



Department
for International
Development



Digital Strategy 2018-2020: Doing Development in a Digital World



January 2018

Contents

Foreword from the Secretary of State	2
Key Messages.....	4
1. Introduction.....	6
2. Doing development in a digital world.....	11
3. Transforming as a digital department.....	17
4. Delivery model and principles	19
5. Conclusion.....	21

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Foreword from the Secretary of State

Doing development in a digital world



In a fast-changing world, technology affords us the opportunity to do more as individuals and in collaboration with others. Technology gives us the power to include, the power to reach, to inspire, to communicate, to educate, to change. Digital technologies offer an unprecedented opportunity to revolutionise the global development system, change lives, transform entire economies, stimulate growth and, ultimately, end reliance on aid.

Global Britain has a proud history of digital innovation – from the earliest days of computing to the development of the World Wide Web – which is evident in today’s thriving global digital economy. In government, we have led the world in transforming our services and systems, using digital technology to make them easier, simpler and cheaper.

DFID leads the world at open, modern and innovative approaches to development and digital technologies are at the heart of our work - using cutting-edge technology to lift millions of people out of poverty. For example, UK aid and British business provided critical support for the launch of M-PESA in Kenya, which has since driven a mobile money revolution in 93 countries.

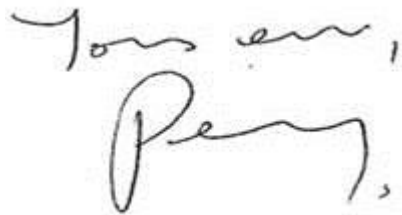
This is why I am launching DFID’s Digital Strategy for ‘Doing Development in a Digital World’, which will build on our rich legacy and support UK efforts to make sure the global aid system is ready for the challenges of the 21st century. The new strategy will ensure that our approach to development adapts and keeps pace with technological innovation and change. We will use the latest digital technology to push the development system to become more effective, transparent and accountable - enabling us to follow the money, the people and the outcomes.

Britain leads the world in humanitarian response; digital technology helps us focus our aid where the need is greatest. Satellite data is helping us to trigger digitally-enabled payments before the worst effects of drought are felt by those who are most vulnerable, providing life-saving support.

The Global Goals are ambitious, and rightly so. We can only achieve them by making best use of the latest digital technology. To get the most out of digital technologies, we need to ensure that the benefits are accessible to all. Small businesses, rural communities, women and minority groups – all stand to benefit from the growth and job creation that innovation

and technology brings. We will harness the power of digital technologies to include, putting disability at the heart of our agenda.

We will work openly and collaboratively with others who share our digital vision; for a world where digital technology will be accessible to all, and where no one will be left behind.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of two lines. The first line reads "Yours ever," and the second line reads "Penny,".

Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP
Secretary of State for International Development

Key Messages

DFID's Digital Strategy 2018-2020 sets out a vision and approach for doing development in a digital world. Its aim is to establish DFID as a global leader in digital technology and development, in order to have a bigger, faster and more cost-effective impact on the lives of poor people.

Digital technologies have the potential to revolutionise the lives of the poor, unlock development and prosperity, and accelerate progress towards the Global Goals. The rapid expansion of mobile phones and internet access in poor countries offers unique opportunities to:

- stimulate growth, jobs and financial inclusion,
- cut fraud and empower citizens to hold governments and other institutions to account,
- provide better response in humanitarian emergencies,
- improve learning outcomes for children in some of the poorest countries,
- increase inclusion by providing access to services previously out of reach to marginalised groups such as girls and women, and people with disabilities,
- enhance traceability and transparency of aid funding throughout the delivery chain,
- deliver real-time feedback and direct engagement with our beneficiaries and the UK public.

However, significant barriers stand in the way of realising the full development potential of digital technologies. Over four billion people around the world lack access to the internet, and risk being left behind in a digital world. The benefits of the internet are also being accompanied by new risks of harmful concentration and monopoly, rising inequality, and state and corporate use of digital technologies to control rather than empower citizens.

DFID will work in an open and collaborative way with others who share our digital vision. Together, we will support a transformed global aid system that is well-poised to harness the opportunities, and ready to rise to the challenges, of a digital world.

We will make greater and better use of digital technology to tackle global poverty and deliver on the Global Goals. We will:

- Identify and embed good practice in using digital solutions in aid programmes.
- Promote common principles and standards for digital development throughout the aid system, to ensure that more digital products and services reach, empower and improve the lives of poor people, particularly those at risk of being left behind.
- Champion affordable, secure access to the internet in developing countries, so that the benefits of digital technologies are accessible to all.

We will play our part in delivering on the vision of the UK Government Transformation Strategy for digital, data and technology by:

- Redesigning services around the needs of our users. This will result in more open, engaging, and responsive interactions with the UK public, our suppliers and partners, and beneficiaries.

- Collaborating across government through common platforms, technologies and systems, in pursuit of the UK government's policy aims worldwide.
- Making better use of data - to inform delivery of the UK Aid Strategy and Global Goals. This will drive better decision-making in our programmes and operations, and strengthen our accountability, transparency and public engagement.

Above all, we will champion a view of digital, data and technology as enablers rather than an end goal: the goal is in the material benefits delivered to people, particularly those who are most vulnerable and marginalised.

