Capacity Development Webinar on

"Accelerating Digital Transformation for Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from COVID-19"

Co-organized by
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG)
&
Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS), Government of the Republic of Korea

In partnership with
National Information Society Agency (NIA), Republic of Korea

Tuesday, 13 October 2020
8:00 PM – 11:20 PM (Seoul, KST) | 7:00 AM – 10:20 AM (New York, EDT)
Via WebEx Event

I. Background

Five years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is clear that there is a strong commitment and momentum for implementation in the decade of action for the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is also clear that implementing the SDGs presents major challenges for Member States, particularly when compounded with the need to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the year 2020 witnessed unprecedented challenges to the world amidst the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. With social distancing and quarantine measures underway to contain the virus, digital solutions by leveraging ICTs and digital government have become critical to delivering essential public services and keeping people informed and engaged. Digital government, highly reliant on real-time data and analytics and full data sharing across government institutions and among stakeholders, has also enabled Government to prioritize and make rapid policy decisions, streamline institutional coordination and business processes, and empower local authorities to address COVID-19 at frontline. Yet, with more swift and assertive digital efforts by leveraging ICTs and digital government for effective responses to address the virus, concerns have re-emerged over data privacy, the digital divides, and lack of digital capacities in many countries.

While fully acknowledging the benefits and significant role of digital government for addressing COVID-19, many countries have started to scrutinize and review their digital government strategies in the context of pursuing a sustainable and resilient recovery in the Post-COVID-19 Era. Governments are resetting digital government strategies to align them with national development strategies, while making endeavors to address a wide range of policy issues, including: i) strengthening digital capacities at all levels of public governance, ii) enhancing better collaboration with ICT businesses and private sector, iii)

bridging the potentially widening digital divide by relaxing regulations and increasing connectivity and affordability of internet access, iv) instituting data governance for protection of privacy in delivering data-centric public services and building public trust, as well as v) promoting technology-driven innovation by introducing regulatory sandboxes.

The COVID-19 crisis also provided an unprecedented opportunity for Government to accelerate digital government transformation and digital economy development, as all Governments are confronted with the significant challenges of revitalizing the economy, mitigating hardships of people, especially of vulnerable groups, and reducing social tensions. Digital government transformation can be defined as the process of transforming governance models and interaction mechanisms between government and society and innovating government policymaking, organizations, services and programmes by leveraging digital technologies. It requires a holistic approach that puts people first and revolves around the needs of individuals, including those left furthest behind, and the mitigation of risks associated with the use of technologies[1].

The general public is demanding that their governments move quickly and take strong action in promoting and strengthening non-contact-based industries, such as distant education, telemedicine and working from home for building resilience. Governments are also expected to further expand digital infrastructure by developing AI, big data, cloud computing, and 5G. The business-as-usual approach will not work. Governments are also required to create new digital ecosystems, including embracing a new paradigm shift by transforming the role of Government as a platform for working with ICT businesses and private sector, for promoting innovations and the digital economy.

Over the past several years, many countries have been pursuing digital government strategies to advance digital transformation to enhance public sector efficiency and service delivery as well as promote better engagement of society. Some countries are setting new digital government strategies for revitalizing the economy in the Post-COVID-19 Era, e.g. the Digital New Deal[2] by the Moon Administration of the Republic of Korea, which could be shared with other countries for peer-to-peer learning.

Against this background, the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), with support from its Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), and the Ministry of the Interior and Safety of the Republic of Korea, are co-organizing a Capacity Development Webinar on "Accelerating Digital Transformation for Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from COVID-19". The objective of the webinar is to provide a platform to discuss and share knowledge about effective digital government strategies for accelerating digital transformation for a sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19. The webinar aims at sharing lessons learned and exchanging good practices in developing digital government strategies and strengthening digital capacities. This is in line with UN DESA's continued efforts to support the development of digital government capacities of Member States, including through study visits, multi-country/inter-regional training workshops, expert group meetings, and regional symposiums. The webinar will also provide an opportunity to highlight key findings of the UN E-Government Survey 2020, which was launched in July 2020.

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[1] UN E-Government Survey 2020 (Chapter 7, page 180).

