



FINAL REPORT
TRACK AND TRACER STUDY
2025/26

Executive Summary

I. Introduction

The 2025/26 CATHSSETA tracer study evaluated the outcomes of CATHSSETA-funded learning programmes, focusing on learner pathways, programme relevance, learner and stakeholder perceptions, operational challenges, and sustainability. The purpose of the study was to provide evidence for improving programme design and ensuring alignment with national development priorities.

II. Methodology and Data Analysis

A cross-sectional tracer survey was conducted using structured questionnaires targeting learners and employers. Data collection combined online surveys and CATI interviews, achieving responses from 325 learners and 118 employers. Analysis employed descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, and thematic coding to identify patterns across demographics, programme types, and provinces.

III. Learner and Employer Profiles

Learners were predominantly youth, with 59 percent aged 26 to 35 and 72 percent female, concentrated in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Western Cape. Employers were mainly small enterprises operating in hospitality, tourism, arts, sports, and conservation sectors.

IV. Summary of Findings by Objective

Objective 1 examined learner pathways and revealed that 45 percent of learners secured employment overall. 28 percent of learners secured full-time employment, 12 percent part-time, and 5 percent became self-employed, while 44 percent remained unemployed. Among those employed, 61 percent found jobs within three months of completing their programmes, and 72 percent reported that their jobs were related to their training.

Objective 2 confirmed programme relevance, with 95 percent of learners recommending the programme and 93 percent of employers affirming alignment with workplace skills needs, although gaps in digital competencies and workplace readiness persist.

Objective 3 focused on perceptions, showing that 79 percent of learners were satisfied with administration and 85 percent of employers were satisfied with learner quality, with positive feedback on coordination and support.

Objective 4 highlighted challenges such as stipend delays, certificate issuance bottlenecks, and limited mentorship capacity, while successes included strong technical and soft skills gains and positive employer evaluations.

Objective 5 assessed sustainability, finding that 86 percent of learners and 91 percent of employers believe the programmes create lasting value, and 98 percent of employers recommend continued investment.

V. Recommendations

Recommendations include embedding digital and soft skills into curricula, strengthening employer partnerships and formalising absorption targets, improving administrative efficiency for stipends and certification, and expanding rural access while institutionalising alumni networks for ongoing support.

VI. Lessons Learned

Regular tracer studies enhance responsiveness and credibility. Employer engagement is critical for effective placements. Urban–rural disparities require targeted outreach, and structured learner support improves long-term outcomes.

VII. Conclusion

CATHSSETA programmes deliver meaningful benefits in skills development and employability, with strong endorsement from learners and employers. However, systemic challenges particularly in job

placement and administrative reliability must be addressed to maximise impact and ensure sustainability.

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List of Abbreviations

CATHSSETA	Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority
CATI	Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HET	Higher Education and Training
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NBI	National Business Initiative
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NPC	Non-Profit Company
PBO	Public Benefit Organisation
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
POPIA	Protection of Personal Information Act
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSET	Post-School Education and Training
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SDA	Skills Development Act
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority

SSP	Sector Skills Plan
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WIL	Work-Integrated Learning

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1. Chapter 1: Introduction

South Africa continues to face persistent challenges of youth unemployment, skills mismatches, and uneven absorption of graduates into the labour market despite progressive policy frameworks. The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 underscores the need for targeted interventions to address these issues, making it essential for the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) to conduct tracer studies that measure its contribution to skills development and the reduction of unemployment.

The 2025/26 tracer study is guided by the Skills Development Act (SDA) No. 97 of 1998, as amended and the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) 2030, which promote evidence-based decision-making across CATHSSETA's diverse sub-sectors. This study focuses on learners who completed CATHSSETA-funded programmes in the 2024/25 financial year, tracking their progression and post-training pathways. The findings will enable CATHSSETA to assess the outcomes of its interventions and provide insights for refining programme design and delivery to better align with national development priorities.

1.1 Constitutional, Legislative, and Policy Mandate

The SDA No. 97 of 1998, as amended, provides for the establishment of Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) for each national economic sector. Its primary aim is to strengthen South Africa's skills base by promoting investment in education and training, while encouraging employer participation in workforce development, particularly for previously disadvantaged groups.

Within this framework, the CATHSSETA was established to develop and implement a nationally recognised Sector Skills Plan (SSP). Through targeted skills development programmes, CATHSSETA serves diverse sub-sectors including Arts, Culture and Heritage; Conservation; Gaming and Lotteries; Hospitality; Sports, Recreation and Fitness; and Tourism and Travel Services. These sectors are vital to economic growth, social cohesion, and the promotion of a uniquely South African identity.

CATHSSETA's mandate is further guided by the NSDP 2030, a sub-plan of the NDP 2030. The NSDP seeks to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality by ensuring that South Africa has adequate, high-quality skills to drive economic growth, employment creation, and social development. As a Schedule 3A public entity under the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), No. 1 of 1999, as amended, CATHSSETA carries a statutory responsibility to ensure its interventions contribute meaningfully to these objectives.

Tracer studies form a critical component of this mandate. They go beyond measuring outputs such as completion rates to assessing outcomes and impacts, tracking employment pathways, programme relevance, and sectoral contributions. This evidence base enables data-driven decisions and strategic planning, ensuring that CATHSSETA's interventions remain aligned with national priorities and effectively address unemployment and skills gaps.

1.2 CATHSSETA Learning Programmes

On an annual basis, CATHSSETA funds and implements a range of skills development programmes aligned with the vision of the NSDP 2030. These interventions aim to improve employability, address sectoral skills gaps, and promote workplace readiness across its diverse sub-sectors. The programmes include:

- *Learnerships* – Structured training combining theoretical learning with practical workplace experience, leading to a SAQA-registered qualification.
- *Internships* – Workplace-based programmes for graduates to gain practical experience aligned with their field of study.
- *Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)* – Placement opportunities for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and university graduates to complete qualifications and enhance employability.
- *Apprenticeships* – Trade-focused programmes combining theory and workplace training over 18 months to three years, culminating in a trade test.
- *Skills Programmes* – Accredited, credit-bearing interventions targeting specific or critical skills, which can contribute towards full qualifications.
- *Bursaries* – Financial support for learners pursuing qualifications relevant to CATHSSETA sub-sectors, offered through higher education institutions and employers.

These programmes collectively aim to build sectoral capacity, strengthen technical and soft skills, and create pathways for sustainable employment. Full details of these interventions are available on the CATHSSETA Learning Programmes portal: <https://cathsseta.org.za/programme>

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary purpose of this tracer study is to evaluate the outcomes of CATHSSETA-funded learning programmes for the 2024/24 financial year. The study is guided by five specific objectives:

1. Determine the post-training pathways of learners who completed CATHSSETA interventions, including employment, further study, and entrepreneurship.
2. Assess the extent to which CATHSSETA learning programmes meet the needs of beneficiaries and align with labour market requirements.
3. Evaluate the experiences and perceptions of learners regarding programme quality, delivery, and impact.
4. Identify key challenges encountered during implementation and highlight successes that contribute to programme effectiveness.
5. Assess whether CATHSSETA interventions create lasting value, improve employability, and support long-term sectoral development.

1.4 Rationale for the Tracer Study

Within the broader South African labour market, the country continues to experience one of the highest unemployment rates globally. The latest Quarterly Labour Force Survey by Statistics South Africa reports a national unemployment rate of approximately 31.4% in the fourth quarter of 2025. Around 7.8 million people officially unemployed and broader measures of labour under-utilisation remain high. Youth unemployment and structural barriers to job creation further exacerbate labour market challenges, suggesting that macro-economic conditions significantly influence employment outcomes beyond the impact of individual training programmes,

CATHSSETA, like other SETAs, implements a wide range of interventions to build sectoral capacity. However, without systematic evidence on learner pathways and programme outcomes, it is difficult to determine whether these interventions effectively address sectoral skills needs or

contribute to the objectives of the NSDP 2030 and the NDP 2030. Persistent challenges such as youth unemployment, skills mismatches, and uneven graduate absorption into the labour market underscore the need for robust evaluation.

Tracer studies provide this evidence by moving beyond output measures (e.g., completion rates) to assess real outcomes such as employment, further study, and entrepreneurial activity, and the relevance of training to labour market needs. They also identify systemic barriers and opportunities for improvement, enabling data-driven decisions and strategic planning. International best practices, as highlighted by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2017) and the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2016), position tracer studies as essential tools for accountability, organisational learning, and continuous improvement. For CATHSSETA, annual tracer studies are critical to refining programme design, strengthening employer partnerships, and ensuring that skills development interventions deliver sustainable impact across its diverse sub-sectors.

1.5 Outline of the report structure

The report comprises five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the study, outlining the policy and institutional context, as well as the objectives and scope. Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature, with a focus on tracer studies and labour market alignment. Chapter 3 describes the methodology, including the research design, sampling, and data collection methods. Chapter 4 presents and discusses the findings, while Chapter 5 provides conclusions and practical recommendations to enhance CATHSSETA learning interventions. The report also includes Appendices containing survey instruments and supporting documents.

2. Chapter 2: Desktop Review

2.1 Introduction

In South Africa, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) promotes tracer studies as part of strengthening monitoring, evaluation, and evidence-based planning within the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system. Research by Kruss et al. (2012) confirms that SETA-led tracer studies help identify skills mismatches, measure the return on investment in training, and guide systemic reforms. For CATHSSETA, conducting periodic tracer studies aligns with national priorities and supports continuous improvement of learnerships, internships, apprenticeships, skills programmes, bursaries, and workplace-based learning interventions.

This chapter synthesises international and South African literature to highlight best practices relevant to the five objectives of the CATHSSETA Track and Tracer Study. Insights from previous evaluations across SETAs and comparable vocational education contexts provide a strong foundation for designing, implementing, and interpreting this study. Building on this understanding, the next section reviews past learnings and key best practices from international and South African tracer studies to inform programme design, implementation, and evaluation for CATHSSETA.

2.2 Past Learnings and Secondary Findings from Literature on Best Practices

UNESCO (2017) and ILO (2016) recognise tracer studies as a vital component of responsive training systems. By tracking graduate experiences, these studies highlight programme strengths and areas requiring adjustment, supporting closer alignment with labour market needs and more sustainable outcomes. In South Africa, the DHET has institutionalised tracer studies within the PSET system to strengthen evidence-based planning and accountability. Insights from DHET's national tracer studies, combined with CATHSSETA's own evaluations, reveal patterns of success and persistent challenges that inform best practices and guide future interventions across the five key objectives of this study as outlined below.

2.2.1 Learner Pathways

Global tracer study literature emphasises the importance of mapping graduate trajectories beyond immediate employment outcomes by combining quantitative indicators with qualitative insights (UNESCO, 2017; JET Education Services, 2016). In South Africa, DHET's TVET Tracer Study (2020) found that N6 graduates achieved employment rates of 54%, compared to 28% for NCV completers, highlighting the role of qualification level and workplace exposure. Similarly, the DHET Graduate Destination Survey (2019) revealed that graduates with structured Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) components were twice as likely to secure employment within six months. CATHSSETA's Chef Artisan Programme, which achieved over 90% employment locally and internationally, illustrates the transformative potential of structured placement pipelines supported by employer partnerships and systematic follow-up mechanisms (CATHSSETA, CAP Implementation Evaluation Study, 2025). Strengthening pathways requires formalised employer absorption targets, longitudinal tracking systems, and integrated career guidance to reduce prolonged job searches.

2.2.2 Programme Relevance

Programme relevance is maximised when curricula are industry-driven and responsive to evolving skills needs. OECD (2019) and INSETA (2024) highlight employer-led curriculum reviews as a critical success factor, while DHET's NSDP 2030 advocates for qualifications aligned to occupational standards and emerging trends. DHET tracer studies confirm that programmes co-designed with industry, such as engineering apprenticeships, achieve higher absorption rates and better wage outcomes. CATHSSETA's tracer findings ([CATHSSETA Annual Report 2023/24](#)) similarly show strong learner satisfaction (95%) and employer confidence (91%), yet gaps persist in workplace readiness and digital competencies. Addressing these gaps requires embedding soft skills, customer engagement, and digital literacy into all learning pathways, alongside sector-specific modules for areas such as sustainability in hospitality and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in tourism.

2.2.3 Beneficiary Perceptions

Understanding learner and employer perceptions is vital for evaluating programme quality and sustainability. UNESCO (2017) and Powell & McGrath (2019) recommend mixed method approaches to capture experiential dimensions such as mentorship quality and workplace integration. DHET's Graduate Destination Survey highlights that learners value practical exposure and mentorship most, while employers emphasise soft skills and adaptability. Similarly, CATHSSETA's previous findings mirror this trend: learners praise facilitator support and hands-on learning, whereas employers identify gaps in professional behaviour. Success stories such as graduates securing international placements through the Chef Programme underscore the value of experiential learning supported by structured mentorship and feedback systems. Programmes should institutionalise feedback loops and mentorship frameworks to enhance responsiveness and learner confidence.

2.2.4 Programme Challenges and Successes

Recurring challenges identified in global and local literature include stipend delays, limited placement capacity, and misalignment between training and workplace realities (ILO, 2016; ETDP SETA, 2021). DHET tracer studies echo these issues, citing administrative inefficiencies and weak employer engagement in rural areas. Yet positive outcomes are evident: DHET's WIL pilots demonstrate that structured workplace exposure significantly improves retention and employability, while HWSETA (2019/20) reported that 92% of respondents improved competency post-training. CATHSSETA beneficiaries similarly report enhanced technical and soft skills, increased confidence, and positive employer perceptions. Strengthening operational efficiency through reliable stipend schedules, digital certificate tracking, and formalised employer agreements is essential to sustaining these gains.

2.2.5 Programme Sustainability

Sustainability extends beyond initial employment to encompass long-term career progression, sectoral retention, and continuous learning. ILO (2016) and OECD (2023) stress the importance of embedded monitoring systems and alumni networks for tracking outcomes over time. DHET's longitudinal pilots confirm that graduates with structured mentorship maintain higher retention in

sector-aligned roles. CATHSSETA's evidence shows strong perceived sustainability, with 86% of learners and 91% of employers endorsing the programme's long-term value. Ensuring this durability requires institutionalising employer retention incentives, expanding alumni networks, and leveraging digital platforms for ongoing engagement and career support.

Table 1: Summary Table Snapshot

Objective	Best Practice	Example / Success Story	Literature Source
Learner Pathways	Structured placement pipelines; longitudinal tracking	DHET WIL pilot: 68% absorption; Chef Artisan Programme: 90% employment	UNESCO (2017); DHET (2020); ILO (2016); (CATHSSETA Chef Artisan Study, 2023)
Programme relevance	Employer-led curriculum reviews; integrate digital & soft skills	DHET NSDP-aligned apprenticeships; CATHSSETA learners: 95% satisfaction	OECD (2019); DHET (2019); INSETA (2024) (CATHSSETA Annual Report, 2024)
Beneficiary Perceptions	Mixed-method feedback loops; mentorship frameworks	DHET Graduate Survey: mentorship valued; CATHSSETA international placements	UNESCO (2017); Powell & McGrath (2019) (CATHSSETA Annual Report, 2024)
Challenges and Successes	SLA-driven stipend schedules; employer MoUs	DHET tracer pilots: improved retention; CATHSSETA strong skills gains	ILO (2016); ETDP SETA (2021), (CATHSSETA Annual Report, 2024)
Sustainability	Alumni networks; employer retention incentives	DHET longitudinal tracking pilots; CATHSSETA 91% employer endorsement	ILO (2016); OECD (2023); Senekal & Munro (2021) (CATHSSETA Annual report, 2024)

2.2.6 Conclusion

This review underscores the critical role of tracer studies in shaping responsive and sustainable skills development strategies. Evidence from global benchmarks, DHET tracer studies, and CATHSSETA's own evaluations highlights both achievements and persistent gaps across the study objectives. While successes such as high learner satisfaction and international placements demonstrate the transformative potential of structured interventions, recurring challenges such as administrative delays and limited alignment with the evolving labour market needs signal areas for improvement. Best practices emerging from the literature advocate for employer-driven curriculum design, integrated soft and digital skills, robust monitoring systems, and strengthened partnerships to ensure long-term impact. These insights provide a solid foundation for the methodological approach and recommendations that follow, positioning CATHSSETA to enhance programme effectiveness and contribute meaningfully to national development priorities.

3. Chapter 3: Methodological Approach

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted to assess the outcomes, challenges, and sustainability of CATHSSETA's learning programmes for the 2024/25 financial year. A cross-sectional tracer survey research design was employed to collect data using a combination of open- and closed-ended questions on the effectiveness, relevance, and overall performance of CATHSSETA-funded interventions. As a methodological approach, the tracer survey enables the tracking of beneficiary transitions after programme completion. This approach offers insights into employment pathways, further study, skills utilisation, and sectoral mobility. In this study, the design allowed for a systematic and structured evaluation of programme outcomes, with specific attention to learner pathways, employment trends, and stakeholder perceptions across the sector. The chapter, therefore, details the research design, target population, sampling strategy, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations, and study limitations.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed a quantitative research approach. Cross-sectional tracer survey is the most suitable data collection approach for this study. This method enables the collection of data from beneficiaries who completed CATHSSETA-funded programmes in the 2024/25 financial year. Structured questionnaires, carved from the project objectives, were employed to obtain standardised responses for both quantitative and qualitative analysis of learner pathways, employment outcomes, and programme relevance, as well as perceptions, challenges, and sustainability factors. Quantitative data was important for objective measurement, numerical analysis, and statistical interpretation, making it ideal for examining patterns and relationships within large datasets. Qualitative research, on the other hand, provided deeper insights into participants' experiences, perceptions, and motivations, helping to explain the context and meaning behind the numbers.

The study employed a census approach based on a full database of all participants provided by CATHSSETA. A census approach aims to reach the entire population of learners at a point in time, and not just a sample. This approach gives CATHSSETA reliable evidence on outcomes,

challenges, and sustainability of its programmes. For easier participation, surveys were conducted using the Avoxi Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system.

3.3 Target Population and the Achieved Sample

The target population for the 2025/26 CATHSSETA tracer study comprised all learners and employers who participated in CATHSSETA-funded programmes during the 2024/25 financial year. This included beneficiaries of learnerships, internships, Work-Integrated Learning (WIL), bursaries, and skills programmes across CATHSSETA's diverse sub-sectors. In total, the database consisted of 2,557 individual records, with 2,084 learners and 473 employers.

The study adopted a census-based Track and Tracer approach, utilising the complete learner and employer databases provided by CATHSSETA. This method aimed to include all 2,084 learners who completed CATHSSETA-funded programmes in the 2024/25 financial year, as well as 473 employers listed in the database. By targeting the entire population rather than a sample, the approach ensured comprehensive coverage and eliminated selection bias.

Although the intention was to reach all records, practical constraints required setting minimum response targets to ensure statistical validity. For learners, the study aimed to achieve at least 386 completed surveys, matching the previous survey achieved targets. The study exceeded the previous iteration sample size with 443 responses in the previous tracer study. For employers, a target of 100 responses was set to provide sufficient insights into workplace experiences and learner performance.

Final employer participation exceeded expectations, with 118 completed surveys (118% of target), while 325 learner surveys were completed (84% of target) - see Table 2. These figures represent response rates of 15.6% for learners and 24.9% for employers, which align with industry norms for tracer studies (10–20%). The achieved sample size is large and diverse enough to support meaningful analysis across CATHSSETA's sub-sectors.

Table 2: Summary Table of Response Rates

Category	Database Size	Target Sample	Achieved Responses	Completion Rate	Response Rate
Learners	2,084	386	325	84%	15.60%
Employers	473	100	118	118%	24.90%
Total	2,557	–	443	–	–

3.4 Data collection

Data were collected using two structured survey instruments: one designed for learners and another for employers. The instruments were collaboratively finalised by CATHSSETA and Mthente, tested on SurveyMonkey, and administered after a formal fieldworker training session. The primary collection method involved offering an online survey via email, with non-respondents subsequently contacted up to three times via telephonic interviews using the CATI system, which facilitated quality assurance through call monitoring and audio recording. Fieldwork was conducted from 29 October to 13 November 2025.

3.5 Data Analysis

Analysis was conducted using descriptive statistical techniques in Microsoft Excel. Frequencies, percentages, and pivot tables were applied to summarise key trends in employment outcomes, programme satisfaction, and further education pursuits. Pivot tables enabled structured exploration of patterns aligned with the study objectives, ensuring coherence and clarity throughout the evaluation process.

This approach provided a robust evidence base for interpreting learner pathways, programme relevance, beneficiary perceptions, and sustainability indicators, directly linking findings to the five objectives of the study.

3.6 Scope, Limitations and Challenges

This study assessed the usefulness of CATHSSETA funded programmes post-training, examining employment outcomes, programme relevance, and sustainability. While the study achieved strong engagement overall, several limitations emerged. Some learners and employers could not be reached due to incorrect details or network issues, which slightly reduced the sample.

Employer participation was also limited because many were unavailable during working hours. The timing of the survey, conducted during peak operational periods, may have further affected response rates.

To address these challenges in future studies, CATHSSETA should regularly update and verify its databases. They should consider scheduling surveys during less busy periods (e.g., mid-year or post-holidays) to improve employer engagement.

Despite these constraints, the study achieved robust response rates, particularly among employers, providing a rich evidence base for evaluating learner pathways, programme relevance, and perceived value.

3.7 Data Management and Ethics

All research activities adhered to the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA, 2013) and Mthente's data protection standards to safeguard participant privacy and ensure secure handling of personal information. Participation was voluntary, with informed consent obtained before engagement and the option to withdraw at any stage.

Data was anonymised immediately after collection and stored on encrypted systems for exclusive use in this tracer study. Strict data management protocols were followed. This included thorough cleaning to remove incomplete or inconsistent responses and validation against original survey records and the CATHSSETA database to maintain accuracy and integrity. Surveys were designed to minimise participant burden, offering convenient online and telephonic options with no associated risks. The entire process was transparent, ethically sound, and aligned with best practices for confidentiality and responsible research conduct.

4. Chapter 4 Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents the detailed analysis of data collected from learners and employers during the 2025/26 CATHSSETA Track and Tracer Study. Guided by the study objectives, the findings integrate quantitative evidence to provide a comprehensive understanding of programme outcomes, relevance, perceptions, challenges, and sustainability.

The analysis is organised around the five objectives and includes:

- Demographic and participation characteristics of learners
- Post-programme pathways and employment outcomes
- Programme relevance and skill application
- Beneficiary and employer perceptions of programme quality
- Challenges encountered and successes achieved
- Indicators of sustainability and long-term impact

Where applicable, findings are compared with previous CATHSSETA performance trends and national labour market patterns to contextualise results.

4.1 Learner Demographic Profile

The learner survey provides a comprehensive view of the demographic characteristics of beneficiaries who completed CATHSSETA-funded programmes. All 325 respondents confirmed programme completion and voluntarily participated in the study, enabling robust analysis of participation trends.

4.1.1 Gender Distribution

The study shows CATHSSETA's commitment to address transformational imperatives, with female learners forming the majority at 234 learners (72%), compared to male learners at 91 learners (28%). This trend suggests that CATHSSETA programmes are particularly accessible or appealing to women, which aligns with broader efforts to empower women in the tourism, hospitality, and related sectors. However, the lower male participation may indicate a need for targeted strategies to encourage more men to enrol.

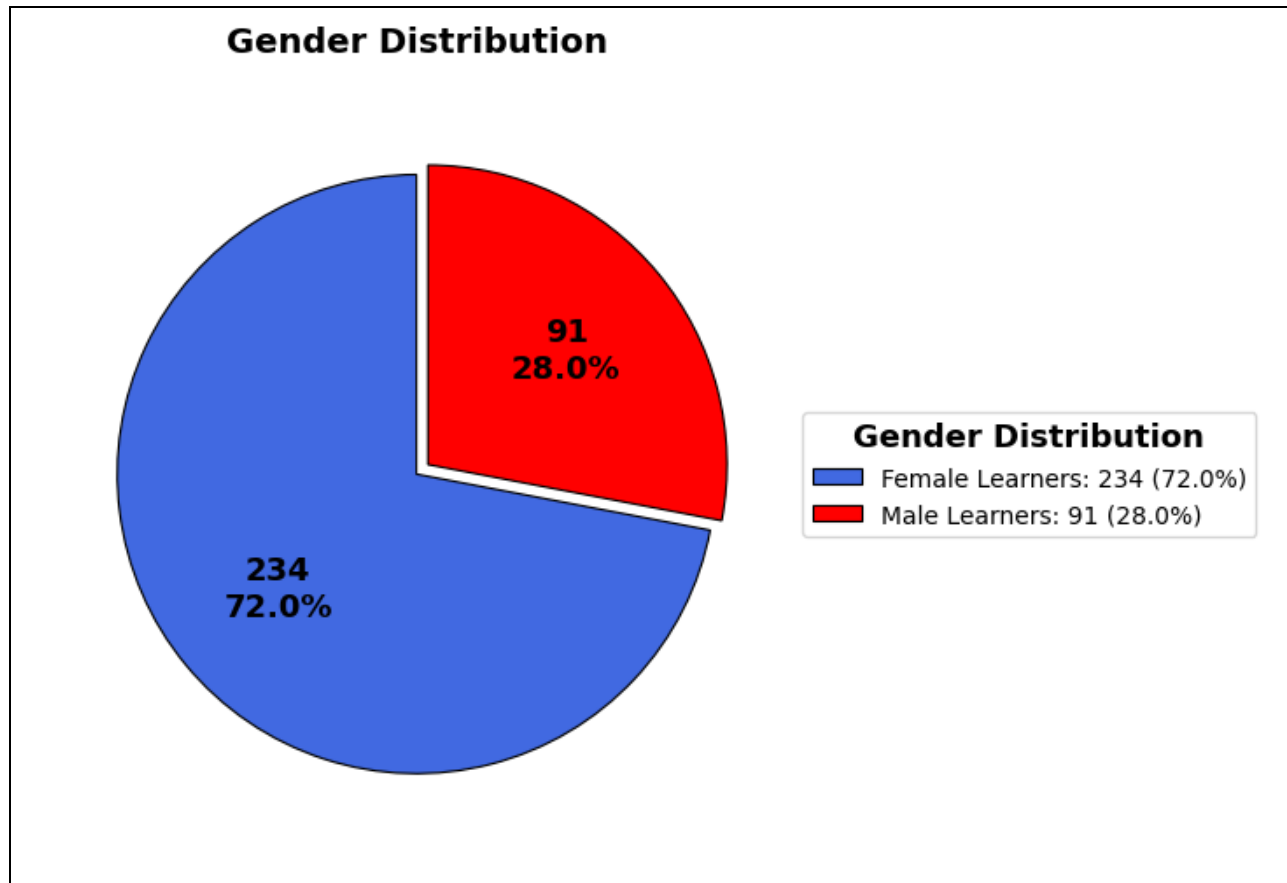


Figure 1 Gender Distribution

The age profile of learners is concentrated in the 26–35 age group (192 learners; 59%), followed by the 18–25 age group (96 learners; 30%). This indicates that most beneficiaries are young adults seeking to establish or advance their careers. Participation drops significantly among older age groups: 36–44 (30 learners; 9%) and 45+ (7 learners; 2%). These figures highlight the importance of youth-focused interventions while also signalling an opportunity to engage older workers who may need reskilling.

4.1.2 Age Group Distribution

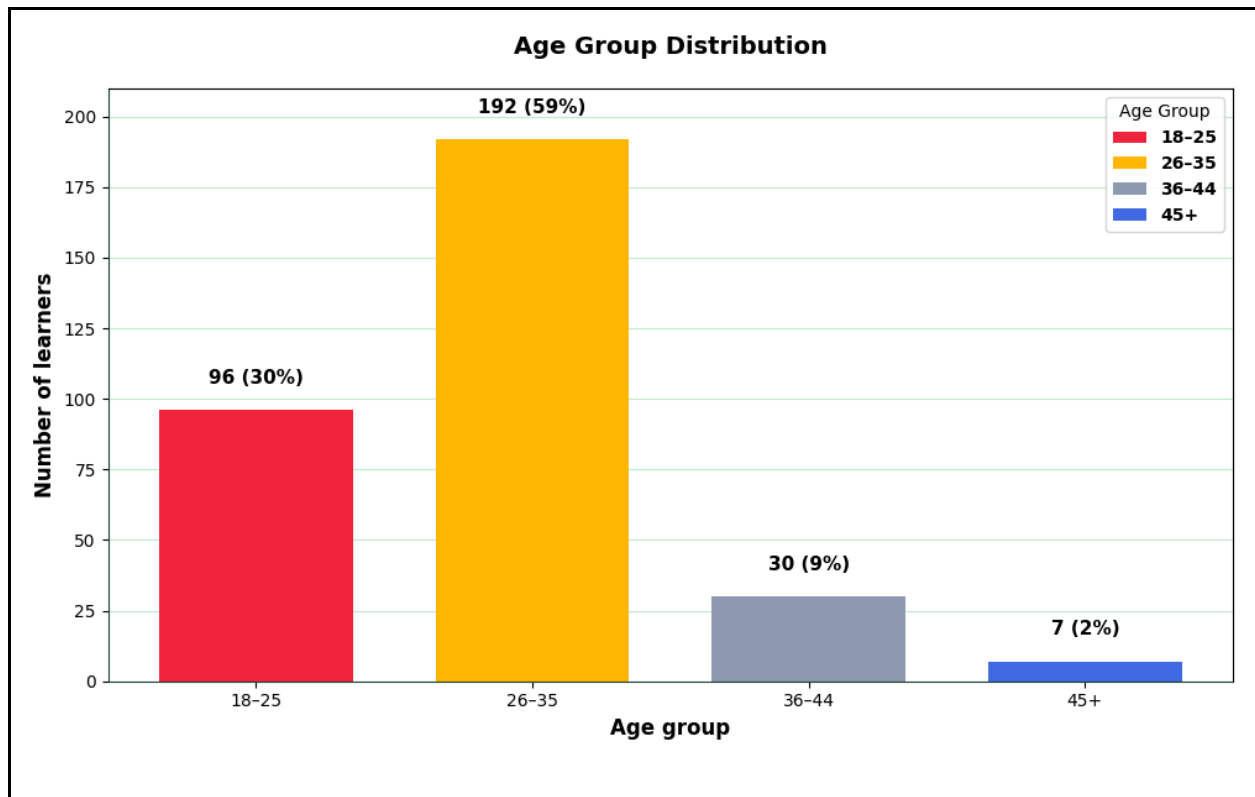


Figure 2 Age Group Distribution

4.1.3 Race

The survey captured race demographics to understand diversity among beneficiaries. Results show the following representation: Black African learners (270; 83.1%), Coloured learners (25; 7.7%), Indian/Asian learners (15; 4.6%), and White learners (15; 4.6%). This pattern aligns with transformation objectives and demonstrates that CATHSSETA programmes are effectively reaching target groups.

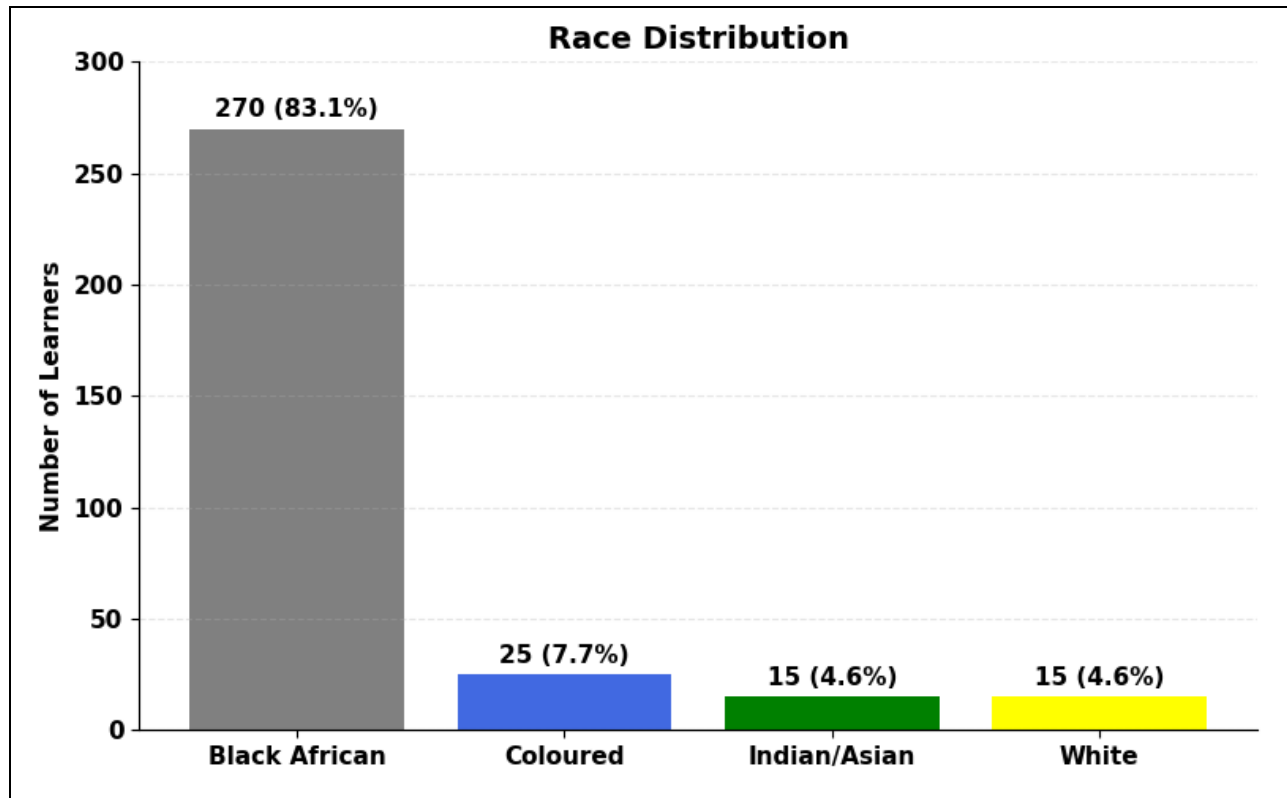


Figure 3 Race Distribution

4.1.4 Provincial Distribution

Geographically, the highest participation comes from Gauteng (78 learners; 24.0%), KwaZulu-Natal (71 learners; 21.8%), Western Cape (46 learners; 14.2%); followed by Limpopo (28 learners; 8.6%), Free State (27 learners; 8.3%), and Mpumalanga (25 learners; 7.7%). Provinces such as Eastern Cape (18 learners; 5.5%) and Northern Cape (11 learners; 3.4%) lag behind. This pattern reflects the concentration of economic activity and training infrastructure in urban centers, suggesting a need for outreach and resource allocation to rural provinces to ensure equitable access.

