

Skills for Inclusive Digital Participation

Theory of Change

October 2021

The Skills for Inclusive Digital Participation (SIDP) Programme seeks to support digitally excluded individuals to develop the skills, networks, and ability for digital participation through training.

SIDP is targeted at digitally excluded individuals including young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds, women and Persons Living with Disabilities (PLWD); individuals that are being left behind in their development of digital skills and networks by generic, large-scale interventions. The delivery of these interventions often doesn't suit the lifestyles of these individuals, learning content doesn't feel relevant and neither content or delivery addresses the barriers that are causing digital exclusion. However, it is recognised that digital inclusion can help achieve long-term economic change for these individuals.

SIDP is based on the theory that by delivering digital training to these individuals in a flexible way (i.e. adapted to suit their lifestyles) and making training materials more relevant, they will develop the digital competencies they need to take part in digital life and online activities safely and enhance their livelihoods through entrepreneurship that leverages online resources and markets (the intended programme impact).

There are two groups who will be supported through SIDP; those delivering the training (Community Level Trainers) and those receiving the training (beneficiaries).

Communities Level Trainers (CLTs), themselves representative of digitally excluded groups, will deliver the training and inform the content of manuals and toolkits that will be used for training. CLTs will be trained for their role. Through this training it is intended that CLTs increase their knowledge on approaches for digital skills training and increase their capacity with regards to safeguarding issues and online safety. Their skills development will be enhanced through mentoring by expert digital trainers and supported by a Community of Practice.

On the assumption that CLTs have further opportunities for teaching digital literacy after the SIDP Programme, it is anticipated that they will demonstrate improved capacity for teaching digital literacy to excluded groups and to adapt training materials and approaches to their local contexts and languages. Through their engagement in international communities of practice, it is expected that the CLTs become aware of new work and business opportunities.

For beneficiaries, there will be three levels of training; foundation, essential (referred to in combination as basic level training) and intermediate.

At the basic level, beneficiaries will be supported to access information online and communicate online. On the assumption that beneficiaries do not face any challenges to digital participation from family / community and do not have any negative experiences

communicating online, it is expected that, as a result of this training, they will demonstrate more active digital participation (with regards to health, relationships, money, learning and business) after the programme.

For some beneficiaries, who have increased their knowledge of new opportunities through SIDP and their subsequent digital participation, it is anticipated there will be an economic benefit in the long term as they access new learning or business opportunities.

At the intermediate level, beneficiaries will be supported to increase their knowledge and skills in digital entrepreneurship (digital marketing and e-commerce) and cybersecurity such that they can actively and safely participate in online communities, produce online content in addition to producing and using web analytics. It is expected that as a result of this training, beneficiaries demonstrate more active digital participation (with regards to health, relationships, money, learning and business) and take steps to raise the visibility / reach of their business through digital methods, set-up e-commerce platforms and / or digital marketing approaches and use web analytics to change / improve the digital experience of their customers. This is based on the assumption that those attending intermediate level training have the opportunity to apply their knowledge in an entrepreneurial setting, i.e. a business or a social enterprise.

It is anticipated that, should there be demand for the products or services being sold by these businesses / social enterprises, this entrepreneurial digital activity will have a long-term economic impact in terms of increase revenue through business growth or monetising online channels.

To support the in-person delivery of training – for both CLTs and beneficiaries – an element of SIDP is sign-posting both groups to further training and work / work placement opportunities. This activity to raise awareness of new work and business opportunities for CLTs and raise awareness of new learning and business opportunities for beneficiaries additionally contributes to both groups accessing new work, business and learning opportunities.

Wider contextual assumptions supporting the delivery of SIDP are that for all groups (CLTs and beneficiaries of basic and intermediate level training):

- They already have, or can access, basic levels of connectivity
- They have minimal social / cultural / religious aversions or negative mindsets about connecting to the internet and taking part online
- There is locally relevant content, markets, audiences that they can access
- Restrictions introduced in response to Covid-19 do not impact delivery and / or the impact of restrictions can be managed through the adaptation of delivery.

In addition to those directly in receipt of training through SIDP, there will be an opportunity for additional individuals to benefit from the training materials developed for delivering basic and intermediate training. The manuals and toolkits will be distributed to a range of institutions who will be encouraged to adapt their existing training in light of these to make it more effective for the digitally excluded. It is anticipated that some of those in receipt of this adapted training will benefit in the same way as beneficiaries who have received basic or intermediate training through SIDP directly.