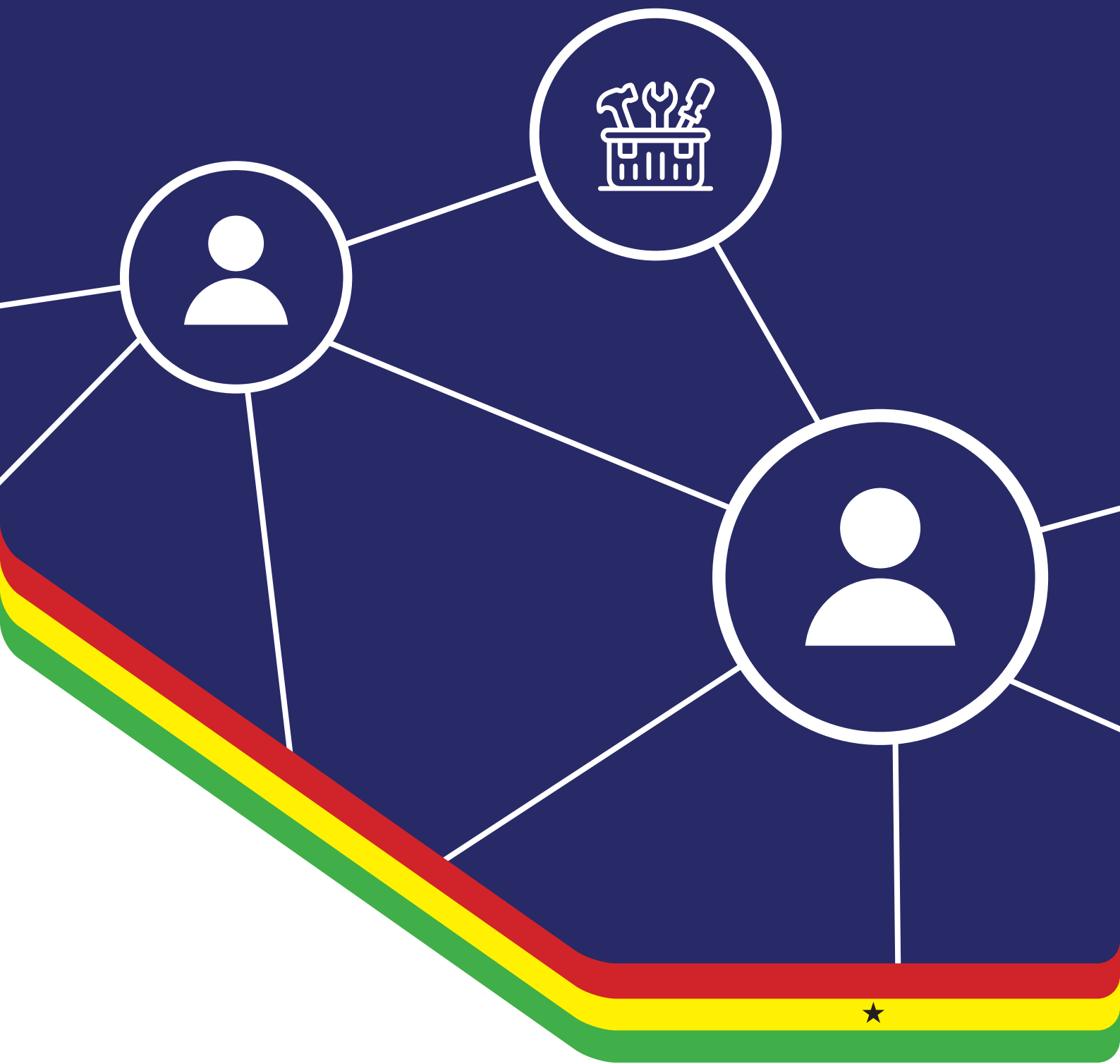




GENDER-RESPONSIVE TOOLKIT FOR WORKSHOP ORGANISERS IN DIGITAL INNOVATION AND TRANSFORMATION



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Glossary

Digital Technology:

Digital technology refers to the hardware, software, networks, and platforms that process, store, and share information. In Ghana, this includes widespread tools like smartphones, mobile apps, and the internet, as well as services such as mobile money (MoMo) and e-learning platforms. These technologies drive communication, innovation, and entrepreneurship, supporting diverse sectors from agriculture to health.

Digital Innovation:

Digital innovation is the use of digital tools and platforms to improve operations, expand markets, and support growth. In the Ghanaian context, this can mean using mobile payment systems like MoMo, e-commerce platforms such as Tonaton or Jumia, and social media for marketing. By adopting these innovations, entrepreneurs and communities can work more efficiently, reach wider audiences, and sustain inclusive growth.

Digital Transformation:

Digital transformation is the integration of digital technologies into all aspects of an organisation, reshaping how value is created and delivered. In Ghana, this includes transitions such as government services moving online through platforms like Ghana.gov or schools adopting blended e-learning. It requires cultural as well as technological change, fostering inclusion and creating opportunities in areas such as digital agriculture, financial services, and youth entrepreneurship.

Sex:

Sex refers to the biological characteristics associated with being male or female, such as chromosomes, reproductive organs, genitalia, and hormone levels.

Gender:

Gender describes the socially constructed roles, behaviours, and expectations associated with being women, men, girls, boys, or other gender identities. Unlike sex, it is shaped by culture, socialisation, and institutions, and can change over time or across contexts.

Gender Norms: Gender norms are the accepted standards and expectations within a society that define how individuals should behave based on their gender identity. They influence roles, responsibilities, and opportunities for women, men, girls, and boys, often reinforcing stereotypes. These norms are learned early through family, culture, and institutions and can limit individual choices.

Gender Relations:

Gender relations describe the social relationships and power dynamics between different genders, such as women and men. These interactions can involve cooperation, support, and connection, but also inequality, conflict, and competition. They are shaped by pervasive power imbalances, often limiting women's access to resources, decision-making, and opportunities.

Gender Roles:

Gender roles are the socially constructed behaviours and tasks that society assigns to women, men, and other genders. Learned from birth and reinforced by family, schools, and culture, they shape access to resources, decision-making, and power within households and communities. In Ghana, women are often expected to manage childcare, household duties, and community responsibilities alongside income-generating work—what is known as the “triple role.” These overlapping demands can create time poverty, limiting women’s opportunities to participate fully in education, entrepreneurship, and digital innovation.

Gender Equity:

Gender equity is the process of ensuring fairness in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and benefits between genders. It recognises historical and cultural disadvantages that have limited women’s participation and requires proactive measures, such as scholarships, mentorship, or targeted training, to create equal outcomes. This can mean supporting women to access digital skills programmes, leadership roles, or entrepreneurship opportunities in sectors where men are dominant. Equity does not disadvantage men and boys; rather, it addresses systemic barriers so that all genders can participate fully and fairly in innovation and development.

Gender Equality:

Gender equality means that all individuals—regardless of gender—enjoy the same rights, responsibilities, and opportunities in political, social, economic, and cultural life. It ensures that women, men, girls, and boys have equal access to education, jobs, leadership roles, and resources, and are treated with dignity and fairness. In Ghana, this includes ensuring women and men have the same opportunities to participate in digital skills training, entrepreneurship, and leadership in innovation hubs. Unlike equity, which provides tailored support to correct disadvantages, equality focuses on equal treatment and opportunities so that everyone can reach their full potential.

Equality of Opportunity:

Equality of opportunity means that everyone has the same starting point and access to resources, opportunities, and conditions, regardless of their background. It emphasises fairness in the process, where people succeed based on merit, effort, or talent. In Ghana, this could mean giving both women and men equal access to digital skills training or entrepreneurship programmes without discrimination. The belief is that if opportunities are equally provided, outcomes will naturally be fair.

Equality of Outcome:

Equality of outcome ensures that everyone reaches similar results, even if they begin from different starting points. It focuses on fairness in results by providing extra support to disadvantaged groups so they can achieve outcomes comparable to others. In Ghana, this might involve offering additional digital literacy training or childcare support for women so they can benefit equally from innovation opportunities. This approach recognises that equal access alone may not close persistent gaps without targeted interventions.

Intersectionality:

Intersectionality is the understanding that people’s experiences of disadvantage are shaped by overlapping factors such as gender, class, income, age, disability, ethnicity, and family status. These factors interact rather than act in isolation, often intensifying inequalities and creating additional barriers to participation. In Ghana, for example, women in northern regions may face stricter patriarchal norms than those in the south, and a single mother with limited support will experience very different

challenges from a woman without caregiving responsibilities. Recognising intersectionality helps ensure that digital innovation programmes and workspaces are designed to be inclusive and responsive to diverse needs, such as providing mother- and child-friendly facilities.

Gender Integration Continuum:

Also known as the gender equality continuum, is a framework for assessing how well gender considerations are incorporated into programmes, products, and services. It categorises approaches from those that ignore or reinforce gender inequalities to those that actively promote equity and transform harmful norms.

Gender-Responsive Workshop:

This is a training or learning event designed to ensure equal participation, voice, and benefit for all genders. It goes beyond simply inviting women and men by actively addressing barriers—such as timing, childcare needs, language, or cultural expectations—that may limit participation. In Ghana, this could include scheduling around market days, providing childcare support, or offering translation into local languages like Twi, Ga, Ewe, or Dagbani. The goal is to create inclusive spaces where women, men, and marginalised groups can equally access opportunities in digital innovation and transformation.

Gender Mainstreaming:

Gender mainstreaming is the strategy of systematically integrating gender perspectives and considerations into all policies, programmes, and organisational practices. Instead of treating gender as an add-on, it ensures that women's and men's needs, priorities, and impacts are addressed at every stage of design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Gender mainstreaming might involve incorporating women's digital skills training into national innovation programmes, ensuring ICT policies address gender gaps, or requiring gender analysis in project planning. Its aim is to make gender equality an integral part of institutions and development outcomes.

Gender-Exploitative:

A gender-exploitative approach uses rigid gender norms and power imbalances to achieve programme goals, often reinforcing harmful stereotypes. This can unintentionally or intentionally worsen inequalities and undermine long-term outcomes. For example, using only female personas for AI voice assistants—like Ghana's "Abena" or global tools such as Siri and Alexa—reinforces stereotypes that women belong in supportive or service roles. Such approaches harm progress toward equity and sustainability.

Gender-Blind:

A gender-blind approach ignores gender differences, assuming policies or innovations affect everyone equally. By failing to account for unequal access, power dynamics, or needs, these strategies often disadvantage women and girls the most. In Ghana, for instance, designing e-learning platforms that require personal devices and high data consumption can exclude many women who have limited access to technology. Gender-blindness perpetuates existing inequalities instead of addressing them.

Gender-Aware/ Gender-Sensitive:

A gender-sensitive approach recognises that women, and men have different needs and experiences, but does not always take concrete steps to address inequality. For example, an organisation may collect gender-disaggregated data or provide separate training sessions for women and men, but fail to tackle the root causes of gender gaps. In Ghana, this could mean acknowledging women's lower digital literacy in innovation hubs without adapting content or support to close that gap. Sensitivity is a first step but not enough on its own.

Gender-Responsive:

A gender-responsive approach actively integrates gender perspectives into every stage of design, implementation, and evaluation. It aims to reduce gender gaps and ensure equitable participation and benefits for all genders. In Ghana, this could include tailoring digital and financial tools to women's economic realities, offering childcare support during training, or designing content in local languages.

Gender-Transformative:

A gender-transformative approach goes beyond addressing gender gaps to actively challenge and change harmful norms, roles, and power relations. It seeks to dismantle systemic barriers and empower women and men to share resources, responsibilities, and leadership more equally. Transformative programming might involve engaging chiefs, queen mothers, and community leaders in dialogue to support women's rights to attend training or become entrepreneurs without male permission.

Safe Space:

A safe space is an environment where all participants feel respected, included, and free from discrimination, harassment, or intimidation. It allows individuals—regardless of gender, age, or background—to express themselves, share ideas, and participate without fear of judgment or harm. In Ghana, creating safe spaces in workshops may include establishing clear codes of conduct, providing confidential channels for feedback, and ensuring that women and marginalised groups are given equal voice.

Affirmative Action:

Affirmative action refers to deliberate policies and measures that give preferential support to historically disadvantaged groups, such as women, to address past and present inequalities. It may include quotas, targeted recruitment, scholarships, or reserved leadership positions to create fairer access to opportunities. Affirmative action is reflected in politics, which seeks to increase women's representation in decision-making and leadership roles.

Gender-Sensitive Indicators:

Gender-sensitive indicators are measures that capture differences in outcomes, participation, or access between women, men, and other gender groups. They help organisations track whether programmes, policies, or innovations are reducing gender gaps or unintentionally reinforcing them.