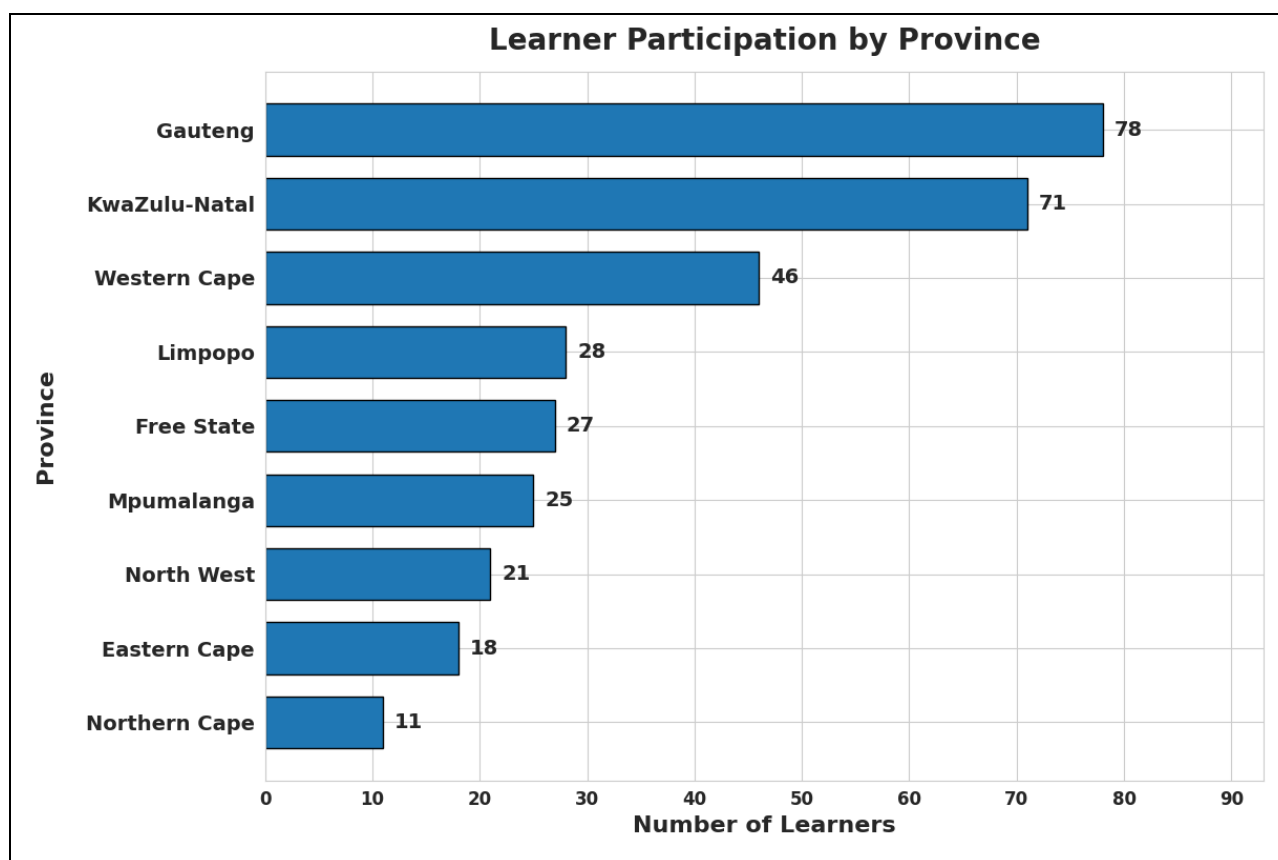


Figure 4 Provincial Distribution

4.1.5 Learner Local Municipalities

Participation is concentrated in metropolitan areas, with the City of Johannesburg (50 learners; 15.4%), eThekweni (45 learners; 13.8%), and City of Tshwane (40 learners; 12.3%) leading the list. Rural municipalities such as Polokwane (20 learners; 6.2%) and Mbombela (15 learners; 4.6%) show lower representation, indicating a need for targeted outreach in remote regions. The limited data restricts the ability to analyse participation at the local level.

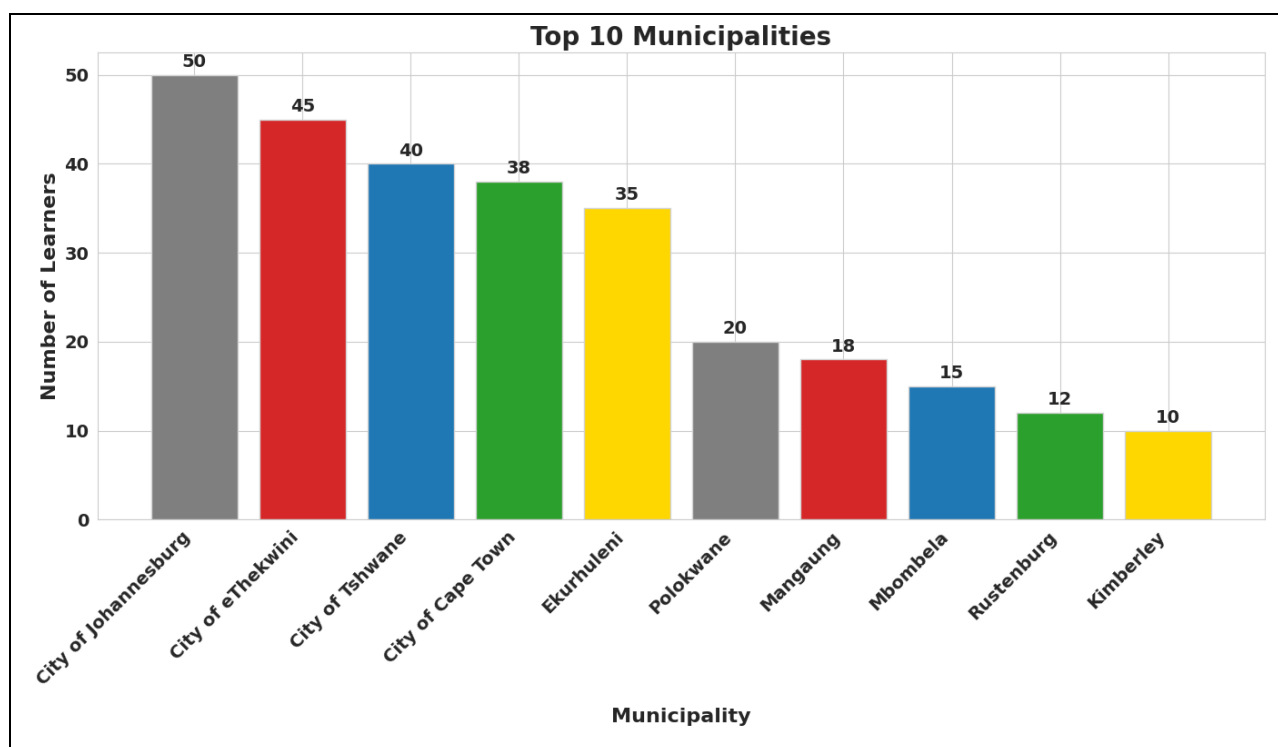


Figure 5 Municipalities

4.1.6 Highest Level of Education Before Programme

Most learners entered the programme with Matric (180 learners; 55.4%), followed by Diploma holders (80 learners; 24.6%) and Degree holders (40 learners; 12.3%). A smaller segment had below a Matric qualification (15 learners; 4.6%), while Postgraduates (10 learners; 3.1%) represent advanced learners. This distribution shows that CATHSSETA programmes cater to multiple education levels, with a strong focus on individuals who have completed secondary education.

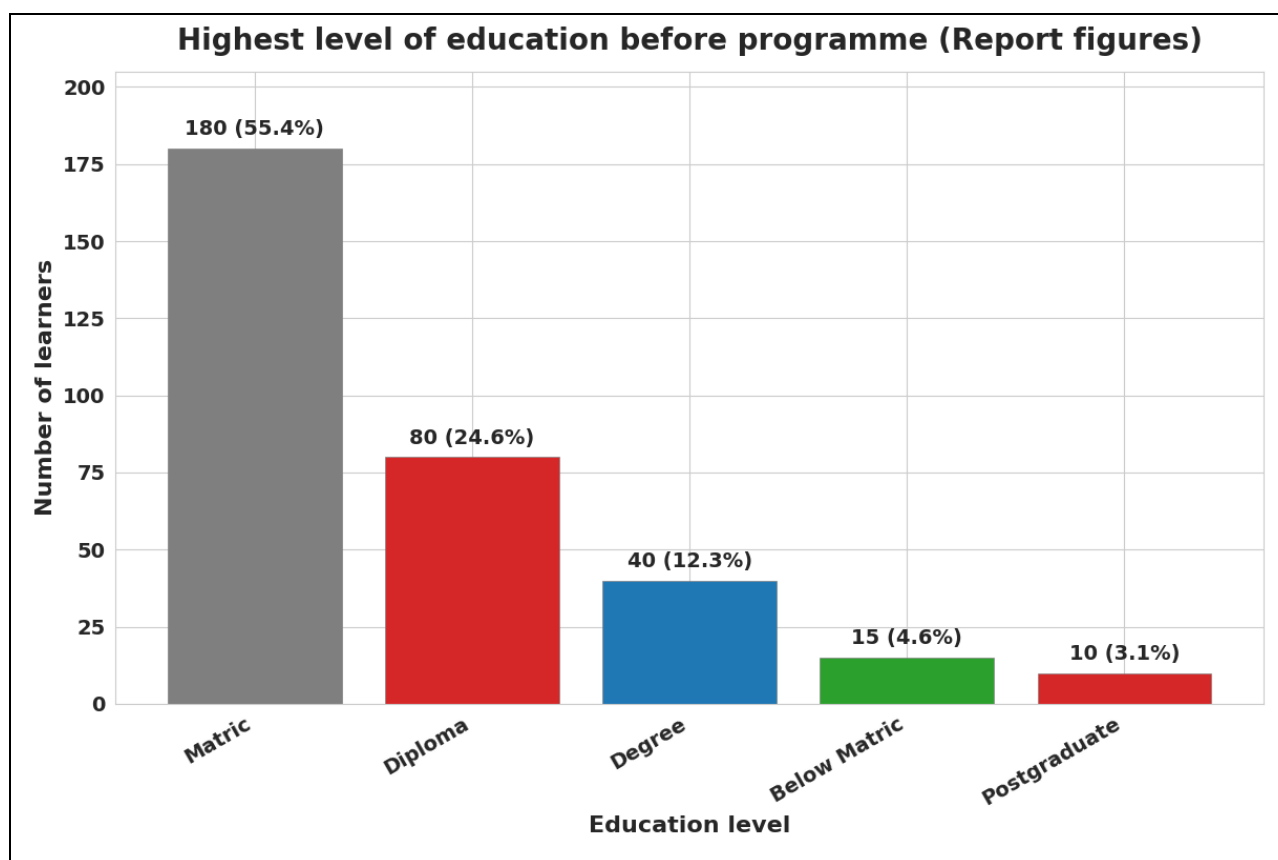


Figure 6 Highest level of Education before Programme

4.1.7 CATHSSETA Programme Completed

Participation is dominated by Internships (131 learners; 40.3%) and Learnerships (100 learners; 30.8%), which together account for over 70% of responses. Smaller but significant contributions come from Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) TVET placements (34 learners; 10.5%), Skills Programmes (30 learners; 9.2%), and Bursaries (23 learners; 7.1%). The “Other” category (6 learners; 1.8%) includes niche programmes such as short courses in hospitality basics, customer service, and specialised training in event management and niche tourism skills. Higher Education and Training (HET) placements were minimal, with only 1 learner (0.3%) recorded.

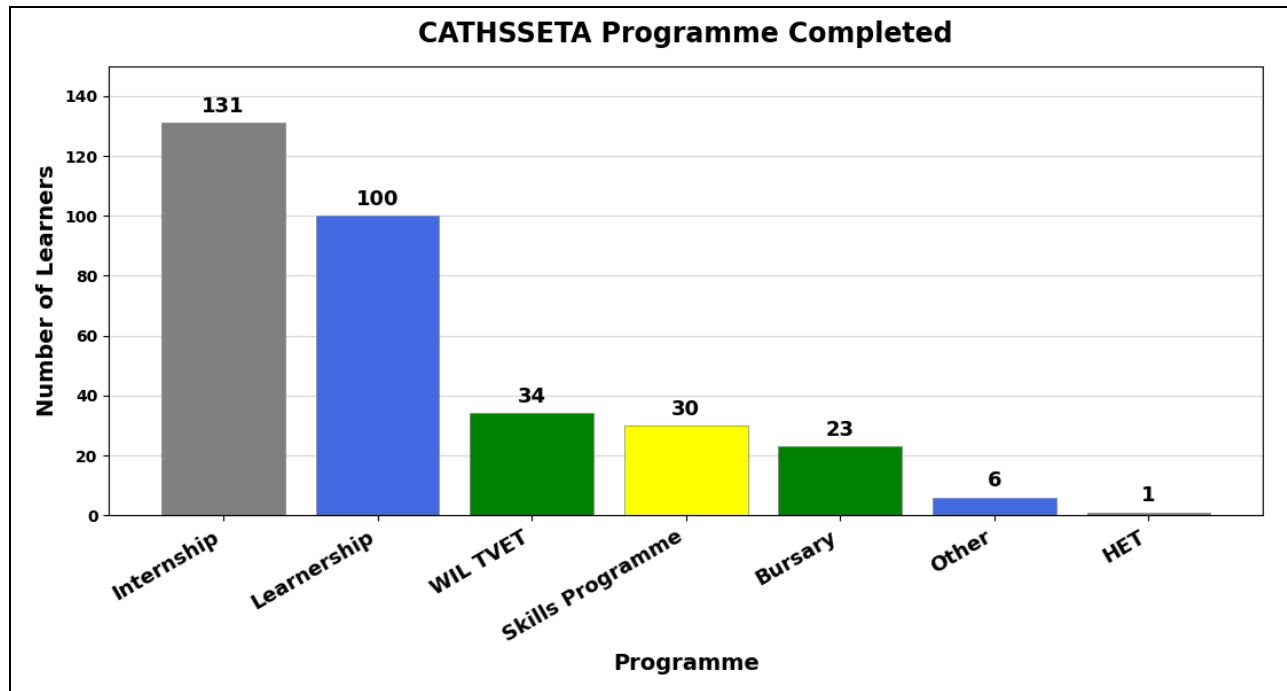


Figure 7 CATHSSETA Programme Completed

4.1.8 Title of Qualification completed

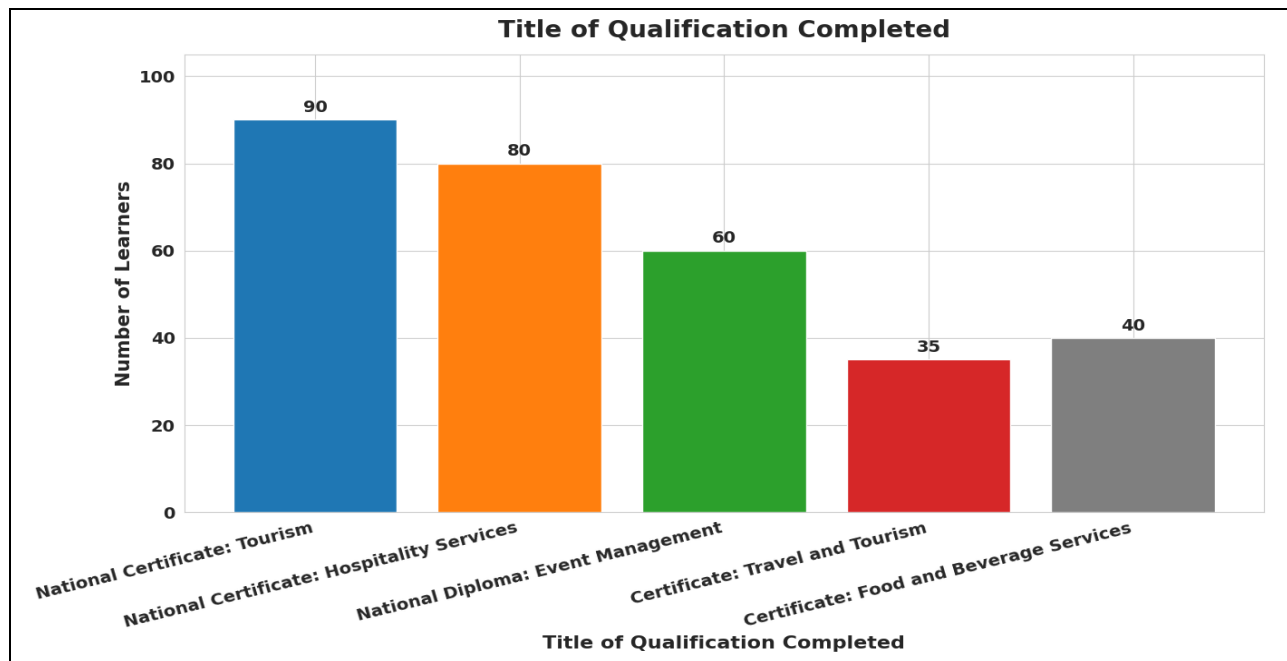


Figure 8 Title of Qualification Completed

The most common qualification completed was National Certificate: Tourism (90 learners; 27.7%), followed by Hospitality Services (80 learners; 24.6%) and Event Management (60 learners; 18.5%). Certificates in Travel and Tourism (55 learners; 16.9%) and Food and Beverage Services (40 learners; 12.3%) also feature prominently, reflecting CATHSSETA's focus on core hospitality and tourism skills. This distribution highlights the strong alignment of programme offerings with sectoral needs, particularly in tourism and hospitality.

4.1.9 NQF Level

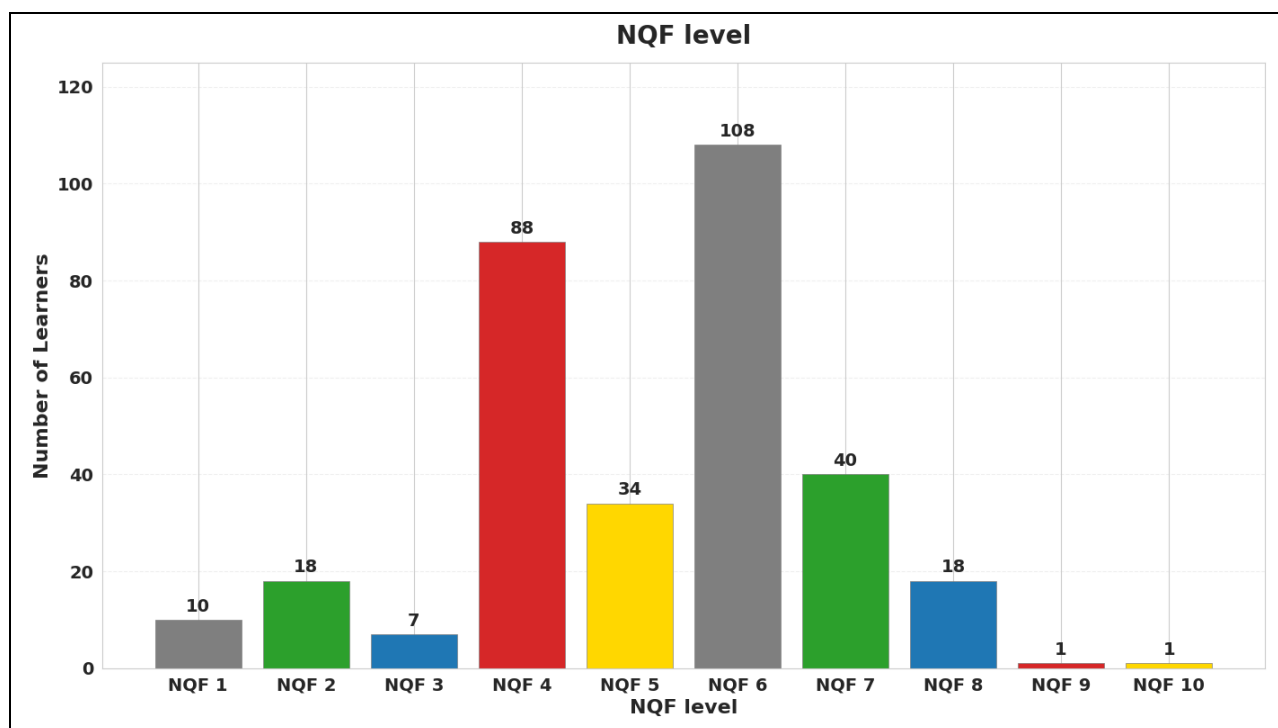


Figure 9 NQF Level

The distribution of NQF levels among respondents shows that most learners completed programmes at NQF Level 6 (108 learners; 33.2%), followed by NQF Level 4 (88 learners; 27.1%) and NQF Level 7 (40 learners; 12.3%). Lower levels (NQF 1–3) and postgraduate levels (NQF 8–10) had minimal participation, together accounting for 89 learners (27.4%) across various categories. This pattern indicates a strong emphasis on mid-level and advanced vocational qualifications, while foundational and high academic tiers remain underrepresented. Key insights highlight that CATHSSETA is effectively meeting industry needs for technical and managerial

skills but needs to strengthen pathways for both entry-level learners and those seeking postgraduate advancement. Recommendations include: (1) expanding access to NQF 1–3 programmes to support individuals with lower educational backgrounds, (2) creating clear progression routes from NQF 4–6 to higher levels, (3) partnering with universities and industry to increase uptake at NQF 7–10, and (4) aligning programme offerings with scarce skills and emerging sectors to improve employability and long-term sustainability.

4.1.10 Year and Month of Enrolment

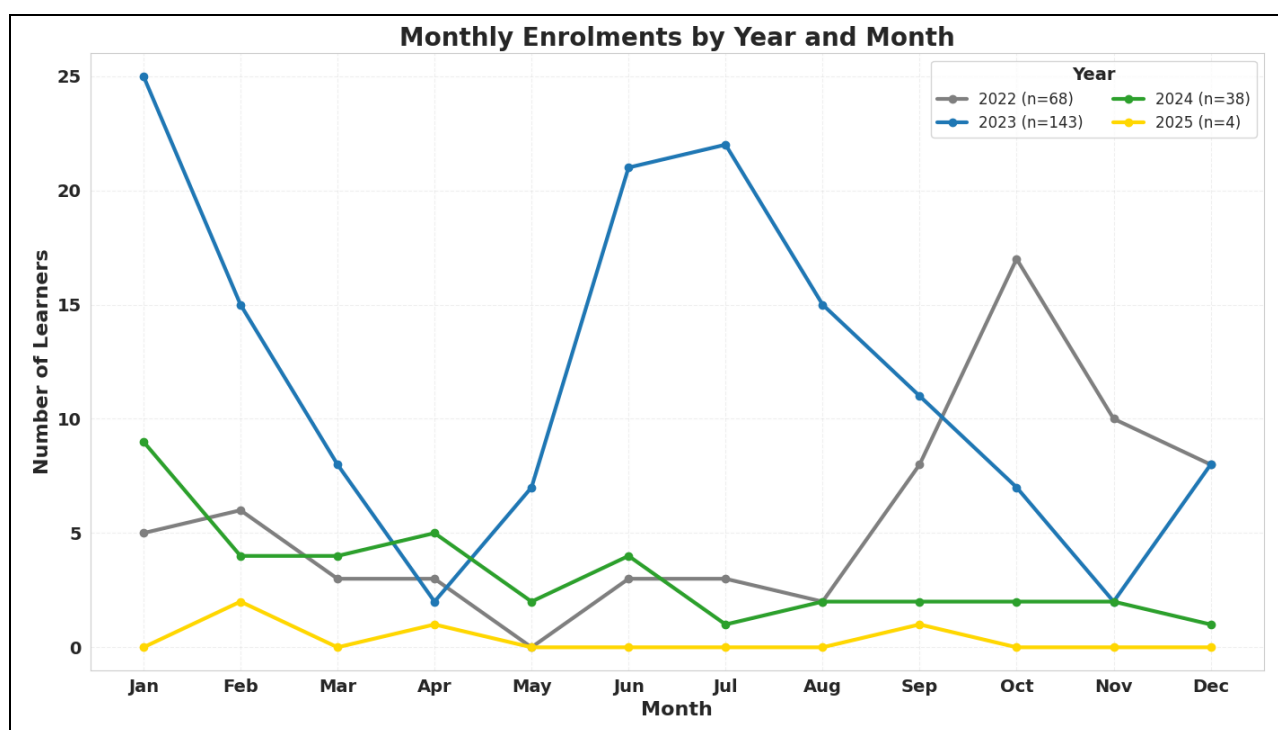


Figure 10 Year and Month of Enrolment

From 2022 to 2025, a total of 253 learners provided valid enrolment data. 2023 dominates with 143 learners (56.5%), followed by 2022 (26.9%) and 2024 (15%). January remains the leading intake month (15.4%), complemented by mid-year peaks in June (11.1%) and July (10.3%), and a late-year surge in October (10.3%). These patterns suggest strategic planning should prioritize early-year and mid-year resource allocation, while October campaigns can capture late-year enrolments. Low-volume months such as May (3.6%) offer opportunities for administrative catch-up and learner engagement.

4.1.11 Year of Completion

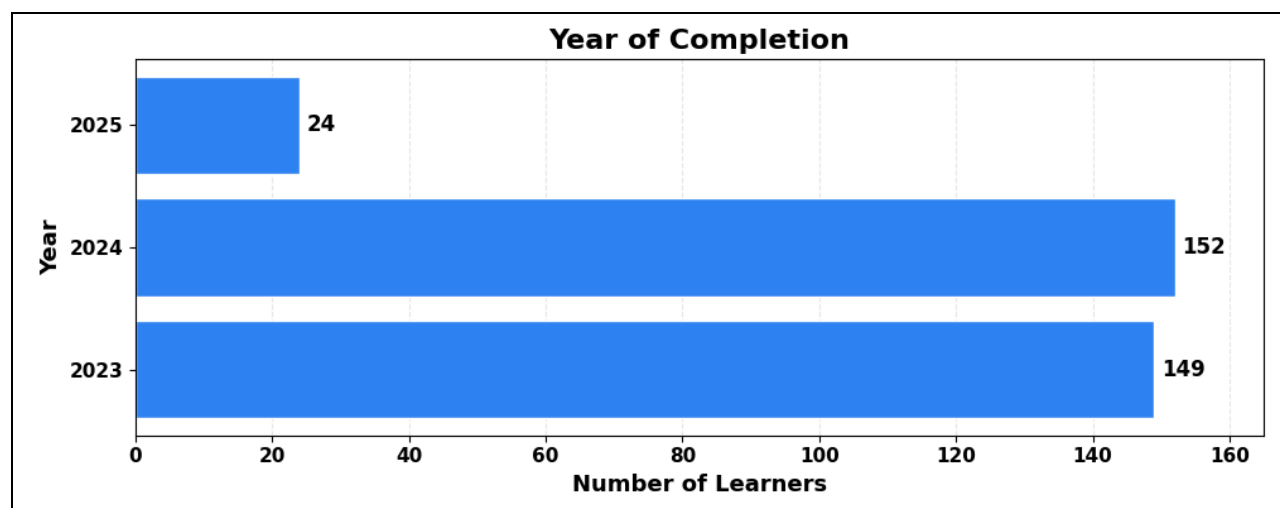


Figure 11 Year of Completion

Analysis of Year of Completion shows that completions are highly concentrated in recent years, with 2024 accounting for 46.8% and 2023 for 45.8% of all valid entries. Together, these two years represent over 92% of completions, confirming the current cycle's peak delivery period. 2025 contributes 7.4%, reflecting partial-year reporting. The data suggests that performance dashboards should anchor on 2024 as the most typical completion year, with 2023 as a benchmark for year-on-year comparison.

4.1.12 Qualification Certificates Received

Out of the surveyed learners, 165 (50.77%) reported receiving their certificates, 129 (39.69%) had not, and 31 (9.54%) did not respond. While just over half of learners received their certificates, a substantial proportion did not, highlighting a gap in certificate issuance that could impact employability and program credibility.

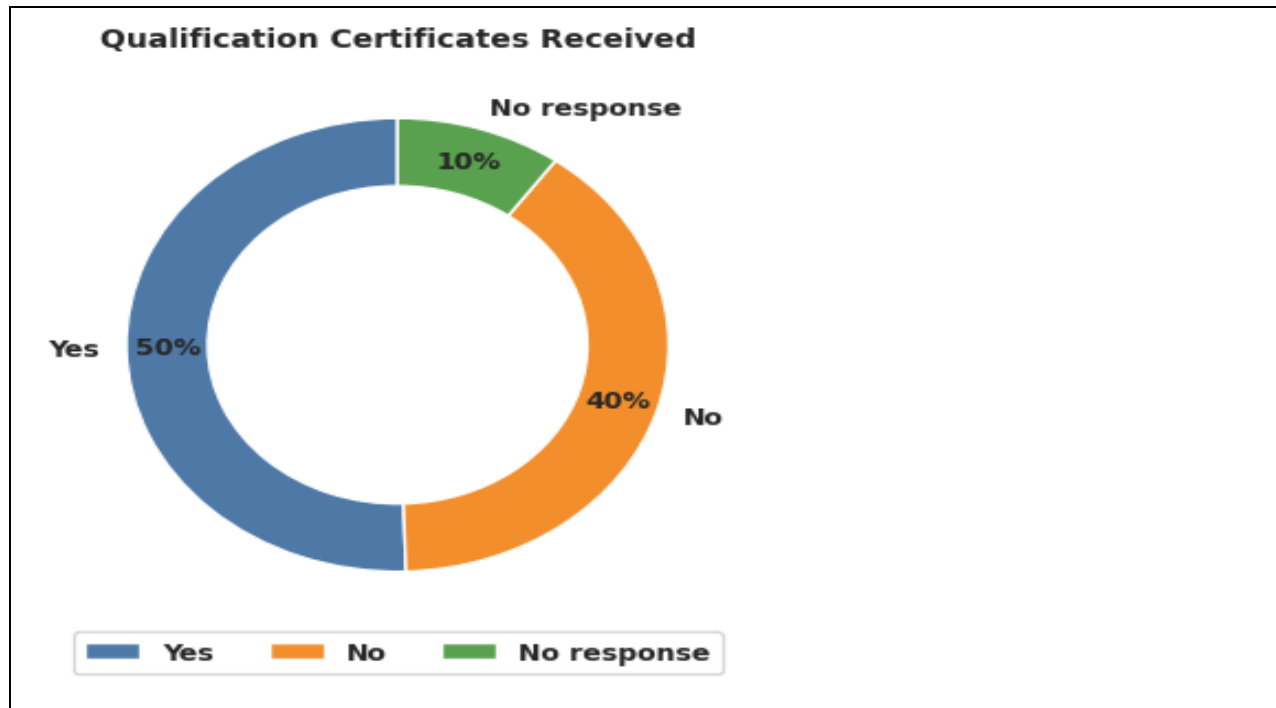


Figure 12 Qualification Certificates Received

4.1.13 Certificate Issuance by Year and Month

Monthly Distribution by Year

Month	2023	2024	2025
January	3	4	3
February	0	3	7
March	2	4	5
April	0	10	8
May	3	7	6
June	1	1	4
July	3	5	6
August	1	3	4
September	3	3	4
October	1	6	7
November	5	4	1
December	6	3	0

Figure 13 Certificate Issuance: Heatmap on Year vs Month

The heatmap illustrates certificate issuance patterns from 2023 to 2025. Peaks are observed in April-July and October-December, reflecting alignment with academic cycles and administrative timelines. Issuance counts are highest in 2024 and 2025, indicating recent completions and potential delays in certificate processing. This visualization highlights seasonal trends and can inform strategies to address bottlenecks in certificate distribution.

4.1.14 Training Funding Source

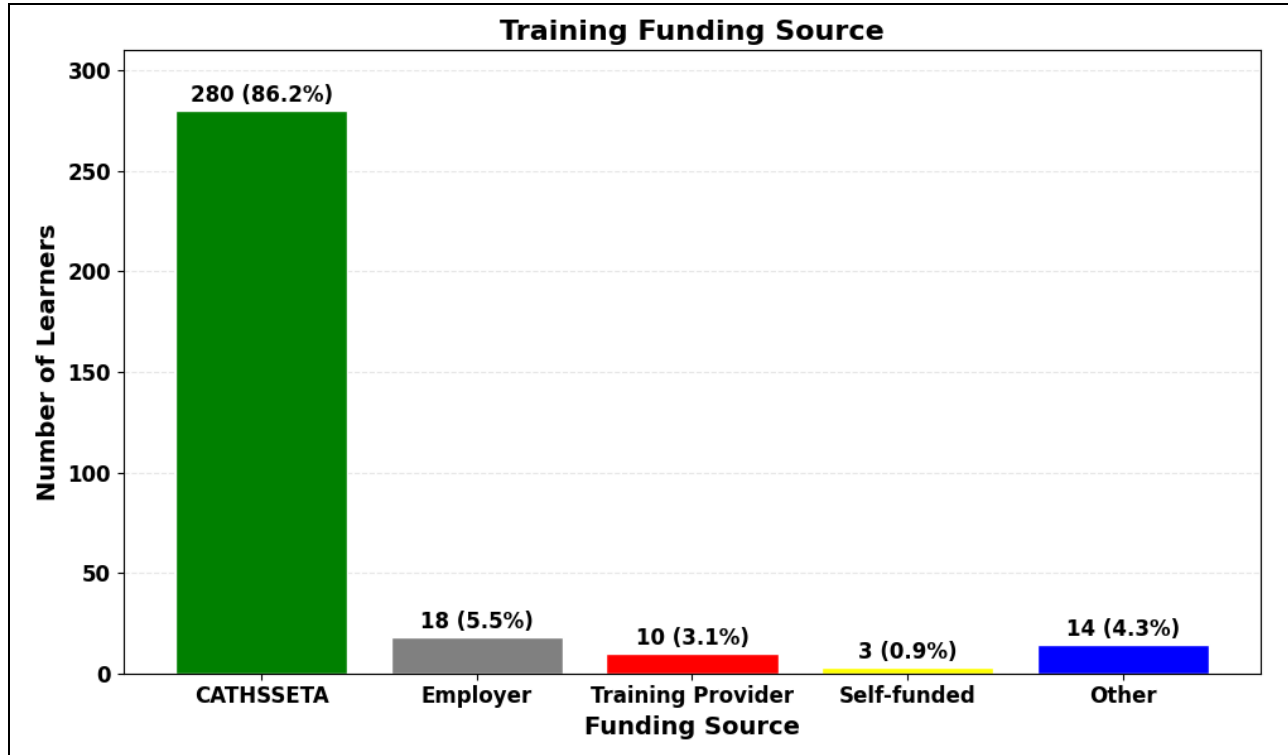


Figure 14 Training Funding Source

The majority of learners (280; 86.15%) reported that their training was funded by CATHSSETA, with smaller proportions funded by employers (18; 5.54%), other sources (14; 4.31%), training providers (10; 3.08%), or self-funded (3; 0.92%). The 'Other' category does not specify alternative funding sources for these 14 entries. Training is overwhelmingly financed by CATHSSETA, highlighting a strong reliance on SETA funding for skills development.

