

# The COVID-19 Pandemic and Higher Education Quality Systems in Africa

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# Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has left no aspect of modern life untouched.

It has created an unprecedented test on the rigidity of higher education systems across SSA.

IUCEA partnered with ESSA to conduct a survey in 2021, to understand the impact of the pandemic on HEIs.

This presentation is an extract from the survey report to demonstrate the impact of the pandemic on the quality of:

- Teaching, and learning
- Exams and assessment



The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the higher education sector in many new and unexpected ways

# Methodology

- Survey data was collected using an online tool (SurveyMonkey)
- Coverage: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, & Uganda
- Survey participants: students, faculty members, MOE officials, and HEI regulators.
- Data was collected between 12th April and 14th June 2021
- Overall, we had 1,658 responses with a 52% completion rate
- Enough responses for a statistical relevant analysis at regional level.





# Survey respondents' distribution

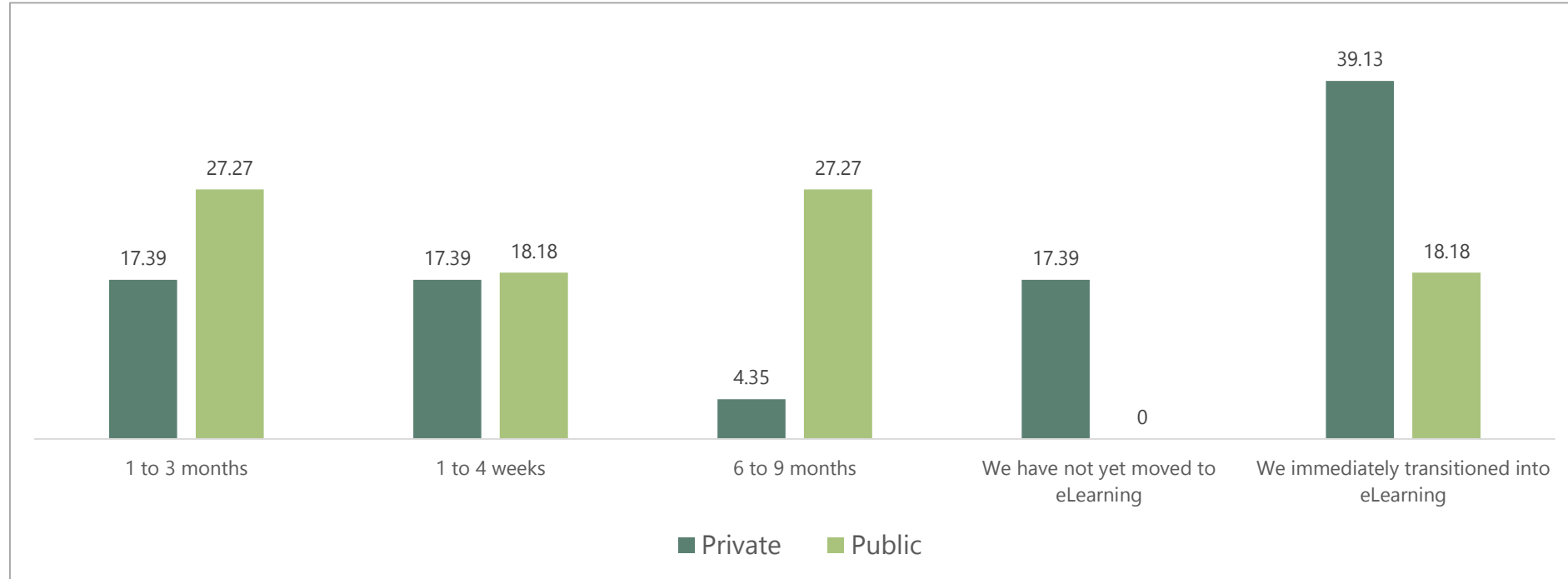
| Category           | Number | Completion rate (%) |
|--------------------|--------|---------------------|
| Faculty member     | 731    | 70                  |
| Students           | 803    | 38                  |
| VC/ Principal      | 65     | 52                  |
| Academic registrar | 48     | 42                  |
| MOE official       | 5      | 60                  |
| Regulator          | 6      | 50                  |



Approximately 97 percent of higher education students in SSA—roughly 750,00 people—had their studies abruptly dustrusted.

# COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND TEACHING, LEARNING, ASSESSMENT

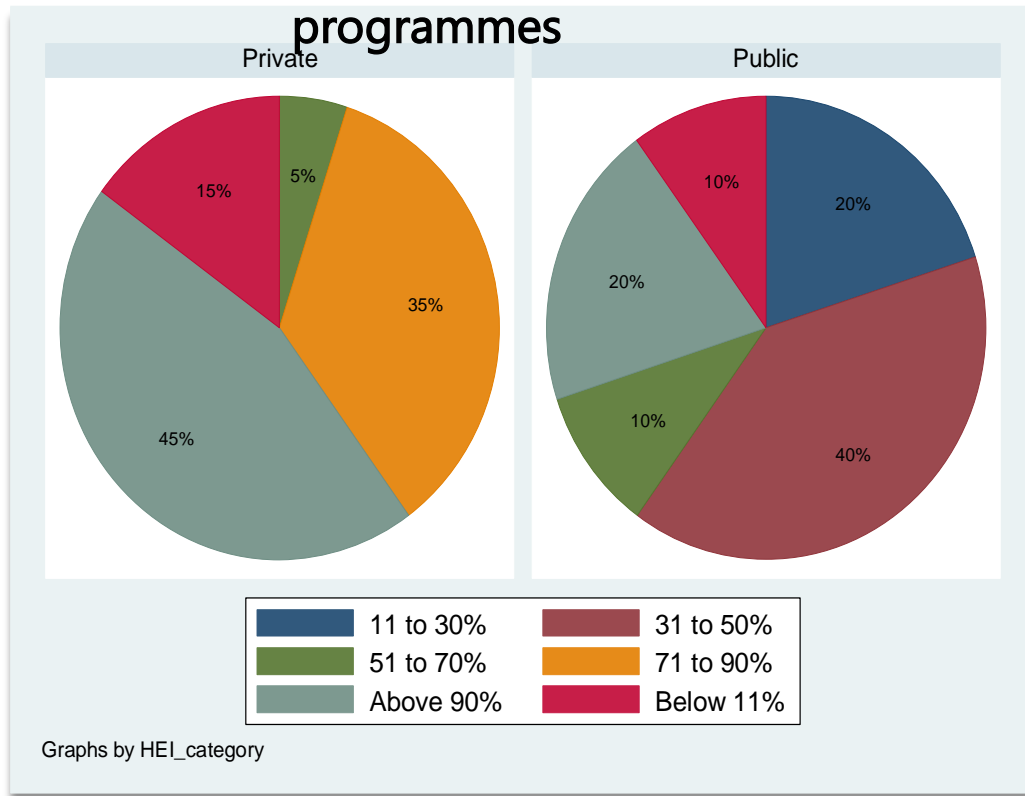
# Time taken by HEIs to transition to eLearning



