

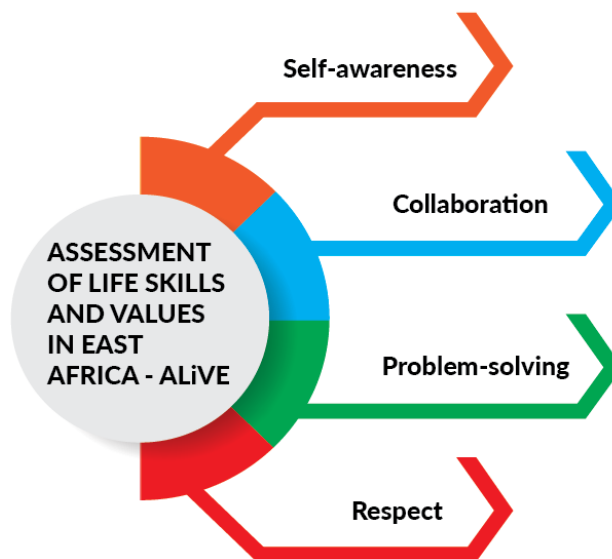


RELI

Regional Education
Learning Initiative

UNDERSTANDING COLLABORATION IN THE KENYAN CONTEXT: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

A Report for the Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa
(ALiVE) Project



COLLABORATION - KENYA

This report is a product of the Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI). RELI, through the Values and Life Skills (VaLi) thematic group, aimed to collaborate with local leaders to cocreate and develop contextualized assessments in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The RELI project, Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa (ALiVE), has three main objectives: (a) develop contextualized, open-source tools for the assessment of life skills and values in the East African context; (b) generate large-scale data on life skills and values across the three countries; and (c) use this data to inform change and build capacities within the VaLi-ALiVE member organizations.

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1 OVERVIEW OF THE ALiVE PROJECT

1.1 Brief Description of the Project

The Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI), through the Values and Life Skills (VaLi) thematic group, intends to collaborate with local leaders to cocreate and develop contextualized assessments in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The initiative, Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa (ALiVE), will achieve three objectives: evidence (and knowledge), community-building, and advocacy. These three broad objectives mirror RELI's three pillars: being a knowledge hub, transforming member organizations, and influencing policy. Over three years (2020–2023), ALiVE will do the following: (a) develop contextualized, open-source tools for the assessment of life skills and values in the East African context; (b) generate large-scale data on life skills and values across the three countries; and (c) use this data to inform change and build capacities within the VaLi-ALiVE member organizations. The goal is to persuade the three national education systems to focus on and to enhance these competencies, to inform regional policy throughout the East African Community, and to inform global thinking on the measurement of life skills and values as relevant and effective learning outcomes.

ALiVE will be a context-relevant, summative assessment. The assessment will target adolescent boys and girls from ages 13 through 17 years, both in school and out of school, focusing on three competencies and one value: self-awareness, problem solving, collaboration, and respect. Embracing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) spirit of leaving no one behind, the initiative will conduct the assessment at the household level. The aspiration is that this will be a simple and easy-to-use tool, making it feasible and affordable to conduct an assessment on a national scale.

The first phase in developing the contextualized assessment tools was to do ethnographic interviews across the three countries with three categories of informants: adolescents, parents, and key persons such as teachers, social workers, youth patrons or matrons, among other such actors. The interviews were to gauge participant perceptions and understandings of the selected ALiVE competencies: self-awareness, collaboration, problem solving, and respect.

1.2 The General Objective of the Contextualisation Study

The study aims to achieve a contextualised understanding of collaboration in Kenya in order to determine the skill structure and derive the best tool for a large-scale assessment of collaboration in the three countries.

1.3 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- (i) How do adolescents, parents, and other key actors in Kenya define and understand collaboration?
- (ii) How do the common definitions differ across the participants' categories (adolescents, parents, and key persons), genders, and locations?
- (iii) Which subskills emerge from the common understanding of this skill, and how do they vary across the participants' categories, genders, and locations?
- (iv) What are the common dispositions and values identified by the different categories of the participants based on gender and location?
- (v) Which support systems, as well as other factors, help the adolescents to develop collaboration skills?
- (vi) What are the common methods identified and used by the participants to assess collaboration skills in adolescents?

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study Design

Since the scope of this study is to learn about and reflect on the way of life and understanding of a certain social group, a qualitative approach and an ethnographic design was adopted to explore and collect participants' perceptions and understandings of the selected ALiVE competence in the local context of Kenya. Ethnography is a widely used research tradition in the social sciences. It can be defined as the study of social interactions, behaviours, and perceptions that occur within social groups, teams, organizations, and communities (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Therefore, the ultimate goal of this tradition is the analysis and detailed understanding of the particularities of a given social group. That is why we considered this the most appropriate design for conducting the present study.

2.2 Study Sites

The study was conducted in 5 sub-counties in Kenya, sampled on the basis of whether they are rural or urban, their economic activity (pastoralist, core urban, agricultural), and their distance from Nairobi. In each sub-county, two villages were randomly sampled. Table 1 summarizes the five locations.

2.3 Study Population

The study population consisted of adolescent boys and girls from 13 through 17 years of age (both in and out of school), parents, and key persons (people close to the adolescents such as teachers, social workers and youth patrons or matrons in religious communities, and others).

Table 1: Data Collection Regions, Sites, and Selection Criteria

CRITERIA	REGION AND SUB-COUNTY
Core urban, low-income areas within the capital city	Region: Nairobi Sub-county: Kibra
Core rural, agricultural-rich, 100 km from the capital city	Region: Central Sub-county: Mwea East
Core rural, agricultural-rich, and within 300–400 km from the capital city	Region: West/Nyanza Sub-county: Rongo
Core rural, pastoralist areas	Region: Rift Valley Sub-county: Narok South
With different characteristics from all mentioned above	Region: Coast Sub-county: Tana Delta

Given that the study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic period, researchers specifically selected sub-counties where RELI members were working, due to ease of contact, logistics, and observance of the COVID-19 health protocols.

2.4 Study Population, Sampling, and Sample

The study population was comprised of adolescent boys and girls from 13 through 17 years of age (both in and out of school), parents, and key persons (people close to the adolescents such as teachers, social workers, youth patrons or matrons in religious communities, and others). Research assistants selected interview participants using systematic sampling based on a list of target participants per category in each village.

In each village sampled, researchers targeted at least 4 interviews with 2 adolescents of each gender (combining those in primary, secondary, vocational training centre, and out of school); 4 interviews with 2 parents of the sampled adolescents, and 2 of non-sampled adolescents (while combining fathers and mothers); and 4 interviews with key persons (teachers, social workers, and others who consistently work with adolescents, from both genders). This resulted in a target of 24 participants for the one-on-one interviews per sub-county. Overall, the sample totalled around 120 participants for the interviews. Given the prevailing challenges, however, the study reached a total of 116 participants in the interviews. The foregoing information is summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Number of Participants Interviewed per Category and Site

Sub-county	Adolescents		Key persons		Parents		Total		
	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Overall
Rongo	04	04	05	03	04	04	13	11	24
Mwea East	04	04	03	05	04	04	11	13	24
Kibra	04	05	04	04	03	05	11	14	25
Narok South	04	04	05	03	04	04	13	11	24
Tana Delta	02	05	03	00	04	05	09	10	19
Total	18	22	20	15	19	22	57	59	116

Notably, out of 116 participants for the one-on-one interviews, only 75 (39 men and 36 women) were interviewed on collaboration.

In addition to the interviews, 21 focus group discussions (FGDs)—(10 FGDs for adolescents and 11 FGDs for parents)—were conducted. For the FGDs, 3 participants (adolescents or parents) were selected to join the other 4 who participated in the interviews. Ultimately, FGDs in each village consisted of 5 to 7 participants.

2.5 Data Collection Methods and Tools

- Interviews: One-on-one interviews with adolescents, parents, and key persons were conducted to determine their understanding of collaboration skills in Kenya's context. Researchers used an interview guide that was developed before data collection.
- Focus Group Discussion (FGD): Discussions with adolescents and parents were conducted in order to cultivate an understanding of the emerging issues realised from the interviews. Researchers developed and used specific FGD guides for each site and its interviews.

2.6 Training of Research Teams and Fieldwork

In each sub-county, there was need of an experienced qualitative researcher to take the lead in interviewing and of a research assistant who would provide support in terms of logistics, recording, and note-taking. At least one of the researchers needed to be fluent in the language of the study location. To ensure the collection of quality data, a 2-day researcher-training session (4 hours per day) was conducted via Zoom on October 19 and 21, 2020. The training emphasised the background and objectives of the ALiVE project, the research approach and methodology, data collection methods and tools, recording and note-taking techniques, ethical issues, and more.

Before going into the field, the research assistants completed preparatory work that included notifying local authorities, listing, and sampling, and notifying the sampled participants. Data collection was conducted between November 2 and 6, 2020 in the 5 sub-counties. The exercise lasted two days in each village. The first day was spent on the in-depth interviews,

while the second day was reserved for the FGDs, which were conducted at a central and safe space within the village. Interviews and FGDs were audio-recorded and hand-written for backup and to ensure accuracy during translation or transcription.

2.7 Coding System and Data Analysis

A coding system was established to analyse the 75 interviews on collaboration following thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79).

The analysis was conducted centrally for all the interviews and FGDs from the three countries. For the analysis of the interviews, we established a coding system based on contextual (descriptive) variables, including (a) category of informants, (b) sex of the participants, (c) country, and (d) sub-county. In quantitative terms, the contextual variables were analysed descriptively (frequency and percentage) using Microsoft Excel and Dedoose.

The coding system also considered content variables related to (e) definition and process described by the participants, (f) subskills, (g) dispositions and values, (h) behaviours, (i) related skills, (j) support systems and factors for enhancing collaboration skills, and (k) methods to assess the skill in adolescents. In qualitative terms as recommended by Gibbs (2018) and using the Dedoose program (version 8.3.41), we performed an analysis of subjects’ understandings of collaboration as presented in the interviews, paying specific attention to elements of contextualisation in contrast with what has been found in the literature review.

These predetermined categories emerged from the analysis of five interviews (at least 1 from each category) conducted by nine research assistants to achieve inter-rater reliability in the coding system. Apart from these predetermined categories, others emerged from the main topic of collaboration, and a unique understanding of the skill is addressed in this report. The analysis process involved the identification of patterns of similar ideas, concepts, or topics to establish the connection and integration of information with the theoretical foundation (Miles & Huberman, 1994) as well as a suggested indication or evidence for contextualisation. The codes were created following the criteria for qualitative evaluation: dependency, transferability, credibility, and verifiability (Duffy, 1987).

Furthermore, the synthetic analysis followed the three stages pointed out by Thomas and Harden (2008): the free “line-by-line” coding of the primary interviews (including sentences or paragraphs as the analysis unit), the organization of these “free codes” into related areas to construct “descriptive themes,” and the development of “analytical themes” (p. 4). The analytical themes go beyond the findings of the primary interviews and develop additional concepts, understandings, or hypotheses. The analytical themes are then related to the recommendations for assessment, intervention, and policymaking to contextualise collaboration skills in East Africa.

In addition, the researchers used the triangulation technique (Flick, 1992, 2004) to search, identify, select, evaluate, and summarise data from interviews based on pre-defined criteria and emergent categories.

Finally, data reduction was applied through a mixed-method analysis: (a) the initial subgroup classification of the interviews is based on the participants' category (adolescents, parents, and key persons), sex, and sub-county; and (b) data reduction involves techniques of extracting and coding data. These mixed-method analyses were carried out using the Dedoose program, which allows for the analysis of the frequency of the codes in terms of the demographic information of the participants and allows for the integration of qualitative and quantitative data. In this regard, three types of descriptive analysis were conducted: code co-occurrence, cross-tabulation of the code and participants' characteristics, and cross-tabulation of the code and 2 or more participants' characteristics.

Notably, for each of the quotations in the findings, we have included a code that helps in identifying the category of the participant. In each code, the first letter represents the country (Kenya), the second letter represents the category of participants (e.g., 'A' for adolescent, 'P' for parent, and 'K' for key person), and the last number represents the number assigned to the participant.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The research team upheld approaches that address ethical considerations in dealing with different categories of participants. These included obtaining informed consent, ensuring the confidentiality of information obtained from the participants, compensating participants (both monetarily and non-monetarily), and ensuring voluntary participation. Precaution was exercised to adhere to the COVID-19 guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health at that time, especially that of not exceeding 15 persons for every gathering, wearing masks, physical distancing, and the washing and sanitizing of hands.

3 FINDINGS

3.1 General Characteristics of the Participants

Overall, 75 participants (39 men and 36 women) were interviewed on collaboration skills. Twenty-two of these were adolescents (12 boys and 10 girls), 28 were parents (11 men and 17 women), and 25 were key persons (16 men and 9 women). Furthermore, the average ages for the participants were 15.9 years for adolescents (15.3 years for boys and 16.5 years for girls; SD=1.3), 42.2 years for parents (45.5 years for men and 40.2 years for women; SD=9.7), and 34.8 years for key persons (35.6 years for men and 33.6 years for women; SD=8.7).

3.2 Codes and Central Themes in Collaboration

The analyses of the interviews identified 7 categories and 42 codes. In what follows, the findings are synthesized according to these 7 categories, while in some cases the codes are cross-cutting into different categories. For instance, the codes used to analyse the definition of collaboration are in some cases subskills of collaboration or values needed for being a collaborative person. For this reason, the tables included at the beginning of each category contain codes that can probably be found in another category.

3.2.1 Definition

The first group of questions posed to participants dealt with the definition of collaboration. To approach the perception of this skill locally, participants were asked to give the formal definition of the term collaboration as well as its translation and synonyms in their local languages.

As presented in the previous sections, 75 people including parents, teenagers, and key persons defined collaboration either with their understanding of the concept and personal experience, or by offering examples of people who, according to them, demonstrate collaboration skills.

The analysis reports the various ways and the number of excerpts in which participants define collaboration. Thirteen codes emerged in this category (definition). These codes identify collaboration according to participants' understanding of this skill. Some responses are more of formal definitions, and in other cases, elements of the collaborative process emerge or are identified with a subskill or similar words.

For some participants, it was easier to offer the example of people who, in their experience, are collaborative and, therefore, are concrete examples from ordinary life.

Table 3: Codes That Emerged to Define Collaboration

CATEGORY: DEFINITION CODES	PARTICIPANT S (SOURCES)	%	EXCERPTS	%
Working or staying together	59	78.66	59	94.93
Teamwork or cooperation	11	14.66	12	15.18
Helping community	11	13.33	11	13.92
Goal setting	10	13.33	10	12.65
Relationship skills	10	13.33	10	12.65
Unity	9	12.00	9	11.39
Agreement	9	12.00	9	11.39
Expressive communication	5	6.66	6	7.59
Sharing	4	5.33	4	5.06
Finding solutions	4	5.33	4	5.06
Love	4	5.33	4	5.06
Guidance and counselling	3	4.00	4	5.06
TOTAL	75 ¹		79 ²	

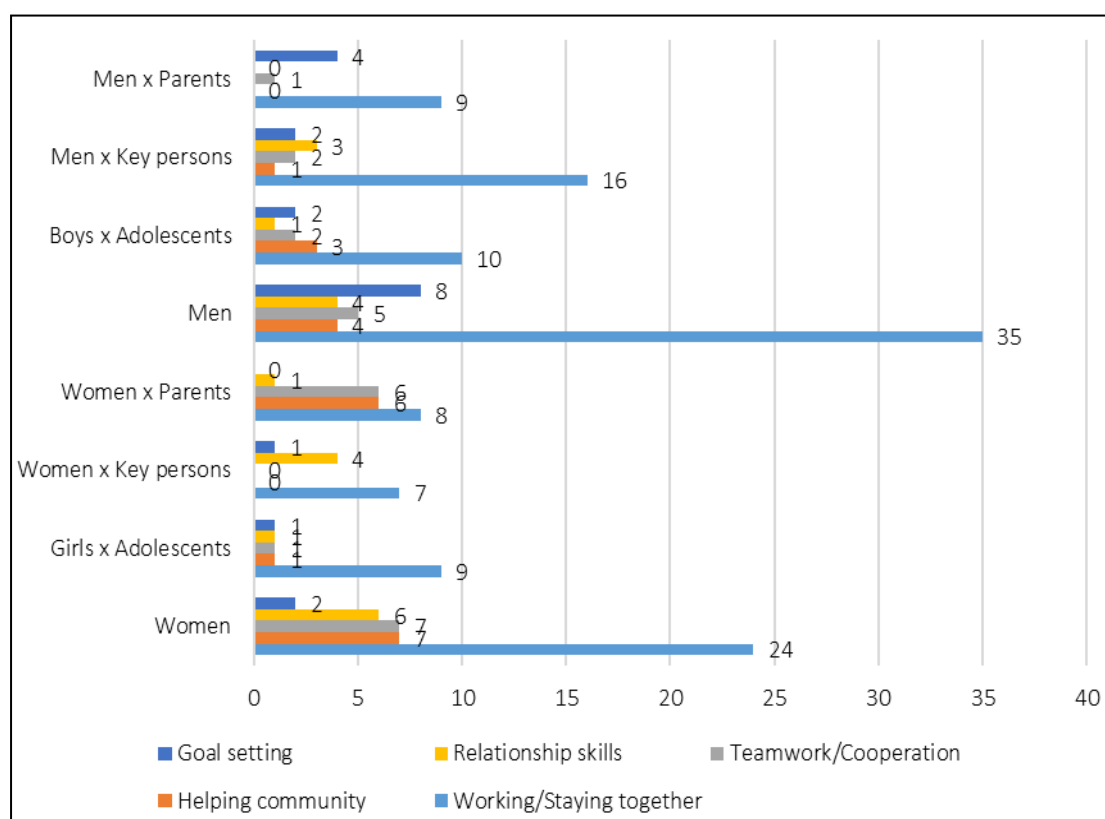
An overview of the frequency of excerpts³ highlighting the main codes that define collaboration are presented by gender and category in Figure 1 and by sub-county in Figure 2.

¹ This refers to the total number of participants who were interviewed on collaboration. It is not the sum of the observed frequencies as more than one code in the theme could emerge from the same participant.

² This refers to the total number of excerpts that emerged in the category of the definition of collaboration. It is not the sum of observed frequencies, since one excerpt could contain more than one of these codes.

