

PRESS RELEASE

Today is UN Day and the theme of the day is *Youth Empowerment and Innovation for Achievement of the SDGs (Uwezeshaji wa Vijana Kiubunifu ili Kuyafikia Malengo ya Maendeleo Endelevu)*.

Innovation, creativity and improved business acumen nurtured will drive social enterprise, particularly amongst young men and women reached for empowerment and increased employability towards the national vision for prosperity through industrialization. Within this context, UNESCO implements the YouthMobile Initiative with a view to empower youth with the high-level skills and confidence to create mobile apps that are locally-relevant and contribute to the reduction of chronic youth unemployment. UNESCO has implemented YouthMobile projects in more than 25 countries worldwide reaching thousands of young women and men.

In Tanzania, UNESCO has partnered with Apps and Girls to organise the fourth edition of Africa Code Week. Taking place across 36 African countries, since the initiative was launched in 2015, Africa Code Week has introduced 1.8 million young Africans to the digital skills they need to thrive in the 21st century.

As we celebrate the day in Tanzania and throughout the world today, Chazinge Secondary School is one of two schools, out of six in Ilala and Kisarawe that UNESCO will be reaching to train 200 young girls on coding skills and applications. The other schools are Jamhuri Secondary School, Dar es Salaam Secondary School, Gerezani Secondary School and Benjamin Mkapa Secondary School in Ilala; and Kimani Secondary School in Kisarawe. The 200 youth will become part of over 2,489 young people engaged in Tanzania over the past two years to learn digital skills for development. The goal is to reach youth who would otherwise not have access to computers and ICT in their schools or homes with the aim to create a spark and inspire the girls to consider STEM and computer science as their subjects of preference on their academic and career paths. The training sessions will also expose the girls to different existing programs, hubs and creative spaces that they can use to grow their coding skills and get follow-up support in the field.

Youth have a crucial role to play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Over a third of the 169 SDG targets highlight the role of young people and the importance of their empowerment, participation, and well-being; and 20 targets across six SDGs are strongly focused on youth: Zero Hunger, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Reduced Inequalities, and Climate Action (UNDP, 2017: Youth as Partners for the Implementation of the SDGs). Furthermore, in June, 2014, the Heads of State and Government Summit of the African Union held in Malabo adopted the Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) continental strategy with the aim to ensure adequate linkages between training and the labour market needs; and for youth empowerment on the continent in order to meet the challenge of making available human resources capable of meeting Africa's developmental needs. Innovation and youth are an integral part of UNESCO priority for Africa.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a strong basis as a universal and local agenda for the advancement of knowledge societies and increased media literacy, particularly in this new age of fast and ever-changing digital transformation-which presents a solid foundation and a unique opportunity-for the work of UNESCO, specifically in Communication and Information over the next 12 years to 2030. And much longer in aspiring for the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063.

More information on the Global Goals can be accessed here: <https://www.globalgoals.org/resources>

Media enquiries:

Nancy Kaizilege, UNESCO Head of Communication and Information Sector | +255 789 288 730| nk.kaizilege@unesco.org