



Launch of Digital Transformation Centers Initiative in Ethiopia and stakeholder engagement

9-10 May 2022 event report

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Executive summary

This report summarizes the activities of the two-day event conducted on 9 and 10 May 2022. The event which took place at Capital Hotel in Addis Ababa, had two adjoining workshops (1) Launch of the Digital Transformation Centre (DTC) initiative in Ethiopia hosted by the Ministry of Innovation and Technology and (2) a multiple stakeholders engagement workshop, facilitated by ITU's I-CoDI (ITU International Centre of Digital Innovation). The report contains the presentations that were given, the ideas, comments and insights that came from participants and the outputs of group activities.

The Ethiopia DTC kickoff workshop was conducted for a full day on 9 May 2022. The workshop had participants from the selected training centers, Ministries, Regional government ICT agencies, academia, development partners, telco companies, and the private sector. More than 75 participants attended the workshop and several topics on the Ethiopia DTC, DTC training centers, and enabling partnerships were discussed. The workshop was organized to optimize attendees' active participation with discussion and group sessions. The following sections will describe the objectives of the workshop, the agenda, the main sessions, the comments/questions raised by participants and participants' feedback about the workshop.

Within its mandate to support citizens' innovation and technology capabilities, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology is undertaking a wide range of digital capacity building initiatives. Ethiopia's digital transformation strategy 'Digital Ethiopia 2025' recognizes digital literacy and digital skills as a foundation for building an inclusive digital economy. As an adjoining event to the national launch of the Digital Transformation Centre initiative on 9 May 2002, I-CoDI facilitated a stakeholder engagement collaborative workshop session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 10 May 2022. The session was jointly organized by the ITU Regional Office for Africa and the Ministry of Innovation and Technology of Ethiopia (MINT).

During the one-day co-design workshop, over 50 stakeholders representing Ministries, academic institutions, training institutions, youth science cafés, private sector companies and development organizations jointly ideated how to establish a sustainable platform to enhance the digital skills of youth and women on digital skills by leveraging synergies between the activities of stakeholders in Ethiopia's digital ecosystem. The participants presented six main ideas at the end of the session. The session was organized as part of I-CoDI ongoing facilitation of the process of designing the Connected Digital Capacity Pilot in Ethiopia under the ITU's project "Accelerating Africa's Digital Transformation Through Connectivity" jointly seed-funded by the ITU and Microsoft.

Event website: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Africa/Pages/EVENTS/2022/ethiopia-DTC-launch-with-partners.aspx>

PART ONE: DTC Ethiopia Kickoff workshop



**Digital
Transformation
Centres**

**Digital Transformation Centers Ethiopia Kickoff Workshop, 9 May 2022
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**



1. Background

The FDRE Ministry of Innovation and Technology, within its mandate to build citizens' capacity, is also working on delivering quality and standardized digital skill and literacy training content for citizens. Under its Digital Strategy (Digital Ethiopia 2025), the government identified People as a foundational element to build an inclusive digital economy.

The Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) Initiative was launched in September 2019 by ITU in partnership with Cisco to support countries to strengthen the digital capacities of citizens, particularly in underserved communities. The selected DTC becomes part of a global network of institutions to accelerate the uptake of digital technologies among citizens and boost the capacity of young entrepreneurs and SMEs to succeed in the digital economy¹.

The primary function of DTCs is to:

- Deliver basic digital skills training to enhance digital literacy and foster uptake of digital tools among those at the bottom of the social pyramid.
- Deliver intermediate digital skills training to provide users with job-ready skills, improve workplace efficiency and enhance chances of employability.
- Improve the capacity of policymakers to design and implement digital skills programs.
- Conduct train-the-trainer programs on digital skills to ensure scalability and self-sustainability in digital skills capacity development.
- Train SMEs in the field of digital technologies, innovation, and entrepreneurship².

