CONCEPT NOTE

National Capacity Building Workshop to Accelerate Digital Government Transformation in Sri Lanka:

Strengthening Digital Governance for Sustainable Development

7-8 June 2023

Jointly organized by

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka

Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka

United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Sri Lanka

Background and Context

E-Governance is a critical enabler to accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by improving the effectiveness and efficiency of public service delivery. Digital Government facilitates integrated policies and public services to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth, social development, and environmental protection. Leveraging Digital Government can also promote the accessibility of vulnerable groups to basic public services and citizen participation in the decision-making process. The most recent UN E-Government Survey launched in 2022 showed that many more countries and municipalities are pursuing digital government strategies, some of which are radically different from those guiding earlier e-government initiatives. Some of the new approaches include the delivery of e-government as a platform, the integration of online and offline hybrid mode/channel delivery, the agile development of digital services, the expansion of e-participation and partnerships, the adoption of data-centric approaches, the strengthening of digital capacities to deliver people-centric services, and the innovative use of new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and blockchain, especially in the development of smart cities.

In Sri Lanka, building a technology-based society is a policy priority and a key strategy to achieve this is to build a citizen-centric digital government. Accordingly, the National Digital Policy and Strategy (2020 – 2025) is based on three key pillars, i.e. digital government, digital economy, and digital services.

Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) is mandated to lead the digital government transformation in Sri Lanka. ICTA has been entrusted with the responsibility of implementing the Roadmap for Government digital transformation. In Sri Lanka, there are various types of organizations that provide different services to citizens, and these organizations are at different levels of maturity due to many practical challenges such as geographical conditions, unequal resource distribution, a lack of opportunities, etc.

With a view to the need of accelerating the pace of digital government transformation, a comprehensive capacity-building strategy for digital government transformation has been designed and is being implemented across the Government of Sri Lanka. This consists of four major initiatives, namely, the adoption of the Digital Maturity Model, setting up Digital Transformation Units, the NextGenGov Initiative, and the Government Chief Digital Information Officer (CDIO) initiative backed by the Digital Government Competency Framework and ICT service reform.

In that light, the ICTA has embarked on an initiative to formulate a Digital Maturity Model in line with current models provided by selected agencies and global trends, and various criteria are applied in analyzing the digital maturity of an organization, which is framed by the TM Forum, the Deloitte maturity model, etc. Understanding the category that the organization falls into is essential for assessing and monitoring progress in digital transformation initiatives. And this was developed in collaboration with ICT businesses, government institutions, academia, and ICTA specialists with diverse domain experience. The objective of this initiative is to study current

Maturity Models and practices and identify the subdivisions and assess the digital maturity of government organizations and publish the digital maturity of the Government annually.

The government workforce is a complex and diversified organization, and the competencies of its employees vary greatly. Further, it is difficult to capacitate many officials systematically in a short period. Furthermore, there is no unified approach to capacity building across the government.

Hence, the ICTA has also formulated the Digital Government Competency Framework to identify the required level of competencies to transform the workforce progressively by specifying the required skills for officials at different levels. To identify the competency gap, a Needs Assessment Toolkit will be used. The objective of this initiative is to adopt a unified competency framework to equip the government workforce with the necessary competencies to help with the digital government transformation. With a view to recent trends in digital government development as emerged in those pioneering countries such as the Republic of Korea and Singapore, this Framework can include required competencies for digital platform government, data- based and integrated government service, and hands-on knowledge.

Against this backdrop, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) and its Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), in collaboration with the Sustainable Development Council and the ICTA of Sri Lanka with support from United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Sri Lanka, will co-organize a National Capacity Building Workshop to Accelerate Digital Government Transformation in Sri Lanka on 7-8 June 2023 through an online format.

Objectives

The Workshop's objective is to build digital government capacities of key government officials to contribute to accelerating the pace of digital government transformation in Sri Lanka. This Workshop will also aim to equip the government officials with knowledge on recent trends and country practices in digital platform government as well as the data policy framework as one of the fundamental pillars.

The Workshop will allow participants to:

1. Gain knowledge on essential skills and knowledge domains on digital government transformation with innovation towards citizen-centric public service delivery, including the knowledge on recent trends in government innovation such as digital platform government and data policy.

2. Identify challenges and building blocks for digital government transformation.

3. Acquire practical hands-on knowledge (and skills) on how to implement digital government strategies and digital technologies in government to deliver inclusive services by promoting change at different government levels (individual, organizational and institutional).

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4. Support the creation of an e-competency profile of the public sector's workforce by specifying the set of knowledge and skills for targeted government officials at different levels, e.g. Government Chief Information Officers at respective government departments, mid-level government officials at national institutions, and lower-level local officials for implementation, and general public institutions. In this regard, a comparative study will be introduced to review ICTA's Digital Government Competency Framework versus several other sources such as the Pillar on Professional and Workforce Development of the Handbook on Digital Government Capabilities Assessment, the European e-Competence Framework (e-CF) as well as the UN DESA Competency Framework with focus on competencies related to inclusive, digital, evidence-based and foresight mindsets.

