1 08 0218 "Produce simple garments".
 - Ask each pair to read the unit title, unit descriptor and elements and performance criteria.
 - Ask each pair to write down five examples of evidence that they think an applicant could present to prove that he or she is competent in the unit and to provide a brief explanation of why they think each item of evidence would be suitable for inclusion in an RPL application.
 - Debrief by reviewing the responses from each pair.

Facilitator notes - Session 5: Overview of the RPL process

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to explain the RPL process.

This means that they will be able to:

- describe the key stages in the RPL process;
- identify who is responsible for the delivery of RPL services;
- describe the roles of applicants, RPL assessors, centres of competency and assessment centres in the RPL process;
- be familiar with the templates provided to assist RPL assessors and applicants in implementing the RPL process.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 5 (8 slides),
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 5: Overview of the RPL process,
- ▶ RPL templates.

Duration

60 minutes

5.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces workshop.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 5.

5.1 The RPL process

Facilitator displays **Slides 3 and 4**.

- ▶ Facilitator provides an overview of the three-stage RPL process.

5.2 Roles and responsibilities in the RPL process

Facilitator displays **Slide 5**.

- ▶ Facilitator provides an overview of the roles of the key stakeholders in the RPL process.

Stakeholder	Role in the RPL process
RPL applicant	Initiates RPL assessment process Completes RPL self-assessment Lodges RPL application and RPL self-assessment with assessment centre Gathers, organizes and presents portfolio of evidence Participates in meetings with RPL assessor
RPL assessor	Advises RPL applicant on RPL process, units of competence, evidence and portfolio development Conducts RPL assessment Provides feedback to RPL applicant on outcomes of RPL assessment, including ways of addressing skill gaps, e.g. training with TVET provider, mentoring, work experience Completes RPL assessment report Contributes to appeals processes
Assessment centre	Facilitates delivery of RPL services Provides targeted, easily accessible information on RPL to companies and potential applicants Provides potential RPL applicants with RPL application and RPL self-assessment forms Receives RPL assessment application from applicant Coordinates RPL assessment in cooperation with CoC, RPL assessor and applicant Receives RPL assessment appeal applications
Centre of competency	Appoints accredited RPL assessor to undertake RPL assessment Issues certification Manages RPL assessment appeals Conducts RPL compliance audit
Employer	Provides information to potential RPL applicants on benefits of RPL and RPL process Provides support to RPL applicants by facilitating access to workplace information that may be used as evidence in RPL applications

Stakeholder	Role in the RPL process
TVET provider	Provides flexible training options to address skill gaps identified through RPL assessments

5.3 Resources to support the RPL process

Facilitator displays **Slide 6**.

- ▶ Facilitator provides an overview of the roles of the key stakeholders in the RPL process.
- ▶ Facilitator explains that a set of thirteen templates in MS Word format is available to support the RPL process. Applicants and RPL assessors are required to use these templates when implementing the RPL process.
- ▶ Facilitator demonstrates how a template may be customized to suit a particular RPL assessment.

TEMPLATE 1A	Introductory information on RPL for applicants
TEMPLATE 1B	Introductory information on RPL for employers
TEMPLATE 2	Checklist of guidance to be provided to potential applicants prior to lodging RPL application
TEMPLATE 3	RPL self-assessment Tool
TEMPLATE 4	RPL application form
TEMPLATE 5	Report of initial meeting between RPL assessor and applicant
TEMPLATE 6	RPL portfolio
TEMPLATE 7	Third-party report
TEMPLATE 8	Questions to guide competency conversation
TEMPLATE 9	RPL assessment report
TEMPLATE 10	Centre of competency statement of RPL assessment outcomes
TEMPLATE 11	RPL appeal application
TEMPLATE 12	RPL audit
TEMPLATE 13	An approach to costing RPL

Facilitator displays **Slides 7 and 8**

- ▶ Facilitator organizes a group activity by implementing the following steps:
 - Ask participants to form pairs.

