



CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE UCC/UCUSAF GRANT FOR COMMUNITY BASIC DIGITAL SKILLING FOR WOMEN IN UNSERVED AND UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES IN UGANDA

STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), through the Uganda Communications Universal Service and Access Fund (UCUSAF), invites suitably qualified organizations, firms or consortia to submit proposals for the implementation of the Community Basic Digital Skilling for Women in Unserved and Underserved Communities project for FY 2026/2027.

The project is intended to equip women in selected unserved and underserved communities with practical digital, financial literacy and entrepreneurship skills that enable them to use digital devices and services confidently, safely and productively. The intervention will be implemented under a collaborative grant framework with a suitable implementing partner or consortium.

The grant is aligned with UCUSAF's mandate to promote universal access and service, Uganda's digital transformation priorities, and national development aspirations for inclusive growth, livelihood improvement and participation in the digital economy.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Digital skills are increasingly essential for access to information, communication, public services, digital financial services, education, markets and livelihood opportunities. However, women in rural, unserved and underserved communities continue to face persistent barriers to meaningful digital participation, including limited access to digital devices, low digital literacy, affordability constraints, social norms, limited confidence in using technology and inadequate exposure to locally relevant digital training.

GSMA studies show that the challenge is not only about network coverage, but also about the ability of people, especially women, to use available digital services

meaningfully. The GSMA Mobile Gender Gap Report 2026 indicates that women in low- and middle-income countries remain less likely than men to use mobile internet, with about 810 million women still not using mobile internet (GSMA, 2026). In Africa, GSMA further notes that almost one billion people, representing about 63% of the population, are still not using mobile internet despite widespread coverage, mainly due to barriers such as device affordability, limited digital skills and lack of relevant content (GSMA, 2026). These findings reinforce the need for targeted digital skilling interventions that address the usage gap among women in underserved communities.

The need for practical and localized training is further supported by GSMA's Mobile Internet Skills Training Toolkit, which promotes a train-the-trainer approach using short, adaptable lessons that can be customized to local needs and languages (GSMA, 2025). This approach is relevant to the UCUSAF women skilling intervention because rural women often require hands-on, confidence-building training delivered in familiar community settings and local languages, with examples linked to their daily livelihoods.

UCC/UCUSAF has implemented women-focused digital skilling interventions in five phases from 2021 to 2026. These interventions demonstrated continued demand for practical community-based digital skilling and generated lessons on the importance of local language delivery, mentorship, community mobilization, flexible training schedules and linking digital skills to livelihoods.

The FY 2026/2027 intervention will build on these earlier phases by strengthening training quality, local mentorship, community ownership, monitoring and sustainability. The project will focus on practical digital skills that women can apply in everyday life, including smartphone use, internet search, online forms, e-government services, digital financial services, online safety, fraud awareness, communication, digital marketing and entrepreneurship.

3.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The core problem is the limited capacity of women in unserved and underserved communities to use digital devices and services confidently, safely and productively. This limitation is not only a connectivity issue, but also a skills, confidence, affordability and relevance challenge.

Many women lack basic skills such as smartphone use, internet search, email, online forms, digital financial services, online safety, use of social media for business and access to e-government services. Existing skilling opportunities are

often not sufficiently localized, flexible or adapted to the realities of women with domestic responsibilities, low literacy levels and limited prior exposure to ICTs.

A targeted community-based project is therefore required to provide practical training, mentorship and locally relevant digital skills that women can apply to livelihoods, enterprise growth, household welfare and community participation.

4.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE GRANT

3.1 General Objective

To enhance the digital capacity of women in unserved and underserved communities by equipping them with practical ICT, financial literacy and entrepreneurship skills that support personal empowerment, social participation, livelihood improvement and effective use of digital services.

3.2 Specific Objectives

1. Train at least 2,500 women from selected unserved and underserved communities in basic ICT and digital literacy skills.
2. Provide practical financial literacy and entrepreneurship training to enable women to apply digital tools in income-generating activities.
3. Strengthen the Trainer of Trainers model to support local language delivery and post-training mentorship.
4. Identify and support selected high-performing participants to act as community digital literacy mentors.
5. Promote safe, responsible and productive use of digital platforms, including online safety, fraud awareness and basic data privacy.
6. Generate evidence on training outcomes, beneficiary uptake, lessons and sustainability to inform future UCUSAF interventions.

5.0 PROJECT SCOPE

The project scope covers the planning, mobilization, training, mentorship, monitoring and reporting activities required to skill at least 2,500 women in selected unserved and underserved communities during FY 2026/2027. It includes beneficiary identification, training needs assessment, curriculum review and translation, training of trainers, delivery of community-based digital skilling sessions, provision of training materials and ICT equipment, digital financial literacy, entrepreneurship training, online safety awareness, mentorship, monitoring, evaluation and documentation of lessons learnt.

