

Barriers to Local NGO Sustainability of Vocational Institutes whose Construction Was Donor-Funded to Empower Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Hargeisa, Somaliland

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Abstract: It has been proven by evidence-based research that local NGO sustainability of TVET for IDPs in Hargeisa cannot be possible as it is hampered by several institutional challenges. Literature review correlates with ground reality among the vocational training institutes that limited skills of trainers and their less motivation as well as absence of tools practical lessons complicates the skilling of IDP graduates. Constrained by lack of national budget allocation, there is no possibility of enhancing long-term or sustaining NGO-TVET institutes without external funding. This is way IDP graduates from local NGO governed TVET are rarely trusted for employment opportunities and thus experiencing huge frustration and poor living conditions. There is need to rethink the alternatives to re-settle IDPs in Hargeisa and Somaliland generally.

Keywords: NGO, sustainability, vocational institutes, construction, donor-funded, empower, IDPs, Hargeisa, Somaliland.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study:

Donor funded local projects serving internally displaced persons IDP's exist in most countries around the world. Donors provide funds to establish local vocational for empowering internally displaced persons. When funders leave the instructions into the hands of local staff, such they do not last or fully meet the needs of IDP's as in the case of Hargeisa. Vocational training institutes funded by donors do not exist in Somaliland alone. According to an international document 17 countries around the world were supported by OECD to establish VET programs to enable youth learning for jobs accessible in the labor market (OECD, 2010 cited in Soma, 2009). In countries like Lebanon VET is funded by both government and international agencies like world bank, Islamic Bank for development, Arab fund, and the German development agency and is moving on well (Karam, 2006).

Elsewhere in African continent, VET institutes funded locally by international donors lack a government hand. Donors always do not fund a VET institutes forever. When institutions are established and helped to run/operate, the donors expect local sustainability of the institutes. Evidence indicates that sustainability of projects/institutes has always been lacking in Kenya and other African countries in as much as several billions and billions of money have been pumped by donors throughout the country. There are still several programs which have not been success full and most people are still depending on donor funding to implement more projects... (Obasanjo, 2003 cited in Mutimba, 2013).

Countries with skilled workers and knowledge of the labour sector respond promptly to challenges and opportunities made by globalization. In Somaliland however, the choice of skills training is not being guided by the needs of the local market but instead by a need to address all needs in projects whose scopes are too small or too wide (Dualeh, 2016). These needs may include the re-settlement of Internally Displaced People (IDP's) through establishing vocational training institutes that provide life skills to them. A Norwegian humanitarian organization disclosed that Somalia's decades of fighting have resulted into over 1 million internally displaced persons in Somalia (UNHCR, 2016 cited in Norad 2017).

These exist in all Somalia regions including Somaliland. Challengingly also, the many years of humanitarian visibility and support in the Somali regions in Somalia, it is reported in various international documents that more humanitarian support is still needed to meet the immediate needs of more than half of the affected population (Humanitarian Response Plan, 2017; UNOCHA, 2016a; Humanitarian Strategy 2016-2018 and UNOCHA, 2016b cited in Norad, 2017). For example (SIDA, 2017) documented that “approximately 1.14 million people are classified as in humanitarian emergency, and a total of 5 million are in need of humanitarian assistance.” This situation implies that IDP’s suffer the highest levels of humanitarian crisis and requires some form of practical interventions such as skilling the IDP’s in Hargeisa. As for Somaliland’s case whose IDP challenges are not excluded from the current humanitarian crisis, (Thiriki & Mohamed, 2012) is concerned about the absence of “policy guideline for the coordination of and collaborative framework among various stakeholders in provision of demand driven TVET programs that is responsive to both socio-economic needs of the communities”. For any institution to operate in a sustainable manner, it must be directed and supported by national policy guidelines. This is not the case with Somaliland its IDP TVET are not even trusted by potential employers and thus, losing credibility. Donor funds that are not monitored by TVET policy may be spent without focus resulting into lack of local NGO/institutional sustainability in case donors end their support programs. Absence of policy on TVET correlates with other findings on Somaliland that “Technical and higher education actors do not provide youth with marketable skills where both tertiary education and vocational trainings have been pointed out as not suitable to equip students with skills needed in the labour market” (Hall, 2015) and that “the vocational training institutes do not prepare young students for the actual labour market” (World Bank-Somalia cited in Hall, 2015).

