DIAL 2021-2025 Strategic Plan: 
*Beacons of Hope*

Working together to accelerate national digital transformations and responsible data use so that we can reach everyone, everywhere.

*July 2020 – Draft for public comment*
Foreword

DIAL’s 2021-2025 strategic plan builds on the UN Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation released on June 11, 2020. The Roadmap calls for increased digital cooperation, putting human rights at the center of the agenda. DIAL’s formative years and research on digital development trends conducted in 2019 shaped the thinking central to this strategy. Additional feedback will be incorporated from July-August 2020 during a public comment period.

The DIAL team would like to thank our Board of Directors and the global development actors listed below who have contributed their thinking, input, and priorities for where DIAL should focus this plan.

1. Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
2. Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP)
3. DAI/Digital Frontiers
4. Department for International Development (DFID)
5. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
6. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
7. Global Pulse
8. Global System for Mobile Communications (GSMA)
9. iSpirit
10. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
11. KfW development bank
12. Microsoft Philanthropies
13. NetHope
14. Norwegian Agency for Development (Norad)
15. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
16. Omidyar Network
17. PATH/Digital Square
18. Pathways for Prosperity
19. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
20. Smart Africa
21. Rockefeller Foundation
22. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
23. UNICEF Ventures
24. United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
25. Vital Wave Consulting
26. The World Bank Group
**Table of Contents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive summary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaching everyone everywhere</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td> A global imperative for change</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td> The benefits of national digital transformation and responsible data use</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIAL’s vision and mission</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What we’ve learned</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Theory of Change</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our 2.0 strategy</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td> Objective 1: <em>Accelerate</em> new exemplars</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td> Objective 2: <em>Build</em> a global movement</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td> Objective 3: <em>Connect, support, and scale</em></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our values</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join us</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Boxes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key terms</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified our reliance on digital tools to work, live, and connect daily. It has highlighted digital technology’s perils as we grapple with questions of citizen safeguards and the pervasive inequality between the digital “haves” and “have nots.” Time and again over the past few months, it has shown us that the most resilient countries may not be those with the highest GDP per capita or the most ventilators, but rather those that have learned the lessons from prior pandemics, moved quickly to shut down cross border transmission, and responsibly used the digital and data tools that they have invested in through their digital transformation agendas.

National leaders, global multilateral institutions, donors, nongovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, and technology implementers, referred to in this strategy as global development actors (GDAs), began prioritizing digital transformation agendas and the use of data to drive governance a decade ago. More recently, they have outlined the UN-led Roadmap for Digital Cooperation that emphasizes the use of digital tools and data, both to combat COVID-19 and achieve the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite the growing recognition of digital’s importance and the high-level commitment to work together to advance it, GDAs still lack shared agreement on how to do this. Without a shared view of where we are going, we are unlikely to reach the destination.

DIAL sees the following obstacles to the development community’s cooperation around digital transformation and data use agendas:

- Incomplete understanding of the factors that drive national digital transformation and responsible data use, which matter most, and in what order they should be tried
- Few common agreed-upon standards or practices to operationalize cross-sector initiatives at either the national or global level
- Lack of common platforms for GDAs to discover proven products and jointly invest in the building blocks needed to achieve national digital transformation agendas quickly, sustainably, and cheaply

Our strategic plan, “Beacons of Hope: Working together to accelerate national digital transformations and responsible data use so that we can reach everyone, everywhere,” commits our resources to help resolve these obstacles. It starts with the Beacons of Hope global framework (Figure 1) centered on aligning national and global demand and supply for digital and data tools.

Many actors contribute to digital transformation, and there are numerous pathways to achieve it under the Beacons of Hope framework. DIAL’s Theory of Change is an explicit subset of this framework and tests one of these possible pathways. Namely, if a few countries take a whole-of-society approach to designing policies on responsible data use and connecting common digital building blocks [e.g., identification (ID) systems, payments, data privacy stacks] to sectoral information systems (e.g., health, education); if global development actors align efforts around a common standard and share...
mechanisms for financing, capacity, and community building; and if the supply side of the digital and data marketplace becomes more discoverable and more sustainable; and new applications emerge that are built locally for national use, then we expect even more low-income countries to undergo digital transformation and use data more responsibly.

As a “think, do, replicate” tank, DIAL has proven its ability to connect national and global demand and supply-side technology actors to tackle cross-cutting obstacles that undermine the value citizens receive from digital transformation. We have built a digital development research practice; tested experiments on the ground with public and private sector partners; built white label global goods others can re-use; and connected digital and data communities that were once siloed by specialty and geography to disseminate and replicate learnings. Equally important to what we have done is how we have done it. Our structure and ethos mean we can let others lead, inject critical technical and financing support, and work with our partners to pivot quickly when tactics fail. Pending sufficient resources, DIAL will pursue the following “A, B, C” approach to tackle digital transformation obstacles:

**Accelerate national digital transformation exemplars:** To accelerate the development of more digital transformation and responsible data use country exemplars (i.e., pathfinder countries), DIAL will partner with three countries, providing direct operational support on their national digital transformation journeys. As we implement, we will document and share widely, lessons from these countries and others regarding which factors matter most in their national digital transformations and responsible data use journeys.

**Build political will and mechanisms to align global support for digital transformation:** DIAL will catalyze an advocacy effort to align financing resources for national digital transformation efforts across global agencies (e.g., International Telecommunication Union, World Bank) and bilateral donors (e.g., Department for International Development, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) against the Principles for Digital Development; invest in digital training programs and a global network of trainers; and accelerate the dissemination of digital and data best practices to the more than 300 organizations engaged with our current communities of practice (e.g., Principles for Digital Development, Open Source Center).

**Connect and expand the availability of proven solutions for faster uptake and adoption in national implementations:** DIAL will expand our “beta” Online Catalog of Digital Global Goods to make it easier for national and global procurers to see the availability and maturity of existing technical solutions that have been tested and proven against the Digital Principles. We will also create an independent technology foundation that provides services and tests integrations between core digital public goods (e.g., ID systems, financial services) that interface with sectoral platforms (e.g., health).