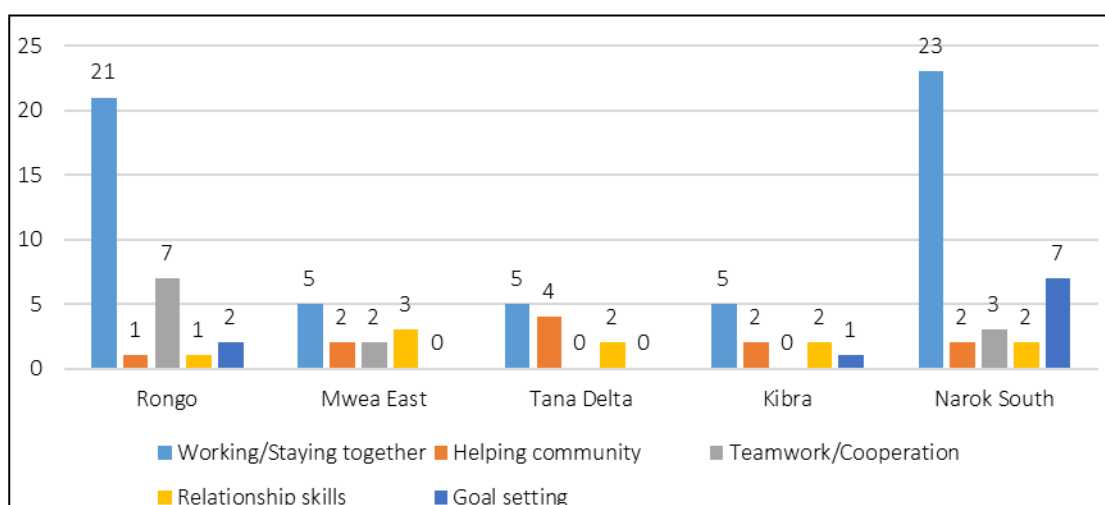
³ It is important to note that the analyses conducted for Figures 1 and 2 include the use of these codes in different categories while Table 3 is specific in definition.

Figure 1: Frequency of Excerpts That Include Working Together, Teamwork, Helping the Community, Goal Setting, and Relationship Skills, by Gender and Category



The graph above represents the number of occurrences by gender and category. The code that transversely has more occurrences is working or staying together, which was mentioned more by men than women, while the one that has less is goal setting. The other codes have variable occurrences.

Figure 2: Frequency of Excerpts That Include Working Together, Teamwork, Helping the Community, Goal Setting, and Relationship Skills, by Sub-County



The graph shows that working or staying together was mentioned especially often in Rongo and Narok South. It was mentioned less frequently in other sub-counties, but helping together and relationship skills were important in defining collaboration in Mwea East.

The most relevant result from these analyses is the frequency of using working together to define collaboration. The emphasis is not on work, however, but on being together in its essence. Several participants corresponding to the three categories (e.g., K-A-03, K-A-07, K-A-08, K-K-05, K-K-28, K-P-05, K-P-08)⁴ answered by saying that collaboration is togetherness, while a smaller number (10 participants) mentioned a common goal (goal setting). Moreover, the achievement of a common goal is not always the motivation for working together. Helping community covers the same number of excerpts as common goal. This is because helping and supporting the needs of the community to which one belongs is a very strong motivation to collaborate. The concrete examples offered by the participants show that community members are concerned about each others' needs: "Concerning problems, it is the work of parents to come together and solve the issue. For example, when there is flooding, people come together and build a dyke to prevent the village flooding" (K-K-18).

For this reason, some participants identify collaboration as finding solutions; solving concrete problems is often the element that prompts collaboration among community members.

Another element that plays a key role in the definition of collaboration concerns the importance attributed to relationships. Indeed, several interviewees defined collaboration by referring to relationship skills and effective communication. An adolescent explained that collaboration was about taking care of relationships and mitigating misunderstandings among peers. He added that this was the only way to do things together; in his words, "That is a good point, for example not trying to cause misunderstandings with fellow friends and through working together and helping one another in activities like farming" (K-A-18).

Both parents and key persons recognized that "sober" communication (K-P-16) was necessary for working together, adding that it was necessary to be "close" and "together" to "reach understanding among collaborators" (K-K-25).

Several times (K-A-06, K-A-35, K-K-03, K-P-03, K-P-07) when participants were asked to state any other word that was synonymous with collaboration, the answer they gave was teamwork or cooperation. Interestingly, no participants used the term teamwork when asked about the definition, but only when trying to use a synonym. Evidently, participants saw a slight difference between the two terms.

A key element that emerged from the analysis of collaboration codes relates to the link between skills and values. In defining collaboration, the participants referred to sharing, unity, and love. Even though collaboration is defined using working together, the value dimension plays an important role. "Coming together as one" (K-P-28) is the key to

⁴ The first letter represents the country (Kenya), the second letter represents the category of participants (e.g. 'A' for adolescent, 'P' for parent and 'K' for key person) and the last number represents the number assigned to the participant.

collaboration; participants identified with the community—a belonging that says something important about them—and, therefore, their perception of collaboration is community centred.

Some interviewees talked about the value of sharing. It is not just about sharing things, but it covers the sphere of comparison among peers. Not only do they share to solve problems but also for mutual understanding.

Helping the community is often concurrent with the definition of collaboration. A good collaborator is one who offers his contribution when he sees a need (K-A-18). The interesting feature is that participants (K-A-18, K-K-31, K-P-23, K-P-41) helped each other because they were together; in other words, according to them, being part of the same community was the reason people shared resources.

The definition of collaboration also includes agreement and guidance and counselling. It is natural for some participants to associate collaboration with agreement. Enhancing collaboration is easier when there is a unity of purpose in the group.

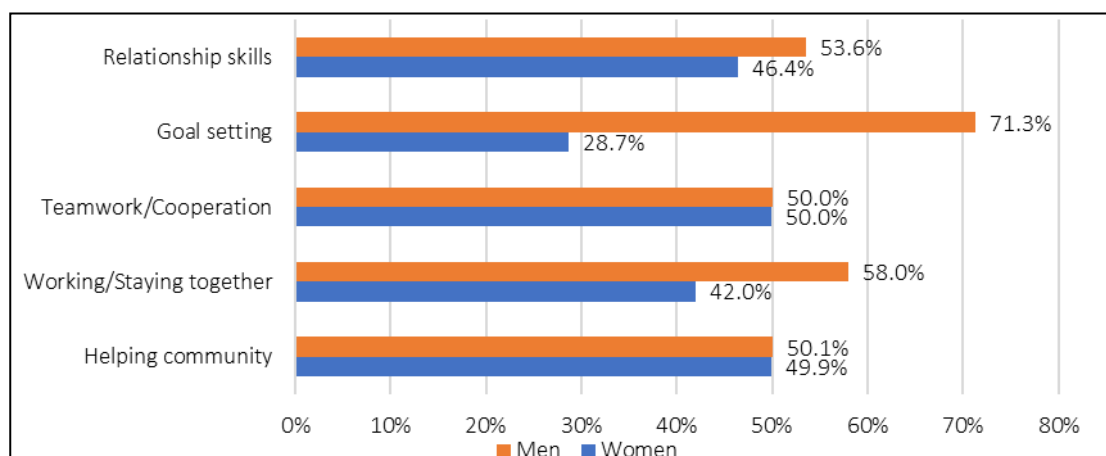
Guidance counselling is, in this context, linked to sharing: as community members share things, they are also sharing the experience for the purpose of helping each other.

In collaboration, there are a good number of benefits a child can get from collaborating among themselves. For example, during school teaching and there was a student who did not understand something and wanted assistance in understanding, such students could ask their fellow student to teach them and in doing so that would be collaboration. (K-P-17)

In fact, collaboration and being together are often connected with values; several participants (K-K-25, K-P-37) said that the meaning of collaboration is being united with love, harmony, and peace.

When the main codes used to define collaboration are analysed by gender, exploring the frequency with which they have been mentioned as indicated in the interviews, we obtain similar findings on relationship skills, teamwork, and helping the community. However, men used the codes working together and goal setting more often than women (Figure 3).

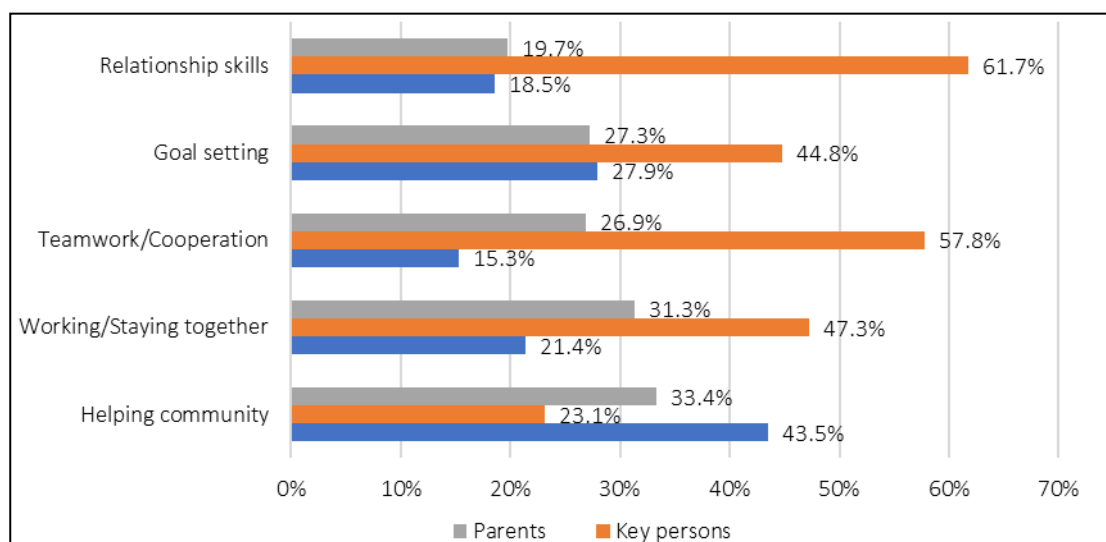
Figure 3: Percentage of the Codes Used to Define Collaboration, by Gender



As can be observed in Figure 3, relationship skills, teamwork or cooperation, and helping the community are equally distributed among men and women, while goal setting and working together report a considerable male majority.

Analysing the same data by the category of the participants, we can conclude that working together is the most frequent code used to define collaboration (see Figure 4). In addition, key persons used working together, relationship skills, and teamwork especially often, while the parents and the adolescents more frequently mentioned helping community as their understanding of collaboration.

Figure 4: Percentage of the Codes' Excerpts Used to Define Collaboration, by Category



This graph shows that the key persons highlighted working together, goal setting, relationship skills, and teamwork as central to collaboration; helping community was emphasized by adolescents.

In regard to the sub-county, it is important to note that 61.9% of the excerpts on teamwork emerged in Rongo, and 53.2% of goal setting in Narok South. There is, on the other hand, a

low percentage of excerpts in all the codes in Kibra and Tana Delta. For more details see Figure 2 and Appendix 1.

3.2.2 Subskills

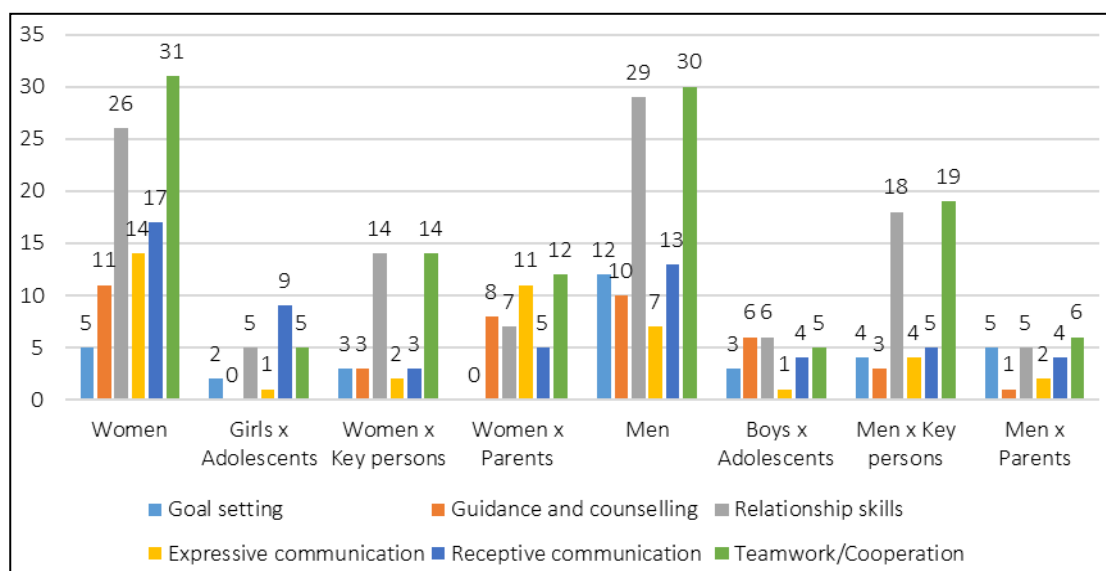
The following table presents a summary of the main codes that describes the subskills of collaboration as well as the frequency of excerpts, including these codes in the documents analysed.

Table 4: Categories and Codes That Emerged as Subskills of Collaboration

CATEGORY: SUBSKILLS CODES	PARTICIPANTS (SOURCES)	%	EXCERPTS	%
Teamwork	35	46.66	61	31.44
Relationship skills	28	37.33	55	28.35
Receptive communication	20	26.66	30	15.46
Expressive communication	17	22.66	21	10.82
Goal setting	15	20.00	17	8.76
Guidance and counselling	16	21.33	21	10.82
Self-confidence	10	13.33	10	5.15
TOTAL	75		194	

Figures 5 and 6 present an overview of the frequency of excerpts that emerged from the subskills of collaboration, by gender and category. Overall, teamwork and relationship skills are mentioned as the most relevant subskills of collaboration, equally by women and men in the category of key persons.

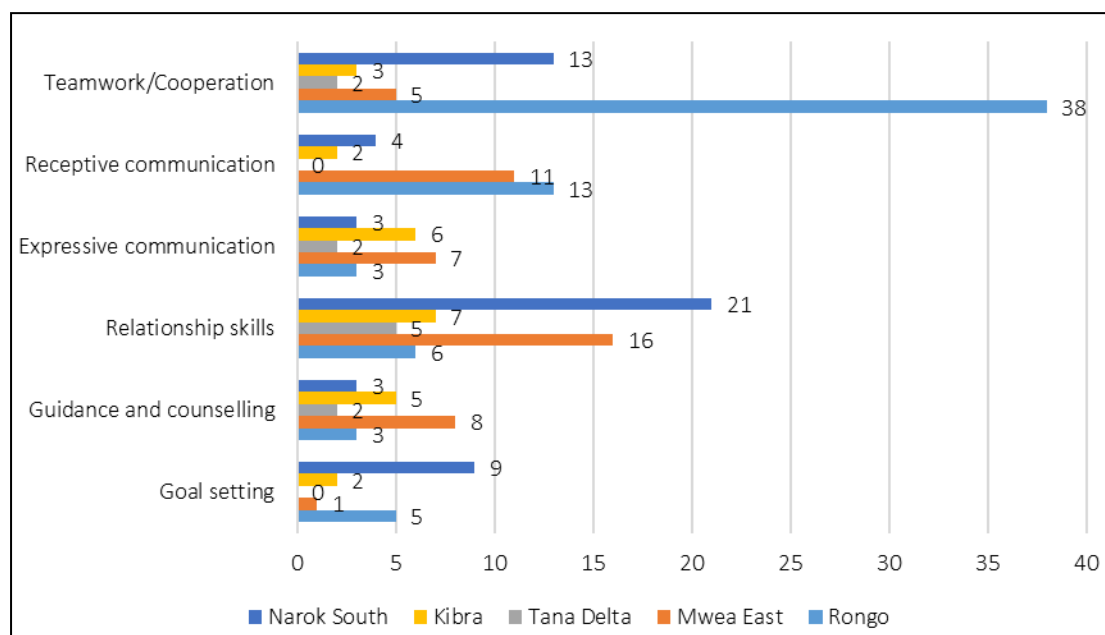
Figure 5: Frequencies of Excerpts That Include Subskills of Collaboration, by Gender and Category



Overall, teamwork and relationship skills are mentioned as the most relevant subskills of collaboration, equally by women and men among the category of key persons.

When we analyse the data by sub-county, it is important to note the clear prevalence of teamwork in Rongo and relationship skills in Narok South and Mwea East. Very few such excerpts were found in the participants from Kibra and Tana Delta (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Frequencies of Excerpts That Include Subskills of Collaboration, by Sub-County



The investigation of the extracts shows the central role that communication plays in good collaboration. As you can see from Table 4, the most important skills are those that put the collaborator in a position to listen and advise others on relationship skills. The number of excerpts that include relationship skills, expressive and receptive communication, and guidance and counselling is 127, 65.5% of 194.

According to most of the interviewees, being sociable is a characteristic of a good collaborator. Knowing how to be with others, knowing how to share one's experiences, and knowing how to listen to the experience of others are key points in the behaviour of those who know how to collaborate. A good collaborator is pictured as someone who

shares with me his experiences during life skills sessions. Sharing and caring, you have to share your problems to get help. There are those you can share with and they despise you, but if it's him he urges one to not give up and encourages you to pray more. (K-A-29)

According to participants from all categories, the adolescent with collaboration skills is someone who loves to listen and to talk with others (e.g., K-A-01, K-K-07, K-P-38).

Interestingly, some participants (K-K-16, K-K-25, K-P-12) associated communication with the value of respect. Again, it emerges that it is very difficult to talk about collaboration without

the value dimension that characterizes it. Respect for others is necessary because collaboration always takes place when there is esteem and listening.

Speaking of a teenager with strong collaborative skills, a key person said, “She is open and freely expresses herself. She knows how to solve a dispute and has high esteem. She is respectful and loving” (K-K-16). This excerpt describes the profile of a good employee. It is interesting to see how the interviewees do not distinguish between sub-competencies, dispositions, and attitudes. But these dimensions, although mixed, draw a clear and coherent profile.

A good number of participants (35 out of 75—for example, K-K-20, K-K-05, K-K-12, K-A-40, K-K-30, K-P-08, K-A-35, K-A-02, K-K-07, K-A-11) talked about teamwork. No one clearly highlighted the differences between teamwork and collaboration. However, they spoke of team spirit, of working as a team (K-P-08), or they characterized the collaborator as a team player (K-K-07), often referring to the context of a team game. It is interesting that the term of comparison with team play is so recurrent—it is indeed pertinent and correct.

Key persons were the only ones who introduced the theme of self-esteem and self-confidence. They also relate collaboration to self-respect and self-awareness (K-K-17). Their intuition about the fact that to be in a relationship with others, it is first necessary to have self-confidence, is particularly relevant.

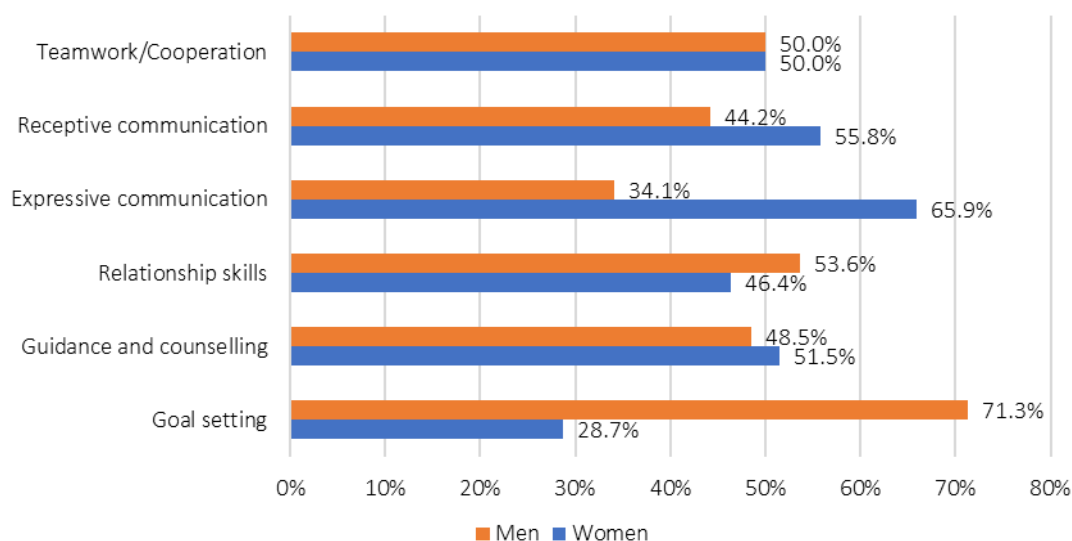
Various aspects emerge from the interviews that increasingly define the profile of the good collaborator. The first is the intuition that communication, both expressive and receptive, is central to collaboration and that in order to communicate, it is important to be open to listening and to be ready to offer guidance and counselling. For this openness and availability to be possible, however, it is necessary to have self-knowledge and self-esteem. In other words, the relationship with the self is the foundation of the relationship with others.