Within its digital literacy agenda, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology was selected to host the Digital Transformation Centre in Ethiopia as part of phase two of ITU's Digital Transformation Centres Initiative. The DTC Initiative in Ethiopia is planned to bridge the digital divide by focusing on women, out-of-school youth, and rural communities with basic and intermediate digital skills. To implement the DTC initiative, the Ministry undertaken preparations and selected 13 DTC training centers across the country to reach the wider population. Therefore, this workshop officially commenced the DTC initiative in Ethiopia, introduced the training centers to each other and to the concept and implementation plan of DTC in Ethiopia.

2. Objectives of the kickoff workshop

The objectives of the workshop were as follows:

- A. To create awareness of the DTC initiative amongst national stakeholders,
- B. To clarify the objectives and organization of the DTC and training centers,
- C. To create an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the DTC and training centers,
- D. To create an understanding of partnerships and stakeholders,
- E. To discuss and co-create the way forward,
- F. To officially launch the DTC initiative in Ethiopia.

3. Agenda

The kickoff workshop was a full day event with different components. The summary of the workshop components is as follows:

- Welcome and opening remarks by MInT, ITU and Cisco.
- Briefing about the ITU's Digital transformation Initiative, about Phase 1 implementation and major lessons learned.
- Presentation about the DTC in Ethiopia, hosted by the Ministry of Innovation and Technology.

¹ <https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/digital-transformation-centres-initiative>

² Ibid

- Roles and responsibilities of MInt and the selected DTC training centers.
- Role and responsibilities of MInt and DTC training centers.
- Group exercise on stakeholders and partnership identification and analysis; and,
- Discuss the way forward, summary and closure of the kickoff meeting were major components of the event.

4. Content of each topic Session 1 – Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) Initiative

- **Digital Transformation Centers (DTC) initiative**

During the first session, the audience was briefed about ITU's Digital Transformation Centres initiative. The presentation focused on the background and the objectives of the DTC initiative, the rationale for the initiative, major activities of DTCs, target group of DTCs and DTC partnership model and partners. Phase 1 performance and lessons learned (March 2020 - August 2021), phase 2 DTCs and the kickoff workshop were also shared. Mr Nxele also discussed the DTC implementation plan at the global and regional levels.

- **Digital skills for employability – No one left behind**

Following the first presentation about the DTC initiative, as a major partner, Cisco presented by focusing on digital skills and the job market in the global digital economy. The presentation included top economic priorities - job security, digital skills need for the 4th industrial revolution, the skill shift, automation, and the future of the workforce, the realities of IT jobs, in different industries (Tech vs non-Tech industries) and market relevant skills development. Mr Hamid also gave a brief about the Cisco NetAcad and the Netacad curriculum portfolio (Explore, Career).

4.2 Session 2 – Aligning DTCs with Digital Ethiopia 2025 and the DTC Initiative hosted by MInt

- **Alignment of DTCs with Digital Ethiopia 2025**

The second session of the workshop showed how the DTC Ethiopia contributes to the realization of the digital strategy (Digital Ethiopia 2025). Some of the points raised were: the Ethiopian digital economy potential and landscape; Digital Ethiopia 2025 strategy and its focus on developing the digital foundations; the current digital skills initiatives and activities that are being undertaken by the government, such as ICT in the General Education curriculum and Digital Skill Action Plan: A country Action Plan for Digital Skill for Digital Economy Ethiopia was discussed. The major challenges and gaps towards digital literacy were also raised in this session.

Furthermore, the DTC's contribution to implementing actions indicated in the Digital Ethiopia 2025 Strategy in relation to Educational Institutions and in relation to job creation was discussed. Finally, it was indicated that digital skilling is crucial to ensure inclusivity and how it requires greater cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders. It was also discussed that the DTC in Ethiopia is aligned with the vision and directions set by the digital strategy of Ethiopia (Digital Ethiopia 2025).

- **DTC Initiative hosted by MInt**

During the next part of the second session a deep dive discussion on the digital transformation centers in Ethiopia took place. The foundational aspects of the DTC Ethiopia such as how it came to be established, the major objectives of DTC Ethiopia and the target groups were discussed. Furthermore, specific issues such as the content and training material to be used, the delivery mechanisms and stakeholders and governance/structure of the DTC Ethiopia were presented. After the presentation, participants had a chance to reflect and bring forth their comments and suggestions.

