

An Evaluation of the Christian Youth Development Program in South Africa, Congo and Cameroon



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1. INTRODUCTION

The origin of the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) can be traced back to 2012 when the Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA) with several missionary outreach initiatives in South Africa, Cameroon, Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia identified the negative impact of unemployment on the Youth in these countries. During 2012, well aware of the negative impact of unemployment amongst the youth in Africa, Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA) arranged for 50 unemployed youths in BCC Cameroon to be involved in a construction project in Yaoundé, Cameroon. See below the Yaoundé Project in Cameroon.



Map 1: Yaoundé Project in Cameroon

As part of the Christian Youth Development Program seven (7) young people were invited to South Africa, to receive training over a period of 6 months to become team leaders in different

areas of construction. After being trained, they were deployed to the project in Yaoundé together with about 43 other youths from three churches in Cameroon.



Photo 1: Cameroon CYDP Participants in 2012

During this construction project in Yaoundé, Cameroon, the Cameroonian youth gained skills and experience in planning, design, managerial work, administration, accounting, procurement, stock control, health and safety, construction, plastering, painting, tiling, carpentry, plumbing, roofing, electrical work and landscaping. However, during this project BCC SA realised that in addition to this, the focus of the program should also be on the **Human Development aspects** such as **providing Soft Skills** in time management, productivity, communication skills, leadership skills, adaptability, integrity, punctuality, diligence, determination, and taking responsibility for their own lives, etc. With this in mind, the project turned out to be a success, resulting in almost all of these young people being employed today. Some started their own businesses and employed several others. They have become mature and active members in the church and community, taking responsibility for other youth and children

Against this background and the outcome of the Yaoundé project, BCC SA started to roll out the program to other African Countries (including South Africa) to help the youth. With

Brunstad Christian Church in South Africa (BCC SA) more established and experienced, the Stephanopark Conference Centre (SCC) in Vanderbijlpark, South Africa, where there are facilities to accommodate larger groups from other African countries, has developed as the ideal place to accommodate the **Christian Youth Development Program**. Against this background the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) was established in 2017, using Stephanopark Conference Centre in South Africa as a base. The participants of the Christian Youth Development Program in 2013 can be seen below in Photo 2.



Photo 2: Cameroon CYDP participants in 2013

In 2018, Brunstad Christian Church South Africa involved the North West University to report on the impact of the program by assessing the economic status and outlook of participants prior to joining the program, in their national and regional context and assessing the value of the developmental training and experience provided by the partner employers, and reporting on the impact of the program, against the stated aim of *“helping people to help themselves, and so gain long term relief from suffering due to poverty and unemployment”*.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Based on BCC SA's previous experience with development work, the aim of the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) today is to help young (and older) people in Africa in a unique way, by means of a holistic development in Africa, to a point where they either can find employment and/or have the possibility to uplift communities back home. The aim therefore is to **provide them with Hard (practical) Skills** as well as **Soft Skills** in a holistic way to develop the individual. In this context **this initiative of Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA) must be seen as an initiative of Human Development**. BCC SA therefore took the responsibility to organize training in local companies for youths coming from the different African countries where BCC SA has connections with. Through the training program as well as other programs sponsored and organized by BCC SA, these young people gain both Hard Skills and other Soft Skills to help them become independent, mature individuals who can sustain themselves and make the right decisions when they come into the different challenges of life. In addition to this, BCC SA creates awareness among them and **equips them with skills to take care of young people, children and the elderly in their own local communities**. In this regard, BCC SA in collaboration with the local churches in the different countries assists them in finding jobs in their local communities so that they can be absorbed in the local economies and sustain themselves. Furthermore, the intention of BCC SA is to assist in the development of communities.

2.1 AIM OF THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The aim of the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) is therefore as follows:

- To offer a program of development where Hard Skills and Soft Skills are transferred in a holistic way to develop a "well-rounded individual". This is done in the context of the Christian faith in sub-Saharan Africa by *"giving the participants Bible studies as well as allowing them to immerse themselves in church life, meetings, services and activities in an established Church, whilst gathering the necessary Hard and Soft Skills"*.
- To assist in the implementation of projects in Africa which help individuals find meaningful employment after training in South Africa in local businesses where they live. This in short means helping them to help themselves. In this manner they can gain long-term relief from suffering due to poverty and unemployment. As per the Chinese proverb, *"You give a*

poor man a fish and you feed him for a day. You teach him to fish, and you give him an occupation that will feed him for a lifetime.”

2.2 METHOD OF DELIVERY

The Christian Youth Development Program is developed in two parts, namely an Africa Program and a South African Program.

- In the **Africa Program**, which supplements the South African Program, participants get a very basic training before they come to South Africa. In this instance BCC SA is leading the program. Local churches in Africa support the program by involving the young people in church life and activities. SCC Services on behalf of BCC SA arranges food and accommodation, looks after the health and welfare of the participants and arranges placements after skills training in local businesses, organisations, and churches.
- In the **South African Program** participants are provided with practical skills training (Hard Skills) by allowing them to work in different companies mostly in the Upriver Group of Companies. Typically, this will take place Monday to Friday 7:30am to 4:30pm. In support of this, the second part of the program focuses on Soft Skills. This includes activities to immerse participants in church life, meetings, services and activities in an established church in evenings and weekends.

The uniqueness of this program is thus embedded in the concept of the involvement of local churches in African Countries, BCC SA in South Africa and providing training that includes Hard Skills as well as Soft Skills.

2.3 THE PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE CYDP

To understand the uniqueness of the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) it is important to start with the concept of **Human Development**. According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP: 2018) Human Development can be seen twofold namely:

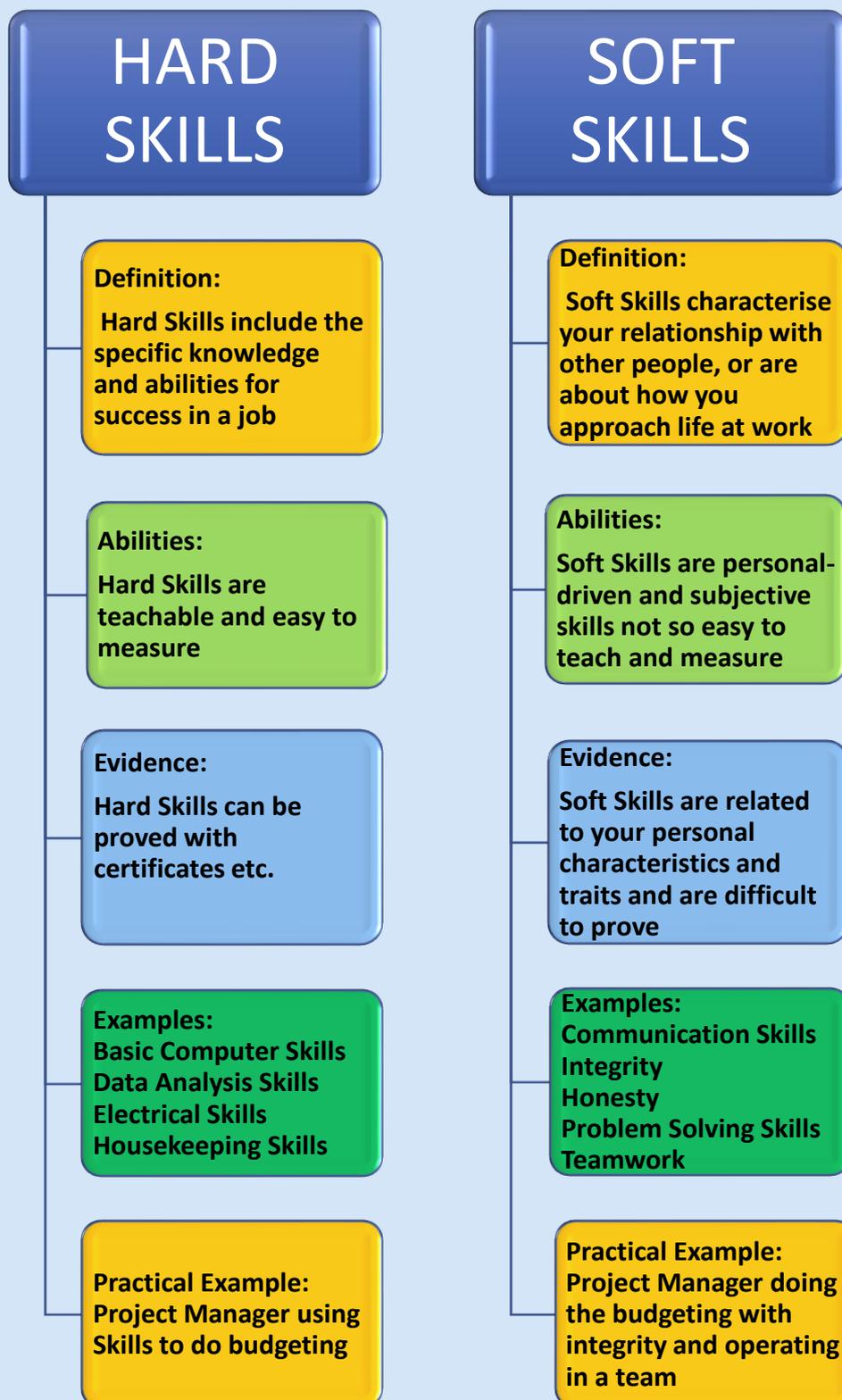
- **People:** the human development approach focuses on improving the life people lead rather than assuming that economic growth will lead;
- **Opportunities:** human development is about giving people more freedom and opportunities to live lives they value. In effect, this means developing people’s abilities and giving them a chance to use them.

Aligned with this view, the Food and Agricultural Organisation (6:2011) defines human development as a people-centred development, where the focus is put on the improvement of the various dimensions affecting the well-being of individuals and their relationships with the society.

In this context, the Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA) believes that developing the individual in a holistic way may contribute to community development. Aligned with the viewpoints of UNDP, the Christian Youth Development Program intends to create opportunities for individuals to develop their lives in such a way that they can contribute meaningfully to community development when they return home.

The Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) thus focuses on a balance between Hard Skills and Soft Skills. The uniqueness of the program is embedded in this concept. Vocational Training can provide Hard Skills without Soft Skills. In this sense the CYDP focuses on a combination of Hard and Soft Skills. As explained in Figure 1, the CYDP focuses on Hard Skills as well as Soft Skills to deliver a “well-rounded individual”. Hard Skills are job specific knowledge and abilities, but only Soft Skills will help you to approach other people in a work setup. Most of the time it is relatively easy to obtain Hard Skills, but Soft Skills are more personal driven and subjective and not so easy to obtain.

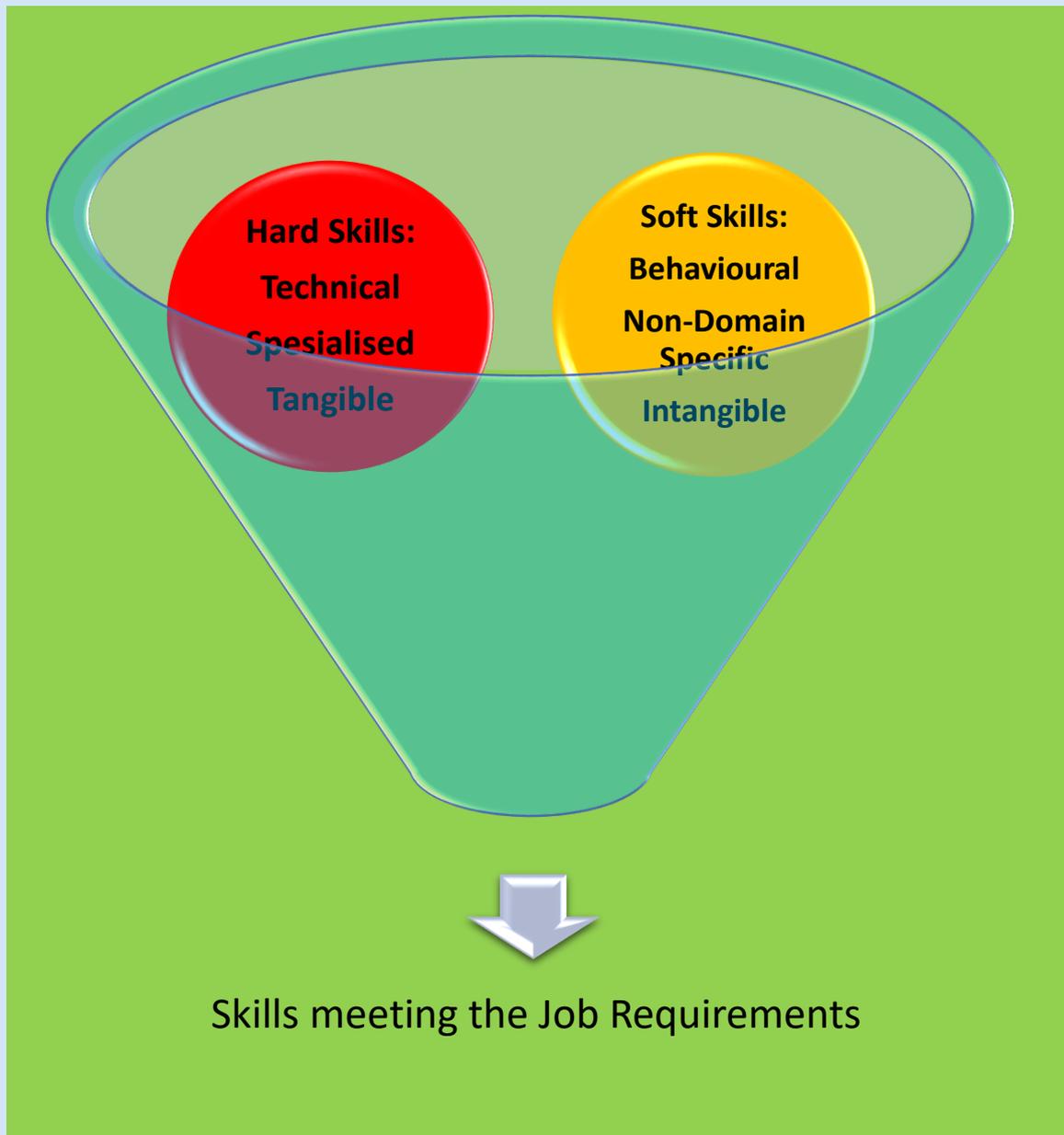
Figure 1: The balance between Hard Skills and Soft Skills - the Key to Success



There are many programs one can follow to obtain Hard Skills, but very few offer Hard Skills as well as Soft Skills. It is only, for example, a project manager who knows how to budget and can operate in a team, who will be successful. The CYDP is based on this principle.

