



# **EXPERIENCE OF COVID-19 REPORT on TVET LEARNING**

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## Executive Summary

This report presents analysis of the experiences of a sample CAP Youth Empowerment Institute (CAP YEI) and government vocational training centers' (VTCs) staff experiences during Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic in Kenya. The purpose of this study is to understand how TVET instructors and managers (staff) have been affected by COVID-19, how they have responded to training and learning needs of their students and their recommendations of ideas and strategies to ensure continued skills development and learning of young men and women during this pandemic crisis. The analysis is based on the scope of CAP YEI and VTC partners' roles in skills development and linkages to livelihood opportunities. The data was collected from 104 staff from CAP YEI (49%) and VTC staff (51%) from partner institutions who benefit from CAP YEI capacity building training support to adopt and implement her Basic Employability Skills Training (BEST) model. The survey was largely a qualitative inquiry, however, the data was coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The analysis is presented in terms of the experiences of gender, institutional affiliation and geographical location (rural, sub-urban, and urban areas).

Majority of the respondents were affected financially, socially, and psychologically. Some of the respondents stated that they lost their jobs or their businesses closed, leading to lose of income or sometimes reduced income streams. The major social challenge with COVID-19 is related to restricted movement and closure of work places, schools, and businesses. There has been restricted movement into and out of Nairobi and Mombasa, as well as night curfews that resulted in separation or isolation of people from their family members and friends.

Restricted movements, closure of schools, businesses, and entertaining places lead to stresses among the respondents. The leading cause of stress is in the isolation of some of the respondents from their family members and not able to engage themselves in any activities. Some said they were affected by the closure of schooling, compelling them to take care of children, thus limiting them the opportunities to work to earn income.

With many work places and businesses closing down, respondents described how they lost jobs, businesses, and income. Furthermore, the respondents pointed out the rising cost of living as a result of having school children at home all the time. All these led to disruption in their economic plans as well as financial wellbeing. At personal level, respondents with school going children and youth expressed their worry and uncertainty with the future of their children. While it is so expensive to have and maintain children at home, it is delicate as it is risk to keep children at home, especially when parents have been busy out there looking for money. More importantly, the future of their children, especially those who were preparing to sit for final primary and secondary or college education exams is more worrying to them.

Despite the presence of COVID-19, TVET staff continued to support their students, mainly through cell phone consultations and linkages to mentors, employers and business opportunities. Furthermore, many of the staff who said they supported their students through E-learning or online learning sited their access to smart phones, computers and internet. Majority of those who continued to offer learning services are from CAP YEI as well as those from urban areas. While they think adoption of E-learning is inevitable to facilitate continued learning in the context of COVID-19, these staff recommend distribution of E-learning platforms; learning resources such as smartphones, lab top computers, internet, and videos; creation of awareness about the importance of adopting online learning; as well as reopening of learning institutions (especially for public institutions) to allow continued learning. Because this study focused on effects of COVID-19 on instructors and managers' and how they responded to skills development of young men and women, there is need to conduct similar study on young people.

## Introduction

Since the emergence of Corona Virus pandemic (COVID-19) in Kenya early March 2020, there has been huge disruption in our lives; socially, economically and developmentally. By mid-March 2020, the President of Kenya, His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta suspended many operations in the country. This included closing down of learning institutions, closing down of businesses and restriction of movement, with total curfew/cessation of movement in and out of Nairobi and Mombasa cities. Cap Youth Empowerment Institute (CAP YEI) commissioned a survey in May 2020, to establish the extent of the effects of COVID-19 pandemic, broadly on the skills development and more specifically on trainees, our team and our government Vocational Training Centers' partners. This report also tries to identify some of the efforts that have been happening towards supporting continued learning as well as recommendations to improve these efforts.

This research was designed and administered through Survey Monkey among CAP YEI staff and Kenya government's vocational training centers' (VTCs) partner trainers and managers. These included 45 CAP YEI staff (9 center managers; 33 instructors/facilitators; and 3 regional coordinators) and 53 VTC staff (34 instructors and 19 managers). This sample comprised 49% female and 51% male respondents as shown in Tables 1 & 2 below. This analysis begin with description of the general findings and later will provide specific experience of the respondents, disaggregated into gender, institutional, role in institutions, and locational backgrounds.

*Table 1: Survey sample size disaggregated into gender*

Gender				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	51	49.0	49.0	49.0
Valid Male	53	51.0	51.0	100.0
Total	104	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Responsibilities of staff

Role	Female	Male	Total	
CAP YEI Center Coordinator	6	3	9	45
CAP YEI Facilitator	13	20	33	
CAP YEI Regional Coordinator	1	2	3	
VTC Instructor	22	12	34	53
VTC Manager	6	13	19	
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>50</b>	98	
	<b>49%</b>	<b>51%</b>		

## Overall effects of COVID-19 in skills development

This was a qualitative survey requiring respondents to explain their experiences and training of young people as a result of emerging COVID-19 pandemic. The responses were as diverse as the number of respondents. However, we did coding to establish the major effects experienced.

We established that majority of the respondents were affected financially, socially, and psychologically. Some of the respondents stated that they lost their jobs or their businesses closed, leading to lose of income or sometimes reduced income streams. The major social challenge with COVID-19 is related to restricted movement and closure of work places, schools, and businesses. There has been restricted movement into and out of Nairobi and Mombasa, as well as night curfews that resulted in separation or isolation of people from their family members and friends.

Restricted movements, closure of schools, businesses, and entertaining places lead to stresses among the respondents. The leading cause of stress is in the isolation of some of the respondents from their family members and not able to engage themselves in any activities. Some said they were affected by the closure of schooling, compelling them to take care of children, thus limiting them the opportunities to work to earn income.

With many work places and businesses closing down, respondents described how they lost jobs, businesses, and income. Furthermore, the respondents pointed out the rising cost of living as a result of having school children at home all the time. All these led to disruption in their economic plans as well as financial wellbeing.

With all learning institutions closed, respondents with school going children and youth expressed their worry and uncertainty with the future of their children. While it is so expensive to have and maintain children at home, it is delicate as it is risk to keep children at home, especially when parents have been busy out there looking for money. More importantly, the future of their children, especially those who were preparing to sit for final primary and secondary or college education exams is more worrying to them. The effects of COVID-19 are summarized in table 3 below. The next section will discuss the effects of COVID-19 to the respondents and their families/friends, their students, and their colleagues.