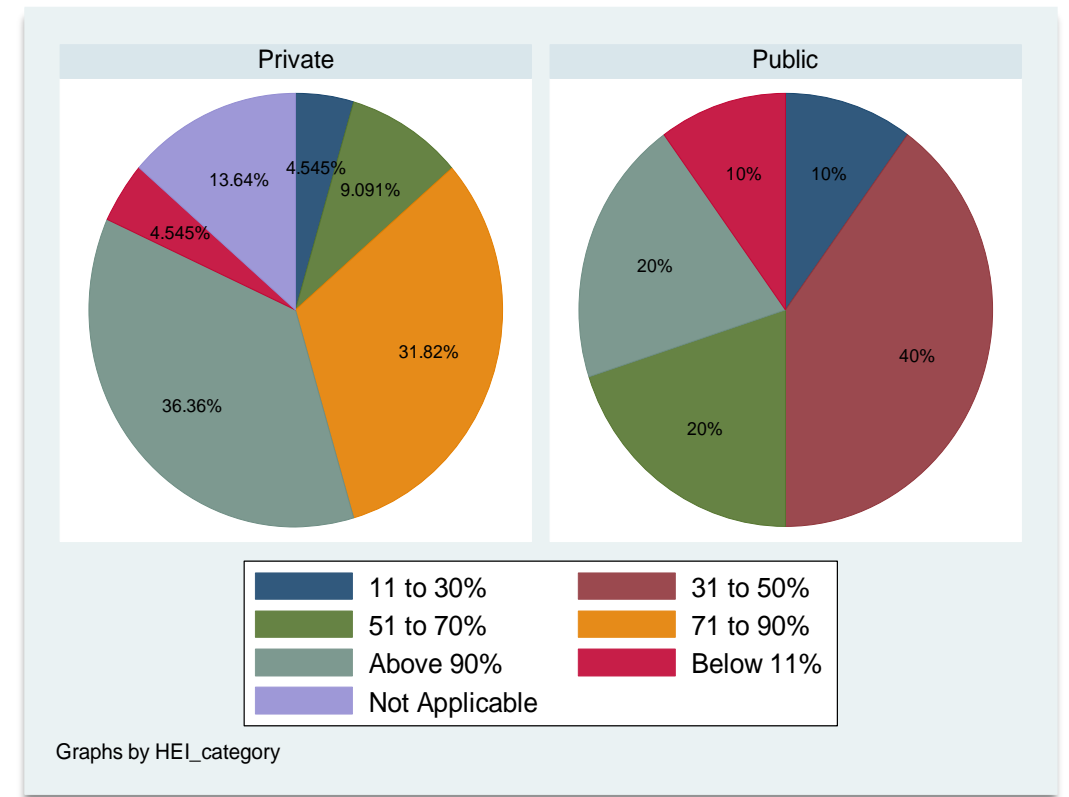
- 39.13% of private and 18.18% public HEIs were able to immediately transition to eLearning