As Under Secretary General Fabrizio Hochschild noted at the launch of the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation:

> the road ahead is long, financial resources are insufficient, and none of us can complete the roadmap alone—we must work together. Without true digital cooperation, our ecosystem will continue to struggle to find and learn from the knowledge that already exists, spinning its wheels and repeating mistakes across sectors and geographies. To get ahead of the next pandemic and achieve the SDGs, we can’t afford further delays in building out national digital transformation and responsible data use efforts. DIAL commits its resources to making this vision reality and invites you to partner with us on the road ahead.
Reaching everyone everywhere

A global imperative for change

Imagine you are a young mother in Malawi in June 2020 when COVID-19 escalates. Your husband has a headache and fever, but the nearest public health facility is several kilometers away by foot and always congested. You hear from neighbors that the lines are even longer than usual. Your son’s school closed after the government’s declaration of a national emergency in March. You and your husband are smallholder farmers and normally sell your crops at the market, but this too, has closed. These sales are your main source of income, but mandatory quarantines now restrict your access to money and services. Providing for your family was a delicate and daily challenge of choices and luck before the pandemic. Times are even harder now, and the future even less certain. Should you buy medicine for your sick husband, food for your family, or some airtime so you can continue to use your family’s phone? The first two are indeed necessities, but over the past few years, the phone has become a lifeline. It provides access to government alerts, health messages, crop prices, and buyers. It allows you to make and receive mobile money payments. Can you survive without it?

Development programs address this mother’s problems as discrete challenges: an education challenge, a health challenge, and an agriculture challenge. This focused approach has yielded global results, as illustrated in Figure 2. For example, in health and education, we have seen marked improvement over the past 17 years.²

Two key metrics—health and education—show marked improvement due to focused investment by development agencies


But as this story illustrates, her problems are interwoven, and information and communication technologies (ICTs) have become essential tools to solve them. The new measure of inclusion and opportunity—indeed one of the most valuable currencies of our time—is access to information (i.e., the
internet). This is true in rich and poor countries alike. Even before the COVID-19 crisis, the divides between rich and poor, men and women were stark. The most vulnerable, particularly women, are 26% less likely to have mobile internet access than men. The gap is larger for broadband.\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{i}

This global crisis brings startling clarity to the value national digital and data solutions bring to countries. However, four challenges currently prevent this from becoming a reality for more of them:

- Political leaders struggle to understand the digital transformation steps required and prioritize technology investments, often failing to get ahead of the technology and data issues facing them,\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{iii} just as climate, health, and economic issues worsen.\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{iii}

- Private-sector technology leaders are frustrated that the public sector does not understand technology, regulatory issues, or the necessary business models that drive sustainability.\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{iv} They step in when a crisis strikes but are not yet embedded partners with governments in funding wide-scale infrastructure build-out or consistently designing new solutions to meet the needs of the most vulnerable.\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{v}

- Donor investments prioritize sector-specific solutions, which hinders and drives up the costs of national\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{vi} digital platform solutions that governments can use to work across their agencies.

- NGO leaders and technical implementers compete for scarce, sector-specific funding and are incentivized to continue to build new digital solutions instead of reusing existing tools and approaches.\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{v}\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{vii}

If we want to be prepared for the next global crisis rather than scramble again and again in our response, we need to ensure that the remarkable advancements in digital and data solutions reach everyone\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{ix} and are institutionalized into development efforts.\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{x} According to the UN Roadmap: “Digital technology does not exist in a vacuum—it has enormous potential for positive change but can also reinforce and magnify existing fault lines and worsen economic and other inequalities. In 2019, close to 87% of individuals in developed countries used the Internet, compared with only 19% in the least developed countries.” Women and girls are also disproportionately affected with less access to the Internet.\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{ix}\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{x} To correct these inequities more quickly, we must all study the paths chosen by countries already implementing digital transformation agendas and enacting responsible data use; support other countries to adapt these models; and work across sectors to make technology platforms modular, interoperable, and sustainable so governments can use them to improve all service delivery and deploy data responsibly to help, not harm people. In this journey, we all have something to learn and something to teach.

**The benefits of national digital transformation and responsible data use**

Now imagine you are a young mother in India instead of Malawi\textsuperscript{x}\textsuperscript{xxii} in June 2020. Over the past decade, your government has undertaken a comprehensive national ID system, instituted a financial payment layer to facilitate electronic payments, and incorporated wide-ranging data privacy and protection laws and a digital data locker layer to protect use of your data. This overarching system is called India
Your Aadhaar number, a unique ID tied to you, is linked to multiple state-level services, including education, health, and payment subsidies. Because external apps can be built on top of this national platform, you are able to access new services from both the government and other vendors. You receive alerts on the changing health situation from the government, and a new government subsidy program has just been enabled to provide financial assistance to registered Aadhaar holders. The government has also been working with the WHO to track the spread of COVID-19, so you know which areas to avoid because you receive updates daily via text message.

As more low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) learn about the digital experiences of India, as well as other countries like Estonia and Singapore, their demand for support has grown. Even before the COVID-19 crisis, the World Bank and the ITU both reported increased requests from countries for whole-of-society approaches to digital solutions and responsible data use. These LMICs are seeing how exemplar governments are able to administer social services remotely, deliver benefits and allowances digitally, and maintain key financial and other transactions even in the heat of a national crisis, all at a fraction of the time and expense of their more analog counterparts.

Although digital transformation journeys are appealing to leaders, many recognize that they don’t understand where to start, don’t yet have sufficient talent or capital, particularly in lower income markets, and often don’t know which solutions to use or how to operationalize their digital strategies. Global development agencies are responding, as can be seen in the “digital cooperation” and “digital transformation” agendas that have emerged as priorities for the OECD, UNCTAD, ITU, United Nations and World Bank, as well as individual bilateral donors in the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States. We anticipate this demand will only accelerate as countries (e.g., Singapore, South Korea) that already possessed this infrastructure when COVID-19 hit, demonstrate afterwards how their digital structures allowed them to mobilize quickly and effectively and place the SDGs within reach.

**DIAL’s vision and mission**

Founded in 2016, the Digital Impact Alliance’s vision is a world where services can safely reach everyone, everywhere using the power of digital technology and data. Our mission is to advance digital inclusion to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, so that all women, men, and children can benefit from life-enhancing, mobile-based digital services.

We believe that in order to achieve the SDGs, digital technology, and responsible data use need to become easier for GDAs to incorporate into service delivery. DIAL’s work focuses on streamlining technology, unlocking markets, and accelerating the rate at which others can deploy digitally enabled services.
What we’ve learned

DIAL takes a “think, do, replicate” approach to build common digital global goods that others can reuse. We investigate common barriers that prevent GDAs from using digital solutions; research the root causes of these barriers; work with partners in low-resource environments to test ways to practically remove them; package these solutions as digital public goods; and then support digital service providers, policymakers, and funders’ efforts to replicate the resulting proven approaches so that services can be delivered more quickly.