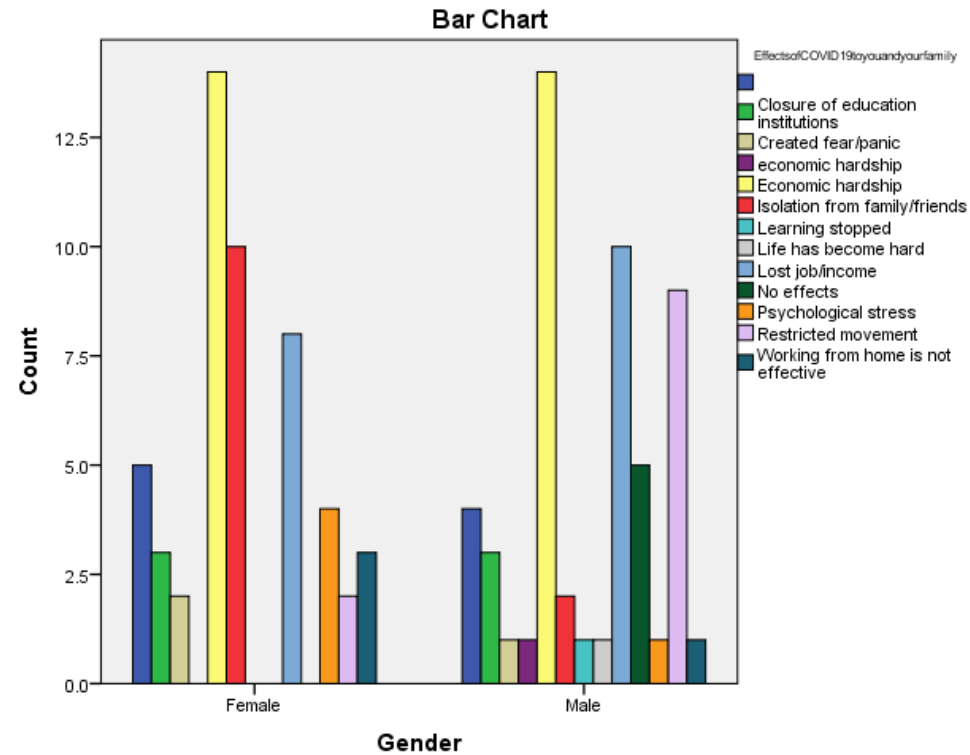
Table 3: Summary of effects of COVID-19

KEY	
Financially	There's financial constraint due to job loss/closed businesses/ reduced income For VTC's-Delayed/Reduced or no salary
Socially	Due to the travel restrictions, people have not been able to spend time with their family as well as have one on one interaction with trainees/friends
Psychologically	Increased stress levels, emotional distress, anxiety, fear of getting infected with the disease and fear of the future
Education	Learning institutions have been closed thus incomplete training, increased household expenditure

### Specific effects of COVID-19 to students, each respondents, and their larger staff of CAP YEI and VTC instructors

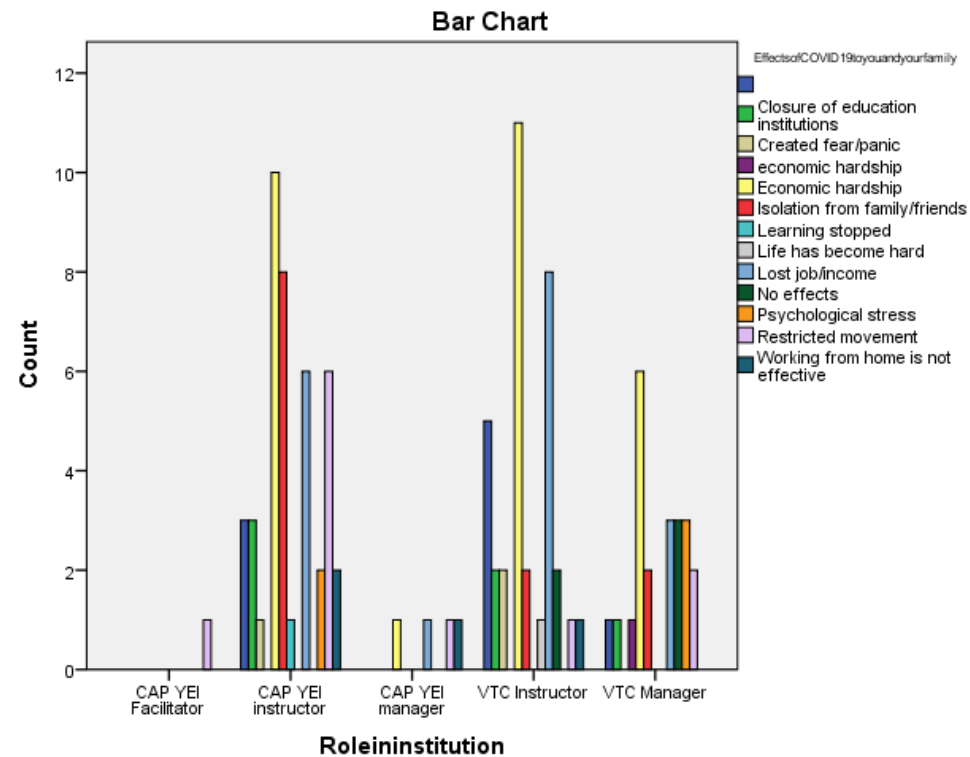
The graph below illustrate the effects of COVID-19 among respondents of both CAP YEI and their VTC counterparts, disaggregated by gender. It was observed that the main effect was on their economics. Both male and female respondents said they mostly faced economic hardship, followed by isolation from family/friends, lost jobs, and restricted movement. The female respondents are seen to have been affected by their isolation from their family and friends than it was for the male. Other than economic hardship, many male respondents lost jobs or income. A significant number of females also lost jobs or income.

Figure 1: Effects of COVID-19 on gender



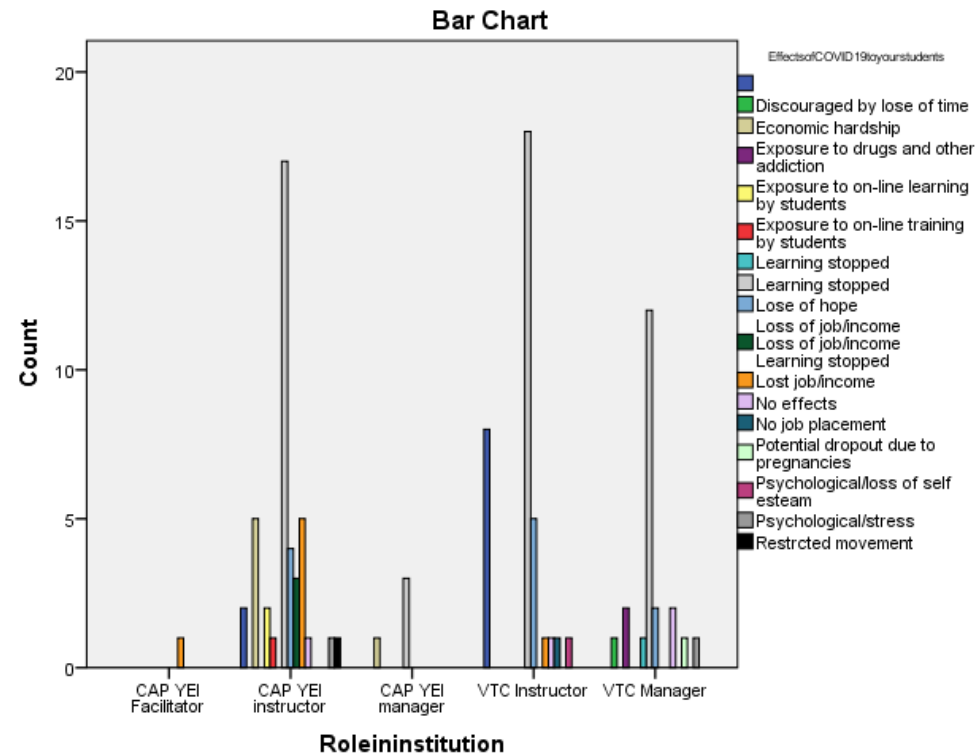
When this data was analysed, to compare the experience of CAP YEI staff and those from public institutions, the findings are as shown in the figure below. Like the experience by gender, economic hardship is the major effect among CAP YEI and VTC managers, as well as CAP YEI and VTC instructors. Interestingly, while CAP YEI site isolation from family and friends as a major effect of COVID-19 after economic hardship, their VTC counterparts said they suffered job and/or income loss. Another common effect is the termination of learning/training activities as shown in the figure below.

