



POLICY BRIEF

Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma

(Building Women, Empowering Communities)

Closing Nigeria's Digital Gender Gap: Evidence, Lessons, and a Roadmap for Scaling Inclusive Digital Skills Programmes

Prepared by

Natview Foundation for Technology Innovation (NFTI)

The Fasaha *Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma* was implemented by Natview in partnership with the World Bank and the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA)

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Abbreviations	6
1. The Policy Challenge	7
2. About Fasaha Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma	9
Programme Vision and Objectives	9
Programme Architecture: Three Components	9
Target Population	12
Why the Model Was Designed This Way	12
3. Theory of Change	13
Inputs and Activities	13
Outputs	13
Outcomes	13
Impact	14
4. Programme Design Innovations	15
Blended, Remote, and Community-Based Learning	15
Safe Learning Spaces and Infrastructure Transformation	15
Rights-Based Curriculum and Mentorship	16
A Condensed Entry Point: The Two-Day Model	16
Soft Skills, Gamification, and Experiential Learning	16
Industry Partnerships and the Learning Management System	16
Technical Working Groups and Community Ownership	16
Infrastructure Investment and Teacher Development	17
Innovation Hubs and IDP Integration	17
5. Evidence of Impact	18
Employment and Entrepreneurship Outcomes	19
Teacher Outcomes and Systemic Multiplier Effects	19
STEM Transition	19
Financial Inclusion	20
Measured Learning Gains	20
Rights Awareness and Community Ownership	21
6. Human Stories Behind the Data	22
7. What Worked	25
8. Implementation Challenges	26
Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity	26
Retention Under Structural Constraints	26
Socio-Cultural and Economic Barriers	26
Instructor and Facilitation Capacity	26

Scaling Constraints	26
9. Lessons for Governments	28
10. Policy Recommendations	30
Federal Government	30
State Governments	30
Development Partners	30
Private Sector and Technology Companies	30
Foundations and Educational Institutions	31
Implementation Partners	31
11. Scalability Framework	32
State Level	32
National Level	32
ECOWAS Level	32
Continental Level	33
Policy Enablers, Financing, and Sustainability	33
12. Conclusion	34

Executive Summary

Digital exclusion is not a peripheral development concern in Nigeria — it is a determinant of who participates in the country's next growth cycle and who is left behind.

Nigeria's digital economy is expanding at a pace that outstrips its labor force's ability to keep up. The World Economic Forum projects that 54 percent of all employees globally will require extensive upskilling by 2030, and in Nigeria, this transition is compounded by deep gender disparities that keep adolescent girls and young women, particularly those in fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) settings, outside the digital talent pipeline. The *Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma* programme, translated from Hausa as "Building Women, Empowering Communities," was co-developed by the World Bank Group, Natview, and the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) as a test model to pilot Nigeria's national digital literacy framework.

Between its successive phases, the programme reached 1,095 adolescent girls and young women across six states — Kaduna, Jigawa, Borno, Kano, and Gombe, and the Federal Capital Territory — including participants drawn from Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, out-of-school populations, married adolescents, survivors of gender-based violence, stay-at-home mothers, students, and serving teachers. The programme tested three learning delivery models — face-to-face, fully remote, and blended — with a common rights-based curriculum that paired technical digital skills with human rights education, online safety, mentorship, and soft-skills development.

The results provide a credible evidence base for national and sub-national investment. Baseline and post-training assessments recorded an 81 percent increase in participants' overall digital skills. Forty-four percent of participants transitioned into formal employment, internships, or freelance engagements, while 56 percent used their new skills to strengthen existing entrepreneurial ventures. Ninety-eight percent of participants rated the programme as excellent, an unusually high satisfaction and retention outcome for a workforce-development intervention operating in FCV contexts. Seventy percent of students engaged through the *Adopt-a-School* model transitioned into STEM pathways at the tertiary level. Sixty percent of the 120 teachers trained advanced into higher institutional positions after adopting the programme's Learning Management System (LMS) and modern delivery methods. One hundred participants gained financial inclusion skills, with several becoming registered mobile-money agents through a partnership with MTN.

These outcomes were not incidental. They followed from a deliberate programme architecture: a Theory of Change anchoring technical training to rights-based learning and mentorship; a Technical Working Group (TWG) model that embedded Emirate Councils, School-Based Management Committees, and Ministry of Education representatives into local ownership of delivery; and an Adopt-a-School approach that converted retention barriers — hunger, unsafe facilities, lack of digital access — into structural design features than treating them as afterthoughts.

This brief sets out why digital inclusion for women is a strategic economic priority, describes the model and the evidence it generated, distills what worked and what did not, and translates that evidence into a set of prioritized recommendations for federal and state governments, development partners, the private sector, and implementation partners. The central policy argument is straightforward: GMGA programme demonstrates a

replicable, cost-disciplined model for closing Nigeria's digital gender gap, and the evidence built over its pilot phases justifies scaled investment rather than further piloting.

KEY TAKEAWAY

GMGA shows that a rights-based, community-owned digital skills model can deliver a 44 percent formal transition rate and 98 percent participant satisfaction among some of Nigeria's most excluded young women — evidence strong enough to inform a national scale-up strategy, not merely another pilot.

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Term
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
FCV	Fragility, Conflict, and Violence
GMGA	Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma
IDP	Internally Displaced Person(s)
JETS	Junior Engineers, Technicians and Scientists
LMS	Learning Management System
MTN	MTN Nigeria (telecommunications partner)
NDLF	National Digital Literacy Framework
NFTI	Natview Foundation for Technology Innovation
NITDA	National Information Technology Development Agency
PSIN	Public Service Institute of Nigeria
TWG	Technical Working Group

1. The Policy Challenge

Digital transformation is restructuring labor markets faster than most education and training systems can adapt. The World Economic Forum estimates that 54 percent of all employees worldwide will require extensive upskilling by 2030, a shift driven by automation, the growth of the platform economy, and the rapid diffusion of digital tools into sectors that were once considered non-technical. For countries with young, fast-growing populations, this is simultaneously an opportunity and a risk: an opportunity because a digitally capable workforce can leapfrog into higher-value services and global remote work; a risk because the benefits of this transition accrue disproportionately to those who already have access to connectivity, devices, education, and social capital.

Nigeria sits at the sharpest edge of this risk. It has one of the world's largest youth populations and an expanding digital economy, yet participation in that economy remains starkly unequal along gender lines. Young women and adolescent girls, in particular, are consistently underrepresented in formal digital skills training, in tech employment, and on the freelance and gig platforms that increasingly mediate access to global income opportunities. These disparities are magnified in fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) contexts, where displacement, interrupted schooling, early marriage, and gender-based violence compound the effects of digital exclusion.

The World Bank Group's Digital Transformation Programme in Nigeria is built on the premise that digital technologies can drive economic growth, create jobs, and expand the participation of young women in the digital ecosystem, but only if deliberate, gender-responsive interventions are designed to overcome the structural barriers that keep women out. Skills training alone is insufficient. Evidence from workforce-development literature consistently shows that women's transition into digital livelihoods depends on a combination of technical training, safe learning environments, mentorship, community buy-in, and pathways into real economic opportunity, the exact combination that a narrowly technical training programme, delivered without attention to social context, tends to omit.