- **Discussion – Summary of comments, recommendations, and questions raised by participants**

Many participants from different institutions participated in the discussion. Institutions such as the World Food Programme, Sidama Science and Technology Agency, Samara University and UN Women participated.

Major discussion points revolved around the infrastructure, connectivity, Ethiopia's job creation vision and how it is planned to be realized, how to reach rural communities with digital skills, among other things.

4.3 Session 3 – DTC Ethiopia: Roles and responsibilities of the MInT and DTC training centers

During the third session of the day, details of the national implementation program were discussed. Issues such as the structure and governance of the DTC in Ethiopia, the selected training centers and the rationale behind the selection, roles of the ministry of Innovation and Technology and roles of the DTC training centers. Finally, key performance indicators for each DTC training center were discussed.

- **Discussion – Comments, recommendations, and questions raised by participants**

After the presentations a discussion took place, and participants once again were able to reflect on the issues raised in the presentations and share on their ongoing initiatives. Participants from ITU, SNNP Regional government science and technology bureau, UN Resident Coordinator, the ITU-AU PRIDA project, ITU Generation Connect youth group, Harari science and technology and other institutions participated in the discussion.

Some of the issues raised by participants were related to the following:

- Clarity on partnerships and stakeholder engagements by the training centers.
- Involvement of the private sector in digital skills activities.
- Challenge of reaching rural communities.
- The need for high level collaboration with ministries and regional government agencies.
- Onboarding of more women for the DTC Ethiopia project; together with other comments and ideas raised during the session.

4.4 Session 4 – Partner and Stakeholder Engagement in the DTC initiative

- **Presentation**

- DTC partnership model
- Key partnership groups for the DTC
- Major DTC initiative partners
- Partners versus stakeholders
- Engaging partners
- Engaging stakeholders
- Benefits of stakeholder engagement

- **Breakout sessions**

The breakout sessions set out sessions to the teams to facilitate the discussion:

I. Questions for breakout session 1 - Partnerships

1. List the partner groups you would approach at the national level to partner with you as a DTC. Explain why? Against each, indicate what they would potentially provide to the DTC.
2. How do you go about engaging each partner group (e.g., public, private sector) What works best for each group, and why?

II. Questions for breakout session 2 - Stakeholder Engagement

1. When it comes to training delivery, list who your key local stakeholders are giving reasons why? (Maximum 5 stakeholders)
2. Indicate against each if they are primary or secondary stakeholders and say why.
3. Against each stakeholder, indicate what value addition they bring to your training activities

4.5 Conclusions of the Day, the way forward, planning, and reporting of DTC training centers, and communication

- DTC Ethiopia –Planning against the KPIs
- DTC Ethiopia – reporting schedule
- DTC Ethiopia – communication Modalities

5. Summary of questions and comments raised by participants

- More stakeholder engagement and partnerships amongst local stakeholders (such as the ministries and regional government) are crucial.
- Course localization (context and language) should be considered.
- The type and sum of support the DTCs could receive?
- Strategies should be devised to reach each target group, such as women and rural communities, and the youth.
- Supporting local businesses and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).
- Openness of government to partner with local stakeholders and international organizations (such as development partners)
- How does the DTCs initiative contribute to the national need of job creation?

6. Summary of challenges and opportunities

5.1. Challenges

- Outdated digital devices, slow connectivity, and lack of other resources (mainly financial).
- Lack of awareness from the local government and other stakeholders.
- To reach out to remote communities, to bring more women and out of school youth to the program.
- Lack of localized contents (Language and context).

5.2. Opportunities

- The commitment of the Ministry to support the program.
Partnership opportunities to mobilize more resources that could help the program.

