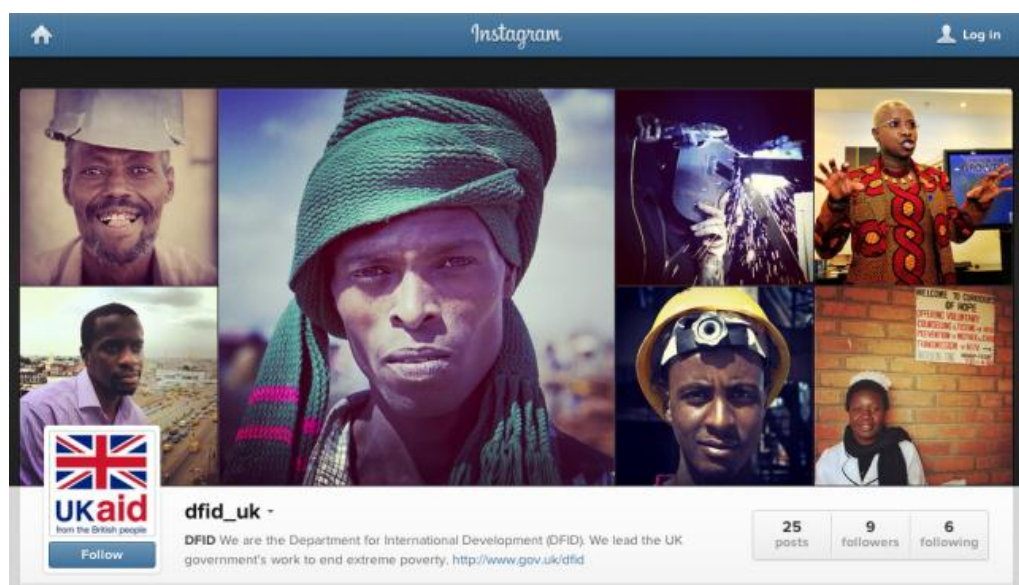# Digital Strategy

Transforming DFID programmes, reaching new audiences, improving transparency, building capability

12 months on report
December 2013
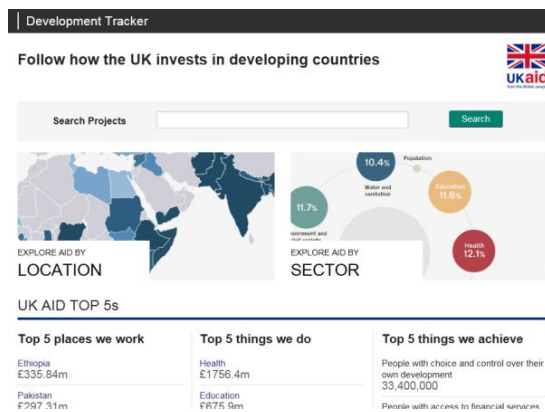
Little Flower Convent School in Chennai, India, use Skype to connect with Warden Park Secondary School in West Sussex. DFID / Pippa Ranger

Contents

Executive Summary

Over the past year DFID has made significant progress in transforming our organisation to respond to technological progress and broader external changes. One year on from the publication of our first digital strategy, this report sets out the progress we have made against the aims set out in the original document and also identifies our aims for the coming year.

As in the original strategy, the word 'digital' refers to content or communication that is delivered through the internet – whether the user is on a desktop computer, laptop, tablet, mobile phone or a digital device not yet invented. In addition, the term 'digital by default' denotes a situation where the digital route is the one that is considered first. Across government, our aim is to develop digital services that are so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use them will choose to do so whilst those who can't are not excluded.

Over the past year, the DFID has:

- launched the **Development Tracker** to map in a powerful, location-specific way how the UK invests in developing countries; **geocoded** projects in Bangladesh and Nepal; made the source code for the Development Tracker freely available

- used **social media** and high quality digital content to engage with stakeholders and the public on major events such as the Syria crisis and Typhoon Haiyan

- moved the DFID website to its new home on the single government portal, **GOV.UK**

- set up a new **Digital Advisory Panel**, the governance body responsible for overall direction of the digital strategy

- continued to develop the **Innovation Hub** to support and deliver innovation projects

- implemented **digital spending controls**

- improved our **procurement processes**

- used the **DFID blogging platform** to communicate our digital and transparency work to a wider audience

- contributed to the cross-government **Grants Efficiency** Programme.

Nevertheless we realise that there are still challenges to meet, especially in an environment where the pace of change and innovation is moving quickly. The digital strategy has actions for delivery up to 2015, and over the next two years we will continue to review and update our plans, in order to achieve our overall objective of becoming an organisation that is 'digital by default'.

