

Via Webinar Series: Youth Session Summary

The International Youth Foundation (IYF) is hosting a webinar series to explore learnings from the [Via: Pathways to Work](#) program. The first session provided an opportunity for two young people from Mozambique and two young people from Tanzania to discuss their experiences, challenges, and opportunities.

Via Learnings

The session began with a presentation from Ilidio Caifaz, IYF Mozambique Country Director. He shared background on the [Via program](#) and some youth-level learnings. The slide on the left shows student baseline data highlighting the average age and income of young people entering TVET education in Mozambique and Tanzania. The slide on the right shows the employer perceptions of youth that was part of the reason to focus on life skills integration in TVETs, and has shown improvement as captured in a recent employer survey. For more learnings and data please see the [Via website](#).

		TANZANIA	MOZAMBIQUE
FEMALE	AGE	22	25
	PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD	6	6
	HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$160	\$100
	STUDENT'S INCOME	\$90	\$75
	LOOKING FOR WORK	>12 MONTHS	>18 MONTHS
MALE	AGE	22	24
	PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD	5.5	6
	HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$180	\$150
	STUDENT'S INCOME	\$60	\$90
	LOOKING FOR WORK	>13 MONTHS	>14 MONTHS

Employer Perspectives	
<i>The Challenge</i>	Young people are "unreliable", "unmotivated", and "have poor work ethic."
<i>Opportunity/Gap</i>	Life skills are as or more important than technical skills, and it's hard to find someone with the right mix.
<i>Employer Survey</i>	Via graduates are 'hard working' and enthusiastic, responsible, and willing to go the extra mile.

Youth Panel Discussion



The session moved to the discussion, hosted by Victoria Ibiwoye, and featuring Maria Mtuse, Daniel Muianga, Mohammed Haji, and Zeredi Juma. To learn more about their backgrounds, please refer to their bios on the last page.

The group shared examples of resilience, ingenuity, and work-ethic in the face of challenging job markets and social norms. While each is on a different employment pathway, they shared inherent motivation, pursuit of practical training and experience, and commitment to apply their skills despite roadblocks in their way.

Introductions



Zeredi shared how she was inspired to open her daycare by the challenges children are facing in their communities, and wanted to have a positive impact on the children and their families. She talked about how she sensitizes parents about good nutrition and holistic upbringing of children. The community comes to her for advice. "They refer children to me and say: 'Our child has this problem,' then we sit with parents to solve their problems.



Mohammed has two jobs – one wage job at a paper company and another operating a moto-taxi. “A young person should be able to sustain themselves, and that is why I started my on moto-bike operation.” He shared how he is honored as a young person to sustain himself and his family. He identified the multi-layered benefits and motivations – self-image as a provider, family wellbeing (funding his brother’s tuition, and improved community and environment. “There is also this work I do in the paper industry...our country does not want us to use plastic bags. It wants us to use paper bags that are friendly for humans and the environment. Through IYF, I have been able to get the opportunity to work in this, and we are providing paper bags in Mtwara and keeping our community and environment clean.”



Daniel shared his experience as a young Mozambican, trained by EFPLM as a mechanic in industrial maintenance and also vocational training center. After training, he did an apprenticeship for three months. After that, he was looking for job which was not easy. In 2018, he found a job with MCM, Mozambique Cotton Manufacturing as maintenance technician. He worked there until mid-2019, when he competed for job with Mozambique railroad company. He received training as train driver, but his training was interrupted. He restarted training in 2020, sat for exams successfully, and now he is a train driver.



Maria had technical issues connecting, so unfortunately, we did not hear from her as much until later in the session, but she shared that she is working as a mechanic, and as a woman this is extremely rare. “At first I was the only girl. I felt special, because colleagues supported me, welcomed me. When you are willing to work in industrial engineering or mechanics with passion, everything is possible.”

What advice they would give other young people interested in TVET or entrepreneurship?

Mohammed

- “Mainly, young people should not give up hope. If you maintain your hope, you’ll achieve whatever you want.”
- “Young people should not be isolated, do not isolate yourselves, work hand-in-hand with your family and community. Build and use your social capital. Once you are an old man, you will not be able to do what you are able to as a young person.”
- Mohammed also referenced Daniel’s persistence and journey as an example of not giving up.