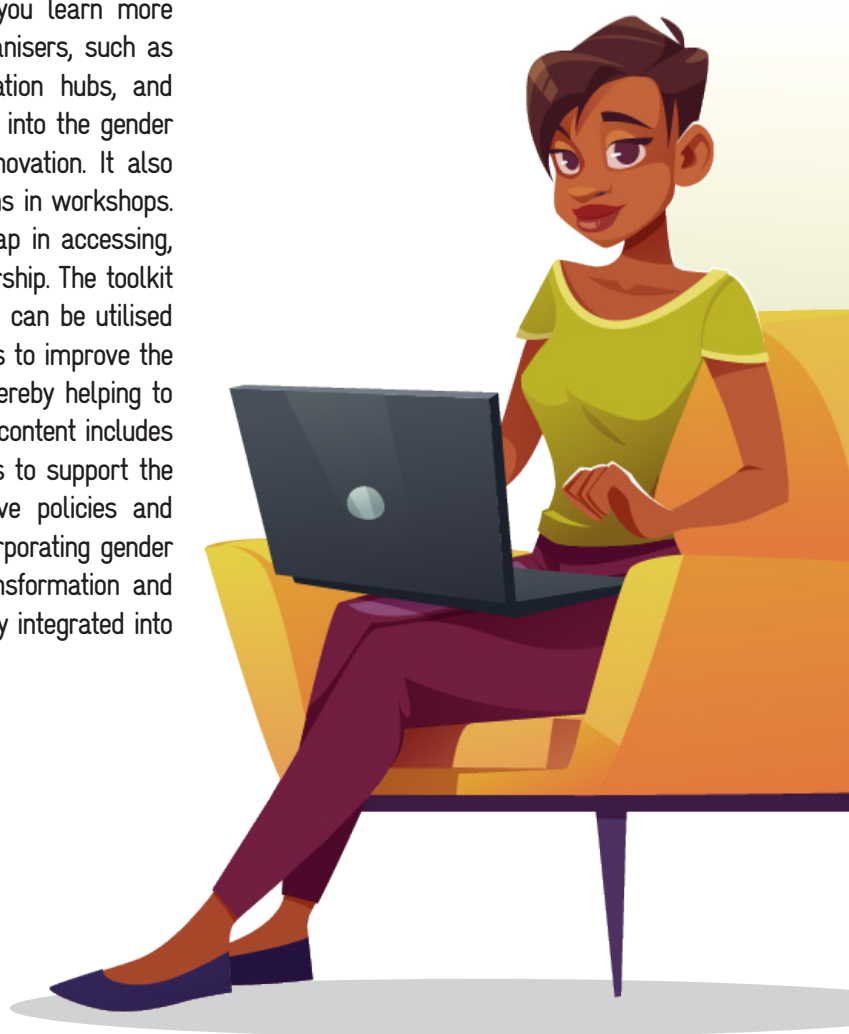
Part: A

Background and Purpose



1: Introduction

This toolkit is based on extensive gender needs assessments carried out with workshop organisers, hub managers, and women entrepreneurs involved in projects on digital transformation and entrepreneurship across six regions in Ghana (namely Eastern, Ashanti, Northern, North-East, Upper East and Upper West regions). In digital technology, business, and innovation, integrating gender helps organisations shift from approaches that overlook gender differences to strategies that promote gender equality. This toolkit will help you learn more about this. The toolkit aims to provide workshop organisers, such as civil society organisations (CSOs), digital and innovation hubs, and government agencies, with practical tools and insights into the gender dynamics affecting women's experiences of digital innovation. It also offers guidance on how to include gender considerations in workshops. The main aim of the toolkit is to bridge the gender gap in accessing, adopting, and using digital technologies in entrepreneurship. The toolkit is applicable beyond digital innovation ecosystems and can be utilised in other sectors aiming to close the gender gap. It aims to improve the quality and inclusiveness of workshops and events, thereby helping to reduce gender disparities in digital transformation. The content includes practical steps, examples, templates, and case studies to support the development and implementation of gender-responsive policies and programmes. Overall, it provides a framework for incorporating gender into workshops and initiatives focused on digital transformation and inclusive entrepreneurship, ensuring gender is effectively integrated into workshops on digital innovations.





The Sections Provide Actionable Insights as follows

- Interactive components, including activities, discussion prompts, and breakout session ideas, are designed to enhance the learning experience.
- Practical prompts: Strategies for addressing gender issues, sexual harassment policy, recruitment checklists, and monitoring.
- Real-world case studies: Examples of successful gender integration in workshops and trainings, drawn from the needs assessment and practice, are incorporated to enhance practical experience.
- The toolkit is divided into three parts: What to do from start to finish.
Part A: Before Organising a Workshop, **Part B:** During Workshops and **Part C:** After Workshops.



Audience of the Toolkit

The audience includes workshop organisers in the digital technology ecosystem, non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations working on gender and women's empowerment, gender networks, and government agencies seeking to bridge the gender gap in technology and entrepreneurship. The aim is to bridge gender gaps in digital transformation.



Purpose of the Toolkit

This toolkit aims to close the digital gender gap. Specifically, it:

- Serves as a resource for gender-responsive practices and policies in workshops and training interventions.
- Equip workshop organisers with practical tools, including templates, checklists, and case studies, to incorporate gender and become gender responsive.
- Provide strategies to create inclusive, safe, and friendly training and mentoring environments that actively support the agency and leadership of diverse groups of women and underrepresented groups in digital innovation.



Who can use the Toolkit

- Workshop organisers can use this toolkit as a reference guide to gain a deeper understanding of gender issues and gender integration and utilise it as a valuable resource during the planning, delivery, and evaluation stages of their workshop programmes.
- Gender-sensitive facilitators: Trained to recognise and address gender dynamics, ensure inclusive discussions, prevent bias, and create safe spaces for all participants.
- Gender-inclusive participant selection: Intentionally ensures balanced representation (women, men, youth, and marginalised groups), enabling diverse perspectives and equitable access to opportunities.



What is this Resource Based on?

The development of this toolkit is grounded in a comprehensive needs assessment conducted with workshop organisers and women entrepreneurs, who are the key stakeholders. The following are key findings pertaining to workshop organisers:

- Inadequate training and access to information by women in digital tech as a result of relatively low education, experience, and skill training levels.
- Lack of mentorship and networks: Limited access to career guidance from both private and publicly funded support services, such as business development services and information on business growth.
- Safety and gender-based violence: Issues pertaining to the safety and protection of women entrepreneurs, particularly during training, encompass bullying, sexual harassment, and other forms of violence, which lead to fear, stress, and restricted opportunities to freely choose, express themselves and derive maximum benefits from capacity-building.
- Family-work balance conflicts: Deeply gendered division of roles and the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work on women limit the time available for participating in training and developing their business and innovation.
- Women face significant socio-cultural and economic barriers in accessing and benefiting from digital training. Cultural and social barriers include normative constraints and societal attitudes, influenced by cultural and religious beliefs, that do not support women's participation in technology. Additionally, there is a perception that entrepreneurship is predominantly for men.
- Workshop organisers often rush through training content without providing trainees with resources.

Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors that Serve as Barriers to Women's Access to Digital Technology

In addition to the factors related to the workshops, there are also socio-cultural barriers that hinder women's participation in the digital transformation ecosystem. According to the needs assessment, women's ability to fully utilise digital technology to improve their businesses is impeded by several challenges.

- ➔ **Limited Internet Connectivity and Resources:** The more rural and underserved areas suffer from slow or unreliable internet, making digital business operations difficult. Similarly, as women are often low-income earners, many businesses also struggle with the high costs of digital devices, electricity, and data, which limit access to essential tools.
- ➔ **Socio-Cultural and Religious Barriers:** Women, especially in Muslim communities, face restrictions on using digital platforms due to societal norms governing femininity. For instance, women reported experiencing backlash against those who use their images to advertise their businesses. There are also family expectations to stay at home and care for family or prospective family members. Gender roles, religious expectations, and family obligations limit their ability to engage in online business. Some men also perceive women's digital empowerment as a threat to their masculinity, further discouraging their participation.
- ➔ **Safety and Privacy Concerns:** Cyberbullying, sexual harassment, and scams were reported as deterring, particularly for women and individuals with disabilities, from using digital platforms. Fear of financial loss and online harassment limits engagement and trust in digital transactions.
- ➔ **Lack of Technical Knowledge:** Many women business owners lack the skills to utilise digital tools effectively. Limited training opportunities exacerbate the issue, preventing them from optimising their online presence and marketing strategies.
- ➔ **Ageism and Digital Exclusion:** Older women face challenges in adopting digital technologies due to limited technical knowledge and exclusion from training programmes that often favour younger participants.
- ➔ **Lack of Awareness and Investment in Digital Tools:** Some women entrepreneurs underestimate the importance of investing in digital technology, viewing it as an unnecessary expense rather than a tool for business growth.





The Importance of Gender Integration in Digital Innovation Organisations

Digital innovation thrives from diverse perspectives. Gender integration practices help:

- Enhance creativity and innovation.
- Address systemic barriers that women and other underrepresented groups face in accessing digital technology and using it to develop their business.
- Create an environment where all participants feel valued, empowered, and safe to explore their talents and abilities.
- Actively promote gender equity rather than ignoring or reinforcing gender disparities.



Training Methodology

- Interactive Workshops: Facilitator-led sessions with group discussions and breakout activities.
- Case Studies and Best Practices: Examples and success stories of gender-responsive practices— excerpts from the needs assessment.

2: Institutional and Organizational Foundations

2.1 CORE GENDER CONCEPTS



Addressing gender issues in digital technology means recognising how digital technology impacts various women and men differently. This is crucial for tackling the digital divide and ensuring inclusive participation and safety for all, as the needs, interests, and aspirations of different social groups, such as women and men, vary due to the societal roles assigned to them. Despite unprecedented advances in digital technologies, women in Ghana face distinct barriers that hinder their full participation in and access to the benefits of the digital sector. The digital innovation ecosystem is a highly male-dominated space where women's unique needs are rarely met. This neglect of women's specific requirements has resulted in serious consequences, including workspaces that are not accommodating for women, a lack of childcare options, and limited flexibility in scheduling training and workshop programmes, forcing women to choose between their domestic responsibilities and attending these programmes. Moreover, widespread sexism, prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping based on gender, primarily directed towards women and girls, along with sexual harassment in training and workshop environments, cause significant discomfort for women. Another challenge is the absence of a critical mass of women as trainers and mentors to inspire and guide younger women in the digital technology ecosystem.

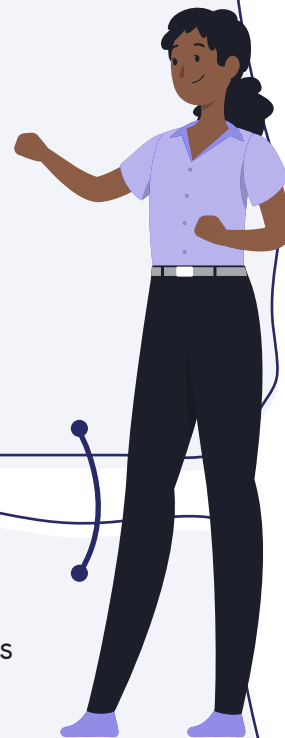
Additionally, women face cyberbullying and fraud due to limited awareness of safety mechanisms while using digital technology. Related to this, women's knowledge of and use of digital technology remains rudimentary, lagging that of men. However, leveraging digital platforms, tools, and digital financial services is essential, as they offer unique opportunities for women's economic empowerment, enhancing their agency within the family and community, as well as their political participation at various levels. Digital transformation can help achieve gender equality if digital inclusion is prioritised.

EXERCISE ONE:

Identifying gender issues in digital technology and transformation

DURATION: 30 minutes

Divide the group into reasonable sizes, preferably four or five. Ask the groups to identify the unique challenges faced by different groups of women and men who have benefited from training focusing on digital technology from their organisation. For instance, what are the different challenges that various women and men face? (That is, young, middle-aged, old, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, religious groups, etc.)



- ➔ Facilitate a discussion of sample answers, encouraging participants to share their perspectives and experiences.
- ➔ Conclude by stating that all the answers are interesting, but no particular answer is superior to another. Be sure to clarify any misunderstandings, such as views that homogenise the challenges among the diverse groups.
- ➔ Note that it is important to apply the principle of no 'right or wrong answers' in adult learning.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE EXERCISE

- ➔ Enhanced awareness of how gender intersects with age, disability, ethnicity, and religion in access to and outcomes of digital training.
- ➔ Identify diverse challenges faced by different groups of women and men in the digital and entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Figure 1: SEX AND GENDER