1. Introduction

1.1 Aims and vision

DFID's Digital Strategy 2018-2020 sets out a vision and approach for doing development in a digital world.

Its aim is to establish DFID as a global leader in digital technology and development, in order to have a bigger, faster and more cost-effective impact on the lives of poor people.

The vision is for a future where DFID will be harnessing the benefits of digital technology at two levels:

- **Doing development in a digital world:** DFID will be using digital technology to improve the speed, value for money, reach and impact of its programmes, which will be more flexible and user-centred. DFID will be playing its part in maximising the development benefits of digital technology - realising a world where the internet will be more widely available, and more digital products and services will be scaled and targeted to reach, empower and improve the lives of poor people, particularly those at risk of being left behind.
- **Transforming as a digital department:** DFID will have re-designed departmental services around the needs of its users. This will mean more open and responsive communications and transactions with the UK public, beneficiaries and partner countries, suppliers and civil servants. DFID and other international departments will be able to work together effectively in pursuit of the government's policy aims worldwide through common platforms, technologies and systems. Data will be

used routinely to inform delivery of the UK Aid Strategy and Global Goals, drive better decision-making within DFID, and to strengthen DFID's accountability and public engagement.

1.2 Starting points

Over the past decade, the digital agenda has come to affect DFID's activities and priorities in a number of ways.

Digital technologies are playing an increasingly important role in developing countries and development practice, presenting new opportunities as well as new challenges. Information and communication technologies are recognised as key enablers for delivering on all of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. Global Goal 9 strives for universal and affordable access to the internet in least developed countries by 2020.

Digital transformation is also a key priority for the UK government. The Government Transformation Strategy 2017-2020 outlines a cross-government vision for digital, data and technology and how they support transformative change.

Taking the lead from the Government Transformation Strategy, the use of the word 'digital' within this strategy refers to "the tools, techniques, technology and approaches of the internet age". This definition recognises that the way people are working digitally is as important as the tools they are using.

While ambitious in its vision, this strategy is not starting from scratch. DFID already has a strong foundation of learning, experience and demonstrable achievement in digital

development to date, which will be important to build on. Examples of this are highlighted throughout the strategy.

1.3 The opportunity

Digital technologies have the potential to revolutionise the lives of the poor, unlock development and prosperity, and accelerate progress towards the Global Goals.

The rapid expansion of mobile phones and internet access in poor countries is impacting on development in a wide range of ways:

- **Economic growth:** Access to the internet has been estimated to have the potential to generate over \$2.2 trillion in additional GDP and more than 140 million new jobs in the developing world. The World Bank has calculated that there is a 1.38% growth in GDP for every 10% of the population connected¹.
- **Financial inclusion:** M-Pesa² - the most successful mobile phone based financial service in the developing world - allows over two-thirds of adults in Kenya to deposit, send and receive money through a simple text-based menu available on even the most basic mobile phone. Since its launch in 2007, the cost of sending remittances dropped by 90% and through enabling citizens to use the service to electricity or shopping, the value of M-Pesa transactions is now equivalent to around half of Kenya's GDP.³
- **Utilities:** Around 1 billion people in the world have no access to affordable and reliable electricity but around 65%⁴ have access to a mobile phone. M-KOPA Solar increases access to electricity for the

poorest by enabling poor people to buy clean energy products in small instalments, using mobile banking platforms such as M-PESA. To date, M-KOPA has powered over 400,000 homes in East Africa. The programme is now being expanded, with the aim of reaching one million homes by 2018.⁵

- **Agriculture:** Technology offers potentially lower cost solutions to otherwise expensive agricultural extension services or hard-to-reach healthcare services. The DFID funded mAgri programme, led by GSMA, works with mobile phone companies to provide farming tips in local languages, weather updates, market prices information as well as nutrition advice. The service reached over five million users in 2017⁶.
- **Health:** Using digital technologies to drive remote diagnosis and prevention education could save up to \$188 billion by 2025⁷. The Global Trachoma Mapping Project⁸ used android mobile smartphones, GPS mapping software and cloud technology to carry out a survey in collaboration with 60 partners globally. One hundred million people were identified as being at risk of becoming blind through Trachoma more quickly, allowing for earlier intervention and better outcomes.
- **Education:** The world faces a global learning crisis. Currently it is estimated that 387million children globally are not on track to read by the end of primary education. Digital technology has the potential to transform learning and help tackle global education challenges, ensuring no one is left behind. A new DFID-funded EdTech Research and

¹ 'World Development Report: Digital Dividends', World Bank, 2016

² M-Pesa received initial funding from DFID

³ See <http://www.eiu.com/industry/article/1451806929/m-pesa-out-of-africa-into-romania/2014-05-13> and

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-38667475>

⁴ 'The Mobile Economy', GSMA, 2017

⁵ www.m-kopa.com; M-KOPA Solar has been funded by DFID

⁶ <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/programmes/magri/creating-scalable-mobile-solutions>

⁷ World Economic Forum, 2016

⁸ Programme funding from DFID

Innovation hub will invest in robust research to identify what works and accelerate adoption of good practice.

