

Report on the Implementation of the Ajira Digital Program Through the Design Implementation Transfer (DIT) Delivery Model

January 2020 - December 2020



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Credits

This report was written by Dalberg Implement, the implementing partner of the Ajira program in conjunction with the Ministry of ICT and Youth in Kenya (MoICT), the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and eMobilis. The Ajira program is the brainchild of the MoICT and is funded by the Mastercard Foundation. This report captures the implementation journey and the outcomes as experienced by Dalberg Implement through the delivery model known as Design, Incubate and Transfer (DIT).

This report would not have been possible without the valuable contribution of the numerous Ajira partners and stakeholders who participated in the implementation process, shared their insights and experiences, provided recommendations, participated in interviews, took part in the youth surveys, and facilitated stakeholder engagements data gathering and analysis.

- **Sincere gratitude to the principals for making this project possible:** Hon. Joe Mucheru, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of ICT, Youth and Innovation (MoICT); Daniel Hailu, Regional Director, Eastern and Southern Africa, Mastercard Foundation; Carole Kariuki, Chief Executive Officer, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA); and the Dalberg Partners, namely Edwin Macharia, Global Managing Partner; James Mwangi, Executive Director; Robin Miller, Partner, Steve Kisakye, Partner and Head of Dalberg Implement, Ravi Chhatpar, Partner, Dalberg Design, and Rositsa Zaimova, Partner, Dalberg Data Insights.
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- **From Adept Technologies**, Mercy Muguru and Mary Ndege who participated in the implementation as one of the two BPOs supporting the judiciary pilot. They also provided insights and recommendations for the study and coordinated youth engagement.
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 - From Dalberg Design: Akia Matem, Michael Mori and Duncan Onyango.
 - From Dalberg Data Insights: Christophe Bocquet.



Ajira Partners

Ajira is implemented through a consortium of partners as follows:

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



The Government of Kenya

The Government of Kenya provided infrastructural support through the provision and equipping of Ajira Youth Empowerment Centres -AYECs (formerly named Constituency Innovation Hubs), access, power, and devices which youth can access for free.



Ministry of ICT Innovation and Youth (MoICT)

Ministry of ICT Innovation and Youth (MoICT)

MoICT took the initiative to create Ajira and has been spearheading the program since its inception. MoICT provides strategic leadership and in-kind support as well as overseeing overall program coordination.



The Mastercard Foundation

The Mastercard Foundation provides funding support and strategic guidance to the Ajira Program through the Young Africa Works in Kenya program, a public-private partnership between the Mastercard Foundation, the private sector, and the Government of Kenya. This partnership is part of the Foundation's Young Africa Works strategy which seeks to enable 30 million young people in Africa to secure dignified and fulfilling work by 2030.



The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)

KEPSA is responsible for implementing the demand side of the Ajira program (job creation from public and private sector) and the revamping of the Ajira portal. KEPSA is the apex body of the private sector in Kenya and the largest private sector association in the country, with over 500,000 members.



Dalberg Implement

Dalberg Implement

Dalberg Implement is responsible for providing capacity support to KEPSA to accelerate program implementation. Dalberg is a social impact advisory group that brings together strategy consulting, implementation, design thinking, big data analytics, and research to address complex social and environmental challenges.



The Judiciary

The e-government program has been undertaken in partnership with a team from the Judiciary who provided technical and legal support for the Judiciary pilot. The learnings from this collaboration will be scaled up to other Government Ministries, Departments and State Agencies (MDAs).



Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) providers

Two BPO providers – Adept Technologies and Daproim Africa were brought on board to lead the implementation of the transcription of court proceedings and digitization of court records.



eMobilis

eMobilis is responsible for implementing the supply side of the program by focusing on delivering digital skills and training of youth. eMobilis has experience in training in digital skills for local talent to meet the growing opportunities in the ICT industry in Africa (for purposes of this report, the eMobilis work is out of scope).

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Executive Summary

The Ajira Digital Program (Ajira) is the brainchild of the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of ICT, Youth, and Innovation (MoICT). Ajira (which means “work” in Kiswahili) aims to empower over one million young people to access digital job opportunities. The program seeks to position Kenya as a choice labour destination for multinational companies and encourage local companies and the public sector to create digital work. The Ajira program is part of a broader strategy by the Government of Kenya to harness the potential of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) to increase efficiencies, improve competitiveness and create jobs.

To achieve these objectives, the Government has upgraded ICT infrastructure, provided skills training, supported technology hubs and networks, launched e-government initiatives, and developed policies to create an enabling environment for the sector.

The first phase of the Ajira program began in 2017 and ended in 2019. This phase of the program received funding support from the Rockefeller Foundation and resulted in over 70,000 youth trained and sensitized on sourcing work from digital platforms. In addition, over 340 Constituency Innovation Hubs (CIHs) were established to allow youth to access training and internet connectivity and over 40 Ajira Digital Clubs were created to provide training and job linkages support to youth.¹ During this phase, over 670,000 Kenyans were found to be working on digital platforms.²

The second (current) phase of the program began in January 2020 and seeks to build on the work carried out in phase one. This current phase is funded by the Mastercard Foundation under the Young Africa Works (YAW) program that has set a goal of enabling 30 million young people in Africa to secure employment they see as dignified and fulfilling by 2030.

As part of a strategic partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, a team from Dalberg Implement was deployed to KEPSA between January and December 2020 to accelerate program implementation and strengthen internal capacity. The Dalberg team was deployed under a delivery model known as Design Incubate and Transfer (DIT) which allows for immediate capacity support to be provided to institutions to help accelerate implementation of program activities. The engagement was planned to last 24 months, but by December 2020 – only 12 months after deployment – the Dalberg team successfully transferred operations, and full oversight and responsibility, to the KEPSA team.

This report examines the rationale for deploying the DIT model. It also examines the workings of the model as pertinent to the Ajira program, its successes, and challenges, and makes recommendations based on its findings. The report is limited to the period of Dalberg’s engagement with Ajira – from January to December 2020. The study is also focused primarily on the activities within KEPSA’s and Dalberg’s implementation remit. All findings or observations should therefore be viewed with these considerations in mind. The report was prepared in consultation with Ajira project partners, private sector companies, program vendors and the youth, who are the beneficiaries of this initiative.

The report inevitably touches on matters of program delivery because the DIT model was deployed not in isolation but as part and parcel of program implementation. It should however be noted that this case study is not intended to assess the Ajira Digital Program. Ajira is still ongoing and once the program ends, the principals will carry out a fully-fledged end-to-end review.

1 Ajira Digital Program Information Pack, January 2020.

2 Report on The Awareness Ajira Digital Program and the Incidence of Online Workers in Kenya, TIFA Research, March 2020.

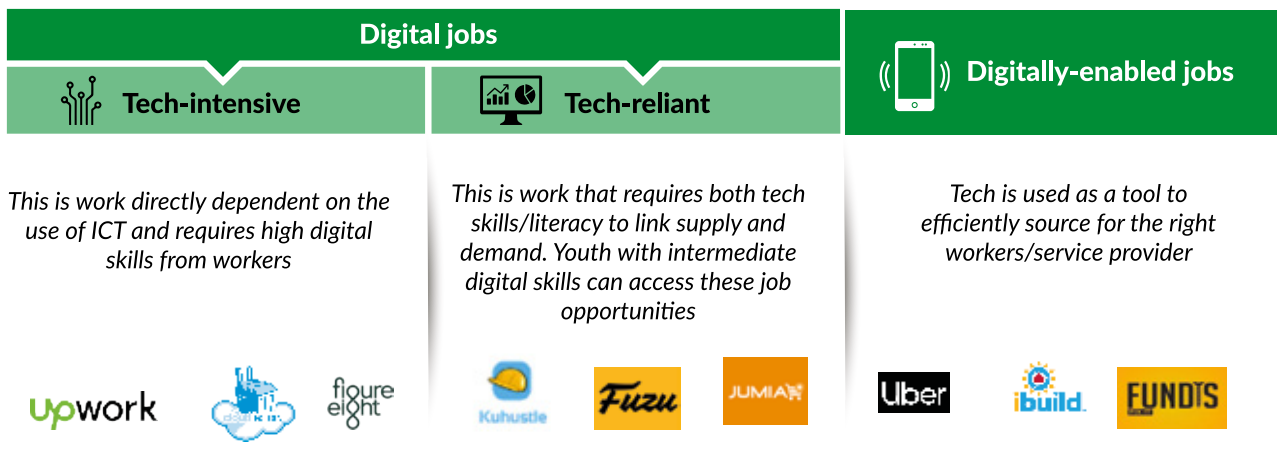
Enabling The Digital Economy In Kenya: The Context of The Ajira Digital Program

The formal job market in Kenya is competitive, and it is not growing fast enough to absorb new entrants. The median age in Kenya is 20 years. Youth (men and women in the 18-34 age group) make up 25% of the population. Over 30% of this youth population is unemployed.³ The mechanisms for matching jobseekers with jobs are inadequate, and the youth lack the appropriate skills and information.

The ICT sector has the potential to create jobs to address this challenge. This includes digital jobs which are directly created through the production and the use of technology - for instance mobile app development, web design and transcription. ICT can also create digitally enabled jobs which are carried out offline but facilitated by digital technology, e.g. an online platform that connects construction workers to clients.

Below is an illustration of digital and digitally enabled jobs:

Figure 1: Digital and Digitally Enabled Jobs



Source: 2019, Mercy Corps; Towards a Digital Workforce: Understanding the building blocks of Kenya's Gig Economy

Over the past two decades, digital technology has penetrated all sectors of the economy. Many companies have digitised their processes and services, and new start-ups are creating digital and digitally enabled jobs in sectors such as agriculture, education, transport, logistics and finance. Between 2015 and 2019, the number of organisations present online almost doubled, and the number of organisations that registered a domain online grew 87%. Spurring this growth is the rapid expansion of mobile money services, such as M-Pesa, which have facilitated financial inclusion.⁴

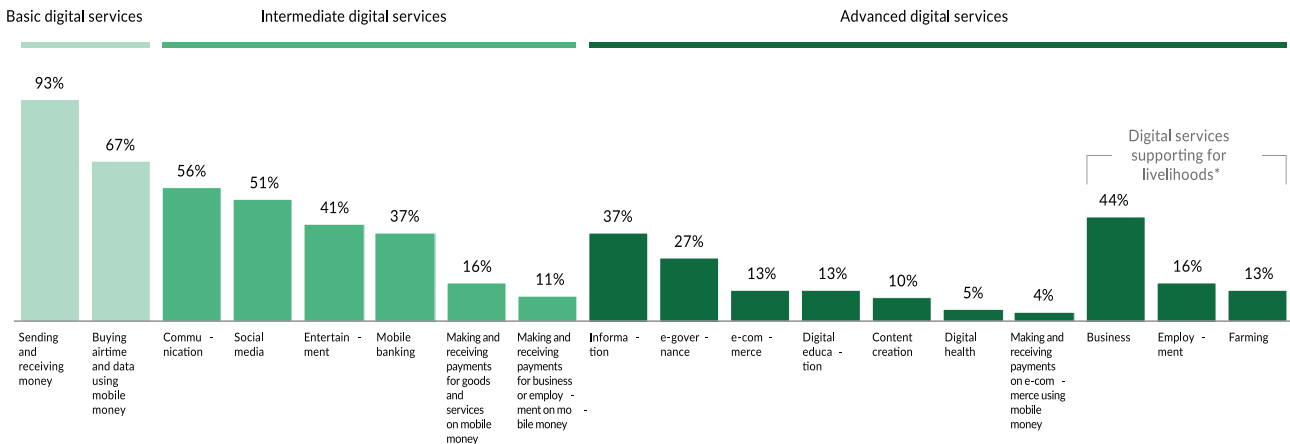
About 98% of Kenyans own a SIM card, 65% have access to the internet, and 52% own a smartphone. The improvement in access to the internet offers the youth across the country opportunities to participate in the digital ecosystem and economy. As the nature of work changes worldwide – from lifetime, 9-to-5 employment to the gig economy – digital and digitally enabled work opportunities continue to grow in scope and number, making up an increasingly larger number of transactions all over the country. In a recent study, 84% of the youth surveyed report benefiting from digital technology, devices, and services, and 30% say that using digital services has raised their income.⁵ The figure below illustrates the current levels of digital services usage.

3 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) Quarterly Labour Force Report Quarter 4 October - December 2019
 4 KNBS, Economic Survey 2020
 5 Kenya's Digital Economy: A People's Perspective Report 2021. Dalberg, 2021.



Figure 2: Digital Services Usage

Figure 1: Usage of digital services
% of respondents. N=2,456



*N represents only the proportion of respondents that cited digital usage for specific occupations; digital livelihoods (business), N=236; digital livelihoods (farmers), N=59; digital livelihoods (employment), N=97.

Source: Kenya's Digital Economy: A People's Perspective Report 2021. Dalberg, Omidyar Network 2021

Recognizing this opportunity, the Kenya Government has embarked upon and supported a range of initiatives to harness the potential of ICT. These include the laying of undersea fibre-optic cables - which set the stage for affordable internet access and improved communication. The Government has also supported the growth of mobile money platforms and other facets of digitization. In addition, the government launched an e-citizen portal, that enables over 197 public services to be accessed digitally and established Huduma (or service) Centres in all counties in Kenya to support citizens to access e-government services.

To bring these initiatives under one cohesive framework, the government launched the Digital Economy Blueprint in 2019. This blueprint was adopted by Smart Africa Alliance member states at the Transform Africa Summit in 2019, thereby paving the way for it to be adopted across the continent.



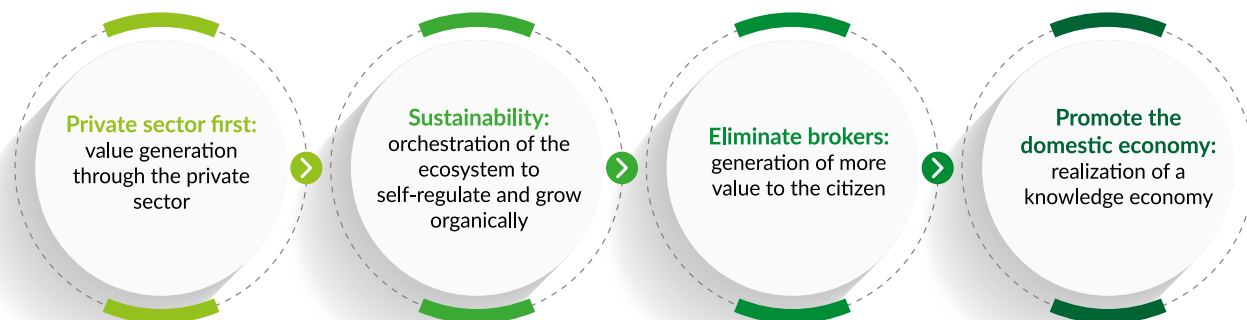
Kisumu data entry & scanning inspection visit



Ajira Digital Program

Ajira (which means “work” in Kiswahili) is a government initiative driven by the Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs to empower over one million young people to access digital job opportunities. The program seeks to position Kenya as a choice labour destination for multinational companies as well as encourage local companies and public sector to create digital work.

The guiding principles of the Ajira Digital Program are:



The program is divided into four pillars which anchor all program activities. The four pillars are:



AJIRA PROGRAM AREAS

Supply Side Interventions (eMobilis)

These focused on providing youth with access to training and mentorship that would better position them to secure work and earn a living. They were covered under the first two Ajira programs:

Program 1: Operationalizing the Ajira Youth Empowerment Centres (AYECS) as centres where youth could access training, internet connectivity, computers, and laptops for free.

Program 2: Institutionalizing Ajira Digital Clubs and curriculum at universities and Technical and Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) institutes.

Ajira implementing partner, eMobilis, oversaw the supply-side interventions covered in Programs 1 and 2 of Ajira and are therefore out of scope for this report.

Demand-Side Interventions (KEPSA)

These focused on connecting youth to work in both the public and private sectors. These objectives were pursued under two programs:

Program 3: The e-Government program that launched a transcription and digitization program in partnership with the judiciary to demonstrate the viability of government outsourcing as a source of job creation for youth.