- Ask each pair to read through the RPL process and describe the process from the point of view of:
 - ' the applicant,
 - ' the RPL assessor.
- Debrief by reviewing the responses from each pair.

► Facilitator organizes a second group activity by implementing the following steps:

- Ask participants to stay in pairs.
- Ask each pair to look through the list of templates and complete the chart below by identifying which templates must be completed by the applicant and which by the RPL Assessor
- Debrief by reviewing the responses from each pair.

Templates completed by applicant	Templates completed by RPL assessor

Facilitator notes - Session 6: RPL Process – Step 1 RPL awareness and application

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to explain the first step in the RPL process: RPL awareness and application.

This means that they will be able to:

- describe ways of increasing applicant and employer awareness of RPL;
- outline the procedure for lodging an RPL application;
- be familiar with the templates used in supporting this step in the RPL process.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 6 (7 slides)
- ▶ Participant Notes – Session 6: RPL Process – Step 1 RPL awareness and application
- ▶ Template 3 - RPL self-assessment tool
- ▶ Template 4 - RPL assessment form

Duration

90 minutes

6.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces workshop.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 6.

6.1 Step 1 RPL awareness and application

Facilitator displays **Slide 3**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains the key activities that take place during Step 1 in the RPL process.

Note: Facilitator should refer to Participant note 6, as required, for information on this step in the RPL process.

6.2 RPL awareness

Facilitator displays **Slides 4 and 5**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that the centre of competency / assessment centre must provide basic, easily accessible information on RPL to companies and potential applicants.
- ▶ Facilitator explains that one way of providing this information is for the centre of competency / assessment centre to produce basic information sheets on RPL for applicants and employers using Templates 1 and 2. These templates may be customized to provide specific details of the centre's RPL process, contact details and fees.
- ▶ Facilitator implements activity by asking participants to individually:
 - read Template 1a – “Introductory information on RPL for applicants” and Template 1b – “Introductory information on RPL for employers”;
 - use this information to produce one basic information sheet on the RPL process for applicants and another for employers, as provided by their centre of competency / assessment centre.
 - After the participants have completed this task, have them share their work and provide critical comment on how the information sheets could be improved.

6.3 RPL self-assessment form

Facilitator displays **Slides 6 and 7**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that before the applicant can undertake a self-assessment, the assessment centre must prepare the self-assessment tool.
- ▶ Facilitator explains Template 3 – “RPL self-assessment tool” to the participants.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to individually complete Template 3. To do this the participant must:
 - read Template 3 – “RPL self-assessment tool”;
 - identify the sections of the self-assessment tool that must be completed by the assessment centre and by the applicant;
 - complete the sections of the self-assessment tool that must be completed by the assessment centre. Participants will need a copy of the relevant occupational skill standards, qualification and units of competence;
 - share their work with a colleague and note any suggestions for improvement.

6.4 RPL application

- ▶ Facilitator explains that having completed the self-assessment tool (Template 3) and decided to proceed with the RPL assessment, the applicant must lodge a completed RPL assessment form (Template 4) and return it to the assessment centre together with the completed self-assessment tool.
- ▶ Facilitator explains Template 4 – “RPL assessment form” to the participants.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to individually complete Template 4 – “RPL assessment form” as if they were an RPL applicant.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to review their completed form and answer the following questions:
 - Are there any changes that should be made to this form?
 - Are there any aspects of this form that applicants may find difficult to complete?
 - What support could be provided to the applicant in completing this form?
 - Is there any other information that might be required from the applicant?

Facilitator notes - Session 7: RPL process – Step 2 Portfolio development and assessment

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to explain the second step in the RPL process: portfolio development and assessment.

This means that they will be able to:

- explain the process involved in conducting the initial meeting with the RPL applicant;
- explain the steps involved in portfolio development, review and evaluation;
- prepare a RPL assessment report;
- identify the templates used in supporting this step in the RPL process.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 7 (17 slides)
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 7: RPL Process – Step 2 Portfolio development and assessment
- ▶ RPL Policy

Duration

90 minutes

7.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces workshop.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 7.