As shown in Figure 2, it is only the ingredients of Hard Skills as well as Soft Skills that will lead to skills that will meet requirements. The uniqueness of the CYDP is locked up in this concept.

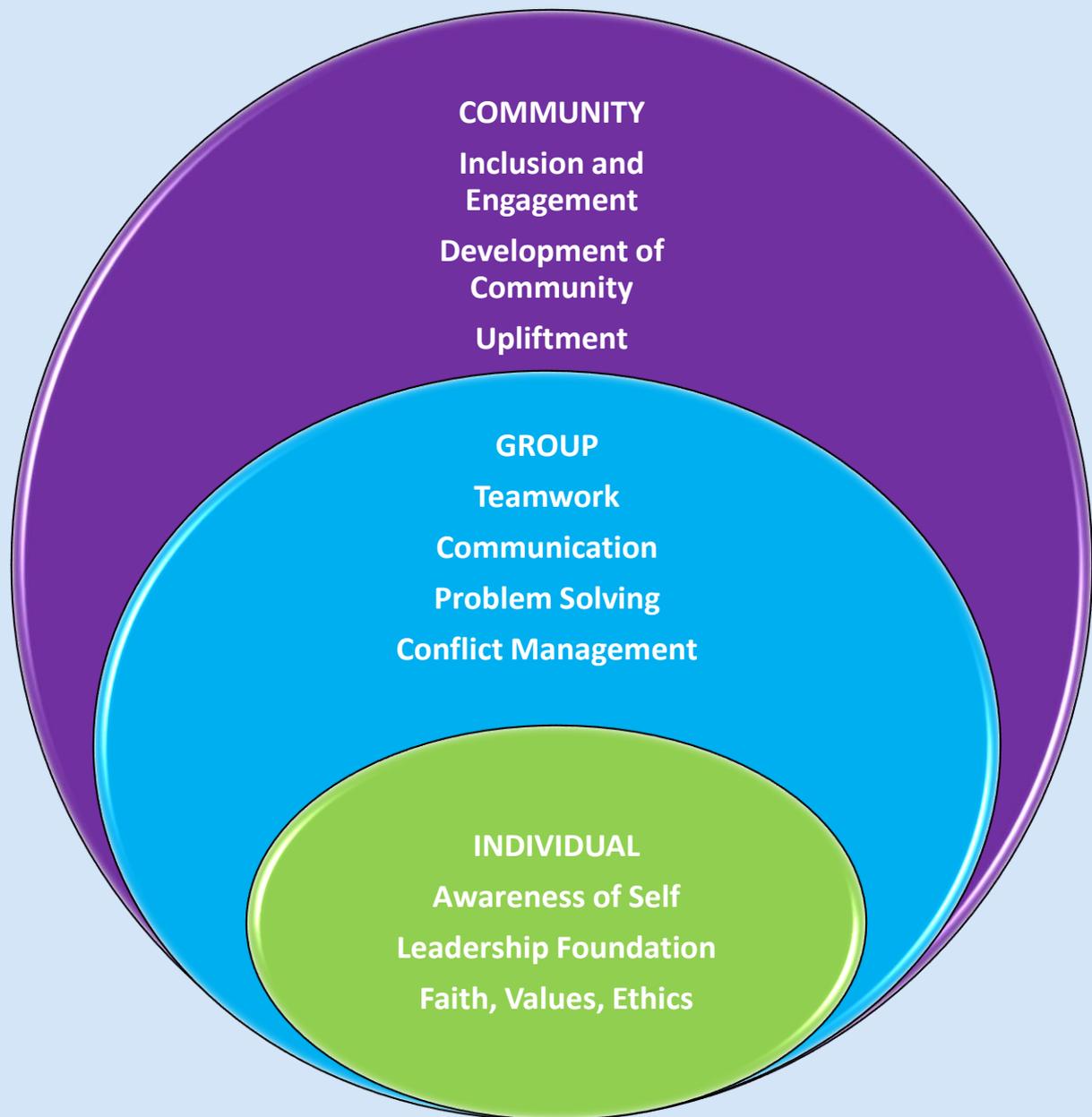
Figure 2: Uniqueness of the Christian Youth Development Program



For Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA), the development of communities is of importance. With the high unemployment and poverty in many of these countries, and a large number of people living below the poverty line, the intention is that this program may help communities to develop. In this regard, BCC SA believes in an **Individual-Group-Community Development Model** as portrayed in Figure 3. The idea is to develop the individual with Hard Skills as well as Soft Skills to create “awareness of the self” and lays the leadership foundation based on faith, values and ethics. Based on this, the individual may participate in a group as a team member, ready to communicate and to solve problems based on values. Equipped with this, individuals back in their communities will engage and develop communities. When section 3 is considered, it is evident that in most of these countries like Cameroon and Congo, a high percentage of communities and community members live below the poverty line, with limited opportunities to get out of the trap of poverty and discouragement. In this regard, as mentioned by many of the participants, **“This was the opportunity of my life”**. In this regard, the Christian Youth Development Program provides an opportunity to young people to be part of a training program where they can gain Hard Skills while they form part of groups where they can also obtain the necessary Soft Skills.

In the last section of this report a few testimonials can be read in this regard. Whilst it was not the aim of this report to assess the impact of the program on communities, it is assumed that probably the biggest contribution of the program is the development of poor communities. When looking at Congo, where 63% of the people live below the poverty line while 30% are unemployed, a program like the CYDP creates opportunities. Similarly, when looking at Section 4 of this study, it shows that a large percentage of the participants were unemployed before joining the program. When the situation in Cameroon is considered, it shows an official unemployment rate of 11%, but estimates are that it is in the order of +20%. In Cameroon, 30% of people live below the poverty line. In South Africa, the unemployment rate is at 27.5%, but estimates are that the youth unemployment rate is above 50%. Taking these facts into consideration, the CYDP provides ample opportunities to young people. Figure 3 below shows the Individual-Group-Community Development Model of BCC SA.

Figure 3: Individual-Group-Community Model of the Christian Youth Development Program



2.4 KEY ROLEPLAYERS IN THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

As indicated in the introduction, the main role player in the Christian Youth Development Program is Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA). BCC SA is then assisted by local churches in Africa as partner organisations, and the UpRiver Group of Companies as the platform where training and employment opportunities are provided. The logistics around the CYDP is provided by SCC Services (Pty) Ltd, a subsidiary of BCC SA. Figure 4 below shows the relationship between the Key Role players in the Christian Youth Development Program.

Figure 4: The relationship between the Key Role players in the Christian Youth Development Program



2.5 COLLABORATION WITH NON-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS AND THE BUSINESS SECTOR

It is clear that in order to be effective in tackling complex challenges in the third world there is a need for a range of organisations to work together. The United Nations expresses it in this way:

The United Nations strongly believes in the power of private sector engagement and has a long history of working with the private sector. In recent years, The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the international humanitarian community have been forming innovative partnerships with the private sector by leveraging on their local and industry expertise to strengthen emergency preparedness and response. This collaboration has become more and more important given that the number of people affected by humanitarian crises continues to increase. It has become clear that the complexity of the world's emergencies requires the coordinated action of diverse actors including the private sector.

In this regard, Brunstad Christian Church South Africa believes that there should be collaboration between the private sector and non-for-profit organisations. The whole model of BCC SA is based on this principle. In the CYDP, the Church and Private Companies collaborate towards the development of people and communities. In an article by Oxford University Economics Professor Paul Collier (NCR, 2011) he indicated, “Church organizations have time and again proven that they are effective at delivering basic social services like education. Religious organisations have the ability to both “reach down” and “reach up” by providing essential services on a hyper-local level, but also appealing to people on a national level in a way that governments in developing countries typically cannot”.

2.6 FUNDING OF THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Christian Youth Development Program is mainly funded by BCC South Africa, *Stichting Wereldwijd Evangeliewerk* (WEW) in the Netherlands and the UpRiver Group of Companies.

2.7 THE 2018 CHRISTIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The 2018 CYDP participants came from the following countries: South Africa, Malawi, Kenya, Cameroon, Uganda, Congo DRC, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe. **Photo 3** below shows some of the Christian Youth Development Program participants of 2018.



Photo 3: CYDP 2018 participants singing in a choir at Brunstad Christian Church South Africa

3. ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE CYDP

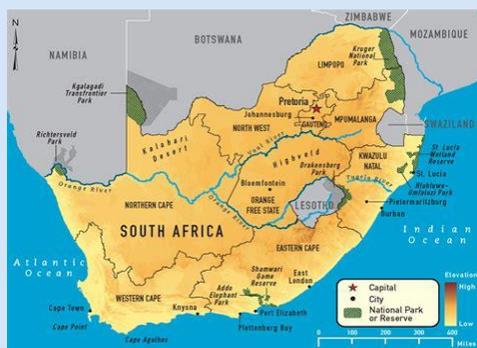
3.1 INTRODUCTION

All the participants in the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) come from African Countries. In these countries, poverty, unemployment and discouragement are common. To understand the circumstances of these participants, it is necessary to look briefly at the socio-economic profile of some of these countries, where the majority of participants are coming from. In this section, the socio-economic profile of South Africa, Congo and Cameroon will be discussed.

3.2 ECONOMIC PROFILE OF SOUTH AFRICA, CONGO AND CAMEROON

In this section, the economic profile of South Africa, Congo and Cameroon will be discussed.

3.2.1 SOUTH AFRICA



In South Africa, the first multi-racial elections took place in 1994 following the end of apartheid. Since then South Africa is under majority rule of the ANC-led government. South Africa still struggles to address apartheid-era imbalances, indecent housing, education, and health care. Jacob Zuma became president in 2009 and was re-elected in 2014. His successor, Cyril Ramaphosa, has pledged to focus efforts on reigniting growth and creating jobs. Government, labour, business, civil society and communities work now together – to remove the constraints to inclusive growth and to pursue far greater levels of investment.

HIV/AIDS was responsible for South Africa’s average life expectancy plunging to less than 43 years in 2008; it has rebounded to 63 years as of 2017. HIV/AIDS continues to be a serious public health threat, although awareness-raising campaigns and the wider availability of anti-retroviral drugs is stabilizing the number of new cases, enabling infected individuals to live longer, healthier lives, and reducing mother-child transmissions.

Economic growth has decelerated in recent years, slowing to an estimated 0.7% in 2017. Unemployment, poverty, and inequality - among the highest in the world - remain a challenge. Official unemployment is roughly 27% of the workforce and runs significantly

higher among black youths (more than 50%). Table 1 below shows an Economic Profile of South Africa.

Table 1: Economic Profile of South Africa

Economic Indicator	
Population	55.3 Million
Labour Force	22.19 Million
GDP	767.2 Billion Dollar
GDP Real Growth Rate	1.3%
GDP per Capita	\$13600
Unemployment Rate	27.5%
Population Below Poverty Line	16.6%

Source: World Fact Book, CIA: 2018

3.2.2 CONGO DRC



Established as an official Belgian colony in 1908, the Republic of the Congo gained its independence in 1960. Ethnic strife and civil war, touched off by a massive inflow of refugees in 1994 from fighting in Rwanda and Burundi, led in May 1997 to the toppling of the Congo regime by a rebellion backed by Rwanda and Uganda.

The country was then renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Despite a wealth of fertile soil, hydroelectric power potential and mineral resources, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) struggles with many socio-economic problems, including high infant and maternal mortality rates, malnutrition, poor vaccination coverage, lack of access to improved water sources and sanitation, and frequent and early fertility. Ongoing conflict, mismanagement of resources, and a lack of investment have resulted in food insecurity; almost 30 % of children under the age of 5 are malnourished.