# Transitioning to eLearning during the COVID-19 pandemic

## Academic programmes

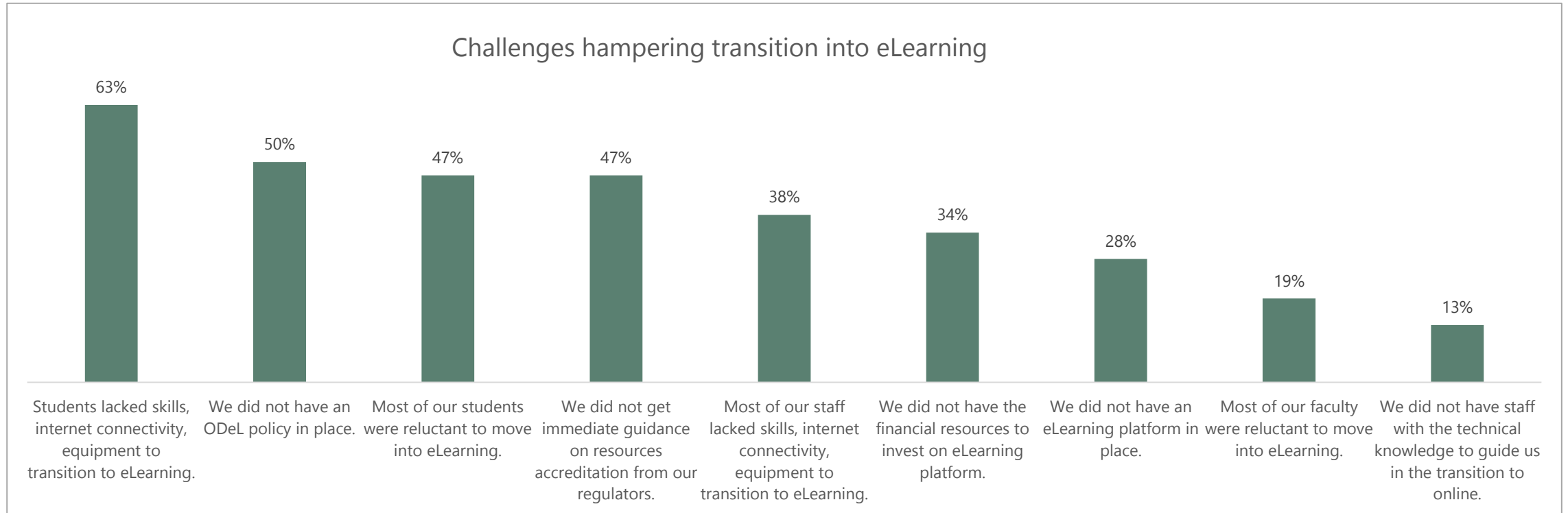


## Students



- 45% of private HEIs and 20% of public HEIs have managed to transition over 90% of their academic programs into eLearning.