6.0 PROJECT ACTIONS

1. Carry out baseline needs assessment to confirm beneficiary profiles, digital skills gaps, training locations and local implementation requirements.
2. Mobilize communities and select eligible women beneficiaries in consultation with local structures, women's groups and relevant stakeholders.
3. Review, customize, translate and produce practical training content suited to local needs, literacy levels and livelihood realities.
4. Recruit and train trainers, facilitators and community mentors using a Trainer of Trainers approach.
5. Identify or prepare accessible, safe and inclusive community training venues with appropriate power, connectivity and security arrangements.
6. Deliver a 5- day hands-on training in basic digital skills, digital financial literacy, online safety, responsible internet use and entrepreneurship.
7. Provide required training materials, digital content, ICT equipment and accessories necessary for training delivery and sustainability.
8. Identify high-performing participants to serve as local digital literacy champions or mentors for post-training peer support.
9. Monitor training delivery, collect feedback, document lessons, submit accountabilities and prepare progress and completion reports.

7.0 TARGET GROUP

The primary target group is women in unserved and underserved communities with limited or no access to ICT skills, digital devices and technology-enabled socio-economic opportunities in the .

- Women engaged in informal and micro-enterprises such as market vending, farming, tailoring, crafts and small-scale trading.
- Women's groups, savings groups, cooperatives and self-help groups that can support peer learning and multiplier effects.
- Out-of-school young women aged 18-35 who are not in formal education or employment but are interested in starting or growing small businesses.
- Women with limited digital exposure who are willing to learn and apply digital skills.
- Women with disabilities and other vulnerable women, where accessibility and local arrangements permit inclusive participation.

Attached as **Annex 2** is the list of districts to be considered in this project.

8.0 ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS

8.1 General Criteria

The applicant, whether an individual organization, firm or consortium, must meet the following minimum eligibility requirements:

1. The applicant organisation(s) must be a not-for-profit entity. Where the proposed solution is to be delivered through a consortium, the lead applicant must be a not-for-profit organisation.
2. The Applicant (both the Lead Applicant and co-applicant, in the case of a consortium) shall be legally registered and established entities in Uganda with valid and verifiable documentation demonstrating legal establishment and operational status.
3. Where an application is submitted by a consortium, both the Lead Applicant and the co-applicant(s) shall sign the Grant Agreement with UCC and shall assume joint responsibility and accountability for the implementation of the project, including compliance with all grant conditions, deliverables and reporting obligations.
4. The Applicant (both Lead and co-applicant in case of a consortium) must be in satisfactory financial health and have adequate structures and systems to manage the project and report to the UCUSAF as shall be required.
5. The Applicant (both Lead and co-applicant in case of a consortium) must demonstrate the willingness, capacity and operational ability to implement activities in unserved and underserved communities across Uganda.
6. The Lead and co-applicant in case of a consortium must demonstrate a working relationship through a legally binding agreement.
7. The Applicant (Either the Lead Applicant or co-applicant, in the case of a consortium) shall provide documented evidence of at least two (2) years' experience in digital literacy training.
8. The Applicant (both Lead or co-applicant in case of a consortium) must demonstrate documented experience in mobilising, coordinating and delivering similar initiatives at a national scale, especially working in rural areas.
9. The Applicant (both Lead and co-applicant in case of a consortium) must show a clear plan and capacity to mobilize additional resources or partnerships to support project sustainability beyond initial funding.

N.B: A due diligence may be conducted on the applicant organization(s) at any point of the process to ascertain demonstrated capability to execute the assignment.

8.2 Preference

The Fund will give preference to proposals that demonstrate the following:

- 1) A well-structured, clear, logical and comprehensive proposal that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the programme objectives, the digital skilling needs and challenges of women in the unserved and underserved communities.
- 2) Clear alignment with the objectives of the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), the Uganda Communications Universal Service and Access Fund (UCUSAF), and relevant national and international development frameworks, including Uganda Vision 2040, the National Development Plan (NDP IV), the Digital Transformation Roadmap, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 3) Demonstrated institutional capacity and relevant experience in delivering community-based digital skilling programmes, supported by innovative, practical and scalable approaches that promote meaningful digital inclusion.
- 4) A robust implementation approach that includes community mobilisation, beneficiary selection, practical hands-on training, stakeholder engagement, mentorship, and post-training support to promote sustained adoption and utilisation of digital technologies.
- 5) A clear Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework with defined baselines, performance indicators, targets, data collection methods, and reporting mechanisms for measuring project outputs, outcomes and impact.
- 6) Identification of key implementation risks, together with realistic and effective mitigation measures to ensure successful project delivery.
- 7) Clear strategies for sustaining project outcomes beyond the grant period, including partnerships with local governments, community structures, educational institutions, private sector actors, or other relevant stakeholders.
- 8) Qualified implementation team with availability of competent, experienced and inhouse human resources capable of executing the project within the proposed timelines.
- 9) Evidence of financial and/or in-kind contributions by the applicant and/or project partners that enhance project ownership, sustainability and overall value.
- 10) Strong value for money, demonstrated through realistic budgeting, cost-effectiveness, efficient use of resources and a clear linkage between proposed activities, outputs, outcomes and expected impact.
- 11) A practical approach to promoting equitable participation, with deliberate measures to ensure the inclusion of youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and other vulnerable and digitally excluded groups amongst the women.