Descriptive analyses have been done to explore the frequency of the codes by the descriptors: gender, category, and site. The more significant figures are presented below, but more detailed information can be found in Appendix 2.

Since the code teamwork often appeared in reference to team games, disaggregated analyses were conducted only by gender to explore whether men or women mentioned it as a subskill of collaboration in different proportions. As can be observed in Figure 7, the frequency—when normalised to percentage—shows that men and women contributed equally (men 50% and women 50%).⁵ Goal setting was mentioned more by men while communication, both expressive and receptive, was mentioned more by the women. Also, in the relationship subskills of collaboration, there were no differences by gender.

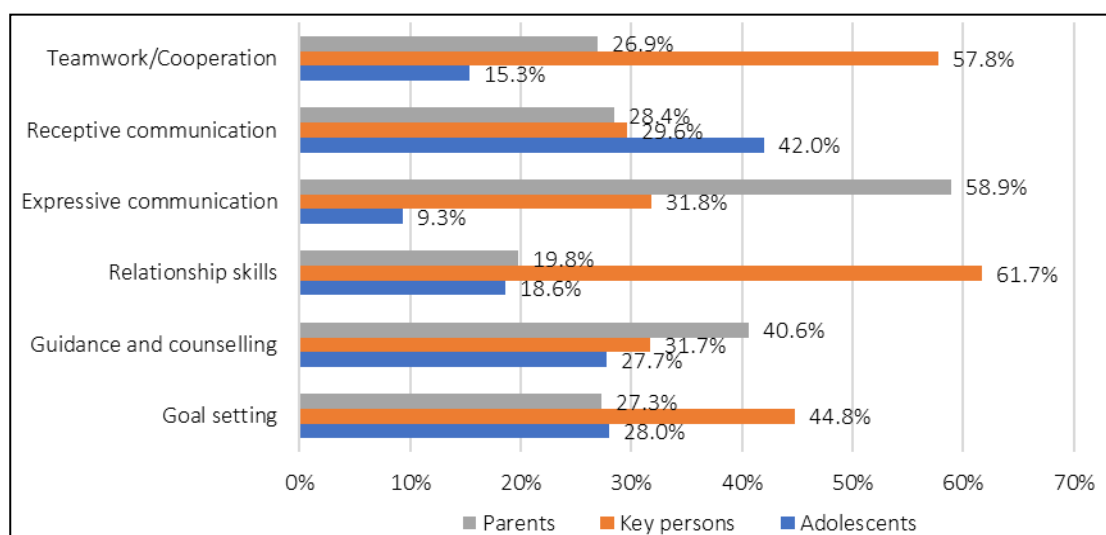
⁵ All the analysis and figures are normalised, which is why the different sizes of the groups must be taken into account in order to correctly interpret Figure 3.

Figure 7: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Teamwork and Other Subskills of Collaboration, by Gender



Even if the results for teamwork are similar for each gender, meaningful differences in terms of percentages have been found (and analysed) for the category of the participants, in favour of the key persons: only the key persons stood out from the other categories in mentioning teamwork, goal setting, and relationship skills instead of adolescents, among whom both females and males mentioned teamwork very few times (see Figure 8). They stood out in mentioning receptive communication, and parents stood out in mentioning expressive communication.

Figure 8: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Teamwork and Other Subskills of Collaboration, by Category

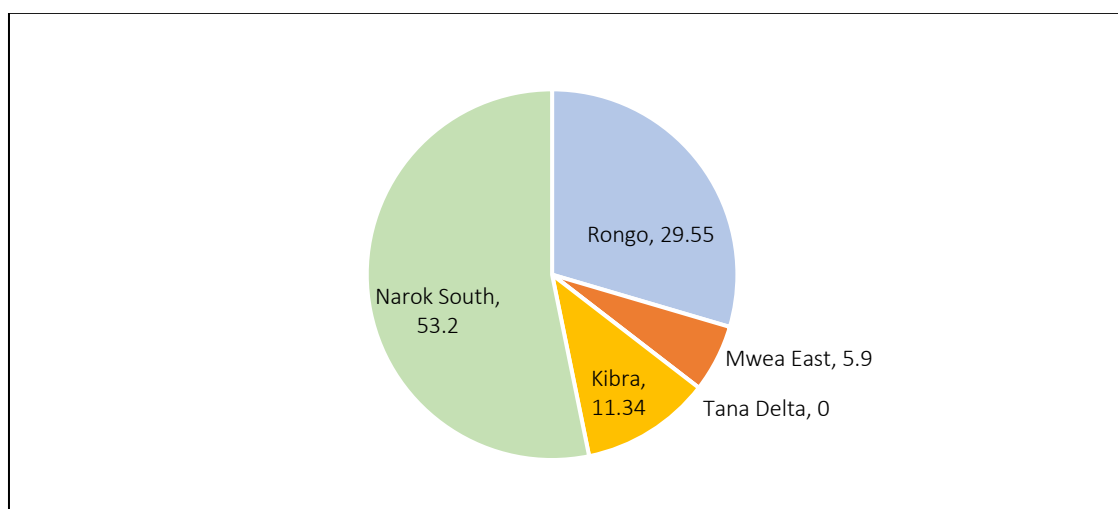


As regards geographical disaggregation, relationship skills were mentioned more in Rongo and Narok South than in the other places (see Appendix 2).

It is important to note that 26.3% of the excerpts related to subskills of collaboration and 37 participants include communication as one of the relevant skills of collaboration. Some of them highlighted the receptive aspect of the subskill, while others stressed expressive communication.

Furthermore, most of the excerpts related to goal setting were found in Narok (53% out of the total of excerpts in goal setting), while participants from Tana Delta did not mention it (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Goal Setting by Sub-County



Finally, the comparison of the prevalence of the code guidance and counselling is minimal, with the most mentions by Mwea East and parents; there are no differences in this regard between men and women.

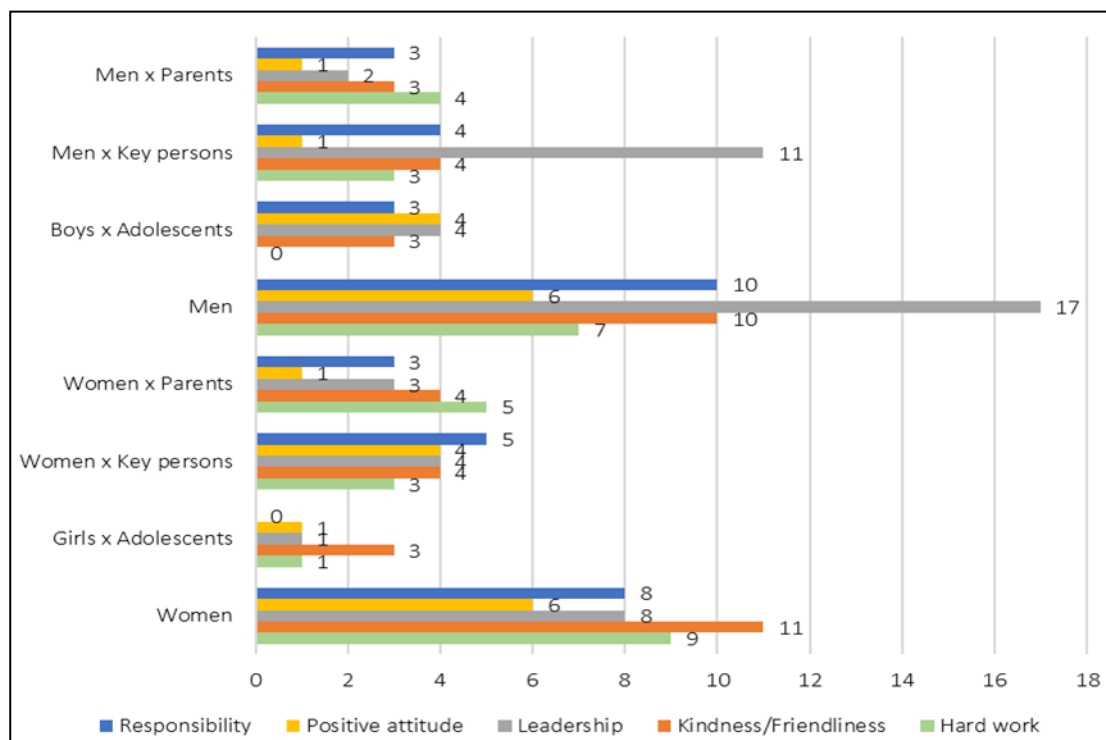
3.2.3 Dispositions

Table 5: Codes That Emerged as Dispositions of Collaboration

CATEGORY: DISPOSITIONS CODES	PARTICIPANT S (SOURCES)	%	EXCERPTS	%
Leadership	19	25.33	25	25.77
Kindness or friendliness	17	22.66	21	21.64
Responsibility	14	18.66	18	18.55
Positive attitude	10	13.33	12	12.37
Hard work	9	12.00	16	16.49
Courage	7	9.33	7	7.21
Patient	5	6.66	7	7.21
Passion	4	5.33	4	4.12
Self-actualisation	4	5.33	4	4.12
TOTAL	75		97	

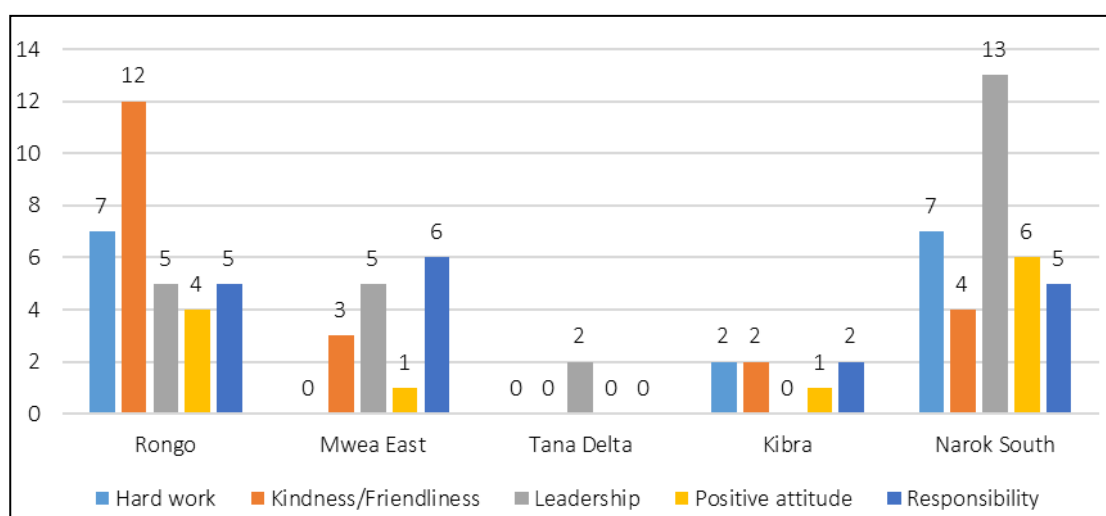
Figures 10 and 11 present a general view of the presence of dispositions of collaboration compared by gender, category, and sub-county.

Figure 10: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Dispositions of Collaboration, by Gender and Category



The graph shows that leadership is a disposition mainly mentioned by men while kindness or friendliness was specially mentioned by women. Adolescent girls highlighted very few dispositions, and among key persons, men underscored the importance of leadership for collaboration.

Figure 11: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Dispositions of Collaboration, by Sub-County



As regards the sub-county, leadership was mentioned mainly in the Narok South sub-county, while being kind or friendly was mentioned more in Rongo.

Dispositions are features of a person's character that help improve how she learns and exercises a skill like collaboration. Regarding collaboration, the dispositions the participants indicated as most relevant are leadership, kindness, friendliness, responsibility, having a positive attitude, and hard work. There are other components related to dispositions that, despite encompassing a small number of excerpts, are significant for this study.

Adolescents believe that a good collaborator is one who can mobilize groups (K-A-04, K-A-09, K-A-13) and offer guidance (K-A-40).

Several key persons (K-K-01, K-K-02, K-K-16, K-K-17, K-K-30, K-K-31, K-K-32, K-K-33, K-K-34, K-K-35) consider leadership a disposition of collaboration. A good collaborator is one who "mobilises" the group to carry out the task.

Since collaboration is a skill that is necessarily used in a group, many excerpts are about the disposition of being friendly and having a positive attitude toward others. However, being kind and having a positive attitude involves many features that go beyond being friendly (K-K-06). For example, it was not only meant cover positive thinking and being accommodating (K-A-35) or being well organized and easily approachable (K-K-01), but also being a lively person and loving company (K-K-03) as well as being understanding and interactive (K-K-28).

Responsibility was also identified as a disposition. The meaning given to responsibility is not unique but lies between being reliable and being independent. According to key persons, a responsible person is someone who does not need any supervision to do something (K-K-01, K-K-02, K-K-13), while according to others, a responsible teenager is someone who "has strong leadership skills and can be trusted, because whenever you give him some responsibility, he honours it. He able to give guidance to others and able to mobilize others" (K-K-33).

Hard work, passion, and self-actualization are personal dispositions that appear in an attitude toward work. Parents and key persons were very focused on hard work, while only one adolescent mentioned hard work as a disposition (K-A-37). According to adults, collaborative people, "when you give them an activity, they don't waste time, they take the activity very fast and positively. The child also has more ideas; he does not need to be told everything" (K-K-35). Similarly, parents said that a collaborative teenager "always works on jobs available in the community" (K-P-01).

Encouraging the group and having patience are two other features the participants identified as characteristics of a good collaborator. The courage to share experiences and give life lessons is an element that appears in some adolescents (K-A-11, K-A-29, K-A-37) and is an element that triggers collaboration.

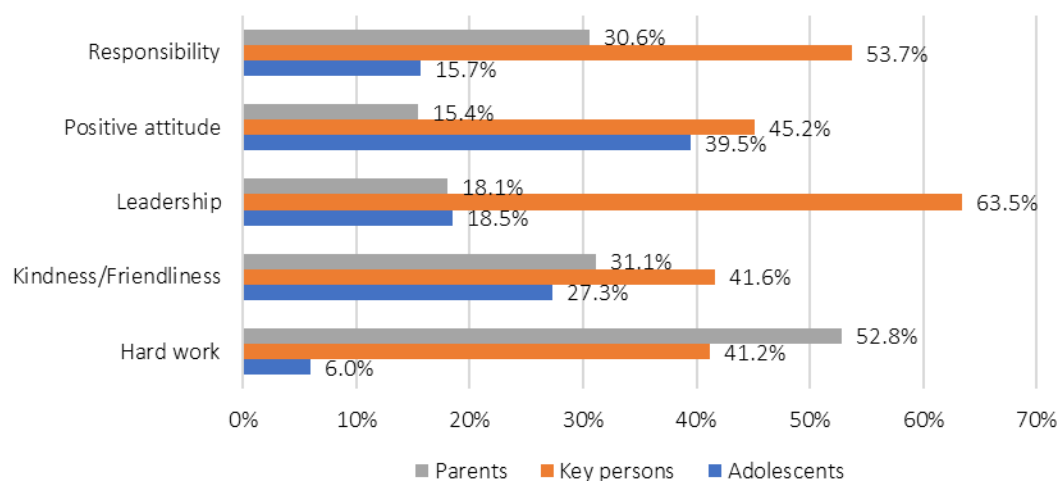
Patience and being conscious of time were also identified as dispositions of collaboration. In particular, patience was understood as the ability to put group members in a position to offer

their contribution without rushing (K-K-35), while being conscious of time was understood as the productive and good use of time (K-P-15, K-K-25).

The differences obtained in the percentage analysed by gender are minimal aside from leadership, where men mentioned 68.8% compared to women, who mentioned 31.3%.

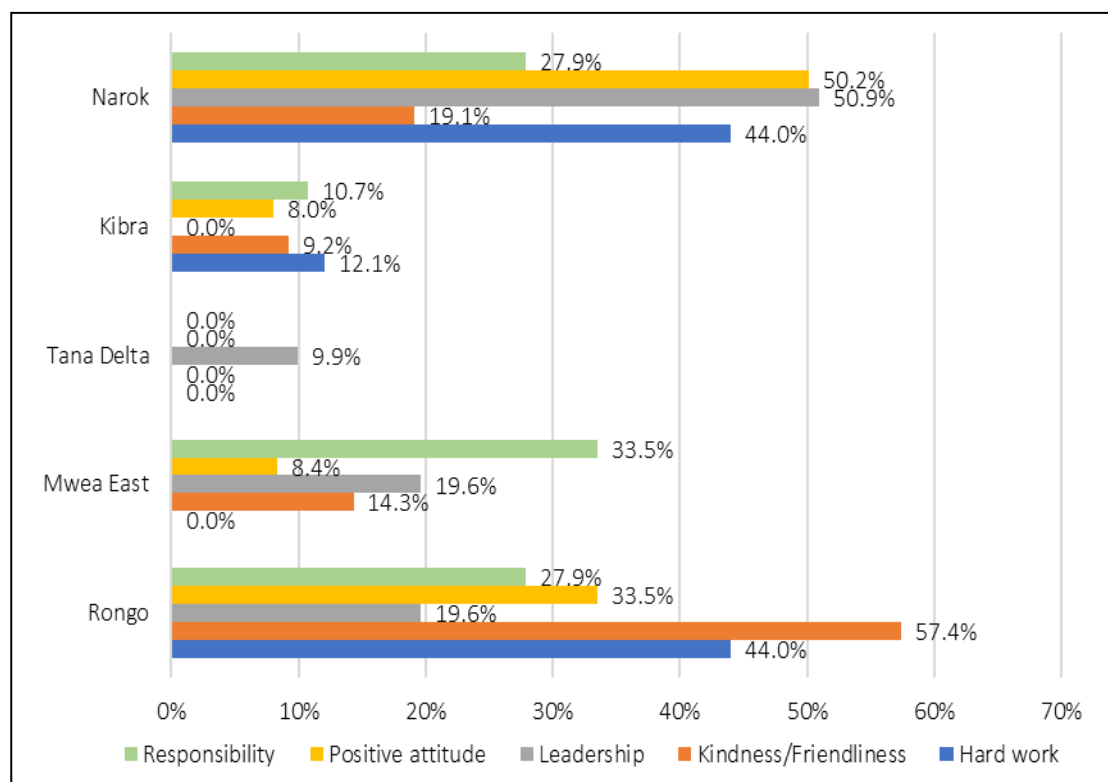
However, the disaggregated data by category and sub-county yielded meaningful findings. Regarding category, key persons stood out in mentioning responsibility, positive attitude, kindness/friendliness, and leadership while parents especially mentioned hard work. Few excerpts include dispositions by adolescents and most of them related to positive attitude and kindness or friendliness.