1.1 Implementing the digital strategy

The DFID vision sets out how DFID will:
1. Deliver results at scale
2. Provide strong leadership
3. Look to the future
4. Improve impact and deliver value for money
5. Build support for our work
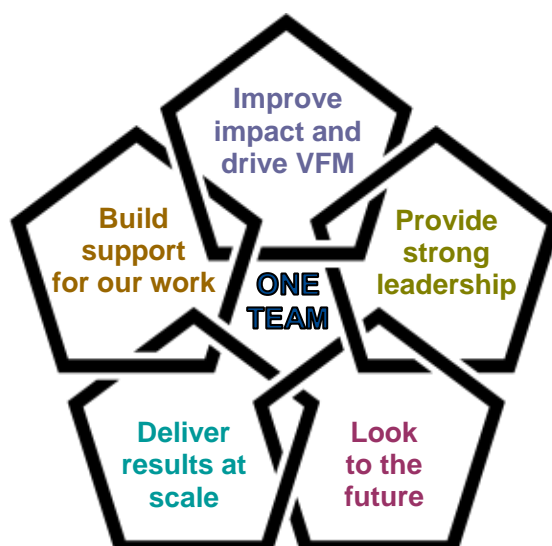
We see digital as being a key enabler for this, helping us to become a more open, transparent and efficient partner in our efforts to reduce poverty.

Last year, in line with the Government Digital Strategy (2012), we produced our own digital strategy to lay out clearly our plan for becoming 'digital by default'. This exercise also provided us with an opportunity to take stock of our digital programmes and the impact that they are having on the ground and to assess gaps. By using the DFID strategy as our guidance we have been able to ensure that our activities are cohesive and therefore more effective. One year on we are now able to comment on our success so far.

It is also a key Civil Service Reform objective to become a government that is 'digital by default'. This means ensuring digital is the first route that is considered when carrying out a transaction, whether that is requesting a service, transferring money, monitoring a programme or sharing data/information.

Recording training material. Picture: Russell Watkins, DFID

We know that we can reach more people, be more effective and improve more lives by using digital tools at all stages of the delivery of aid. We also know that the pace of technological development means that without constant feedback and research we are at risk of falling behind and failing people who are in most need of our help. Also, we recognise that our commitment to becoming 'digital by default' does not mean excluding those who do not have access to the internet.

Building the capacity of DFID to respond to these challenges has been a process that has spanned many areas of the organisation. The cultural shift that is required to achieve this has demanded the input of departments, teams and individuals. Our leadership has also evolved to provide direction and consolidate the different strands of our strategy.

2. Leadership

Over the past year we have put leadership at the centre of our digital mission. We are now receiving expert advice and knowledge to help us set direction and give us a foundation from which to achieve our goals. DFID's digital leader Richard Calvert has continued to champion our digital agenda.

2.1 Creation of a Digital Advisory Panel
We have brought together 10 digital and development experts with a wealth of different experience to form an advisory panel for DFID. Tim Robinson, CEO of LGC (a scientific analysis company), has been appointed as non-executive director of DFID and he will chair the panel as it reviews and challenges our digital plans. The work programme is in development and progress will be reported on via the DFID blog during 2014, but in the meantime panel members will be invited to comment on our digital priorities, suggest ways of moving forward and speak at our 2014 Digital for Development showcase event.

2.2 Cross-government digital activities
We convened a group of digital representatives from a range of UK government departments as we recognised there was a range of issues common to those who were not delivering transactional digital services. This group has been instrumental in identifying issues and tackling challenges such as capability building and digital policy making. We have become a focal point for engagement with GDS and a report on a range of common concerns is to be presented to their senior management group.
The group will continue to meet in 2014.

We have compared experience with the Scottish Government's Digital Directorate and shared learning materials. We have further meetings planned with the Welsh Government and policy communications teams within the Scottish Government.

3. Delivering better results

Digital technology helps us to plan, deliver and adapt our programmes so that they can be more effective and help more people. It can also play a significant part in obtaining information and gathering feedback that will strengthen and improve the quality of our decisions. By incorporating digital into both design and delivery of our programmes, we can help to eradicate corruption and fraud, speed up delivery and cut costs. The need for greater transparency is also a key concern, and we have taken a huge step towards complete end-to-end transparency of aid spend by developing the innovative Development Tracker tool.

Technology can change people's lives by increasing citizen feedback and participation. This will, in turn, improve the delivery of vital services, such as healthcare or clean water, and boost economic opportunities. By giving citizens access to information and services quickly and affordably, we can ultimately help them to become self-sufficient. The following projects use digital tools and techniques to support delivery.

3.1 Development Tracker
The Development Tracker (launched in beta in June 2013 and fully live on 31 October 2013) enables the public to track overseas development investment down to the project level including geographical information.

This is a major step forward in increasing transparency as all data is in an international standard format known as IATI (International Aid Transparency Initiative). This format makes it easier to compare data between countries and to trace aid funding through the delivery chain.

We are open about which organisations and partners we give money to and this tool will assist in the reduction of waste, fraud and corruption. The tracker has been designed following principles of the Government Digital Service Digital by Default Service Standard.

Next steps
The civil society organisations that have been receiving central development funding from DFID will publish details of how they are spending money. This will be published to IATI standards on the Tracker. The same requirements will be extended to private sector suppliers in March 2014.

The Development Tracker also contains a prototype version of an application programming interface (API) that enables developers to re-use the data. More features for the API will be developed based on user feedback. The source code has also been made available so that others can freely re-use or even contribute to the code.

We have further developed the published data on DFID aid projects to include results so that the public can understand what is achieved from specific aid projects. The first results delivered against the 25 centrally monitored indicators in DFID's Results Framework have

been published as reusable data. Other results are published within project documents as reusable electronic data, including project-level results and project performance scores.

