

Digital Skilling Training for Citizens Progress Report as of May 2025

1. Context

One of the initiatives under 13th FYP is a digital skilling program to enhance the digital skills of citizens in the country, aligning with the overall goal of increased revenue, productive employment generation and citizens knowing how to safely use online service. GovTech recognises the importance and prioritizes digital skilling programs that enable every citizen in the country to be digitally literate. The proposed project envisions to strengthen the digital literacy of citizens in the country for social inclusion and economic empowerment. For this fiscal year, the target is to train 4000 citizens across the country.

As part of the ongoing initiative to enhance digital skills the Tech Industry Development Division, in collaboration with the training institute, has successfully conducted three cohorts of digital skilling programs between April and May 2025 training 400 participants till date across all seven sectors (manufacturing, construction, transport, hotel and homestay, travel agent and tour guide, wholesale and retail trade, agriculture) training at least one time in all seven sectors. These programs are aligned with the national vision of building a digitally empowered workforce and supporting the transition towards a knowledge-based economy.

2. Update on program

2.1 First Training Cohort

The inaugural cohort of the digital skilling initiative was implemented from **14th April to 26th April 2025**. The training targeted two priority sectors i.e. **Travel Agent and Tour Guide**, and **Wholesale and Retail trade** and was conducted in **Thimphu**. A total of **46 participants** benefitted from the program, with **26 trainees** in the Travel and Tour sector and **20 trainees** in Wholesale and Retail trade.

2.2 Second Training Cohort

The second phase of the training was held from **21st April to 3rd May 2025**, expanding its outreach to **six economic sectors**, namely **Construction, Transport, Manufacturing, Wholesale and Retail trade, Travel Agent and Tour Guide**, and **Hotel and Homestay**. A total of **110 participants** were trained in Thimphu, with additional training conducted simultaneously in **Paro** for the Travel Agent and Tour Guide sector, enrolling **25 participants**. This brought the total number of participants in the second cohort to **135 individuals**.

2.3 Third Training Cohort

The third cohort was conducted from **5th May to 17th May 2025**, covering **four major sectors** i.e. **Agriculture, Wholesale and Retail trade, Travel Agent and Tour Guide**, and **Hotel and Homestay** across five key districts: **Thimphu, Paro, Wangdue, Gelephu**, and

Samdrupjongkhar. This round recorded the highest participation to date, with **195 individuals** trained: **19 in Agriculture, 33 in Wholesale and Retail trade, 123 in Travel Agent and Tour Guide, and 20 in Hotel and Homestay.** The training sessions were tailored to address the sectoral challenges and opportunities, with a focus on integrating digital solutions into everyday business practices.

3. Monitoring of the Digital Skilling Program: Summary of Key Findings and Challenges

As part of the continuous improvement and quality assurance mechanisms under the Digital Skilling Initiative, comprehensive monitoring was carried out through on-site visits by the GovTech Agency and feedback submitted by training participants. The findings outlined below provide a holistic overview of the program's effectiveness, strengths, and areas requiring further refinement.

3.1 Curriculum Implementation and Relevance

General Curriculum

Feedback collected from participants indicates that core modules such as National Digital Identity (NDI), Cybersecurity, Computer Fundamentals, Digital Collaboration, Digital Marketing, and other sector-relevant components were perceived as highly relevant and essential in today's digital context. While the modules were generally found to be understandable, a subset of participants experienced initial difficulties in keeping pace with certain topics. This was largely attributed to educational gaps and the diverse academic backgrounds among participants, who were predominantly unemployed. Nevertheless, with the proactive support of trainers and peers, participants were able to navigate the curriculum successfully. Importantly, all participants were provided with necessary digital devices by the training institute to facilitate hands-on learning.

Sector-Specific Curriculum

Sector-oriented modules, particularly for Homestay, posed instructional challenges due to the inexperience of participants. However, the exposure to digital tools and IT solutions specific to their sectors was widely appreciated, with many noting increased confidence in applying similar technologies across different domains. The practical orientation of these sessions were considered beneficial in demonstrating real-world use cases.

