



Activity Spotlight and Lessons Learned

Alliance Partner: The African Talent Company (TATC) and BrighterMonday Kenya **Dates: April 2023 - July 2024**

Program: e-Biz Kwa Vijana

Alliance Series: MSME capacity-building, Inclusive trade

What was done?

- In partnership with The African Talent Company (formerly ROAM), BrighterMonday Kenya successfully trained 1,006 entrepreneurs and onboarded 666 of them onto ecommerce platforms
- Participants reported significant improvements in digital engagement and business operations

How was the program designed?

- **Conducted** comprehensive research on Kenya's ecommerce landscape to identify skills and knowledge gaps among entrepreneurs
- **Developed** a tailored training curriculum on ecommerce, digital marketing, and business strategies
- **Launched** a comprehensive digital campaign across social media platforms, leveraging field mobilizers and networks through partners
- **Screened** applicants based on availability and level of engagement in business activities, shortlisting youth (35 years or younger)
- **Delivered** a 6-week training program through a hybrid approach which combined self-paced learning, virtual webinars, and physical masterclasses
- **Onboarded** entrepreneurs onto various ecommerce platforms
- **Engaged** with stakeholders to foster supportive and collaborative ecosystem for young entrepreneurs

Project: Empowering youth entrepreneurs through skills development in digital trade and ecommerce platforms

Country: Kenya

Target segments: Young entrepreneurs, MSMEs

Outcomes:

- 1,006 entrepreneurs trained
- 666 entrepreneurs onboarded onto ecommerce platforms

Impacts: Uptake in digital platform adoption and improvements in key performance indicators

Top Lesson: Ensure continuous participant engagement and support during and after the training through constant interactions, flexible training schedules, and mentorship.

Keys for impact:

- Tailor curriculum to specific needs of the target beneficiaries
- Provide flexible delivery methods



I. Participants

- The majority of participants in the eBiz Kwa Vijana program were young entrepreneurs. Specifically, 53% of the participants were women, and 85% of the firms were microenterprises, highlighting the project's focus on small and micro businesses led by young people (Figure 1).
- The age distribution (Figure 2) shows that most women (70%) and most men (79%) were between 25-35 years old. A smaller percentage of participants were either younger (18-24 years) or older (over 35 years).
- Women and men showed similar educational distributions, predominantly holding undergraduate degrees: 49% of men and 43% of women (Figure 3).