Donor funded vocational training schools/institutes built in Hargeisa to provide free training for IDP’s, do not meet the needs of IDP’s. These donors pour money through local NGO’s to construct vocational training centers for IDP’s. When construction is completed the training of IDPs cannot be sustained by local NGO’s. After words, IDP’s are forced to drop out before they complete the training cycle. This is because when NGOs fail to facilitate the services such as paying of trainers cleaning and meeting learning needs, they begin charging training fees which are outside of the original mission of the donor. At the end of the day, the major goal of vocational training center is not met. IDP’s continue to suffer from vulnerable conditions, miserably and are without hope for the future. This research is intendeds to examine the context of vocational training centers, assess experience of IDP’s who had been part of such projects and therefore determining possible measures that could be applied to provide better training alternatives for IDP’s in Hargeisa and Somaliland generally. It is specifically aimed at: determining the factors that increasing project sustainability; assessing level of employability in vocational training schools; analyzing the role of ministry of education role during vocational trainings and set the sustainability plan of vocational training schools.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

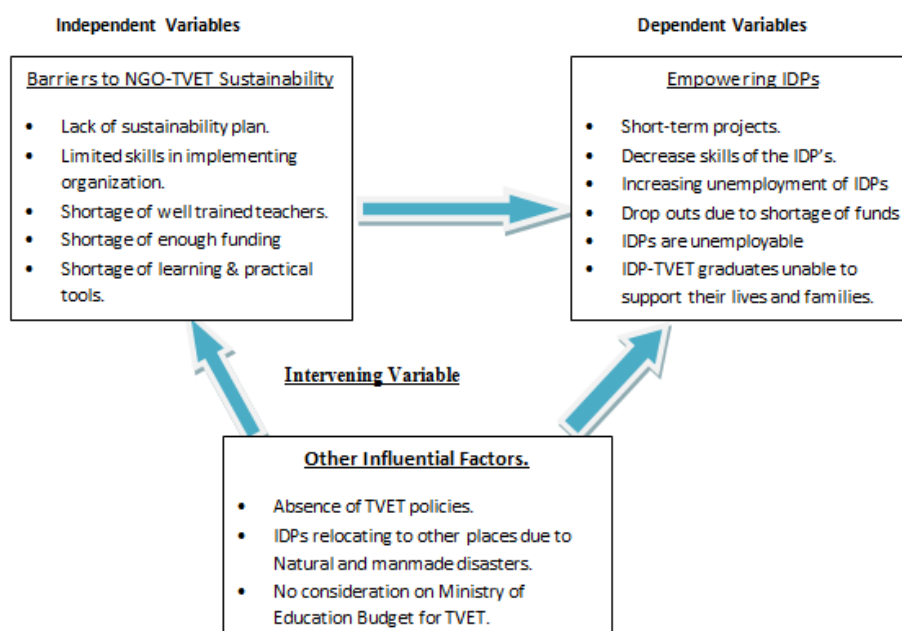


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: This author.

Explanation:

The diagram above illustrates the relationship between variables. The variables include; independent, dependent and intervening variables. TVET programs run by local organizations lack of sustainability plan. This implies that their program activities run without reliable direction. This therefore explains why local NGOs implement only short term projects. It is important to note that the TVET implanting organizations in Hargeisa employ mostly low skilled teachers who have limited knowledge to deliver to IDPs. This results into several IDP dropouts who think that they are not benefiting them the training. Even those who graduate from such kind of low quality training do not get jobs. Because they are perceived by workshop owners or employers as unemployable, there is fear from employers that these graduates can damage the tools and things expected to fix. After international donors have left TVET institutions in the hands of local organizations they are met with shortage of funding due to poverty in the host country. As result, they run only for short time and close down. The IDPs who go through such TVET institutions end up helpless and unable to support their families.

However there are also other factors which influence the independent and dependent variables. For example the ministry of education of Somaliland has no budget allocation for TVET programs. This means, if even ministry have a TVET policy, it will not regulate the trainings, skills, planning, employability or sustainability of program. In addition to that, IDP movements resulting from natural disasters like floods and drought, wars may force them to relocate to other places and thus, dropping out of the vocational training.

1.3 National TVET Policy for Somaliland:

Policy gaud lines play a major role on the management and operation IDP's TVET like any other institutions in the country. Somaliland's TVET policy appears to exist in international documents only UNESCO and European Union. Technically there are no reforms made to improve TVET programs generally in the country, this is caused due to lack of experienced people to reform and set policies for leading TVET programs to insure the quality and reach for intended goals. However Somaliland is growing day after day which means that the country requires interventions to enhance TVET skills, TVET policy and TVET sustainability.

European Union is the major funder of TVET in Somaliland and other Somalia regions like Puntland. The report exposes a lot of structured and policy disappointments but is not giving any possible solution to fill the gap (European Union, 2016). The improvement of TVET program for Somaliland based on or international presence is not likely to improve the living standard of TVET in Somaliland graduates including IDP's. Local policy-interventions could be spearheaded by government and its institutions. These could be done by local resource mobilization and outstanding of skilled TVET teachers in the neighboring region to implement the program.

2. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES**2.1 Study Area and Target population:**

The study was carried out in the Hargeisa capital city of Somaliland. Specifically, it targeted IDP camps and donor-funded Vocational Institute graduates, current students and the facilitating NGOs.

