



► Skilling, upskilling and reskilling of employees, apprentices & interns during the COVID-19 pandemic

Findings from a global survey of enterprises

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Skilling, upskilling and reskilling of employees, apprentices and interns during the COVID-19 pandemic: Findings from a global survey of enterprises

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► Foreword

The COVID-19 pandemic is posing the most challenging crisis the world has faced since the Second World War – testing the strength and resilience of our society and economies. This survey report represents the collaborative efforts of ten development partners in an attempt to shed light on the impact of the pandemic on the training and development of employees, apprentices, interns and trainees from the perspective of enterprises and organizations. Given the widespread suspension of operations and the consequent interruption of training and development activities, the survey findings paint a gloomy picture of stagnation of skills development activities. Yet at the same time, enterprises and organizations around the world have demonstrated their ability to improvise and innovate, and the many good practices and innovative solutions undertaken by them to mitigate the impact of the pandemic have been captured in this report.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, skills development and lifelong learning systems were facing increasing challenges in meeting the fast-changing demand of labour markets. Global megatrends, including new technologies, globalization, demographic shifts, climate change, and migration, are causing the loss of some jobs while also creating new opportunities. By intensifying the ongoing challenges in the world of education and the world of work, the COVID-19 pandemic has placed an urgent demand on individuals to acquire new skills, reskill, and upskill to adapt to the new normal.

As the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated changes in the demand for skills and raised the possibility of structural shifts in labour markets around the world, there is an urgent need for quality training to support a robust economic recovery. Without remediation, there is a risk of leaving behind a “COVID-19 generation” of current and future workers with lower earnings and lower quality jobs over their lifetime. In order to enhance the agility and resilience of societies to deal with the challenges posed by the pandemic and crises in the future, governments have a crucial responsibility in ensuring the continuation of training and development at workplaces, as well as improving the effectiveness of skills development and lifelong learning systems.

An effective skills development system depends on close coordination between governments, social partners, the private sector, and education or training providers. In particular, engaging employers in the roll-out of new training programmes and updating the curriculum and delivery of existing programmes is crucial to enhance the responsiveness of formal TVET and work-based learning programmes to labour market needs. Based on the lessons learned from the survey findings, this report proposes a range of policy recommendations to address the immediate impact of the pandemic, to ensure rapid recovery after the crisis, and to build skills development systems capable of adapting to labour market transformations in the long-run.

This global health crisis calls for the engagement of and partnerships between stakeholders at all levels, including international and regional development organizations, governments, social partners, public and private enterprises, education and training institutions, as well as learners and workers from all walks of life. For instance, the Global Education Coalition was launched by UNESCO nearly a year ago and brought together more than 140 partners from all horizons (private sector, academia and international organizations) to make sure quality education and training remain available in these times of crisis. Under the umbrella of the Coalition, the Global Skills Academy was initiated in July 2020 and specifically focuses on developing modern-day professional skills such as digital skills and leadership skills in order to foster the construction of a more sustainable future.

This inter-agency survey illustrates the international collaboration that is needed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hoped that this joint initiative will serve as a knowledge base and impetus for promoting more international cooperation and knowledge exchange in this area, to generate innovative solutions for addressing the impact of COVID-19 on training at workplaces, and for building effective and resilient skills development systems.

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The overall design, methodology and implementation of the survey and the preparation of the report was supervised by Ashwani Aggarwal. The survey instrument drafted by Ashwani Aggarwal received inputs from Joanna Anstey (ETF), Susan Bird (EC), Cheryl Chan, Anastasia Festi (ETF), Didier Gelibert, H el ene Guiol, Shinyoung Jeon (OECD), Hiromichi Katayama, Victoria Levin, Jongwoo Lim (ILO), Nazrene Mannie, Glenda Qunitini, Antonio Ranieri, Indhira Santos, Norbert Shoebel, Stefan Thomas, Tamas Varnai, Michael Weber and Helmut Zelloth. The survey instrument was translated into five languages: French by H el ene Guiol and Adame Traore; Spanish by Angelica Mu oz Marmolejo; Arabic by Wael Mustafa; Russian by Galyna Terzi; and Bahasa Indonesia by Tauvik Muhamad. All partners used their networks to circulate the survey and obtain responses.

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► List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
AR	augmented reality
ATEC	Australian Tourism Export Council
Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CSR	corporate social responsibility
EC	European Commission
ETF	European Training Foundation
GAN	Global Apprenticeship Network
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation
GTO	group training organization
ICT	information and communications
MNE	technology multinational enterprise
MSME	micro, small and medium-sized enterprise
NAPS	National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (India)
NTA	Namibia Training Authority
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSH	occupational safety and health
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority (South Africa)
SME	small and medium-sized enterprise
TAFE	technical and further education (Australia)
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Philippines)
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VR	virtual reality
WBG	World Bank Group

► Main findings

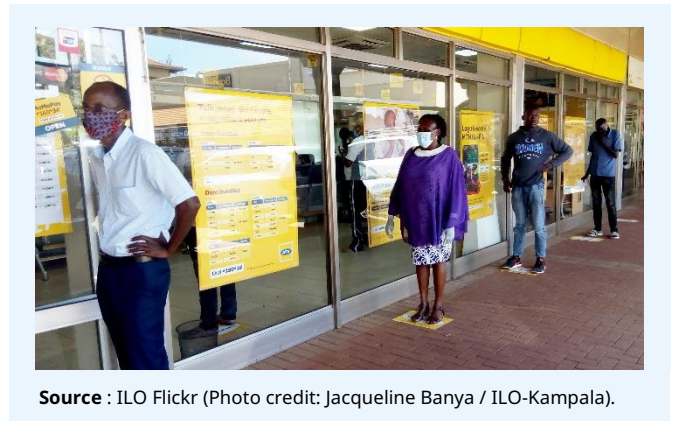
The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously disrupted the skilling, upskilling and reskilling of employees, apprentices and interns in all types of enterprises and organizations around the world. To assess the impact of the pandemic, ten development partners together undertook a global online survey of enterprises from 27 April to 5 June 2020.¹ This survey received 901 responses from 114 countries. The main findings are presented below.

Suspension of operations in enterprises and organizations

- The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted the operations of those enterprises and organizations that participated in the survey:
 - around 78 per cent completely or partially suspended operations;
 - approximately 86 per cent introduced work from home measures.
- The impact was greater on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) than it was on large enterprises:
 - almost 83 per cent of MSMEs suspended operations compared to 65 per cent of large enterprises;
 - almost 95 per cent of large enterprises introduced work from home measures compared to only 75 per cent of MSMEs.

Interruption to skilling, upskilling and reskilling

- Enterprises and organizations brought skills development almost to a standstill due to lockdown measures introduced during the pandemic. Training was interrupted for 90 per cent of employees, 86 per cent of apprentices and 83 per cent of interns/trainees. MSMEs were impacted the most in this respect.
- Nearly a half of enterprises and organizations stopped paying a stipend or wages to apprentices and interns/trainees.
- Enterprises and organizations increased online learning following the introduction of lockdown measures. They faced considerable challenges in delivering training online, however. The most common of these were infrastructure issues (e.g. inadequate internet connectivity and poor access to computers); limited digital literacy among users; a lack of adapted training programmes and resources; and the difficulty of delivering practical training online. This last factor is the most significant challenge to training apprentices and interns/trainees online.



Source : ILO Flickr (Photo credit: Jacqueline Banya / ILO-Kampala).

¹ African Development Bank (AfDB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Commission (EC), European Training Foundation (ETF), European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN), International Labour Organization (ILO), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the World Bank Group (WBG).

Actions taken to continue skilling, upskilling and reskilling

By enterprises and organizations

Approximately 65 per cent of the enterprises and organizations surveyed took active measures to continue upskilling and reskilling their employees. Reskilling programmes covered a range of topics and not solely technical skills; for example, socio-emotional skills, time management, occupational safety and health (OSH), prevention of COVID-19 infection, digital skills, mental health and well-being. The measures taken by enterprises and organizations included:

- using video conferencing tools and online learning programmes.² This was the most common measure taken by enterprises in order to continue training employees, apprentices and interns/trainees. Some supported staff by providing better internet connection, laptops or access to additional IT tools and programmes;
- adjusting the training period for apprenticeships so apprentices could complete their training (around 53 per cent of enterprises applied this measure);
- resuming on-the-job training at the workplace by introducing precautionary measures against COVID-19 infection, such as social distancing, the wearing of a facemask, disinfecting workplaces, introducing temperature checks and reducing the number of apprentices in any single group;
- partnering with external organizations to facilitate staff training and development (around 37 per cent of enterprises applied this measure).³

By trade unions

The actions of trade unions for their members / workers included:

- influencing policy measures through social dialogue;
- setting up emergency funds for affected workers;
- carrying out awareness-raising campaigns;
- adjusting training programmes;
- offering labour market matching services or legal advice;
- in some instances obtaining the recognition of COVID-19 as an employment injury from the competent authorities.⁴

By governments

Measures adopted by governments included:

- giving regular updates and communications on the state of the COVID-19 pandemic and providing guidelines on safety and health and preventative measures;
- introducing guidelines or law on remote working;
- affording greater flexibility in terms of funding rules, training period, scheduling of off-the-job and on-the-job training to allow a focus on the off-the-job portion of curriculum during periods of lock-down, assessments and completion of apprenticeship training;
- setting up free online learning platforms and radio and television channels;
- providing financial support to both enterprises and apprentices, including in the form of wage subsidies and digital equipment.

² A list of 41 useful resources and tools for online and offline learning used by the enterprises surveyed are listed in Appendix V.

³ Some examples of partnerships between enterprises and external organizations to facilitate staff training and development during the COVID-19 pandemic are given in section 2.1.4 of this report.

⁴ A Global Trend Analysis on the Role of Trade Unions in Times of COVID-19 (ILO,2021).

The mitigation measures and practices considered most helpful for delivering training during the pandemic are the listed below:

- financial support for enterprises and learners;
- capacity building for trainers and teachers to help them in developing and delivering online training;
- access to digital infrastructure and equipment at an affordable cost;
- close communication between trainers/supervisors and learners;
- flexibility in implementing apprenticeships;
- psychological support for employees, apprentices and interns/trainees.

Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic: innovative approaches to skilling, upskilling and reskilling

Although it was the stated intention of over half of the enterprises and organizations surveyed to reduce investment in staff training due to the financial constraints imposed by the pandemic, a large majority (75 per cent) will adopt innovative methods to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of skilling and reskilling. These include:

- increasing investment in digital platforms, tools and resources, including virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR);
- introducing or intensifying blended training methodologies;
- building the capacity of staff to design and deliver online training;
- acquiring equipment and software for online training.

Policy recommendations

At the international/regional level

- Promote gender-responsive international standards and good practices in consultations with governments and social partners;
- promote international cooperation and knowledge exchange in the sharing of innovative solutions and good practices for addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on staff development and training;
- support developing countries in reforming skills and lifelong learning systems and capacity building of governments, social partners and other institutions.

At the country/sector level

- Promote social dialogue and partnerships among all stakeholders in skills development systems and facilitate the engagement of social partners;
- develop gender-responsive crisis recovery plans, and guidelines for skills development systems, both during and after the pandemic;
- guarantee funding for skilling, upskilling and reskilling, especially for women, disadvantaged groups and the hardest-hit sectors;
- take specific measures to encourage the provision of and participation in work-based learning programmes, including apprenticeships and traineeships;
- enhance the equity of access especially for women to training opportunities and digital infrastructure;
- invest in establishing or improving recognition of prior learning (RPL) and micro-credential systems;
- revise regulations and guidelines in order to introduce greater flexibility into work-based learning programmes;
- strengthen career guidance system and services.

At the enterprise/individual level

- Promote social dialogue and the engagement of trade unions;
- align training provision with crisis response and recovery plans at the national or sectoral level;
- leverage digital technologies to ensure continuity in the training provided for employees, apprentices and interns/trainees while overcoming gender digital divide;
- invest in the capacity development of trainers and supervisors in enterprises, as well of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees, to become more adaptable and resilient;
- facilitate close communication between trainers and learners in order to monitor progress and provide adequate pedagogical and psychological support where necessary;
- ensure adequate preparation for resuming hands-on and practical training, including compliance with safety and health regulations.



Source : ILO Flickr (Photo credit : Kivanc Ozvardar / ILO).

► 1 Introduction

1.1 Background and objectives

At the time of writing, it has been ten months since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 pandemic a public health emergency of international concern in March 2020. As countries around the world grapple with the devastating consequences of the pandemic, governments struggle to strike a balance between, on the one hand, measures to contain the virus and, on the other, minimizing the consequent economic losses. In most countries, the prolonged period of lockdown and workplace closures have caused substantial labour market disruption globally. According to ILO estimates, 94 per cent of workers reside in countries with workplace closures in place and 12.1 per cent of working hours were lost in the third quarter of 2020, the equivalent of 345 million full-time jobs (ILO 2020).⁵ This significant loss in working hours has translated into substantial lost income, as well as higher levels of unemployment and economic inactivity.

In an attempt to support workers and businesses, many countries have approved large-scale fiscal packages in response to the crisis (ILO 2020). While it is evident that monetary policies and fiscal stimulus are effective in mitigating labour market disruption, countries also need long-term and innovative policy responses. In particular, it is necessary for governments to develop people's capabilities, making them more adaptable and resilient to the changing world of work and future crises. It is crucial that countries do not overlook the importance of effective skills development systems when adopting large-scale and targeted macroeconomic policies.

The disastrous consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are being acutely felt by all segments of society. It is therefore important to highlight that disruptions to the world of work and interruptions in the education and training sector are inextricably linked. While the closure of schools and training institutes is leading to learning loss and increased dropout rates, the economic shock will exacerbate the damage caused by depressing skills demand and supply. In the long-run, the significant disruption to learning and training will be detrimental to human capital accumulation, thereby hampering countries' socio-economic development.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about significant, unprecedented changes to the way many of us work and learn. As the future of work is becoming ever more uncertain, it is becoming even more necessary that people are empowered with the right skills through timely and relevant skilling, upskilling and reskilling efforts. This is so people can become more agile and resilient, and able to cope with the challenges posed not only by the current pandemic but in the future.

In view of the significant interruption to skills development activities due to the pandemic, it was decided to launch a global online survey to examine the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the training and development of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees in enterprises and other organizations.

The global survey and this report are the result of collaboration between ten key international and regional development partners: the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Commission (EC), the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), the European Training Foundation (ETF), the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the World Bank Group (WBG).

The survey focused on three main areas:

1. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the training and development of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees.
2. The good practices and innovative solutions instigated by various enterprises and other organizations to mitigate the impact of the pandemic.
3. Policy recommendations to address the impact of the pandemic once lock-down is lifted and in the future.

⁵ The equivalent loss in terms of full-time jobs is presented to illustrate the magnitude of the estimated of hours lost. Full-time equivalent (FTE) values are calculated assuming a 48-hour working week.

This report presents findings based on 901 survey responses received from 27 April to 5 June 2020. It outlines the impact made by the COVID-19 pandemic on enterprises and other organizations, as well the mitigation measures and good practices adopted to ensure that the training of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees continued. Based on the survey analysis and inputs from development partners, policy recommendations for addressing the challenges, both during and after the pandemic, are identified. Finally, the report presents information about the publications and initiatives undertaken by a selection of countries and development partners in this context.

For the purposes of this report, the term “enterprise” refers to all the public and private enterprises and other organizations that responded to the survey. Findings will distinguish between responses according to the following four categories:⁶

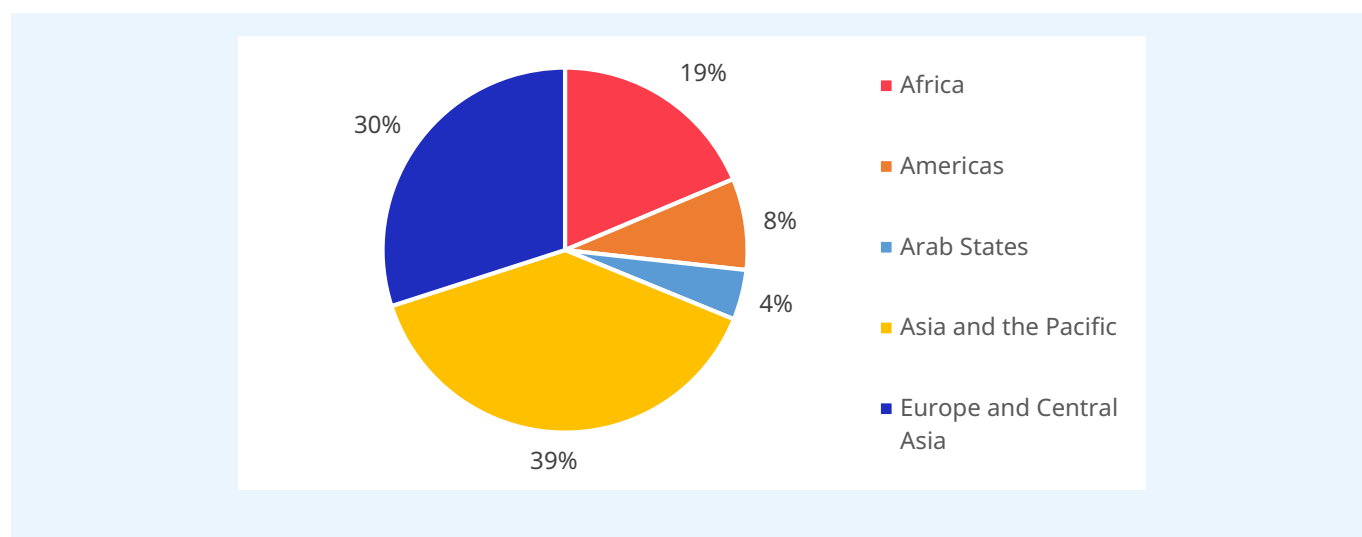
- micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs);
- large enterprises and multinational enterprises (MNEs);
- governmental or public organizations;
- non-profit organizations and others.

1.2 Methodology and respondents

The survey was launched on 27 April 2020 using the online software *SurveyMonkey* and closed on 5 June 2020. It was available in six languages, namely, English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Bahasa Indonesia. Apart from being circulated through the networks and offices of the ten development partners, the survey was promoted on the ILO website and on social media platforms.

From 27 April to 5 June 2020, 901 responses were received from 114 countries.⁷ Figure 1 shows the number of responses by region. Approximately 39 per cent of responses were from Asia and the Pacific, 30 per cent from Europe and Central Asia, 19 per cent from Africa, 8 per cent from Americas and 4 per cent from the Arab States.

► **Figure 1. Responses by region**

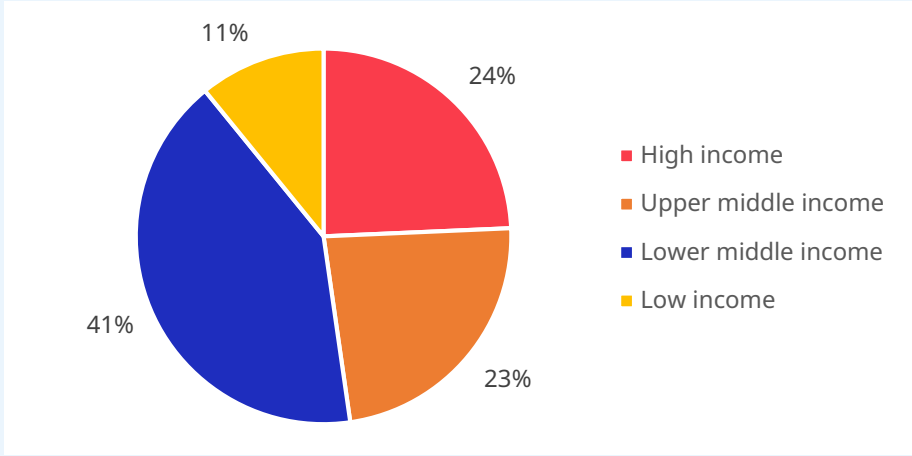


With regard to the distribution of respondents by income group, lower-middle-income countries accounted for just over 40 per cent of responses, high-income and upper-middle-income countries for around a quarter, respectively, and low-income countries for just 11 per cent (figure 2).

⁶ Enterprises are defined according to number of employees, that is, micro enterprise (1–10 employees); small enterprise (11–50 employees); medium enterprise (51–250 employees); large enterprise (over 250 employees).

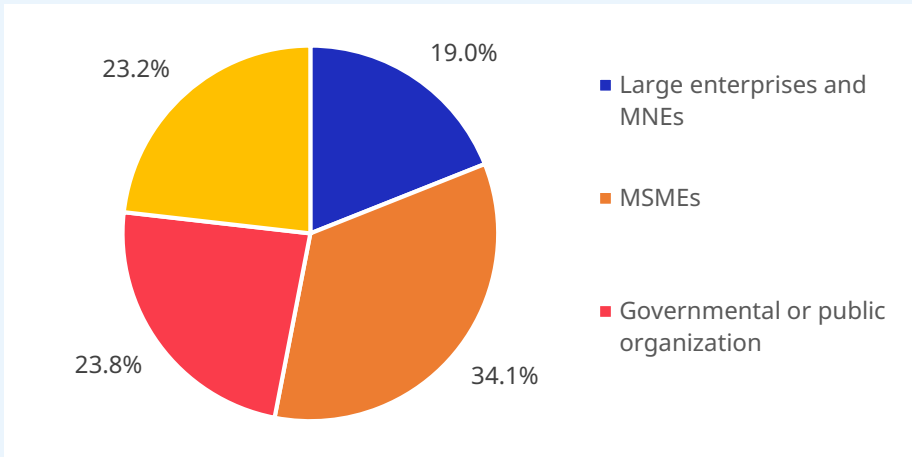
⁷ See Appendix II for a detailed breakdown of the responses by country.

► **Figure 2. Responses by income group**



Respondents represent a wide variety of enterprise both in terms of nature and size (figure 3). The majority of responses were received from private enterprises (MSMEs, large enterprises or MNEs).

► **Figure 3. Type of enterprise**



1.3 Structure of the report

This report is organized into three chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the rationale and objectives of the report. It also outlines the background of the survey respondents and their respective enterprises. Based on a detailed analysis of the responses received, Chapter 2 examines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on staff development and training, apprenticeships and internships. It illustrates the types of interruption and challenges experienced by enterprises, their immediate responses to the crisis and the long-term measures they intend to implement. In light of the survey findings, Chapter 3 presents several policy recommendations in support of the continuation of staff training, apprenticeships and internships/traineeships, both during and beyond the pandemic.

The English language version of the survey can be found in Appendix I and a detailed breakdown of respondents by country in Appendix II.

Appendix III lists and summarizes the initiatives and resources of development partners to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, training and skills development. Details about the initiatives undertaken by some countries in support of training and development during the crisis can be found in Appendix IV.

Lastly, Appendix V is a compilation of the useful resources and tools for online and offline distance learning provided by the survey respondents.

1.4 Limitations of the report

Respondents to the survey were from 114 countries across the five regions of the world. It is important, however, to point out the survey does not claim statistical representativeness for several reasons. First, the survey was designed and implemented within a short time frame (approximately six weeks) in order to learn quickly about the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic was having on the training and development of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees in public and private enterprises. Second, the survey was primarily circulated among the networks and offices of the ten development partners. Third, as it did not employ any particular sampling methodology, the survey is likely to be subject to selection bias. Lastly, the survey was available online for anyone to participate without any restrictions.

Throughout this report, analysis and interpretations is qualified by an awareness of the potential bias in the data. Nevertheless, within the limitations outlined above, it remains possible to analyse the changes seen following the COVID-19 outbreak by comparing the situation as reported by different categories of enterprise. It might be useful to complement this survey after some time by a survey of the opinions of employees, apprentices and interns and of workers' organizations to assess the impact of mitigation measures taken by enterprises.