- 36.4% of private HEIs and 20% of public HEIs have managed to transition over 90% of their students into eLearning.

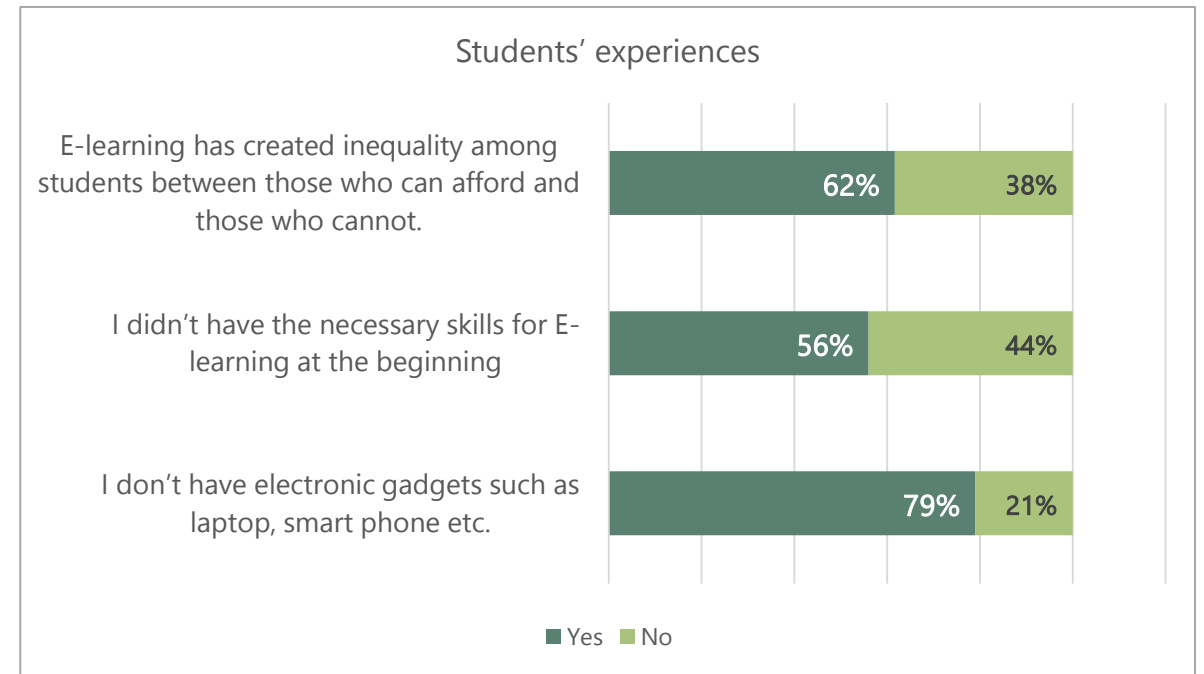
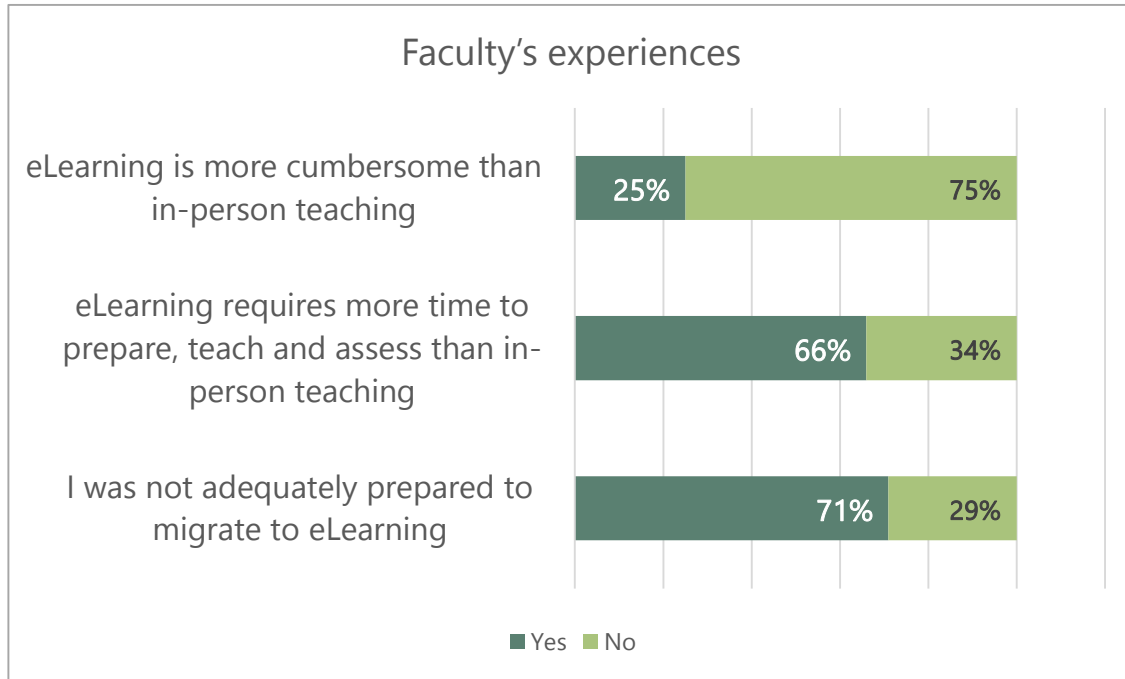
# Factors hindering the transition to eLearning