2.2 Research Design:

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses formed the basis analyzing data. In a latest research, mix design is defined as, "the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e. g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration" (Johnson et al., 2007 in Schoonenboom and Johnson, 2017). Qualitative experiences, stories and observations have been used to make sense of the statistical findings.

2.3 Sample Size:

The sample size of 121 respondents was selected from 5 Internally Displaced Camps (IDPs) in Hargeisa city of Somaliland They included Ayaha A, Ayaha B, Stadium, Shiekh-nuur, M,mooge, Aw Adam, Daami, State house and Digaale.

2.4 Sampling Procedure:

Sample size was calculated according to Baker's Second Rule of Thumb which states that researchers intending to search for primary data should be aware that people in the study area may or may not participate in the study; and that the researcher must strive to achieve 95% of the respondents (2012). The total population of TVET graduates in the five IDPs was estimated to be 180 according to the city authorities. Thus, leading us to the Baker's sample size determination formula:

$$n=385 \div ((1+ (385/N))$$

N=Total population

n=sample size

$$n=385 \div (1+ ((385/180)$$

$$n=385 \div (1+ ((2.138)$$

$$n=385 \div 3.138$$

$$n=122 \text{ (sample size)}$$

2.5 Data Collection Methods:**2.5.1 In-depth Interviews:**

In-depth interviews were necessary in interacting with some members of the community.

Kothazri (2004) recommends that the community members be engaged in a face to face conversation with the researcher using one-by-one technique to establish free space for capturing detailed information from the respondents. I realized that most people felt comfortable to share their views when they were not interrupted by others.

2.5.2 Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interview applied to high status or influential figures with leadership positions in the community. Dawson (2009) suggests that key informants usually provide specific information which the rest of the community may not have. IDPs-TVET principles, local NGO staff and funding organizations were the key informants.

2.5.3 Observation:

During the data collection, some of my primary data was obtained by observation method. I spent a period of two weeks interacting with IDP TVET graduates rotating around the IDP camps and connecting with the TVET institutes. I observed that the institutes looked very old with fractures, there were no skilling equipment at their training centers or library. Anyone could easily tell that no practical learning is going on at all. The TVET IDP graduates I interacted with looked frustrated and miserable and helpless in the IDP camps.

2.5.4 Questionnaire:

Open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires were distributed to TVET graduates to be filled according to their convenience. Most of them shared related nasty experiences regarding their IDP survival activities.

2.6 Data Analysis:

Quantitative data was analyzed through percentages and analysis of variance (ANOVA) techniques. Percentages were used to analyze demographic and other key data that was illustrated in figures and pie-charts. Qualitative stories from IDPs, TVET principals, local NGO and existing international funding organizations were used to interpretation of data.

3. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

3.1 Demographic Data:

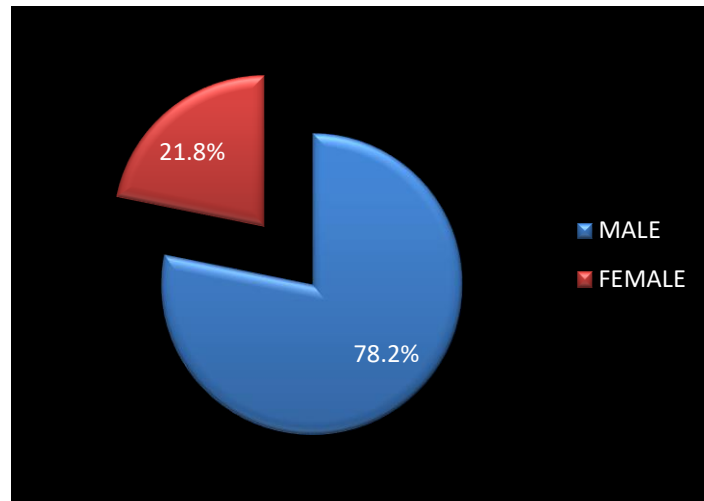


Figure 2: Gender of the respondents

Source: Primary data

Both males and females participated in the study. In order to create an impact on all IDPs it was necessary to address gender sensitivity. As shown in figure 2 above, 78.2% of the respondents were Male and 21.8% of the respondents were Female.