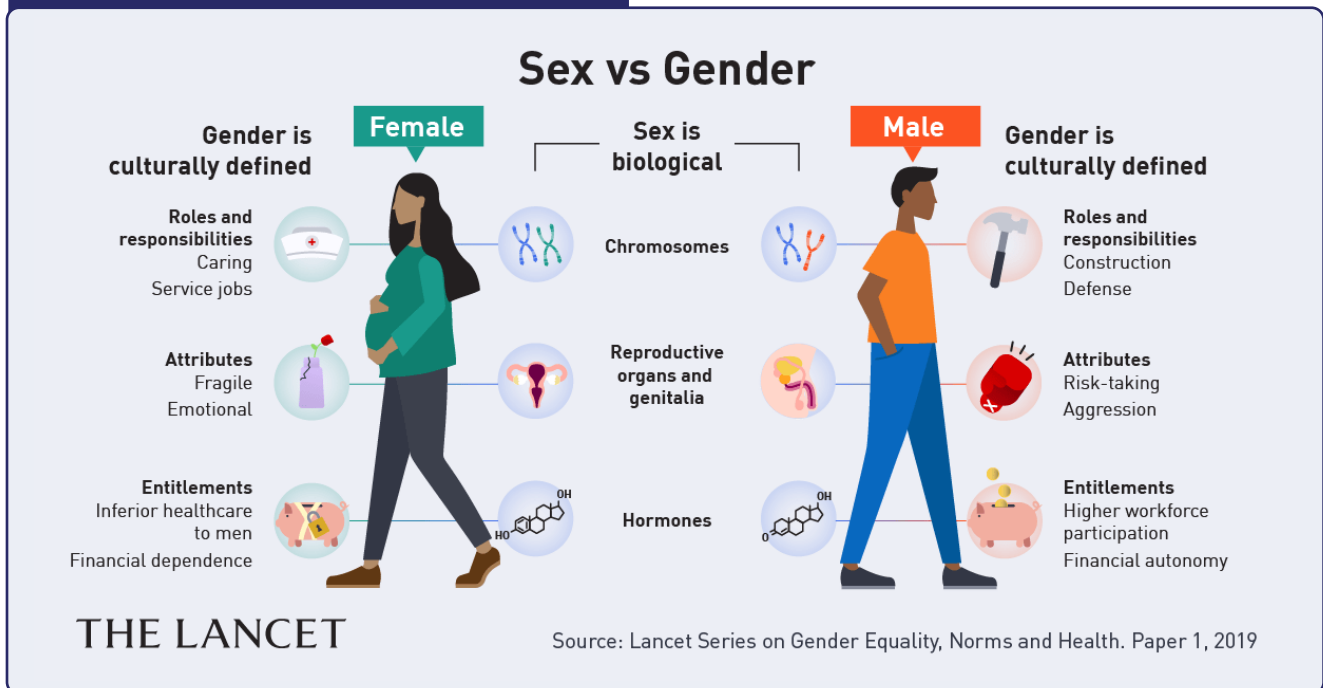
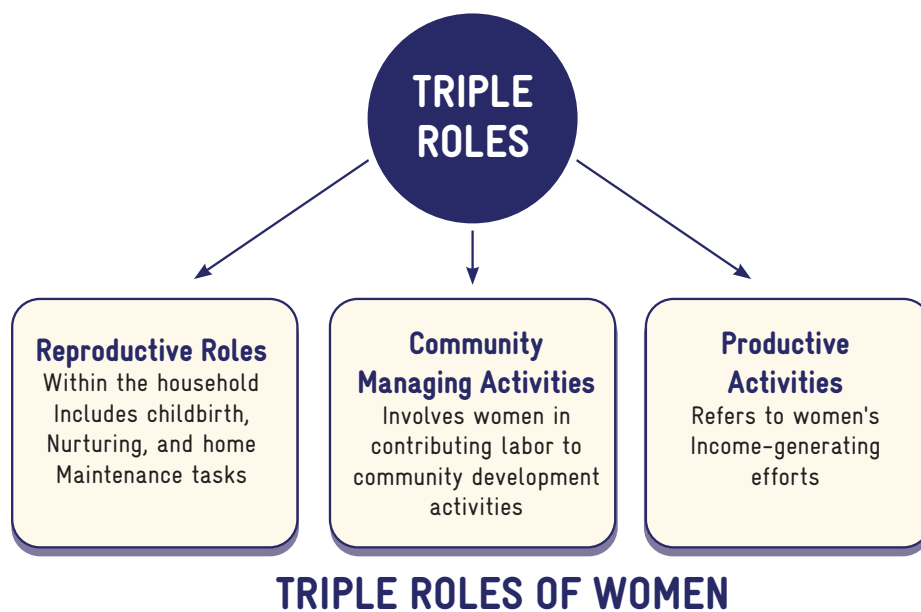


Figure 2: THE TRIPLE ROLES OF WOMEN



Reproductive



Productive



Community Managing

EXERCISE TWO:

Understanding Gender

DURATION: 30 minutes

Instructions: Divide the participants into small groups of three or four and ask them to explore responses to the questions:

- ➔ What is gender?
- What is sex?
- What are the power dynamics involved in gender relations?
- How do they affect access to digital technology resources?

➔ **Role of the Facilitator:**

- Help the small groups generate ideas about gender and sex.
- The aim is to develop a better understanding of the term and to explore the power dynamics and relations that negatively affect women's access to productive resources.
- Invite groups to share their ideas.
- Clarify any misunderstandings and close the session.

➔ **Expected outcomes of the exercise**

- Gain a deeper understanding of the concepts of gender and sex.
- Identify the power dynamics in gender relations and their impact on resource access.
- Understand how gender inequalities affect women's access to digital technology.
- Recognize the social and cultural factors that shape gender roles.

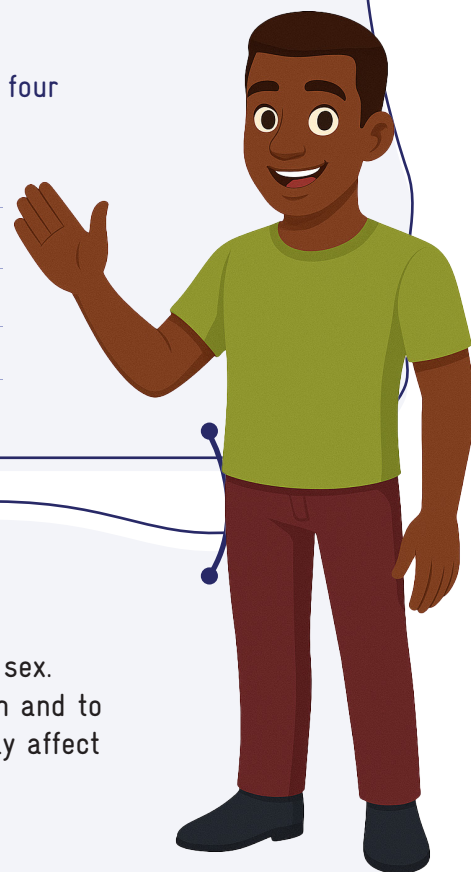
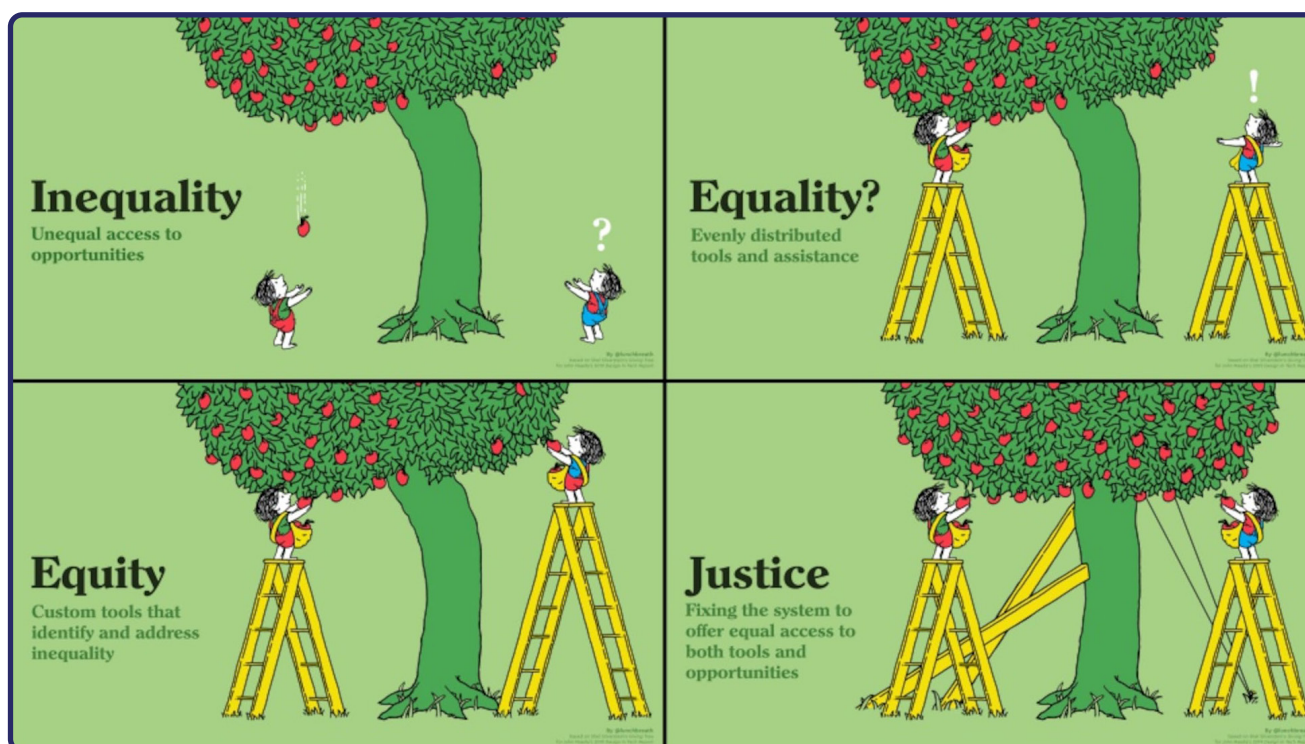


Figure 3: THE GIVING TREE



Source: Tony Ruth's the Giving Tree

→ Equality of Opportunity

Equality of Opportunity means that everyone has the same starting point and access to the same resources, opportunities, or conditions, regardless of their background. It emphasises fairness in the process—people succeed based on merit, effort, or talent. Equality of opportunity is about ensuring a fair starting point. This principle suggests that everyone should have the same access to resources and opportunities, such as education, jobs, and housing, without discrimination. It focuses on creating a level playing field where individuals can compete based on their abilities and efforts. The belief is that if the process is fair, then the outcomes will also be fair.

→ Equality of Outcome

Equality of outcome means ensuring that everyone ends up with the same or similar results, regardless of their starting point. It emphasises fairness in results by adjusting resources or support to achieve equal outcomes across individuals or groups. Equality of outcome focuses on a fair finishing point. This principle seeks to ensure that everyone achieves similar levels of success, irrespective of their background or circumstances. It may involve providing additional support or resources to those who are disadvantaged to help them attain the same outcomes as others. Equality of outcome is sometimes viewed as a more radical approach, as it may necessitate interventions that go beyond merely offering equal opportunities.

2.2 THE GENDER INTEGRATION OR GENDER EQUALITY CONTINUUM

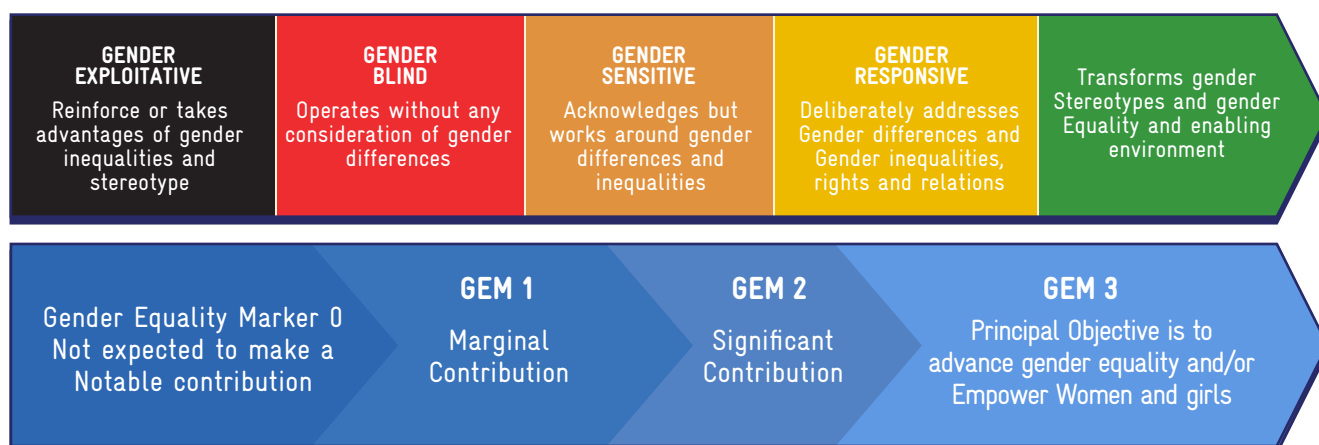


Addressing the socio-cultural and economic factors to improve the effective integration of diverse categories of women requires further progress along the gender integration continuum. The **Gender Integration Continuum**, also known as the gender equality continuum, is a framework for assessing the degree to which gender considerations are incorporated into the development and implementation of programmes, products, and services. The Gender Integration Continuum provides tools for evaluating how gender considerations are incorporated into the design and implementation of programmes, products, and services. It categorises approaches by how they treat gender norms and inequities in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programmes/policies. In digital technology and business innovation, integrating gender helps organisations transition from approaches that overlook gender differences to strategies that promote gender equity.

Key Components of the Continuum

At one end, the practices are detrimental and perpetuate gender inequity, gradually progressing toward actively addressing underlying issues and gender inequalities while promoting gender equality. There are at least four gender integration approaches that programmes and organisations typically adopt when an explicit gender approach is identifiable in the images as follows.

Figure 4: GENDER INTEGRATION CONTINUUM



Source: UNICEF Gender Equality Marker and Gender Tag Guidance Note (2022)

Figure 5: GENDER-RESPONSIVE vs GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE

	GENDER-RESPONSIVE	GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE
DEFINITION	Considers and addresses gender disparities in digital technology	Challenges and seeks to change harmful gender norms through digital technology
FOCUS	Improving access and participation for women and girls	Shifting power relations and gender roles
DESIGN	Inclusive design with women as users	Empowering women as leaders and creators
IMPACT	Enhances digital equity	Drives structural social change
EXAMPLES	Coding programmes for girls, online safety tools	Women-led tech startups, advocacy campaigns

EXERCISE THREE:

Understanding the Gender Integration Continuum

DURATION: 30 minutes

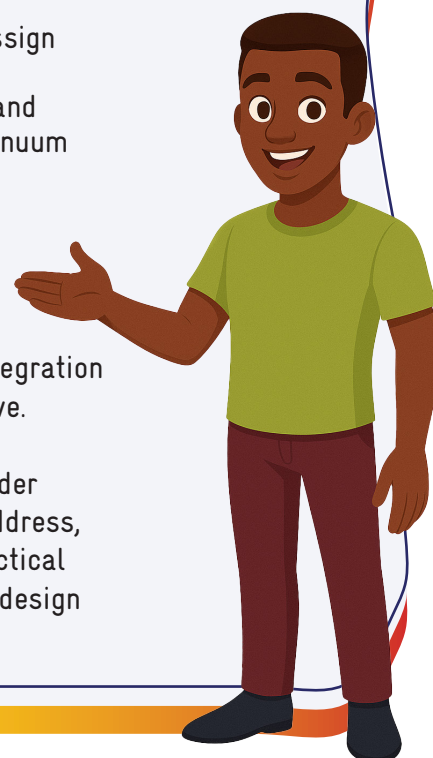
Instructions: Divide the participants into four or five groups and assign Appendix 1. A sample program for assessing the Gender Integration Framework, to each group. Ask the groups to analyse the program and determine where they would place it on the gender integration continuum (e.g., gender-exploitative, gender-blind, gender-sensitive, gender-responsive, or gender-transformative).