- **Governance and accountability:** When Nigeria launched its e-ID system, this resulted in an annual saving of \$1 billion through exposing 62,000 ‘ghost workers’ in the public sector (a return on investment of nearly 20,000% in one year)⁹, and prevented 4 million duplicate votes during the 2015 elections¹⁰. In the past 6 years, 1 billion digital identities have been issued under Aadhaar, India’s biometric identification programme, expanding public services to poor and marginalised populations. Cash transfers enabled by this programme are saving around \$1 billion per year and it is projected that the benefits of the programme will result in a return of over 52% on investment over 10 years¹¹.
- **Humanitarian response:** Mobile cash provides a faster and more secure route of getting resources to people in need and enables more targeted delivery of aid. During the Ebola crisis, the UN Development Programme used mobile phones to make direct payments to response workers, reaching 60,000 people at the height of the crisis and overcoming the logistical challenge of paying field workers in remote and rural locations¹².

Digital technologies can also help increase inclusion by giving voice and providing access to information, vital services and economic opportunity previously out of reach to marginalised groups:

⁹ A.Gelb and J.Clark, ‘Identification for Development: The Biometrics Revolution’, Center for Global Development, 2013
¹⁰ ‘World Development Report: Digital Dividends’, World Bank, 2016
¹¹ Andhra Pradesh Smartcard Survey, ‘Implementing a Biometric Payment System: The Andhra Pradesh Experience’, 2013
¹² UNDP, 2015

- **Giving voice:** Digital communications are amplifying the voices of geographically or politically remote communities, projecting their needs further and more loudly and increasing the likelihood of them being addressed.
- **Providing access to information and choice:** Digital technologies also enable information to flow in the other direction, for example by providing access to educational tools and healthcare advice.
- **Supporting financial independence:** E-commerce and e-work platforms are helping women, girls and people with disabilities gain a degree of financial independence, overcoming the social norms, mobility or time constraints which can confine them to their homes and exclude them from economic activities.
- **Widening access to basic services:** New business models and efficiencies being driven by digital technologies are allowing the private sector to deliver basic services like water and electricity to informal settlements and poor rural communities for the first time.

Box 1. Empowering girls and women*

- **Technology-Enabled Girl Ambassadors** in Nigeria are being trained to become qualified mobile social researchers. They are using mobile technology to collect accurate, rapid insights into girls’ lives, particularly in hard to reach communities.
- **Project iMlango** delivers e-learning programmes to girls in rural and remote Kenyan primary schools, who otherwise struggle to get access to education, through high-speed satellite broadband connectivity, provision of tailored online educational content and electronic attendance monitoring.
- **The Girl Generation Project** is using social media to galvanise action to end FGM, driving social and behavioural change across Africa.

** Programmes funded by DFID*

1.4 The challenge

While the opportunities are significant, the World Bank's *World Development Report 2016* points out that 'digital dividends' for development are not spreading equally or rapidly enough.

Over four billion people around the world lack access to the internet. Sixty per cent of people in developing countries do not have access to the internet, rising to 85% in least developed countries. The divides in access are similarly large among demographic splits in those countries, in particular between rural and urban populations (10% and 23%), women and men (12% and 18%), youth and people aged over 45 (20% and 8%)¹³.

Without a focus on access and accessibility, there is a risk that the digital revolution could further exacerbate existing inequalities by making it harder for chronically excluded groups of people to access services.

In addition, the benefits of the internet are being accompanied by new risks of harmful concentration and monopoly, rising inequality, and state and corporate use of digital technologies to control rather than empower citizens.

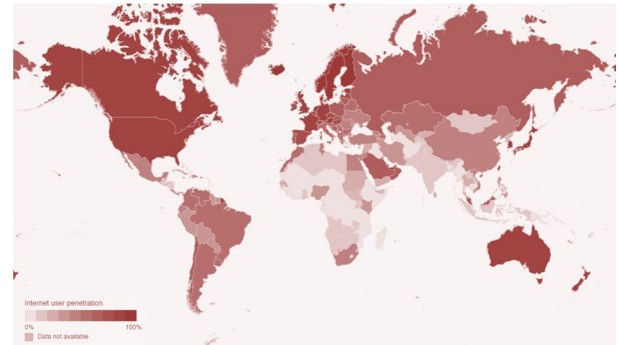
To realise the full development benefits of the internet, digital investments need the support of what the World Bank terms 'analogue complements':

- **Regulations** - to support open competition and innovation.
- **Improved skills and inclusion** - so that people can take full advantage of digital opportunities.
- **Accountable institutions** - so that governments respond to citizens' needs and demands.

¹³ 'World Development Report: Digital Dividends', World Bank, 2016

Digital technologies can, in turn, strengthen regulation, skills and accountability, thereby amplifying development outcomes.

Global internet use [Source: Internet Society 2017]



1.5 Responding and reforming

Against this backdrop of change, challenge and opportunity, DFID needs to reform how the digital agenda is prioritised and put into practice. This is critical in order for us to:

- **Remain at the cutting edge:** The world is changing rapidly. DFID will need to adapt its development practices to keep up with the digital transformation agenda across government and the global aid system.
- **Get value for money:** DFID already invests heavily in development programmes that incorporate a digital element and needs to ensure it gets the best value for money from these.
- **Maximise opportunity:** Digital technologies offer the potential to deliver bigger, faster, more transformative impact for all, including people who have often been excluded from development benefits. DFID needs to be able to harness this fully.
- **Navigate risk:** We also need to be able to navigate the new risks and threats posed to development by operating in an increasingly digital world, and ensure that no one is left behind.