The DRC is a source and host country for refugees. Between 2012 and 2014, more than 119,000 Congolese refugees returned to the relative stability of northwest DRC, but more

than 540,000 Congolese refugees remained abroad at the end of 2015. In addition, an estimated 3.9 million Congolese were internally displaced in 2017, fleeing violence between rebel groups and Congolese armed forces. Thousands of refugees have come to the DRC from neighbouring countries, including Rwanda, the Central African Republic and Burundi.

The economy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo - a nation endowed with vast natural resource wealth - continues to perform poorly. Systemic corruption since independence in 1960, combined with countrywide instability and intermittent conflict that began in the early 90s, has reduced national output and government revenue, and increased external debt. With the installation of a transitional government in 2003 after peace accords, economic conditions slowly began to improve as the government reopened relations with international financial institutions and international donors, and President Kabila began implementing reforms. Poverty remains widespread in DRC, and the country failed to meet any Millennium Development Goals by 2015. DRC also concluded its program with the IMF in 2015. The price of copper – the DRC’s primary export - plummeted in 2015 and remained at record lows during 2016-17, reducing government revenues, expenditures, and foreign exchange reserves, while inflation reached nearly 50% in mid-2017 – its highest level since the early 2000s. Table 2 below shows an Economic Profile of Congo DRC.

Table 2: Economic Profile of Congo

Economic Indicator	
Population	85.3 Million
Labour Force	31.3 Million
GDP	41.4 Billion Dollar
GDP Real Growth Rate	3.4%
GDP per Capita	\$800
Unemployment Rate	11.3%
Population Below Poverty Line	63.0%

Source: World Fact Book, CIA: 2018

3.2.3 CAMEROON



French Cameroon became independent in 1960 as the Republic of Cameroon. Cameroon has a large youth population, with more than 60% of the populace under the age of 25. Fertility is falling but remains at a high level, especially among poor, rural, and uneducated women, in part because of inadequate access to contraception. Life expectancy remains low at about 55 years due to the prevalence of HIV and AIDs and an elevated maternal mortality rate, which has remained high since 1990. Cameroon, particularly the northern region, is vulnerable to food insecurity.

Despite economic growth in some regions, poverty is on the rise, and is most prevalent in rural areas, which are especially affected by a shortage of jobs, declining incomes, poor school and health care infrastructure, and a lack of clean water and sanitation. International migration has been driven by unemployment (including fewer government jobs), poverty, the search for educational opportunities, and corruption. Table 3 below shows the Economic Profile of Cameroon.

Table 3: Economic Profile of Cameroon

Economic Indicator	
Population	25.6 Million
Labour Force	9.9 Million
GDP	9.3 Billion Dollar
GDP Real Growth Rate	3.5%
GDP per Capita	\$3700
Unemployment Rate	30.0 %
Population Below Poverty Line	30.0%

Source: World Fact Book, CIA: 2018

Cameroon's economy suffers from factors that often impact underdeveloped countries, such as stagnant per capita income, a relatively inequitable distribution of income, a top-heavy civil

service, endemic corruption, continuing inefficiencies of a large parastatal system in key sectors, and a generally weak climate for business enterprise.

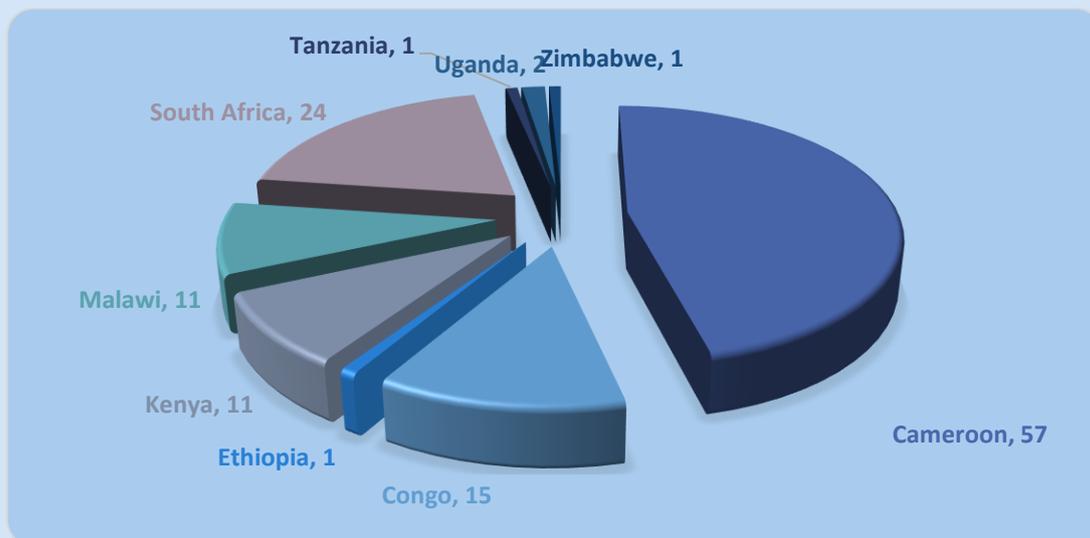
3.3 GEOGRAPHIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CYDP) PARTICIPANTS

In this section, the geographic and demographic profile of the participants in the CYDP will be discussed.

3.3.1 GEOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

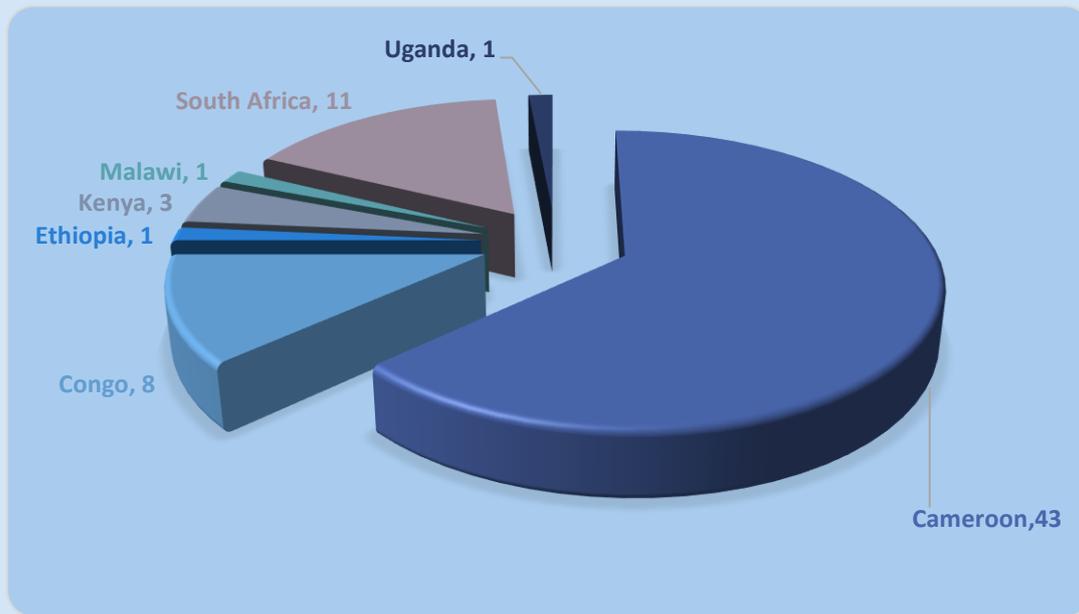
When the geographic profile of the participants since 2012 to 2018 is considered, it shows that 57 participants came from Cameroon, 24 participants came from South Africa, 15 participants came from Congo, 11 participants came from Malawi, 11 participants came from Kenya, 2 participants came from Uganda and 1 participant each came from Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Ethiopia. It is evident from this that most of the participants are from Cameroon and Congo. Participants from a country where opportunities are limited, and as discussed in the previous section, unemployment and poverty are widespread. The geographical profile of the participants since 2012 to 2018 is shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Geographic Profile of Participants (2012 to 2018)



The geographic profile of the 2018 participants is shown in Figure 6 below. When the last group (Evaluation Group) is considered, it shows that 43 participants came from Cameroon, 11 participants came from South Africa, 8 participants from Congo, 3 participants from Kenya and 1 participant each from Uganda, Malawi and Ethiopia.

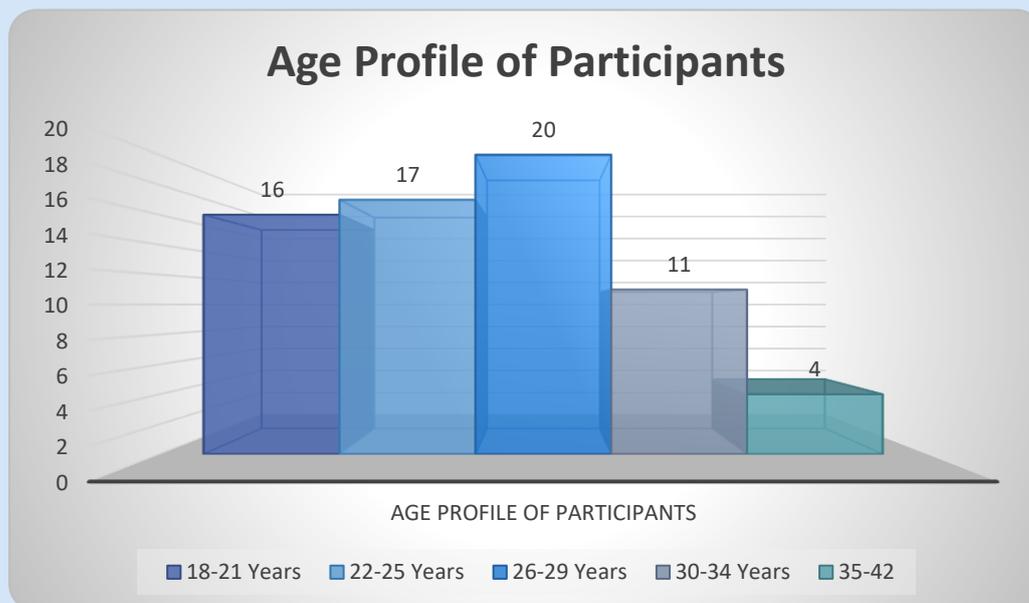
Figure 6: Geographic Profile of Participants in 2018 (Evaluation Group)



3.3.2 AGE OF PARTICIPANTS

The age profile of the participants shows that all participants are between the age of 18 and 42. Most of the participants are in the age category 26 to 29 years old (20 participants), 17 participants in the age category 22 to 25 years old, and 16 participants in the category 18 to 21 years old. The age profile of the participants is shown in Figure 7 below.

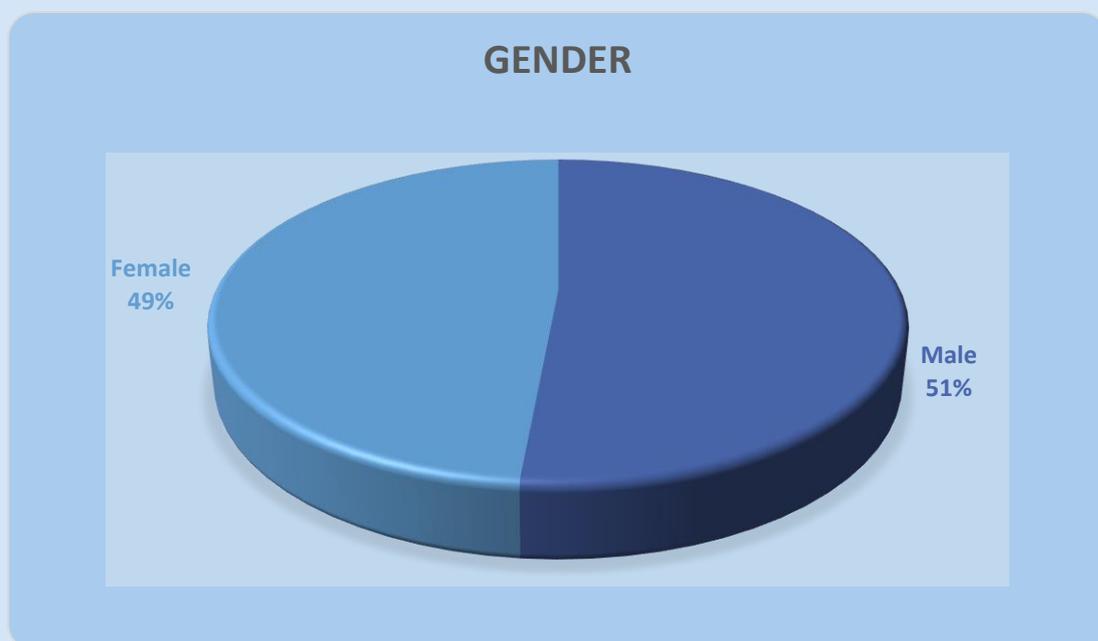
Figure 7: Age profile of Participants in 2018 (Evaluation Group)



3.3.3 GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS

When the gender profile of the participants is considered, it shows that 49% of participants are female and 51% of the participants are male. Considering the emphasis on gender and the focus on female empowerment, this CYDP is well balanced. In this regard, there is a focus specifically in Africa to empower women. Furthermore, this CYDP can be considered as an opportunity for females to uplift themselves. The gender profile of the participants is shown below in Figure 8.