It is against this backdrop that the Fasaha *Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma* Digital Skills Development Programme for Girls and Young Women was conceived, not as a stand-alone digital-skills bootcamp, but as a test of whether a rights-based, community-anchored delivery model could move the needle on women's digital and economic participation in some of Nigeria's most structurally disadvantaged regions. The programme's footprint spanning Kaduna, Jigawa, Borno, Kano, and Gombe states and the Federal Capital Territory, including IDP camps affected by conflict and displacement was itself a deliberate policy choice: to test the model across a spread of contexts where digital exclusion, gender inequality, and fragility intersect most severely, on the premise that a model proven across hard contexts is more, not less, credible for national replication.

Nigeria's opportunity is time-bound. Every cohort of adolescent girls who age out of the education system without exposure to digital and soft skills represents a widening, not narrowing, gap in the country's digital workforce.

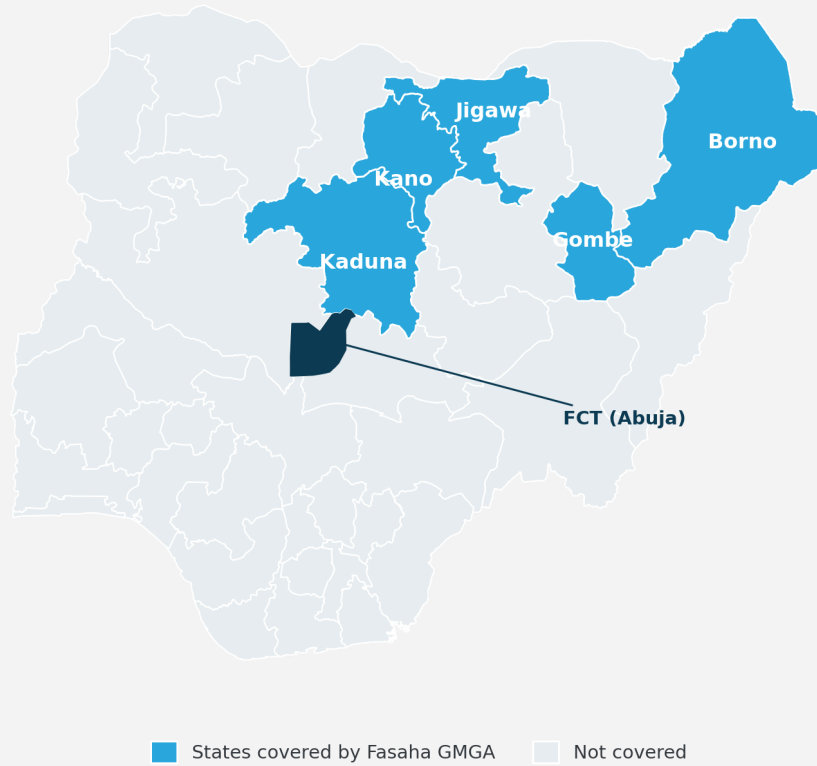


Figure 1. GMGA programme footprint — Kaduna, Jigawa, Borno, Kano, and Gombe states, and the Federal Capital Territory.

2. About Fasaha Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma

Fasaha Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma (GMGA) is a digital skills programme designed to identify, prepare, and connect disadvantaged adolescent girls and young women with emerging skills in the knowledge economy. It was co-developed by the World Bank Group, Natview Foundation for Technology Innovation, and the National Information Technology Development Agency, with an explicit mandate to serve as a test model informing Nigeria's National Digital Literacy Framework (NDLF). Fasaha GMGA is a successor to Fasaha 4.0, an earlier digital skills programme delivered in 2021 that trained 180 girls and young women across three tracks — Content and Digital Marketing, UX/UI, and Data Science. Thirty participants were selected from three Internally Displaced Persons camps in Abuja, while the remaining 150 were drawn from across different states in Northern Nigeria for blended-learning delivery. Fasaha 4.0 was implemented in partnership with the World Bank and the EQUALS Global Partnership, a global coalition for gender equality in the digital age, of which Natview is a member.

Programme Vision and Objectives

The programme's animating vision is that digital inclusion for women is an economic development strategy, not a social add-on. Its objectives were structured around six core deliverables:

- Developing an innovative remote content-delivery process that combines remote learning, physical facilitation, and hands-on experiential learning;
- Identifying and securing facilitation centers across a technology ecosystem of partners to provide practical, hands-on learning experiences;
- Building lifelong learning, cognitive, and soft/social skills to strengthen confidence and provide mentorship for women;
- Connecting participants to short-term economic opportunities — outsourcing, internships, and remote jobs — through job fairs, hackathons, and freelancing ("e-lancing") platforms;
- Identifying emerging technologies in demand across Nigeria and globally, to equip women with Industry 4.0 competencies; and
- Building multi-stakeholder partnerships with local and global technology ecosystem players to create pathways into in-demand skills.

Programme Architecture: Three Components

GMGA was structured around three components, each applying a gender-lens approach that incorporates gender-sensitive design, analysis, implementation, and evaluation to address the barriers that persistently deny women access across all aspects of participation in the digital economy. The three core components were delivered across four states — Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, and Kano — with additional delivery in Kaduna and the Federal Capital Territory bringing total programme reach to six jurisdictions:

Component	Focus	Participants
Makoyar Fasaha	Instructional design and capacity building for instructors — a train-the-trainer programme equipping teachers to deliver market-relevant digital skills training	120
Dalibar Fasaha	STEM-based blended learning with physical facilitation — engaging adolescent girls through a rights-based empowerment model, with ICT/JETS clubs in two girls' secondary schools per state	400
Matan Fasaha	Rights-based learning, digital literacy, and introduction to the virtual economy — training disadvantaged young women in FCV contexts and introducing them to the gig economy	300

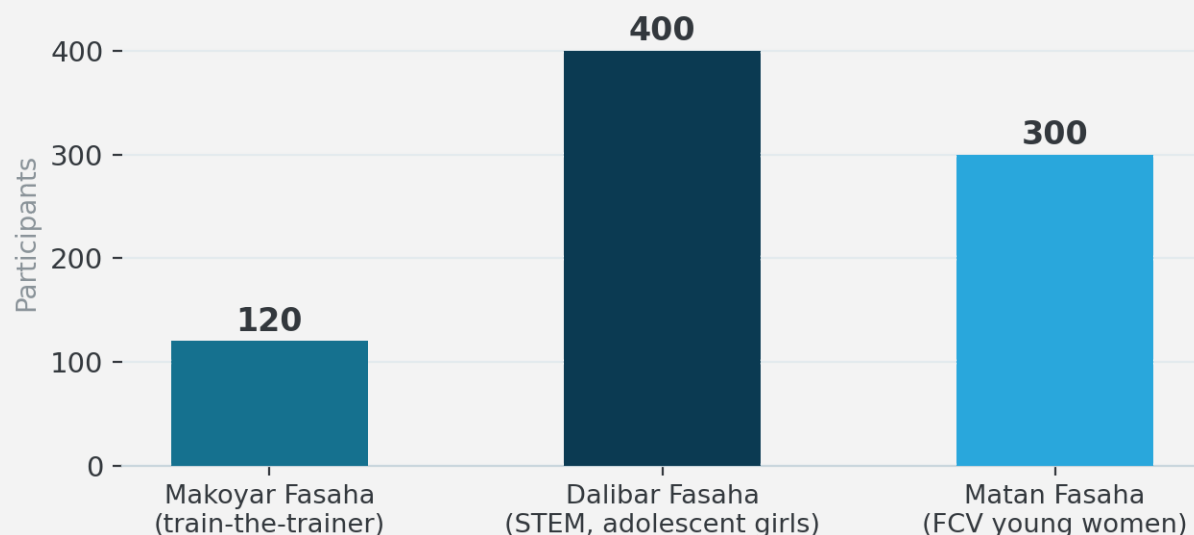


Figure 2. Participants by programme component.