5. Learn and apply new concepts, tools, and approaches to support strategies, capabilities, and action planning.

6. Develop a roadmap and an action plan, using design thinking approaches.

Thematic Focus

Based on the previously identified challenges and needs, the Capacity Building Workshop will cover the following topics:

Session 1 – Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development and Trends in E-Government Development including the recent trends in digital platform government and data policy.

Session 2 – Conducting a Situation Analysis: Innovation and Digital Government Capability Assessment with a focus on individual capacities, organizational structures for coordination, national to local governance and partnerships.

Session 3 – Identifying Priorities and New Approaches for Inclusive Service Delivery with a focus on:

- Promoting Digital Skills and Changing Mindsets
- Enhancing Institutional Coordination for Effective Public Service Delivery
- Taking different strategies of capacity development for targeted government officials at different levels of government institutions based on the Innovation and Digital Government Capability Assessment.

Session 4: Developing a Road Map and Action Planning for Innovation and Digital Government Transformation for Inclusive Service Delivery to Realize the Sustainable Development Goals (based on the above four areas including key recommendations from the UN E-Government Survey)

Session 5: Towards Digital Government: Turning your Action Plan Ideas into Results

Target Audience

The target audience of the Workshop will include selected government leaders, digital government practitioners, potential Government Chief Digital Information Officers (CDIOs), and trainers working on relevant domains.

Methodology

The strategy for this Workshop is to evaluate the results of the 2022 UN E-Government Survey for Sri Lanka, and then customize the training modules contained in the Toolkit on Innovation and Digital Government for Public Service Delivery and the Toolkit on Capacities on Digital Government Transformation to the needs of Sri Lanka. This workshop will also use the Handbook on Digital Government Capabilities Assessment to identify capacity gaps in different building blocks so to prioritize areas for enhancement.

Based on the previous workshop experience, an effective delivery of the interactive workshop – involving exercises, the development of an action plan based on design thinking, joint activities and discussions will require facilitation on the ground. In this regard, officials from UN RCO in Sri Lanka as well as ICTA and the Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka could help with this interactive discussion among participants.

To enhance the impact of this workshop, the key findings and lessons learned will be disseminated to all regions through the UN Public Administration Network (UNPAN) and the divisional websites. The workshop will be conducted in English.

Expected Outcomes

- Positive perception towards digital government transformation among government leaders and policymakers.
- A better understanding of the global innovative practices/ context related to digital transformation in public sector.
- Produce master trainers to train and disseminate the knowledge.

Programme

Day 1 – 7 June 2023	
08.55 – 09.00	**Video Clip - Sustainably Developed Sri Lanka**
09:00-09:25 (GMT +5:30)	**Welcome and Opening Remarks** **Moderator: Ms. Cristina Alicia Rodriguez Acosta**, Inter-Regional Advisor on Innovation and Digital Government, DPIDG, UN DESA • **Mr. Christian Skoog**, UN Resident Coordinator a.i. in Sri Lanka (5 mins) • **Mr. Mahinda Siriwardana**, Secretary to the Treasury, Ministry of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies (5 mins) • **Sr. Prof. Niranjan D. Gunawardena**, Secretary, Ministry of Technology; Vice Chancellor of University of Moratuwa (5 mins) • **Mr. Kyu Chang Ko**, Head of UNPOG, DPIDG, UN DESA (5 mins)
09:25-09:30	**Group picture**
09:30-11:15	**Session 1 – Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development and Trends in Digital Government** **Moderator: Mr. Sameera Jayawardena,** Associate Chief Digital Economy Officer, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka — **Keynote Speech on Digital Transformation in Sri Lankan Public Sector** • **Mr. Mahesh Perera,** Chief Executive Officer, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka (5 mins) — **Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development** • **Ms. Cristina Alicia Rodriguez Acosta**, Inter-Regional Advisor on Innovation and Digital Government, DPIDG, UN DESA (15 mins) — **Trends of Digital Government Development – Major Findings from the 2022 E-Government Development and Innovative Practices from around the World** • **Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro,** Chief, Digital Government Branch, DPIDG, UN DESA (*video presentation*) (15 mins)

	— **New Journey to Digital Platform Government**: Korea's Strategy for Government Innovation[1] & Data Policy to Unlock the Potential Value of Data[2][3] • **Mr. Je Myung Ryu,** Presidential Committee on Digital Platform Government, Republic of Korea (15 mins) — **Singapore's Digital Transformation Journey** • **Ms. Karen Kee,** Deputy Director, International and Community Development Lead, GovTech, Singapore (15 mins) — **Panel Discussion** (40 mins)
11:15-11:30	**Coffee break**
11:30-13:00	**Session 2 – Conducting a Situation Analysis** **Moderator: Mr. Sameera Jayawardena,** Associate Chief Digital Economy Officer, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka Innovation and Digital Government Capability Assessment with a focus on individual capacities, organizational structures for coordination, national to local governance and partnerships. *This is an interactive session that will require active participation of all participants.*
13:00-14:00	**Lunch**