Program 4: The private sector engagement program that focused on on catalysing the creation of digital and digital-enabled jobs

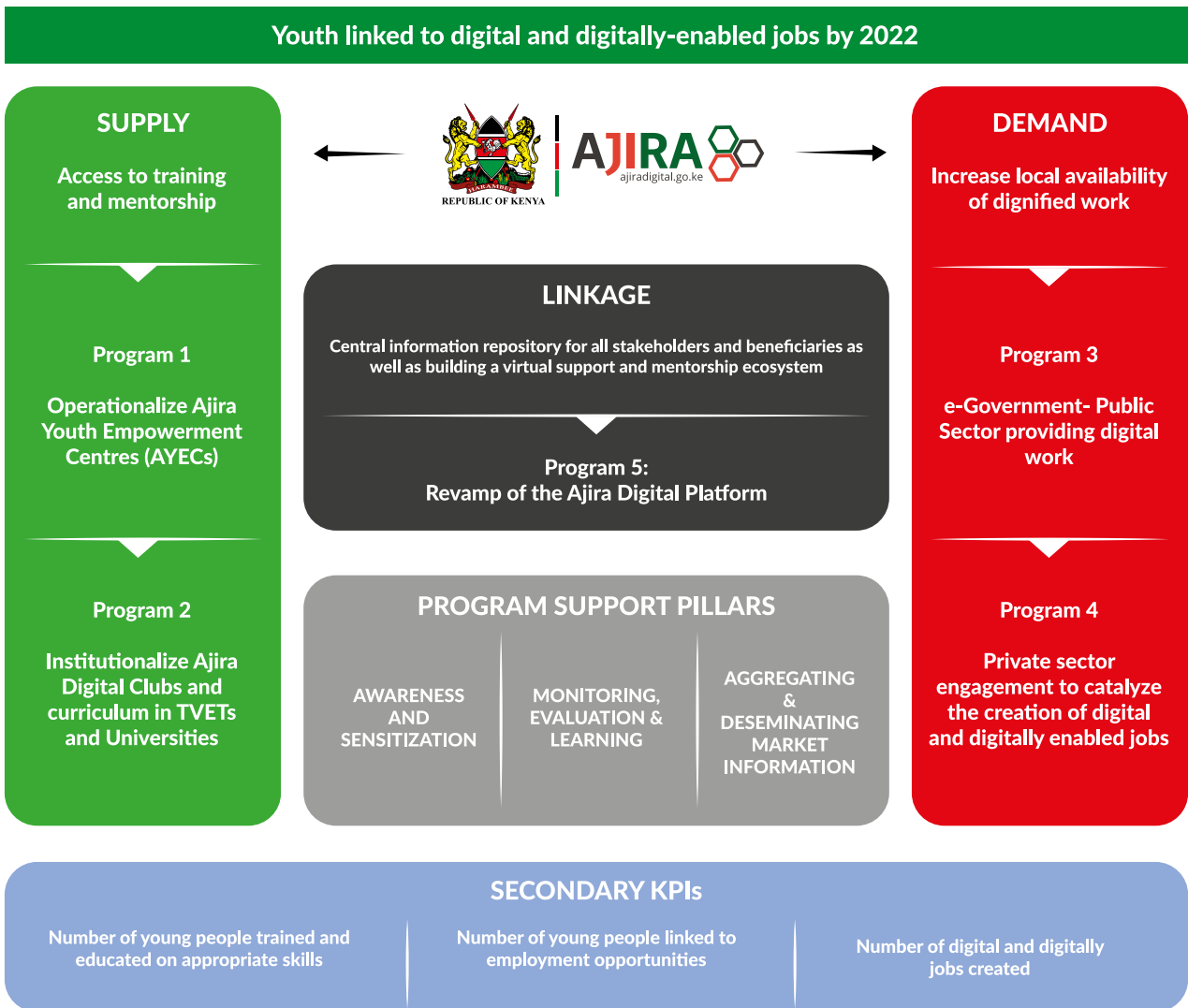
Linkage Interventions (KEPSA)

This program focused on providing a linkage between the demand and supply sides of Ajira through:

Program 5: the revamp of the Ajira portal to offer relevant and timely labour information to youth.

The Ajira programs are summarised in the figure below:

Figure 3: Overview of the Five Ajira Programs

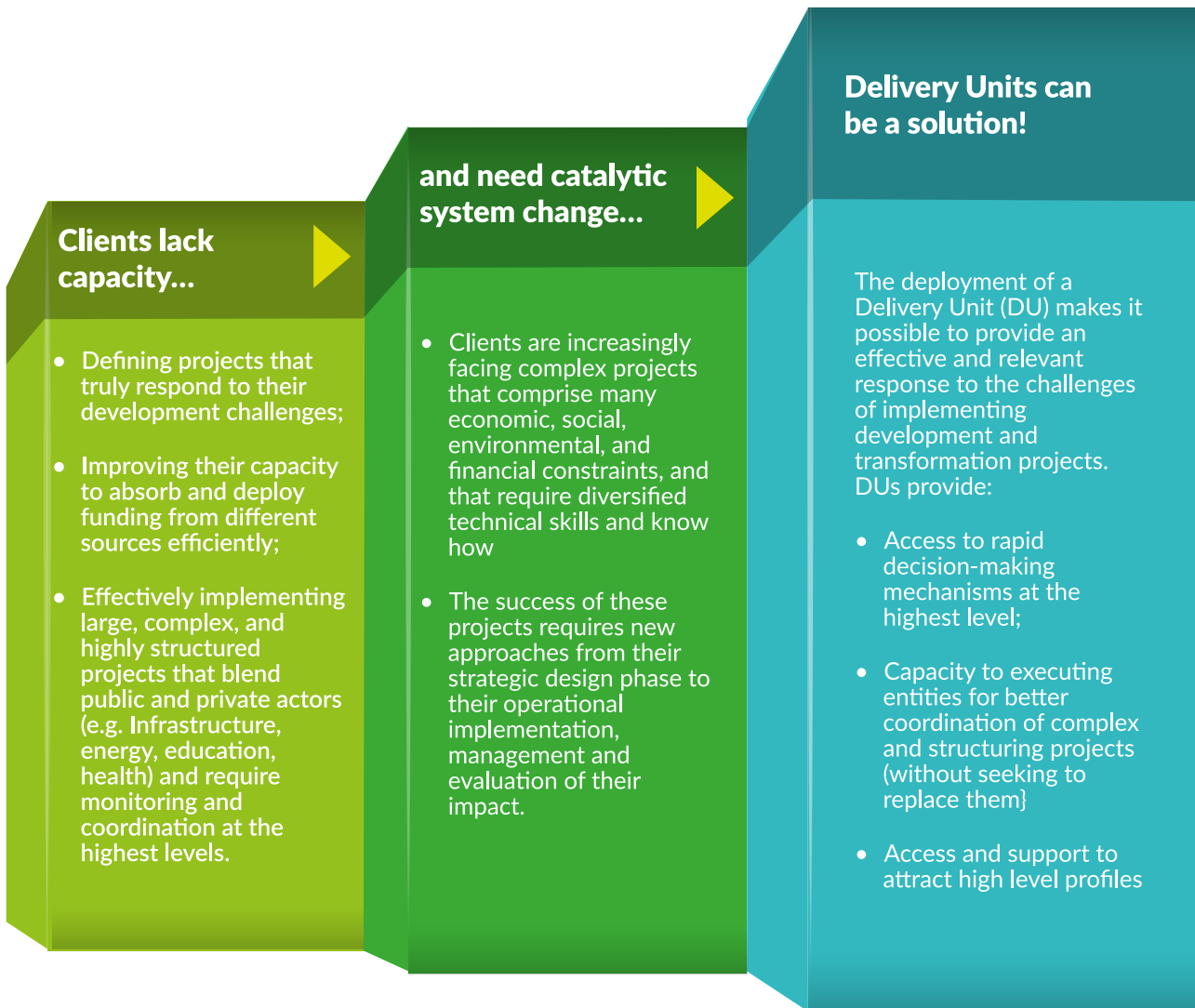




Design, Incubate and Transfer (DIT) Model

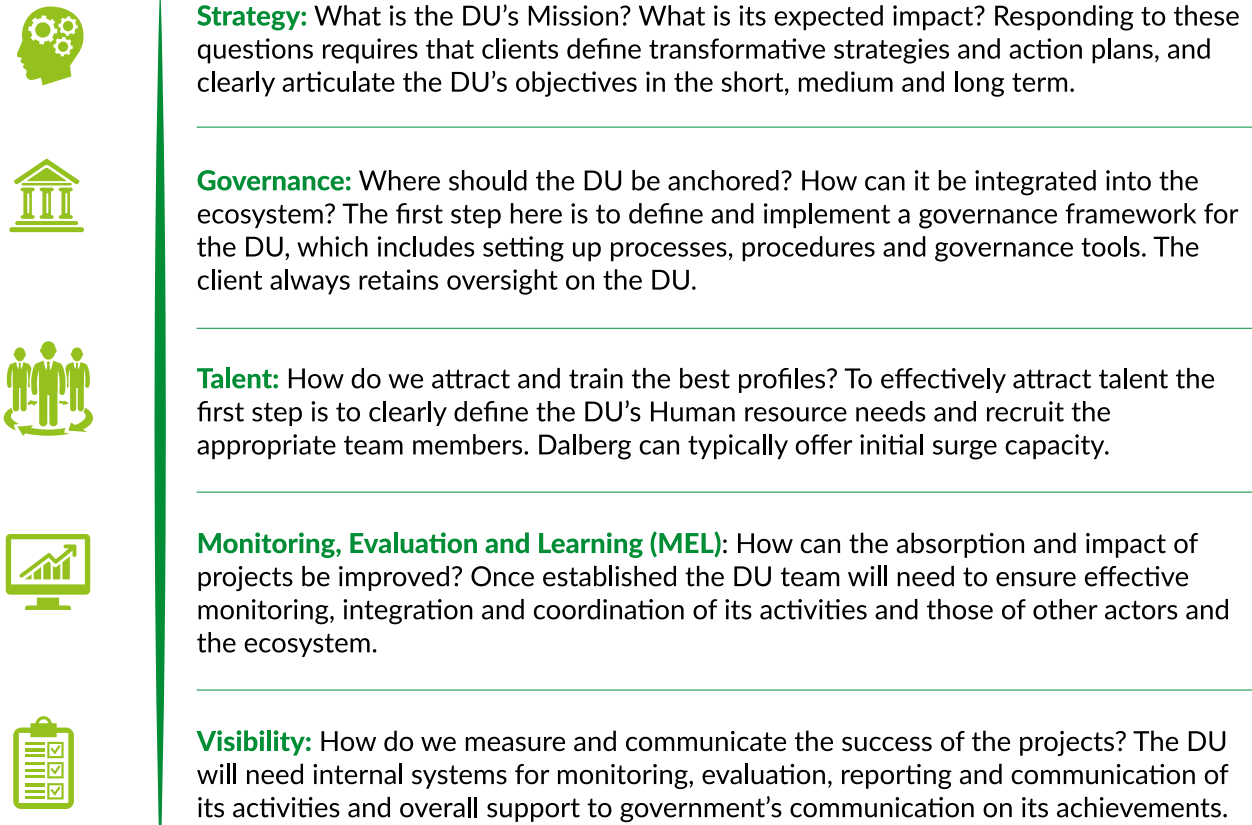
To better understand why the DIT model was deployed in the Ajira program, it is imperative to understand the application of Delivery Units. Delivery Units are crucial to operationalizing large complex projects especially where there is a requirement for capacity strengthening. The table below illustrates this approach in detail.

Figure 4: Delivery Units approach applied to complex projects



Once Delivery Units are deployed, they can help clients to develop a strategy and design a governance model, attract talent, set up a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system and ensure client and program visibility. Several considerations determine the success of deploying a Delivery Unit as illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 4: Considerations when deploying Delivery Units



The DIT model is an example of the application of a Delivery Unit approach. This model combines strategy with program implementation and builds off common Public Private Partnerships approaches (such as Build-Operate-Transfer) where, for example, private sector actors build and run a facility before transferring it to a client, such as government, after a specified period.

The three elements of the model are summarised below:

Figure 4: Summary of the DIT Model

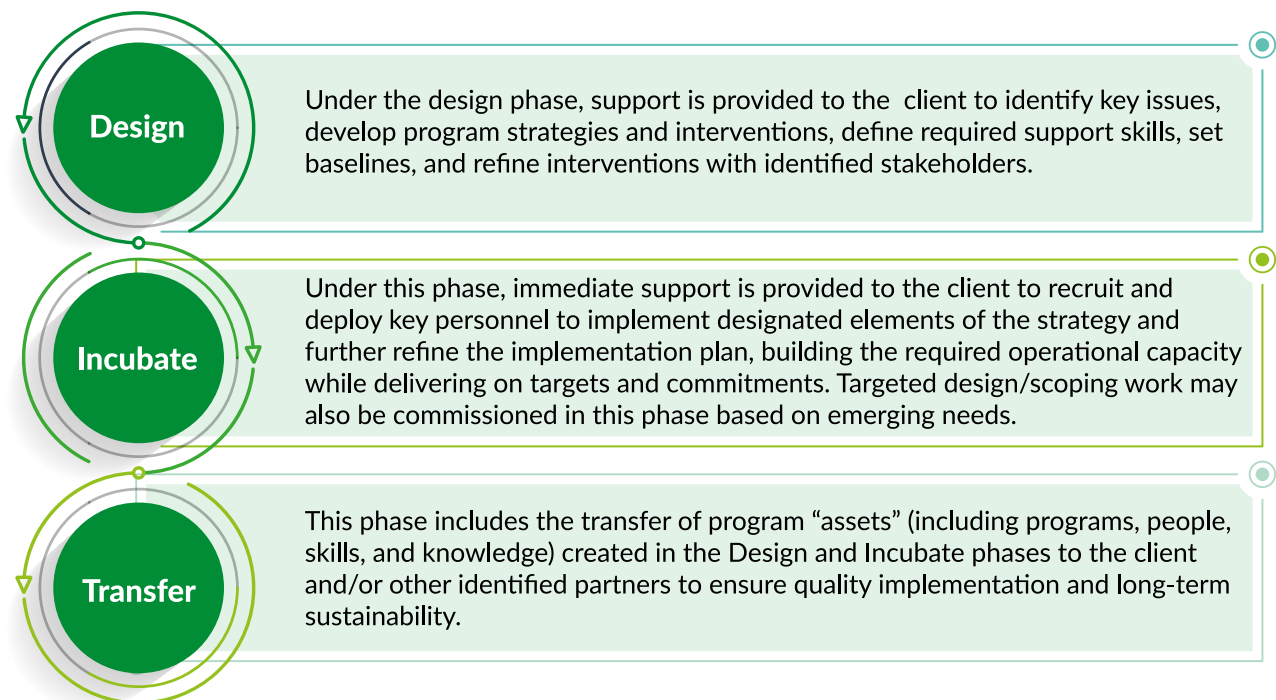
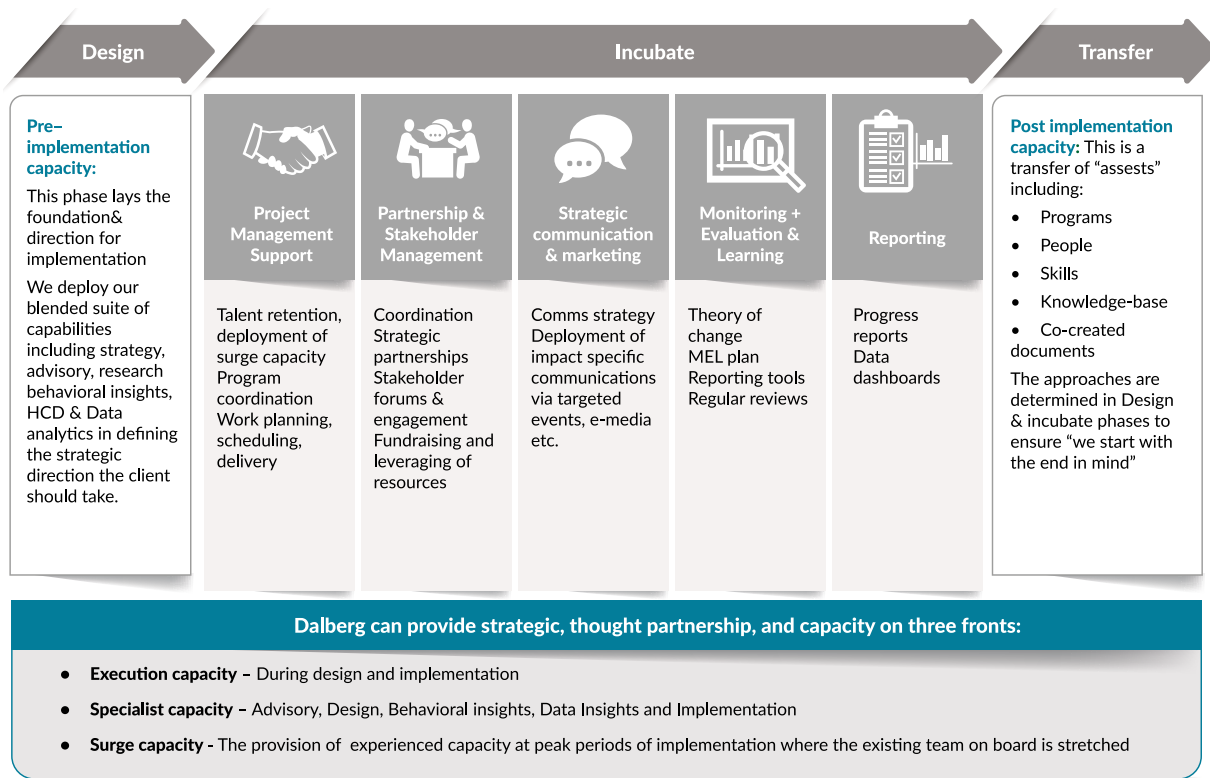


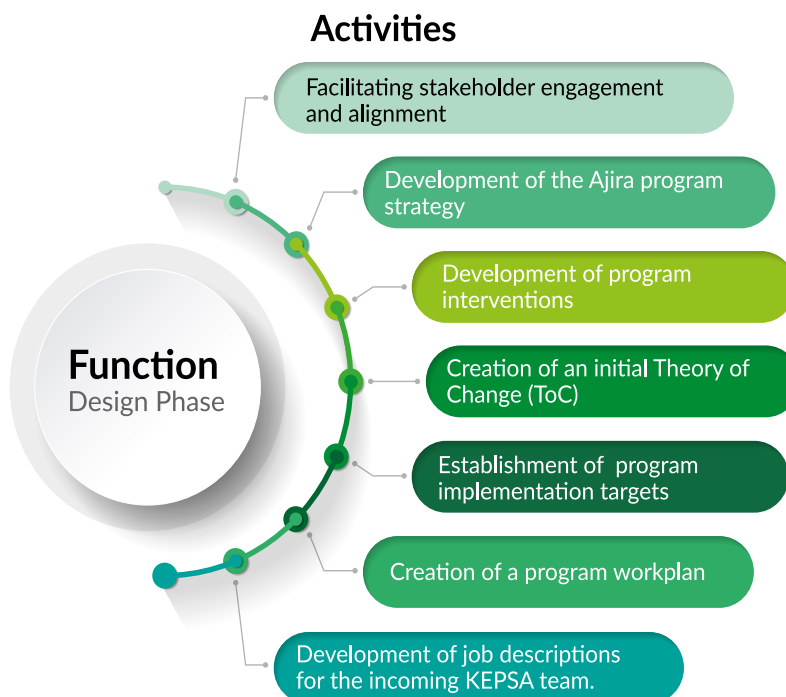
Figure 5: Application of the DIT approach from pre- to post-implementation



DESIGN PHASE

The design phase is critical in establishing the strategic direction that the program will take, and it plays a crucial role in serving as a launching pad for the incubation phase which follows. During this phase, Dalberg worked in close collaboration with KEPSA, the MoICT and the Mastercard Foundation to carry out activities that would set the stage for the next phase of the program. These activities are summarized below:

Figure 6: Summary of Activities in the Design Phase





INCUBATE PHASE

Under this phase, Dalberg deployed a full team to KEPSA to kick start program implementation. This included establishment of a Project Management Office (PMO), supporting recruitment of the KEPSA team, communications support, and the creation of a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework.