Core component delivery ran over three months, structured around four learning tracks (digital literacy, digital marketing, rights-based learning, and virtual economy) and a defined allocation of instructional time. For the instructor and disadvantaged-women components, delivery was weighted 40 percent remote learning, 30 percent facilitation and hands-on practical work, 15 percent group work and assignments, and 15 percent soft skills bootcamps. The adolescent-girls component inverted this balance toward in-person work — 60 percent facilitation and hands-on practical, 25 percent group work, assignments and gamified learning, and 15 percent soft skills bootcamps — reflecting the lower baseline digital access of secondary-school participants.

Train-the-trainer delivery combined LMS-based remote instruction with ten days of physical facilitation across the three-month period.

Alongside the component structure, participants were distributed geographically across the six jurisdictions, together with a 250-participant cohort trained at the two-day Fasaha Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma digital skills programme held at the E-Government Training Center, Public Service Institute of Nigeria, Abuja:

Delivery Location	Participants
Two-day programme, E-Government Training Centre, PSIN Abuja	250
Gombe	180
Jigawa	155
Kano	155
Borno	155
Kaduna	100
Federal Capital Territory	100
Total	1,095

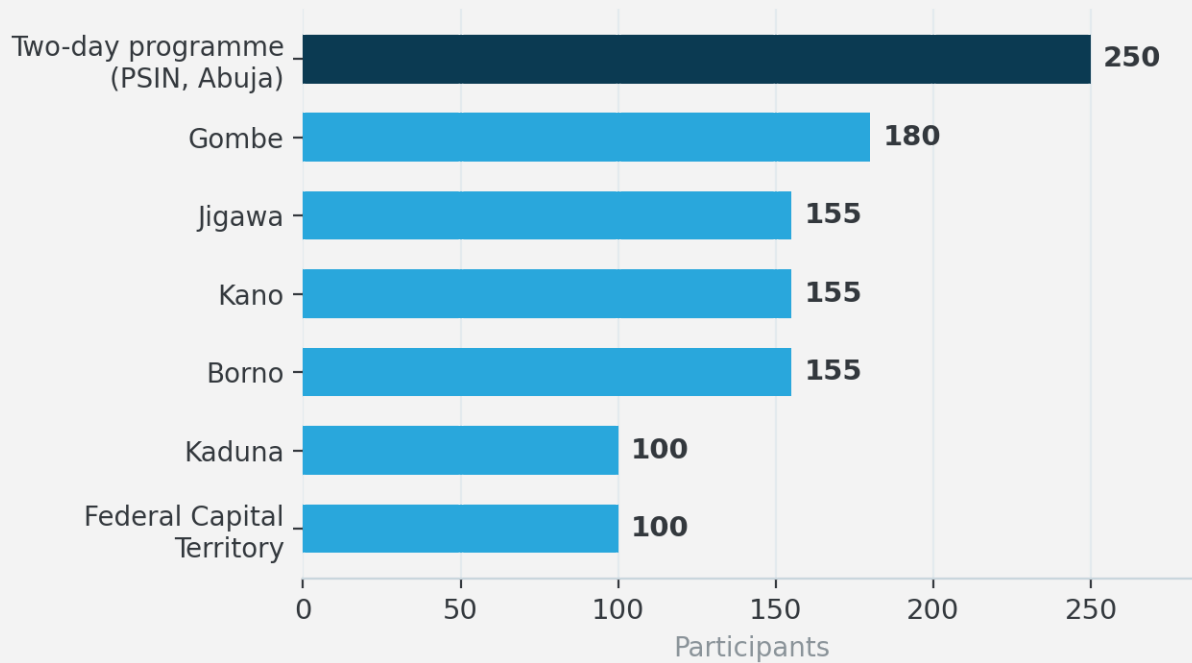


Figure 3. Participants by delivery location.

The two tables describe different cuts of the same programme, and the distinction matters for how the evidence is read. The component table records participants engaged through multi-week curriculum delivery; the geographic table adds the 250-participant cohort trained over two days at the programme launch. These represent materially different intervention intensities: the 820 participants in the three core components received sustained, assessed instruction, while the two-day cohort received a condensed curriculum combining hands-on digital and content marketing practice with a set of gig economy and lifelong soft skills sessions — online safety and protection, financial literacy, profile management and e-lancing, and mentorship. Read together, the tables show a programme weighted toward the north-eastern and north-western states — Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, and Borno together account for 645 participants — with Kaduna and the Federal Capital Territory serving as smaller, more targeted delivery sites.

Target Population

GMGA deliberately targeted girls and young women from disadvantaged groups using a mixed-selection approach instead of a single homogeneous cohort. Participants included students, out-of-school adolescents, married adolescent girls, survivors of gender-based violence, stay-at-home mothers, serving teachers, and residents of Internally Displaced Persons camps. This selection design reflected a considered judgment that a genuinely inclusive digital skills model must be tested across, not around, the populations most likely to be excluded from conventional training pipelines.

Why the Model Was Designed This Way

Conventional digital skills programmes frequently assume a baseline of digital access, formal education, and household support that does not hold for adolescent girls in FCV and low-resource settings. GMGA's design responds directly to this gap by testing different learning modalities — face-to-face, remote, and blended — against a shared curriculum architecture built around gender-sensitive design, safe learning spaces, linguistic support, and mentorship. Instead of assuming a single delivery model would work across all contexts, the programme treated delivery modality itself as a variable to be tested and evaluated, generating comparative evidence on what works for which population.

3. Theory of Change

GMGA's Theory of Change links a defined set of activities to outputs, outcomes, and a long-term impact statement, and its internal logic explains much of the programme's effectiveness. The pathway runs as follows:

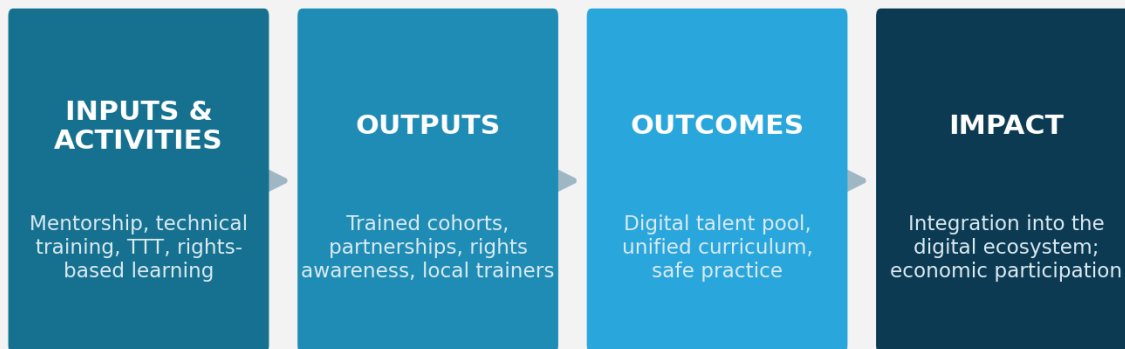


Figure 4. Fasaha's Theory of Change pathway.