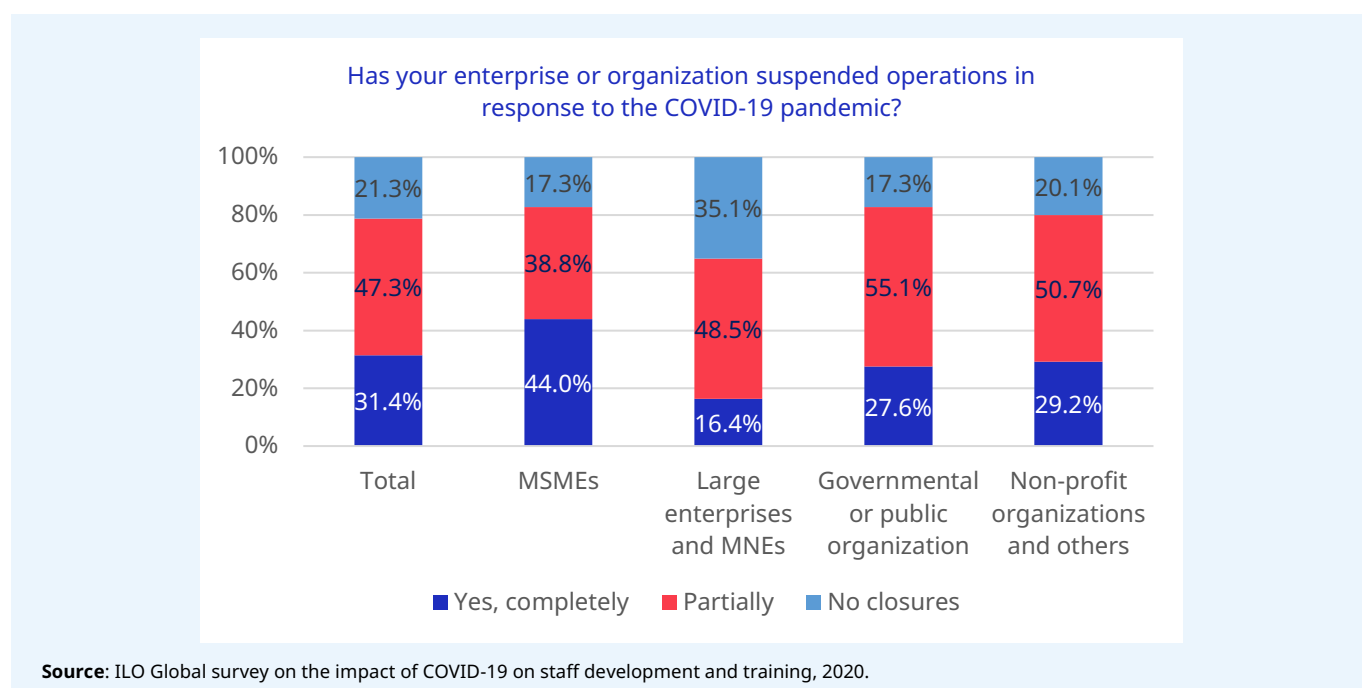
► 2 Survey analysis

2.1 Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on staff development and training

2.1.1 Interruptions to staff development and training

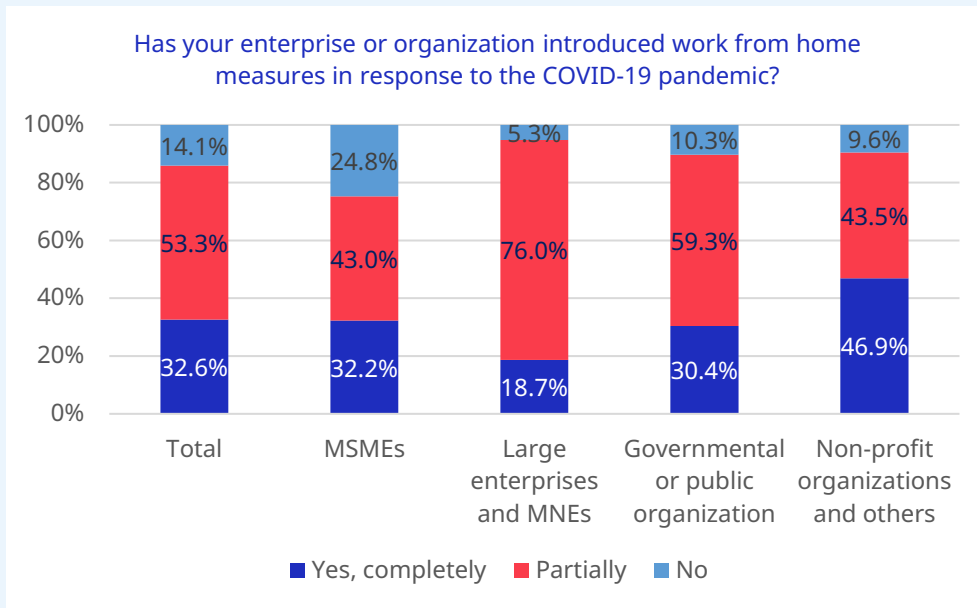
The COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe impact on enterprises and their employees, apprentices and interns. Almost 79 per cent of respondents indicated either a complete or partial suspension of operations due to the crisis, with around 30 per cent reporting complete closure and just under half a partial closure (figure 4). The impact was much more severe on MSMEs (83 per cent) compared to large enterprises and MNEs (65 per cent).

► **Figure 4. Suspension of operations among enterprises surveyed**



At the same time, over 85 per cent of respondents reported having introduced work from home measures. While 33 per cent of respondents overall reported completely switching to work from home for all staff, this measure only partially applied to a proportion of staff in more than half. Moreover, whereas nearly 95 per cent of large enterprises and MNEs introduced work from home measures, this was the case for only three-quarters of MSMEs (figure 5).

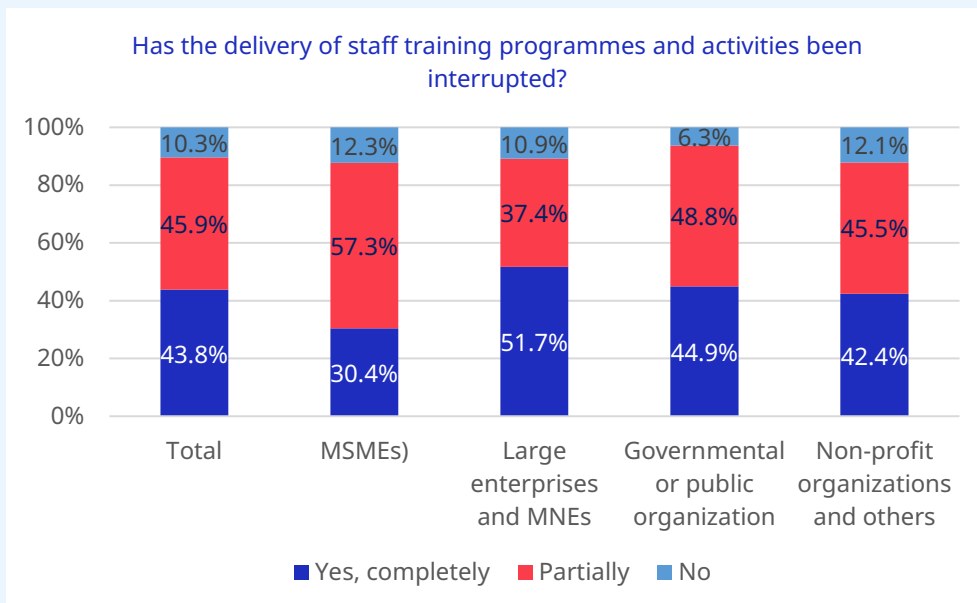
► **Figure 5. Introduction of work from home measures among enterprises surveyed**



Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

At the same time as many enterprises suspended operations and introduced work from home, almost 90 per cent also reported interruptions to staff training programmes and activities. Around 44 per cent of respondents indicated a complete suspension of training and 46 per cent reported that staff training had been partially interrupted. Whereas in more than half of MSMEs training activities were suspended completely, the same happened in only about 30 per cent of large enterprises and MNEs (figure 6). Some respondents reported their training department as being unprepared for the crisis and lacking experience in developing and providing online learning.

► **Figure 6. Interruption to staff training programmes and activities**

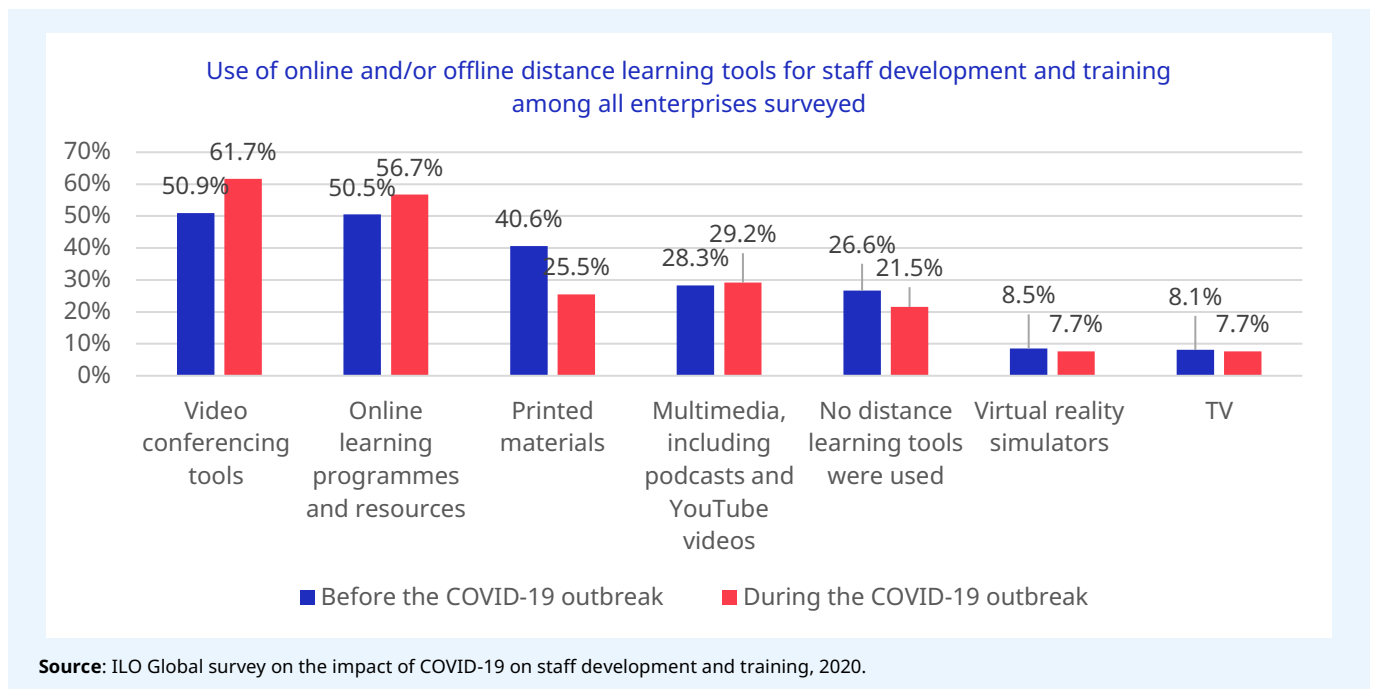


Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

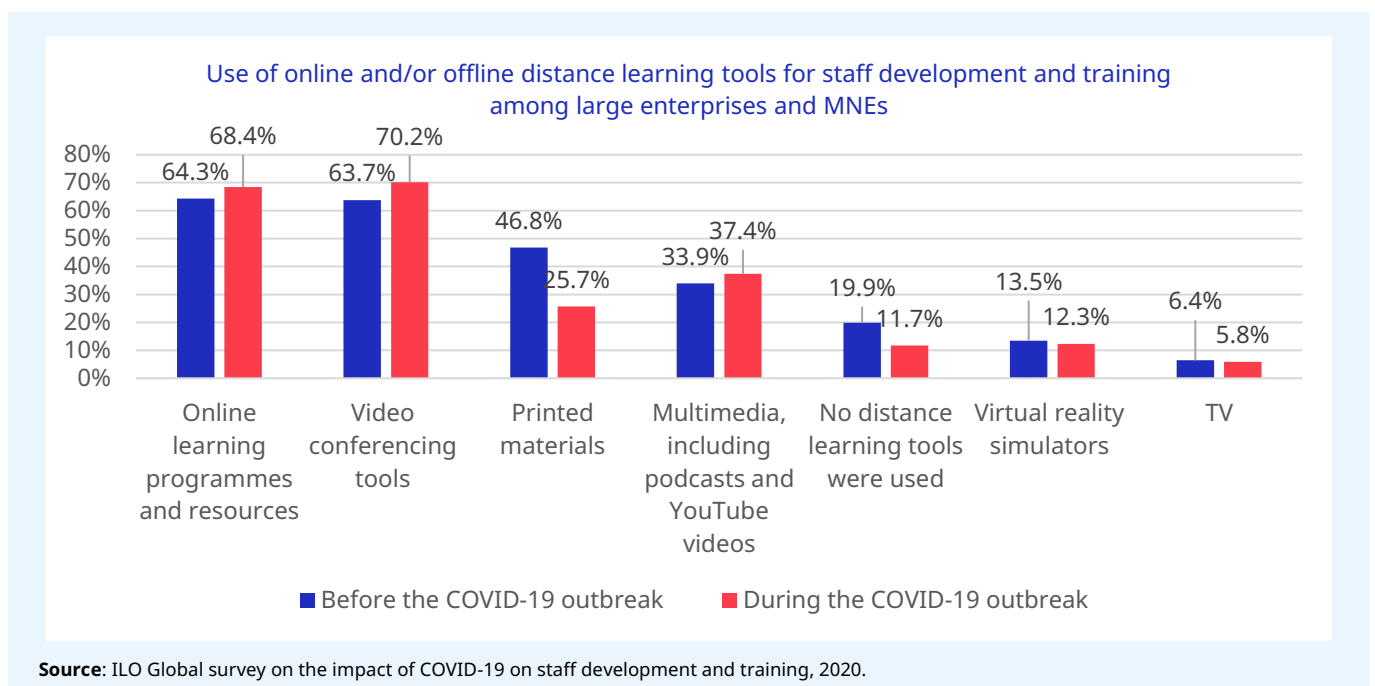
2.1.2 Use of online learning and/or offline distance learning tools before and during the COVID-19 pandemic

As shown in figure 7, the share of enterprises using video conferencing tools and online learning programmes to deliver staff development and training during the pandemic increased by 10 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively. Comparing figures 8 and 9, it is evident that both before and during the pandemic the use of video conferencing tools and online learning programmes was more prevalent among large enterprises and MNEs than among MSMEs.

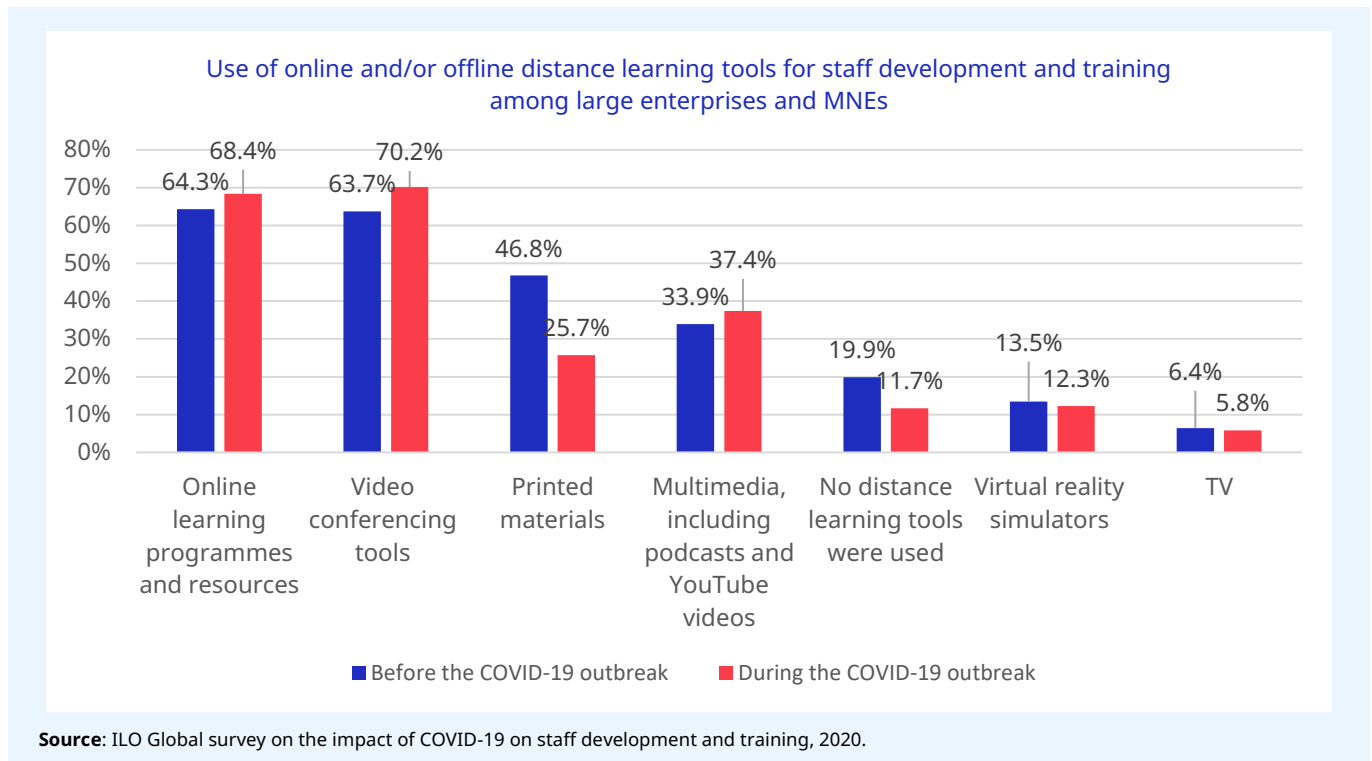
► **Figure 7. Changes to delivery modalities for staff development and training among enterprises surveyed**



► **Figure 8. Changes in delivery modalities for staff training among large enterprises and MNEs**



► **Figure 9. Changes in delivery modalities for staff development and training among MSMEs**



Before the COVID-19 pandemic, printed materials were the third most popular distance learning tool for staff development and training. However, their use dropped significantly from 41 per cent to 26 per cent after the outbreak, to be replaced by multimedia, including podcasts and YouTube videos, as the third most commonly used modality. More generally, multimedia use increased among all types of enterprise, with the notable exception of MSMEs (see figures 7–9).

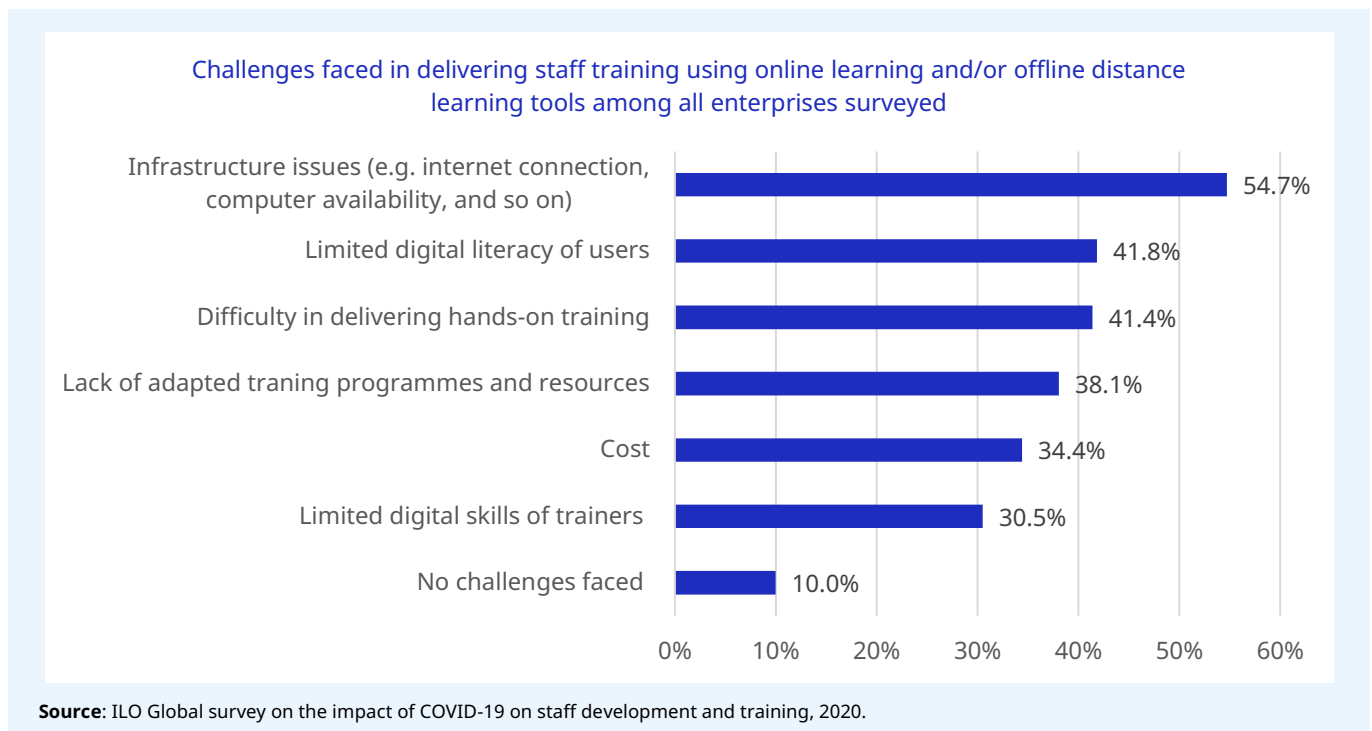
The proportion of enterprises not using any distance learning tools reduced from 27 per cent to 22 per cent during the pandemic (see figure 7). It is worth noting that a quarter of MSMEs still do not employ any form of distance learning, which is much higher than for large enterprises and MNEs (11.7 per cent).



Source: ILO Flickr (Photo credit: Yacine Imadalou / ILO).

Figure 10 shows that infrastructure issues (including internet connection and computer availability) and the limited digital literacy of users were the two most common obstacles confronted when delivering staff training programmes and activities using online learning and/or offline distance learning tools. Despite the growing adoption of such tools, these two obstacles are likely to prevent employees from benefiting fully from training. Furthermore, the complete digitalization of training programmes and/or activities may exacerbate the vulnerability of workers with a low level of digital literacy and/or limited access to the internet and available online resources.

► **Figure 10. Challenges in delivering staff training among all enterprises surveyed**

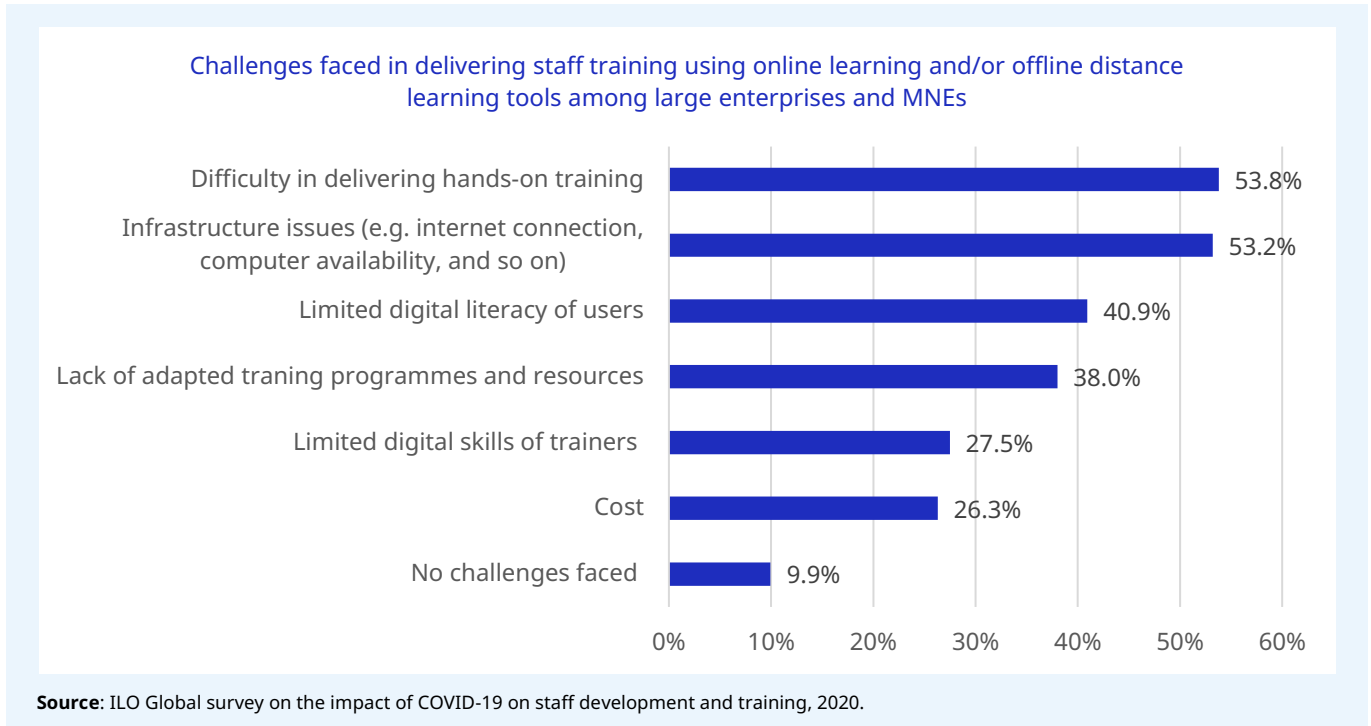


Source : ILO Flickr (Photo credit : Kivanc Ozvardar / ILO).

