

RESEARCH CONCEPT NOTE:

REMOTE WORK OPPORTUNITIES

THE OPPORTUNITY

There is a fantastic opportunity for people living in poverty to take advantage of remote work opportunities and make money serving a global market.

Development programmes spend billions of dollars annually supporting livelihoods and income generating activities. These train participants to produce and sell a variety of goods and services for the local market, such as agricultural produce, handicrafts, or retail. These projects frequently fail because the markets are small and over-saturated.

By contrast, the global market in remote, professional services will be worth [\\$17.4 billion by 2023](#). This includes some services, like web development, graphic design, translation, and accounting, which suit people with a high level of education, such as refugees from conflicts in middle-income countries. It also includes basic services, such as transcribing data, which can be performed by anyone with an internet connection and a foundational level of computer literacy. It also includes creative industries such as selling digital art.

This gigantic and growing market provides a fantastic opportunity to people living in poverty or insecurity. It allows them to transcend the geographic and economic barriers of life in a poor country, and to dramatically increase their income and skills. Any development organisation working in livelihoods should be exploring how they can take advantage of it. Unfortunately, with very few exceptions, they are not.

THE RESEARCH

We believe now is the right time to draw attention to this market opportunity.

We want to conduct a study to:

- Disaggregate and predict the market for professional services in the next decade, showing how opportunities are distributed by skill level.
- Highlight the concrete opportunities that people living in poverty can take advantage of. This will include well-known websites such as Upwork and Mturk, alongside other possibilities such as producing NFTs or earning money from in-game marketplaces.
- Assess the barriers that people might face when taking advantage of these opportunities.
- Designing intervention briefs, which organisations can take as a blueprint for implementation in their context.

THE PARTNERSHIP

DevLearn is a consultancy and training company specialising in implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and communications for inclusive economic growth.

We are looking for partners who can fund the initial research, act as implementation partners, or help us disseminate it among their network. If you might be interested in a partnership, please contact adam@devlearn.co.uk