A geocoding tool has been released to DFID staff to enable project managers to map their own projects. This tool provides more detailed location information for individual projects using a recognised international methodology. So far, projects in Bangladesh and Nepal have been geocoded. This methodology will be extended to all new aid projects by March 2014.

We have also investigated a Linked Data approach for aid data, based on the IATI standard, to provide greater traceability of aid spend, but have decided not to pursue this at present, as we are waiting for existing initiatives from the international development data community to mature.

3.2 Pilots to gather beneficiary feedback and involvement

We are trying out new ways to enable poor people to directly monitor and comment on aid projects as part of the Global Poverty Action Fund (GPAF). A pilot project will test three different approaches to beneficiary feedback. One of these is the use of mobile technology via SMS and voice calls to solicit feedback from beneficiaries and provide them with information. This approach tests whether mobile can be an effective, efficient and equitable mechanism for obtaining feedback, and enabling fast two-way communication with beneficiaries. The projects that

Mariam (left) and Uche are, respectively, a statistician and a software developer in Lagos. *Russell Watkins/Department for International Development*

have been identified at this stage are in Somaliland, Tanzania and India.

GPAF partners are publishing results in the international aid data (IATI) standard and information on project activities is displayed on DFID's Development Tracker.

Next steps

Further work is underway to finalise the design for each project and the aim is to start implementing in mid-2014. The role that technology can play in feedback will be evaluated as part of an independent impact evaluation over the next three years.

Enabling citizens to get involved

DFID is one of the partners in Making All Voices Count: a global initiative that uses cutting edge solutions including mobile and web technology to ensure the voices of all citizens are heard. It also utilises the same technology to ensure that governments have the capacity, as well as the incentive, to listen and respond. The aim is to achieve effective democratic governance and accountability.

3.3 DFID's Innovation Hub

The Innovation Hub was established to support the development of innovative programmes, policy and research across DFID. It provides support to DFID teams on new approaches and financing methods. Its remit also includes acting as a focal point for ICT for social good across Whitehall.

Pramila and Banita, two community health workers at the nursery centre - or 'Anganwadi' - join pregnant and young mums to listen to the weekly radio soap opera, 'Kantha Kahe Kahani'. *Pippa Ranger/Department for International Development*

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This year the Innovation Hub has launched a number of programmes, which include important digital elements. The 'Amplify' programme is a way of crowdsourcing solutions to development challenges, using both an online platform and in-country work with 'offline' communities. The online platform brings together innovators from over 100 countries onto a common platform to share ideas and inspiration on new solutions that could tackle development challenges. The first challenge will be launched in February 2014.

The Innovation Hub also manages a two year grant to support the work of the World Wide Web Foundation. The key deliverable of the programme is the development of the Web Index which is a country-by-country global study that measures the impact of the web in different countries. This year the index has been expanded to cover over 80 countries, and now includes enhanced data on gender, surveillance and censorship and open data.

A second component of the Web Foundation grant is DFID's inclusion in the newly formed Alliance for Affordable Internet which brings together donors, private sector and civil society organisations to address high costs of internet access in developing countries. The Alliance is looking to engage governments to bring about policy and regulatory changes to drive down artificially high prices. Three governments have already signed up to the Alliance's Best Practices – Nigeria, Mozambique and Ghana.

3.4 Research for Development (R4D)
We require that all research produced as a result of public money is freely accessible. Our main route for finding information is Research for Development (R4D) - a free access online database that includes details of current and past DFID funded research and contains almost 40,000 project and document records. http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk .
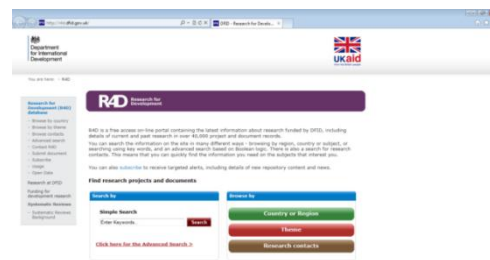
A range of services have been developed to make the datasets held within R4D accessible to other organisations and individuals. This means that others can reuse this knowledge and build and extend applications in new and creative ways. R4D provides two main services for the delivery of research metadata:
•	the Research for Development Gateway
•	the Linked Development platform

We are currently working with the Government Digital Service (GDS) to develop the services and functionality of R4D for the end user and DFID's research partners.

4. Building capability

We understand that it is not enough just to give our staff digital tools. We also need to give them the confidence and skills so that they can use those tools effectively. In the past year DFID staff have been encouraged to understand the opportunities and risks of greater transparency, and to participate in social media. Some teams have made progress in automating processes. We have pushed colleagues to consider the interests of end users when commissioning new digital-related services.