Inputs and Activities

Five interlocking activity streams anchor the model: mentorship connect, which links participants to industry stakeholders through partnerships and internships; soft-skills and competency building, focused on complementary skills that make participants globally competitive; technical training and curriculum design, covering the development of learning tracks and the direct training of participants; train-the-trainers, which upgrades the digital skills of instructors and potential trainers drawn from local communities; and rights-based learning, which integrates women's and children's rights, online safety, and child protection into every stream of instruction.

Outputs

These activities were designed to produce five outputs: a trained cohort of girls and young women under the GMGA programme; enhanced collaborative partnerships with technology ecosystems and industry players; increased human rights, child protection, and online safety awareness among participants; increased awareness of the programme itself across target communities, disaggregated by medium; and an expanded pool of local trainers equipped and skilled in the programme's digital skills methodology.

Outcomes

At the outcome level, the model targets four interconnected results: a pool of digitally relevant girls and young women able to identify, prepare for, and connect to both informal (freelancing, remote work) and formal (employment) digital talent pools; improved cognitive and soft skills that extend beyond digital competency to the broader demands of current and future labour markets; a community of local trainers equipped to deliver a unified digital jobs curriculum across different delivery streams; and a rights-based curriculum embedding

human rights, online safety, and child protection, so that digital tools remain safe for both trainers and participants.

Impact

The programme's stated long-term impact is to integrate more young women into the digital ecosystem by improving their economic participation in the digital space — a formulation that deliberately privileges economic outcomes (income, employment, entrepreneurship) over training completion as the ultimate measure of success.

WHY THIS DESIGN MATTERS

By threading rights-based learning through every activity stream instead of treating it as a stand-alone module, Fasaha's Theory of Change ensures that safety, confidence, and economic skill-building reinforce one another — a structural choice that later evidence shows was decisive for retention and for participants' willingness to take up new opportunities.

4. Programme Design Innovations

GMGA's results are best understood as the product of a set of deliberate design innovations, each addressing a specific barrier that conventional digital skills programmes tend to overlook.

Blended, Remote, and Community-Based Learning

Rather than committing to a single delivery format, the programme tested three distinct models against the 1,095 participants reached overall. A face-to-face model served participants drawn from three IDP camps and an *Adopt-a-Class* model in FCV community schools. A remote-only track combined four days of remote learning with one day of physical facilitation each week for a digital-entrepreneurship cohort. A blended model paired remote instruction in emerging technologies — cybersecurity, data science and analytics, and digital and content marketing — with weekly, in-person facilitation at a tech hub. This comparative design allowed the programme to identify which modality best supports which population, instead of assuming remote learning (the cheapest option) would work uniformly across contexts with highly unequal connectivity and device access.

Safe Learning Spaces and Infrastructure Transformation

A concrete illustration of the programme's approach is its transformation of learning environments at the New Kuchingoro IDP Camp in Abuja, where a containerized infrastructure was converted into an innovation center. This signals a broader principle that digital skills training in FCV contexts cannot succeed without deliberate investment in physical infrastructure and in the safety and dignity of the learning environment itself.



Figure 5. Natview upcycled an old container into a computer hub that offers a safe space for women in IDP camps to learn digital skills.

Rights-Based Curriculum and Mentorship

Human rights education covering women's and children's rights, online safety, and child protection was integrated directly into the technical curriculum. This was paired with structured mentorship connecting participants to industry stakeholders through partnerships and internships, and with monthly bootcamps where mentors shared their own technology career stories at community-based tech hubs, providing participants with visible, relatable role models.

A Condensed Entry Point: The Two-Day Model

Alongside multi-week delivery, the programme ran a condensed two-day format that pairs intensive, hands-on technical instruction with the practical scaffolding needed to convert it into income. The technical half covered digital and content marketing in applied form — content strategy, search and social channels, copywriting, and analytics tools. The remainder addressed the gig economy and lifelong soft skills through four targeted sessions: online safety and protection, financial literacy, profile management and e-lancing, and mentorship. The design logic is worth noting for policy purposes: a marketable skill alone does not produce income if a participant cannot open and manage a payment channel, build a credible freelance profile, price her work, or protect herself online. By bundling these into the same two days, the model treats economic participation — not skill acquisition — as the unit of delivery and offers a lower-cost entry point that can reach participants for whom a multi-week commitment is not feasible.

Soft Skills, Gamification, and Experiential Learning

The programme's pedagogical approach combined group case studies, gamified learning using flashcards, and event-styled learning sessions, deliberately designed to sustain engagement and motivation — a response to the well-documented retention risk in digital skills programmes that rely solely on didactic instruction.

Industry Partnerships and the Learning Management System

GMGA built multi-stakeholder partnerships with local and global technology ecosystem players to create pathways into in-demand skills and deployed a Learning Management System (LMS) to deliver courseware, track lesson outcomes, and manage assessments at scale. The LMS proved particularly consequential for teacher training: 120 teachers trained on modern learning delivery models via the LMS saw measurable transition into higher institutional positions.

Technical Working Groups and Community Ownership

A Technical Working Group (TWG) model brought together the Emirate Council, a representative of the School-Based Management Committee, a representative of the Ministry of Education, and the training facility (the NITDA Digital Economy Center) as a standing local governance structure. This TWG became the mechanism through which programme ownership and, therefore, sustainability beyond the funding cycle were built into communities and not imposed on them.

Infrastructure Investment and Teacher Development

Beyond learner-facing infrastructure, the programme invested in teacher development at scale, delivering a two-week train-the-trainer workshop to 120 secondary school teachers across Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, and Kano states, covering instructional design and modern teaching methods for rights-based learning. Under the *Adopt-a-Class* phase, computer laboratories were renovated and digitally enabled in selected schools across four states, paired with meal incentives to support attendance. This dual investment in learners and in the educators and facilities that serve them reflects a system-strengthening logic instead of a one-off skills transfer.

Innovation Hubs and IDP Integration

GMGA's IDP cohort was deliberately integrated into the mainstream technology ecosystem instead of being served through a parallel, segregated track. Participants gained access to digital infrastructure and training in navigating online protection, and the programme measured their reintegration into mainstream formal opportunities as a distinct success indicator — treating displacement status as a barrier to be actively designed around, not a disqualifying condition.



Figure 6. Image from Train-The-Trainer Workshop for Teachers. 120 Secondary School Teachers across Borno, Gombe, Jigawa and Kano states received training on Instructional Design and Modern Teaching Methods for Rights-Based Learning.

5. Evidence of Impact

GMGA reached 1,095 young women across its delivery models, and the composition of that cohort is itself a policy-relevant finding: the programme succeeded in reaching precisely the populations most often missed by conventional digital skills initiatives.