In just over four years, DIAL has evolved from an idea to a trusted partner of multilateral, donor, and NGO groups. Known for our hands-on work and collaborative approach, we are connecting national and global actors with re-usable, proven tools that advance digital transformation and responsible data use efforts.xxxv

Based on our progress and design as an adaptive organization, we have learned:

- **Impact matters at the country level—and should be our focus.** It is important to be explicit about where our focus lies, and how our work serves it. Because multiple strategic priorities shaped DIAL 1.0’s focus, DIAL has grappled with addressing multiple customer needs. Moving forward, this strategy prioritizes country audiences as the primary demand-driver for all our knowledge products. Global-level discourse and collaboration can focus on what will make a difference at the country level and avoid repeating mistakes. Without this clarity of direction, our collective work may not make a difference to the people we seek to serve.

- **Align donor and ecosystem actors around a central hypothesis:** DIAL’s founding strategy was developed by consultants with extensive input from the ecosystem prior to DIAL’s team being formed. Given the breadth of consultations, myriad opinions, and pressure to move quickly when formed, the resulting strategy and programs lacked a coherent vision for two years as a new team grappled to form and align around disparate priorities, uncertain which ones mattered most and to whom. To correct this going forward, DIAL’s team has incorporated our baseline

---

**DIAL’s progress since 2016:**

**SDG Digital Investment Framework** developed with ITU assists country leaders in taking a whole-of-government approach to e-governance planning.

**Online Catalog of Digital Global Goods** provides a repository of existing digital and data solutions and practical guidance about how these solutions can be combined to solve real-life problems. The catalog is designed with input from global agencies like the Digital Public Goods Alliance, WHO and Digital Square.

**Step-by-step, how-to guidance implementing digital solutions** for government and NGO leaders who know the problem they want to solve with a digital solution, but don’t know how to go about it. DIAL’s practical guides eliminate the guesswork.

**Mobile network data unlocked for decision-making**, answering key demographic and mobility questions when combined with national data. Today, nine countries use forms of MNO data analytics supported by DIAL and our partners to make decisions across various sectors and improve national service delivery, including COVID-19 responses.

**Digital capacity and community building** for donors, NGOs and country governments to choose and use digital technology and replicate good practices through our virtual communities of practice.

**Support 30 digital public goods,** providing technical assistance and financial support services to open source programs serving the agriculture, health, financial services, and humanitarian sectors.

---

*Box 1*
data, researched potential future paths, consulted with our Board and stakeholders, and with them, aligned our new strategy around digital transformation and responsible data use.

- **Focus DIAL resources where there is a unique value add:** In our original strategy, DIAL was designed to “connect and convene the eco-system.” However, we have found that taking a global convening role risks being duplicative with larger entities much of the time. Instead, we have found that there is a clear need at the country level, particularly in debates over technical issues (e.g., data for development, mobile messaging work) and support for country leaders tackling policy areas such as responsible data and financing. Moving forward, our team will focus more support towards national efforts that require digital transformation and responsible data use.

- **Place the Digital Principles at the heart of our strategy:** The Principles for Digital Development were a small part of DIAL’s original strategic design and were only incorporated in March 2016. When stewardship was transferred to DIAL, the request was to keep the community separate and not embed it centrally. Given the progress we have seen building momentum, the Digital Principles will be incorporated across all DIAL’s programming moving forward.

- **Prioritize partnerships and resource alignment, not unique branding:** When DIAL was formed, many in the sector viewed it as a competitive effort with outsized resources. While financing was sufficiently lower than first announced, irritation over resourcing complicated our efforts to strike meaningful partnerships with UN agencies and larger entities. Through hard work and deliberately investing DIAL resources externally, we have struck meaningful relationships with our stakeholders. Moving forward, DIAL will continue to connect cross-sector efforts, particularly when a neutral actor is required, and work to complement larger agency efforts.

### Our Theory of Change

The DIAL 2.0 strategy explicitly recognizes that digital transformation and digital cooperation are far larger than any one organization. Outlined below is a proposed global framework centered on catalyzing a global **Beacons of Hope** movement in which peer organizations, countries, and global public and private actors cooperate to share efforts that accelerate national digital transformations and the responsible use of data. The central hypothesis of this framework is that in order for low-income countries to achieve the SDGs through applying digital and data solutions at scale, more countries first need to demonstrate that successful digital transformation and responsible data use investments can improve service delivery. More countries also need to demonstrate that national and global development actors can align connectivity, product, procurement, pricing, policy, and people investments to country needs, and that this aligned country demand will drive an increased supply and usage of proven, appropriate, and affordable digital and data global goods that can be made available.
for countries to adopt and maintain. If these things happen, more national exemplars, or *Beacons of Hope* countries, will be able to accelerate their digital transformation and responsible data use journeys. The DRAFT Beacons of Hope framework is illustrated in Figure 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Demand</th>
<th>Drives Alignment Efforts Which Increases</th>
<th>Supple Side Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low-income countries drive digital transformation agendas and use data responsibly for service delivery</td>
<td>Global development actors align funding and expertise to country digital transformation and responsible data use agendas</td>
<td>Low-income countries generate, adapt, and use appropriate digital and data global goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Government prioritizes persons-first digital transformation and RDU in national strategy</td>
<td>2.1 Public and private actors co-create shared vision of success, roadmap, and norms for digital transformation and RDU agendas</td>
<td>3.1 Technology products are designed for inclusivity and implementation in low resource living environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Government costs and commits funding for digital transformation and RDU</td>
<td>2.2 Global development actors shift procurement practices to support national digital transformation and RDU agendas</td>
<td>3.2 Market size and financing attract public- and private-sector global goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Dedicated governance institution coordinates and manages digital transformation and RDU across sectors</td>
<td>2.3 Global development actors train their staff in digital literacy and responsible data competencies</td>
<td>3.3 Technology suppliers design products using best practices for interoperability, modularity and extensibility using relevant standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Public and private sectors advocate for inclusion of most vulnerable in digital and data-enabled service delivery</td>
<td>2.4 Public and private actors co-create and share best practices and policy innovations</td>
<td>3.4 Procurers can easily discover, evaluate and source proven digital global goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Civil society enforces person's privacy and security safeguards for government and use of citizen data</td>
<td>2.5 Public actors invest in documenting impact of digital transformation and RDU agendas</td>
<td>3.5 Sufficient human resource capacity exists for digital and data solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Public and private tech leaders establish and maintain interoperable platforms and standards</td>
<td>2.6 Public and private actors implement and share best practices and policy innovations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Public decision-makers can access multiple data sources to inform public service delivery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3**

**DIAL’s Theory of Change is an explicit subset of the Beacons of Hope framework.** We know from our consultations that many actors contribute to digital transformation, and there are numerous pathways to achieving it. **Our Theory of Change tests one of these possible pathways.** Namely, if a few national digital transformation exemplars take a whole-of-society approach to designing policies on responsible data use and connecting common digital building blocks (e.g., ID systems, payments, data privacy stacks) with sectoral information systems (e.g., health, education); global development actors align efforts around a common standard and share mechanisms for financing, capacity, and community building; and the supply side of the digital and data marketplace becomes more discoverable and is
better supported, then more appropriate applications for the national context can be built locally and national digital transformation and responsible data use efforts can accelerate in new countries.