This will require a clear and systematic approach to the way that DFID engages with digital technologies in its development activities, and transforms digitally as a government department.

DFID will focus on its users and their needs, to design solutions that take advantage of digital tools and technologies, rather than seeing them as an entire solution.

1.6 Overview

This digital strategy addresses two areas where work is needed in order to achieve DFID's digital vision and aims.

The first area (Chapter 2) places focus on 'doing development in a digital world' and is directed at using digital technologies in support of better development outcomes. The second area (Chapter 3) focuses on 'transforming as a digital department', in line with the vision of the Government Transformation Strategy.

A well-networked, central hub (Chapter 4) will ensure coordinated implementation of the digital strategy.

It will set strategic direction for digital policy and programming; build digital capability and capacity; inspire transformation through visible digital demonstration; and ensure impact is maximised through partnerships and collaborative working with those who share our digital vision.

The strategy is designed to lay the foundations for transforming how we, and our partners, approach development in a digital world. We recognise that transformation will be an ongoing process. We will remain adaptable and responsive in order to keep pace with change – while maintaining a continued focus on user need.

Our aim is to establish DFID as a global leader in digital technology and development, in order to have a bigger, faster and more cost-effective impact on the lives of poor people.

Box 2. The inclusive power of digital technology: Leave No one Behind

Sehat Kahani is one example of the inclusive power of digital technology: in Pakistan, around 70% of medical school graduates are women. However, socio-cultural expectations and pressures around the role of women mean that only 30% even begin practising medicine, and many of those that do soon stop. In total only 13% of licensed female doctors are registered as physicians. Meanwhile, 108 million people (60% of the population) do not have access to quality, affordable healthcare. Sehat Kahani is a health solution that provides female healthcare professionals with the tools to work remotely, such as video conferencing, transmission of still images, e-health patient portals, remote monitoring of vital signs, and continuing medical education. This enables the delivery of high quality healthcare to rural and low income urban communities via small local healthcare centres, while circumventing socio-cultural barriers that restrict women to their homes. Trained community-based nurses, health workers and midwives simultaneously assist in physical evaluation of patients.

Funded by DFID through SPRING: www.springaccelerator.org/about-spring/

2. Doing development in a digital world

This area of the strategy is directed at DFID's use of digital technologies in support of better development outcomes. Focus is placed on:

- **Enabling and leading:** supporting an environment that maximises the development impact of digital technologies.
- **Sharing and scaling:** making sure proven digital models are widely shared and replicated, to reach more poor and marginalised people in developing countries.
- **Systematising and standard setting:** identifying and embedding good practice in using digital solutions in development programmes, to deliver better value for money and impact.

2.1 Enabling and leading

Aims

DFID will support affordable access to the internet and digital technologies in developing countries. We will foster conditions that maximise the impact of digital technology on reducing poverty and achieving the Global Goals.

Activities

- **Developing strategic digital development partnerships:** For example, DFID is aligning with partners across UK government and the international donor community in support of affordable, secure internet access; serves as an anchor partner on the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data; and is part of a strategic partnership

that aims to harness mobile technology to provide life-enhancing services (Box 4).

- **Collaborating across government:** DFID will align closely with other government departments working on international digital issues - such as internet access, digital inclusion and skills, the digital economy, data privacy, cyber security and internet governance.
- **Building capacity and providing technical assistance:** This might include offers to 'match make' recipient governments to learn from each other; or transferring UK expertise to developing countries, extracting lessons from the public and private sector.
- **Advocating and influencing:** DFID will play an active role in digital policy discussions, domestically and internationally. We will aim to ensure a strong focus on inclusion and poverty reduction within digital policy. This will help ensure marginalised and excluded people and communities have equal opportunities, voice and choice to benefit from digital technologies.

Desired outcomes

- DFID's leadership role in partnerships will influence the creation of better enabling environments and standards.
- Programmes will be able to reach marginalised people faster to ensure they are not left further behind by digital transformation.
- Digital delivery of programmes will provide open and transparent data.

Box 3. The Principles for Digital Development

The Principles for Digital Development are globally recognised guidelines for international development practitioners on how to make the most of digitally enabled programmes.

The nine principles include:

1. Design with the User
2. Understand the Existing Ecosystem
3. Design for Scale
4. Build for Sustainability
5. Be Data Driven
6. Use Open Standards, Open Data, Open Source, and Open Innovation
7. Reuse and Improve
8. Address Privacy and Security
9. Be Collaborative

DFID's partners are putting the Principles for Digital Development into practice in a range of ways. Shule Direct is an online platform that provides educational learning content for students and teachers in secondary schools. Shule Direct realised that over 85% of the users accessing their open educational resource were doing so over Opera Mini browsers, which are designed for mobile phones. With support from the DFID-funded Human Development Innovation Fund, Shule Direct developed a learning and revision platform for secondary school students in Tanzania, which is accessible via all types of phones. This enabled them to extend their services to rural areas and a wider community.