Figure 1 – Participant profile

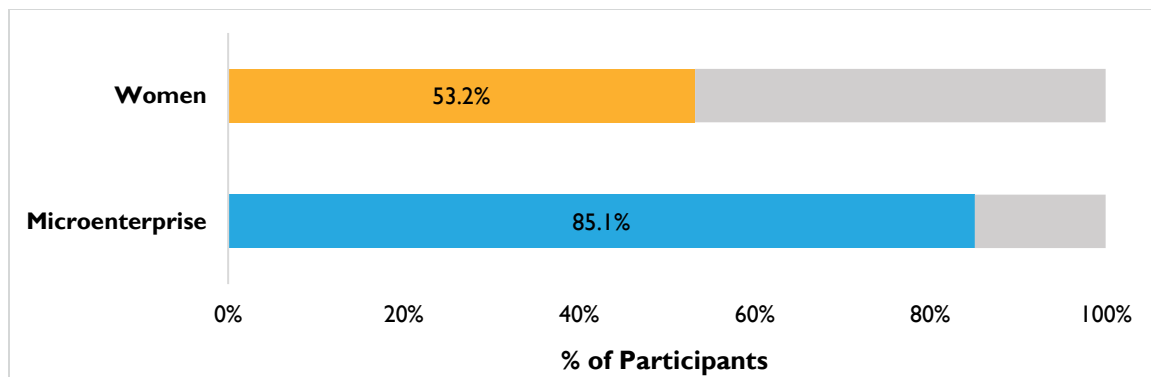


Figure 2 – Participants by gender and age

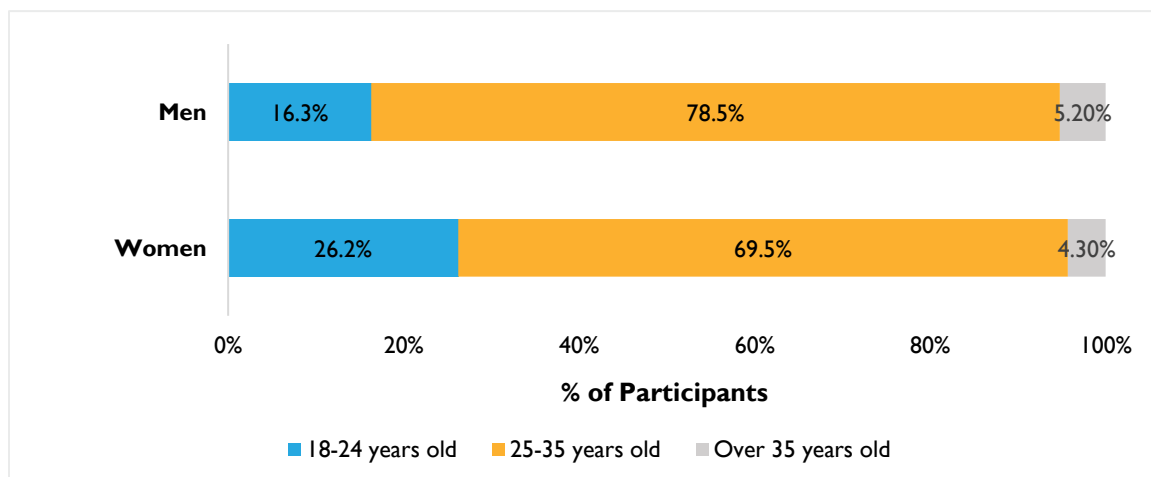
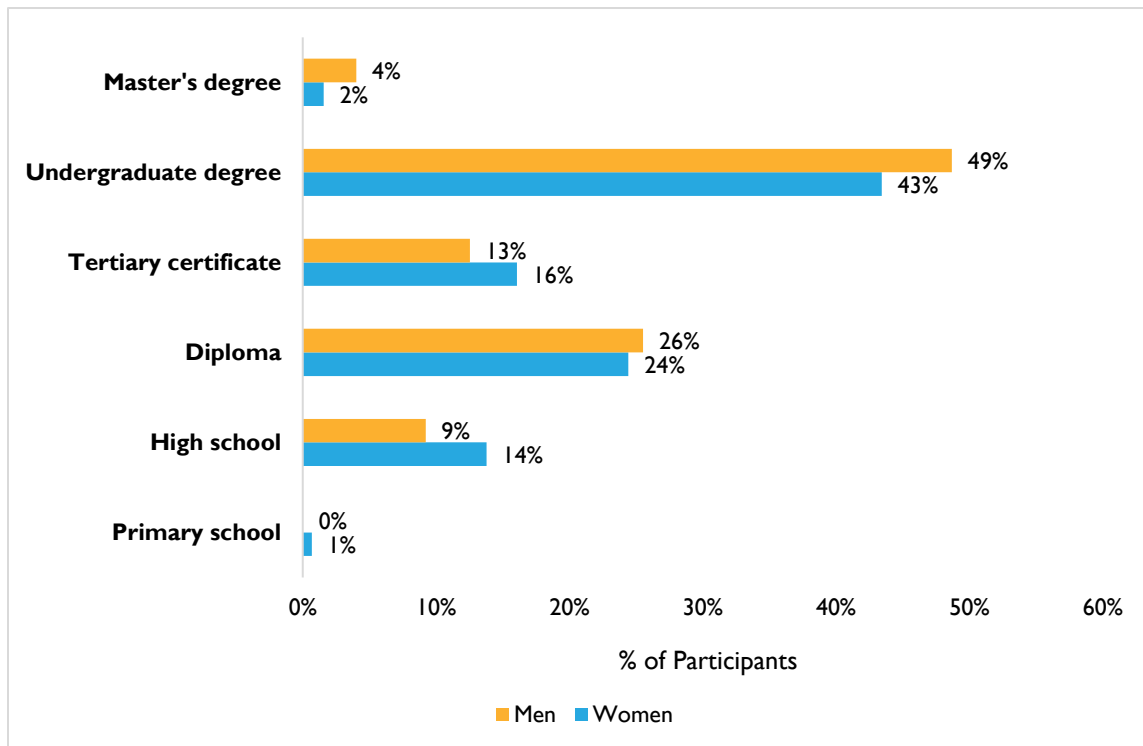