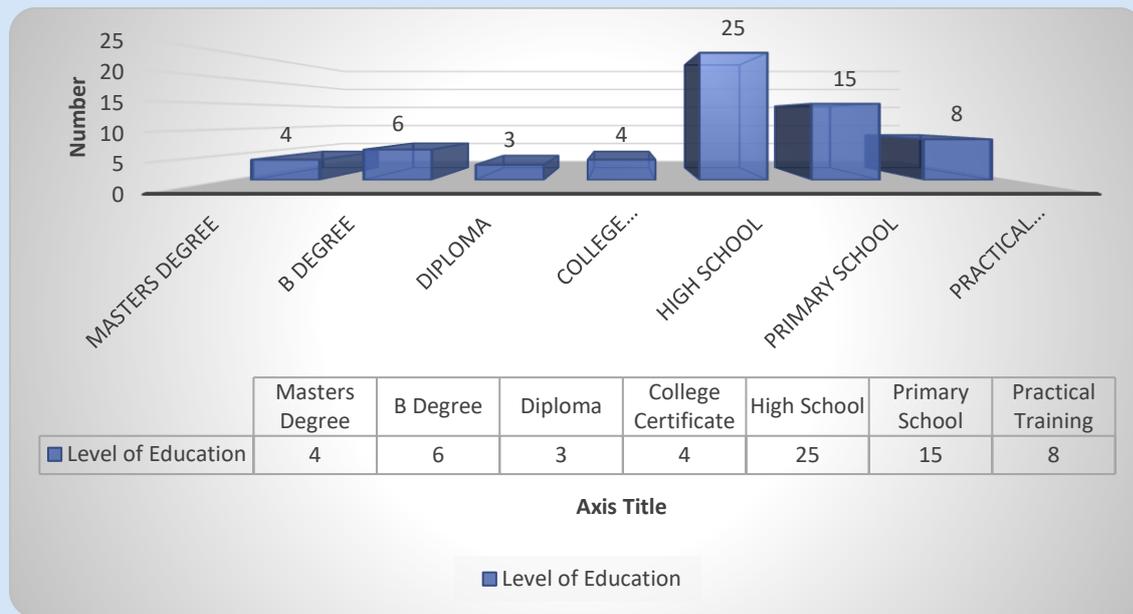
Figure 8: Gender Profile of Christian Youth Development Program Participants



3.3.4 LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF PARTICIPANTS

When looking at the level of education of participants, it shows that 25 of the participants' educational level is high school, with 15 participants with only primary school education. A total of 6 participants do have a bachelor's degree, and 4 participants do have a master's degree qualification, and 3 participants have a diploma. The level of education of the participants is shown below in Figure 9.

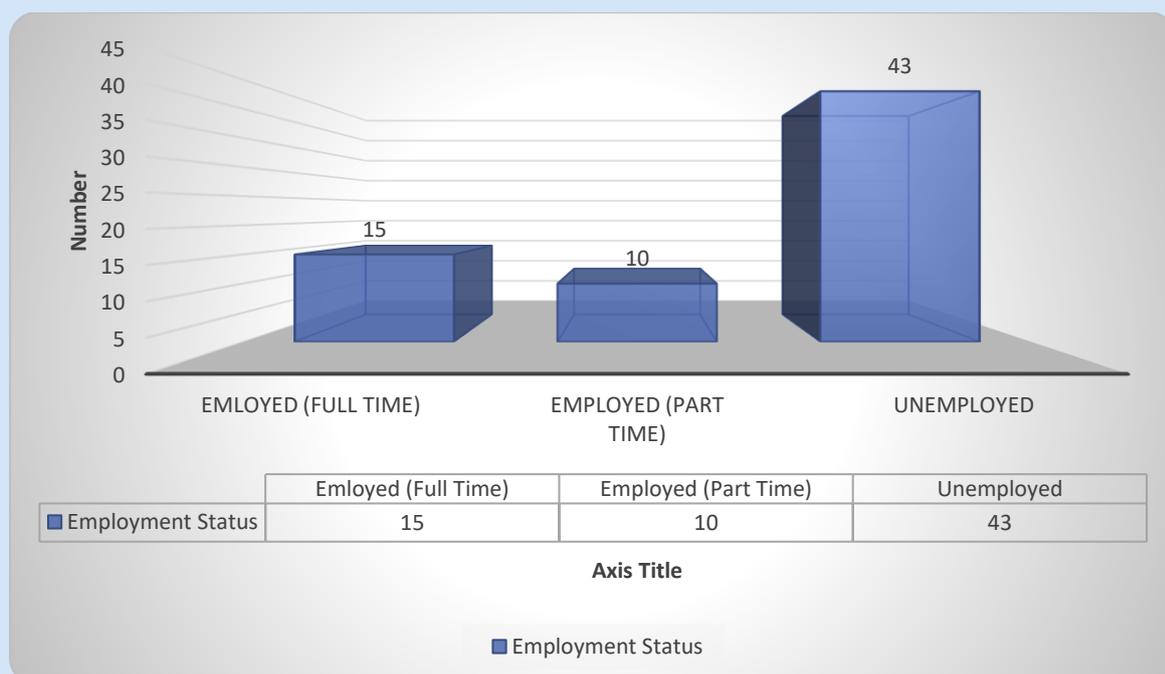
Figure 9: Level of Education of Participants in 2018 (Evaluation Group)



3.3.5 EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS

When the employment status of the participants is considered, it shows that only 25 of the 68 participants were employed, while 43 of the participants were unemployed before taking part in the program. See also the Economic Profile of Cameroon, Congo and South Africa in this regard. South Africa’s youth unemployment is estimated above 50%. The employment status of participants is shown below in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Employment Status of Participants (Evaluation Group)



4. EVALUATION OF HARD SKILLS BEFORE AND AFTER THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CYDP)

To determine the impact of the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) on participants, all 68 participants in the 2018 program completed a questionnaire with the help of a trained fieldworker who explained the questions in the language of the respondents. Similarly, mentors responded on 29 participants in a questionnaire and 27 peer participants responded on fellow participants. In this questionnaire several **Hard Skills** were presented in a list to respondents where they were asked to comment on a scale from 0 to 5 in the following way:

- 0 - No skills acquired in this area
- 1 - I have acquired a few very basic skills in the area
- 2 - Basic skills acquired and knowledge of how this area links to other areas
- 3 - Average skills and knowledge obtained in this area. Able to perform this function on my own
- 4 - Above average skills in the area. Able to lead others
- 5 - Excellent skills obtained in this area. Able to train others

In this context respondents were asked to rate themselves “Before” they started with the program and “After” they completed the program. To do the analysis the SPSS statistical program was used. The statistically significant difference between means was determined by the paired t-test to ascertain whether an improvement in skills indeed took place.

4.1 SELF-ASSESSMENT BY PARTICIPANTS

In the statistical analysis the mean of the skills “before” and “after” the program was compared with each other. This means was also used to compile the different graphs. The feedback from the participants is divided in four categories namely, General Office Skills, Construction Skills, Information Technology Skills and Housekeeping Skills.

The self-assessment of participants with regards to **General Office Skills** shows that they think they improved on all general office skills. A paired–sample t-test was conducted to evaluate the impact of the program. There was a statistical significant increase in skills as reported by the participants in event management ($p=0.0001$; $p<0.05$), budgeting ($p=0.048$; $p<0.05$), work

planning ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), project management ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), goal setting ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), health and safety ($p=0.004$; $p<0.05$) and human resources ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$). There was however no statistically significant increase in the skills as reported by participants in administration ($p=0.231$; $p>0.05$), accounting ($p=0.5264$; $p>0.05$), marketing ($p=0.441$; $p>0.05$), sales ($p=0.212$; $p>0.05$) and photography ($p=0.435$; $p>0.05$). Thus, it can be assumed statistically that participants improved in event management, budgeting skills, work planning, project management skills, goal setting skills, health and safety skills and human resources skills, but did not improved significantly in accounting, administration, marketing and photography. The improvement in general office skills is shown below in Figure 11.

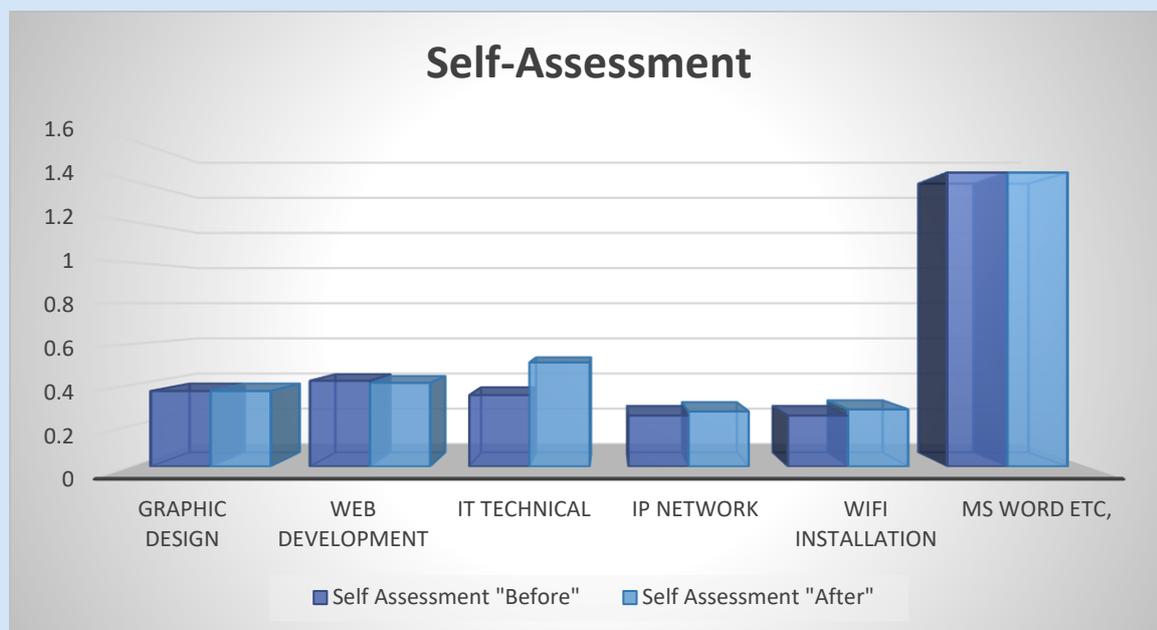
Figure 11: Self-Assessment of General Office Skills “Before” and “After” the Christian Youth Development Program



When the practical **IT Skills** are considered, participants feel that they did not improve in this field. In Figure 12 it shows that a marginal improvement with regards to technical IT skills is recorded. From an analysis perspective there was no statistically significant improvement in the skills of graphic design ($p=0.900$; $p>0.05$), web design ($p=0.843$; $p>0.05$), IT technical ($p=0.117$; $p>0.05$), WIFI installation ($p=0.620$; $p>0.05$) and MS Word ($p=0.998$; $p>0.05$). In other words, participants feel that they gained knowledge, but not in all cases. Similarly, when participants score themselves, they tend to be more conservative and less confident compared to the scoring of mentors. Information Technology knowledge and skills on the other hand are probably skills that can only be acquired in a longer program.

With regard to MS Word skills it can be assumed that many of the participants came to the program with knowledge as indicated in Figure 12, but they feel that they did not gain any extra knowledge or skills. When Information Technology technical skills are considered, some participants feel that they gained a lot from the program, but not all participants agree.

Figure 12: Self-Assessment of Information Technology Skills



When the self-assessment with regards to **Construction Skills** is considered, it shows that participants feel they improved in this field. There was a statistically significant increase in skills as reported by the participants in painting ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), electrical work ($p=0.094$; $p<0.05$), plumbing ($p=0.003$; $p<0.05$), plastering ($p=0.008$; $p<0.05$), carpentry ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), welding ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), store keeping ($p=0.003$; $p<0.05$), materials management ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$) and brick work ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$). It can thus be said with accuracy that participants in the construction field gained considerably from the training intervention. There was however no statistically significant increase in the skills as reported by participants in operating a TLB and Bobcat ($p=0.35$; $p<0.05$). Photo 4 below shows the CYDP 2018 participants busy with construction training. This shows also the extent of practical on the job training embedded in the program



Photo 4: CYDP participants, South Africa 2018 – Construction training

This can be considered as a significant outcome of the program, since many of the participants will be able to use these skills in communities when they return home. This can be regarded as essential services in any community. In this context, many of the participants may use the skills to start own businesses or to find employment, especially participants with low formal education as reported.

Figure 13 shows the assessment of construction skills by participants.

Figure 13: Self-Assessment of Construction Skills



When the self-assessment of participants with regards to **Housekeeping Skills** is considered, it shows that all fields improved with the highest improvement recorded for cleaning services. There was a statistically significant increase in skills as reported by the participants in catering ($p=0.028$; $p<0.05$), waiter services ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), housekeeping ($p=0.020$; $p<0.05$), cleaning ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), and chef-cooking ($p=0.014$; $p <0.05$). Figure 14 shows the improvements in housekeeping skills.

Figure 14: Self-Assessment of Housekeeping Skills



4.2 MENTOR ASSESSMENT

The assessment of mentors with regards to **General Office Skills** shows that mentors feel that respondents improved in all general office skills with the best improvement in work planning, project management, goal setting, administration and event management. There was a statistically significant increase in skills as reported by the mentors in administration ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), accounting ($p=0.032$; $p<0.05$), event management ($p=0.004$; $p<0.05$), marketing ($p=0.031$; $p<0.05$), sales skills ($p=0.018$; $p<0.05$), photography ($p=0.035$; $p<0.05$), budgeting ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), work planning ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), project management ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), goal setting ($p=0.014$; $p <0.05$), health and safety ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$) and human resources ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$). Mentoring by a Mentor is shown below in Photo 5.