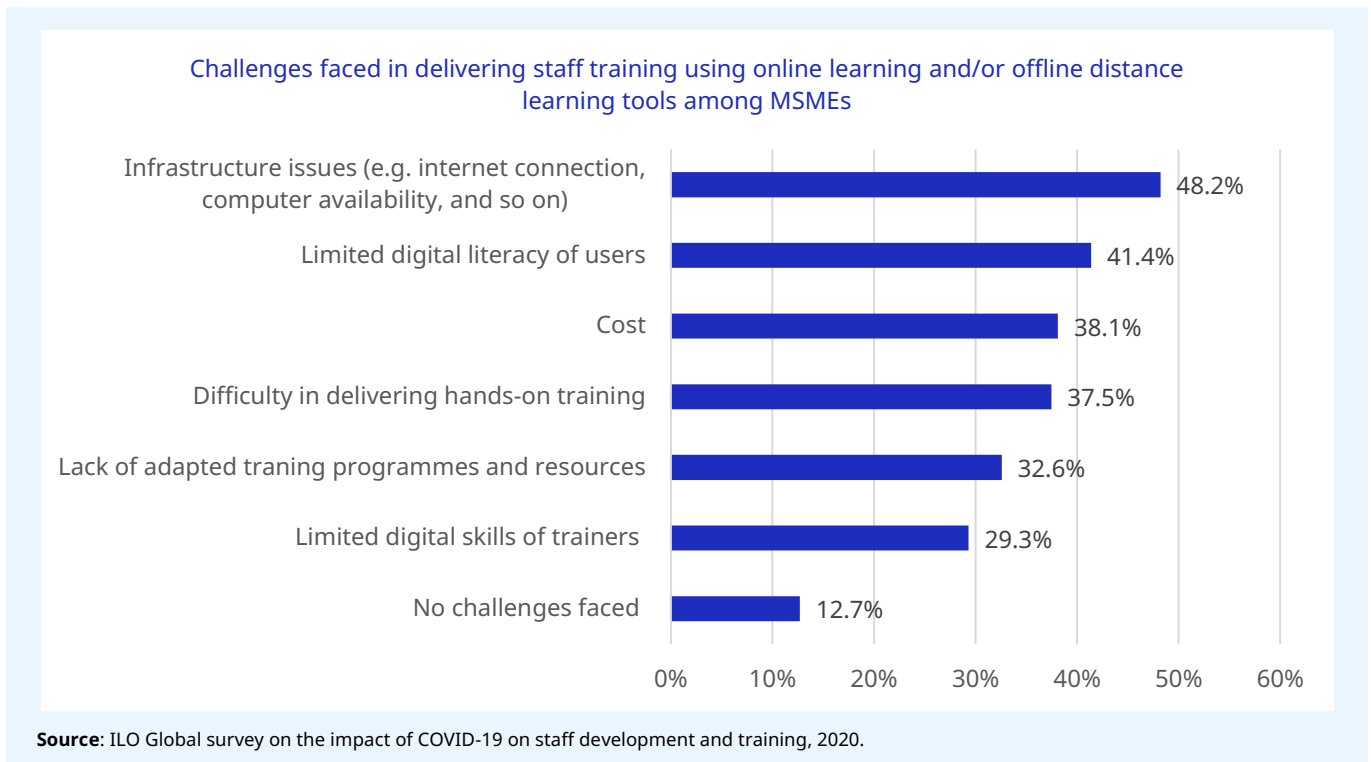
Another two commonly challenges faced are difficulty in delivering hands-on training and a lack of adapted training programmes and resources. Only around 10 per cent of all respondents reported experiencing no challenges at all in delivering staff training.

Figures 11 and 12 provide a comparison with regards to delivering staff training between large enterprises and MNEs, on the one hand, and MSMEs, on the other. It is notable that the most common challenge among larger enterprises and MNEs was in delivering hands-on training (54 per cent), a difficulty which was less common among MSMEs (38 per cent). Infrastructure issues and the limited digital literacy of users are both important concerns for larger enterprises, MNEs and MSMEs alike.

► **Figure 11. Challenges in delivering staff training among large enterprises and MNEs**



► **Figure 12. Challenges in delivering staff training among MSMEs**



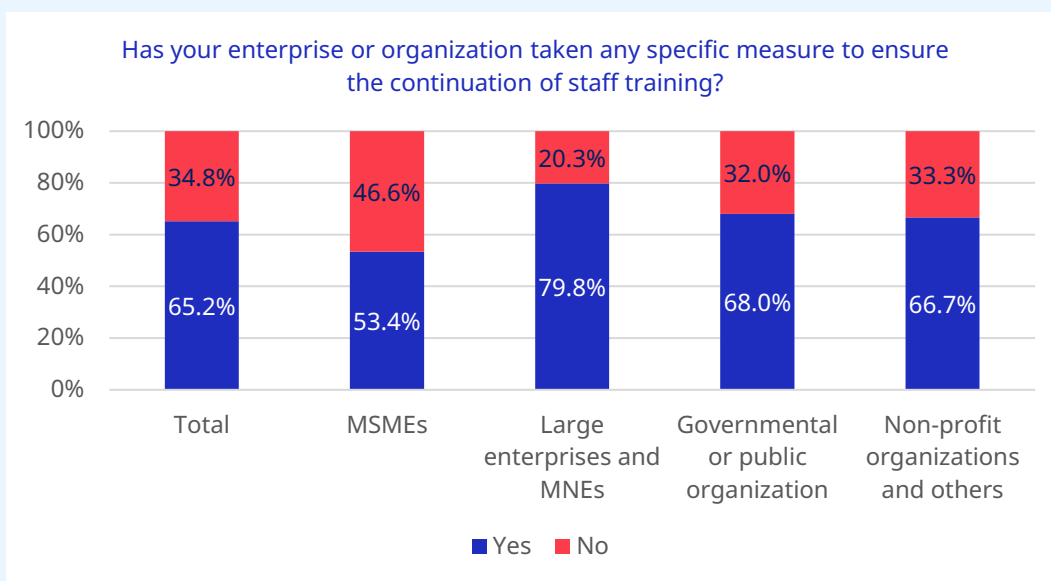
2.1.3 Mitigation measures and available support for staff development and training

Mitigation measures for staff training at the enterprise level

Approximately 65 per cent of respondents surveyed had taken specific measures to ensure training programmes and activities continued, mainly through the use of online platforms and tools, such as webinars, virtual classrooms and/or online courses. Of the respondents who took specific measures, 80 per cent were large enterprises and MNEs, while only 53 per cent were MSMEs (figure 13).



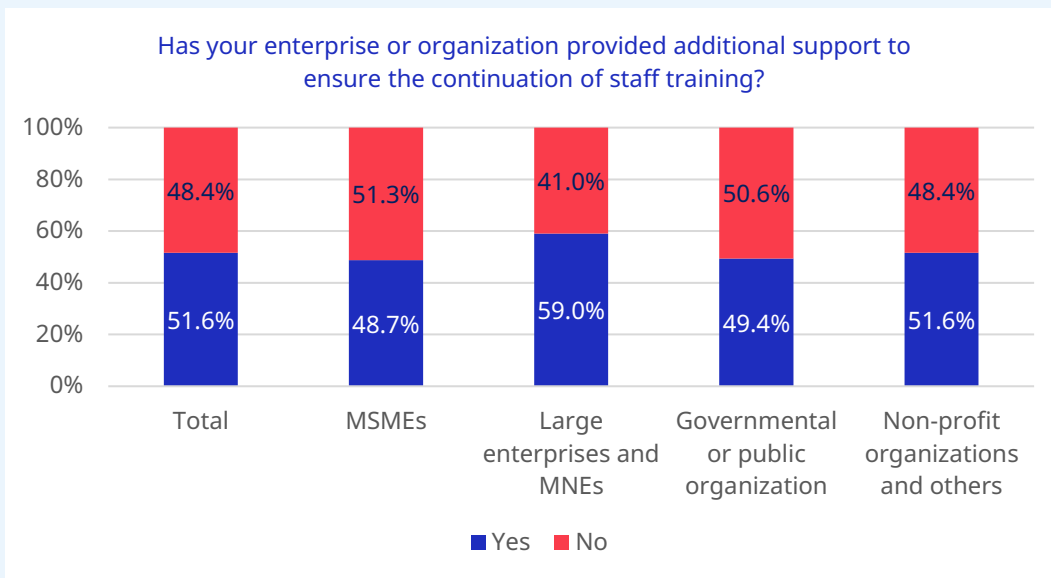
► **Figure 13. Specific measures taken to ensure the continuation of staff training**



Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

When asked whether they had provided any additional support to those staff responsible for organizing and delivering training, around 52 per cent of respondents replied in the affirmative (figure 14). This further support included technical support, for example, the provision of a better internet connection and laptops, or access to additional IT tools and programmes. Furthermore, some trainers taught themselves how to use the tools for online teaching.

► **Figure 14. Additional support provided to ensure the continuation of staff training programmes and activities**



Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

Some 60 per cent of respondents had planned or organized new training programmes or activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (figure 15). These primarily included training related to remote working, such as time management and planning, as well as health-related subjects, such as hygiene measures related to COVID-19 prevention, mental health and well-being. One respondent from the United States of America had even organized tutorials on how to make protective facemasks.

► **Figure 15. New training programmes or activities planned or organized**



Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

Support for staff training from the government and other stakeholders

The table below presents examples of the measures put in place by various stakeholders in order to continue staff development and training, as well as the further measures that would be desirable but are currently unavailable or need to be strengthened.

► Measures to continue staff development and training

Measures taken to continue staff training	Desirable measures that are currently unavailable or require improvement
Institutional	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guidelines on teleworking, as well as safety and health; ● Implementation of preventative measures, including social-distancing measures, temperature checks and the wearing of face masks at the workplace; ● Access to accurate and up-to-date information regarding the COVID-19 crisis, including government recommendations and regulations; ● Sharing of industry best practice through newsletters, online portals and webinars; ● Increased flexibility and adaptation of work schedule and rhythm; ● Arranging for online assessments; ● Agreements established through social dialogue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extension of the time frame for programme implementation; ● Online platforms for exchange of lessons learned and resources at the regional level; ● Provision of COVID-19 testing at training venues, such as the drive-in testing stations in Germany; ● Timely notification of COVID-related arrangements and measures to allow sufficient time for implementation; ● Crisis response plan enabling enterprises and educational institutions to effectively develop measures, strategies and resources in response to the crisis; ● Involvement of trade unions.
Technical	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improved access to ICT infrastructure, including free or affordable internet connection; ● Enhanced provision and access to online educational platforms and tools, including online communication and video conferencing tools, as well as training software and applications; ● Free online training courses, videos, webinars and live workshops; ● Development of online platforms, portals and tools for staff training, including simulation tools for delivering practical, hands-on training; ● Staff capacity building in online training delivery, teleworking and basic IT skills; ● Education and training on safety and health in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; ● Guidelines on using digital platforms and tools for online learning and teaching, including video conferencing tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High-speed and reliable internet connection, particularly in remote and rural areas; ● More affordable or free access to the internet, particularly for vulnerable groups; ● Development of an integrated online platform for staff training; ● Online training of trainers in e-learning course design methods; ● Online courses on mental health and safety measures at the workplace.
Material	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and provision of online educational materials and resources, including those relating to safety and health; • Provision of digital devices for teleworking, including computers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More online learning content and resources that is tailored and fitted to the local context, including online courses in local languages, using multimedia media and podcast; • Adapting of on-site, face-to-face training materials into online content; • Provision of digital equipment and tools for training and teleworking, for example, computers and virtual reality simulators; • Provision of hygiene and disinfectant products at the workplace.
Financial	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of internet service costs by providers; • Financial support for wages from the government, in the form of subsidies and loans, and so on; • Subsidies for participating in online distance learning; • Employee tax relief. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional financial support for digital infrastructure, such as internet, electricity, phone bills and so on, while teleworking; • Grants and subsidies for training.

According to a global trend analysis by the ILO on the role of trade unions in times of COVID-19, trade unions engaged with governments and employers through social dialogue in developing policy responses to COVID-19 crisis. Some of the actions of trade unions for their members / workers included setting up emergency funds for affected workers, carrying out awareness-raising campaigns, adjusting training programmes, offering labour market matching services or legal advice, and in some instances obtaining the recognition of COVID-19 as an employment injury from the competent authorities.⁸

Some specific initiatives undertaken by different countries in support of staff development and training are listed below:

- Australia: Australian JobKeeper Payment is a scheme to support those businesses and not-for-profit organizations significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic;⁹
- Azerbaijan: the Ministry of Economy has introduced a support programme for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);
- Costa Rica: the National Training Institute is adjusting its provision of training and upskilling;
- Ireland: Skillnet Ireland has been supporting enterprises through redesigning and adapting training for virtual delivery and providing grant funding, as well as reducing the cost of training programmes;
- Spain: open training courses on government platforms have been made available, such as those run by the National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teacher Training (INTEF);
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) provides financial support to SMEs affected by COVID-19 through loans and other kinds of finance up to a value of £5 million; the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme allows employees to take part in training while furloughed.¹⁰

In order to ensure the continuation of staff training beyond the crisis, some examples of the support needed for dealing with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic are listed in the box below.

⁸ A Global Trend Analysis on the Role of Trade Unions in Times of COVID-19 (ILO, 2021).

⁹ For details of the JobKeeper Payment, see the Australian Government's Business website, <https://business.gov.au/Risk-management/Emergency-management/Coronavirus-information-and-support-for-business/JobKeeper-Payment>.

¹⁰ See the UK Government's website for details of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>.

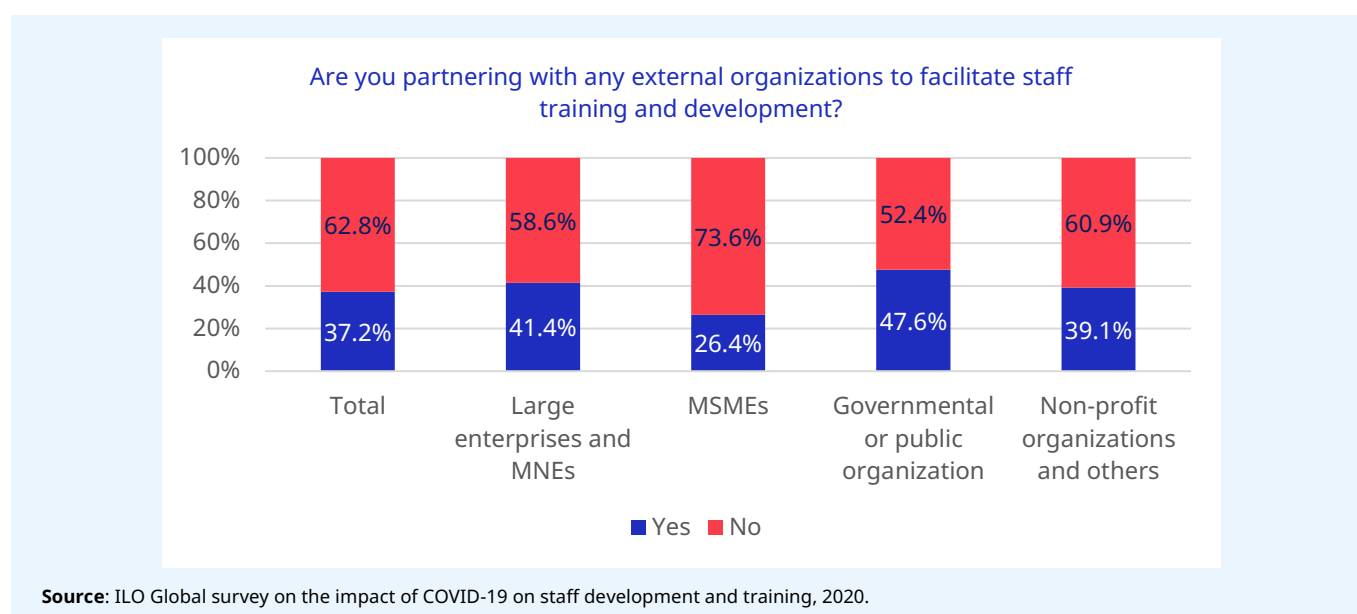
► **Required support to ensure the continuation of staff training beyond the crisis**

Institutional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exchange of experiences between enterprises and countries; ● More partnerships between enterprises; ● Updated skills needs anticipation and assessment; ● Implementation of safety and health measures at the workplace, including social distancing, the wearing of facemasks, temperature checks, and so on; ● More research and evaluation on the learning outcomes and effectiveness of online training; ● More flexible working hours and locations; ● Information on the availability of relevant online training courses; ● Expansion of e-learning and a blended learning approach; ● Continuation of newly introduced online elements and self-study offerings; ● Online examinations and certification procedures; ● Strategies for building resilience and business process re-engineering; ● Psychological support.
Technical
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More online courses, not only in technical subjects but also on occupational health and safety, personal development, and soft skills, such as stress management and adaptation; ● Provision of online standard certification training by the government; ● Adapting of existing training materials into online content, including gamification and automated evaluation tools; ● Better ICT infrastructure for online and blended learning; ● Access to a high-speed and affordable internet connection, especially in rural and remote locations and for vulnerable groups; ● Training in digital skills, including the use of platforms, software and tools; ● Capacity development in the blending of teaching approaches; ● Capacity development in the management of enterprises in times of crisis, including business continuity and resilience, development of crisis response plans and contingency plans for risk situations.
Material
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provision of additional online training resources, particularly on health and safety with respect to the COVID-19 virus; ● Provision of digital equipment, devices, software and tools, particularly to vulnerable groups; ● Provision of hygiene and sanitation products, including facemasks and disinfectants.
Financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More long-term financing for staff training; ● Tax breaks and more subsidies for trainer and staff capacity development after the crisis.

2.1.4 Partnerships for staff development and training

More than 60 per cent of all respondents surveyed – and over 70 per cent of those representing MSMEs – reported not partnering with any external organization to facilitate staff training and development during the pandemic (figure 16).

► **Figure 16. Partnership(s) with external organizations to facilitate staff training and development**



Of those enterprises who were partnering with external organizations, some had already been doing so before the COVID-19 outbreak. Nevertheless, many respondents had formed new partnerships in direct response to the pandemic. The examples of external organizations given are extremely diverse. At the international level, many enterprises were partnering with international organizations (e.g. the ILO, the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO), UNICEF, WHO), regional development agencies (e.g. Cedefop, the EC, the ETF) and foreign donors (e.g. the German Corporation for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) (GIZ) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)). At the country and local levels, enterprises were commonly collaborating with government agencies and ministries in the education, health, skills development and training sectors, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), chambers of commerce, and academic and research institutions.

The new partnerships established following the COVID-19 outbreak typically fall into two categories:

1. partnerships with training providers (e.g. LinkedIn Learning), technology companies (e.g. Articulate, Cisco, Microsoft) and consulting firms (e.g. KPMG) that specialize in online training delivery or with other companies and group training organizations (GTOs) in order to deliver online training programmes and webinars, as well as to develop training materials and new IT tools;
2. partnerships with government agencies and health and medical insurance service providers in order to deliver COVID-related health and safety training, as well to design protective and preventive measures against the pandemic.

Some country-specific examples of partnerships and partner external organizations are listed below:

- Albania: the SDC's "Skills for Jobs" (S4J) project implemented by Swisscontact;¹¹
- Belgium: Formaform, a training centre for trainers that is the result of a partnership between the three leading public vocational training organizations in French-speaking Belgium;¹²
- Cambodia: VitalSource Bookshelf, a global platform for digital textbooks and course materials;
- Colombia: enterprises provided social security for employees;
- Congo: companies in the ICT sector, for example, MTN, a telecommunications service provider, Airtel, a mobile services provider, and Startimes, another telecommunications service provider;

¹¹ For more information, see the Skills for Jobs website, <https://skillsforjobs.al>.

¹² See the FormaForm website, <https://www.formaform.be>.

- Egypt: the Arab Academy for Electronic & Information Technology Services;
- Germany: an online exam preparation course was made open to trainees at short notice with the help of an external service provider;
- India: the MSME Development Forum; Textile Sector Skill Council (TSC);
- Indonesia: Ecolab offered training related to health and hygiene;
- Iraq: IREX, a global development and education organization; Zain, a mobile voice and data services operator delivering training for students;
- Ireland: Skillnet Ireland, the national agency for workforce learning¹³; the National Recruitment Federation (NRF); Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC);
- Mexico: the Secretariat of Public Education reached an agreement for the free use of the Microsoft TEAMS platform in order to conduct education and training activities online;
- Mozambique: the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), an intergovernmental organization created by Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1987 to promote the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies;¹⁴
- Niger: the GIZ Africa Cloud project aimed to provide access to high-quality digital content for the purpose of knowledge transfer and skills development;¹⁵
- Nigeria: The Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND), a Nigerian NGO established to promote equitable economic development and peace in the Niger Delta through partnership;¹⁶
- Philippines: a partnership between the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) to deliver online training and webinars; Hytec Power, which conducts free technical training via webinar;¹⁷ Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF);
- Poland: a partnership between the Voivodship Labour Office and the Educational Research Institute to organize an online conference on qualifications and skills, and to tackle changes resulting from the pandemic;
- Rwanda: the Association for the Promotion of Education and Training Abroad (APEFE), a Belgian NGO operating in developing countries to implement development policy in the education, agriculture and environment, health, governance sectors and the private sector;¹⁸
- South Africa: National Council of Trade Union (NACTU); partnership between an enterprise and the National School of Government to adapt face-to-face training programmes to online learning; National Institute of Communicable Diseases;
- Spain: the Aragonese Centre of Technologies for Education (CATEDU), a centre dedicated to distance training for teachers, offered services aimed at encouraging and facilitating the use of ICT in education;¹⁹
- United Republic of Tanzania: Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) – Improving Skills Training for Employment Program; Genos International, a provider of emotional intelligence programmes.



Source: ILO Flickr (Photo credit: Kivanc Ozvardar / ILO).

¹³ The Skillnet Ireland website is available at <https://www.skillnetireland.ie>.

¹⁴ The Commonwealth of Learning's Mozambique webpage is available at <https://www.col.org/member-countries/mozambique>.

¹⁵ Details of the Africa Cloud project are available on the GIZ website, <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/85527.html>.

¹⁶ For more information, see the PIND Foundation website, <https://pindfoundation.org>.

¹⁷ The Hytec Power website is, <https://www.hytecpower.net>.

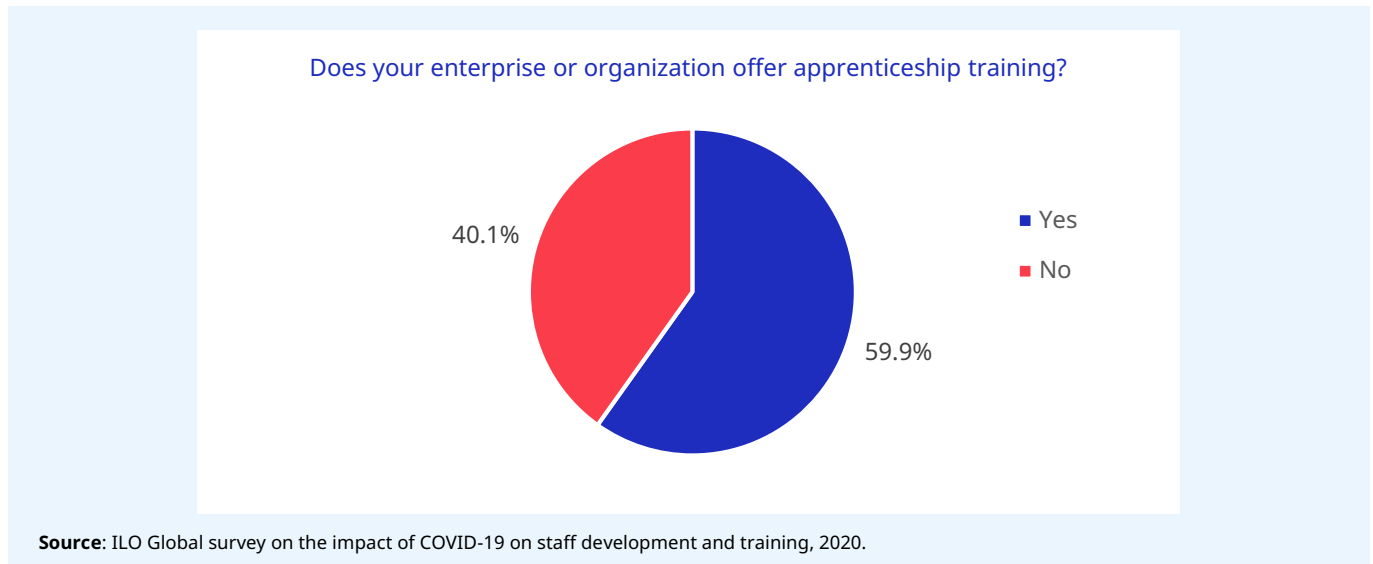
¹⁸ See the Rwanda section on the APEFE website, <https://www.apefe.org/programmation/rwanda.html>.

¹⁹ For more information, see the CATEDU website, <https://web.catedu.es/webcatedu>.

2.2 The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on apprenticeships²⁰

Approximately 60 per cent of respondents offered apprenticeship programmes (figure 17).