3.2 Instructional Delivery and Learning Approach

Hands-On Teaching and Learning

Interactive teaching methodologies were employed throughout the training. Although participants engaged in group presentations, there were instances where comprehension was hindered due to limited preparation time. Feedback suggests that presentation sessions scheduled towards the end of the day, along with preliminary briefings by the trainers, would enhance

understanding. Trainers maintained a participatory and learner-centered environment, with daily pre- and post-training quizzes used as tools to assess comprehension and knowledge retention. Participants recommended scheduling more practice-oriented modules in the latter half of the day for better absorption.

3.3 Certification and Assessment Readiness

The **Certification** (Internet and Computing Core Certification) is a globally recognized credential that validates foundational digital skills essential for using computers, the internet, and basic productivity software in academic, workplace, and everyday settings. It is recognized by employers worldwide as a baseline digital literacy qualification especially for administrative, tech, and customer-facing roles. This certification is accepted by many schools and colleges as proof of IT readiness; often integrated into digital literacy or foundational ICT courses.

During the first cohort, certain participants expressed anxiety regarding the Certification Assessment, primarily due to limited exposure to the format and content of the certification. In response, the training institute took proactive measures by organizing mock tests and familiarization sessions, which significantly improved participant confidence and retention. However, concerns were raised about the repetition of questions in the mock assessments and the need for better pre-arrangements, such as configuring devices ahead of the examination date. These suggestions have since been incorporated into subsequent training cohorts.

3.4 Logistical Arrangements and Facilities

A range of logistical challenges were identified. Notably, internet connectivity issues were encountered by many participants, with some relying on personal mobile hotspots. The training institute subsequently upgraded the bandwidth to address this issue. Initial concerns related to food quality and serving time on the first day were acknowledged and improved upon in the following sessions. Additionally, although training devices and venue facilities were provided effectively, participants raised concerns regarding toilet hygiene, particularly during concurrent sessions for multiple cohorts and recommended increasing the number of female washrooms to meet demand.

3.5 Duration and Training Schedule

The majority of participants agreed that the 12-day training schedule was adequate to cover the fundamental digital modules. However, several participants suggested extending the duration of sector-specific training to allow for greater focus on practical exercises. Furthermore, feedback from participants highlighted that the defined age criteria for the employed category limited access for some interested individuals, thereby suggesting a potential re-evaluation of eligibility parameters to broaden participation.

4. Summary of Participant Feedback: Consolidated Insights

Across the board, the digital skilling initiative was regarded as impactful and transformative, with most participants acknowledging the value it added to their understanding of digital tools and practices. Trainers were widely commended for their expertise, engagement techniques, and approachability. Group presentations and dynamic team rotations were seen as effective in fostering networking and collaborative learning.

The insights gathered in each cohort will inform continuous programmatic adjustments to ensure effectiveness, inclusivity, and sustainability of the national digital skilling agenda.

5. Training Recommendations and Incorporation from next cohorts

Based on feedback and observations collected during the course of the digital skilling training program, the following key recommendations have been proposed for incorporation to enhance the overall delivery, effectiveness, and participant experience:

1. Scheduling of Practical Modules and Learner Support

It is recommended that modules involving hands-on and practical sessions be scheduled during afternoon hours to optimize participant engagement and retention. Additionally, provisions for tailored support to participants demonstrating slower learning progress have been suggested. These recommendations have been duly incorporated from the second cohort onwards to ensure inclusivity and equitable learning outcomes.

2. Improved Presentation Preparation and Content Overview

Participants have expressed the need for trainers to provide a concise briefing or overview of assigned group presentation topics. Moreover, it was suggested that group presentations be conducted on the following day to allow adequate preparation time. While the brief overviews have been introduced, adjustments to the presentation schedule remain constrained due to the pre-defined program timelines/plan of the training program.

3. Enhancement of Hygiene Facilities

To address participant concerns regarding hygiene, particularly during parallel training batches, it has been recommended that the training institute explore the feasibility of expanding female washroom facilities. Additionally, the institution is advised to establish and communicate clear hygiene-related ground rules to maintain sanitation standards throughout the training duration.

Training Pictures

Wholesale and retail trade sector training in Thimphu





Travel agent and tour guide sector training in Thimphu, Wangdue and Samdrup Jongkhar





Transport sector and construction sector training in Thimphu





Hotel and homestay sector training in Thimphu



Manufacturing sector training in Thimphu

Agriculture sector training in Thimphu