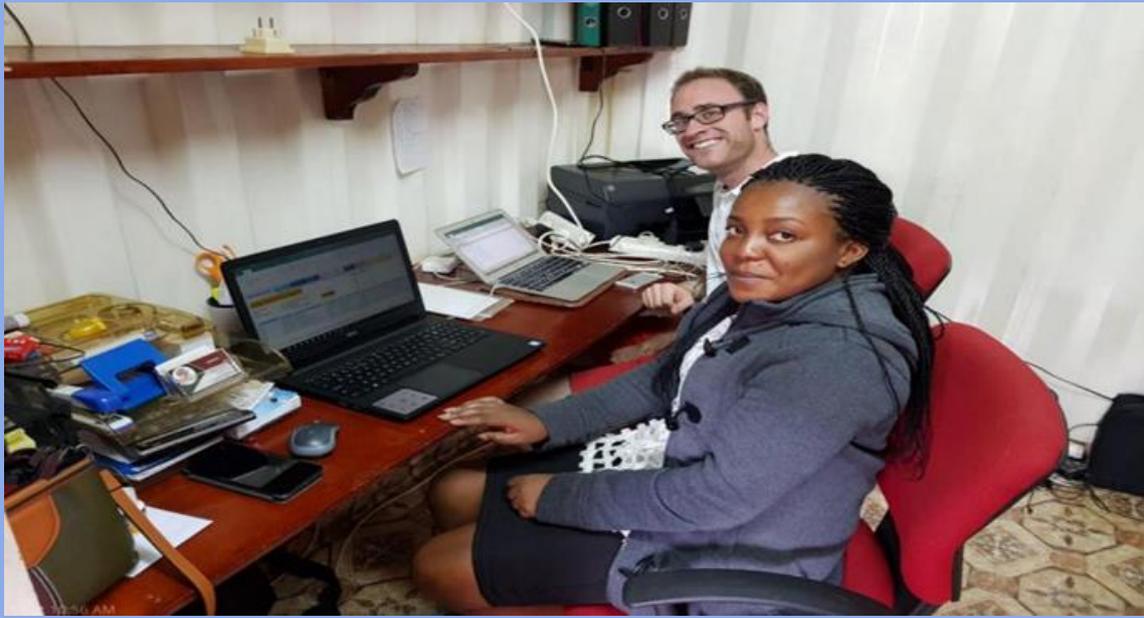
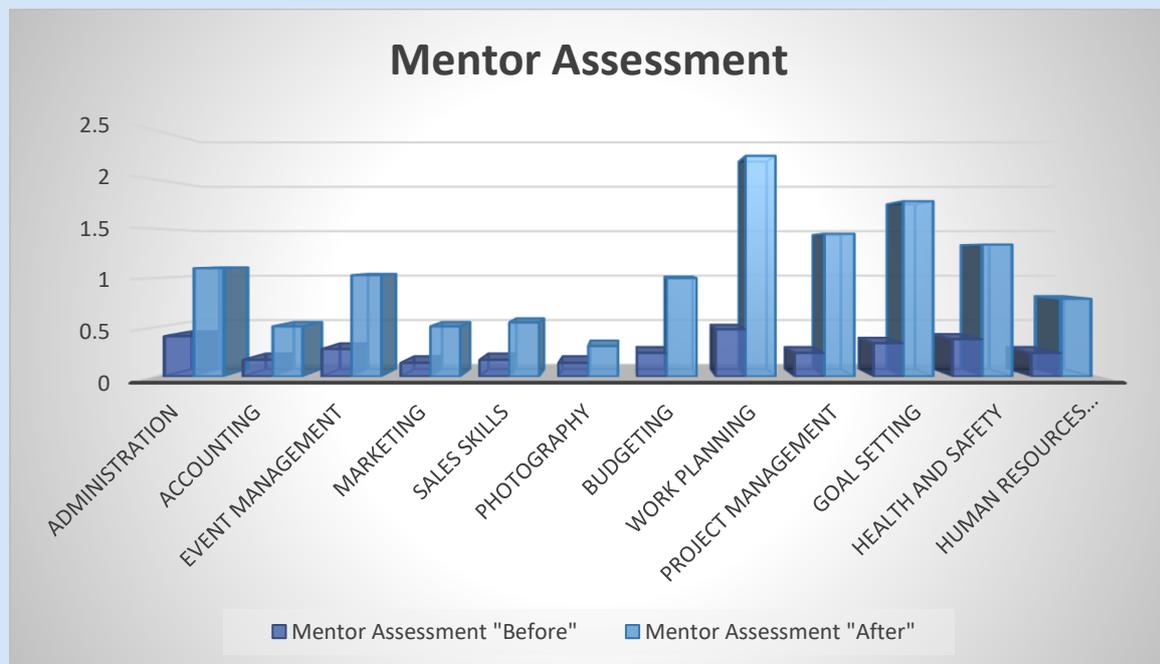


Photo 5: Mentoring taking place – Office Skills Training

Figure 15 shows the improvement of participants in general office skills as assessed by mentors.

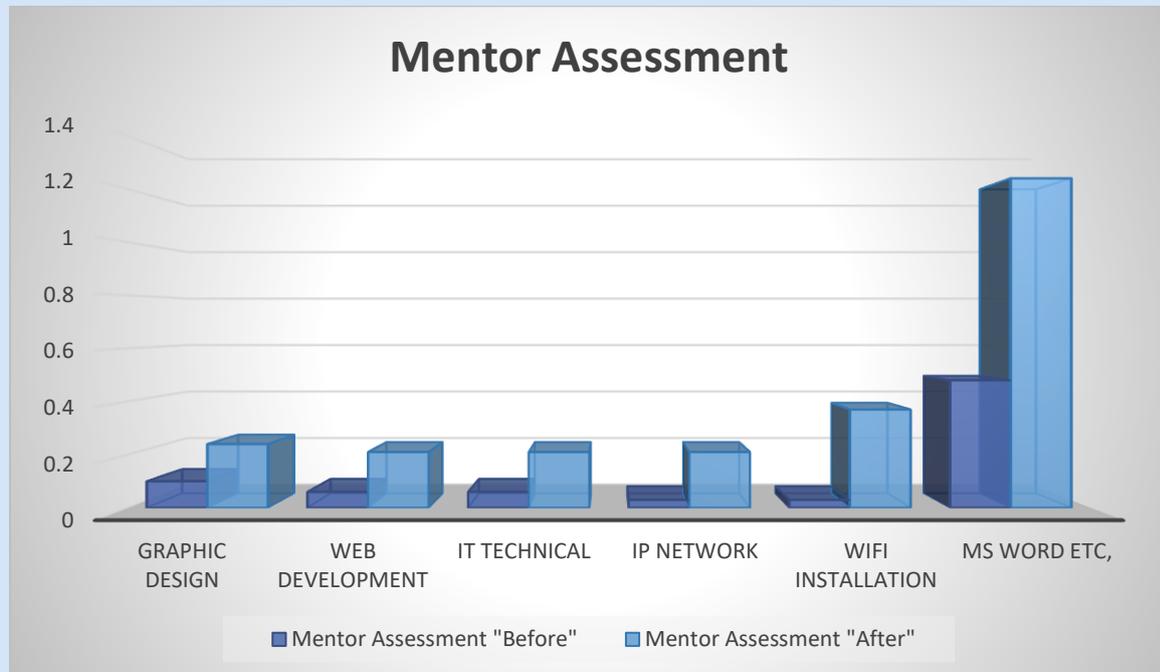
Figure 15: Mentor Assessment of General Office Skills “Before” and “After” the Christian Youth Development Program



Whereas participants scored themselves very low on **Information Technology Skills** mentors indicated that participants improved in IT skills, with the highest recorded for MS WORD skills.

However, from a statistical significance perspective only MS Word skills improved statistically significant ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$). Figure 16 shows the mentor assessment of participants in Information Technology skills.

Figure 16: Mentor Assessment of Information Technology Skills



Considering the assessment of mentors with regards to the improvement of **Construction Skills** of participants, mentors feel that participants improved considerably in this field. There was a statistically significant increase in skills as reported by the mentors in painting ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), electrical work ($p=0.009$; $p<0.05$), plumbing ($p=0.007$; $p<0.05$), plastering ($p=0.002$; $p<0.05$), carpentry ($p=0.005$; $p <0.05$), welding ($p=0.049$; $p<0.05$), store keeping ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), materials management ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$) and brick work ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$). There was however no statistically significant increase in the skills as reported by mentors in operating a TLB and Bobcat ($p=0.326$; $p<0.05$; $p=0.325$; $p<0.05$). When the viewpoint of mentors is considered, it shows that they feel that in electrical work, plumbing, carpentry etc. participants improved considerably. This can be considered together with brickwork as the basic skills to construct housing, and it can thus be assumed that these skills will be ploughed back into communities.

The mentor assessment of construction skills is shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Mentor Assessment of Construction Skills

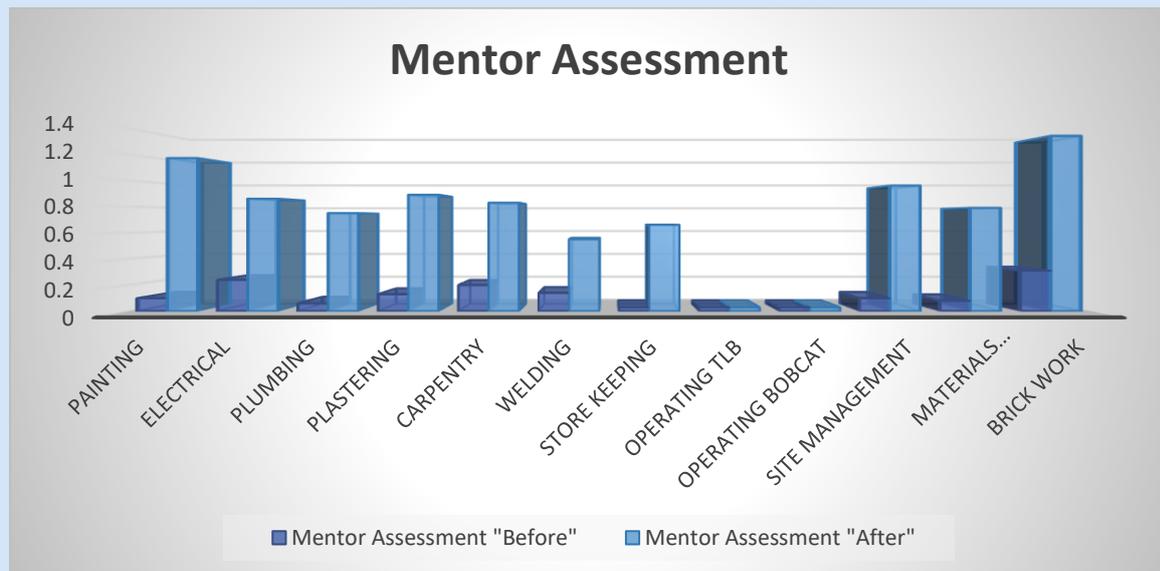
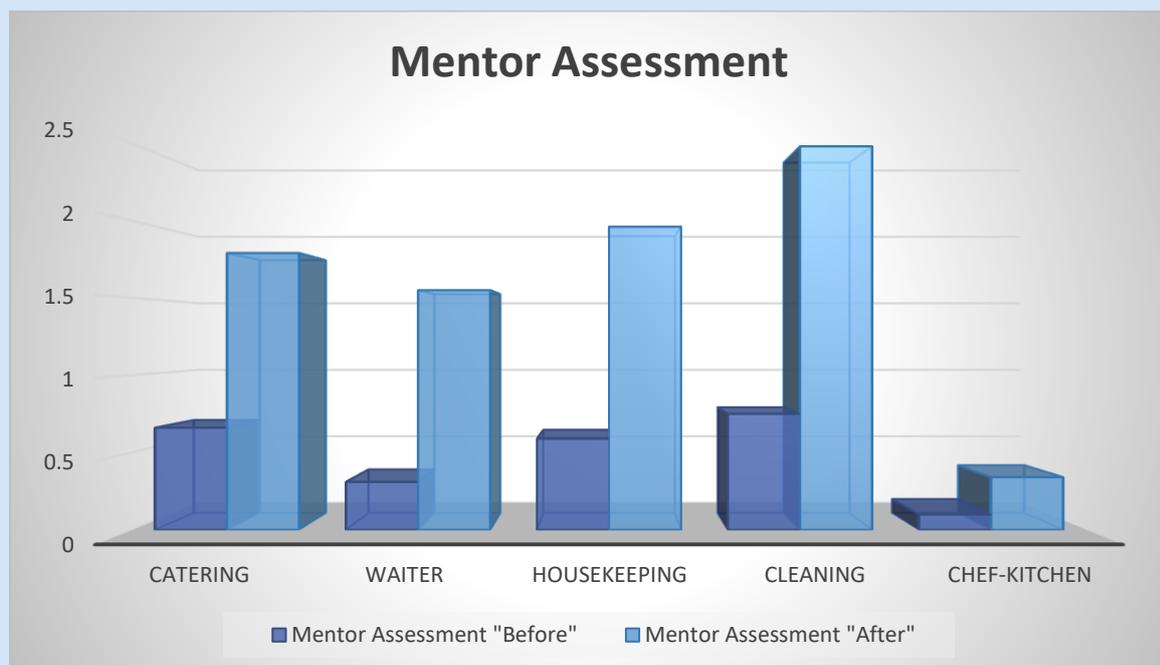


Figure 18 shows the assessment of mentors with regards to the improvement in participants **Housekeeping Skills**. There was a statistically significant increase in skills as reported by the mentors in catering ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), waitering ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), housekeeping ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), cleaning ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), and chef-cooking ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$). In this regard, Figure 18 shows that catering, waitering, housekeeping, cleaning and chef skills improved considerably during the program.

