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ESCAP 75
MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Capacity Development Webinar

Advancing Digital Government Transformation for Accelerating the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

Launch of the Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation

30 May 2023

15:00 – 16:40 Seoul (GMT+ 9)
13:00 – 14:40 Bangkok (GMT+ 7)
09:00 – 10:40 Addis Ababa (GMT+3)
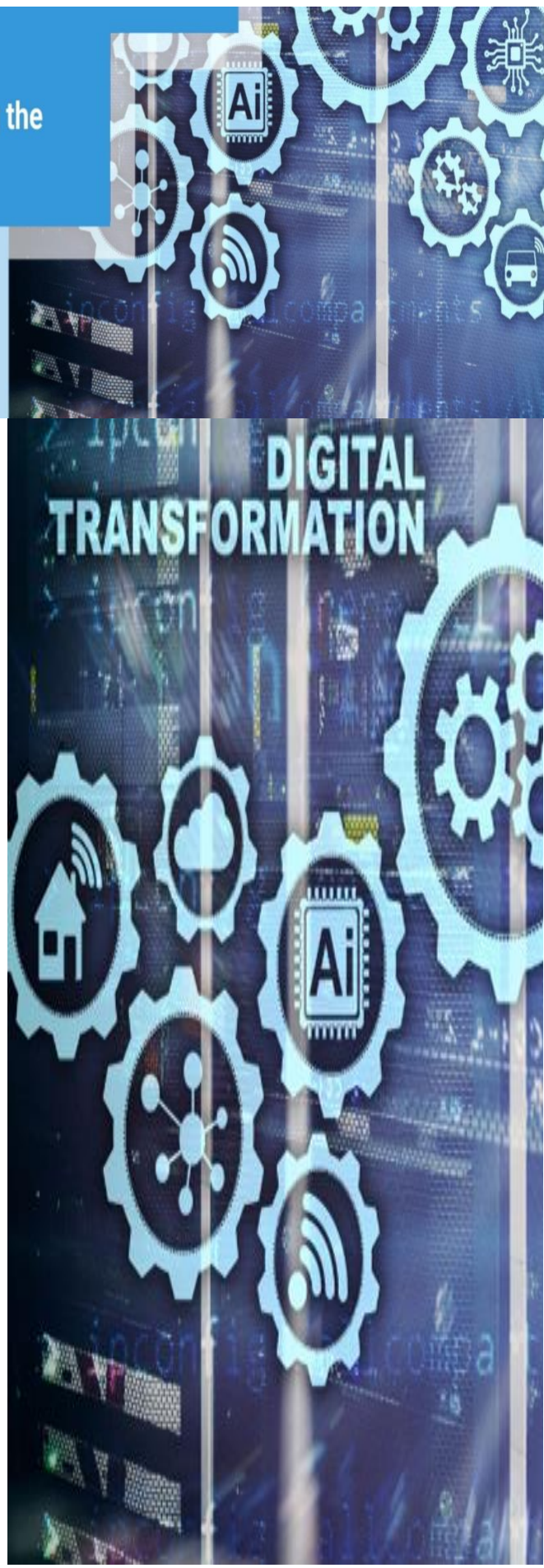
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Outcome Report

August 2023

Capacity Development Webinar

Advancing Digital Government Transformation for Accelerating the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

Launch of the
Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation

Via Zoom

OUTCOME REPORT

August 2023

Organized by the
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government
and
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social, and environmental spheres and national action. The department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates, and analyses a wide range of economic, social, and environmental data and information on which States Members of the United Nations draw to review common problems and to take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on a joint course of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capacities.

United Nations Project Office on Governance

The United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) is part of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). Its principal mission is to strengthen the public governance capacities of developing the Member States in Asia, the Pacific, and beyond to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The operational work of UN DESA, and thus UNPOG, aims to strengthen the capacities of developing countries to translate internationally agreed policy frameworks into strategies and programmes at all levels of public governance. The focus on strengthening the capacity of public administration falls within the mandate of UN DESA's Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government.

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in the Asia-Pacific region. The Commission promotes cooperation among its 53 member States and 9 associate members in pursuit of solutions to sustainable development challenges. ESCAP is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

The ESCAP secretariat supports inclusive, resilient and sustainable development in the region by generating action-oriented knowledge, and by providing technical assistance and capacity-building services in support of national development objectives, regional agreements and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development. ESCAP also provides support to partners at the national level. ESCAP's national offer is rooted in and linked with the implementation of global and regional intergovernmental frameworks, agreements, and other instruments. ESCAP pursues this objective by carrying out work in close cooperation with other United Nations entities and intergovernmental organizations in the region.

Disclaimers

Websites: publicadministration.un.org, unpan.un.org and unpog.org

Acknowledgments

This report captures the main outcomes from the Capacity Development Webinar on **Advancing Digital Government Transformation for Accelerating the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**" to launch the Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation, jointly organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), and the Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD) of UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). We are grateful to Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director of IDD/UN ESCAP and Mr. Tae Hyung KIM, Chief of ICT and Development Section of IDD/UN ESCAP for partnering with UN DESA to organize this Webinar.

Under the responsibility of Juwang Zhu, Director of DPIDG, the UN DESA team was led by Kyu Chang Ko, Head of UNPOG, Keping Yao, Senior Governance and Public Administration Expert, Carolit Salvacion, Associate Networking and Outreach Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG, with the guidance of Adriana Alberti, Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, and the extensive contribution and support of Vincenzo Aquaro, Chief of Digital Government Branch, Anni Haataja-Beeri, Programme Management Officer, Nosipho Dhladhla, Information Management Officer, and Huiwen Tan, Public Information Assistant, DPIDG/UN DESA.

This report benefited from presentations, fruitful discussions, comments, recommendations provided by Sung Joo Son from Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS) of Republic of Korea; Sean Doral from ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; Tae Hyung Kim from IDD of UN ESCAP; Khen Gee TAN from GovTech of Singapore; Anir Chowdhury from a2i of Bangladesh; Shah Nasir Khan from UN Resident Coordinator Office in Pakistan; Haozhi Pan from the Asian Association for Public Administration (AAPA); Alex B. Brillantes from the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA); John Nakabago from the African Association of Public Administration and Management (AAPAM); Abir Achour from the African Local Governments Academy (ALGA) of UCLG Africa; Lizan E. Perante-Calina from the Development Academy of the Philippines and the Philippine Society; Semral Aliyev from the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President, Azerbaijan; and Steven Matainaho, Secretary from the Department of ICT of Papua New Guinea; Lei Zheng from the Lab for Digital and Mobile Governance of Fudan University, China; and Vincenzo Aquaro, Yun Sook Lee and Keping Yao from UN DESA .

This report has been prepared by Keping Yao, Senior Governance and Public Administration Expert. The report benefited greatly from the review and comments made by Kyu Chang Ko, Head of UNPOG.