Dalberg also provided direct implementation support for the launch of the judiciary transcription pilot, the development of a private sector engagement strategy and the development of products requirements for the Ajira Portal. The Dalberg team provided initial surge capacity to allow for the program activities to kick-off as the KEPSA team was being recruited. Once onboarded, the Dalberg team worked closely with their KEPSA counterparts to transfer learnings. Once this process was complete, the Dalberg team gradually transferred oversight of all activities to KEPSA.

The incubate phase was expected to take place over a period of 24 months but was concluded in 12 months. This accelerated timeframe can be attributed to the facilitative environment created by the Ajira partners, the speed with which the Dalberg team was deployed and came up to speed with program activities and the strength of the KEPSA team recruited who very quickly acquainted themselves with the program and took over program implementation responsibilities.

The key activities carried out by Dalberg as part of the incubation phase are explained in more detail below.

a. Establishment of a Project Management Office (PMO) and Recruitment of KEPSA Staff

The establishment of a PMO function laid the groundwork for the start of implementation activities as the KEPSA team was being recruited. The PMO provided support to all Ajira partners, tracked program progress and supported recruitment. Key activities are summarized in the table below:

Function	Activities
Establishment of a PMO office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership and stakeholder engagement. Coordination meetings, providing logistic and communication support. Development of workplans and keeping track of the progress of activities. Providing research, strategy, analytics, and advisory support where required. Building knowledge management and maintaining a central repository for the program.
Recruitment of KEPSA staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fine tuning job descriptions and advertising for the positions. Supporting the shortlisting of candidates Participating in interview panels. Undertaking all program responsibilities while recruitment was taking place, allowing the project to move forward.

Dalberg worked closely with KEPSA to identify and onboard staff to take on Ajira program roles by developing job descriptions, shortlisting candidates, and participating in interview panels. As this was taking place, the Dalberg team took on the KEPSA program responsibilities, allowing the project to move forward.



Position	Date Reported
Project Director	April 2020
eGovernment Officer	May 2020
eGovernment Officer	September 2020
Private Sector Engagement Officer	April 2020
Private Sector Engagement Officer	May 2020
Technical Product Owner	June 2020
Monitoring and Evaluation Manager	April 2020
Data Officer	May 2020
E-Learning Officer	June 2020
Project Assistant	April 2020
Accountant	April 2020

b. Implementation of the e-Government Program



Currently, most law courts in the country do not have transcription capabilities and judges record the proceedings by hand, taking on an onerous notetaking burden at a time when they are required to be fully engaged in proceedings. This manual system also results in challenges of accuracy and delays in the production of transcripts. The Ajira e-government program sought to address these challenge whilst also demonstrating the transformative and job creation potential of e-government by launching a transcription pilot in partnership with the judiciary in early 2020. As part of its mandate under the DIT model, Dalberg provided implementation support to KEPSA, working closely with the judiciary, MoICT team and BPO companies to carry out the following activities:

Table 2: Summary of e-Government Program Activities

Activities	Description
Establishment of a Judiciary Working Group (WG)	<p>The WG met weekly and oversees program activities and progress.</p> <p>The group is chaired by Hon. Justice Tanui, Senior Magistrate and Deputy Registrar, Milimani Courts.</p> <p>Membership comprised of representatives from the judiciary, MoICT, KEPSA and Dalberg.</p>
Review of the Court Recording and Transcription System (CRTS)	<p>The Judiciary and MoICT team led the activity of reviewing the Court Recording and Transcription System (CRTS).</p> <p>The team developed a process flow document to map the entire transcription process.</p> <p>The team also carried out an assessment to outline the requirements for the integration between the CRTS and the BPO providers' system.</p>
Recruitment of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) firms	<p>Two firms, Stepwise Daproim Africa and Adept Technologies were selected to recruit and train the youth who carried out the transcription of court proceedings. The BPOs were selected following an extensive evaluation process.</p>
Recruitment of transcription and data entry staff	<p>The BPOs recruited youth, with a gender target of 70% women recruited by the end of the program.</p> <p>The BPOs also focused on recruiting youth from traditionally excluded groups such as persons living with disabilities.</p>
Assessment of transcription models	<p>To ensure the sustainability of the court transcription post-pilot, the Working Group conducted an assessment to identify the model that would be most suitable for court transcriptions when the pilot is scaled up.</p> <p>The assessment considered (i) cost of implementation (ii) number of jobs that could be created for youth (iii) technical complexity required to implement and scale the model.</p>



An overview of the two BPO companies is below:

		
Based in Nairobi	Location	Based in Nairobi and Nakuru
Founded in 2007	Establishment	Founded in 2006
CEO Mercy Murugu	Leadership	MD Emily Barasa
Transcription, data entry, image annotation, call center services, training	Services	Transcription and data entry, natural language processing, image and video annotation and instance segmentation
CIC Group, International Trade Center, Strathmore University.	Clients	Airbnb, Stanford Seed, Hewlett Packard (HP), Benetec, Kenya National Chamber of Commerce
109 staff	# Of staff	140 staff
Adept's Digital Work Training Program offers free one-month training to youth to enable them to secure online work.	Impact Focus	Focus on chronically unemployed, underemployed, women, persons with disabilities.



Ajira youth transcribing judiciary proceedings at Dapriom-Africa offices, Nairobi: Source: Dapriom-Africa.



Ajira youth transcribing judiciary proceedings at Adept Technologies offices, Nairobi: Source: Adept Technologies.

The pilot subsequently expanded to cover scanning and data entry of court records in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu. The closure of courts due to the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated this expansion. The courts were exceptionally nimble in pivoting to virtual proceedings. Ultimately, however, given the prolonged nature of the disruption, it became necessary to pivot to a different workstream that was not as dependent on court schedules. The MoICT's groundwork – laid before the transcription pilot began – helped greatly in facilitating and accelerating programme implementation by securing the buy-in of the judiciary and also funding and support for physical and systems infrastructure and technical capacity. The Judiciary and Ajira teams are to be commended for arriving at this solution and moving quickly to implement it.

It is estimated that the process of digitization and establishment of an e-Government could lead to the creation of over 500,000 jobs countrywide. To unlock this potential, the learnings from the pilot will be drawn upon to develop a blueprint for government outsourcing that will be scaled up to other government Ministries, Departments and Agencies.



Court Registry in Kisumu prior to kick-off of Digitization Activities: Source Mastercard Foundation.



Ajira Youth Digitizing Judicial Records.

c. Implementation support for the Private Sector Engagement Program

KEPSA spearheads the private sector workstream to engage the private sector in creating jobs. In January 2020, when the Ajira partners launched the program, they were aware that merely persuading the private sector to participate would not meet Ajira’s job creation targets; they would need to strengthen the country’s jobs ecosystem by helping small businesses and industry bodies – such as the Online Professional Workers Association of Kenya (OPWAK) – to grow and connect youth more effectively to online work.

The work of designing a Private Sector Engagement Strategy (PSES) and identifying sectors most likely to create digital and digitally enabled jobs, began in February 2020. However, only one month into the analysis, in March 2020, the first case of COVID-19 was reported in Kenya, and pandemic-related challenges and restrictions would shape almost every facet of the program. The most significant impact was to severely constrain employer demand as many businesses struggled to survive, much less recruit new employees. To address this challenge, stakeholder engagement was prioritised, and the private sector engagement strategy recalibrated to address the new COVID-19 reality.

The following activities were carried out as part of the private sector engagement program.

Activities	Description
Stakeholder Engagement	The team developed and deployed a stakeholder engagement plan, and monitored progress closely to track the number of engagements that led to the creation of jobs.
Development of a Private Sector Engagement Strategy (PESE)	The strategy included an analysis of the most promising sectors where digital and digitally enabled jobs were most likely to be created. Analysis on the strategy had already started when the COVID-19 pandemic began requiring a recalibration of approach.
Ecosystem building activities	The KEPSA team led this initiative that aimed at provide small businesses with targeted enterprise support to help them grow and therefore employ more youth. Support was offered to industry bodies such as the Online Professional Workers Association of Kenya (OPWAK) to help them grow and connect youth more effectively to online work.

d. Revamp of the Ajira Digital Portal

The Ajira Digital portal is envisaged to be a central information repository, offering relevant and timely labour information to benefit the entire ecosystem. The portal is also intended to provide virtual support for training and mentorship with relevant training content to benefit the youth. Under this Program, activities were undertaken to revamp the existing portal to ensure that it meets the above stated objectives. Dalberg provided support to KEPSA by undertaking the following activities:

Activities	Description
Development of a Product Requirements Document (PRD) and Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Ajira portal	<p>Dalberg brought in specialist in-house technical capacity to carry out an assessment of the current portal.</p> <p>The team carried out interviews to assess stakeholder needs, and developed a PRD based on their findings.</p> <p>The PRD defined the features and functionalities required to support improved user engagement on the portal.</p> <p>The team also created a ToR for a software developer and advertised the position.</p>
Recruitment of a software developer, Technical Product Owner (TPO) and eLearning Officer to support the portal revamp	<p>This included participating in the evaluation of bids and interviews and the identifying and onboarding of a suitable candidate.</p>

eLearning

As part of the portal revamp, activities were also undertaken to develop eLearning content for the Ajira Platform. These included:

- **Engaging with potential partners towards long-term collaboration:** The team initiated conversations with a myriad of partners to pursue potential collaboration. A comprehensive eLearning Partners Assessment Framework was developed that evaluates potential organizations that Ajira could partner with.
- **Developing eLearning content and outlining relevant skills to be incorporated into the Ajira curriculum:** In collaboration with the KEPSA team and MoICT, the eLearning team mapped out modules that are relevant to government opportunities, which include: information about Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO), business registration etc.
- **Designing an outreach and marketing strategy:** The eLearning team engaged a partner to develop a pilot to create awareness of the online courses that Ajira has with the current partners.
- **Participating in weekly check-ins with the KEPSA team:** The team held weekly meetings to provide additional support in course curation, skills mapping, and strategy implementation for the eLearning workstream.

e. Creating a MEL plan and Reporting Tools

Dalberg supported KEPSA in the development of a MEL system for the Ajira program. This MEL support included:

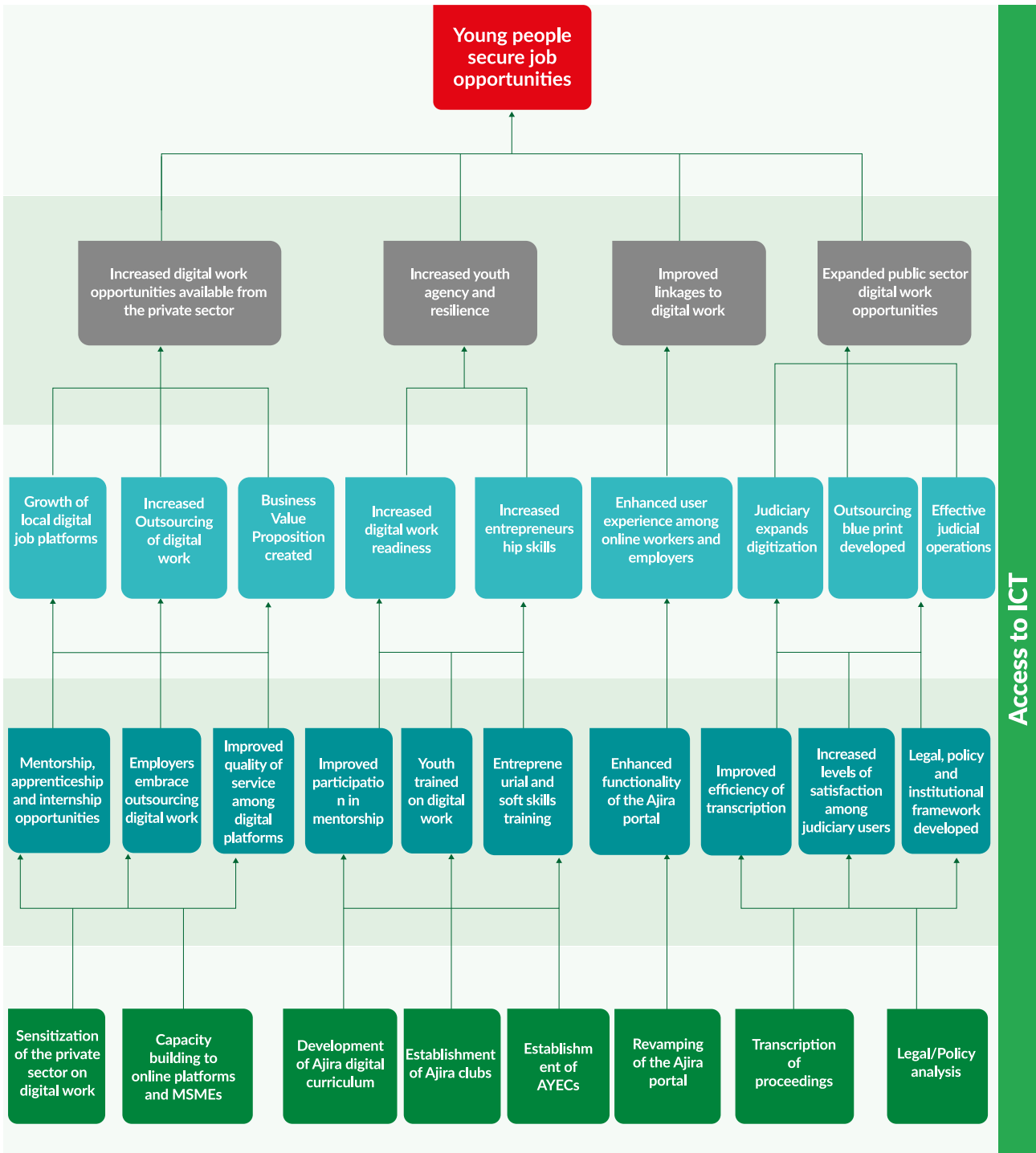
- **Developing the Theory of Change, MEL framework, and Indicators:** KEPSA and Dalberg MEL teams worked together to help align on the Theory of Change, M&E Framework, and overall program expectations. This process enabled: a) alignment program of partners, b) identification of initial data gaps c) development of qualitative and quantitative KPIs, and c) identification of interdependencies across programs.
- **Developing the MEL Plan:** The Dalberg MEL team worked with the KEPSA team to compile a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plan for the Ajira program. This toolkit comprises of the entire MEL system for the Ajira program.
- **Creating data collection tools and reporting templates:** Dalberg collaborated with the KEPSA team to create data collection materials for Program 3 (eGovernment) and Program 4 (Private Sector Engagement). The tools used for this process included Excel, Kobo Toolbox, and SurveyMonkey. The MEL team used different data collection tools based on the target audience, audience reach,

and program personnel. Additionally, the Dalberg team supported in developing monthly reporting templates for the various programs. The essence of these reports is to indicate how the month has progressed and the targets achieved.

- Designing the Ajira Dashboard:** The platform used for the dashboard is Power BI which provides program-specific updates by collecting and visualizing data in real-time. The MEL team at Dalberg and KEPSA collaborated to develop the dashboard with input from the Ajira stakeholders to identify relevant data points.

Below is the program Theory of Change as of December 2020.