Participant Category	Share of 1,095 Participants
Students	37%
Out-of-School Adolescents	14%
Married Adolescents	14%
Internally Displaced Persons	14%
Teachers	11%
Survivors of Gender-Based Violence	6%
Stay-at-Home Mothers	2%

This demographic spread matters because it demonstrates that a single programme architecture anchored in a shared rights-based curriculum can be adapted to serve highly heterogeneous populations simultaneously, not requiring a bespoke intervention for each group. (Figures as reported in original programme data, which sum to 98 percent.)

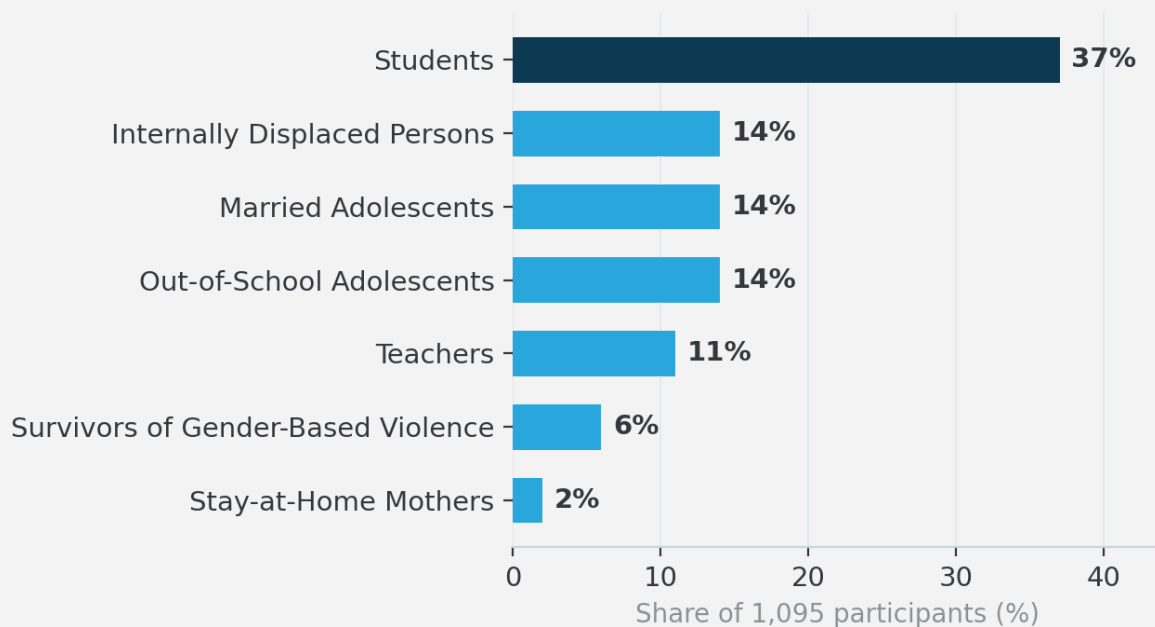


Figure 7. Participant demographic composition, by share of 1,095 participants.

Employment and Entrepreneurship Outcomes

On economic participation, the headline result is a **44 percent transition rate into formal employment, internships, and freelancing opportunities**, concentrated primarily in secretarial and teaching roles. The remaining **56 percent of participants used their new digital skills to strengthen existing entrepreneurial ventures** instead of pursuing formal employment. A further **27 percent of participants reported increased income specifically attributable to improved digital and social media marketing for their existing businesses**. Read together, these figures suggest that for this population, entrepreneurship, not formal employment, is the primary economic pathway digital skills unlock, a finding with direct implications for how future programmes should define and measure success.

Teacher Outcomes and Systemic Multiplier Effects

Among the 120 teachers trained on modern, LMS-based learning delivery, **60 percent transitioned into higher institutional positions**. Separately, 50 percent of participants in the *Makoyar Fasaha* train-the-trainer stream reported actively applying the new teaching techniques in their own schools. This is a systemic multiplier: each trained teacher extends the programme's reach to students well beyond the original cohort, at no incremental cost to the funding partners.

STEM Transition

Under the **Adopt-a-School** model, **70 percent of participating students transitioned into STEM courses** at the tertiary level, driven substantially by weekly Junior Engineers, Technicians and Scientists (JETS) extracurricular activities that ran at full capacity throughout the programme.

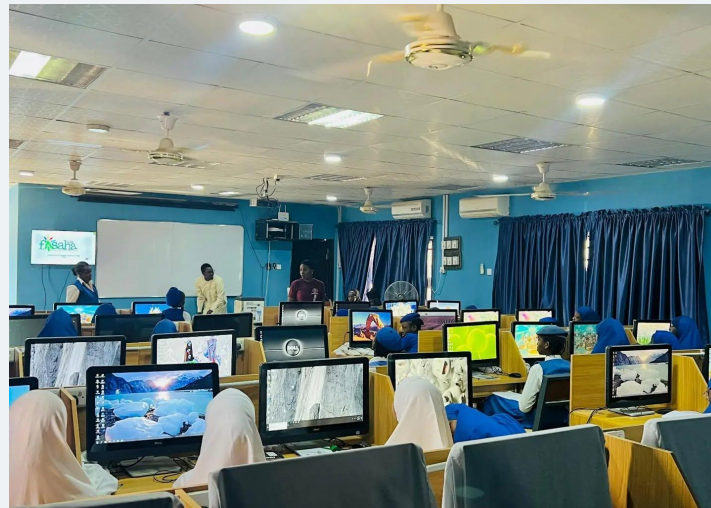


Figure 8. Dalibar Fasaha Beneficiaries During JETS Sessions

Financial Inclusion

One hundred participants were equipped with financial-inclusion skills, with a number going on to register as mobile-money agents through the programme's partnership with MTN — converting digital literacy directly into a recognized economic role within the local financial system.



Figure 9. GMGA graduates in Kaduna and IDP host communities received mobile phones, MoMo accounts, and start-up grants to launch gig-economy income.

Measured Learning Gains

Beyond transition and satisfaction data, the programme applied baseline and post-training assessments measuring participant competence across seven modules, each scored out of ten. These recorded an **81 percent increase in participants' overall digital skills** — a directly measured learning gain rather than a self-reported one, and among the more methodologically credible findings in the evidence base. On rights and safety outcomes, **420 participants gained digital literacy skills enabling online access to information and opportunity; 820 girls and young women were equipped to understand and advocate for their rights under the rights-based learning approach**; 51 percent were equipped with effective strategies to safeguard themselves against cyber attacks and online bullying; and there was a **24 percent increase in participants demonstrating attitudes and behaviours reflecting respect for human rights, appreciation of diversity, and commitment to equity and inclusion**.

NOTE ON MEASUREMENT

Outcome metrics reported in this section derive from the assessment of participants engaged through the programme's multi-week component delivery. The 250-participant cohort trained at the two-day launch programme received a condensed curriculum — hands-on digital and content marketing, plus gig economy and soft skills sessions — and represents a different intervention intensity. It should be read as distinct from the sustained component cohorts when interpreting transition, satisfaction, and skills-gain figures.