7.1 Step 2 Portfolio development and assessment

Facilitator displays **Slide 3**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that there are five key activities in this step in the RPL process:
 - Applicant lodges RPL application with assessment centre.
 - CoC appoints RPL assessor.
 - RPL assessor holds initial meeting with applicant to discuss the applicant's readiness for RPL assessment and to clarify the RPL procedure, units of competence, evidence requirements and approach to portfolio development.
 - Applicant collects evidence and submits portfolio to RPL assessor.
 - RPL assessor reviews portfolio and conducts competency conversation with the applicant.
 - RPL assessor makes assessment decision and meets with the applicant to provide feedback on the outcome of the RPL assessment.
- ▶ Facilitator explains that if the applicant decides not to proceed with the RPL application at any stage during this part of the process, the RPL assessor must provide the Applicant with advice on ways of addressing skill gaps, such as:
 - training,
 - mentoring,
 - work experience.

7.2 CoC appoints RPL assessor

Facilitator displays **Slides 4, 5, 6 and 7**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that once the RPL application form has been received, the relevant centre of competency will appoint an accredited RPL assessor to conduct the RPL assessment. The RPL assessor must be accredited and possess the skills and qualification identified in the RPL policy.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to read the relevant section of the RPL policy and note down the requirements for accredited RPL assessors.
- ▶ Facilitator notes that the RPL assessor has two main tasks:
 - to provide advice to the applicant on the RPL process, and
 - to conduct the RPL assessment.
- ▶ Facilitator explains the records that must be kept by the RPL assessor and introduces the RPL assessment report (Template 9). The facilitator explains that the information must be recorded stage by stage in the RPL assessment report (Template 9).
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to read the RPL assessment report (Template 9) and note the information that the RPL assessor must record.

7.3 Initial meeting between the RPL assessor and the applicant

Facilitator displays **Slides 8 and 9**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that the RPL assessor must arrange an initial meeting with the applicant.
- ▶ Facilitator explains the purpose and the records that must be kept of the initial meeting between the RPL assessor and the applicant.
- ▶ Facilitator explains Template 5 – “Report of initial meeting between RPL assessor and applicant”.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to form pairs and discuss the process involved in planning for, conducting and reporting on the initial meeting with the applicant. Each pair should prepare a brief report on the critical steps involved in this part of the RPL process and report back to the whole group.

7.4 Applicant collects evidence and submits portfolio to RPL assessor

Facilitator displays **Slides 10 and 11**

- ▶ Facilitator explains what a portfolio is and the types of evidence that may be included, and introduces:
 - Template 6a – “RPL portfolio – Applicant portfolio record sheet”
 - Template 7 – “Third-party report”
- ▶ Facilitator explains that the RPL assessor must prepare the complete version of Template 6a – “Applicant portfolio record sheet” for the applicant. This identifies the skills and knowledge of which the applicant is required to provide evidence to support his or her claim to competency.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants individually to complete Template 6a – “Applicant portfolio record sheet”. This involves:
 - reading Template 6a – “Applicant portfolio record sheet”;
 - identifying which sections of the template must be completed by the RPL assessor and which by the applicant;
 - completing the sections of the portfolio record sheet that must be completed by the RPL assessor. For this, participants will need to have a copy of the relevant occupational skill standards, qualification and units of competence;
 - sharing their work with a colleague and noting any suggestions for improvement.

Facilitator displays **Slides 12 and 13**

- ▶ Facilitator explains the purpose of a third-party report.
- ▶ Facilitator explains Template 7 – “Third-party report”.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to individually prepare the complete version of Template 7 for the applicant to provide to third parties, such as employers and workplace supervisors, who can comment on the applicant’s capacity to perform the task identified in the

relevant unit(s) of competence. Participants should show their completed template to a colleague and identify any areas for improvement.

Note: Further information on portfolios is provided in Sessions 9 and 10.