7. Next steps and the way forward

During the event, the need for coordinated activity towards digital literacy and skills was indicated. Thus, moving forward, the DTC initiative will serve as a platform to coordinate these efforts to bring about a more impactful national effort towards digital skills. Multiple stakeholders have displayed interest to collaborate on digital skills initiatives. Our next steps are going to include, exploring, and identifying these potential collaboration areas, collaborators, and come up with concrete initiatives to accelerate the digital skills efforts. To move forward, plans should be devised including:

- A. Training plan:** – a more comprehensive training plan for the DTC implementation will be developed for the next year, by including each training centers' plans.
- B. Training of trainers (TOT) plan:** – TOT is needed for Trainers which will be involving in delivering the training contents. Especially for those who are found in the training centers. Thus, a comprehensive TOT plan will be developed and implemented.
- C. Stakeholders' engagement plan:** – The most important component that was emphasized on the workshop is, the necessity of creating more collaborations with critical stakeholders and partners. Therefore, we will devise a stakeholders and partner engagement plan to promote greater collaboration for the successful implementation of the program.

- D. Resource mobilization plan:** – It is observed that human and financial resources are critical when it comes to delivering trainings, especially for rural communities. Therefore, we will develop a resource mobilization plan, to equip the program with finance and other critical resources.

8. Conclusions of Day One

In summary, the DTC kickoff workshop was a successful launch of the DTC initiative in Ethiopia, in terms of meeting its objective. Most of the DTC training centers were present and were actively participating in the discussions. The workshop created awareness about what the DTC initiative is, how the DTC initiative in Ethiopia is planned to be run, and its role in realizing the digital strategy of Ethiopia. It also created an engagement with many stakeholders and gathers their feedbacks to enrich the program going forward.

PART TWO: Stakeholder Engagement Workshop



I-CoDI
INTERNATIONAL CENTER
OF DIGITAL INNOVATION

Collaborative Stakeholder Workshop held in conjunction with the national Ethiopia Digital Transformation Centre Initiative Kickoff Event, 10 May, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



1. Background

1.1. Setting

Despite the advancement of women on the African continent in terms equitable access to the Internet, they are still less likely to use the Internet to participate in public life, use mobile Internet, own digital devices, and are also under-represented in the job market enabled by digital technologies. Women and youth in Africa are less likely to take up studies in the digital field, and generally in the areas of Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), as well as to pursue careers in the ICT sectors. The growth of the digital economy offers the potential to improve employment conditions.

Ethiopia is at a critical juncture, undergoing political, economic, and demographic transitions that are structural in nature. This transformation poses challenges but also permits a leap forward in inclusion, shared prosperity, sustainability, as well as on peace and security. The country's first digital transformation strategy, Digital Ethiopia 2025, sets to transform the country's national economy through four major pathway sectors, including, agriculture, manufacturing, IT-enabled services and tourism. The digitization of these sectors is expected to boost the economic transformation of the country, enable it to become a digitally enabled society, where technology will allow for more efficient and inclusive interactions between citizens, governments and businesses, catalyzing its progress towards its national priorities and as such drive Ethiopia's status to a middle-income country. However:

- Ethiopia is yet to realize its potential in the digital space and leverage technology to build a more prosperous society, and opportunities are not available to all (urban vs rural, gender differences, skills gaps, etc.). Bold, and coordinated action is needed to enable digital transformation accelerated by digital skills and capacity development. There is a need for increased collaboration, synergies, and partnerships in the digital space for the implementation of 'Digital Ethiopia 2025', the National Digital Transformation Strategy in 2020 (approved by Council of Ministers on 15 June 2020).
- While the country is on a journey of economic and social change enabled by the Homegrown Economic Reform Agenda and the Ten-Year National Development Plan (2020-2030), and the Digital Transformation Strategy, few in society are benefitting, young people are not sufficiently skilled, and connectivity is yet not always available and affordable. Creation of an inclusive digital economy and society as a catalytic force to drive productivity improvements, job growth and the same opportunities for all requires resources, skills and partnerships.
- At the same time, ITU with its Regional Office for Africa located in Addis Ababa is increasingly developing and implementing initiatives in Ethiopia with four initiatives currently active with a common red thread of addressing various aspects of digital skills capacity development for youth and women in Ethiopia. Yet, there is room for further collaboration, especially when new initiatives are established, such as the forthcoming ITU Digital Transformation Center hosted by the Ministry of Innovation and Technology. What all initiatives related to digital skills and capacity development have in common is the lack of affordable and reliable internet connectivity and electricity across the country. To bring the benefits of connectivity to all, access needs to be improved and the skilling and training efforts scaled to reach the target groups of the different initiatives and beyond.
- There are further links to be explored between ITU's activities and other initiatives in Ethiopia. Other UN agencies, international and regional organizations, development partners and private sector players are actively undertaking digital skill and capacity development initiatives in Ethiopia. For instance, Internet Governance Forum of the UN Secretariat General launched in December 2021 a digital skills training program for youth in Ethiopia in collaboration with GIZ and the Ethiopian government, among others.