Rights Awareness and Community Ownership

Ninety-eight percent of participants rated the programme as excellent, an exceptionally high satisfaction and retention outcome. Beyond training statistics, the human-rights and online-safety modules produced tangible protective outcomes: participants reported using their new understanding of legal rights to pursue formal complaints and to protect themselves from online fraud, evidence discussed further in Section 6.

EVIDENCE SNAPSHOT

1,095 participants reached across six states • 81% measured increase in overall digital skills • 44% transitioned to formal employment/internships/freelancing • 56% strengthened existing businesses • 27% grew income via digital marketing • 98% satisfaction and retention • 820 equipped to understand and advocate for their rights • 51% equipped against cyber attacks and online bullying • 70% of Adopt-a-School students moved into STEM • 60% of trained teachers advanced in role • 100 participants gained financial-inclusion skills.

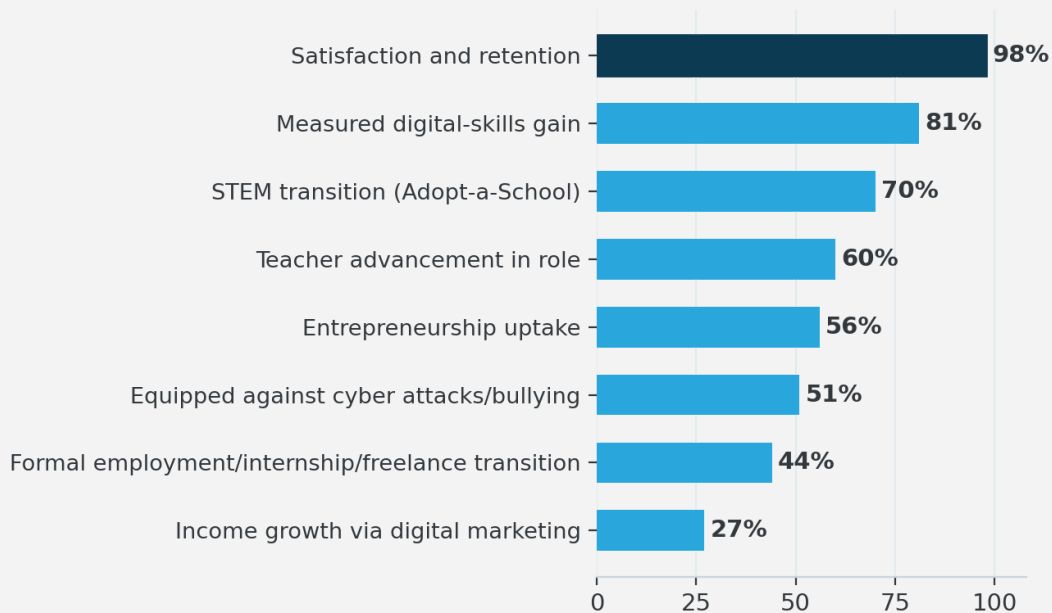


Figure 10. Headline outcome metrics across the evidence base (percent).

6. Human Stories Behind the Data

Aggregate statistics describe scale; individual trajectories describe mechanism. The following cases, drawn directly from programme records, illustrate the specific pathways through which GMGA converted training into economic and social outcomes, and are presented here as policy evidence of programme mechanisms.

Economic Recovery After Job Loss

Digital Marketing Track

A participant who had lost her position at a micro-credit company during the COVID-19 pandemic used the programme's digital marketing training to secure her first international freelance contract on Upwork, followed by multiple internship offers, and now holds a digital marketing internship at a technology firm. Her trajectory illustrates the programme's role in providing an alternative re-entry pathway into the labor market when the formal economy contracts.

From Informal Trade to Digital Marketing Internship

Digital Marketing Track

A participant with a background in interior decoration and informal retail (bedsheets, throw pillows, and cotton fittings) was accepted into a digital-marketing internship with an international company after completing the programme — demonstrating how digital skills training can formalize and internationalize existing informal-sector experience.

Career Transition Into Product Design

UI/UX Track

A qualified legal practitioner with an interest in technology enrolled in the UI/UX track and secured a full-time position as a UX/UI Designer at a technology company in Abuja — evidence that the programme's technical tracks can support genuine career pivots for participants with unrelated professional backgrounds.

From Administrative Work to Paid Product Design Internship

UI/UX Track

A participant working in an administrative role despite holding a university degree in the sciences used the UI/UX track to secure a six-month paid internship with a financial services company, with the prospect of full-time conversion — illustrating the programme's value for underemployed graduates whose formal qualifications had not translated into matching job opportunities.

From Contract Work to International Study

UI/UX Track

A participant used her new design and branding skills to secure a contract role with an education-technology company, and was subsequently accepted into Natview's own internship programme before going on to further her studies abroad — an example of the programme functioning as a launchpad rather than a terminal outcome.

Re-Entering the Workforce After Relocation

Data Science Track

A participant holding professional networking certification and a master's degree in network engineering, who had lost employment after relocating between states, joined the Data Science stream and secured a position as a project coordinator on a World Bank–supported property enumeration project midway through the programme — demonstrating that GMGA's value extends to highly credentialed women who lack local professional networks, not only to those with limited prior education.

Digital Safety Awareness Among Displaced Populations

IDP Cohort — Cybersecurity

An Internally Displaced Person who had never previously encountered the concepts of cybersecurity or artificial intelligence described how the programme opened her understanding of the risks she faced daily as an online seller and expressed a specific desire to continue studying cybersecurity because of the frequency with which she encountered fraud attempts while conducting business over social media. Her account illustrates a protective function of the curriculum that operates independently of formal employment outcomes: digital literacy as a defence against exploitation for women already engaged in informal digital commerce.

Rights Awareness Translating Into Civic Action

IDP Cohort — Human Rights Module

Another Internally Displaced Person credited the programme's human rights module with giving her the knowledge and confidence to formally contest the demolition of her home, filing a complaint with the relevant authorities and seeking support from a human rights activist to pursue compensation — a direct, documented instance of rights-based curriculum content translating into real-world advocacy and legal action.

Digital Tools Expanding an Existing Business

Rigasa Community, Kaduna

A school dropout who married at a young age and lacked formal certification was admitted to the programme despite these barriers, and went on to use online business-promotion tools learned through the programme to expand the reach and performance of her fabric-selling enterprise — evidence that the needs-based selection mix used for the disadvantaged-women component successfully reached participants who would be excluded by credential-based admission standards.

Foundational Digital Literacy as a Turning Point

Rigasa Community, Kaduna

A participant with no prior exposure to spreadsheet or word-processing software described the programme as transformative, and has since committed to teaching newly acquired digital skills to others in her community — an informal but valuable multiplier effect that extends the programme's reach beyond its direct beneficiaries.

Across these cases, three mechanisms recur: digital skills training converts informal economic activity into formal or internationally visible opportunity; rights-based education produces measurable protective and civic behavior, not only awareness; and needs-based learner selection reaches women who would be filtered out by credential-based eligibility criteria.

7. What Worked

Several design choices stand out as decisive contributors to Fasaha's results, and each carries a direct implication for future programme design.

