The African Centre for Women, Information and Communications Technology

- Established in 2001
- Is a pioneer Kenyan based Information and Communications Technology for Development (ICT4D) Organization with a regional reach
"Our mission is to promote women’s access to and use of ICTs as tools for social, economic and political advancement."
ACWICT’s core competency is the creation and delivery of programs that harness the power of ICTs to deliver to six key sectors of the Kenyan economy namely:

- employability
- education
- health
- agriculture
- peace building and conflict management
- governance.
Since 2007, in partnership with IYF and other organizations, ACWICT has been implementing employability programs.

To date, over 5000 youths have been trained with over 70% gaining meaningful employment.

Currently, with funding from the WB through IYF, ACWICT is implementing the “Ninaweza” youth empowerment program.
1) To increase the employability and income-generating capacity of 700 disadvantaged young women in informal settlements areas surrounding Nairobi, Kenya by providing them with comprehensive skills training (combining life skills, technical skills and on-the-job training) and job placement support.

2) To conduct an impact evaluation involving 1,490 young women to examine the impact on youth employability and income-generating capacity.
Intervention elements

- Assessment of market and youth needs, and adaptation of curricula to identified needs;

- Technical/vocational training in market-identified skill areas, with technical training in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) expected to be a focus area;

- Life skills training

- Work experience through internships

- Job placement assistance, as well as mentoring and business development support services for youth interested in pursuing self-employment.
Some of the activities being implemented with employers in the interest of placing youth in jobs:

- Creating and maintaining a database of potential employers including contact persons, when contacted, feedback received, etc.;
- Subscription and dissemination of existing listings of job opportunities
- Visits to businesses to meet with business owners, HR managers, and/or executive staff to explore internship and placement opportunities
- Organization of roundtable meetings with business leaders, existing and potential employers
- Participation in events organized by business associations;
- Creation of brochure and other materials with the logos of all training partners and do-nors.
Employers take

- Focus on self starters - creativity, flexibility, passion and commitment
- Some experience needed in some industries especially the technical ones
- Expect basic skills like computer and communication skills - esp. BPOs
- Limited time for supervision since the concept of internship is not fully embraced
- Limited or no stipend support for internships
- Most youth lack confidence in their capabilities
Participants’ perspective

- Overemphasis on support through training to job placement
- Life skill controlled groups not keen on internships
- Need to provide funding to start up entrepreneurship
- Employers to provide conducive terms of employment - some employers could actually be exploitative
- Life skill treated groups exhibit more confidence on their capabilities
- The challenge of experience still major
- Need for close supervision
Challenges and responses

- **Recruitment and retention of participants**
  Response: Transportation stipends for highest need treatment participants

- **Motivation of control group participants**
  Response: Participation stipend, enumerators ‘go to them’ for data collection

- **Security for participants and enumerators**
  Response: Police escorts, unmarked vehicles

- **Participant availability for data collection**
  Response: Flexible timeframe for data collection

- **Implementing partner capacity to reach required sample size**
  Response: Multiple cohorts, morning and afternoon shifts
Thank you!