Maria

- “It’s not easy to be in a male-dominated field. But, with courage and drive there is nothing that is impossible. I believe that if you put your effort and sacrifice in, everything is possible.”
- “If you want to hone your skills or practice something, it is difficult to not have other women there. But if you focus, it doesn’t matter because you start to see yourself as their equal and capable of doing what they’re doing.”
- When you work with passion, everything is possible. Quitting is not an option. You have to chase your dreams and goals. You also have to be fierce, and you shouldn’t give up. Only the weak give up. When one is strong-willed and willing to go beyond themselves to reach their goals.
- I tell young people: don’t just wait, don’t stay there. Everything in life is possible if you desire it. No barrier is huge enough that you cannot overcome it. We have to make a purposeful journey. If we are going in the right direction there are always challenges.

- Unemployment is real here. We shouldn't be idle, we have to be active and find a way.

Zeredi

- “On my part, I can advise youth, we should have a new awakening of pursuing education. Especially if announcements online. These announcements can provide opportunity to get an awakening and move forward. For example, self-awareness, problem-solving, are all very important for youth to cultivate. They are not values that can just be assumed and not paid attention to.”
- “Have monetary discipline. This I've learned at IYF program. I never thought of putting my savings in order. After training I got an awakening, my mind is broadened.”
- “Commit yourself, be innovative. Don't wait to be employed. As you wait, volunteer. Don't think money is more important than life and life skills. Be ready to go all the way.”

Daniel

- “There is no success without hard work. In order for you to get what you want, you have to go after it because nobody will do it for you.”
- “Nobody will come to your house and give you a job. You need to get training and pursue the jobs, that's the only way employers will take you.”
- “We only have two options: adapt or die! Since I don't want to die, I adapt.”

What challenges have you experienced?

Zeredi

- “Registering my daycare. Because of regulations we are supposed to follow.”
- “Need to have an agreement for at least 5 years and 300,000 TZS to enter in agreement with the owner of the area. I am still in consultation with the owner to write 3-year agreement without having to pay up front, but month to month.”

Mohammed

- “First of all, on motorbike business, challenge of passenger not wearing helmet. We advise them to wear a helmet, but we only have one helmet. Many don't want to wear the helmet because many people have used the helmet, and might give skin disease. I advise them to wear the helmet. If they are uncomfortable, they can cover with their veils or something else. We tell them to ensure them to look at their safety. They should use helmet because it will protect them. The head has the brains. The head is everything to human beings. There is also the challenge of traffic police. We meet them when we carry passengers. They stop us, especially if the passenger is not using the helmet. We tell them the passenger refused to use it. Then we have a discussion.”
- “The plant has been opened at the Paper company. Imported from India. At first we couldn't operate the plant. Then we were given a 10-day crash course. Then we understood how it works. So understanding how to operate the machine.”

Maria

- “It's not easy, because in my journey I faced many challenges. There were barriers too. When you are strong willed, everything is possible.”
- “Quitting is not an option. You have to chase your goals. You have to be strong-willed.”
- “Many youth are unemployed. We shouldn't be idle. We have to find a way.”

Daniel

- “Daniel shared a powerful story about being soaked in the rain while he was looking for work, but he protected his CV from the rain at all costs.”

What are the keys to your success?

Zeredi

- “All these courses, I am not just learning theoretically, but also practically. Challenges are many. But the thing is being able to solve. Since I was a child I preferred to be a leader. I thank my parents for picking up on that. If your child loves football, or loves to cook or wants to be a soldier. Push them and motivate them. If you have a child and you want him to be a doctor, or a teacher, instead use the inner eye, what are their talents? And support them in that.”
- “When introduced to a new concept, it is not easy. Pioneering in life is not easy. Local authorities, parents, community. They don’t see what you see. Because you are pioneer. I have numerous discussions with parents, local authorities. Thank God they have been able to understand me.”