2.2 Sharing and scaling

Aims

DFID will ensure that proven digital models are widely shared and replicated, to reach and benefit more poor and marginalised people in developing countries.

Activities

- **Encouraging coordination around effective solutions:** DFID will build

understanding and consensus on conditions and contextual factors that lead to successful outcomes in the use of digital technologies in development programmes. DFID will ensure that evidence on what works is shared widely within the department, as well as among donors and partners, so that it can be used to influence and benefit other programmes.

- **Helping DFID develop effective and sustainable digital programmes:** DFID staff involved in preparing business cases for programmes with digital elements will be able to get advice and good examples from DFID's Digital Spend Panel. They will be encouraged to follow the Principles for Digital Development (Box 3).
- **Working with DFID country offices and sectors to scale and demonstrate high potential solutions:** DFID will identify a number of 'digital trailblazers' and work with DFID staff and partners to pilot new ways of working with digital technologies and approaches (Box 7).

Desired outcomes

- DFID will identify and develop digital solutions with the potential to be scaled and replicated so they can reach the greatest number of people who need them.
- Knowledge will be shared between donors and across governments to ensure lessons are learnt and common technology platforms are procured and reused.
- Donors and partner countries will be coordinated around effective solutions to enable replication and scale up of successful interventions.

Box 4. Doing development in a digital world: Examples of DFID's existing activities

Enabling and leading:

- **DFID sits on the steering committee of the World Economic Forum Internet for All Initiative**, which was established to facilitate collaboration and alignment between public and private sector stakeholders seeking to expand internet access to poor and excluded populations. The initiative brings together a global community of over 50 leading organisations from business, government, civil society, academia, donors and international organisations.
- **DFID is an anchor partner of the new Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data**. The partnership aims to exploit the opportunities from the data revolution, by fostering the development and application of innovative approaches to filling critical data gaps, and engaging a wider set of stakeholders in the private sector and civil society.

Sharing and scaling:

- **The Mobile for Development Strategic Partnership** harnesses mobile technology to provide life-enhancing services including digital identity solutions, humanitarian response, access to clean energy and water, and mobile money. DFID partners with the global association of mobile networks (GSMA) to leverage their expertise and market reach in order to catalyse innovation that benefits the world's poorest. In this way we aim to unlock the powerful intersection between mobile-enabled service inclusion, financial inclusion and digital inclusion, leading to long term socio-economic impact.
- **LEGEND (Land: Enhancing Governance for Economic Development)** is an open data land and resource rights mapping platform that will help safeguard rights and opportunities for poor and marginalised people. It will help share knowledge for the design and delivery of new country programmes, improve land governance as an essential component for economic development, and strengthen land and property rights at scale.

Systematising and standard setting:

- **DFID's Digital Grid** has been developed to help identify and share examples of the use of digital technologies in programmes so that others can learn from them and understand how they are helping to achieve development results. It can be used to search for digital projects in DFID, and filter results by country, sector, tool and problems. Currently in beta testing as an internal tool for DFID staff, we would like to enhance it and potentially open it up across government and the wider development community.
- **Standards and quality assurance:** DFID already drives high standards in digital programming by running a process that requires any digital elements of programmes be reviewed at the earliest possible stage by our advisors and approved by our Digital Spend Panel. In the past four years, this process has enabled our programme staff to be 'intelligent customers' of digital solutions and save money by applying our guidance. DFID requires our suppliers and partners to adhere to the Principles for Digital Development. DFID also plays a leading part in the International Aid Transparency Initiative, a global open data standard for international development and humanitarian data.

2.3 Systematising and standard setting

Aims

DFID will aim to embed effective use of digital technologies into the way it delivers, monitors and evaluates aid and development work, by systematising existing knowledge and setting standards.

Activities

- **Consolidating, coordinating and sharing knowledge:** This will include further development and promotion of the Digital Grid (Box 4) as a comprehensive, online database of digital programmes and activity in DFID. This could later become an open tool to share experience with the wider development community.
- **Raising awareness, building capacity and quality control:** We will develop and deliver an ambitious new digital curriculum that builds staff capability in a digital world (see Box 5). We will provide high quality advice and guidance, and raise awareness through regular communications and showcases of digital technology in development.
- **Providing tailored knowledge and guidelines:** We will collate and promote existing knowledge and understanding of how digital tools and technologies have been applied successfully to development

challenges in the context of particular geographies, groups or sectors.

Desired outcomes

- The use of digital tools, techniques and technologies will be mainstreamed within DFID's development activities and programmes.
- Staff will be intelligent digital consumers – meaning they will have more capability and confidence in commissioning and managing programmes that incorporate digital technologies.
- Digital ways of working will be considered by default in DFID. This will support programmes that are more flexible and user centred, and can better address the problems they are designed to solve.
- Good practice will be identified, catalogued and shared, enabling DFID to achieve better impact and value for money.

DFID will focus on inclusion and poverty reduction and will ensure marginalised and excluded people and communities have equal opportunities, voice and choice to benefit from digital technologies.