Our 2.0 strategy

DIAL’s 2021-2025 strategy, **Beacons of Hope**, seeks to **Accelerate** three national digital transformation and data use exemplars working with national governments; **Build** global cooperation around digital transformation through shared advocacy, financing, training, and community mechanisms; and **Connect**, support, and scale proven solutions for faster uptake and adoption by governments and service providers. The following pages outline DIAL’s proposed programs and their outcomes, pending sufficient resources being secured, to achieve three objectives:

**Objective 1: Accelerate new exemplars of low-income countries pursuing a whole-of-society approach to digital transformation and responsible data use**

**Overview**

Termed “pathfinder countries” by United Nations agencies, many low-income countries take different digital transformation journeys as they seek to build a digital economy. Despite taking different paths, they face common challenges in identifying which investments to make first; knowing how to connect existing technical investments; lacking on-call expertise to help sort through policy challenges or find alternative models; and having sufficient costing and financing support to fund this transformation.

DIAL will work with e-governance agencies and/or Ministries of ICT in three governments to help them resolve these common challenges. Upon request, we will provide direct **support** to one country, integrate the lessons we learn into our working model, and **scale** this improved approach in two additional countries. We will document the countries’ journeys and contribute to cumulative best practice and standards for others’ benefit. We will **share** our learnings with country leaders and global development actors to help them identify patterns and relevant investments that might accelerate progress in global digital transformation. We will embed the **Principles of Digital Development** in all of our technical delivery, procurement and policy support, and program management.
Support: We have heard from our country government colleagues that there is demand for assistance with process and stakeholder engagement for designing and executing digital transformation. Many countries have the political will, building blocks and sectoral investments needed to drive digital transformation and responsible data use agendas. What they often lack is the time, personnel, and financial support to bring multiple disparate investments together under a comprehensive national roadmap and operationalize it.

In Year One, we will support one national government to operationalize its digital transformation and responsible data use roadmap. We will work with a committed e-governance agency, confirmed prior to the beginning of Year One. As a neutral partner, DIAL will support the country’s e-governance agency or coordinating body to bring coherence to the strategic, technical, financing, and policy investments currently led by different sectoral ministries and implementing agencies.

DIAL will provide the partner country with services in support of their digital transformation agenda, such as:

- Map existing product and policy efforts being led by stakeholders across the public, private, civil society, and development sectors who are working on national digital transformation and responsible data use agendas to help identify gaps, overlaps, and potential synergies.

- Support the government to convene cross-government agencies, private-sector actors, and development-sector actors to identify points of intersection and alignment between existing sectoral efforts (e.g., health, agriculture) and technical building blocks (e.g., ID systems, payments).

- Support the government’s work to consolidate policy and procurement efforts across line ministries.

- Bolster the e-governance agency’s program management capacity through training and support to identify and manage technical and policy priorities across line ministries on an ongoing basis.

- Cost the overall resource needs for the government to achieve the digital transformation and responsible data use agenda with donor partners and support efforts to finance the roadmap through pledging conferences.

Potential Country Partners
DIAL preliminarily analyzed 22 definitions of digital transformation, digital economy, and digitalization (among others) and considered key factors of success in the journeys underway in countries like India and Estonia. From this analysis, we developed a working hypothesis of key preconditions of success required for digital transformation, including e-governance, ICT infrastructure, political will, human capacity and partner/funding support. Based on our existing work and partnerships in Africa, we then mapped 10 Smart Africa countries against this criteria as part of a Listening Study conducted in April and May 2020 to understand digital economy and determine the basic validity of these factors, as well as narrow the list of potential countries where the proposed partnership model might resonate. Our first country partnership will be based on discussions with country government representatives by November 2020.
Scale: Pending success of this model and new funding sources, DIAL will replicate this model in up to two additional countries beginning in Year Three to gain insight into alternate digital transformation and responsible data use models. Working in new geographies with different partners will provide alternate proof points and teach us which variables matter most to accelerate digital transformation. For example, rather than working with a country that has a relatively well-developed set of preconditions for DT/RDU, which is our target for country one, we propose working with a country that is smaller and less developed in terms of existing infrastructure and digital activity.

Standardize and share: As these exemplar cases gather momentum, DIAL will work through their national e-governance agencies and implementing partners to standardize a harmonized design and learning process. This will help governments track progress and analyze lessons so they can improve execution along the way. This standardized MEL (monitoring, evaluation, and learning) framework will build on nascent research methodology designed to analyze the digital transformation journeys of India and Estonia. As we support the three countries in their journey, the MEL framework will be the basis for how lessons will be synthesized, documented, and disseminated along the way. These lessons will provide the evidence DIAL will use to recommend standardized models for delivery in digital transformation and responsible data use.

DIAL will also leverage existing platforms for national-level information sharing and adaptation within each of the three countries, grounded in the Principles for Digital Development. Depending on country context, we will look into adapting existing virtual (e.g., online learning/collaboration platforms) and/or in-person learning networks, which enable the political and technical stakeholders to learn from each other as well as from other countries.

Success factors

If DIAL’s efforts stimulating national demand are successful, the result in five years will be three countries whose digital transformation and responsible data use efforts are well coordinated between the public, private, and development sectors. They will be fully costed and pledging conferences will be organized to finance these efforts. Their journey, and other case studies documenting digital transformation and responsible data use, will be shared widely for new countries to consider through communities of practice. Markers of progress over the five years will include the following:

A country with a platform-based approach to digital transformation

The Estonian government has put in place a platform built on core enabling technology, or “building blocks” (e.g., digital ID systems, payments, security), that can be leveraged across sectors for government services, 99% of which are available online. According to e-Estonia: “An important part of this ecosystem is flexibility, and the ability to integrate its different parts while improving e-services and allowing government systems to grow.” Because of this infrastructure and Estonia’s individual, permission-based use of data, citizens have been able to quickly move to online education, continue accessing health care records, file taxes, and move money safely during the growing COVID-19 crisis. The foundation for this system was laid following the collapse of the Soviet Union, with a relatively low investment and using a platform-based approach. This model is within reach for lower-income countries, as India is demonstrating.
• **Active political cooperation** across public-, private-, and development-sector actors around the need to align digital transformation and responsible data use efforts. An MOU signed between critical actors within the public, private, and development sectors will signal commitment to a national delivery roadmap, with common priorities, clearly defined roles, and measures of success.