Figure 12: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Dispositions of Collaboration, by Category



Moreover, the differences by sub-county are striking, as can be observed in Figure 13. It is paramount to note the presence of these codes in Rongo and Narok South, and their absence in Kibra and Tana Delta.

Figure 13: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Dispositions of Collaboration, by Sub-County



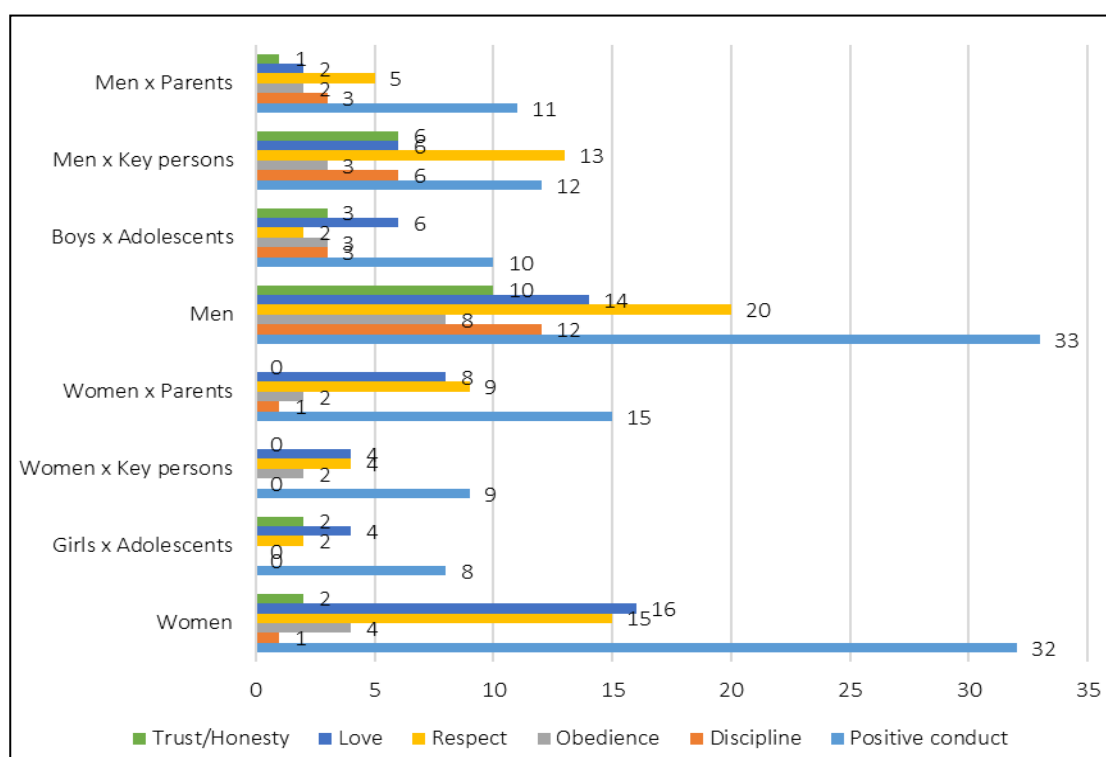
3.2.4 Values and Behaviours

Table 6: Codes That Emerged as Behaviours and Values Characteristic of a Collaborator

CATEGORY: VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS CODES	PARTICIPANTS (SOURCES)	%	EXCERPTS	%
Positive conduct	59	78.66	65	48.50
Respect	23	30.66	35	26.11
Love	22	29.33	30	22.38
Discipline	10	13.33	13	9.70
Obedience	9	12	12	8.95
Trust or Honesty	9	12	12	8.95
Humility	7	9.33	8	5.97
Exemplary	4	5.33	4	2.98
TOTAL	75		134	

The following figures present an overview of the presence of the different behaviours and values by gender, category, and sub-county.

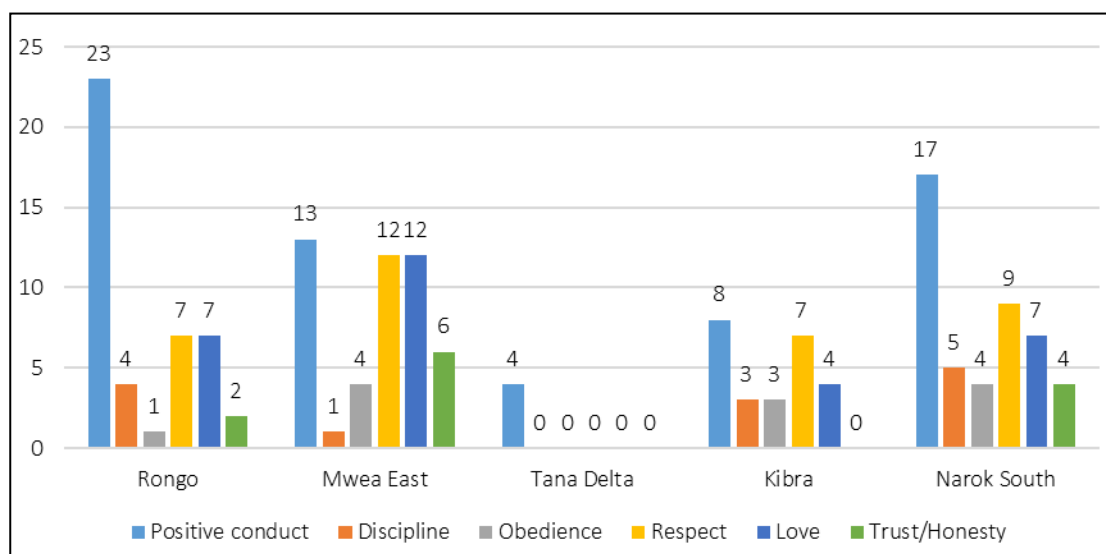
Figure 14: Frequency of Excerpts That Include Behaviours and Values of Collaboration, by Gender and Sub-County



As can be observed in the graph above, positive conduct appears to cut across the genders and categories of the participants.

It is particularly important to note the consistency of the responses in stressing the role of good behaviour in being a collaborative person. Apart from the general good behaviour, men mentioned the importance of discipline and honesty more, while the women highlighted love.

Figure 15: Frequency of Excerpts That Include Behaviours and Values of Collaboration, by Sub-County



The graph above shows that positive conduct is always associated with collaboration, especially in Rongo and Narok South. Other values were more or less equally mentioned and distributed among the sub-counties, apart from Tana Delta, where the frequency is zero. Respect and love seem to be the most relevant values necessary for collaboration.

Participants were asked what the characteristics of collaborative behaviour are. All responded by denoting positive behaviour by specifying some particular characteristics. There are some aspects such as discipline, obedience, and exemplary attitude that have a certain importance. However, the answers were descriptive of practical attitudes associated with a set of values in which social cohesion is held in high esteem.

Discipline, obedience, and exemplary behaviour are some of the aspects that most denote collaborative behaviour. Key persons mentioned the aspect of discipline. One of them highlighted the historical and cultural relationship between discipline and respect:

Discipline is just like respect. It's just like one has been brought up by the elders from childhood and how they have continued to grow into that system of respect. How you have been brought up, when you meet a grown-up on the road and they call you or send you, you must go, that is respect. (K-K-25)

The parents (K-P-15, K-P-16, K-P-37) instead emphasised obedience. They offered practical examples, adding that a collaborative teenager needs to be flexible in following instructions, needs to be God-fearing, and needs to have a very positive attitude toward adults.

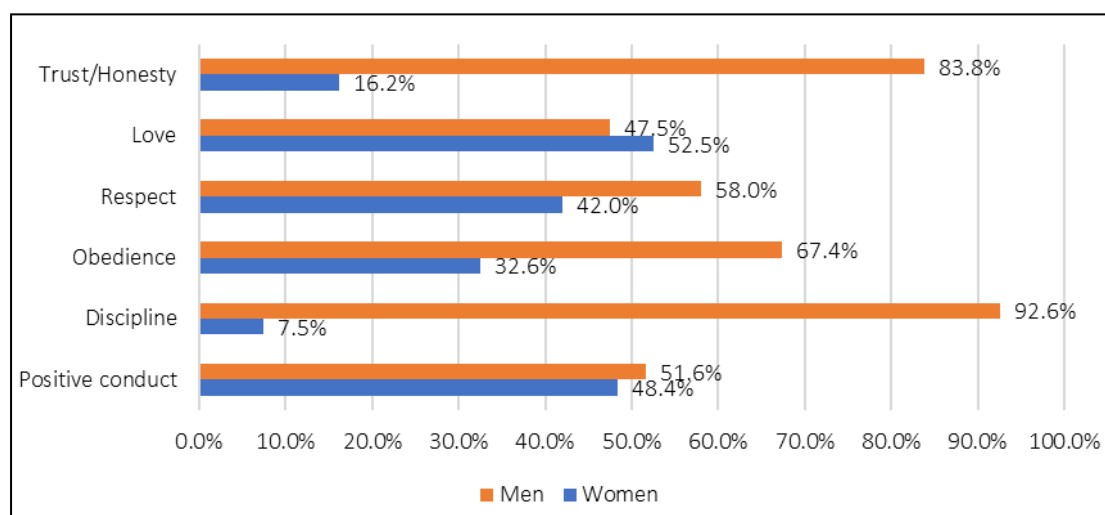
Then there is another set of codes that covers the whole area of community values. It ranges from sharing and helping people in need, to the sphere of more “emotional” values such as love and relationships with others.

It is adolescents who, more than others, consider the value dimension: young collaborators “always love peace and love talking to people” (K-A-01), “they like sharing, they advise people” (K-A-03), or they are friendly and respectful (K-A-05, K-A-06). Still others highlighted love, care for others, and readiness to listen (K-A-13, K-A-15, K-A-18). The youngest sample of interviewees identified collaboration with a set of values that belong to tradition and that translate into a set of attitudes that enhance relationships and care for others.

The parents (K-P-01, K-P-07, K-P-30), on the other hand, spoke of hard work as a characteristic of young people with collaborative skills. Although these extracts are a minority, they highlight the needs of the parents interviewed, which is often that of having domestic help in supporting needs.

In conclusion, most of the excerpts linked to positive conduct are connected to values and not so much to behaviour. The daily experience of values shapes positive conduct more than obedience, discipline, and exemplary attitude.

Figure 16: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Behaviours and Values of Collaboration, by Gender



Regarding the category of the participants, it is interesting to note the high presence, in almost all the codes, of the key persons’ excerpts and the low percentage of adolescents’ excerpts. Parents more often mentioned the importance of having good behaviour for being a collaborative person, unlike the adolescents who mainly denoted trust or honesty or faithfulness and love. For more detailed information see Appendix 4.

3.2.5 Related Skills

The interviews also explored the relevance of other skills related to collaboration. As observed in Table 7 below, only three skills were identified, and the frequency of excerpts that include these skills is low.

Table 7: Codes and Excerpts That Emerged as Related Skills

CATEGORY: RELATED SKILLS CODES	PARTICIPANTS (SOURCES)	%	EXCERPTS	%
Problem solving	6	8	8	61.53
Decision making	3	4	3	23.07
Self-awareness	2	2.66	3	23.07
TOTAL	75		13	

At the time of coding, the skills related to collaboration were identified as critical thinking, creativity, self-awareness, and decision making. In the Kenyan sample, however, the skills presented in Table 7 were only associated with collaboration in three excerpts (e.g., K-K-20, K-P-09, K-K-06).

Even if the frequency of these skills related to collaboration was very low, disaggregated data can be observed by gender, category, and sub-county in Figures 17, 18, and 19 to compare the different prevalence in the different groups. In a nutshell, we can conclude that the few excerpts mentioned in these skills belonged to the female key persons in Mwea East and Kibra.

Figure 17: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Skills Related to Collaboration, by Gender

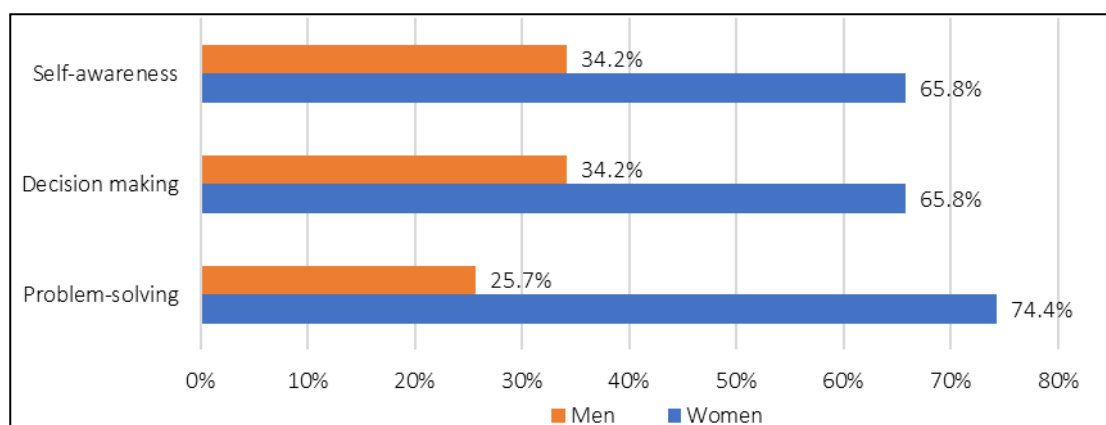


Figure 18: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Skills Related to Collaboration, by Category

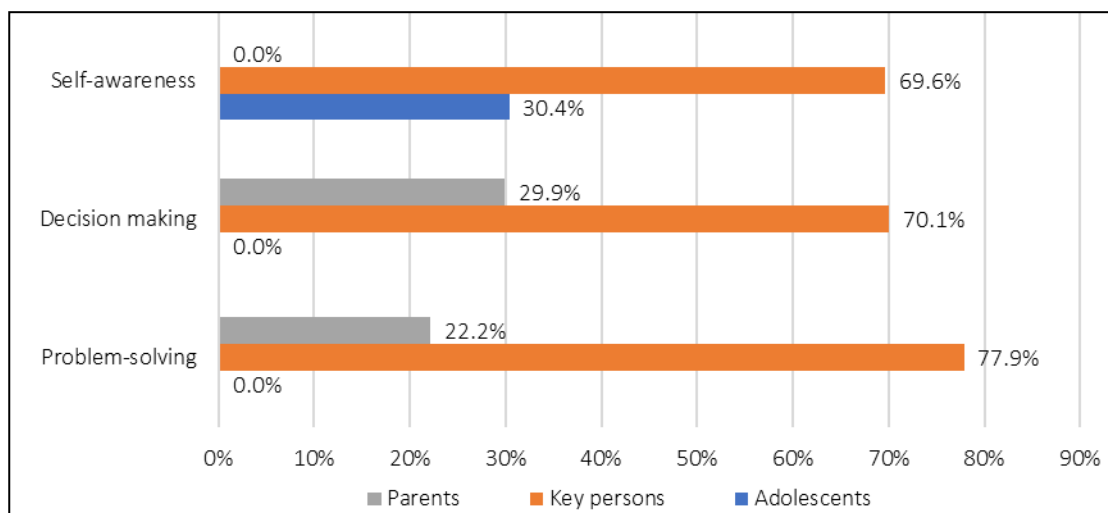
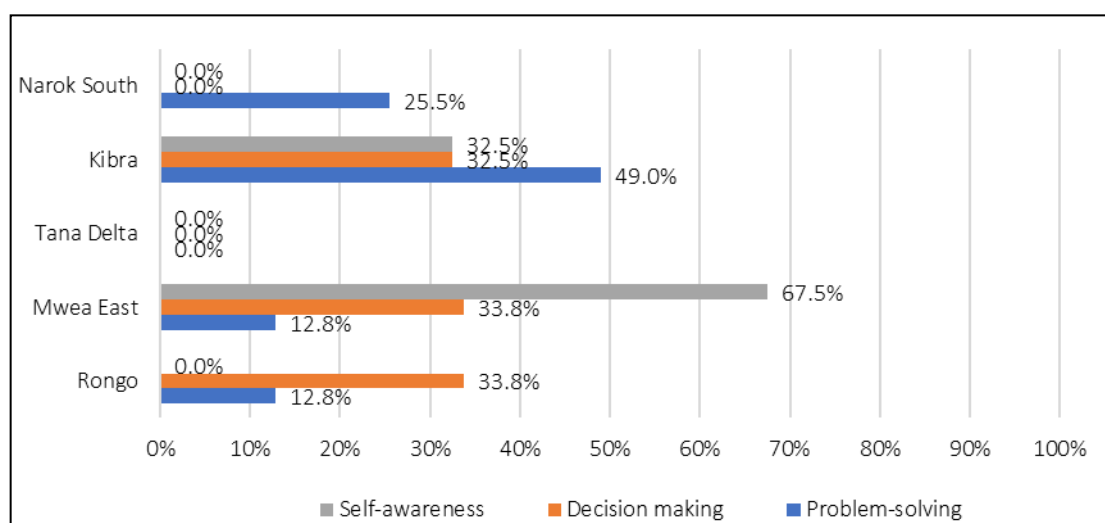


Figure 19: Percentage of Excerpts That Include Skills Related to Collaboration, by Sub-County



The ability to make decisions, identified here as a related skill, is discussed in the context of conflict resolution. The good collaborator “[has to] consider herself and also, others that is, if it is in the case of an argument or an issue that has come up and gives her decision fairly” (K-K-20), or similarly, “he is able to observe things and decide on how to solve family issues” (K-P-09).

Six participants (K-K-34, K-K-20, K-K-32, K-K-13, K-P-31, K-P-04) identified a very interesting connection between collaboration and problem solving. A participant who was asked what a person’s behaviour would be if she were to be considered collaborative responded that it was about “the way she handles her matters. And also, I’ve been in some groups with her. And she also has a lot of problem-solving skills and ideas” (K-K-20).

Shortly thereafter, the very same participants explicitly said that problem solving is a necessary skill for being a good collaborator. Another participant emphasized that

collaboration was good and important because “it brings people together and can help to solve a problem” (K-K-32).

Finally, one participant identified a connection between the skills of collaboration, problem solving, and self-awareness saying, “Whenever love prevails in a group of people, they are able to collaborate. Being self-aware helps in solving many problems” (K-K-13). This continuity between skills is a very interesting aspect because they are not actually closed boxes, but rather, communicating entities that contribute to each other.

As the table shows, the most significant co-occurrence from a numerical standpoint is that of respect. The theme of respect emerges in the interviews in various ways. When some parents (K-P-37, K-P-38, K-P-39, K-P-15) were asked to exemplify or explain the traits of a collaborative teenager, they introduced the subject of respect by saying that a person was cooperative if they showed respect. Therefore, a person is cooperative when he is respectful; there is no collaboration without respect, which is a prerequisite of this skill. This connection between collaboration and respect is also emphasized by key persons, who said that respect is a necessary skill for being collaborative (K-K-08, K-K-05).