7.5 RPL assessor reviews portfolio and conducts competency conversation with the applicant

Facilitator displays **Slides 14 and 15**

- ▶ Facilitator explains that after the applicant has submitted the portfolio, the RPL assessor must review it and arrange to meet with the applicant to conduct a competency conversation.
- ▶ Facilitator explains that two templates are provided to assist the RPL Assessor with these tasks:
 - Template 6b – “RPL portfolio – Portfolio evaluation form”
 - Template 8 – “Questions to guide competency conversation”
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to prepare the completed version of Template 6b – “RPL portfolio – Portfolio evaluation form” and Template 8 – “Questions to guide competency conversation”. Participants should show their completed templates to a colleague and identify any areas for improvement.

7.6 RPL assessor makes assessment decision and provides feedback to RPL applicant

- ▶ Facilitator displays Slides 16 and 17.
- ▶ Facilitator explains that, after the meeting, the RPL assessor must consider the evidence in the applicant's portfolio and the applicant's answers to the questions posed in the meeting, and use this information to make the assessment decision. This information is recorded by the RPL assessor in the RPL assessment report (Template 9).
- ▶ Facilitator explains that the RPL assessor must then meet with the applicant to provide feedback on the RPL assessment report.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to form pairs to discuss the process involved in planning for, conducting and reporting on the meeting with the applicant. Each pair must prepare a brief report on the critical steps involved in this part of the RPL process and comment on the usefulness of Template 9 – “RPL assessment report”.

Facilitator notes - Session 8: RPL process

– Step 3 Certification and appeals

► Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to explain the RPL appeal and certification process.

This means that they will be able to:

- describe the information required in a statement of RPL assessment outcomes;
- explain the RPL appeal process;
- be familiar with the templates used in supporting this step in the RPL process.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- PowerPoint presentation 8 (7 slides)
- Participant notes – Session 8: RPL process – Step 3 Certification and Appeals
- Template 10 – “Centre of competency statement of RPL assessment outcomes”

Duration

60 minutes

8.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- Facilitator introduces workshop

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 8.

8.1 Step 3 Certification and appeals

Facilitator displays **Slide 3**.

- Facilitator explains that there are two key activities in this step in the RPL process:
- Issuing of RPL certification
- Applicant appeals against RPL outcomes

8.2 RPL certification

Facilitator displays **Slides 4 and 5**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that once the RPL assessor has submitted the RPL assessment report, the CoC will provide a written statement to the applicant on the outcomes of the assessment together with formal certification for the qualification or units of competence for which RPL has been granted.
- ▶ Facilitator explains Template 10 – “Centre of competency statement of RPL assessment outcomes”.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to individually read and complete a copy of Template 10 – “Centre of competency statement of RPL assessment outcomes”. Participants should show their completed templates to a colleague and identify any areas for improvement.

8.3 RPL appeals

Facilitator displays **Slides 6 and 7**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that applicants who disagree with the outcomes of the RPL assessment may lodge an appeal with the assessment centre. In this case, the applicant’s portfolio will be reviewed by an independent RPL assessor. The independent RPL assessor may also choose to interview the applicant. The appeal process is managed by the CoC and the result is final.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to form pairs and complete the following activity:
 - Read this extract from the RPL policy, which states:

All applicants have the right to appeal a RPL assessment decision where they feel the assessment process was unfair or that the decision made by the RPL assessor does not accurately reflect their competence.
 - In pairs discuss the following:
 - ' Should the RPL policy and procedures include provision for appeals?
 - ' Under what circumstances could an appeal be lodged by an applicant?
 - ' Should applicants have to pay a fee if they want to lodge an appeal?
 - ' What are your views on the appeal process as it is described in the RPL policy and procedures?

Facilitator notes - Session 9: Thinking about portfolios

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to identify and explain the purpose and limitations of the different types of portfolios used in education and training.

This means that they will be able to:

- define the term portfolio;
- distinguish between process and product portfolios;
- identify the purposes of a portfolio;
- distinguish between different types of portfolio;
- identify the authors and audience for portfolios;
- discuss the limitations of different types of portfolio.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 9 (12 slides)
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 9: Thinking about portfolios

Duration

60 minutes

9.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces presentation.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 9.