Our plans have evolved since the original strategy was agreed. We no longer plan to establish a new unit, but have identified two specific roles needed to deliver the priorities identified in the strategy. These people work closely with colleagues across the organisation who also have digital responsibilities. We have been working closely with the Digital Advisory Panel to make sure we have access to the best expertise and advice on how digital can support development.
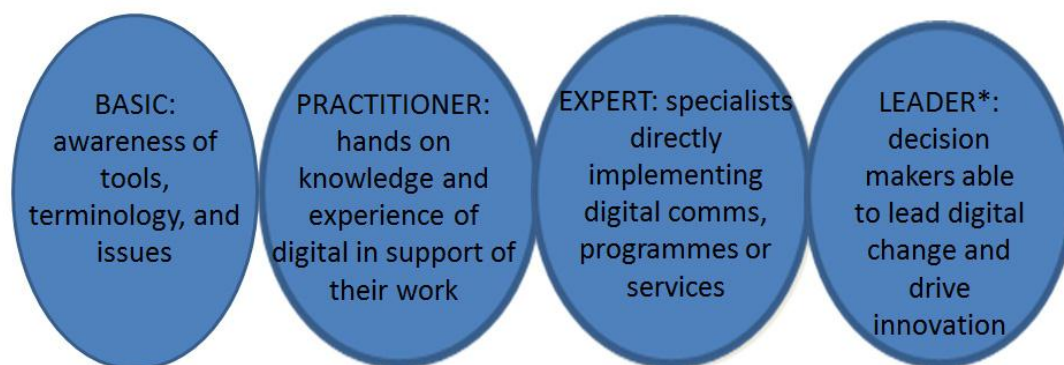
4.1 Civil Service Reform and digital capability

The Civil Service Capabilities Plan, published in April 2013, identified digital capability as one of the priority skillsets that needed improvement across government. The requirements of that plan match the priorities in the digital strategy which identify the current levels of ability across the organisation, and suggest a range of approaches to address improvements.

4.2 Capabilities across the organisation

To respond to the Skills Capability Audit commissioned by Cabinet Office, we gathered data from a series of questionnaires, completed by staff who attended introductory sessions, and sampled a couple of overseas offices and a professional cadre. Our conclusions were that while there is excellence in parts of DFID, there is work to be done to establish a consistent, basic set of digital skills. Also, that we need to do more to promote better awareness among staff as to what training and development opportunities are available to them.

We are reviewing the skills needed across the organisation against the Cabinet Office model of four skill levels:

BASIC: awareness of tools, terminology, and issues

PRACTITIONER: hands on knowledge and experience of digital in support of their work

EXPERT: specialists directly implementing digital comms, programmes or services

LEADER*: decision makers able to lead digital change and drive innovation

*Cabinet Office use the term WORKING

Our intention is to ensure all staff achieve basic level. Leader level denotes the knowledge needed by those in decision making positions, who need to be comfortable with and understand the opportunities offered by digital and technology advances. The remaining levels are practitioner and expert and refer to the more hands on roles and levels of skills needed to deliver digital transformation. Besides the levels we also recognise that different roles require different kinds of expertise, and our guidance will reflect this.

During the last year, there have been a series of activities designed both to identify needs, and to explore the ways of meeting them. This encompassed group sessions with teams from different areas of the organisation, presentations at induction courses, and one-to-one sessions with senior colleagues, including specific sessions on using social media.

Plans to improve capability

We will start with a focus on the leadership group: providing hands on experience, plus a structured learning programme, with the aim for decision makers to become comfortable with the scope of the digital landscape (covering areas like cloud computing, agile methodologies and opportunities for technology to support programmes). We will also review and recommend basic introductory self-service training.

4.3 Focusing on communicators' skills

Within Communications Division, press officers and the strategic communications team are learning how to use digital tools for themselves and are working towards 'expert' level. We will build on work that has already started to look in more depth at the activities and skills needed by all communication specialists across the organisation. Press officers took on responsibility for out-of-hours digital publishing to GOV.UK and Twitter. The Digital Team provided bespoke training alongside GDS editor training, resulting in greater confidence and flexibility in using Twitter for engagement and announcements. In addition, we have trained several strategic communications staff in how to run a social media campaign, resulting in them producing and publishing rich content such as podcasts, pictures and video.

The cross-government Digital Communications Capability Review carried out during autumn 2013 created a manifesto for change, and included the recommendation that:

> "… for the mainstream communicator, effective use of the essential digital tools to do your job should be supported and made mandatory as soon as possible. All media relations teams should be able to publish web stories and write 140 character summaries of their announcements without needing to hand over to a 'specialist'. No one should need their digital team to re-tweet."
>
> From cross-government Digital Capability Review

DFID's Communications Division received positive feedback relating to its digital capability in the recent Cabinet Office led communications capability review, with the final report stating that the Digital Team is "seen as a shining example" of how digital communications across government can work. The team is often called upon to share its knowledge across government.

To improve digital communications capability and value for money further, a programme of work has been recommended, including devising a content strategy, stronger audience segmentation and improving objective setting and evaluation of all digital communications activity.

4.4 Digital for Development event and innovation speaker series

Other plans to enthuse staff and maintain interest in opportunities offered by the digital agenda include the following:

- We are organising a one-day Digital for Development event in March 2014 showcasing digital or ICT enabled aid programmes. The day is intended to inspire ideas, spark debate and encourage thinking about how we can utilise such technology by sharing our own experiences and exploring examples from others. It follows on from a similar successful event last year
- We are developing a speaker series of lunchtime sessions, where we will invite interesting and innovative people from outside the organisation to give presentations to staff on their ideas or activities, to inspire debate.