It emerges from this discussion on related skills that the boundary between skills, related skills, and disposition in the local understanding is blurred. There is a general perception of collaborative conduct as something positive, community-centred, and that values the needs of others; however, there is no analytical perception of the components of collaboration as a skill.

3.2.6 Support Systems and Enabling Factors

The role different systems play in enhancing collaboration skills was also explored in the interviews. Table 8 summarizes the frequency of excerpts and participants that mentioned the two main systems (family and school) as well as other contexts identified by the participants: place of worship, community, and friends.

Table 8: Codes That Emerged as Support Systems and Enabling Factors of Collaboration

CATEGORY: SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND ENABLING FACTORS CODES	PARTICIPANTS (SOURCES)	%	EXCERPTS	%
Family	40	55.33	45	22,61
School or training	37	49.33	39	19,10
Place of worship	17	22.66	18	9,05
Community or development partners	17	22.66	18	9,05
Friends or peers	12	16	13	6,53
TOTAL	75		86	

An overview of the frequency of excerpts that include the main codes used as support systems and enabling factors of collaboration are presented by gender and category in Figure 1, and by sub-county in Figure 2.

Figure 20: Frequency of Excerpts That Include School or Training, Family, Community, Friends, and Place of Worship, by Gender and Category

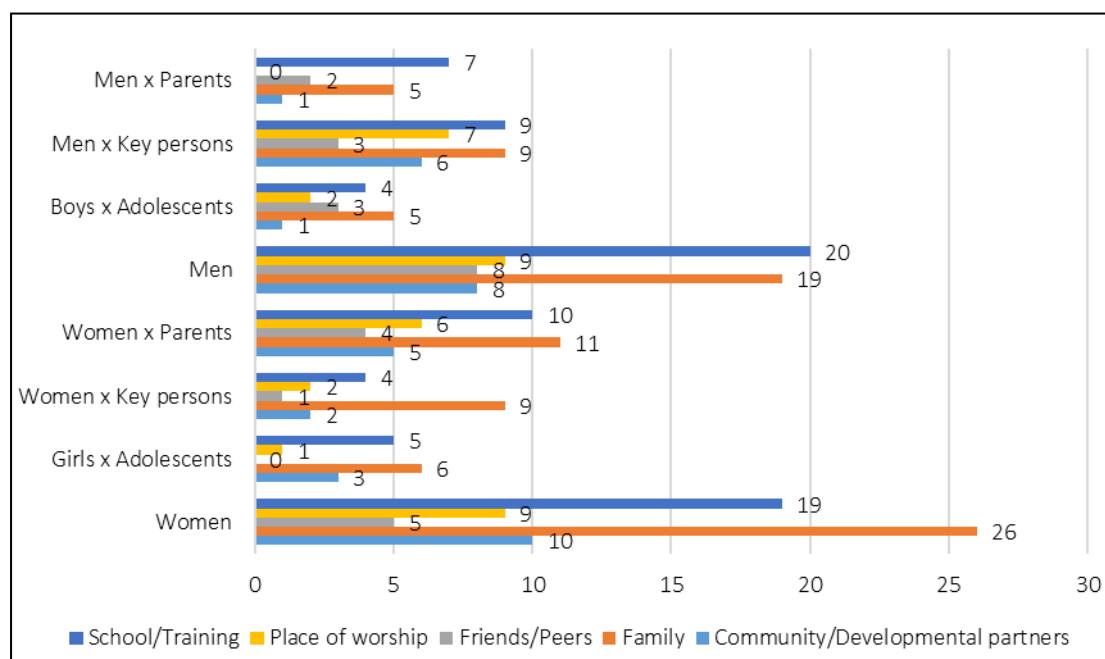
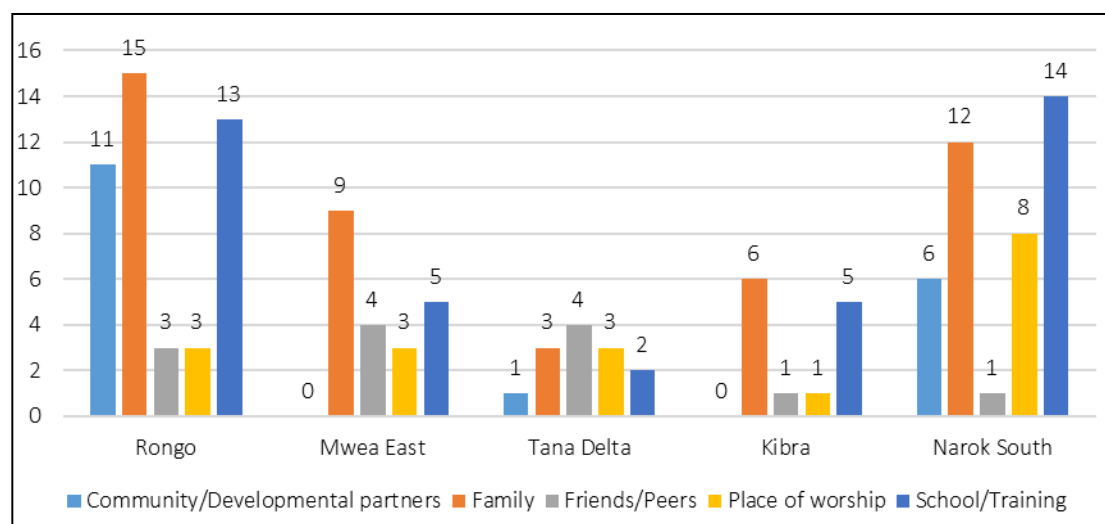


Figure 21: Frequency of Excerpts That Include School or Training, Family, Community, Friends, and Place of Worship, by Sub-County.



Support systems are places and contexts in which collaboration is taught and learned. It can be said that they are those places where collaboration is “transferred.” In any case, they are the necessary tools to foster the development of collaboration among adolescents.

All key persons interviewed (K-K-01, K-K-02, K-K-04, K-K-05, K-K-06, K-K-08, K-K-13, K-K-16, K-K-20, K-K-25, K-K-28, K-K-29, K-K-33, K-K-35) recognized the family as fundamental for teaching and learning collaboration. Indeed, that is where every child belongs and where daily challenges are shared. A similar perception is seen among parents. “I can say that for collaboration, the parent should join hands with the child and teach the child the right way”

K-P-28. Even teenagers said that the family was the place where they were encouraged and where they learned life lessons (K-A-11).

School also plays an important role as an environment for personal growth and development. An interviewee (K-A-34) underscored the fact that school and family were where young people spent the most time and, therefore, where learning takes place. Parents in particular highlighted that school is an environment where children could learn to prevent and manage problems that might appear in life. One parent says:

To empower [students] with certain things, let us put them in things like any skills, put them in its tuition or education, things like that or a seminar, if they are taught certain things, if it is a boychild they should be kept in it, teach them certain things relating to boychild, if it is the girls (child crying in the background) teach them what things to avoid, and avoid what will give them like pregnancy, peer pressure, truancy, in a ghetto way. (K-P-30)

Parents often made explicit statements on the value of education and the positivity of teachers: “It is education that causes a child to be lively, the child will be happy with the teacher such that if they are asked to stay at home they will refuse and go to school so that they get something that can challenge their mind” (K-P-28).

The community itself as a unit that includes families and teachers is in itself educational, because the experiences of both sub-units contribute to each other: “There is good collaboration among the people in the community. There is good relation between parents, children, and the community” (K-P-23).

It is interesting to note that when asked about the places where cooperation could be strengthened, most of the answers referred to the community and the places of belonging, from the smallest to the largest: family, school, community. Nobody talked specifically about the workplace, but they spoke of the communities to which they belong. Collaboration is, therefore, denoted as something that happens in a community setting.

Friends and places of worship were also mentioned as enhancing collaboration. Religion itself promotes fundamental community values such as respect and justice. The peer group, on the other hand, is the most immediate network in which collaboration can be exercised. All of these collaborative environments are then linked into the experience of community members as they move from churches to family to group meetings, bringing their values and experience of collaboration: “Volunteering my time in church fellowships, having good time management to avoid absenteeism in meetings, and improving on communication by using respectful language in groupings” (K-P-15).

A good number (K-A-07, K-K-20, K-K-05, K-K-33, K-P-35, K-A-18, K-K-31, K-P-40, K-A-34, K-K-08, K-A-05, K-A-13, K-P-38, K-K-03, K-A-38, K-P-04, K-A-08, K-P-34, K-K-18, K-P-36, K-P-02, K-P-17, K-P-31, K-K-29) of participants who responded to the question about what enhances collaboration mentioned working together/staying together, highlighting the act and the circumstances of being together rather than the particular place (family, place of worship, etc.).

Two excerpts mentioned experience as a relevant factor for becoming more collaborative. This is why that code was not included in the analysis in Table 8. Nevertheless, the excerpts are important for understanding the factors that enhance collaboration, as can be seen in the following statement of an adolescent:

Experience is the best teacher; I've grown knowing that e.g., in marriage if couples fight children suffer most, they will probably drop out of school. My mother tells me, "maisha ni kupitia," and we can all learn from our mistakes, but at the same time, we need to be humility. (K-A-29)

3.2.7 Assessment Methods

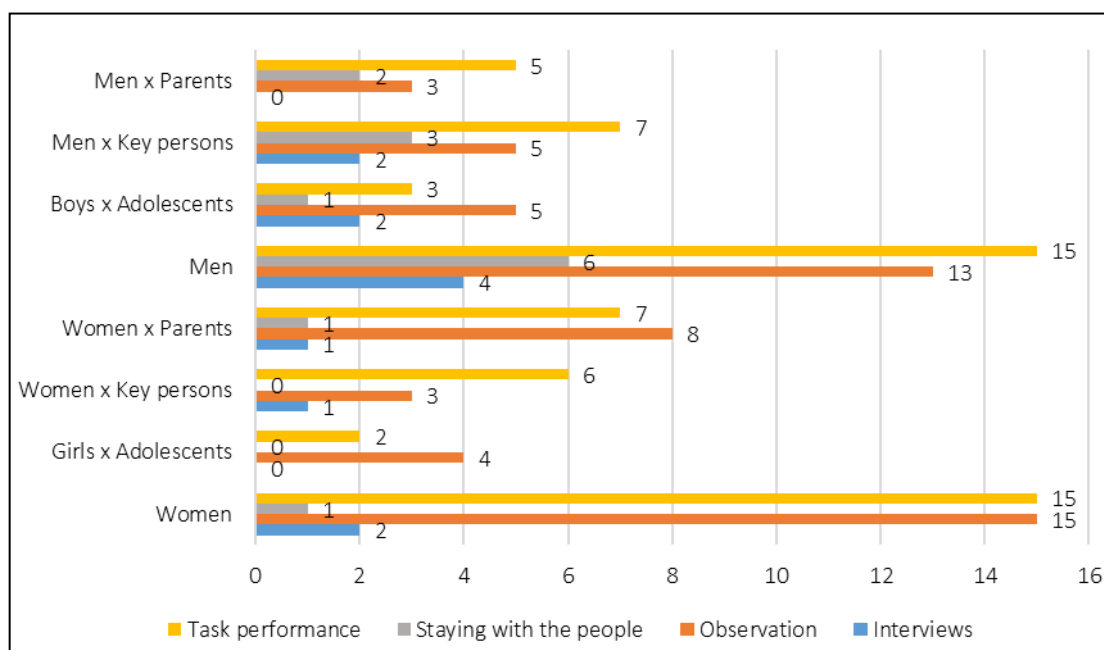
One of the last questions included in the interviews was intended to ascertain possible methods and strategies to identify and assess collaboration skills and characteristics of collaborative people. As can be observed in Table 9, researchers identified four methods, with a special focus on prevalence of task performance and observation.

Table 9: Codes That Emerged for Assessing Collaboration

CATEGORY: ASSESSMENT METHOD CODES	PARTICIPANTS (SOURCES)	%	EXCERPTS	%
Task performance	30	40	31	41.33
Observation	28	37.33	28	37.33
Interview	6	8	7	10.76
Staying with the people	6	8	7	10.76
TOTAL	75		65	

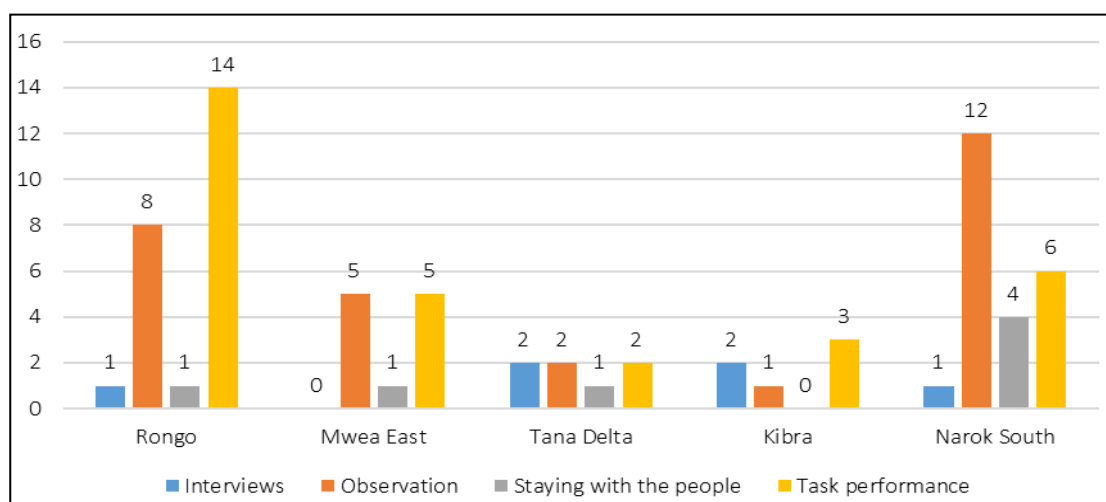
Figures 20 and 21 present an overview of the presence of each particular method in the interviews compared by gender, category, and sub-county.

Figure 22: Frequency of Excerpts That include Task Performance, Observation, Interview, and Staying with People, by Gender and Category



As can be observed in Figure 20, task performance and observation are the main methods identified as collaboration assessment tools regardless of gender and category.

Figure 23: Frequency of Excerpts That Include Task Performance, Observation, Interview, and Staying with People, by Sub-County



As can be observed in

Table 9 and Figures 20 and 21, observation and task performance are the main assessment methods identified by the participants for determining whether a youth possesses collaboration skills, covering the 37.3% (28 excerpts from 28 sources) and 41.3% (31 excerpts from 30 sources).

It is interesting how one parent, when speaking of observation as an assessment tool, paid attention to the details that characterize collaborative behaviour:

You will know by looking at how they live together, cooperate, play together, and how they will spend the evenings together. They will be able to sit together and talk without fighting or insulting each other. (K-P-23)

Only a few participants identified interviews (6 participants and 10.8% of the excerpts) and staying with the people (6 participants and 10.8 % of the excerpts) as effective tests for collaboration.

The fact that most participants indicate observation as an assessment tool reveals how difficult it is to assess collaboration. Indeed, even if observation as an assessment method was mentioned, there was no reference to activity and a tool to use when observing a particular person or sample.

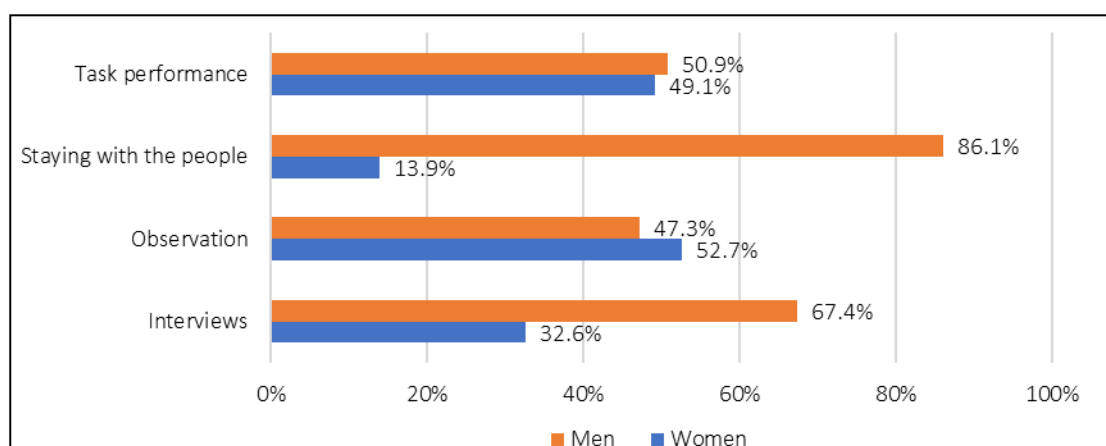
Assigning a task and verifying whether it was performed in a collaborative way is identified as an effective test of collaboration. Very often, however, even the task is not detailed enough: “Give a task with a group of children to see how he cooperates with them” (K-P-35)

In conclusion, the interviewees mainly suggested situations that require collaboration. They also suggested observing behaviour in a situation where the problem to be tackled required peer involvement in the solution process.

The fact that no one has pictured a real test reveals the nature of collaboration as a skill. It is cross-cutting and requires interaction with others. For this reason, it is difficult to test. It is more meaningful to think of observing it in people’s attitudes and interactions with one another.

When we disaggregate data by gender, it becomes clear that men mention more of these assessment strategies—especially staying with people—compared to women.

Figure 24: Frequency of Excerpts That Include Task Performance, Observation, Interview, and Staying with People, by Gender



4 CONCLUSIONS

Seventy-five interviews (of 36 women and 39 men) divided into three categories (adolescents, key persons, and parents) and five regions or sub-counties, have shed light on the contextualised understanding of collaboration. From the analyses of these interviews, 7 categories and 42 codes (in some cases used interchangeably in more than one category) were identified. The categories that were intended to synthesise the information include definition, subskills, dispositions, behaviours and values, related skills, support systems, and assessment strategies of collaboration.

The interviews analysed in this report aimed to investigate how Kenyans understand and conceptualize collaboration. The culture, the tradition, and the way of collaborating at the local level give the perception of this skill its particular qualities.

One of the most relevant results from these analyses is therefore the frequent use of working together to define collaboration, with no emphasis on work but on being together in its essence. As one participant clearly stated, collaboration is “being together in its essence.” This aspect plays a key role because it is necessary to identify the reason why we work together: if, for the majority of the participants, it is not for a common goal, then what is its purpose? For Kenyans, being together is inspired by a need and not a goal. Close to this finding is the frequency with which respondents used teamwork or cooperation as a synonym for collaboration.

Related to these intertwined social and individual components is the cross-cutting presence of certain values throughout most of the interviews. Even if there was no specific question about values, the participants mentioned respect, trust, love, and unity as prerequisites necessary for collaboration with others. Overall, men mentioned behaviours and values such as discipline, honesty, obedience, and respect more than women did. Only love was mentioned more by women.

The opposite percentage of occurrence was found in the skills related to collaboration, where women mentioned the following more than men: problem solving, decision making, and self-awareness.

As regards the subskills identified by the participants, it is important to note that both men and women mentioned the attributes of teamwork and relationship skills many times. Men emphasised goal setting while women stressed expressive communication.