Expected Outcomes of the exercise

Gain a deeper understanding of the stages of the gender integration continuum, from gender-exploitative to gender-transformative.

Analyse real program examples through the lens of the gender integration continuum. Identify how different programmes address, or fail to address, gender issues and dynamics. Acquire practical insights necessary for applying gender analysis in program design and evaluation.



Summary

The introductory chapter offers valuable insights into key gender concepts and their representation in digital technology. It also emphasizes the gender issues that hinder women's effective participation in digital and entrepreneurial ecosystems. This section demonstrates that working within a gender integration framework provides opportunities to effectively address gender issues in digital technology.

2.3 GENDER IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

This section focuses on gender in leadership decision-making and training facilitation during digital transformation. The importance of including women in decision-making and as training facilitators cannot be overstated. Women's needs, interests, and perspectives, along with their experiences and perceptions of digital technology, are unique because of the gender roles assigned to them by society. Recognising their viewpoint in relation to that of men offers opportunities for meaningful contributions to a broader understanding of various issues. This can boost creativity and problem-solving, while also ensuring equal opportunities for women to participate in decision-making that improves their access to and effective use of digital technology resources. Equally, involving women as training facilitators for digital transformation programmes and in leadership roles, such as management and the board of directors, which are the highest decision-making bodies, is vital. Doing so empowers women facilitators by developing their skills and knowledge, providing employment opportunities, building their self-confidence, and allowing them to serve as role models for other women. Therefore, it is essential to promote gender inclusion in leadership and capacity-building before, during, and after the workshop.



Strategies to Promote Women's Participation as Trainers and Facilitators

Creating a Gender-inclusive Environment: One way to encourage women's participation in delivering training is to raise awareness of gender equality. This can be done by training facilitators on gender equality, diversity, and inclusion. This will improve gender awareness and sensitivity among facilitators. Additionally, it is crucial to promote open communication, teamwork, mutual respect, and flexible work arrangements that foster a welcoming environment for women. It is also vital to implement measures to prevent and address gender-based discrimination and harassment.

Creating Career Development Opportunities for Women: Another strategy to promote women's participation in delivering training programmes is to create career development and mentoring opportunities for them. Designing flexible training options, such as online courses, self-paced learning, and mobile access, will accommodate women's diverse needs and schedules, including domestic duties like household management and childcare. Creating peer-to-peer learning and workshops where women can share their expertise and experiences in a collaborative environment will boost their self-confidence and enable them to exchange knowledge with their peers. Additionally, establishing mentorship programmes to connect women with experienced professionals in the digital technology ecosystem will provide guidance and support to help advance their careers. Moreover, designing women's

leadership development programmes and opportunities will enable women to enhance their leadership knowledge and skills, making them more effective as training facilitators.

Encouraging Women's Participation in Digital Transformation Workshops: To ensure women are capable of playing key roles in delivering training, such as facilitating training on digital technology, it is vital to strengthen their skills through digital training programmes. This can be done by subsidising the costs of these programmes for women, scheduling training sessions at times that suit women, removing barriers that might prevent women from participating—such as providing support for pregnant women and nursing mothers—and holding training programmes in gender-friendly environments (locations with adequate washrooms and sanitary towels). Women in technology, particularly those who have previously benefited from these initiatives, should be encouraged to facilitate these training sessions.

Leadership Training and Mentorship Models for Women in Workshop Delivery: Effective leadership training and mentorship, which build upon the successes of former mentees and workshop beneficiaries, can empower women to assume roles as workshop facilitators within the organisation organisations.

Figure 6: MENTORSHIP



Source: <https://asm.org/articles/2024/october/women-stem-importance-mentorship-community>

The elements of this model are explained below:

Goal: The goal of leadership training and mentorship is to improve the knowledge, skills, capacity, and attitude of the recipient. This better prepares the women entrepreneurs to be effective in their role and allows them to make a meaningful contribution. It also gives them the power to train others in the field. The aim of the workshop delivery for women is to develop them into effective digital transformation workshop facilitators who can train, coach, and mentor other women in the field. Using this model will help set goals that support and empower women workshop facilitators.

Training women as digital transformation workshop facilitators will empower them and equip them with the skills to facilitate workshops effectively, drawing on their experiences to inspire others.

Motivation boosts people's self-confidence, enabling them to meet their needs and reach their full potential. This is extremely important in the training of leaders. Motivation can come in the form of kind words, compliments, cash, or kind rewards.

Advice: For effective mentorship, mentors should be able to advise their mentees on issues related to their field through personal experiences or lessons they have learnt during their engagements. This will provide guidance to the mentees on the decisions to make regarding similar challenges or situations.

Success: To ensure that women become effective digital transformation workshop facilitators, there needs to be a commitment from their trainers to help women succeed. This can be achieved by deploying well-trained and experienced coaches for training and mentorship, encouraging women when they consider giving up, and providing ongoing support throughout their training sessions.

Coaching: Coaching involves guiding an individual to achieve a specific personal or professional objective. Coaches who are committed to gender equality will play a crucial role in training facilitators for digital transformation workshops.

Support: Supporting women during training enables them to participate effectively and contribute to discussions. This provides an opportunity for them to enhance their knowledge and skills. Supporting them after training, when they become facilitators, through on-the-job coaching is crucial because it boosts their teamwork and helps improve their performance in the role.



Case Study: Workshop Organisers Engaging Women as Trainers in Technology

Growing the ranks of women in STEM in Ghana requires deliberate efforts to ensure that women are not only participants but also visible trainers, mentors, and leaders. One organisation has taken the lead in this regard, pioneering coding and digital skills training in southern Ghana.

The organisation is committed to equipping women and girls with relevant technology and digital skills to thrive in the 21st century. It has developed programmes which pair young women learners with female mentors and trainers in coding, web development, and design thinking. By positioning women as role models and facilitators, the organisation helps to

demystify technology and builds confidence in younger girls who may not otherwise consider a career in STEM.

The organisation also organises community-driven workshops, hackathons, and leadership development programmes that emphasise not only technical skills but also soft skills such as teamwork, public speaking, and entrepreneurship. Alumni of the Academy often return as trainers and mentors, creating a sustainable cycle of women training women. Importantly, it incorporates cultural sensitivity by promoting an inclusive environment for women from different socioeconomic backgrounds, including those from underserved communities.

Through mentorship, networking, and leadership development, the organisation contributes to building a pipeline of women leaders in technology who can influence decision-making, inspire others, and lead training initiatives within Ghana and beyond.

EXERCISE THREE:

Engaging Women in Leadership

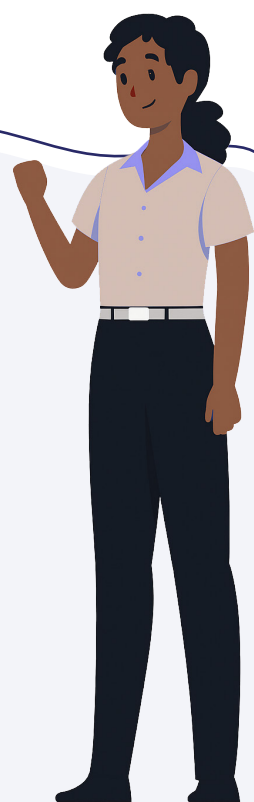
DURATION: 30 minutes

Instructions: Divide participants into small groups of three or four and ask them to explore responses to the questions:

- How will the activities of the organisation result in women leaders in technology?
- How relevant are the strategies being used by the organisation to mentorship?
- How can the case of this organisation promote leadership decision-making and training facilitation?

→ **Role of the facilitator:**

- Help the small groups generate ideas about promoting women in leadership.
- Invite groups to share their ideas.
- Clarify any misunderstandings and close the session.





Expected Outcomes of the exercise

- Gain a deeper understanding of the role of women in leadership in digital technology.
- Explore how to promote women in leadership.



Gender-Responsive Recruitment and Training of Beneficiaries

- Strategies for participants and trainees' selection (affirmative action)
- Creating inclusive job descriptions
- Addressing gender biases in workshop space and delivery
- Sample gender-sensitive recruitment checklist



Affirmative Action in Participant / Trainee Selection

Gender responsiveness in the design and delivery of digital technology interventions is vital for achieving inclusive development outcomes in Ghana. Women, particularly those in rural and low-income urban areas, face systemic barriers to accessing digital tools, education, and opportunities to develop their businesses. Tackling these disparities requires deliberate, context-specific strategies in both recruitment and training phases.

Recruitment Strategies:

To ensure women's participation, recruitment efforts should go beyond general outreach in advertisements. The workshop organisers ought to partner with local women's groups, market associations, faith-based organisations such as churches and mosques, and community-based organisations working in the field of women and girls' empowerment to achieve a wider reach. This will foster trust and ensure information reaches a diverse range of women across various contexts, targeting the right audiences. Communication materials could be created in local languages, such as Twi, Ewe, Dagbani, or Ga, to reach more people and avoid language barriers. It is also essential to use culturally appropriate visuals and messaging that resonate with women of different literacy levels. Setting specific gender targets, like ensuring at least 60% of participants are women, can help measure progress and promote accountability.

Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy: What It Is and Why It Matters

Harassment refers to any unwelcome behaviour or act that undermines the dignity of those subjected to it. It may include harassment of women by men, harassment of men by women, same-sex harassment, peer harassment, harassment of subordinates or students

by a supervisor or lecturer, harassment of a supervisor or lecturer by a student, and third-party harassment by non-employees such as clients, parents, external service providers, staff, and suppliers.

Harassment can appear in various forms, with sexual harassment being one of them. The Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651) Section 175 describes sexual harassment as 'any unwelcome, offensive or importunate sexual advances or request made by an employer or superior officer or a co-worker, whether the worker is a man or woman'. Sexual harassment results from unequal power dynamics, where a person with more influence exploits their privileged position to oppress a more vulnerable individual.



Manifestations of Sexual Harassment

Verbal Harassment

- Sexual comments or jokes about a person's body, clothing, or appearance
- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions
- Comments about sexual orientation or gender identity
- Repeatedly asking for dates after being told no
- Spreading sexual rumours or gossip

Non-Verbal Harassment

- Leering or staring in a sexually suggestive manner
- Gestures or facial expressions of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually explicit images, cartoons, screensavers, or posters
- Sending sexually suggestive emails, texts, or social media messages
- Invading personal space with sexual overtones

Physical Harassment

- Unwanted touching, hugging, or kissing
- Groping or brushing up against someone's body deliberately
- Cornering, blocking movement, or following someone inappropriately
- Sexual assault or attempted assault

Psychological or Power-Based Harassment

- Tying job opportunities or promotions to sexual favours ("quid pro quo")
- Threats or intimidation due to rejection of sexual advances
- Retaliation for reporting harassment or declining advances
- Favouritism based on sexual relationships with supervisors or managers

Digital / Cyber Harassment

- Sending sexually explicit content via email, chat, or social media
- Online stalking or surveillance with sexual intent
- Non-consensual sharing of intimate images or videos (revenge porn)
- Harassing messages in virtual meetings or on collaborative platforms



How to Prevent Sexual Harassment in Digital Technology Workshops

Establish Clear Policies and Procedures

- Develop and communicate a zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment before and during training.
- Include clear definitions, examples, and consequences as part of workshop content.
- Ensure the policy applies to all staff, entrepreneurs, contractors, and visitors.
- Include procedures for confidential reporting, investigation, and resolution during workshops.

Education and Training during Workshops

- Conduct regular training on recognising, preventing, and reporting harassment in digital innovation.
- Address bystander intervention, power dynamics, and consent in digital innovation.
- Use inclusive language that acknowledges gender diversity in planning, during and after the workshop.
- Include cyber harassment and online behaviour as part of the training.

Create Safe and Respectful Environments

- Promote a culture of respect, accountability, and dignity.
- Ensure equal participation and representation in leadership and decision-making for women.
- Encourage open discussions about workplace culture and gender norms.
- Consider displaying posters, hotline numbers, and policy summaries in common areas to keep everyone well-informed and connected.

Enable Safe Reporting Mechanisms

- Provide multiple, confidential reporting channels (e.g., hotline, HR).
- Allow for anonymous reports, if appropriate.
- Ensure no retaliation for those who report or support others.
- Act swiftly and fairly on complaints.

Respond Effectively and Transparently

- Ensure impartial, trauma-informed investigations.
- Take corrective actions that are proportionate and consistent.
- Communicate outcomes (while respecting confidentiality).
- Offer support services to victims (e.g., counselling, legal advice).

Strengthen Institutional Accountability

- Collect and analyse data disaggregated by gender, age, and role.
- Conduct climate surveys to assess prevalence and perceptions.

- Include sexual harassment indicators in performance and compliance reviews.
- Involve independent oversight bodies where applicable.

Empower Bystanders and Allies

- Train people to recognize harassment and intervene safely.
- Encourage peers to support victims and report concerns.
- Create a culture where silence is not an option.