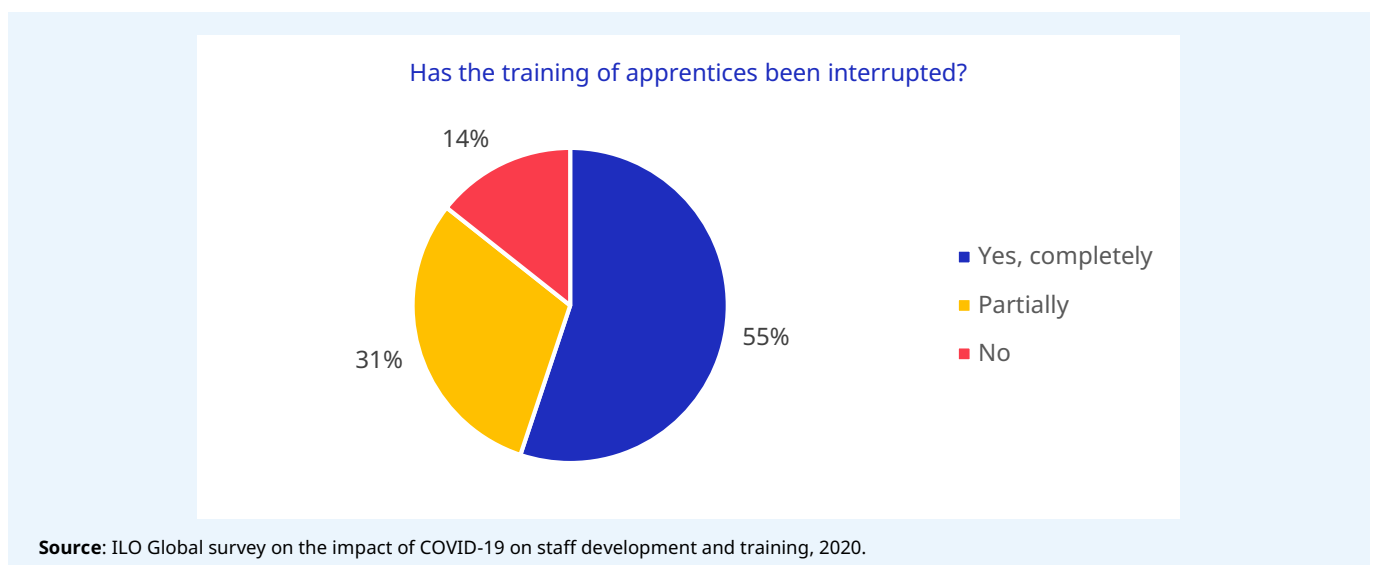
► **Figure 17. Provision of apprenticeships**



2.2.1 Interruptions to apprenticeships

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe impact on the provision of apprenticeships. Around 86 per cent of respondents indicated that the training of apprentices had either been suspended completely or been partially interrupted. While 31 per cent of respondents reported a partial interruption, over half (55 per cent) reported apprenticeship programmes as having been suspended completely (figure 18). Only 14 per cent experienced no interruptions.

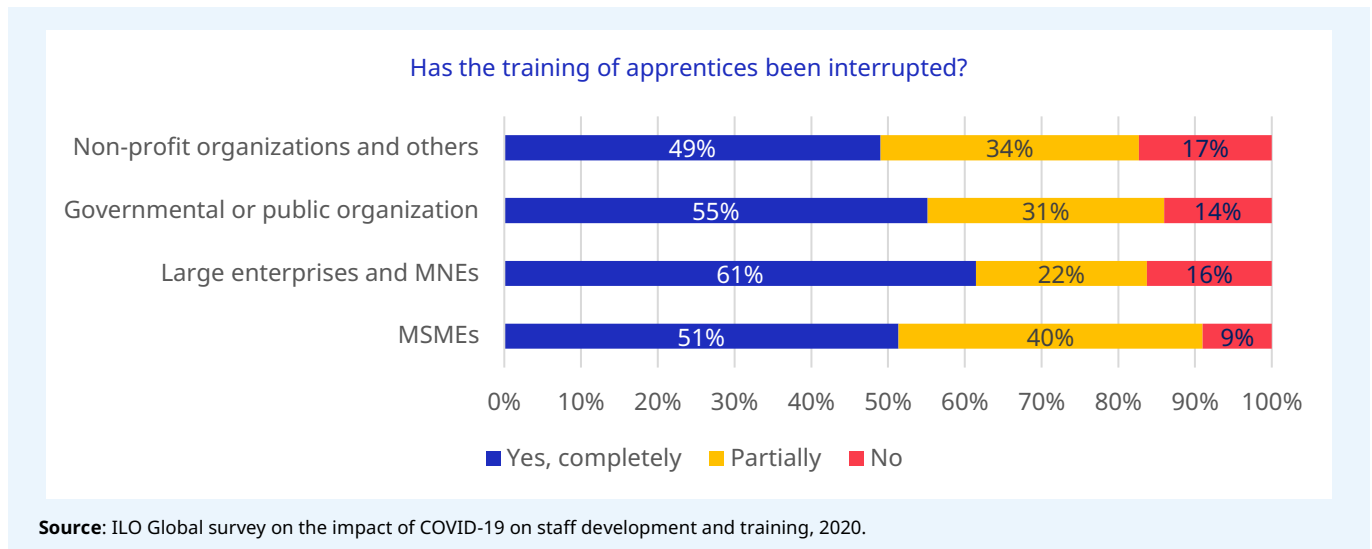
► **Figure 18. Interruption to apprenticeships**



²⁰ Approximately 76 per cent of respondents completed Section III of the survey which relates to apprenticeships. The data provided in this section excludes those respondents who did not complete Section III of the survey.

The disruption to apprenticeship training was greatest in MSMEs, with over 90 per cent of respondents indicating either a complete or partial interruption, compared to other categories of enterprise (figure 19). There is little difference in terms of the interruption of apprenticeships experienced between large enterprises and MNEs (83 per cent), governmental or public organizations (86 per cent), and non-profit and other organizations (83 per cent).

► **Figure 19. Interruption to apprenticeships in the four types of enterprise**

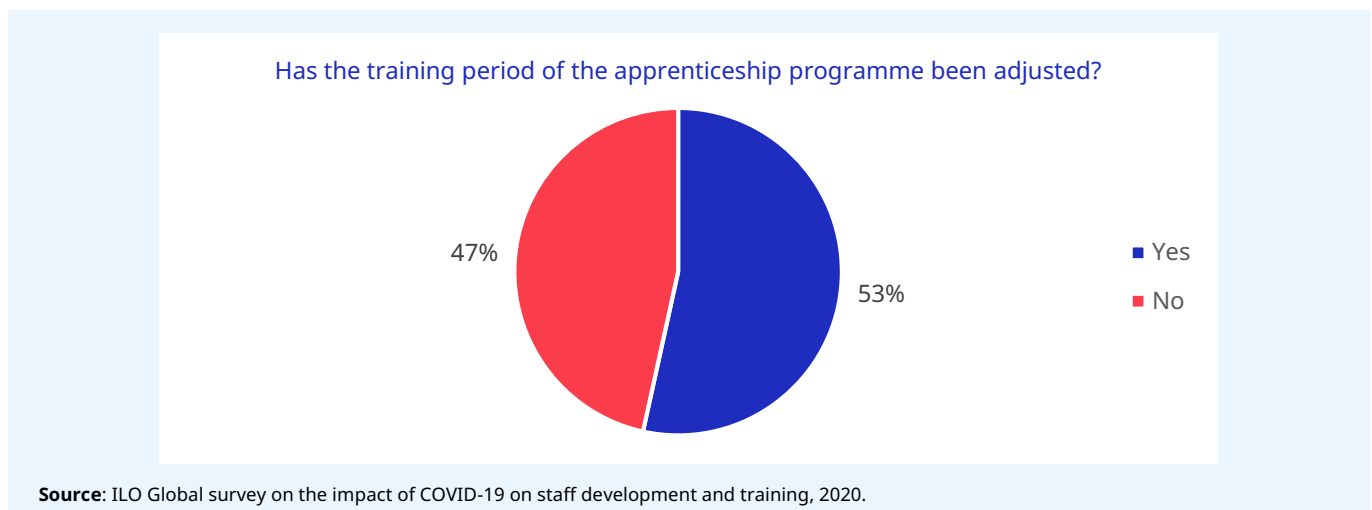


During the pandemic, many enterprises were no longer able to offer training, mainly due to the closure of workplaces and training institutions, as well as a lack of transportation. Many respondents reported apprenticeship programmes having been suspended or even terminated. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the on-the-job component of training to a greater degree than it has off-the-job training, which in many cases continued through distance and online learning. Nevertheless, in some cases, on-the-job-training continued to be delivered, but with precautionary measures in place, such as a limit to the number of apprentices allowed in a training venue and the maintenance of social distancing.

Adjustment to the training period

Over half of respondents to the survey reported the apprenticeship training period having been adjusted as a result of interruption.

► **Figure 20. Adjustment to the training period of apprenticeship programmes**

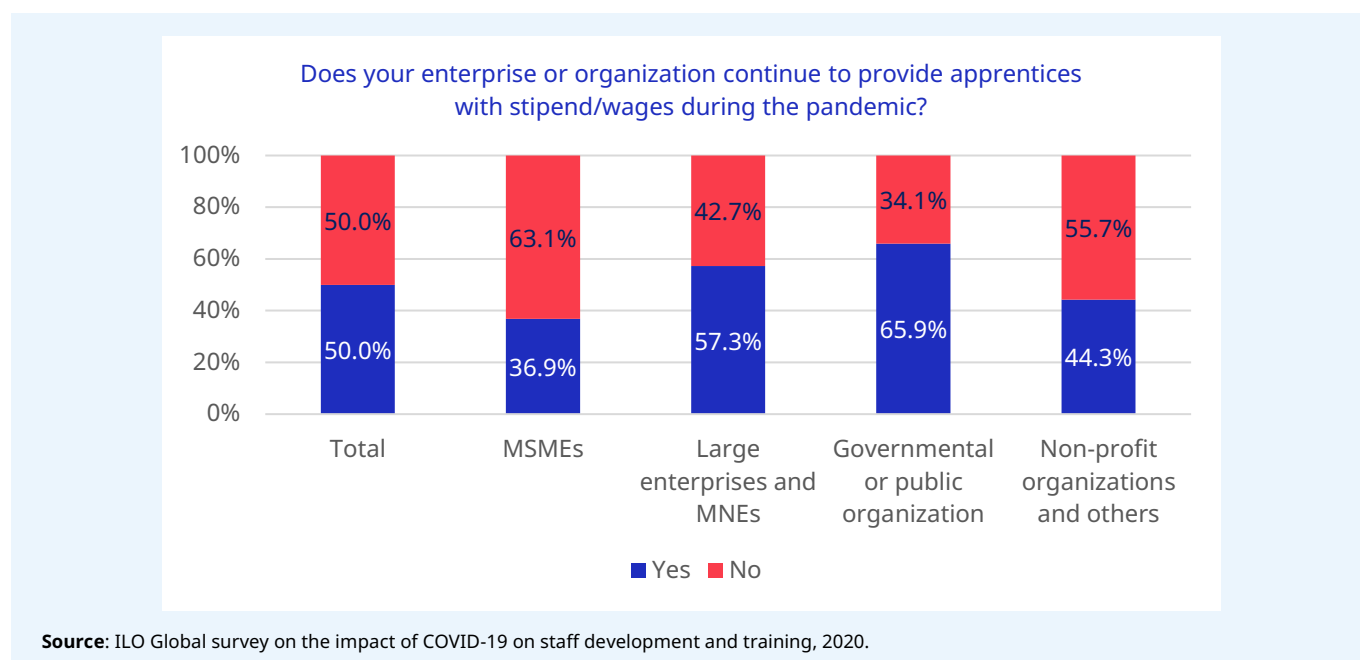


While interruption to apprenticeship training was compensated for in a majority of cases by extending or postponing the training period (figure 20), some respondents also reported training having been shortened or terminated. Some respondents pointed to such a decision as having been made at the government level or by national authorities, such as the Skills Education Training Authorities (SETA) in South Africa and TESDA in the Philippines. In cases where the authorities had not issued any official guidelines, the decision to adjust the training period was taken by enterprises themselves or by educational and training institutions in consultation with apprentices.

Provision of a stipend or wages

A half of the enterprises surveyed no longer provided a stipend or wages to apprentices following the outbreak of the pandemic (figure 21). It is worth noting that, among all the types of enterprise, MSMEs are the least likely to pay a stipend or wages to apprentices (37 per cent), whereas governmental or public organizations tended to continue paying apprentices during the pandemic (66 per cent). In a few cases, enterprises reduced the amount of a stipend or wages paid, either due to the suspension of on-the-job training or because the company had no income.

► **Figure 21. Provision of a stipend or wages to apprentices during the COVID-19 pandemic**



Among those enterprises continuing to offer a stipend or wages to apprentices, many paid from an allocated budget or through corporate social responsibility (CSR) funding. Some enterprises were also in receipt of wage subsidies or grants from government. Listed below are examples of the funding sources drawn upon by respondents from different countries:

- Australia: additional subsidies from the Australian government;
- Hungary: the Hungarian Government in accordance with national law;
- India: National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS);²¹
- Italy: public funds from the Italian Government;
- Kazakhstan: regional budget;
- Luxembourg: national grant for apprenticeship support from the Luxembourg Government;
- Mexico: federal resources;
- Namibia: Namibia Training Authority (NTA);

²¹ NAPS is a Government of India scheme providing financial support to enterprises offering apprenticeship training.

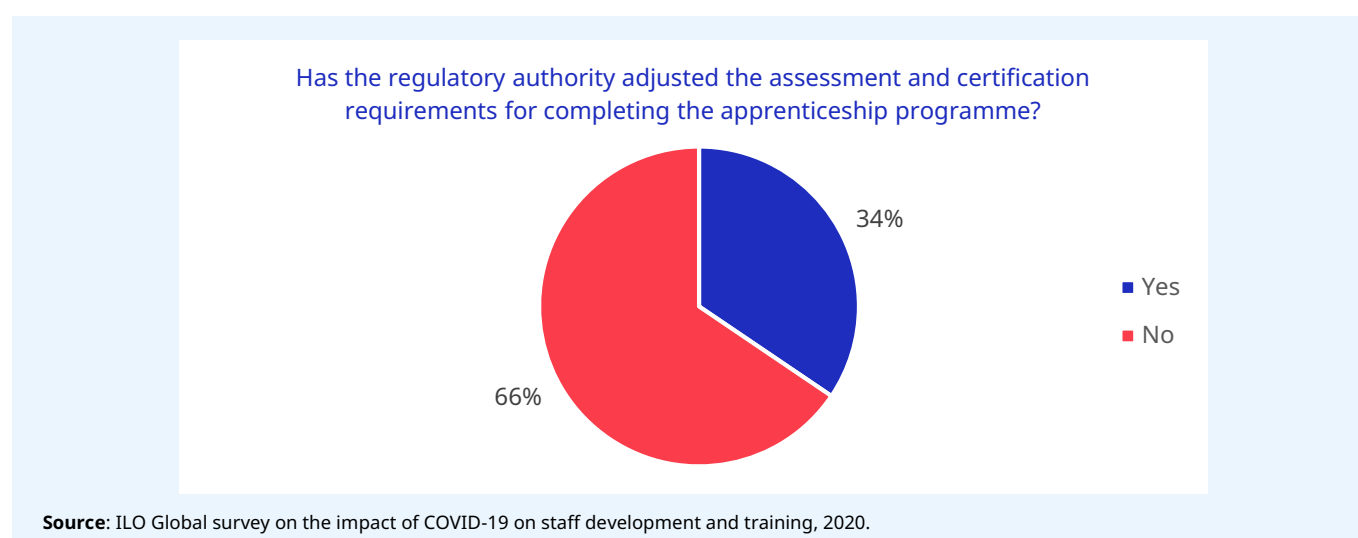
- Netherlands: the Dutch Government;
- Philippines: dual training allowances; financial assistance given to apprentices who had terminated training;
- Seychelles: government assistance;
- South Africa: National Skills Fund or SETA grants;
- Spain: public grants;
- Sudan: government funding;
- Uganda: the European Union through the Apprenticeship and National Graduate Volunteer Scheme.

Some respondents provided hygiene facilities, meals, transportation allowances and accommodation support, although it is unclear whether this was in addition to or a substitute for the payment of a stipend or wages.

Changes to assessment and certification requirements

The COVID-19 pandemic has not forced widespread changes to the assessment and certification requirements for completing apprenticeship programmes. Two-thirds of respondents replied that the regulatory authority had not made any adjustments in this regard (figure 22).

► **Figure 22. Adjustment to the assessment and certification requirements for completing apprenticeships**



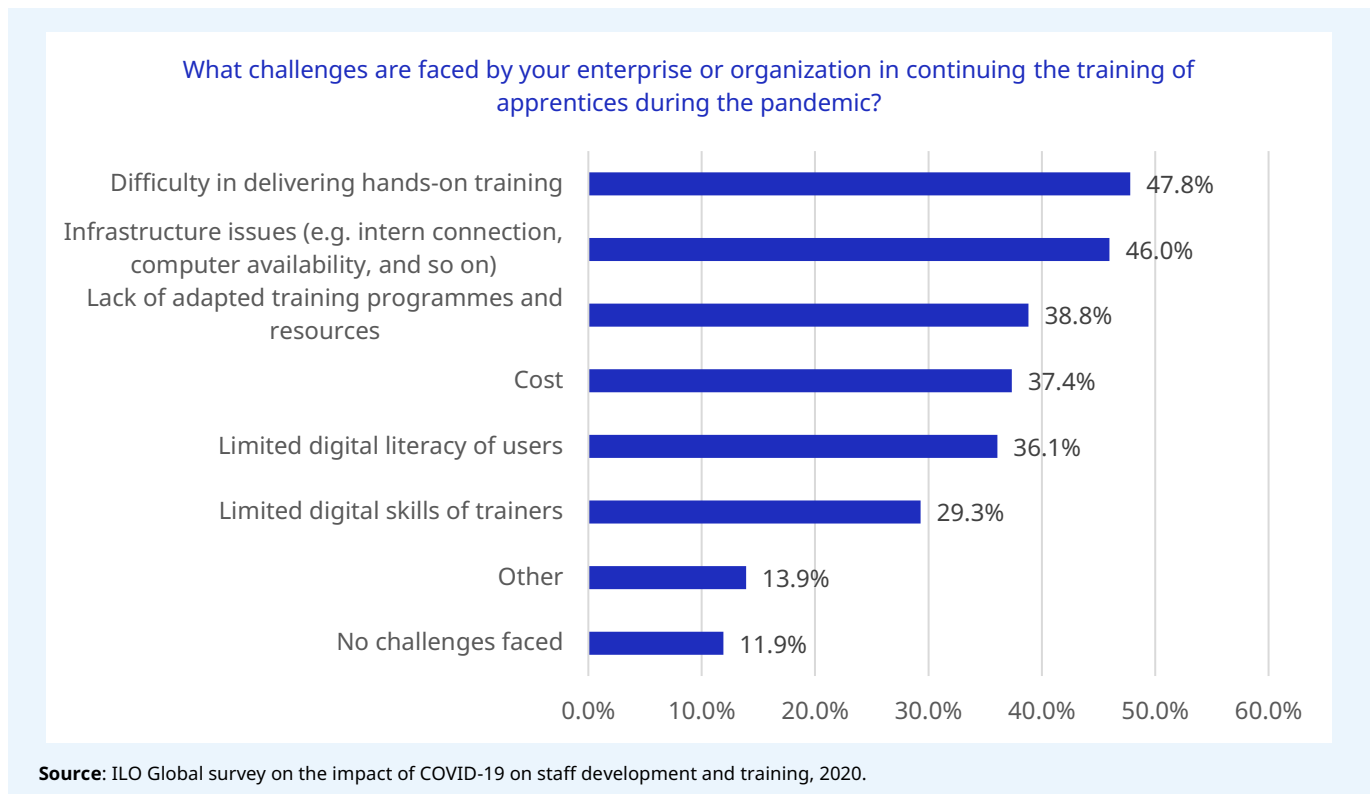
Some specific examples in which adjustments were made and assessments delayed are: Australia, India, Poland and the United Kingdom. In North Macedonia there are to be no final examinations in 2020. In South Africa, the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) notified training providers that formative or ongoing assessments could be conducted through online channels. A respondent from France pointed to that country's adaptation of its educational platform so that information could be transmitted to the certifying bodies monitoring and evaluating apprentices.

2.2.2 Challenges to continuing apprenticeship training

Enterprises were confronted by several challenges in continuing to train apprentices during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The most common, nominated by nearly half of respondents (47.8 per cent), was difficulty in delivering hands-on training online (figure 23). Another significant challenge for 46 per cent of respondents was infrastructure issues, such as limited or no digital equipment or internet connection. Other common challenges included lack of adapted training programmes and resources (38.8 per cent), lack of funding for continuing apprenticeship training (37.4 per cent) and the limited digital literacy of apprentices (36.1 per cent). There also appears to have been a gap in digital literacy between apprentices and trainers; that is, while around 36 per cent of respondents pointed to the limited digital literacy of apprentices, 29 per cent indicated the same for trainers.

A majority of the respondents who selected “Other” for challenges reported that it was impossible to carry out apprenticeship training due to lockdown and social distancing measures. Due to safety and health concerns, practical training, especially in the catering and hotel sector, could not be continued. Some respondents also pointed to travel restrictions and the unavailability of public transport as a challenge.

► **Figure 23. Challenges faced by enterprises in continuing apprenticeship training**

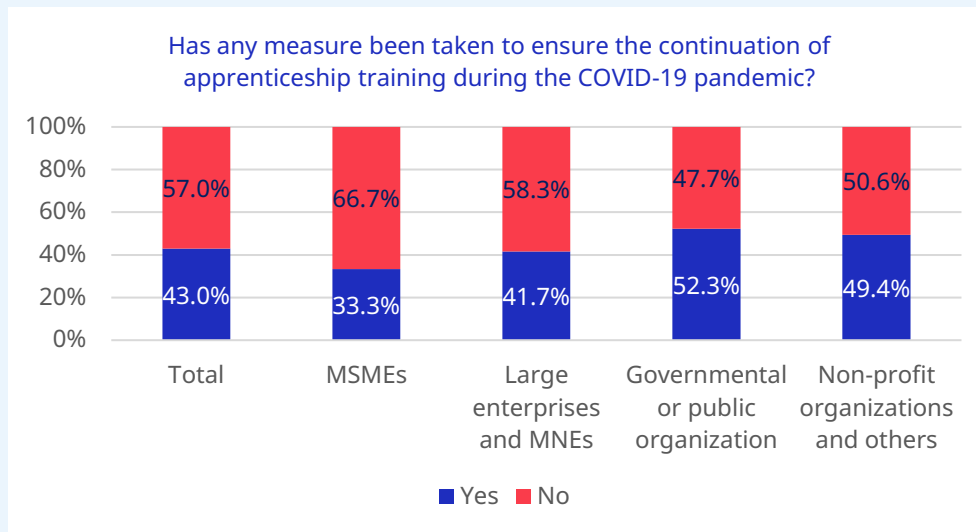


2.2.3 Mitigation measures and available support for apprenticeships

Mitigation measures for apprenticeships at the enterprise level

Among those enterprises that offered apprenticeships, only 43 per cent indicated they had taken specific measures to ensure the continuation of apprenticeship programmes (figure 24). Indeed, private sector enterprises (including MSMEs, large enterprises and MNEs) were relatively less likely than governmental, public or non-profit organizations to have taken mitigation measures in order to continue apprenticeships following the outbreak of the pandemic.

► **Figure 24. Measures taken to ensure the continuation of apprenticeship training**

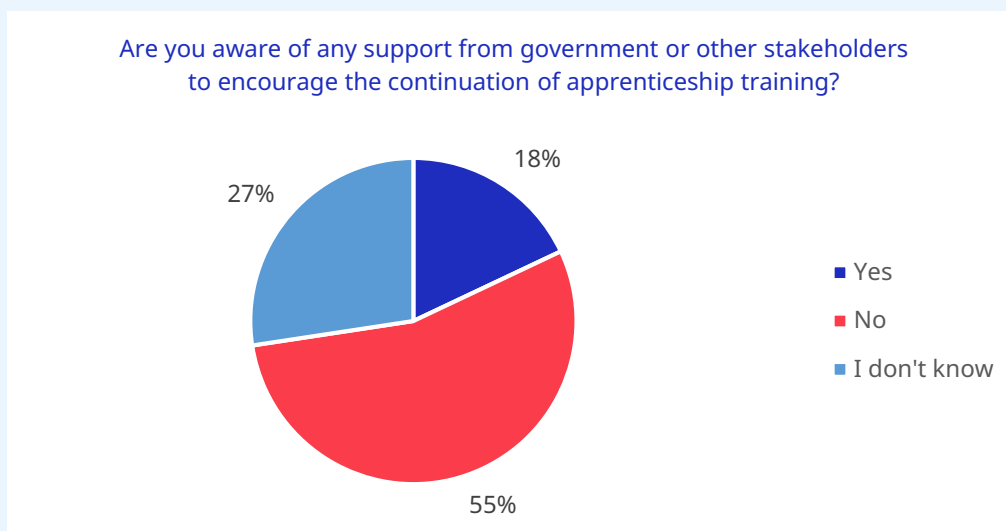


Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

Support for apprenticeships from the government and other stakeholders

The majority of respondents were unaware of any technical, material or financial support on offer from the government or other stakeholders to help enterprises deal with the impact of COVID-19 and to encourage the continuation of apprenticeships (figure 25). Only 18 per cent indicated being informed about such measures.