4.1.15 Province where learners stayed when training started

The majority of learners resided in urban provinces when their training began, with Gauteng (75; 23.08%), KwaZulu-Natal (72; 22.15%), and the Western Cape (51; 15.69%) showing the highest concentrations. This reflects the municipalities where learners were living at programme entry and highlights the geographic distribution of participants. The pattern suggests a strong urban focus, with implications for regional representation, accessibility, and potential support needs during programme implementation.

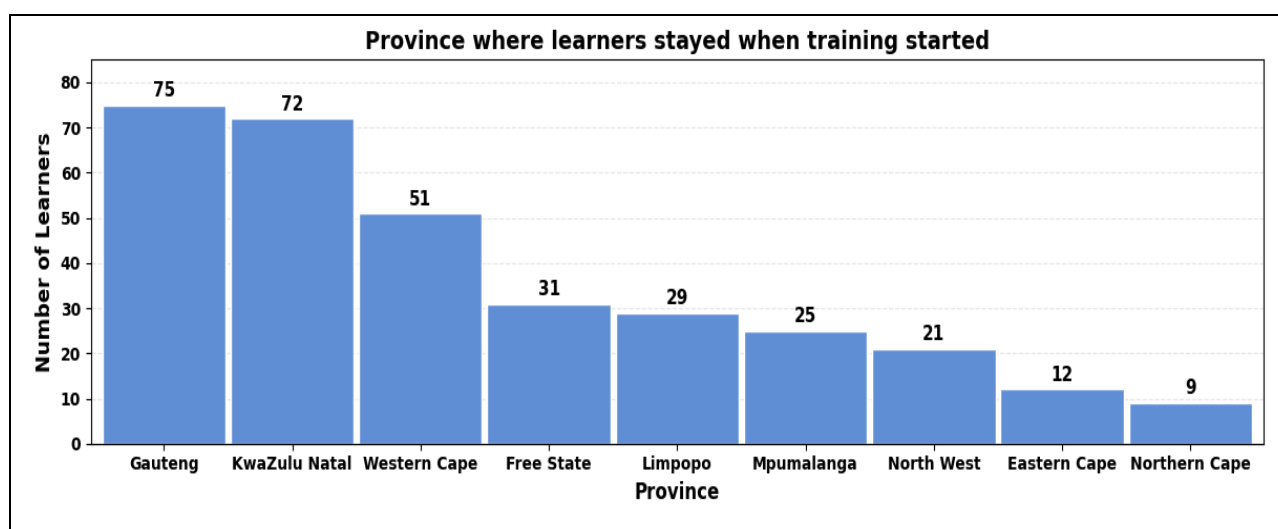


Figure 15 Province where learners stayed when training started

The highest numbers of learners are from the City of Cape Town (45; 13.85%), City of eThekweni (34; 10.46%), and City of Johannesburg (32; 9.85%). Urban municipalities dominate participation.

However, 43.7% of responses were recorded as 'Other' mostly representing smaller municipalities and rural areas. Examples of municipalities reported by learners include Mogalakwena, Madibeng, Polokwane, eMakhazeni, Umahanyakuze, Mahikeng, Newcastle, Fetakgomo, Maletswai, Amajuba, Emfuleni, Umhlathuze, Sol Plaatjie, Waterberg, Saldanha Bay, Emalahleni, Rustenburg, Greater Taung, Pietermaritzburg, Dannhauser, Umkhanyakude, Bushbuckridge, Kimberley, Maluti a Phofung, Bela Bela, Steve Tshwete, and Govan Mbeki. Figure 17 groups the municipalities by province.

4.1.16 Municipality where learners stayed when training started

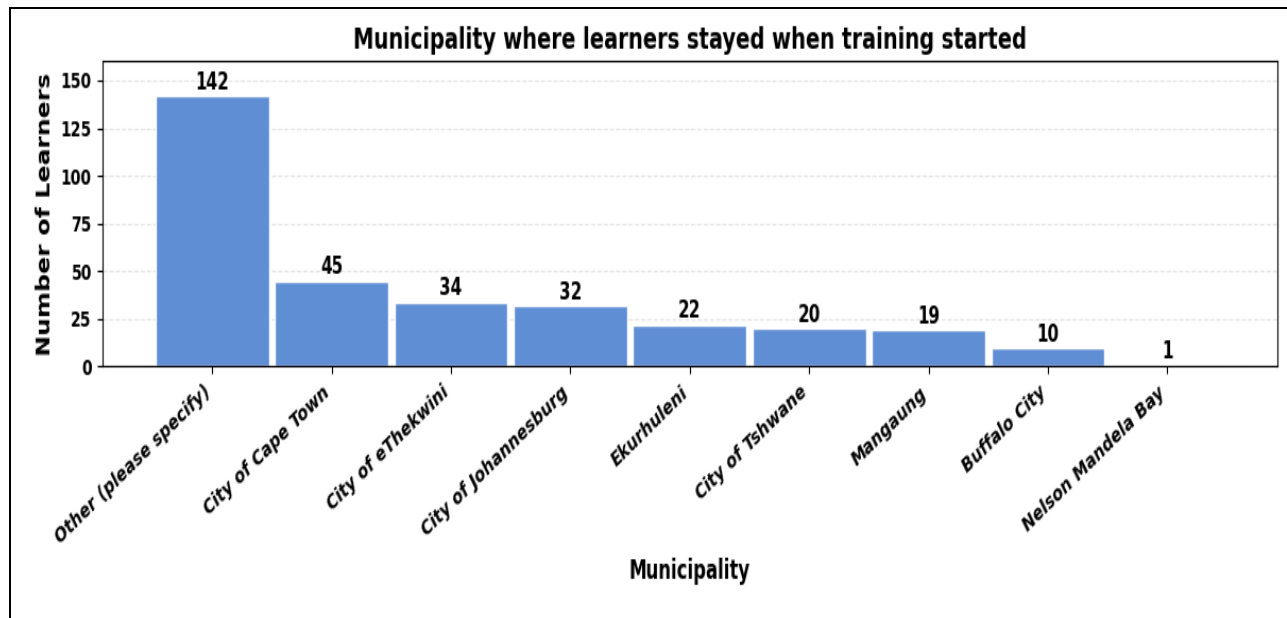


Figure 16 Municipality where learners stayed when training started

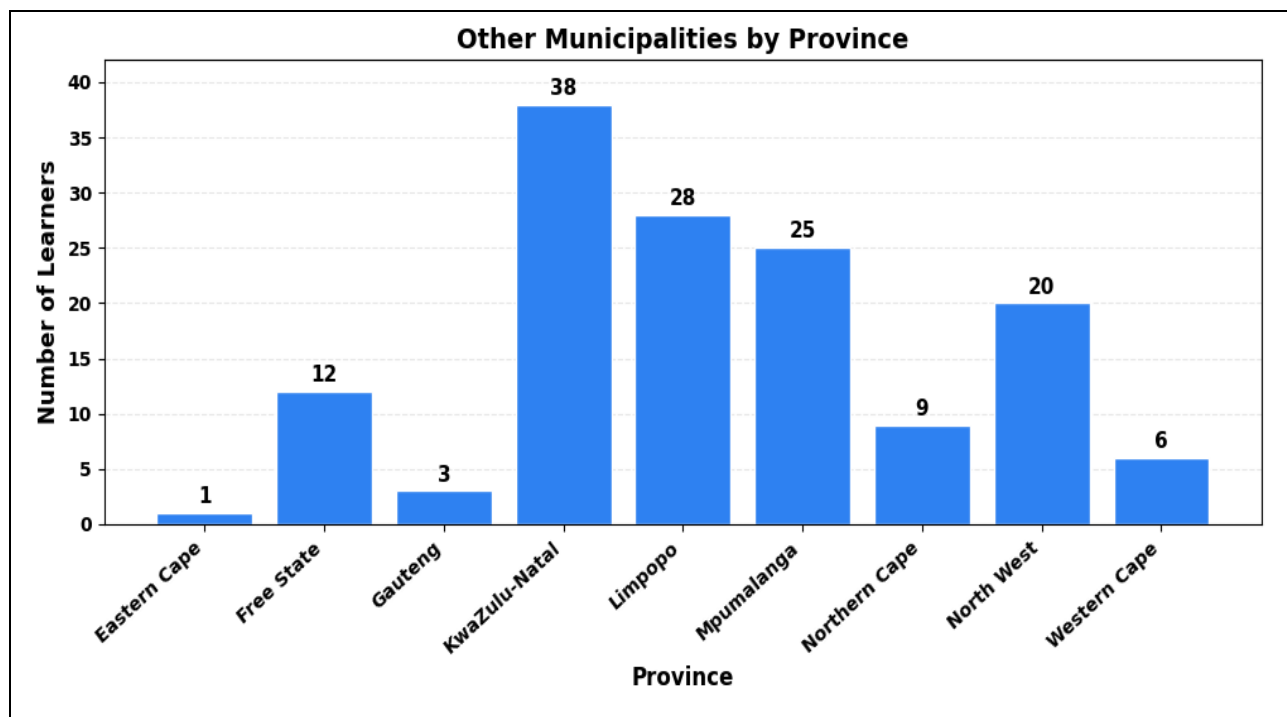


Figure 17 'Other' Municipalities by Province

4.1.17 Type of High School Attended

The majority of learners attended public schools (290; 89.23%), while a smaller proportion came from private or independent schools (27; 8.31%). Public schools overwhelmingly dominate, indicating that the programme primarily serves learners from public education backgrounds.

The 'Other' category included five unique entries: Somavhunga Secondary School (1), Universities (1), TVET College (1), Dinoko Lodge (1), and College (1). Some learners interpreted the question broadly, listing higher education institutions or alternative training environments rather than traditional high school types.

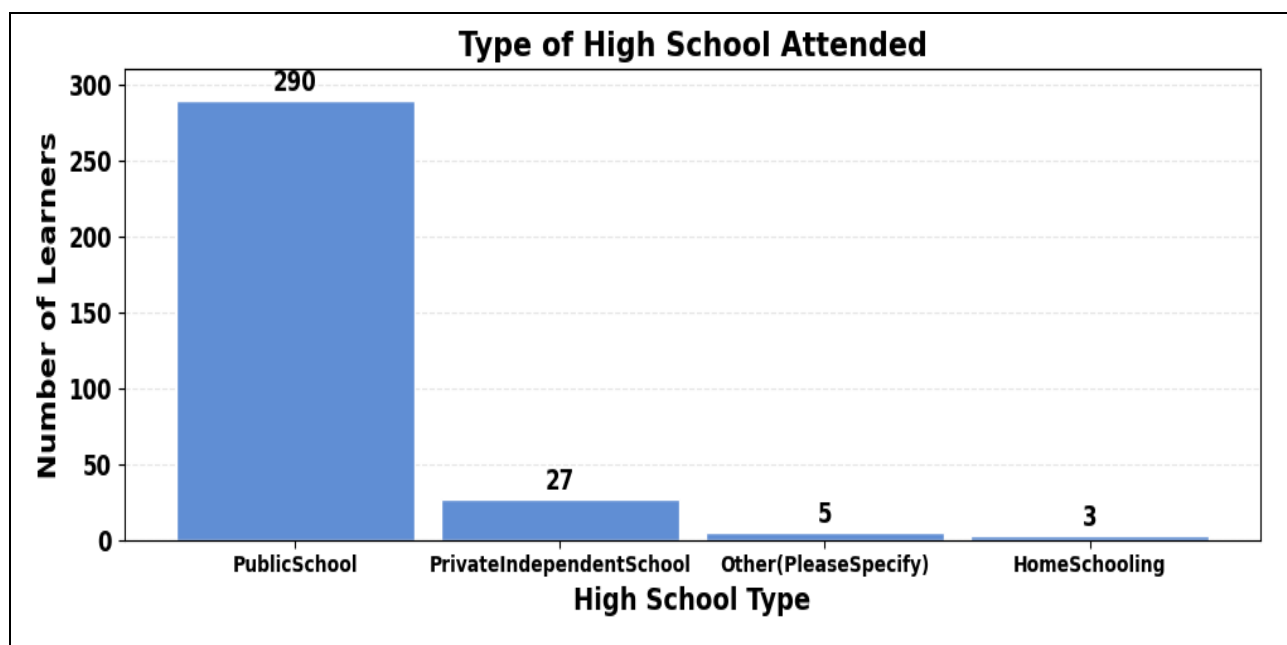


Figure 18 Type of High School Attended

4.2 Objective 1: Learner Pathways

4.2.1 Employment Pathways

Objective 1 examines the post-programme pathways of learners, covering their employment status (employed, self-employed, studying further, volunteering or unemployed) and reasons for unemployment. It also reviews the type and quality of employment, the time taken to secure work, and challenges faced in self-employment and job seeking. These findings are contextualised within broader labour-market integration and unemployment trends (Stats SA, 2022).

Out of 325 learners who completed the survey, the majority remain unemployed (144 learners), which accounts for 44% of respondents. This indicates a significant challenge in transitioning from training to employment. However, 92 learners (28%) secured full-time employment, showing that the programme does create opportunities for some participants. Part-time employment was reported by 38 learners (12%), while 16 learners (5%) became self-employed, suggesting entrepreneurial pathways are less common but present. A smaller proportion pursued further studies (14 learners) or engaged in volunteering (8 learners), reflecting alternative post-training trajectories. Overall, while the programme provides skills, the high unemployment rate signals a need for stronger job placement support and industry partnerships.

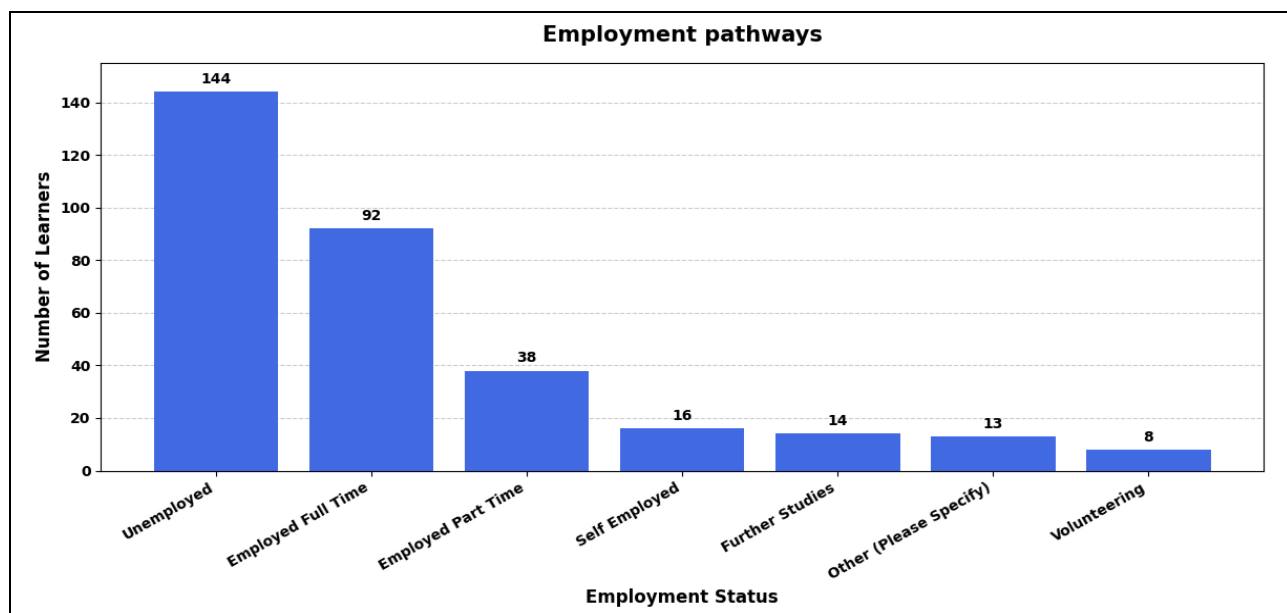


Figure 19 Employment Pathways

4.2.2 Time to Get Employment

Among learners who secured employment after completing the programme, the majority found work quickly. Out of 145 employed learners, 89 learners (61.4%) obtained jobs within 0–3 months, indicating strong immediate absorption for some sectors. Another 41 learners (28.3%) took 4–12 months to find employment, while 15 learners (10.3%) waited more than a year. This pattern suggests that while the programme can lead to quick employment for some, others face prolonged job searches, possibly due to geographic, sectoral, or qualification mismatches. Targeted interventions such as career guidance, employer engagement, and follow-up support could help reduce these delays.

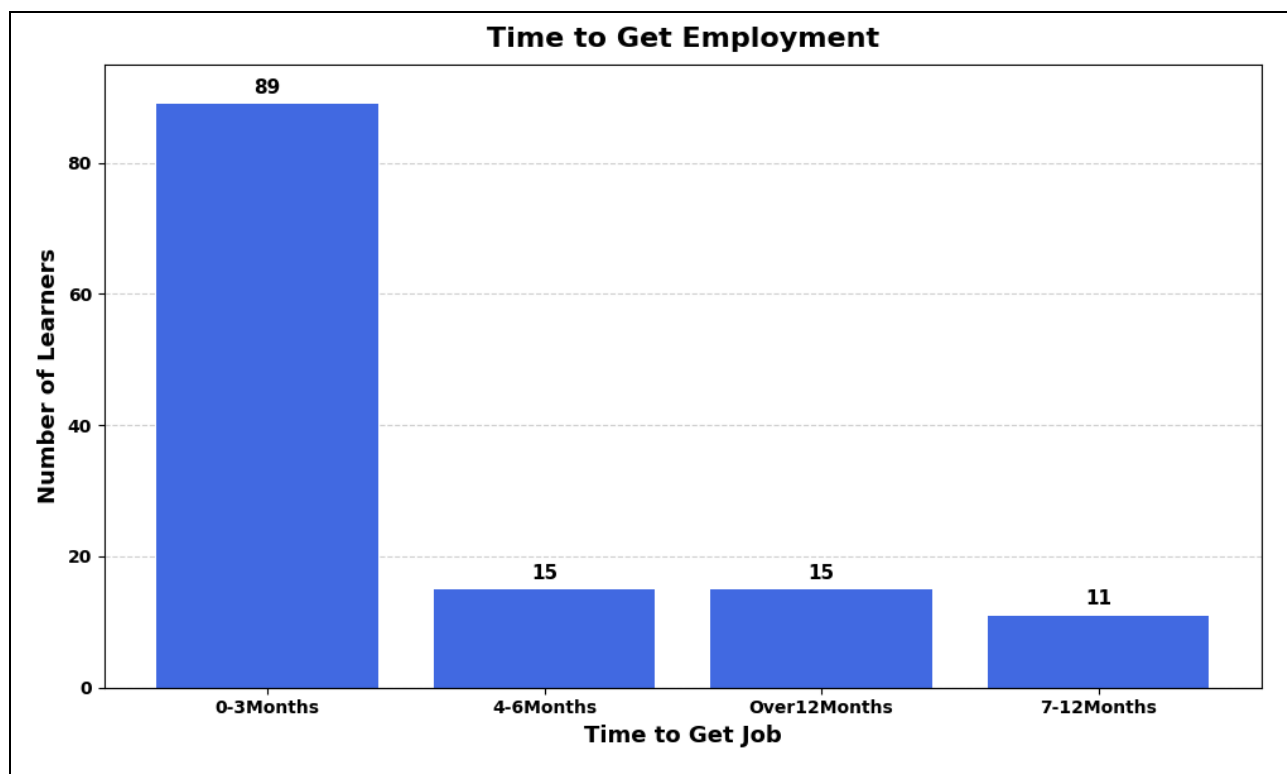


Figure 20 Time to Get Employment

4.2.3 Learners Employed

4.2.3.1 Job relatedness to the CATHSSETA sub sector

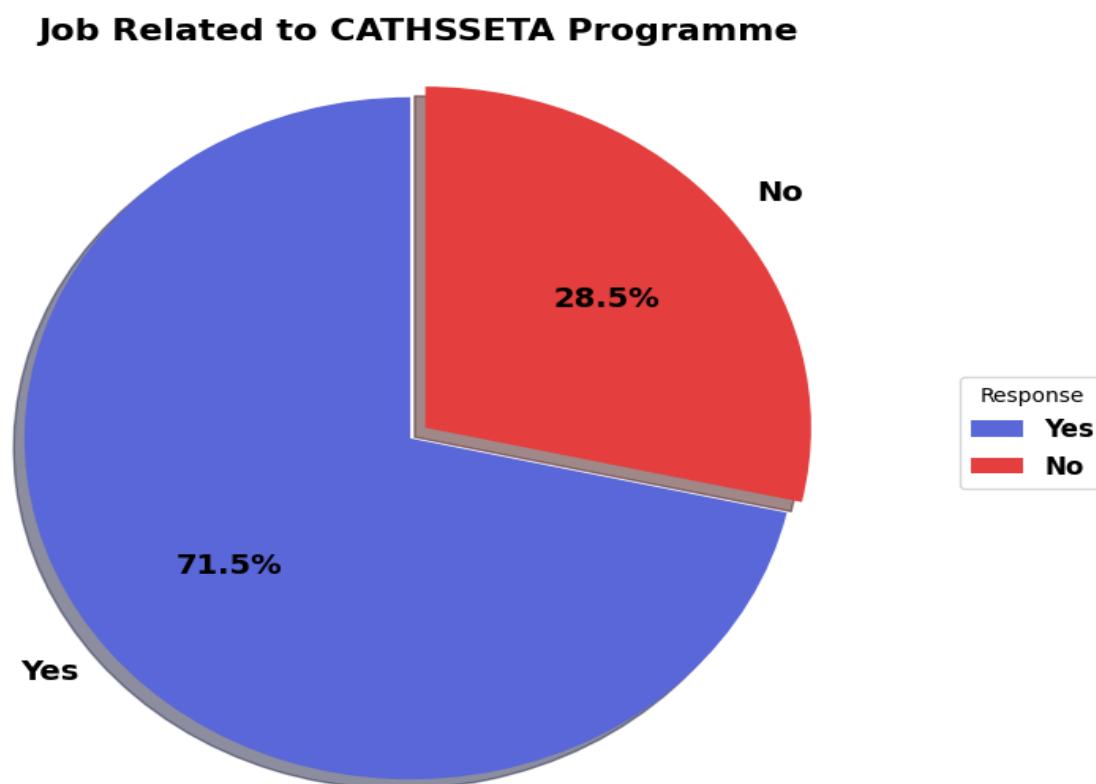


Figure 21 Job relatedness to CATHSSETA

Among employed learners, 93 respondents (71.5%) indicated that their current job is related to the CATHSSETA programme they completed, while 37 learners (28.5%) reported working in roles not directly aligned with their training. This finding highlights that although most learners transition into relevant positions, a significant proportion experience job mismatches. Strengthening alignment between programme content and industry needs, coupled with targeted career guidance and employer engagement, could improve job relevance and enhance long-term employability outcomes. It should be noted, however, that these conclusions are based solely on learner-reported data; broader economic and labour market factors may also influence employment outcomes, but their impact would require a separate, intentional study to investigate systematically.

4.2.3.2 Employment Type vs Monthly Income Bracket

Employment Type	R0–R5k	R5k–10k	R10k–20k	R20k+	Prefer not to say	Other	Total
Casual/Temporary	14	1	1	0	0	0	16
Contract	24	13	3	1	2	0	42
Internship	32	4	1	1	0	0	38
Permanent	0	36	22	9	11	0	78

Figure 22 Employment Type vs Monthly Income Bracket

Analysis of Employment Type vs Monthly Income Bracket shows stark differences in earnings across employment categories. Among Permanent employees (78), the majority earn between R5,001–R10,000 (46%) and R10,001–R20,000 (28%), while 12% earn above R20,001. In contrast, contract roles (42) are concentrated in the lowest bracket, with 62% earning R0–R5,000 and 30% in R5,001–R10,000, leaving only 8% above R10,000. Internships (38) and Casual/temporary roles (16) are overwhelmingly low-income, with 85% of interns and 88% of casual workers earning R0–R5,000, and minimal representation in higher brackets. Notably, “Prefer not to say” responses account for 14% of permanent employees and 5% of contract roles, indicating some reluctance to disclose income among higher-stability positions. These patterns confirm that permanent employment correlates with better earnings, while non-permanent categories remain clustered in entry-level brackets. This underscores the need for placement strategies prioritizing permanent pathways, stipend guidelines for internships and casual work, and targets to reduce low-income concentrations. CATHSSETA should prioritise partnerships that will secure permanent placements, encourage employers to convert contract roles into permanent ones, introduce wage guidelines for internships and casual work, and career-progression support to learners in low-income roles. ‘Other/Unspecified’ category includes responses that did not match defined income brackets or ‘Prefer not to say,’ such as unclear entries like ‘stipend’ or ‘depends on hours.’”

4.2.3.3 Employment Continuity

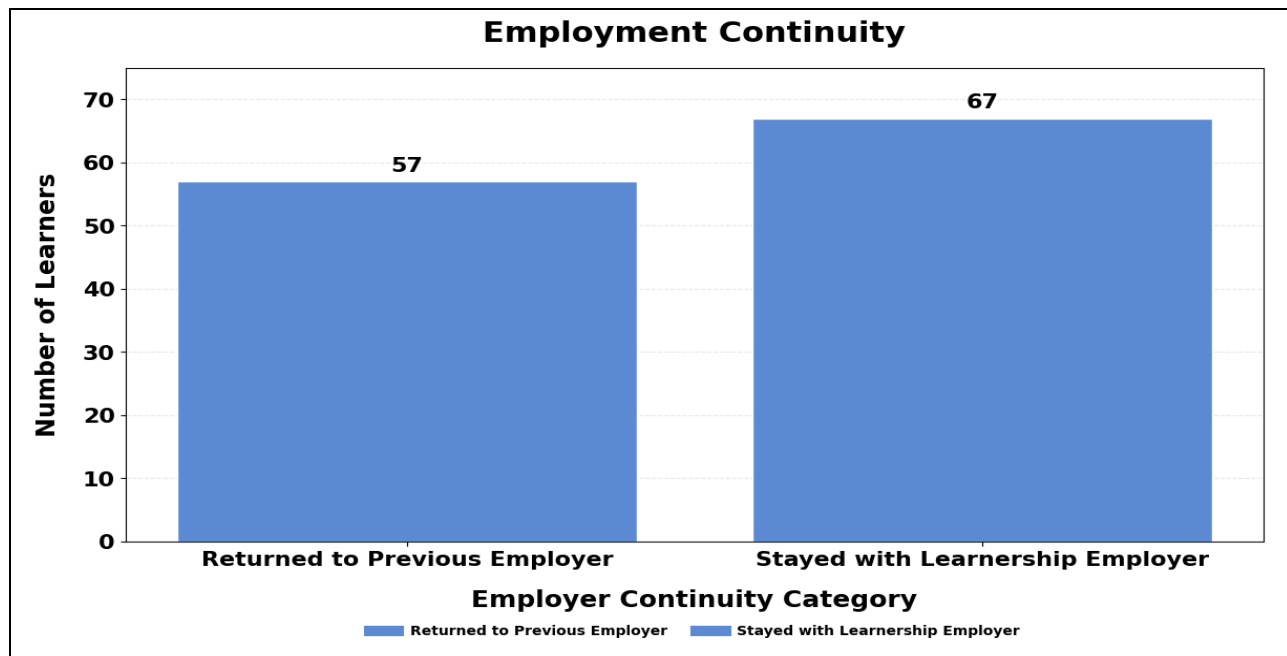


Figure 23 Employment Continuity

The data shows that 57 employed learners (46.7%) returned to their previous employer after completing their CATHSSETA programme, while 67 learners (55.3%) remained with the company where they completed their learnership or internship. This indicates that just over half of employed learners maintain continuity with their host employer, while nearly half revert to prior employment arrangements. Overall retention beyond these two categories appears limited, signalling weak long-term employment continuity and the need for improved retention measures. To address this, CATHSSETA should work with employers to establish structured retention strategies, introduce incentives for companies that keep learners post-training, and implement follow-up programmes to monitor placements and support learners during transitions. Strengthening mentorship and career development within host companies can promote long-term employment. Mentorship supports learners in their roles, while clear advancement opportunities boost motivation and loyalty.

4.2.3.4 Establishment Classification

Most employed learners work in private enterprises (74 learners; 56.9%), followed by public entities (25 learners; 19.2%) and government institutions (21 learners; 16.2%). A smaller proportion is employed in non-profit organisations (6 learners; 6.2%), while private households (2 learners; 1.5%) account for the least representation. This distribution highlights the dominant role of the private sector in absorbing learners, while public and government institutions provide secondary opportunities. To broaden employment pathways, CATHSSETA should strengthen partnerships with government departments, public entities, and NGOs to diversify placement options and reduce reliance on private enterprises.

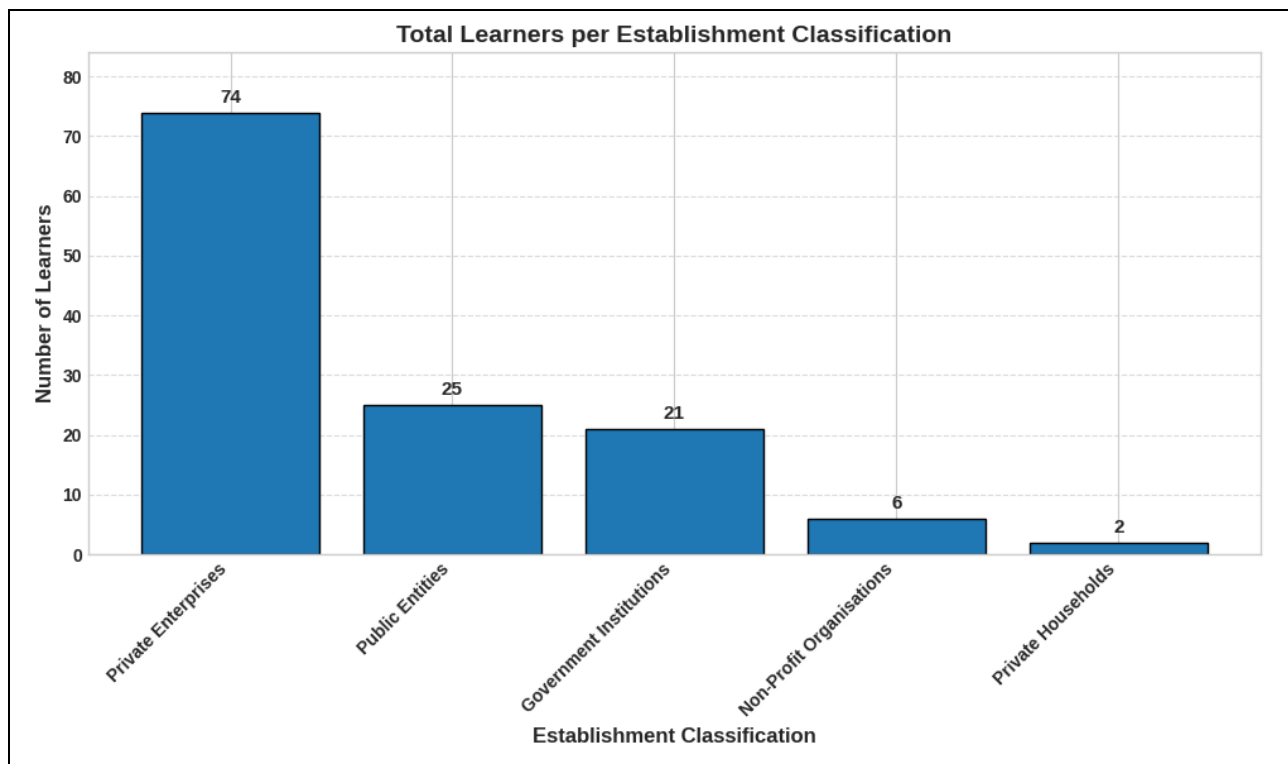


Figure 24 Establishment Classification

4.2.3.5 Employer Contributions

Analysis of employment benefits shows mixed compliance with statutory and workplace provisions. UIF contributions were confirmed by 90 learners (69.2%), while 22 learners (16.9%) reported no UIF and 18 learners (13.8%) were unsure. Pension contributions were provided to 54 learners (41.5%), with 52 learners (40.0%) indicating no pension and 24 learners (18.5%) unsure. Medical aid coverage is notably low, with only 29 learners (22.3%) receiving this benefit, compared to 90 learners (69.2%) without coverage and 11 learners (8.5%) unsure.

These figures highlight gaps in employer compliance and benefit provision, particularly for medical aid and pensions. While UIF coverage is relatively strong, the absence of comprehensive benefits for many learners underscores the need for CATHSSETA to advocate for improved workplace standards. Recommendations include reinforcing employer obligations through programme agreements, monitoring compliance, and incentivising organisations that provide full benefits to learners.