Support systems are places and contexts in which collaboration is taught and learned. It can be said that they are those places where the collaboration is “transferred.” In this regard, it is paramount to note the high value placed on the family and the school, which means that collaboration can be taught in these contexts. Factors such as family background, the school context, and friends have been highlighted as relevant in boosting collaboration skills. On the other hand, these findings suggest that facilitating a collaborative culture within schools could make a difference in young people’s acquisition of this important skill.

The excerpts related to assessing collaboration reminded us of (and corroborated) the difficulty of measuring collaboration skills in the existing literature. What seemed to be common to most of the participants was the fact that observing behaviour, the accomplishment of a particular task, or staying with the people, could produce the information necessary for determining whether a person or a sample of people are collaborative. The last strategy suggested by some participants reminds us of the importance of ethnographic studies in the understanding of some variables or processes in a particular context.

At the sub-county level, it is important to note the overall absence of responses in Tana Delta and Kibra, and the high presence of the different codes in Rongo and Narok South. This finding raised concern about how the interviews were conducted in these sub-counties.

In conclusion, the literature review conducted before this contextualised work led to a consensus on the definition of collaboration as working together to achieve a common goal (Care et al., 2016; Kim & Care, 2020; Lai, 2011; Marek et al., 2015, among others). From the analysis of the interviews, however, the aspect of achieving a common goal is absent or is described otherwise; it is usually not related to the achievement of goals in the workplace but most frequently refers to the achievement of the common good of the participants' community. Since a person belongs to a certain community, that person is also expected to collaborate with the other members of that community. It should be noted that the definitions that emerged in the interviews align with the etymological meaning of collaboration. Collaboration comes from a Latin root *com* and *laborare*, meaning to work together. Similarly, Ofstedal and Dahlberg (2009) assert that "people who practice true collaboration create a shared vision with joint strategies when working on a problem, issue or goal" (p. 38).

The findings of this study remind us of the intertwined social and individual aspects of development as recognised by both Piaget and Vygotsky and help us to reflect on the three different theoretical positions in collaboration research: socio-constructivist, socio-cultural, and shared (or distributed) cognitive approaches. Across the axis between the 'individual' and the 'group', collaboration can be studied and measured as the individual skills (cognitive) in working collaboratively or in interacting with a group. Based on the participants interviewed in our study, we can conclude that when people collaborate in Kenya, a group is generated from a single cognitive system (Dillenbourg & Baker, 1996). It seems as if the environment is an integral part of cognitive activity, and not merely a set of circumstances in which context-independent cognitive processes are performed. Therefore, the focus should be placed largely on the social context, that is, the social communities in which these collaborators participate (Dillenbourg & Baker, 1996)..

In summary, the most relevant conclusion about the contextualised understanding of collaboration in Kenya is probably the Sense of Community or Sense of Belonging found in most of the definitions, explanations, and characterizations of a collaborative person and her values. Collaboration is not reduced to accomplishing tasks in the school or work settings, but a way of living and conceiving of ourselves. This awareness was reflected in the

interviews through the following expressions: working with others, togetherness, helping the community, sharing, unity, and the like.

4.1 Limitations of the Research

The findings presented in this report should be read in light of the limitations presented throughout the processes of planning, data collection, and data analysis.

Regarding the data collection process, the way the interviewers asked the questions had some influence on the participants' responses. Due to the large number of interviews, different styles were used to conduct them. For instance, some direct styles elicited particular responses due to the inclusion of leading explanations.

Researchers encountered two other difficulties in this process: the lack of familiarity with the participants and the challenge of interacting with the adolescents. Specific skills may have been necessary when interviewing adolescents.

The need to use the English language to ensure a common understanding of the sources and to share the findings with the scientific community and other stakeholders posed a challenge to the participants in terms of understanding the questions—especially for adolescents and parents. Most of them responded to the questions in their local languages with the added complexity of translations. The challenge of using the English language as a medium of communication and the need for translation into the local languages meant that during the interviews, some nuances and cultural connotations of the words used may have been lost in the process. The findings of the analysis of the data presented in this report were reviewed by the Kenyan researchers for cultural sensitivity.

Regarding the process of data analysis, the complexity of the study (including different skills in different countries) affected the treatment of the documents and the codebook. It was impossible to foresee all the challenges that would arise during the coding and analysis. Qualitative analysis required a systematic and collaborative process among the researchers involved in reading, analysing and coding the sources. Given the large number of interviews for such a qualitative study, a large number of researchers was involved in the process, increasing the challenges as well as the richness of the analysis. Nevertheless, different strategies were implemented to guarantee the reliability and accuracy of the findings. On the other hand, interviews were analysed in two rounds by the team in order to achieve sufficient inter-rater reliability. Raters maintained constant communication through daily meetings to share challenges, doubts, and suggestions.

Finally, it would have been beneficial to conduct a second round of interviews with the participants to verify whether their understanding of collaboration was included in the findings of this report.

4.2 Recommendations for Future Research and Assessment

A unique understanding of collaboration skills in the Kenyan context has emerged from this study. This should open a new path of research in order to develop more contextualised studies on life skills based on different cultures and contexts.

New strategies and assessment methods should be informed by these new contextualised studies and concepts. Authentic knowledge about the nature of a skill as used in a particular culture could inspire new methods of assessment.

Certain unique aspects of this study call into question the appropriateness and importance of conducting an inductive process. Therefore, more studies, including a qualitative participatory approach as a first step in developing assessment tools, are recommended. This finding supports the benefit of the mixed-method approach in assessment studies.

More iterative processes are also recommended in future studies to verify the preliminary findings.

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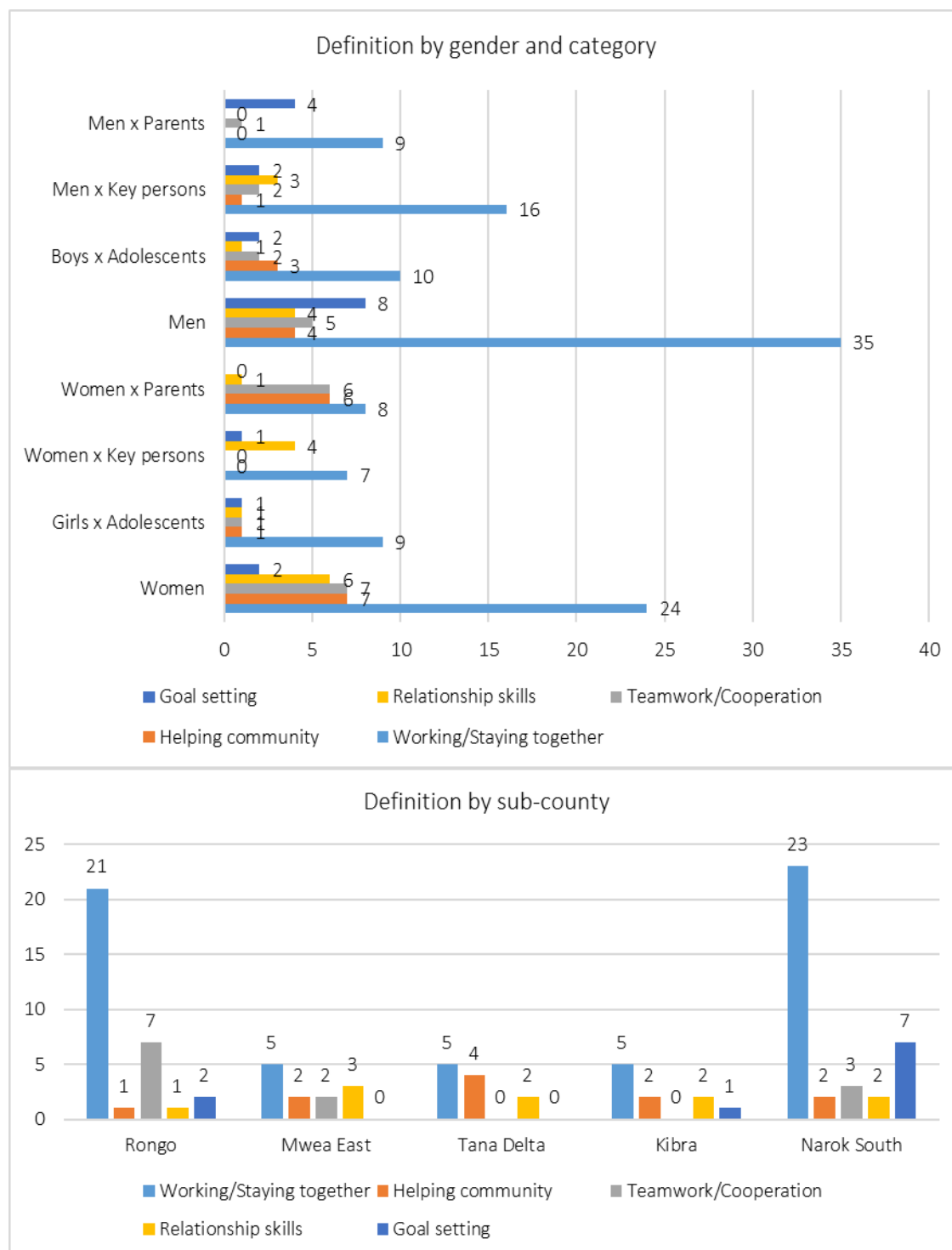
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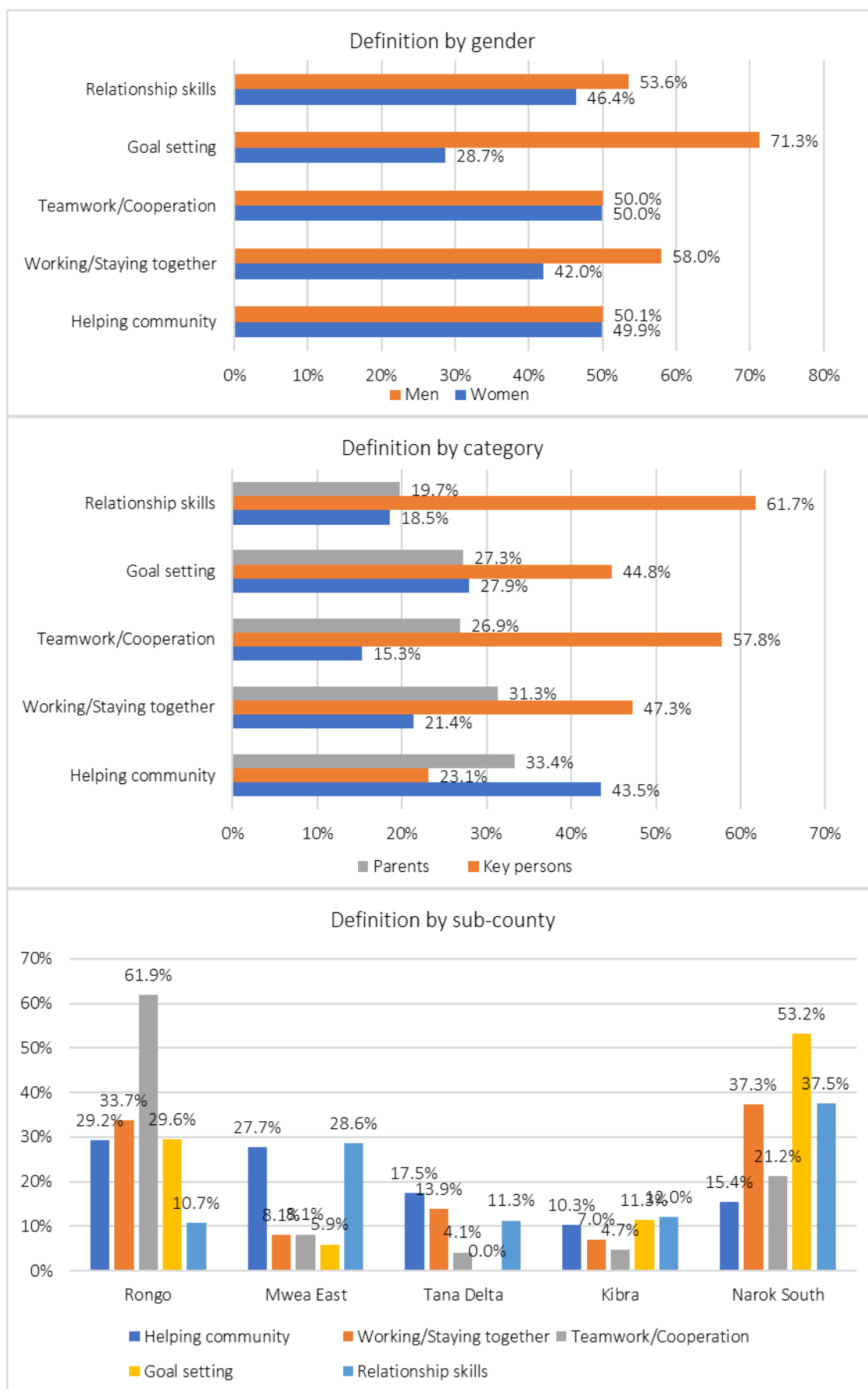
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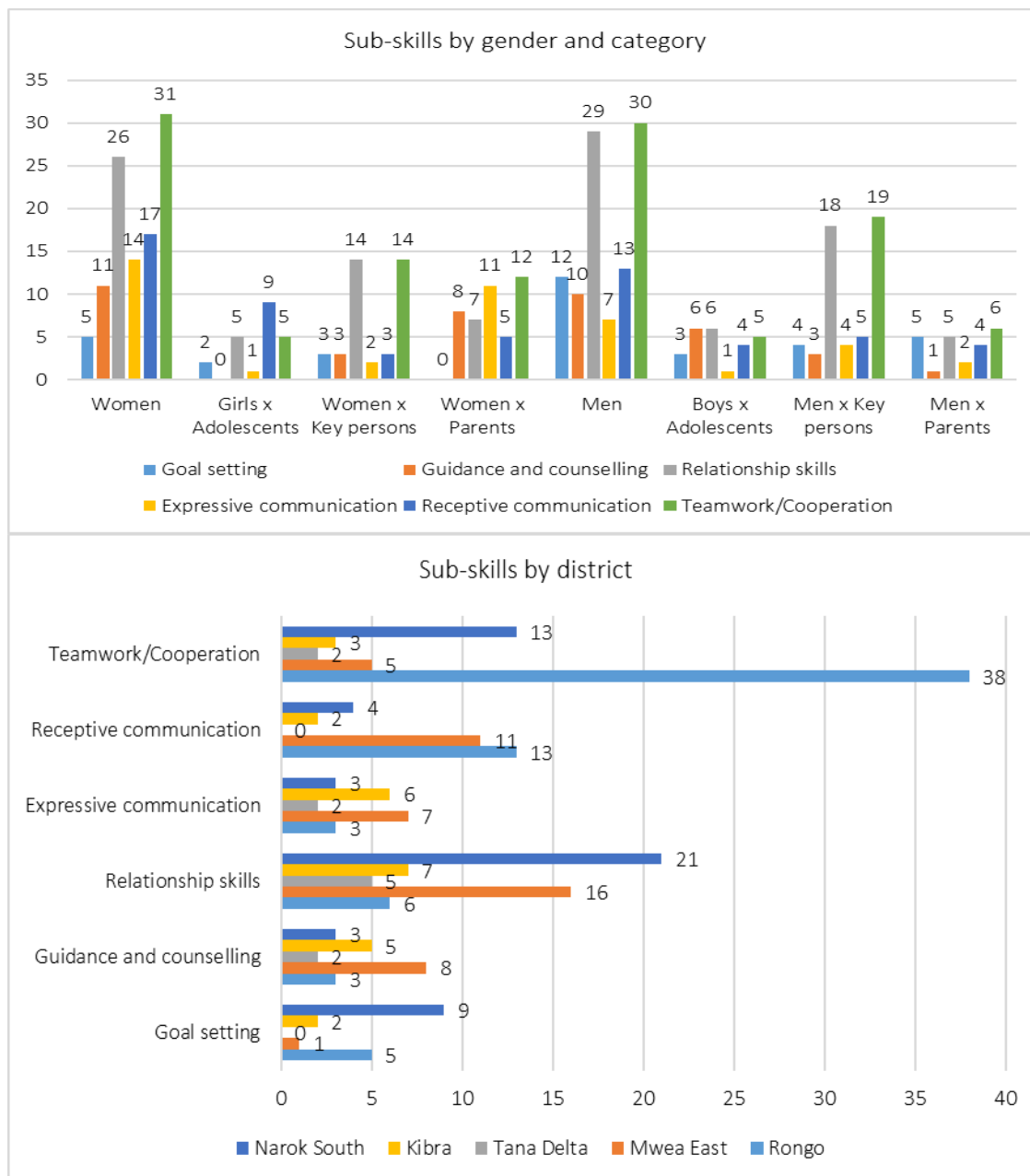
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Descriptive Analysis of the Main Definition Codes by Descriptors

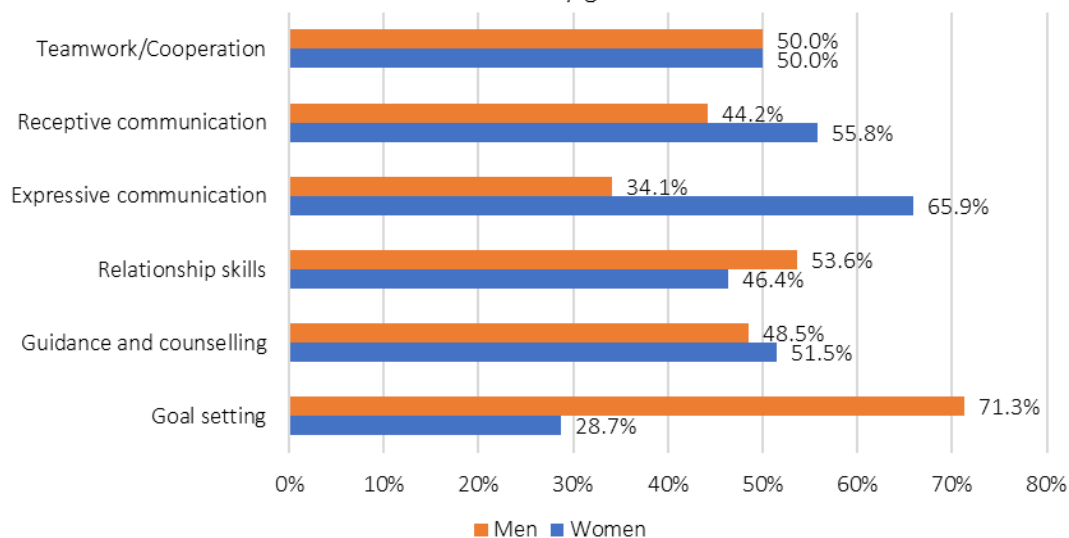




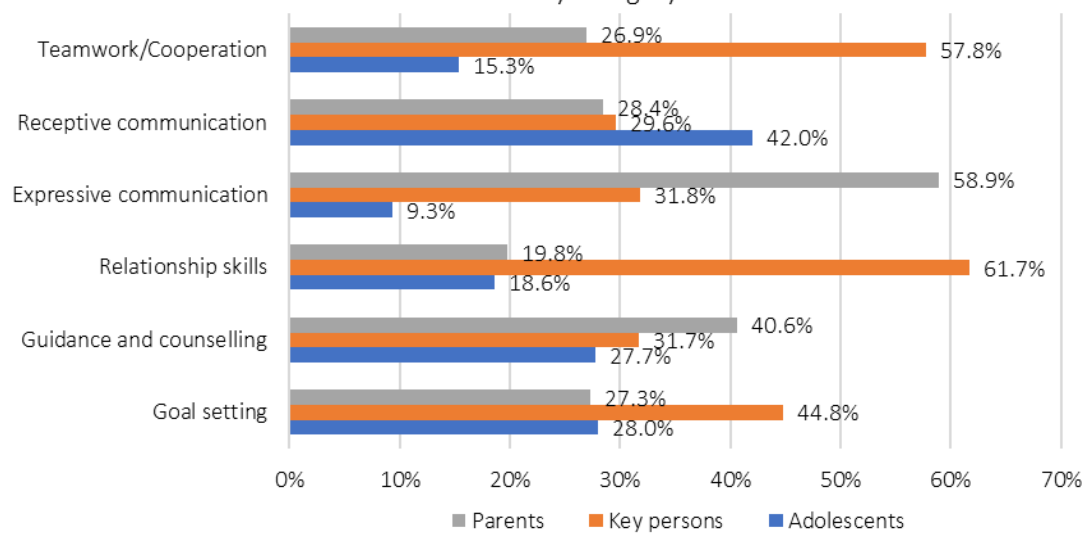
Appendix 2: Descriptive Analysis of the Main Subskills Codes by Descriptors