• Consultatively developed **policies on responsible data use and privacy** as appropriate to country context that have been provided to governments to consider.

• An established bench of **technical capacity** in their e-governance agencies, equipped to maintain this alignment over time and engage at the political and technical levels to chart their national transformation roadmap. These agencies should be able to lead and coordinate different actors, drive consensus, and maintain alignment to the national roadmap.

• **Improved product alignment** across key building blocks (e.g., digital identity, financial services, data) that can connect to sectoral initiatives driven by line ministries. There will be suitable structures and national bodies to drive the development of common national technical standards, specifications, and APIs, which align to the national enterprise architecture. Thereafter, providers should be developing solutions in accordance with these standards and specifications.

• A **fully costed plan** of the digital roadmap is developed, and the government has the data to run a pledging conference to secure gaps in financing or in-kind resourcing from multilateral finance institutions, bilateral donors, and the private sector.

• **Standardized, comparative case studies** that document the digital transformation journeys from different country archetypes with comparative needs and opportunities. There will also be focused briefs on specific aspects of digital transformation and responsible data use, including, but not limited to, areas in policy, procurement, financing, and technical architecture.

**Objective 2: Build, with partners, a global movement that aligns the financing, training, and measurement approaches that global development actors use to support country-led digital transformation**

**Overview**

Governments, donors, and multilateral agencies have prioritized digital transformation and pledged cooperation, recognizing that these tools and responsible data use are critical if we are to achieve the SDGs. Yet, preliminary analysis of practices used across global development actors reveals the lack of commonly used definitions and agreement on how best to enable digital progress. This, in turn, has exacerbated inefficiencies in the global support received by countries, and investments, priorities and practices continue to operate on a sector-by-sector basis without coherence. Our hypothesis is that without greater alignment across GDAs on common business standards and cross-sectoral mechanisms (e.g., common funding priorities, policy positions, procurement practices, training guidelines, best
practices), countries’ efforts to use digital tools to make progress towards their development goals will continue to be undermined and delayed by agency, sector, and geographic siloes.\footnote{11}

DIAL will leverage its neutral role to mobilize high-level political leadership around the need for digital cooperation and aligned financing for digital transformation; standardize digital capacity training and procurement practice around the Principles for Digital Development; and share, connect, and drive adoption of digital good practices through its digital development communities of practice.

Mobilize: DIAL will work with leading GDAs to align and connect, not control, digital transformation initiatives, highlighting gaps and supporting co-investment. DIAL will contribute original research, advocacy materials, policy analysis, and technical guidance, and work with existing networks to support policy coordination for digital transformation against the Beacons of Hope framework. There are two primary areas where we will focus: financing and evidence building for digital.

Financing: We will continue to build the evidence base for new financing mechanisms for digital global goods, particularly public procurement practice (see Box 5). In most economies, public-sector spend typically represents a major segment of local demand, with public procurement estimated to make up more than 13% of GDP in low-income countries.\footnote{12} We will use data from national tests to advocate for a pan-government approach to investment and procurement. We will propose new funding mechanisms and provide policy analysis, technical guidance, and evidence to demonstrate the increased long-term sustainability and impact of a cross-government investment approach.\footnote{13} Building on The Principles of Donor Alignment for Digital Health,\footnote{14} we will advocate for a cross-sectoral approach to digital goods that incorporates the Principles for Digital Development into procurement practices aligned with government strategies.

Evidence: Learning from digital transformation exemplars and generating actionable knowledge from systematic review of our practice is a critical step in improving outcomes and scaling digital transformation effectively. We will work with partners to build data use, curating and synthesizing evaluations, reports, and studies to produce several thematic papers and a periodic State of the Ecosystem report. DIAL will build on

---

Building the evidence base for pooled procurement of digital global goods

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global resource flows to emerging markets is already apparent. In March 2020 alone, investors pulled approximately US $90 billion out of emerging markets. The OECD estimates a longer-term economic recession will drive additional cuts from donors, as economic growth slows, and budget is reallocated to domestic spending. Estimates are that global ODA levels will drop sharply, and a US $25 billion decrease by 2021 is within the range of possibilities. Strong public institutions, particularly those involved in procurement, are needed to ensure value for money and impact for every dollar invested.

DIAL has already researched the GAVI business model, which is based on aggregation of demand and associated investment as a market-shaping strategy. Working with 15 governments across all income levels about their approach to aligning investment in digital transformation, we have developed a hypothesis for a viable strategy for pooled procurement. Many of the specialists we interviewed agreed that a centrally led operating model for procurement of digital solutions increases economies of scale and negotiating power, improves the interoperability of digital technologies implemented by the government, and presents a whole-of-government view that generally builds trust and stimulates the supply-side market. This strategy will build on our work to aggregate the myriad of existing technology commissioning, total cost of ownership and buyer guides into an online tool for use by national governments. We are also using DIAL’s connections with larger UN agencies to evangelize digital procurement as a specialization, backing this position with data on the benefits of taking a whole-of-government approach to digital procurement.

---

Box 5
existing methodologies that can be used to compare approaches and track the progress being made at the national and global level of digital transformation and responsible data use efforts.

**Standardize:** Underpinning DIAL’s research, advocacy work, and tests to identify financing mechanisms is our stewardship of the Principles for Digital Development. While calls for digital investment cooperation have increased over the past four years, the OECD reports that sector-level cooperative financing approaches are actually decreasing. Our hypothesis is that a common standard used by donors and country governments in their digital procurement practices, proposal evaluations, technology considerations, and programmatic implementations can help to counterbalance this trend. With more than 228 organizations already endorsing the Principles for Digital Development, multiple sectoral Principles nested underneath them, and five donors already incorporating them into their evaluations of new digital submissions, DIAL believes the Digital Principles can be the basis for this business standard.

