



## Inclusive Sustainable Economic Domain (ISED)

### Empowering the Youth to Embrace the Digital Economy and Digital Entrepreneurship



Uzbekistan promotes equitable and sustainable economic growth through decent and productive employment, improving access to knowledge and innovation, designing digital solutions and creating a more favorable business environment, especially for young entrepreneurs, including those located in rural areas. The project provides support to enhance the Government's efforts to unlock opportunities presented by the emerging digital economy with an emphasis on unlocking opportunities for the economic empowering of the youth through digitalization.

#### Rationale

Uzbekistan stands at an important point of its demographic, economic and technological transition. The growing young population theoretically gives it a "demographic dividend", but harnessing this potential requires the creation of an enabling environment, which fosters the significant scope offered by the digital economy and transformation. Digitalization offers much potential to provide employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people. However, digital skills and internet access are often lacking and there is a large gender and rural-urban digital divide. The Government recently launched an ambitious "Digital Uzbekistan 2030" strategy, which underpins the strong political will with regard to youth empowerment to embrace digital skills development and entrepreneurship.

The Project builds on the momentum of digital transformation of the Uzbek economy, on the strong government commitment to promote digitalization, particularly taking into account the needs and potentials of young people.

#### Country:

Uzbekistan

#### Duration:

2022- 2025

#### Total Budget:

CHF 900'000

#### Partners:

Ministry of Economy and Finance;  
Ministry of Employment and Poverty Reduction;  
Agency for Innovative Development;  
Graduate School of Business and Entrepreneurship;  
IT-Park

#### Executing Agency:

UNDP

## **Objectives and activities**

The overall goal of the project is to empower young people, especially women, with digital entrepreneurship skills, tools and an enabling environment to increase their employment opportunities, competitiveness and resilience to crises.

It thus contributes to reduced inequality and ensures inclusive, innovative and sustainable economic growth and job creation.

## **The project will pursue the following outcomes and expected results**

Outcome 1: Digital entrepreneurship environment and digital skills of young entrepreneurs are enhanced.

Outcome 2: Institutional capacities for developing the digital economy and digital entrepreneurship ecosystem with a focus on youth are strengthened.

Outcome 3: Youth's financial inclusion and opportunities for nurturing digital entrepreneurship projects and start-ups, are improved.

## **The project activities include**

- Largescale digital skills and digital entrepreneurship training programs for young entrepreneurs;
- Advisory and mentorship support to develop tech solutions for digital transformation of youth-led small businesses;
- Capacity building of government institutions in relation to youth-centered digital entrepreneurship policies and programs;
- Public-Private Dialogues that engage youth in decision making regarding digital policy development, monitoring and evaluation;
- Public and private financing instruments to support digital youth entrepreneurs.

## **Expected results**

- Enhanced capacities of public institutions to implement digital economy policies focused on youth;
- Strengthened institutional capacities for developing youth digital entrepreneurship programs;
- Innovative financing solutions for nurturing digital entrepreneurship projects and start-ups;
- 10'000 youth trained in digital entrepreneurship;
- 3'000 young entrepreneurs obtained Business Development Services;
- 150 young entrepreneurs received mentorships;
- 120 young women participated in the internship program.

## **Target group**

Around 13,000 youth will benefit from the project, of which at least 50% women and 25% from rural areas.

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