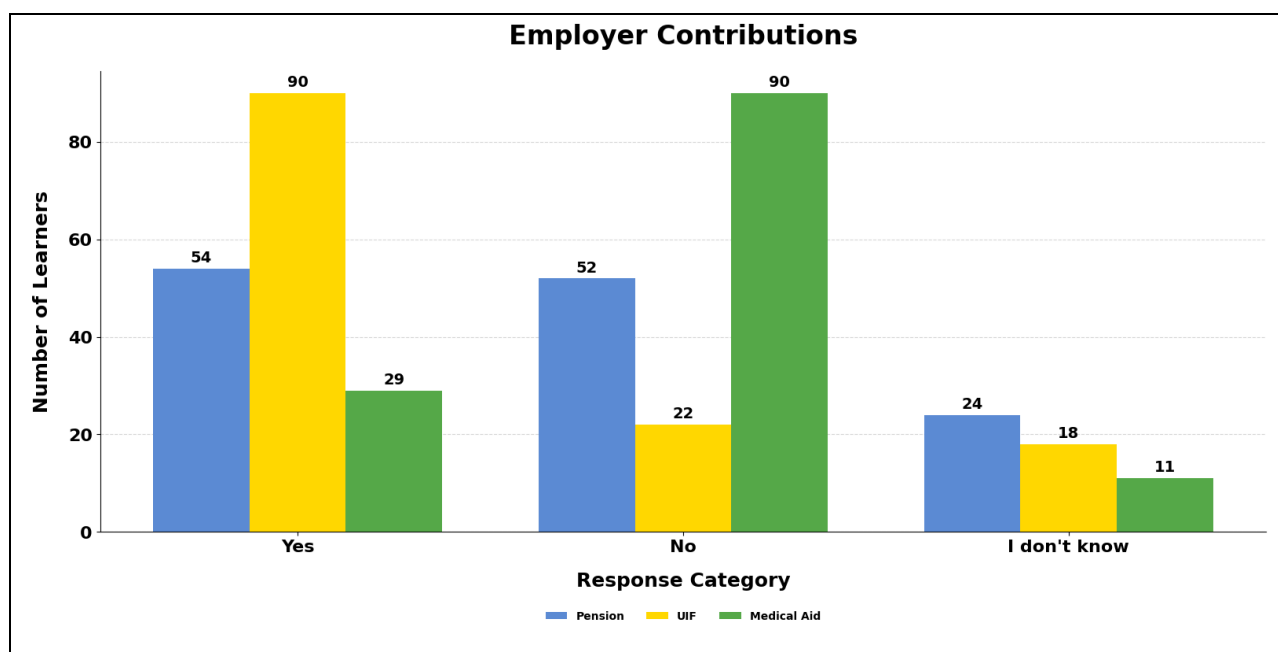


Figure 25 Employer Contributions

4.2.4 Unemployed Learners

A total of 144 respondents (44.3%) reported being unemployed after completing the programme. The primary reason cited was a lack of job opportunities, mentioned by 112 learners (77.8%), while other factors were minimal. Analysis of job search duration shows that 89 learners (61.8%) have been seeking employment for more than a year, 39 learners (27.1%) for 6–12 months, and 16 learners (11.1%) for less than six months.

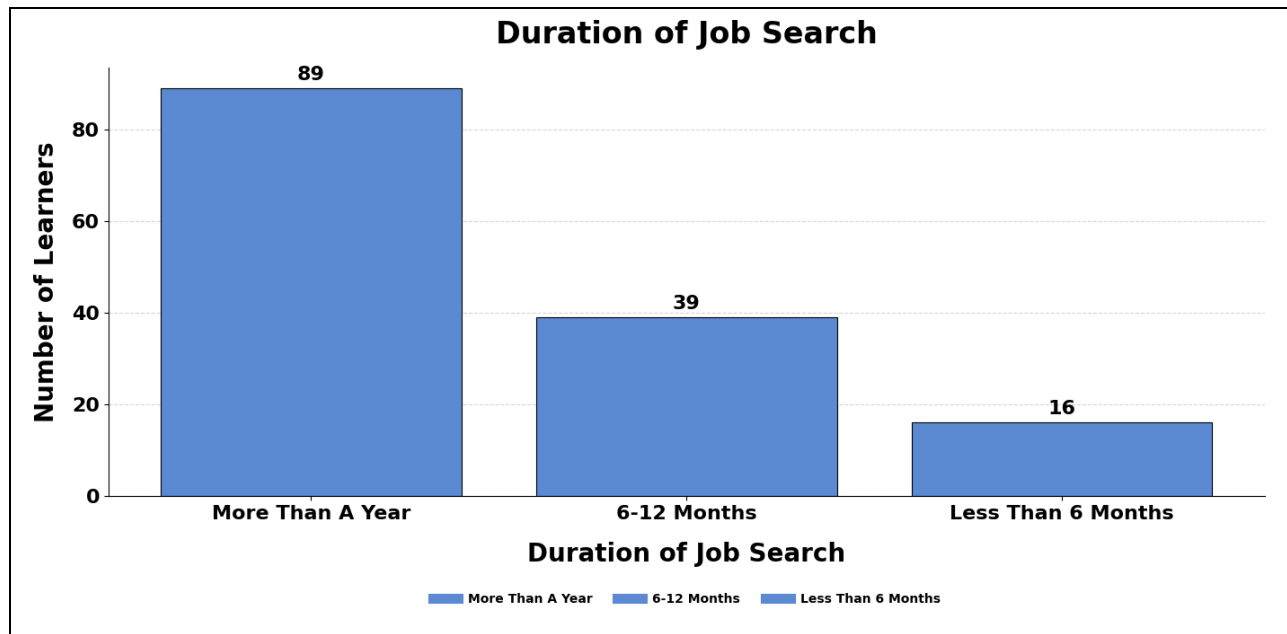


Figure 26 Duration of Job Search

4.2.4.1 Reasons for Unemployment vs Actions Taken to Look for Work

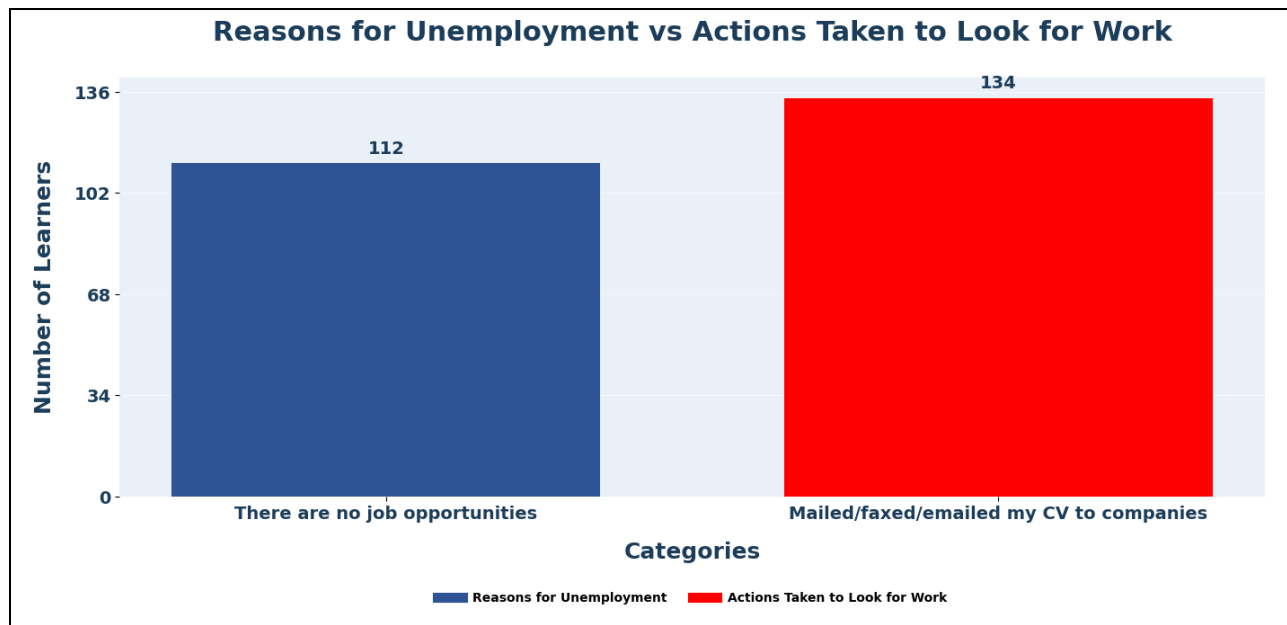


Figure 27 Reasons for Unemployment vs Actions Taken to Look for Work

Most unemployed learners actively pursue opportunities, with 134 learners (93.1%) mailing, faxing, or emailing CVs to companies. However, fewer people use recruitment agencies or social media platforms. The dominant barrier remains limited job availability, compounded by a lack of work experience. Persistent job searching suggests structural challenges in the labour market. There is a need to strengthen job placement initiatives and employer partnerships. Targeted skills development and internships should be provided. Access to job search resources and career counselling must be improved. Transport or relocation support should be considered for learners in remote areas to expand employment opportunities.

4.2.5 Learners Studying

4.2.5.1 Type of Qualification and Institution

A total of 14 learners (4.3%) reported pursuing further studies after completing the programme. The breakdown of qualification types is as follows: Degree – 5 learners (35.7%), Diploma – 3 learners (21.4%), Certificate – 3 learners (21.4%), and Postgraduate – 3 learners (21.4%). Regarding institutions, Universities account for 7 learners (50%), while the remainder are enrolled in TVET colleges and other institutions.

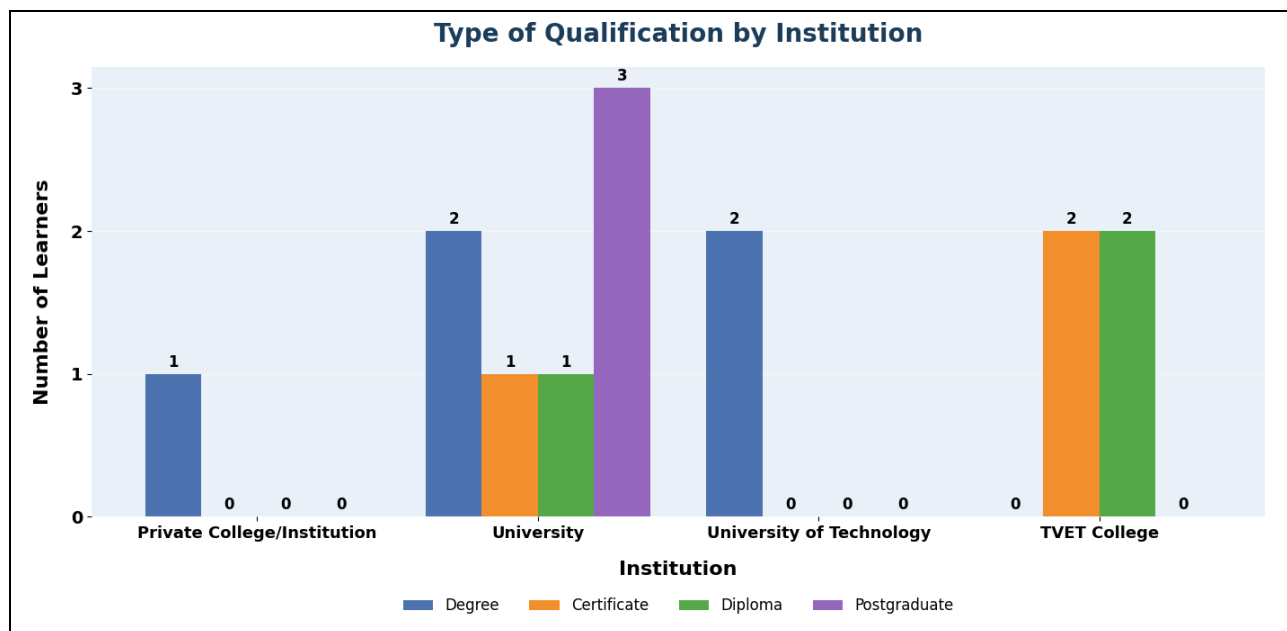


Figure 28 Type of Qualification by Institution

4.2.5.2 Title of Qualification and Enrolment Year

The most common qualification is Hospitality and Catering Services with 15 learners (4.6%), followed by Professional Cookery at 11 learners (3.4%). Tourism Management and Hospitality each account for 9 learners (2.8%). Assistant Chef and Diploma in Event Management both have 6 learners (1.8%), while Diploma in Tourism Management, Diploma in Hospitality Management, Food and Beverage, and Diploma in Hospitality each represent 5 learners (1.5%). Finally, Nature Site Guide and Tourism round out the list with 4 learners (1.2%) each. Together, these top 12 qualifications make up the bulk of the cohort, reflecting a strong emphasis on hospitality, culinary arts, tourism, and event management, which collectively dominate the skills development landscape.

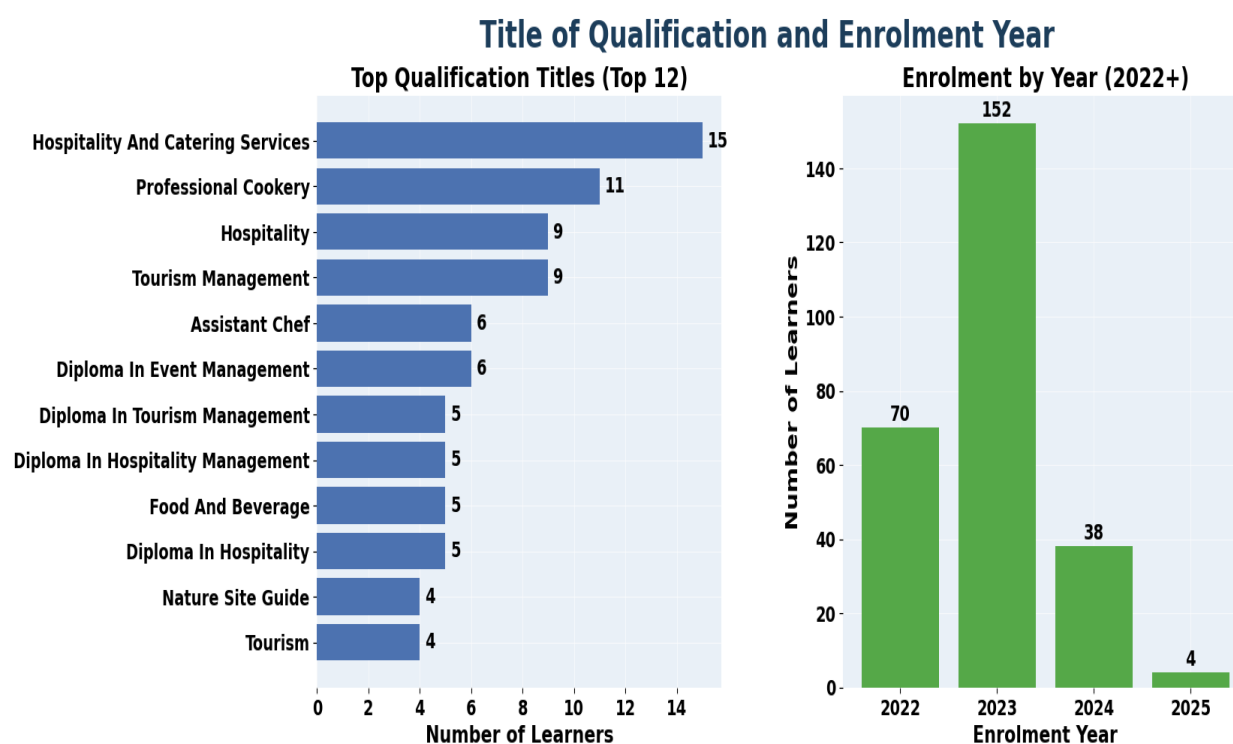


Figure 29 Title of Qualification and Enrolment Year

Figure 29 shows that enrolments increased markedly from 2022 to 2023, rising from 70 learners (26.5%) to 152 learners (57.6%), a 117% year-on-year increase. This surge appears to represent a once-off high-intake cohort, as enrolments declined to 38 learners (14.4%) in 2024, returning

closer to typical levels. The 2025 count (4 learners; 1.5%) remains low due to the partial-year period. Overall, the pattern shows a pronounced peak in 2023, followed by a normalisation of enrolment trends. It is important to note that enrolment numbers reflect the study sample only and may not represent total programme enrolments, but they still illustrate trends within respondents over time.

4.2.5.3 *Reasons for Studying*

The leading motive for further study is career expansion (20%), followed by gaining knowledge and achieving higher qualifications (17.1% each). Learners also aim to secure better jobs (11.4%) and improve employment chances (8.6%), showing education's role as a pathway to employability. A smaller but notable group (8.6%) seeks to address industry gaps through entrepreneurship, while financial and advancement motives like earning more, promotions, and personal interest, account for 5.7% each.

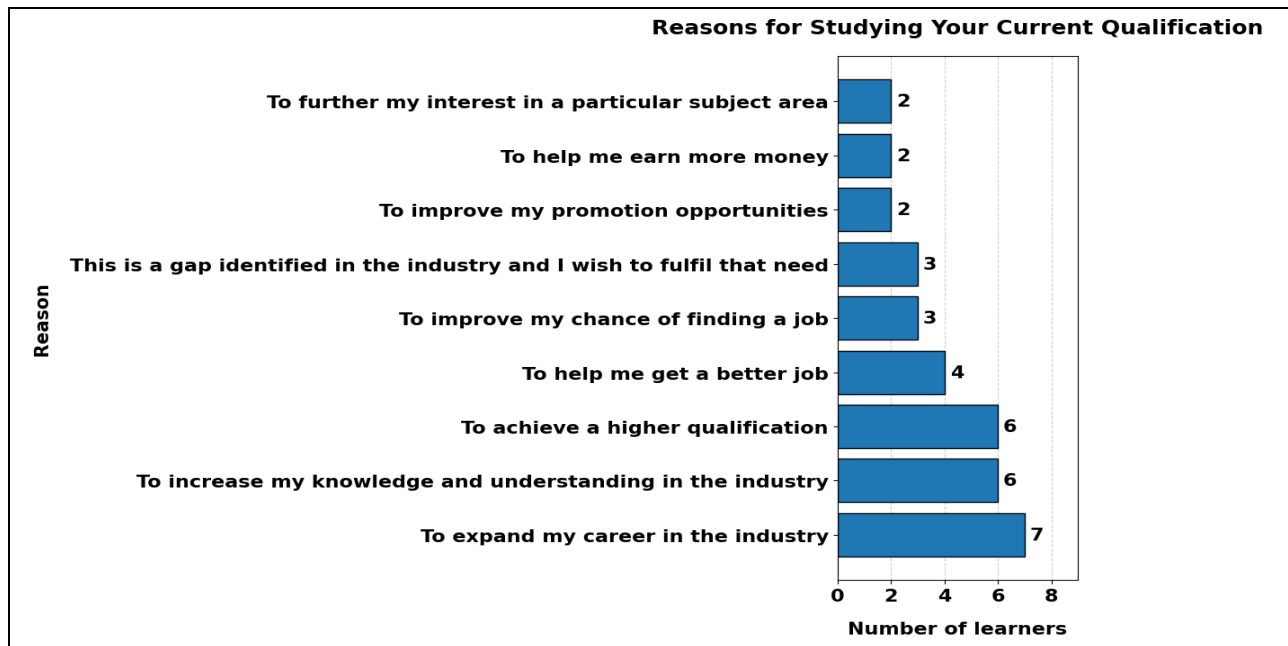


Figure 30 *Reason for Studying*

4.2.6 Learners that are Self Employed

This analysis of 16 self-employed learners supported by CATHSSETA highlights strong alignment between training interventions and entrepreneurial outcomes. Half of the cohort completed

learnerships or skills programmes (50%), with qualifications concentrated at NQF levels 5 and 6, indicating a solid skills foundation.

Entrepreneurship within this group is predominantly youth-led, as 75% are aged 26–35, reflecting recent entry into the labour market. Business formation is largely individualistic, with 88% operating as solo ventures. 50% launched their businesses within three months post-training, demonstrating rapid programme-to-enterprise transition. Importantly, 75% report their ventures are directly related to their training, reinforcing the relevance of sector-aligned skills development.

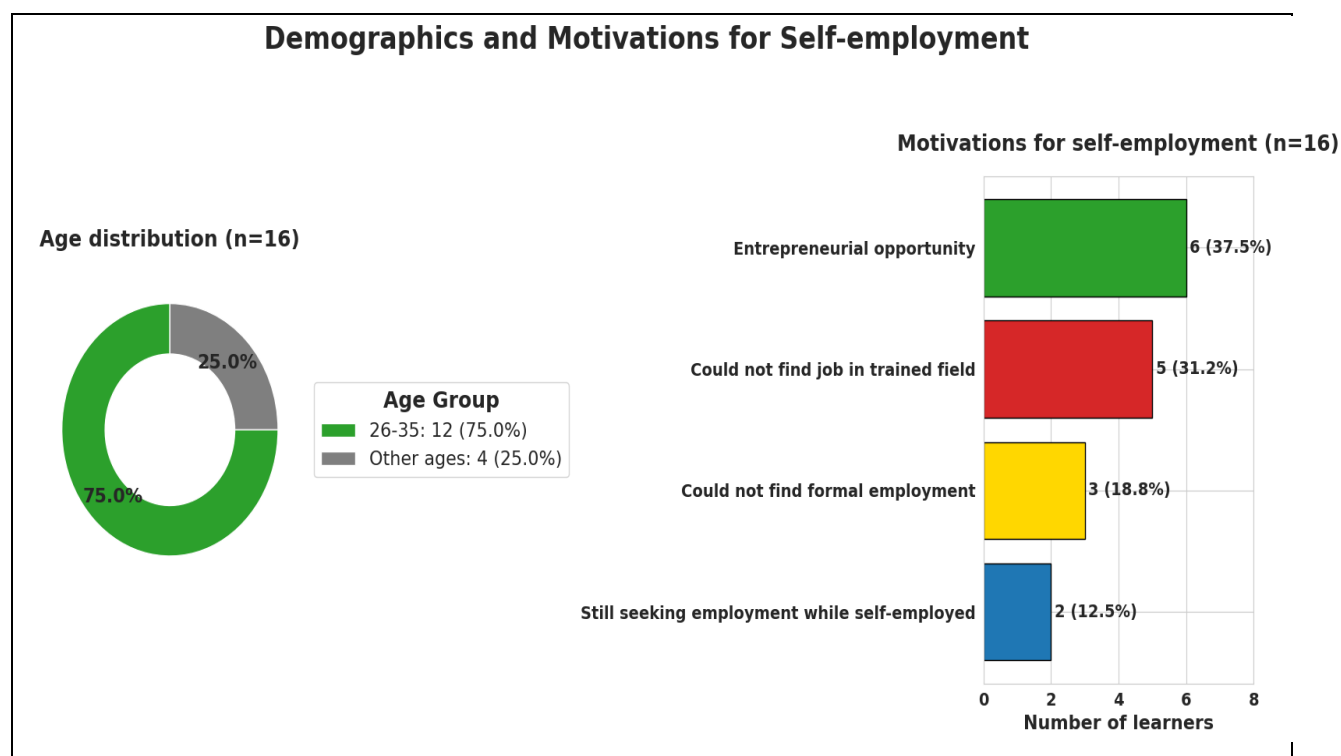


Figure 30a Demographics and Motivations for Self-employment

Motivations for self-employment vary, but the most common drivers include entrepreneurial opportunity (37.5%), could not find a job in trained field (31.3%), and could not find formal employment (18.8%). A smaller proportion (12.5%) are still seeking employment while self-employed. While formalisation is progressing where 56% have registered with CIPC, VAT compliance remains low (27%), reflecting early-stage micro-enterprise characteristics. On average, each business employs about 2 people, suggesting modest but meaningful job creation.

Overall, the data underscores the potential of targeted training programmes to catalyse youth entrepreneurship, while revealing gaps in business formalisation and scalability that warrant further support.

4.3 Objective 2: Relevance of the Learning Programme interventions

4.3.1 Skill Level Before and After Programme Completion

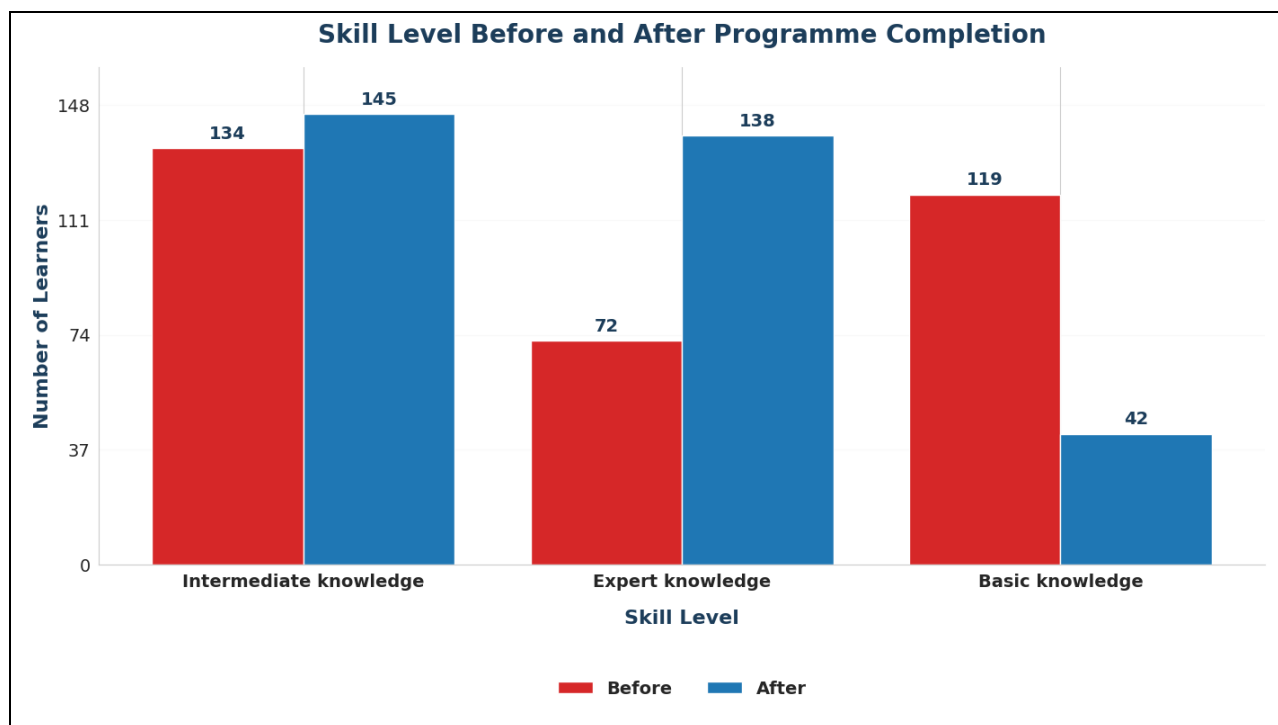


Figure 31 Skill Level Before and After Programme Completion

Analysis of participant responses indicates a significant improvement in skill levels following programme completion. Before the programme, 119 learners (36.6%) reported having basic knowledge, 134 learners (41.2%) had intermediate knowledge, and 72 learners (22.2%) indicated expert-level proficiency. After completing the programme, the number of learners with expert knowledge increased to 138 (42.5%), while intermediate knowledge rose slightly to 145 (44.6%), and basic knowledge decreased sharply to 42 (12.9%). While many learners improved, a large group remains at the intermediate level. Insights from CATHSSETA's ongoing tracer studies can guide targeted support to help more learners reach expert proficiency.

4.3.2 Extent of Using Acquired Skills

Survey results show that most learners apply the skills gained from the programme extensively in their work. Specifically, 171 learners (54.6%) reported using the skills “to a very great extent,” while 98 learners (31.3%) indicated “to a moderate extent.” A smaller proportion, of 34 learners (10.9%), use the skills “to a lesser extent,” and 10 learners 3.2% reported “not at all.”

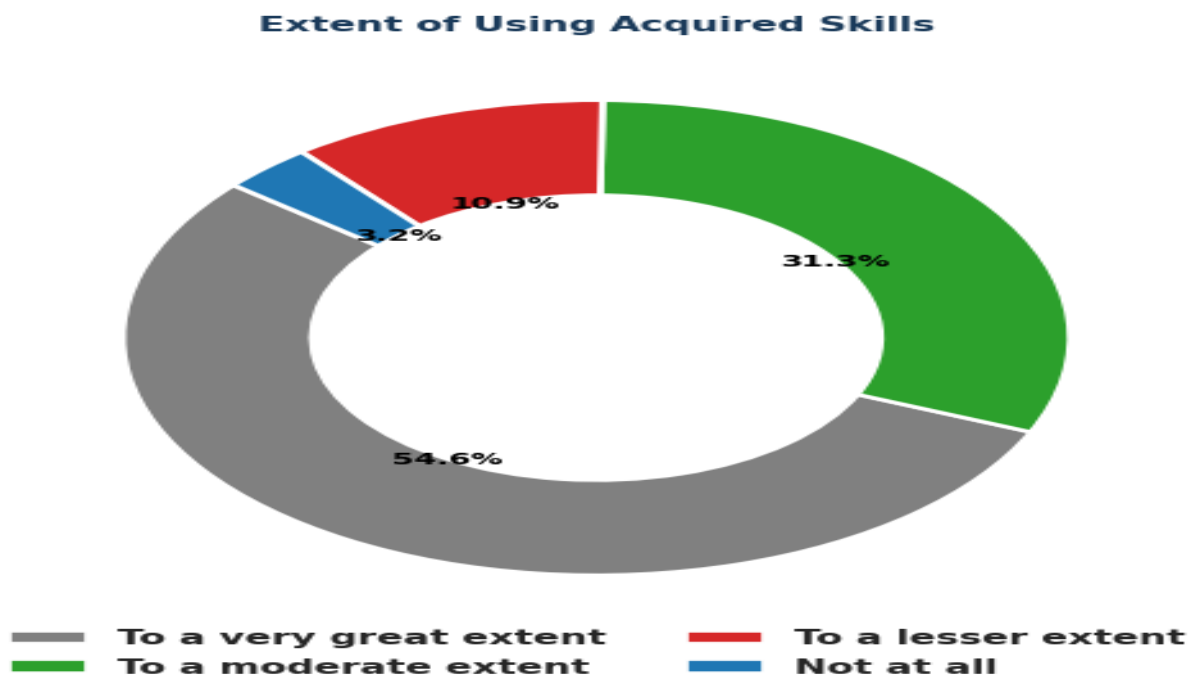


Figure 32 *Extent of Using Acquired Skills*

4.3.3 Most Useful Skills from the Programme

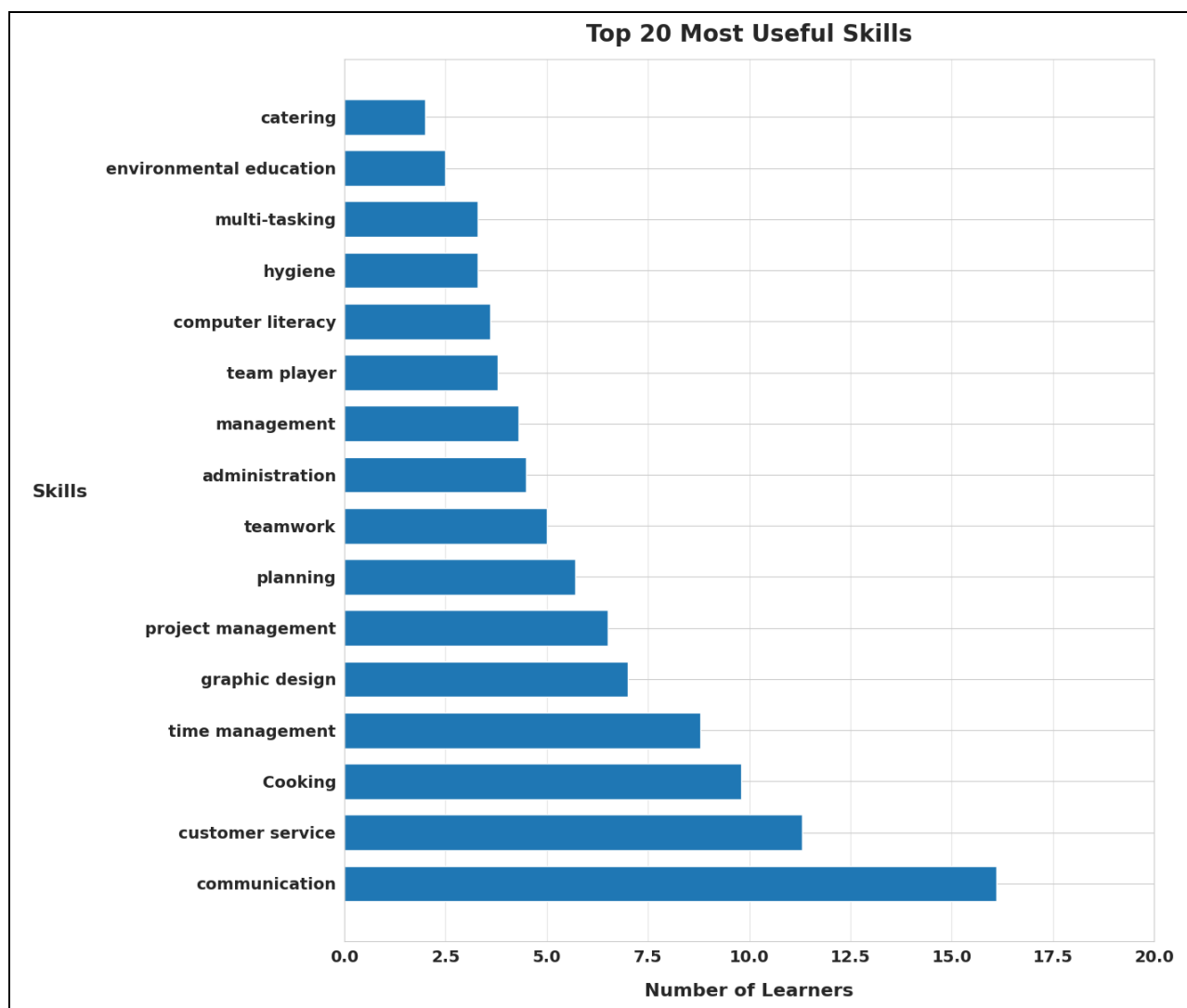


Figure 33 Top 20 Most Useful Skills

Learners identified a wide range of skills as most useful for their career development. The top three soft skills were communication (18.5%), customer service (15.2%), and time management (12.8%), which are critical across hospitality, tourism, and related sectors. Technical skills such as cooking (10.4%), computer literacy (9.6%), and graphic design (7.2%) were also highly valued, reflecting the practical nature of many programmes. Organisational and leadership skills, including project management (6.8%), planning (5.9%), and teamwork (4.8%), were frequently

mentioned as essential for workplace readiness and career progression. These findings highlight the importance of combining soft skills with technical proficiency to meet industry demands and improve employability.

4.3.4 Programme Recommendation

The survey results show overwhelmingly positive feedback regarding programme recommendation. Out of 325 respondents, 310 learners (95.4%) indicated that they would recommend the programme to others, while 10 learners (about 3.0%) were unsure, and only 5 learners (1.85%) said they would not recommend it.