The Capacity Development Webinar, which successfully launched the Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation [Document] [PowerPoint], helped enhance an understanding of the importance to adopt a holistic approach to digital government transformation and raise awareness of the required capacities for digital government transformation at institutional, organisational, individual and societal levels. The Webinar also provided a good venue to share country experiences in promoting digital inclusion through bridging the digital divides and developing capacities of people in vulnerable situations. The representatives of the Global Network of Schools of Public Administration also provided good recommendations on how to mainstream the Toolkit in the Curricula of the Public Administration Schools and Training Institutes to develop digital capacities of capacity developers to promote digital government transformation. The Toolkit aims provides methodologies and approaches to advance knowledge and assist governments in developing capacities at the individual, organisational, and institutional/societal levels to drive digital government transformation for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Abbreviation

a2i: aspire to innovate

AAPA: Asian Association for Public Administration

AAPAM: African Association of Public Administration and Management

ALGA: African Local Governments Academy

DPIDG: Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government

ECOSOC: United Nations Economic and Social Council

EGDI: E-Government Development Index

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

ITU: International Telecommunication Union

LDCs: Least Developed Countries

LLDCs: Landlocked Developing Countries

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SIDS: Small Island Developing States

UCLG: United Cities and Local Governments

UN DESA: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UN ESCAP: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

UNPAN: United Nations Public Administration Network

UNPOG: United Nations Project Office on Governance

UNRCO: United Nations Resident Coordinator Office

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I.   Executive Summary

In an era when the world is facing interlinked and cascading crises with far-reaching implications for public health, jobs, social equity, climate change, and environmental protection, digital government plays an increasingly vital role in accelerating the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Governments around the world are using digital technologies to innovate the way they operate, share information, make decisions, and deliver services, as well as to engage and partner with people to solve policy challenges of public concern. Yet, many countries remain ill-equipped to effectively leverage digital technologies and provide accessible, reliable, fast, personalised, secure, and inclusive services and empower people through open and participatory mechanisms[1]. In this context, while realising the importance and benefits of digital government transformation, many countries especially countries in special situations are confronted with a multitude of challenges notably in technological, governance and institutional dimensions. UN DESA supports Member States in strengthening their capacities for digital government transformation for achieving sustainable development.

In this regard, with reference to the 2020 and 2022 editions of UN E-Government Survey, the United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), which is part of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), developed the Training Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation, which provides national and local governments with a comprehensive framework, practical strategies, and tools to embrace a holistic approach and develop required capacities for digital government transformation. It also provides a step-by-step guideline on how to conduct a situation analysis to assess capacity gaps, undertake an envisioning exercise by adhering to the SDGs and fostering design thinking, and devise a strategy and road map to digital government transformation. It examines how to develop capacities at institutional, organisational, individual, and societal levels including highlighting the importance of changing mindsets as well as the need of recruiting, retaining, and motivating the best digital talent within government and creating safe spaces in which individuals can nurture innovation. It puts particular emphasis on how to develop digital capacities of people in vulnerable situations to promote digital inclusion through bridging the digital divide. Since digital government transformation is a dynamic process and a long journey instead of a final destination, the continuous monitoring and evaluation of digital services are essential. So this Toolkit also introduces the objectives, methods, and indicators of monitoring and evaluation of the progress of digital government transformation.

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[1] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), United Nations E-Government Survey 2020

Against this background, DPIDG/UNPOG and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific co-organized a Capacity Development Webinar on "Capacity Development Webinar on Advancing Digital Government Transformation for Accelerating the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals" to launch the Toolkit.

The Webinar provided a platform to discuss the recent trends in digital government transformation on global, regional, and country levels and the required competencies of government officials. The representatives from the Global Network of Schools of Public Administration also provided recommendations on approaches to mainstreaming the Toolkit in the Curricula of the Public Administration Schools and Training Institutes for developing digital capacities of capacity developers to promote digital government transformation in the A-P and African regions.

The Webinar was very much appreciated by the participants. The respondents of the post-event evaluation gave consistently high ratings of "Very Satisfied" and "Satisfied" on the relevance, clarity and quality of the Webinar. Overall, **97.2%** (143 out of 147) are "very satisfied" or "Satisfied" with the Webinar; **99.3%** (146/147), **96.5%** (142/147) and **95.2%** (140/147) are "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the importance/relevance of the topics, the quality of presentations and the overall facilitation/delivery of the Webinar. Though **91.8%** (135/147) of responses are "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the "Duration of the Webinar", many of them requested extending the length of the Webinar with more time for interactive discussion. The participants liked most of discussions of the Webinar on: 1) the whole-of-government approach to digital government development, 2) sharing best practices among countries with different insights, 3) introduction on the Toolkit, 4) the importance of changing mindsets, 5) building strategies of digital government transformation, 6) digital as new form of inequality, digital divide and the importance of digital inclusion and leaving no one behind, and 7) the importance of developing digital capacities of public sector at all levels and the society in general.

The Webinar was pre-registered by **1214** registrations from **88** countries, mostly from the Asia-Pacific and African regions; and there were more than **300** participants online for most of the duration of the Webinar.

II.   Key Messages

1.   **Digital Transformation means a new development paradigm and its process for the fabric of the whole society**, in terms of value creation, management, use and

distribution through applications of disruptive technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), digital data, connectivity and network.

2.   **The future of digital government should not be digital but hybrid**. Despite investments in technology and the development gains achieved in many countries, the digital divide persists. The primary objective should not be digital development only but rather recognizing human agency and supporting human development through digitalization. Digital divides are not static; vulnerability is a dynamic and shifting state, and a list of risk factors is not always sufficient to identify those who need different ways to access and utilize services. The path to digital inclusion and sustainable development remains fraught with obstacles and uncertainties, especially in Africa and among LDCs and SIDS.

3.   **LNOB should guide policy development and implementation in e-government and the public sector.** An inclusive, integrated digital/analogue ecosystem is needed to facilitate and sustain inclusive e-government development so that everyone benefits, and no one is left behind. Governments should adopt "inclusion by design", "inclusion by default" or "inclusion first" strategies. Targeted, localized and contextual approaches are key, as not all excluded groups are confronted with the same barriers.

A whole-of-government approach that integrates multilevel, multisectoral and multidisciplinary strategies and partnerships is needed for the implementation of inclusive digital government. Top-down and bottom-up approaches should be combined to better understand and address the e-government needs of the most vulnerable.

4.   **Cognitive government, agile and adaptive government, and the development of predictive capabilities can better anticipate and respond to the needs of all members of society.** New approaches are strengthening Member States analytical and anticipatory capabilities and shaping future development scenarios. Member States are moving towards seamless, invisible government in which fully automated services are made accessible to anyone anytime from anywhere.

5.   **Legal systems, regulations and programs with clear incentives & penalties are necessary for successful and efficient digital transformation.** Public sector digital transformation requires various enabling factors to be in place. In the case of the Republic of Korea, these tools include legislation on e-government and use of public data, institutional arrangements for annual evaluations of government organizations including criterial for digital transformation and public data quality management level, systematic management and financial and technical support for public sector

digital transformation projects.

6. **Digital Platform Government is when a government works with citizens and business to solve social problems and create new values upon a "digital platform" where all data are connected.** For digital platform government, data integration and public-private collaboration are key with better use of open public data, user-centered, proactive and personalized public services, and protection of personal information.

7. **A Whole-of-Government Approach (National Policy/Strategy/Plan) is required for digital development at both national and local levels and digital transformation requires an ecosystem.**

III. Summary of Discussion

1) Opening Session

Mr. Kyu Chang Ko, Head of United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), DPIDG/UN DESA, welcomed all participants and introduced that one priority area of our work is to support developing countries in strengthening their capacities for digital government transformation to achieve sustainable development. Mr. Ko pointed out that many countries remain ill-equipped and are confronted with a multitude of challenges, in technological, governance and institutional dimensions in the process of digital government transformation. Mr. Ko introduced the Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation as a useful tool to support Member States in their endeavors to develop capacities, explore solutions to overcome challenges and advance digital government transformation.

Mr. Ko also highlighted the importance of strengthening digital cooperation among countries for fast tracking digital government transformation of developing countries.

Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, UN ESCAP, expressed her appreciation to UNPOG for the preparation of the Webinar and the partnership with UN ESCAP in her addressing at the opening. Ms. Bonapace emphasized the role of digital government in driving sustainable development with the potential to enhance public service delivery, promote transparency, foster innovation, and ultimately, contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. Ms. Bonapace introduced the efforts by UN ESCAP in promoting digital cooperation and accelerating digital transformation through the operation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Action Plan 2022-2206, which is the largest network among governments in the Asia-Pacific in the field of digital and ICT. Ms. Bonapace also reaffirm her commitment to continue to deepen this collaboration, leveraging our shared resources and expertise, to further the cause of digital transformation and government innovation.

