



SCILLS Grant Program

The Strengthening Communities/Improving Lives and Livelihoods (SCILLS) program aims to contribute to economic growth and increase educational opportunities by supporting individuals and communities to more knowledgeably and skillfully use the Internet.

This program advances efforts to employ the Internet as a key tool to access better paying jobs in the digital economy, support entrepreneurs, and enhance educational outcomes.

The SCILLS program operates in target countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Currently, the six target countries are Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Ghana, Indonesia, and Senegal.

THE PROGRAM IN THREE NUMBERS

\$4,886,344

USD in new funding
disbursed in 2023

\$241,717

USD average grant
made to a SCILLS
grantee in 2023

17

SCILLS projects
completed
since 2020





Impact



Expanding to 3 New Countries

After three years of supporting projects in Bangladesh, Colombia and Senegal, the SCILLS program expanded to include Brazil, Ghana and Indonesia. This expansion was guided by learnings from prior SCILLS cohorts and considerations such as geography, socioeconomic contexts, Internet and mobile penetration, digital literacy, policy landscape, and the local nonprofit environment. Of the 20 grants approved in 2023, 11 will implement programs in the new target countries.

Building a Community of Practice

Between 2022 to 2023, the SCILLS program conducted grantee gatherings and site visits in Colombia, Senegal, and Bangladesh. These engagements promoted collaboration between the Foundation and the grantee cohort. In order to provide more meaningful connections amongst cohorts, we organized the first SCILLS Regional Kickoff, convening all SCILLS partners from Colombia and Brazil. The response was overwhelmingly positive and helped both the Foundation and participants understand how their projects will lead to desired change.

Implementing Internet Literacy Trainings

As we emerged from the pandemic, projects have adapted their digital literacy trainings to be more responsive to the needs of their communities. Our partners have worked with parents, caregivers and schools to support safe Internet use by students. When training entrepreneurs, projects offered soft skills development and promoted collaboration amongst participants to help Internet adoption. Finally, establishing relationships with the business community proved essential to support digital job placement of those trained on Internet applications.



9,250

students reached
with digital
content/skills



6,612

youth trained to
use the Internet for
economic opportunities



SCILLS 2023 KICKOFF,
NOV 2023,
SAO PAULO,
BRAZIL



Grantee Spotlight: significant outcomes



"The project has enabled landlocked localities far removed from the digital revolution to benefit from the program, fully promoting equal opportunities and reducing territorial disparities, while also helping to bridge the digital divide."

BOUNA KANE

Directeur Afrique - Simplon Foundation - Senegal



Raising Awareness About Safe Internet Use in Bangladesh

With the goal to promote Internet literacy and create a safe online environment that enables young children to harness the benefits of the Internet in Bangladesh, the "Safe Internet and Early Childhood Development" project, implemented by Sesame Workshop, targeted 100 primary schools to receive audiovisual and printed content. They have reached 4,000 children and established direct relations with parents and caregivers. The popularity and reach of Sisimpur's Muppets characters (how Sesame is referred to in Bangladesh), as well as a partnership with the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission ensured the massive distribution of materials and awareness from the schools' communities.

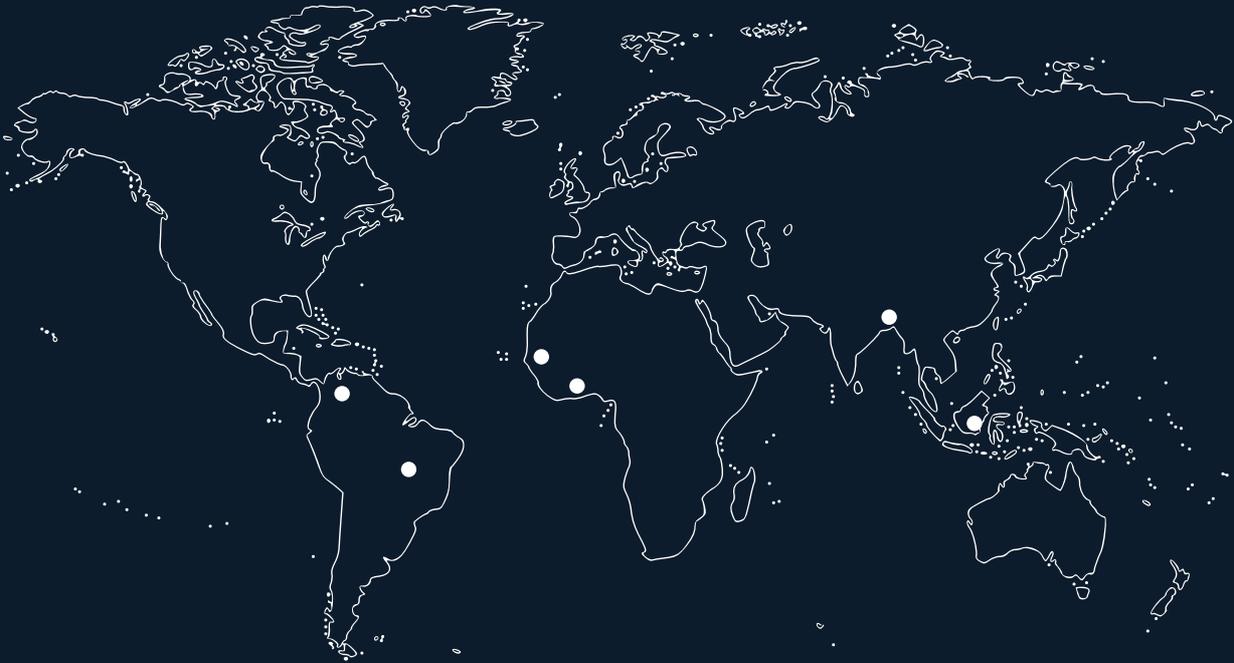


Increasing Digital Skills Among Underserved and Remote Communities in Senegal

Simplon Foundation has deployed a series of intensive, 5-day fundamental digital skills trainings in Senegal's capital, Dakar, and its suburban areas, as well as in the Ziguinchor region. Their goal is to support young jobseekers to enter the professional world and help introduce entrepreneurs to digital tools. From 2021-23, 446 participants were trained and, although many infrastructural and cultural challenges persist, Simplon identified that by the end of their trainings, 82.4% of the beneficiaries were using their new digital and technical skills as part of personal or professional projects. In addition, the project has encouraged beneficiaries to use the Internet more than 3 hours a day, with a rate of 60.8% compared with 43.7% before the trainings.



Countries We Funded in 2023



Bangladesh
Brazil

Colombia
Ghana

Indonesia
Senegal

The names shown on this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Internet Society Foundation concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city, or area of its authorities. We use ISO 3166 country codes and names.



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