Figure 3 – Participants by gender and highest level of education



II. Reported Outcomes

A subset of participants (n=524) completed an exit survey at the end of the program, reporting on their outcomes:

- Adoption of digital technology post-training shows notable gains (Figure 4):
 - 42% started using Google Business or other customer engagement tools.
 - 40% of participants onboarded local online platforms like Jumia, Pigiame, Jiji, and Kilimall.
- Participants reported several business improvements due to the training (Figure 5):
 - 48% felt better positioned to overcome the impact of COVID-19.
 - 45% saw increased ecommerce sales to existing customers.
 - 40% made their first online sale and improved their ecommerce sales in the domestic market.
 - 36% gained new domestic ecommerce customers and reduced logistics costs.
- Participants' willingness to pay for similar training in the future was varied, a considerable portion indicated a preference for lower costs (Figure 6):
 - 23% were willing to pay Kes 2,001 - 5,000.
 - 18% were willing to pay Kes 5,001 - 10,000.
- When it comes to paying for ecommerce platforms monthly, participants showed a range of willingness to invest (Figure 7):
 - 36% were willing to pay Kes 2,001 - 5,000.
 - 30% were willing to pay Kes 1 - 2,000.
 - 19% were willing to pay Kes 5,001 - 10,000.



Figure 4 – Digital technology adoption

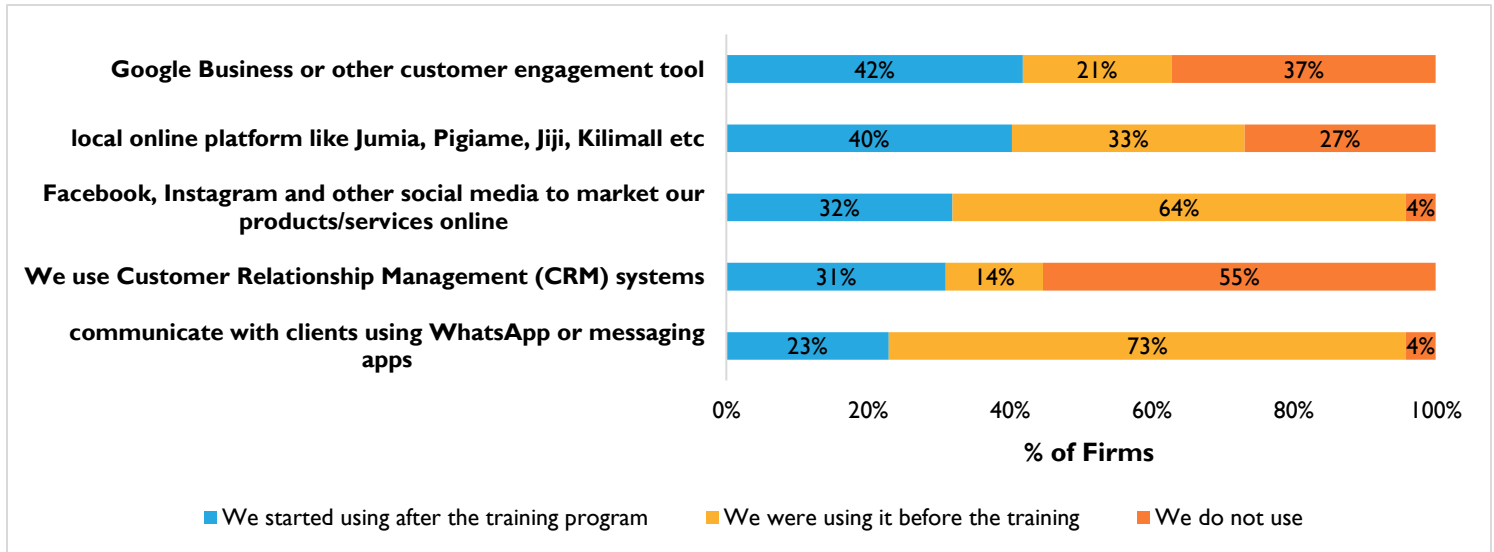


Figure 5 – Business outcomes

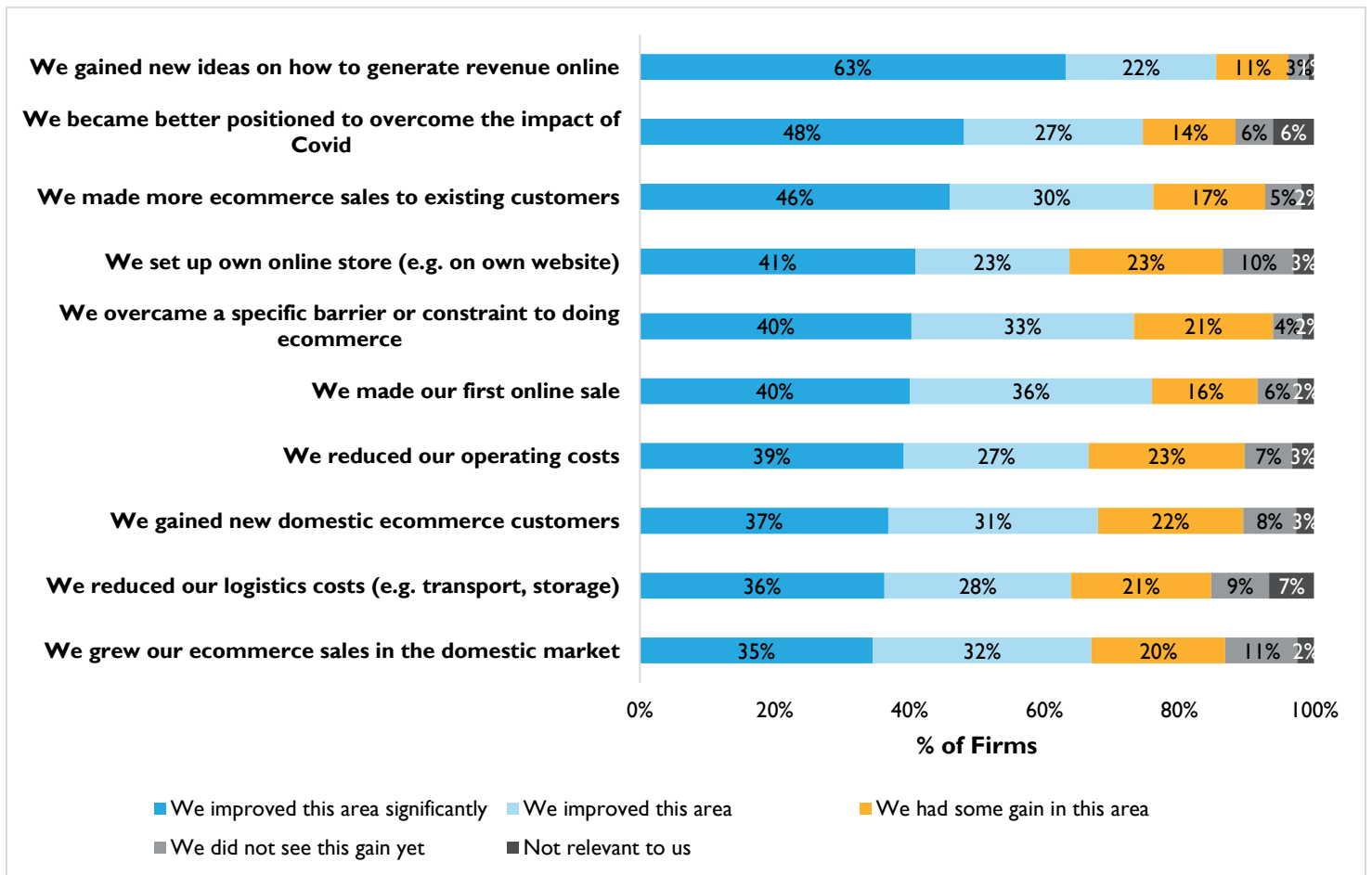




Figure 6 – Price that firms are willing to pay for similar training

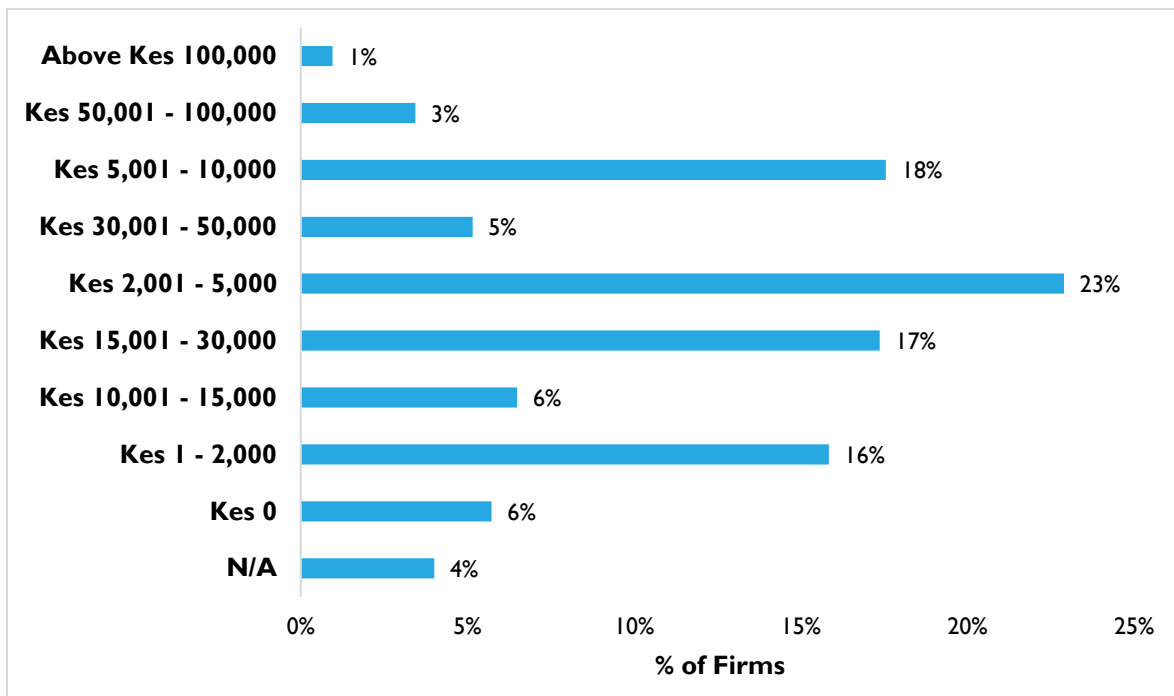
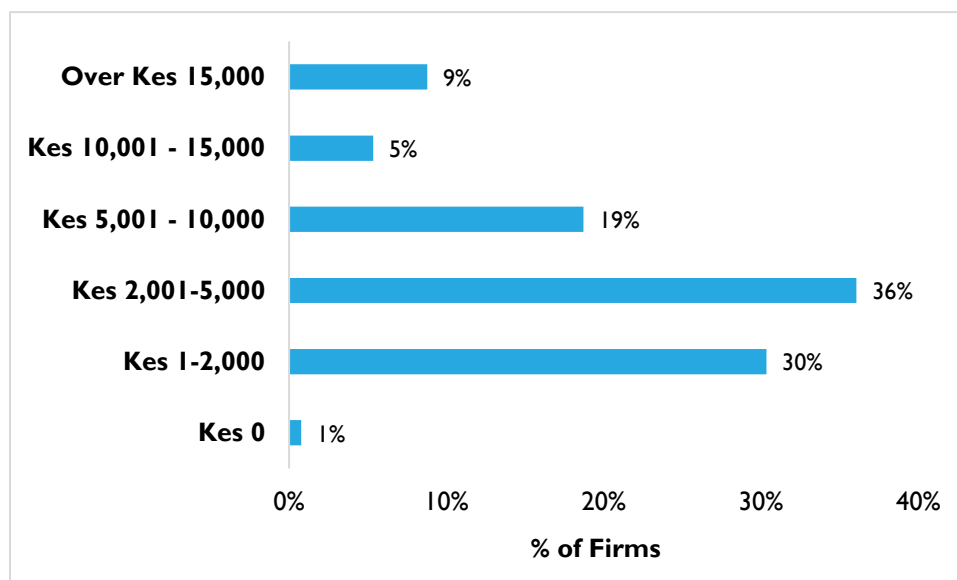