- There was a general lack of digital and virtual skills and infrastructure, policy, and skills to transition to eLearning
- No clear guidance on how to conduct online learning from regulators.
- No clear guidance on the accreditation of online recourses by regulators.

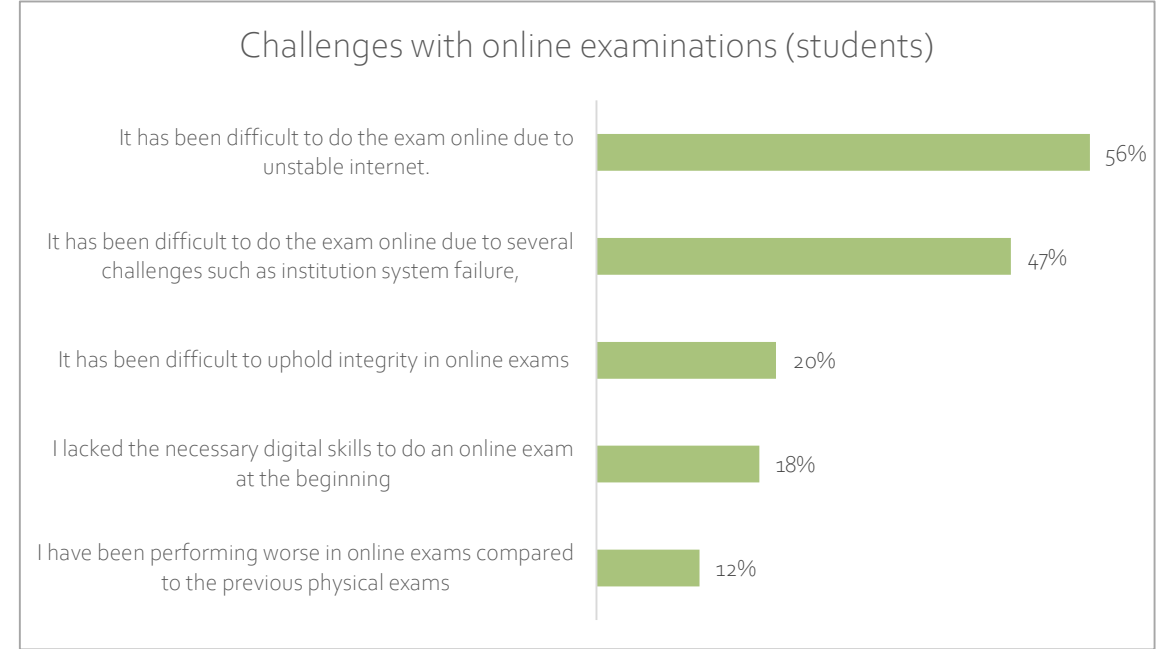
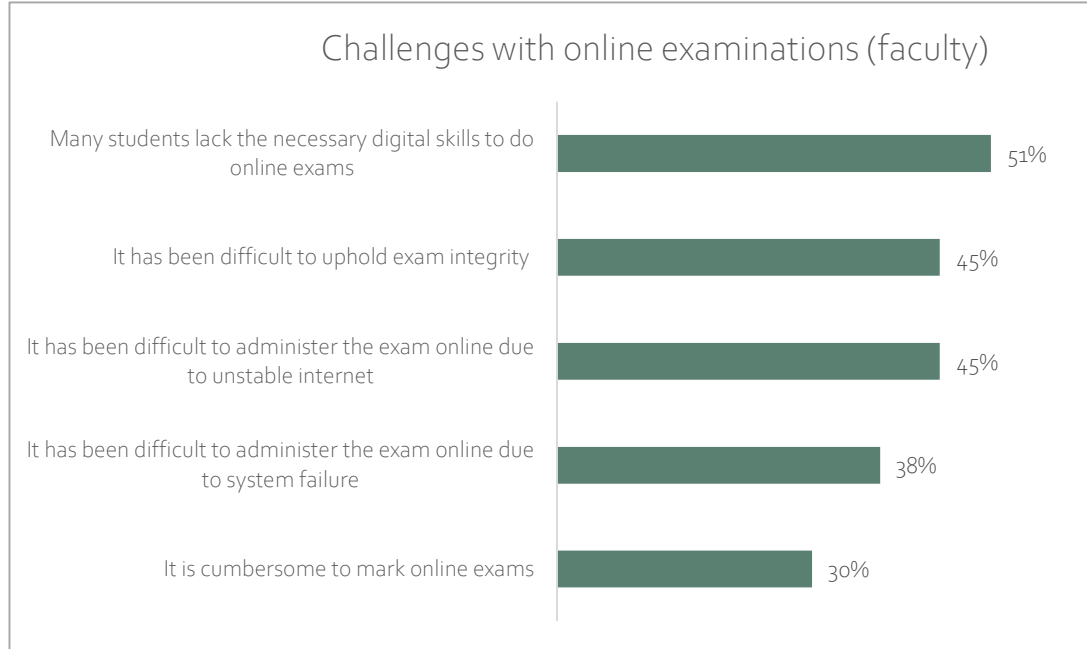


# Teaching and learning remotely [experiences of students and faculty]



- Most faculty members were of the view that eLearning required more time compared to in-person teaching.
- Both students and faculty members lacked the necessary skills to transition to eLearning.
- Most students (62%) think eLearning has created inequalities in learning (digital divide).

# Online examinations and assessment [experiences of students and faculty]



- Lack of the necessary skills required to conduct and participate in exam remotely.
- Both students and faculty members raised concern about the difficulty in upholding integrity in online exams
- Difficulty in administering exams online due to system failure.

