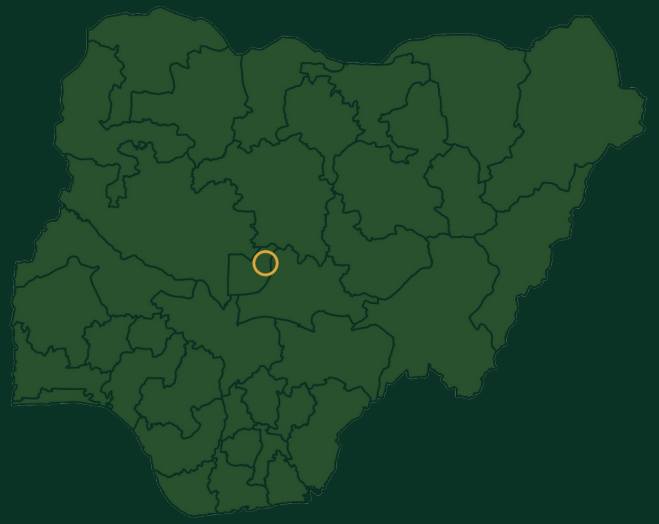
ITU-D STUDY GROUP 2 · QUESTION 1/2 · 15 OCTOBER 2026

Talent is the infrastructure



Building digital talent at national scale: lessons from Nigeria's 3 Million Technical Talent (3MTT) programme

Workshop on accelerating digital transformation projects for sustainable cities and communities

Francis Sani

Programme Director, 3 Million Technical Talent (3MTT), and
Technical Adviser to the Honourable Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Nigeria

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Innovation does not come from buildings; innovation comes from people.

Dr Bosun Tijani, Honourable Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, June 2026

Source: BusinessDay, 10 June 2026

A city can buy the network. It cannot buy the people who run it.

BOUGHT

- Platforms
- Sensors
- Networks

GROWN OVER YEARS

- People who build them
- People who run them
- People who use them

Every digital transformation project a city plans depends on the right-hand column.

Demand for digital skills is rising, and Nigeria is young.

230m

jobs in Sub-Saharan Africa will need some level of digital skills by 2030

In Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Rwanda, 35 to 45% of jobs are expected to need digital skills by 2030. Most sit outside the tech sector.

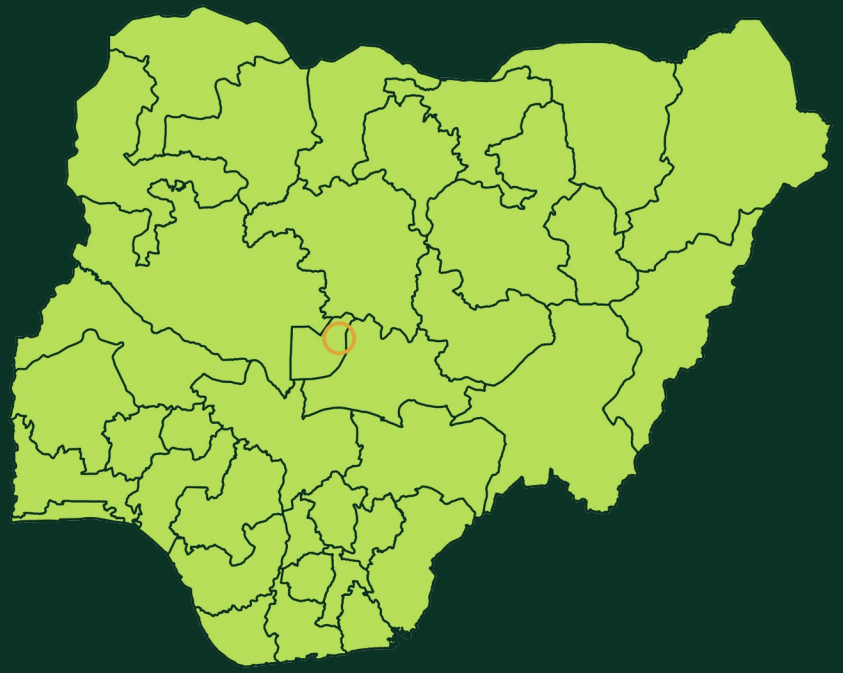
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Nigeria's median age, in years

The people who will run our cities' digital services in ten years are in school or looking for work today.