The Digital Principles may also evolve to become a business standard in other ways. Given their global acceptance, practical guidance for applying the Principles for Digital Development can inform how we design, build, and deploy digital technologies overall. Donors and implementers alike have begun utilizing the Digital Principles Maturity Matrix for Proposal Evaluation. We will soon deploy measurement indicators that can be used to track progress of digital programs and products against digital transformation efforts and measurement indices. Governments and their digital agencies could incorporate a globally accepted digital good practice business standard based on the Principles for Digital Development. These are early examples of tools that can form the foundation for standards. DIAL will expand these critical guiding resources to ensure that the Principles for Digital Development are adopted as a business standard to align global practices across the development sector.

Under the advice of the Digital Principles Advisory Council and through community engagement, DIAL will build additional Digital Principles training curricula to contribute to greater digital capacity among agencies that adopt the new standard. Our goal will be to make the curricula available as a digital public good under open license for public use. DIAL will offer partners an accredited training-of-trainers program, creating a global network of trusted facilitators that can be run by local institutions in their own countries.

**Share and Connect:** Over the past four years, DIAL has built a community management and events capacity that connects discrete communities around shared best practices. In addition to the Principles for Digital Development, DIAL manages two additional communities of practice: the Open Source Center, which works with digital public goods providers, and Digital Donors Anonymous, which links bilateral and multilateral donors to discuss practical methods for better digital cooperation. We also provide infrastructure for the Donor Alignment Principles in Digital Health. Collectively, these communities touch more than 300 organizations and 1200 individuals. DIAL will grow its existing communities of practice, providing shared personnel and infrastructure, and deepen partnerships with sectoral and country peer learning networks to accelerate the sharing of digital transformation and responsible data use best practices across pathfinder countries. In particular, we will support the community to review and update the Principles for Digital Development and expand its stakeholder network to more effectively include country governments.
Success factors

If DIAL’s efforts aligning global demand are successful, in five years we will have supported a coalition of GDAs to reach consensus on mechanisms that support digital financing cooperation and digital transformation; developed a strong technical curriculum and training accreditation program based on the Principles for Digital Development; and promulgated learnings through interconnected, powerful communities of practice. Markers of progress over the five years will include the following:

- Alignment by a core group of public and private actors on the most critical components of national digital transformation and responsible data use; progress towards co-investment; the benchmarks, original research, and technical guidance to track and measure progress across initiatives, particularly around public procurement practices; and the endorsement by at least five donors of a new set of cross-sector Donor Investment Principles.

- Improved practice in key areas of digital transformation and clear documentation of the progress and gaps in the digital ecosystem, in the form of actionable insights in papers and studies, based on a community-driven evidence base.

- Increased numbers of government endorsers for the Principles for Digital Development and improved design, development, and deployment practices with a common business standard drawn from the Principles, adopted through the Digital Principles training program and implemented by a global network of accredited trainers; e-learning and capacity-building resources for donors to help them integrate the Principles into their staff training programs.

- Continued progress and impact from the Principles for Digital Development, including undertaking a global process to update the Digital Principles in partnership with the community to ensure their relevance as “living” guidelines.

- Mutual reinforcement of communities of practice that communicate innovations and common community knowledge management and community organizing infrastructure leveraged by the Open Source Center, the Digital Principles community, Digital Donors Anonymous, and a new country-led digital transformation Peer Learning Network available to the whole digital ecosystem.

Objective 3: Connect, support, and scale proven solutions for faster uptake and adoption by governments and service providers

Overview

To support their social program objectives, GDAs pursuing digital transformation agendas have invested in software solutions and the corresponding enabling environments to roll them out. Given the funding and infrastructural constraints LMICs face, many global development actors have embraced free and open-source software (FOSS) to avoid ongoing licensing costs and vendor lock-in, have
the freedom to modify the software to fit the needs of a country context, and leverage the FOSS communities to augment their own capacities to develop and manage it.\textsuperscript{xlii}

Cross-cutting digital solutions face chronic underinvestment to build their platform capabilities and the necessary capital to connect solutions within a country. The result is over investment by donors and governments in sector-specific solutions, many of which have overlapping or duplicative functions and the inability to easily aggregate and compare data pulled from disparate systems. See (Figure 4).

From our work with the ITU in Niger, country partners (e.g. Malawi, Sierra Leone, Smart Africa) and donors (e.g., GIZ, DFID, USAID), we have identified two main obstacles with which they struggle: 1) discoverability of products that are proven digital building blocks, and 2) how best to connect these interoperable building blocks to form a national ICT strategy that delivers high return on investment and solves more solutions than the sum of its parts.

Many countries already have some of the requisite infrastructure needed for digital transformation but lack the funding and expertise to find and evaluate missing, needed products against shared business requirements; understand the pros and cons of different technical approaches already in use; and connect these building blocks to cover more use cases than currently envisioned by the standard, sector-specific approach.

DIAL will make it easy for GDAs to find potential products that meet a set of requirements and provide practical examples of how these products are used in combination with others to provide solutions to real problems and maximize ROI. Once candidate products are discovered, they must be rigorously evaluated against existing maturity models and matrices; and governments, many of whom choose open-source solutions, must have confidence that these products will persist.
Our supply-side work bolsters DIAL’s support to national governments making these “build vs. buy” decisions, the global procurement efforts that finance them and the marketplace of implementers who supply them. We will invest in efforts to **connect** buyers and sellers with existing, vetted solutions; provide tools for analysis and evaluation; and establish, with partners, an independent software foundation dedicated to **support and scale** proven solutions.

**Connect buyers and sellers:** DIAL will continue working with leading sectoral and global partners to expand both the breadth and depth of the SDG Digital Investment Framework’s use cases, workflows, and descriptions of ICT Building Blocks in the form of business requirements. This theoretical framework is complemented by the living Catalog of Digital Global Goods platform, which serves both as a digital marketplace for digital solutions as well as a white-labelable tool that GDAs can use themselves to manage their digital investments.

**Support and Scale:** The Catalog of Digital Global Goods captures many of the existing digital solutions that exist, most of which originated and still reside in academic or nonprofit institutions. These organizations are not well-suited, however, to scale and sustain digital and data products to a sufficient level of maturity. In addition, most of these products are not financially sustainable, requiring continued donor support. DIAL and GDAs will establish an **independent foundation** that provides some or all of the following services for digital and data solutions deemed essential for quality products to support digital transformation:

- **Fiduciary agent:** A host entity that receives and manages financing and is auditable and able to execute contracts; the OSC, existing software foundations or other legal fiscal sponsors could provide legal entities to facilitate financial management and back-office services. This would enable shared burden of overhead expenses across multiple open-source projects.
• **Organizational home**: The primary maintainer of the project, who takes an active role in community management, developing/maintaining the product roadmap, governance, etc.