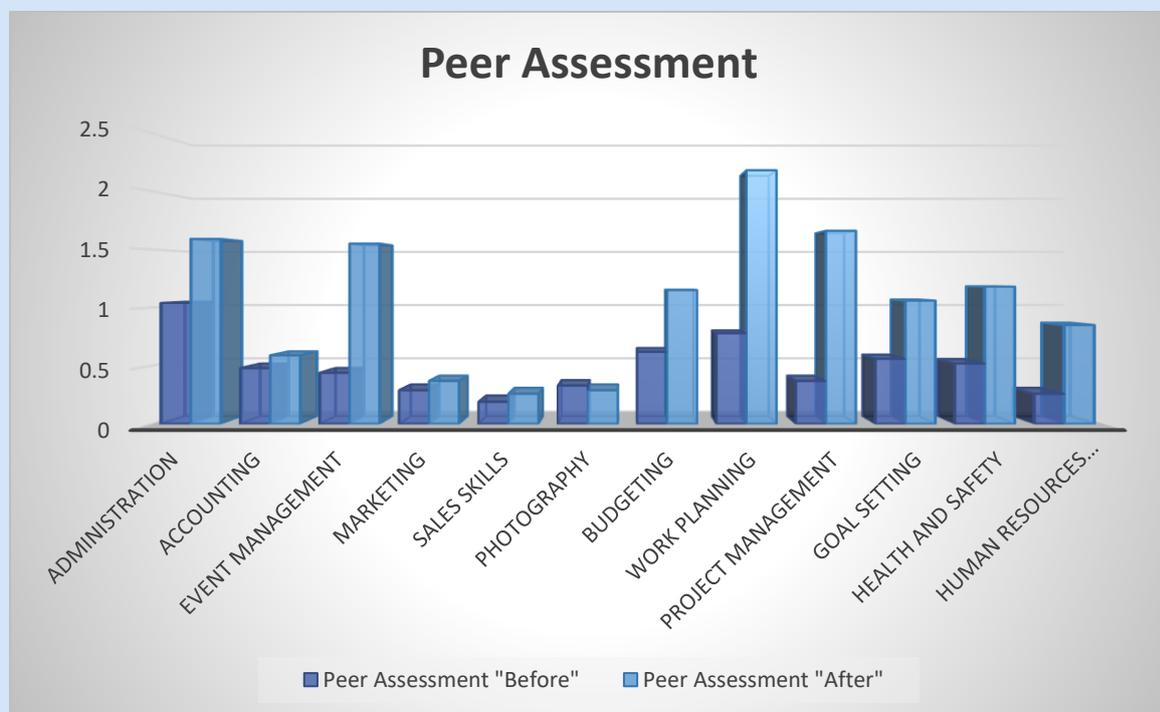
Figure 18: Mentor Assessment of Housekeeping Skills



4.3 PEER ASSESSMENT

There was a statistical significant increase in **General Office Skills** as reported by peers in administration ($p=0.023$; $p<0.05$), event management ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), marketing ($p=0.003$; $p<0.05$), sales skills ($p=0.003$; $p<0.05$), photography ($p=0.003$; $p<0.05$), budgeting ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), work planning ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), project management ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), goal setting ($p=0.002$; $p <0.05$), health and safety ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$) and human resources ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$). There was no statistically significant improvement in accounting skills ($p=0.355$; $p<0.05$). The peer assessment of general office skills is shown in Figure 19 below.

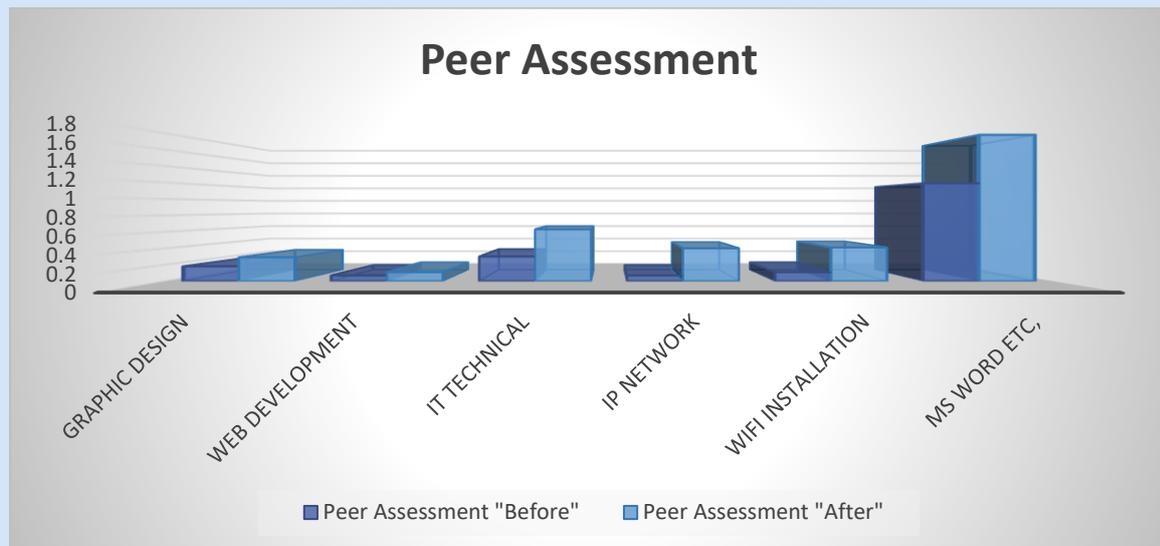
Figure 19: Peer Assessment of General Office Skills “Before” and “After” the Christian Youth Development Program



From an analysis perspective regarding **Information Technology Skills** there were no statistically significant improvements in the skills of graphic design ($p=0.083$; $p>0.05$), web design ($p=0.074$; $p>0.05$), IT technical ($p=0.130$; $p>0.05$), WIFI installation ($p=0.125$; $p>0.05$). There was a statistically significant improvement in MS Word skills ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$).

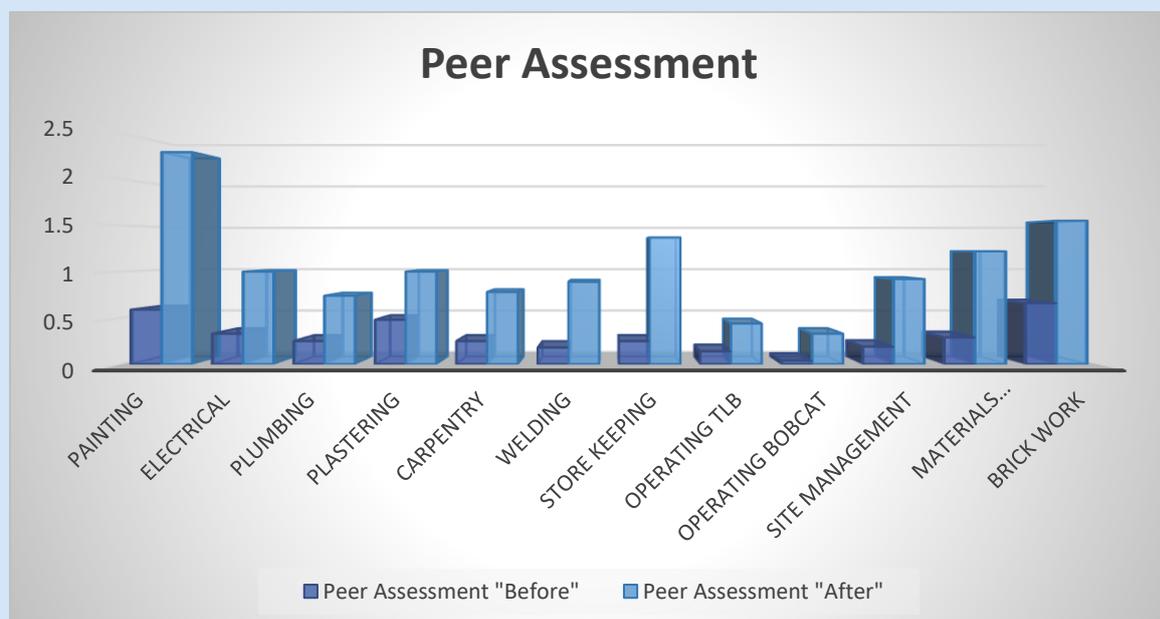
The peer assessment of information technology skills is shown in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Peer Assessment of Information Technology Skills



There was a statistical significant increase in **Construction Skills** as reported by the peers in painting ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), electrical work ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), plumbing ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), plastering ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), carpentry ($p=0.001$; $p <0.05$), welding ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), store keeping ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), materials management ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$) and brick work ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$). There was no statistically significant increase in the skills as reported by peers in operating a TLB and Bobcat ($p=0.133$; $p<0.05$; $p=0.128$; $p<0.05$). Figure 21 shows the peer assessment of construction skills.

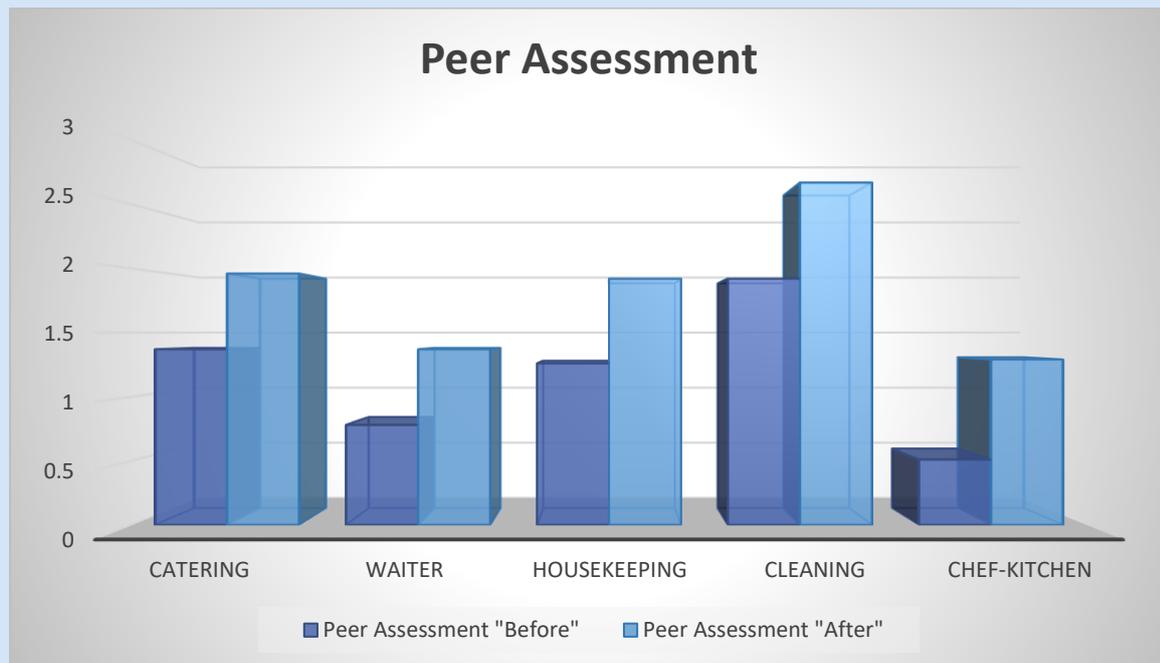
Figure 21: Peer Assessment of Construction Skills



There was a statistically significant increase in **Housekeeping Skills** as reported by peers in catering ($p=0.043$; $p<0.05$), waitering ($p=0.015$; $p<0.05$), housekeeping ($p=0.007$; $p<0.05$), cleaning ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), and chef-cooking ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$).

Figure 22 below shows the peer assessment of housekeeping skills.

Figure 22: Peer Assessment of Housekeeping Skills



5. EVALUATION OF SOFT SKILLS BEFORE AND AFTER THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CYDP)

To determine the impact of the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) on participants, all 68 participants in the 2018 program completed a questionnaire with the help of a trained fieldworker who could have explain the questions in the language of the respondents. Similarly, Mentors responded on 29 participants in a questionnaire and 27 Peer participants responded on fellow participants. In this questionnaire, several Soft Skills were presented in a list to respondents where they were asked to comment on a scale from 0 to 5 in the following way:

- 0 - No skills acquired in this area
- 1 - I have acquired a few very basic skills in the area
- 2 - Basic skills acquired and knowledge of how this area links to other areas

- 3 - Average skills and knowledge obtained in this area. Able to perform this function on my own
- 4 - Above average skills in the area. Able to lead others
- 5 - Excellent skills obtained in this area. Able to train others

In this context, respondents were asked to rate themselves “Before” they started with the program and “After” they completed the program.