► **Figure 25. Support from government or other stakeholders to encourage the continuation of apprenticeships**



Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

The table below lists examples of the available measures for apprenticeships put in place by various stakeholders following the outbreak of the pandemic, as well as further measures that would be desirable but are currently unavailable or need to be strengthened.

► Measures to continue apprenticeship training

Available measures for apprenticeships	Desirable measures either currently unavailable or requiring improvement
Institutional	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular updates and communication on the state of the COVID-19 pandemic from the government; ● In Spain, a new decree introduced to regulate remote working; ● In the United Kingdom, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) implemented a range of measures to facilitate the continuation of apprenticeships by allowing greater flexibility in terms of funding rules, assessments and completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provision of reliable and clear information on the COVID-19 situation and next steps; ● Early engagement and consultation with stakeholders on the introduction of any new measure; ● Awareness-raising about the importance of digital skills and literacy.
Technical	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guidelines on online teaching and learning; ● Guidelines on health and safety, including social distancing and preventive measures against COVID-19; ● Internet infrastructure for online training, including negotiations with internet providers; ● Development of online platforms and tools for distance learning and working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to free online platforms for training delivery; ● Provision of training to teachers and trainers on the delivery of distance learning; ● Improved and more affordable internet access, such as by providing data packages.
Material	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provision of equipment for online learning and teleworking; ● Provision of online materials for TVET and recommendations for applications and online resources for learning and training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provision of digital equipment and tools, including computers, mobile phones, and so on; ● Provision of high-tech online learning materials, including virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) content.
Financial	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Financial support for both enterprises and apprentices, including wage subsidies; ● Public funds offered by the Italian government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Financial support for those enterprises that provide apprenticeships, including tax reliefs, particularly for MSMEs; ● Financial support for apprentices whose stipend or wages have been reduced or suspended.

There is a considerable difference between countries in terms of measures taken to sustain apprenticeship programmes. A broad range of examples has been provided by respondents and these are listed below.

- In Australia, technical and further education (TAFE) institutions switched to online learning, with the exception of the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC), which continued to offer face-to-face training but reduced the size of classes;
- In Belgium, apprenticeship contracts were extended;
- In Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Federated States of Micronesia, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Republic of the Congo, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, respondents were either implementing or planning to introduce distance learning;

- In Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Niger, Rwanda and Tanzania, respondents reported making adjustments to workplaces and introducing precautionary measures, such as social distancing, the wearing of facemasks, the disinfecting of workplaces, temperature checks, and so on;
- In Costa Rica, the apprenticeship model was reformulated. Apart from adapting training content for remote teaching and learning, training was provided to teaching staff, facilitated by specialists in synchronous and asynchronous distance education. Each teaching staff member modified their teaching plan, which was monitored weekly. Personalized support was also provided to those teachers and apprentices who required assistance;
- In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a respondent reported suspending groups of more than ten apprentices, while allowing smaller groups to continue with training, but only under social-distancing restrictions
- In Ethiopia, a respondent reported revising their apprenticeship training schedule in consultation with relevant stakeholders;
- In Finland, a national admission work group was established for the planning and designing of admission tests that can be conducted on home computers;
- In France, the CFA²² educational platform was being used by teachers and apprentices to transmit and exchange online courses, educational content and assessments;
- In Germany, support in developing learning materials was being provided to trainers online, while exceptional permission had been granted to apprenticeship training centres to re-open;
- In Ghana, a respondent was delivering training via phone, as well as online;
- In Ireland, alternative assessment methods for apprentices were introduced;
- In Kazakhstan, a respondent reported replacing practical lessons with theoretical ones.

The most common answers to the question what desirable support would help apprenticeships deal with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic are listed below.

► Desirable support to ensure the continuation of apprenticeships beyond the crisis

Institutional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special support for migrants and guest workers; • Support for partnerships between enterprises and educational institutions; • Coordinated and systematic guidance for enterprises in dealing with the effects of sudden disruptions through a consultative approach; • Psychosocial support for staff and apprentices.
Technical



Source: ILO Flickr (Photo credit: KB Mpofu / ILO).

²² The Educational Platform of the CFA (Le Centre national de formation d'apprentis) can be accessed at <https://www.cfa-operaorchestre.fr/plateforme-pedagogique/#:-:text=Cette%20plateforme%20est%20un%20outil,le%20CFA%20pour%20y%20acc%C3%A9der.>

- Training for trainers in the development and implementation of digital and interactive learning tools;
- Strengthening of the capacity of trainers and apprentices to deal with future emergencies and disruptions;
- Integrating accessible and affordable digital solutions for the monitoring and assessment of apprentices;
- Developing a database of apprentices seeking training opportunities, as well as enterprises offering apprenticeship training.

Material

- Provision of digital and distance learning and training packages in different languages;
- Provision of digital infrastructure, including computers, laptops and internet access;
- Provision of hygiene products and personal protective equipment (PPE).

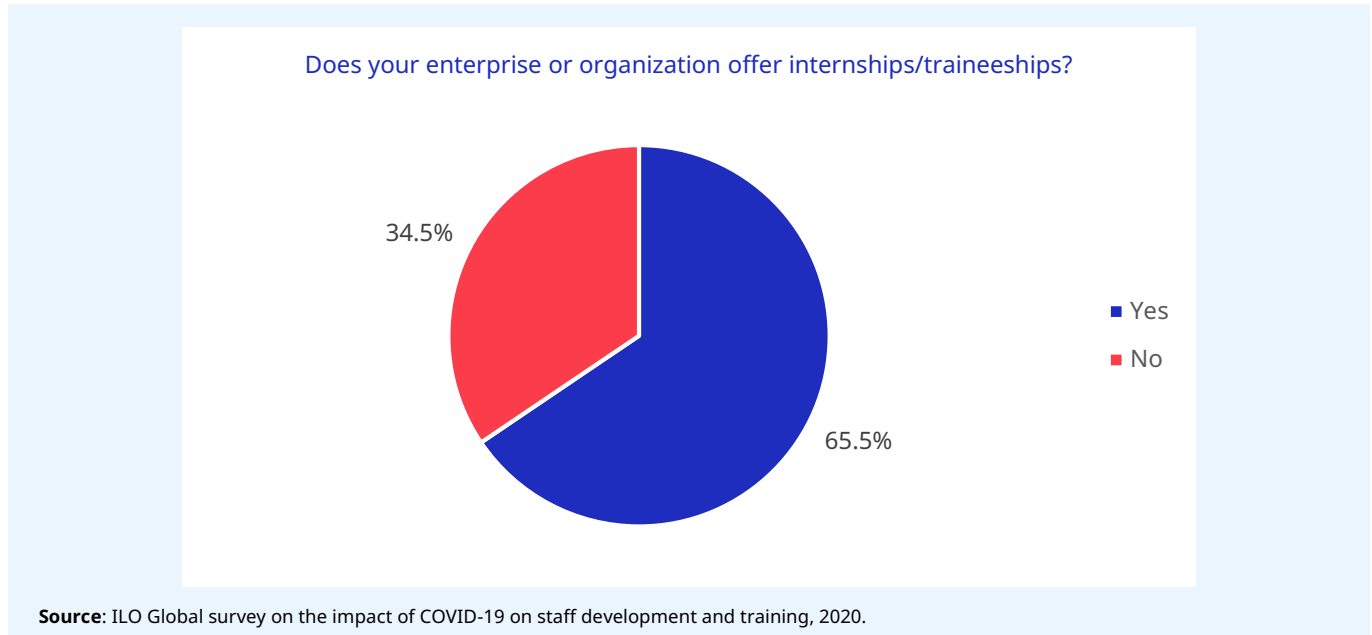
Financial

- Financial support and assistance to enterprises, particularly MSMEs.

2.3 The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on internships/traineeships²³

Almost two-thirds of respondents to the survey confirmed that their enterprise provided internships/traineeships (figure 26).

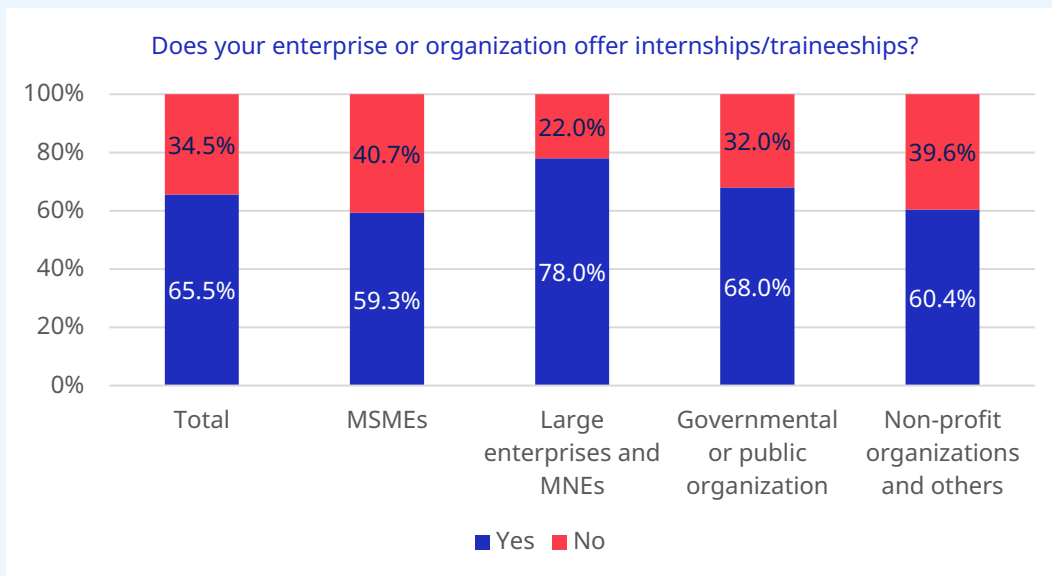
► **Figure 26. Provision of internships/traineeships**



Among those offering internships/traineeships there was a relatively high proportion of large enterprises and MNEs (78 per cent), followed by governmental or public organizations (68 per cent) (figure 27). In comparison, only around 60 per cent of MSMEs and non-profit organizations offered internships/traineeships.

²³ Approximately 72 per cent of all respondents completed Section IV of the survey which relates to internships/traineeships. The data presented in this section excludes those respondents who did not complete in Section IV of the survey.

► **Figure 27. Provision of internships/traineeships by type of enterprise**

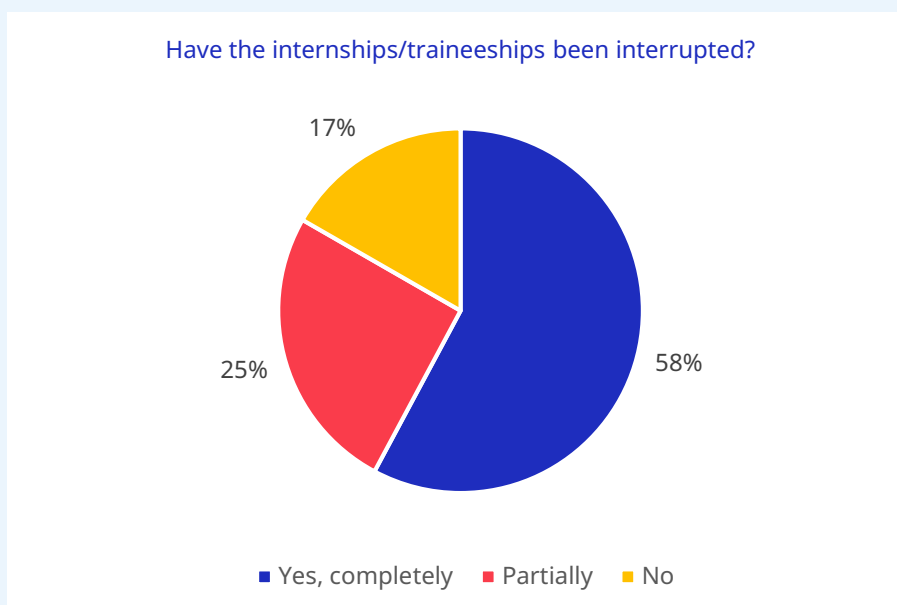


Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

2.3.1 Interruptions to internships/traineeships

The provision of internships/traineeships has been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In total, 83 per cent of enterprises either partially or completely suspended their internships/traineeships programmes (figure 28). Whereas a quarter of respondents reported internships/traineeships being only partially interrupted, almost 58 per cent reported these programmes as having stopped completely. Only 17 per cent experienced no interruptions.

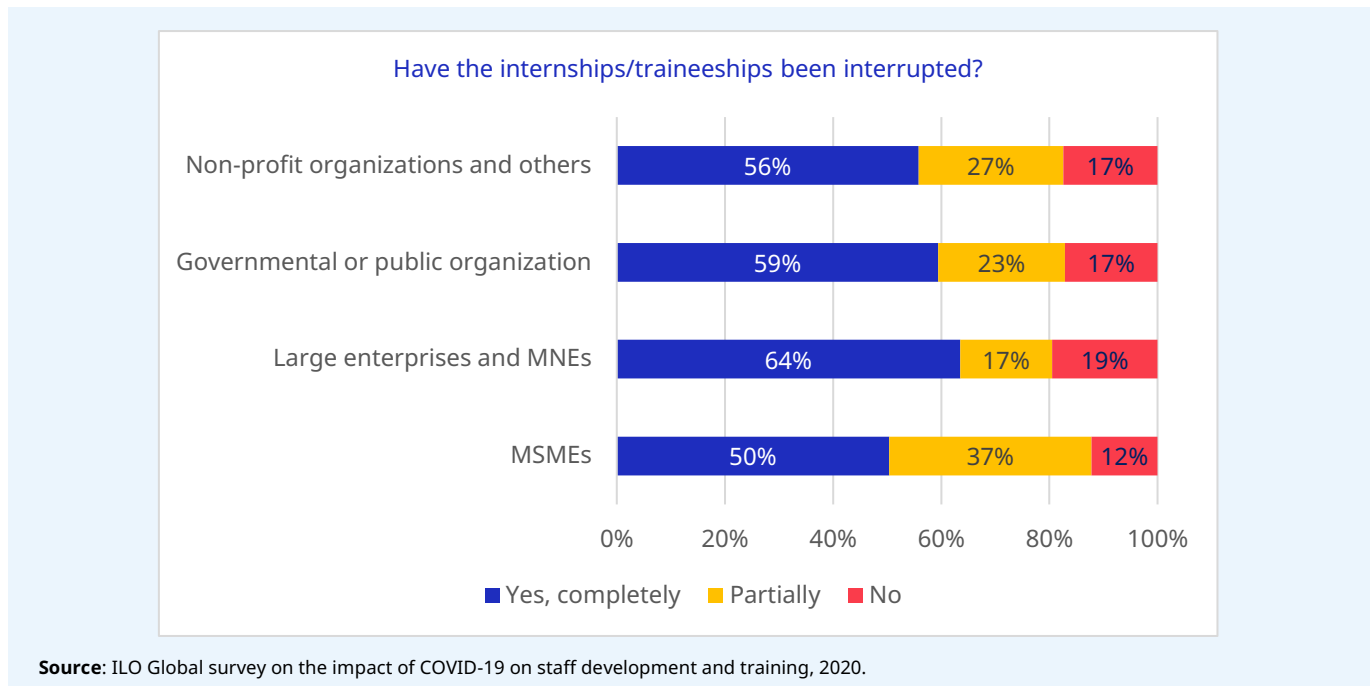
► **Figure 28. Interruption to internships/traineeships**



Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

Concerning interruptions to the internships/traineeships on offer, there was no significant difference reported between the types of enterprise (figure 29). While MSMEs experienced the slightly greater disruption, with close to 90 per cent reporting either a partial interruption or a complete suspension, there was little difference between large enterprises and MNEs (81 per cent), governmental or public organizations (83 per cent) and non-profit and other organizations (83 per cent). It is noteworthy that these findings follow a similar pattern to that found for apprenticeships.

► **Figure 29. Interruption of internships/traineeships according to type of enterprise**



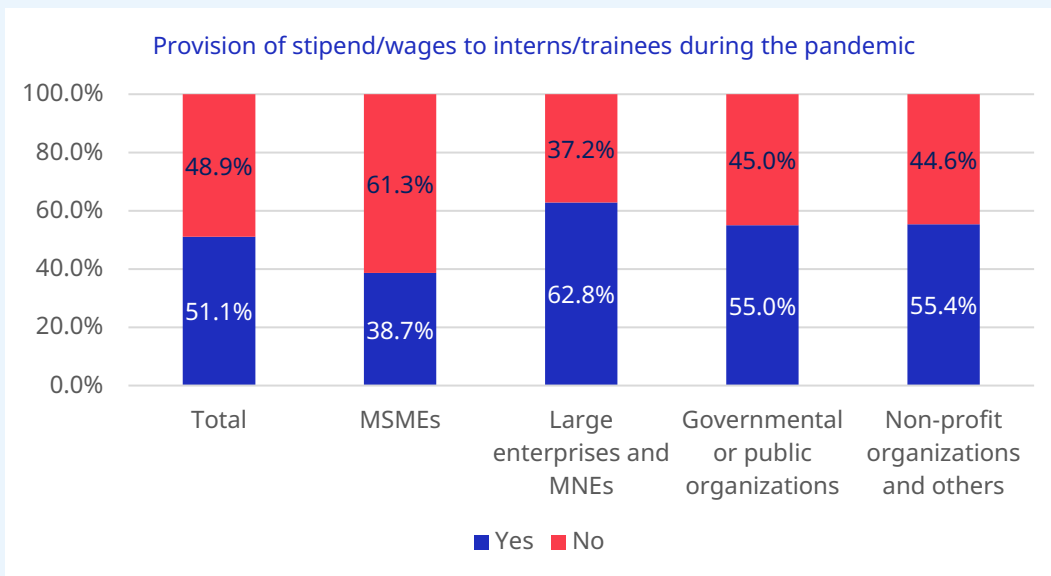
Provision of a stipend or wages²⁴

Figure 30 shows that close to a half of the respondents surveyed reported no longer offering a stipend or wages to interns/trainees. It is unclear whether remuneration was cancelled due to the pandemic or whether the internships/traineeships programmes concerned were unpaid from the beginning.

In terms of providing a stipend or wages, large enterprises and MNEs appear to have been more resilient to the crisis, with around 63 per cent continuing to provide interns/trainees such remuneration at the time of the survey. As regards governmental, public or non-profit organizations, 55 per cent of these continued to offer a stipend or wages to interns/trainees, whereas only around 39 per cent of MSMEs continued to do so.

²⁴ Around 38 per cent (i.e. 346) of respondents provided data on the remuneration of interns/trainees.

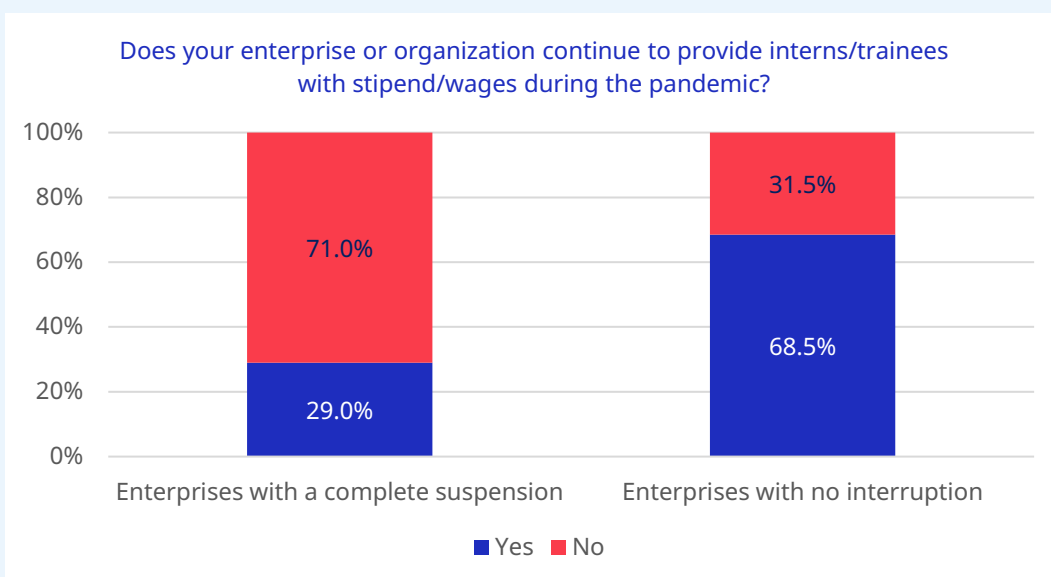
► **Figure 30. Provision of a stipend/wages to interns/trainees**



Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

Among those enterprises that experienced a complete suspension of their internship programmes, only 29 per cent continued to pay a stipend or wages to interns/trainees (figure 31). Of those enterprises where there was no interruption to programmes, 68.5 per cent continued providing a stipend or wages.

► **Figure 31. Provision of a stipend/wages to interns/trainees during the pandemic**

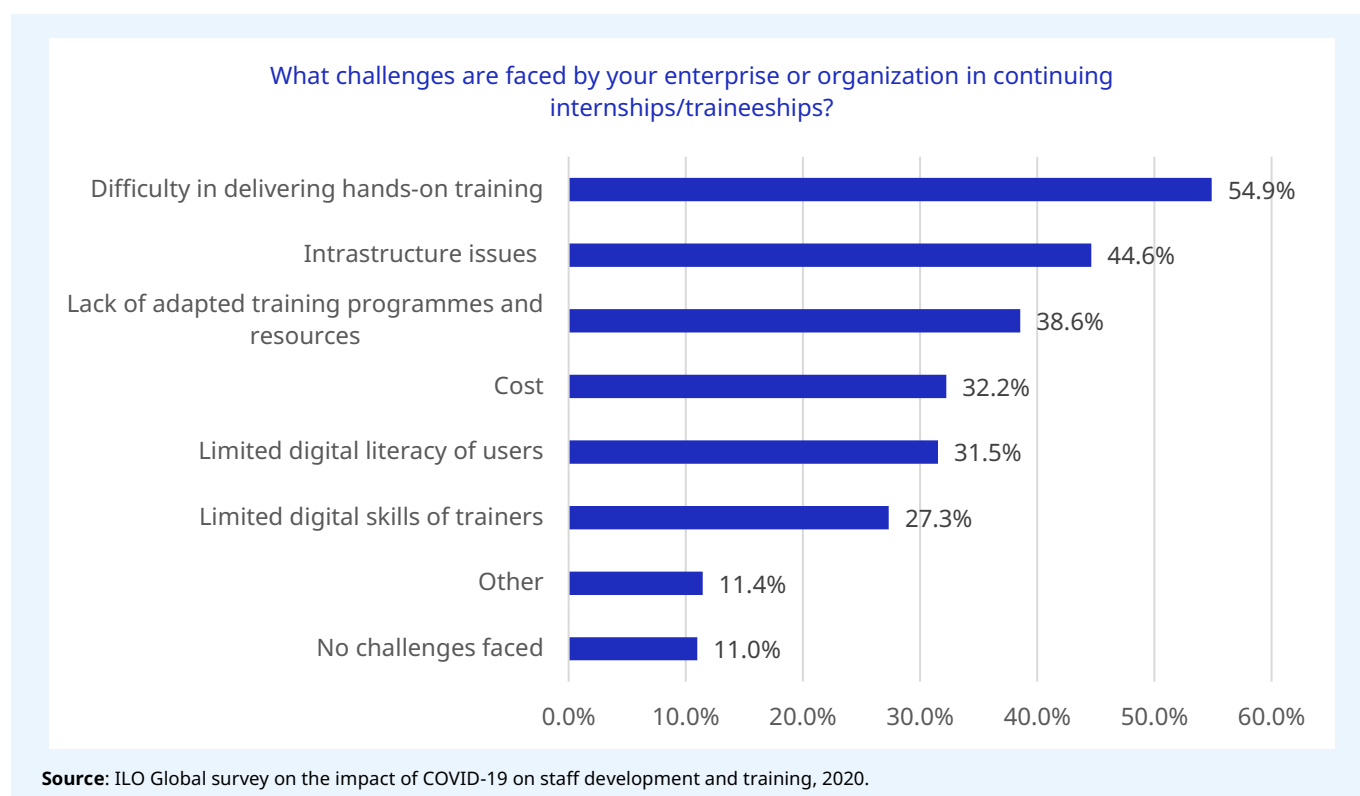


Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

2.3.2 Challenges to continuing internships/traineeships

Of the challenges faced by enterprises in continuing internships/traineeships during the pandemic, the biggest was a difficulty in delivering hands-on training, according to over half (55 per cent) of respondents (figure 32). Other common challenges included infrastructure issues (e.g. limited or lack of digital equipment or internet connection), observed by around 45 per cent of respondents, and a lack of adapted training programmes and resources (39 per cent of respondents).

► **Figure 32. Challenges faced by enterprises in continuing internships/traineeships**



2.3.3 Mitigation measures and available support for internships/traineeships

Respondents to the survey highlighted the importance of continuing to offer internships/traineeships programmes, despite the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They provided suggestions for enabling the continuation of internships/traineeships and these are listed in the box below.