Address Root Causes

- Tackle gender inequality, power imbalances, and harmful stereotypes.
- Promote gender-sensitive leadership and inclusive work environments.
- Integrate sexual harassment prevention into broader gender equity policies.



Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy

An anti-sexual harassment policy explains what sexual harassment involves and outlines how to prevent, address, and resolve it in a workshop setting, on virtual platforms, or in other learning environments. Its goal is to create a safe and respectful space for all entrepreneurs by clearly defining what constitutes sexual harassment, detailing reporting procedures, and specifying disciplinary measures for violations. Clarifying what counts as sexual harassment is vital, as many issues arise from a lack of understanding about what it entails. Implementing an anti-sexual harassment policy is an essential step in protecting young women within the digital technology ecosystem. All workshop organisers are encouraged to follow the organisational anti-sexual harassment policy to guide their operations.

Components of A Good Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy (A Good Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy Should have)

Policy Statement, Principles, and Objectives

A clear and unequivocal statement that the organisation prohibits all forms of sexual harassment. It reaffirms the commitment to a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. The policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, students, visitors, and others.

Scope of Application

This policy applies to all levels of the organisation, including employees, leadership, board members, and entrepreneurs. It covers various settings such as workplaces, events, virtual platforms, and third parties like vendors, clients, and visitors.

Definition of Sexual Harassment and Related Terms

The policy clearly outlines sexual harassment, including aspects of consent, reporting procedures, and measures against retaliation in the workshop setup.

Reporting Mechanisms

Sexual harassment is a highly sensitive subject. Therefore, the organisation's anti-sexual harassment policy must provide various confidential reporting channels, including the human resources department, an anonymous helpline, online forms, and other options. It is crucial to clearly explain how to report incidents and what to expect during the process so that survivors of sexual harassment can trust and effectively utilise the policy. Furthermore, measures should be put in place to maximise protection for survivors or witnesses against retaliation by perpetrators.

Investigation Procedures

The workshop organisers should also specify the steps involved in the investigation, including receipt of complaints, initial review, interviews, findings, and resolution of sexual harassment. To streamline the process, it is necessary to appoint trained and competent investigators who will impartially examine the issues and recommend appropriate sanctions.

Disciplinary Measures

The organisation's anti-sexual harassment policy should clearly detail possible consequences for offenders, ranging from warnings and suspension to demotion and outright termination of employment in the case of an employee. The rule must be applied with proportionality and consistency in disciplinary measures to ensure fairness.

Support for Survivors

The workshop organiser should aim to ensure that individuals can access counselling and legal services, when necessary, particularly in serious situations such as a felony.

Training and Education

Mandatory regular training should be provided for all workshop organisers, trainers, and managers to understand sexual harassment, the power dynamics in their relationships with trainees, and how to prevent sexual harassment. Awareness campaigns and posters should be displayed in training venues and communal areas.

3: Preparation – Before The Workshop Starts

3.1 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

➔ Addressing Structural Barriers:

A major obstacle to women's access to digital transformation is limited availability of suitable tools, including smartphones, computers, and related accessories. To enhance digital access, different groups of women require support in obtaining devices and internet connections. Whenever possible, workshop organisers should consider including provisions for subsidised devices, mobile data packages, or access to shared digital hubs within communities.

➔ Monitoring and Evaluation:

Regular gender-disaggregated monitoring should be integrated throughout the programme cycle. This involves tracking enrolment, attendance, completion rates, and post-training outcomes such as employment or entrepreneurship. Qualitative feedback should also be collected to understand the lived experiences of female participants and to adapt the programme accordingly.

➔ Addressing Gender-based Stereotypes in Workshop Space and Delivery:

Gender bias is an unfair treatment directed at an individual based on their gender identity. This often stems from gender role stereotyping. To ensure successful training sessions, it is vital to dispel gender-based stereotyping decisively to clearly communicate that such negative cultural behaviours are unacceptable. This can be achieved by raising gender awareness, offering training on equality, intersectionality, and equity, standing firm against abuse and harassment, establishing safe spaces with essential items like sanitary towels for women, and fostering an inclusive training environment for all participants.

3.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The needs assessment is the first step in planning a gender-responsive workshop. It helps organisers understand the different barriers, interests, and opportunities that women, men, and marginalised groups face in accessing and benefiting from digital innovation. This stage ensures that the workshop is designed around the real needs of participants rather than assumptions. A good needs assessment considers factors such as access to devices, internet connectivity, digital literacy levels, caregiving responsibilities, safety concerns, and language preferences.



Monitoring and Evaluation:

Regular gender-disaggregated monitoring should be integrated throughout the programme cycle. This involves tracking enrolment, attendance, completion rates, and post-training outcomes such as employment or entrepreneurship. Qualitative feedback should also be collected to understand the lived experiences of female participants and to adapt the programme accordingly.



Addressing Gender-based Stereotypes in Workshop Space and Delivery:

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Tips and Best Practices:

» Engage Stakeholders Early

- › Consult women's groups, youth organisations, disability associations, and community leaders.
- › Use focus group discussions or short interviews to hear directly from potential participants.

» Collect Gender-Disaggregated Data

- › Gather information separately for women, men, and other marginalised groups.
- › Look at numbers (e.g., device ownership) and experiences (e.g., comfort using online tools).

» Use Multiple Methods

- › Combine surveys, interviews, and informal community conversations.
- › For low-literacy groups, use oral discussions or participatory tools like ranking exercises.

» **Consider Intersectionality**

- › Recognise that women and men's experiences differ by age, location, disability, income, or religion.
- › For example, young urban women may face online harassment, while rural women may struggle with access to devices or reliable internet.

» **Focus on Barriers and Enablers**

- › Identify not only challenges but also existing resources, networks, and success stories that can be built upon.



Outcome of a Good Needs Assessment:

- » Clear understanding of who should participate (balanced representation).
- » Practical adjustments to content, timing, and logistics to suit participants' realities.
- » Early trust built with the community by showing that organisers care about participants' needs.

3.3 PARTICIPANT PROFILING AND RECRUITMENT

Participant profiling and recruitment are critical steps for ensuring balanced representation and meaningful participation in gender-responsive workshops. Profiling involves identifying the types of participants you want to reach, while recruitment ensures that these groups are effectively invited and included. This stage helps organisers move beyond general outreach and ensures women, men, and marginalised groups are deliberately represented.

Best Practices

» **Aim for Balanced Representation**

- › Set clear participation targets, e.g., at least 40% women or underrepresented groups.
- › Strive for diversity across age, location (urban/rural), ability, and socio-economic background.

» **Leverage Trusted Community Networks**

- › Partner with women's innovation hubs, market associations, faith-based organisations, and local NGOs to reach participants who might otherwise be overlooked.
- › Work with existing leaders—such as chiefs, queen mothers, or local association heads—to build trust and credibility.

» **Use Inclusive Outreach Strategies**

- › Translate invitations into local languages (Twi, Ewe, Ga, Dagbani) and use culturally familiar images or stories.
- › Advertise through multiple channels—radio, community meetings, WhatsApp groups, and notice boards—to reach both literate and non-literate audiences.
- › Ensure messaging avoids stereotypes (e.g., not portraying only men as tech experts or only women as caregivers).

Outcome of Good Profiling and Recruitment:

A workshop that brings together women, men, and marginalised groups in balanced numbers, creating a richer and more inclusive learning environment.

Table 1:

SAMPLE GENDER-SENSITIVE RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

PRIOR TO RECRUITMENT	CHECKLIST ITEMS	YES/NO	NOTE
	Have recruitment team been trained on gender issues?		
	Have gender targets been set?		
	Are workshop training contents gender responsive?		
RECRUITMENT	Is information on the vacancy notice gender sensitive?		
	Is the media for vacancy dissemination accessible to all?		
SELECTION	Are selection criteria gender sensitive?		
	Is there a balance in the selection committee?		
	Is the setting for interviews gender sensitive?		
	Will gender awareness be employed in dissemination of interview outcomes?		
RECORD KEEPING	Will the committee keep records of candidates who were not selected for the training for successive opportunities?		

3.4 TRAINING DESIGN

Training programmes must be adapted to the realities of women's lives. Across the intervention regions, women juggle multiple responsibilities, including household chores and informal economic activities. Additionally, developing short, modular sessions that are more accessible and easier to join would significantly boost participation. Digital training content should be designed with inclusivity in mind, using simple interfaces, visual aids, and interactive methods that cater to different levels of digital literacy. Female trainers or facilitators should be involved where possible to foster a comfortable learning environment and serve as role models.

Best Practices

- » **Use Local Case Studies:**
 - › Highlight Ghanaian examples, such as women using mobile money (MoMo) for business, or young men leveraging e-commerce platforms like Jumia.
 - › Strive for diversity across age, location (urban/rural), ability, and socio-economic background.
- » **Balance Perspectives:**
 - › Include both male and female success stories to normalise diverse participation in digital innovation.
- » **Adapt Learning Materials:**
 - › Provide resources in different formats—printed handouts, audio recordings, and simplified digital guides—for participants with varying literacy and technology skills.

3.5 VENUE SELECTION

Creating an inclusive and gender-responsive workshop begins with choosing the right venue. The physical space sets the tone for participation, safety, and comfort—especially for women, gender minorities, and other marginalized groups. Thoughtful venue selection ensures that logistical and environmental barriers do not hinder engagement, allowing every participant to contribute fully and confidently.

Best Practices

- » **Accessibility for All**
 - › Choose venues with ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms for persons with disabilities.
 - › Ensure signage is clear and available in multiple languages if needed.
- » **Safe and Neutral Location**
 - › Select a venue that is perceived as safe and welcoming by all genders, especially women and gender minorities.
 - › Avoid locations associated with exclusionary practices or political/religious bias.

- » **Safe and Neutral Location**
 - › Select a venue that is perceived as safe and welcoming by all genders, especially women and gender minorities.
 - › Avoid locations associated with exclusionary practices or political/religious bias.
- » **Gender-Sensitive Facilities**
 - › Confirm availability of clean, private restrooms for all genders.
 - › Consider gender-neutral restrooms where appropriate and culturally acceptable.
- » **Transport and Proximity**
 - › Ensure the venue is reachable via safe and affordable public transport.
 - › Consider proximity to participants' homes to reduce travel burden, especially for women with caregiving responsibilities.
- » **Privacy and Security**
 - › Provide secure spaces for breastfeeding, prayer, or personal breaks.
 - › Ensure lighting, security personnel, and emergency protocols are in place.
- » **Inclusive Layout and Seating**
 - › Avoid hierarchical seating arrangements that reinforce power dynamics.
 - › Use circular or mixed seating to encourage equal participation.
- » **Technology and Connectivity**
 - › Ensure reliable internet and digital tools to support hybrid participation, especially for those who may face mobility or time constraints.
- » **Cultural Sensitivity**
 - › Respect local customs while promoting inclusive norms.
 - › Avoid venues that enforce dress codes or behaviours that exclude certain groups.

3.6 TRAINING DESIGN

Trainers shape the learning environment. Selecting the right trainers and preparing them ensures that workshops are inclusive and free from bias. Brief trainers with a short checklist on respectful behaviour, inclusive participation, and handling sensitive issues. Encourage trainers to monitor who speaks most in discussions and actively invite quieter voices. Involve women trainers who can inspire female participants and help them feel more comfortable.

Best Practices

- » **Diversity Matters:**
 - › Strive for a gender-balanced team of trainers, including women role models

- » **Inclusive Facilitation:**
Prioritise trainers with experience in engaging diverse groups and using participatory methods.
- » **Orientation and Awareness:**
Train all facilitators on unconscious bias, gender-sensitive communication, and how to create safe spaces.

3.7 LOGISTICS

Logistics can make or break participation, especially for women and marginalised groups. Thoughtful planning removes barriers and encourages equal participation. Ask participants during recruitment about preferred times and location constraints. If possible provide refreshments and rest breaks to ensure comfort, especially for participants with caregiving or health needs. Use visible signposting and safe entry/exit routes to make the venue welcoming and secure.

Best Practices

- » **Safe and Accessible Venues:**
 - › Choose well-lit, centrally located venues with childcare options, gender-friendly restrooms, and lactation spaces..
- » **Scheduling with Care:**
 - › Avoid late evenings, market days, or times that clash with caregiving duties.
- » **Transport and Safety:**
 - › Where possible, provide or subsidise safe transport for participants.

Overall Outcome:

By tailoring content, selecting inclusive trainers, and planning logistics carefully, organisers can reduce barriers and create an environment where women, men, and marginalised groups can learn and contribute equally.



Part: B

DURING WORKSHOPS



4: During Workshops

4.1 THE FACILITATION PROCESS SHOULD FOSTER EQUITY, SAFETY, AND ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT.

a. Inclusive Facilitation

- » Use gender-sensitive language and avoid stereotypes (e.g., women are emotional).
- » Ensure equitable speaking opportunities. (e.g., rotate who answers first, small group discussions).
- » Encourage diverse perspectives, especially from women and marginalised groups.

b. Engagement Strategies

- » Use interactive tools (polls, breakout groups, roleplays) that allow all voices to be heard.
- » Highlight women-led and inclusive innovations as examples.
- » Adapt teaching methods to multiple learning styles (visual, auditory, experiential).

c. Managing Group Dynamics

- » Monitor participation balance—intervene if some groups dominate.
- » Use facilitation techniques (talking stick, round-robin) to give quieter voices a chance to be heard.
- » Address resistance to gender issues respectfully but firmly.

d. Preventing Harassment and Bias

- » Establish a clear code of conduct at the beginning.
- » Provide confidential reporting channels for abuse.
- » Ensure trainers intervene promptly in cases of harassment, discrimination, or microaggressions (indirect, subtle or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalised group).