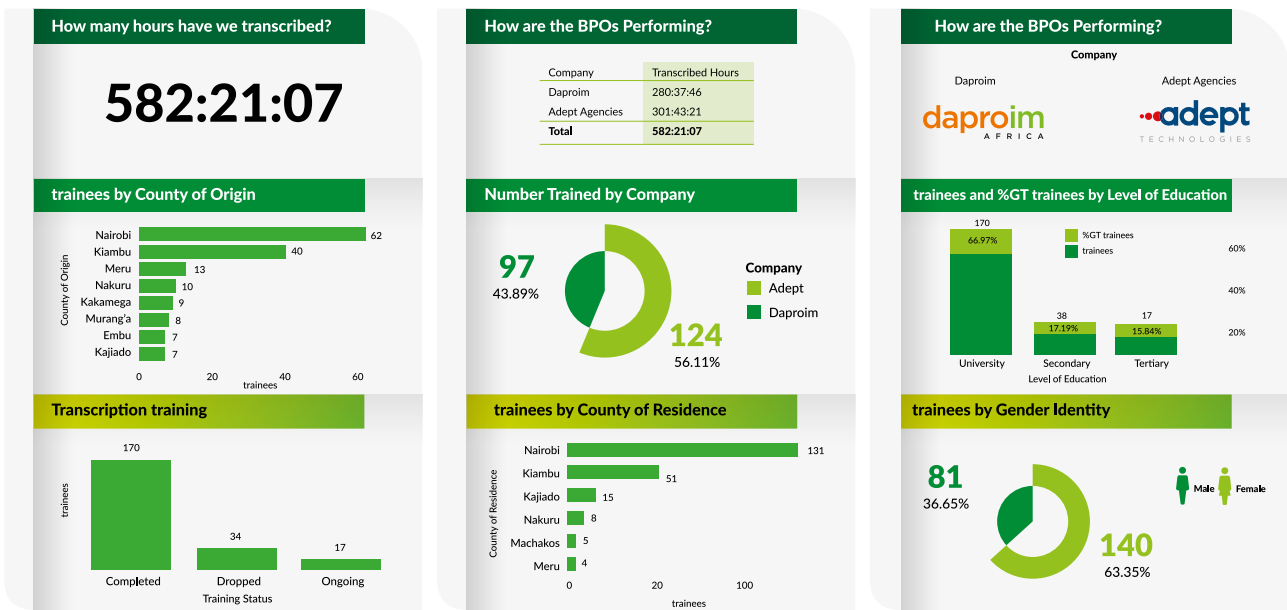
Figure 7: Ajira Theory of Change





The team also utilized tools such as Power BI to create results dashboard that helped track progress of activities. Below is a screenshot of PowerBI showing the e-government program results.

Figure 8: Program 3 results Dashboard



Learning Plan

Dalberg supported the KEPSA MEL team in consolidating learning questions in line with the program objectives. The knowledge gathered from MEL is vital in understanding the effectiveness of the program activities and understanding the key areas needing prioritization and improvement. The learning questions developed help in identifying areas of prioritization and improvement to maximize impact.

Figure 9: Learning Plan Overview

Purpose	Types	Learning Questions
Test and explore the Theory Of Change	Program 3 (e-government) Program 4: (Private Sector Engagment) Program 5: (Ajira Portal)	Is the Judiciary pilot process improving the effectiveness of the judiciary operations? Is the pilot process designed scalable to other parts of the government? Does the process of digitization improve efficiency and ensure value for money? How does the judiciary pilot improve the quality, speed, satisfaction, and accessibility of judicial proceedings and services? Is the roadmap and blueprint to be designed adaptable to different Ministries, Departments, Agencies, and Counties?
Technical Evidence	Fill in critical gaps in understanding	Are the engagements with platforms and the private sector increasing job opportunities for the Kenyan youth? Is the revamping process improving access to digital jobs and increasing satisfaction between employers and job seekers?
Scenario planning	Develop scenarios and identify game changers	What are the barriers to women's participation and access to digital and digitally enabled jobs? What factors contribute to improved entrepreneurial skills among the Ajira youth? What are the most digital skills required by the private sector? What is the effect of digital work on SME growth?
		What will be the impact on the gig economy in case a law on taxation is passed? What if the internet coverage rates are still low? Who will reach the vulnerable youth? If the cost of access to the internet goes up, how will that impact the Ajira program?

f. Communications support

At the start of the program, Dalberg carried out several of the functions of the communications agency and also participated in the recruitment of an agency before eventually transferring responsibility for all communication activities to the agency, once onboarded.

Activities the Dalberg team undertook as part of the support to KEPSA included:

- Supporting the development of communication materials including the Ajira Communication Strategy, the Judiciary Pilot Communication Implementation, and the Ajira Press Kit.
- Supporting the development of branded collateral

An example of communication collateral developed is below:





TRANSFER PHASE

The transfer phase involved handing over technical know-how and assets to KEPSA, including skills, knowledge base, and content developed during the design and incubate phases, to ensure long-term sustainability of the program. As of February 2021, all operations had been fully transferred to the KEPSA team.

The transfer phase focused on four main elements as summarized in the diagram below:

Figure 10: Elements of the Transfer Phase



People: Dalberg supported the identification, recruitment, and onboarding of KEPSA program to take up the roles needed to execute the Ajira Digital Program. Once these roles were filled, the KEPSA staff, and their Dalberg team counterparts collaborated closely transfer the day-to-day operational tasks. Every KEPSA staff member was matched to a Dalberg resource who together worked side by side to implement the project. That act of working together and co-creating ensured that learning was transferred and quickly internalized.

Skills: Skills were transferred by working closely on day-to-day operational tasks as well as targeted training. A series of training sessions were organized between the Dalberg and KEPSA teams and material prepared. The training sessions included (i) introduction to project management (ii) role of Monitoring and Evaluation (iii) slide development for presentation (iv) report writing.




Knowledge base: All documentation produced throughout the project was stored in a shared drive that is accessible by all Ajira team members across all organizations. This ensured that (i) institutional memory of the project was maintained and (ii) team members had access to data and information to make informed decisions and can learn from material across workstreams.

Broader strategic support: Finally, Dalberg provided broader strategic support including (i) identifying synergies with other external programs that could amplify Ajira's work (ii) assessing various areas of the program which could benefit from expansion (iii) leveraging our networks to bring various interventions to fruition.



At the end of the transfer phase, activities concluded were mapped out and a high-level workplan for the post-Dalberg phase was developed. The figure below summarizes the approach taken.

Figure 11: Transfer Plan Summary

Program	Year One (Collaboration between Dalberg and KEPSA)	Year Two (KEPSA deliverable)
	Activity	Outcomes
 Program 3 – eGovernment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judiciary pilot kicked off BPOs boarded Hired transcribers New Judiciary digitization workstream kicked off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify sustainability model for government outsourcing Development blueprint for e-government scale-up Have at least one MDA adopts outsourcing of digital work
 Program 4 – Private sector Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed a private sector engagement strategy Engaged with the private sector to create linkages for youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catalyze creation of digital and digitally enabled jobs in the private sector Harness KEPSA's vast networks to beyond the current job creation activities
 Program 5 – Revamo of the Ajira Portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed a Product Requirement Document Developed a Terms of Reference and hired a software developer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the successful launch and operation of the revamped Ajira portal Support the handover process of the portal to MoICT







Achievements

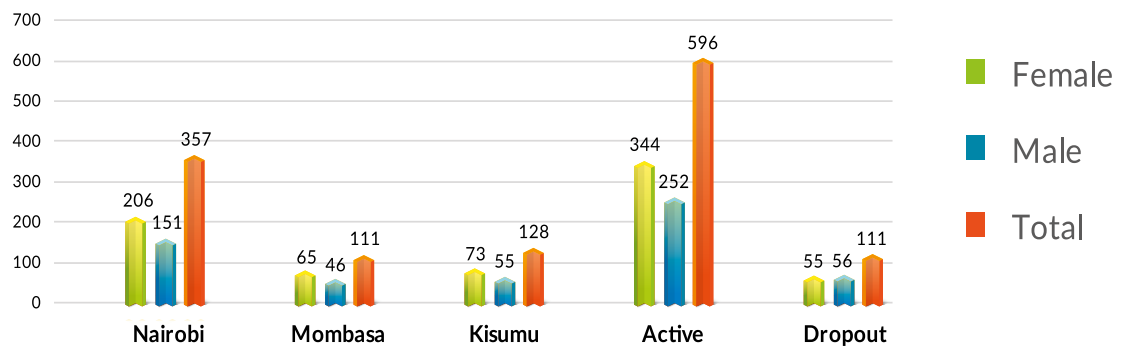
Since January 2020, the Ajira program has **trained over 9000 youth** in work-ready digital skills and **connected over 30,000 youth to jobs**. These jobs are distributed across the country with youth in all 47 counties having benefited from the program.

E-government Program

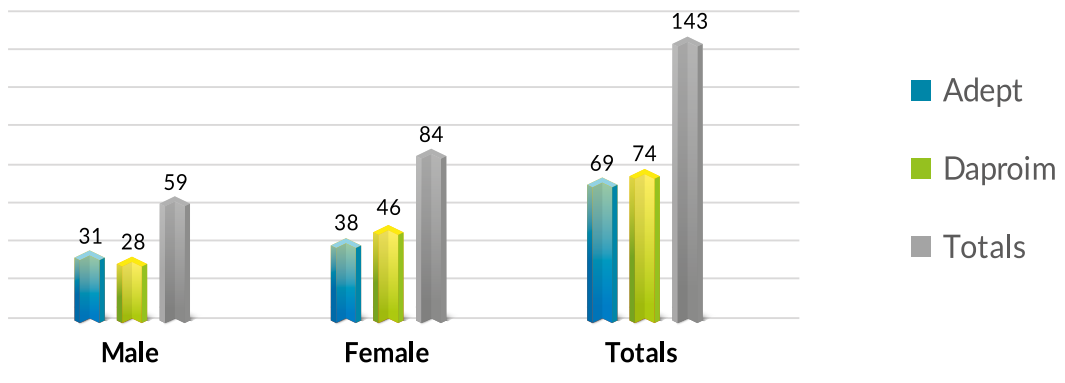
The job creation target for the e-government program was 700 jobs, and the program exceeded this target by creating 878 jobs by June 2021. This success is due largely to the nimbleness of the team, the MoICT and the judiciary in identifying a new workstream and quickly mobilising resources to take it up despite a challenging year ravaged by COVID-19.

In addition, Ajira has helped improve efficiency in the judiciary: since the launch of the judiciary pilot over 10,000 transcripts have been created and over 3,000 records scanned. This has contributed to improved efficiency in the judiciary as transcribed records have resulted in improved accuracy of records and the scanning and data entry process had greatly facilitated the roll-out of the e-filing system that was rolled out by the judiciary.

Data entry & Scanning jobs



Transcribers



“Through this experience, I learned a lot and was humbled to work on a program which will have benefits for the judiciary and the entire justice system.”

Joel Kwawa, Data Entry Supervisor, Mombasa

“While working under the Ajira program, I registered for an online diploma in legal studies that I completed and got certification. The move has motivated me to register for the Bachelor of Laws degree that I am pursuing currently.”

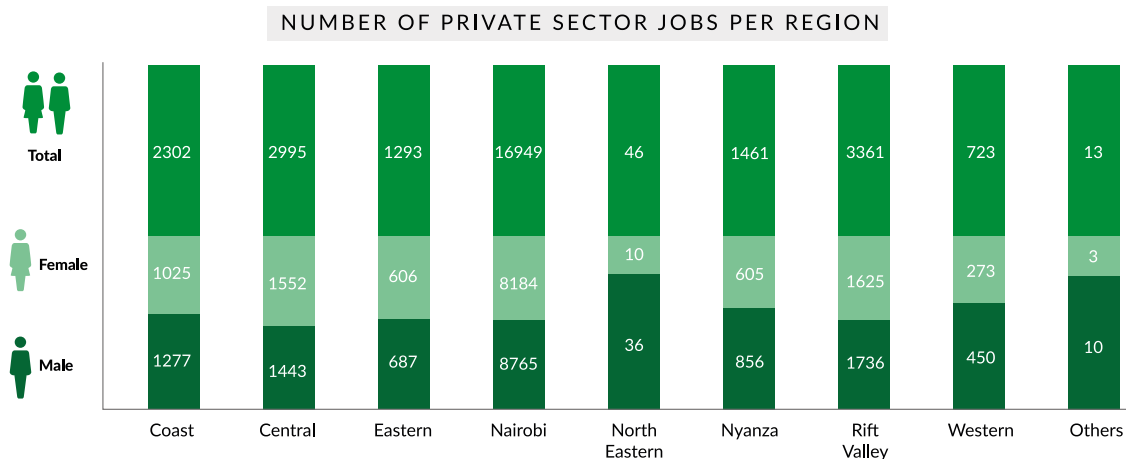
Vincent Adika, Transcriber, Adept Technologies Nairobi



Private Sector Engagement

As of June 2021, Ajira had connected over **29,000 youth to jobs as part of the private sector engagement program.** ⁶ These numbers should be viewed in light of the economic devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant effect on job creation. The jobs that Ajira succeeded in creating have been cited by numerous youth interviewed in providing critical support during a period of significant economic challenges. The jobs created include a wide range of digital and digitally enabled jobs such as digital marketing, sales, transcription, web developer, hardware installation, plumbing and electrical installation. Under this program, youth from all 47 counties in the county were connected to work, confirming the truly national reach of the program.

Figure 12: Private Sector jobs created by region



The jobs that Ajira succeeded in creating have been cited by numerous youth interviewed in providing critical support during a period of significant economic challenges.

“I am thankful for Ajira which has come through for me in a big way. The salary I earn allows me to support my daughter. My job also provides an important distraction from the stress that is out there especially due to COVID.”

Loice Njorge, Transcriber, Adept Technologies

“Ajira contacted me at a critical time during the COVID pandemic when things were quite difficult financially. I registered with Ajira and found the training and mentorship very helpful. After this I was linked with companies who were doing online work like Wowzi, and I also looked for other online jobs.”

Wilfred Ndawa, Accountant, Kitale

Ajira has also provided support to over 750 MSME’s, created partnerships with over 39 educational institutions and supported over 1500 youth to create online work accounts to enable them to earn an income. The business support programs were in particular highlighted as a benefit of the program.

“I would credit Ajira – through KEPSA – with providing tremendous support in terms of providing capacity-building to businesses such as mine. Through this program, I have accessed a broader network that has been beneficial to my business.”

Timothy Munene - CEO and Founder, Tru-Link

In addition, the program has resulted in the following achievements:

- 1. Stakeholder engagement:** The program has engaged over 20 national and international private sector partners to provide digital and digitally enabled jobs to the youth in Kenya. These partnerships do not represent the entirety of the stakeholder engagement carried out but reflect the partners that the program has successfully enlisted and who have committed to providing jobs for youth.



2. **Private sector engagement strategy:** The team also developed a strategy to catalyze job creation in priority sectors – Agriculture, health education, MSMEs.
3. **Capacity building:** The program also included capacity strengthening efforts for BMOs in the online and digital jobs ecosystem including organizations such as OPWAK and the Digital Lenders Association.
4. **Increased awareness:** Since the project launch the KEPISA team and project partners have carried out several activities to support awareness raising of the program across all relevant stakeholders. This has included participation in youth, employment and government led panels and webinars to raise awareness about the work of the program and engage more partners to help meet the goals of the program.
5. **Improved efficiency in the judiciary:** Since the launch of the judiciary pilot over 10,000 transcripts have been created and over 3000 records scanned. This has contributed to improved efficiency in the judiciary as transcribed records have resulted in improved accuracy of records and the scanning and data entry process had greatly facilitated the roll-out of the e-filing system that was rolled out by the judiciary.

The achievements above were aided by the following factors in each of the three DIT model phases:

DESIGN PHASE

Successes factors in the Design Phase

- **Partner alignment:** Given the multiple stakeholders involved in the program and the complexity of the program design with five separate workstreams under the Ajira program, alignment of this diverse group of stakeholders and the commitment to working toward a common objective has been cited by stakeholders that were interviewed for this report as a key success.

“What worked well in the program was having some level of clarity about what we wanted to do and having a shared objective. In addition, there were clear mandates for each of the partners and alignment on larger objectives.”

Patrick Karanja, Mastercard Foundation

- **Operational efficiency:** The development of an overall program workplan which was later refined during the implementation phase set the tone for effective program management throughout the duration of the program.
- **Comprehensive approach to youth engagement:** the program was designed to provide the youth beneficiaries with holistic support from training and skills building to connecting youth to mentorship and work opportunities.

“The design of the program provided the youth with end-to-end support from training and skills development all the way to securing a job. In this way, it differs from many programs which only focus on one of those elements .”

Zilpher Owiti, MoICT

- **Focus on inclusion:** The program design has a strong focus on inclusion including a focus on gender and other marginalized groups as key beneficiary metrics that were being tracked. The design of the program on a national scale ensured full regional participation across the country and the operationalization of the youth empowerment centres was designed to address the challenge of access faced by youth.
- **Expanding of sources of demand:** The design of this phase of the Ajira program included the addition of an e-government workstream (though the judiciary pilot) as well as an increased focus on local platforms as a source of job creation to avoid over-reliance on international platforms. Both approaches served to expand the scope of sources of demand for job creation and the later was particularly prescient given the COVID pandemic which resulted in increased competition on international work platforms due to job losses globally caused by COVID.



INCUBATION PHASE

The incubation phase focused on the roll-out of program implementation activities which were geared to meet the goal of upskilling youth and connecting them to jobs.