► Measures to ensure the continuation of internships/traineeships

Institutional

- Introduction of teleworking;
- Close communication between teachers or supervisors and interns or trainees; for example, through video calls and the providing of weekly work plans that allow for working from home;
- Implementation of health and safety measures, including social distancing;
- Sufficient monitoring of the learning process for interns and trainees.

Technical

- Creation of dedicated online programmes for interns and trainees;
- Increased provision of theoretical courses in place of practical training;
- Increased use of multimedia tools for online learning.

Material

- Development of communications materials and tools, such as videos and newsletters, for guiding interns and trainees;
- Provision of digital equipment and tools to interns and trainees.

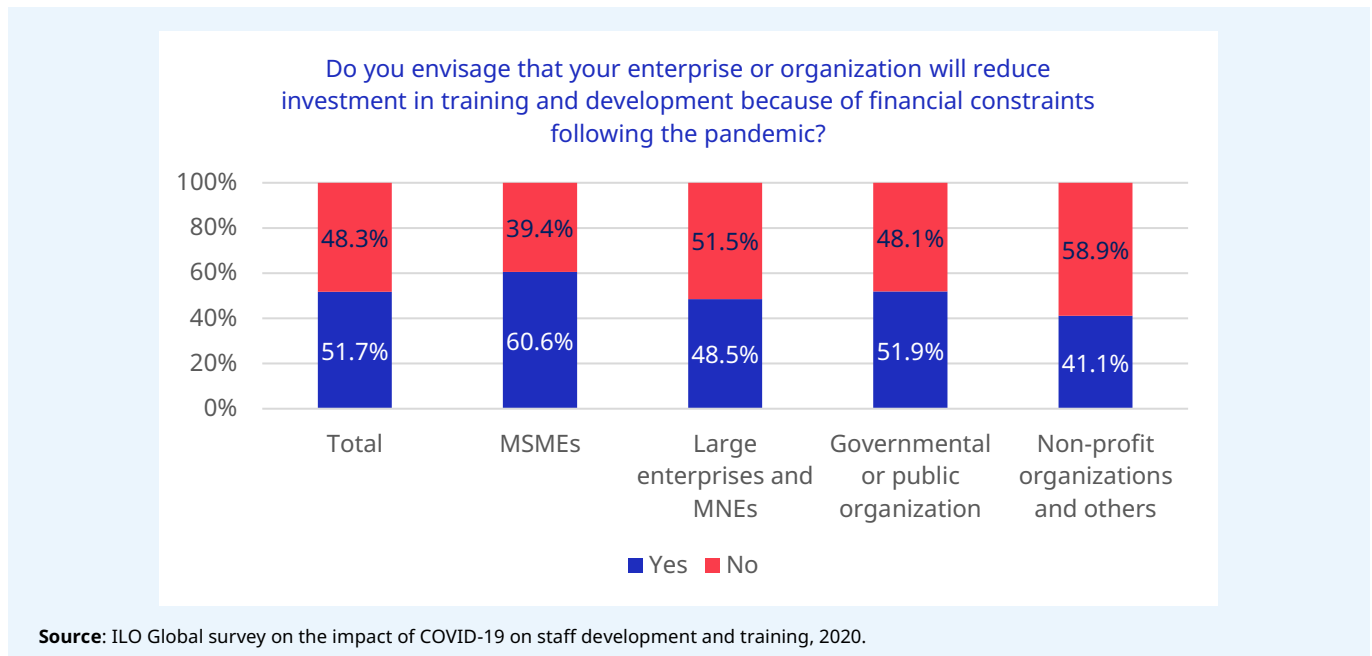
Financial

- Provision of financial support to interns and trainees.

2.4 Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic: the long-term impact on staff development and training

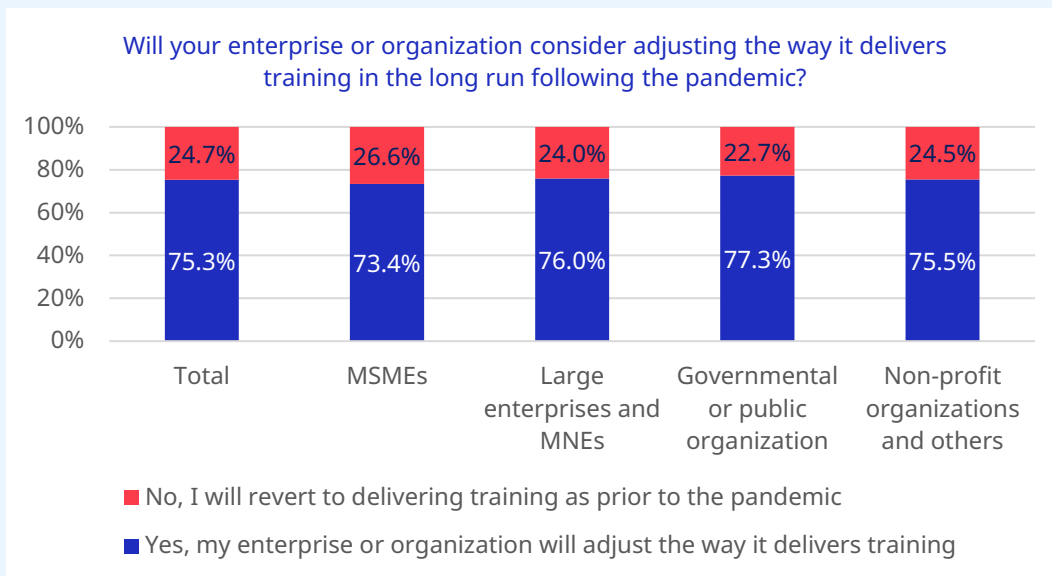
More than a half of respondents surveyed foresaw a future reduction in investment in training and development due to financial constraints imposed by the COVID-19 crisis (figure 33). This was highest (61 per cent) among MSMEs, followed by governmental or public organizations (52 per cent) and large enterprises and MNEs (49 per cent). Non-profit organizations were relatively less likely to intend reducing investment in training (41 per cent).

► **Figure 33. Intended reduction in investments in training and development according to type of enterprise**



A majority of respondents (75 per cent) intended making adjustments to training following the pandemic. Figure 34 shows only a slight difference among types of enterprises in terms of their willingness to adjust the way they deliver training in the future.

► **Figure 34. Adjustment to the delivery of training in the long run in various types of enterprises**



Source: ILO Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training, 2020.

When asked to describe how they plan to adjust training, the vast majority of respondents pointed to changes relating to online and distance learning, namely:

- increasing investment in digital platforms, tools and resources, including web conferencing, e-learning courses, videos, podcasts, online instructional materials and social media;
- introducing or intensifying blended training methodologies by combining face-to-face and distance learning;
- building the capacity of staff to deliver online training;
- acquiring equipment and software for online training;
- encouraging positive attitudes towards online and blended learning.



Source: ILO Flickr (Photo credit: KB Mpofu / ILO).

Other measures mentioned by respondents included:

- reducing class sizes;
- paying more attention to health and safety issues at workplaces;
- enhancing the flexibility of the administration to adapt the programmes' assessment and certification.

Despite a willingness by the majority of enterprises to adjust training delivery by incorporating more online or distance learning, some respondents indicated that this will only be partial, as distance teaching cannot match face-to-face interaction for quality. In other words, practical experience remains essential for certain aspects of training and cannot be replaced by distance learning. In particular, respondents highlighted three salient challenges concerning online or distance learning:

- difficulty in assessing practical skills;
- unavailability of the financial resources required for increasing capacities in distance learning;
- minimal control over the outsourcing of training contents.

► 3 Policy recommendations

The survey analysis presented in this report provides an insight into the considerable challenges the various types of enterprise faced in continuing to train and develop employees, apprentices and interns/trainees following the COVID-19 outbreak. While the empirical research conducted on this issue globally has been relatively limited to date, findings from this survey and other studies indicate that staff training and development is likely to be adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in the medium- to long-term. According to a study conducted by the Mitchell Institute for Education and Health Policy at Victoria University in Australia, new apprenticeships and traineeships are likely to decline by 30 per cent within the next two years (i.e. from the beginning of the pandemic to June 2023), which is equivalent to around 130,000 fewer new apprentices and trainees (Hurley 2020). It is projected that such a decline may lead to a 50 per cent increase in youth classified as “not in employment, education or training” (i.e. NEET). To prevent a so-called “lost generation” being created, governments must therefore take immediate action to address the impacts the COVID-19 crisis is having on youth employment.

This report has presented some of the initial responses and mitigation measures undertaken by enterprises in relation to staff training and development. It highlights the importance of the effectiveness of education and training systems to equip people with the right skills to navigate a crisis, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, now and in the future.

This chapter sets out policy recommendations based on findings from the survey responses together with contributions from development partners. In order to adapt skills development systems to the changes in the world economy being brought about by the pandemic and consequent economic recession, there is an urgent need for comprehensive and innovative policy responses calling for the engagement of government, social partners (workers’ and employers’ organizations) and other key stakeholders at all levels. While this chapter presents recommendations at the international/regional, country/sector and enterprise/individual levels, it is important to caution that there is no single, “one-size-fits-all” approach. With this in mind, and wherever applicable, targeted recommendations specific to the various types of training programmes and enterprises are set out below.



Source: ILO Flickr (Photo credit: Marcel Crozet / ILO).

3.1 At the international/regional level

i. Promote gender responsive international standards and good practices in consultations with governments and social partners.

International standards, together with examples of good practices, provide basic principles and guidance to governments, workers and employers in drafting and implementing national law and policy on skills and lifelong learning. Therefore, international development organizations may strengthen initiatives to develop and promote gender-responsive international standards and good practices. For example, representatives of governments, workers and employers from the 187 ILO Member States adopt international law, in the form of binding Conventions and non-binding recommendations. They have adopted a Recommendation on Peace and Resilience in 2017.²⁵ This recommendation deals with crises arising from conflicts and disasters, including COVID-19. It proposes, amongst others, action with regards to “education, vocational training and guidance”. Moreover, a consultation process has already started within the ILO that may lead to the design of a new International Labour Standard to shape a new era of apprenticeships in 2023. This new standard may also include measures to address

²⁵ https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:R205.....

the impact of crisis such as COVID-19 pandemic.²⁶ At the European level, the European Council in 2018 adopted a Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. It calls for the active involvement of social partners and other stakeholders in the design, governance and implementation of apprenticeship schemes.

Furthermore, the trade unions (Labour 20 – L20) and employers’ associations (Business 20 – B20) of the G20 Member States, in cooperation with global trade unions and employers’ associations (ITUC, IOE, BIAC and TUAC), developed “Key Elements of Quality Apprenticeships” in 2013 (ITUC, 2013).

Trade unions call to G20 countries

International Trade Union Confederation and Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD have called for an inclusive response to the COVID-19 pandemic by G20 leaders. They have recommended to take and implement measures with the involvement of social partners through social dialogue, which may include:

- paid sick leave from day one;
- wage/income protection;
- managed reduction of hours where necessary, with government support to maximise income security;
- mortgage, rent and loan relief;
- universal social protection and free access to healthcare;
- childcare support for frontline workers in health, supermarkets, pharmacies and other vital areas.

Source: https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/trade_union_letter_to_the_g20_heads_of_state_meeting_re_covid19.pdf (accessed 4 April 2021).

ii. Promote international cooperation and knowledge exchange in the sharing of innovative solutions and good practice for addressing the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training.

Although countries are taking diverse measures in response to their particular circumstances, all can benefit from a transparent and open exchange of lessons learned and effective strategies adopted. In particular, countries can share resources and explore what is the potential for advanced technologies to deliver online, distance and blended learning.

International and regional development agencies and global trade unions and employers’ associations play a crucial role in facilitating knowledge exchange at the global level, establishing new partnerships among key stakeholders and promoting the generation of innovative ideas. For example, an Inter-Agency Group on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (IAG-TVET) was established by UNESCO in 2008 to promote knowledge sharing and a common understanding of key matters on TVET and ensure the effective coordination of activities by international organizations involved in policy advice, programmes and research.²⁷ The ILO has launched a MOOC on Quality Apprenticeships in 2020 with the primary objective to support policymakers and practitioners in the design and implementation of quality apprenticeships in the fast-changing world of work and to address challenges posed by COVID-19. It provided representatives of governments, social partners and other stakeholders from over 125 countries with an opportunity to establish a global network of policymakers and practitioners for the sharing of experience and innovative practices through webinars and forum activities.

²⁶ For information on ILS and COVID, see https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/WCMS_739937/lang--en/index.htm (NOTE THAT A NEW NOTE WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE)

²⁷ The membership of this Inter-Agency Group on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (IAG-TVET) consists of the ILO, the OECD, UNESCO, the UNIDO, WHO and the World Bank. Regionally-based members include the AfDB, ADB, Cedefop, EC, ETF, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB). The webpage of this IAG-TVET inter-agency cooperation on TVET can be accessed at <https://en.unesco.org/themes/skills-work-and-life/interagency-cooperation>.

More examples of the initiatives and resources undertaken by development agencies with regard to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, training and employment can be found in Appendix III.

iii. **Support developing countries in reforming skills and lifelong learning systems and building capacity of governments, social partners and other institutions.**

International financial institutions and funding agencies should increase technical and financial assistance for developing countries in reforming skills and lifelong learning policies, systems and programmes in addressing the impact of crisis such as COVID-19 pandemic including on women. For example, the World Bank Group in response to the pandemic is deploying \$160 billion for support tailored to the health, economic, and social shocks countries are facing.²⁸

The support measures may specifically include national capacity building to reform and develop skills policies and programmes, including developing the capacity of the workers and employers to contribute to policy reform and implementation (ILO, 2005).

3.2 **At the country/sector level**

iv. **Promote social dialogue and partnerships among all stakeholders in skills and lifelong learning systems and facilitate the engagement of social partners.**

The COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated the ongoing transformation in labour markets, creating both skills shortages and skills surpluses. As highlighted in the ILO's second Global Deal Flagship Report (ILO and OECD 2020), effective skills development systems are crucial in preventing skills depreciation and obsolescence and facilitating transitions towards those sectors and jobs that are expanding. However, skills development systems are not always able to keep pace with rapidly changing skill needs in the labour market. Furthermore, participation is usually low among those most in need of new or additional skills, and among the growing number of people who are in non-standard employment.

Social dialogue has a key role to play in promoting skills development by ensuring the collaboration of key stakeholders throughout the planning and implementation processes. In particular, the nexus of governments, training institutions and the private sector is vital for strengthening resilience and accelerating the recovery of skills development systems following the crisis. In many countries, the involvement of sector skills councils is also important in financing and assuring the quality of training, as well as enhancing social inclusion for vulnerable groups.

In order to enhance the effectiveness of skills development systems, governments need to mobilize workers' and employers' organizations and involve them in the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of training (ILO, 2005). Furthermore, social partners can take part in the production of labour market information and the matching of aspiring candidates with apprenticeships or traineeships, as well as in their placement and integration into the workplace.

While the degree of involvement by social partners in skills development systems varies across countries, their engagement is particularly important in the context of the pandemic. Well-informed about changes in skills needs and work organization, social partners can help in increasing and improving training provision, as well as providing re-employment assistance to workers who become unemployed and have difficulty in finding sustainable employment (ILO and OECD 2020).

²⁸ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/09/19/woman-entrepreneur-putting-gender-at-the-heart-of-pandemic-response> accessed 4 April 2021.

v. Develop gender-responsive crisis recovery plans and guidelines for skills development systems both during and after the pandemic.

The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated the importance of a country's ability to deal with crisis scenarios. In order to ensure the continuation of skills development both during and after this current pandemic, governments and social partners should devise gender-responsive crisis recovery plans for skills and lifelong learning systems.

These should be based on comprehensive and timely analyses of the latest labour market information and the prospects for economies and industries. These crisis response and recovery plans should be developed through the collective effort of relevant ministries – not only those in charge of labour and education, but also those responsible for social security, health, industry and finance – and in consultation with employers and workers organizations.

As global and regional supply and value chains have been significantly disrupted, such analyses can contribute to an accurate understanding of changes to skills needs, both current and future. The results should inform the design and delivery of appropriate and pertinent skilling, upskilling and reskilling programmes for current and future workers. As many sectors are in the process of restructuring, MSMEs in particular will require additional support in adapting to a rapidly changing business environment.



Source : ILO Flickr (Photo credit: Marcel Crozet / ILO).

Furthermore, sector-specific guidelines can be established which offer practical guidance for enterprises and training institutions when addressing the challenges brought about by the crisis. In particular, such guidelines should cover issues relating to OSH and the key impediments to the continuation of training; for example, difficulty in delivering hands-on training, a limited or lack of digital equipment or internet connection, a lack of adapted training programmes and resources, as well as the limited digital literacy of learners and trainers.

vi. Guarantee funding for skilling, upskilling and reskilling, especially for women, disadvantaged groups and in the hardest-hit sectors.

Public health outbreaks have distinct gendered impacts and the COVID-19 pandemic is no different.²⁹ According to the ILO, employment losses due to COVID-19 pandemic were higher for women (5.0 per cent) than for men.³⁰ Thus, the response and recovery plan must address the widening gender inequalities.

Governments, in consultation with social partners,³¹ should provide financial incentives, including wage subsidies, to ensure the continuation of training for employees, apprentices and interns/trainees, both during and after the crisis. Many countries use training levies or payroll taxes to incentivize employers to place greater emphasis on improving the skills and productivity of their workforce. In countries with higher levels of informality and weaker institutional capacity, grants to individuals for training, in the form of vouchers, for instance, is common. Financial incentives ought to be as targeted as possible, and may vary, depending on the size and type of enterprise, economic sector, region, type of programme, and so on. In particular, special attention should be given to those sectors hardest hit, and disadvantaged groups, such as women, workers in the informal economy, as well as MSMEs. The hardest-hit sectors are often also the ones with important female workforce: accommodation, food and retail services etc. undermining gains made in female labour market participation.

²⁹ [covid-19-ed webinar 3-addressing the gender dimensions of school closures-report-en.pdf \(unesco.org\)](https://www.unesco.org/en/education/2020/04/covid-19-ed-webinar-3-addressing-the-gender-dimensions-of-school-closures-report-en.pdf)

³⁰ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_767028.pdf

³¹ In line with R205 - Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205).

vii. Take specific measures to encourage work-based learning programmes, including apprenticeships and traineeships.

The disruption caused by COVID-19 may not only have a negative impact on the willingness of enterprises to offer work-based learning programmes, but also on the educational choices open to young people; for instance, the interruption to hands-on training is likely to influence educational choices where work-based learning is a component. In particular, TVET and apprenticeship programmes, especially those with a lot of work-based learning, may become less attractive for youth, who may opt instead for school-based TVET and general education programmes that are less susceptible to this kind of disruption. The risk could be even higher for girls and women who, except for very few countries in the world, already were heavily under-represented among apprentices due to gender stereotypes and occupational segregation among others.



Source : ILO Flickr (Photo credit: KB Mpofu / ILO).

Governments, in consultation with social partners, should therefore provide incentives and technical support for work-based learning programmes in enterprises, paying particular attention to apprenticeships and traineeships for young people and to the hardest-hit sectors. Apart from financial incentives, governments also need to introduce measures promoting participation in such programmes, for example, through the mandatory recruitment of new apprentices and trainees into government-funded projects and community programmes. Furthermore, additional measures should be implemented to make apprenticeships and traineeships more attractive, including through careers guidance, the development of learning materials, online platforms and dedicated media channels, the capacity building of trainers, outreach activities, and the dissemination of success stories. Governments, social partners and the private sector should also develop innovative methods for delivering practical training using virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR).

viii. Enhance the equity of access especially for women to training opportunities and digital infrastructure.

With the major shift in training delivery from face-to-face to online teaching, governments, in consultation with social partners, should take steps to narrow the digital divide, including digital gender gap, and prevent inadequate digital infrastructure excluding disadvantaged groups from skills development opportunities. For instance, in order to improve internet connection and make it more affordable, governments could offer subsidies to companies to reduce the cost of internet services. Governments could also award grants to employees, apprentices and interns/trainees for the purchase of digital equipment for teleworking, such as computers (as in the case of France and South Africa). Furthermore, the use of multi-modal channels comprising high-tech (e.g. VR simulators), low-tech (e.g. TV, radio), and no-tech solutions (printed materials) should be promoted to ensure equality of access to training opportunities.

ix. Invest in establishing or improving recognition of prior learning (RPL) and micro-credential systems.

As a higher proportion of learning is taking place through non-formal, informal, and digital learning, a challenge is how to accredit and recognize the skills acquired through these means. The fast adoption of edTech, led largely by the private sector, in offering need based short duration on-line learning programmes, is challenging the traditional education and training systems. These systems need to catch up fast and come up with innovative mechanism to offer and accredit micro-credential based courses and also improve RPL systems.

x. **Revise regulations and guidelines to allow greater flexibility in work-based learning programmes.**

In order to facilitate the adapting of skills development systems to the rapidly evolving situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, regulations and guidelines should be revised and updated in a timely manner. In view of the disruption to the operation of training activities in enterprises, authorities should allow greater flexibility in the recruitment of new participants, and their assessment and certification. For instance, age requirements for apprenticeships and traineeship programmes, where they exist, could be revised so as to include more adults, especially older workers. The timeline and the requirements for completing training programmes should be adjusted according to new circumstances. For instance, the assessment of practical learning outcomes could either be postponed or changed to an online assessment.

xi. **Strengthen career guidance system and services.**

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the role of career guidance has become ever more important. Governments, in consultation with social partners, should pay more attention to and re-think career guidance provision from a systemic perspective (CEDEFOP, 2020).

3.3 **At the enterprise/individual level**

xii. **Promote social dialogue and the engagement of trade unions.**

Social dialogue at the enterprise level has a key role in mitigating the impact of COVID 19 pandemic on the training and development of employees, apprentices and interns and accelerating the recovery of learning activities following the crisis. Trade unions can promote learning at the workplace, during or after the pandemic, through collective bargaining, collaboration with other bodies and the engagement of mentors to support training programmes. They should be engaged by the employers in the planning, implementation and evaluation of training and development activities in their enterprises. Workers' representatives in enterprises should (ILO, 2017):

- represent the interests of employees, apprentices and interns in the running of training programmes at the enterprise level and, in particular, ensuring appropriate working and training conditions (e.g. with regard to occupational safety and health, wages and allowances and working hours) for apprentices and interns;
- preventing exploitative practices under the guise of training; and
- providing apprentices and interns with advice for training activities, in those enterprises that have Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) and/or works councillors.



Source : ILO Flickr.

xiii. **Align gender-responsive training provision with the crisis response and recovery plan at the national or sectoral level.**

Gender-responsive training provision for the skills development of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees, should address the individual and business skills needed for recovery and sustained growth thereafter. Both the content and delivery of the training provided by enterprises should be determined by and, as far as possible, in line with the crisis response and recovery plan at the sectoral, national and regional levels.

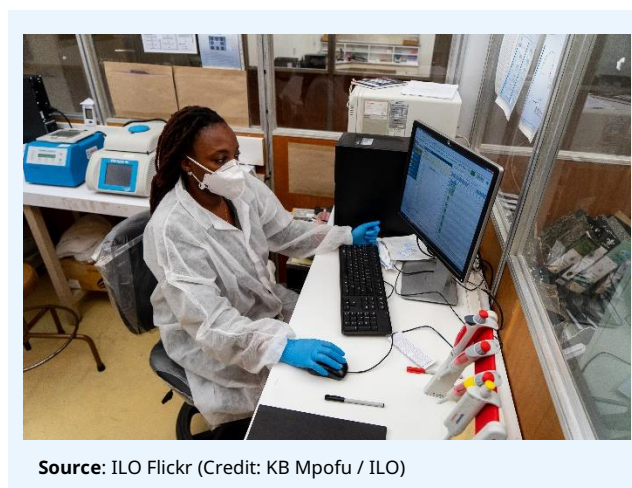
In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, enterprises not only need to be well informed about rapid changes in labour market skills needs, but also about any new safety and health regulation that could affect the delivery of training. As the crisis evolves, enterprises, in consultation with trade unions, should adjust the design and implementation of training accordingly, including training plans, curriculum, duration, means of delivery, assessment and certification. In particular, MSMEs should work closely with a sector skills council, as well as with those ministries in charge of MSMEs and public employment services which offer consultancy and administrative support.

xiv. **Leveraging digital technologies to ensure the continuity of training provision for employees, apprentices and interns/trainees while overcoming gender digital divide.**

Considering the current disruption to the training provided by enterprises, it seems likely that the skills development of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees will be negatively impacted in the medium-to-long-run. Nevertheless, the mitigation measures and innovative solutions developed, in consultation with trade unions, during the crisis may result in new approaches to training. Instead of being held back by the negative consequences of the crisis, it is possible that enterprises could benefit from some of the positive takeaways identified in the survey.