In the next section, the self-evaluation of respondents will be discussed.

5.1 SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SOFT SKILLS

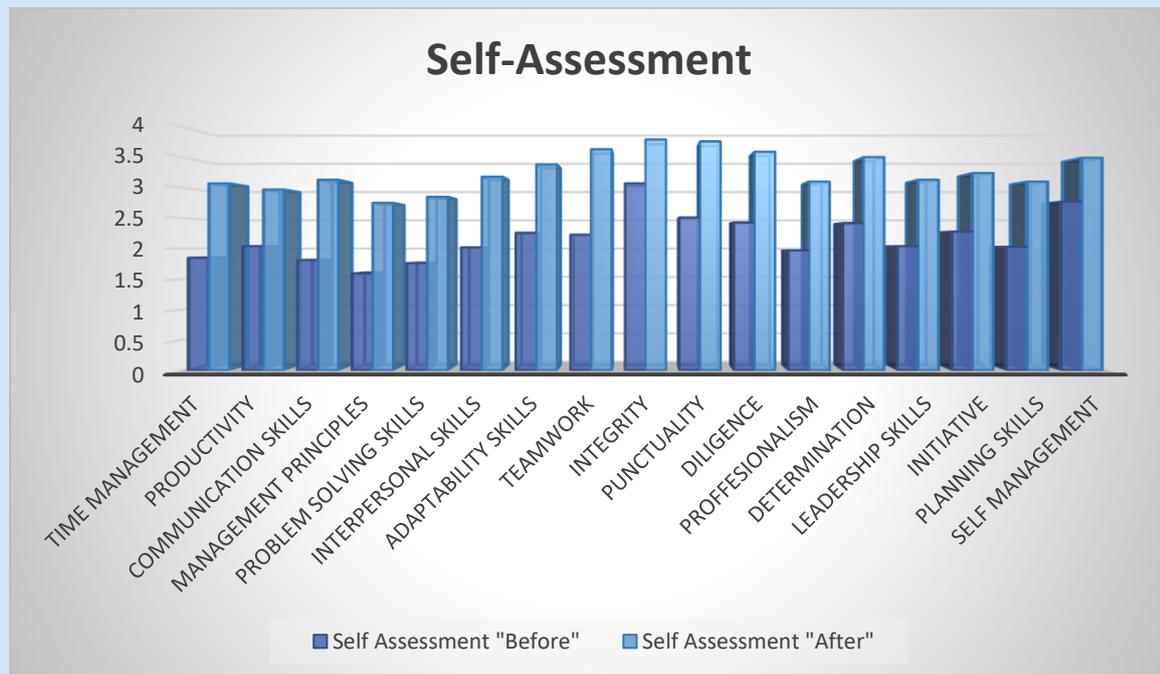
When the self-assessment of participants is considered, it shows that respondents feel that they improved in all the Soft Skills listed. Photo 6 below shows the 2018 CYDP group just after group activities to enhance soft skills etc.



Photo 6: CYDP participants in 2018 after a group soft skills activity, South Africa

In Figure 23 it shows an improvement in all Soft Skills listed in the questionnaire.

Figure 23: Self-Assessment of Soft Skills “Before” and “After” the CYDP



There was a statistical significant improvement in time management ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), productivity ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), communication skills ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), leadership ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), problem solving skills ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), interpersonal skills, adaptability ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), teamwork ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), integrity ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), punctuality ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), diligence ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), professionalism ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), determination ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), leadership skills ($p=0.002$; $p<0.05$), initiative ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$), planning skills ($p=0.001$; $p<0.05$) and self-management ($p=0.003$; $p<0.05$).

In the next section, the evaluation/assessment of mentors is discussed.

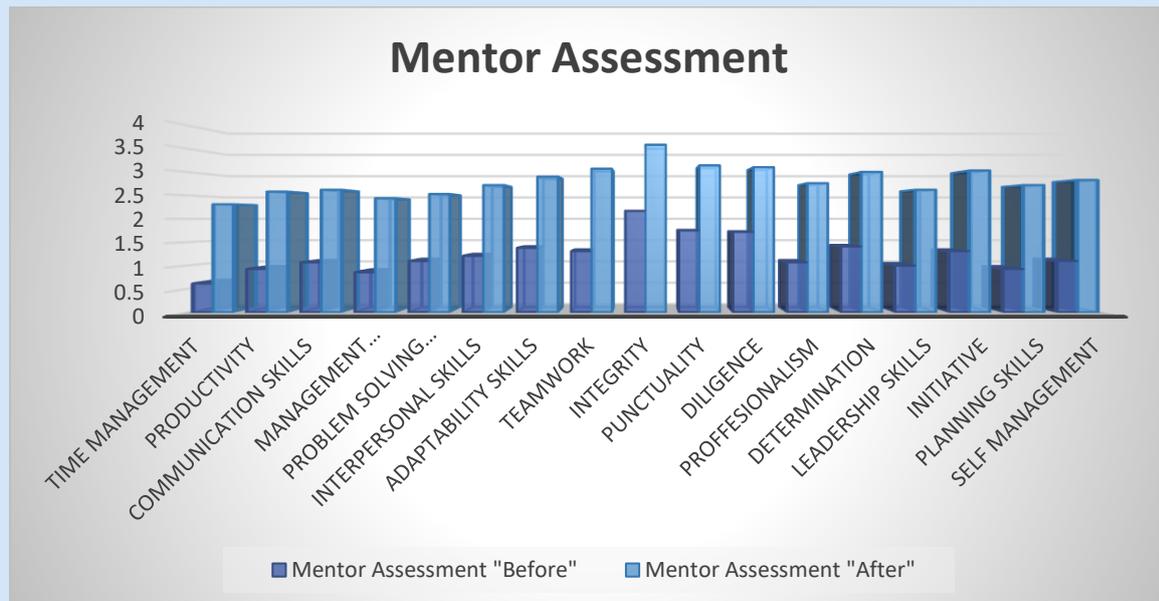
5.2 MENTOR ASSESSMENT OF SOFT SKILLS

It is evident from this that mentors agree with participants but consider productivity as the most important improvement and feel that participants indeed improved more than how they assessed themselves. Participants in this regard scored themselves considerably lower than how mentors scored them. Furthermore, mentors scored participants the highest on integrity followed by punctuality and diligence.

There was a statistical significant improvement in time management ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), productivity ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), communication skills ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), leadership ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), problem solving skills ($p=0.000$; $p<0.05$), interpersonal skills, adaptability ($p=0.000$;

$p < 0.05$), teamwork ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), integrity ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), punctuality ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), diligence ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), professionalism ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), determination ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), leadership skills ($p = 0.001$; $p < 0.05$), initiative ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), planning skills ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$) and self-management ($p = 0.001$; $p < 0.05$). In Figure 24 it shows that mentors feel that participants improved with regards to all Soft Skills.

Figure 24: Mentor Assessment of Soft Skills “Before” and “After” the CYDP

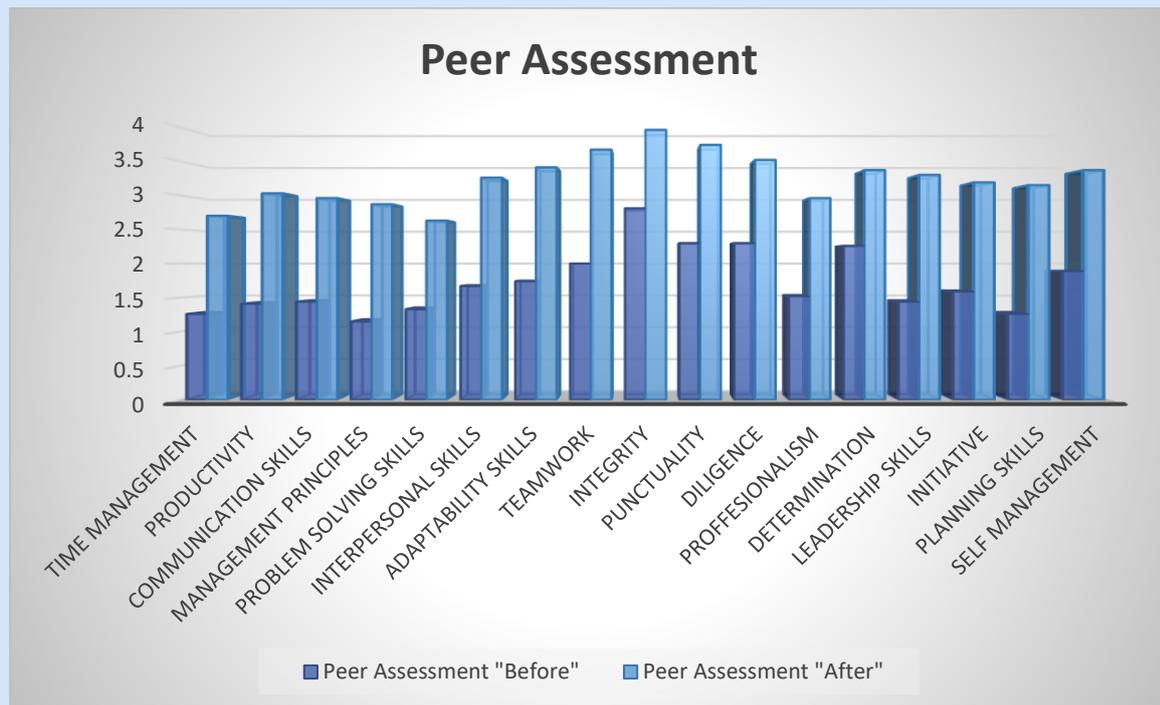


5.3 PEER ASSESSMENT OF SOFT SKILLS

As part of the assessment, co-participants were also asked to comment on fellow participants and how they feel they improved with regards to Soft Skills after completing the CYDP. In Figure 25 it is evident that peers feel that the participants improved with regards to all Soft Skills listed.

There was a statistical significant improvement in time management ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), productivity ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), communication skills ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), leadership ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), problem solving skills ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), interpersonal skills, adaptability ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), teamwork ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), integrity ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), punctuality ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), diligence ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), professionalism ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), determination ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), leadership skills ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), initiative ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), planning skills ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$) and self-management ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$).

Figure 25: Peer Assessment of Soft Skills “Before” and “After” the CYDP



5.4 CONTRIBUTION OF SOFT SKILLS

To determine the impact of the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) on participants in the program, participants were interviewed and asked to elaborate on the most important contributions of the program to their own personal development. For the purpose of this, ten (10) participants were randomly selected to be interviewed. In the section below the answers to this question by the participants are outlined and summarized.

5.4.1 RESPONDENT A

When Respondent A was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- “My interpersonal skills improved during the program”
- “My time management skills improved”
- “My integrity changed positive”
- “I feel more part of a team”
- “Teamwork is very important to me now”
- “My leadership ability changed considerably”

- “I know now that it is important to take responsibility for my own actions”
- “I can manage my time better”

5.4.2 RESPONDENT B

When Respondent B was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- “I feel I should work more on my interpersonal skills”
- “It is very important to work and interact together”
- “Integrity is probably the foundation of anything I do”
- “Integrity leads to trust”
- “Very important to be part of a team”
- “I must be able to uplift other people”
- “Very important to be self-motivated”
- “I am much more motivated, and I think I can motivate other people”

5.4.3 RESPONDENT C

When Respondent C was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- “My problem-solving skills improved”
- “I have learned to solve problems in a group”
- “My mind is more open”
- “My ability to work with other people improved”
- “The skills I obtained will change my life”
- “The program changed me to be a more honest person”
- “I am more myself”
- “It taught me that my conscience is important”

5.4.4 RESPONDENT D

When Respondent D was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- “The skills I gained will help me to get a job”
- “I feel better about myself”
- “I value integrity more”
- “Integrity is the most important in anything you do”
- “Important to be part of a team”
- “I need to take responsibility for my own actions”
- “My problem-solving skills improved”
- “This is a very helpful program”
- “This was the biggest opportunity of my life”

5.4.5 RESPONDENT E

When Respondent E was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- “Integrity and honesty are very important”
- “It taught me flexibility skills”
- “Interpersonal skills are very important in today’s world”
- “My teamwork skills improved a lot”
- “Teamwork skills help you to improve your communication skills”
- “My self-management skills improved”
- “Communication is very important”
- “Very important to take responsibility for your own actions”

5.4.6 RESPONDENT F

When Respondent F was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- “I feel more active as a human being”
- “I know I must create my own destination”
- “My interpersonal skills improved”
- “I think integrity is really important”
- “My communication skills improved a lot”
- “I need to show an example in my way of life to others”

5.4.7 RESPONDENT G

When Respondent G was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- “My communication skills improved”
- “Teamwork is very important in any business”
- “Must be able to work in a team”
- “My attitude changed positive”
- “I am more adaptable”
- “I take responsibility for my actions”
- “I am more motivated in life”

5.4.8 RESPONDENT H

When Respondent H was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- “I learned to be on time”
- “I can now interact in a team”
- “I learned a lot about integrity”
- “It is important to take responsibility for actions”
- “Very important how you talk to other people”

- " You need to listen to people when they talk to you"
- "I can manage projects now"
- "I think I can open my own business now"

5.4.9 RESPONDENT I

When Respondent I was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- "The way how I look at integrity changed"
- "I can better interact with other people now"
- "I take more responsibility for my own actions now"
- "My problem-solving skills improved"
- "I think this will help me to get a job"
- "When I came here I knew nothing and now I know more"

5.4.10 RESPONDENT J

When Respondent J was asked what specific value he/she got out of the CYDP he/she answered as follows:

I think the Christian Youth Development Program benefited me in the following ways:

- "I am a graduate but could not find a job" - "I think now I will get a job with more practical experience"
- "The program improved my chances to get a job"
- "The program taught me to be punctual"
- "Communication skills are very important"
- "Very important to manage your time"
- "Take responsibility for your actions"

When the ten (10) respondents' views are summarized, it shows that the program impacted mostly on Soft Skills (Human Development). In this regard the following words stand out:

- Interpersonal skills
- Time Management skills

- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Leadership ability
- Responsibility for own actions
- Trust
- To uplift others
- Self-motivation
- Problem-solving skills
- Ability to work with others
- Honesty
- Conscience
- Self- Image
- Flexibility
- Communication Skills
- To set a good example
- Positive attitude

This can be summarized in a word cloud as shown in Figure 26.