Key Successes in the Incubation Phase

- **Groundwork by the MoICT** prior to the commencement of the transcription pilot served to greatly accelerate and facilitate program implementation. This did so by (i) securing judiciary buy-in (ii) securing funding for the physical and systems infrastructure required (iii) providing technical capacity support where required.
- **Acceleration of program implementation** due to the presence of the Dalberg DIT team to carry out program activities as the KEPSA team was being recruited and onboarded.
- **Job creation in the e-government program exceeded the set targets** by creating 791 jobs for youth across the country (against a target of 700 in 2020). This was largely due to the nimbleness of the team, the Ministry of ICT, and the judiciary in identifying a new workstream and quickly mobilizing resources to take it up. This pivoting was in response to the decline in available work in the transcription workstream due to court closures owing to COVID-19.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** the program has engaged over 20 national and international private sector partners to provide digital and digitally enabled jobs to the youth in Kenya. These partnerships reflect the companies that the program has successfully enlisted and who have committed to providing jobs for youth but do not represent the entirety of the stakeholder engagement carried out which comprises of a much larger number.
- **Enterprise support:** Private sector stakeholders interviewed lauded KEPSA for strong engagement and capacity building support. This included (i) capacity strengthening efforts for BMOs in the online and digital jobs ecosystem (ii) connecting businesses with potential opportunities (iv) hosting networking and information sharing sessions for businesses (v) inviting businesses to join and participate in webinars in their areas of interest which helped increase knowledge and networks and increased visibility.
- **Close engagement of program vendors:** Stakeholders interviewed noted that close engagement with the KEPSA team in carrying out their tasks and troubleshooting. They cited frequent check-ins with the KEPSA team and a good understanding of the challenges of the operating environment that they were working in as positive elements of the program.
- **Raising the profile of online work:** since the project launch the KEPSA team and project partners have carried out several activities to support awareness raising of online work across all relevant stakeholders. This has included participation in youth, employment and government led panels and webinars. In a survey carried out by TIFA, 63% of participants demonstrated awareness of the gig economy.

TRANSFER PHASE

Key Successes in the Transfer Phase

- **KEPSA team in place and carrying out their functions effectively:** Following the draw-down of the Dalberg team's day to day engagement, the KEPSA team has taken up all responsibilities and is driving program implementation. Stakeholders interviewed cite the seamless transfer as evidence of the success of the model – in the words of one interviewee *“nothing fell through the cracks once the Dalberg team left.”*
- **Effective knowledge management systems in place** with key documents in a central repository which can be accessed by all stakeholders.
- **Effective transfer of project tools and assets:** This includes workplans developed for the entire program as well as individual workstreams, project templates such as standardized presentation and meeting templates and Ajira style guides.



Impact Beyond the Numbers



The impact of Ajira goes far beyond the number of jobs created or youth trained. Below, Ajira youth describe the impact of Ajira in their lives.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced many firms out of business and resulted in many youth becoming unemployed and struggling to make ends meet. Ajira helped to mitigate some of the disruption.



LOICE NJOROGE
TRANSCRIPTION AGENT
ADEPT TECHNOLOGIES,
NAIROBI

I was introduced to Ajira by my sister who encouraged me to join. I had been looking for a job after the company, I worked for laid off employees due to COVID. I enjoyed the training, despite it being a steep learning curve. Listening to the audio requires concentration and we needed to quickly familiarise ourselves with the legal terminology to do a good job as legal transcribers. They were patient with us in the training and eventually we learned and increased our speed and accuracy. I am thankful for Ajira which has come through for me in a big way. The salary I earn allows me to support my daughter. It provides an important distraction from the stress that is out

there including due to COVID. I am learning new skills – not only in transcription but also through the additional skills training we receive through the training clubs. What I appreciate about Ajira is that they are ready to accept anyone and provide the training and skills you need to succeed. I would recommend Ajira to other young people, but I would also say that they should keep an open mind and be willing to learn and work. Ajira will give you the tools, but you have to be willing to take what is given to you and change it to something that will better your life and better the life of people are around you.

ERIC KIMATHI
DATA ENTRY AGENT,
DAPROIM-AFRICA,
NAIROBI



Ajira provided a much-needed job during an economic downturn. I had been working as a Project Manager at an NGO that mentored persons living with epilepsy. After COVID-19 hit, the NGO experienced a financial setback and as a result, I lost my job. Fortunately, a director at the organisation told me about Ajira and encouraged me to join. I applied for a data entry and scanning position and started work at Makadara Law Courts before moving to Milimani Law Courts. I really enjoyed the experience of working in a legal setting. I had never been in a courtroom before, and I embraced the challenge of learning about a new field.

At Ajira, I learned new skills and built a strong network of co-workers and friends. It was a respectful and inclusive environment. I have been living with epilepsy for the past 10 years and would sometimes experience convulsions on the job. My team leader catered for my needs and ensured that there was an ambulance on site in case of an emergency. I used the opportunity to speak to members of the team about epilepsy so that they could learn more about the condition, teach others and in so doing, reduce misconceptions and stigma. Since the conclusion of the project, I have secured another job where I have applied the skills and learning from Ajira.



About 67% of the youth respondents surveyed reported being unemployed before Ajira and credited the program with providing them with employment and an opportunity to earn an income.

GABRIELLA NASHIVA
DATA ENTRY AGENT,
DAPROIM - AFRICA,
MOMBASA



I studied horticulture at Southeastern Kenya University and graduated in 2019. I had been looking for work since graduating but it had been difficult to find a job and then the pandemic hit, making things even harder. I heard about Ajira through a WhatsApp group that I was on. I applied for the job and was assigned to the Khadhi's courts, overseeing a team of 11 agents scanning and digitizing court records. I really enjoyed the job and learning about how the court system works. I had an excellent team and we all got on well. At the end of the day, we all knew that we needed to do our best to ensure that the work was done well. I would say that I felt privileged to be part of a project that

will have lasting benefits for the judiciary. Now that the project is concluded I am looking for work but I am not someone to sit still and so I have been undertaking volunteer activities. I am currently working to develop content for a local CBO which serves as an economic rescue center, providing support to young women in challenging circumstances. I am also working to sharpen my writing skills. In addition to writing articles, I am taking writing courses to improve my skills. I recommended Ajira to two of my friends and they also got jobs.



WILFRED NDAWA
ACCOUNTANT,
KITALE

Ajira provided a way to earn an income after I was forced to close my business. I hold a Bachelor of Science Degree in entrepreneurship from Jomo Kenyatta University Kenya and I am a Certified Public Accountant. Despite these qualifications, I struggled to find full time employment. I decided to start a business based out of Thika, but I was forced to close it in 2019 because it was not doing well. After that, I worked a few jobs but nothing long-term or permanent. That is when Ajira came calling. They contacted me at a critical time during the COVID pandemic when things were quite difficult financially. I registered with Ajira and found the training and mentorship very helpful. After this I was linked with companies who were doing online

work like Wowzi, and I also looked for other online jobs – having been inspired by Ajira to delve into the world of online work. Thanks to the experience at Ajira, I worked at several online jobs on both local and international platforms during 2020. These jobs provided much-needed income during the difficult COVID year. In addition to the work I secured, I also appreciated the training and skills building that Ajira provided. This included digital marketing skills which I honed through the Google training and certification. I now work as an accountant at a medical clinic in Kitale. I enjoy the job as it is in line with my educational background and training. In the future I hope to continue to grow my skills and advance in my profession.



PATRICK DAWA
DATA ENTRY SUPERVISOR,
KISUMU

The job at Ajira helped me earn an income through which I provided for my family. I graduated in 2012 and started a job as a microbiologist in Nestlé. However, after a while the company retrenched some staff, and I lost my job. I heard about Ajira from a friend who knew about it and contacted me after I lost my job. I applied for the job and started work as a data entry supervisor at the Courts in Kisumu. I oversaw a staff of 18 and worked to ensure that we all understood the significant responsibility we had given that we were handling court records. During my time with Ajira, I learned a lot, had the opportunity to meet new people and to manage teams. I also expanded my social circle and learned about new skills and new opportunities for work including online work.

Several young people reported that Ajira helped build their confidence and leadership skills.

CHARITY MBETHE
DATA ENTRY SUPERVISOR,
DAPRIOM AFRICA,
NAIROBI

My job at Ajira was critical in building my confidence and demonstrating my ability to lead. I started out as a data entry agent, digitizing records at Milimani Law courts. I was soon promoted to the role of supervisor where I oversaw a team of 25 agents. In the beginning it was difficult but I soon learned to engage my team to ensure that they produced quality work and we got good results. As a person living with disabilities, I always felt supported in my work. Special provisions were made for employees living with disabilities such as ensuring wheelchair access in the buildings we worked. Most importantly, we were treated on an equal basis with all other employees. Working in such a supportive environment has built my confidence and leadership skills. In the future, I would like to pursue a career in education, building on my training as a teacher. My focus will be on empowering other young persons with disabilities such as myself.





MUUNA SAMIA MWASI
DATA ENTRY SUPERVISOR,
DAPROIM-AFRICA,
MOMBASA



Ajira was my first full-time job after graduating University, and it helped build my confidence and leadership skills. I had been looking for work after graduation and learned about the opportunity to do data entry and scanning work at Dapriom Africa through a jobs board that I followed. I applied for the job and was recruited, working as a supervisor overseeing 11 data entry agents at the center in Mombasa. I thought it would be overwhelming as I had not held such a senior position before, overseeing so many people, but I was determined to make the most of this opportunity and the team was very good and did their work well. The court officials and the Dapriom-Africa staff were also very supportive. This job was instrumental to my growth, given that I was a recent graduate. The leadership skills which I thought I did not have all came out during this time. It was an overall positive experience, learning new skills and getting to network with the other agents. Moreover, the income I earned allowed me to save money and channel the money into starting a business selling shoes.

Several Ajira youth pursued entrepreneurship, using the skills learned during Ajira to help them establish and grow their own business.



EVANS TERER
ENTREPRENEUR,
NAKURU

Support from my Ajira mentor led me to set up a digital marketing business which currently employs six people. I first learned about Ajira from my Member of County Assembly. I decided I would register for the Programme and joined in October of 2020. Once I joined, I took the training courses in digital marketing and e-commerce as these were two areas of particular interest. One of my mentors who knew about my passion for entrepreneurship encouraged me to start my own business. The digital marketing company which I founded is called Reasons Marketing and is based in Nakuru – from being a job seeker, I have now become an employer. The income I earn enables me to support myself and become independent. Instead of relying on my parents I can now send them money to cater for their needs- instead of the other way round. I would encourage young people to join Ajira. They have supported me through the mentorship programme, referrals and building my skills through the training offered.



SHABAN HABIB
ENTREPRENEUR,
NAIROBI

I applied for the digital marketing training I received from Ajira to grow my clothing business-Shaban Apparel. In addition, I also provide digital marketing services to other small businesses looking to grow. I realized that many people that are starting business do not know how to market their businesses well. I saw that this was a business opportunity to offer digital marketing as a service to these companies. In this way, the benefit from Ajira has been not only been to my own businesses but to other entrepreneurs as well. Overall, my experience at Ajira has been positive. In addition to the benefits of the training, I was also connected to jobs on local online work platforms which allowed me to earn an income. The training I received at Ajira also encouraged me to pursue additional skills building courses on my own such as a Google course on the fundamentals of digital marketing. My experience with Ajira has been so positive that I have recommended it to my friends. Looking ahead, I would like to have my own digital marketing firm, have grown my business and increased my knowledge in this field. My recommendation to Ajira would be to publicize this program even more. There are many people who would like to take these courses and could benefit from them but might not know about it.

Youth interviewed also cited the opportunity to learn new skills and build networks as a key benefit of the program

JIVANCE OCHEING
TRANSCRIPTION AGENT
AT DAPRIOM AFRICA

I joined Ajira during the initial phase in 2017. I found the training to be helpful but given the difficult economic environment, I struggled to find long-term stable work. In late 2020, I learned from friends about the transcription work taking place at Dapriom Africa, as part of the Ajira Programme. I applied for the job and was recruited. I really enjoy my work. It enables me to earn an income which I use to support myself, my children, and my family. I also enjoy learning new skills, and I value the networks that I have been able to create because of this job. I also received guidance and mentorship to pursue areas of interest and specialisation either through specific tasks on the job or through additional training. I would recommend Ajira to other young people. The opportunity came at a time when I needed the work and the job allowed me to earn an income while also building new skills.





Some youth welcomed the opportunity to be engaged in a program with far-reaching impact

JOEL KAWAWA
DATA ENTRY SUPERVISOR,
DAPRIOM-AFRICA,
MOMBASA



Working on the judiciary digitization work with Ajira was an opportunity to engage in a program that will have a long-term benefit for the Kenyan judiciary. After COVID hit, my cake bakery business -Nyali Cake House- was negatively affected, I lost revenue and I started to look for work to supplement my lost income. I got the job at Ajira supervising a team of over 127 agents scanning and digitizing court records in Mombasa. I was fortunate that I had a great team. They were a very young vibrant team that handled challenges well. We worked hard to meet the targets set and I am proud about what we achieved as a team. Through this experience, I learned a lot was humbled to work on a program which will have benefits for the judiciary and the entire justice system. I learned that one person can make a difference by doing their own individual part – our collective efforts can make a big change.

Ajira's focus on inclusion and creating a respectful and supportive working environment was cited by respondents as a positive element of the program.



FLORENCE NJERI
QUALITY ASSURANCE SUPERVISOR,
ADEPT TECHNOLOGIES,
NAIROBI

My job at Ajira has given me job stability, allowed me to earn and income and introduced me to the field of law which I hope to pursue one day. I studied graphic design and have a love for computers but like many other graduates I struggled to find full time, stable work. I started several businesses, trying to hustle as much as possible to support myself but I faced challenges with mobility. I use a prothesis due to my left leg being shorter than my right and this condition affects my mobility which in turn affected the running of my businesses. I heard about the job at Ajira during a challenging time. I had been forced to shut down another business I had started – this time due to COVID.

I applied for the job at Adept and was called to start work. The training was very exciting - I love learning new skills. I was working with computers which I love although at first it was difficult to learn all the new legal terminology. Our trainer who is a lawyer, encouraged us to continue and eventually I became very proficient and was promoted from agent to Quality Assurance Supervisor. I love our offices which are wheelchair accessible, and I have found it to be a very supportive working environment. I have not faced discrimination that I have sometimes experienced in other jobs as a person living with disabilities. Due to this job, I have a salary and can support myself and my daughter and I can also help my mum out. I also appreciate having gained the skill of transcription – I have become so conversant with legal terminology that I sometimes feel like a lawyer and would like to pursue law, someday. I have big dreams and I want to continue to grow and spread my wings.



EDWIN OPETU
DATA ENTRY AGENT,
DAPRIOM AFRICA,
NAIROBI

I learned about Ajira from the APDK (Association for the Physically Disabled in Kenya). I applied for a job and was hired to work as a data entry agent, digitizing court records at the Court of Appeal in Nairobi. The experience working with Ajira was awesome. As a person living with disabilities there are always challenges but the team made sure to cater for my needs. This experience also opened the world to me. I made new friends and got the chance to experience new things including learning about how the court system worked. I would recommend Ajira as many young Kenyans are jobless and so when such an opportunity arises, they should take it.

Ajira’s national reach has allowed youth to access work opportunities, across the country

DIANA NGARI
TRANSCRIPTION AGENT
DAPRIOM AFRICA,
MBEERE



Ajira has demonstrated that digital work can be done anywhere. I work as a transcriber at the Dapriom Africa center in Mbeere, Embu. Working in Mbeere has meant a lower cost of living than Nairobi and as a result I have been able to make savings. I started working with Ajira after graduating from Kenya Institute of Mass Communication with a degree in broadcast journalism. I had been looking for a job and friends who were working with the program told me about an opportunity to transcribe court records. At first it was a little challenging - not only were we learning transcription, but it was also specialized work, focusing on legal transcription. I was however determined to learn, and I

would read up constantly, looking to familiarize myself with the legal terminology. Eventually, I became proficient and ended up loving the work. I work as a Quality Controller, reviewing the accuracy of the transcripts produced. It is a very supportive team environment, and we have a great team leader. There are numerous benefits that I have experienced due to Ajira. I have received a great deal of exposure; I am able to earn a living and can pay my bills and be more financially independent. In the future I would like to save up and go back to school and study international relations. In addition, I have developed an interest in law due to my experience at Ajira.



ANNE ROSE MAKUK
TRANSCRIPTION AGENT
ADEPT TECHNOLOGIES,
DHIWA



I work with Adept at the Ajira transcription centre in Dhiwa Homa Bay. I love my job and enjoy all the new skills that I am learning.

This was the first time that I had done any transcription work and it was also my first experience with the legal system. Over time my typing speed and accuracy has improved and our Dhiwa centre is one of the best performing in the program. It is a lot of pressure because the accuracy of the records we transcribe could have a bearing on the case so we all undertake the responsibility that we hold. My job at Ajira has allowed me to earn an income and pay my bills and also support my family. As the oldest sibling, I have younger siblings that look up to me and whom I want to set a good example for. The job also helped me gain new skills. At Adept they stress the importance of learning beyond our transcription and so we are encouraged to join clubs which focus on a particular area to grow your skills. We are also enrolled in community activities to give back – for example our team helped clean the local market and have carried out tree-planting exercises – all so we can leave a positive mark on the community. The Ajira job came at just the right time as I had been laid off from my job due to COVID. I feel as though this was a blessing and I work hard to make sure that I make the most of this opportunity.