[2] https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-05-07/south-korea-to-make-5g-ai-centerpieces-of-korean-new-deal

II. Thematic Focus

Digital government and digital cooperation are playing a critical role in countries across the world in their efforts to recover from the Covid-19. As evidenced by the 2020 UN E-Government Survey, digital government transformation is now an important component of the national sustainable development of many countries. During the pandemic, "Digital government technologies, through information sharing and online services provision, have kept Governments and people connected during the outbreak. Digital technologies have also enabled Governments to make rapid policy decisions based on real-time data and analytics, to enhance the capacities of local authorities for better coordination, and to deploy evidence-based services to those who need them most"[3].

Session 1: Setting Effective Strategies to Accelerate Digital Transformation

Digital transformation for recovery from COVID-19 and the mid- and long-term preparation for the "new normal" requires a more holistic and integrated strategy and setting roadmaps on the basis of enhanced interconnection and interoperability across different institutions and sectors at all levels. At the same time, they are expected to further foster decentralized, customized and personalized service delivery mechanisms to address the special demands from different parts and sectors of society, which are sharply increasing and evolving in the process of coping with the COVID-19 situation.

In this regard, effective digital transformation strategies and roadmaps for sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 need to include, among others: data sharing and data integration to overcome data silos across governments and sectors; policy and legislative frameworks for data privacy; flexible and customized policies for special areas, such as health, education, etc.; harnessing frontier technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI) and big data analytics; mid- and long-term investment in infrastructure, including for the so-called "non-contact industries"; capacity building of both government and non-governmental stakeholders; and creating an enabling digital ecosystem.

Also, ensuring whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches is imperative in the process of developing digital transformation strategies and setting roadmaps. Governments need to align their digital transformation strategy with country's mid- and long-term development plans, as well as digital strategies and plans at both national and sub-national levels. Governments also need to collaborate with other stakeholders, including the private sector, IT industry, academia, civil society organizations, and citizens, from the beginning stages of designing and developing strategies, not just at the implementation stage. This approach would help to maximize the mobilization of resources and skills across sectors and to address the varying demands of different parts of the society including vulnerable groups.

This Session will examine the key focus and elements of effective digital transformation strategies and roadmaps as a holistic solution for the COVID-19 recovery. It will also dwell on the mechanisms needed for the "new normal" in the Post-COVID-19 Era. Countries will share different perspectives, frameworks and paradigms in conceptualizing and developing their digital transformation strategies for the COVID-19 recovery, including building data-centric ecosystem. The Session will also introduce different country experiences in coordinating different levels of government and engaging diverse stakeholders in the process of strategy and roadmap development.

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[3] United Nations E-Government Survey 2020, https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2020-Survey/2020%20UN%20E-Government%20Survey%20(Full%20Report).pdf

Session 2: Building Capacities and Mindsets for Accelerating Digital Transformation

Developing and implementing effective digital transformation for sustainable, resilient and inclusive COVID-19 recovery requires a different set of capacities from those needed under normal circumstances. Government needs to be equipped with necessary capacities for implementing multi-dimensional and inter-level digital transformation strategies in a holistic and integrated way while promptly adapting to the different environment of the "new normal" in the Post-COVID-19 Era with agility. Strong leadership and innovative mindsets are also critical for setting the vision, priorities and strategies for digital transformation for the COVID-19 recovery, which is also distinct from the pre-COVID-19 times. Digital government transformation, which should be implemented through a whole of society approach, requires building capacities and changing mindsets of not only government institutions, but also other relevant stakeholders, including the IT sector, civil society organizations, and citizens.

This Session will examine what are the required capacities for accelerating digital government transformation for the COVID-19 recovery, and how countries can develop those capacities. Specifically, it will provide the opportunity to exchange knowledge on the required capacities at the societal, institutional, organizational, and individual levels. The Session will also highlight the importance of changing mindsets and strengthening collaborative leadership for advancing transformation and innovation in all parts of society while ensuring that no one is left behind.

Session 3: Promoting Global Digital Cooperation for Solidarity

The call for global digital cooperation is more urgent than ever as digital technologies and innovation stand at the center of effective and innovative responses and recovery strategies to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic is trans-boundary and requires concerted action from all countries. Global solidarity for advancing digital government transformation for sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 is therefore important to better harness the opportunities of digital government transformation while effectively addressing its challenges and policy concerns. The major areas that call for global digital cooperation, as also highlighted in UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation[4] launched in June 2020, include: improving global connectivity; enhancing access to digital public goods; bridging the digital divide and promoting digital inclusion; protecting digital human rights, including data protection and the right to privacy; and fostering digital trust and security. In addition to Governments, other non-governmental stakeholders also play a critical role in promoting global digital cooperation. Private companies are also playing a key role in improving digital infrastructure and developing digital capacities, especially in developing countries.