5. Making DFID easy to do business with

We want any transactions with DFID at any level to be as efficient as possible. We work with many third parties including: private sector suppliers, NGOs, students looking for scholarships, teachers, and citizens of aid recipient countries. Any one of those partners should be able to find the information they need, or access and complete a service efficiently.

5.1 Grants Efficiency Programme

We are participating in a cross-government Grants Efficiency Programme to redesign and ultimately streamline the process of applying for UK government grants and funds. The programme aims to cut the costs of grant administration, reduce losses from fraud and error and make grants more effective. A 'digital by default' approach to the entire process of finding, applying for and disbursing grants and funds is under consideration. Our priority is to improve the user experience of finding and applying for our grants and work is underway with the GDS development team to achieve this.

Over the next 12 months, we intend to bring greater transparency to our grants and funding schemes by showing how much funding is available for which sectors, in which countries, and what they achieve.

5.2 Changes in procurement

The Procurement Team in DFID has worked hard over the last year to make our tendering and contracting process more clear and effective. We have restructured our procurement reporting mechanisms to be greatly automated, providing real-time information.

Digital tools have been a key part of this realignment. We are using our web based supplier portal and online collaboration sites to communicate a coherent message to the relevant supply base.

In the coming year, we will be upgrading our ERP system [Enterprise Resource Platform] and are realigning our coding taxonomy to meet the standard chart of accounts across government. This will lead to consistent reporting, that enables us to look with confidence at data from across the whole supply chain.

5.3 Digital spending controls

We are implementing the Cabinet Office digital spending controls to ensure that money on digitally enabled projects or programmes is being spent appropriately. Our aim is to achieve value for money in programme spend by applying the GDS design principles. The principles put users at the heart of any new web or digital developments.

The next steps are to create increased awareness with DFID programme managers of the costs and benefits of digital when writing business cases.

6. Improving the way we communicate

Digital is the fastest way of communicating with our partners around the world, supplementing and enhancing face to face contact. Using digital tools we are able to keep in touch with stakeholders and beneficiaries to help shape, monitor and evaluate policies and programmes at all stages of the programme cycle. We can also reach new audiences who have an interest in how international development works.

Our digital approach to communicate with the public encourages a two way flow of information, and the opportunity to extend and deepen engagement with various audiences. Using social media to communicate and interact has become a mainstream activity in DFID this year, from the top of the organisation downwards. Country and policy teams now consider their digital communications strategy at the start of a new initiative, rather than as an add-on.

6.1 Using social media to communicate and interact with the public

Throughout 2013 we have continued to innovate and adapt our use of social media and digital channels. Our focus has been on holding interactive events with the public and improving the dialogue between members of the public and our ministers and top officials. This has been particularly effective in communicating our work on the Syria crisis.

In response to the Syria refugee crisis we set up a Google+ hangout (a live video chat service) with BBC World in which the Secretary of State and Head of the World Food Programme were able to talk directly with refugees and aid workers in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey.

We have also encouraged our country offices to use social media to inform followers of project activities. Currently DFID Ethiopia and DFID Nepal have Twitter accounts, as do numerous individuals in a range of different countries. DFID Nepal has tweeted the Minister of State's congratulations following Nepal's recent elections, shared photos of the opening of a new DFID-funded bridge and highlighted our gender-based violence campaign during the South Asia football championships held in Kathmandu. More can be read on this in Annexe 1.

For the first time ever, a digital officer was deployed with the humanitarian response team, this time working on Typhoon Haiyan in November this year. The digital officer played a unique role in providing real-time updates on the UK's response, in the form of high quality pictures, video interviews, tweets from the scene and from DFID experts. The material gathered was widely used by British broadcast, print and online media including BBC Breakfast, Sky News, BBC News, ITV News, The Times and the Daily Star.

Typhoon Haiyan also required a deeply integrated, cross-government approach to the single page on GOV.UK. DFID established the page and worked closely with FCO and MOD colleagues to keep it up to date from all perspectives. It has received over 16,000 page views.

We also started using Instagram as an additional digital channel to reach and engage a younger audience. Instagram also allows us to develop and promote new kinds of content - less formal "behind the scenes" photos and short video clips – which are engaging, quick to produce and easily shareable. This was used most effectively at the recent UN General Assembly, and again during Typhoon Haiyan, when the first consignment of shelter kits reached Cebu Airport in southern Philippines.

This year we ran a digital campaign called **#PakistanProgress** to increase awareness of our work in Pakistan -specifically amongst the Pakistani diaspora, but other interested UK citizens were also an important audience. This was the first time we had run a concerted campaign on a particular country programme and it will be used as a benchmark to evaluate future social media campaigns.

6.2 Transition of the DFID website to GOV.UK
A key plank of the government's digital strategy has been the creation of the new single government website. It brought together all the policies, news and publications of all the ministerial departments by March 2013, and will be expanded by the transition of the websites of other government funded organisations by July 2014.

At DFID we successfully moved our website onto GOV.UK to meet the deadline. We closed down and archived our former website which is resulting in cost savings for the department of over £100,000 per year in website development, support, maintenance and hosting.