9.0 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

9.1 Three Stage Assessment Process

A. Administrative Assessment

This stage focuses on verifying the eligibility of the applicant. Key areas assessed include:

- i. Legal registration and status of the organisation in Uganda.
- ii. Submission of all required administrative and legal documentation.
- iii. Compliance with minimum eligibility requirements as outlined in the call.

B. Technical Assessment

The technical assessment will evaluate the overall quality, relevance and feasibility of the proposed project. This includes:

- i. Clarity and rationale of the project motivation.
- ii. Alignment of project objectives with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) principles.
- iii. Applicant's relevant experience and track record in similar ICT and multimedia training programs.
- iv. Appropriateness and innovation of the proposed methodology and project management approach.
- v. Feasibility and practicality of the work plan and timelines.
- vi. Anticipated project outcomes, impact and alignment with UCC/UCUSAF priorities.
- vii. Integration of cross-cutting issues such as gender inclusion, disability mainstreaming, and environmental considerations.
- viii. Demonstrated strategy for sustainability beyond the project period.

C. Financial Assessment

This stage will assess the proposal's financial soundness and cost-effectiveness, including:

- i. Clear and realistic budgeting with a strong value-for-money proposition.
- ii. Sustainability of project funding post-grant.
- iii. Ability to leverage additional resources (financial or in-kind) to scale and sustain the initiative.

9.2 Required Applicant's Legal Documents

All applicants are required to submit the following legal and administrative documents to support their eligibility and capacity. In the case of partnerships or consortia, these requirements apply to both the lead applicant and co-applicants.

- 1) Certificate of Incorporation or Registration: A valid certificate showing the legal name and registration status of the organisation in Uganda.
- 2) Beneficial owner form, in case of a company.
- 3) Memorandum and Articles of Association: Foundational documents outlining the organisation's governance, objectives and operational mandate.
- 4) Official Address Details: Current physical address, postal address, email and website (where applicable).
- 5) Authorised Contact Person Information with Powers of Attorney: Full name, title/position, phone number, and email of the designated representative authorised to act on behalf of the organisation.
- 6) Letters of Support (if applicable): Endorsement letters from affiliated entities, proposed implementing partners, or supporting institutions if any (co-applicants).
- 7) Audited Financial Statements: Certified financial statements for the last two (2) financial years, demonstrating sound financial health and reporting systems.
- 8) Signed Code of Ethical Conduct: A duly signed copy of the "Code of Ethical Conduct for Grant Applicants and Providers" (refer to Annex 1 of the Call for Proposals).
- 9) Proof of Relevant Experience: Provide evidence of the organisation's experience skilling mechanics, such as project completion reports, client testimonials and/or records of previous awards.

9.3 Proposal Requirements

- 1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the project's objectives, target beneficiaries and the digital skilling needs of rural and underserved communities.
- 2) Show how the proposed intervention aligns with the UCC/UCUSAF Strategic Plan and relevant national and international development priorities.
- 3) Provide evidence of the organisation's and key personnel's experience in implementing similar digital skilling, ICT, or community development projects.
- 4) Describe the methodology for community mobilisation, beneficiary selection, training delivery, stakeholder engagement, and post-training support.
- 5) Outline the project management structure, staffing, roles, implementation schedule, and quality assurance mechanisms.

- 6) Present a results-based MEL framework, including performance indicators, data collection methods, reporting arrangements, and learning mechanisms.
- 7) Describe strategies for sustaining project outcomes beyond the grant period and outline key risks together with mitigation measures.
- 8) Explain how the project will promote gender equality, disability inclusion, safeguarding, environmental sustainability, and other relevant cross-cutting considerations.
- 9) Submit a detailed, realistic, and cost-effective project budget, including any financial or in-kind contributions from the applicant or partners.

10.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

The Commission shall undertake a comprehensive risk assessment of all applications as part of the evaluation process. The assessment will consider both identified and potential risks associated with the applicant, the proposed project, implementation approach, governance arrangements, financial management capacity, technical capability, and overall ability to deliver the intended project outcomes.