Figure 2: Effects of COVID-19 on people in different institutional roles



The next figure show the effects of COVID-19 among students in the lenses of CAP YEI and VTC instructors and managers. It is clear from the graph that the key effect experienced by students of CAP YEI and VTC is in the termination of learning. Other than learning stopping as a common effect of COVID-19, there are other distinct differences between the experiences of CAP YEI and VTC students. More CAP YEI trainees suffered job/income lose and economic hardship while their counterparts from VTCs lost hope and suffered psychological stress. Stress is a common experience among both, but at more low levels. The instructors who lost jobs in VTCs are those who said they had been employees of institutional board of governors (BOG teachers) while those from CAP YEI are staff who had short contracts.

Figure 3: Perceived effects of COVID-19 among TVET students

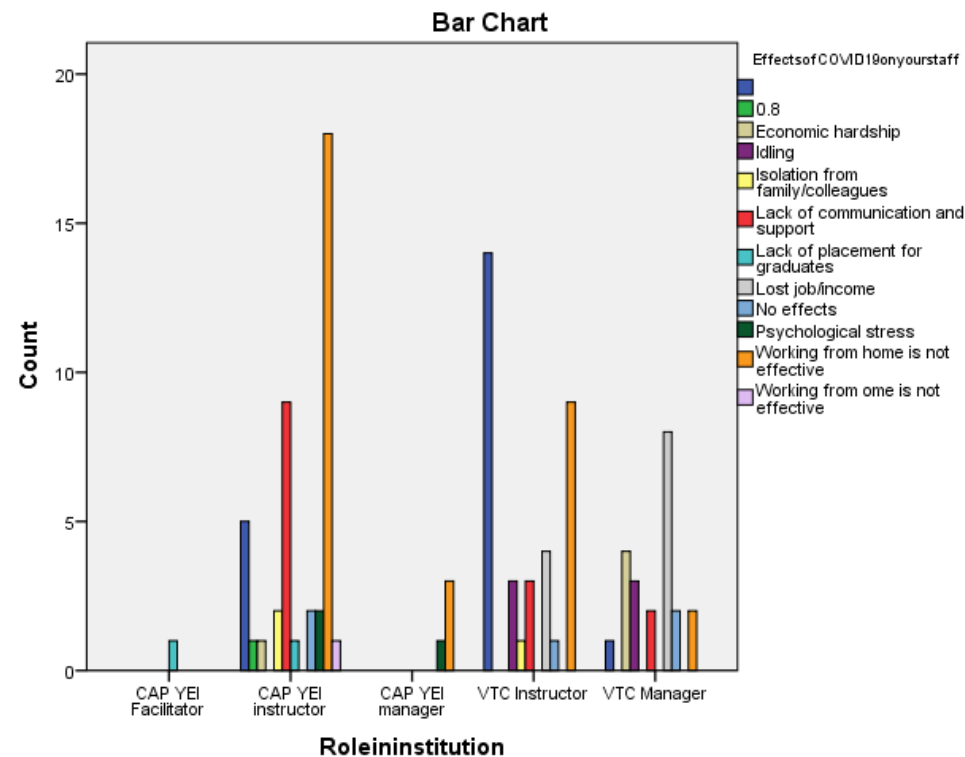


COVID-19 experience of a larger team of instructors and managers was also inquired in this survey and the findings are illustrated in figure 4 below. The findings are quite different compared to the individual effects. In this case, majority of instructors from both institutional category said it was more challenging working from home. Specifically, they said working from home is not effective as they would be working from their work stations. Like on the individual level experience, we also find here that some members lost their jobs and thus income. Interestingly, CAP YEI staff reported they suffered from lack of working together as a team,



a characteristic they has identified with themselves. They feel they lost working as a team and communicating is a key problem during this pandemic period. On the other hand, VTC staff reported they were more idling now than before the pandemic.

Figure 4: Effects of COVID-19 on staff

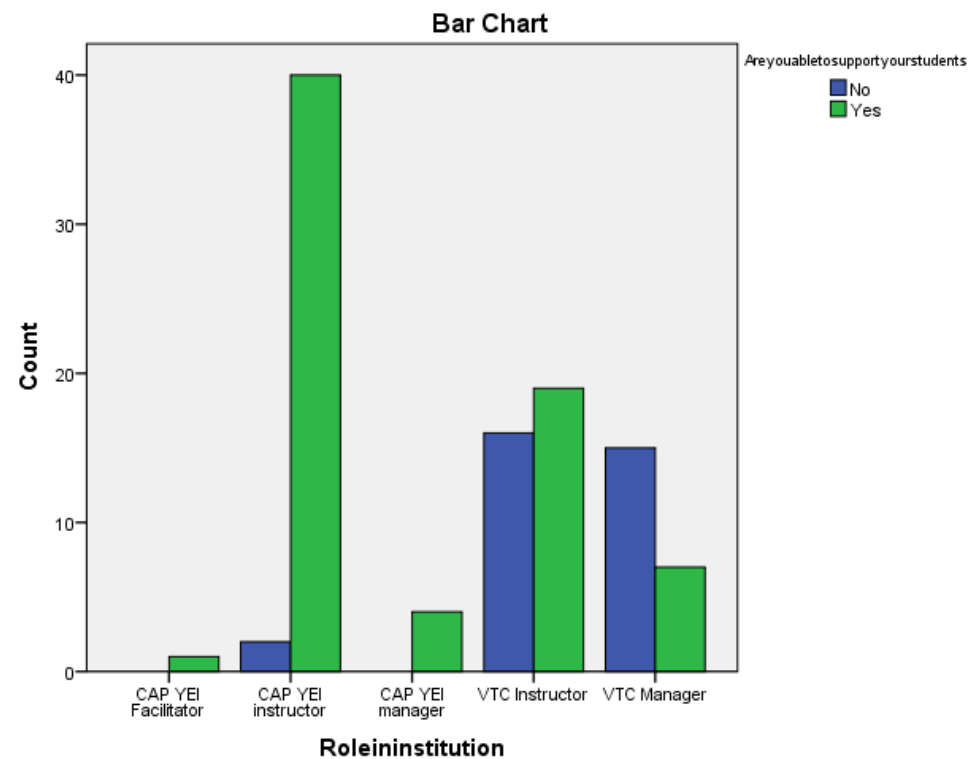


There was total shock immediately after the closing of learning institutions and work places in Kenya. It took a month or two before various thoughts and efforts were brought up to help students' learning. We wanted to establish the extent of support by managers and instructors to ensure continued learning by their students. So we asked the respondents if they offer any services to their students amid the lockdown of learning. Majority of the respondents said they were

supporting their students. The figure below shows that more of CAP YEI instructors and managers continue to support their students compared to the government VTCs' counterparts.