Our editorial team worked with DFID policy officials to rewrite all our policies in 'plain English' so that visitors to GOV.UK could clearly understand the work of the department to meet our international development goals and to report on results. We've retrained our editors to use the new publishing system and to meet the new standards from the GDS. Feedback from web visitors shows that they welcome the clearer language from government.

Next steps
There is still work to be done to improve areas of the website, in response to feedback both from our staff and from web visitors.

Plans for 2014 are to work closely with the GDS team to carry out usability testing in selected countries with individual website visitors and to improve the pages so that people can complete tasks and find the information they need quickly.

Transition of other websites
DFID's two remaining arms-length bodies (the Stabilisation Unit and the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK) are currently going through the transition process.

6.3 Recruitment
We have developed our use of social media in our recruitment activities as it is a fast and cost effective tool with global reach in communicating with potential applicants. We now have more engaging careers messages on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. This allows us to tailor our use of social media in our recruitment campaigns to reach a wider pool of potential applicants without the delays and costs associated with traditional print media recruitment advertising.
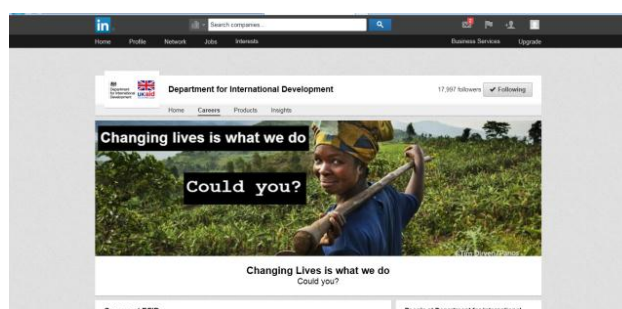
Our potential candidates are often working in challenging locations where mobile social media platforms are a personal lifeline. We need to actively communicate quickly via mobile social media to ensure our candidates remain engaged and knowledgeable on DFID activities. In graduate recruitment, our rise of 40 places in the Top 100 Graduate Employers list was achieved through a mix of communications channels including more active use of social media.

6.4 Digital for Development blog
We are posting updates on the DFID blogging platform to communicate our digital and transparency work to a wider audience. It is encouraging to see how many people have shared our posts with their colleagues via Twitter (on which we have over 132,000 followers) and Facebook and it has opened up a new channel to debate digital and development issues.

6.5 Monitoring and evaluation

Communications Division has led a major piece of work on digital evaluation this year, leading to the implementation of new forms of evaluation to inform communication activity. Resulting changes include a range of reports and the trial of a monitoring tool to provide better analytics. Members of the Division have also engaged in cross government workshops hosted by Defra on social analytics and will take part in new Cabinet Office evaluation framework setting.
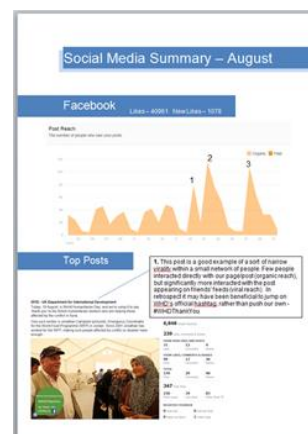
7. Conclusion and plans for 2014

Whilst we are conscious of the scale of the task that becoming a 'digital by default' organisation presents, we are confident that the range of activity outlined in this report takes us firmly in that direction. We need to continue to improve our skills, capabilities and insight into how digital can help us meet many objectives: the requirements of the Civil Service Reform plan, the needs of programme beneficiaries, and the increasing need for transparency in our aid spend. Digital plays a fundamental role in that journey, and we reaffirm our commitment to, and efforts in, ensuring digital plays a key role in the future for government and for international aid.

We are proud of our achievements so far, but realise we have much further still to go. We will continue to update the digital strategy each year by publishing our progress against our stated aims, and laying out the roadmap for becoming a more digitally mature DFID.

7.1 Looking ahead to work on open and big data

In October 2013, as a part of the UK response to the data revolution called for by the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons we started to look at what we should do to tackle research and capacity-building challenges associated with statistics and data for development. Discussions will no doubt build on our experiences to date in DFID with data standards and our open access policy. It is likely that any agreed actions will exploit digital technology to meet their goals.

The revolution in ICT's over the last decade provides an opportunity to strengthen data and statistics for accountability and decision-making purposes. At the same time, the research and evaluation communities are working to realise the potential of 'big data' (datasets with sizes beyond the ability of commonly used software tools to capture and process) and 'open data' (data which is open to anyone to use, reuse, and redistribute, subject to attribution). In June, the UK government signed up to the G8 Open Data Charter and the post-2015 process needs to bring all of these strands together to improve the quantity, quality, availability and usability of development data.

The crucial research questions which need answering are:
• 	how can this be done and what tools do we need?
• 	can we develop the technologies to fully exploit the potential of new data?
• 	how can we strengthen the ability of citizens, southern partners, developing country governments and the international development community to use the data to have real impact on poverty and development?

The recommendations of this internal work will be available early in 2014. For further information on open data, see DFID's [Open Data Strategy](#).

7.2 Plans for 2014
Note: the actions listed in our response to the Cabinet Office were edited and published by them in a different order and under different headings. They are published as Annex 2 for reference.

