

Detailed Concept Note

Title of the Event: UNEP Hackathon Finale: Live Youth Pitches & Digital Innovation and Data for the Environment

Date and Time: Tuesday, 2 September 2025, 1:15 PM – 2:45 PM (EAT)

Venue: CR 4, United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), capacity: 150 attendees

Format: Hybrid format (in-person + Microsoft Teams)

Organized by: UNEP, Office of the Chief Digital Officer

Focal Point: Clara Wegenast - clara.wegenast@un.org

Background

As the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and pollution intensify, there is an urgent need for bold and scalable digital solutions. *Hack for the Environment* is a UNEP-led initiative that empowers young innovators in Nairobi to innovate and co-create practical digital tools to address climate, nature, and pollution challenges.

The hackathon was implemented with a range of partners, who contribute technical training, including 7 masterclasses, mentorship support from about 40 mentors from different organizations, and outreach to Nairobi's youth innovation community.

Objectives of the Event

The event aims to celebrate and elevate youth-led digital innovation as a key driver in addressing the triple planetary crisis. It will present the most promising solutions developed during the *Hack for the Environment* hackathon, while also showcasing the creative process behind them through a short video.

A core objective of the hackathon which culminates in this event is to build capacity and actively engage with young digital talent in Nairobi. This event seeks to elevate the visibility of the solutions and innovations generated through the hackathon and highlight the role of digital and youth as partners in shaping a greener and digitally inclusive future. It will also foster connections between young innovators, UNEP staff, Member States, and the broader stakeholder community, while exploring opportunities for further development of the winning solutions.

Agenda

- Welcome and opening remarks
- Summary of the Hackathon journey and highlights
- Video Showcase: The Hackathon Journey
- Pitches of the top 7 hackathon teams

- Deliberation time and feedback
- Announcement of winners and closing remarks

Jury

1. **Inger Andersen** - Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme
2. **Ambassador Philip Thigo** - Special Envoy on Technology for the Republic of Kenya
3. **Ambassador Ali Mohamed** - Special Envoy for Climate Change for the Republic of Kenya
4. **Charity Wayua** - Director, IBM Research Africa
5. **Harry Hare** - Chairman & Publisher, CIO Africa

Expected Outcomes

- Capacity, youth empowerment, visibility & recognition: Participants have strengthened skills in digital, data, and design thinking through masterclasses, tailored mentorship and hands-on prototyping.
- Innovative solutions: Prototypes addressing climate, nature, and pollution are developed. Top solutions may advance through UNEP's Digital Accelerator Lab and contribute to real-world environmental outcomes.
- Ecosystem for sustainable digital transformation strengthened: Stronger ties and collaboration between youth innovators, UNEP, government, tech firms, and academia.
- Awareness: Showcase of how digital public goods and youth innovation can support environmental outcomes.