Majority of CAP YEI staff, including all the managers continue to offer support to their trainees amid learning lockdown and restricted movement. Even though lower number of government VTCs still support their students, it is encouraging to see a good number still put up some effort. The type of support provided is consistent and confirms the extent of support given to trainees by CAP YEI and VTC instructors.

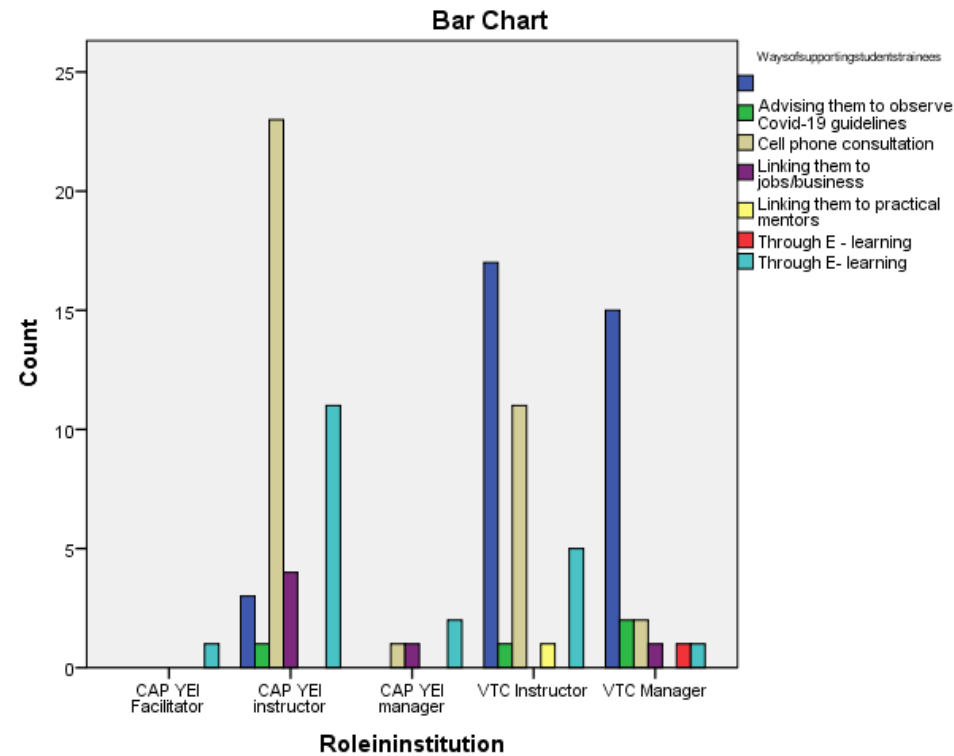
Figure 5: Affirmation of staff continued support of learning during COVID-19



When they were asked about what kind of support they offered, majority of CAP YEI and their VTC counterparts said they did cell phone consultations; largely through WhatsApp group engagement, short messaging, and calls. The functionality of WhatsApp messaging to include sending large pdf files and pictures becomes handy at this time, and these instructors said they shared a lot through the cell phones.

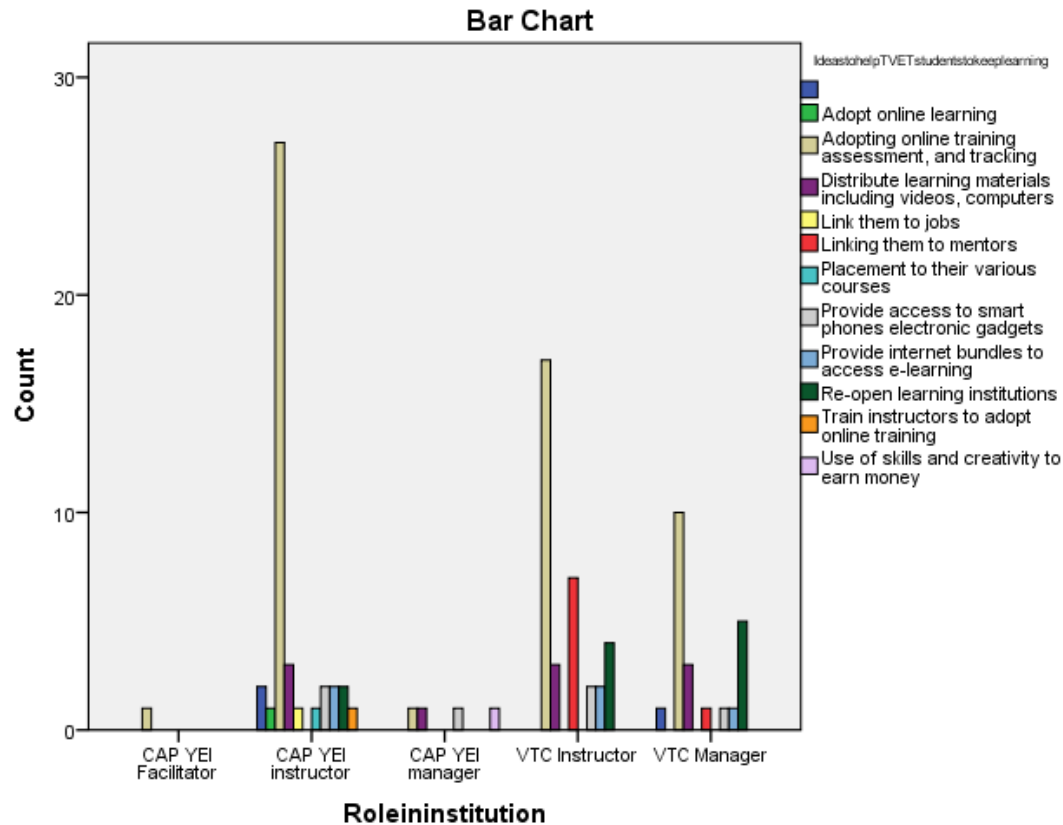
While cell phone consultation is talked about as a support, this study could not establish if this can also imply a method of communication to offer the other supportive services. What is very interesting to note in this survey is that a good number of the instructors from CAP YEI and VTC provided E-learning opportunities to their trainees. More CAP YEI staff were found to be providing E-learning and linking their trainees to jobs and business opportunities than their VTC counterparts as shown in the figure below.

*Figure 6: Ways staff continue to support their students during COVID-19*  
*Fig. 6: Ways of supporting students*



The survey also sought to know what these experts would advise CAP YEI and VTCs to do to allow continued students' learning while the current COVID-19 pandemic continue to persist. Majority of trainers advocated for adoption online training, assessment and tracking as shown in the figure below. The next majority of instructors in CAP YEI advise or advocate for distribution of learning materials such as lab top computers and videos. However, the next majority of instructors from VTCs advocate for their students to be linked to sector industry mentors for them to benefit from on-job training. Interestingly, a good number of instructors and managers from the VTC category of respondents said they are advocating re-opening of their learning institutions.