1.2. About the project

The main objective of the “Accelerating Africa’s Digital Transformation Through Connectivity” project is to foster meaningful digital connectivity with a focus on youth and women (including women entrepreneurs) in Africa, in particular in Ethiopia, by providing a platform that coordinates and accelerates the multiple ongoing ITU initiatives related to digital capacity for youth, and women, and provide the space for the Ethiopian government and the UN Country Team, and other stakeholders, to collaborate with private sector, civil society, and academia for increased impact of their ongoing and planned initiatives.

Expected outcomes:

1. Exploration of increased synergies and information sharing between ITU-led initiatives, ITU bureaus, stakeholders and partners working in digital development, and as result
2. Identification of new interventions to enhance scalability, quality and effectiveness via combining financial resources of different initiatives and stakeholders
3. Increase opportunities for attracting partners and additional funding by increased sharing, to be able to communicate complementarities between initiatives and create a holistic proposition to contribute to the digital skills and related capacity development components of Digital Ethiopia 2025 implementation.
4. Increase sustainability and long-term impact of the digital skills capacity development and training interventions in the country, not only in the capital Addis Ababa but in the 10 regions of the country.

1.3. Project scope

The project “Accelerating Africa’s Digital Transformation Through Connectivity” will facilitate the design of the Connected Digital Capacity Pilot - a multi-stakeholder platform Digital Capacity for All Platform in Ethiopia, as a first workstream of the I-CoDI Regional Hub for Africa. It is meant to leverage synergies between:

- ITU initiatives with partners in Ethiopia, in particular:
 - ITU-EIF Tech as a Driver of Women’s Economic Opportunity initiative,
 - ITU-ILO Decent Jobs and Skills for Youth in Africa’s Digital Economy joint program,
 - Digital Transformation Center initiative,
 - African Girls Can Code, Girls in ICT and EQUALS initiatives,
- Other ITU initiatives in Africa/ global with African scope:
 - Generation Connect Youth Group, Youth Summit, and related activities,
 - Women in Cyber Mentorship program (as part of Cyber4Good),
 - Partner2Connect Digital Coalition (Main focus area 2: Adoption (Empowering Communities) plus 1: Access (Connecting People Everywhere) and Focus are 3: Value Creation (Building Digital Ecosystems)),
 - Connect2Recover reinforcement of digital infrastructure,
 - I-CoDI Regional Hub co-design physical/hybrid space in the ITU Regional Office in Addis Ababa and related activities.
- ITU expertise to implement and scale interventions,
- ITU stakeholders and partners (existing and potential) operating in Ethiopia’s digital ecosystem (other UN agencies, development partners, academia, accelerators and incubators, training providers, tech companies and startups), including:
 - Broad stakeholder engagement under Partner2Connect activities,
 - Broader engagement of the youth via Generation Connect Regional Youth Group for Africa, bringing in other youth networks, and related activities of the ITU Regional Office for Africa
 - Serving as one of the first joint pilot projects under the ITU-UNDP Joint Facility for Digital Capacity, as well as engaging in Joint Facility’s multistakeholder dialogue activities

