



Inclusive Sustainable Economic Domain (ISED) Digital Empowerment of Girls Activity (ICT4Girls)



The information age and digital revolution have transformed the labor markets: While employers are searching for employees with advanced skills such as indata analysis, network management, cybersecurity many youths in Uzbekistan, especially females, lack even basic digital skills. A UNICEF national survey showed that 43.5% of girls are computer illiterate, and that 68.1% percent of young women never used the Internet. These rates are two times higher than for boys and young men.

Rationale

As the government of Uzbekistan plans to increase the export of IT services in the next five years, the need for involving females is growing significantly. Using the potential of young women will not only empower them but contribute to the growth of the sector, improving the labor force and promoting growth. The Digital Empowerment of Girls Project (ICT4Girls) initiated by the Center for Innovation, Technology and Strategy (ITSM) under the Ministry of Public Education will help to enhance women's participation in the digital labor market providing relevant digital training and skills.

Objectives and activities

The main goal of the ICT4Girls Project is to decrease the gender inequality in the digital labour market by equipping young girls with necessary digital education and introducing potential employment opportunities. Activities include:

Country:

Uzbekistan

Duration:

2021-2022

Total Budget:

CHF 200'000

Partners:

Ministry of Public Education;
Center for Innovation,
Technology and Strategy
(ITSM)

Implementing Partner:

UNDP

- Courses for girls with no or only basic digital skills: Online courses covering e-commerce and digital marketing subjects and animated educational videos will be developed for dissemination through the digital platforms and social media resources.
- ICT4Girls Digital Camp will bring together young women offering educational programs in web development, mobile development, web design and digital marketing. Leading IT specialists working in different companies will introduce their experience with participants.
- Mentorship program for young women. A team of experts, will coach participants. It is foreseen that 3 winning projects then will receive a grant for further development.
- A Forum on Digital Empowerment of young women will bring together all stakeholders in IT sector, facilitating panel discussions, presentations and exchange. An Education on Job Fair will be organized.
- An awareness campaign will help to gain strong parental and community support for girls' participation in ICT programs, relying on most popular social media platforms as well as traditional medias.

Target group

Young women studying in the 8-11-grades at school, colleges, technikums as well as universities.

The project also targeted adults to change social norms and increase public awareness of the topic.

Key results achieved

1. Courses on the topics of digital marketing and e-commerce have been developed and uploaded to the Profororientation Platform.
2. 10 videos were designed and widely promoted via the YouTube and Telegram channels of the projects.
3. The first ICT4Girls Digital Camp brought together 100 young women and offered educational programs in areas including web design and digital marketing. IT specialists representing well-known companies like EPAM, Uber and NASA shared their experience.
4. For the mentorship program, 445 applications were received, 149 of them were validated, and 24 girls were invited to the second stage to introduce their IT proposals. 10 applicants were accepted for the mentorship program. As a result, 3 winning projects received a grant for further development and launch their own project as start up.

Contact:

Embassy of Switzerland

Shota Rustaveli Street,
Impasse 1, House 4
Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Tel.: +998 78 120 54 54
tashkent@eda.admin.ch
www.eda.admin.ch/tashkent

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