Figure 7: Ideas to help TVET continued learning

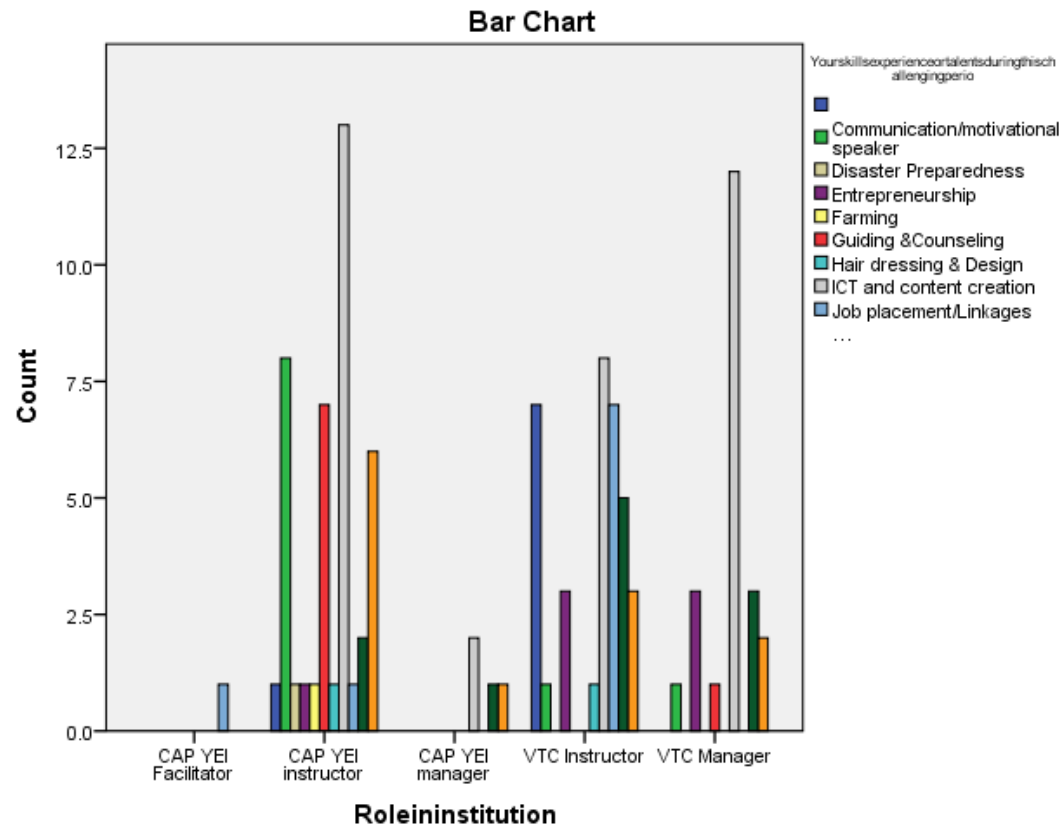


We were also interested to know the skills, experiences, and talents of the respondents that they think are useful at this time of COVID-19 lockdown of learning. There is a wide variety of skills, experiences and talents among these people, however, the majority said they are capable of ICT and content creation. This is very interesting and quite useful not because of this capabilities, but also because this skill and experience in ICT and content creation is very relevant at this time of restriction from traditional classroom learning. The other skills and experiences common among the respondents is vary widely among CAP YEI and VTC instructors and managers as shown in the figure below. For example, while many of CAP YEI identify themselves with communication/motivational speaking and guiding & counselling as qualities useful to their students during this pandemic period, their VTC counterparts identify themselves more to job placement and

linkage. The strong identity towards communication, motivational speaking and guiding and counselling by CAP YEI staff may be a factor to their expertise and appreciation of life skills training.

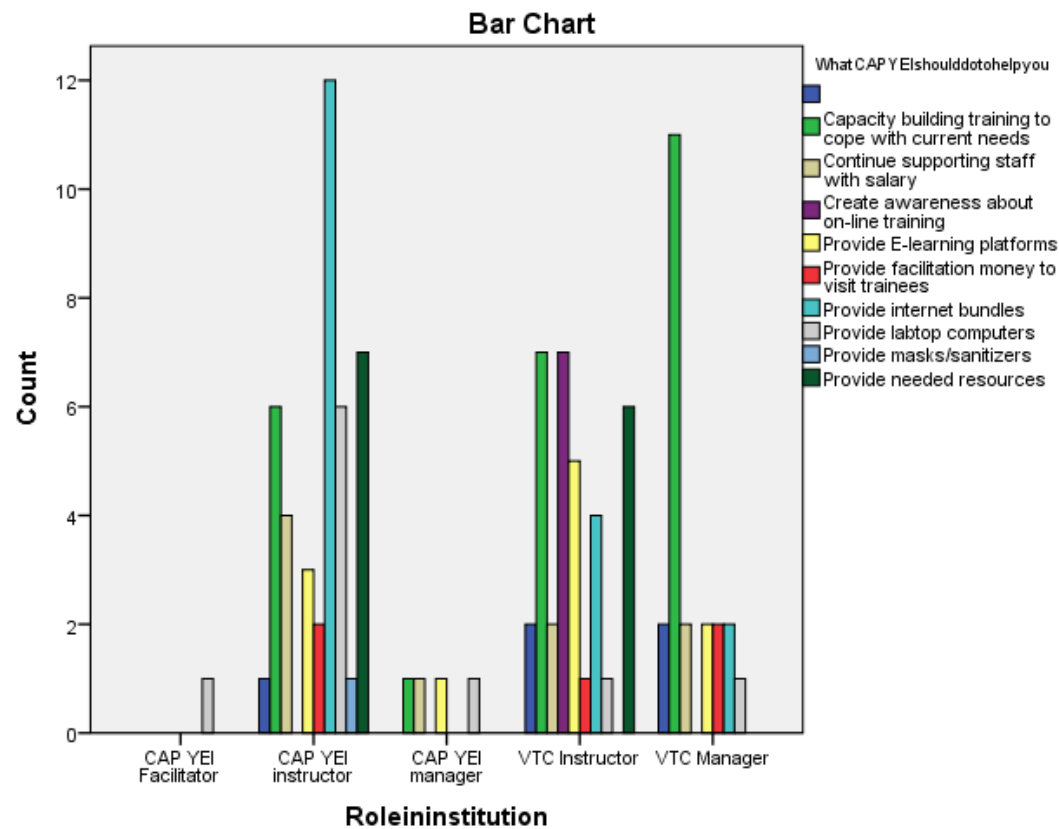
It is more of a tradition and experience among CAP YEI to help link their graduates to internship and jobs, but their low rating to this experience speaks to the realities of work and business lockdown that denied many work and income generation. On the other hand the strong rating by VTC staff towards job placement and linkages as their useful experience and skill during this pandemic speak of their strong advice for youth to be linked to mentors during this pandemic.

Figure 8: Skills, experiences, and talents useful during COVID-19



When asked about what they think CAP YEI can do to help them to continue supporting their students' learning during this pandemic, the respondents provided a wide range of suggestions, however, these suggestions vary widely between CAP YEI and VTC staff as illustrated in the figure below. While majority of CAP YEI staff want to be provide with sufficient internet bundles, which is an indication of their ownership of internet enabled equipment e.g. computers and smart phones, their VTC counterparts want to CAP YEI to provide capacity building training that will enable them cope with the current needs of training. A large number of staff from VTC want CAP YEI to create more awareness about the importance of online training. The next majority of CAP YEI staff want to be provided with needed resources including computers as well as capacity building training to cope with the training needs during this pandemic crisis.