9.1 Portfolios

Facilitator displays **Slides 3 to 12**.

- ▶ Facilitator gives a presentation based on the information contained in the accompanying PowerPoint presentation. The materials covered in this presentation include:
 - What is a portfolio? – Slide 3
 - Process and product portfolios – Slide 4
 - Types of portfolio – Slides 5 and 6
 - Uses of a portfolio – Slide 7
 - Authors and audience for portfolios - Slide 8
 - Portfolio structure – Slide 9
 - Portfolio development process – Slide 10
 - Strengths and limitations of different types of portfolio – Slides 11 and 12

Note: The presentation is designed to provide participants with an opportunity to broaden their knowledge of the use of portfolios in education and training and, in particular, in RPL assessment. The session is also intended to serve as stimulus for Session 10, a question-and-answer session on RPL portfolios.

Facilitator notes - Session 10: Question and answer session on RPL portfolios

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to describe the key features of and process for developing and evaluating an RPL portfolio.

This means that they will be able to:

- describe the format and content of an RPL portfolio;
- explain the roles of applicants and RPL assessors in the development and evaluation of RPL portfolios;
- explain the process of portfolio evaluation;
- be familiar with the templates used to support RPL portfolio development and evaluation.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 9 (3 slides)
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 9: Thinking about portfolios

Duration

60 minutes

10.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces presentation.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 10.

10.1 Portfolio questions and answers

Facilitator displays **Slide 3**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that this session is a facilitator-led question-and-answer session on portfolios.
- ▶ Facilitator gives participants time to consider the questions listed below. Depending on the nature of the group, this discussion could be organized in pairs, small groups or on a one-to-one basis.
 - What is the role of the applicant in RPL portfolio development?
 - What is the role of the RPL assessor in RPL portfolio development and evaluation?
 - What information should be included in an RPL portfolio?
 - How should an RPL portfolio be structured?
 - How much time should an applicant be given to prepare an RPL portfolio?
 - Are there any other things you would like to have explained about portfolios?
 - What are the five key questions that you would like to ask about RPL portfolio development and evaluation?
- ▶ Facilitator conducts whole group discussion to identify questions that the group would like to have answered on portfolios.
- ▶ Facilitator and group finalize the set of questions.
- ▶ Facilitator provides answers and seeks opinions from the group on the questions.

Facilitator notes - Session 11: RPL quality assurance

▶ Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to explain RPL quality assurance procedures.

This means that they will be able to:

- explain the approach to RPL quality assurance;
- identify who is responsible for RPL quality assurance;
- distinguish between internal and external RPL quality assurance;
- be familiar with the templates available to support RPL quality assurance.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 11 (7 slides)
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 11: RPL quality assurance
- ▶ RPL Policy
- ▶ Template 12 – “RPL audit”

Duration

45 minutes

11.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces presentation.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 11.

11.1 Approach to RPL quality assurance

Facilitator displays **Slide 3**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that RPL quality assurance involves two processes:
 - Internal quality assurance
 - External quality assurance.
- ▶ Facilitator explains the difference between the two processes.

11.2 Internal quality assurance

Facilitator displays **Slides 4 and 5**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains internal quality assurance requirements for RPL.

Note: Facilitator should refer to Participant note 11, as required, for information on these processes.

11.3 External quality assurance

Facilitator displays **Slide 6**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains external quality assurance requirements for RPL.

Note: Facilitator should refer to Participant note 11, as required, for information on these processes .

Facilitator displays **Slide 7**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains that Template 12 – “RPL audit” is provided to assist assessment centres in reviewing their RPL process.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to form pairs and consider the following questions:
 - What aspects of the RPL process are covered by the RPL audit tool?
 - Are there other areas that should be covered in the RPL audit tool?
 - How would you plan and implement an audit of an assessment centre’s RPL process using this tool?
 - Would using this tool help assessment centres prepare for the compliance audits managed by the regional CoCs?
- ▶ Facilitator leads whole groups discussion based on outcomes of responses from pairs to the preceding questions.

