Capacity Development Workshop

Changing Mindsets for Innovation, Digital Transformation, and Improved Public Service Delivery for Sustainable Development Goals Implementation

11–12 October 2023
Hotel Finlandia
Calle Finlandia 188
Quito, Ecuador

Capacity Development Workshop on

"Changing Mindsets for Innovation, Implementing Digital Transformation, and Improved Public Service Delivery for Sustainable Development Goals Implementation"

Organized by
Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society
Office of the President of Ecuador
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Ecuador

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Concept Note

The 2030 Agenda highlights the need to build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels, in line with Goal 16. General Assembly resolution 60/34 of 17 March 2006 also emphasized "the need to improve the efficiency, transparency and accountability of public administration". Strong public institutions and efficient service delivery are crucial to the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thus, the importance of building transparent, accountable, innovative, and citizen-oriented institutions to accomplish sustainable development.

Digital transformation has become essential to sustainable development. It is no longer an add-on policy objective. In his report on Our Common Future, the United Nations Secretary-General called for further investment in innovation and digital transformation to reshape our way of working, helping us to reach more people in need and better serve them[2]. Digital tools, whether applied in digital government, digital economy, digital data, are important drivers of sustainable development at all levels. In many countries, digital government has empowered citizens to benefit from lifelong public services, while improving service efficiency, inclusion, e-participation, and transparency. Digital government services also facilitate business startups and increasingly underpin dynamic digital economy, which has proven to be an important engine for economic growth and sustainable development. An early study by the World Bank found that a 10% increase in internet access correlates to a 1.38% increase in GDP in developing countries. Areas with Internet connectivity experienced more job creation and higher economic growth. Stimulating digital government and digital economy has become a strategic objective of many municipal and local governments. It is therefore critical that developing countries are enabled to utilize digital tools for advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at national, local and community levels.

As such, E-Government has the potential to become 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.

The Government of Ecuador, recognizing the importance of digital transformation, has set forth a path for the reform of the public sector to support the necessary changes required to achieve the country's digital transformation. The Government's Digital Transformation Agenda stresses the need for increasing financing for digital infrastructure that must simultaneously be accompanied by updated regulatory tools, renewing efforts to create and maintain skilled digital workforce, by strengthening digital literacy and capacity development of digital skills working with the private sector and academia, and recognizes the

need to build on sound data governance, which is required not only to protect privacy but also to facilitate cross-border data flow[1].

Even though Ecuador has made great progress in capacity building and strengthening of the public sector, serious gaps remain, especially regarding digital transformation and innovation. The current government has made public sector capacity building a priority for the strengthening of institutions. The need for strong institutions is also recognized as a key element for the delivery of inclusive, effective, and equitable delivery of services by the UN's Common Country Analysis (CCA)[2] and Ecuador's National Development Plan[3]. In both cases strong institutions are considered a pillar for the implementation of the SDGs.

To contribute to the strengthening of capacities of the Ecuadorean public sector to better understand the important role they play in implementing the SDGs with an emphasis on changing mindsets for innovation and digital transformation of government services, the Office of the President of Ecuador, the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society, and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), with the support of the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, organized a series of five Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop where the content in Spanish of the UN DESA's Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the main modules of the toolkits on Innovation and Digital Government for Public Service Delivery and the Digital Transformation were presented and customized to the needs of Ecuador's public service as identified by the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society and the Office of the President.

DPIDG's mission is to advance effective, accountable, and inclusive governance and public institutions for sustainable development, including through innovation, digital government, and digital transformation. The Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs aims to promote critical understanding of sustainable development issues, enhance governance capacity, and strengthen public servants' awareness of their active role in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs.

The Office of the Presidency has identified the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society as the main beneficiary of the workshop activities as the Ministry is the governing body for the development of information and communication technologies in Ecuador, which include telecommunications and the radioelectric spectrum. It issues policies, general plans and monitors and evaluates their implementation, coordinating actions with the actors of the strategic sectors to guarantee equal access to services and promotes their effective, efficient, and effective use, ensuring progress towards the information society for the good living of the Ecuadorian population. The Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society has identified a group of technical staff who will be trained online on the use of the toolkit and will then support and lead the planned in-person workshop. It is expected that this team will, in the future, continue training other public sector employees.

Objective

The in-person workshop, taking place in Quito, is aimed at government officials and practitioners who have a policy, leadership and/or implementation role in the government's digital transformation agenda

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[1] Agenda de Transformación Digital del Ecuador 2022-2025. Ministerio de Telecomunicaciones y de la Sociedad de la Información. República del Ecuador. Junio 2022

[2] https://ecuador.un.org/es/212754-analisis-comun-de-pais-cca-ecuador-2022

[3] Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2017-2021-Toda una Vida | Ecuador - Guía Oficial de Trámites y Servicios (www.gob.ec)

to improve public service delivery and will include targeted, innovative, and customized training, including sessions to discuss the governments' priorities, assess the existing institutional arrangements in the country, and design a roadmap for effective government digital transformation for effective public service delivery. The workshop will provide a platform to share solutions and will benefit from the presentations of innovations in changing mindsets, innovation, and digital governments and ICT use that have been introduced in other public institutions. The workshop will facilitate knowledge exchange, provide support, and promote peer-to-peer learning.

The workshop will be based on UN DESA's Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the main modules of the toolkit on Innovation and Digital Government for Public Service Delivery and the Digital Transformation.

This capacity development workshop will also aim to:

1. Enhance capacities of the Member State to strengthen public institutions and public services delivery to support the implementation of the SDGs using the Curriculum on Governance toolkits on Changing Mindsets for SDGs Implementation, and Innovation and Digital Transformation for Public Service Delivery.
2. 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.
3. Provide sound and innovative advice to government officials and other relevant stakeholders, on the importance of innovation and digital transformation for long-term institutional development and services provision.
4. Identify challenges and building blocks for digital government transformation.
5. 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).
6. 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.
7. Learn and apply new concepts, tools, and approaches to support strategies, capabilities, and action planning.
8. Develop a roadmap and an action plan, using design thinking approaches.

Format

Based on 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. Thus, the interactive workshop will be held in person in Quito, Ecuador. It will be conducted entirely in Spanish.

Target Audience

Government officials and practitioners who have a policy, leadership and/or implementation role in the government's digital transformation agenda to improve public service delivery as well as trainers and staff of the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society.

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.

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

Expected Results

- 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.

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