In the coming year we will:
Leadership
• work closely with the Digital Advisory Panel and take their direction on the best ways to achieve our digital goals
• agree on DFID's role in improving the quantity, quality, availability and usability of development data

Delivering better results
• commission a piece of research that will map digital activities (specifically ICT programmes, but the scope may widen) across the whole development sector
• increase awareness within DFID amongst programme managers of costs and benefits of digital when designing programmes and writing business cases
• develop and implement a way of carrying out systematic monitoring of projects and programmes which contain a digital element.
• continue to develop the functionality of the Development Tracker and make the data available as widely as possible in line with IATI standards

Building capability
• run further, focused, training and development sessions for different staff groups to develop digital skills at all levels
• run the 2014 Digital for Development event and continue to learn the lessons from the innovative work our colleagues and partners are carrying out

Easy to do business with
• continue to progress work on the Grants Efficiency Programme with a view to improving the process of applying for DFID funding
• where current DFID services need to be improved or redesigned, we will follow the GDS design principles and the Digital by Default Service Standard
• investigate requirements for management information (MI) across the organisation
•   we will upgrade our enterprise resource platform (ERP)

Improving the way we communicate
• continue to work with other government departments and devolved administrations to share experience of digital transformation and lessons learned
• work with GDS to carry out usability testing on the worldwide section of GOV.UK and redesign pages
• test approaches to receiving beneficiary feedback.

ANNEXE 1 – Case Studies

Case study 1
DFID Nepal: Using Twitter to ensure transparency

In DFID Nepal, we've been using Twitter for the last 12 months as a way of sharing news about DFID's programme in Nepal.

We've had some great feedback on our tweets, and have variously used Twitter to convey the Minister of State's congratulations following Nepal's recent elections, share photos of the opening of a new DFID-funded bridge and highlight our gender-based violence campaign during the South Asia football championships held in Kathmandu.

In Nepal's sometimes volatile political environment, it has been important for us to be completely clear about the UK's role in Nepal, to contribute to the ongoing debate about aid, and to counter misconceptions about what DFID does.
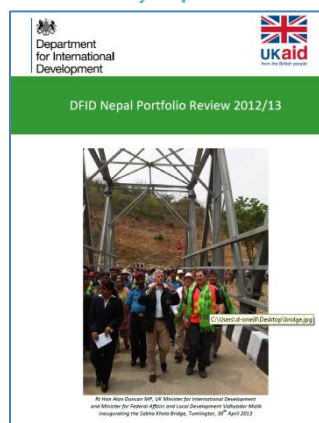
For us, the real value of Twitter has been in reaching opinion formers and journalists in Nepal. We currently have 1,500 followers, probably about 75% of which are Nepali.

We have used Twitter to increase our transparency, publishing our own portfolio review in 2011/12 and 2012/13 and tweeting key results to demonstrate what we have achieved. This has been really useful in extending the reach of our messaging.

In the next year, we hope to encourage more DFID Nepal staff to start tweeting and to use Twitter to highlight the importance of our work in Nepal.

Follow DFID Nepal on Twitter: @DFIDNepal.

Case study 2

DFID Afghanistan: Using Twitter to inform

 "Many of us have made mistakes on social media, but the biggest mistake is not to be on it,"
@HMATomFletcher (British Ambassador to Lebanon).

I opened a Twitter account in early May, by the end of the month I had 21 followers. Six
month later I have 350. How did I do it?

First, I bought a second hand iPhone. Second, I got
some help – my DFID press officer @EmilyPoyser and
the guys behind the Embassy twitter feed
@UKinAfghanistan gave me a few simple lessons.
Thirdly, I try to tweet and reply every day. It's a
conversation, little and often, not a lecture. Fourthly I
attach pictures– a picture paints a thousand words and
I've only got 140 characters! And fifthly, I link to stories
on the Embassy Facebook (51,000 likes) and DFID
website pages.

@DFIDAndyLeigh, DFID Afghanistan Deputy Head of Office. Tweets on #AfghanProgress
#UKaid #GlobalDev.

Case study 3
DFID's Private Sector Development team use of twitter
The Private Sector Development team currently have a steady increasing audience of
followers, mainly based in UK and USA, however they are increasingly attracting followers
from across the world including South Africa, Kenya and Ethiopia. Followers come from a
range of backgrounds including NGOs, research institutions and the private sector.
The team has found that being active on Twitter has helped build and strengthen certain
relationships through retweets and messages. Tweeting also enables them to get out their
most up-to-date messaging in a quick and easy way as well as keeping up-to-date with what
other actors are doing in the PSD space.

Follow the Private Sector Development team on twitter: @DFID_PSD

ANNEXE 2 - Government Digital Strategy principles and actions

DFID responses to actions in the overarching Government Digital Strategy were edited and published on GOV.UK
We include them for reference below:

Enhance departmental digital leadership

Action 1 – Departmental boards will include an active Digital Leader, who will lead on the development and delivery of departmental digital strategies.

Progress during 2013
DFID's digital leader is a director general who sits on the departmental board and executive management committee. DFID has also appointed a non-executive director board member with a digital background and experience.
The department has established a new digital advisory panel, including global digital and development experts. The panel will provide an overview of strategy for digital and technology in our programmes.