Sources: IFC (2019); World Bank and IFC (2021); UN World Population Prospects 2024 (median age 18.1 in 2025)

3MTT is one national programme, delivered in every state.



2023

Launched by the Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, with NITDA

Free

to fellows, in 12 technical skills from software development to cybersecurity

200+

partner organisations delivering in all 36 states and the FCT

● Abuja, Federal Capital Territory

Sources: 3mtt.nitda.gov.ng; 3MTT programme data. State boundaries: OCHA COD-AB Nigeria, CC BY-IGO

Government sets the rules. Partners deliver.



A FELLOW'S PATH

Apply → Learn → Prove → Connect

In Nigeria the sub-national delivery partner is the state. In your country it may be the city.

Three years in: 165,000+ fellows enrolled across four cohorts.

Registrations

1.88 million+

Fellows enrolled



165,000+

Demand far exceeds the places any one programme can offer.

60,000+

standardised skills assessments

300,000+

reached through the learning community and open resources

15,000+

job and opportunity pathways, not placements

Pathways: recruiter introductions, career fairs, certification vouchers and paid trials. Source: 3MTT programme data, October 2026

Getting people through training was hard.
Getting them into work was harder.



ACCESS

- Devices
- Power
- Connectivity
- Space to learn
- Transport

SYSTEM

- Comparable outcome data
- Multi-year financing

Every barrier under Access is local. That is where cities come in.

What worked: free, open access, local partners in every state, and one open national call.

So 3MTT is moving from programme to infrastructure.

Supply-led	➡	**Demand-led:** train for real roles
One delivery model	➡	**Two tracks:** self-paced at scale, cohorts for depth
Paying for activity	➡	**Paying on verified milestones,** from onboarding to placement
A programme	➡	**National talent infrastructure,** built as a public good

Cohort 5, due to start this year, is the first run of this model.

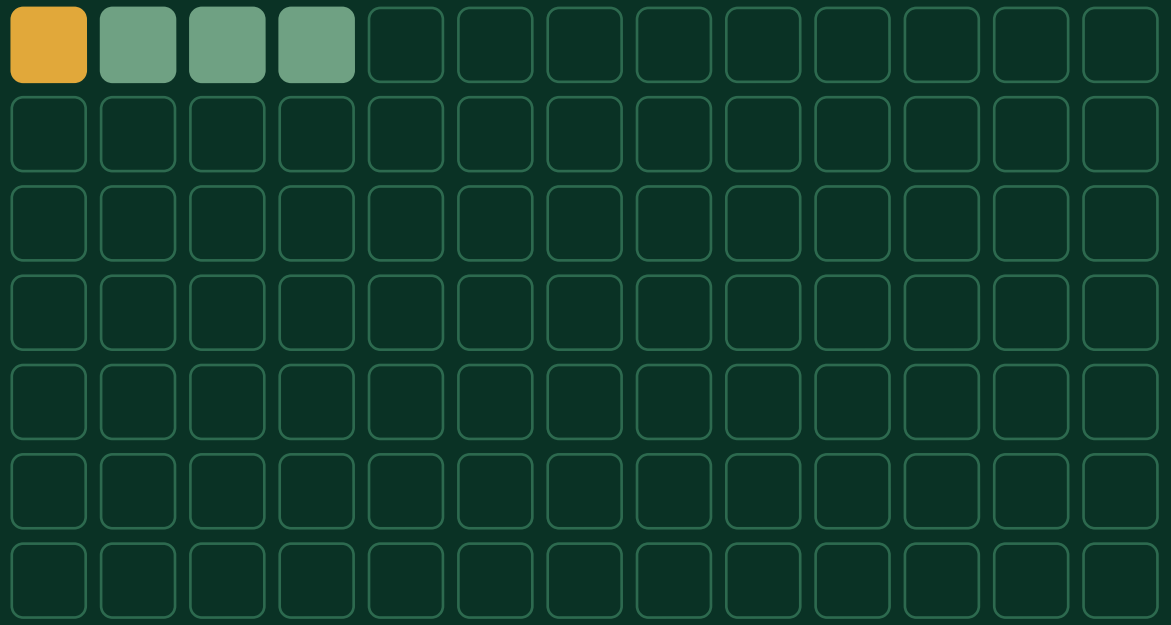
Every programme counts something different.