Figure 9: What CAP YEI can help to continued supporting learning in TVET institutions during COVID-19



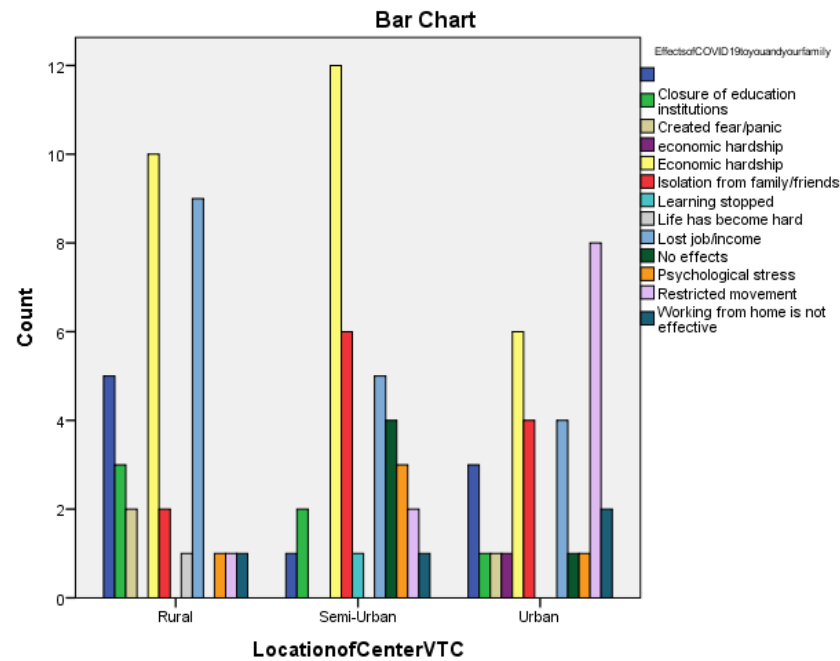
## LOCATION OF INSTITUTION'S SPECIFIC EFFECTS OF COVID-19

This section analyses the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on VTC and CAP YEI training and learning experiences, based on their geographical location; urban, sub-urban and rural settings. We believe there is a difference in access and utility of resources as well as reach to trainees and trainers for training and learning opportunities. We begin by analysing the effects of COVID-19 to the trainers and their families.

The figure below shows a clear difference in the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on staff who live train in rural and urban setup. Majority of urban staff said restriction of movement was their main challenge, while majority of staff in rural and sub-urban locations said their challenge is economic hardship. Overall, economic hardship feature prominently among staff living and working in all the locations, however, a significant number of rural staff said they lost jobs and income compared to their counterparts in sub-urban and urban areas as shown in the figure below. A good proportion of staff living in urban and sub-urban areas also said they were affected by isolation from their family and friends, which was less experienced by rural staff. The effects on trainees or students are totally different from the experiences of staff.

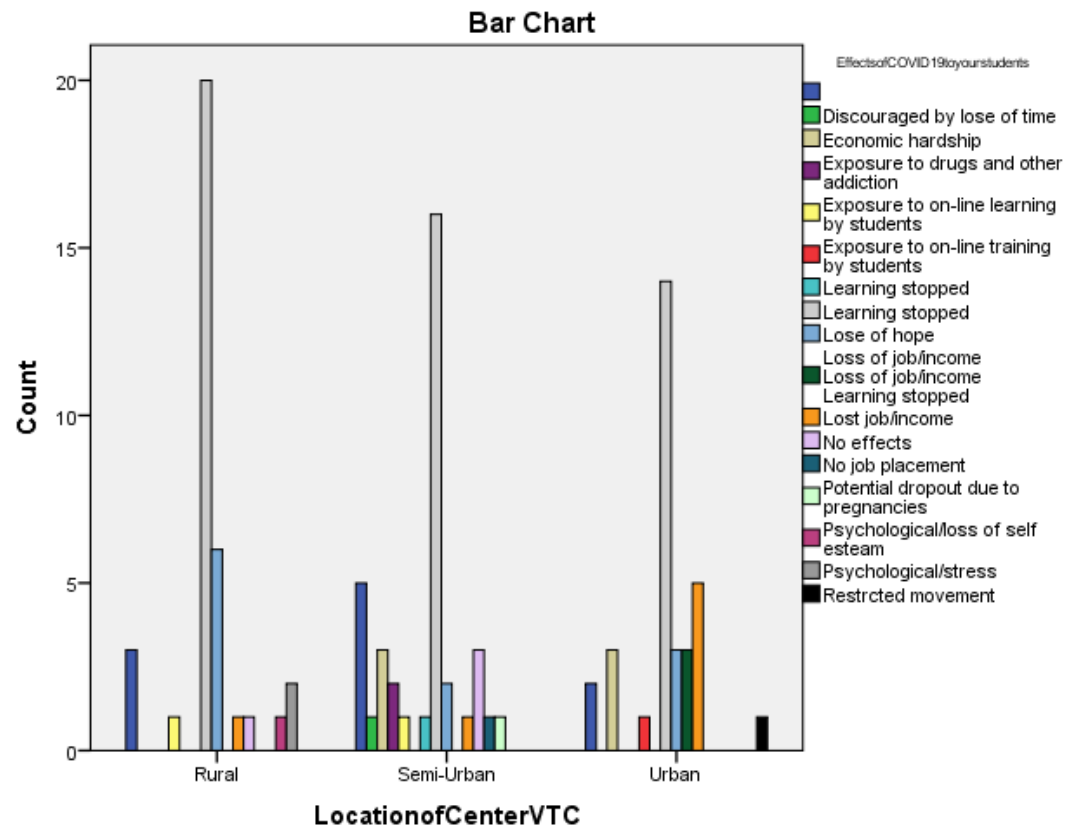
*Figure 10: Effects of COVID-19 on staff living in rural, sub-urban, and urban areas*