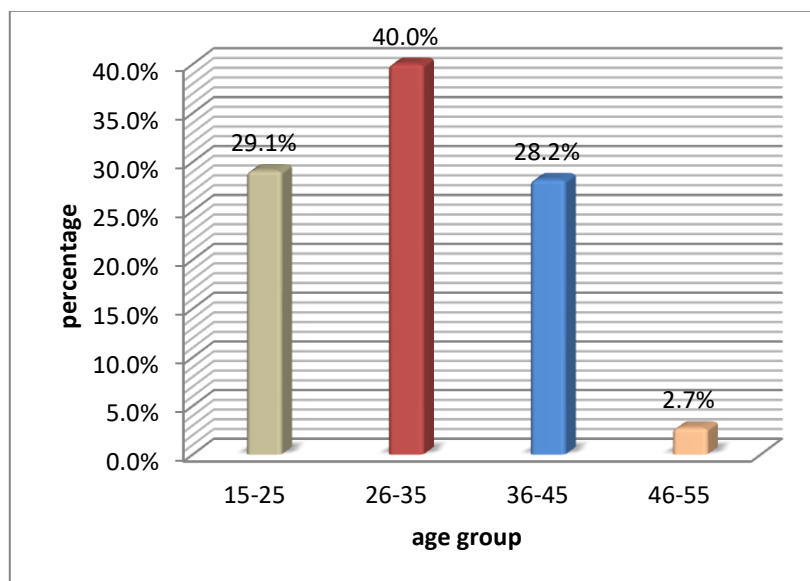


Figure 3: Age of the Respondent

Source: Primary data

People of the different ages can have different views on similar situation. In this study it was considered a necessity to include different age groups in order to compare different pieces of information. As shown in figure 3 above, 29.1% of the respondents were within the age group of 15-25 years, followed by 40.0% who were within the age group of 26-35 years. In addition to that, 28.2% were aged between 36-45 years and 2.7% of the respondents were between 46-55 years.

The 25-35 years, who are the majority of respondents were found to be more interactive or had more experience with TVET. The old people stay home most of the time and may have limited information or were not easily too accessible.

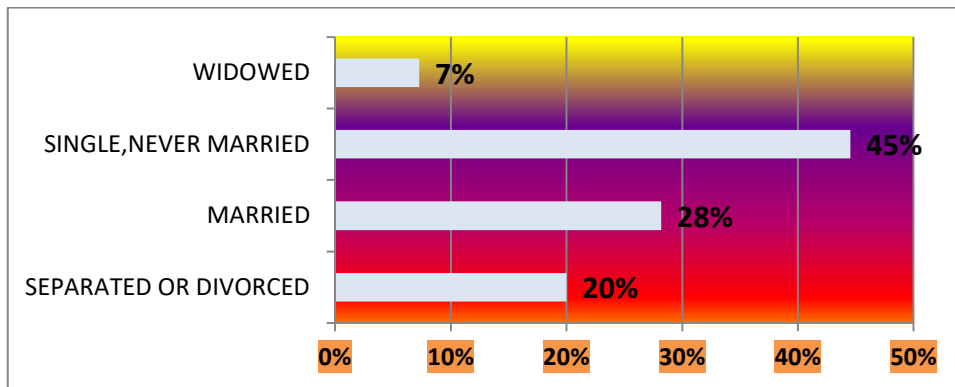


Figure 4: Marital Status

Source: Primary data

Figure 4 indicates that 28% of respondents were married by the time of data collection, 20% said separated or divorced, 7% widowed, and 45% were single or never married.

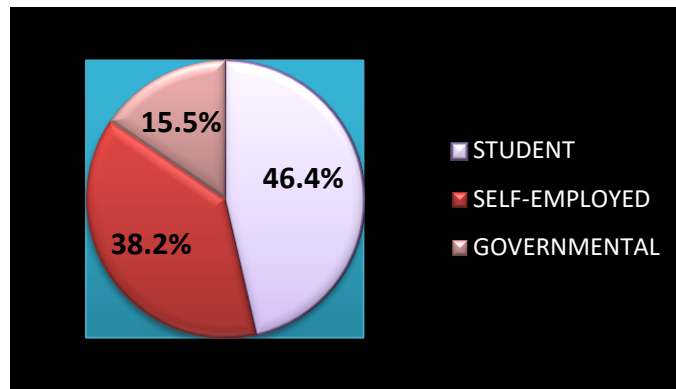


Figure 5: Occupation Status

Source: Primary data

For the interest of this research both IDP TVET current students’ workshop owners/employers as well as government staff were interviewed. As shown in figure 5, 46.4% were students, while 38.2% of the respondents said they were self-employed; and 15.5% were working with government. From experience among Hargeisa TVET and communities, there are very few TVET graduates. That is why the majority of respondents were IDP student currently undertaking TVET program. A few people also owned workshops and play a big role in the employment of such graduates. It was necessary to engage ministry of education to explain how they are responding to the empowerment of IDPs in Hargeisa.



Figure 6: Level of Education of Respondents

Source: Primary data

In figure 6 above, 16.4% of the respondents attended high school, 12.7% of the respondents answered they attended college, 10.9% of the respondents were graduate students while 18.2% of the respondents answered graduated high school. Also, 16.4% had graduated from college, 13.6% of the respondents answered post graduate degree but 11.8% never had any school background. The differences in education levels of IDPs could explain the variation in their vulnerability context. IDPs without any education background or the ones who attended the lowest education level are largely likely to experience TVET training/learning disabilities and could blame their failures on trainers.