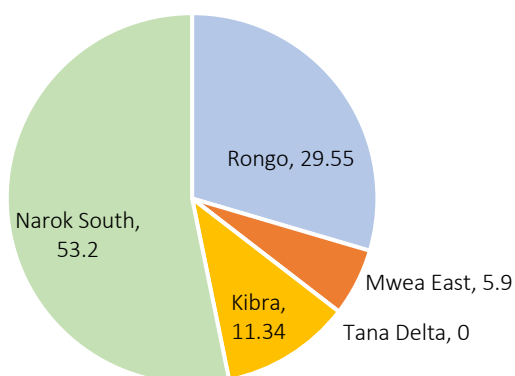
Sub-skills by gender



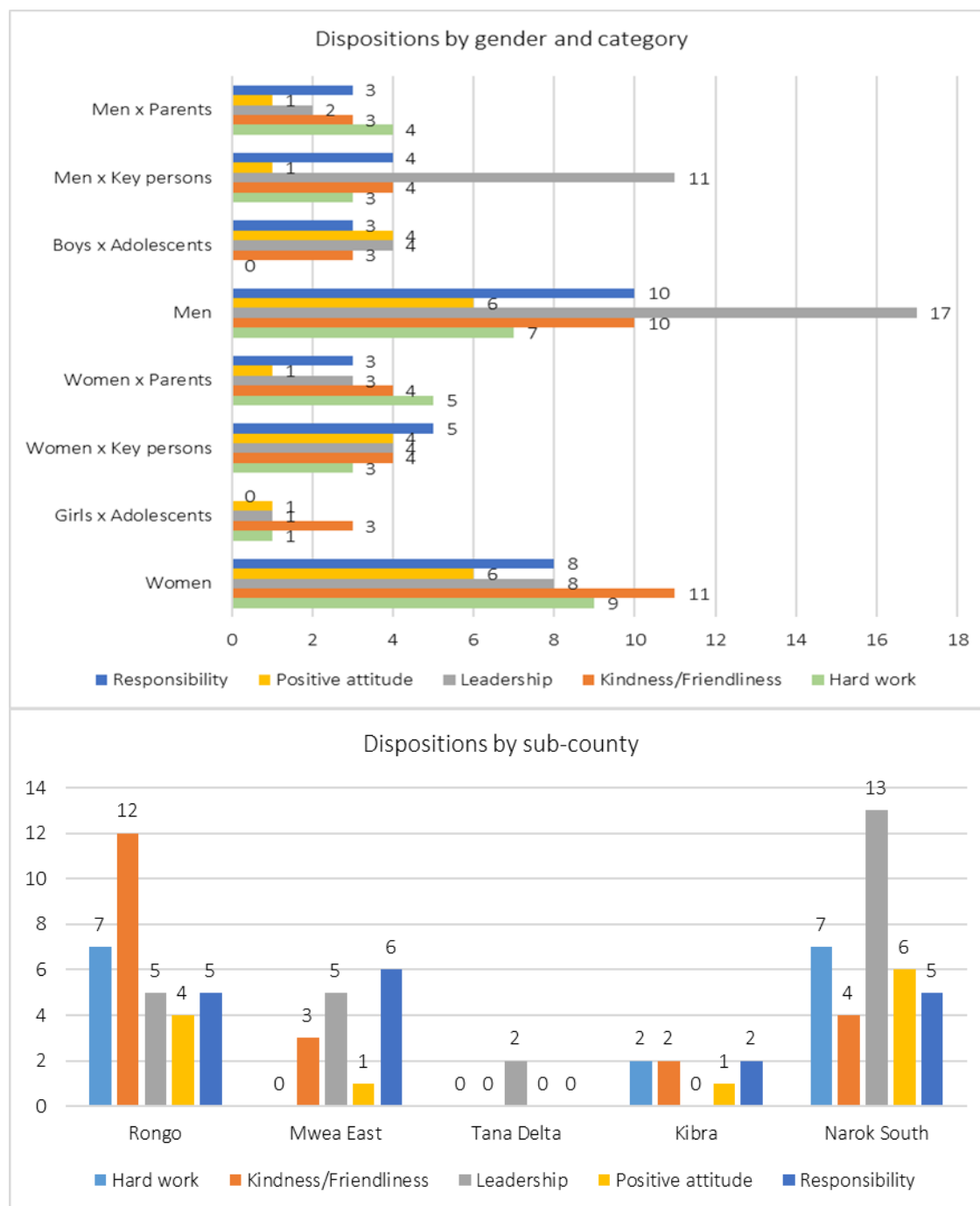
Sub-skills by category

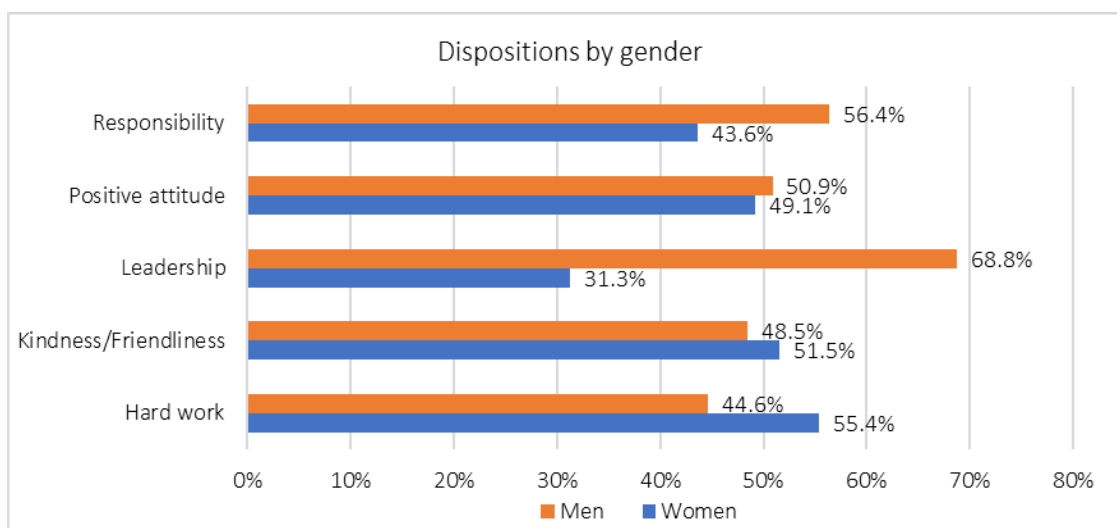
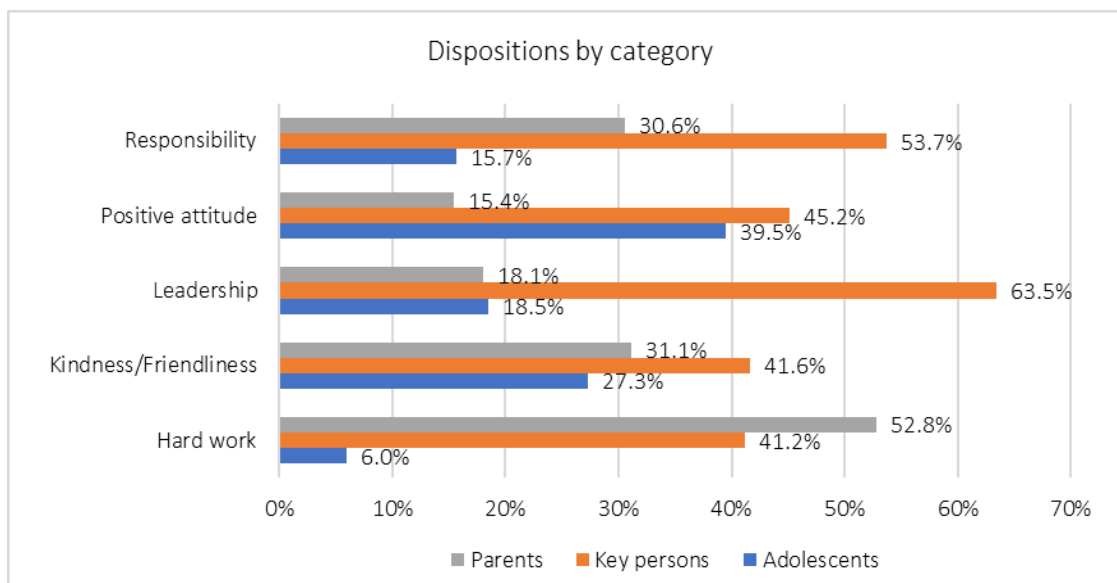


Goal setting by sub-county

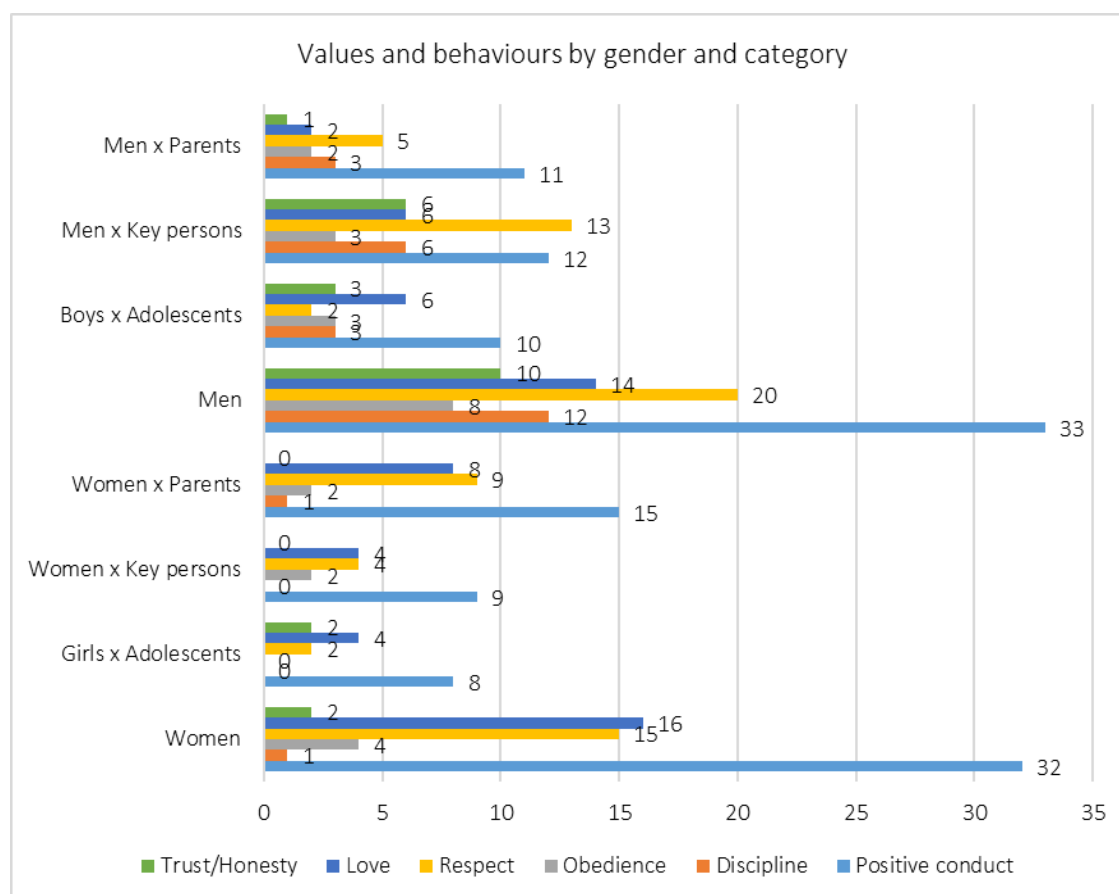
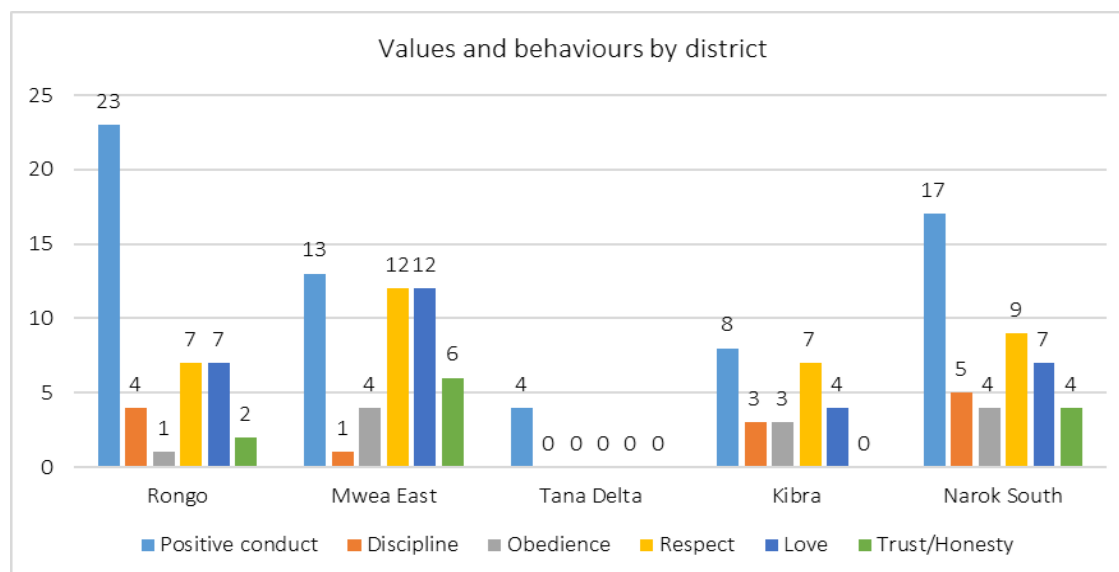


Appendix 3: Descriptive Analysis of the Main Dispositions Codes by Descriptors

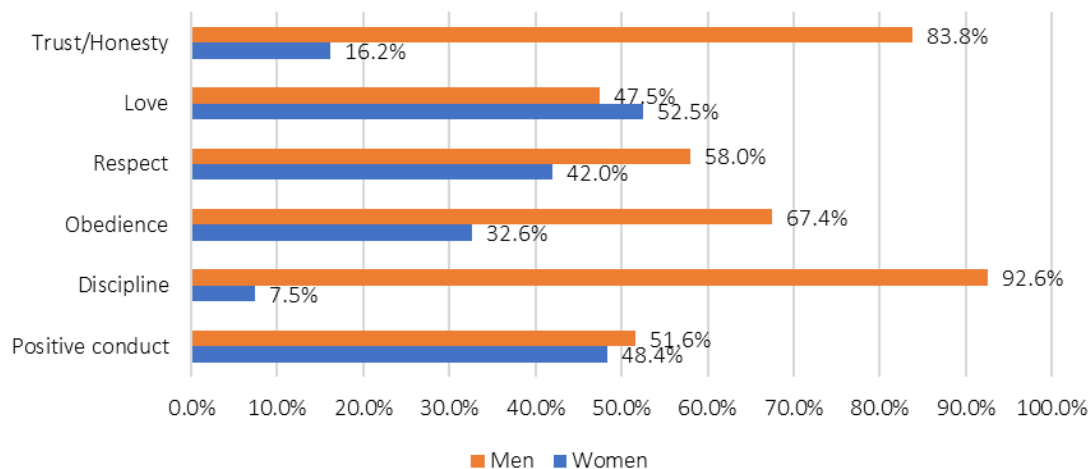




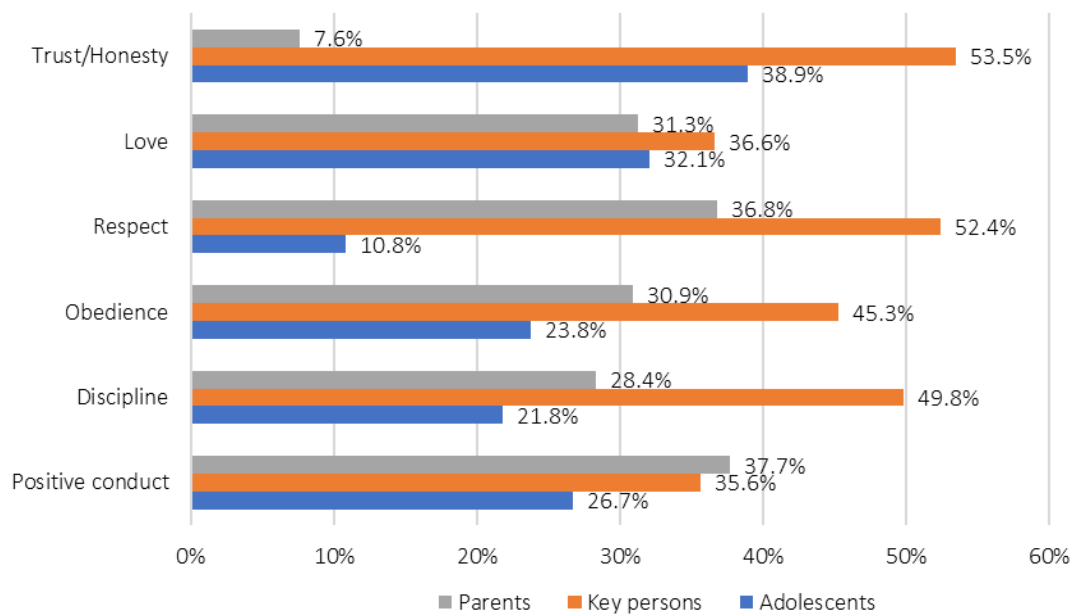
Appendix 4: Descriptive Analysis of the Main Values and Behaviours Codes by Descriptors