2) Session 1: Recent trends in Digital Government Transformation: Challenges, Approaches and Strategies, and Required Competencies of Government Officials

Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro, Chief of Digital Government Branch, DPIDG, UN DESA
Global and Regional Trends and Key Findings – An Overview of 2022 UN E-Government Survey.

The UN E-Government Survey 2022 indicates that the last 8 years has witnessed an increasing number of countries improving e-government development. Overall, the upward trend is encouraging. Yet, while we observed widespread reliance on digital technologies for services delivery during the COVID-19, the global average E-Government Development Index (EGDI) value only increased by a small margin in 2022. Data evidence shows how digital transformation has not yet materialized in a more homogeneous and comprehensive manner, especially for developing countries. At regional level, Europe continues to remain for the 12th time the leader region, followed by Asia, the Americas, Oceania and Africa. For developing countries, the path to digital inclusion and sustainable development remains fraught with obstacles and uncertainties.

Despite investments in technology and the development gains, achieved in many countries, the digital divide persists and for some group of countries increase. Ongoing challenges continue to undermine the development efforts of countries in special situations, especially the Least Developed Countries, as clearly shown in this map. Using the global average EGDI value as a proxy for measuring the digital divide, the 2022 Survey indicates that about 45 per cent of the combined world population - 3.5 billion people - still lags behind.

The new face of inequality is digital. In digital transformation the primary objective should be recognizing human agency and supporting human development through digitalization, as the future will be still hybrid and not only digital. Therefore, the future should be an inclusive, integrated analogue-digital ecosystem that must ensure no one is left behind. Digital Government should always work as an equalizer for inclusion. To do so, a whole-of-government approach that integrates multilevel, multisectoral and multidisciplinary strategies is needed starting from the principle of "inclusion by design" or "inclusion first" before doing digital by design.

More Member States are deploying cutting-edge technologies such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence and blockchain. Some have developed new methods for exploiting data-driven policy modelling tools, and have created pilot initiatives and sandboxes to design, validate and scale up innovative solutions. New approaches are strengthening Member States analytical and anticipatory capabilities and are shaping future development scenarios. Governments are setting themselves up to better anticipate and respond to the needs of all members of society.

Looking to the future, the Survey indicate that a growing number of countries are moving towards seamless, invisible government in which fully automated and personalized services are made accessible to anyone anytime from anywhere – using cutting-edge technologies. Innovations and digital transformation must always aim to be truly inclusive. But the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should remain the government blueprint for building a healthier and more resilient and inclusive future and *Leaving no one behind* should become the operational principle for the future, guiding digital development-and making e-government as a force for good.

Mr. Sung Joo Son, Director, Digital Government Cooperation Division, Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS), Republic of Korea
Korea's Journey toward Digital Platform Government
Korea's Digital Development has experienced

more than 50 years of continuous development since 1960s. The digital service delivery has evolved from separated services to service integration by policy area, whole-of-government services ([gov.kr](gov.kr) and data.go.kr), and personalized services in multiple channels with virtual assistant for citizen in various commercial Apps.

To achieve this progress, digital literacy and capacity development of public officials are critical. Public officials at the back end must be accustomed to digital tools for efficient and collective work and those officials in charge of digital service design, implementation, and operation must have adequate digital skills.

For ensuring and supporting successful and efficient public sector digital transformation, there should be various legal systems, regulations and programs with clear incentives & penalties, which include: i) legal obligations and mandatory missions of government institutions, ii) institutional Performance Evaluation including criteria for digital transformation and Assessment of Public Data Quality Management Level, iii) systematic management of public sector digital transformation projects, and iv) financial & technical support for public sector digital transformation projects.

To address current problems with citizens, government and businesses in terms of more friendly, integrated and motivated engagement in public services, the digital platform government that works with citizens and businesses to solve social problems and create new values upon a digital platform where data are connected has become an ideal solution. The digital platform government aims to: i) provide proactive, personalized and seamless public services, ii) facilitate scientific and rational government management by using AI and data, and iii) establish ecosystem for public private collaboration to develop innovative mash-up services and grow digital economy.

9 Principles of Digital Platform Government

1. A government should actively encourage public-private collaboration to nurture innovation ecosystem and shared growth of the public and the private sector.

2. Public data should be open by default in machine-readable digital formats.

3. Public services should be user-centered, integrated, proactive, and personalized for each citizen.

4. A government should break down silos and implement the whole-of-government with digital platforms.

5. A government should redesign administrative processes, innovate organizational culture, and overhaul personnel management systems.

6. A government uses data and artificial intelligence for evidence-based scientific decision making.

7. A government should protect personal information and ensure safe and reliable access to public services.

8. A government uses and develops open standards to facilitate sharing data and services between the public and the private sector.

9. A government should comply with existing global standards and actively contribute to the creation of new global standards in the course of developing Government as a Digital Platform

**Mr. Sean Doral, Programme Officer, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**
Recent trends in Digital Government Transformation: Challenges, Approaches and Strategies
The strategic plan of ITU focuses on two key goals: universal connectivity and sustainable digital transformation, which aim to i) ensure that every individual, regardless of their background or location, could have access to reliable and affordable digital services and ii) leverage ICTs to drive economic growth, foster social inclusion, and promote environmental sustainability.

The digital divide remains a significant challenge worldwide. In 2022, approximately 66% of the global population had internet access, but in the least developed countries (LDCs), that number dropped to only 36%. This disparity highlights the importance of targeted efforts to bridge this gap. Disparities exist between urban and rural areas, as well as between male and female users. Bridging these gaps is crucial for achieving inclusive digital transformation. Even when infrastructure is available, there is often a gap between those who have access to a mobile broadband network and those who actually use the internet. **Digital inclusion is a fundamental aspect of digital transformation.**
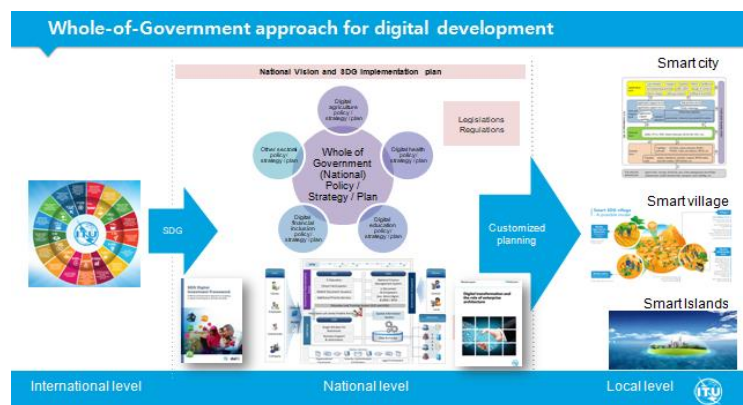
Digital transformation involves interdependencies among digital technologies, communication infrastructure, and skills development. To overcome these challenges,

adopting a whole-of-government approach is highly recommended. This approach aligns international goals, such as the SDGs, with national visions and implementation plans. **Digital transformation requires an ecosystem approach, where partnerships and collaboration across sectors are key**. The Partner2Connect initiative promotes collaboration and knowledge-sharing among stakeholders.

Digital transformation should not be limited to the national level. Supporting digital transformation at the community level has become increasingly important, with initiatives like Smart Village and Smart Islands leverage digital technologies and strategies to enhance the quality of life and services in rural and remote areas. Digital skills training is essential for equipping individuals with the knowledge and competencies needed to thrive in the digital age.

**Mr. Tae Hyung Kim, Chief, ICT and Development Section, IDD, UN ESCAP**
Digital Government for an Inclusive Digital Transformation
Digital transformation goes beyond digitization and digitalization. Digital Transformation, according to Asia Pacific Digital Transformation Report 2022, pertains to a new development paradigm and its process for the fabric of the whole society, in terms of value creation, management, use and distribution through applications of disruptive technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), digital data, connectivity and network. One key nature of digital transformation is its irreversibility.