5: Designing and Delivering Gender-Responsive Programmes

5.1 WHY GENDER-RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING MATTERS

Gender-responsive programming refers to initiatives that consider the varying circumstances, roles, needs, and interests of women, men, girls, and boys in the creation and implementation of workshops. Such programming matters because they:

- › Tackles barriers that prevent equal participation and access for different genders.
- › Acknowledges the distinct roles, needs, and interests of women, men, girls, and boys.
- › Build frameworks that are inclusive and responsive to gender dynamics.
- › Integrate parity into a comprehensive approach to achieving gender equality.
- › Ensure all participants feel represented and engaged, leading to more effective learning.
- › Target root causes of gender disparities in access, opportunity, and representation.
- › Encourage shifts in societal norms and behaviours toward greater equity.
- › Create environments where both women and men can participate meaningfully in discussions and teamwork.
- › Reduce gaps in access, usage, and digital skills between genders.
- › Respond to issues like limited device access, poor internet connectivity, low digital literacy, and restrictive social norms.

Such programmes or activities address gender-based obstacles, recognise gender differences, establish structures, systems, and approaches that are sensitive to gender, ensure that achieving gender parity is part of a comprehensive strategy to enhance gender equality, and adapt to bridge disparities and eliminate gender-based discrimination. Gender-responsive programming is vital for the success of training because these programmes aim to incorporate the unique needs and experiences of all participant groups and have the potential to foster effective participation, which leads to successful training outcomes. Considering gender as a key element in programme design will also better address systemic inequalities, promote positive social change, and ensure that both female and male participants can contribute

equally to discussions and group work. Gender-responsive programming can therefore help close the digital gender divide. The digital gender divide refers to the gap in access, use, and skills related to digital technologies between women and men. Recognising this gap is crucial for designing effective training programmes that specifically target the challenges women face, such as limited access to devices and the internet, inadequate digital literacy, and societal norms that hinder their participation.



Principles of Gender-Responsive Digital Skills Training

Gender-inclusive digital skills training is essential for addressing the specific needs of both men and women. Several principles can be adopted to promote gender-inclusive digital skills training:

Creating a Gender-Sensitive Environment:

A supportive and inclusive learning environment is essential for encouraging women to participate in digital skills training. This includes using relatable examples, stories, and language that connect with women's experiences, challenging gender stereotypes, and offering opportunities for women to share their perspectives and learn from one another.

Gender Sensitive Curriculum:

The curriculum should be tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of women and girls. This may involve including topics relevant to their lives, such as digital safety, online entrepreneurship, and digital citizenship, and providing opportunities for them to practise their skills in real-world settings.

Gender-Sensitive Knowledge-Sharing Approach:

Incorporating gender-norm change strategies into training programmes can help challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes that may restrict women's participation in the digital world. This may involve utilising positive role models, promoting gender equality in the curriculum, and creating opportunities for women to take on leadership roles in the digital sector.

Equitable Access to Resources:

Ensuring women and girls have equal access to digital devices and the internet is a fundamental principle. This may involve providing affordable or subsidised devices and internet access, partnering with organisations that offer technology solutions, and promoting policies that support digital equity.

Equal Opportunity to Participate in Training Without Intimidation:

Every participant should have equal opportunities to join the training session, including asking questions, making comments, and engaging in group activities, without any barriers.



Integrating Gender in Hackathons, Incubators, and Accelerator Programmes

Hackathons are collaborative coding marathons where individuals or teams work together to develop new projects within a short timeframe. Incubators are specialised programmes that nurture and support early-stage digital projects or ventures. Accelerators are strategies used to speed up the adoption and implementation of digital technologies, leading to faster and more impactful results. It is essential to integrate gender considerations into hackathons, business incubators, accelerator programmes, and start-up summits. This approach helps bridge the digital divide, encourages equal participation in digital opportunities, and facilitates the realisation of digital business ideas through funding opportunities. It empowers all participants and fosters a gender-sensitive environment for digital business creation. Ultimately, this supports gender equality and empowers women in technology.

Table 2:

CHECKLIST: ENSURING TRAINING PROGRAMMES ARE GENDER-RESPONSIVE

Below is a Checklist for Gender-Responsive Digital Transformation Training Workshops

PHASE	CHECKLIST	INDICATOR
Phase One: Workshop planning Gender needs assessment with team and preliminary actions	Identify barriers to digital participation	[]
	Have gender targets been set?	[]
	Identify gendered strategies for participants recruitment	[]
	Integrate gender issues into curriculum design	[]
	Train facilitators on integrating gender into trainings programmes	[]
	Select a gender sensitive and friendly environment	[]
	Provide digital tools for each participant	[]
Phase Two: Workshop	Use gender-sensitive languages and examples	[]
	Promote equal participation	[]
	Control gender power dynamics	[]
Phase Three: Workshop Evaluation	Measure the impact of training on the identity of all participants	[]
	Provide mentorship and coaching opportunities	[]
	Link participants to digital opportunities	[]
	Document and share outcomes of the training and its influence on the gender perception of participants with other partners and stakeholders.	[]



Case Study: Digital Entrepreneurship Training Programme

A Tech Hub in northern Ghana is dedicated to promoting tech innovation for the rapid prototyping of ideas, fostering local innovations, and driving impact. It also provides start-up support and encourages youth entrepreneurship in information and communication technology, thereby addressing technological challenges. The hub provides training, incubation, and mentoring, welcoming talent and championing the use of mobile and web technology for social impact. It has won awards such as best digital skills hub, best gender-inclusive hub, and Best GTiL Female Startup of the Year 2022, among others, for its commitment to integrating gender into digital transformation programmes. At the hub, startups are incubated and nurtured for six months. From the idea stage, each startup is allocated to a mentor and a coach who help them develop and validate their ideas. At the incubation stage, each startup is expected to have a minimum viable product (MVP). They also nurture and educate already existing businesses on effective and productive business choices and solutions. They offer training for corporate bodies and women's groups on technology-related programmes through the organisation of boot camps, seminars, and meetups on digital training skills.

Consider the following questions:

1. How does the Tech Hub promote gender responsiveness in digital technology through its activities?
2. What lessons can we learn from the Tech Hub's narrative for enhancing gender responsiveness in digital technology?
3. How does the case of the Tech Hub discussed here help your understanding of hackathons, business incubators, accelerated programmes and start-up summits?



Accountability Mechanisms

This requires establishing clear targets necessary for increasing the representation of women as beneficiaries, along with monitoring frameworks and participatory feedback loops, to ensure policies remain responsive to gender needs. Enhancing accountability requires developing budget lines specifically designated for gender equality and gender-balanced interventions, as well as establishing leadership and advisory boards to ensure progress toward gender equality in the digital technology ecosystem.

A SIMPLE ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	TARGETS
CLEAR TARGETS	Set specific goals to increase women entrepreneurs' representation in digital technology.	Target: 60% women participation in digital skills training programmes by 2026.
MONITORING FRAMEWORKS	Track progress and evaluate gender-focused actions.	Quarterly gender audit reports; baseline and endline gender data collection.
PARTICIPATORY FEEDBACK LOOPS	Gather input from women and men entrepreneurs to ensure gender needs are addressed.	Periodic focus groups with women entrepreneurs, targeting 80% feedback response rate
GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING	Allocate specific funds for gender equality interventions.	Minimum 30% of program budget earmarked for gender-specific initiatives.
LEADERSHIP AND ADVISORY BOARDS	Include a diverse range of women and men to promote gender equality in accessing and using digital technology.	50% women representation on advisory boards; at least one gender expert per board.



Why A Gender Policy Matters

A gender policy matters because it ensures that policies, workplace practices, training content, and delivery address the differentiated gender needs of women so as to be effective and equitable for women and men, promoting equity and equality. It addresses the specific needs and concerns of all participants and ensures that workshops are beneficial to every participant, irrespective of their gender. Developing a gender policy for digital transformation will safeguard the rights of all participants, particularly women. This necessitates the employment of affirmative action in recruiting beneficiaries and trainers for these workshops. By considering the diverse needs, experiences, and perspectives of both men and women, gender-responsive policies aim to promote gender equality, address discrimination, and reduce inequalities. Although women are the most disadvantaged, the gender policy concerns not only women; rather, it aims to remove the barriers that various groups of men and women face within the workshop context, enabling them to achieve the maximum benefits from the interventions¹.



Ensuring Safe and Inclusive Spaces for Women in Workshops Creating Gender-sensitive Workspaces (e.g., childcare facilities, lactation rooms)

Creating gender-sensitive workspaces in hubs and digital transformation training involves fostering an inclusive environment where every participant can effectively contribute and engage in training programmes, irrespective of gender. This can be achieved by addressing gender inequalities in hiring, promoting equitable remuneration, and ensuring safe and respectful working environments. It also requires challenging biases and stereotypes, as well as implementing policies and practices that support gender equality and intersectionality.

Establishing a Code of Conduct for Gender Equity

Establishing a code of conduct for a digital transformation workshop is a crucial step in fostering a respectful, inclusive, and equitable environment for a successful training. The following steps can be taken to establish a code of conduct.

- » Establish a commitment to gender equity and equality in the digital technology sector.
- » Promote core values such as respect, fairness, and inclusion of women and minority groups.
- » State expected behaviours (inclusive language and addressing bias).
- » Prohibit harmful actions, such as harassment and gender discrimination (such as zero tolerance for sexism, sexual harassment, and bullying).
- » Provide safe reporting systems and clear consequences for violations.
- » Train teams and participants on the code of conduct.
- » Monitor and update the code based on feedback from training and data.

Sample Safety and Inclusive Policies of the Workshop Organisers

Safety and inclusive policies are crucial in ensuring the success of each digital training initiative. Below are strategies that can be used to develop a safety and inclusion policy to workshops..

- » Draft and enforce a code of conduct with zero tolerance for harassment or discrimination.
- » Encourage equal participation, inclusive language, and gender awareness.
- » Ensure safe spaces are accessible to all participants.
- » Make available reporting channels and confidential support systems that will address issues of gender harassment.
- » Ensure equitable representation among trainers and an inclusive event design.
- » Respect participants' data and privacy by gaining their consent for photos, video, and audio recordings.
- » Respect health and safety guidelines for in-person training events (e.g. first aid boxes).

6: Event Management and Facilitation

6.1 GENDER-SENSITIVE EVENT MANAGEMENT (GSEM)

Implementing gender-responsive training workshops is essential for promoting and strengthening gender equality and women's empowerment in digital transformation. It is also vital for preventing gender-based discrimination and pursuing gender justice within digital and entrepreneurial ecosystems. Since the digital technology sector is not gender neutral, the aim of gender-responsive event management is to achieve not just numerical gender parity but also foster an inclusive environment for transformational exchange that is fair, equitable, and sustainable. This begins by recognising gender-specific needs and integrating them into the event planning to ensure inclusivity and address the diverse requirements of participants. This checklist provides workshop organisers with practical examples and a suggested step-by-step approach to managing events in a gender-responsive manner.



Why it is Needed

This GSEM checklist is inspired by the IKI and GIZ checklists for GSEM. It provides guidance on best practices and potential gender-sensitive approaches to be used during the planning, implementation, and follow-up of both in-person and virtual events. Well-planned and properly applied Gender-Sensitive Event Management will do more than just achieve numerical gender parity; it will foster a truly respectful and inclusive environment for transformative exchange and equitable, sustainable change – one that also recognises and addresses the needs of individuals who do not conform to a binary gender model. The checklist is supported by practical examples and templates included in the Annexes.

The following section of the checklist provides proven practical examples and a recommended step-by-step approach to gender-responsive events.

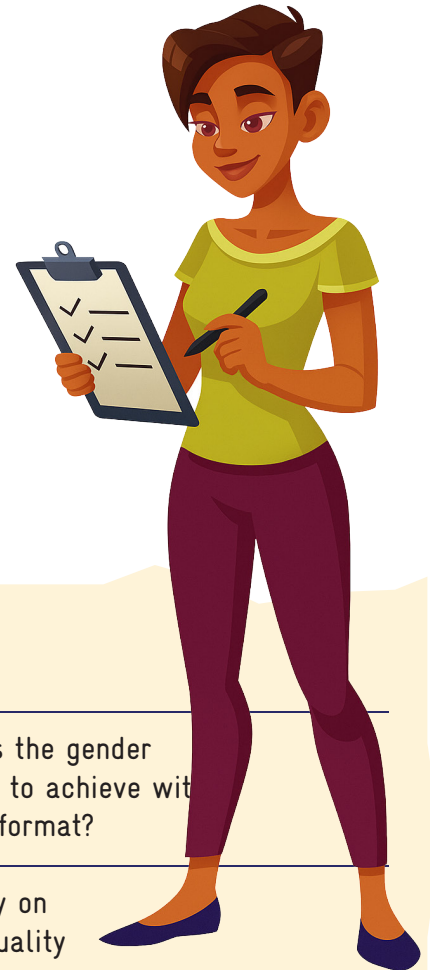
Phase 1:

Planning of the Event

A: Topics and Content Management

How much influence will you have on shaping the event? Are you organising it yourself or in support of a partner?

Is gender equality, diversity and social inclusion a central theme of the event that can be directly addressed in specific sessions, or can you identify sessions which can be enriched through a gender lens?



Checklist:



Ask yourself, who are the audience and participants? What is the gender dimension you wish to address and the specific goal you aim to achieve with the event? What special challenges arise from the choice of format?