PROGRAMME	WHAT IT COUNTS		PUBLISHED FIGURE
India: FutureSkills Prime	Registered and certified		3.4m+ registered; 1.3m+ certified
Kenya: Ajira Digital	Youth in digital work		Aim: 1m+ young people a year (2019 to 2024)
Nigeria: 3MTT	Enrolment and pathways		165,000+ enrolled; 15,000+ pathways
Rwanda: One Million Coders	Coders trained		Aim: 1m coders under NST2 (2024 to 2029)
Singapore: SkillsFuture	People in training		606,000 in SSG-supported training, 2025 (all sectors)
Seoul: Youth Employment Academy	Employment rate	CITY	10,114 trained since 2021; 75.4% of completers employed

Published figures, as each programme defines them. None is comparable with the others, and that is the point.

Sources: PIB, Aug 2026; Mastercard Foundation; 3MTT; The New Times, Sep 2024; SSG, Feb 2026; Seoul Metropolitan Government, Nov 2025

The U4SSC city indicators track skills and jobs, but not the link between them.



91 key performance indicators in the U4SSC framework

Skills: the only ICT-skills indicator is students' access to ICT, an input.

Work: unemployment, youth unemployment and ICT-sector employment are city-wide rates, not programme results.

No indicator links a programme's trainees to verified skills or to work.

Source: U4SSC key performance indicators, Recommendation ITU-T Y.4903/L.1603; U4SSC collection methodology (2017)

A city can start on five things now.

1. **Start from demand.** Map the roles your digital projects will create, then train for them.
2. **Use local anchors.** Libraries, colleges and municipal centres make good learning sites.
3. **Measure skills and work.** Ask every programme you fund for the same few numbers.
4. **Share infrastructure.** Use a national platform where one exists.
5. **Plan financing from day one.** Budget for people in every digital project.

We propose four shared indicators for digital talent.

An answer to this workshop's question: *“What indicators should be used to measure success and impact?”*

1
Enrolled
Started a programme

2
Completed
Finished its requirements

3
Verified skill
Passed an independent assessment

4
In work at six months
Employed or self-employed six months after completing

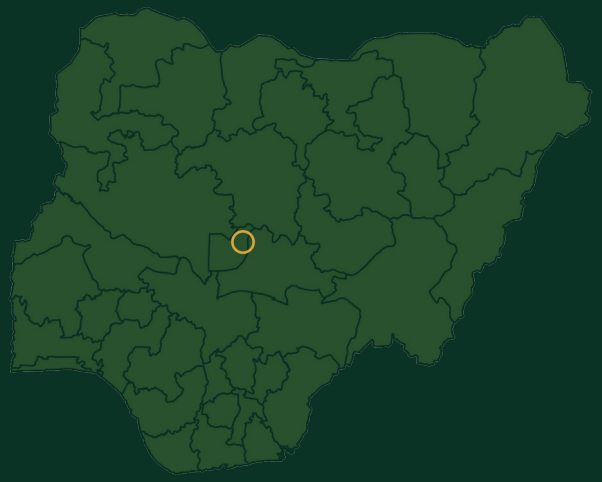
Each reported with shared definitions, and disaggregated by gender and location.

We propose that Question 1/2, working with Question 5/2, develop them for digital transformation projects.

Nigeria offers 3MTT as a case study and will share its experience.

The networks we build will only be as good as the people who run them.

Thank you.



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Sources

Slide 2

Dr Bosun Tijani at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, 9 June 2026, as reported by BusinessDay, 10 June 2026

Slides 5 and 7

3MTT, 3mtt.nitda.gov.ng; 3MTT programme data, October 2026. State boundaries: OCHA COD-AB Nigeria (FGN/NBS via OCHA), licensed CC BY-IGO

Slide 11

U4SSC key performance indicators for smart sustainable cities, Recommendation ITU-T Y.4903/L.1603; U4SSC collection methodology (2017); U4SSC city verification reports (91 KPIs)

Slide 4

IFC, Digital Skills in Sub-Saharan Africa: Spotlight on Ghana (2019); World Bank and IFC, Demand for Digital Skills in Sub-Saharan Africa (2021); UN DESA, World Population Prospects 2024

Slide 10

Press Information Bureau / MeitY, Government of India, August 2026; Mastercard Foundation, Ajira Digital programme; The New Times (Rwanda), September 2024; SkillsFuture Singapore, 9 February 2026; Seoul Metropolitan Government, as reported 3 November 2025

Visuals

The charts, map and diagrams were drawn for this presentation.