- Beneficiaries:
 - Youth and women (including displaced women, women entrepreneurs, business owners (SMEs), and more specifically in the textile/apparel sector),
 - Regulators and policy makers responsible for the design, coordination, and implementation of ICT policies.
- Scope:
 - Geographical scope:
 - Initially in Ethiopia with scaling up across African countries as resources are made available and approach is confirmed.
 - Thematic scope:
 - Digital capacity with a focus on:
 - Digital skills: basic, intermediate, and advanced skills (including digital skills related to entrepreneurship and e-commerce, and cybersecurity),
 - Building digital capacity of the regulators and policy makers in the area of digital transformation and gender inclusive ICT policies.
 - Related areas:
 - Affordable and reliable connectivity with sustainable energy supply,
 - Access to affordable digital devices,
 - Security for women and girls in accessing potential training premises.
- Policy and strategy alignment:

The project is aligned with: Digital Ethiopia 2025 Strategy, African Union's Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020-2030) principles and pillars, Ethiopia UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2020-2025), United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs (UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1) and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) action lines, UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, UN Special Advisor's for Africa Inter-Department Taskforce for Africa activities.

As well as the WTDC Regional Initiatives in Africa for the coming cycle (AFR1 – AFR4):

 - AFR1: Supporting digital transformation to usher a rapid transition to digital economy while accelerating innovation in Africa
 - AFR2: Implementation and expansion of broadband infrastructures, connectivity, and emerging technologies
 - AFR3: Building trust, safety and security in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technology and protection of personal data
 - AFR4: Fostering emerging technologies and innovation ecosystems
 - In addition, within Ethiopia, the project will also support ITU's contribution to other related activities of the UN country team (UNCT).
 - Lead government agency: Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MiNT), Ethiopia

2. Objectives of the stakeholder workshop

As one of the first working streams of the I-CoDI Regional Hub for Africa, the project seeks to deploy the ITU International Centre of Digital Innovation (I-CoDI) design thinking methods to engage stakeholders into co-creation and validation of the platform, addressing the challenge question: ***How can we establish a sustainable platform to implement 'Digital Capacity for All' in Ethiopia, leveraging synergies between stakeholders in the Ethiopia's digital ecosystem?***

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Engage the stakeholders into broader, strategic discussion on how to develop connected digital capacity platform in Ethiopia under the strategic objective of 14 million people employed by 2024,
- Ideate new solutions/initiatives and create synergies and exchange of knowledge among stakeholders,

- Build co-design thinking capacity among government, policy makers and all the stakeholders engaged in digital capacity ecosystem in Ethiopia.

3. Participants

Over 50 participants took part in the one-day workshop. The workshop featured representatives of the Ministry of Technology and Innovation (MINT) and ITU as well as:

- **Ministries:** Ministry of Innovation and Technology, Ethiopian Education and Research Network of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education
- **Universities:** Samara University, University of Gondar, Madda Walabu University, Jimma University, Werabe University, Assosa University, Wachemo University, Gambela University, Bahir Dar University, Addis Ababa University
- **Youth Science Cafés:** OSTA Jimma Science Café, Adama Science Cafe
- **Regional Agencies:** SNNPRS Science and Information Technology Bureau, Sidaama Science and Technology Agency, Harari People Regional State Innovation and Technology Agency, Benishangul Gumuz Culture and Tourism Bureau
- **Development agencies:** UNICEF, UNWOMEN, International Labour Organization, World Food Programme (WFP)
- **NGOs:** Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT), Ethiopian Youth Entrepreneurs Association (EYE-A), Ethiopian Cybersecurity Association (ECYSA), Divo25, Ethiopian Education and Research Network
- **Private Sector:** Safaricom
- **Youth:** Generation Connect Youth Envoys for Ethiopia.

4. Agenda

After the introduction to workshop objectives, Connected Digital Capacity Pilot and I-CoDI methodology, participants worked in 6 breakout groups of 8-12 people over the course of the day, going through stages of the co-design workshop.