Consider discussing gender content with your partner(s) early on to establish a shared understanding of integrating gender equality and social inclusion issues.



Have you established the extent to which you wish to address gender during your event (e.g., gender as a cross-cutting or key topic)?



Does the content of your event reflect the realities of diversity—gender, age, income, ethnicity, etc.?



Employ gender-inclusive language and graphics from the outset and steer clear of stereotypes in publications, announcements, and speeches (refer to the Annex for information on how to avoid stereotyping).



For training sessions: Aim to utilise teaching methods and learning approaches that are inclusive, participatory, and “gender transformative” (defined as including trainings and discussions on stereotypical views and gender norms to provide learners with alternative case studies and role perceptions).

Source: Gender-Sensitive Event Management Checklist for practitioners

B: Workshop Organisation

What are the obstacles to equal and full participation of women and men in terms of security, accessibility, family life obligations, access to the internet, etc.?

Do groups of participants face varying obstacles?

Have financial resources been set aside to cater for specific needs, e.g., to provide childcare, mother- and child-friendly workshop spaces during the event?

Checklist:



Choose a venue that is accessible, secure, and well-connected to public transport, or think about arranging a pick-up service if needed.



Have you checked if the venue is equipped to accommodate the specific needs of participants (e.g., breastfeeding rooms, gender-neutral washrooms, childcare services), if applicable and brought to your attention?



Are you aware of any time constraints for guests? How could you design and offer a gender-friendly schedule (e.g., start with a networking lunch instead of dinner, avoid ending too late), digital participation or other forms of participation where possible (e.g., pre-recorded presentations)?



Create a setting that invites everyone to become an active participant (e.g., working in smaller break-out groups, multiple methods available to engage in Q and A).



Consider including a disclaimer on respectfulness or an anti-harassment policy in your event invitation and materials.



Depending on the size of your event and the approach you want to take, consider establishing a gender task force or appointing gender focal points that can be approached for any issues related to gender discrimination, harassment, or violence. Ideally, this is a diverse group representing different perspectives.



Offer gender registration to monitor the gender balance of your event (if possible, include options for non-binary categories and a field for participants to add further terms to identify themselves or opt out). Gender information should always be voluntary.

C: Speakers and Participants Management

Know your audience: Who is among the intended participants?
Does the gender of a person matter for a certain role?

Checklist:

- ☒ Consider the gender ratio among the participants and speakers, aim for gender parity and analyse how it might affect your event.
- ☒ Can you make stakeholders and partners aware about the importance of GSEM and respectful interaction?
- ☒ If deemed appropriate, provide guidance to the chair/moderator/facilitator and the panelists on how to identify and avoid gender stereotyping.
- ☒ Try not to reinforce stereotypes (e.g., a male facilitator „runs the show“ with a woman assisting with the catering in the background).
- ☒ Brief speakers and facilitators or trainers on guidelines for GSEM.
- ☒ Have you considered nominating or seeking ambassadors for the event to advocate for a differentiated gender lens (refer to “Gender Voices” and Annex III).

Phase 2: Implementation

Know your context: What approach or method will best serve gender equality?
Does everyone know about your gender responsiveness concept and how to “make use” of it?

“GENDER VOICES”

To make sure that balanced gender perspectives are actively raised during an event, nominate and brief “gender voices” and place them in the core sessions of the event to address the gender aspect of certain topics or discussions.

Checklist:



Make the disclaimer on respectfulness or the anti-harassment disclaimer available to participants before the event starts and/or ask the moderator to introduce or refer to it. If your event covers several days, make gender part of your daily debriefing sessions.



Consider nominating a point of contact that participants can approach for questions and concerns.



Have you thought about taking gender considerations into account when arranging rooms and seats (e.g., mixing or separating genders depending on the context) or off-site activities?



If possible, provide a variety of participatory means to encourage all participants to engage (e.g., include online feedback or ensure equal representation of gender when collecting statements).

Phase 3: Follow-up

Have we been successful in our workshops? What can be improved next time?
How can a follow-up highlight the importance of gender responsiveness?

Checklist:



Include gender in the analysis and report after the event: who participated, which roles did participants take, if imbalances are identified, how can they be explained and possibly overcome in future?



Consider including different voices in the report to display the variety of perspectives.



Collect feedback and possible recommendations on how gender-responsive the event has been perceived (e.g., include in the general feedback form of the event).



Are you aware of where and how gender issues were marginalised or ignored during the event?

This GSEM checklist is designed to enable a critical thinking process for everyone involved in organising events to work from a gender perspective. The training programmes, audiences and events that occur in different cultural and societal settings. The GSEM checklist enables flexible adaptation to various contexts and varying degrees of influence.





Part: C

AFTER WORKSHOP



7: After Workshops

Sustainability is all about continual learning, evaluation, and taking thoughtful follow-up steps. Embracing this ongoing process enables us to create a more sustainable and positive impact on the ecosystem.

a. Feedback and Evaluation

- Collect gender-disaggregated feedback on content, delivery, and accessibility.
- Use both anonymous surveys and open discussions.
- Assess whether participants feel empowered to integrate gender responsiveness in their work.

b. Follow-Up

- Provide post-workshop resources (guides, toolkits, mentorship opportunities).
- Establish peer-learning communities (e.g., WhatsApp or Slack groups).
- Encourage participants to share gender-responsive practices in their organisations.

c. Sustainability of Gender-Responsive Practices

- Integrate monitoring frameworks (track how many women/men apply digital innovations post-training).
- Encourage organisations to adopt gender policies in digital innovation programmes.
- Share success stories to build momentum and showcase impact.

8: Monitoring, Evaluation and Sustainability

8.1 GENDER DATA COLLECTION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M AND E)

Gender-disaggregated data in digital technology involves systematically collecting and analysing information about digital access, usage, and participation separately for men and women. Gathering and analysing this type of data is crucial for recognising and addressing gender disparities in the digital world. Data plays an essential role in driving, guiding, and monitoring efforts to promote gender equality. It assists in identifying gaps, refining policies, and allocating resources effectively. However, ongoing underfunding of gender statistics and the difficulty in accessing disaggregated data hinder progress. Gender-disaggregated data enables a deeper understanding of inequalities and more effective responses, especially among marginalised groups such as women from low-income backgrounds and ethnic minorities. It helps to pinpoint specific needs, socio-economic traits, and experiences of both men and women. Consequently, it can inform policies that ensure interventions are personalised to meet the distinct needs of different women and men, as well as other genders. This data also supports assessing whether an initiative successfully reaches and benefits certain groups, particularly women and girls.



Strategies for Gathering and Analysing Gender-Disaggregated Data

To effectively collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data, various strategies may be implemented, including setting goals and indicators that seek to reveal gender gaps.

- » Design inclusive and gender-sensitive tools.
- » Collect data from both primary and secondary sources using a mixed method.
- » Select a gender-sensitive sampling procedure.
- » Train workshop staff on gender-sensitive data collection.
- » Employ ethical considerations during data collection.
- » Analyse data to identify gender issues.
- » Draft a report on findings that can be used to inform inclusive policies and actions.



Key Gender Indicators for Digital Workshop Organisers

Gender indicators are markers used to assess changes in gender equality and women's empowerment over time. Some key gender indicators that digital workshop organisers can utilise are:

- » Equal Participation
- » Intersectionality (priority to marginalized groups)
- » Equal Representation (trainers and participants)
- » Equal opportunities (mentorship, coaching, financial support, employment, etc.)
- » Attitudinal change
- » Dissatisfaction with social norms that are gender bias

Table 3:

SAMPLE GENDER SCORECARD FOR WORKSHOP ORGANISERS

A gender scorecard helps assess gender equity and take action to improve inclusivity. It helps track gender equity in workshops across key areas:

ISSUE	MEET TARGET	EXCEED TARGET
The programme encouraged participation of all gender		
Gender equality in facilitators recruitment		
The workshop promoted Inclusive accessibility		
The workshop promoted access to opportunities for all		

The training was conducted in a gender sensitive environment		
Participant were satisfied with how gender issues were handled		
The drafting of effective harassment reporting mechanism encouraged victims to report harassments		



Best Practices for Tracking Gender Impact

Tracking the gender impact is crucial for understanding how initiatives affect the lives of the beneficiaries, namely, different groups of women, men, and non-binary individuals. Some practices that can be adopted to track gender impacts are:

- » Assess the gender dynamics within the workshop context.
- » Set gender-specific goals and targets.
- » Collect gender-disaggregated data.
- » Apply inter-sectional analysis to understand multiple and interlinked gendered inequalities.



Involve Gender Experts and Train Staff

- » Adopt a mixed-methods approach for data collection on participants' experiences.
- » Specify indicators for gender impact.
- » Engage participants through questionnaires, interviews or focus group discussions.
- » Employ ethical considerations during data collection.
- » Analyse the data and draft a report on the findings.



Funding and Sustainability of Gender-Responsive Initiatives



Identifying funding sources for Gender Equity Initiatives

In the face of dwindling donor funding worldwide, there are limitations to accessing local and international organisations committed to supporting the financing of women in the digital technology ecosystem. However, access to funding is crucial for enhancing gender equality in digital technology initiatives. Nonetheless, a few organisations, such as the Government of Ghana under the Ministry of Communication and Digitalisation, academic institutions, international organisations, NGOs, and private foundations, offer funding

support. Organisations such as the UN Women, World Bank, and EU provide grants for gender-focused projects. Foundations like Ford, Gates, Open Society, and the Global Fund for Women support women's rights and empowerment, as well as backing these initiatives. Tech companies and corporations fund women in STEM and entrepreneurship through CSR programmes. Competitions such as Echoing Green and the Cartier Women's Initiative offer funding and mentorship.



Partnerships for Sustainability

Partnerships for sustainability in digital transformation workshops involve collaborations between organisations to utilise digital technologies and best practices to achieve programme goals. These partnerships can take various forms. This may include Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), NGO and community collaborations, academic and research institutions, multilateral and international agencies, among others. The aim of these partnerships is to combine diverse skills, expertise, resources, and perspectives to address sustainability challenges related to women's involvement in digital technology that a single organisation might not be able to tackle alone.



Case Study: A Workshop Organiser that Secured Funding for Gender Initiatives in Ghana

A hub, based in Ghana, is a pioneering technology and digital skills training centre with a focus on empowering women and girls. Recognising the digital gender divide in Ghana, the hub designed a Women in Digital Skills Programme, an initiative aimed at equipping young women entrepreneurs and women professionals with the digital competencies needed to thrive in an increasingly digital economy. With funding support from the Mastercard Foundation, the hub was able to expand its training workshops to many regions of Ghana. The programme offered a structured 12-week training that included modules on coding, digital marketing, data analysis, e-commerce, and financial literacy. Additionally, mentorship and career readiness sessions were integrated into the curriculum to foster confidence and leadership among participants.

Through this initiative, hundreds of women entrepreneurs were trained to integrate digital tools into their businesses, enabling them to reach broader markets and improve efficiency. For example, women-owned small businesses have learned to set up e-commerce platforms and utilise mobile payment systems, resulting in increased customer outreach and revenue growth. The workshops also supported unemployed young women to gain employable digital skills, reducing barriers to economic participation and narrowing the gender gap in Ghana's technology ecosystem.



Lessons Learned:

- » Choice of funding: This case highlights that securing long-term institutional partnerships (e.g., the Mastercard Foundation) provides stability, scalability, and sustainability

compared to one-off donor funding. Strategic partnerships enable workshops to reach a broader audience of women and create lasting ripple effects in local communities.

- » Overcoming dwindling funding streams: Diversifying sources of funding—by collaborating with government, securing private sector sponsorships, obtaining alumni contributions, and engaging in income-generating activities (such as offering paid corporate training)—can lessen dependence on a single donor. Incorporating measurable social and economic impacts into programme design also bolsters the case for attracting new funding partners.

9: Capacity Building and Partnerships

i. TRAINING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR WORKSHOP ORGANISERS

Essential Gender Training Topics for Workshop Organisers

Designing gender-responsive topics for workshops is crucial for the success of the training, as it encourages the effective participation of diverse groups of women, thereby boosting their empowerment. These topics should promote concepts such as understanding gender, recognising and reducing unconscious bias, and advancing gender equality. Some topics that can be included are gender in digital transformation.

Exploring these topics will deepen participants' understanding of gender and its role in digital transformation. This discussion will examine issues related to the gendered digital divide and promote awareness of how gender equality impacts digital progress. It will lay the foundation for active participation and foster an inclusive environment for everyone.

Gender and Leadership in Digital Transformation:

This topic aims to emphasise the importance of equal opportunities in leadership for all participants. It highlights the significance of marginalised genders taking on leadership roles in digital transformation initiatives and teams. This involves providing inclusive digital skills training tailored to marginalised gender groups, thereby enhancing empowerment and career development.

Sexual Harassment and Safety in Digital Spaces:

This topic aims to improve understanding of how sexual harassment influences safety during digital transformation workshops. It will inform participants about the effects of sexual harassment on training outcomes. Additionally, it will help participants comprehend the policies developed to tackle harassment and promote a secure digital environment for women, girls, boys, and men.

Gender-Inclusive Policies:

Participants should also be trained in developing policies that promote gender equality in digital education, employment, and other opportunities. This training will equip them with the knowledge and skills to tackle gendered challenges and barriers.

Sustainability and Gender Equity:

A topic on sustainability and gender equity is important in digital transformation workshops. This topic will equip participants with the techniques to understand how to leverage digital transformation to promote gender equality and sustainability. This topic will ensure that digital transformation workshops are inclusive and gender-sensitive, with sustainable outcomes.