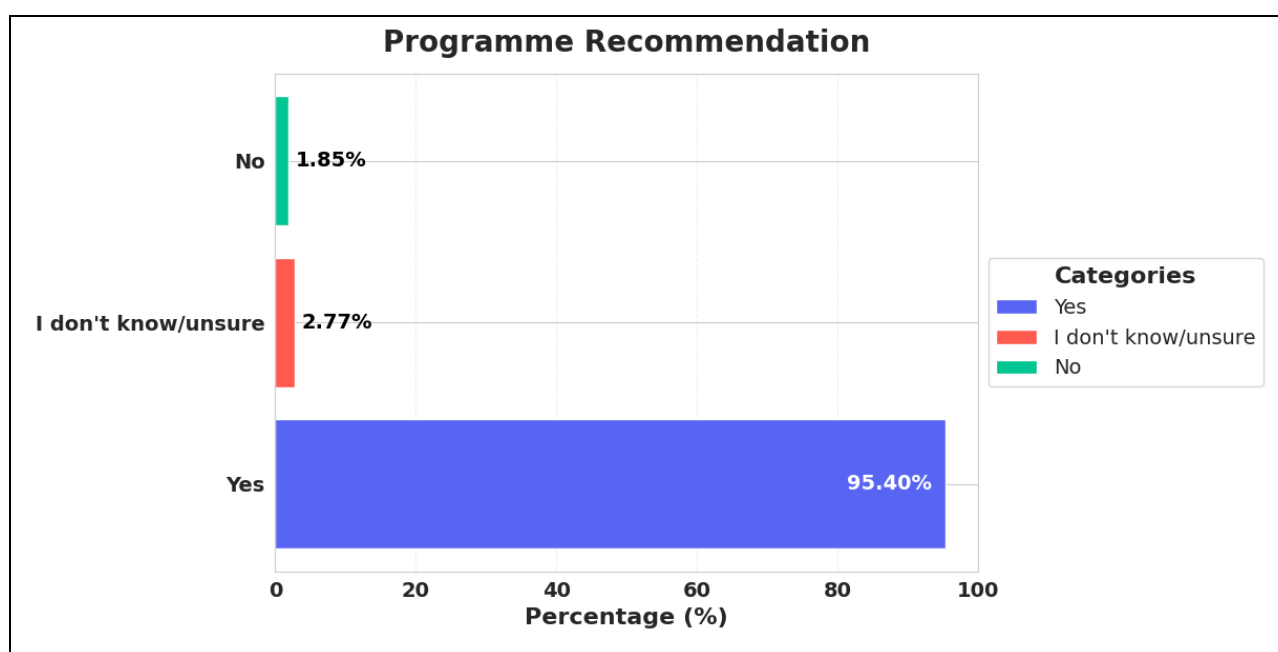


Figure 34 Programme Recommendation

4.3.5 Opinion on Career Pathway

Survey results show that most learners believe the programme positively influenced their career trajectory. Specifically, 176 learners (54%) stated the programme “definitely” improved their career pathway, while 133 learners (41%) indicated it helped “to some extent.” Only 13 learners (4%) felt the programme did not contribute at all. Feedback highlighted gaps such as limited job placement opportunities and short programme duration, which hindered long-term career

progression. To fully realize its potential, respondents suggested extending programme timelines, strengthening partnerships with employers, and creating mechanisms for permanent employment or continued mentorship. Overall, the programme lays a strong foundation for career growth but requires additional support to ensure sustainable pathways into the workforce.

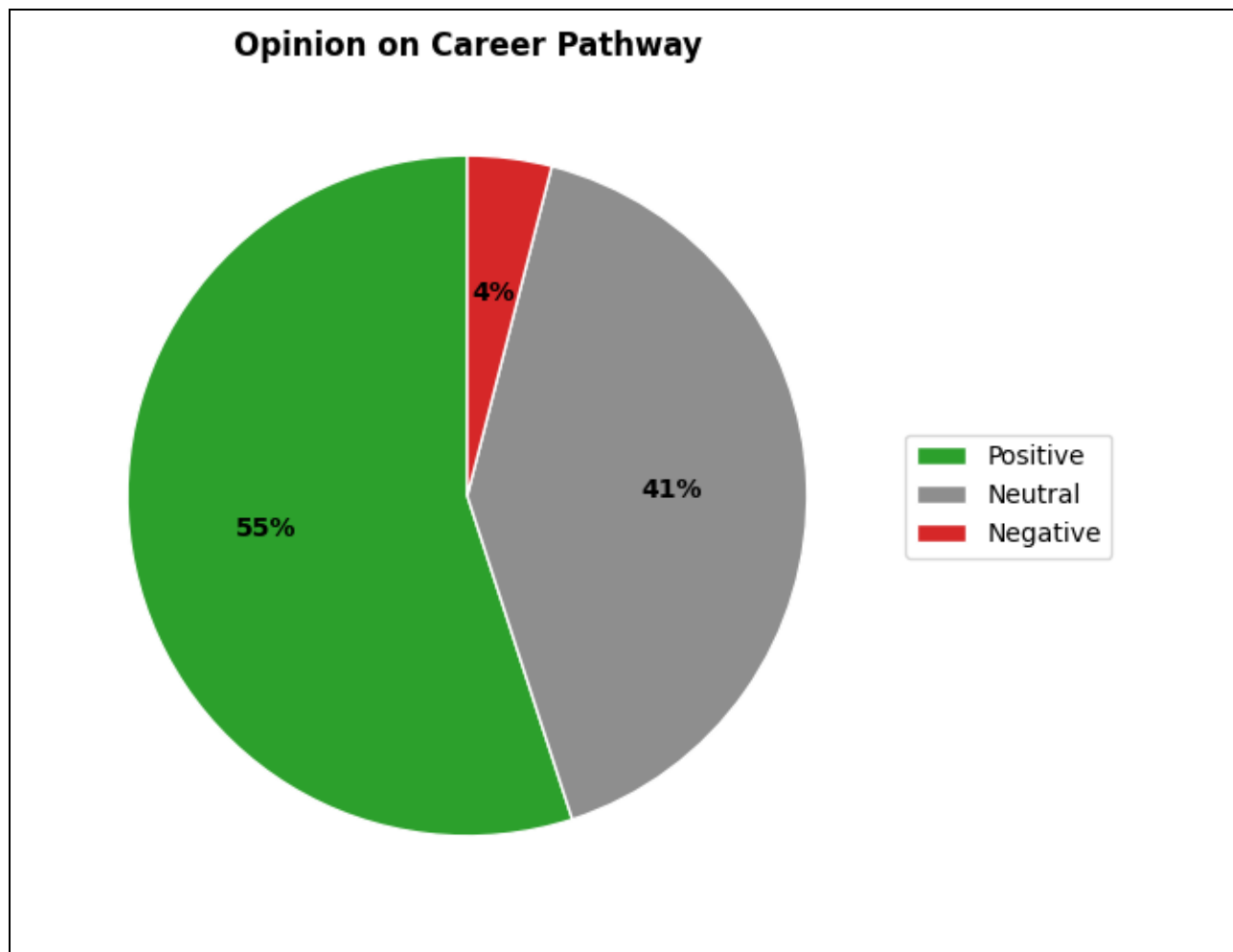


Figure 35 Opinion on Career Pathway

4.4 Objective 3: Perceptions of beneficiaries who completed the CATHSSETA programme.

4.4.1 Satisfaction with Programme Administration

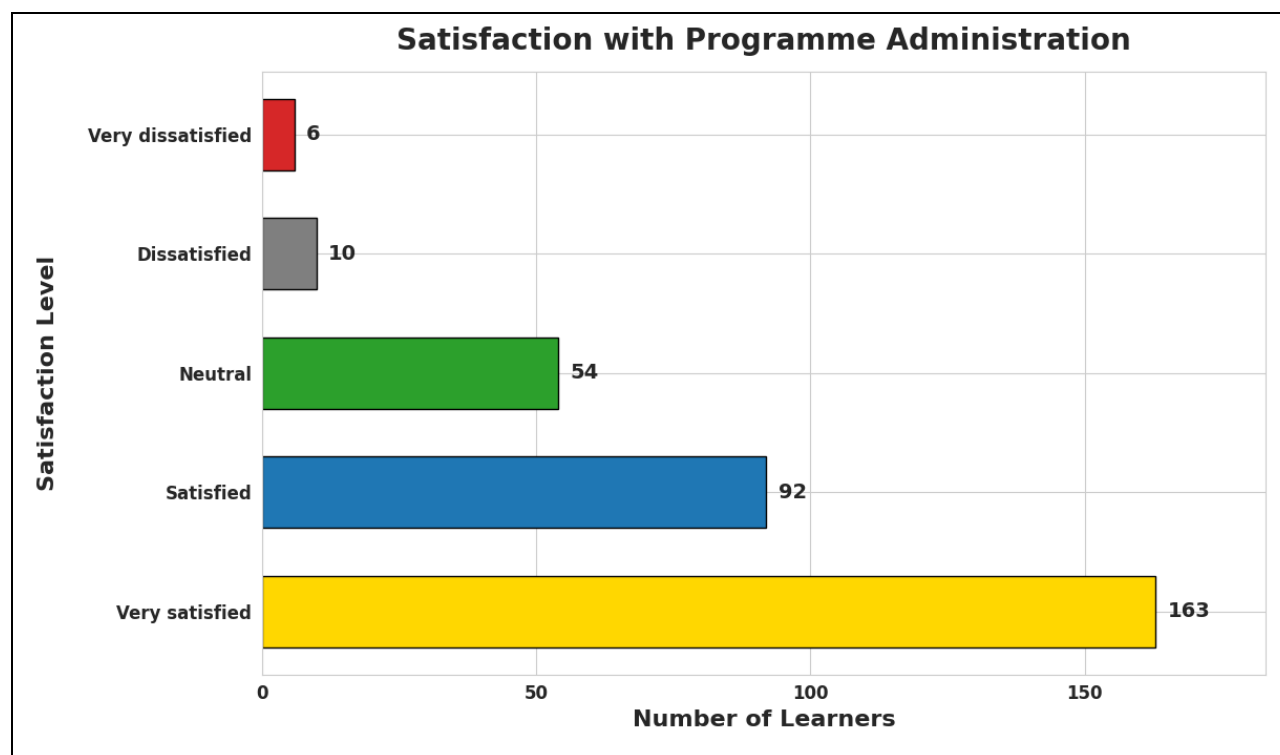


Figure 36 Satisfaction with Programme Administration

Learner feedback shows strong satisfaction with programme administration but also highlights areas for improvement. Out of 325 respondents, 163 learners (50.2%) were *Very Satisfied*, 92 learners (28.3%) were *Satisfied*, 54 learners (16.6%) were *Neutral*, 10 learners (3.1%) were *Dissatisfied*, and 6 learners (1.8%) were *Very Dissatisfied*.

Overall, 78.5% of the learners expressed positive ratings (*Very Satisfied* + *Satisfied*), while 16.6% were neutral and 4.9% reported dissatisfaction (*Dissatisfied* + *Very Dissatisfied*). Learners praised effective communication, timely updates, and facilitator support as key strengths of programme administration. The small proportion of negative responses points to operational issues such as stipend delays and certificate issuance bottlenecks. Overall, programme administration was

perceived as well-organized and supportive, contributing positively to the learner experience and reflecting high satisfaction with communication and coordination.

4.4.2 Three Biggest Challenges Experienced by Learners

The three main challenges experienced by learners were related to time management, including scheduling conflicts, balancing assignments, and training sessions that clashed with work or study commitments. Time-related issues (0.92%) involved delays in materials, late communication, and insufficient preparation time. Transportation difficulties (0.62%) and other logistical or operational issues were also reported. Financial and administrative concerns, such as delayed payments, along with stress and customer interaction challenges, were additional factors. While some issues had low percentages, they highlight recurring obstacles. Improving scheduling, communication, and resource allocation could enhance the learner experience and programme efficiency.

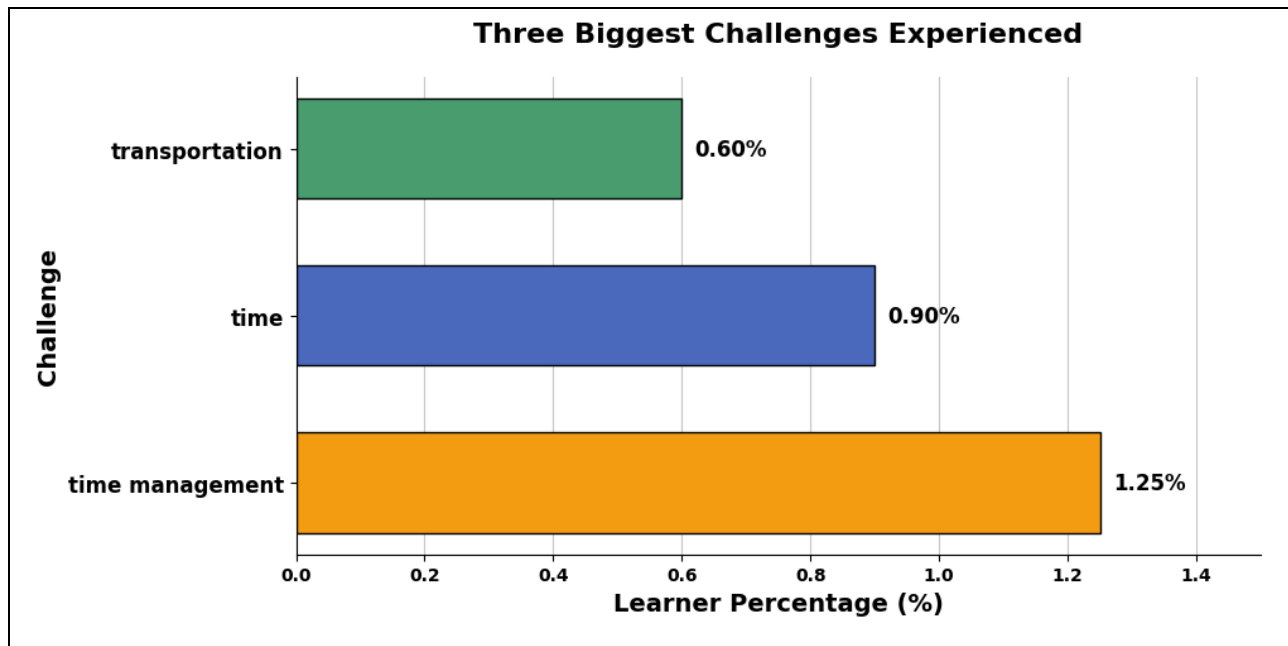


Figure 37 Three Biggest Challenges Experienced

4.4.3 Aspects of the Programme That Worked Well for Learners

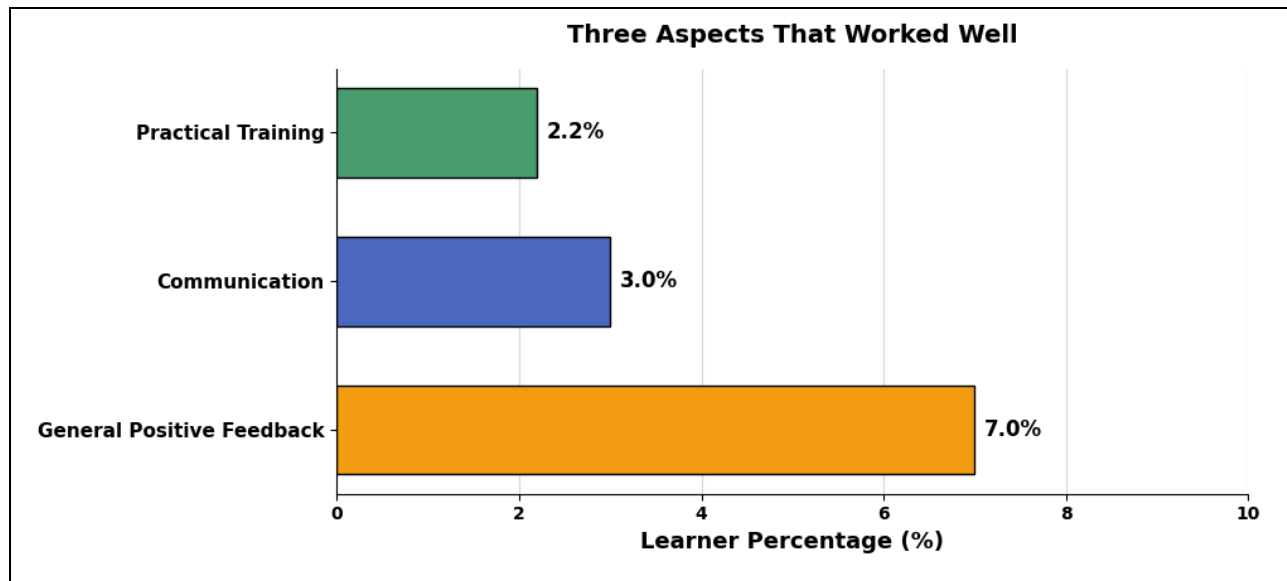


Figure 38 Three Aspects That Worked Well

The three most appreciated aspects of the programme by learners were General Positive Feedback (6.77%), Communication (2.77%), and Practical Training (2.15%). These findings indicate that learners valued the overall structure and delivery of the programme, highlighting effective communication and hands-on learning opportunities as key strengths. The emphasis on practical training suggests that experiential learning played a crucial role in enhancing skills and confidence among participants.

4.4.4 Learner Perceptions of Programme Quality

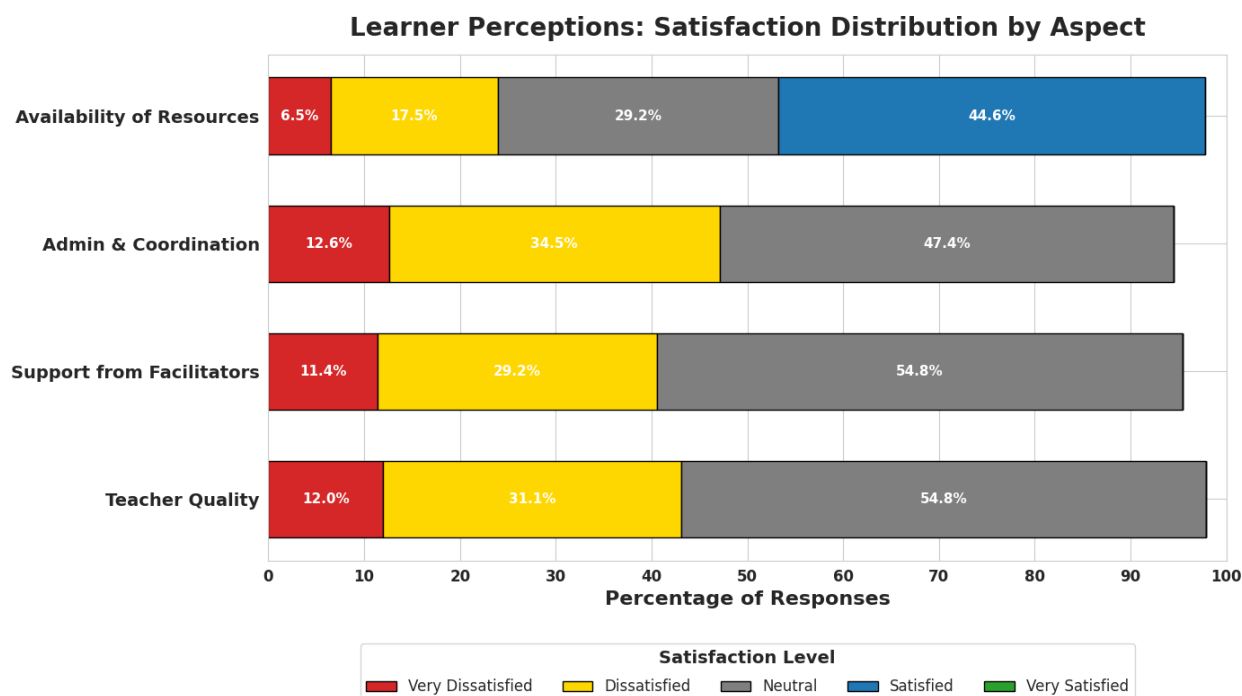


Figure 39 *Learner Perceptions of Programme Quality*

Survey results show that Teacher Quality had the highest satisfaction, with 54.8% Very Satisfied and 31.1% Satisfied, totalling 85.9% positive responses. Support from Facilitators followed closely at 84.0% positive (54.8% Very Satisfied, 29.2% Satisfied). Administration and Coordination achieved 81.9% positive (47.4% Very Satisfied, 34.5% Satisfied). Availability of Resources was slightly lower, with 73.8% positive responses (44.6% Very Satisfied, 29.2% Satisfied). Neutral responses ranged from 12.0% to 17.5%, while negative ratings (Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied) remained below 7% across all aspects. Most positivity comes from “Very Satisfied” ratings (44.6%–54.8%), demonstrating strong programme delivery and indicating that improving access to materials and equipment could further boost overall satisfaction.

4.5 Objective 4: Challenges and Successes of the programme.

4.5.1 Key Learner Successes

Across programmes, learners consistently reported meaningful skills gains and strong work-readiness, with many saying they used programme knowledge “to a very great extent” in roles ranging from customer service and hospitality to conservation, administration, event management, and sports coaching. These gains translated into positive employment outcomes; numerous respondents were absorbed into permanent or contract roles within 0–3 months of completion and, in several cases, started small businesses or pursued further studies using the confidence, credentials, and networks developed through the programmes. Satisfaction with facilitator support, practical exposure, and programme coordination was frequently high, and most learners would recommend the programme, endorsing its long-term value and employability benefits.

4.5.2 Key Learner Challenges

The most common pain points were stipend issues (insufficient amounts and late payments), transport and relocation costs, and long or irregular working hours, which sometimes led to fatigue and absenteeism. Learners also flagged limited resources/ PPE, infrequent site visits or mentorship, and administrative bottlenecks, including delays in issuing certificates that affected job seeking; some placements were misaligned with qualifications or involved poor workplace treatment, which dampened skills application. Post-completion, many cited scarce job opportunities and the “experience required” barrier, and repeatedly recommended longer programme durations, stronger employer partnerships for placement, higher or timely stipends, better communication/monitoring, and clearer pathways to absorption.

4.6 Objective 5: Programme Sustainability

4.6.1 Is the programme sustainable and beneficial?

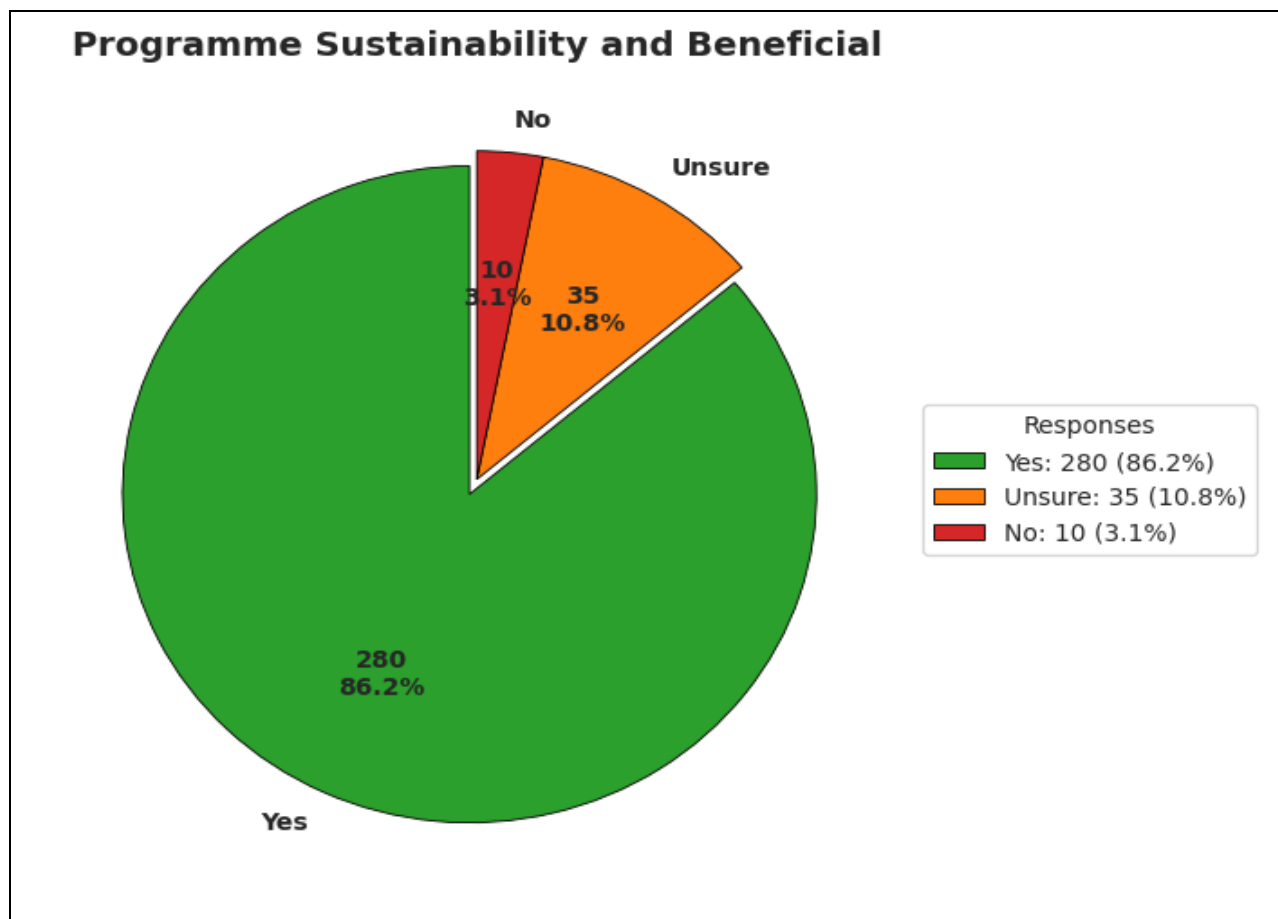


Figure 40 Programme Sustainability and Beneficial

Analysis of the learner survey in Figure 40 shows strong confidence in the programme's long-term sustainability. Of the 325 learners surveyed, 86.2% said the programme is sustainable, 10.8% were unsure, and only 3.1% disagreed. This reflects broad belief in the programme's long-term value, with uncertainty largely linked to operational issues such as stipend delays, certificate turnaround times, and host-employer practices noted elsewhere in the findings. Overall, learners perceive the programme as impactful and worth recommending. Improvements in employer absorption pathways, communication, site monitoring, and stipend reliability could help convert the remaining "unsure" respondents into clear advocates over time.

The three charts below (Figures 41, 42 and 43) show strong learner support across all the three dimensions rated for sustainability. *For long-term value*, over 87% agreed or strongly agreed, with fewer than 4% disagreeing. *Employability* also received high approval, with about 83% agreement and just over 3% disagreement; although 13% were neutral, indicating some uncertainty about labour-market outcomes. *Recommendation to others* was the most positive measure, with more than 91% agreement and under 3% disagreement, showing strong advocacy among learners. Overall, these results confirm consistently positive perceptions of value, employability, and recommendation, aligning with the separate sustainability question in Figure 38 where 86.2% answered “Yes.”

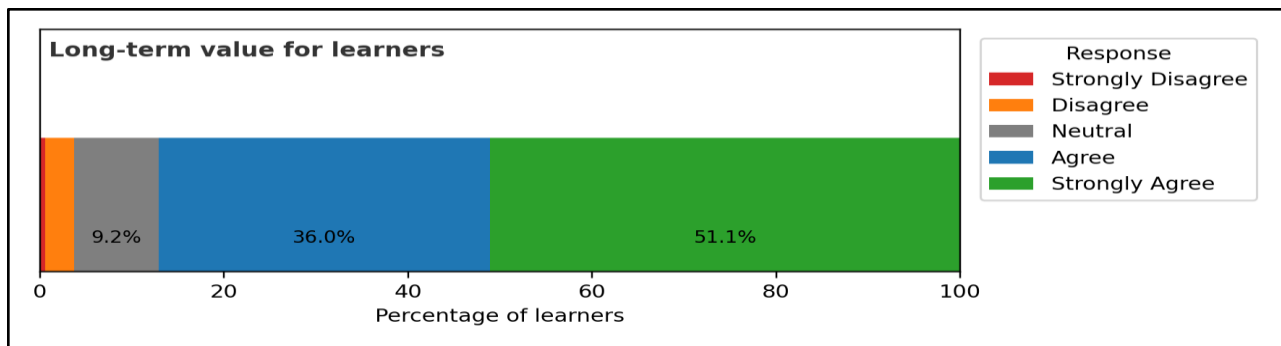


Figure 41 The Programme Has Long-term value for learners

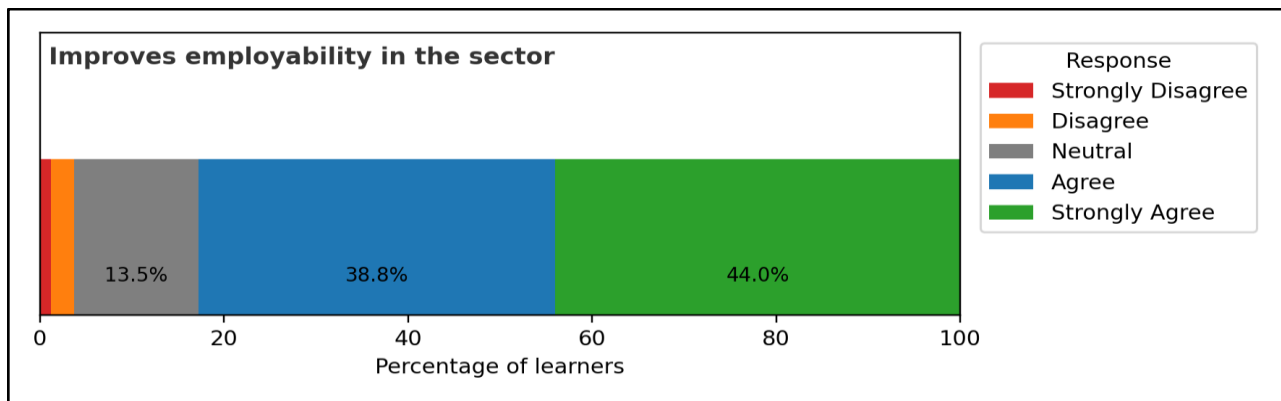


Figure 42 The programme improves employability in the sector.

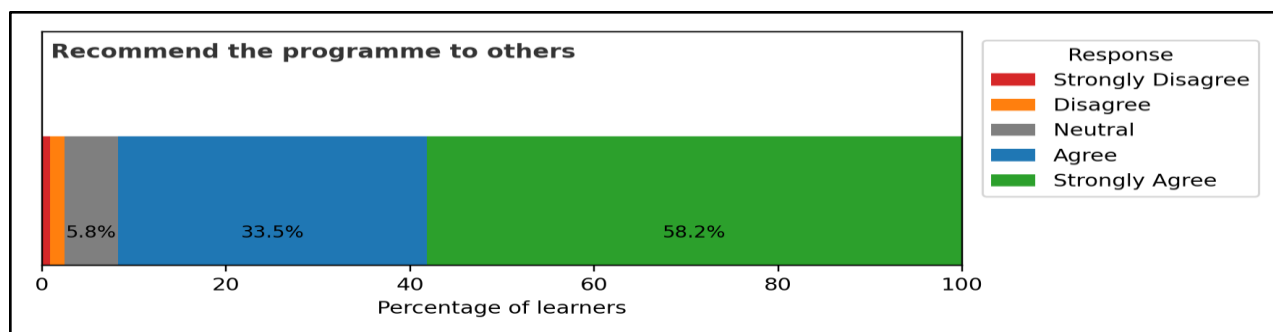


Figure 43 Recommendation of the Programme to Others.

4.6.2 Three key aspects CATHSSETA should improve in future programmes

Learners identified three priority areas for improvement. The most frequently mentioned was employment and absorption after the programme, cited by 71 learners (21.8%), followed by stipend value and timely payment, highlighted by 64 learners (19.7%), and stronger communication with regular check-ins and site visits, noted by 61 learners (18.8%). Other suggestions included extending programme duration, improving resource availability, and enhancing mentorship support. In short, learners want clearer bridges from training to jobs, reliable financial operations, and closer on-site support. To address this, CATHSSETA should i) formalise employer absorption pathways (e.g., MoUs with minimum placement targets and quarterly conversion dashboards), ii) set a stipend service-level agreement with clear pay-day notifications and an escalation route, and iii) institutionalise field support through scheduled site visits and bi-weekly virtual check-ins backed by a simple helpdesk/ticketing system. These steps directly target the top-cited frictions, strengthen learner trust, and improve post-programme outcomes

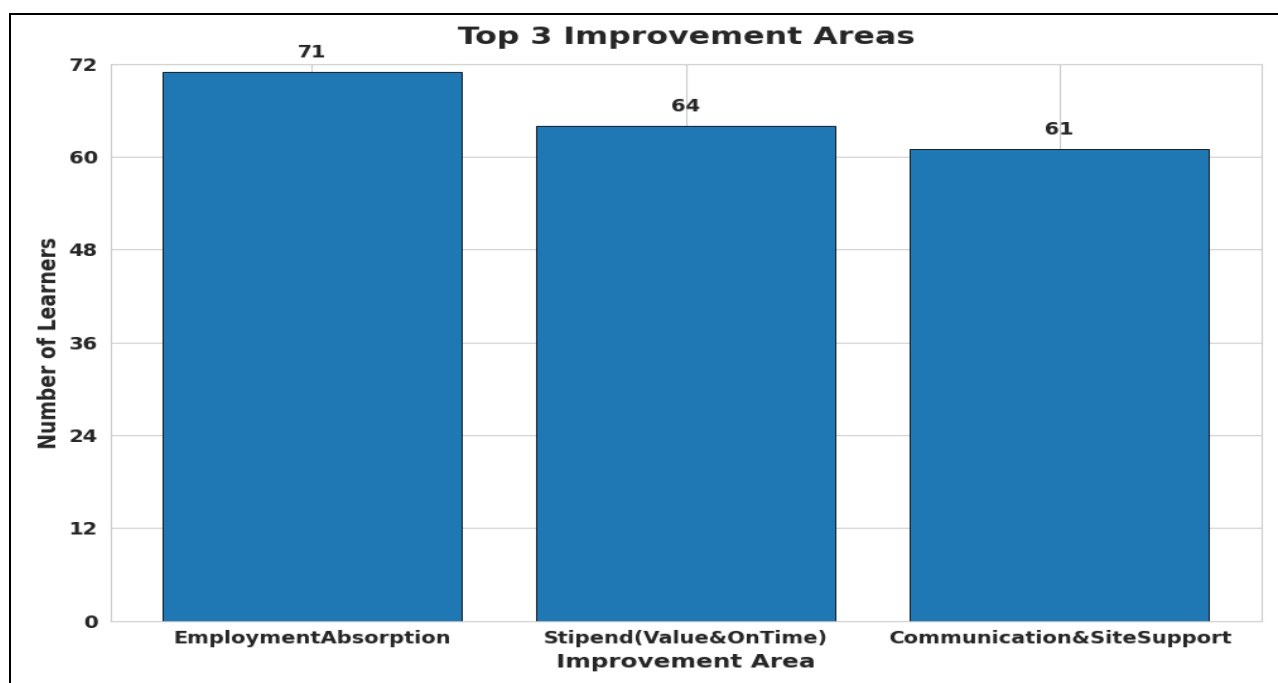


Figure 44 Top 3 Improvement Areas

4. 7 Summary of Employer Profile

Profile data from the survey provides a clearer picture of the employers participating in CATHSSETA programmes. The Hospitality sector had the highest representation, followed by Arts and Culture, Tourism, Sports, and Conservation. Most organisations were small, employing fewer than 49 people. Some medium and large organisations also took part. Participation was highest in Gauteng, with strong representation from KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. Most respondents were private companies, with additional input from NPOs/NGOs, public entities, sole proprietors, and partnerships. The majority of organisations had been operating for six to twenty years, suggesting a stable and experienced employer base across CATHSSETA's sub-sectors.