The online work that Ajira introduces the youth to is flexible; and working from home saves them time and money on the commute.

ELSIE JEPNGETICH
ONLINE WORKER

Ajira has been a lifesaver. I studied Communications at Maseno University and was working as an insurance agent, but I was looking for a job that would give me greater flexibility and allow me to increase my income. I had heard about online work but found it challenging to get accurate information and I needed a reliable guide to help navigate the world of online work. That was when I heard about Ajira. Through the training and mentorship programme, I learned more about online work platforms, how to open an account and effectively bid for jobs and I was able to align my skills and interests with the jobs available. It was a learning process that was not without its challenges. My first job was for an international client on a global platform. Despite being eager to do the work, I found that I had not properly understood the client needs. However, I was determined to succeed, and I learned a lot from that experience. I secured work with a second client, the job went well, and I have been working online since then. I value the flexibility of online work and the ability to save on transport costs. Because online work can be done anywhere, it is possible to relocate outside Nairobi to a location with a lower cost of living, again resulting in savings.

CHRISTINE OMONDI
ONLINE WORKER



I have a degree in information systems from Kenyatta University but like many other graduates, I struggled to find work. The process of job hunting was made even harder when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. The few jobs that were available seemed to dry up completely. That when I heard about Ajira, I joined and through the training learned how to access online jobs more effectively. Beside the training we also received support in the form of job alerts and referrals. My focus on online work is on transcription and writing jobs. I find that transcription work is more involved but also pays more and so I am focusing on it more. It is not always easy to find work – the competition is global, so you really must demonstrate value to the client, but I am grateful to Ajira for opening my eyes to this opportunity and allowing me to see multiple opportunities for work that are out there.



Partner Profiles



Adept Technologies:
Mercy Muguru
Chief Executive Officer
(CEO)

I founded Adept with a friend while at university. At the time Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) was relatively new in Kenya and the government had launched several initiatives to grow the sector so we decided to pursue the opportunity. Over the years we have expanded our team and grown to take on new business lines as our capabilities have grown and as new areas of demand emerged.

Currently we have a team of 109 staff and our service lines include data management, customer support, machine learning, and digital work training. Our clients are a mix of local and international and we believe that that government digitization work – such as Ajira – could be a strong source of demand that grows the local industry.

At Adept we place a high premium on individual growth and learning. Our goal is to ensure that when young people leave us, they have grown in their knowledge and capabilities. We also stress the importance of community, and we intentionally focus on developing leadership capabilities -as we work, we grow leaders.

Under Ajira, we are executing a program to digitize court records across the country, resulting in increased efficiency in the judiciary and job creation for youth. As a business, it was a chance to apply our transcription experience at scale. We have successfully processed large volumes of work and expanded our geographic footprint beyond our offices in Nairobi to other locations across the country. In the process we have demonstrated our capability to carry out a task of this magnitude and engaged with a group of young people whose passion and commitment to the work has been an inspiration.

Ajira has provided much needed jobs to youth, giving them an opportunity to earn an income and build new skills. Ajira also helped to increase access to opportunity across the country. One of our best performing centres is in Ndhiwa in Homa Bay County. This has been due to a hardworking group of transcribers, a committed Adept team and a Member of Parliament who has been very supportive of the program.

As a company we continue to grow and stretch our capabilities and are always looking for partnerships that will help us meet our goals. Ajira has been one such partnership and we look forward to continuing the great work that has been started by the program.



In the 14 years since Adept Technologies was founded, nothing has brought me greater satisfaction than to see young people grow to reach their fullest potential.



Stepwise Dapriom:
Emily Barasa
General Manager (GM)



I have always been drawn to an impact-focused approach to business. I see a clear correlation between being intentional about having positive impact and good business results.

I have worked in the Kenya Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry since its inception and have been fortunate to participate in its growth. All through, I have been privileged to work closely with young people who are committed, passionate and engaged in their work.

I joined Dapriom-Africa in July 2020 as the General Manager. The ethos of the organization is closely

aligned with mine – given that the company was founded as an impact focused business. Our goal is to empower young people, persons living with disabilities and women by creating jobs that will increase incomes and build skills. Our focus on inclusion is not only limited to the agents that we recruit but also extends to the management team. Our office in Naivasha is staffed entirely by persons living with disabilities and we strive to expand inclusion/ diversity and access through all our decision-making. As we like to say at Dapriom- for us, there is no Profit without Purpose and without purpose we cannot realize profits.

As a company we have grown from an initial cohort of 4 staff employees in 2006 to today’s 700 staff members and we have grown our service offering from a focus on Traditional data entry and conversation to additional service lines including Data Annotation, Computer Vision and Natural Language Processing. We have also expanded our reach from one office in Nairobi which is our current Global Delivery Centre to an additional centre in Naivasha all being served by our Headquarters in Austin, Texas.

Our partnership with Ajira dates back to the first phase of the program in 2017 when we trained over 3,350 youth as part of the program. In this second phase we are serving as an implementing partner to transcribe court proceedings and digitize court records. This initiative has the dual benefit of increasing efficiency in the judiciary while creating jobs for youth. The experience has been beneficial to us from a business and impact perspective as well as introducing us to new partners and opportunities.

Ajira has created impact by providing jobs for youth in a context of high unemployment. Young people now have the chance to earn an income, build their experience and learn new skills. In addition, the program’s focus on inclusion is aligned to our own approach and includes a target of more youth female participation in the program and a national reach, ensuring that there is equitable regional access.

I think that the future of Ajira – and of digital work is bright. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the move towards digital and in the process has created or expanded avenues for digital work. For instance, the opportunities in transcription have grown significantly due to the increase in virtual meetings. In addition, there are opportunities that arise from customizing local content – such as translation content into local dialects. Ajira is helping train the cohort of youth that can take up these opportunities while at the same time raising awareness about the possibilities of digital work. We feel fortunate to be a partner in this journey.



Tru-link:
Timothy Munene
Founder And CEO



I have been a long-time enthusiast of the gig industry in Kenya, both as an online worker and as the owner of an online work business;

I am the founder of Trulink.io, a content writing agency that specializes in Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) content, copywriting, editing, and development of eCommerce and Social Media content. For me, the Ajira Digital project was an opportunity to test the potential of this industry in Kenya. My engagement with Ajira goes back to the first phase of the program, where I served in a consultative capacity and as a mentor for the youth.

As an Ajira partner, I absorb Ajira trainees into my business, primarily to carry out writing and editorial assignments while providing mentorship and guidance. This experience gives them a chance to put the skills they have developed in the program to use and earn an income while also building work experience.

Many of the young people that I have engaged had pre-existing writing skills. Ajira provided them with support and training on how to access online work platforms and engage with clients in the online work world.

I would credit Ajira – through KEPSA – with providing tremendous support in terms of providing capacity-building support to partner businesses such as myself. This support focuses on business growth. Through this program, I have accessed a broader network that has been beneficial to my business.

Ajira has greatly aided in the raising of awareness of online work in Kenya. Before Ajira, seeking out Kenyan freelance workers to recruit for my business was not easy. It required quite an effort, but now there is much greater awareness of online work and a ready pool of trained workers that have gone through Ajira. Ajira continues to host helpful information sessions and webinars focused on the industry as a whole.

If Kenya is to gain a foothold in the global online work sector, we should focus on broadening the scope of our engagement beyond the low-barrier, low to moderate skills jobs that we tend to focus on. While these jobs have the advantage of being accessible to a large number of Kenyans, we need to think about engaging in work with advanced skills and effectively higher value. We would do well to learn from countries such as Pakistan that successfully operate across the online work skills spectrum.



Learnings

Design Phase Learnings

- **Importance of articulating the DIT model to all partners early in the process:** While the program partners indicated that they found the DIT model to have been successful in accelerating the program implementation, they also indicated that the program would have benefited from greater clarification of the rationale and workings of the DIT model early on and the development of documentation that clearly captured working modalities, partner roles and expectations within the model.
- **A permanent Project Management Office (PMO) function with oversight over the entire program is critical:** While Dalberg provided PMO support to KEPSA, the program design did not provide for an overall, permanent PMO function to play an oversight and coordination role for all of Ajira. In that absence, the program sometimes suffered from a siloed approach to implementation with Programs 1 and 2 driven by one implementing partner (eMobilis) and Programs 3-5 anchored by KEPSA. This led to a missed opportunity for fully integrating program learnings and the creation of strong linkages across all the programs including the critical aspect of creating feedback loops between the training and the jobs linkages aspects of the program. This design also had implications for the development of the MEL framework which was initially developed as a framework for two separate programs – each run by a different implementing partner. A joint Theory of Change (ToC) was subsequently developed but the program could have benefitted from the development of an integrated framework from the onset.
- **Differentiated partner support proved disadvantageous:** The decision to provide DIT support to one implementing partner in the program and not the other resulted in an uneven playing field as implementation activities kicked-off. While there was an option for the second partner to secure this support on their own, the differentiated approach placed one partner at a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis the other.
- **The structure and duration of the training program should be revisited:** The ‘one-size fits all’ nature of the program has meant that all trainees regardless of their education or skills background underwent the same training. It is proposed that a segmented approach to training be taken where programs are tailored to the skills capabilities of trainees. Similarly, a recommendation is made to increase the duration of the training program to ensure that lasting skills transfer can be fully embedded. Below are a sample of comments from youth surveyed.

“Add more days for online learning maybe five days online training then mentorship”

“Increase the training days”

“The training should be extended to a week instead of two days”

In addition, feedback from employers suggested that a more segmented approach to referral of youth would be beneficial:

“My recommendation for Ajira is to consider instituting a referral system for the youth that are connected to employers. This will help prospective employers know what kinds of skills levels they should expect. They will then tailor their expectations appropriately. Currently, there is quite a variation in the skills levels of the youth.”

Private Sector Partner.

- **The risk of path dependency:** The successful implementation of the second phase of Ajira owes a significant debt of gratitude to the foundation laid in the first, successful phase of the initiative. However, by hewing so closely to the original structure and approach of the first phase, there may have been a missed opportunity to carry out a more extensive re-design of the program for phase two - for instance with regards to elements such as the structure and duration of the training program as noted above.



Key Learnings in the Incubation Phase

The Effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic



The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a nimble and flexible approach to implementation: The first case of COVID-19 was reported in Kenya in March 2020, just two months into project kick-off. As a result, from the very onset, the program faced challenges and restrictions related to the pandemic which would shape almost every facet of the program. These included:

- ▶ **The effect of the pandemic on job creation.** The most significant impact of the pandemic was to severely constrain employer demand as most business grappled with survival and were therefore not in a position to recruit youth. While the program has made significant efforts to address this challenge through enhanced stakeholder engagement and targeted focus on sectors which showed resilience during this period, the net result has been fewer jobs created than expected. To close this gap the program will have to recalibrate its activities and approach to job creation.
- ▶ **Revision of multiple elements of program planning and design** to ensure the health and safety of all program participants: this included instituting remote working measures for some of the transcribers, redesigning the BPO workspaces to ensure that social distancing and other health and safety regulations were met, and making explicit in agreements with vendors the responsibility to ensure that all health and safety regulations were met. Majority of these changes were implemented with minimal disruption but there were some programmatic consequences: for instance, the BPO companies noted lower engagement and performance levels from their remote working staff and eventually had to shift to their staff coming to their offices but on a staggered schedule to ensure that only small numbers were accommodated at a time.
- ▶ **Reduction of the transcription workload:** this resulted from reduction in the number of cases due to court closures making it necessary to pivot to a different workstream which was not as dependent on court schedules. The Working Group and the MoICT is to be commended for arriving at this solution and moving quickly to implement it.
- ▶ **Reduction of the length of the training period:** the Ajira training had been envisaged as a 5-day training period which could be carried out online, but which would likely have many trainees attend in person at the AYECS. Due to COVID restrictions however, the training was moved online. While this allowed for the training to continue, the result was that youth were now forced to meet the costs of internet connectivity. In recognition of the financial strain this would cause, a change was made to reduce the number of training days from 5 to 2 days. The effect was to reduce the time that trainees had to absorb the lessons and develop the required skills.

- **Need for strengthening of the linkages between the training and jobs elements of the program:** the strengthening of linkages would (i) ensure greater alignment with employer requirements (ii) improve the transition of youth from training to securing of work and (iii) allow for a robust integration of employer feedback into the training program. It also appears the referral system from Ajira to private sector employers could be strengthened. Several employers noted that they had not received specific referrals from Ajira and if an Ajira trained youth ended up in their employment, it was often happenstance rather than a concerted effort from the program.
- **Data collection and analysis should be more effectively used for decision-making:** currently data is being collected and analysed primarily for reporting purposes. A more effective approach would be for data collection to be guided by the needs of the program and for the data collected to be more effectively used for decision-making.

Key Learnings in the Transfer Phase

- **More time should have been allocated for formal training:** While KEPSA team members felt that transfer took place effectively during day-to-day interactions and noted that they valued the training sessions, they noted that more time could have been allocated to the formal training sessions which they found to be useful.
- It is vital to have a well-documented and articulated transfer process to ensure that the process takes place effectively. The detailed approach taken to the entirety of the transfer process helped make it smoother and more effective.

Recommendations

Based on learnings from the past year, the following recommendations are made for the program going forward:

1. **Clarify the rationale and workings of the DIT model early on in the design phase** to all program partners to avoid misunderstanding later on in the implementation phase. This process should be supported by documentation and/or agreements which capture the agreed working modalities.
2. **Establish a single coordinating function for Ajira to ensure seamless execution and improve learning across all Ajira activities and programs.** One of the key learnings from year one was that the Ajira program structure could be enhanced. The siloed approach to implementing the different programs has resulted in missed opportunities for greater synergy. In addition, program tracking of issues arising and how they affect other areas of the program had not been systematically coordinated. We propose that a coordination function be established to oversee the implementation of programs One to Five, to enhance cross-workstream learnings, data synthesis, and synergies..
3. **Engage the full range of private sector players** to scale job creation. This approach will look to intentionally target KEPSA members across the business spectrum from small enterprises to larger firms that may have the capacity to recruit larger numbers of youth.
4. **Develop an entrepreneurship track for youth that may take up self-employment,** bearing in mind the paucity of employment options available for youth. If successful, this model can serve as a longer term, sustainable engine for job creation while also simultaneously supporting local MSME businesses. One potential opportunity is to build on existing support to a group of online work businesses, initially supported in the first phase of the Ajira program, to grow their businesses to allow them to employ more Ajira youth. These businesses can be leveraged to provide mentorship and apprenticeship opportunities for Ajira trained youth to allow them to gain hands on working experience.
5. **Expand the existing accelerator program** that is provided by KEPSA by expanding the number of businesses that receive support. This recommendation is made having recognized that for the job creation targets of the program to be met it will be necessary to more intentionally carry out activities that support the boarder jobs ecosystem. To this end, an accelerator program would support participants and home-grown platforms with the training, mentorship, and funds required to grow. The program would expand the current activities being carried out by KEPSA and provide targeted support to identified MSME's including (i) hands-on mentorship, coaching and connection to partners and advisors in the wider KESPA ecosystem that can support their growth, (ii) targeted training and peer learning based on identified needs and (iii) connection to a network of potential funders and investors.
6. **Build in sustainability from the onset** to ensure continuity of the program beyond current funding cycles. In addition to the sources of finance that the program would seek, we would recommend also exploring the potential for revenue generating models for the e-government workstream - for instance through the charging of a fee to access the transcribed records. This would need to be carefully calibrated after consultation with the legal community and other users of the final product to better understand demand and the willingness to pay. A document outlining potential models for judiciary transcription was developed by the Dalberg team and shared with stakeholders
7. **Extend the training period** to allow for skills transfer to fully take hold.
8. **Tailor the training to account for the different skills levels of youth** that enter the program, as opposed to the current one size fits all approach.
9. **An integrated Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) function** will avoid the risk of a siloed approach, given the multiple activities that are carried out under the Ajira program. MEL should also be understood to operate not as a separate function but as a core part of program delivery.
10. **Develop stronger linkages between the demand and supply workstreams:** This will be greatly aided by instituting an overall PMO function as proposed above. However, improving linkages will also require, sharing of results and findings and learnings across programs in a more systematic and frequent manner and developing stronger feedback loops between the training and private sector elements of the program.
11. Ajira is already a success in Kenya, the Mastercard Foundation should look to replicating this success in other African countries to help address the daunting youth unemployment statistics.

Conclusion

The Ajira programme can help reduce unemployment by creating jobs at scale, and by up-skilling youth and connecting them to those jobs, thus improving their skills, knowledge and livelihoods and creating knock-on benefits for their communities. By demonstrating the potential of e-government initiatives to create operational efficiencies within government agencies, the programme can also transform how government works.

The building blocks are in place for the Ajira programme to fully realise its transformational potential, and Phase Two has made a strong start – despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

If successful in establishing Kenya as a global hub for online work, the Ajira programme could significantly increase the pool of work available for Kenyan youth while building their skills and raising the country's profile. Replicating the programme's successes across the continent would amplify its transformative impact.