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[1] Korea's new innovation strategy: Digital Platform Government. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/01/davos23-korea-digital-platform-government/

[2] Open Data Policy in Korea. https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/08/31/open-data-policy-in-korea-pub-87768

[3] Unlocking the Potential Value of Data: An Emphasis on Public Data. https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2022/05/13/unlocking-the-potential-value-of-data-an-emphasis-on-public-data

14:00-16:30	**Session 3 – Identifying Priorities and New Approaches for Inclusive Service Delivery**
	Moderator(s): Ms. Sheron Hewawaduge, Assistant Director, Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka & **Mr. Azam Bakeer Markar**, Development Coordination Officer, UN Resident Coordinator Office in Sri Lanka
	— **Keynote Speech on Identifying Priorities and New Approaches for Inclusive Service Delivery** • **Ms. Chamindry Saparamadu**, Director General, Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka (5 mins)
	— **Promoting Digital Skills and Changing Mindsets: UN DESA Competency Framework and European e-Competence Framework** • **Ms. Cristina Alicia Rodriguez Acosta**, Inter-Regional Advisor on Innovation and Digital Government, DPIDG, UN DESA (*video presentation*) (15 mins)
	— **Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation Competency Framework for Civil Servants** • **Ms. Marielza Oliveira**, Director, Division for Digital Inclusion, Policies and Transformation, Communications and Information, UNESCO (15 mins)
	— **Enhancing Institutional Coordination for Effective Public Service Delivery** • **Mr. Keping Yao,** Sr. Governance and Public Administration Officer, UNPOG, DPIDG, UN DESA (15 mins)
	— **Applying Human-centered Design and Foresight and Innovation Tools for Development Solutions – with a focus on innovative partnership with stakeholders** • **Mr. Yasas Thalagala,** Strategic Engagement and Exploration Lead, Citra Social Innovation Lab, Sri Lanka (15 mins)
	— **Capacities at Institutional, Organizational, Individual and Societal Levels for Digital Government Transformation** • **Mr. Keping Yao,** Sr. Governance and Public Administration Officer, UNPOG, DPIDG, UN DESA (15 mins)
	— **Panel Discussion** (70 mins)

Day 2 – 8 June 2023	

09:00-11.00	**Session 4: Developing a Road Map and Action Planning for Innovation and Digital Government**
	
	Moderator: Mr. Sameera Jayawardena, Associate Chief Economy Officer, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka
	
	This session will include digital transformation for Inclusive Service Delivery to Realize the Sustainable Development Goals, and turning action plans into results. It will highlight the latest developments and specific cases from different ministries and regions in the country.
	
	— **An Integrated Capability Development Approach to Digital Government Transformation**
	   • **Mr. Sameera Jayawardena,** Associate Chief Digital Economy Officer, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka (10 mins)
	
	— **A Holistic Strategy for Accelerating Digital Government Transformation in Sri Lanka**
	   • **Mr. Thushara Suraweera,** Additional Secretary (ICT & Digitization), Ministry of Transport of Sri Lanka (10 mins)
	
	— **The Need and Challenges for Accelerating Digital Government Transformation in Sri Lanka**
	   Ms. Deepa Liyanage, Additional Secretary to the Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Office (10 mins)
	
	— **Architecting a Digital Service Solution to Accelerate the Digitalization of Government Service**
	   • **Ms. Yolanda Martínez,** GovStack Global Overall Lead, ITU (15mins)
	
	— **Digital Gov Sri Lanka**
	   • **Mr Kanchana Thudugala,** Chief Digital Government Officer, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka (10 mins)
	
	— **Digital GovStack Sri Lanka**
	   • **Mr. Chrishantha Nanayakkara,** Chief Technology Officer, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka (15 mins)
	
	— **Group Activity** (50 mins)
	
	Morning coffee will be available during the session.

11: 00 – 12.15	**Session 5: Developing a e-Competency Profile of the Public Sector Workforce in Sri Lanka** **Moderator: Ms. Kanishka Withana** – Manager, Government Sector – Capacity Building, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka — **How to Effectively Adopt the Digital Government Competency Framework** (Interactive Discussion on the Adoption of e-Competence Profile) • **Mr. Sameera Jayawardena,** Associate Chief Digital Economy Officer, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka
12:15-12:30	**Closing and next steps** **Moderator: Mr. Keping Yao,** Sr. Governance and Public Administration Officer, UNPOG, DPIDG, UN DESA • **Ms. Chamindry Saparamadu**, Director General, Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka • **Mr. Mahesh Perera,** Chief Executive Officer, ICT Agency of Sri Lanka • **Mr. Kyu Chang Ko**, Head of UNPOG, DPIDG, UN DESA

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