National Capacity Building Workshop to Accelerate Digital Government Transformation in Sri Lanka:
Strengthening Digital Governance for Sustainable Development

Capacities at Institutional, Organizational, Individual and Societal Levels for Digital Government Transformation

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The definition of capacities for digital government transformation

✧ **Digital government transformation capacity** reflects the ability of Governments and society to transform policies, programmes, processes and services by leveraging innovation and digital technologies.

✧ For effective design and implementation of a holistic approach to digital government transformation, **broad capacity development is needed at the institutional, organizational and individual levels in government as well as at the societal level**.

✧ **Political commitment at the highest levels of government is an essential precondition**, and there should be a clear vision of government transformation guided by a set of core values that are aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

✧ **Capacities to engage in transformational leadership and change mindsets at the national and local levels and across all sectors in society are equally important**.

✧ Digital government transformation also requires building digital capacities in government by **attracting and retaining the best digital talent in a country**.

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✧ **Capacities to put in place a comprehensive institutional and regulatory framework for digital government are critical**. It is necessary to strengthen capacities to develop integrated approaches, effect organizational change, and enhance people's participation in public affairs.

✧ **Capacities to mobilize resources, manage data, promote effective public communication, and address issues related to technology access and ICT infrastructure and affordability are also part of a holistic approach.**

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Ecosystem: The central feature of a holistic approach to digital government transformation is the alignment of institutions, organizations, people, technology, data, and resources to support desired change within and outside of the public sector for the generation of public value.

> ➢ **Systems thinking**
> ➢ **Integrated approach**

Contextual: It should be home-grown and leverage local knowledge while also taking into account good practices from across the world.

Collaborative: It should be collaborative since providing integrated digital services requires a high degree of coordination among ministries and agencies and new mindsets in government and society.

People-centric: a holistic approach is value-driven, which puts people first and revolves around the needs of individuals, including those left furthest behind, and the mitigation of risks associated with the use of technologies.

Promote both organizational and data interoperability and standards for using technologies

➢ Interoperability "is a top priority today as Governments try to integrate services across departments so as to improve effectiveness as well as efficiency"

➢ Many countries have long enforced specific technical requirements and standards to establish or improve interoperability, some countries have adopted policies on interoperability, and others have taken concrete steps to implement relevant institutional reforms or formalize new arrangements.

Promote coordination among different agencies and break silos

➢ Horizontal integration
➢ Vertical integration

- **Situation analysis:** undertake a situation analysis to assess digital transformation capacity gaps and opportunities;

- **Future envisioning:** articulate a shared vision of government transformation and how digital technologies will be leveraged to achieve societal goals;

- **Digital government transformation strategy and roadmap:** devise a strategy and a digital government implementation road map in which key pillars are identified;

- **Monitoring and evaluation:** put monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to collect feedback that should then be used to inform the subsequent rounds of situation analysis, strategy development and implementation;

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Key Pillars of a Roadmap

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.

Principles for developing a strategy and roadmap

✧ Be aligned with and integrated into the **Government's overall development strategy**

✧ Be aligned with **subnational strategies** to ensure that local perspectives are incorporated into national development plans

✧ Include actions aimed at facilitating **public-private partnerships** and enhancing **collaboration for public value co-creation**

✧ Include **short-term, medium-term and long-term** projects that are aligned with the digital government transformation vision

Tools for developing a strategy and roadmap

> ➢ The UN DESA DiGIT4SD toolkit

> ➢ OECD: Going Digital Toolkit

Box 7.2   Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development: Going Digital Toolkit

OECD has developed a comprehensive framework and analytical toolkit that is designed to guide and support countries in their digitalization efforts. It starts with an assessment of a country's level of digital development and aids in the formulation of policies, strategies and approaches in response to seven metrics based on thirty-three indicators, as follows:

(1) *Jobs*: share of ICT and digital-sector jobs in total employment; ICT training; new STEM graduates; public spending on labour market policies

(2) *Market openness*: cross-border e-commerce sales; share of digitally delivered services in the commercial services sector; digital services value in manufactured exports; digital services trade restrictiveness; foreign direct investment restrictiveness

(3) *Access*: fixed and mobile broadband penetration; M2M SIM card use; mobile data use; business broadband use

(4) *Trust*: abuse of personal information or privacy violations; non-use of ICT due to payment-security or product-return concerns; internal employee provision of ICT security and data protection

(5) *Society*: Internet use among older persons, lower-income households, indigenous peoples and young women; digital equipment use at work and in telework from home; high-performing youth in STEM and reading; e-waste generation

(6) *Innovation*: ICT investment; business R&D expenditure in information industries; venture capital investment in the ICT sector; share of start-ups in the business population; computer science documentation use; ICT-related patents