In general, there are three key challenges of digital transformation. *First*, understanding changing digital environments due to rapid, comprehensive, complex and interdependent factors. *Second*, a new development paradigm and regulatory framework for new demands in a more flexible, adaptive and corroborative way is required to survive in an upcoming digital society. *Third*, enhancing the leading and adaptive capacity of government.

ESCAP has mainstreamed digital transformation in its work, which include i) inter-governmental perspective, e.g. the 2nd Asia Pacific Digital Ministerial Conference in October 2024, ii) research perspective, e.g., Asia Pacific Digital Transformation Report 2022, iii) Asia Pacific ICT Network perspective, i.e. the operation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) Initiative and the APIS Action Plan 2022-2026 (ESCAP resolution 79/7 in May 2023), and iv) implementation perspective with projects and programmes for institutional capacity building. More specifically, the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (APIS) Initiative include three pillars: connectivity for all, digital technologies & applications, and digital data.
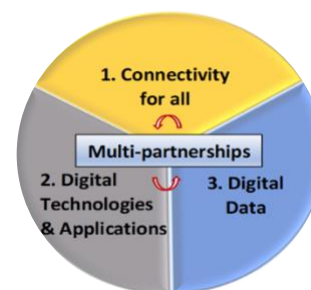
Mr. Semral Aliyev, Head of Design of Services and Innovations Department, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations (SAPSSI), Azerbaijan

Success Factors of Digital Government Transformation

A significant success factor of digital government transformation is strong leadership and vision. Leadership plays a crucial role in driving the transformation process, setting clear goals, and inspiring stakeholders to embrace digital initiatives. Effective leaders within the government provide the necessary guidance, resources, and support to implement and sustain digital transformation efforts.

Based on the experience of Azerbaijan, key factors of digital governance are as follows:

1. *Strategic Planning*: Leaders develop a comprehensive strategic plan that outlines the vision, goals, and roadmap for digital transformation.
2. *Policy and Governance*: Leaders establish policies and governance frameworks that promote digital innovation, ensure data privacy and security, and streamline decision-making processes
3. *Resource Allocation*: Leaders allocate appropriate resources, including budget, skilled personnel, and infrastructure, to support digital transformation projects.
4. *Change Management*: Leaders effectively manage the change associated with digital transformation by communicating the benefits, addressing concerns, and involving stakeholders at various levels.
5. *Collaboration and Partnerships*: Leaders foster collaboration within the government and with external stakeholders, such as private sector organizations, academic institutions, and civil society.

Azerbaijan has also come across many challenges. **One of the challenges is lack of digital skills and knowledge.** Many government officials do not possess the necessary digital skills and knowledge to effectively navigate the complexities of digital transformation. This includes lack of understanding on emerging technologies, data management, cybersecurity, and leveraging digital tools and platforms.

Another challenge is resistance to change. Resistance to change is a common challenge in any organizational transformation, including digital government initiatives. Some officials may be resistant to adopting new technologies, changing work processes, or adjusting to new roles and responsibilities. Overcoming resistance and fostering a culture of openness to change is crucial. Communications on the potential benefits, creating a shared vision, and providing training and support programs for government officials could help solve this problem.

The other main issue is about cybersecurity and data protection direction. The digitization of government services increases the risk of cybersecurity threats and data breaches. Government officials must address cybersecurity challenges, establish robust security measures, and ensure the privacy and protection of citizens' data.

It is crucial to create digital cooperation with other countries in order to be successful in digital government transformation and overcome challenges. Digital

cooperation with other countries fosters knowledge sharing, promotes interoperability, strengthens cybersecurity, facilitates cross-border services and trade, enhances innovation, supports policy harmonization, and enables collaborative approaches to address global challenges. It creates a framework for countries to work together, leverage each other's strengths, and collectively navigate the opportunities and complexities of the digital era.

In summary, to be successful at digital government transformation, all stakeholders should take into account current situation and challenges, research on best solutions and do several programs on this direction with regional and global cooperation.

Mr. Steven Matainaho, Secretary, Department of ICT, PNG
Challenges and Initiatives of Digital Transformation in PNG
One of the primary hurdles we face is the lack of coordination among various government entities in the digitalization process. This lack of coordination has led to fragmented efforts and a slower pace of progress. Additionally, there has been a need for a champion of digital transformation within the government to drive and coordinate initiatives effectively.

To address these challenges, Papua New Guinea has undertaken several strategic approaches. We formulated the **Digital Transformation Policy** in 2020, which provides a comprehensive framework to guide our digitalization efforts. This policy aims to create an enabling environment for digital government transformation by promoting innovation, enhancing digital skills, and improving service delivery to citizens.

Furthermore, recognizing the need for updated legislation to support digital transformation, we restructured the **Digital Government Act** in 2022. This act establishes a solid legal foundation for the implementation of digital government

initiatives and ensures compliance with international standards and best practices.

In addition, we have taken significant steps to bolster our cybersecurity capabilities by establishing the **National Cyber Security Centre**. This center plays a crucial role in safeguarding our digital infrastructure, protecting citizens' data, and fostering trust in digital government services.

In the early part of this year, we have rolled out the **Government Cloud and Digital ID Wallet Conceptual Framework** as part of our **Government Technology Stack**. These initiatives are aimed at improving efficiency, reducing duplication of efforts, and enhancing the security and accessibility of government services for our citizens.

While these efforts are commendable, we recognize that digital transformation cannot be achieved in isolation. **Collaboration and digital cooperation with the Pacific Community are of paramount importance**. The Pacific region shares common challenges and opportunities, and together, we can leverage our strengths and resources to drive digital transformation in a coordinated and impactful manner.

In conclusion, Papua New Guinea is fully committed to embracing digital government transformation for the betterment of our nation and our people. We recognize the challenges we face, but we are determined to overcome them through strategic policies, legislative reforms, strengthened cybersecurity measures, and the implementation of innovative digital solutions.

With continued collaboration and digital cooperation within the Pacific Community and with the support of organizations like UNPOG/DPIDG and UN ESCAP, we can unlock the full potential of digital transformation to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

3) Session 2: Overview Introduction of the Toolkit

Mr. Lei Zheng, Director, Lab for Digital and Mobile Governance, Professor, Fudan University, China
Mr. Keping Yao, Senior Governance and Public Administration Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA

The Training Toolkit provides national and local governments with a set of comprehensive frameworks, practical strategies, and tools to understand the importance of a holistic approach to digital government transformation in pursuit of sustainable development and to develop required capacities for digital government transformation at the institutional, organizational, individual and societal levels. The Toolkit is structured into 7 Chapters.

The first two chapters give an overall introduction on the importance of promoting and accelerating digital government transformation through a holistic approach. Chapters Three to Six elaborate on four steps and the building blocks of

Table 7.2   Key pillars of a road map for digital governance transformation and digital capacity development

1. **Vision, leadership and mindsets:** Strengthen transformational leadership, build digital capacities, and change mindsets at the individual and institutional levels.
2. **Institutional and regulatory framework:** Establish a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework for the development of an integrated institutional ecosystem.
3. **Organizational set-up and culture:** Transform the organizational set-up and culture.
4. **Systems thinking and integration:** Promote systems thinking and the development of integrated approaches to policymaking and service delivery.
5. **Data governance:** Ensure the strategic and professional management of data to address data access and use priorities and enable data-driven policymaking.
6. **ICT infrastructure and affordability and access to technology:** Provide access to high-speed broadband Internet and safe and secure access to new technologies for all.
7. **Resources:** Mobilize resources and align priorities, plans and budgeting, including through public-private partnerships.
8. **Capacities of capacity developers:** Enhance the capacities of schools of public administration and other capacity-building entities and mechanisms.
9. **Societal capacities:** Develop capacities at the societal level to bridge the digital divide and ensure that no one is left behind.