Figure 26: Word Cloud of Soft Skills



6. TESTIMONIALS ON THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

After the analyses of Hard Skills and Soft Skills by participants, Mentors and co participants it is important to look at the viewpoints of Community Leaders in the Cameroon and Congo. This is important to get an understanding of the impact of the program in Communities. In

this regard the viewpoints of two community leaders in the Congo and Cameroon will be looked at. It is evident from the testimonial of Claude Cue Kamdem, community leader from the Cameroon and Director of the Action Development Cameroon (ADCAM) that the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) contributed significantly in the Cameroon Communities. In his words **“The Youth Development Program initiated by BCC South Africa and Upriver Group of Companies in SA has been a very good initiative for us here in Cameroon. In our country there is a lot of unemployment, especially among the youth and most of them don't have any hope for a future. Bit by bit it became evident that our youth learned to take responsibility both in the work place and in their own lives. After the construction project most of them started their own companies based on the skills they have acquired. They became self-sustainable and got married over time, and started their own families etc. They also took responsibility for many activities in our church and in our community. This Youth Development Program has opened a huge opportunity for our youth. Each time a group goes to South Africa for the program they come back completely changed and very positive about life. My personal testimony is that this program should continue and even be more reinforced to give a better future for our youth. I'm so thankful for this Youth Development Program”**. The testimonial of Claude Hue Kamdem can be seen in Annexure A.

It is also evident from a community leader in the Congo that the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) contributed significantly to community development in the Congo. In this regard Big Bope, community leader in Lubumbashi, Congo DRC indicated that **“The Youth Development Program serves a huge purpose in our assembly. The program enables young people from different countries, communities, places and cultures to work and stay together. In this way the Youth Development Program offers an incredible personal experience to young people in Africa. From a spiritual point of view: Before joining the Youth Development Program, we had a very inactive youth. They were always a bit separate from assembly's activities and they believed that the church was just something for parents and adults. The young people were not so much interested to hear about God's Word. When coming back from the Youth Development Program, our youth took responsibility for many activities in the church, for example: activity clubs for small children, Sunday school classes, youth activities etc. They started living with high moral standards and became active in taking responsibility in the church gatherings. Those who did not have work simply**

stayed idle at home. Now everyone who has been on the program is active in putting up small businesses, making use of the skills they have acquired. I can say that we experience a revival among the young people” The testimonial of Big Bope can be seen in Annexure B.

When the testimonial of Jacques Mbous, Councilor for Trade and Investment, Cameroon High Commissioner is considered it is evident that the CYDP is a well-managed, successful program. In this regard the Councilor Mbous testify as follows **“In my opinion this is one of the best programs involving collaboration between South Africa and Cameroon which is successful in helping young people to help themselves, by becoming economically and social self-sufficient”**. The Testimonial from the Counsellor for Trade and Investment, Cameroon High Commission can be seen in Annexure C.

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA) with several missionary outreach initiatives in South Africa, Cameroon, Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia in 2012 identified the negative impact of unemployment and negative economic circumstances on the Youth in these counties. In this period, BCC SA realised that these communities should be developed in a unique way. They realised that it was not only the lack of Hard Skills that discourages individuals, but that a lack of Soft Skills leads to the individuals’ discouragement. In 2012, BCC SA started a pilot project, namely the construction project in Yaoundé, Cameroon. In this project, Cameroonian youth gained skills and experience in planning, design, managerial work, administration, accounting, procurement, stock control, health and safety, construction, plastering, painting, tiling, carpentry, plumbing, roofing, electrical work and landscaping. However, during this project BCC SA realised that in addition to this program, the focus should also be on the **Human Development aspects** such as **providing Soft Skills** including time management, productivity, communication skills, leadership skills, adaptability, integrity, punctuality, diligence, determination, and taking responsibility for their own lives. With this addition of Soft Skills, the project turned out to be a success, resulting in almost all of these young people being employed today. Some started their own businesses and employed several others. They have become mature and active members in the church, taking responsibility for other youth and children.

Based on the experience of previous programs in Christian Youth Development by BCC SA, the aim of the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) shifted towards a more focused approach of human development. The aim therefore shifted to **provide them with Hard (Practical) Skills as well as Soft Skills** in a holistic way to develop the individual.

In this context, the Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA) believes that by developing the individual in a holistic way, it may contribute to community development. In this regard they agree with views of the UNDP in that the Christian Youth Development Program intends to create opportunities for individuals to develop their lives in such a way that they can contribute meaningfully to community development when they return home.

For the Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA) the development of communities is of essence. With the high unemployment and poverty in many of these countries and a large number of people living below the poverty line, it is the dream that this program may help communities to develop. In this regard the BCC SA believes in an **Individual-Group-Community Development Model**, where the idea is to develop the individual with Hard Skills as well as with Soft Skills to create **“awareness of the self”** and lays the leadership foundation based on **faith, values and ethics**. Based on this, the individual may participate in a group as a team member ready to communicate and to solve problems based on values. Equipped with this, individuals back in their communities will engage and develop communities.

With many of these countries, like Cameroon and Congo, with a high percentage of communities and community members living below the poverty line, with limited opportunities to get out of the trap of poverty and discouragement, this program can be considered as a program that creates opportunities. Participants indicated in this regard, **“This was the opportunity of my life”**. In this regard the Christian Youth Development Program indeed provides an opportunity to young people to be part of training where they can gain Hard Skills, while they are part of groups where they can obtain the necessary Soft Skills also.

When the evaluation of Hard Skills is considered, it can be concluded that all participants showed a statistically significant improvement. With these skills it can be assumed that they will be equipped to return home and contribute meaningful in their communities. These Hard Skills combined with Soft Skills gained will most probably be the difference between success and failure for these young people. In relation to giving young people a valuable combination

of both Soft Skills and Hard Skills, this program can be considered as a success. The program could also improve the Soft Skills statistically significantly.

This program where the Church and the Private sectors take hands can be considered as a unique intervention. In the words of Oxford University Economics Professor Paul Collier, “Church organizations have time and again proven that they are effective at delivering basic social services like education. **Religious organisations have the ability to both “reach down” and “reach up” by providing essential services on a hyper-local level but also appealing to people on a national level in a way that governments in developing countries typically cannot**”. In this context the CYDP will contribute meaningfully in communities. In this regard the testimonial from the Counsellor for Trade and Investment, Cameroon High Commission, and Community Leaders from Cameroon and Congo shows that this CYDP program can be considered as unique and very successful, contributing significantly towards community development.

8. REFERENCES

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9. ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Testimonial from Community Leader in Cameroon

From **Claude Kue Kamdem**, Church / Community Leader in Cameroon; director of ADCAM (Action Development Cameroon):

“The Youth Development Program initiated by BCC South Africa and Upriver Group of Companies in SA has been a very good initiative for us here in Cameroon. In our country there is a lot of unemployment, especially among the youth and most of them don't have any hope for a future.

We started by sending seven youths to South Africa for a period of six months in 2012, to be involved in a training program, mainly in construction and the management of projects. After they came back to Cameroon, we saw a very clear and distinctive change in them. Together with two mentors from South Africa, they then started with the construction of our conference centre *Vallée Verte* in Yaoundé over a period of eighteen months. Members of BCC South Africa and staff of the Upriver Group of Companies in SA were the driving force in this project, and contributed substantially to train the youths of Cameroon to be competent in many areas of construction, such as electrical work, plumbing, painting, carpentry, administration, management, marketing, catering, etc.

Bit by bit it became evident that our youth learned to take responsibility both in the work place and in their own lives. After the construction project most of them started their own companies based on the skills they have acquired. They became self-sustainable and got married over time, and started their own families etc. They also took responsibility for many activities in our church and in our community. Others that were involved in the project remained in the company and were employed as staff to bear the responsibility for the running and management of the newly built centre. Up to date BCC South Africa and Upriver Group of Companies remain involved as mentors to train staff in business management, marketing, financial management, business operations and the field of hospitality related to running of a conference venue.

This Youth Development Program has opened a huge opportunity for our youth. Each time a group goes to South Africa for the program they come back completely changed and very positive about life.

My personal testimony is that this program should continue and even be more reinforced to give a better future for our youth.

I'm so thankful for this Youth Development Program.

Claude Kue Kamdem, Cameroon. +237 6999 08144 claudekkamdem@yahoo.fr



Annexure B: Testimonial from Community Leader in Congo

*From **Mayi Munene Mikobi Bope**, Church / community leader in Lubumbashi, Congo DRC:*

The Youth Development Program serves a huge purpose in our assembly. The program enables young people from different countries, communities, places and cultures to work and stay together. In this way the Youth Development Program offers an incredible personal experience to young people in Africa.

From a spiritual point of view: Before joining the Youth Development Program, we had a very inactive youth. They were always a bit separate from assembly's activities and they believed that the church was just something for parents and adults. The young people were not so much interested to hear about God's Word. When coming back from the Youth Development Program, our youth took responsibility for many activities in the church, for example: activity clubs for small children, Sunday school classes, youth activities etc. They started living with high moral standards and became active in taking responsibility in the church gatherings.

From a material point of view: Before joining the Youth Development Program, our young people were not able to initiate or undertake any activities. Those who did not have work simply stayed idle at home. Now everyone who has been on the program is active in putting up small businesses, making use of the skills they have acquired. I can say that we experience a revival among the young people. When my daughters came back from the Youth Development Program in South Africa, out of their own initiative they repainted my whole house! Something like this they could never do before! Before the Youth Development Program, we could never imagine that our young people will be able to build a house. Today we experience and have seen with our own eyes that they can build a house, do the tiling, the electrical work, the plumbing, do the procurement, do the entire book keeping and manage the whole project. In addition, they can organize events. All of this equipped our young people and made them ready and "mature" to start their own businesses. This "revival" had a very positive impact on the older members of our church and the community too. Today they are involved in voluntary work at our church and in the community. This voluntary work is organized and driven by youths who have been on the Youth Development Program.

Best regards.

Big Bope

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Annexure C: Letter from the Counsellor for Trade and Investment, Cameroon High Commission in South Africa

High Commission for the
Republic of Cameroon
in South Africa



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Dear Sir/Madam

I understand that you are considering supporting the Christian Youth Development Program (CYDP) being run in collaboration between various organisations including Brunstad Christian Church South Africa (BCC SA), BCC Cameroon and local businesses including the Upriver Group companies.

As the Counsellor for Trade and Investment on behalf of the Cameroon High Commission in South Africa I had the great pleasure of visiting Stephanopark Conference Centre and Cote De Val estate on 26 April 2018 to learn more about this program.

This program involves:

- Identifying young people from sub-Saharan Africa, currently predominantly from Cameroon who have a limited economic outlook without intervention – but a positive attitude and a willingness to learn.
- Allowing them to become participants in the CYDP program
- Giving participants the opportunity to gain training, skills and real work experience through a combination of work place internships both in their own country and in South Africa.
- Supporting participants in finding meaningful employment on their return to their home country – typically through property development projects in that country.

In my opinion this is one of the best programs involving collaboration between South Africa and Cameroon which is successful in helping Cameroonian young people to help themselves, by becoming economically and socially self-sufficient.

I and my fellow Cameroonian country men who I represent, would be extremely grateful if you would consider supporting this program as and where you have the opportunity.

Yours faithfully

Jacques Mbous
Counsellor for Trade and Investment
Cameroon High Commission
Pretoria



2018-05-07

Annexure D: CV of Prof Wynand CJ Grobler

Professor Wynand CJ Grobler holds the position of Executive Director at the School of Economic Sciences at North West University, Vaal Campus. He is a Full Professor in Economics with 30 years' experience in Higher Education and more than 20 years' experience in research. He has done research and written 48 research reports on monetary policy, poverty alleviation, economic development and economic impact assessment and delivered papers at more than 30 International Conferences. He holds a Diploma in Economic Impact Assessment and a PhD in Economics. He has supervised 29 post graduate (Masters and Doctorate) students.



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