(7) *Use*: individual Internet users; individuals using the Internet to interact with public authorities; Internet users that have made recent online purchases; small businesses with recent e-commerce sales; businesses purchasing cloud services; adults proficient in problem-solving in technology-rich environments

Sources: Government of South Australia, "Digital transformation toolkit" (https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/responsibilities/ict-digital-cyber-security/toolkits/digital-transformation-toolkit)

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**4. capacity development for
digital government transformation**
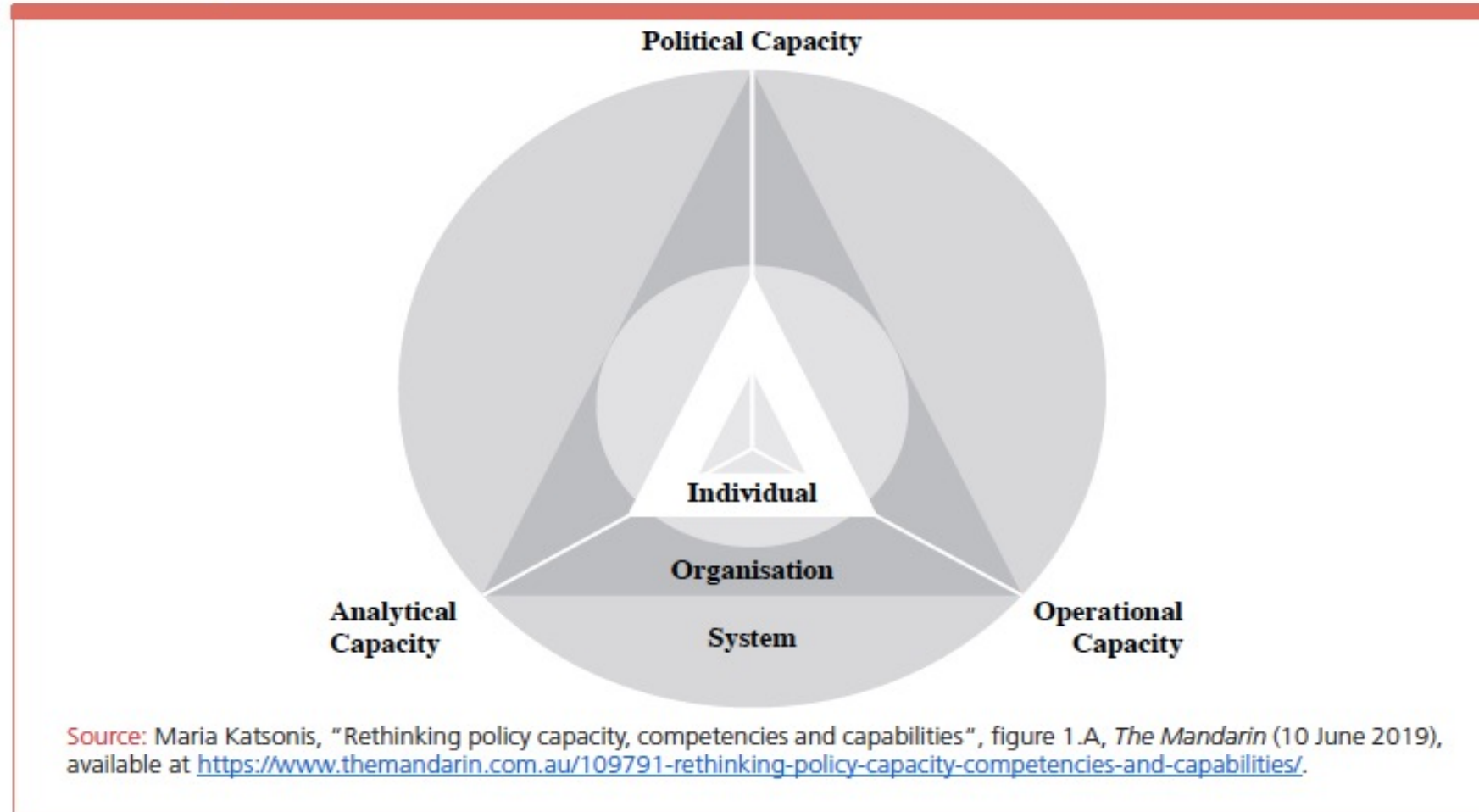**Capacities at institutional level**

Putting in place an institutional ecosystem: incorporating laws, regulations, policies, guidelines and standards that address issues such as access to information, data privacy protection, digital security, and AI legislation

➢**Developing a comprehensive regulatory framework**

➢**Taking the needs of vulnerable groups into account**

➢**Regulators' new role of a facilitator and partner**

➢**New government capacities are needed** to address institutional and regulatory requirements for the integration and use of rapidly evolving technologies.