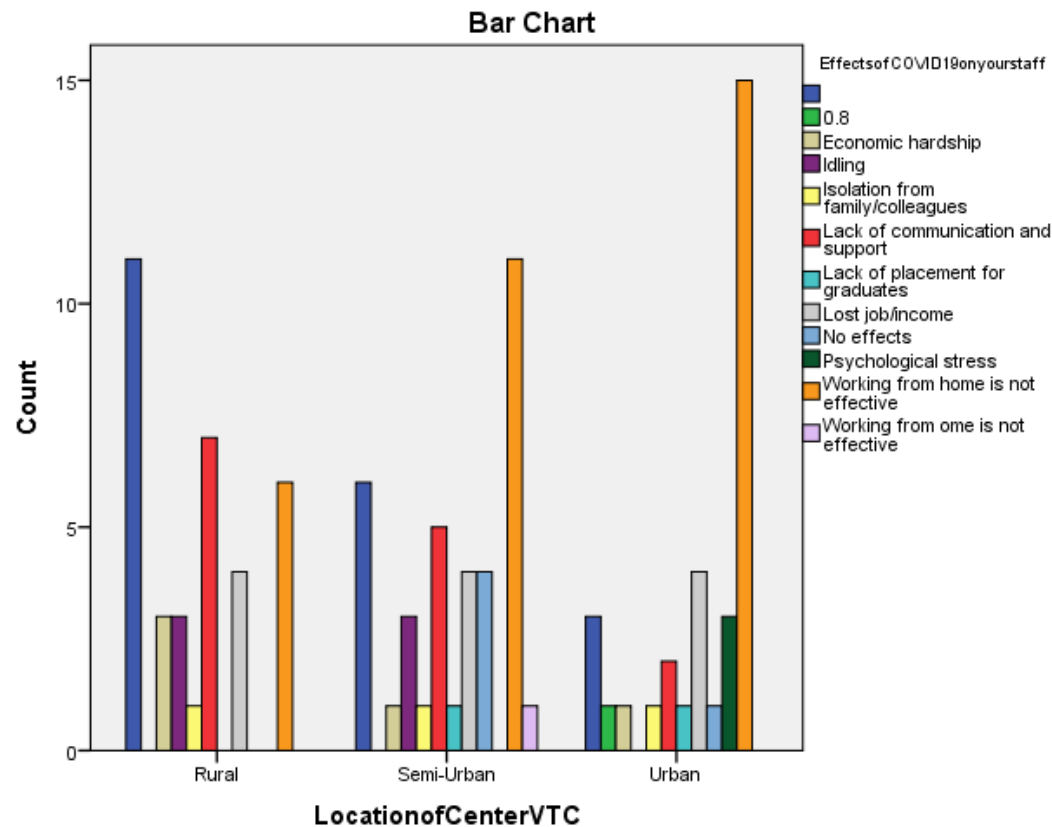
When the respondents were asked about the effects of COVID-19 on their students, significant majority said, regardless of those students living and learning in rural, semi-rural and urban locations, learning for them completely stopped. We also learn from this analysis that the trainees in urban areas were initially engage in job opportunities before COVID-19 pandemic hit and those jobs and income were lost. For those in rural areas, hopelessness is their next challenge after training stopped as can be seen in figure 11 below.

Figure 11: Effects of COVID-19 on students in rural, sub-urban, and urban areas



We also wanted to understand the experiences of staff living in urban, sub-urban and rural areas during this pandemic period. Majority of staff, especially those working and living in urban and semi-urban areas said working from home was ineffective while those living in rural areas were affected by lack of communication and support. A significant number from all the locations also suffered job and income loses as shown in figure 12 below. Interestingly, more staff in rural areas said they were now idling away, an experience which is less experienced by sub-urban staff and not experienced at all, by urban staff.

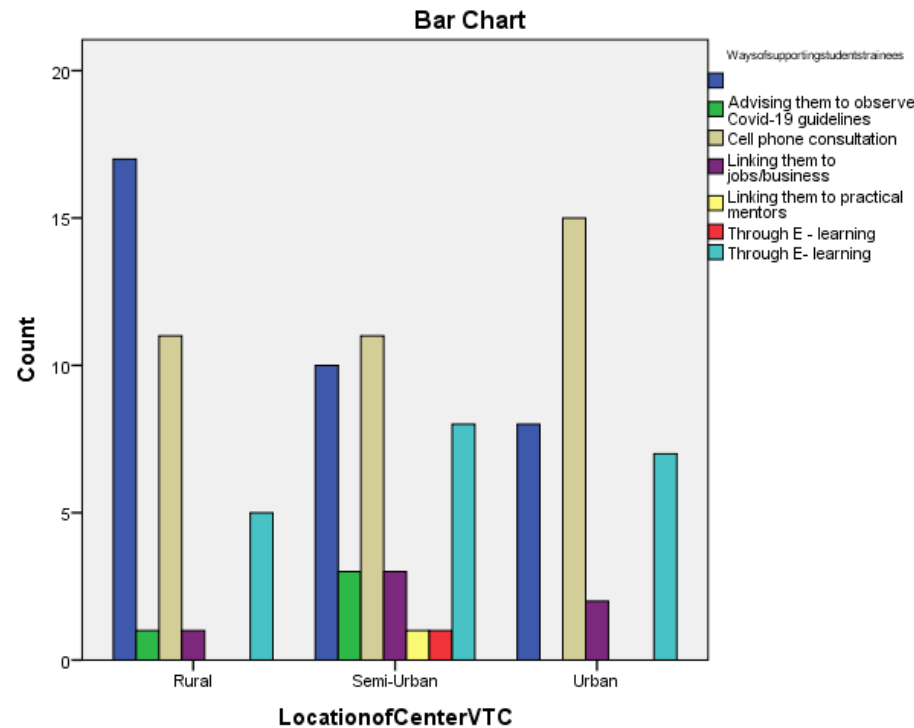
Figure 12: Effects of COVID-19 on other staff in rural, sub-urban, and urban areas



When they were asked if they support their students during COVID-19 pandemic, majority of the respondents from all the three locations said responded on the affirmative as shown in figure 14 below. However, lesser proportion of those living in rural areas said they support their trainees compared to the higher proportion of staff who work and live in urban and sub-urban areas. This is quite consistent to the rural staff claims that they have been affected most, by lack of communication and support to do their work.

Majority of the respondents from rural, urban and sub-urban locations said they support their students through cell phone consultations followed by those who support them through E-learning. A few of them said they help link them to jobs and businesses. The respondents also shared ideas about how their trainees can be supported to continue learning during this pandemic outbreak.

Figure 13: Ways in which staff from rural, sub-urban, and urban areas support their students



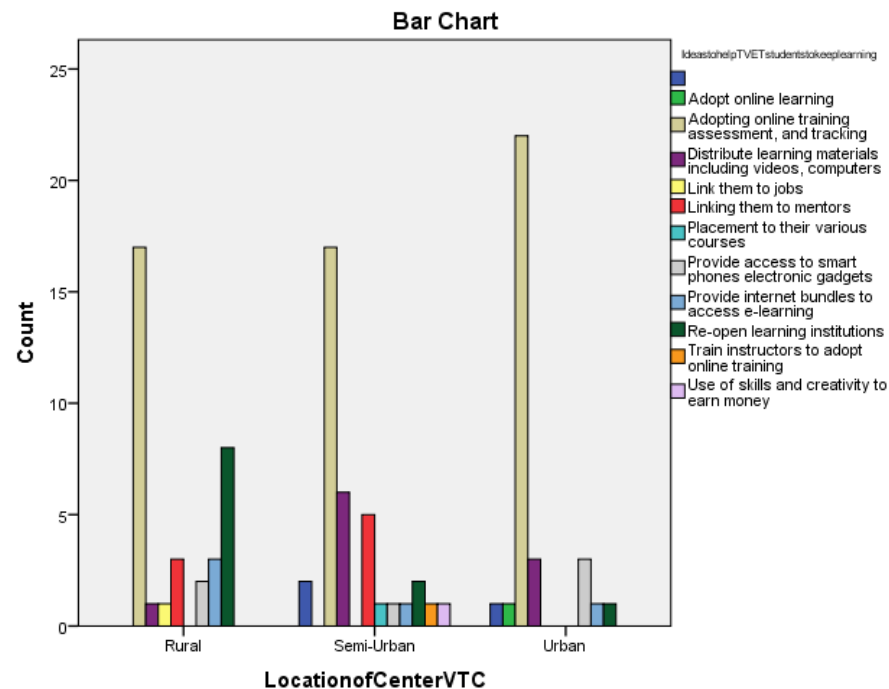
The participants of this survey also provided ideas they thought would be useful for continued learning during COVID-19. A large majority of staff from urban, sub-urban and rural areas said it would be a good idea to adopt online training, assessment and tracking for their students as shown in figure 15 below. Interestingly, though, another good number of rural staff thought it was a good idea to re-open learning institutions, as long as it was possible to follow Ministry of health guidelines to prevent spread of COVID-19. Their counterparts in urban and semi-urban areas think it is a good idea to distribute learning materials, including computers and videos to help their students continue learning amid COVID-19 lockdown.