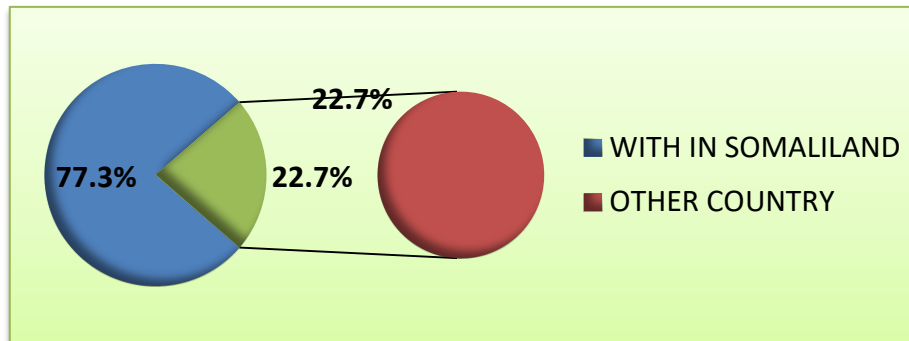


Figure 7: Country of Origin

Source: Primary data

A very unique finding was that different nationalities of IDPs live in Hargeisa IDP camps. As shown in figure 7 above, 77.3% of the respondents had been displaced within Somaliland due to natural disasters like drought while 22.7% were from other country as refugees disguising themselves as IDPs. Identifying who is a Somali citizen and who is a foreigner is likely to be an immigration gap.

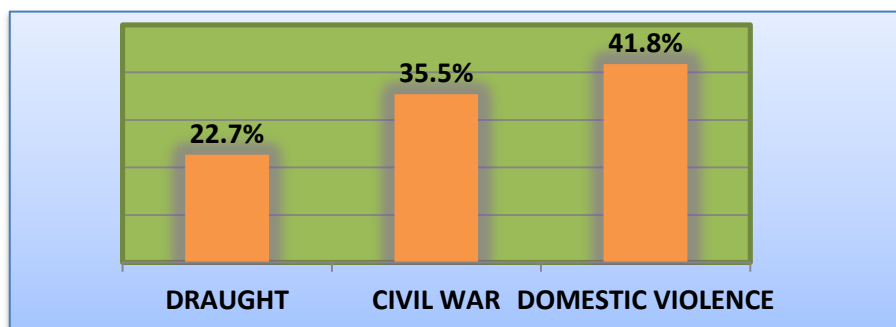


Figure 8: Reason for coming to the IDP Camp

Source: Primary data

There are three reasons why various IDPs ended up in the camp. Figure 8 above shows that 22.7% were displaced by drought, 35.5% by civil war and 41.8% by domestic violence. There could have been other reasons but they were not disclosed during data collection.

3.2 Summary of Research Findings:

A number of findings were noted during field study. They include the following.

- ❖ It was concurrently mentioned by workshop that most IDPs who were given TVET training are unemployable. This experience was based on the fact that IDP graduates damage things or tools they try to fix.
- ❖ The study disclosed that IDPs spend very limited time in the classroom everyday as these teachers demonstrates that they have no time to teach them.
- ❖ IDPs revealed that TVET teachers gave them only theoretical exercises than practical work.
- ❖ Ministry of education also does not have full knowledge the resettlement of IDPs since the latter are largely facilitated by international agencies

- ❖ One of the biggest challenges unveiled by the study was lack of experienced teachers and absence of tools for supporting practical work.
- ❖ The study also disclosed that not all IDP-TVET graduates are unemployable because very few of them get jobs in garages for machines and to fix car problems. They earn some money to cater for themselves and their families.
- ❖ The TVET schools investigated did not have a library and IDPs depend only on blackboard notes.

3.3 Living Conditions in the IDP Camps of Hargeisa:

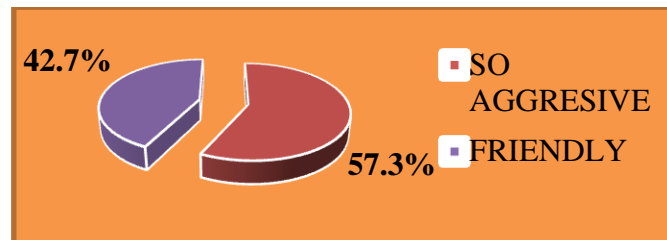


Figure 9: Living Conditions in the Camp

It is risky to live in the IDP camps within Hargeisa as was disclosed by the majority of IDPs represented by 57.3% in figure 9 above. Most IDPs are afraid of aggressive behaviours in the camps. Only 42.7% said that camp conditions are friendly. The lived experiences of IDPs in the camps could be true because most of the criminals that undermine Hargeisa security live in such camps. It is advisable not to walk through the camps in the night except by bus transportation means for safety reasons.