The most prominent example of the many innovative measures undertaken by a majority of enterprises is the shift from conducting training face-to-face to online delivery. While face-to-face training has gradually resumed as lockdown measures have eased, the survey findings suggest that, in the long-run, the crisis is likely to accelerate a move to blended learning. In addition to video conferencing tools, many enterprises have begun exploring the potential of advanced digital tools – for example, AR and VR simulators– to deliver on-the-job or practical training. While training provision may not be completely digitalized following the crisis, enterprises should be encouraged to continue taking advantage of what digital technologies have to offer with regard to improving the effectiveness and resilience of gender-responsive training provision. For instance, digital logbooks or diaries could be used for the monitoring and supervision of learners, who, in their turn, could use them to document tasks performed and reflect on their performance. This is particularly useful when learners change learning environment frequently (which has been the case for many during the crisis), switching between being at the workplace to teleworking from home, school, training centres, and so on). Digital logbooks could also be used for summative and formative assessments. However, emphasis may be given to address gender digital gap as women in many countries are less likely to have access to internet than men.

The digitalization of learning and training could create opportunities for future entrepreneurs in the design and development of new products – for example, mobile applications for training and teaching – thereby making digital learning more accessible.



Source: ILO Flickr (Credit: KB Mpfu / ILO)

xv. Invest in the capacity development of trainers and supervisors in enterprises, as well as that of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees, to become more adaptable and resilient.

According to findings from a survey conducted by the UNIDO and the ETF, the pandemic is pushing companies to explore future skills needs, which is seen as crucial for resilience and change management to cope with the challenges it presents (UNIDO and ETF 2020). In addition to technical skills, it is equally important that enterprises invest in developing the core skills and digital skills of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees. The sudden closure of workplaces and training venues means additional support is needed by learners in adjusting to new working and training arrangements and methodologies.

The UNIDO-ETF survey has demonstrated there has been no substantial change to what enterprises consider are the core skills needed following the pandemic, while at the same time there is obviously a growing trend towards digitalization (UNIDO and ETF 2020). In the context of increasingly digitally based and automated world of work, greater autonomy at work, as well as a growth in virtual communication, requires that workers develop and strengthen certain core skills. The ILO's Global Framework on Core Skills for the 21st Century examines core skills that would be especially important in coping with the challenges of COVID-19. These comprise basic digital skills, critical thinking, self-reflection, problem-solving, advanced interpersonal skills (negotiation, conflict resolution, communication and collaboration), emotional intelligence, creativity and innovative thinking, planning and organizing, career management, and learning to learn (ILO, forthcoming).

Furthermore, additional training on hygiene and health should be given to all employees, apprentices and interns/trainees in order that applicable health and safety standards are met.

xvi. Facilitate close communication between trainers and learners to keep track of progress and provide adequate pedagogical and psychological support.

Employees, apprentices and interns/trainees may find it a challenge adjusting from face-to-face to online training, and may even come to feel disconnected, even isolated. It is therefore important that enterprises take steps to ensure adequate interaction, albeit virtual, between trainers and learners, and among the learners themselves. Apart from establishing effective communication mechanisms, special training and webinars can provide guidance on mental health and well-being. This is not only crucial for maintaining motivation and ensuring progress, but it can also help ensure an adequate pedagogical and psychological support for both trainers and learners, and protect against difficulties in learning and loss of motivation during online training.

xvii. Ensure adequate preparation for resuming hands-on and practical training, including compliance with safety and health regulations.

Despite the widespread shift to online and distance learning prompted by the pandemic, with the lifting of lockdown measures in some countries, some enterprises may choose to resume practical, hands-on training. It is important therefore that enterprises prepare a plan for the resumption of hands-on training, specifying the hygiene and social distancing measures needed in order to comply with safety and health regulations. For instance, it may be that practical training has to be carried out in smaller groups. In the long-run, enterprises may also want to consider adopting a blended training approach that combines both face-to-face and online training, as well as also revising curricula by including the development of soft skills and digital skills. The UNIDO-ETF survey shows that enterprises place great value on information and communications technology (ICT) skills and their application (particularly in e-commerce and marketing), as well as valuing transversal skills, such as design thinking, creativity, analytical capabilities and multitasking potential (UNIDO and ETF 2020).

In those countries where workplaces remain closed, practical training can be organized in alternative workplace-like environments, such as school workshops, training centres, and so on. This would require close cooperation between public authorities, municipalities, chambers of commerce and business associations.

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► Appendix I: Survey

Global Survey on Staff Development and Training in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Public and Private Enterprises and other Organizations

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the way we work and learn in unprecedented ways. As a joint initiative between the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the European Commission (EC), the European Training Foundation (ETF), the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank Group (WBG), this survey aims to examine the impact of COVID-19 on the training and development of employees, apprentices and interns/trainees in public and private enterprises and other organizations. It will complement the other joint survey between the ILO and UNESCO on addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, which targets Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) providers, policymakers and social partners. The responses to the survey will contribute to the stocktaking of good practices and innovative solutions undertaken by various enterprises and organizations to overcome the challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This survey consists of six sections, of which Sections I, II, V, VI are applicable to all respondents. Sections III and IV are required for enterprises or organizations offering work-based learning programmes, particularly apprenticeships and internships/traineeships. The Inter-Agency Group on TVET defines work-based learning as comprising all forms of learning that take place in a real work environment. It provides individuals with the skills needed to successfully obtain and keep jobs and progress in their professional development. Apprenticeships, internships/traineeships and on-the-job training are the most common types of work-based learning. For more information about the Inter-Agency Group on TVET, please refer to the weblink: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/skills-work-and-life/interagency-cooperation>.

We greatly appreciate your valuable time and efforts in filling out this survey. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact us at aggarwal@ilo.org, h.guiol@unesco.org or chany@iloguest.org.

Section I. Description of enterprise or organization

1. Are you ...

Check one

- Multinational enterprise
- Large enterprise (over 250 employees)
- Medium enterprise (51–250 employees)
- Small enterprise (11–50 employees)
- Micro enterprise (1–10 employees)
- Governmental or public organization
- Intermediary organization
- Non-profit organization
- Other (please specify below)

2. Which sector or industry does your enterprise or organization belong to?

Check one

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing

- Mining and quarrying
- Manufacturing
- Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
- Construction
- Wholesale and retail trade
- Transportation and storage
- Accommodation and food service activities
- Information and communication
- Financial and insurance activities
- Real estate activities
- Professional, scientific and technical activities
- Administrative and support service activities
- Public administration and defence; compulsory social security
- Education
- Human health and social work activities
- Arts, entertainment and recreation
- Other service activities
- Other (please specify below)

3. Your position in the enterprise or organization

4. Your country

You are not obliged to answer Questions 5 to 7, but if you would like to receive feedback on your contribution and obtain the results of this survey, please provide your contact details. This information will not be shared with others.

5. Name of enterprise or organization

6. Name of the person completing the form

7. Contact email

Section II. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on staff development and training

8. Has your enterprise or organization suspended operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes, completely Partially No closures

9. Has your enterprise or organization introduced work from home measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes, completely Partially (some from home, some at the workplace) No

10. Has the delivery of staff training programmes and activities been interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes, completely Partially No Not applicable

11. Has your enterprise or organization taken any specific measure to ensure the continuation of staff training programmes and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes No Not applicable

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate below.

12. Has your enterprise or organization planned or organized any new training programmes or activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes No

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate below.

13. Was your enterprise or organization using any of the following online and/or offline distance learning tools for staff development and training before the COVID-19 pandemic? Please check all that apply.

- Online learning programmes and resources
- Video conferencing tools
- Virtual reality simulators
- Multimedia including podcasts and YouTube videos
- TV
- Printed materials
- No distance learning tools were used
- Other (please elaborate further below)

14. Is your enterprise or organization using any of the following online and/or offline distance learning tools for staff development and training during the COVID-19 pandemic? Please check all that apply.

- Online learning programmes and resources
- Video conferencing tools
- Virtual reality simulators
- Multimedia, including podcasts and YouTube videos
- TV
- Printed materials
- No distance learning tools are being used
- Other (please elaborate further below)

15. Please provide information about the tools and web link(s) of the online resources and/or distance learning portal used, if possible.

16. What challenges does your enterprise or organization face in delivering staff training programmes and activities using online learning and/or offline distance learning tools in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic? Please check all that apply.

- Limited digital literacy of users
- Limited digital skills of trainers
- Cost
- Lack of adapted training programmes and resources
- Difficulty in delivering hands-on training
- Infrastructure issues (e.g. internet connections, computers availability, etc.)
- No challenges faced
- Other (please elaborate below)

17. Has your enterprise or organization provided any additional support to the staff responsible for organizing and delivering the training to ensure the continuation of training programmes and activities?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate below.

18. Are you partnering with any external organizations to facilitate staff training and development during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate below.

19. Regarding the measures put in place by various stakeholders (e.g. national authorities, industry associations and development partners, etc.) to help enterprises or organizations to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on staff training and development:

a. What measure(s), if any, has/have been the most helpful to your enterprise or organization?

b. What measures would you have liked that were not available in your country/region?

c. What type of support in providing staff training and development would you like to receive to deal with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Section III. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on apprenticeships (This section is only required for enterprises or organizations offering apprenticeships.)

20. Does your enterprise or organization offer apprenticeship training?

- Yes No

If your answer is "Yes", please specify the average duration in months of the apprenticeship training.

21. Does the apprenticeship training offered by your enterprise or organization include the following component(s)? Please check all that apply.

- Off-the-job or school-based component

On-the-job component at the workplace

Other (please specify below)

22. Has the training of apprentices been interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes, completely

Partially

No

Not applicable

If your answer is "Yes" or "Partially", please elaborate on how off-the-job and on-the-job training is affected.

23. Has the training period of the apprenticeship programme been adjusted due to the interruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes

No

Not applicable

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate below how the training period has been adjusted and which stakeholder(s) decided to make the adjustment?

24. Does your enterprise or organization continue to provide apprentices with stipend/wages during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes

No

Not applicable

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate below what is the source of funding.

25. Has any measure been taken to ensure the continuation of apprenticeship training during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes

No

Not applicable

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate on the measure(s) in relation to off-the-job and on-the-job training respectively and which stakeholder(s) determined the measure(s).

26. What challenges are faced by your enterprise or organization in continuing the training of apprentices during the COVID-19 pandemic? Please check all that apply.

Limited digital literacy of users

Limited digital skills of trainers

Cost

- Lack of adapted training programmes and resources
- Difficulty in delivering hands-on training
- Infrastructure issues (e.g. internet connections, computers availability, etc.)
- No challenges faced
- Other (please elaborate below)

27. Are you aware of any technical, material and financial support from the government or other stakeholders to encourage the continuation of apprenticeship training during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate below regarding the nature, modalities and level of support.

28. Has the regulatory authority adjusted the assessment and certification requirements for completing the apprenticeship programme due to the interruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate on any challenge your enterprise/organization faces with regard to the new adjustments on assessment and certification.

29. Regarding the measures put in place by various stakeholders (e.g. national authorities, industry associations and development partners, etc.) to help enterprises/organizations to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on apprenticeships:

- a. What measure(s), if any, has/have been the most helpful to your enterprise /organization?**

- b. What measures would you have liked that were not available in your country/region?**

- c. What type of support on apprenticeships would you like to receive to deal with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Section IV. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on internships/traineeships (This section is only required for enterprises or organizations offering internships/traineeships.)

30. Does your enterprise or organization offer internships/traineeships?

- Yes No

If your answer is "Yes", please specify the average duration in months of the internship(s)/traineeship(s).

31. Have the internships/traineeships been interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes, completely Partially No Not applicable

32. Does your enterprise or organization continue to provide interns/trainees with stipend/wages during the lockdown caused by COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes No Not applicable

33. What challenges are faced by your enterprise or organization in continuing internships/ traineeships during the COVID-19 pandemic? *Please check all that apply.*

- Limited digital literacy of users
 Limited digital skills of trainers
 Cost
 Lack of adapted training programmes and resources
 Difficulty in delivering hands-on training
 Infrastructure issues (e.g. internet connections, computers availability, etc.)
 No challenges faced
 Other (please elaborate below)

34. Does your enterprise or organization have any good practice to share regarding continuing internships/traineeships during disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes No

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate below.

Section V. Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic

35. Do you envisage that your enterprise or organization will reduce investment in training and development (including both staff training and apprenticeships) because of financial constraints following the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes

No

36. Will your enterprise or organization consider adjusting the way it delivers training in the long-run following the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes, my enterprise or organization will adjust the way it delivers training

No, I will revert to delivering training as prior to the pandemic

If your answer is "Yes", please elaborate below on how. If your answer is "No", please specify the reason(s).

Section VI. Final remarks

37. The information from the survey will be shared with other countries and organizations in an aggregated form whereby your individual answer will not be identifiable in any way. Would you agree to share the information you provided in the survey with others (except your answers in Section I)?

Yes

No

38. Other Comments

Thank you very much.

► Appendix II: Distribution of respondents by country, region and income group

► Distribution of respondents by country, region and income group

Country	Region	Income group	No. of response(s)
Afghanistan	Asia and the Pacific	Low income	1
Albania	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	4
Algeria	Africa	Lower middle income	1
Antigua and Barbuda	Americas	High income	1
Argentina	Americas	Upper middle income	2
Armenia	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	2
Australia	Asia and the Pacific	High income	7
Austria	Europe and Central Asia	High income	4
Azerbaijan	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	2
Bangladesh	Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	7
Barbados	Americas	High income	2
Belarus	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	1
Belgium	Europe and Central Asia	High income	7
Belize	Americas	Upper middle income	1
Bolivia, Plurinational State of	Americas	Lower middle income	2
Brazil	Americas	Upper middle income	1
Bulgaria	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	3
Burkina Faso	Africa	Low income	2
Burundi	Africa	Low income	2
Cambodia	Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	14
Canada	Americas	High income	2
China	Asia and the Pacific	Upper middle income	3
Colombia	Americas	Upper middle income	15
Congo	Africa	Lower middle income	1
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	Africa	Low income	4
Costa Rica	Americas	Upper middle income	3
Côte d'Ivoire	Africa	Lower middle income	1
Croatia	Europe and Central Asia	High income	1
Cyprus	Europe and Central Asia	High income	1
Czechia	Europe and Central Asia	High income	1
Dominican Republic	Americas	Upper middle income	2
Ecuador	Americas	Upper middle income	1
Egypt	Africa	Lower middle income	6
El Salvador	Americas	Lower middle income	2
Estonia	Europe and Central Asia	High income	2
Ethiopia	Africa	Low income	3

Finland	Europe and Central Asia	High income	4
France	Europe and Central Asia	High income	2
Gabon	Africa	Upper middle income	1
Gambia	Africa	Low income	1
Germany	Europe and Central Asia	High income	13
Ghana	Africa	Lower middle income	5
Greece	Europe and Central Asia	High income	9
Hungary	Europe and Central Asia	High income	12
Iceland	Europe and Central Asia	High income	4
India	Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	72
Indonesia	Asia and the Pacific	Upper middle income	42
Iraq	Arab States	Upper middle income	5
Ireland	Europe and Central Asia	High income	41
Italy	Europe and Central Asia	High income	7
Jamaica	Americas	Upper middle income	3
Jordan	Arab States	Upper middle income	8
Kazakhstan	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	16
Kenya	Africa	Lower middle income	7
Kosovo ^(a)	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	1
Kyrgyzstan	Europe and Central Asia	Lower middle income	2
Lebanon	Arab States	Upper middle income	8
Liberia	Africa	Low income	1
Lithuania	Europe and Central Asia	High income	1
Luxembourg	Europe and Central Asia	High income	19
Madagascar	Africa	Low income	1
Malawi	Africa	Low income	1
Mali	Africa	Low income	4
Malta	Europe and Central Asia	High income	2
Mexico	Americas	Upper middle income	22
Micronesia, Federated States of	Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	1
Moldova, Republic of	Europe and Central Asia	Lower middle income	4
Mongolia	Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	1
Morocco	Africa	Lower middle income	7
Mozambique	Africa	Low income	2
Myanmar	Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	1
Namibia	Africa	Upper middle income	6
Netherlands	Asia and the Pacific	High income	1
Niger	Africa	Low income	1
Nigeria	Africa	Lower middle income	6
North Macedonia	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	2
Occupied Palestinian Territory	Arab States	Lower middle income	2
Pakistan	Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	5
Panama	Americas	High income	1
Peru	Americas	Upper middle income	9

Philippines	Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	184
Poland	Europe and Central Asia	High income	3
Portugal	Europe and Central Asia	High income	5
Qatar	Arab States	High income	1
Romania	Europe and Central Asia	High income	2
Russian Federation	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	5
Rwanda	Africa	Low income	4
Saudi Arabia	Arab States	High income	1
Senegal	Africa	Lower middle income	2
Serbia	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	5
Seychelles	Africa	High income	4
Sierra Leone	Africa	Low income	1
Singapore	Asia and the Pacific	High income	1
Slovakia	Europe and Central Asia	High income	2
Slovenia	Europe and Central Asia	High income	32
Somalia	Africa	Low income	1
South Africa	Africa	Upper middle income	32
Spain	Europe and Central Asia	High income	11
Sri Lanka	Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	10
Sudan	Africa	Low income	25
Sweden	Europe and Central Asia	High income	1
Switzerland	Europe and Central Asia	High income	2
Tajikistan	Europe and Central Asia	Low income	3
Trinidad and Tobago	Americas	High income	2
Tunisia	Africa	Lower middle income	4
Turkey	Europe and Central Asia	Upper middle income	6
Uganda	Africa	Low income	5
Ukraine	Europe and Central Asia	Lower middle income	19
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Europe and Central Asia	High income	6
United Republic of Tanzania	Africa	Low income	21
United States of America	Americas	High income	2
Uzbekistan	Europe and Central Asia	Lower middle income	1
Yemen	Arab States	Low income	15
Zambia	Africa	Lower middle income	6
Total			901

Note: (a) As defined in UN Security Council resolution 1244 of 1999.

► Number of respondents by region

Region	No. of countries	No. of responses
Africa	32	168
Americas	18	73
Arab States	7	40
Asia and the Pacific	15	350
Europe and Central Asia	42	270
Total	114	901

► Number of respondents by income group

Income group	No. of countries	No. of responses
Low income	20	98
Lower middle income	27	373
Upper middle income	29	211
High income	38	219
Total	114	901

► Appendix III: Development partners' resources on COVID-19 and skills development

Below is a list of initiatives and resources undertaken by development partners with regards to addressing the impact of COVID-19 on education, training and employment.

African Development Bank

In April 2020, the AfDB launched a COVID-19 response facility of up to US \$10 billion to assist regional member countries in fighting the pandemic.³² Job preservation schemes, the provision of fiscal relief and the strengthening of health infrastructures are some of the mitigation tools this support facility has been introducing through working with governments and the private sector in over 40 countries on the continent of Africa.³³

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)

Below is a weblink to Cedefop's dedicated webpage for all news items, publications and other material that cover Cedefop's work related to the impact of the coronavirus crisis:

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/landing-page/corona-virus>

European Commission

The EC conducted an online survey between March and May 2020 to capture the variety of initiatives undertaken to ensure continuity of learning and teaching during the lockdown. The overview of 262 responses is summarized on the following site:

https://ec.europa.eu/social/vocational-skills-week/fight-against-covid-19_en

As a follow-up to the survey (and other surveys, including the one analysed in this report) the EC organized two Live Discussions:

1. Live Discussion: Remote Learning – How technology is empowering new forms of work-based learning (14 May 2020)

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1175&newsId=9681&furtherNews=yes>

2. Live Discussion on remote learning: Challenges and opportunities in the VET Sector posed by the COVID-19 pandemic (17 June 2020)

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1175&newsId=9721&furtherNews=yes>

European Training Foundation (ETF)

1. LearningConnects – ETF campaign offering support during COVID-19 crisis

³² The African Development Bank Group's Covid-19 Rapid Response Facility (CRF) is available at <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/african-development-bank-groups-covid-19-rapid-response-facility-crf>.

³³ The African Development Bank Group's COVID-19 responses to date are available at <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-events/our-covid-19-response-date>.

To help people deal with the unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that learning continues to connect individuals and institutions, ETF has launched an initiative focusing on how education and training systems, businesses, schools, teachers, students and their families can adapt to the challenges of teaching and learning at a distance, often using unfamiliar and untried technology and imperfect systems and infrastructure.

Below is a weblink to the webpage on the ETF campaign LearningConnects:

<https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/projects/learningconnects>

2. Mapping COVID-19: The overview

https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-07/etf_covid_mapping_v06_1.pdf

3. Mapping COVID-19: The socio-economic impact – The future of skills in the EU neighbourhood

https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-07/mapping_covid_030720_socio_economic_0.pdf

4. Distance digital learning during COVID-19 in ETF partner countries

https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-07/mapping_covid_ddl_050620.pdf

5. Global survey analysis: Changing needs for skills development as a result of COVID-19 (UNIDO-ETF)

<https://lkdfacility.org/resources/global-survey-analysis-changing-needs-for-skills-development-as-a-result-of-covid-19>

The Learning and Knowledge Development Facility (LKDF) of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the ETF launched a global survey to collect information from industries in order to explore the economic impact of COVID-19 and the measures put in place by enterprises.

Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN)

GAN Global Headquarters

1. A Global Collaboration for Digital Skills: COVID-19 and Beyond

To address the widening digital divide, which 2020 exposed, GAN member company Microsoft announced in June 2020, the launch of an initiative to help 25 million people worldwide acquire the digital skills needed in a COVID-19 economy.³⁴ With data gathered through LinkedIn, the top ten tech jobs were identified as, having the greatest number of job openings, steady growth over the past four years, a liveable wage, and requiring skills that can be learned online. In November 2020, GAN Global announced its partnership with Microsoft Philanthropies to conduct a series of skills and industry analyses related to the digital skilling policy landscapes in Australia, Colombia and New Zealand. This will help further the reach of Microsoft's global skills initiative in supporting underrepresented and vulnerable communities in these countries.

<https://www.gan-global.org/post/a-global-collaboration-for-digital-skills-covid-19-and-beyond>

2. Virtual Resources from GAN Global

- Through its media partnership with FE News, GAN Global was featured on the radio show #SkillsWorld Live to showcase what the skills sector has learnt in dealing with COVID-19.³⁵

³⁴ A blog post on Microsoft's initiative to help 25 million people worldwide acquire the digital skills needed in a COVID-19 economy is available at <https://blogs.microsoft.com/blog/2020/06/30/microsoft-launches-initiative-to-help-25-million-people-worldwide-acquire-the-digital-skills-needed-in-a-covid-19-economy/>

³⁵ The episode on *What lessons has the FE and the skills sector learnt so far about dealing with Covid-19?* is available at https://www.spreaker.com/user/fenews/what-lessons-has-the-fe-and-the-skills-s?utm_medium=widget&utm_source=user%3A11502738&utm_term=episode_title. The episode on *How are other countries skills systems battling the pandemic?* is available at <https://www.fenews.co.uk/fevoices/224-podcasts/48684-how-are-other-countries-skills-systems-battling-the-pandemic-episode-27-skillsworldlive#.Xtf3FLhmXmw.linkedin>

- GAN Global Chair, Laurent Freixe, Executive Vice President and CEO Zone Americas of Nestlé contributed an article on the private sector response to the pandemic.³⁶
<https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/resource-details/Blogs/754>
- GAN Global Webinar Series on Work-Based Learning Adaptation Strategies to COVID-19:
 - What can we do to help a “lockdown generation” transition to labour markets post COVID-19?: This was the main issue addressed with high-level stakeholders from public and private spheres and youth representatives from across the globe in an online discussion held in July 2020: <https://www.gan-global.org/post/what-can-we-do-to-help-a-lockdown-generation-transition-to-labour-markets-post-covid-19>
 - Work-based Learning Innovations and Solutions to COVID-19: Lessons learnt from the digital sector, international organisations, intermediaries, employers and governments. Examples from the UK, Australia, Switzerland, and Kenya: <https://www.gan-global.org/post/work-based-learning-innovations-and-solutions-to-covid-19>
 - Digital Skilling in the Time of Covid-19 - Innovations and Outreach: <https://www.gan-global.org/post/digital-skilling-in-the-time-of-covid-19-innovations-and-outreach>
 - Youth Training and Employment in the time of COVID-19: <https://www.gan-global.org/post/youth-training-and-employment-in-the-time-of-covid-19>
 - Driving Work-Based Learning Solutions for Africa - COVID-19 and Beyond: GAN Global in partnership with the African Union Commission, the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and the British Council convened a webinar in August, linked to International Youth Day, to engage on current policy and practical solutions to COVID-19. <https://www.gan-global.org/post/driving-work-based-learning-solutions-for-africa-covid-19-and-beyond>

GAN Networks

1. GAN Argentina Trains Teachers Virtually³⁷

In partnership with the Varkey Foundation, GAN Argentina launched a country-wide, one-month virtual training program to develop and enhance the knowledge and capacity of 500 teachers in relation to work-based learning programs and its benefits for youth.

<https://uia.org.ar/eventos/35/>

2. GAN Costa Rica Offers Free Access to a Digital Knowledge Platform

In partnership with Accenture Costa Rica and the Universidad Técnica Nacional (UTN) of San Carlos, GAN Costa Rica kicked off a new pilot project that will allow 15 UTN students free access to the Accenture online platform for digital knowledge and soft skills courses for youth.