Dalberg team on location at Mbeere South Ajira Youth Empowerment Centre in Embu county.



Annex

PRIVATE SECTOR DEEP DIVE

As part of the support for the private sector engagement program, Dalberg developed a Private Sector Engagement Strategy (PSES) that aimed to identify digital and digitally enabled opportunities in the private sector and outline an approach that KEPSA could take in catalysing these opportunities for youth as part of the Ajira Program.

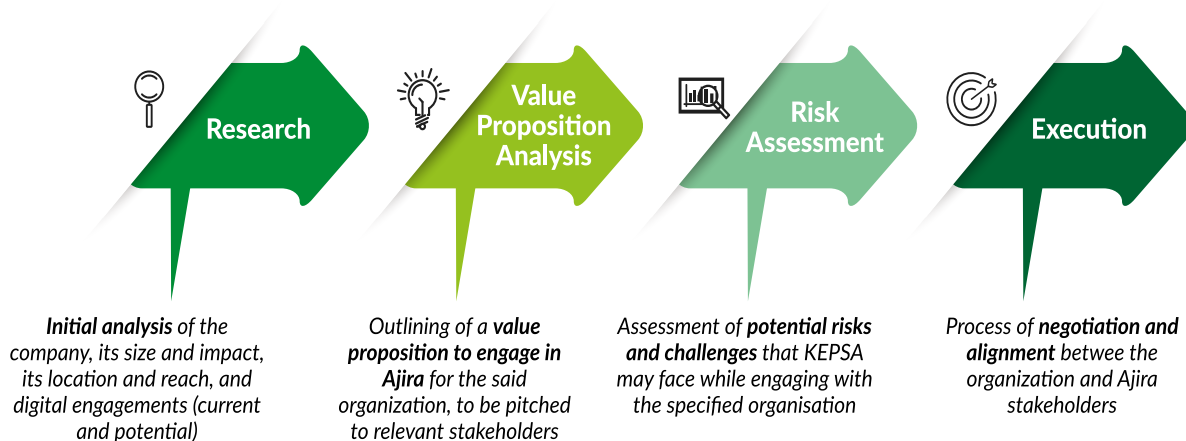
This approach focused on (a) collaborating directly with private sector players to create opportunities (b) addressing ecosystem challenges and identifying interventions that support enabling environments to foster job creation.

To achieve these objectives, Dalberg made use of the following methodology:

- a. High-level landscape assessment to understand the current private sector landscape
- b. Framework assessment to prioritize sectors and stakeholders via a shared stakeholder list
- c. Stakeholder engagement via interviews. The team aimed to understand:
 - The effect of COVID on job opportunities in the sector.
 - The degree of digital penetration in the sector.
 - New opportunities for job opportunities and digital transformation in the sector.
 - Constraints to growth in the sector.
 - Constraints within the value chain that can be best addressed through private sector investment or collaboration.

Figure 13: Stakeholder Engagement Prioritization approach

Objective: To assess the effectiveness of an engagement and decide on what private sector players to prioritize. It is then executed based on the findings of an elaborate assessment process.



The findings of these activities were included in a Private Sector Engagement Strategy that included















- a. A summary of findings of opportunities in each sector
- b. A prioritization framework to direct KEPSA's next steps in engaging with Private Sector.
- c. Interviews with a total of sixteen (16) business owners across sectors.



Assessment of The Impact Of Covid-19 on Job Creation

The development of the Private Sector Engagement Strategy (PSES) began as the COVID-19 pandemic was unfolding. An assessment of the impact of the pandemic on job creation, found that over **5 million jobs** were at risk because of the pandemic.

Figure 14: Number of Jobs at Risk due to COVID-19

Sector	# of jobs at risk of being lost (000)	Comments
 Travel & Tourism	3100	Includes tour operators, travel agents, restaurants, hotels and bars
 Construction & RE	450	In addition, indirect impact on proprty managment services, only a quarter of sites open
 Agriculture	350	Reflects jobs at risk at the end of March 2020 with 200k on unpaid leave
 Sports, Arts & Culture	350	Job loss across value chain, with -90% of workers impacted
 Education	320	Over half of educational institutions reported layoffs, according to KEPSA April survey
 Manufacturing	180	300k direct jobs and 100-150k indirect jobs affected
 Public Transport	127	Includes drivers, conductors, mechanics, electricians, panel beaters, etc.
 Energy & Extractives	85	-60-70% loss for small scale mines ¹ ; no sig. losses for large scale mines and energy
 Legal	65	15,000 practicing advocates+ 50,000 support staff affected, pay cuts and leave
 Wholesale & Retail	40	Includes non-essential retail and restaurants (does not reflect essential retail)
 Environment & Waste	20	Includes recycling operations, down 70% due to overall production being halted
 Logistics & Transport	20	Largely operational, but some job losses for administrative personnel
 Healthcare	20	Impact mostly coming from healthcare SMEs experiencing 40% revenue drop
 Security	10	Shows jobs lost since March 2020; curfew reduced need for security in facilities
Total	5.1M	jobs at high-risk of being lost

Source: 2020, KEPSA, Consultative meeting Government and Private Sector on Covid-19 Containment Measures

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS PER SECTOR

With the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacting the ability of sectors to create jobs and shifting job creation potential from sectors such as travel and tourism, the sector analysis required a recalibrated approach. Taking these factors into consideration, the analysis identified a shortlist of sectors with high potential for engagement for KEPSA. The prioritization process included a prioritization of (i) high potential sectors and (ii) potential interventions that KEPSA could undertake.



Sector Prioritization

Sectors were prioritized based on

- a. **Potential to create jobs**
- b. **Potential for training and mentorship** opportunities that increase employability of youth
- c. **Length of time it would take to execute** proposed interventions

The Dalberg team also identified potential interventions to be undertaken by KEPSA to help unlock the opportunities in the identified sectors. The criteria for this prioritization exercise is below:

- **Ongoing initiative:** Intervention is currently being pursued within KEPSA
- **Third party involvement:** Intervention requires partnership with external parties (outside Ajira partners)
- **Resources required:** Level of resources (financial, human resources) required to pursue intervention
- **Cross cutting intervention:** Intervention covers more than one sector
- **Realization potential:** Timing the intervention can be executed
- **Increase in private investment levels:** Potential to increase local and foreign direct investment
- **Increase in economic competitiveness:** Potential to increase the number organizations
- **Quality of business laws and regulations:** Potential to improve quality of business laws and regulation
- **Increased awareness/education on digital opportunities:** Potential to increase mass awareness/ education on digital opportunities within the private sector





Following this exercise, the following sectors were prioritized:

1. eCommerce

The ecommerce sector has recorded annual growth rates of ~15-25% and is estimated to create 200,000 jobs in Kenya within the next five years. Ajira can support the growth of the sector through (i) capacity building for key skills such as web developers, digital marketers, digital entrepreneurship etc. ii) the provision of digital skills training.

eCommerce Overview



Sector Overview

eCommerce is widely recognized as a mode of purchasing and selling goods and services online, allowing industries to conduct transactions, promote sales and reduce operational costs. 5.1% business-to-business transactions and 4.7% of business-to-consumer transactions in Kenya are classified as e-commerce transactions, and the eCommerce industry is expected to have an annual growth rate (CAGR 2020-2024) of 19.7%.

Covid-19 Impact

- Due to reduced foot traffic, many have turned to eCommerce. Groceries, in particular, have spiked through eCommerce channels.
- Many pre-existing eCommerce platform have ramped up their operations to cater for the growing demand.
- Many organizations without a prior online presence have quickly shifted online.

Ecosystem Challenges

- Mistrust of online shopping, specifically of online payments
- High cost of transactions when factoring bank costs/MPesa charges etc.
- High last-mile delivery logistics costs especially when factoring in traffic management, fuel etc.)
- Limited internet connectivity affecting potential consumers
- Regulatory burdens e.g., new tax obligations

Potential Impact For Digital Transformation

- Demand for versatile operations of businesses causing organizations to rethink business models and cultivate a stronger online presence.
- Growth in online consumerism transforming marketing strategies by businesses and organizations.
- Growth in online consumerism is also transforming the value chain for retailers as a whole, who now ought to take last-mile delivery into consideration.

Job Opportunities In The Sector

- Web and software development: front-end and back-end technology support.
- Customer-facing roles: Digital marketing, customer and operations management support.
- Delivery riders (high demand in other regions) e.g., Mombasa, Nanyuki, Kisumu.
- Digital entrepreneurship: Companies such as Mzizzi/Range make it increasingly easier for MSMEs to set up, operate and market online stores.

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, National Economic Survey 2020.



2. Education

An estimated 14.3 million learners have been impacted by school closures. The global eLearning market is expected to grow to over USD 300 billion in 2025 from ~ USD 190 billion in 2018. The growing market for e-Learning has opened opportunities for creative content creators, curriculum designers, researchers, and digital teachers, as well as back-end roles such as audio-visual editing, software development, business development among others.

Education Overview



Sector Overview

The public expenditure on education makes up close to 5.3% of Kenya's GDP, and was estimated to be KES 496.8bn in the fiscal year of 2019/20. Part of the education sector in Kenya is also privatized, with over 30% of schools being private schools and both local and international companies providing education to Kenyans.



Covid-19 Impact

- The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of schools by the Ministry of Education for a period of time.
- Although many shifted their learning to online platforms, the situation further highlighted the impact of the digital divide in Kenya with public schools having no recourse.



Ecosystem Challenges

- Limited access to internet and hardware, making it difficult for low-income students to get access to digital educational resources.



Potential Impact For Digital Transformation

- Conversion of educational material to digital content for television, radio, internet platforms etc facilitates easier dissemination of educational resources to students. There is a clear demand for educational materials across the board.
- More students can learn digital skills that continue to be more relevant in the future of work.



Job Opportunities In The Sector

- Teachers: There is growing need for teachers to facilitate digital learning.
- Content creators: This includes animators, voice actors, scriptwriters, actors, audiovisual support and video editors, who could assist in creating engaging educational content.
- Digital entrepreneurship: Elimu TV is an example of entrepreneurial ventures that provide educational material to an existing market.

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, National Economic Survey 2020.



3. Blue-Collar Platforms

An estimated 14 million people (~83% of the labour force) work in the informal employment. Moreover, the sector is creating jobs at a 2% faster rate than the formal sector. Ajira could provide support in i) upskilling informal workers through digital training, ii) transitioning and onboarding identified workers to digital blue-collar platforms (mobile/web), iii) establishing linkages with partners to improve social protection.

Blue-Collar Platforms Overview



Sector Overview

The informal sector in Kenya represents over 80% of the workforce. Although transactions in the sector are still largely direct, there is a nascent, but growing shift towards digital platforms. Many of these platforms are solving for the challenges faced in the sector including the provision of safety nets training, access to financial products etc.

Covid-19 Impact

- The imposition of curfews as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and ultimately the slow down of the economy have affected informal sector workers' income and livelihoods.
- New opportunities have arisen for informal sector workers e.g., strategic partnerships such as the Safe Hands Kenya initiative which has created opportunities for over 800 cleaners.

Ecosystem Challenges

- Lack of formal safety nets for worker.
- Work on platforms is primarily limited to urban areas.
- The value of working of digital platforms is not fully appreciated by workers
- Oversupply of workers, creating reduced demand.

Potential Impact For Digital Transformation

- Although still nascent, the digital shift is gradually growing, increasing customer demand and worker supply on the platforms.
- Opportunities for growth in rural markets across Kenya.
- Platform partnerships can increase tools for innovation and growth e.g. creating a micro-insurance product for blue-collar industry.

Job Opportunities In The Sector

- Expanding ecosystems forming around digital platforms e.g. Fundi's developing an Amazon business model for contractors
- Access to marketplaces for workers to showcase their work and get more jobs e.g. carpenters, metal workers
- iWorkers – a group of future workers who are on the cusp of formalized work, with the right tools – a smartphone linked to an account

Sources: Business Daily, How informal youth workers can be insured, 2020; FES, How the Pandemic is affecting the informal sector in Kenya, 2020; Mastercard Foundation, Digital Commerce and Youth Employment in Africa, 2019



4. Online Work (Tech-Intensive)

By 2022, it is expected that 50% (133 million) new roles created will be in technology globally. Occupations such as, data analysts, and software developers are set to grow from 16% to 27% of the employee base of large companies. With the growth of local digital developer communities that foster upskilling, peer-to-peer learning, mentoring etc., Ajira could elevate these communities by plugging into them and creating linkages for Ajira youth.

Online Work (Tech Intensive) Overview



Sector Overview

The tech-intensive, online work sector is expected to grow by 33% over the next five years to \$345 million in 2023. Whilst this online work sector is growing, majority of freelance work still takes place through direct transactions and in the informal sector.

Covid-19 Impact

- Technology has proven to be a vital resource, as work-from-home orders and other directives have disrupted more traditional models of product and service delivery.
- There has been a surge in demand for online work on digital platforms as people look for new sources of income.

Ecosystem Challenges

- Local opportunities and outsourcing capabilities from businesses/corporates is low; project-based work has yet to be adopted.
- Weak social protection and labour laws for freelance workers.
- High barriers to entry for new workers, due to the complexity of skills needed.

Potential Impact For Digital Transformation

- The need for highly skilled local talent has increased due to teleworking and on-demand e-commerce growth e.g. developers, web designers.
- Digitization is increasing in the private sector, creating opportunities of tech-focused youth.
- Tech hubs and online communities are creating upskilling opportunities e.g. mentoring, (virtual) internships, and peer to peer training.

Job Opportunities In The Sector

- Website and software developers.
- Data and server managers.
- Gaming and eSports.
- Supply chain/inventory analysts.
- Virtual Assistants.
- Cloud computing.
- DevOps.

Sources: Mercy Corps, Youth Impact Labs, 2019. 'Towards a Digital Workforce: Understanding the Building Blocks of Kenya's Gig Economy'; Elvis Melia, "African jobs in the digital era: Export options with a focus on online labour", 2020; KNBS, Kenya job market report, 2018; WeForum, The Future of Jobs, 2019

5. On-Demand Logistics (Last Mile)

The number of boda-boda riders in Kenya has risen to over 2 million as at May 2020 from 600,000 in 2017. Given the current oversupply of riders in Nairobi, there is potential to create jobs outside Nairobi, as on-demand logistics firms scale their operations countrywide. Ajira could capitalize on these opportunities given its country-wide reach by forming partnerships with existing players as they expand.

On Demand Logistics Review



Sector Overview

The rise of digital technology, increased access to the internet, high rates of mobile penetration, have paved the way for the growth of on-demand logistics. Customers are increasingly searching for solutions that offer real-time visibility, security, easy payment and low-cost delivery. However, cost of transportation remains high and represents 50% to 75% of the retail price of goods.



Covid-19 Impact

- There has been an increase in the demand for on-demand logistics services due to reduced foot traffic and increased ecommerce transactions (e.g., increased pharmacy, grocery and alcohol sales and deliveries).



Ecosystem Challenges

- Oversupply of riders (bodabodas) in Nairobi – opportunities are available in other towns.
- Poor physical infrastructure and lack of an efficient, safe and standardized National Addressing System, which would ease last-mile delivery.
- Delayed deliveries/lost or damaged goods/incidences of fraud with regards to delivery of goods, payment of goods/services etc.



Potential Impact For Digital Transformation

- An efficient National Addressing System would spur growth of on-demand services across the country.
- An efficient logistics system has a ripple effect on other sectors as it makes transportation of products easier across value chains, increasing more opportunities for expansion and job creation.



Job Opportunities In The Sector

- Customer facing roles: Administrators e.g., call centre customer service, business acquisition roles.
- Delivery riders (high demand in other regions) e.g., Mombasa, Nanyuki, Kisumu.
- Cold chain delivery riders.

Source: 2020, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, National Economic Survey; 2019, Wawira, J, Logistics Challenges Facing e-Commerce in Africa

6. Online Work (Transcription)

The global transcription industry is expected to grow from ~\$4 billion in 2019 to \$12 billion in 2022; However, transcription opportunities are also at risk as organizations turn to automated speech to text technologies. Opportunities in language-to-language transcription, academic transcription and in various spots of medical and legal transcription are available but require higher technical expertise.

Online Work (Transcription) Overview



Sector Overview

Transcription is Kenya's second largest online labour sub-sector employing ~180,000 Kenyans today. In Kenya, transcription opportunities are increasing as the government rolls out its digitization strategy; this has strong potential for mass employment. The private sector can also create opportunities; however it remains nascent.



Covid-19 Impact

- The Covid-19 pandemic increased the prominence of online work in Kenya, due to disruptions from work from home orders, reduced revenues, income streams, and employment opportunities.



Ecosystem Challenges

- Automated transcription software has reduced the amount of work available globally
- Limited local transcription work due to slow uptake of outsourcing within the private sector
- Limited technical support to scale MSMEs e.g., access to investors, writing proposals etc.
- Poor paying habits from businesses are deterrent for local transcribers



Potential Impact For Digital Transformation

- Digitization of government e.g. digitization of the Judiciary and other government MDAs will create opportunities for youth
- Increasing internet penetration and infrastructure investment into rural areas can increase opportunities for rural youth



Job Opportunities In The Sector

- Entertainment transcription and editorial services (intelligent and verbatim) e.g. Netflix and Showmax subtitling contracts
- Global transcription services (e.g., business, medical, legal transcription etc.)
- Opportunities for English and vernacular language translation of content e.g. YouTube captions, book translations

Sources: Mercy Corps, Youth Impact Labs, 'Towards a Digital Workforce: Understanding the Building Blocks of Kenya's Gig Economy', 2019; Elvis Melia, 'African jobs in the digital era: Export options with a focus on online labour', 2020



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ABOUT ECO-SYSTEM CHALLENGES

The Dalberg team carried out an analysis of the eco-system challenges facing the private sector and proposed medium to long term actions.