Source: 2020 United Nations E-Government Survey.

implementing digital government transformation include: (1) situation analysis, (2) envisioning, (3) strategy, roadmap, and capacities development, and (4) monitoring, evaluation, and improvement. The situation analysis helps define the general development objectives and how digital technologies can support the overall vision and strategy of nation development. The envisioning is aimed to develop shared goals reflecting interests, needs and skills. The national strategy and roadmap introduces the overall purpose of digital government for the country, how it relates to the country's SDG priorities, its key development objectives, and how it will benefit people through aligning with subnational-level strategies and placing emphasis on both "leaving no one offline" and "leaving no one behind". Capacities at institutional, organizational, individual, and societal levels all need to be developed for digital government transformation. The continuous monitoring and evaluation of digital services, as a part of cyclic policy process, help to evaluate progress in the medium term and measure what is happening in relation to what was planned. Finally, Chapter Seven wraps up the whole programme with the action plan exercise and training evaluation.

The Training Toolkit can be used to enhance the understanding of digital government transformation by conveying the message that the transformation is not only about technology, but more importantly, about governance transformation. It can also be used to learn member countries' digital government transformation experiences. Users can use the toolkit with a staged approach to developing government capacities towards digital transformation from situation analysis and envisioning to developing national strategy and roadmap. The Toolkit is also highly interactive with a set of exercises for users to reflect and practice.

IV. Recommendations and Commitments by Representatives from the Global Network of Schools of Public Administration

Mr. Shah Nasir Khan – Head of UN RCO and Senior Strategic Planner for UN System
Digital Government Transformation – A Case of Pakistan
The Kepios analysis indicates that internet users in Pakistan increased by 22 million (+35.9 percent) between 2021 and 2022. Meanwhile, GSMA Intelligence's numbers indicate that mobile connections in Pakistan were equivalent to 82.2 percent of the total population in January 2022. **While the technology and internet footprint has increased significantly, Pakistan's overall internet penetration is still below 40%. The digital divide is even bigger from the gender lens.** Access to internet by women

will induce changes in behaviors, create education opportunities, bring about communication facilities as well as possible economic revenues.

Pakistan has realized the importance of prioritizing digital transformation to boost economy. The challenges of digital government transformation in Pakistan include: i) **policy formulation and planning as well as implementation and changing mindsets for a Digital Pakistan,** ii) **insufficient digital infrastructure,** iii) **Digital Literacy Gap**: the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2019-20 reported that only 40% of households in Pakistan have a computer-literate person, pointing to a significant digital literacy gap (PBS, 2020), iv) **Bureaucratic Hurdles**: The entrenched bureaucratic culture often resists the transition towards digitalization. A study by Zaidi et al. (2022) highlights that such resistance stems from fear of transparency, loss of power, and the perceived threat of job redundancy, and v) **trust deficit to share sensitive information.**

Leveraging current Partnerships to operationalize the Toolkit in Pakistan. UN RCO Pakistan, in partnership with UN DESA's DPIDG and UNPOG, has forged strategic partnerships with Pakistan public administration schools (NSPP, CSA, NIM) involving senior civil servants in the embedment of the Toolkit on Changing Mindsets in Public Institutions for trainings at various levels to achieve SDGs. Civil servants are well-positioned to create transformative change by turning ideas and visions into a course of action that generates the desired outcome. The Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation comes at a crucial time, providing structural guidance to address the challenges highlighted earlier and accelerate the pace of digital government transformation in Pakistan. The Toolkit includes concrete methodologies and innovative cases from around the world. These resources can be used to inspire and guide capacity development efforts in Pakistan. One approach to leveraging the Toolkit is organizing national capacity building workshops while influencing existing training curricula. **Training and empowering government officials in understanding and implementing the methodologies and strategies of the Toolkit is important**.

Dr. Haozhi Pan, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Director of the Secretariat, Asian Association for Public Administration
Developing Digital Capacities of Capacity Developers to Promote Digital Government Transformation in the A-P Region

The AAPA aims to expand and improve research and academic exchange on public administration and public policy in the Asian region.

We are experiencing a world towards digital governance and good governance. The experience for the Asia and the World has highlighted that i) new technologies in public management are powerful tools for empowerment, ii) the new government in digital era is symbolized by collaboration, and iii) the new governance toward good governance is more people oriented. The

Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation speaks right to the needs of schools of public administration and could facilitate the training of current and future civil servants.

The Toolkit is very timely against the trend of the accelerated pace of digital transformation in a post-COVID world. There are many common challenges of digital transformation including *digital divide*, *inequity*, *AI ethics*, *data privacy, data security* and *public trust*. The Toolkit can be a go-to and off-the-shelf tool and curriculum for public servants and governmental officials. The Toolkit should be used as a tool for supporting SDG implementation with focus on private-public-people partnerships, localizing SDGs, development and procurement management, changing mindsets of civil servants.

The Toolkit should be localized to better fit the education and training systems in the A-P region. AAPA will promote the use of the Toolkit in AAPA's network, continue to host series of events with partners and various platforms to promote this Toolkit among AAPA members to mainstream the Toolkit in their curricula, and work together with different stakeholders including governments and non-governmental organizations and academic institutions and training schools.

Alex B. Brillantes, Jr., PhD, Secretary General, EROPA
Mainstreaming the Toolkit in the Curricula of the Public Administration Schools and Training Institutes in the Asia Pacific Region
EROPA, as a pioneering public administration organization and network in the Asia Pacific region, was established in 1958 and formally launched in 1960. EROPA has actively engaged experts, scholars, and practitioners and students of Public Administration working towards responsive public administration and governance public service and governance in Asia.

The Toolkit provides modules specific for digital government transformation that are accessible to all public institutions. However, **there is a need to be mindful of contextualizing the modules to develop training designs that are grounded to local conditions.** The Toolkit is an important supplementary to training programmes and/or manual that are essential in advancing efforts to digitalize the public sector. It also provides a systematic approach towards digital transformation, coupled with structural modules that are readily available.

Educational institutions and research institutes, as capacity developers, play an important role in enhancing the digital capacities of government officials and the society in general. We should maximize the role of higher educational institutions (HEIs) as source of research studies and provider of capacity development trainings, with focus on upskilling the digital capacities/competencies for government officials.

Building upon the previous activities conducted in collaboration with UN DESA and

AAPA, EROPA recommends and commits to the following:

- Continue capacity building interventions through the conduct of Training-of-Trainers on the Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation in collaboration with UN DESA;
- Follow up with UN DESA trainings (in person or online) to deepen the understanding of the Toolkit and its application;
- Create cohorts of trainers composed of officials from universities and public institutions in the Asia-Pacific region for easier dissemination and mainstreaming the Toolkit in the curricula and training programs for public servants;
- Continue sharing good practices on how the UN DESA Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs including this Toolkit could be incorporated in public administration curricula among PA communities - sharing case studies of new courses and translate training materials into different languages;
- Continue efforts to localize and contextualize the teaching and research of SDGs among EROPA partners and public administration institutions in the region.

Dr. John Nakabago, President, African Association of Public Administration and Management (AAPAM)
Developing Digital Capacities of Capacity Developers to Promote Digital Government Transformation in Africa

AAPAM has long been at the forefront of promoting excellence in public administration across Africa.

In terms of digital government transformation, AAPAM serves as a catalyst – facilitating collaboration among governments, academia, and industry partners. The AAPAM actively promotes the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and cutting-edge research, enabling member countries to leverage technology effectively for public service delivery, citizen engagement, and policy formulation.

Government officials and capacity developers who are equipped with digital skills are better prepared to embrace emerging technologies, leverage data-driven insights, and adapt to changing circumstances. This enables governments to respond effectively to evolving challenges and seize new opportunities. Digital capacities enable government officials and capacity developers to provide high-quality services to citizens. With digital tools and skills, officials can leverage data analytics and online platforms to deliver services in a more timely and accurate manner. This enhances the overall citizen experience, increases satisfaction, and builds trust in government institutions.