- Community ownership through the Technical Working Group model. Embedding Emirate Councils, School-Based Management Committees, and Ministry of Education representatives into a standing local governance structure converted community leaders from passive stakeholders into co-owners of programme delivery, which in turn supported the exceptionally high 98 percent satisfaction and retention rate.
- Local partnerships with technology ecosystem players. Securing facilitation centers and industry linkages through local and global technology partners gave participants direct access to mentorship and employment pathways that a training-only model could not have provided.
- Rights-based learning woven through the technical curriculum. Integrating human rights, online safety, and child protection content directly into technical tracks — rather than as an isolated module — produced documented protective and civic outcomes, as evidenced in Section 6.
- Incentives tied to retention. The *Adopt-a-School* model's use of daily meals as an incentive directly addressed a known driver of school and programme attrition in FCV contexts, contributing to the 70 percent STEM transition rate among participating students.
- Structured mentorship. Monthly bootcamps connecting participants with mentors who shared their own technology career stories provided visible role models and functioning professional networks, particularly valuable for participants such as IDP cohort members who lacked pre-existing industry contacts.
- Ecosystem integration for displaced populations. Deliberately integrating the IDP cohort into mainstream soft-skills programming, than serving it through a segregated track, supported measurable confidence growth and improved peer interaction over the course of the programme.
- Blended learning calibrated to context. Testing face-to-face, remote, and blended models against a shared curriculum allowed the programme to match delivery modality to the connectivity and infrastructure realities of each cohort, than applying a uniform (and likely less effective) remote-first approach.
- Instructor quality and local recruitment. Identifying instructors and teaching assistants from local communities and ecosystems, through a competitive selection process, strengthened both curriculum delivery and the sustainability of the local trainer pool.
- Industry-aligned curriculum design. Grounding curriculum development in a skills-demand survey conducted with industry partners ensured that technical content addressed real labor-market gaps rather than a generic digital-literacy syllabus.

8. Implementation Challenges

The programme's own lessons-learned documentation, together with evidence patterns in the outcome data, point to a consistent set of implementation constraints that any scaled successor programme must address directly.

Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity

Digital infrastructure emerged as the single most consistently cited constraint on programme success, with infrastructure barriers directly affecting retention rates. The need to run parallel face-to-face, remote, and blended tracks — instead of a uniform remote-first model — is itself evidence that connectivity and device access could not be assumed even within a single state.

Retention Under Structural Constraints

Although overall retention and satisfaction were high, the programme's own design response — introducing daily meal incentives under the *Adopt-a-School* model — indicates that food insecurity and competing economic demands on participants' time posed a material retention risk that had to be actively engineered around rather than assumed away.

Socio-Cultural and Economic Barriers

Several case studies, including a married adolescent who dropped out of school, women balancing informal trade with training, and participants relocating between states for economic reasons, indicate that early marriage, informal economic obligations, and household responsibilities constrain participation in ways that a training curriculum alone cannot resolve. The programme's response was to differentiate selection by programme stream instead of applying a single standard: instructor recruitment under Makoyar Fasaha used a competitive weighted scoring matrix (educational qualification 25 percent, teaching experience 25 percent, technical expertise 20 percent), while Dalibar Fasaha and Matan Fasaha used a needs-based selection mix targeting defined disadvantaged groups. This allowed the programme to hold instructor quality to a high bar while admitting learners who would have been screened out by credential-based criteria — a deliberate design choice in place of an ad hoc accommodation.

Instructor and Facilitation Capacity

The programme's investment in training-the-trainers and in competitive, locally sourced instructor recruitment suggests that facilitation capacity was a binding constraint and not a resource freely available in target communities — a constraint that scales disproportionately as any programme expands beyond a single state.

Scaling Constraints

The programme's component structure — a train-the-trainer stream for instructors and teachers (Makoyar Fasaha, 120 participants), a STEM-focused stream for adolescent girls (Dalibar Fasaha, 400 participants), and a digital literacy and virtual-economy stream for disadvantaged young women in FCV contexts (Matan Fasaha,

300 participants) — reflects a considered response to the reality that a single national design could not adequately serve such different populations simultaneously. Any scale-up strategy must therefore budget for continued contextual adaptation than a single standardized rollout, with corresponding implications for cost and implementation timelines.

POLICY IMPLICATION

The evidence indicates that infrastructure, retention incentives, and locally sourced facilitation capacity are not secondary implementation details — they are binding constraints on programme effectiveness that require dedicated budget lines in any scale-up design, not residual allocations after curriculum and stipend costs are met.

9. Lessons for Governments

GMGA's evidence base translates into a concrete set of lessons for federal and state governments considering investment in digital-inclusion programming for women and girls.

- **Curriculum must be co-designed with industry.** A skills-demand survey conducted with employers, before curriculum design begins, is a necessary first step to ensure training addresses genuine labor-market gaps instead of a generic digital-literacy syllabus.
- **Infrastructure investment is a precondition, not a complement, to training.** Digital infrastructure gaps directly affect retention; government co-investment in connectivity, devices, and facilitation space should be treated as core programme cost, not a donor-funded extra.
- **Community ownership structures should be mandated, not optional.** The Technical Working Group model — embedding traditional authorities, school management committees, and ministry representation — should be a standard design requirement for any government-backed digital skills programme, given its demonstrated link to retention and satisfaction.
- **Gender-sensitive programme design must be built in, not layered on.** Safe learning spaces, linguistic support, and flexible delivery modalities for married adolescents, mothers, and survivors of gender-based violence should be default design features, not accommodations added after a standard curriculum is built.
- **Digital ecosystem partnerships extend government reach at limited cost.** Formal partnerships with private technology firms and platforms of the kind that placed GMGA graduates into internships and freelance contracts allow government-funded training to convert directly into economic outcomes without the government having to create employment itself.
- **Monitoring should track economic outcomes, not only training completion.** GMGA's most policy-relevant data, the 44 percent formal transition rate, the 56 percent entrepreneurship uptake, and the 27 percent income growth, required outcome-level monitoring well beyond graduation. Government-funded programmes should budget explicitly for this longer monitoring horizon.
- **Blended and locally adapted learning models outperform a single standardized model.** Government scale-up strategies should preserve, not eliminate, the flexibility to combine face-to-face, remote, and blended delivery modes in line with local infrastructure realities.
- **Safe spaces and rights-based education strengthen, rather than dilute, technical outcomes.** Embedding human rights and online-safety content within technical tracks instead of treating it as a compliance add-on was associated with strong retention and with documented protective and civic outcomes among participants.
- **Soft-skills development is inseparable from digital-skills development.** Confidence-building, mentorship, and psychosocial support consistently emerged as conditions for participants to apply their new technical skills, not as optional extras layered on top of them.
- **Teacher development multiplies programme reach at low marginal cost.** Training teachers on LMS-supported delivery extended the effective reach of the programme into their own classrooms well beyond the direct beneficiary cohort — an efficient use of government training budgets.

- **Local facilitators should be recruited competitively, not by default.** Competitive, locally rooted instructor recruitment strengthened both the quality of delivery and the long-term sustainability of the local training workforce.

10. Policy Recommendations

The following recommendations are organized by stakeholder group and prioritized across short-term (0–12 months), medium-term (1–3 years), and long-term (3–5 years) horizons.