First half of the day:

- Redefining the problem
- Understanding challenges and opportunities
- Imaging the future state – brainstorming and lead idea selection

Second half of the day:

- Solution development
- Stakeholder mapping
- Future road-mapping
- Reporting the solution

5. Summary of workshop results

5.1. Redefining the problem

The workshop began by participants discussing key issues that should be addressed, defining for whom is the problem and what are the factors shaping the problem before diving into brainstorming how the challenge statement/problem could be redefined and further streamlined.

Among the most **crucial issues** identified in relation to digital capacity, participants identified:

- **Lack of sufficient infrastructure** (electricity, network connectivity, availability) **and affordability of digital devices,**

- **Lack of basic digital skills and lack of awareness** of the need of such skills among policy makers and communities themselves, in addition to **negative attitudes** towards tech (tech phobia)
- **Need to perform digital skills gap assessment** to understand where the needs are, and take action to address them,
- **Lack of appropriate digital skills teaching curriculum and language barriers of different localizations** (need of translated content into local languages),
- **Peace and security issues** in selected regions – unstable political situation,
- **Unemployment of recent graduates** and diminishing productivity of those employed.
- **Lack of resources and funding.**

Participants also mentioned a **lack of commitment from government and policy makers**. At the same time, it was mentioned that digital technologies and ICTs are now one of the Ethiopia main strategic pillars (see below discussed in gaps and opportunities).

Participants identified the following main target groups:

- Women and youth, including those in rural communities/ farmers
- Students and recent graduates
- Unemployed
- SMEs and entrepreneurs
- Educational and governmental institutions

In addition to key issues already identified, participants mentioned several other factors shaping the problem:

- Environmental issues connected to climate change and the need for a more resilient society
- Cultural and social norms, including early marriage and conservative culture mindset for women (early marriage and conservative culture mindset for women)
- Cost barriers of infrastructure, resources and funding
- Economic situation of society – low-income level
- Low quality of public service and low level of collaboration between institutions
- Lack of curriculum that has policy and standards developed on sectorial/official level, mandated from the ministry of education

Key Issues	Who is the problem for?	Factors shaping the problem	Redefining the problem
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of basic digital literacy • Insufficient Infrastructure (urban and rural) - electricity, network connectivity, access to devices and resources in local or rural locations (network, laptops, phones) • Lack of awareness of the need of digital skills (communities and policy makers) – especially in rural communities • Need to understand where the skills gaps are • Need for digital inclusion programs where tech working with education sectors • Lack of teaching curriculum • Policy and regulatory system - lack of commitment from government and leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and young women • Unserved, underserved & disadvantaged population, including people with disabilities • Unemployed • Youth • Rural communities • Educational institutions and SME's, • Students • Farmers • Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of infrastructure • Monitoring and evaluation • Curriculum making • Increasing community engagement • Collaboration between institutions • Attitude and awareness problems • Leadership commitment & priorities (political, community, spiritual) • Environmental factors • Cultural and social norms, including early marriage and conservative culture mindset for women • Natural emergencies due to conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to increase leadership commitment • How to use volunteer communities • How to create digital incubation and innovation centers? • How to introduce tech curriculum in rural areas? • How to design income generating activities? • Looking at problems as potential opportunities • How to increase the demand for digital capacity building? • How to empower sectorial contacts from other ministries? • How to raise overall basic tech literacy?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resistance to use tech – people having tech phobia and negative attitudes towards tech • Peace and security issues in some regions of the country • Very small part of the population is eager and interested to learn, and has access to digital devices • Issue of unemployment among graduates & diminishing productivity among those employed • Insufficient market formation • Language barrier – localization in different areas • Cost of implementing the initiatives 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost barriers and infrastructure • Economic situation of society – low-income level • Low quality of public service • Lack of curriculum that has policy and standards on sectorial/official level – mandate from the ministry of education • Early marriage and conservative culture mindset for women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to organize rural communities for digital inclusion • Low space for creativity and innovation for disruptive solutions • Lack of customized information and service • Think about the associated risk/ risk mitigation measures • Thinking about funding and subsidizing communities
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Finally, participants suggested adding further dimensions to the challenge question/ redefining the challenge: *“How can we establish a sustainable platform to implement ‘Digital Capacity for All’ in Ethiopia, leveraging synergies between stakeholders in the Ethiopia’s digital ecosystem?”* by adding focus on:

- Increasing leadership commitment and empowering sectorial contacts from other ministries
- Mobilizing volunteer communities and increasing community engagement, and organizing rural communities
- Designing tech curriculum for rural communities
- Fostering incubation, creativity, and innovation for disruptive solutions
- Creating income-generating activities
- Thinking about associated risk/ introducing risk mitigation measures
- Increasing funding opportunities and resource mobilization.