3. GAN Costa Rica's Online Workshops

As a follow-up to its project focused on developing strategic skills for youth employability, GAN Costa Rica launched a new project phase that seeks, through online workshops, to introduce youth, especially girls from vulnerable backgrounds, to the STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, math) disciplines.³⁸

4. GAN France

³⁶ The ILO Decent Jobs for Youth Blog Series is available at <https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/blogs>

³⁷ For Argentina and Costa Rica, funding is provided by the USDOL under cooperative agreement number IL-29557-16-75-K-1. This material does not necessarily reflect the views or policies on the USDOL, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government.

³⁸ A video on the project is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=6wfr0ksefAM>

The French Government announced several measures to promote youth employment and apprenticeships, in response to the pandemic.

<https://www.gan-france.org/newsletter-gan-juillet-2020>

5. GAN Australia

The Department of Education and Training (DET) has commissioned the Apprenticeship Employment Network (AEN) Victoria, the peak body for GAN Australia and group training employers, to develop and administer a programme for “retrenched” apprentices and trainees that have been impacted by the pandemic.

<https://aen.org.au/outoftrade/>

International Labour Organization (ILO)

The ILO has a dedicated webpage on COVID-19 and the world of work, which consists of the latest news, publications, updated assessments of the impact of COVID-19 on economies and labour markets, as well as policy recommendations at the global, regional and country levels:

<https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/lang--en/index.htm>

Below is a list of publications, projects and activities related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on skills development, education and training.

1. ILO-GAN webinar and blog post on work-based learning innovations and solutions to COVID-19

The webinar took place on 7 April 2020, with the aim of understanding how businesses, governments, intermediaries and international organizations were adapting to the massive and sudden disruption to workforces caused by COVID-19. The webinar discussion is summarized in a blog post, which highlights examples from the Australia, Kenya, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. A blog post on the webinar is available on the GAN website:

<https://www.gan-global.org/post/work-based-learning-innovations-and-solutions-to-covid-19>

2. ILO-UNESCO-WBG survey for TVET providers, policymakers and social partners on addressing the COVID-19 pandemic

https://www.ilo.org/skills/Whatsnew/WCMS_740668/lang--en/index.htm

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on good practices and facilitate knowledge sharing to help countries around the world mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the areas of education and training. The survey targets providers of initial and continuing TVET, policymakers and social partners.

A report on the early results of the survey is available on the ILO website:

https://www.ilo.org/skills/Whatsnew/WCMS_742817/lang--en/index.htm

3. E-discussion: Continuing online learning and skills development in times of the COVID-19 crisis (27 March–17 April 2020)

https://www.skillsforemployment.org/KSP/en/Discussions/EDMSP1_256625

This discussion invites government representatives, employers’ and workers’ organizations, education and training providers, NGOs and individuals, among others, to share and discuss how to maintain continued learning and skills building for students and workers in times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. It aims to explore relevant and timely innovative practices in distance and online education and training

4. Skills for Employment Policy Brief: Distance and online learning during the time of COVID-19

https://www.ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS_743485/lang--en/index.htm

This article reflects on some of the innovative solutions being adopted in TVET along three policy streams and discusses how to ensure that the lessons learnt have a lasting and positive effect on TVET, skills development and lifelong learning.

5. Employment support continues with the Work Based Learning Programme

https://www.ilo.org/ankara/news/WCMS_757282/lang--en/index.htm

The ILO supports employment opportunities with the recently launched Work Based Learning Programme. Through this comprehensive and inclusive Programme, employers and job-seekers are supported in coping with the difficulties they face due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. Massive open online course (MOOC) on Quality Apprenticeships (29 June–16 August 2020)

With the goal of improving the access and delivery of knowledge products on apprenticeships, the ILO, in partnership with the ITCILO, has launched a seven-week MOOC on Quality Apprenticeships. The primary objective of the MOOC on Quality Apprenticeships was to support policymakers and practitioners in the design and implementation of quality apprenticeships in the fast-changing world of work and to address challenges posed by COVID-19. It provided participants from over 125 countries with an opportunity to establish a global network of policymakers and practitioners for the sharing of experience and innovative practices through webinars and forum activities.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The OECD has set up a dedicated COVID-19 webpage where briefs, editorials, projections are available:

<https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/en/#id-4>

1. Supporting people and companies to deal with the Covid-19 virus: Options for immediate employment and social-policy response

<https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/supporting-people-and-companies-to-deal-with-the-covid-19-virus-options-for-an-immediate-employment-and-social-policy-response-d33dffe6>

This brief is accompanied by an overview table of countries' policy responses. This will be continuously updated, and can be downloaded from the OECD website using the following weblink:

<http://www.oecd.org/social/Covid-19-Employment-and-Social-Policy-Responses-by-Country.xlsx>

2. Flattening the Covid-19 peak: Containment and mitigation policies

https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=124_124999-yt5ggxirhc&Title=Flattening%20the%20COVID-19%20peak:.Containment%20and%20mitigation%20policies

3. VET in a time of crisis: Building foundations for resilient vocational education and training systems

<http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/vet-in-a-time-of-crisis-building-foundations-for-resilient-vocational-education-and-training-systems-efff194c>

4. Public Employment Services on the frontline for employees job seekers and employers

<http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/public-employment-services-in-the-frontline-for-employees-jobseekers-and-employers-c986ff92>

5. Coronavirus school closures: What do they mean for student equity and inclusion?

<https://oecdeditoday.com/coronavirus-school-closures-student-equity-inclusion>

6. Learning remotely when schools close: How well are students and schools prepared? – Insights from PISA

<http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/learning-remotely-when-schools-close-how-well-are-students-and-schools-prepared-insights-from-pisa-3bfd1f7>

7. A framework to guide an education response to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020

https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=126_126988-t63lxosohs&title=A-framework-to-guide-an-education-response-to-the-Covid-19-Pandemic-of-2020

8. The potential of online learning for adults: Early lessons from the COVID-19 crisis

<https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/the-potential-of-online-learning-for-adults-early-lessons-from-the-covid-19-crisis-ee040002>

9. Skill measures to mobilize the workforce during the COVID-19 crisis

<https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/skill-measures-to-mobilise-the-workforce-during-the-covid-19-crisis-afd33a65>

10. Strengthening online learning when schools are closed: The role of families and teachers in supporting students during the COVID-19 crisis

<http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/strengthening-online-learning-when-schools-are-closed-the-role-of-families-and-teachers-in-supporting-students-during-the-covid-19-crisis-c4ecba6c>

11. Adult learning in times of lockdown: How much informal and non-formal training do workers miss when at home? (issued in coming weeks)

12. Teaching and learning in VET: The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the use of digital technologies (issued in coming weeks)

Forthcoming projects with a COVID-19 focus

- An analysis of Enterprise Strategies towards Training, through case studies, taking place in the fall of 2020. Interviews explore changes brought about by the COVID-19 crisis.
- A study of Career Guidance policies, including changes due to COVID-19, based on a questionnaire distributed to policymakers. In the field (report expected in fall 2020).
- A survey of adult attitudes towards Career Guidance, including changes in attitudes brought about by the COVID-19 crisis (results expected in fall 2020).
- Workshop on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Training, with a focus employing AI to broaden the use of online learning (planned for 27 November 2020 in Paris).
- Skills Outlook 2021: Learning through uncertainty (to be published in the Spring of 2021).

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

1. Global Education Coalition

<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/globalcoalition>

The Global Education Coalition, launched by UNESCO, is a platform for collaboration and exchange to protect the right to education during this current unprecedented disruption and beyond. It brings together more than 140 members from the UN family, civil society, academia and the private sector to ensure that #LearningNeverStops. Coalition members are encouraged to rally around three flagships, namely, connectivity, teachers and gender, as well as support specific causes, including the educational recovery following the deadly explosion in Beirut in 2020.

2. Global Skills Academy

<https://globaleducationcoalition.unesco.org/global-skills-academy>

Global Skills Academy aims to help one million young people build skills for employability and resilience between 2020 and 2021. Free and high-quality online training is offered by members of the Global Education Coalition, curated by UNESCO. UNESCO's specialized institute for technical and vocational education and training (UNEVOC) will match learners with Academy training by leveraging partnerships with over 250 vocational centres located in more than 160 countries. Individual learners can also access training independently.

3. UNESCO COVID-19 Education issue notes

<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/issuenotes>

UNESCO Education Sector's issue notes cover key topics related to the COVID-19 education response. They provide evidence of good practice, practical tips and links to important references to mitigating the short- and longer-term impact of school closures. The issue notes are prepared collectively by UNESCO education colleagues around the world and cover several topics under nine thematic areas, namely: health and well-being; continuity of learning and teaching; gender equity and equality; teaching and learning; higher education and TVET; education and culture; education policy and planning; vulnerable populations, as well as global citizenship education and education for sustainable development.

4. TVET peer support in response to COVID-19: Resources and services (UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre)

<https://unevoc.unesco.org/home/COVID-19%20disruptions>

World Bank Group (WBG)

1. TVET Systems' Response to COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/930861589486276271/tvet-systems-response-to-covid-19-challenges-and-opportunities>

This note focuses on the role of TVET in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides guidance on reducing the adverse impact of the pandemic on TVET provision and enhancing the contribution TVET can make to mitigating the health, social and economic impact of COVID-19.

2. How are Youth Employment Programs Adapting to COVID-19?

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34703>

This brief highlights the different ways in which youth employment projects are adapting strategies and delivery models in response to COVID-19. Six main trends used by programmes to maintain operational and programmatic continuity are visible, namely: scaling of virtual operations; crowdsourcing ideas from youth; accelerating remote learning; encouraging youth voice; increasing support for MSMEs; and leveraging new growth opportunities.

3. Europe and Central Asia Economic Update, Fall 2020: COVID-19 and Human Capital

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34518>

This analysis examines human capital outcomes in Europe and Central Asia and the ways in which they are likely to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It suggests that modernizing the foundations of education systems, improving access to and the quality of tertiary education, and reducing adult risk factors for health are key for the region.

4. Multi-modal TVET Delivery during COVID-19: Expanding Access to Continued Learning in Afghanistan

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/education/multi-modal-tvet-delivery-during-covid-19-expanding-access-continued-learning-afghanistan>

The World Bank and Afghanistan's TVET Authority developed an Alternative Learning Plan to ensure its 60,000 students can stay connected to the TVET system.

5. Managing the Employment Impacts of the COVID-19 Crisis: Policy Options for Relief and Restructuring

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34263>

This note discusses policy options for managing the employment impacts of the COVID-19 crisis which are aimed at relief and restructuring. The note pays attention to the labour market and the institutional context of most low- and middle-income countries where informality is widespread and where existing institutions often lack mechanisms to effectively reach businesses and workers in the informal economy. The note covers complementary policies aimed in the relief phase at: (a) helping businesses survive and retain workers; (b) providing protection for those who lose their jobs and see their livelihoods significantly affected; and (c) facilitating alternative employment and employability support for those out of work (collectively known as active labour market programmes, ALMP). The note further differentiates between, on the one hand, these relief responses and, on the other, the restructuring response when countries start to re-open businesses and policies need to support firms and workers transition to a "new normal", which is hopefully a "better normal" and one that supports a resilient recovery.

6. Confronting the Jobs Impacts of COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

<https://www.jobsanddevelopment.org/confronting-the-jobs-impacts-of-covid-19-coronavirus>

A blog series that draws on the best practices learned from previous crises. It takes into account what changes are necessary for a crisis rooted in a health emergency and one that calls for people to stop work. It also highlights options available for the labour markets of those low- and middle-income countries with high informality rates for jobs and firms.

7. Education and COVID-19

The World Bank has dedicated websites that compile all relevant up-to-date resources on Education and COVID-19: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/coronavirus>

► Appendix IV: Country initiatives

Listed below are some country examples of the support provided by governments in order for apprenticeship training to continue during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Austria – Government grant (approx. 20 million euros)
<p>The government granted support to any apprentice employed from 16 March 2020 to 31 October 2020. Companies received a €2,000 bonus for each new apprentice in order to save about 10,000 at-risk apprenticeship places.³⁹</p>
Australia – Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements wage subsidy (\$1.2 billion Australian dollars)
<p>To assist with the recovery from the impact of COVID-19, the Australian Government is providing support to employers who engage a new Australian apprentice.</p> <p>The AUD\$1.2 billion Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements wage subsidy⁴⁰ will support businesses and Group Training Organisations (GTOs) in taking on new apprentices and trainees, to build a body of skilled workers in support of a sustained economic recovery.⁴¹</p> <p>Any businesses or GTOs that engages an Australian Apprentice on or after 5 October 2020 may be eligible for a subsidy of 50 per cent of the wages paid to an apprentice between 5 October 2020 and 30 September 2021, to a maximum of AUD\$7,000 per quarter.⁴²</p> <p>This assistance will support 100,000 new apprentices across Australia, and is in addition to the Supporting Apprentices and Trainees wage subsidy which is helping SMEs keep their apprentices and trainees in work and in training. SMEs are eligible for a 50 per cent subsidy, for wages paid from 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021.</p>
Canada
<p>The Government of Canada has initiated the following policy measures to support the continuation of apprenticeships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For apprentices (and all other employees across various sectors) who lost their job as a result of COVID-19, the Canadian Government initiated the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). The CERB is a taxable benefit of 2,000 Canadian dollars (CAD) every 4 weeks for up to 24 weeks to eligible workers who have stopped working or whose work hours have been reduced due to COVID-19. • For employers (who employ both apprentices and others), the Government initiated the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) programme. The CEWS covers 75 per cent of an employee's wages – up to CAD\$847 per week – for eligible employers. The CEWS allows employers to re-hire employees and avoid layoffs during the Covid crisis. <p>The Government also revised repayment details for the Canada Apprentice Loans. To support student and apprentice loan borrowers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Canada recently announced a plan to pause the repayment of Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans until 30 September 2020 with no accrual of interest.</p> <p>The Provinces are coming up with different strategies to manage the impact of the COVID-19 on apprenticeship training. For example, the Ontario government is providing grants for apprentices to purchase tools, protective equipment and clothing for their trade. It has also initiated the Loans for Tools Program, which allowed thousands of new apprentices to buy tools, equipment, clothing, manuals and code books required for their trade. The government has given more than CAD\$10 million loans which benefited about 19,000 apprentices.⁴³ In British Columbia, as of 14</p>

³⁹ See news article on the APA-OTS website, https://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20200531_OTS0023/kuenftig-2000-euro-bonus-pro-neuen-lehrling.

⁴⁰ The Australian Government's scheme is available on the Department of Education, Skills and Employment website, <https://www.employment.gov.au/boosting-apprenticeship-commencements>.

⁴¹ A Fact Sheet summarising the new wage subsidy is available on the Department of Education, Skills and Employment website, <https://docs.employment.gov.au/documents/boosting-apprenticeships-commencements-fact-sheet>.

⁴² Details of the Supporting Apprentices and Trainees scheme are available on the Department of Education, Skills and Employment website, <https://www.employment.gov.au/supporting-apprentices-and-trainees>.

⁴³ See the "New program helps apprentices get the tools they need to get back to work" news item on the ConstructConnect website, <https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/government/2020/05/new-program-helps-apprentices-get-the-tools-they-need-to-get-back-to-work>.

July 2020, the Industry Training Authority (ITA) resumed exams in a majority of communities where safety protocols can be established within venues.

On 8 April 2020, the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF) issued a letter to The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, calling for action to support apprentices facing challenges as a result of the pandemic. The letter can be accessed using the following weblink:

[https://caf-fca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID19 -Min-Qualtrough-.pdf](https://caf-fca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID19-Min-Qualtrough-.pdf)

The CAF also compiled a list of online resources based on submissions by CAF-FCA Members and apprenticeship stakeholders from across Canada. As described by CAF, “these online learning platforms and resources maintain the training momentum and reinforce knowledge for apprentice training impacted by COVID.”⁴⁴

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many training providers and post-secondary institutions in Canada were already delivering programmes for some trades online, either entirely or in a blended model with some in-class training. Following the outbreak of the pandemic, they continue to explore “hands-off” education and training options using virtual delivery to keep apprentices on track, while ensuring the safety and health of apprentices and instructors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to continue with practical training, technical trade schools in Canada are quickly adapting their training model for various trades, such as welding, mechanics, electrical, carpentry or even hair cutting, using virtual reality (VR) or by sending additional equipment to apprentices.⁴⁵

Some apprenticeships agencies have developed specific strategies for continuing apprenticeships and have provided updates on their websites, for example:

- Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (<https://nsapprenticeship.ca/agency/covid-19-information>)
- Apprenticeship Manitoba (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/wd/apprenticeship>)

Denmark – Employers’ Education Grant (725 million euros)

A tripartite agreement re-allocated a surplus from Employers’ Education Grant (AUB) to provide a wage subsidy scheme for apprenticeships.⁴⁶ From 1 May until the end of 2020, companies received 75 per cent of apprentice salaries. Wage subsidies were also granted for new agreements, respectively 45 per cent for short agreements and 90 per cent for ordinary education agreements. Furthermore, all employers received an extraordinary subsidy to support the continued creation of apprenticeships.

France – Additional state support (1 billion euros)

State support for hiring apprentices under 18 years of age to be raised to €5,000 from €4,125 and for apprentices aged 18 years or over to €8,000 from €5,125.⁴⁷

Germany – Support to SMEs (0.5 billion euros)

The Government foresees SMEs receiving a one-time premium of €2,000 for each newly concluded training contract and €3,000 for additional new training contracts. SMEs that are unable to continue training on their premises will be given a temporary subsidy to continue training apprentices in a joint inter-company training centre. In addition, companies that take on apprentices who are unable to continue training due to the insolvency of their training company will receive a take-over bonus.

India – Reimbursement of stipend

The Indian government announced that it will reimburse 25 per cent of the stipend given to 240,000 apprentices deployed in various industries and asked the companies to not cut the amount of a stipend amount during the current lockdown period.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ “Trades training goes virtual” is available on the British Columbia ITA website, <https://www.itabc.ca/success-stories/trades-training-goes-virtual>.

⁴⁵ See the news item “COVID-19: Trades schools are thriving in the new normal” is available on the *Vancouver Sun’s* website, <https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/0608-covid-industrial-arts>.

⁴⁶ See the “COVID-19” overview of important initiatives available on the Danish Government’s, Ministry of Employment website, <https://bm.dk/arbejdsomraader/aktuelle-fokusomraader/covid-19>.

⁴⁷ See the news article “France to spend 1 billion euros to boost apprenticeships” on the *Reuters* website, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france-apprentices/france-to-spend-1-billion-euros-to-boost-apprenticeships-idUSKBN23B2VS>.

⁴⁸ See the news article “COVID-19: Government to reimburse 25% stipend of 2.4 lakh apprentices deployed in industries” available on the *Mint* website, <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/govt-to-reimburse-25-stipend-of-2-4-lakh-apprentices-deployed-in-industries-11585664768520.html>.

New Zealand – Government fund (NZ \$52 billion)

The Government has allocated NZ\$52 billion to measures that mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on businesses and communities, and support the long-term recovery of the country's economy. The fund targets a number of recipients and areas, including Maori and Pacifica communities, health and mental health, education, businesses, large industrial projects and the re-deployment of workers who have lost their jobs.

Concerning staff training, apprenticeships and internships/traineeships, the fund provides for the following:

- A wage subsidy for any business impacted by both lockdowns to date. This enabled businesses, including trades, to continue paying workers and apprentices. It also was aimed at reducing the number of job losses.
- Technology Access Fund for Learners to help training providers support learners to continue to access tertiary education and training disrupted by COVID-19. This also encouraged training providers to place education materials online for apprentices to access during the lockdown periods.
- A fund for English language schools to help increase demand for English language training. The funding will also help with upskilling and improving the employability of migrants and dependents of New Zealand citizens and residents.
- Tax relief is being given to SMEs to assist with cash flow.
- Apprenticeship Boost is a payment to help employers both keep and take on new apprentices so that apprentices can continue training and receive qualifications as the economy recovers from the impact of the pandemic. The payment is made directly to employers.
- Apprentices who lost their jobs due to the lockdown are given a Grace Period of 16 weeks during which they can continue training while finding another employer with whom to resume the apprenticeship.

An income relief package is available to anyone who has lost their job due to the pandemic.

South Africa - Grant for Artisan Apprenticeships increased by 25 per cent

On 8 October 2020, the Director General of the Department of Higher Education and Training released a formal circular announcing that the grant available for employers to support apprenticeships would increase from the then current level of 165,000 rand over three years to a revised level of R206,290 over three years, an increase of 25 per cent.⁴⁹ This is the largest adjustment to this grant since its inception in 2013 and a direct support by national government enabling employers to continue training apprentices.

The South Africa blueprint for economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, known as the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, also highlights the shift towards a more demand-led approach to the benefit of work-based learning, including apprenticeships.

United Kingdom – Incentive for hiring apprentices

In England, employers who hire a new apprentice between 1 August 2020 and 31 January 2021 received a payment of £2,000 for apprentices aged 16 to 24, or £1,500 for apprentices aged 25 and over. This payment is in addition to the £1,000 that employers already received for hiring an apprentice.⁵⁰

In Northern Ireland, apprentice electrician places were down almost 50 per cent since the outbreak of the pandemic, trainee motor mechanic places dropped by 36 per cent, while engineering apprenticeships were down a massive 77 per cent. Just before lockdown there were 7,714 apprentices in Northern Ireland, the vast majority aged 16–24. However, about 4,500 of these have been furloughed at the time of writing, while almost 250 have been laid off.⁵¹

Under a new Department for the Economy (DfE) scheme, employers in Northern Ireland are to be paid up to £3,700 for each apprentice worker they train and retain. This could amount to around 25 per cent of an apprentice's annual wage.

⁴⁹ The South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan is available on the South African Government website, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202010/south-african-economic-reconstruction-and-recovery-plan.pdf.

⁵⁰ See the "Incentive payments for hiring a new apprentice" report on the Apprenticeships Directory website, <https://www.apprenticeshipsdirectory.com/blog/incentive-payments-for-hiring-a-new-apprentice>.

⁵¹ See "Coronavirus: NI employers are offered apprentice cash support" on the BBC News website, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-54018532>.

► Appendix V: Useful resources and tools for online and offline distance learning

Below is a list of useful online resources and distance learning portals provided by survey respondents.

General

Distance learning portals

- Alison (<https://alison.com>)
- Canvas (<https://www.canvas.net>)
- Coursera (<https://www.coursera.org>)
- eCornell: Cornell Online Education Programs (<https://www.ecornell.com>)
- edX (<https://www.edx.org>)
- Edmodo (<https://www.edmodo.com>)
- FutureLearn (<https://www.futurelearn.com>)
- Harvard online courses (<https://online-learning.harvard.edu>)
- Ipsos Training center (<https://campus.ipsos-trainingcenter.com>)
- IATA virtual classrooms (<https://www.iata.org/en/training/courses/virtual-classrooms>)
- International Training Centre of the ILO (<https://www.itcilo.org>)
- McGraw Hill University USA Connect portal (<https://www.ecornell.com>)
- LinkedIn learning (<https://www.linkedin.com/learning>)
- Skillshare (<https://www.skillshare.com>)
- The Open University (<http://www.open.ac.uk>)
- Udacity (<https://www.udacity.com>)
- Udemy (<https://www.udemy.com>)

Online tools and resources

- Adobe Connect (<https://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect.html>)
- Basecamp (<https://basecamp.com>)
- CISCO webex (<https://www.webex.com>)
- Chorus call (<https://choruscall.com>)
- Google Classroom (<https://classroom.google.com>)
- Google Meet (<https://meet.google.com>)
- Go to meeting (<https://www.gotomeeting.com>)
- GuruVw (<https://guruvw.com>)
- International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) online learning platform (<https://ecampus.itcilo.org/local/home/index.php>)
- Microsoft teams (<https://www.microsoft.com/en/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software>)
- Moodle (<https://moodle.org>)
- Padlet (<https://padlet.com>)
- Skype (<https://www.skype.com>)

- Zoom (<https://zoom.us>)

Regional level

- EU Learn (<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/cas/login>)

National/local level

- Australia: Apprenticeship Employment Network (<https://www.youtube.com/user/grouptrainingvic>)
- India: JigAshi – a startup training portal to connect Learners, Trainers and Corporate for Skill Development requirement (www.jigashi.com)
- Ireland: Access I.T. (<http://www.accessit.ie>)
- Italy: TRIO (technology, research, innovation and orientation) (www.progettotrio.it)
- Jordan: TVSDC Web site (<http://udv2014.com/TVSD/newdemo1>)
- Spain: Asociación de entidades de educación de personas adultas (FAEA) (<https://www.faea.es>) – a moodle platform for training, collaboration, management and development of projects, both for FAEA and for other entities that do not have online resources and which have been provided with space, advice and human resources to move training offers from face-to-face/in-person education to online
- Tunisia: Sa7ti (<http://www.sa7ti.tn>)
- Uganda: Houston Executive Consulting (<https://www.heconsulting.us>)