Engaging Men as Allies in Gender-Responsive Innovation

Engaging men as allies in gender-responsive innovation is crucial for promoting inclusivity and ensuring that digital innovations benefit all. Identifying and training men who are passionate about gender equality will empower them to become thought leaders equipped with the tools to recognise and challenge gender bias. It will also encourage them to foster inclusive behaviours that promote participation. Involving men committed to gender equality in digital training workshops can influence other male participants and make these workshops inclusive for everyone. Some strategies to engage men as allies include:

- » Recruit men who are passionate about gender equality
- » Train them on gender issues in digital technology
- » Deliver training in a gender sensitive manner
- » Motivate them to inspire change during training
- » Encourage the men to mentor other male participants

Sample Training Outline for Staff and Facilitators

This training outline aims to equip staff and facilitators with the skills to lead gender-sensitive digital transformation workshops. It includes the following key modules:

- » Introduction to the workshop
- » Objectives for the workshop
- » Setting the ground rule for training
- » Introduction to gender and digital transformation

- » The Importance of developing safe and inclusive spaces in digital innovations
- » Gender-Responsive digital tools and innovation
- » Evaluating and measuring gender impact
- » Facilitating gender-responsive workshops
- » Group discussion on topics
- » Presentation and discussion of group work
- » Evaluating workshop agenda
- » Close of training

ii. Building Partnerships for Collaborations

- » Collaboration models with gender-focused organisations
- » Engaging the private sector and development partners
- » Sample partnership MOU template

Collaborative models are vital frameworks that will guide how gender-focused organisations collaborate. Building partnerships with gender-focused organisations will enhance innovation, improve decision-making, and foster the development of strong, mutually beneficial relationships. Some models that can facilitate these partnerships are:

- » **Partnership Model:**

A partnership between gender-focused organisations and digital transformation experts enables the co-design and delivery of workshops that promote inclusive content and diverse perspectives. This model enables collaborators to establish a network or community which enables ongoing learning, mentorship, and peer exchange after the workshop.

- » **Advisory Model:**

Gender-focused organisations provide expert guidance on integrating gender equality into workshop content. This promotes inclusivity and raises awareness of gender disparities in the digital transformation process. This collaboration enhances knowledge of gender and advocates for policies that promote gender equity.

- » **Sponsorship Model:**

Gender-focused on supporting the participation of underrepresented groups in digital transformation workshops. They can achieve this by providing funding, resources, or scholarships that are essential for the success of these workshops. Training-of-

- » **Trainers Model:**

Collaboration with gender-focused organisations enables the training of facilitators to deliver digital transformation workshops to their communities in a gender-sensitive manner.

» **Research Model:**

Collaborating with gender-focused organisations enables partners to work together on research and assessment of the gendered impact of workshops. The findings from this research can inform and improve future training initiatives.

Engaging the Private Sector and Development Partners

Engaging the private sector and development partners in gender-responsive digital transformation workshops is essential for fostering inclusivity. This will necessitate a collaborative approach to leverage expertise and resources for the development of effective digital solutions. Some strategies that can be adopted to enhance engagement between the private sector and development partners include:

» **Establishing partnerships:**

These engagements should focus on identifying common grounds of interest, shared challenges, and opportunities. Partners should set common objectives (e.g. closing the gender digital divide, empowering women in tech) and commit to achieving these goals. This will promote collaboration and joint initiatives that foster long-term sustainability. These partnerships will also bring together diverse perspectives, enabling stakeholders to collectively develop strategies that address the needs of individuals, businesses, and governments.

» **Resources mobilisation:**

These partners enhance resource mobilisation. It may be easier to access financial and technical resources from both sectors to support workshops and training activities. For instance, technology companies can provide tools and expertise, while development partners offer funding and outreach.

» **Leveraging corporate social responsibility:**

Private sectors and development partners have corporate social responsibilities to their communities. Workshop organisers can capitalise on this opportunity to solicit support for workshops from corporate social responsibility initiatives. This will encourage private companies and development partners to contribute resources to digital transformative workshops as they enhance their brand recognition.

» **Capacity building for Leaders:**

Engaging the private sector and development partners in gender-responsive digital transformation workshops will equip leaders of workshop organizations and development partners with the tools to integrate gender equality into their projects. This will foster a culture of inclusivity and innovation. It will also foster innovation and build capacities that will support sustainable and gender-responsive digital transformation. By bringing together diverse perspectives, stakeholders can collectively develop strategies and solutions that address their collective needs.

» **Research:**

The contribution of each stakeholder to these workshops will be documented. This data can be used to track the gender impact of the workshops and ensure continuous improvement. Data from these workshops can also be used to raise awareness of the need for gender equality in digital context transformation.

Sample Partnership MOU Template

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines the terms of collaboration between the two organisations to organise gender-responsive digital transformation workshops. This workshop aims to promote participation and inclusivity of women and marginalised groups.

Objectives

The partnership focuses on designing and delivering digital skills training, promoting gender equity, ensuring inclusivity, and measuring the impact of the workshops on gender equality.



Responsibilities

PARTNER A		PARTNER B		SHARED RESPONSIBILITY	
Responsibility	Timeline	Responsibility	Timeline	Responsibility	Timeline
Leads the technical aspects. 1. Content delivery 2. Resources mobilization, 3. Post-workshop support		1. Provides gender expertise 2. Ensures inclusivity 3. Supports outreach, and 4. Helps with funding		1. Both partners collaborate on workshop development 2. Research 3. Monitoring and evaluation	



Funding

Both parties will seek external funding, contribute resources, and allocate financial support as agreed.



Duration

The MOU is effective for a set period (e.g., one year) with options for renewal and termination with notice.



Confidentiality

Both parties agree to keep shared sensitive information confidential unless otherwise agreed.



Dispute Resolution

Any disputes will be resolved through good-faith negotiations or mediation.



Amendments

Any changes to the MOU require written consent from both parties.

10: Moving Forward

CONCLUSION AND ACTION PLAN

The Gender-Responsive Toolkit for Workshop Organisers in Digital Innovation and Transformation emphasises that gender inequalities in digital spaces are not accidental. The gender gaps originate from deep-rooted structural, cultural, and systemic barriers such as limited access to mentorship, safety concerns in learning and working environments, restrictive socio-cultural norms, and economic exclusion that disproportionately impact women and other marginalised groups. Tackling these barriers requires intentional, ongoing, and tailored actions. Workshop organisers, facilitators, and partners must move beyond ad-hoc gender-sensitive measures and institutionalise gender responsiveness as a standard practice across all stages of workshop planning, delivery, and follow-up. Doing so not only ensures equity and fairness but also strengthens the quality, impact, and sustainability of digital innovation initiatives.

Key Action Points for Organisers

- » Institutionalise continuous feedback by establishing mechanisms such as post-workshop surveys, focus group discussions, or anonymous digital feedback forms to capture women's perspectives. Ensure this feedback is systematically analysed and incorporated into the design of future workshops, so that women's voices directly influence programme improvements. Strengthen women's leadership and facilitation.

Proactively recruit and train more women as facilitators, trainers, and mentors. Representation at the front of the room helps dismantle stereotypes and inspires female participants to see themselves as leaders in digital innovation.

- » Integrate gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation (M and E). Track participation, learning outcomes, and career or entrepreneurship trajectories using gender-disaggregated data. Use this evidence to measure progress, report impact to funders, and revise strategies for greater inclusion.
- » Create safe and inclusive environments. Develop and implement clear codes of conduct that prevent harassment and bias during workshops. Ensure venues are physically accessible and schedules are flexible, taking into account caregiving responsibilities and mobility limitations.

- » Expand mentorship and peer networks. Develop structured mentorship programmes and alumni networks that extend beyond the workshop. Pair women participants with role models, industry professionals, and supportive peer groups to maintain confidence, learning, and opportunities.
- » Secure sustainable funding and partnerships. Progress towards hybrid funding models that combine donor support, private sector partnerships, and government collaboration. Long-term funding guarantees continuity, scalability, and sustainability of gender-responsive practices.
- » Localise and adapt approaches. Recognise that barriers differ by context. Collaborate with local women's groups, community organisations, and traditional or religious leaders to ensure workshops are sensitive to local realities while fostering transformative change.

Summary of Key Issues and Recommendations

Key issues can emerge from training on digital transformation. The table below highlights these issues and provides actionable recommendations to address them.

EMERGING ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Influence of cultural norms	Educate participants on gender awareness and the effect of gender stereotypes on the workshop
Inadequate gender responsive content	Develop training materials tailored to the unique needs of all participants
Inadequate gender sensitive facilitators	Recruit and train gender sensitive facilitators
Gender digital divide	Ensure equal access to digital devices, platforms, and internet for participants
Gender sensitive environment	Create a respectful and inclusive learning environment where participants feel safe. Establish gender, anti-harassment and safeguarding policies and provide support for individuals facing harassment

The effectiveness of workshops on gender-responsive digital transformation is influenced by the ability to adapt approaches to the unique gendered needs encountered in the digital space by all participants. By customising these gender strategies, workshop organisers can create a more inclusive and empowering environment for women and marginalised genders, ensuring that digital transformation initiatives are equitable and beneficial for all. The strategies aim not only to increase participation but also to promote long-term opportunities for participants in the digital economy.

Appendices



Appendix 1:

Some customised gender strategies that can be adopted are described in the table below.

SCOPE	CUSTOMIZED STRATEGY
Familiarisation with local gender context	Conduct gender assessment before the workshop to understand local gender norms, barriers, and opportunities
Modified curriculum to integrate local context	Modify content to reflect cultural values and gender expectations, while promoting gender equality. Incorporate gender-sensitive language and examples into training materials. Design practical training materials that address unique gender needs such as digital entrepreneurship for women.
Gender sensitive recruitment and training	Recruit gender sensitive facilitators and train them to be aware of gender biases and ensure all participants, feel heard and supported Recruit marginalised gender groups, particularly in underrepresented communities to participate in workshops Partner with local gender-focused organisations to help select participants.
Gender sensitive environment	Provide accessible and safe facilities and online platforms for all participants that address specific needs such as privacy. Create a conducive space for open discussions on gender challenges in technology, encouraging feedback and engagement from all genders. Draft clear codes of conduct together with participants to prevent harassment and discrimination during workshops.

Post workshop engagements	Mentorship and Networking Opportunities Data collection and analysis on participation, engagement, and outcomes broken down by gender to assess the impact of the workshop on different gender groups for improve future workshop content. Design post-workshop follow-up programmes, including online communities or alumni networks, to continue providing gender-focused support and resources. Establish career support initiatives such as job placement programmes, internships, and grants, particularly targeting women and marginalised groups Continuous engagement with local private organisation and development partners to create an enabling environment for gender equity in digital transformation.
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Appendix 2: Action plan template for workshop organisers to implement gender-responsive practices

A gender-responsive action plan for digital workshop organisers aims to make digital programmes and workshops inclusive and equitable for everyone. This strategy focuses on ensuring that the services, policies, and practices of the digital technology workshop organisers are accessible and beneficial to beneficiaries, including women and girls, addressing intersectional issues. The objective is to advance gender equality in the digital space and tackle gender-based obstacles to digital inclusion. The following table outlines a sample action plan for digital transformation workshops, serving as a guide for implementing gender-responsive initiatives.

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE	INDICATORS
Gender inclusive digital workshop environment and content	Familiarise with gender norms and the impact on the workshop	Baseline study on the workshop local context	2 weeks	Knowledge of local context and aligning materials to suite this context and promote gender equality

Trained gender sensitive facilitators	Facilitators understand gender issues	Conduct gender sensitivity training for all facilitators by Integrating gender modules into training programmes.	1 month	All facilitators trained gives feedback on effects of the training on their perception on gender
Create a gender Sensitive environment	Provide a harassment-free, inclusive space.	Participatorily design and implement zero-tolerance policies for harassment and discrimination. Provide anonymous reporting mechanisms. Prioritise Gender sensitive facilities and infrastructure for workshops	Throughout the workshop	Number of harassment reports safety ratings Facilities with places for child carers to relax, facilities with good washrooms and sanitary towels etc.
Gender sensitive content design	Develop inclusive content for all genders.	Modify training materials to reflect gender-neutral language and examples Create gender-specific case studies highlighting women's and marginalised genders' contributions	2 months	Content audit for inclusivity
Gender sensitive recruitment of participant	Ensure gender-balanced participation in workshops	Develop strategies targeting women and marginalised genders Partner with gender-focused organisations to widen outreach	1 Month	Increased women participation in digital workshop

Resource allocation	Allocate resources for gender initiatives.	Allocate budget specifically for scholarships for underrepresented genders to enable them to participate in digital transformative training.	Throughout the project	Number of scholarships granted
Coaching and Mentorship	Offer career support for all participants especially women	Set up mentorship programmes with women Organize networking events to encourage participation of women	Throughout the project	Number of coaching done and number of mentorship programmes established.
Monitoring and evaluation	Support participants after workshops	Organise alumni programmes for continued engagement and support. Offer career support such as job placement, internships, and mentorship	1month after the workshop	Alumni participation rate Job placement rates for women/marginalised genders



Appendix 3:

What should workshop organisers do if there is no internal gender expert?

Achieving gender responsiveness in digital and entrepreneurial training requires a deeper understanding of the gender issues, local dynamics, policy formulation and implementation that address the diverse needs of women and men. Where there is no gender expert or competence in designing and implementing gender-responsive training programmes, workshop organisers need to endeavour to outsource technical expertise. Thus, in the long run, it would be important for workshop organisers to employ gender experts to support the design and implementation of training programmes. A starting point may be the district, municipal, and metropolitan assemblies within which the organisers are based, as well as the directors of the regional Departments of Gender.

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