• **Dedicated staff**: A full-time core product team consisting of product owner, community manager, technical architect, and software engineers; not every product requires, or can afford, full-time staffing for these roles.

• **Stable funding**: A committed funder(s) dedicated to finding and/developing both start-up and ongoing funding that supports the “core”; likely a mix of grants and internally generated revenue, ideally through a public-private partnership.

• **Community governance**: Connections to others solving similar challenges for collaboration, assistance, and interoperability.

**Success factors**

If DIAL’s efforts connecting buyers and sellers with proven solutions and providing dedicated support for those solutions are successful, the result in five years will be an online marketplace of vetted, proven solutions that contribute to government digital transformation and responsible data use; technical tools, resources, and communities that empower governments to achieve technical sovereignty over their digital infrastructure; and a dedicated foundation built solely to ensure that the products and services needed for digital transformation are well-managed, scalable, and sustainable. Markers of progress include the following:

• **Expanded library of use cases, workflows, and common business requirements for ICT Building Blocks (products)**. Our team will continue to augment and refine the platform’s library of use cases and workflows through engagement with working groups, domain experts and alliances to incorporate priority use cases and link to relevant resources, expanding both the breadth (e.g., fintech, climate) and depth (e.g., Ag, social protection) of the SDG Digital Investment Framework.

• **Development and adoption of a common ontology for evaluating digital products**. This ontology will include broad categories for evaluating products and specific indicators or data points that can be collected about a product and will be contained in a white-labeled rubric that provides an open and transparent guide for evaluating the maturity, quality, and sustainability of digital public goods. By working to align donors, governments, and any funder or purchaser of these digital public goods and services around a common framework for evaluating technology
solutions, we will reduce fragmented and/or duplicative investments while also shaping the market by signaling the weight of desirable aspects (e.g., standards, interoperability, modularity, etc.).

• **An online marketplace (Catalog of Digital Global Goods) that serves as a searchable catalog of these digital building blocks used for digital transformation and responsible data use.** The catalog will serve as a public repository of available digital global goods. This platform will also contain community-sourced, real-world examples of how ICT building blocks can be mixed and matched to solve real-world problems, as well as provide guidance on how to select products and strategically plan for interoperable investments via wizards and toolkits. In addition to hosting a reference implementation of this platform, we have heard an expressed need by governments (e.g., the DRC), donors (e.g., GIZ), and NGOs to make it their own (white-label use) in order to organize and manage their investments.

• **A foundation dedicated to supporting, scaling, and sustaining digital public goods.** This entity will provide a menu of service offerings specific to digital public goods and governments as the primary clients. Certain service offerings will appeal more to some products based on their maturity, and country governments will leverage the foundation in different ways. For example, they might use the reference sandboxes for testing the interoperability of various combinations of building blocks (e.g., ID systems, fintech) to achieve certain playbooks (e.g., payments to teachers or community health workers); as technical consultants for ICT strategy development that leverages the Principles for Digital Development and the SDG Digital Investment; or as a hub for talent development.

**Our values**

DIAL’s approach to our work is underscored by our organizational values and The Principles for Digital Development. We will deepen efforts to enhance these over the coming five years. The following values shape our approach:

• **Impact Focused:** Our efforts must start by understanding the long-term benefit for women, girls, and those most economically vulnerable.

• **Committed:** Our endeavors are targeting the hard challenges that have arisen over decades in digital development; persistence will be required.

• **Data-Driven:** Our strategy will be guided by evidence drawn from multiple sources and investments made after vigorous debates have been held on the conclusions.

• **Respectful:** Our culture will respect that colleagues come from different cultures and training; we will listen to all.
• **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**: Our starting point is to learn from other industries, partners and countries on what is working and failing versus creating from scratch.

• **Action Biased and Adaptive**: Our bias is for action. Demonstrations will be tried and evaluated rigorously and plans and solutions will be adapted or ended if they are not gaining traction.

• **Collaborative**: Our investments (e.g., dollars and information) must continuously be linked together across sectors, stakeholders, and countries.

• **Humble**: Our impact will be manifested when we work through others; taking the spotlight is not our goal.

• **Cost Effective**: Our ambitions are higher than our funding base; teams need to budget frugally and consider where they can leverage other funding sources.

• **Transparent**: Our work is shared openly unless business confidential.

**Join us**

To achieve the SDGs, to equip 1 billion people with legal identification, to prepare for and respond to climate, health and humanitarian emergencies, and to serve the most vulnerable, we can’t afford delays. Mutually beneficial partnerships in which global development actors complement, not compete, with one another is critical for the success of the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and achieving the SDGs. Through DIAL’s *Beacons of Hope* framework and this five-year strategy, DIAL pledges our support to connect the digital development ecosystem, integrating people and technology to achieve a shared vision of impact. **Join us in this effort to advance digital transformation and responsible data use: Please share your feedback on this strategy (send to: DIALStrategy@unfoundation.org) and let us know if you are interested in working together.**

Now is our time to act.
List of Figures

Figure 1 - The Hypothesis behind the Beacons of Hope Framework
Figure 2 - Country progress on child mortality and education 2000-2017
Figure 3 - Beacons of Hope Framework: Areas Where Cooperation Can Accelerate Digital Transformation
Figure 4 - SDG Targets and Sectors
Figure 5 - ICT Infrastructure scenario