3.4 Employability of IDPs that have TVET Training:

IDPs in Hargeisa work different companies like building and construction companies, power companies, garages for car issues, and tailoring which is mostly for girls. To get a job depends on how one's ability to do the job and how easy they can work in teams. If an IDP-TVET graduate is good at creativity and planning, he/she stands a better chance of getting a job. However, majority IDPs do not have any skill that could attract companies to them.

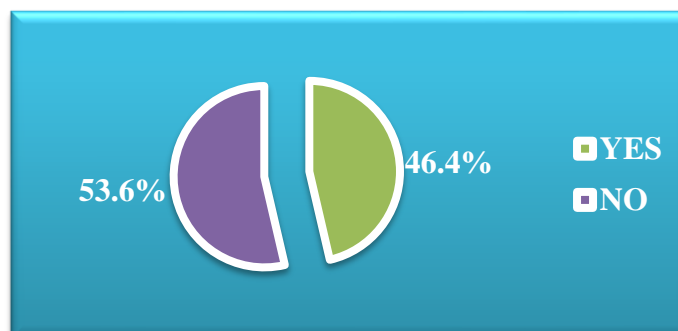


Figure 10: Employability Status of the Respondent

Source: Primary data

At the garage I visited, owners were accusing IDPs - TVET graduates of limited skills, late coming and snail's speed of working the tasks. The manager of the garage was afraid that these graduates may damage the products/things they are supposed to fix. That is why 53.6% of the participants (majority) said it is difficult to get a job. It does not mean that jobs do not exist but employers are looking for the scarce practical talents.

3.5 How IDP-TVET Graduates are attracted to the Job Market:

Getting job in Somaliland is so difficult for most people, including citizens who live in their homes except if they are known by employers or employers' friends and relatives. The situation can be tough for IDPs who are largely discriminated even when their livelihood situation is health-threatening.

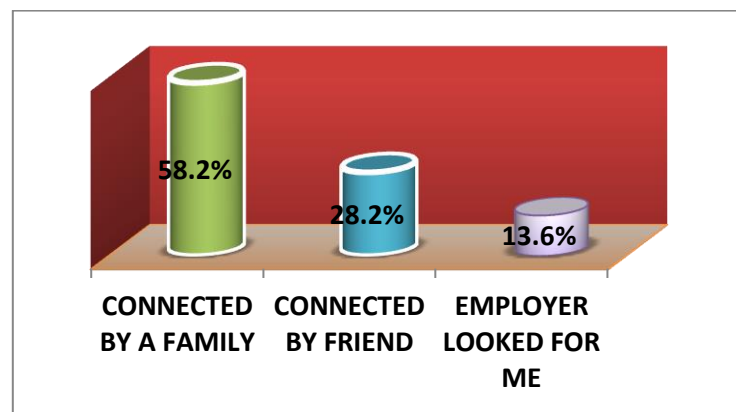


Figure 11: Attracting to the Job Market

Source: Primary data

As shown in figure 11 above, majority of IDPs (58.2%) are connected; by a family, 28.2% by a friend. The smallest percentage of 13.6% IDP graduates mentioned the employer looked for them. Employers may be attracted by the creative skills in the IDP.

3.6 Empowering IDPs through TVET Program:

Internally Displaced People all over the world are usually supported in various ways to enable them recover from negative memories of disasters that hit their regions of origin. The IDPs who are hosted in Hargeisa originated from various locations of Somaliland. Charitable international and local organizations take responsibility of empowering such people with life skills through TVET program to enable them become self-help communities who could sustain their own lives. Hargeisa in Somaliland is one place where some IDPs are given training in several courses that could qualify them to start their own small scale businesses or even be attracted to the job market. It is unfortunate however that most of them do not actually attain the required skills. For example, this study has revealed in figure 12 below that 75.5% of the enrolled IDPs do not complete the TVET program but only 24.5% are able to complete the courses. The statistical information here was also supported by individual stories of various research participants. What this might mean is that IDP vulnerabilities in the context of Hargeisa may not be addressed with TVET training in institutes without skilled human resources and skilling equipment.