It is important to enhance capacities at Individual and societal levels for digital government transformation in Africa.

- Enhancing individual capacities can ensure that those working in government can understand the complex interactions and tradeoffs characterizing the SDGs, envisage different policy scenarios, and be equipped with the capacity to design, implement and monitor integrated policies and services by leveraging digital technologies.

  Enhancing individual capacities for digital government transformation also lays a good foundation for innovation and entrepreneurship. Individuals with digital skills can leverage digital technologies to create new businesses and job opportunities in public administration - fostering economic growth and development in the continent.

- Digital government transformation at societal level enables citizens to access public services and information conveniently from anywhere at any time. Online platforms, mobile applications, and digital portals allow citizens to interact with the government, make transactions, and access services without the need for physical presence or lengthy bureaucratic processes.

  Enhancing capacities at the societal level ensures that more people in particular; girls and women, youth and people living with disabilities have the skills to use digital tools to engage with their governments, express their views and contribute to policy development thus fostering civic engagement particularly in African Regions.

- Digital government initiatives promote transparency by making government information, policies, and decisions more accessible to the public. Online portals and platforms enable citizens to access public records, budget information, and government reports.

AAPAM proposes the following suggestions to mainstream the Toolkit in the Curricula of public administration schools or Training Institutes in Africa.

- Capacity building for lecturers - trainers need to be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver the course effectively. Capacity building programmes can be organized to train them on how to use the Toolkit.
- Collaboration with stakeholders such as schools of public administration in African regions, government agencies and civil society organizations is necessary to ensure that the Toolkit is integrated to the curricula.
- In addition, providing access to digital tools and platforms for university students are necessary for digital government transformation. This will enable students to gain practical experience and apply the knowledge they acquire in real life situations.

The Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation is a valuable resource for governments in the African Region looking to improve their digital

capabilities. The Toolkit is particularly useful in the African context where many governments are still in the early stages of developing their digital capabilities. By providing practical guidance on how to approach digital transformation, the Toolkit can help governments overcome the challenges they face in this area, such as lack of infrastructure and limited resources.

In line with the modules of the Toolkit, AAPAM suggests the following strategies for advancing digital government transformation in the African region.

- **Develop a Digital Strategy**: Governments should formulate a comprehensive digital strategy that outlines their vision, goals, and objectives for digital government transformation.
- **Foster Collaboration and Partnerships**: Collaboration between government agencies, private sector organizations, civil society, and academia is crucial for successful digital government transformation.
- **Enhance Digital Infrastructure**: Governments need to invest in robust and secure digital infrastructure, including broadband connectivity, data centers, cloud services, and cybersecurity measures.
- **Strengthen Digital Skills and Capacity**: Countries should prioritize the development of digital skills among public servants and provide training programs to enhance their capacity in areas such as data analytics, cybersecurity, emerging technologies, and digital service delivery.
- **Ensure Digital Inclusion**: African Countries should strive to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all citizens have equal access to digital services. This requires addressing issues of affordability, digital literacy, and accessibility, particularly for marginalized and underserved populations.
- **Adopt the User-Centric Design**: Governments should prioritize user-centric design principles when developing digital services, ensuring that they are intuitive, accessible, and meet the needs of citizens. Regular user feedback and usability testing should be incorporated into the design process.

Ms. Abir Achour, Task Manager, ALGA of UCLG Africa
UCLG Africa Go Digital and Smart

UCLG Africa has been actively engaged and connected with its members in times of Covid 19 Pandemic. i) Organizing, in house and online *Coaching Sessions*, through online Platforms to empower UCLG Africa Members, Networks, and staff, ii) Using diverse platforms (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Social Medias), iii) Moving from Face to face to online and blended activities, iv) Having organized and planned Several events in time of Covid 19: statutory meetings, trainings, forums, conferences, side events, and v) Participating to Partners online activities .

UCLG Africa has drawn many lessons from the Pandemic: i) digital transformation could provide diverse and multiple advantages and opportunities; ii) there exists

digital divide at African Local/Regional levels, which poses big challenges for vulnerable populations, including limited internet access, lack of devices, and insufficient digital skills and capacities; iii) enhancing digital capacities of vulnerable populations is crucial to ensure equitable access and use of the digital technologies, empowering them to benefit from the opportunities offered by digital government transformation and promoting inclusive development in the digital era.

UCLG Africa highly appreciates UN DESA's efforts to develop the Toolkit, which could be an important tool to empower Africa's Digital Future.

- The Toolkit provides a comprehensive framework and practical strategies to address the challenges of digital government transformation in Africa, particularly at the Local level.
- It provides guidance on assessing capacity gaps, envisioning digital transformation aligned with the SDGs and developing a strategy and roadmap for implementation.
- By utilizing the Toolkit, African Local/Regional Governments can enhance service delivery, improve governance processes, and promote digital inclusion, ultimately accelerating progress towards the SDGs.
- The Toolkit's timely release aligns with the increasing importance of digital technologies and the urgent need for capacity development to leverage their full potential for sustainable development in Africa.

UCLG Africa agreed to the important role of educational and research institutes in developing capacities at all levels for digital government transformation.

- Educational and research Institutes play a vital role in building the capacities of government officials at both national and subnational levels, as well as society in general.
- They can develop and deliver tailored training programmes based on the Toolkit, equipping government officials with the necessary skills to drive digital government transformation.
- Educational and research institutes can provide expertise, research support, and resources to strengthen institutional capacities and foster a culture of innovation and digital inclusion
- The collaboration between educational and research institutes, UCLG Africa, and UN DESA/DPIDG is crucial in developing and implementing capacity building initiatives that are responsive to the specific needs and contexts of the African Local and Regional Governments

UCLG Africa is committed to promote the implementation of the Toolkit with the following recommendations.

- **Integration of the Toolkit into UCLG Africa e-Academy to ensure that digital government transformation becomes a fundamental component of capacity building initiatives.**

- **Collaborative efforts between UCLG Africa and UN DESA/DPIDG can be established to jointly develop and deliver tailored training Workshops, Webinars and Peer to Peer Learning opportunities for African stakeholders facilitating knowledge exchange and best practices.**
- **By leveraging their respective expertise, networks, and resources UCLG Africa and UN DESA/DPIDG can work synergistically to build the capacities of African Local and Regional Governments empowering them to drive and sustain digital government transformation across the region.**

V. Evaluation of the Post-Event Survey

147 evaluation responses were collected for two weeks following the Webinar. The respondents' background consisted of a mix of national governments, international organizations, local or regional governments, training institutes and academic institutions.

6. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of the Webinar. Please choose one in each row.
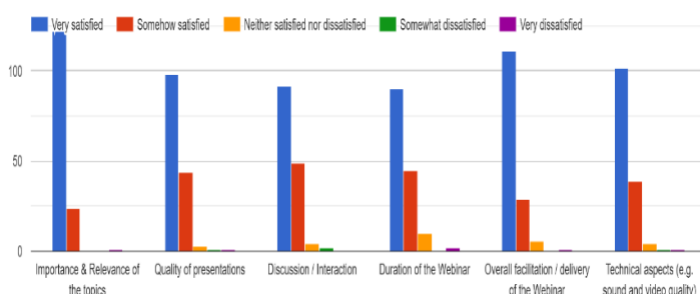
The Webinar was very much appreciated by the respondents. All respondents gave consistently high ratings of "Very Satisfied" and "Somehow Satisfied" on the importance & relevance, quality of presentations, discussion & interaction, and overall facilitation of the Webinar. Respondents mainly found the topics important and relevant (**99.3%,** 146 out of 147); they are satisfied with the quality of presentations (**96.6%,** 142 out of 147); they are satisfied with the discussion and interaction (**95.9%,** 141 out of 147); and they are satisfied with the overall facilitation of the Webinar (**95.2%,** 140 out of 147).