Box 5. Bridging the disability divide through digital technologies (Source: World Bank 2016)

Over 1 billion people around the world have disabilities, and 80 percent of them live in developing countries. People with disabilities face barriers to communicate, interact, access information, and participate in civic activities. Digital technologies are helping overcome some of these barriers. Voice recognition, magnification, and text-to-speech functionality benefit people with visual, cognitive, learning, and mobility disabilities. Text messaging, telephone relay, and video captions reduce communication barriers for persons with hearing and speech disabilities. Hands-free navigation and gesture-controlled interfaces assist people with severe mobility impairments in using digital devices.

Box 6. DFID's digital learning offer

A modular digital curriculum will build staff capability to support:

- **Doing development in a digital world** - this focuses on the opportunities and risks presented to international development by an increasingly digital world, and the implications for operational planning, policy and research, and programme design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation. There is a particular focus on guidance for procuring digital solutions in line with the Principles for Digital Development. This element of the curriculum will build basic understanding of various digital solutions, combined with in-depth modules focusing on particular functions, sectors or groups.
- **Transforming as a digital department** - this will focus on building capability in open internet tools and systems; effective use of data management platforms; online safety and security; and digital communications and social media.

The digital curriculum will add to DFID's existing capability offer, which includes:

- **Digital Ninjas** - a rewarding and successful peer network of over 200 digital experts across all teams and offices in DFID that support staff in improving their digital capability.
- **Digital Quiz** - digital skills self-assessment tool that measures knowledge and experience and refers individuals to resources to learn about new digital tools and techniques; available for open source reuse by anyone.



3. Transforming as a digital department

This area of the strategy supports delivery of the Government Transformation Strategy, which outlines a cross government vision for digital, data and technology. It aligns with and incorporates aspects of DFID's work in digital services, data and technology. This is outlined in more detail in DFID's Data Roadmap and Technology Strategy respectively.

This area of the strategy includes a focus on:

- **Service design:** re-designing whole services to meet user needs in a modern and efficient way.
- **Shared platforms and technology:** collaborating across government to speed up transformation and make it easier to build, iterate, reuse and retire services.
- **Data availability, quality and use:** with a focus on data for development; data for decision making within DFID; and data to strengthen DFID's accountability.

3.1 Service design

Aims

Our service transformation will design and deliver services and digital tools based on the needs of our users - both civil servants and external partners.

Activities

- **Ongoing digital transformation:** we will continue to develop and improve corporate services so that users find them easy to access, simple to understand, timely and high quality. To support these services, DFID will train and equip service

and product managers and ensure services continue to meet the Technology Code of Practice and the Digital Service Standard.

- **Cloud hosting:** we will continue to move DFID services to cloud hosted environments where appropriate, in line with the government's Cloud First Policy, to benefit from assured performance and innovation.
- **Cyber security:** we will continue to monitor threats to DFID systems and service. We will develop our security capability to build the appropriate cyber and information safeguards into design and delivery of our infrastructure, platforms, applications and processes. Where aid programmes are implemented by partners DFID will require these partners to apply the secure ways of working promoted by the Principles for Digital Development.

Desired outcomes

- We will provide the tools for staff to work, communicate and collaborate effectively with colleagues across government and other partners globally.
- Users will be at the heart of the design and delivery of excellent services which will operate flexibly and efficiently.
- Our joined-up systems will support effective use and management of knowledge and information in a cross-government context.

Box 7. Digital services: Examples of existing activity

Internal services:

- **Management Information (MI) tools** provide visibility of key information to all staff within DFID.
- **Aid Management Platform** focuses on improving the quality of information and visibility of international development programmes through modern digital tools.
- **Vault** - DFID's new electronic document and records management system.
- **Service Anywhere** - DFID's corporate support system (HR, finance, IT, facilities) is being developed into a one-stop knowledge service, providing all the information staff need to know about our corporate systems and processes.

External services:

- **International Development Funding Finder** makes it easier for people to find funding for international development work.
- **UK Development Tracker** uses International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) open data to trace the flow of funding from donors to implementing agencies.
- **UK Aid Direct** is a new online grant application portal and learning environment, launched in 2016. It provides comprehensive information for potential applicants, and learning resources such as videos and case studies for existing grant holders.

3.2 Shared platforms and technology

Aims

DFID will support the government's drive to make it easier to build services through shared platforms by collaborating across government where there is common interest.

Activities

- **Cross-government shared platforms:** DFID will explore the possibility of extending its Aid Management Platform and supporting management information tools to other government departments with responsibility for delivering official development assistance (ODA). We will use government platform services as appropriate (GOV.UK, Notify, Registers) and will collaborate around future services.
- **Common Technology Services internationally:** DFID is working with other government departments with an international presence such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), British Council and the Department for International Trade (DIT), as well as with the Common Technology Services team within the Government Digital Service (GDS). The aim is to design platforms, systems and services for flexibility, scalability and reuse that are cost-effective and meet user need. We will advocate for a common approach to devices, personal identification, collaboration, office productivity tools, mobile device management, and technology designs for property hubs.
- **GOV.UK:** we are committed to working with GDS to overhaul all of DFID's legacy content on GOV.UK and make reforms to outdated publishing practices so government services and information are clear, well maintained and easy to find.
- **ECHO2 overseas network:** in collaboration with the FCO, British Council

and DIT, DFID is modernising the overseas communications and data network to include quicker and easier access to all services.