Maria

- “I also work with land and environmental resources management. I’m even more proud of myself because I chase my dreams. I sacrificed a lot.”
- “At first I was the only girl. I felt special, because colleagues supported me, welcomed me. This made me feel special. When you are willing to work in industrial engineering or mechanics with passion, everything is possible.”

Mohammed

- “Convince clients to use environmentally friendly paperback. The client is not used to it, and not willing to buy it. But we continue to convince them to use it. We are committed to sharing positive story, we are embracing industrialization. We see ourselves as a small industry.”

Daniel

- “Sometimes we face challenges, but if you are firm in your intentions you will overcome it...A soldier always falls down. I have always faced challenges. It was not easy to be here where I am right now. But I believe I am still going far. The most important thing is to keep working to achieve my dreams.”
- “Thanks to training, we learned so much, I learned how to draft CV, thanks to training program am where I am right now. This is not it for me. So brothers, let’s do this, let’s pursue our dreams.”

Via Webinar Series: Youth Session Bios

Moderator: Victoria Ibiwoye

Victoria Ibiwoye is a legal advocate and peacebuilding practitioner from Nigeria. She is a strong advocate for quality education and meaningful youth engagement. In addition to her grassroots advocacy background, Victoria brings international experience having worked with institutions like the World Bank Group, UNESCO and the USAID, to share perspectives on inclusive education and youth systems strengthening. Victoria has spoken at the United Nations, and at several high-level events calling on world leaders to prioritize quality education for all. She is a 2019 Mandela Washington Fellow and a Diana Legacy Award Recipient. Victoria describes herself as a systems thinker and bridge builder connecting the best talents and opportunities to enhance social impact.

Maria Wédio Matusse

Maria Matusse is a 22 years old from Maputo, Mozambique. She graduated from Industrial Maintenance Mechanics course at Instituto de Formação Profissional e Estudos Laborais Alberto Cassimo (IFPELAC) and has gone on to study Management of Territorial and Environmental Resources at the Medium Institute of Physical Planning and Environment, in Maputo. Outside of school, she has a business doing makeup and decoration for events. Once she completes the current course, she plans to pursue a continuation of her education at university.

Daniel Alexandre Muianga

Daniel Muianga is a 28 years old who graduated from Industrial Maintenance Mechanics course at IFPELAC and also completed Industrial Chemistry at the Maputo Industrial Institute. He studied Basic Computer Science and Basic English, as well as completed life skills through Passport to Success (PTS). And has been trained on population and Taxes at the General Directorate of Customs (Direccao Geral das Alfândegas), Maputo. He is currently employed at the Mozambique Railways (CFM) as Traction Practitioner. Additionally, he performs casual work for Mozambique Elite Service (MES) as Inspector of vehicle loading and unloading at the Maputo Car Terminal. His professional goals are to become a successful professional, work with honesty, and embrace future challenges that will enable him to contribute to the development of his company, his family, his country, and of the world. He is a father to a daughter.

Mohammed Kasim Haji

Mohammed is a young graduate of VETA Mtwara. He joined VETA Mtwara in 2014 and graduated in 2015. He kick-started his career as an accountant for VETA SACCOS (2015 - 2019), and Mohammed left his mark as an engaged and faithful team player committed to reaching organizational goals. From there he was driven to take a bold step and decided to take a short course in driving, envisioning to run a transport business, he is currently a trusted boda-boda drive (motorbike drive) providing transport services to selected clientele early in the morning before he goes to his job and evenings after his job as the Technical Operator at Eden Paper Bag Company. He also operates a mobile money services and he has hired one person to support him on this business.

Zeredi Juma

Zeredi Juma is a social entrepreneur. She owns and runs Zerry's Education and Daycare Center in Dar es Salaam. She provides day care services, pre-primary education, culturally relevant and holistic early childhood education to over 60 children in her area. She joined the Tanzania Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness Center (TECC) in 2017 to improve her skills so that she can run her business more successfully. Courses she took included business training, entrepreneurship, and life skills. Zeredi is a leader in action in her community, and also a national facilitator under Ministry of Health in Tanzania on health care and life skills issues.