There are many positive comments from the respondents about what they like most.

- Excellent presenters and moderators as well as topic
- I like the relevance of the topics.
- It is timely and relevant in today's situation.
- It is timely and relevant.
- The whole-of-government approach for digital development is the one I like most. All presentations are good and helpful in my profession. it is eye opening presentation for me.
- It's a big relevance to today's landscape.
- The experiences of the speakers from different countries gave a lot of insights to the participants.
- I liked the presentation of each country's and agency's effort on digital governance which can serve as good practices which other countries can emulate.

- It was overall a great knowledge booster.
- I like most the provision of quality presentations by the speakers.
- I like the whole webinar. I like how they are all sharing knowledge and insight. The idea of no one and no place will be left behind when it comes to innovation and digital transformation.
- I like the most about the webinar is that every speaker explained the topic very well.
- I really like the most are the recommendations that they presented.
- I like the most about the digital inclusion and the least is the toolkit.
- I like the most where all the speakers tackled their own perspective about the digital government transformation and their countries progress about it. Overall, I like it.
- The discussion on e-government best practices which can be adopted by other nations.
- The statement that says there is no size fits all. The development will rely on the strategies applied by one nation.
- The overall presentation that gives me more knowledge digital government transformation.

7. The Webinar helped my understanding on the structure of the Toolkit and the importance of building capacities for digital government transformation. (please choose one in each row)
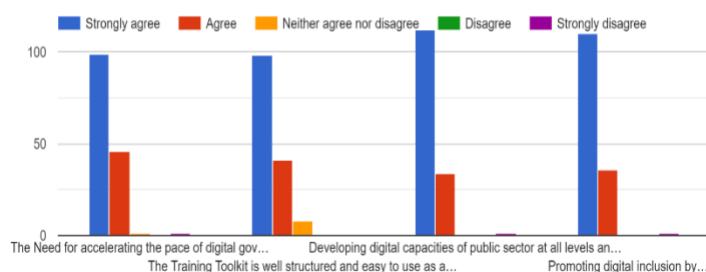
Most respondents reflected that the Webinar helped their understanding on i) the need for accelerating the pace of digital government transformation (**98.0%,** 144 out of 147), ii) the importance of building capacities for digital government transformation (**99.3%,** 146 out of 147), iii) the importance of promoting digital inclusion (**99.3%,** 146 out of 147). And most respondents agreed that the Toolkit is well structured and easy to use as a tool (**94.6%,** 139 out of 147).

Overall, most respondents are satisfied with the webinar (**97.2%,** 143 out of 147).

The Survey also asked whether the respondents will be interested in a follow-up capacity development activity such as requesting DPIDG/UNPOG for organizing a national capacity building workshop. Most respondents expressed their interests in receiving continued capacity development support from DPIDG/UNPOG. Please refer to below some selected responses.

- Yes. To be participated by the government administrators in every government agency.
- Yes. To be participated by all sectors in the society.
- Contextualize the tool per country
- Yes! A national capacity building workshop would be great!!
- Yes. Establishing training of trainers

- Yes. Capacity development on leadership training and communication.
- Definitely! We could invite representatives from civil services of a few Asian countries (say Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines and even Singapore - this could be done as a series) and discuss where they are in the EGDI and share possible reforms and ways forward using the Digital toolkit.
- Capacity Development on Local Governance particularly on strengthening networks and connections with different stakeholders to promote efficiency in public service delivery.
- Yes, can this be a regional approach, per country? For example in the Philippines , could it be possible that there is a separate capacity development activity for rural municipalities or provinces. because digital challenges faced by the local government in rural communities are different from challenges in the cities.
- Definitely yes, I am looking for more topic like how to cope with digitalize form of serving people and how to use properly the modernized technologies
- Training of trainers for the dissemination of the toolkits in various countries
- Yes. I would like to have an awareness seminar and orientation of toolkit for our agency.

VI. Closing & Way Forward

In his closing remarks, Mr. Kyu Chang Ko, Head of UNPOG, re-emphasized that the digital government transformation should be inclusive and human-centered, which calls for capacity building of people in vulnerable situations to promote digital inclusion as well as strengthening digital cooperation among countries. He also expressed his appreciation to AAPA, EROPA, AAPAM, and UCLG-Africa for their recommendations and commitments to mainstream the Toolkit in the curricula of public administration schools or training institutes in their network. He reiterated the important role of the educational institutions and public administration schools, as capacity developers, in enhancing the digital capacities of public servants and the society in general.

On the way forward, the Head of UNPOG hoped that this Webinar could generate more capacity development interests from government institutions and public administration schools to adapt and implement the Toolkit to national context. He also expected that this Webinar could also result in the delivery of national training workshops upon government's request.

Moreover, while being committed to mainstream the Toolkit in the curricula of PA schools, the AAPA, EROPA, AAPAM and UCLG Africa also proposed the following in implementing the Toolkit.

- The Toolkit could be foundational for capacity development for Member States;
- The innovative cases from different countries are important for replicating successful experience;

- It is important to localize and contextualize the Toolkit to national contexts;
- It is important to build a global pool of training of trainers with a platform to quickly mobilize resource persons for conducting training;
- There should be incentives for encouraging experimentation.

Annex 1. Concept Note and Agenda

Advancing Digital Government Transformation for Accelerating the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

Event Description

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) and its Project

Office on Governance (UNPOG), in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP), is organizing a capacity development webinar to launch the Training Toolkit on Capacities for Digital Government Transformation (the "Toolkit"), which is part of the [Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)](#) (the "Curriculum"). The Offices of UN Resident Coordinators in the Asia-Pacific region will be invited to provide advice in contextualizing the training material to the national level context.

Objectives

The Webinar aims to:
- Introduce the main pillars, strategy and roadmap for advancing digital government transformation;
- Enhance better understanding of the importance to adopt a holistic approach to digital government transformation;
- Raise awareness of the required capacities for digital government transformation at institutional, organisational, individual and societal levels;
- Share country experiences in promoting digital inclusion through bridging the digital divides and developing capacities of people in vulnerable situations; and
- Discuss with participants particularly capacity developers on how to use the Toolkit for enhancing capacities to advance digital government transformation.

Thematic Focus

"Information and communications technology enabled breakthroughs in Government, including the provision of public services, education, health care and employment, as well as in business, agriculture and science, with greater numbers of people having access to services in data that might previously have been out of reach or unaffordable"[2]. In an era when the world is facing interlinked and cascading crises with far-reaching implications for public health, jobs, social equity, climate change and environmental protection, digital government plays an increasingly vital role in accelerating the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Governments around the world are using digital technologies to innovate the way the

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[2] UN General Assembly, Outcome Document of the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, available at: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ares70d125_en.pdf

operate, share information, make decisions and deliver services, as well as to engage and partner with people to solve policy challenges of public concern. Yet, many countries remain ill-equipped to effectively leverage digital technologies and provide accessible, reliable, fast, personalised, secure and inclusive services and empower people through open and participatory mechanisms[3]. In this context, while realising the importance and benefits of digital government transformation, many countries especially countries in special situations are confronted with a multitude of challenges notably in technological, governance and institutional dimensions. UN DESA supports Member States in strengthening their capacities for digital government transformation for achieving sustainable development.

The Training Toolkit provides national and local governments with a comprehensive framework, practical strategies, and tools to embrace a holistic approach and develop required capacities for digital government transformation. It also provides a step-by-step guideline on how to conduct a situation analysis to assess capacity gaps, undertake an envisioning exercise by adhering to the SDGs and fostering design thinking, and devise a strategy and road map to digital government transformation. It examines how to develop capacities at institutional, organisational, individual, and societal levels including highlighting the importance of changing mindsets as well as the need of recruiting, retaining, and motivating the best digital talent within government and creating safe spaces in which individuals can nurture innovation. It puts particular emphasis on how to develop digital capacities of people in vulnerable situations to promote digital inclusion through bridging the digital divide. Since digital government transformation is a dynamic process and a long journey instead of a final destination, the continuous monitoring and evaluation of digital services are essential. So this Toolkit also introduces the objectives, methods, and indicators of monitoring and evaluation of the progress of digital government transformation.