Importantly, 84% of respondents confirmed that their operations fall within the CATHSSETA mandate. About three-quarters were aware of their mandate status. This shows strong alignment between participating organisations and the sub-sectors CATHSSETA supports. Most organisations took part in Learnerships and Skills Programmes. Internships and Artisan Programmes were also common. Participation in TVET Placements and Bursary Programmes was lower but still significant. These profiles are detailed below.

4.7.1 Sector and Sub-Sector Representation

The subsector distribution in the survey is heavily skewed towards Hospitality, which accounts for 44.9% of all responses, by far the most represented subsector. The next largest category is Other (including education and training providers, TVET colleges, and NGOs), contributing 27.1% of responses, signalling strong participation from institutions operating adjacent to CATHSSETA's core subsectors. Smaller but notable shares come from Sports, Recreation & Fitness (11.0%), Arts, Culture & Heritage (8.5%), and Tourism & Travel Services (5.9%), while Conservation (1.7%) and Gaming & Lotteries (0.8%) have minimal representation.

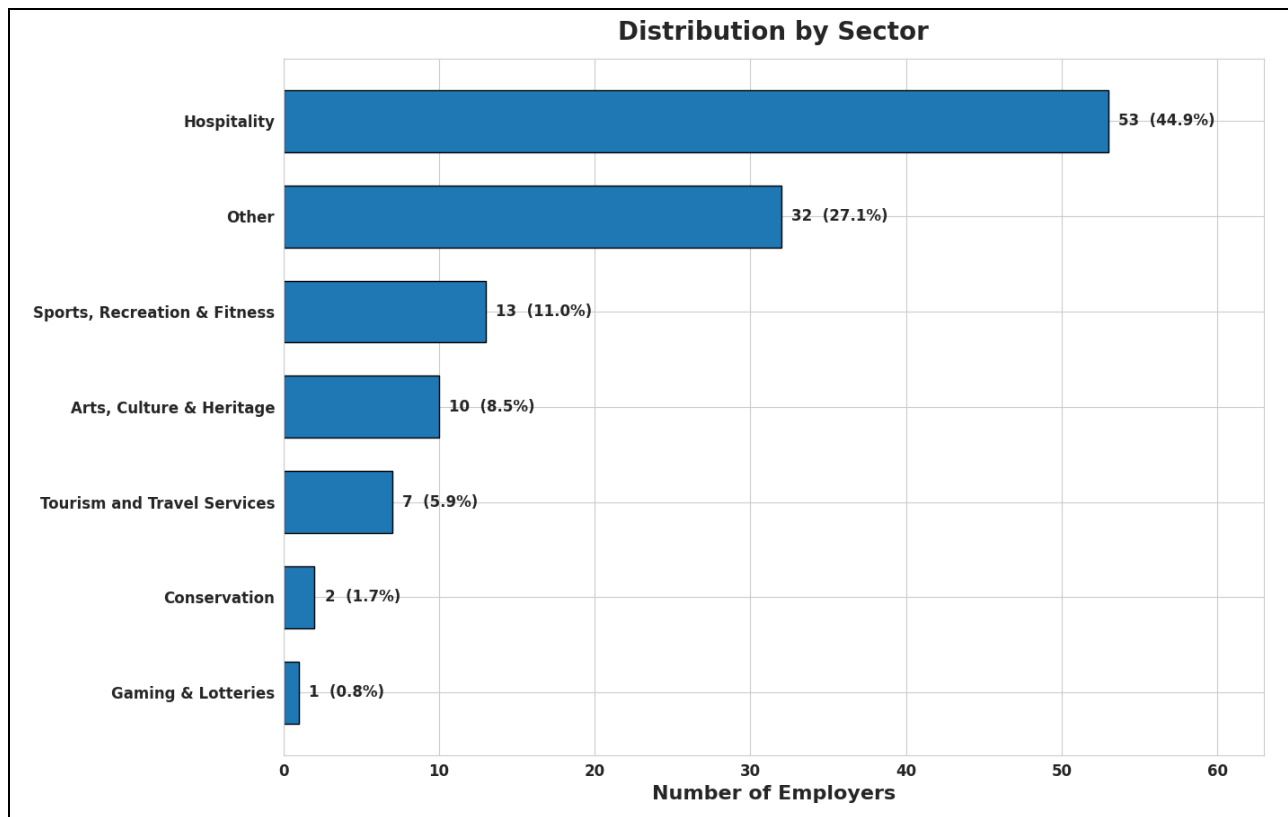


Figure 45 Sub-Sector Representation

Overall, this pattern suggests that CATHSSETA programmes are most engaged with hospitality-related organisations, but there is also substantial involvement from training institutions and NGOs. This highlights the need for tailored strategies that address both sector-specific priorities in hospitality and cross-sectoral skills development with education and training partners.

4.7.2 Organisation Size

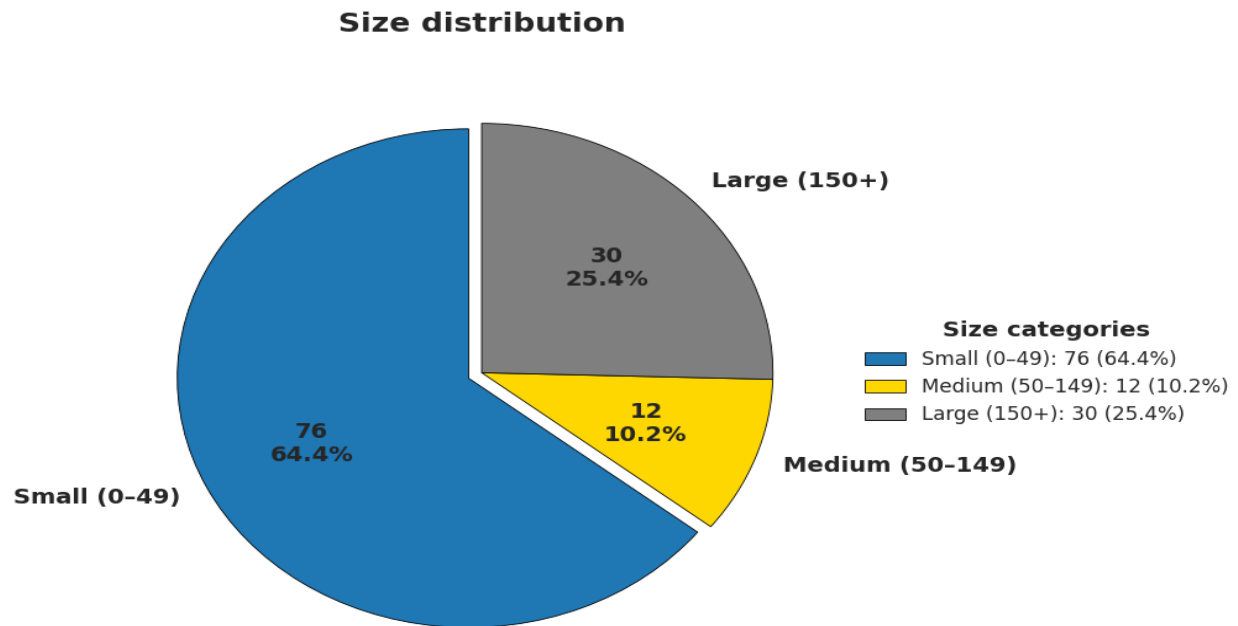


Figure 46 *Organisation Size*

The survey reveals those small organisations (0–49 employees) dominate the respondent pool, representing 64.4% of all valid entries. This indicates that CATHSSETA programmes are primarily engaging with smaller businesses, which often face unique challenges such as limited resources for training and mentorship. Large organisations (150+ employees) account for 25.4%, showing that a significant portion of the sector’s bigger players are also participating in skills development initiatives. Meanwhile, medium-sized organisations (50–149 employees) make up only 10.2%, suggesting a potential gap in engagement with mid-tier companies. This distribution highlights the need for differentiated strategies: targeted support for small enterprises to overcome capacity constraints, while leveraging the scale and infrastructure of large organisations to drive broader impact.

4.7.3 Years Involved in Subsector

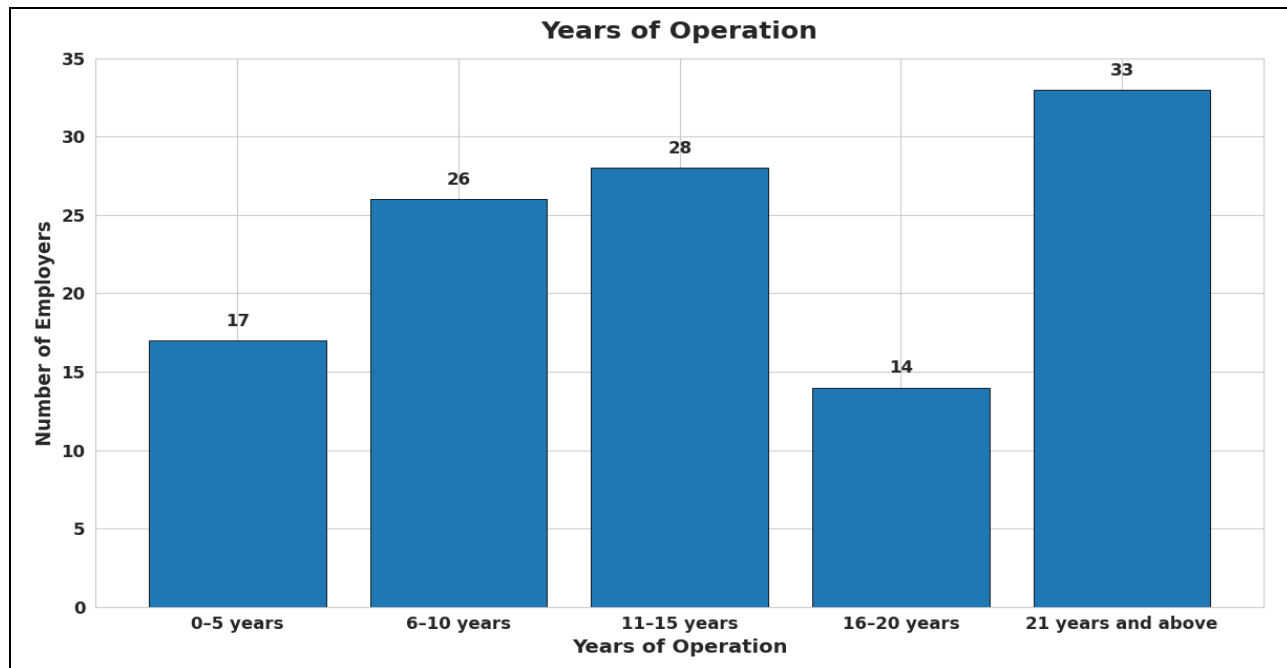


Figure 47 Years of Operation

The data shows that most organisations in the sample are well-established, with over 73% reporting more than six years of involvement in their subsector. The largest single category is 21 years and above, representing 28% of respondents, which underscores the maturity and stability of many businesses in the sector. Mid-tenure organisations are also significant: 11–15 years accounts for 23.7%, and 6–10 years for 22%, indicating a strong cohort of companies with a decade or more of experience. In contrast, newer entrants are relatively few, with only 14.4% of organisations reporting 0–5 years in the subsector. This distribution suggests that CATHSSETA programmes are primarily engaging with experienced organisations, which may influence programme design, emphasising advanced skills development and leadership training rather than basic onboarding.

4.7.4 Provincial Distribution

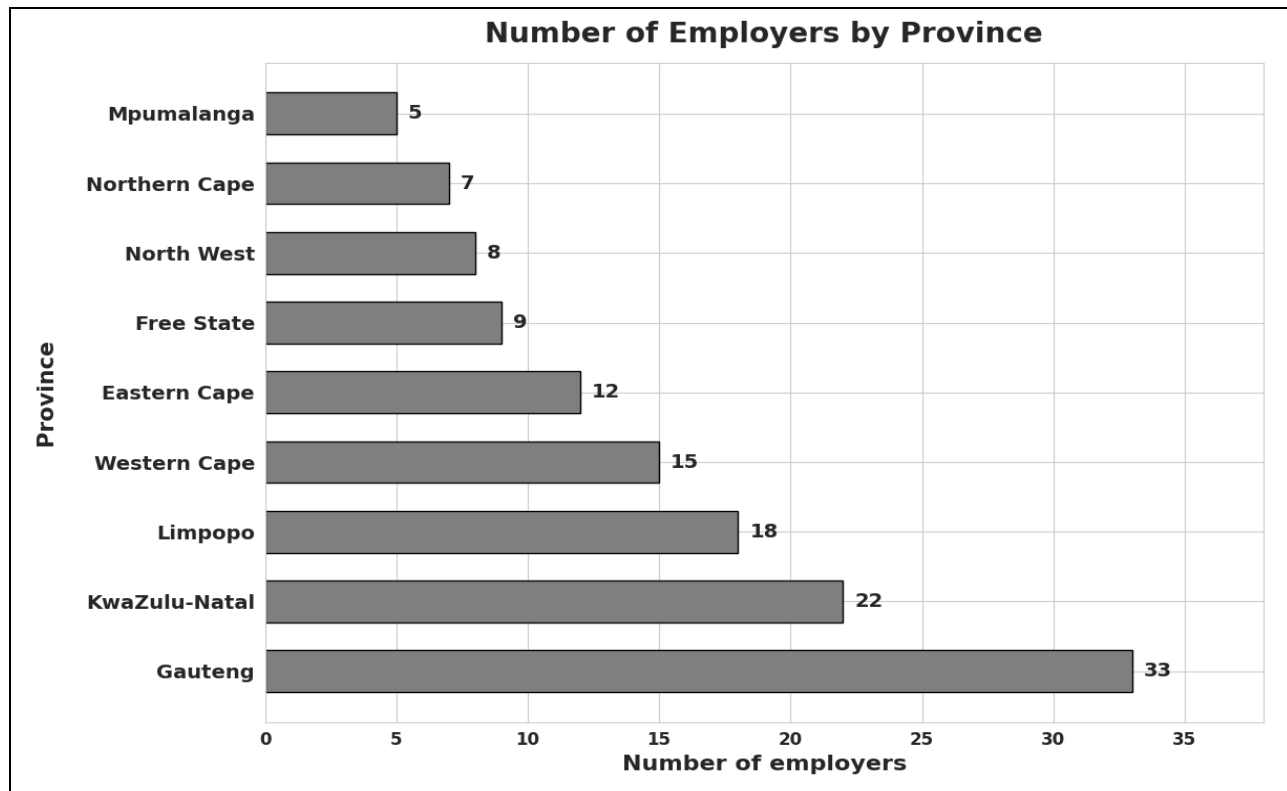


Figure 48 Provincial Distribution

The survey responses are concentrated in Gauteng, which accounts for 27.1% of organisations, reflecting the province's role as a major economic hub and a key player in hospitality and tourism. KwaZulu-Natal follows with 19.5%, highlighting its strong tourism and hospitality footprint, while Limpopo contributes 16.1%, suggesting notable engagement from rural and eco-tourism sectors. Western Cape (11%) and Eastern Cape (7.6%) show moderate representation, consistent with their established tourism markets. Smaller shares come from Free State (6.8%), Northwest (5.1%), and Mpumalanga and Northern Cape (each 3.4%), indicating that while participation spans all provinces, the bulk of activity is concentrated in Gauteng and coastal regions. This distribution suggests that programme strategies may need to balance the strong metropolitan presence with targeted outreach to underrepresented provinces to ensure equitable skills development across the country.

4.7.5 CATHSSETA's sectoral mandate

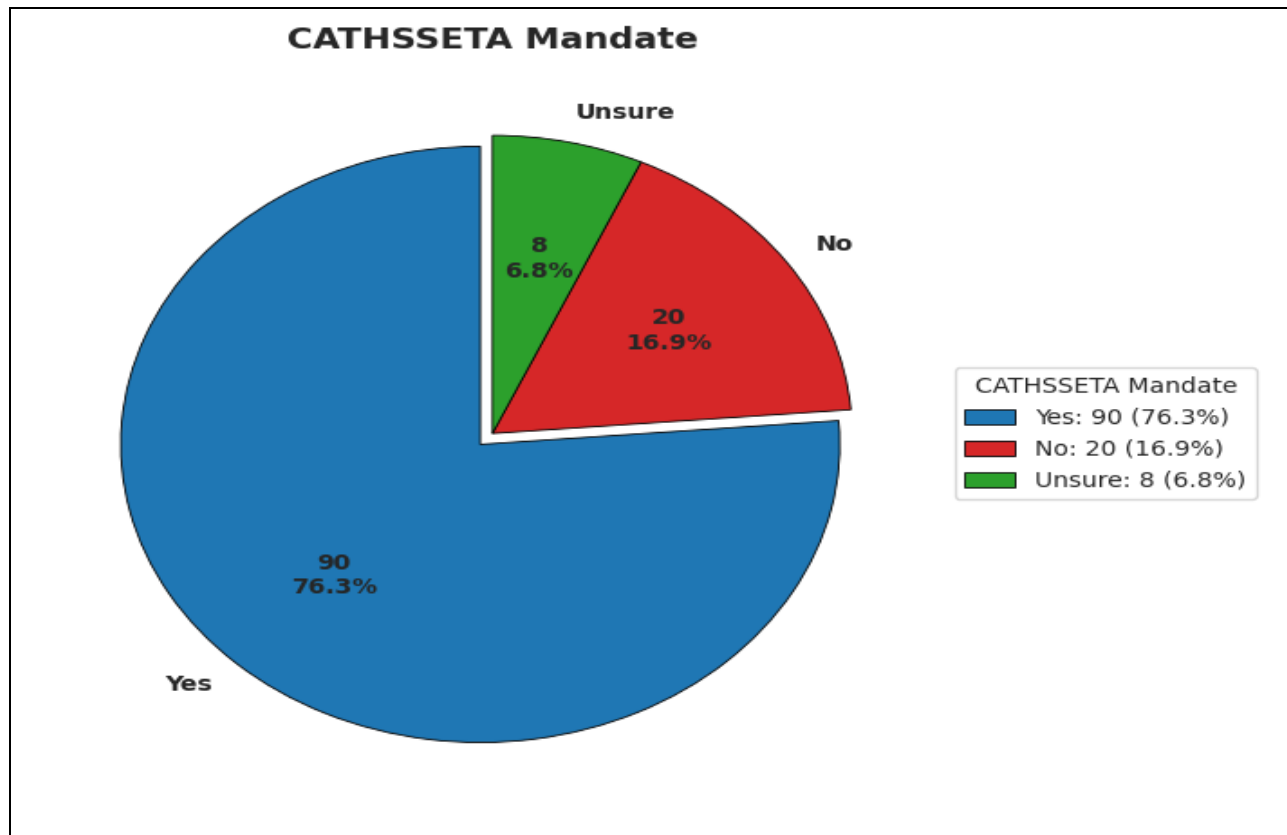


Figure 49 CATHSSETA Mandate

The majority of organisations surveyed, 76.3% (90 out of 118) confirmed that they fall within CATHSSETA's sectoral mandate, either as levy-paying or non-levy-paying entities. This strong alignment indicates that most respondents are directly relevant to CATHSSETA's scope and programmes. However, 16.9% (20 organisations) reported that they do not fall under the mandate, and 6.8% (8 organisations) were unsure of their status. The presence of uncertainty suggests a need for clearer communication and guidance on mandate criteria, particularly for organisations that may be eligible but lack clarity. Overall, these findings highlight that while CATHSSETA's reach is substantial, there is an opportunity to improve awareness and engagement among organisations outside or uncertain about the mandate.

4.7.6 Ownership Type

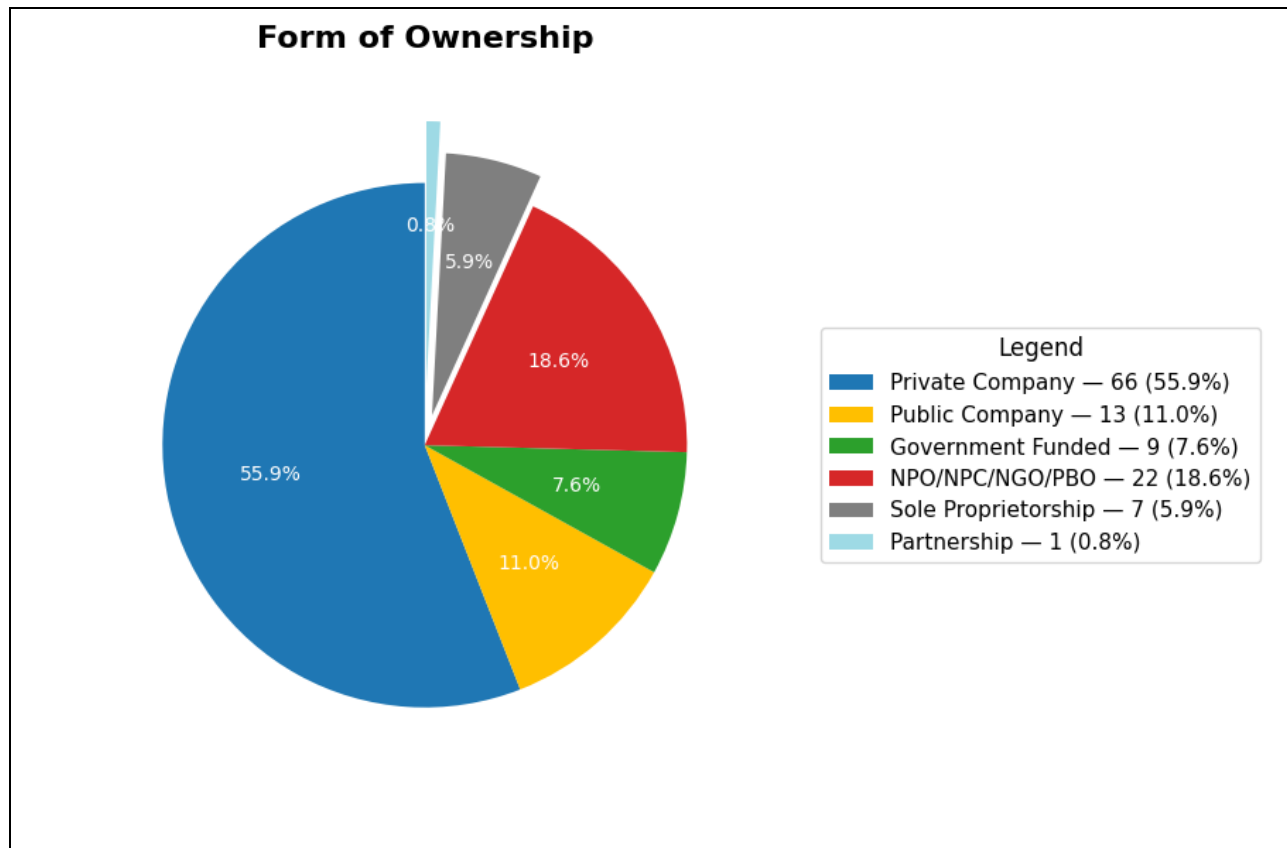


Figure 50 Ownership Type Distribution

In Figure 49, the respondent pool is dominated by Private Companies (55.9%), suggesting that most participating organisations operate as privately registered entities. A substantial non-profit presence (18.6%) covering NPOs, NPCs, NGOs and PBOs, indicates strong engagement from mission-driven training providers and sector-support organisations. Public Companies (11.0%) and Government-funded entities (7.6%) contribute a meaningful share, reflecting participation from publicly listed firms and institutions supported by the state. Sole Proprietorships (5.9%) appear as a smaller but notable group (often agile, micro-scale actors), while Partnerships (0.8%) are rare in the sample. Overall, this mix points to a diverse ownership landscape, with programmes needing to accommodate compliance and capacity differences across private, public, and non-profit structures.

4.7.7 Programmes Involvement

The data shows that Learnership Programmes are the most common intervention, with 31.4% of organisations reporting involvement. Skills Programmes follow closely at 20.3%, highlighting their importance in addressing immediate workplace skills gaps. Internships and University Placements account for 9.3%, reflecting efforts to integrate graduates into the labour market, while Artisan Programmes (7.6%) and TVET Placements (4.2%) indicate targeted technical training initiatives. Bursary Programmes and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) appear less frequently (each under 1%), suggesting these are niche interventions.

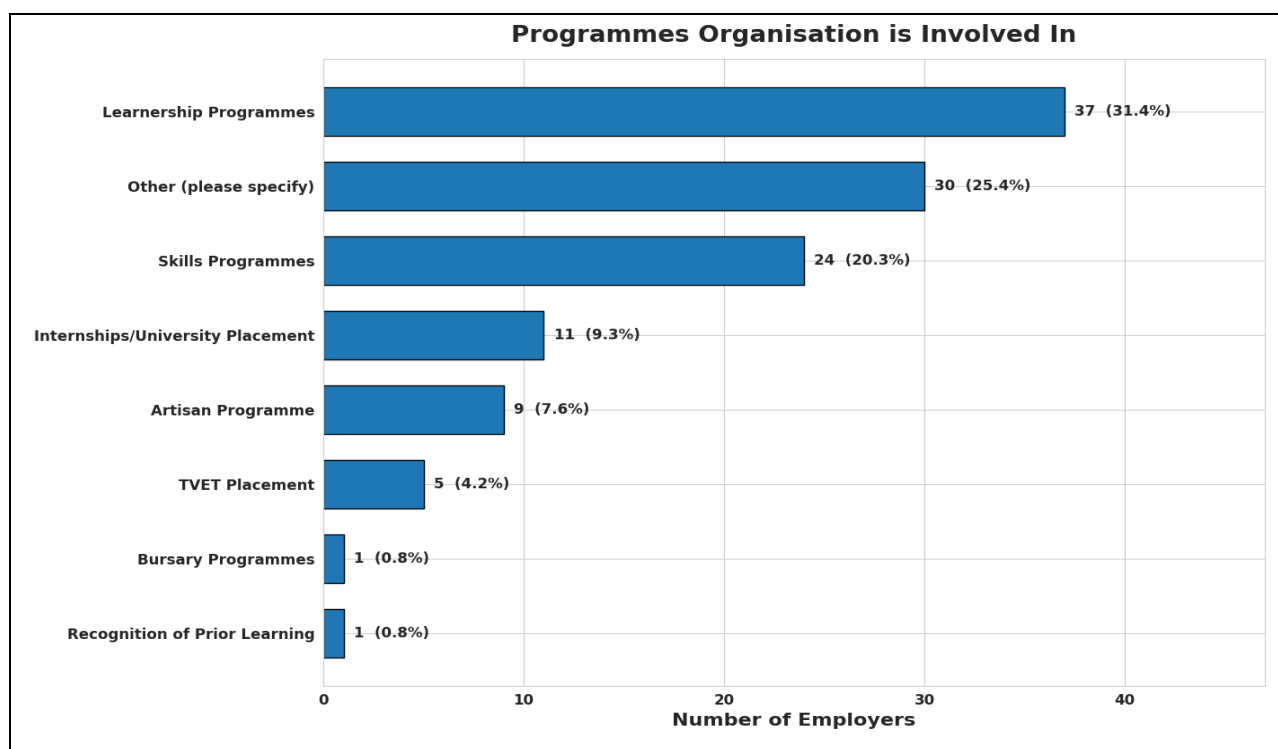


Figure 51 Programmes Involvement

Notably, “Other” responses make up 25.4%, and analysis of these free-text entries reveals that many organisations participate in multiple programmes simultaneously, often combining learnerships, skills programmes, internships, and bursaries. Several responses in this category indicate “all of the above”, suggesting organisations often engage in a broad mix of programmes rather than a single type. This pattern underscores the need for integrated programme design

and flexible funding models to support organisations engaging across several intervention streams.

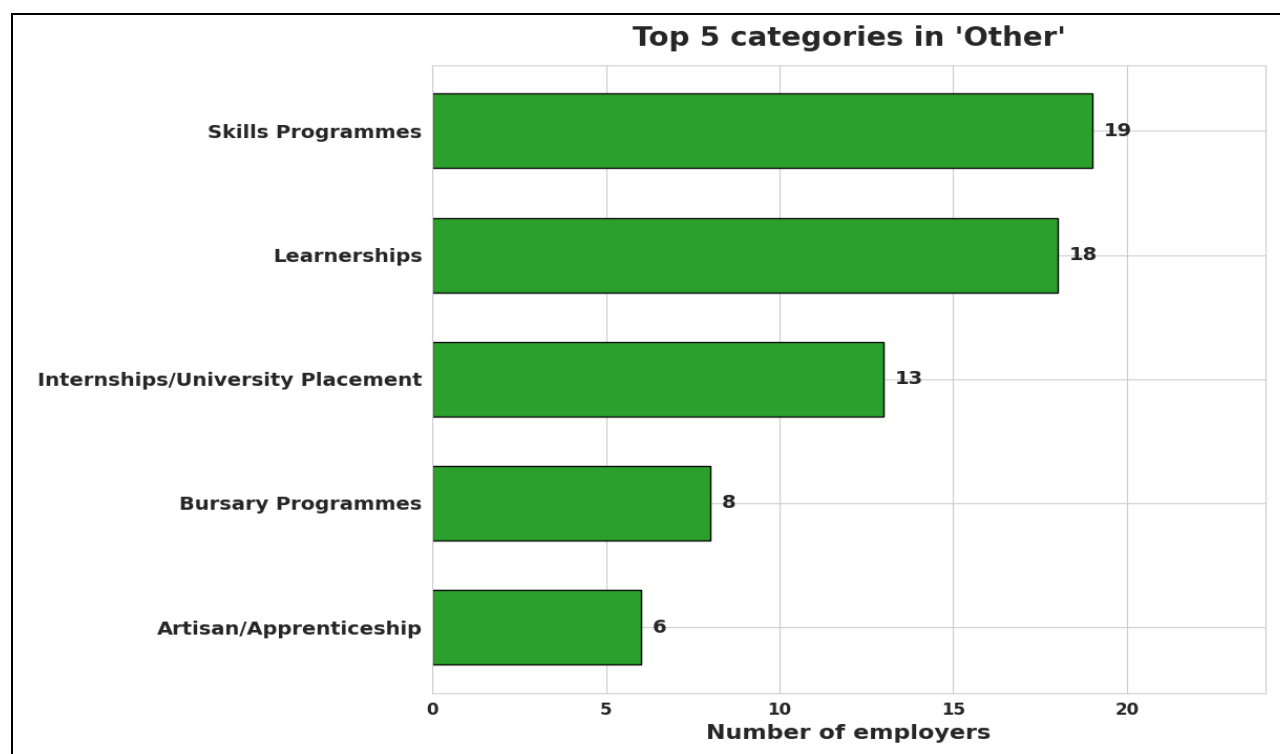


Figure 52 'Other' Programme selections

4.8 Objective 2: Relevance/Alignment with Labour Market Needs

4.8.1 Programme Alignment with Skill Needs

Employer feedback indicates strong alignment between CATHSSETA-funded programmes and workplace skill needs. Of the 118 respondents, most rated the programmes as Very Well Aligned (63.9%) or Well Aligned (29.4%), resulting in an overall alignment rating of 93.3%. Only one employer (0.8%) felt the programmes were poorly aligned. Positive ratings were linked to relevant technical skills, improved workplace readiness, and meaningful contributions to productivity. In contrast, neutral (5.0%) or negative feedback pointed to gaps in soft skills, digital competencies, and programme flexibility.

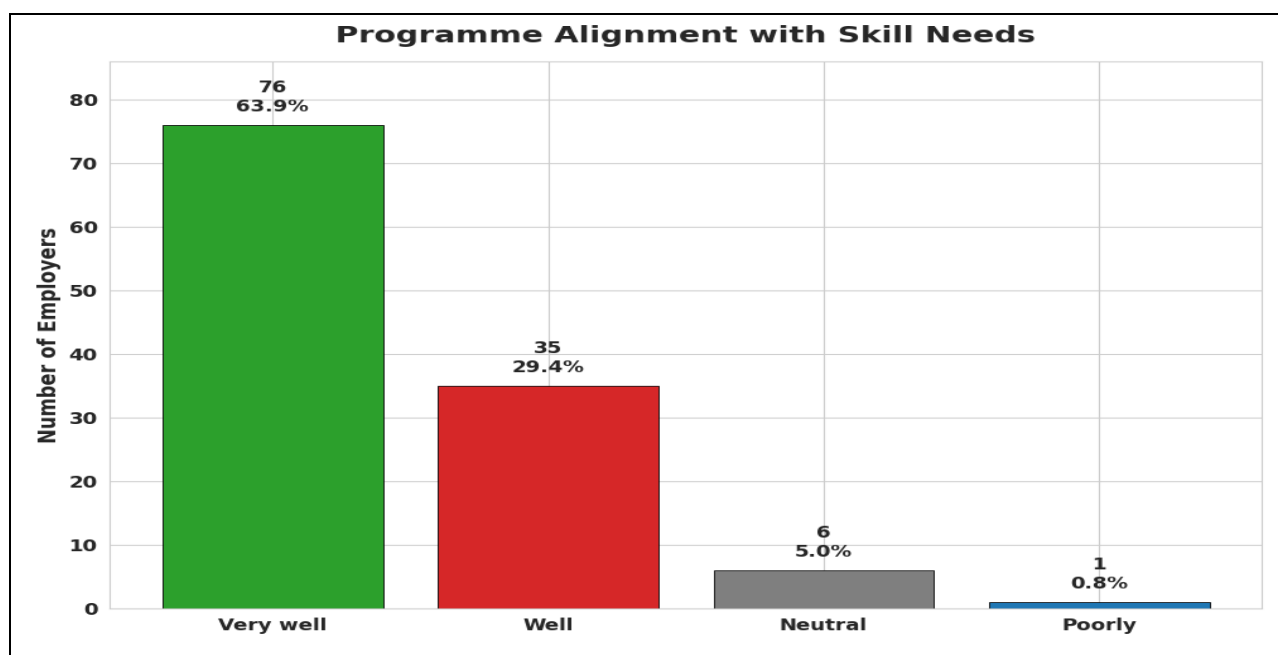


Figure 53 Programme Alignment with Skill Needs

4.8.2 Dissatisfaction with WBL programmes and Provision of skills

Payment delays and administrative inefficiencies emerged as the most prominent issue. Respondents reported late stipend payments and slow invoice processing, which disrupt programme delivery and place financial pressure on learners.