List of Boxes

Box 1 – DIAL’s Progress
Box 2 - The power of neutral convening
Box 3 - Narrowing the list of potential country partners
Box 4 - A country with platform-based approach to digital transformation
Box 5 - Building the evidence base for pooled procurement of digital global goods
Box 6 - Digital Global Goods platform main features
# Key terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building block approach</td>
<td>A way to implement technology solutions using multiple, interoperable reusable components that address more than a primary use cases to achieve economies of scale and maximum return on investment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital building blocks</td>
<td>A digital or ICT Building Block is an enterprise-ready, reusable software component that provides key functionality to facilitate generic workflows across multiple sectors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital transformation</td>
<td>The use of digital technologies by governments, the private sector, donors and civil society to fundamentally improve how a country achieves its national priorities and supports its citizens. It requires that external stakeholders invest their funds, time and capacity to support countries to improve the delivery and reach of all services and to use digital data responsibly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digitalization</td>
<td>The transition of business and services to use digital technologies (e.g. APIs), products, and services. That means digitalization presumes digitization, as described in the previous section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digitization</td>
<td>The process of encoding physical information, i.e. creating a digital representation of physical objects. For instance, we scan a paper document and save it as a digital document (e.g., PDF).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital inclusion</td>
<td>The activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital public goods</td>
<td>The digital products, software and data—and the algorithms that drive them—that serve to educate us, help us thrive in our professional lives, enrich our cultural experiences, and ultimately do good for the benefit of humankind. (<a href="https://www.unicef.org">UNICEF</a>). The Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation noted the requirement for them to be freely and openly available with minimal restrictions. (<a href="https://www.unicef.org">Report</a>). Digital public goods include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Open source software, libraries, application programming interfaces (APIs) and algorithms for which the source code is released under a license that allows the user to use, study, change and distribute it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Open data and content: Information or knowledge that is released under a license that allows the user to use, study, and distribute it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Open standards: Publicly available compendia of norms, laws, specifications and reference implementations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital global goods</td>
<td>Digital global goods include both digital public goods and commercial off-the-shelf solutions (COTS). While acknowledging the value of free and openly licensed public goods, digital global goods describe the whole marketplace of software, data, content, standards, and other digital products, available to stakeholders. This centers the needs of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
governments and other users to procure, implement, and scale the digital and data solutions most appropriate to their context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICT4SDGs</td>
<td>Information, Communications and Technology for the Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalization</td>
<td>Embedding digital technology in policies, practices, workflows and daily life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global development actors</td>
<td>Individuals, groups and agencies that exist and carry out specific functions in every society. In any given society or country, there are people who are responsible for the development of the society by reason of their activities. They are institutions and/or organizations like civil society, government and community-based groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income countries</td>
<td>Nations that have a per capita gross national income (GNI) of less than US $1,026.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-income countries</td>
<td>Nations that have a per capita gross national income of US $1,026 to $12,475.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNO</td>
<td>Mobile network operator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National digital transformation</td>
<td>The use of digital technologies to radically or fundamentally improve how a country's socio-economic conditions benefit all citizens, improve digital government, improve gender equality, boost productivity/growth/jobs, develop digital skills/literacy, and drive innovation (i.e., promote economic growth and sustainable development OR a country's specific priorities, which could be the SDGs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-first</td>
<td>Denotes the importance of honoring the rights and needs of all people in the country (as opposed to citizen-first).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>The part of the economy, sometimes referred to as the citizen sector, which is owned by private individuals or groups, usually as a means of enterprise for profit rather than being owned by the state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurers</td>
<td>A person or entity (donor, multilateral, country ministry, NGO, etc.) that buys a digital public good or digital global good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>The part of the economy owned by the state, composed of both public services and public enterprises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible data use</td>
<td>The duty to ensure people’s right to consent, privacy, security and ownership around the information process of collection, analysis, storage, presentation and reuse of data, while respecting the values of transparency and openness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguards</td>
<td>Policies and regulations and the mechanisms to enforce them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG targets</td>
<td>Defined high-level objectives to which governments systematically align their development goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</td>
<td>The world’s shared plan to end extreme poverty, reduce inequality and protect the planet by 2030.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SROI</td>
<td>Social return on investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology supplier</td>
<td>A person or business that provides a technology product or service to another entity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Use cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use case</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use cases</td>
<td>Define the steps necessary to achieve a business objective contributing to one or more SDG targets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-of-government approach</td>
<td>The joint activities performed by diverse ministries, public administrations and public agencies in order to provide a common solution to a particular problem or issue. The approach and content of the initiatives can be formal or informal. For DIAL, this means using a whole-of-government approach to investing in and deploying digital technologies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-of-society</td>
<td>The joint activities performed by all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, individuals and communities, in order to provide a common solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workflows</td>
<td>Generic business processes, such as client communication or procurement, that support the delivery of a use case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable populations</td>
<td>Groups and communities that are at a higher risk as a result of the barriers they experience to social, economic, political and environmental resources, as well as limitations due to illness or disability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References


4. Ibid.


6. Ibid.


11. Ibid.
There is a question of how you can help lift digital strategies by tying them into the government’s goals, in support of a broader vision for digital transformation of government, the public sector, and the economy. Source: Discussion with USAID Mission (Jan. 2020).

For more information, see: DIAL Baseline Ecosystem Study, "Investments in, and attitudes towards digital by institutional donors and foundations were quite similar to those of large NGOs and grassroots NGOs. Donor key informants reported making large systematic investments in organizational capacity-building, with a strong drive for innovation from their central headquarters. However, diffusion to their decentralized country offices was often slow and unsuccessful. Large NGO key informants reported similar dynamics as funders between their headquarters and country offices for internal dissemination of technology." Source: Digital Impact Alliance, "DIAL Baseline Ecosystem Study," DIAL, December 2018 (accessed on June 22, 2020). Retrieved from: https://digitalimpactalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/DIALBaselineEcosystemStudy.pdf.


For more information, see: IndiaStack, "What is India Stack?" IndiaStack (accessed on June 24, 2020). Retrieved from: https://www.indiastack.org/about/


Source: DIAL Staff. Staff members who are citizens of Rwanda and Singapore receive daily alerts from their health ministries. In Singapore, the government has compiled and provided a collective set of digital resources, both public and private, that citizens use to access news and services. Further, the government of Singapore has indicated ways in which it is protecting user privacy.


DIAL has received a request from OECD to collaborate on the development of a digital transformation thought piece.
DIAL was funded 14 months ahead of the CEO being hired, and internal donor pressure required the team to invest in early experiments that did not always match later strategy.

Since DIAL’s inception, our budget has deliberately invested 50% of resources with external partners to benefit the digital ecosystem and not the DIAL team directly.

DIAL analysed over 20 frameworks of or relating to digital transformation (i.e. digitalization, innovation, digital economy, digital government, etc) that exist across the multilateral system. While this understanding is preliminary, we recognize that there are many common thematic areas which demonstrate a need for continued effort to understand and align divergent ecosystem approaches when framing and promoting a national digital transformation agenda alongside partners (ex: Smart Africa has adopted the Digital Economy Blueprint).


To date, the Open Source Center (OSC) community has 28 members, while the Digital Donors Anonymous (DDA) community has involved over 20 distinct funders across the digital ecosystem. Furthermore, the DDA community has engaged more than 140 individuals across all funders as of June 2020 (including donor governments, UN agencies, and private foundations), regularly engaging focused conversations across a range of topics.