Desired outcomes

- Civil servants in all international departments will be able to work together effectively in pursuit of the government's policy aims worldwide.
- All government buildings in the UK and overseas should be designed around property hub principles and could be used by staff from any department.
- Working in overseas offices will be significantly easier and more efficient due to better connectivity and network performance as close as possible to that achieved in the UK.

3.3 Data availability, quality and use

Aims

DFID will make good use of data to deliver the UK Aid Strategy, directly and through strategic partnerships. This will require improvements in the availability, quality and use of data, in ways made possible by better digital technology.

Activities

- **Data to underpin the Global Goals:** DFID will focus on strengthening in-country data systems to enhance transparency and open government. It will ensure the international system provides effective and coordinated support for better quality open data; invest in data infrastructure in partner countries; and support the use of innovative techniques or technologies to improve data production, dissemination and use in partner countries.

- **Data to drive decision-making:** DFID will continue to strengthen the quality and timeliness of the data that it uses to design, monitor and evaluate its programmes, as well as its capability to use data to inform broader decisions at the business unit and corporate level.
- **Data for accountability and public engagement:** DFID is committed to the timely release of data which is open and accessible by default. DFID will work with its implementing partners to improve the availability and quality of their data. DFID will use the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard to strengthen the traceability of data on international development funding through the delivery chain.

Desired outcomes

- Increased availability, quality and transparency of disaggregated data in partner countries, will be used for decision making and to hold governments to account.
- DFID will be recognised as a data-driven organisation, offering transparency of delivery through our supply chain using open data from partners. More efficient capturing of results data will free time for analysis and use.
- DFID's open data will provide researchers and academics with access to rich datasets, allowing them to generate new insights to inform and challenge development policies and practices.

Users will be at the heart of the design and delivery of excellent services which operate flexibly and efficiently.

4. Delivery model and principles

A well-networked, central hub will ensure coordinated and concerted implementation of the digital strategy. It will play a key role in aligning digital, data and technology activities undertaken across DFID, in support of collaboration, learning and innovation.

The hub will work according to the following principles:

- **Leading** through setting strategic vision and direction.
- **Empowering** by building capability for all.
- **Inspiring** transformation through visible delivery and demonstration.
- **Maximising** impact through open and collaborative working.

Examples of how these four principles will translate into a practical delivery model are outlined below.

4.1. Strategy, policy and governance

Work in this area will involve:

- Setting strategic direction for how digital technologies and approaches are incorporated into policy, programmes and operations.
- Shaping DFID position on key international digital policy issues by engaging in policy at a cross-government and global, multi-stakeholder level.
- Developing and implementing a data roadmap to set the strategic direction for the collection, use and dissemination of data.

- Aligning technology delivery to DFID's strategic objectives, getting the best out of our resources and effectively managing, measuring and reporting on risk and performance.
- Supporting and maintaining secure network infrastructure across our locations worldwide and ensuring that risks to our information and infrastructure are identified and managed effectively.

4.2. Capability and capacity

Work in this area will involve:

- Building DFID's internal capacity and capability to use digital technologies and data in ways that unlock better business and development outcomes.
- Advising on and approving digital spend and delivery in projects and programmes through DFID's Digital Spend Panel.
- Providing advice, guidance and best practice evidence at various stages of the programme lifecycle.
- Developing new tools and products to support digital knowledge and capability across DFID.
- Building specialist digital capability into professional competency frameworks. This will include embedding the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) profession, to provide opportunities for training and skills development and career progression.

4.3. Delivery and demonstration

Work in this area will involve:

- Spearheading ambitious new digital programmes of work - working with 'trailblazing' country offices and sectors to identify, embed, share and scale good practice (Box 7).
- Collaborating across government to design or reuse platforms, systems and services that are cost-effective and meet user needs.
- Developing DFID's Aid Management Platform (AMP) and management information tools in ways that better respond to user needs.
- Sharing experience and tools with other government departments spending Official Development Assistance (ODA).

4.4. Engagement and collaboration

Work in this area will involve:

- Building and demonstrating DFID's leadership in digital development through innovative partnerships across DFID, UK government and the development community.
- Collaboration with other donors through the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) to improve the availability and use of data both within DFID and in developing countries.
- Engaging widely with staff across DFID to communicate the opportunity and potential of digital approaches, and build collective

ownership for implementation of the digital strategy.

- Ongoing engagement across the organisation to ensure strategy and delivery remain aligned to corporate objectives and user needs. We will do more to help staff get the most out of our technology, considering the need to support adoption and behavioural change at the outset of new initiatives.

Leadership and direction will be set by DFID's Executive Management level Digital Champion and external expertise and challenge will be provided by DFID's Digital Advisory Panel of cross-sector experts.

Box 8. Digital Trailblazing

A series of Digital Trailblazers will demonstrate the transformative potential and impact of digital technology for development.

The trailblazers will focus on applied learning about the application of digital technologies in the context of particular sectors, themes or geographies. They will serve as high-profile demonstrators, geared at identifying, spreading and scaling innovative practice.

