17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AFRICA CENTRE OF COMPETENCE FOR DIGITAL & AI SKILLING

Executive Summary

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with Microsoft, proposes the establishment of the first-ever Africa Centre of Competence for Digital & Artificial Intelligence (AI) Skilling to be located in Kenya. This Centre aims to put the infrastructure in place to help scale digital and AI capabilities of government employees in the Africa region (Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, Malawi, and Cape Verde). The "hub-and-spoke" model is proposed to position Kenya as the principal hub for the duration of the project.

Context and Justification

The public sector in Africa faces significant challenges due to a lack of advanced digital skills and the potential for cloud computing enhance services delivery. These skills gap often leads to service delays and hinders citizen satisfaction. The Centre of Competence addresses these challenges by providing critical digital skills training, improving public service delivery, and positioning Kenya as a leader in inclusive digital transformation within Africa.

Objectives and Goals

- Objectives: Equip public sector workers with essential digital skills, fostering a culture of transparency, efficiency, and innovation in government operations.
- Alignment with broader goals: Kenya's national digital masterplan provides a strategic framework to accelerate digital transformation anchored on digital infrastructure, skills, economy, and government.

Project Components and Budgets

- Public sector digital and AI skilling: Scaling of the Centre of Competence across Africa to enhance digital and AI skills of 100,000 public servants in the pilot countries (Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, Malawi, and Cape Verde). This includes baseline assessments, development of training platforms and industry-relevant curricula, cross-country knowledge-sharing, and public sector innovation initiatives. Budget: USD 2.6M;
- Cloud migration support for public sector: Providing technical expertise and support to facilitate the Government's ambitions for seamless data migration to cloud computing infrastructure, including training and change management. Budget: USD 1.0M;
- Participatory virtual citizen engagement: Developing a metaverse platform potentially expanding access by citizens to public services and decision-makers, while providing a more immersive, participatory, and efficient approach to service delivery. Budget: USD 0.5M;
- Personalised anticipatory service delivery: Promoting a citizencentric approach to the digitalisation of key public services by developing expertise to harness predictive analytics and Big Data that anticipates and streamline citizens' needs across the human life cycle (cradle-to-grave). Budget: USD 0.5M.

Target Audience and Strategic Partnerships

The Centre targets 100,000 civil servants across Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, Malawi, and Cape Verde, with potential expansion to other countries in the continent. Partnerships will be forged with local universities for research and academic support, relevant government ministries for policy alignment and implementation, and technology firms for infrastructure and curriculum expertise. UNDP will oversee the project, through the established governance structures, which will be anchored in the Executive Branch of Government of Kenya, in the Office of the Head of Public Service and Ministry of ICT.

Implementation Strategy

Scheduled to launch in Q3 2024, the project will span to Q4 2026 with annual evaluations to assess ongoing implementation and scaling potential.

Scalability and Options

The programme will start with foundational courses, and progressively include more advanced digital skills using a hybrid model. Scaling options include extending services to all African nations. Funding of the Centre beyond 2026 will be based on G2G (government-to-government) business models.

Risk Management

Potential risks include limited initial participation, curriculum relevance, and funding sustainability. Mitigation strategies involve high-level government engagement, co-developing the curriculum with industry experts, and a robust funding model involving both public and private sectors.

Evaluation and Success Metrics

- Impact will be measured through pre- and post-training assessments, efficiency metrics in service delivery, and user satisfaction surveys.
- Success criteria: Success will be defined by measurable improvements in service delivery speed and quality, increased digital literacy among government employees, and the potential replication of the model in other regions.

Legal and Compliance

All project activities will comply with national and international data protection regulations, ensuring digital training and data handling meet stringent security standards.

PROJECT COST US$

$ TOTAL PROJECT COSTS 6,000,000

UNDP Investments: 800,000
Government Commitment: 300,000
Microsoft Initial Commitment: 300,000
Required Resources: 4,600,000

Contacts

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