Source: Maria Katsonis, "Rethinking policy capacity, competencies and capabilities", figure 1.A, *The Mandarin* (10 June 2019), available at https://www.themandarin.com.au/109791-rethinking-policy-capacity-competencies-and-capabilities/.

Strengthening policy capacity, competencies and capabilities for digital government transformation

**4. capacity development for
digital government transformation**
Capacities at organizational level

Organizational capacity relates to government structures that define authority, roles and responsibilities, accountability and reporting lines, and mechanisms and processes for coordination and communication.

➢**A whole-of-government approach is needed**

➢**Having in place a central coordinating agency**

➢**Capacities are needed to promote coordination**

➢**Transforming the organizational culture at all levels**

Capacities at individual level

Individual capacities are the beliefs, mindsets, values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and competencies of people.

➢**Improving individual capacities within government and across society**

➢**Recruiting, retaining and motivating the best digital talent for digital government transformation**

➢**Developing digital capacities within government and changing mindsets**

➢**Creating multidisciplinary and multisectoral teams**

➢**Ensuring safe spaces for innovation and experimentation**

➢**A plan to develop individual capacities for digital government transformation**

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Societal capacities are capacities of all stakeholders in society.

➢**Developing digital capacities for co-creation and cooperation and promoting digital inclusion**

➢**Bridging digital divides and empower vulnerable groups**

➢**Identifying those being left behind in digital government** (those living near or below the poverty line, Women and girls, Older persons, Persons with disabilities, Youth, Migrants and refugees)

➢**Barriers relating to access, affordability and ability (3As)**

➢**The role data, design and delivery can play in ensuring no one is left behind**

➢**Hackathon: encourage more talents and stakeholders to participate in the innovation of digital technology**