The risk assessment will involve a holistic review of the proposal and supporting documentation to determine the level of exposure that the proposed engagement may present to UCC/UCUSAF's resources, operations, reputation, and strategic objectives. Key areas of assessment will include financial sustainability, organisational capacity, governance and compliance, project implementation capability, stakeholder management, operational risks, and sustainability of project outcomes.

Based on the findings, each application shall be assigned an overall risk rating of Low, Medium, High, or Extreme. The results of the assessment will inform funding decisions, grant management arrangements, monitoring requirements, and any risk mitigation measures that may be required prior to project commencement.

11.0 APPLICATION TIMELINE

The grant application is open effective 10th August – 21st August 2026.

An online Pre – grant Application meeting on Teams will be held on 17th August 2026 at 3.00pm. Meeting log in link is here below:

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/379239588784733?p=jwDnbg37OUdDq1c ajC>

For any required clarification or guidance on the grant application process, please contact telephone +256414339000 or email ucusaf@ucc.co.ug.

Final applications should be submitted online through the link below: <https://eservices.ucc.co.ug/web/> by 5.00 pm on 21st August 2026 to:

**The Executive Director
Uganda Communications Commission
Plot 42-44, Spring Road Bugolobi
P.O. Box 7376, Kampala
Uganda**

Please note that any form of solicitation for favors in the application process will lead to automatic Applicant disqualification.

Disclaimer

Personal information supplied in an application will be used by UCC in accordance with the Laws of Uganda.

ANNEX 1

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN BUSINESS FOR GRANT APPLICANTS

1. Ethical Principles

Applicants shall at all times-

- (a) maintain integrity and independence in their professional judgement and conduct;
- (b) comply with both the letter and the spirit of-
 - i. the laws of Uganda; and
 - ii. any contract awarded.
- (c) avoid associations with businesses and organisations which are in conflict with this code.

2. Standards

Applicants shall-

- (a) strive to provide works, services and supplies of high quality and accept full responsibility for all works, services or supplies provided;
- (b) comply with the professional standards of their industry or of any professional body of which they are members.

3. Conflict of Interest

Applicants shall not accept contracts which would constitute a conflict of interest with, any prior or current contract with Uganda Communications Commission. Applicants shall disclose to all concerned parties those conflicts of interest that cannot reasonably be avoided or escaped.

4. Confidentiality and Accuracy of Information

- (1) Information given by Applicants in the course of THE grant processes or the performance of contracts shall be true, fair and not designed to mislead.
- (2) Providers shall respect the confidentiality of information received in the course of performance of a contract and shall not use such information for personal gain.

5. Gifts and Hospitality

Applicants shall not offer gifts or hospitality directly or indirectly, to staff of Uganda Communications Commission that might be viewed by others as having an influence on a grant decision.

6. Inducements

- (1) Applicants shall not offer or give anything of value to influence the action of a public official in the grant process or in contract execution.
- (2) Applicants shall not ask a public official to do anything which is inconsistent with the Code of Ethical Conduct in Business.

7. Fraudulent Practices

Applicants shall not-

- (a) collude with other businesses and organisations with the intention of depriving Uganda Communications Commission of the benefits of free and open competition;
- (b) enter into business arrangements that might prevent the effective operation of fair competition;
- (c) engage in deceptive financial practices, such as bribery, double billing or other improper financial practices;
- (d) misrepresent facts in order to influence a grant process or the execution of a contract to the detriment of the Uganda Communications Commission; or utter false documents;
- (e) unlawfully obtain information relating to a grant process in order to influence the process or execution of a contract to the detriment of the Uganda Communications Commission;
- (f) Withholding information from the Uganda Communications Commission during contract execution to the detriment of the Uganda Communications Commission.

I ----- agree to comply with the above code of ethical conduct in business.

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

NAME OF APPLICANT

ANNEX 2: SELECTED TRAINING DISTRICTS

NUUMBER	DISTRICT	SUBREGION
1	SSEMBABULE	BUGANDA SOUTH
2	NAKASEKE	BUGANDA NORTH
3	KASSANDA	BUGANDA NORTH
4	MASAKA CITY	BUGANDA SOUTH
5	IGANGA	BUSOGA
6	KUMI	TESO
7	KABERAMAIDO	TESO
8	SIRONKO	ELGON
9	BUKEDEA	TESO
10	BUTALEJA	BUKEDI
11	KALAKI	TESO
12	GULU	ACHOLI
13	KOTIDO	KARAMOJA
14	MOROTO	KARAMOJA
15	MOYO	WEST NILE
16	NEBBI	WEST NILE
17	AMOLATAR	LANGO
18	ALEBTONG	LANGO
19	LAMWO	ACHOLI
20	KARENGA	KARAMOJA
21	MADI-OKOLLO	WEST NILE
22	HOIMA	BUNYORO
23	KABALE	KIGEZI
24	KAZO	ANKOLE