1. Taxing the digital economy



Challenge: The Finance Act of 2019 proposes that goods and services supplied in the digital marketplace will be subject to a 1.5% tax on monthly income and a 14% VAT tax on digital marketplaces. This has been met with concern from consumers and digital players who warn that the taxes will stifle innovation, growth in a nascent sector. Furthermore, implementation of the taxes is still ambiguous and non-operational, creating uncertainty amongst players.

Near term actions

- **Continue to drive policy activities to provide certainty to digital players on how the taxes are applied:** i.e., i) specific income that is subject to tax ii) applicable rates to be applied iii) the party responsible
- **Collaborate with MoICT to create awareness of the Ajira tax benefits,** i.e. members pay 10,000 KES towards an Ajira fund per year in lieu of tax for three years.

Medium-long term actions

- **Leverage the ICT sector board** to i) advocate for policy amendments and ii) ensure early participation and collaboration in policy formulation
- **Ensure alignment with the broader digital economy government policy,** international best practice and data protection laws
- **Work with OPWAK to develop incentives** to spur innovation in the ecosystem e.g. wider casting of tax breaks to businesses.

Benefits for ecosystem if resolved

- Existing job opportunities preserved and continued growth to the sector
- Spurred innovation and growth of our nascent digital economy that is showing strong potential
- Increased foreign investment in the country and avoidance cross border trade wars
- Encourage participation in the sector by youth, support the growth of MSMEs and thereby creating employment opportunities for youth.

2. Promoting outsourcing as a function to large corporates and SMEs in Kenya



Challenge: Despite the benefits of outsourcing, including increased efficiency, access to skilled resources, cost advantages etc., many multinationals, corporates, and MSMEs in Kenya still conduct all business processes internally. Uptake of outsourcing is still low and even when undertaken, it is outsourced to other countries, limiting the creation of opportunities in Kenya.

Near term actions

- **Undertake stakeholder interviews and research to understand the bottlenecks** of outsourcing in Kenya and why private sector uptake is low.
- **Host marketing drives amongst KEPSA members to create awareness** of outsourcing and the functions that can be outsourced.
- **Provide a repository of information-based case studies** showcasing successful outsourced projects.
- Sector and sub-sector targeted initiatives to promote outsourcing.

Medium-long term actions

- **Collaborate with MoICT to launch Ajira as a Semi-Autonomous Government Agency (SAGA)** and position it as the government's online work outsourcing agency.
- **Ideate incentives for firms to outsource work** and provide them with linkages to BPOs.
- **Build out a framework for interested members in online work outsourcing** by supporting in the i) creation of task-or project-based work ii) redesign of traditional job descriptions etc.

Benefits for ecosystem if resolved

- **Build Kenya's brand globally** as an outsourcing nation.
- **Create awareness and confidence in outsourcing** from the local private sector starting off with large corporates and SMEs.
- **Create opportunities for Kenyan youth** to earn a decent wage from digital jobs.

3. Providing social protection and technical support for online workers



Challenge: Kenya's current labour laws and regulations are still weak regarding social protection, equal employment opportunities and labor standards for digital workers. Like most parts of the world, the current policies and ecosystem provide relatively low technical support or protection to the growing number of digital workers forcing them to conduct their work in a regulatory grey zone.

Near term actions

- **Collaborate closely with OPWAK** to i) strengthen their association and voice in the ecosystem, ii) better understand the systemic challenges faced by online workers.
- **Facilitate dialogue opportunities with partners such as financiers, insurers** to create tailored products to support them.
- Identification of **super-agents** who can support new workers entering the labour market.

Medium-long term actions

- **Advocate for the creation of an enabling policy and regulatory environment** for online workers across several MDAs e.g. Trade, Labour, Justice.
- **Collaborate with MoICT to launch the Ajira fund.**
- **Promote incentives to participate in the online workspace** e.g. offer tax breaks, incentives to access the Ajira fund.
- Ensure programs offered by Ajira **provide labour market information** e.g., pay-range for skill.

Benefits for ecosystem if resolved

- **Create a conducive work environment** for online workers.
- **Develop trust in the ecosystem**, with a reliable stream of online workers and outsourced work.
- **Spur penetration to other geographical areas** e.g. rural areas opening up economies across Kenya and increasing uptake of youth in online work.

4. Improving access to finance for MSMEs in digital jobs ecosystem



Challenge: MSMEs account for over 80% of employment opportunities in Kenya yet, many MSMEs are unable to survive and grow due to the lack of access to capital and financing. Many Kenyans are also unable to start and scale businesses and are therefore unable to participate in the economy, due to a lack of start-up capital.

Near term actions

- **Partner with existing programs** such as KEPSA's and Mastercard Foundation's fund for SMEs to ascertain how to plug in Ajira driven SMEs.
- **Research methods/tools that can improve credit reporting** across sectors to improve access to finance for MSMEs.
- **Collaborate with financiers to determine ways to improve access to credit** through improved credit reporting, secured lending e.g., development of collateral registries.

Medium-long term actions

- Continue to **advocate for more financial inclusion for MSMEs and for comprehensive regulation of credit facilities** by the Central Bank of Kenya (including innovative financing vehicles such as micro-credit facilities)
- **Conduct continuous countrywide consultations and research activities** to monitor progress of actions and to ensure a good understanding of the most pressing issues facing MSMEs.

Benefits for ecosystem if resolved

- **Incentivizes and enhances participation** by young businesses and new entrants into the market.
- **Grows the Kenyan economy** due to increased business activities.
- **Creates job opportunities** and improves overall wellbeing of the economy.



5. Offering technical support to MSMEs



Challenge: MSMEs cite the need for technical support across their value chains as a pressing need in an increasingly digitizing ecosystem. As digitization progresses, there is an increased need to support MSMEs with skills such as effective writing, business development, digital product design and management, digital sales and marketing, seamless online payment transactions, operations and logistics, etc. to ensure that they can compete effectively in the market.

Near term actions

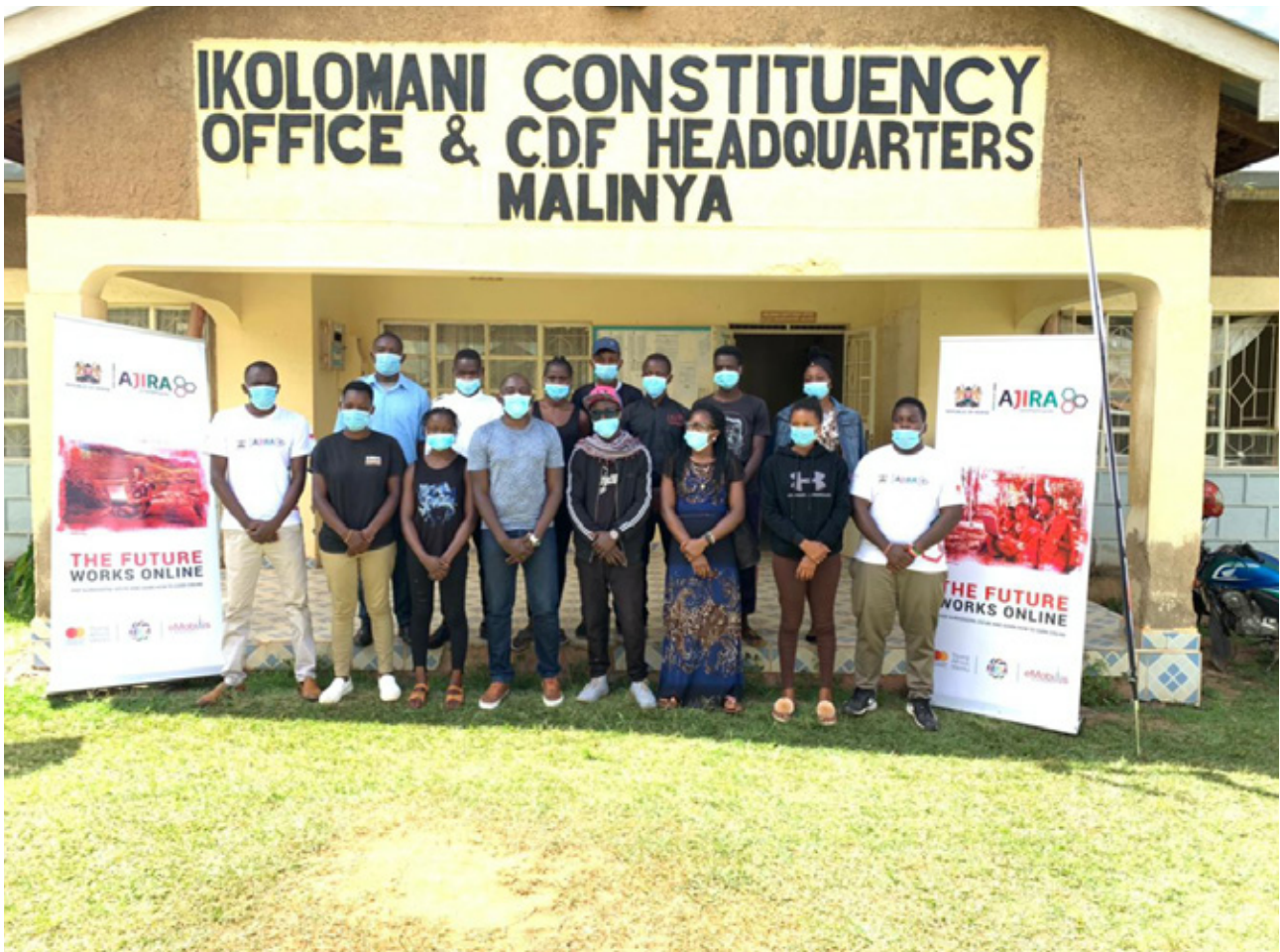
- Support the rollout of the virtual MSMEs business recovery hub in partnership with Mastercard Foundation.
- Partner with various incubators in the market such as NaiLab and iHub to support MSME growth.
- Foster cross-sectoral collaboration with KEPSA members and MSMEs e.g., create spaces to form mentor-mentee relationships with MSMEs and more established businesses.

Medium-long term actions

- Invest with companies such as Oracle and Techno Brain to develop research on emerging and disruptive technologies.
- Collaborate with policy makers to introduce regulations that secure and protect the integrity of the digital ecosystem.
- Lobby the government to improve the technical infrastructure available to MSMEs, such as equipment, hardware and internet access.

Benefits for ecosystem if resolved

- Unlocks business growth for small and medium enterprises.
- Increases trust and reliability of digital transactions among entrepreneurs and customers.
- Enhances the ease of doing business by improving operations and logistics.
- Creates more digital work opportunities for youth in the country.







Annex: Ajira Youth Survey Feedback

In August of 2021, a survey was carried out of 260 Ajira youth. The survey sought to engage the youth on their experience with Ajira. Most survey respondents (43%) were in the 18-25 age group and almost evenly split across gender (52.9% women and 47.5% men). About 60% had a university degree. While this is a small sample size, it sheds insight nonetheless into the perspectives of the youth surveyed on their interaction with the Ajira program. Selected findings from the survey are summarised below:

Mode and Effectiveness of Training

Ajira youth surveyed overwhelmingly carried out their training online and the survey results indicate that over 70% of youth credited the Ajira training, with helping them secure a job.

Over 76% of respondents carried out Ajira training online



Over 70% of respondents indicated that the training helped secure them a job.



Several youth surveyed however indicated that they were still seeking work and when asked what could be improved about the program several youth referred to the continued challenge of finding and earning a sustainable living. A sample of their comments are below:

“Ajira should create more job opportunities”

“Earning a livelihood is still a struggle honestly”



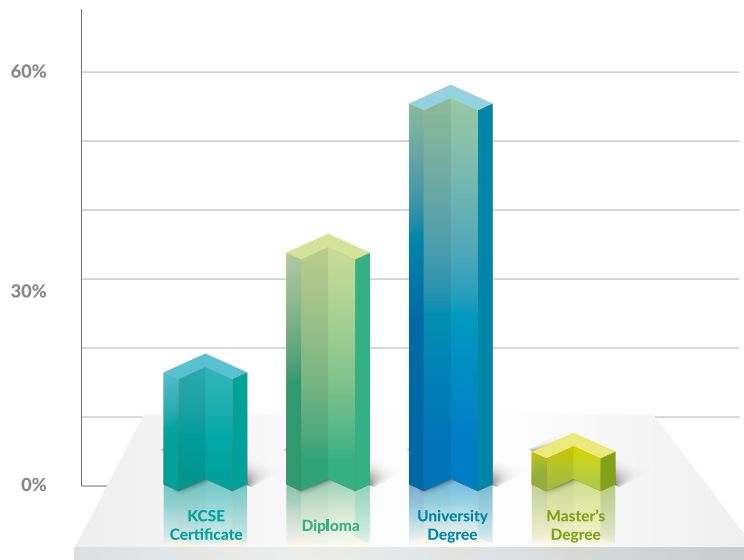
Job Types

Transcription was the highest job category recorded



Inclusion

The program has reached gender parity in terms of number of youth connected to work and has also included traditionally excluded groups such as person's living with disabilities - over 9% of survey respondents identified as being differently abled. The program still however skews towards youth who have a university degree with close to 60% of respondents indicating that they fell within this category.



Benefits of Ajira

Youth surveyed list the following benefits from working with Ajira:

- **Increased earnings:** most respondents listed improved income as a benefit from Ajira. this has allowed youth to meet their basic needs, pay their expenses and provide for themselves and their families.

“Ajira gave me income during a period when I was unemployed”

“With the salary I am earning from online work, I’ve been in a position of supporting my family and myself as well.”

“Ajira has helped improved my income, hence sustainable living condition”

- **Improved skills:** this includes specific skills such as digital marketing and transcription as well as soft skills such as improved communication and better time management.

“I have gained communication, marketing skills”

“I have acquired skills and knowledge that have enabled me get an income”

“I improved my typing speed and learnt transcription”

“Ajira brings income to me, I learnt new skills and improved in my time management.”

“I can help my parents with this income, support my siblings in school, pay back the HELB loan”

- **Access to information:** respondents noted that through Ajira they have increased their knowledge base, learnt about new modes of work (beyond traditional white-collar jobs) and learned about other sectors of online work.

“Ajira has enabled me to earn income, network with different marketers, different platforms and forums.”

“I have improved networks, improved research and have started earning.”

- Improved confidence and independence were also cited as benefits:

“I am self-reliant, plan my schedule, earn my money”

“I have been able to be independent and also empowered me mentally.”

“I am more enlightened and empowered to train other people.”

- **Flexibility:** was listed as a benefit of online work that Ajira helped introduce them to.
- **Time saving** was also listed as a benefit of Ajira/online work as it allowed for time saving and the avoidance of a commute. Related to this some respondents also cited money saved as a result of the reduction of the commute.

Ajira Youth Recommendations

Youth surveyed made the following recommendations for the Ajira Program:

- **Improved connection to jobs** was cited by numerous respondents who indicated that they were still looking for work. They made several suggestions as to how Ajira could facilitate better job connections including more support post training, improved linking of trainees to clients and direct referrals to clients.
- **Increase the duration of the training and mentorship program:** as noted above, several youth surveyed indicated that they found the training useful but would like to see the time period extended. They also indicated that they would find it beneficial for the mentorship period to be extended.
- **Increased awareness raising** was also cited as a recommendation: several respondents indicated that they found the program beneficial and wished that more young people knew about it.

“They should do more campaigns and also help those not yet secured jobs to get jobs”

“Post adds so that many youth can know about Ajira digital programs.”



COVID-19 Impact

There were mixed results from survey responders regarding the impact of COVID-19.

- Most respondents indicated that there had been a negative impact on the ability to earn a living with one respondent stating that the number of tasks they were able to access online has dropped by 40% while several indicated job losses, business closures and reduced income due to COVID-19.

“Getting work is a bit difficult due to flooding of online workers.”

“Clients have reduced and forced me to subsidize prices due to hard economic times.”

“COVID has brought about scarcity of jobs, low volume if any.”

“Too many people have closed their businesses while for others, expenses have become too much for them.”

- Others indicate little or no change citing the fact that they worked from home before as serving to mitigate some of the disruption of COVID-19.
- A small number indicated that COVID-19 had been beneficial as it drew their attention to Ajira and online work opportunities which might not otherwise have happened.

“It was because of COVID that I got to know Ajira, and I got a job. I would say it was a blessing in disguise.”

“It helped me discover online jobs and kept me busy.”

“Actually, I had lost a job due to Corona and somehow I found work online to sustain me.”

- In terms of mitigating measures in the wake of COVID-19, most respondents cited taking health and safety measures such as wearing of masks and social distancing.
- Others indicated that the challenging economic circumstances brought about by COVID-19 had necessitated a more intensive approach to securing of work including longer time spent on job sites and platforms, updating of profiles to better attract clients, and ensuring a steady internet connection so as to be available in the event that a job is available.





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