The trailblazers will aim to promote knowledge exchange, and build capacity and consensus around 'what works'. They will focus on translating evidence into action through collaborative working with DFID staff and partners.

The trailblazers will be used to build momentum and capacity for wider digital transformation within DFID and the international development community.

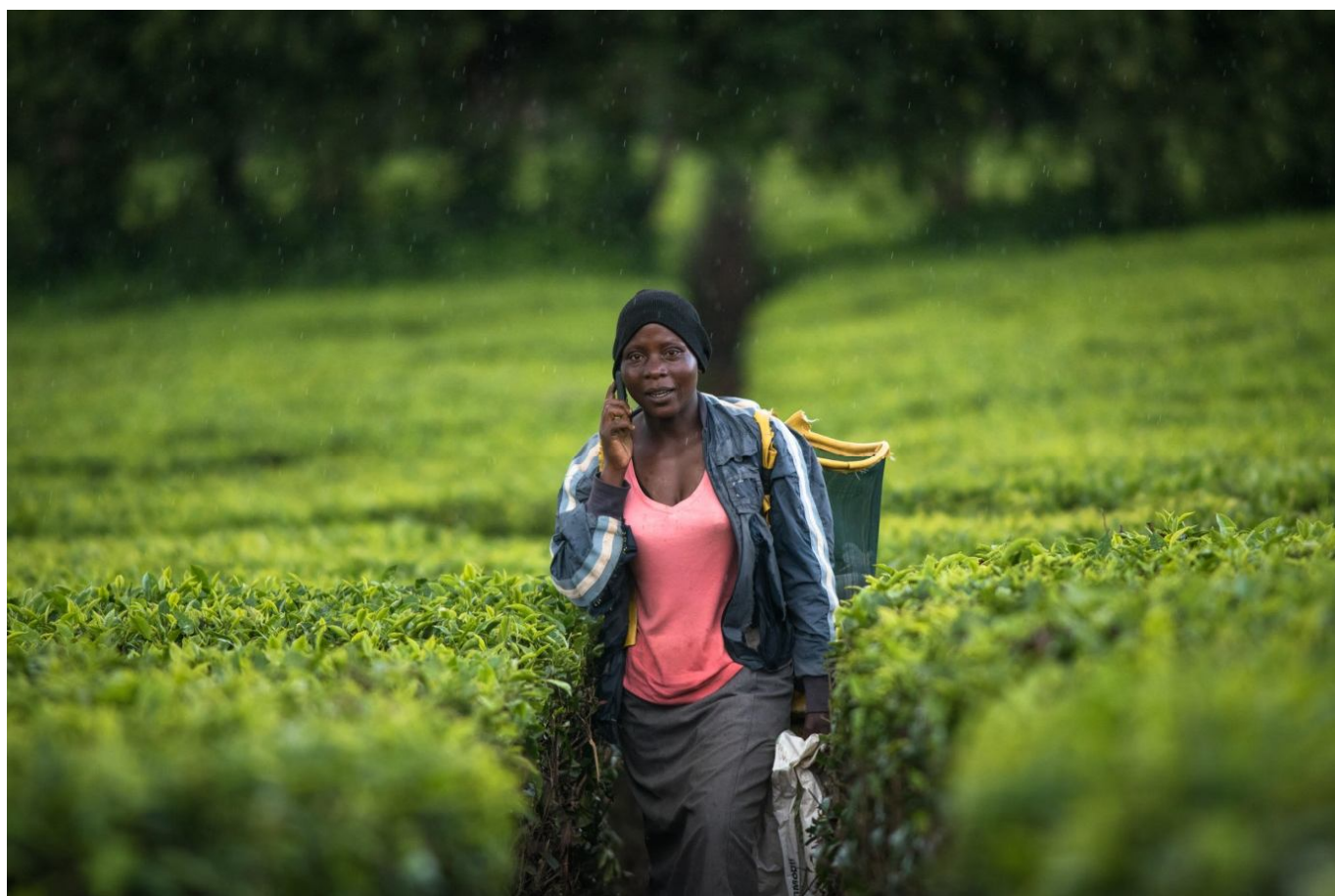
5. Conclusion

This strategy sets out a vision and approach for ‘doing development in a digital world’. It seeks to establish DFID as a global leader in using digital solutions in development programmes, and promoting good practice and common standards for digital development through the aid system. It commits DFID to helping realise a world where the development benefits of digital technology will be accessible to all: where the internet will be more widely available, and more digital products and services will be scaled to reach, empower and improve the lives of poor people, particularly those at risk of being left behind.

The strategy is designed to lay the foundations for transforming how we, and our partners, approach development in a digital world. It runs until 2020 but transformation will be an ongoing process. We will ensure we are adaptable and responsive to change in order to keep pace with changing technologies and their use.

We will work in an open and collaborative way with others who share our digital vision, in pursuit of our common objectives. Together, we will support a global aid system that is both ready to rise to the challenges - and well-poised to harness the opportunities - of a digital world.

Above all, we will champion a view of digital, data and technology as enablers rather than an end goal: the goal is in the material benefits delivered to people, particularly those who are most vulnerable and marginalised.



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