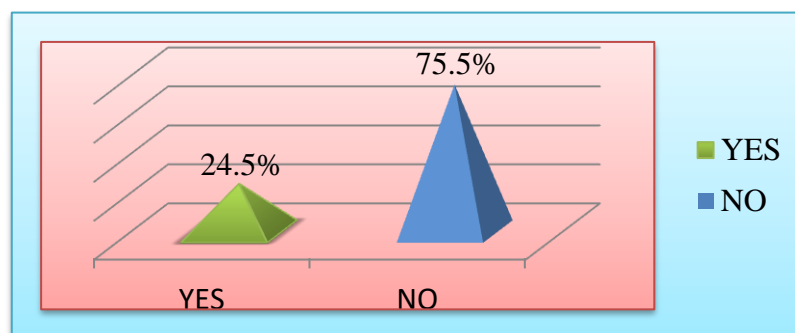


Figure 12: Completion of TVET course

Source: Primary data

Most of the IDPs that were involved in the study revealed that they did not get trusted training due to absence of experienced teachers as well as lack of equipment for handling practical courses. Some of them explained in the interview that they had language barrier challenge that made it difficult to understand whatever the teachers were training them, and that the training itself was taking a very short time. This could have made the IDPs to feel that they received inadequate or no skills at all. Some other IDPs appreciated the skills of the oldest teachers but showed dissatisfaction that these teachers were giving them very limited activities. Besides, IDP trainees would have loved the younger generation of teachers who however they mentioned that they lack technical knowledge but give only theoretical lessons rather than practical courses that are offered in the TVET program.

The undesirable experience IDPs go through in IDP-TVET institutions may have negative consequences the IDP-TVET graduates. For example, a workshop owner shared his experience with such graduates who seek to work for him, reasoning that they need good training and entrepreneurship skills as well as learning to be tolerant with workplace ethics.

In these perspectives, anyone can view skills development as one way of transforming vulnerable people such as these IDPs. However, the reality on the ground implies that IDPs rarely benefit from TVET programs established without recruiting skilled teachers or making learning tools for practical activities.

3.7 Number of Hours IDPs studied during TVET per Day:

A related experience on empowering IDPs with TVET, it should be noted that training someone cannot be accomplished overnight. Rather, it takes a period of time to instill learning and skills among such vulnerable people. This study also disclosed that the number of hours the study the courses per day cannot enable them gain the required skills. In figure 13 below, respondents shared their experiences.

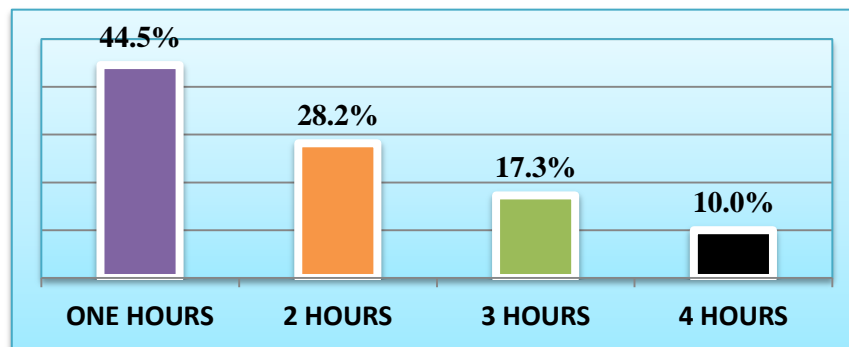


Figure 13: Number of Hours studied

Source: Primary data

The majority of the participants who accounted for 44.5% said that the studied for one hour per day. This is definitely not enough. 28.2% of them mentioned that they study for 2 hours, and 17.3% completed their lessons within three hours. Only 10.0% of them remembered that they studied for 4 hours per day. From this illustration, it appears that teachers cheat the IDP-TVET trainees and this explains the major reasons why the few IDPs graduated without attractive skills.

3.8 Tuition Fees required for TVET program from IDPs:

The learning/training deficiencies suffered by IDPs could be connected to shortage of enough funding to facilitate the program. Before the TVET institutes are entrusted in the leadership of local NGOs, the former provided free training for IDPs in various vocational programs such as mechanics, tailoring, plumbing, weaving among others. In the hands of local NGOs, fees are introduced and required from the vulnerable unemployed helpless IDPs who cannot pay.

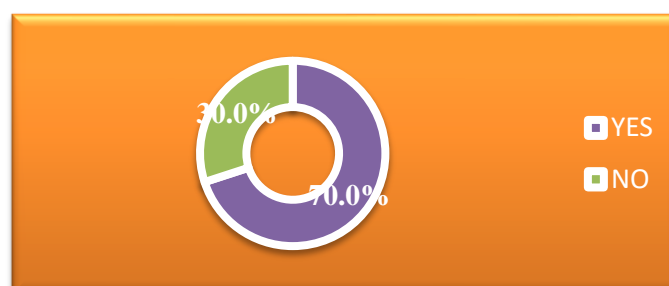


Figure 14: Payment of Fees

Source: Primary data

As shown in Figure 14 above, 70% of the respondents answered yes meaning that they do not afford to pay while 30% struggle to pay any fee. So this makes some of the IDP youth to not attend TVET School or drop-out at a higher rate.

3.9 Understanding of TVET Program:

Skills are essential tool for every person to overcome the obstacles of life, especially internally displaced persons (IDPs). These IDPs need and skill to be professional since they missed the basic formal education and need a rapid skill. TVET schools in Hargeisa always concentrate on theoretical lessons rather than practice. When 64.5% respondents in figure 15 mention they write notes during the training and 35.5% reveal that they practice what they study, there are still unanswered questions skills gap that TVET institutes in Hargeisa rarely address.