Facilitator notes - Session 12: Costing RPL services

Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to explain the procedures for costing RPL service.

This means that they will be able to:

- identify the costs associated with providing RPL services;
- describe the sources of funding for RPL services;
- identify and apply a model for costing RPL services;
- be familiar with the templates available to support the costing of RPL services.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 12 (6 slides)
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 12: Costing RPL services

Duration

45 minutes

12.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces presentation.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 12.

12.0 Costs involved in providing RPL services

Facilitator displays **Slides 3 to 6**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains an approach to costing RPL services that takes into account all costs associated with establishing, operating and maintaining the RPL process.

- ▶ Facilitator explains it is unlikely that all these costs will be covered by RPL fees charged to applicants and that the costs associated with RPL will be met by a mix of applicant fees and government funding.
- ▶ Facilitator outlines an approach to costing RPL in which government funding will support the establishment and maintenance costs associated with RPL, while RPL fees paid by companies and individual applicants cover the operational costs incurred by an assessment centre in conducting RPL assessments.
- ▶ Facilitator explains Template 13, which provides an approach to identifying the operational cost of conducting a RPL assessment. Facilitator notes that this template may be customized by:
 - adding or deleting cost items,
 - varying the costs basis of each item,
 - adjusting the cost per hour,
 - changing the number of units of competence covered by the RPL assessment.
- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to form small groups (3 to 4 people) and apply Template 13 – “An approach to costing RPL” to calculate the cost of an RPL assessment for an applicant seeking RPL for four units of competence from the Occupational Standards for Basic Garment Production NTQF Level 1.
- ▶ Facilitator asks groups to report back on their costing and leads a discussion focused on the following questions:
 - What is the cost of providing the RPL service?
 - Were there variations in the costs determined by different groups?
 - How useful was the costing model?

Facilitator notes - Session 13: Action plan for RPL implementation

Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to develop an action plan for RPL implementation.

This means that they will be able to:

- define the term “action plan”;
- identify the key features of an action plan;
- develop an action plan for implementing an RPL assessment in the garment-making industry.

Materials

All participants must have a copy of:

- ▶ PowerPoint presentation 13 (5 slides)
- ▶ Participant notes – Session 13: Action plan for RPL implementation

Duration

60 minutes

13.0 Introduction

Facilitator displays **Slide 1**.

- ▶ Facilitator introduces presentation.

Facilitator displays **Slide 2**.

- ▶ Facilitator outlines objectives of Session 13.

13.1 What is an action plan?

Facilitator displays **Slides 3, 4 and 5**.

- ▶ Facilitator explains what an action plan is, the features of an action plan and a format for a simple action plan.

Actions	Person responsible	Start date	Finish date	Resources	Desired outcome

- ▶ Facilitator asks participants to form small groups (2 or 3 people) and list the steps involved in planning and implementing an RPL assessment.
- ▶ Facilitator then asks the small groups to prepare an action showing the steps and responsibilities involved, and the time required to implement the RPL assessment, and to report back to the whole group on their plan.
- ▶ Facilitator leads a whole group discussion on RPL action planning that considers questions such as:
 - What are the features of an effective RPL action plan?
 - Who should be responsible for developing the RPL action plan?
 - What points of flexibility might be needed in an RPL action plan?
 - What factors might cause you to depart from the RPL action plan during implementation?

PowerPoint presentations

PowerPoint presentation	Title
1a	What is RPL?
1b	Features of a quality RPL process
2	Checklist of guidance to be provided to potential applicants prior to lodging RPL application
3	FTVET Agency RPL framework and policy
4	Thinking about RPL evidence
5	Overview of RPL process
6	RPL process Step 1 – RPL awareness and application
7	RPL process Step 2 – RPL portfolio development and assessment
8	RPL process Step 3 - Certification and appeals
9	Thinking about portfolios
10	Question and answer session on RPL portfolios
11	RPL quality assurance
12	Costing RPL services
13	Action plan for RPL implementation

Note: These presentations are provided in a separate document.