# COVID-19 AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE

# Measures taken by HEIs to ensure quality standards are maintained.

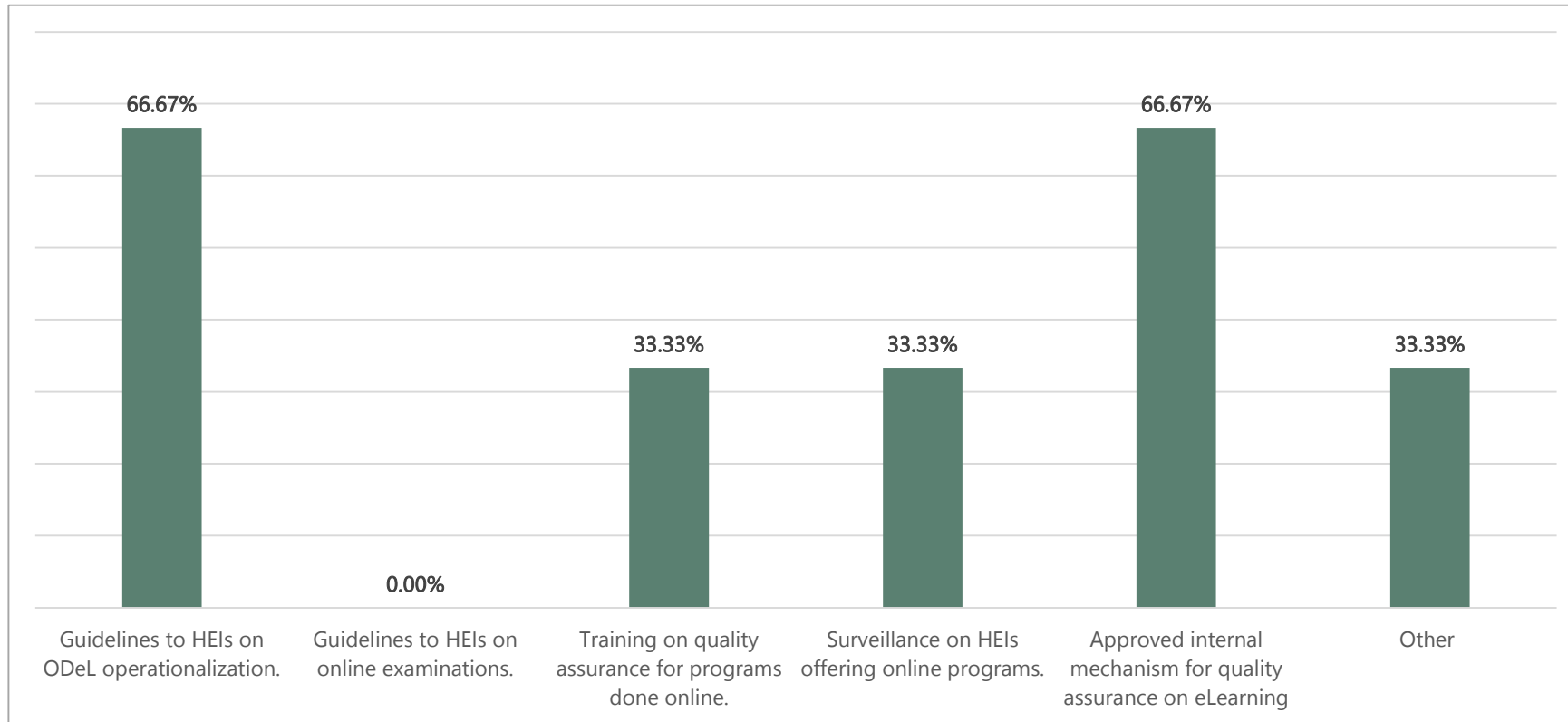
## Institutional Support [Students]

- Training on how to use eLearning tools (61%)
- Provision of internet bundles (12%)
- Access to premises with internet for eLearning (21%)
- Provision of laptops (2%)
- No institutional support (32%)

## Institutional Support [Faculty]

- Training on how to use eLearning tools (35%)
- Provision of internet bundles (20%)
- Provision of laptops (2%)
- No institutional support (38%)