This difference, where rural staff favour re-opening of learning institutions while urban and sub-urban staff favour distribution of learning materials such as computers and videos is consistent to earlier analyses. Rural staff cited limited access to computers and smart phones as well as lack of communication and support

to enable them continue supporting their students' learning. The reason why urban and sub-urban staff support the idea to distribute learning materials including computers and videos is because their students are capable of accessing and able to use these materials to continue learning.

While rural and semi-rural staff favour the idea of linking their students to mentors for on-job training is relevant to their ability to move around, compared to their counterparts who have not suggested such an idea because they have been restricted from moving in and out of their cities.

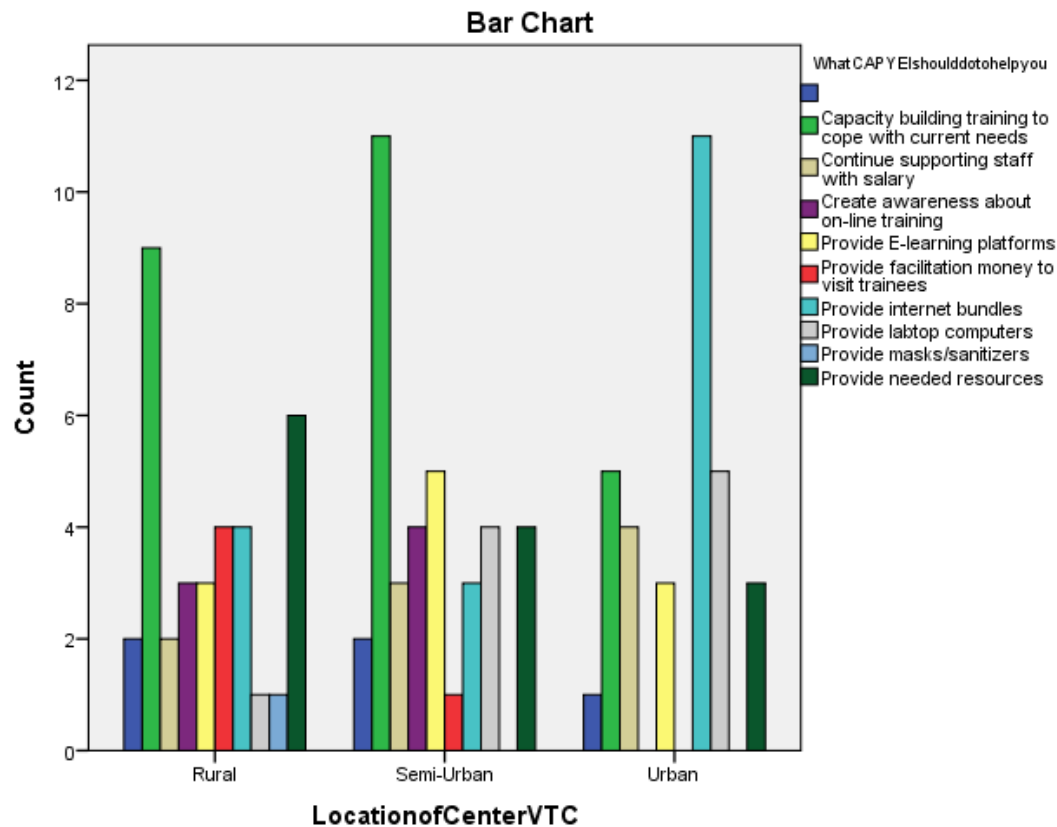
Figure 14: Ideas to help TVET continued learning



Finally, we asked the respondents about what they think CAP YEI can help them to continue supporting their students' learning. The findings illustrate clear difference in the needs of the staff in urban and rural/sub-urban areas as shown in figure 16 below. Large majority of staff from urban areas said they want CAP YEI to provide them with internet bundles, which is consistent to their earlier reporting that they mainly supported their students through cell phone consultations and E-learning which requires a lot of internet capabilities. On the other hand, a large majority of staff from rural and sub-urban areas said they want CAP YEI

to provide capacity building training to enable them meet the current needs of training during COVID-19 pandemic. The other things needed by the respondents from both geographic locations include provision of E-learning platforms, needed training needs e.g. lab top computer, and creation of awareness about online training.

Figure 15: Ways CAP YEI can support staff continued training during COVID-19 pandemic



## Conclusion and recommendation

COVID-19 pandemic cases started to hit in early March 2020. This led to a closure of learning and work places that has caused unprecedented effects. This report presents analyses of the effects of COVID-19 on TVET instructors and managers as well as on students in the sector. We analyzed these effects based on gender, institutional affiliation (CAP YEI, NGO institution and VTCs, public institutions), as well as geographic location (urban, sub-urban, and rural). The findings show greater differences between the effects of COVID-19 on organizational affiliated staff as well as on geographical locations of work places than effects of COVID-19 on gender.

Overall, COVID-19 caused serious financial, social, psychological and educational problems globally and to individuals. The **financial effects** were caused by job loss/closed businesses/ reduced income. Job/income losses mainly happened among VTC instructors who were often employees of institutional boards on temporary contracts. Financial effects caused untold economic hardship among the respondents especially when cost of living continued to increase as the dependence burden increased.

**Psychological effects** include stress and loss of hope. The main causes of psychological effect of COVID-19 are isolation from family and friends, restriction from movement, increased economic burden and termination of children's learning. Specifically, psychological effects of COVID-19 are exhibited by increased stress levels, emotional distress, anxiety, fear of getting infected with the disease and fear of the future.

**Social effects** of COVID-19 came about from the isolation of people from their family members and friends as well as restriction from movement. The total lock down of Nairobi and Mombasa also led to closure of many social places such as public parks, stadiums, and entertainment joints such as bars and clubs.

Finally, COVID-19 led to total closure of learning institutions (**educational effects**). This not only affected the efficiency of working by the respondents, but it also led to closure of schools of the children of the respondents. Losing a whole academic year by their children, including those who were to do their final national exams was quite demoralizing for them.

Despite the presence of COVID-19, TVET staff continued to support their students, mainly through cell phone consultations and linkages to mentors, employers and business opportunities. Furthermore, many of the staff who said they supported their students through E-learning or online learning cited their access to smart phones, computers and internet. Majority of those who continued to offer learning services are from CAP YEI as well as those from urban areas. While they think adoption of E-learning is inevitable to facilitate continued learning in the context of COVID-19, these staff recommend distribution of E-learning platforms; learning resources such as smartphones, laptop computers, internet, and videos; creation of awareness about the importance of adopting online learning; as well as reopening of learning institutions (especially for public institutions) to allow continued learning.

This research is limited to TVET instructors and managers' experience during COVID-19 pandemic. While responses to questions about the effects of the pandemic on students are limited, in future, it will be very important to conduct a study that will directly allow students to state their experience during this pandemic.