Learner-related challenges were also common. Many employers experienced dropouts linked to stipend delays, while others noted inconsistent motivation and low commitment among some learners. Limited access in rural areas also presented barriers for many learners.

Programme structure issues were frequently highlighted. Misalignment between programme schedules and academic calendars created planning difficulties. Also, limited flexibility in delivery made it hard for organisations to adapt training to operational needs.

Training quality concerns appeared in several responses. Employers observed inconsistent training standards and insufficient practical exposure, affecting learner preparedness. These

factors reduced learners' ability to perform effectively and limited the overall impact of the programmes for those organisations.

Table 3 *Summary of issues Identified*

Category	Issues Identified
Payment Delays & Administration	- Late stipend payments - Slow Invoice Processing - Administrative inefficiencies
Learner-Related Challenges	- Dropouts due to stipend delays - Low motivation or inconsistent motivation - Limited rural access and transportation costs
Programme Structure Issues	- Misalignment with academic calendars - Limited Programme flexibility
Training Quality Concerns	- Inconsistent training standards - Insufficient practical exposure
Workplace Readiness Gaps	- Difficulty adapting to workplace demands - Issues with discipline and long working hours

4.8.3 Learners' contribution to skills gaps

Employer feedback strongly indicates that learners placed through CATHSSETA programmes contributed meaningfully to addressing workplace skills gaps. Out of 118 organisations, 107 employers (90.7%) agreed that learners helped meet their skills needs, while 11 employers (9.3%) reported that learners did not fully meet expectations. The reasons included lack of commitment from some learners, dropouts linked to stipend delays, and limited workplace readiness.

Workplace readiness gaps were another major concern. Learners often struggled to cope with long working hours, discipline requirements, and general workplace expectations. Overall, these challenges span administrative, structural, and learner-related dimensions, all of which impact programme effectiveness and completion rates.

When asked whether the learners placed in their organisations contributed to meeting skills gaps, the vast majority of employers responded positively. Approximately 89.9% indicated that the

learners helped address their skills needs, highlighting the value these programmes bring in supplementing organisational capacity. A smaller proportion, 9.24%, reported that the learners did not significantly contribute, often citing reasons such as limited work readiness, short placement durations, or mismatches between learner skills and organisational requirements.

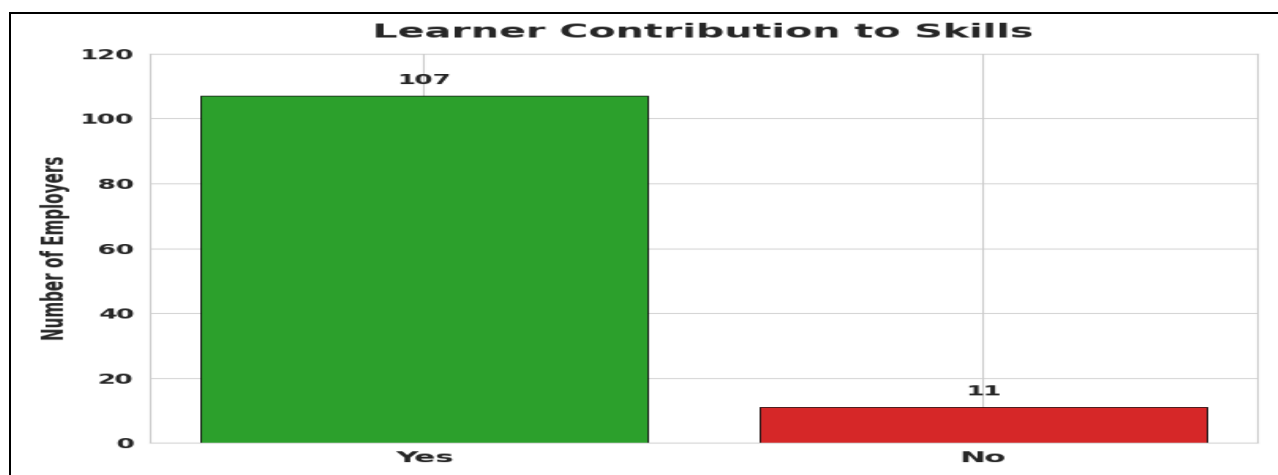


Figure 54 Learner contribution to Skills

4.9. Objective 3: Perception of the Learning Programmes Interventions

4.9.1 Satisfaction with Quality of Learners

Analysis of 118 valid responses shows that 84.7% of employers were either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the quality of learners from CATHSSETA programmes. Employers highlighted several reasons for their positive ratings: learners were eager to learn, adaptable to workplace environments, and equipped with relevant technical skills. Many respondents noted that learners contributed to increased productivity, brought fresh ideas, and demonstrated professionalism. Some organisations absorbed learners into permanent roles, reinforcing the programmes’ impact on employability.

However, challenges were mentioned, such as gaps in soft skills, limited workplace readiness, and occasional dropouts linked to stipend delays. Employers recommended stronger mentorship and pre-placement preparation to improve learner integration.



Figure 55 Satisfaction with Quality of Learners

4.9.2 CATHSSETA Administration and Coordination Effectiveness

Survey results show that 76% of employers rated CATHSSETA's administration and coordination as "Effective" or "Very Effective", while 20% were neutral and only 3% indicated "Ineffective." This strong positive perception is largely attributed to clear communication, timely support, and structured processes that helped employers implement programmes smoothly. Many respondents praised the responsiveness of CATHSSETA staff and the ease of resolving queries, noting that coordination was "on point" and that projects were monitored well.

However, the neutral and negative ratings stem from operational challenges such as technical issues with the CIMS system, delays in stipend and tranche payments, and regional inconsistencies in service delivery. Employers in some provinces reported slower turnaround times and difficulty reaching support teams during critical phases. These issues created administrative strain and, in some cases, affected learner attendance and morale.

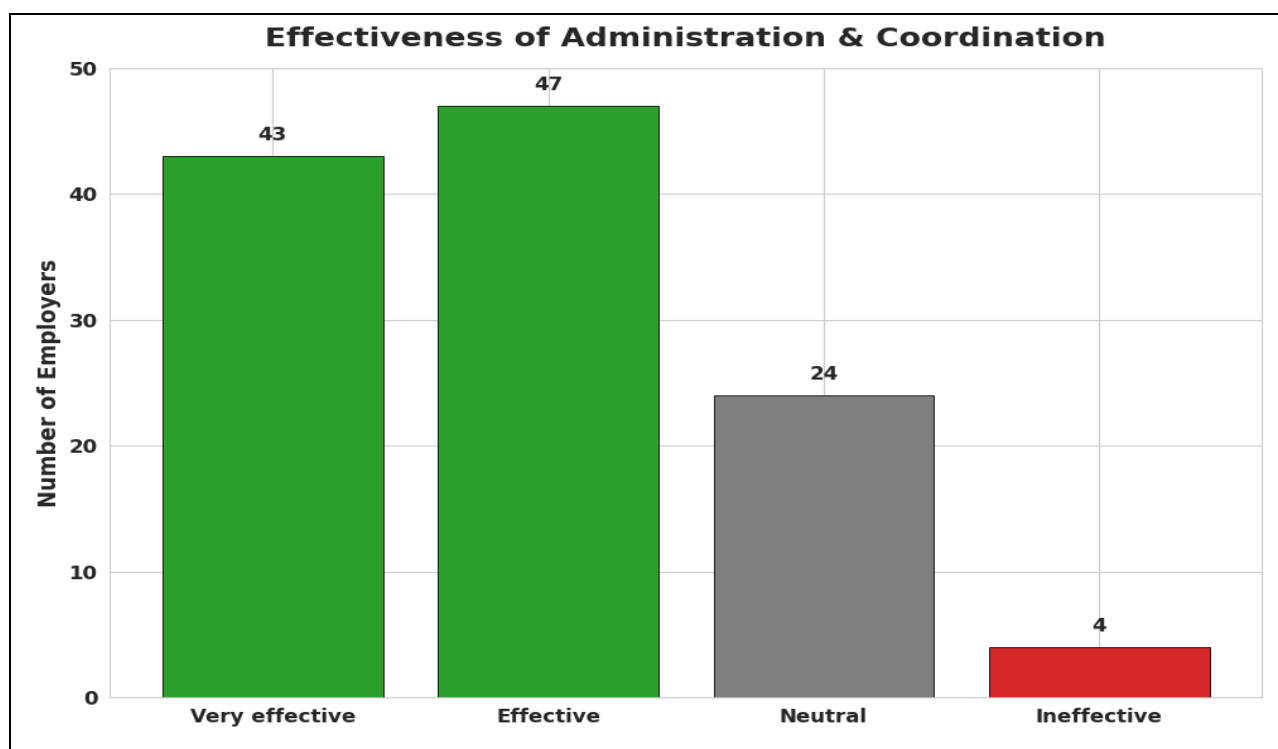


Figure 56 Administration and Coordination Effectiveness

4.10. Objective 4: Challenges and Successes

4.10.1 Challenges Faced by Organizations

The challenges reported by employers mainly relate to resource constraints and structural limitations that hinder effective programme implementation. Mentorship capacity is a major issue, with many organisations lacking enough supervisors to support learners. Time constraints further limit the ability of employers to provide consistent guidance.

Budget pressures are significant. Employers struggle with the costs of equipment, compliance, and other resources required to host beneficiaries. Many also face space and facility shortages, particularly smaller organisations in hospitality and tourism.

Learners' academic commitments create additional disruptions, as time off for assignments affects workflow. Stipend payment delays remain a recurring problem and contribute to

absenteeism and dropouts. Employers also raised concerns about learners' work-readiness, discipline, and professionalism.

PPE and compliance costs add further strain, especially in sectors with strict safety requirements. Overall, while employers value the programmes, financial, operational, and capacity-related pressures continue to limit optimal implementation.

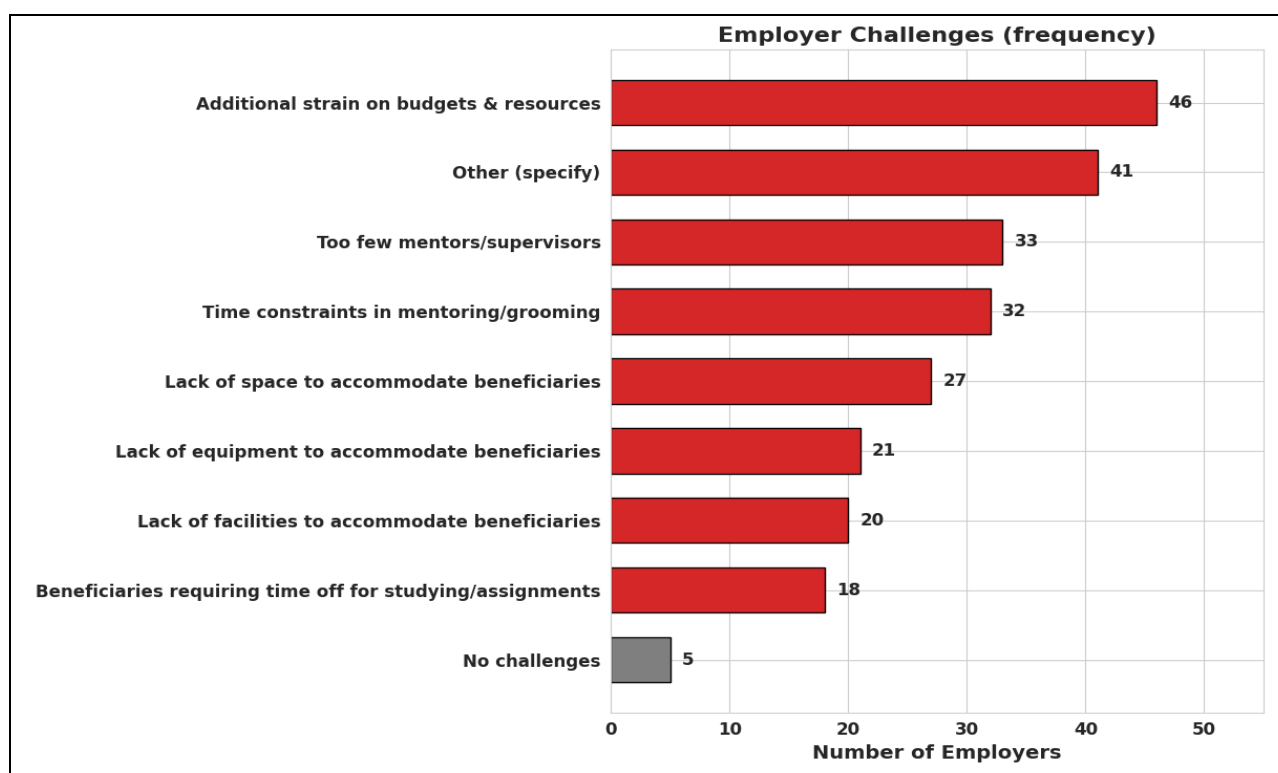


Figure 57 Employer Challenges

Employers reported several operational and resource-related challenges when hosting learners. The most frequently cited issue was budget strain, mentioned by 47 responses (39.8%), followed by mentorship capacity and time constraints, each appearing in 33 responses (27.9%). Limited space was noted in 27 responses (22.9%), while insufficient equipment and inadequate facilities were highlighted in 22 responses (18.6%) and 21 responses (17.8%), respectively. Learners' academic commitments, such as time off for assignments, were mentioned in 19 responses (16.1%). Counts reflect theme matches; a single entry may map to multiple themes. The numbers

represent how many times those themes appeared across all employer responses, and not how many employers reported them.

Analysis of the 42 open-ended responses in Figure 57 reveals recurring operational and learner-related challenges. The most frequently mentioned issue was stipend-related problems, including low amounts and delayed payments, (38.1%). Transport and accommodation difficulties followed, (23.8%), often linked to insufficient stipends and long commuting distances. Workplace readiness and soft skills gaps were noted in 16.7%, with employers highlighting issues around discipline, punctuality, and professional behaviour. PPE and compliance costs were mentioned (11.9%), particularly in hospitality and safety-sensitive environments. A smaller proportion (9.5%) raised concerns about programme duration and placement rotation, suggesting the need for longer, more structured placement periods to ensure adequate workplace exposure.

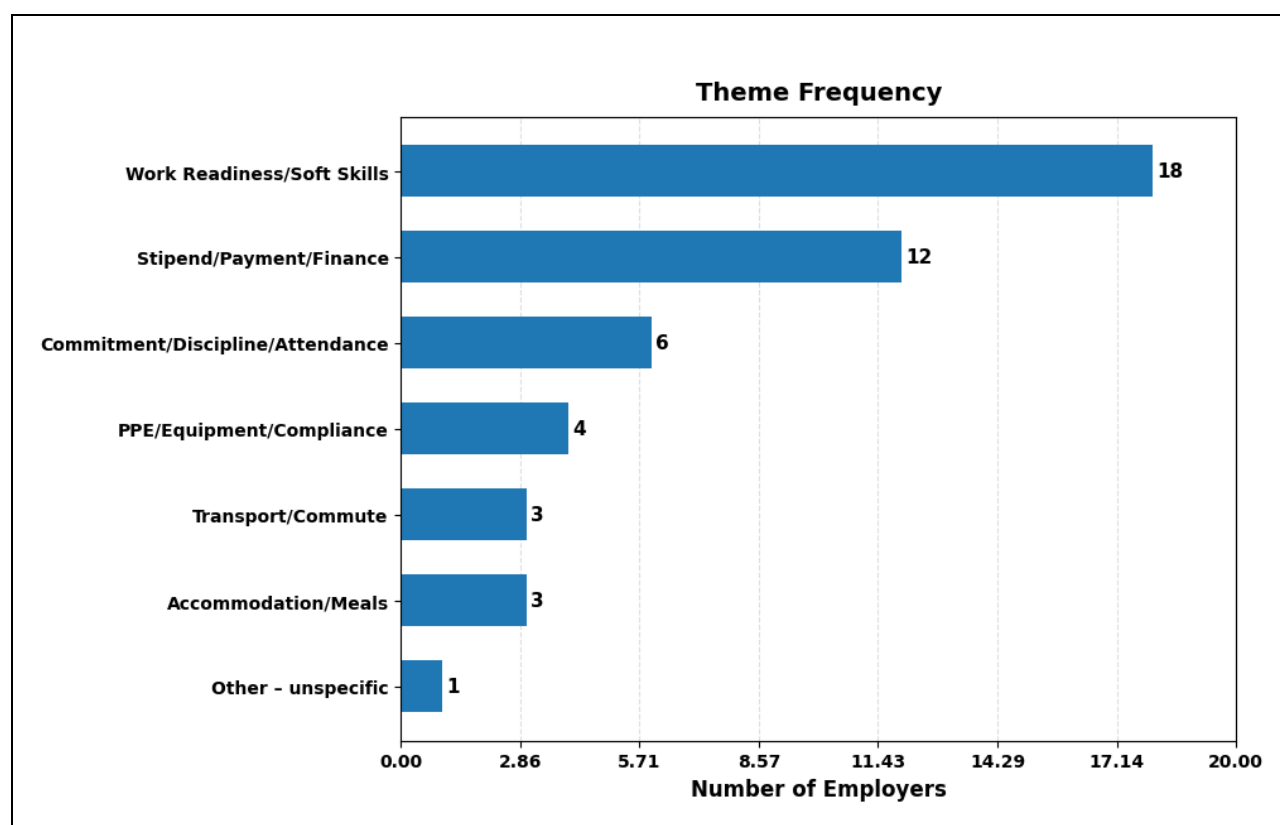


Figure 58 Employment Challenges: 'Other'

4.10.2 Benefits of CATHSSETA-Funded Programmes

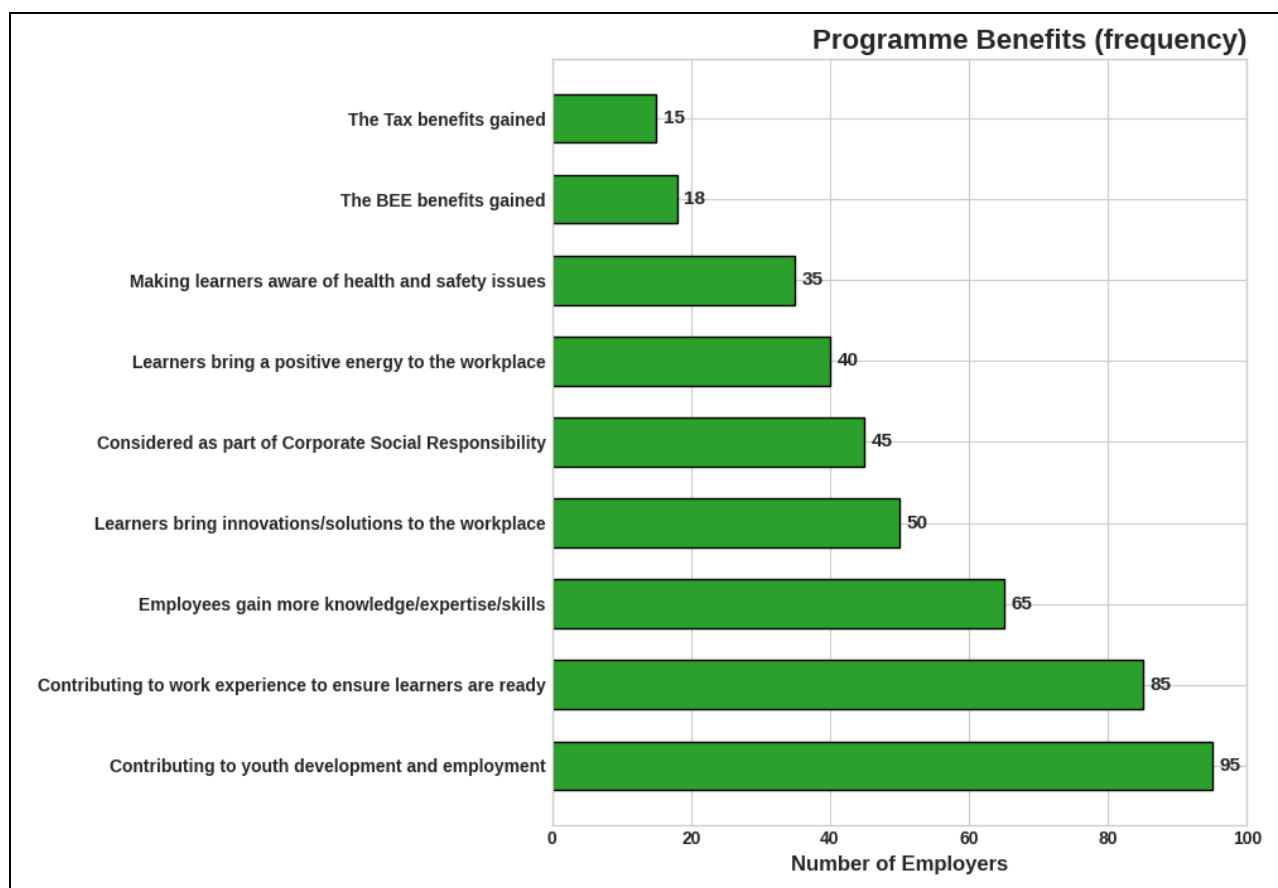


Figure 59 Programme Benefits

Employers reported strong and widespread benefits from participating in CATHSSETA-funded programmes. The most frequently cited benefit was youth development, mentioned in 103 responses (33.8%), followed by workplace readiness and practical experience in 87 responses (28.6%). Workforce capacitation was highlighted in 64 responses (21%), while innovation and fresh ideas appeared in 48 responses (15.8%). Additional benefits included CSR visibility (43 responses; 14.1%), positive energy in the workplace (41 responses; 13.4%), health and safety awareness (39 responses; 12.8%), and compliance advantages linked. This is detailed in Figure 58.

Table 4 consolidates the main challenges and improvement areas highlighted by employers during the survey. A further discussion will be held on the recommendations provided.

Table 4: Summary of Challenges and Recommendations

Challenges Identified	Description / Evidence from Dataset	Recommendations
Budget strain and financial pressures	High costs for equipment, resources, and hosting learners.	1. Increase financial support. 2. Streamline reimbursement processes.
Mentorship capacity constraints	Too few supervisors to adequately support learners (most cited challenge).	1. Provide mentor training. 2. Offer incentives for supervisors. 3. Distribute mentoring workload. 4. CATHSSETA to conduct thorough due diligence to ensure that the funded employers have the necessary capacity including that of mentorship
Time constraints	Employers struggle to balance daily operations with mentoring responsibilities.	1. Introduce flexible scheduling. 2. Allow blended or modular programme delivery.
Space and facility limitations	Limited physical space, equipment, or facilities to accommodate learners.	1. Provide infrastructure support to smaller organisations. 2. Strengthen partnerships to diversify placement sites.
Stipend delays and administrative inefficiencies	Late stipend payments and slow invoice processing cause absenteeism and dropouts.	1. Improve administrative systems; ensure timely payments. 2. Enhance communication on payment timelines.
Learner work-readiness and discipline gaps	Issues with punctuality, discipline, professionalism, and adapting to workplace culture.	1. -Introduce mandatory work-readiness and soft-skills training before placement.
Limited placement opportunities	Some organisations rotate learners due to limited capacity (e.g., 30 learners but few placement slots).	1. Expand employer partnerships; Diversify placement opportunities across subsectors.
PPE and compliance costs	High cost of PPE and compliance requirements, especially in hospitality and tourism.	1. Allocate PPE budgets. 2. Provide sector-specific compliance support.
Transport and accommodation barriers	Stipends too low for transport; accommodation and meals are costly for learners.	1. Review stipend levels. 2. Provide transport subsidies or partnership-based accommodation support.
Awareness and outreach gaps	Low programme visibility in some regions (e.g., Northern Cape).	1. Strengthen regional outreach and radio/online advertising.

4.10.3 Recommendations for Strengthening Programme Impact

Employers identified several improvements to enhance programme delivery and outcomes. The most frequent recommendation was to increase learner stipends and ensure efficient, timely payment processes, as payment delays undermine learner attendance, motivation, and retention.

Respondents also called for clearer communication around financial procedures, including invoice and tranche payments.

Employers further recommended broadening the scope of training beyond chef-focused programmes to meet diverse sector needs. Strengthening work-readiness and soft-skills preparation was also highlighted to address punctuality, discipline, and professionalism challenges. Finally, organisations encouraged CATHSSETA to improve monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure consistent training quality, better learner tracking, and more responsive programme adjustments.

Together, these recommendations provide a pragmatic roadmap for addressing administrative constraints, strengthening training quality, and increasing the overall developmental impact of CATHSSETA's learning programmes.

4.11. Objective 4 Sustainability

4.11.1 Sustainability of CATHSSETA's interventions

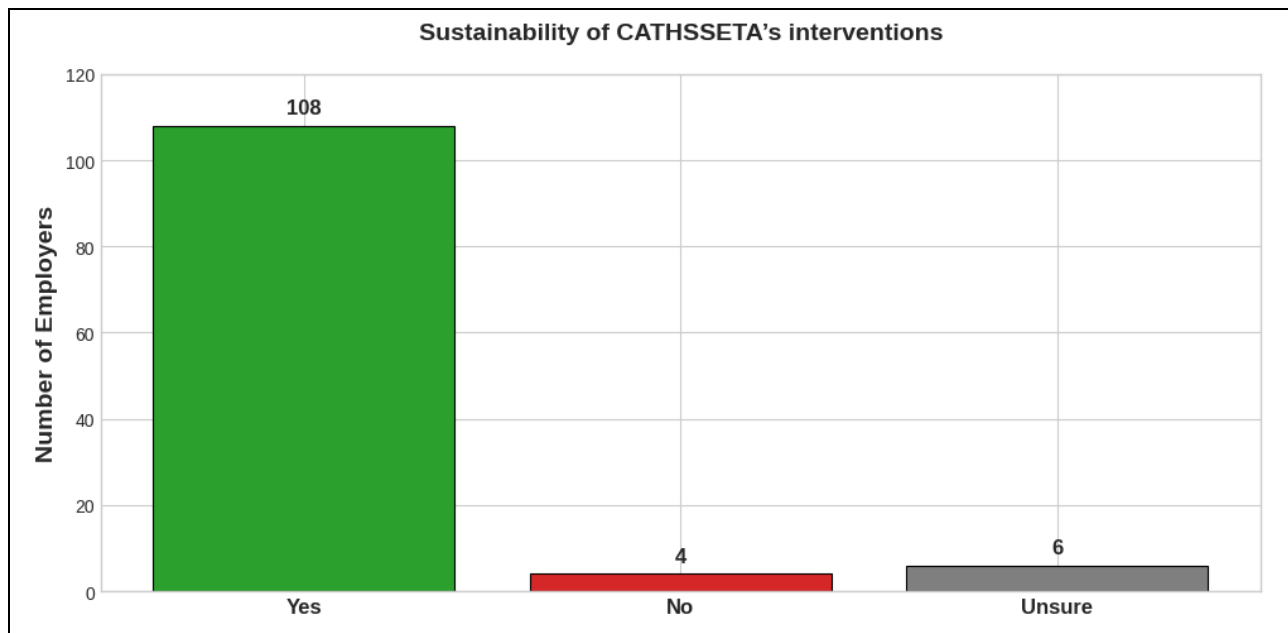


Figure 60 Sustainability of CATHSSETA's interventions

The survey results demonstrate strong confidence among employers regarding the sustainability of CATHSSETA's interventions. Out of 118 respondents, 108 employers (91.5%) indicated that the interventions are sustainable in addressing sectoral skills needs. Only 4 employers (3.4%) disagreed, while 6 employers (5.1%) were unsure. With over 91% agreement, CATHSSETA's interventions are widely regarded as sustainable, providing a strong foundation for continued investment and programme expansion.

4.11.2 Programmes creating a lasting impact

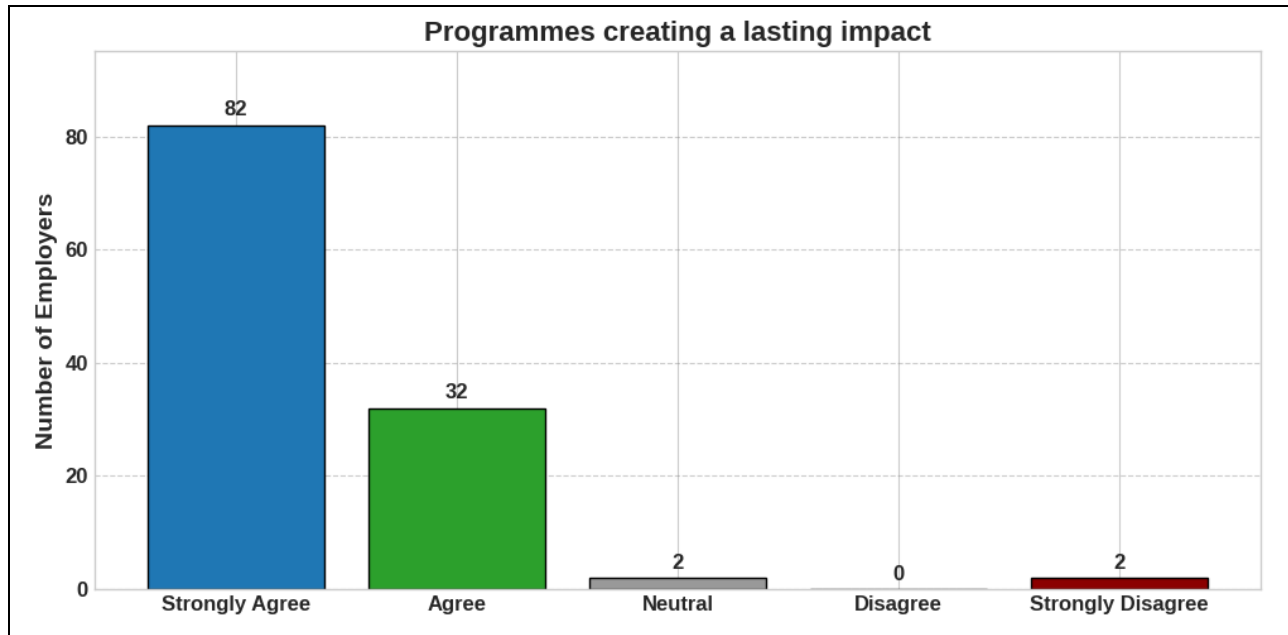


Figure 61 Programmes creating a lasting impact

Employer feedback strongly affirms the enduring value of CATHSSETA-funded programmes. Of the 118 respondents, 82 employers (69.5%) *strongly agreed* that the programmes create a lasting impact for learners, while 32 employers (27.1%) *agreed*. Only 2 employers (1.7%) were neutral, and another 2 employers (1.7%) *strongly disagreed*. With nearly 97% positive agreement, stakeholders believe these interventions significantly enhance career prospects and sectoral skills capacity, reinforcing their role as a cornerstone for sustainable workforce development.