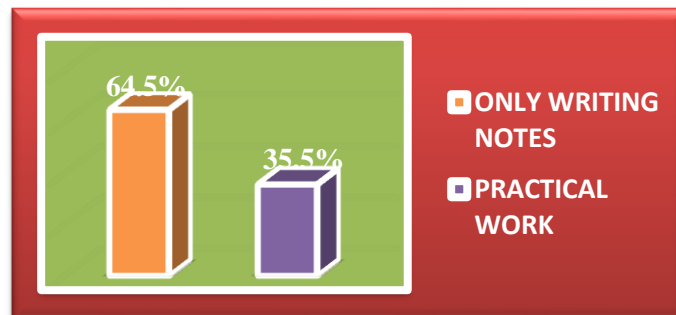


Figure 15: The Nature of the Training

Source: Primary data

3.10 Local NGO Sustainability of TVET Program:

Keeping the project sustainability is one of the main roles of leading organizations for that project to be success to reach the goals for that project, which continuity of the teaching process. Some projects are built by Donor funders and also take the responsibility of the next step which is to make sustainability plan by scheduling and financing and monitoring. However some TVET program is on LNGO hands which can manage and lead the TVET programs by recruiting and equipping and maintaining how things going on and changing if there is any risk faced how plan was intended. But these organization are not able full responsibility for the project sustainability since they get the form donors and Government, so there TVET schools are project based and the schools work period of time for example 3 month 6 month or 8 month and sometimes it my stop before reached the completion of the courses. Somaliland government is the third institution can do the sustainability of these TVET institutes for IDPs in Hargeisa. But TVET in department are said that they do not have any budget intended for IDP-TVET so they can not able to take the sustainability role. For these reason IDP-TVET become short time and or project based.

3.11 Challenges faced by TVET Graduates:

IDP-TVET graduates who get different skills form TVET training centers in IDP camps Hargeisa face many obstacles in live job searching and employability and interactions. In case of live obstacles these IDPs are living low level situations of live poor sanitation hygiene, because they do not get enough water for cleaning their homes and wash themselves also no toilets to urinate or defecate which cause to urinate or defecate inside their villages and causes diseases like diarrhea. Also they do not have clean water for drinking and cooking their food which also causes disease. In addition of that these people live on poor designed shelters which cannot resist cool climate and hot climate which people sometimes feel to get sick, these shelters are tend to fire if one fires since they are congested and no routes to for safety to reach them also the security is very poor. These graduates are faced gap or lack of basic education because of no primary schools secondary schools colleges and universities for IDPs. Lack of education institutions makes them to not adopt the programs which are leading academic facilitators using advanced and standard curriculum. IDPs those have and enough income to pay schools send their children to the private schools in Hargeisa which are for profit oriented institutes, also no sustainable TVET programs since they are project and time based.

4. CONCLUSION

The nature of IDP-TVET trainings is equally at risk as in other developing regions as was disclosed by previous research. Constrained by limited or no budget allocation to TVET, the NGO sustainability of the former is not guaranteed. Local NGOs lack sustainability plan to run these IDP-TVET institutes and thus, resorting into project activities under the cover of supporting IDP empowerment initiatives.

Absence of skilled technical teachers as well as a general lack of learning/training tools in Hargeisa correlate with the failure of producing the required skills. This results into un-employability of IDPs who are not trusted with practical activities at workplaces. The existing jobs in companies require matching skills that IDPs do not acquire in Hargeisa TVET institutes. Joblessness is a characteristic of both IDP-TVET graduates and those who have never seen the blackboard and therefore incapable of meeting livelihood needs in the camps.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

There is no problem that cannot be solved if appropriate problem-solving strategies are in place. The following recommendations could enhance sustainability of TVET programs if they are applied by local NGOs as well as the host government.

- ❖ Privatization of TVET institutes to private individuals could provide possible funding strategies that enable outsourcing of technical staff.
- ❖ Government could begin allocating some budget for TVET programs to enhance sustainability. If government collaborates with private sector, they could forge tangible training possibilities for enrolled IDPs in TVET institutes.
- ❖ Local NGOs need to sign sustainability plan for TVET programs. This can be possible if the stakeholders support their planning with principles of accountability and transparent operation.
- ❖ TVET Institutes could collaborate with local workshop owners to allow internship activities to familiarize IDPs with practical work. Learning on the job enhances skills transfer and development.
- ❖ Police organizations in Hargeisa need to deploy permanent security workforce in IDP camps to ensure safety of both IDPs and surrounding communities.
- ❖ There is need to support IDPs with starting capital for them to establish small-scale businesses. This could prevent idleness of most of them to mitigate possibilities of being lured into armed conflict.

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