Section 6

References

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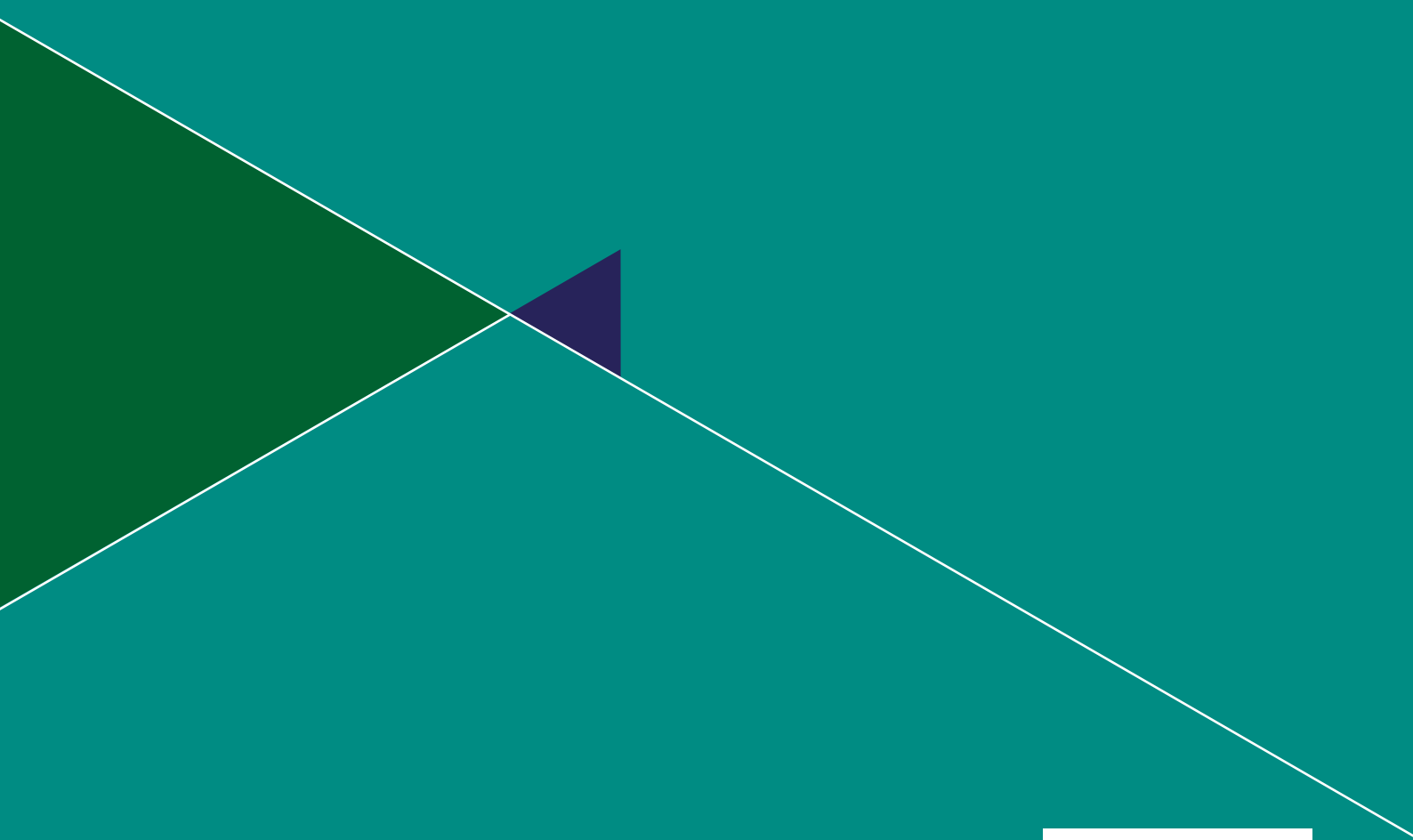
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