# Measures taken by regulators to ensure quality standards are maintained.

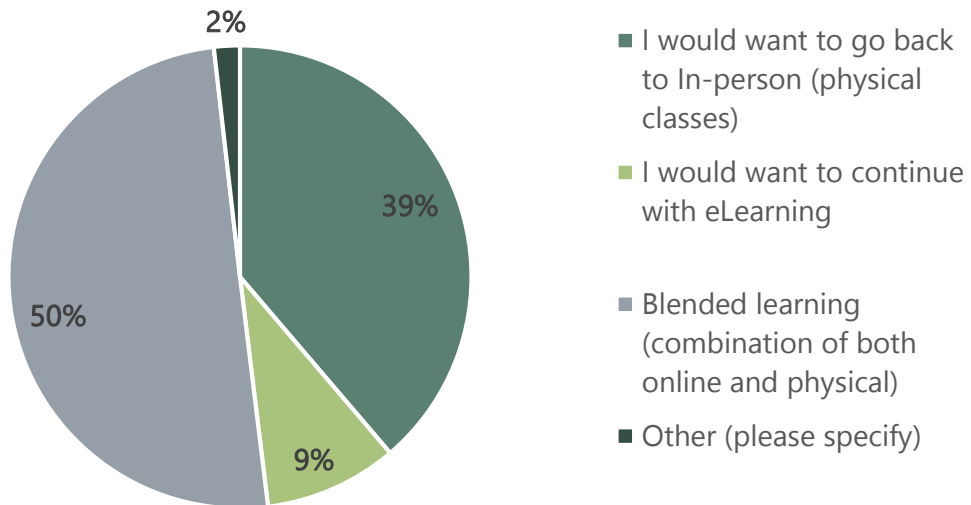


# OUTLOOK ON THE MODE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE FUTURE

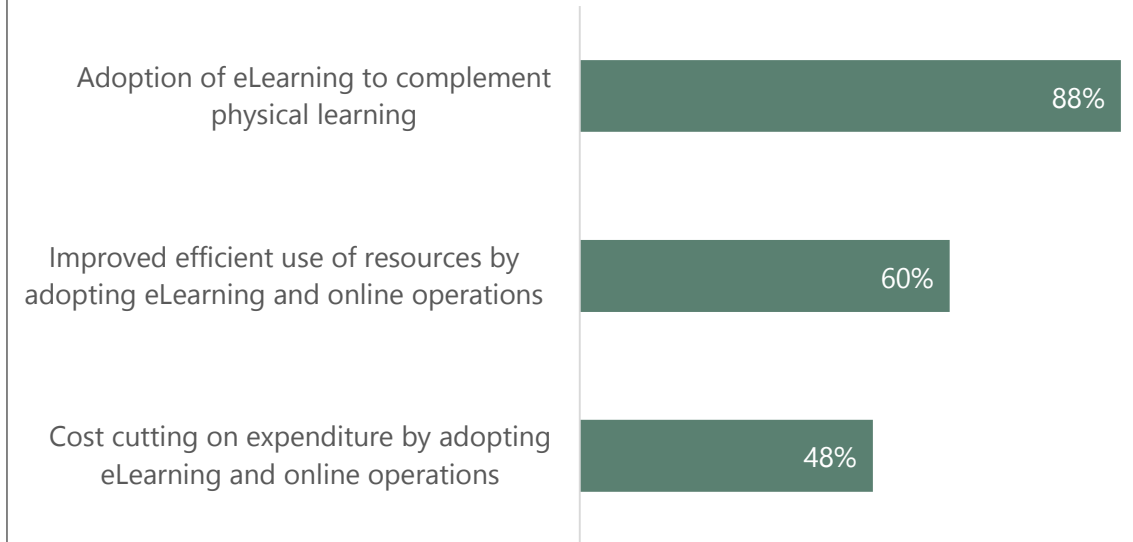


# Future mode of teaching and learning

Future preferred mode of learning



Faculty members view on the future of learning



- Student members prefer the future mode of learning to be blended.
- Faculty members recommend blended learning to be the future of education

# Conclusion

- No clear guidance on how to conduct online teaching, learning and assessment.
- HEIs in the EAC region showed resilience in transitioning to eLearning.
- There is a general lack of digital and virtual infrastructure and delayed adoption of technology-supported solutions for online learning and assessment.
- There is a general concern about the integrity of online exams among students and faculty.
- Blended learning is the preferred mode of learning for both students and faculty members.



# CALL TO ACTION

How can HEIs in Africa improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment?

# Thank you