4. capacity development for digital government transformation

Capacities at societal level

Figure 4.6 The intersectionality of barriers: of access, affordability and ability in determining digital exclusion
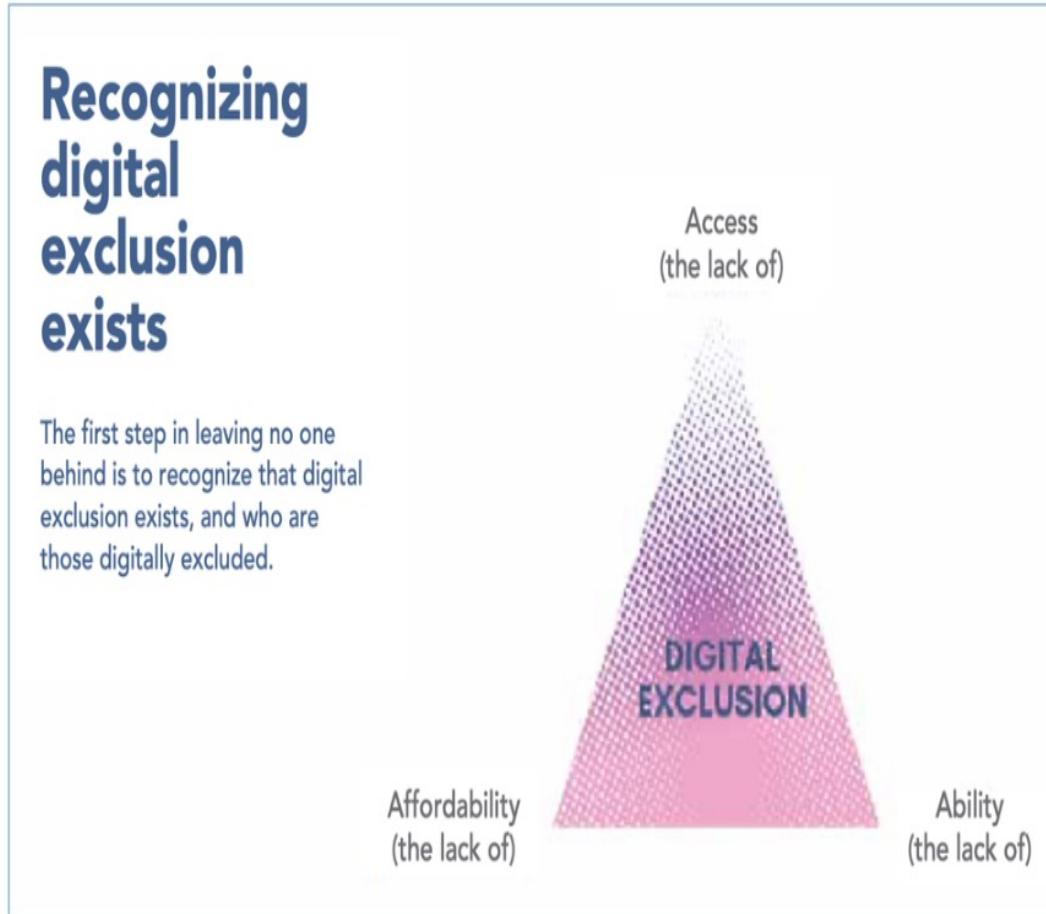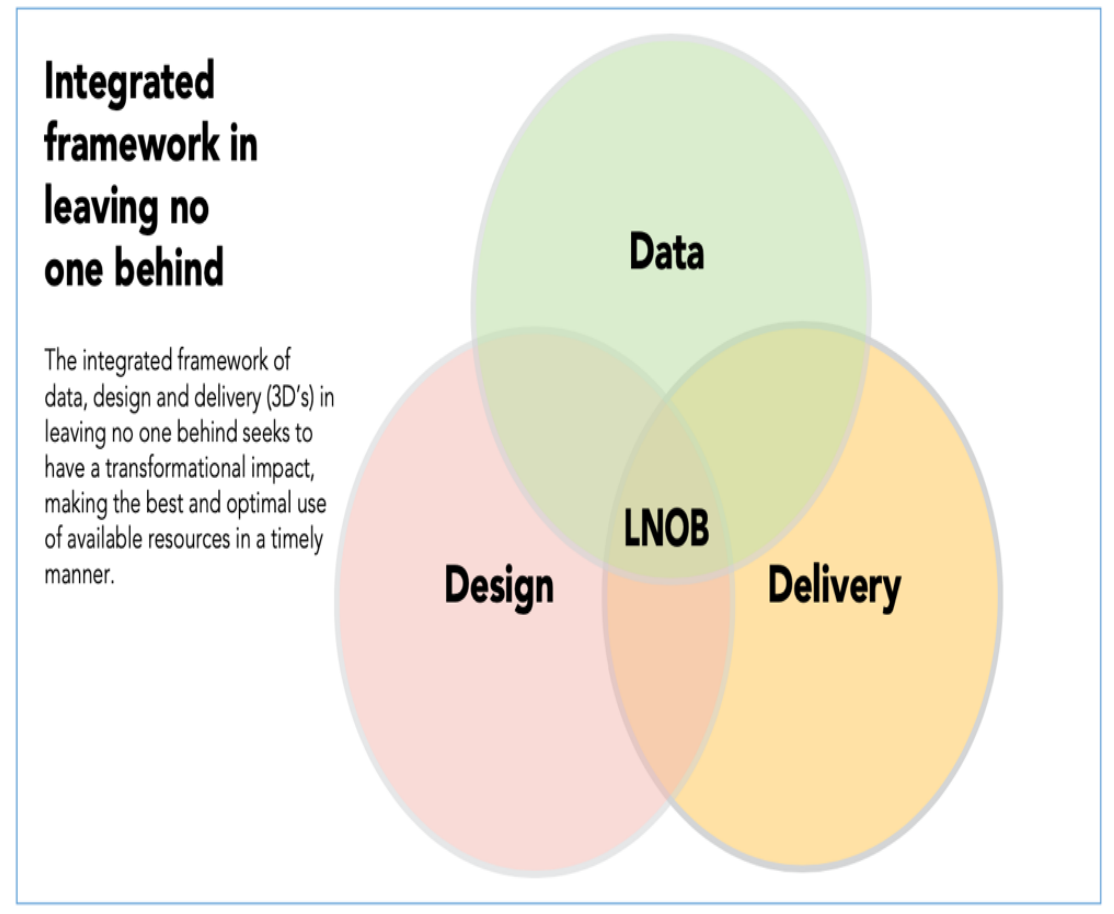
Figure 4.13 Integrated data-design-delivery framework for e-government

Recognizing digital exclusion exists

The first step in leaving no one behind is to recognize that digital exclusion exists, and who are those digitally excluded.

Access (the lack of)

DIGITAL EXCLUSION

Affordability (the lack of)

Ability (the lack of)

Integrated framework in leaving no one behind

The integrated framework of data, design and delivery (3D's) in leaving no one behind seeks to have a transformational impact, making the best and optimal use of available resources in a timely manner.

Data

Design

LNOB

Delivery

Capacities of capacity developers

Capacity developers may include schools of public administration, management development institutes, or non-State actors such as private sector software developers.

➢strengthening the skills and competencies necessary for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

➢provide training for public servants of all types and at all levels

➢play a central role in developing curricula that provide current and future public servants with the requisite skills, mindsets and competencies they will need for effective governance.

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Thank you

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