The Toolkit provides methodologies and approaches to advance knowledge and assist governments in developing capacities at the individual, organisational, and institutional/societal levels to drive digital government transformation for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This Training of Trainers Capacity Development Toolkit is structured around modules that include readings, self-assessment situation analysis, application of theories to concrete issues and challenges, priority setting exercise, through country case studies based on the level of competencies of government officials, action planning, and other activities that can assist countries in advancing digital government transformation for sustainable development. The Toolkit is made available at no cost on the UNPAN website at unpan.un.org. This Toolkit is also intended for schools of public

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[3] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), United Nations E-Government Survey 2020

administration and institutes of public management given their strategic role in training public servants and improving the effectiveness of digital government policy and digital government service design, implementation, and evaluation through in-service training and education of all those engaged in digital government transformation.

Format

The Webinar will run for 100 minutes. It will be conducted in English. It will include thematic session on recent trends in digital government transformation wi discussion on challenges, approaches and strategies, and required competencies government officials, and an overview presentation of the Toolkit. The presentation will be followed by an interactive discussion to solicit recommendations an commitments by representatives from the Global Network of School of Publ Administration and an open discussion/Q&A. The Webinar will be conducted usir video conferencing tools such as Zoom and Facebook livestreaming (TBC).

The recordings and the presentations will be posted on the website after th conclusion of the Webinar. The follow-up actions, including key recommendation partnership building among participating agencies and country demands/needs f capacity development support, will be disseminated through the UN DESA and U ESCAP websites.

Target Audience

The target audience of the Webinar includes government officials, from both national and local government agencies, schools of public administration and institutes of public management in the Asia-Pacific region, members of the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN), the UN Resident Coordinator Offices in the Asia-Pacific region and other relevant stakeholders, including civil society organisations, private sector, and academia. The Webinar is also open to the public upon registration.

Expected Results

The Webinar will result in:

- A better understanding on the essence of digital transformation – which goes beyond digitalization and harnessing digital technologies.
- Enhanced understanding of the main pillars of digital government transformation, which requires public governance transformation, creating a digital ecosystems and innovation as part of overall national development vision and strategy.
- Raised awareness of the importance of taking a holistic approach to digital

government transformation that is value-driven and institutionalized across all levels of government and society.

- Knowledge sharing on how to develop a strategy and roadmap for digital government transformation.
- Increased understanding on the strategy and approaches to developing capacities for digital government transformation at institutional, organisational, individual, and societal levels.
- Increased knowledge on building a mechanism for monitoring, evaluation and improvement of digital government transformation.
- Partnership building among participating countries in advancing digital government transformation.

Upon completion of the Webinar, a survey will be circulated to garner the capacity development interest of participating government officials and schools of public administration to adapt and implement the Toolkit to their national context. The Webinar will also result in the delivery of national training workshops on digital government transformation, upon governments' request. Follow-up activities can also include peer-to-peer learning workshops on developing capacities to promote digital government transformation in the A-P region and beyond.

Key Questions for the Open Discussion

1. Why is promoting and accelerating digital government transformation important for realising the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

2. What are the benefits and risks of using digital technologies in government?

3. Why is it significant to adopt a holistic approach to digital government transformation? What is the process and the steps in implementing digital government transformation?

4. Why is it necessary to conduct a situation analysis? What tools could be used for situation analysis?

5. What is the future envisioning for digital government transformation? What are the tools available and the procedures to implement the envisioning?

6. What could be the effective strategies and approaches to developing capacities at institutional, organisational, individual and societal levels?

7. What could government do to promote digital inclusion and empower people in vulnerable situations in the process of digital government transformation?

8. Why is continuous monitoring and evaluation needed for digital government transformation and what performance indicators could be adopted for this purpose?

9. What could be the approaches and strategies for collaboration to apply the Toolkit's training material for advancing the digital government transformation in your national curricula?

Programme

Time (GMT+9)	Agenda
15:00 – 15:07 (7 mins)	**Opening** **Introduction by the Moderator: Mr. Keping Yao**, Senior Governance and Public Administration Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA (1 min) • **Opening Remarks: Mr. Kyu Chang Ko,** Head of UNPOG, DPIDG/UN DESA (3 mins) • **Opening Remarks: Ms. Tiziana Bonapace,** Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, UN ESCAP (3 mins)

15:07 – 15:39 **(32 mins)**	**Session 1: Recent trends in Digital Government Transformation: Challenges, Approaches and Strategies, and Required Competencies of Government Officials** **Moderator: Ms. Yun Sook Lee,** Senior Programme Management Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA **Overview of the Global and Regional Trends and Key Findings from the UN E-Government Survey 2022** • **Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro**, Chief, Digital Government Branch, DPIDG/UN DESA (video presentation) (8 mins) **Digital Platform Government and Data Integration for Digital Government Transformation** • **Mr. Sung Joo Son,** Director, Digital Government Cooperation Division, Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS), Republic of Korea (8 mins) **Enhancing Digital inclusion and Strengthening Partnership for Inclusive Digital Transformation** • **Mr. Sean Doral,** Programme Officer, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (8 mins) **A-P Digital Transformation Landscape** • **Mr. Tae Hyung Kim,** Chief, ICT and Development Section, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, UN ESCAP (8 mins)
15:39 – 15:54 **(15 mins)**	**Session 2: Overview Introduction of the Toolkit** **Moderator: Ms. Karen Kee,** Deputy Director, International and Community Development Lead, GovTech, Singapore • **Mr. Lei Zheng,** Director, Lab for Digital and Mobile Governance, Professor, Fudan University, China • **Mr. Keping Yao**, Senior Governance and Public Administration Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA

15:54 – 16:24 **(30 mins)**	**Session 3: Interactive Discussions – Recommendations and Commitments by Representatives from the Global Network of Schools of Public Administration (6 mins for each speaker)** **Moderator: Mr. Anir Chowdhury,** Policy Advisor, a2i, Bangladesh **Enhancing Digital Capacities and Developing Digital Mindset of Public Sector Workforce for Digital Government Transformation in Pakistan** • **Mr. Shah Nasir Khan**, Head, UN Resident Coordinator Office in Pakistan **Developing Digital Capacities of Capacity Developers to Promote Digital Government Transformation in the A-P Region** • **Dr. Jiannan Wu,** President, Asian Association for Public Administration (AAPA) **Mainstreaming the Toolkit in the Curricula of the Public Administration Schools and Training Institutes in the A-P region** • **Dr. Alex B. Brillantes,** Secretary-General, Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) **Developing Digital Capacities of Capacity Developers to Promote Digital Government Transformation in Africa** • **Dr. John Nakabago,** President, African Association of Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) **Enhancing Capacities for Fostering Digital Government transformation at the Local Level** • **Ms. Abir Achour,** Task Manager, the African Local Governments Academy (ALGA) of UCLG Africa
16:24 – 16:37 **(13 mins)**	**Open Discussion/Q&A** **Moderator: Dr. Lizan E. Perante-Calina,** Dean of Development Academy of the Philippines and President of the Philippine Society for Public Administration • **Mr. Abdul Aliyev**, Head of International Relations Department, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President, Azerbaijan • **Mr. Steven Matainaho,** Secretary, Department of ICT, Papua New Guinea
16:37 – 16:40 **(3 mins)**	**Closing: Summary and Way Forward** • **Closing Remarks: Mr. Kyu Chang Ko,** Head of UNPOG, DPIDG/UN DESA

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