Federal Government

- Short-term: Formally adopt GMGA's Theory of Change and Technical Working Group model as reference architecture for digital skills programmes aimed at informal sectors and FCV-affected communities.
- Medium-term: Establish a dedicated budget line for gender-responsive digital skills training within federal ICT and education sector allocations, co-financed with state governments.
- Long-term: Integrate outcome-level monitoring of digital skills programmes (employment, entrepreneurship, income) into national labor-market and education data systems.

State Governments

- Short-term: Replicate the Technical Working Group model in target Local Government Areas, anchored in traditional and religious institutions, school management committees, and state ministries of education.
- Medium-term: Co-fund infrastructure upgrades — connectivity, facilitation centers, and digital equipment — in partnership with development partners and private technology firms.
- Long-term: Institutionalize the *Adopt-a-School* model within state basic and secondary education budgets, including retention incentives such as meal provision in FCV-affected areas.

Development Partners

- Short-term: Adopt the GMGA model for Digital Gender Inclusion programmes.
- Medium-term: Fund a multi-state scale-up of the model, preserving its proven flexibility across face-to-face, remote, and blended delivery modes.
- Long-term: Support the transition of the Technical Working Group model into a standing, government-owned institutional structure to sustain outcomes beyond the funding cycle.

Private Sector and Technology Companies

- Short-term: Expand structured internship, freelance, and mentorship pipelines with implementation partners.
- Medium-term: Co-invest in facilitation infrastructure and connectivity in underserved communities as part of corporate digital-inclusion and ESG commitments.
- Long-term: Participate in ongoing skills-demand surveys to keep curricula aligned with evolving industry requirements.

Foundations and Educational Institutions

- Short-term: Fund teacher-development and LMS-adoption components, given their demonstrated multiplier effect on programme reach.
- Medium-term: Integrate JETS-style STEM extracurricular models into standard secondary-school programming in FCV-affected states.
- Long-term: Support the development of a national trainer-certification pathway building on the train-the-trainer model.

Implementation Partners

- Short-term: Standardize the rights-based curriculum integration model for adaptation by other digital-skills implementers.
- Medium-term: Build shared referral pathways with financial institutions, freelance platforms, and employers to formalize the transition pipeline demonstrated by GMGA graduates.
- Long-term: Document and publish delivery-model comparative data (face-to-face versus remote versus blended) to inform sector-wide design standards.

11. Scalability Framework

GMGA's design — modular delivery streams, a replicable community-ownership structure, and a curriculum architecture that pairs technical and rights-based content — lends itself to scaling along four horizons.

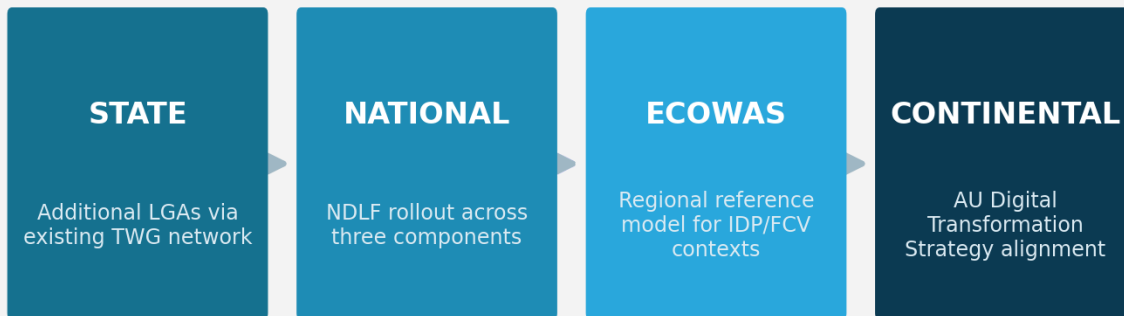


Figure 7. Scalability roadmap, from state-level replication to continental alignment.

State Level

Within Kaduna, Jigawa, Borno, Kano, and Gombe states and comparable jurisdictions, scale-up should proceed by replicating the Technical Working Group structure across additional Local Government Areas, using the existing NITDA Digital Economy Center network and Emirate Council relationships as an institutional backbone already proven to function across a multi-state footprint.

National Level

At the national level, GMGA's three-component architecture — Makoyar Fasaha (instructional design and capacity building for instructors), Dalibar Fasaha (STEM-based blended learning for adolescent girls), and Matan Fasaha (rights-based digital literacy and virtual-economy training for young women in FCV contexts) — provides a ready-made segmentation model for rolling out digital skills programmes, allowing states with different demographic and infrastructure profiles to adopt the component best suited to local conditions instead of a single undifferentiated national curriculum.

ECOWAS Level

Within the ECOWAS region, GMGA's evidence on reaching displaced and conflict-affected populations is directly relevant to member states managing comparable IDP and refugee populations, and the model could be adapted as a regional digital-inclusion reference programme under existing ECOWAS gender and youth-employment frameworks.

Continental Level

At the continental level, GMGA's core design principles — rights-based curriculum integration, community-anchored governance, and blended delivery calibrated to local infrastructure — align with the

African Union's Digital Transformation Strategy and could inform continental guidance on gender-responsive digital-skills programming in fragile and low-connectivity settings.

Policy Enablers, Financing, and Sustainability

Scaling Fasaha sustainably will require three enabling conditions: blended financing that combines government budget lines, development-partner grants, and private-sector co-investment in infrastructure; institutionalization of the Technical Working Group model within existing government structures, so that ownership does not depend on continued donor presence; and a shared outcome-monitoring framework enabling comparison across states and implementation partners, so that scale-up decisions remain evidence-driven rather than assumption-driven.

SCALABILITY PRINCIPLE

GMGA scales most credibly not by replicating a single fixed curriculum nationwide, but by replicating its underlying architecture — rights-based content, community governance, and delivery-model flexibility — adapted to each context's infrastructure and population profile.

12. Conclusion

Fasaha Gina Mata, Gina Al'Umma demonstrates that digital inclusion for women is not merely a technology intervention — it is a strategic investment in economic growth, gender equality, resilience, and inclusive development. Across 1,095 participants spanning some of Nigeria's most structurally excluded populations — internally displaced persons, out-of-school adolescents, married girls, survivors of gender-based violence — the programme produced results that would be notable in any context and are exceptional given the fragility of the settings in which they were achieved: a 44 percent formal transition rate, 56 percent entrepreneurial uptake, 98 percent participant satisfaction, and a 70 percent STEM transition rate among Adopt-a-School students.

These outcomes were the product of deliberate design choices, not favorable circumstances: a Theory of Change that ties technical training to rights-based learning and mentorship; a Technical Working Group model that builds genuine community ownership; delivery modalities calibrated to real infrastructure constraints rather than assumed connectivity; and a monitoring approach that tracked economic and civic outcomes, not merely training completion.

The evidence assembled here is sufficient to move beyond further piloting. Nigeria's Sustainable Development Goals commitments on gender equality and decent work, its National Digital Literacy Framework, and the World Bank Group's Digital Transformation Programme all point toward the same conclusion: a tested, evidence-backed model for closing the digital gender gap already exists, and the policy task now is to finance and institutionalize its scale-up — across states, across the ECOWAS region, and as a reference model for the continent.

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