Figure 7 – Monthly price that firms are willing to pay for ecommerce platform





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III. Lessons Learned

What worked well in implementation:

- **Rigorous curriculum development** – the training modules were comprehensive and tailored to the specific needs of the participants. The focus on practical applications of ecommerce, digital marketing, and business strategies was particularly effective.
- **Hybrid delivery methods** – the combination of self-paced learning, virtual webinars, and physical masterclasses allowed for flexibility and accommodated various learning preferences and schedules
- **High engagement and participation** – regular engagement through multiple channels (WhatsApp, phone calls, SMS) kept participants motivated and increased participation rates. Flexibility in training schedules also contributed to higher participation rates.
- **Stakeholder collaboration** – engaging a diverse range of stakeholders fostered a supportive ecosystem for young entrepreneurs. Collaborations with ecommerce platforms, academic institutions and business associations enhanced the program's impact.

Challenges in implementation:

- **Participant motivation and engagement** – diverse motivation among participants led to varying levels of engagement. Some participants found it challenging to prioritize training amidst their busy schedules, resulting in high attrition rates.
- **Time constraints** – entrepreneurs often struggled to find time for training sessions due to their business commitments, this was more prevalent among participants running multiple businesses or having significant operational responsibilities.
- **Post-training support** – participants required ongoing support and mentoring after the training ended, which was crucial for sustaining the training's impact.
- **Limited international trade focus** – There was a need for more in-depth training on international digital trade, including managing international payments, understanding international markets, and optimizing logistics for cross-border trade.

Recommendations and activities to overcome challenges:

- **Clear communication and comprehensive screening** – improve initial screening processes to ensure participants understand the time commitment and program expectations which can manage participant expectations and reduce attrition
- **Flexible training options** – offer more flexible training schedules, including after-hours and weekend classes. Provide webinar recordings and additional self-paced learning options to help participants access more learning materials.
- **Enhance post-training support** – provide ongoing mentorship and support programs to help participants apply their new skills in real-world scenarios. Regular follow-ups, coaching sessions, and peer networking opportunities can sustain the training's impact.
- **Expand training content** – include more advanced modules on international digital trade including international payments, export/import regulations, and cross-border logistics.



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This summary was prepared by Jem Marasigan, Nextrade Group.

About Alliance partners, The African Talent Company and its subsidiary, BrighterMonday Kenya

The African Talent Company (TATC) and its affiliate, BrighterMonday Kenya, serve as key Alliance partners dedicated to fostering e-commerce growth among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Kenya. TATC, known for its commitment to talent development and employment solutions across Africa, leverages its extensive network and expertise to empower young entrepreneurs. BrighterMonday Kenya, a leading online job marketplace, contributes its robust platform and deep understanding of the local market to support MSMEs in navigating the digital landscape. Through initiatives like the eBiz Kwa Vijana project, TATC and BrighterMonday Kenya play a pivotal role in promoting inclusive trade and building the digital competencies of the next generation of business leaders.