This Session will introduce different forms of global digital cooperation that can contribute to advancing digital transformation at national and regional levels. It will invite countries, regional and international organizations as well as the private sector that have taken proactive initiatives in promoting North-South, South-South and triangular digital cooperation to share their experiences and lessons learned for more effective global digital cooperation. This Session also aims to provide a platform for interaction and partnership building among the webinar participants as well as the speakers.

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[4] https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/

III. Draft Agenda

Time (KST)	Session
08:00-08:10 PM **(10 mins.)**	**Opening Session**
	Overall Moderator: Mr. Bokyun Shim, Head, United Nations Project Office on Governance, DPIDG/UN DESA
	Opening Remarks
	• **Mr. Elliott Harris,** Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Chief Economist, UN DESA
	• Vice Minister, Ministry of the Interior and Safety, Republic of Korea (TBC)
	• **Mr. Yong-sik Moon,** President, National Information Society Agency (NIA), Republic of Korea
08:10-09:10 PM **(60 mins.)**	**Session 1: Setting Effective Strategies to Accelerate Digital Transformation**
	Moderator: Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro, Chief, Digital Government Branch, DPIDG/UN DESA
	Panelists
	• **Mr. Siim Sikkut**, Government CIO/Deputy Secretary General for IT & Telecom, DG eGovernment Program/Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, **Estonia**
	• **Mr. Sung Joo Son**, Director, Digital Government Cooperation Division, Ministry of the Interior and Safety, **Republic of Korea**
	• **Mr. Mandla Ngcobo**, Government CIO, **South Africa** (TBC)
	• **Mr. Ali Nasser Alasiri,** Director General, Saudi e-Government Program, **Saudi Arabia** (TBC)
	• **Ms. Analía Verónica Gil,** Chief of Staff, Undersecretariat of Digital Government, Ministry of Modernization, **Argentina** (TBC)
	Interactive Discussion/Q&A
09:10-10:10 PM **(60 mins.)**	**Session 2: Building Capacities and Mindsets for Accelerating Digital Transformation**
	Moderator: Ms. Adriana Alberti, Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, DPIDG/UN DESA
	Panelists
	• **Mr. Yimin Wang**, Director of E-government Research Center, China National Academy of Governance, **China** (TBC)
	• **Mr. Raymundo Artis**, Coordinator of the National Digital Strategy of the Presidency of **Mexico** (TBC)
	• **Ms. Josephine Nyiranzeyimana**, Government Chief Information Officer, Rwanda Information Society Authority, **Rwanda** (TBC)
	• **NIA, Republic of Korea**
	• **Mr. Christofer Ferguson**, CIO, Digital Cabinet Office, **United Kingdom**
	• **Mr. Kyong-yul Lee**, Secretary General, **World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization (WeGO)**
	Interactive Discussion/Q&A

10:10-11:10 PM **(60 mins.)**	**Session 3: Promoting Global Digital Cooperation for Solidarity**
	Moderator: Mr. Keping Yao, Senior Governance and Public Administration Expert, UNPOG, DPIDG/UN DESA
	Panelists
	• **Ms. Tiziana Bonapace,** Director, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD), **UN ESCAP**
	• **Mr. Emannuelle Baldacci,** Director, Directorate D, Digital Services, **EU** (TBC)
	• **Mr. Salim Asham,** Director, Global Head of Strategy Consulting Alliances, **Google** (TBC)
	• **TBC**
	• **Mr. Anir Chowdhury,** Policy Advisor, Access to Information (a2i) Programme, **Bangladesh** (TBC)
	• **Mr. Chan Cheow Hoe**, Government Chief Digital Technology Officer, Smart Nation and Digital Government Office, **Singapore**
	Interactive Discussion/Q&A
11:10-11:20 PM **(10 mins.)**	**Closing Session**
	Closing Remarks
	• **Mr. Bokyun Shim**, Head, United Nations Project Office on Governance, DPIDG/UN DESA
	• **Mr. Suwan Jang**, Director-General, Digital Government Bureau, Ministry of the Interior and Safety, Republic of Korea

IV. Contact

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