5.2. Understanding challenges and opportunities

The participants summarized the main challenges, before diving into opportunities.

Major challenges and gaps	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership and political situation - Insufficient Infrastructure - Lack of funding and resources, especially in rural communities - Lack of positive attitude towards and awareness of digital technologies - Economic, social and cultural norms - Emergency situations in some regions - Lack of content translated in local languages - Skill gap among communities & teachers and lack of relevant curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of latest technology/ rapid acceleration of technological change - High demand for digital skills is high - Commitment and support of the government through existing strategies (Digital Ethiopia Strategy, Electronic Transaction Proclamation, Start-Up Act) - Privatization/ liberalization of telecom sector - Automation of government services & development of digital environment - Reprioritizing funds to address lack of awareness and focus on underserved populations - Creating more jobs for youth & women by developing digital business organizations - ICT is one of the 5 pillars of Ethiopian Strategy - Active engagement of the development partners/ projects (inc. Digital Foundation Project of the World Bank, DTCs) - Increasing coaching for teachers - Developing local implementation plans - Process of privatization can be influenced to impact positively marginalized groups - Availability of educational institutions, science cafes and training centers in other regions in Ethiopia

5.3. Imagining the future state – brainstorming and development of main idea

As the final activity of the first part of participants focused on ideation of the maximum number of solutions, clustering and ranking, of the solutions identified and final selection of the Top1 idea.

The following **main future goals** were identified by the participants:

- ICT Informed citizens
- Digitalized Ethiopia
- Enhanced attitude, digital literacy, and digital skills for employability to meet the Digital Ethiopia 2025 Strategy
- Job creation through digitalization
- Enhanced connectivity and infrastructure for digital ecosystem
- access, affordability, and sustainability
- Women and Youth are fully part of Ethiopian digital economy
- Creating a hub for digitalization

During the second part of the day, participants ideated one solution that they have identified/selected, in 6 groups, using a lean business canvas approach. The ideas developed are synergetic in scope and have the potential to become a part of a broader platform concept.

- **Idea 1:** Transforming digital skills delivery for underserved women and communities in Ethiopia by strengthening ecosystem and partnerships with all stakeholders the country
- **Idea 2:** Integrating ICT into the school curriculum
- **Idea 3:** Providing schools in local, rural communities with sustainable access to electricity by installing solar-based solutions (enabler for digital capacity)
- **Idea 4:** Providing access to digital skills to rural community farmers by providing solar-powered community training and information centers
- **Idea 5:** Empowering women and youth take advantage of ICT and digitalization
- **Idea 6:** Enhancing digital competence for better employability through blended learning (physical training and digital learning) by creation/providing digital libraries in high schools and universities

Though the ideas developed differed in granularity and activities, four overarching themes can be identified:

- **Need of infrastructure** (power provided by **solar** and connectivity) in the more rural areas for digital inclusion of women and youth
- Thus, the **potential of local farmers community centres** to be turned into local digital training centres, and the need of engagement of community/religious leaders
- Need of **digital skills need assessment** and
- **Integrating ICT in the school curriculum** and introduction of blending learning in schools/ universities

6. Next steps

The project team will discuss the results of the workshop with the Ministry of Technology and Innovation in Ethiopia to decide on a revised platform scope and activities in cooperation with the interested development partners (WFP, UNDP, UNICEF Generation Unlimited and ILO (International Labour Organization), with the expected expanded stakeholder engagement and implementation of platform activities in Q3 and Q4 2022.