4.11.3 Recommend Continued Investment

The survey results reveal strong employer endorsement for continued investment in CATHSSETA-funded programmes. Out of 118 respondents, 75 employers (63.6%) *strongly agreed* that investment should continue, while 35 employers (29.7%) *agreed*. Only 6 employers (5.1%) were neutral, and 2 employers (1.7%) *strongly disagreed*. With more than 93% positive agreement, employers clearly view continued investment as essential for maintaining sectoral skills development and addressing workforce gaps. The small proportion of neutral and negative responses suggests that while confidence is high, some employers may require assurance around operational improvements

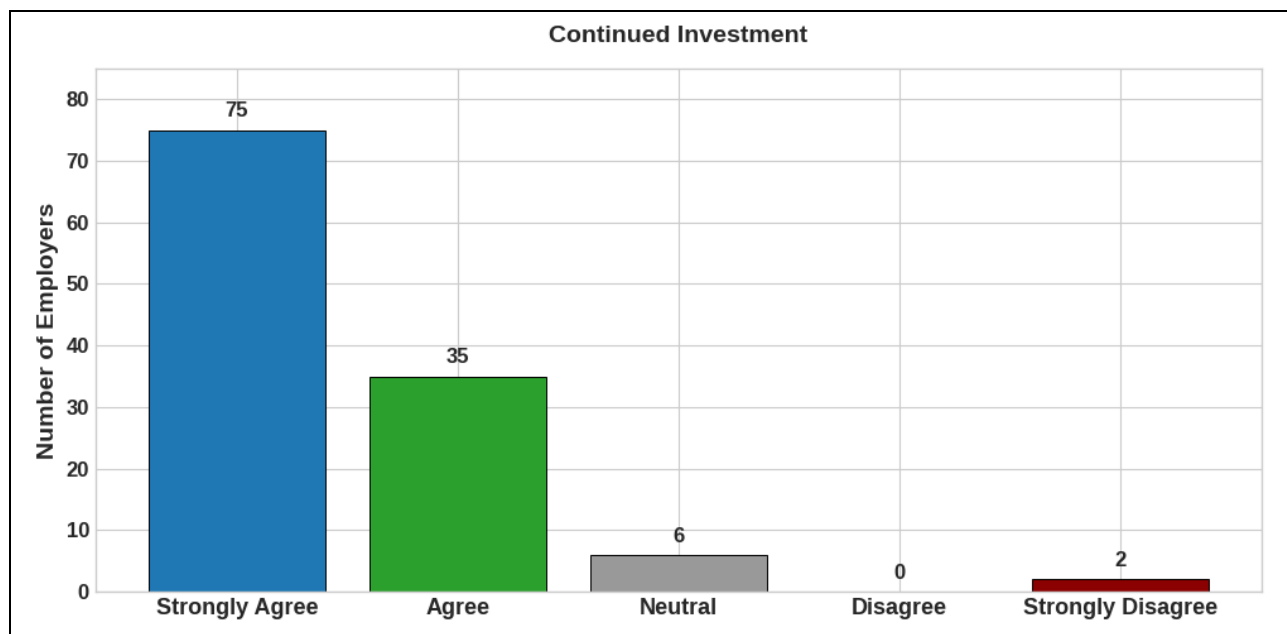


Figure 62 Continued Investment

4.11.4 Top Three key improvements for strengthening future programmes

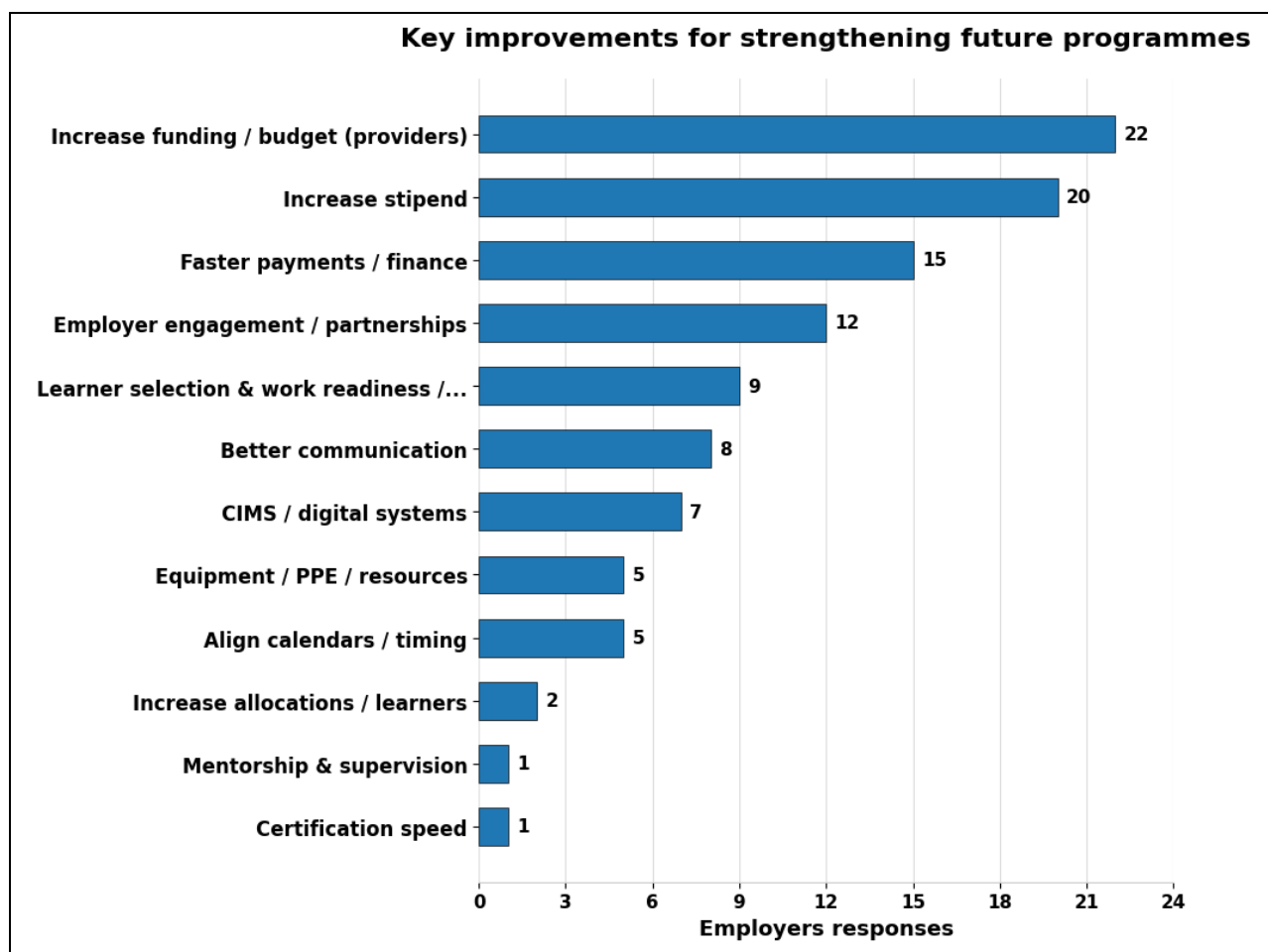


Figure 63 Key improvements for strengthening future programmes

Employers identified several priority areas for improvement to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of CATHSSETA-funded programmes. Out of 118 respondents, the most frequently cited recommendation was increasing provider budgets and funding, mentioned by 22 employers (18.6%). This was followed closely by raising learner stipends, highlighted by 20 employers (16.9%), and speeding up payments and finance processes, noted by 15 employers (12.7%).

Other notable suggestions included deepening employer engagement and partnerships (12 employers; 10.2%) and enhancing learner selection and work-readiness through soft skills development and screening (9 employers; 7.6%).

These findings indicate that financial and operational improvements dominate employer priorities, with a strong emphasis on timely payments and adequate funding to reduce absenteeism and dropouts. Strengthening employer partnerships and improving learner readiness are also critical to ensuring programme success and long-term impact.

The top three improvements: budget increases (18.6%), higher stipends (16.9%), and faster payment processes (12.7%) reflect the need for robust financial and operational systems to support programme sustainability.

4.11.5 Recommending Programmes to other Organisations

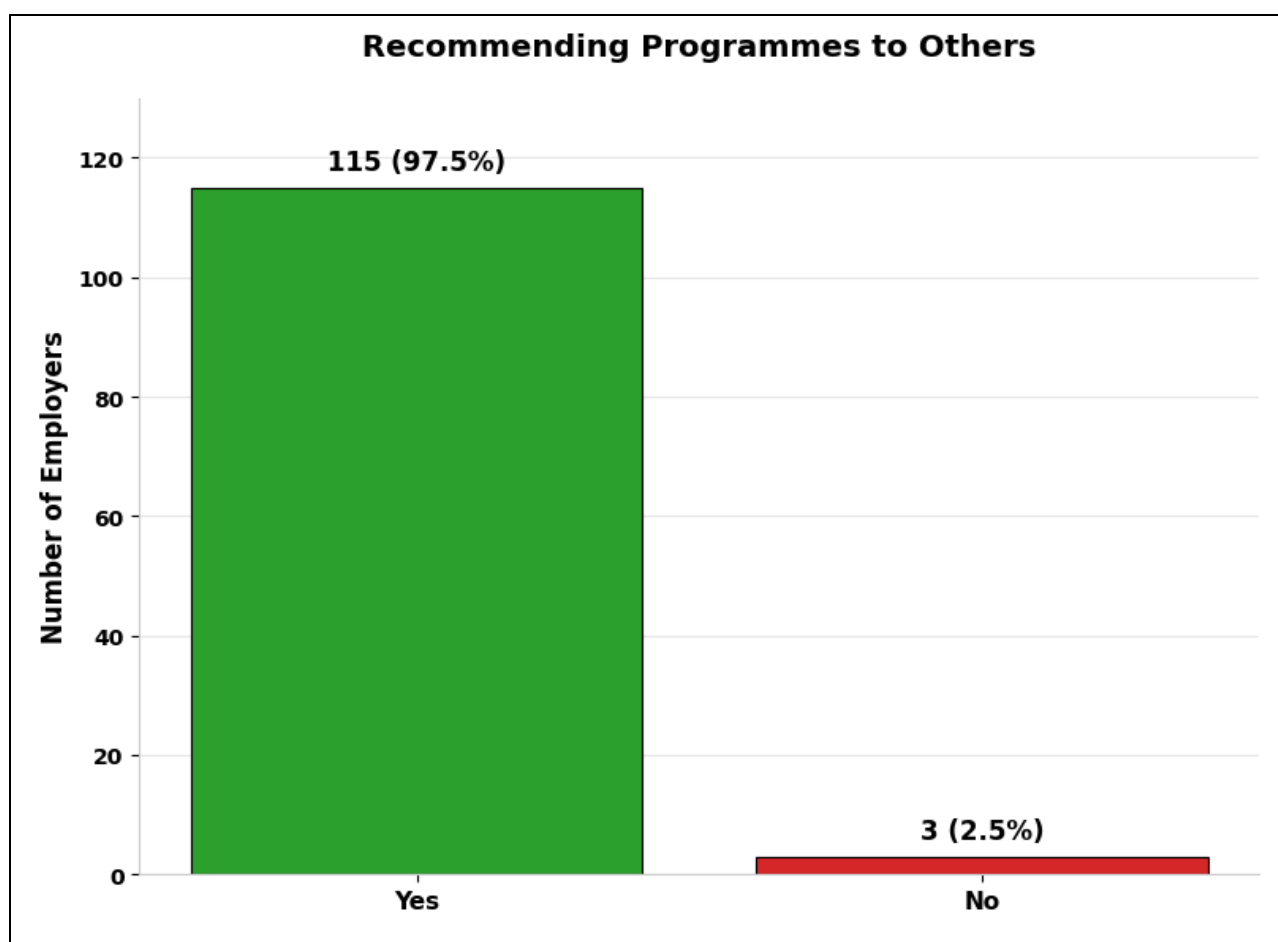


Figure 64 Recommending Programmes to other Organisations

Employer responses show overwhelming advocacy for CATHSSETA-funded programmes. Out of 118 respondents, 115 employers (97.5%) indicated they would recommend these programmes to other organisations. Only 3 employers (2.5%) said they would not.

This near-unanimous endorsement highlights the perceived value of the interventions in addressing skills gaps, improving workplace readiness, and creating talent pipelines. Employers cited benefits such as youth development, enhanced productivity, and compliance advantages as key reasons for their recommendation.

With 97.5% of employers willing to recommend participation, CATHSSETA programmes enjoy exceptionally strong credibility and stakeholder trust, reinforcing their role as a strategic investment for sectoral development.

4.11.6 What this means for sustainability

The combined findings from sections 4.10.1 to 4.10.5 present a clear picture of strong stakeholder confidence in the sustainability of CATHSSETA's interventions. Key indicators include:

- **91.5% of employers** affirming that the interventions are sustainable (4.10.1).
- **96.6% agreement** that programmes create a lasting impact (4.10.2).
- **93.3% support** for continued investment (4.10.3).
- **97.5% willingness** to recommend programmes to other organisations (4.10.5).

These consistently high percentages demonstrate that employers view CATHSSETA programmes as effective, impactful, and worth expanding. However, sustainability is not automatic; it depends on addressing operational enablers such as timely stipend payments, adequate funding, and stronger employer partnerships. With endorsement levels consistently above **90%**, CATHSSETA has a strong mandate to maintain and scale its interventions. By prioritising financial reliability, learner work-readiness, and employer engagement, the organisation can convert this confidence into long-term systemic impact.

5. Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter synthesises the findings of the 2025/26 CATHSSETA Track and Tracer Study, integrating evidence from learner and employer surveys with international best practices. It draws together insights on programme relevance, perceptions, challenges, successes, and sustainability to provide a holistic assessment of CATHSSETA's learning interventions. The analysis highlights how these programmes have shaped skills development and employability outcomes, while identifying systemic gaps that limit full impact. Based on this evidence, the chapter presents actionable recommendations aimed at strengthening curriculum alignment, deepening employer partnerships, improving administrative efficiency, and enhancing long-term sustainability. These proposals are informed by both stakeholder feedback and global tracer literature, ensuring that CATHSSETA's interventions remain responsive to labour market needs and contribute meaningfully to national development priorities.

5.1 Learner & Employer Profiles

The learner cohort is predominantly female, accounting for nearly 70% of the participants, and concentrated in the 18–35 age group, reflecting a strong youth focus. Most learners entered with Matric and participated in internships and learnerships, primarily in hospitality, tourism, and event management. Geographically, participation is highest in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Western Cape, with limited representation from rural provinces. Employers engaging with CATHSSETA programmes are mainly small enterprises (64%), complemented by large organisations (25%) and a minority of medium-sized firms. The hospitality sector dominates, followed by arts, culture, tourism, and sports, with most organisations operating for over a decade which indicates a mature employer base. Both profiles highlight strong alignment with CATHSSETA's sectoral mandate but reveal gaps in rural outreach and mid-tier employer engagement. These patterns mirror international tracer literature, which emphasises the importance of inclusive access and diversified employer participation for systemic impact (UNESCO, 2017; OECD, 2019; ETDP SETA, 2021).

Recommendations:

Expand rural access through mobile training units, satellite hubs, and partnerships with TVET colleges and municipalities. Introduce targeted strategies for mid-sized firms, leveraging their potential for structured mentorship and scalable placements. Formalise employer engagement frameworks with clear expectations for hosting learners and co-financing arrangements to ease resource constraints for small businesses. For learners, broaden programme marketing to underrepresented provinces and embed career guidance and digital skills to improve employability (ILO, 2016; UNESCO, 2017; INSETA, 2024).

5.2 Objective 1: Pathways of Learners

The tracer study reveals persistent challenges in transitioning from training to employment. While 28% of learners secured full-time jobs and 12% part-time roles, nearly 44% remain unemployed, reflecting structural labour market constraints. Among those employed, fewer than half work in positions aligned with their training, and permanent roles correlate strongly with higher income and benefits. Time-to-employment varies: some learners find jobs within three months, while others search for over a year, often citing lack of opportunities and work experience as barriers. Alternative pathways include further study and very limited self-employment, though entrepreneurial outcomes remain weakly aligned with qualifications. These patterns mirror international evidence that skills development initiatives are most effective when paired with structured placement pipelines and employer commitments (ILO, 2016; UNESCO, 2017; OECD, 2019; ETDP SETA, 2021; INSETA, 2024).

Recommendations:

Formalise employer absorption targets through MoUs and incentivise retention via wage subsidies or recognition awards. Introduce career guidance and job-matching services, supported by digital platforms and alumni networks, to reduce prolonged job searches. Expand work-integrated learning (WIL) and mentorship frameworks to bridge theory-practice gaps, and embed soft skills and digital competencies across all programmes to improve workplace readiness. For unemployed learners, implement structured job placement support, transport or relocation

assistance for rural participants, and targeted entrepreneurship modules linked to sector opportunities (UNESCO, 2017; ETDP SETA, 2021; INSETA, 2024).

5.3 Objective 2: Programme Relevance

The tracer study confirms that CATHSSETA programmes are widely regarded as relevant by both learners and employers. Learners reported significant improvements in technical and soft skills, with more than half applying these competencies extensively in their work. Employers echoed this view, noting that learners helped address critical skills gaps and contributed positively to productivity. However, alignment between training and actual job roles remains inconsistent, as fewer than half of employed learners work in positions directly related to their qualifications. Employers also highlighted gaps in workplace readiness and digital competencies, indicating that while technical content is strong, behavioural and emerging skills need reinforcement. These findings align with global evidence that programme relevance is maximised when curricula are industry-driven and responsive to evolving labour market needs (UNESCO, 2017; OECD, 2019; ETDP SETA, 2021).

Recommendations:

Embed employer-led curriculum reviews and integrate digital literacy, customer engagement, and soft skills across all learning pathways. Expand work-integrated learning and mentorship frameworks to bridge theory–practice gaps, while introducing sector-specific modules for emerging areas such as ICT in tourism and sustainability in hospitality. Formalise employer partnerships through agreements that include placement targets and structured feedback loops to ensure continuous responsiveness to workplace needs (ILO, 2016; UNESCO, 2017).

5.4 Objective 3: Perceptions of Programme Effectiveness

Learners expressed strong satisfaction with CATHSSETA programmes, citing high-quality facilitation, effective communication, and practical exposure as key strengths. Over 95% indicated they would recommend the programme, and most agreed it improved employability and offered long-term value. Employers shared similar confidence, with more than 84% satisfied with learner quality and 76% rating CATHSSETA's administration as effective. Positive perceptions were linked to structured coordination and responsive support, while dissatisfaction stemmed from

delayed stipends, certificate issuance, and limited monitoring during placements. These findings echo international literature, which emphasises that positive perceptions enhance programme credibility but must translate into tangible employment outcomes to sustain impact (UNESCO, 2017; Powell & McGrath, 2019).

Recommendations:

Institutionalise real-time communication systems and digital dashboards for stipend and certification tracking to address administrative bottlenecks. Regular site visits and virtual check-ins can reinforce learner support and employer confidence, while structured feedback loops will enable continuous improvement. Introduce learner experience audits and employer satisfaction scorecards to provide actionable insights for programme refinement (ILO, 2016; OECD, 2019).

5.5 Objective 4: Programme Challenges and Successes

The study highlights clear successes: learners report substantial skill gains and strong satisfaction with facilitation and practical exposure, while employers confirm learners address skills gaps, improve productivity, and bring fresh ideas. Most employers would recommend continued participation and view the interventions as sustainable. Yet recurring challenges temper impact: for learners, stipend delays, certificate issuance lags, transport costs, and inconsistent job-match undermine transitions; for employers, mentorship capacity, equipment/PPE constraints, and work-readiness gaps complicate workplace integration. These patterns reflect international tracer literature, which stresses that programme impact peaks when curricula are industry-driven, work-based learning is embedded with employer commitments, and administration is reliable (UNESCO, 2017; ILO, 2016; OECD, 2019; INSETA, 2024).

Recommendations:

Formalise employer pathways with MoUs that set placement and retention targets, paired with mentorship frameworks and wage-subsidy or equipment co-financing to relieve small-firm constraints. Lift programme relevance through employer-led curriculum reviews embedding digital, customer engagement, and professional behaviours across all pathways. Ensure administrative reliability through SLA-based stipend calendars, digital certificate tracking, and helpdesk/site-visit protocols. Expand equitable access via blended delivery and rural satellites,

alongside longitudinal tracing and alumni networks for referrals and mentorship (UNESCO, 2017; INSETA, 2024).

5.6 Objective 5: Programme Sustainability

Sustainability indicators are strong: over 86% of learners and 91% of employers believe the programmes create lasting value, improve employability, and justify continued investment. Employers overwhelmingly recommend participation and view the interventions as effective in addressing sectoral skills gaps. Learners echo this sentiment, citing enhanced career prospects and practical skills as key benefits. However, sustainability is constrained by systemic issues such as stipend delays, certificate turnaround times, and limited employer absorption. These findings align with global tracer literature, which stresses that sustainable outcomes depend on ongoing curriculum alignment, structured employer partnerships, and robust post-programme support systems (UNESCO, 2017; Senekal & Munro, 2021).

Recommendations:

Formalise employer absorption pathways through MoUs with minimum placement targets and retention incentives. Institutionalise longitudinal tracking systems and alumni networks to monitor career progression and provide feedback loops for programme refinement. Secure co-financing models with employers to share costs for equipment, mentorship, and compliance, reducing resource strain and improving programme resilience. Standardise administrative processes with SLA-driven stipend schedules and digital certificate tracking to eliminate delays and strengthen learner confidence. Expand access through blended learning, rural hubs, and transport support to ensure inclusivity and sector-wide impact (ILO, 2016; OECD, 2019).

5.7. Conclusions

The 2025/26 tracer study demonstrates that CATHSSETA programmes deliver meaningful benefits in skills development, workplace readiness, and employability, with high satisfaction among learners and employers. However, persistent challenges such as limited job placement, administrative inefficiencies, and gaps in curriculum alignment continue to constrain impact. Sustainability indicators are positive, with strong confidence in the long-term value of interventions, yet systemic improvements are essential to fully realise programme objectives. By

embedding employer-driven curriculum design, strengthening placement pipelines, improving administrative reliability, and expanding access to underserved regions, CATHSSETA can transform these programmes into more inclusive, responsive, and impactful pathways. These recommendations, grounded in stakeholder feedback and international best practice, provide a roadmap for enhancing programme effectiveness and ensuring that CATHSSETA contributes meaningfully to national skills development priorities.

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Appendices

Learner / Beneficiary Survey

INTRODUCTION

Mthente Research and Consulting Services (Pty) has been appointed by CATHSSETA to conduct the track and tracer study for the 2025/26 financial year. The research seeks to identify the learner pathways subsequent to the completion of the SETA-funded programmes. The findings of this study will enable the SETA to determine the outcomes of skills interventions across all sub-sectors.

This survey will take approximately 15 minutes and will aim to understand the perspectives of learners/ beneficiaries of CATHSSETA-funded programmes. Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. There are no right or wrong answers to this survey. All responses will be kept completely anonymous and confidential. Results will be consolidated so that no individual can be identified. Your voice matters, and you are encouraged to answer each question as honestly as possible.

Do you agree to voluntarily participate in this survey?

Yes- continue

No- end survey, "Thank you

A. Can you please confirm if you have completed the learning programme in 2023/24 & 2024/25?

1. Yes, I did complete the learning programme [go to Section B]
2. No, I have not completed the learning programme, I am still studying [Thank the respondent and end the survey]
3. No, I have not completed the learning programme, I dropped out [go to SQ.4)
4. If the respondent selected option SQ.3 Ask the respondent to state, the reason/s for dropping out [Interviewer note:] [Thank the respondent and end the survey]

B Background Information

	Question	Response Options
1.	Full name (optional if anonymous)	_____
2.	Gender	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to say
3.	Please indicate your race	☐ African ☐ Coloured ☐ Indian ☐ White ☐ Other
4.	Age group	☐ 18 – 25 ☐ 26 - 35 ☐ 36 – 44 ☐ 45+

5.	Province of residence	☐ Eastern Cape ☐ Free State ☐ Gauteng ☐ KwaZulu Natal ☐ Limpopo ☐ Mpumalanga ☐ Northern Cape ☐ North West ☐ Western Cape
6.	Local Municipality	☐ Buffalo City ☐ City of Cape Town ☐ Ekurhuleni ☐ City of eThekweni ☐ City of Johannesburg ☐ Mangaung ☐ Nelson Mandela Bay ☐ City of Tshwane ☐ Other (Specify)

7.	Highest level of education completed before starting the CATHSSETA programme:	☐ Matric ☐ TVET certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Postgraduate ☐ Other (specify)
8.	Which CATHSSETA programme did you complete?	☐ Learnership ☐ Internship ☐ Bursary ☐ Artisan ☐ Skills programme ☐ WIL TVET ☐ HET ☐ Other

9. Title of Qualification completed

10. NQF level

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ☐ NQF 1 | ☐ NQF 7 |
| ☐ NQF 2 | ☐ NQF 8 |
| ☐ NQF 3 | ☐ NQF 9 |
| ☐ NQF 4 | ☐ NQF 10 |
| ☐ NQF 5 | ☐ NQF 11 |

☐ NQF 6

☐ NQF 12

11. Year and month of enrolment

12. Year of completion: ☐ 2023 ☐ 2024 ☐ 2025

13. Did you receive the qualification certificate after completing the programme?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(Except for Internships, University Graduate and TVET Placement).

14 . When did you receive the qualification certificate? Please indicate the Year.

☐ 2023 ☐ 2024 ☐ 2025

15. When did you receive the qualification certificate? Please indicate the Month.

☐ January

☐ July

☐ February

☐ August

☐ March

☐ September

☐ April

☐ October

☐ May

☐ November

☐ June

☐ December

16 Who paid for your programme training?

☐ Self-funded,

☐ Employer,

☐ Training Provider,

☐ CATHSSETA,

☐ Other, please specify

(This question is to check if learners are aware that they were funded by CATHSSETA or not).

17. In which province were you staying when you started your training?

- ☐ Eastern Cape
- ☐ Free State
- ☐ Gauteng
- ☐ KwaZulu Natal
- ☐ Limpopo
- ☐ Mpumalanga
- ☐ Northern Cape
- ☐ North West
- ☐ Western Cape

18. In which municipality were you staying when you started your training? (add a drop down of all local municipalities)

- ☐ Buffalo City
- ☐ City of Cape Town
- ☐ Ekurhuleni
- ☐ City of eThekwin
- ☐ City of Johannesburg
- ☐ Mangaung
- ☐ Nelson Mandela Bay
- ☐ City of Tshwane
- ☐ Other (Specify)

19. What type of high school did you mostly attend ? [one mention only]

- ☐ Public School,
- ☐ Private/Independent School,
- ☐ Home Schooling,
- ☐ Did not attend high school, and
- ☐ Other

C. Pathways After Programme Completion

20. What is your employment status?

- ☐ Employed full-time ☐ Employed part-time ☐ Self-employed ☐ Further studies ☐
- Unemployed ☐ Volunteering ☐ Other (specify)

21. How long after the training did you find a job? Please add the below drop down:

- ☐ 0 - 3 Months
- ☐ 4 - 6 Months
- ☐ 7 - 12 Months
- ☐ Over 12 Months

(Skip logic: If employed → Q22; If unemployed → Q23; If studying → Q24; If self-employed → Q25)

22. If employed:

- a) Is your job related to the CATHSSETA programme?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b) What type of employment do you have?
- ☐ Permanent ☐ Contract ☐ Internship ☐ Casual/temporary
- c) Monthly income bracket: ☐ R0–R5,000 ☐ R5,001–R10,000 ☐ R10,001–R20,000 ☐ R20,001+

d) Are you currently employed by the company/employer where you worked prior to starting your training?

☐ Yes

☐ No

e) Is the establishment/institution / business/organisation you work for (the one that pays your salary) classified as

☐ National/Provincial/Local government

☐ Public Entity

☐ A private enterprise

☐ Non-profit organisation (NGO/CBO)

☐ A private household

f) Are you currently employed by the company/employer where you did your learnership/apprenticeship/ skills training/placement? (Do not ask Bursary students)

”

☐ Yes

☐ No

g) Does/did your employer contribute to any pension/retirement fund for you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

h). Does/did your employer contribute to any Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) fund for you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

i). Does/did your employer contribute to any Medical Aid fund for you?

☐Yes

☐No

23. If unemployed:

a) What do you think are the main reasons you are unemployed? (You may mark more than one box)

- There are no job opportunities
- I do not want to relocate
- I don't have the right skills
- I don't have a high enough education level
- I do not want to work in jobs in relation to what I studied
- No one has provided me with assistance in finding a job
- I am not looking for employment
- Lack of work experience
- Lack of transport
- Family responsibilities
- Other (specify)

b) How long have you been seeking work?

☐ Less than 6 months ☐ 6–12 months ☐ More than a year

c) What have you done to look for work? (You may mark more than one box)

- ☐ Mailed/faxed/emailed my CV to companies
- Applied to newspaper job advertisements
- Made enquiries at workplaces
- Registered with an employment agency
- Registered on the Department of Labour database
- Offered to volunteer
- Used social media
- Nothing
- Other, please specify

24. If studying:

- a) What type of qualification are you currently pursuing?
- ☐ Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Postgraduate ☐ Other
- b) Where are you currently registered to study?
- ☐ University
- ☐ University of Technology
- ☐ TVET College
- ☐ Community Education and Training
- ☐ College (CET College)
- ☐ Private College/Institution
- c) What is the title of the qualification?.....
- d) When did you enrol into this study? Month and Year.....
- e) What are the main reasons for studying your current qualification?
- ☐ To increase my knowledge and understanding in the industry
- ☐ To achieve a higher qualification
- ☐ To improve my chance of finding a job
- ☐ To help me get a better job
- ☐ To improve my promotion opportunities
- ☐ To help me earn more money
- ☐ To further my interest in a particular subject area
- ☐ This is a gap identified in the industry and I wish to fulfil that need
- ☐ To expand my career in the industry

25. If Self-employed:

- a) How long after the training did you start your business?

- ☐ 0 - 3 months
- ☐ 4 - 6 months
- ☐ 7 - 12 months
- ☐ Above 12 months

b) Did you start the business by yourself or in partnership with another individual?

- ☐ Self
- ☐ Partnership
- ☐ Cooperatives
- ☐ Other (Please Specify)

c) Was your business related to the training/qualification you completed?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

d) Why are you self-employed/ Why did you start your own business?

- ☐ Could not find a job in the field that I was trained in
- ☐ I could not find formal employment
- ☐ I prefer flexible working hours
- ☐ I am still looking for a job
- ☐ It gives me more opportunity to do work I want to do
- ☐ I am entrepreneurial/I saw an opportunity
- ☐ Other please specify

e) How many persons do you employ (including you and your partners)?.....

f) Did you register your business with CIPC/CIPRO?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

g). Did you register your business for VAT?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

D. Relevance of the Programme

26. How would you describe your skill level in the occupational/study field that you received training in, before programme completion? Please answer on a scale of 0 to 10,

- ☐ 0 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 1 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 2 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 3 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 4 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 5 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 6 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 7 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 8 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 9 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 10 Expert knowledge

27. How would you describe your skill level in the occupational/study field that you received training in, after programme completion? Please answer on a scale of 0 to 10,

- ☐ 0 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 1 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 2 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 3 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 4 Basic knowledge
- ☐ 5 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 6 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 7 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 8 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 9 Intermediate knowledge
- ☐ 10 Expert knowledge

28. When you look at your current work tasks altogether, to what extent do you use the knowledge and skills acquired during the programme?

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ To a minimum extent
- ☐ To some extent
- ☐ To a very great extent

29. What specific skills from the programme are most useful in your work or studies? (Open-ended)

30. Would you recommend anyone to enrol in the programme?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I don't know/unsure

31. In your opinion, do you think the programme has provided you with a career pathway?

☐ Not at all

☐ To some extend

☐ Definitely

E Perceptions of the Programme

32. How satisfied were you with the administration of the programme (communication, support, coordination)?

☐ Very satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neutral ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Very dissatisfied

33. What were the **three** biggest challenges you experienced during the programme? (Open-ended)

34. What **three** aspects of the programme worked well? (Open-ended)

Please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects:

Aspect	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
a) Quality of teaching/training	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Support from facilitators/mentors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Administration and coordination of the programme	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Availability of resources (materials, equipment, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

F. Sustainability and Recommendations

35. Do you think the programme is sustainable and beneficial in the long term?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Please rate the following statements:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) The programme has long-term value for learners.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) The programme improves employability in the sector.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) I would recommend this programme to others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

36. On what **three** key aspects should CATHSSETA improve in future programmes? (Open-ended)

Employer / Training Provider Survey Questions

(Employers and training institutions that hosted CATHSSETA learners)

INTRODUCTION

Mthente Research and Consulting Services (Pty) has been appointed by CATHSSETA to conduct the track and tracer study for the 2025/26 financial year. The research seeks to identify the learner pathways subsequent to the completion of the SETA-funded programmes. The findings of this study will enable the SETA to determine the outcomes of skills interventions across all sub-sectors.

This survey will take approximately 15 minutes and will aim to understand the perspectives of employers and training providers who have hosted CATHSSETA learners. Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. There are no right or wrong answers to this survey. All responses will be kept completely anonymous and confidential. Results will be consolidated so that no individual can be identified. Your voice matters, and you are encouraged to answer each question as honestly as possible.

Do you agree to voluntarily participate in this survey?

Yes- continue

No- end survey, "Thank you"

A. Organisation Profile

1. Name and Surname of company representative
2. Sector/sub-sector: ☐ Tourism and Travel Services ☐ Hospitality ☐ Arts, Culture and Heritage ☐ Sports, Recreation and Fitness ☐ Gaming and Lottery ☐ Conservation
3. Size of organisation: ☐ Small (0–49) ☐ Medium (50–149) ☐ Large (150+)
4. How long has the company been involved in the subsector?
5. ☐ 0 – 5 years ☐ 6 – 10 years ☐ 11 – 15 years ☐ 16 – 20 years ☐ 21 years and above
6. In which province is your company operating (head office)?*
 - ☐ Eastern Cape
 - ☐ Free State
 - ☐ Gauteng
 - ☐ KwaZulu Natal

- ☐ Limpopo
- ☐ Mpumalanga
- ☐ Northern Cape
- ☐ North West
- ☐ Western Cape

7. Does this organisation fall within CATHSSETA's sectoral mandate (as a levy paying or non-levy paying organisation)?*

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know/unsure

8. What form of ownership is this business?

- ☐ Sole Proprietorship
- ☐ Partnership
- ☐ Private Company
- ☐ Public Company
- ☐ Government Funded
- ☐ NPO/PBO/NPC/NGO

9. Which programmes has the organisation been involved in (as host employer or employer)?

- ☐ Internship Programmes and/ or University Placement
- ☐ Learnership Programmes
- ☐ Bursary Programmes
- ☐ Skills Programmes
- ☐ TVET Placement
- ☐ Recognition of Prior Learning
- ☐ CET Internships
- ☐ Artisan Programme

☐ Other, please specify

B. Relevance/Alignment with Labour Market Needs

10. To what extent were the CATHSSETA programmes aligned with your organisation's skills needs?

☐ Very well ☐ Well ☐ Neutral ☐ Poorly ☐ Not at all

11. Why are you dissatisfied with WBL programmes in providing employees with the necessary skills?

- Don't teach relevant skills/ mismatch between skills
- Training is poor quality/ low standard
- Not enough hands on/ practical skills taught
- Qualification/ training too general/ not specific enough
- Standards are inconsistent across institutions
- Trainers do not have enough skills/ industry experience
- Poor access/availability of training (regional/rural areas)
- Lack of flexibility with training/ too rigid (times and method)
- Training content outdated
- Other (please specify)

12. Did the learners placed in your organisation contribute to meeting your skills gaps?

☐ Yes ☐ No (explain)

C. Perceptions

13. How satisfied were you with the quality of learners from the CATHSSETA programmes?
And why?

☐ Very satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neutral ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Very dissatisfied

14. How effective was CATHSSETA's administration and coordination of the programme?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Neutral ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

And why?.....

D. Challenges and successes

15. What are the major challenges that employers face with regards to accommodating beneficiaries in the workplace?

- ☐ Additional strain on budgets and financial resources to accommodate beneficiaries (Procuring additional equipment)
- ☐ Lack of space to accommodate beneficiaries
- ☐ Lack of equipment to accommodate beneficiaries
- ☐ Lack of facilities to accommodate beneficiaries
- ☐ Too few mentors or supervisors to oversee beneficiaries
- ☐ Time constraints in mentoring and grooming beneficiaries
- ☐ Beneficiaries requiring time off for studying/ assignments
- ☐ Other (Specify)

16. What are the major benefits of these programmes for the organisation?

- ☐ Increased productivity/more hands-on-deck
- ☐ Contributing to youth development and employment
- ☐ Contributing to work experience to ensure learners are ready for the real world of work
- ☐ Making learners/employees aware of health and safety issues (before entering the occupation)
- ☐ Learners bring a positive energy to the workplace
- ☐ Learners bring innovations/solutions to the workplace
- ☐ Employees gain more knowledge/expertise/skills (capacitation of workforce)
- ☐ Considered as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (social accountability)
- ☐ The Tax benefits gained
- ☐ The BEE benefits gained
- ☐ Other (please specify)

E. Sustainability

17. Do you believe CATHSSETA's interventions are sustainable in addressing sector skills needs? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

18. Please indicate your agreement:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) The programmes create a lasting impact for learners.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) We would recommend continued investment in these programmes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. What three key improvements would you recommend for strengthening future programmes? (Open-ended)

20. Would you recommend that other organisations take part in the programmes?
And why?

☐ Yes

☐ No