

In 2018, DIAL and Genesis Analytics conducted a comprehensive study to analyze the state of the “Digital Development Ecosystem” with multiple stakeholders in mind. The purpose of this study was to inform DIAL’s results framework indicators and to provide additional insight into the experiences and interactions of these stakeholders. The focus of this study was on funders, technology specialists, governments, NGOs and implementers.

Icons represent the stakeholder groups and indicate where a finding is specific to each group.

**FUNDERS**  
• Donor - large aid funding • Foundations - private grants

**GOVERNMENTS**

**NGOs AND IMPLEMENTERS**  
• International NGOs • Local grassroots NGOs

**TECHNOLOGY SPECIALISTS**  
Organizations involved in this study were largely social mission driven

## 1 Most ICT4D solutions are actually internally focused



“We are not only supporting organizational tech needs but also using tech in programs. We have a number of projects, a lot around mobile data collection. It is a pretty wide remit and we have a number of country offices and regional offices engaged in this work.”

- NGO

## 2 Funding does not support scaling proven tech



“Innovation funding always wants something exciting, not something that is formative and functional.”

- TECH SPECIALIST

## 3 OSS is valued, but needs more collective product ownership



“There is a misconception around open source in international development; open source is not free, it can be expensive. To have a well-working open source solution, you need to spend a lot on consultants to configure. Then you need to spend money to maintain it.”

- TECH SPECIALIST

## 4 Capacity to use digital data and solutions is still a pervasive challenge



“Lack of digital literacy has been identified as a component. We are trying to involve more people in digital literacy programs to leverage the digital platforms available.”

- GOVERNMENT

## 5 Implementing the Principles for Digital Development are key to addressing these barriers



“The Principles provide structured reminders to refer to as development, user research and training take place... With respect to users and partners, they often keep us more agile, as we cannot adhere to the Principles without actively seeking out user input, feedback and validation.”

- TECH SPECIALIST

PREVALENCE OF USE OF ICT4D SOLUTIONS AMONG FUNDERS, GOVERNMENTS AND NGOS

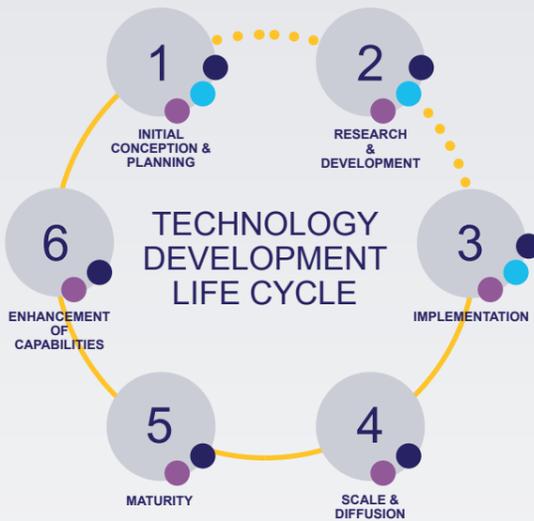


**INTERNALLY-FOCUSED SOLUTIONS**

Back office “enterprise”

**EXTERNALLY-FOCUSED SOLUTIONS**

End-user facing



- Funding available with wide awareness in the ecosystem  
• Seed funding | Impact investing
- Funding sporadically available with some awareness in the ecosystem  
• Challenge funds
- Insufficient funding provision, if at all, with low awareness in the ecosystem  
• Scale funding | Core funding
- Largest portion of existing program budgets
- Maintenance, monitoring, support and iteration



8/10 tech specialists indicated a preference for using Open Source Software components, but identified lagging quality as an obstacle



“Partners do not have tech staff and so handover becomes an issue. We have to train them from scratch and they can only understand when you deliver the final product. Capacity building training means we often have to follow people out into the field to make sure they are able to roll out.”

- TECH SPECIALIST

150 organizations from around the world have endorsed the Digital Principles as of December 2018



The full report can be found here <https://digitalimpactalliance.org/resource-library/>.

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### WAYS TO SUPPORT THE ECOSYSTEM

- **Advocate** for best practices in funding, sustainability, and scaling.
- **Convene stakeholders**, particularly government and large private sector stakeholders, to drive collaboration and share knowledge.
- **Capacity-building** in basic and advanced digital skills, best practices, and funding awareness – among all ecosystem stakeholders.
- **Improve infrastructure** for electricity and mobile connectivity, and encourage use of interoperable platforms.