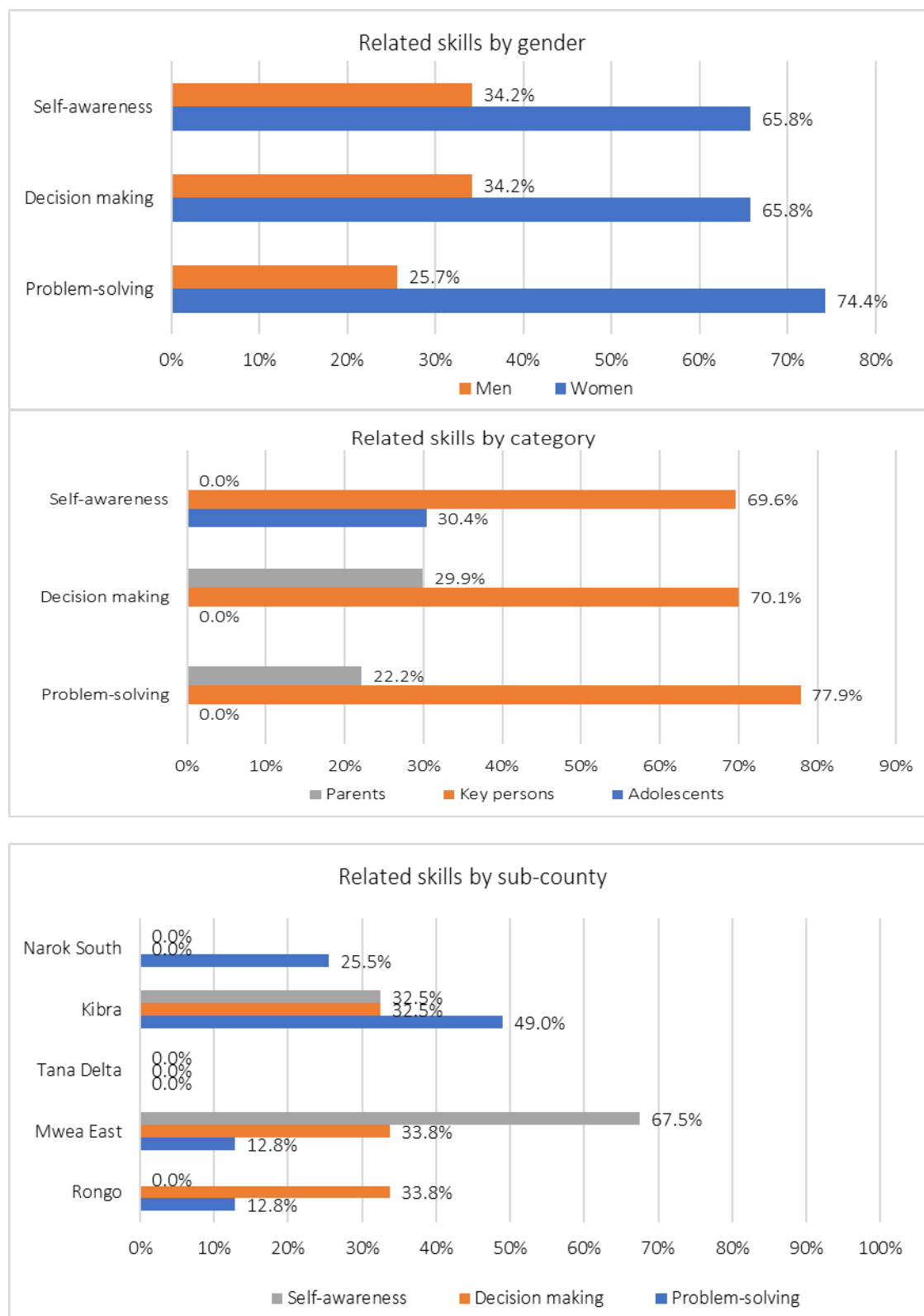
Values and behaviours by gender



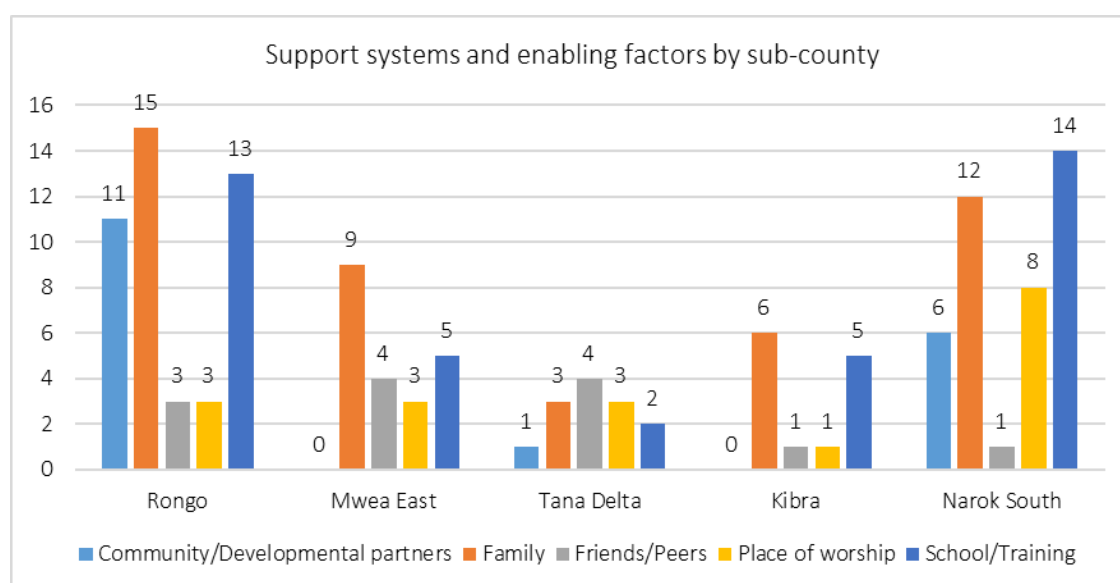
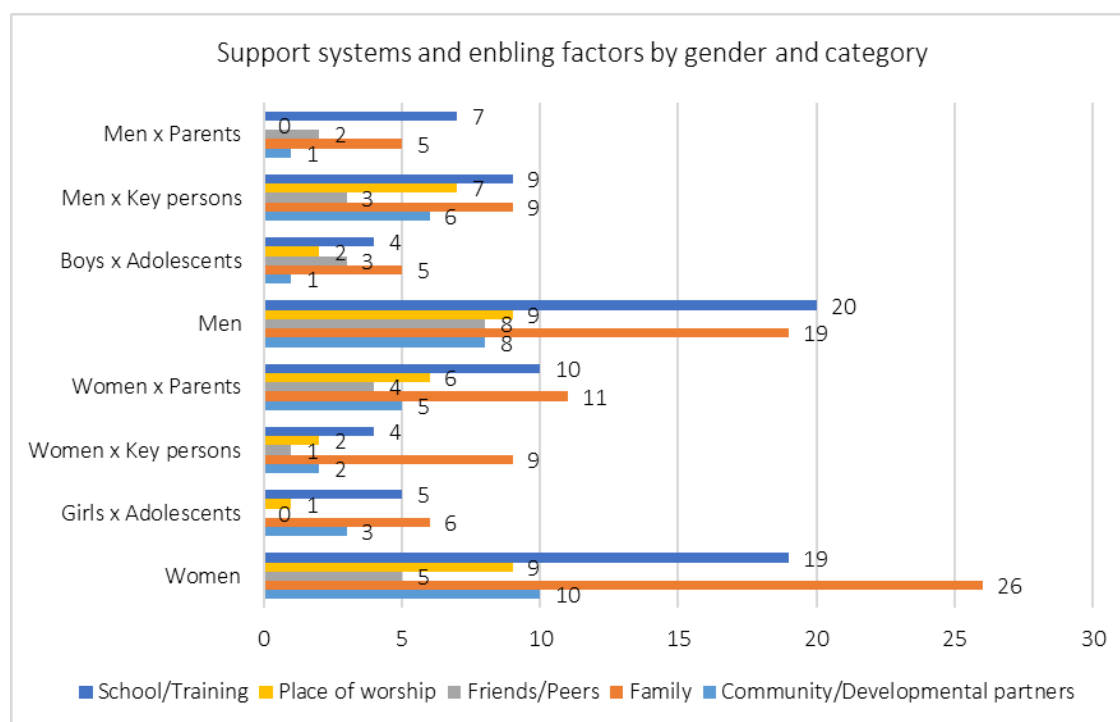
Values and behaviours by category



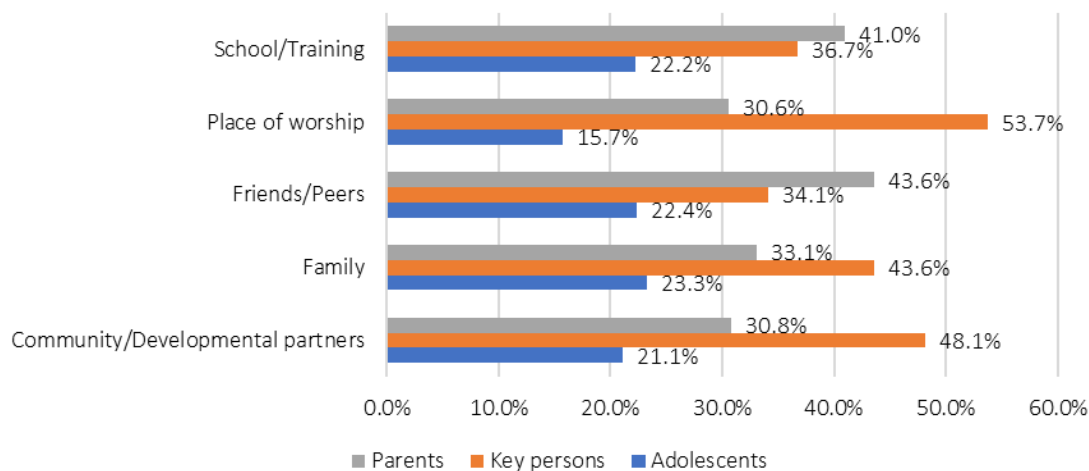
Appendix 5: Descriptive Analysis of the Main Related Skills Codes by Descriptors



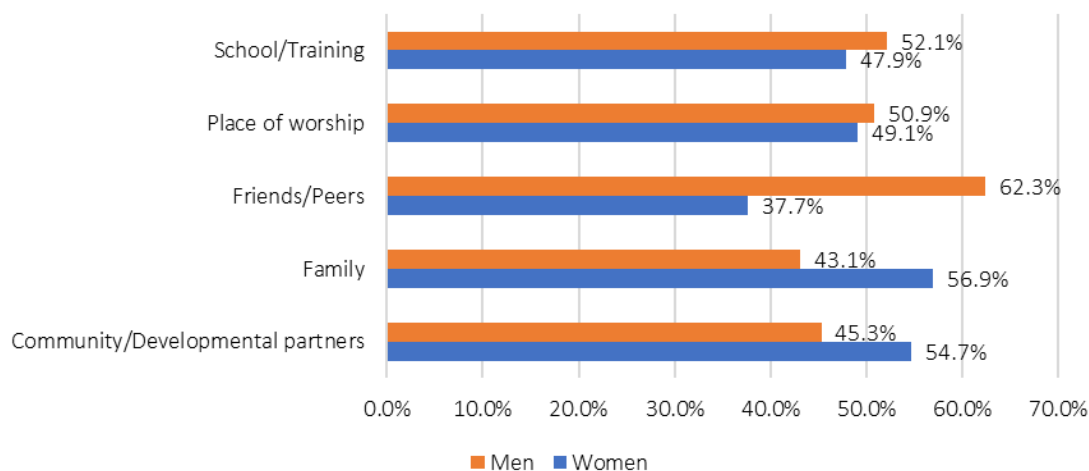
Appendix 6: Descriptive Analysis of the Main Support Systems and Enabling Factors by Descriptors



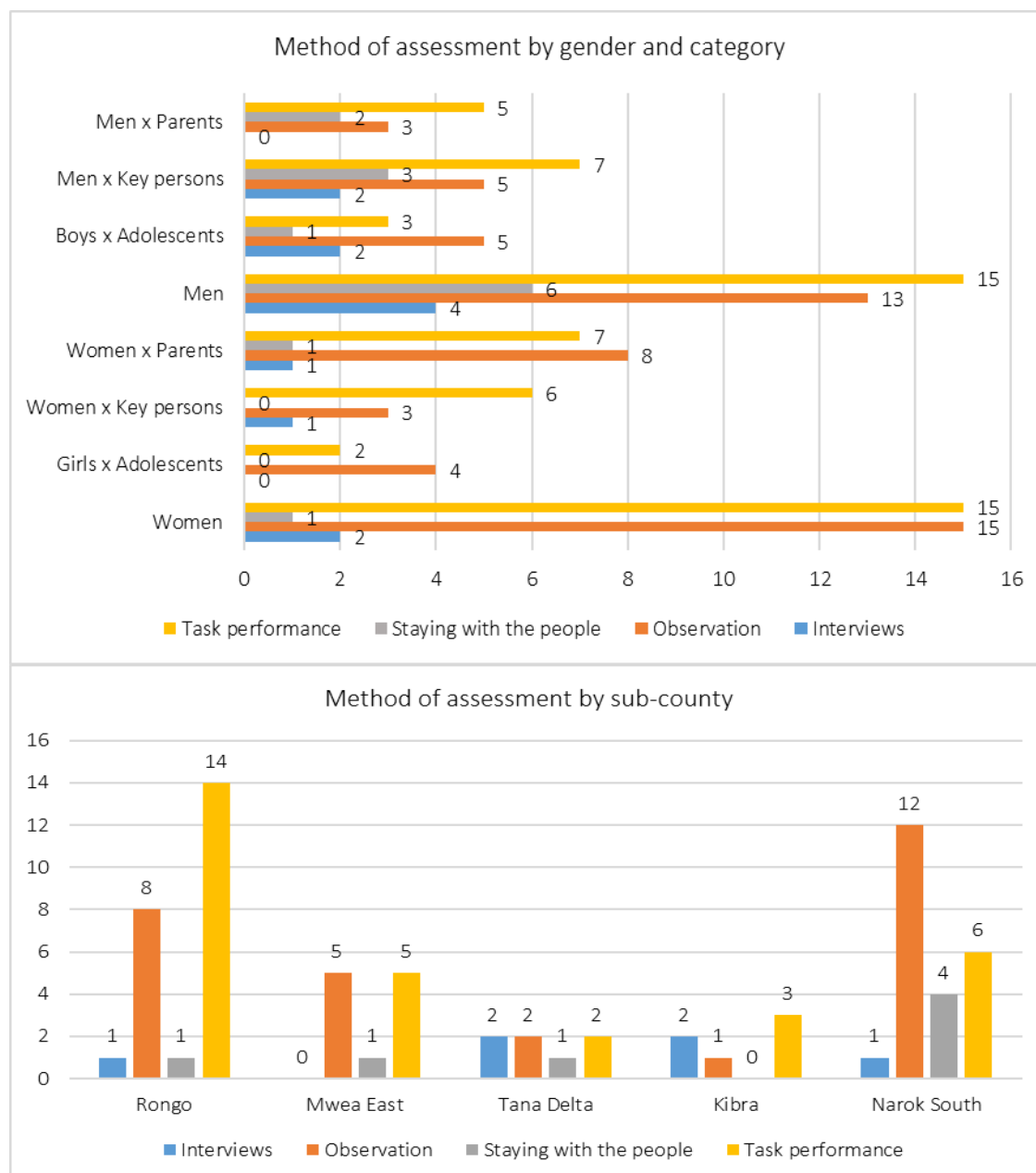
Support systems and enabling factors by category

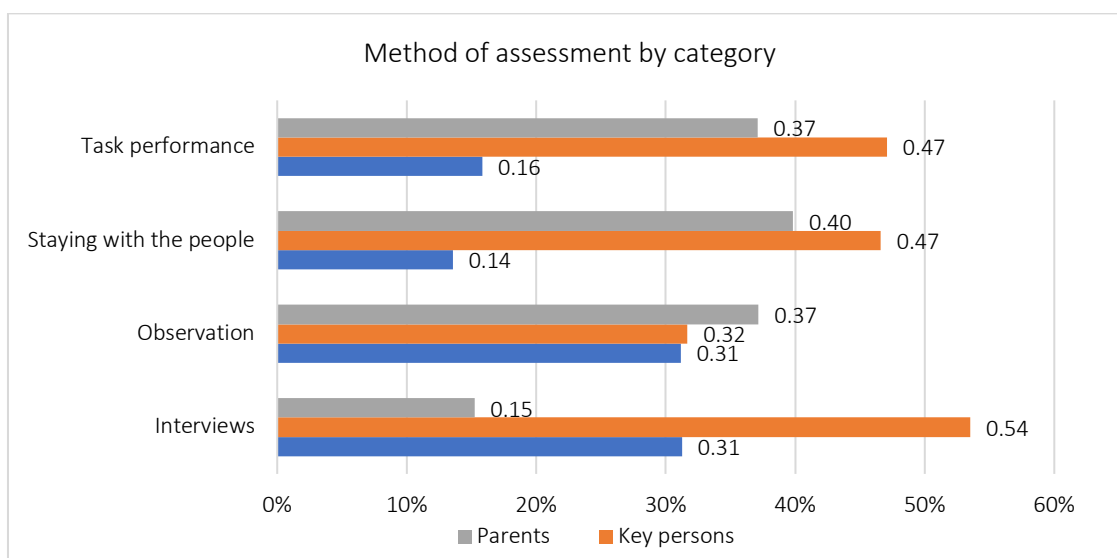
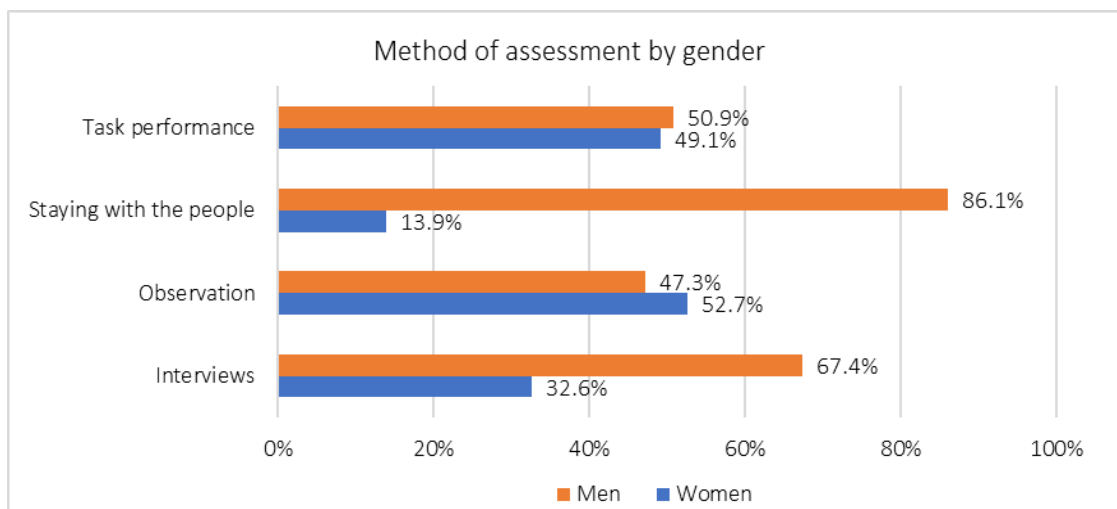


Support systems and enabling factors by gender



Appendix 7: Descriptive Analysis of the Main Assessment Methods Codes by Descriptors







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