

What Did We Learn?

Findings revealed the complexity of the uptake of e-learning. Key learning points emerged from the study.

- 1 In all three countries, despite some contextual differences, the issues affecting the uptake of e-learning by NGLP scholars are similar.
- 2 The pre-pandemic internet infrastructure gaps were aggravated during COVID-19, limiting access to online learning in remote and poorer regions.
- 3 Preference for in-person instead of online learning may be driven by social factors rather than expectations of effective outcome.
- 4 IT skills gaps evident in both scholars and lecturers/course facilitators were reflective of inadequate exposure and preparation at entry.
- 5 Internet penetration does not automatically translate to internet access.
- 6 Unstable internet, unreliable power connections and shared devices provides loopholes for both scholars and even some lecturers to “cheat”.
- 7 The high cost of laptops and smartphones may lead some scholars to either share devices or borrow devices from others in order to join online lessons.
- 8 Smartphones have their uses but are not good for attending classes for long periods of time at a go.
- 9 The poorer and less exposed a congregation, the less likely they would be to provide scholars with devices to facilitate their participation in e-learning.
- 10 The intersection of gender and hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church may result in the exclusion of religious sisters from some privileges and opportunities.
- 11 Scholars' participation in online lessons may be disrupted by competing duties assigned to them by their congregations.

Moving Forward

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Employ a multipronged strategy that integrates the voices of scholars, taking into consideration both the external and internal environments in which NGLP courses are offered and address barriers at national (policy), institutional, programme and individual levels.
- 2 Provide a blended or hybrid model that takes into consideration the psychosocial needs of beneficiaries as well as leveraging on the strengths of e-learning for potentially larger outreach and knowledge mobilization.
- 3 Invest in strengthening skills of course facilitators to actively engage scholars in online learning.
- 4 Sensitize the congregations on the benefits of facilitating scholars financially and/or in kind to enable participation in e-learning and other online activities.
- 5 Equip scholars with appropriate devices to enable effective participation in online learning.
- 6 Support scholars by ensuring they have adequate time both online and offline to engage in their courses of study.
- 7 Collaborate on configuring scholar's gadgets to the university e-library and other online learning infrastructure so that they can easily access it.
- 8 Advocate for government intervention in regulating the cost of data bundles.
- 9 Establish regular and systematic monitoring of programme implementation, collating the feedback through documentation of success stories, good practices and lessons learnt.

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Report of the Rapid Inquiry into the Uptake of E-learning by Catholic Scholars in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda

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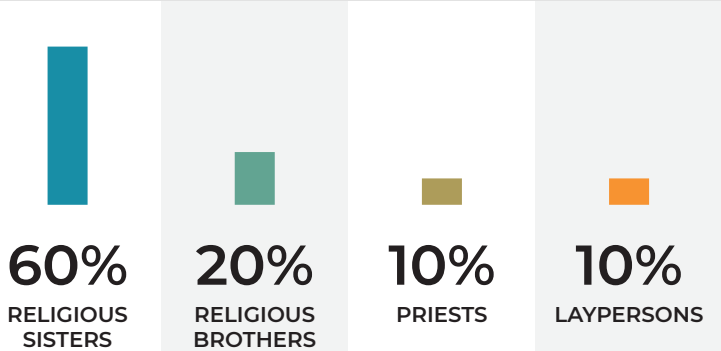
About the Study

Conducted between December 2021 and April 2022, this study was undertaken to identify underlying factors influencing the uptake of e-learning by the New Generation Leadership Programme (NGLP) scholars in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The aim was to identify actionable recommendations for improving a leadership programme that is effective, impactful, sustainable and COVID-19 safe.

The NGLP is a scholarship programme supported by Porticus Africa for Catholic religious scholars in East Africa. The programme aims at upgrading the academic qualifications of scholars and equipping them with leadership skills in service of the Catholic Church.

NGLP New Generation Leadership Programme	REGULAR COURSES Professional Programmes - Certificate, Diploma, Undergraduate & Postgraduate Degrees
	MANDATORY COURSES Servant Leadership, Executive Management, Child Protection & Safeguarding, Catholic Social Teaching

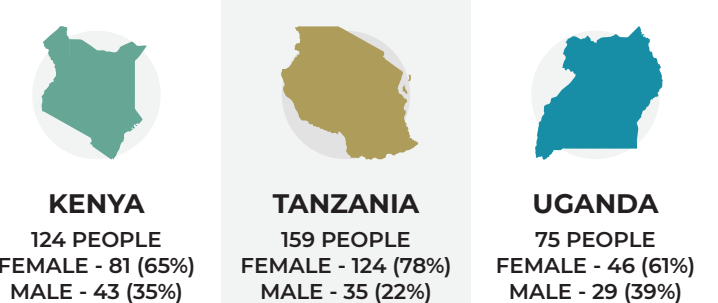
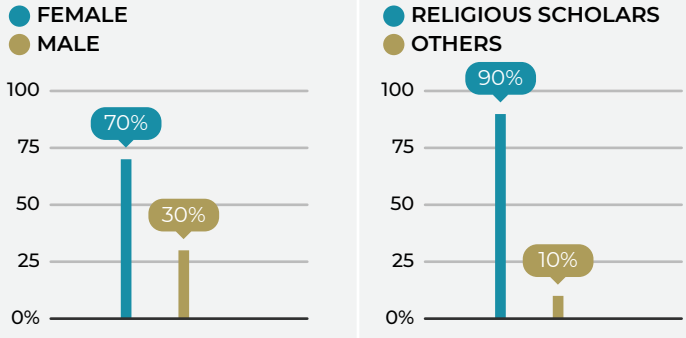
Who does the NGLP Target?



What Did We Do?

We conducted a mixed method multi-country study. Data was collected in-person and remotely reaching out to 358 religious scholars and other stakeholders (251 women & 107 men). The sample selection was purposive.

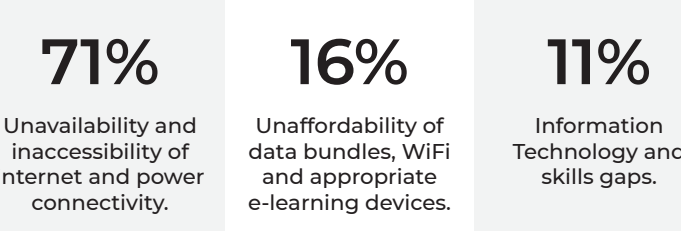
Data Collection Methods	Media and Technology
Online Survey Key Informant Interviews In-Depth Interviews Focus Group Discussions	In-Person Interviews Google Suite Zoom WhatsApp



What Did We Find?

All scholars had some exposure to online learning as education institutions migrated to e-learning as a COVID-19 mitigation measure. However, out of the 4 NGLP mandatory courses, only Servant Leadership, designed for those pursuing undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, was offered online.

Barriers to E-Learning Identified by Survey Respondents



TANZANIA	UGANDA	KENYA
INTERNET RELATED BARRIERS		
67.9%	44.1%	57.1%
POWER		
6.2%	14.7%	16.3%
COST		
6.2%	23.5%	10.2%
TECHNICAL CAPACITY		
9.9%	5.9%	4.1%
DEVICES		
6.2%	5.9%	2.0%
OTHER		
3.7%	5.9%	10.2%