Planned activities in 2014
The digital advisory panel will provide further challenge and direction on how DFID develops and increases its digital activities and use of technology in its programmes.

Action 2 – Services handling over 100,000 transactions per year will be redesigned, operated and improved by a suitably skilled, experienced and empowered Service Manager.

Progress during 2013
DFID has no service that carries out over 100,000 transactions. The department has been working with its corporate services teams to ensure that where current services need to be improved, streamlined or made simpler, those involved in the process have access to Government Digital Service design principles and the Digital by Default Service Standard.

Planned activities in 2014
The department will continue to work with its corporate services teams to ensure that where current services need to be improved, streamlined or made simpler, those involved in the process will follow the GDS design principles and the Digital by Default Service Standard.

Develop digital capability throughout the Civil Service

Action 3 – All departments will ensure they have appropriate digital capability in-house, including specialist skills.

Progress during 2013
DFID received extremely positive feedback and was described as "one of the best in government at digital communications" in a recent capability review. The digital team in DFID is not a single team but consists of staff in variety of roles. The team coordinates the activities of communications, web publishing, skills training, digital spending controls, programme design, and takes responsibility for promoting and overseeing delivery of this strategy.

In the past year the department has carried out a series of digital skills development sessions for DFID teams including the leadership group, heads of profession, new graduates and communications staff beyond the digital team.

Planned activities in 2014
Members of staff from a range of teams in DFID will be identified to participate in skills development programmes, and there will be continued focus on working with the leadership group.

Action 4 – Cabinet Office will support improved digital capability across departments.

Progress during 2013
DFID continued to liaise with GDS and Civil Service Learning to identify where there was guidance or training which helped to address the needs of DFID staff.
DFID is part of a group of digital team leads that was convened across government departments with similar transformation and capability needs. The group meets on a regular basis to share experience and ideas. DFID has also compared experience with the Scottish government's Digital Directorate and shared learning materials; subsequent meetings have been scheduled with the Welsh government.
The department has ensured that fast streamers and graduate intake are taking up opportunities to gain digital experience in relevant teams.

Planned activities in 2014
DFID is planning a digital development day with the aim of encouraging staff to participate, learn and follow through into better programme design.

Redesign transactional services to meet a new 'digital by default' service standard

Action 5 – All departments will redesign services handling over 100,000 transactions each year.
Progress during 2013
DFID is committed to applying user centred principles when it redesigns services.

Planned activities in 2014
DFID will ensure that user centred principles are applied when it redesigns services.

Action 6 – From April 2014, all new or redesigned transactional services will meet the 'digital by default' service standard.

Progress during 2013
DFID's Development Tracker has been designed following the principles of the Digital by Default Service Standard. The Tracker enables the public to find and explore details and results from international development projects that are funded by the UK government. All the data is in a standard format known as International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) which makes it easier to compare data between countries and to trace aid funding through the delivery chain.

DFID has been participating in a cross-government Grants Efficiency Programme with the aim of re-designing and streamlining the process of applying for DFID grants and funds. The

first milestone was to improve the user experience of finding and applying for grants online and work is underway with GDS to achieve this.

Planned activities in 2014
DFID will continue to develop the process of applying for DFID grants and funds with GDS.

Complete the transition to GOV.UK

Action 7 – Corporate publishing activities of all 24 central government departments will move onto GOV.UK by March 2013, with agency and arms-length bodies online publishing to follow by March 2014.
Progress during 2013
DFID's website met the deadline for transitioning to GOV.UK. Its two remaining arm's length bodies are going through the transition process. Our management and editorial teams liaise regularly with GDS on continual improvement and updates to the website.

Planned activities in 2014
DFID will continue to improve the user experience of the worldwide sections of the website.

Increase the number of people who use digital services

Action 8 – Departments will raise awareness of their digital services so that more people know about them and use them.

Progress during 2013
DFID's Digital Developments blog provides updates on its digital activities and is an effective channel, along with its social media accounts, for engaging with people on how it is meeting its objectives.

To improve recruitment, DFID has evaluated impact, costs and benefits of its social media use. The department is reaching more potential applicants through better LinkedIn activity and tailored use of social media in its graduate and advisor recruitment campaigns.

DFID has been testing ways to collect feedback from beneficiaries of global development projects including looking at when and how it is more effective to use technology to do this, for example short message service (SMS) feedback systems. This should ensure real-time information on results and programme effectiveness to inform decision making.

Planned activities in 2014
DFID will continue to communicate with its audience via its digital developments blog and other social media channels. We will test three different approaches to beneficiary feedback. One of these is the use of mobile technology via SMS and voice calls to solicit feedback from beneficiaries of the Global Poverty Action Fund and provide them with information.

Provide consistent services for people who have rarely or never been online

Action 9 – there will be a cross-government approach to assisted digital. This means that people who have rarely or never been online will be able to access services offline, and we will provide additional ways for them to use the digital services.

Progress during 2013

DFID delivers very few transactional services but is committed to ensuring that they will always look consistent and accommodate the needs of all users.

Planned activities in 2014

DFID will ensure that all new or redesigned transactional services look consistent and accommodate the needs of all users.

Broaden the range of those tendering to supply digital services including more small and medium sized enterprises

Action 10 – Cabinet Office will offer leaner and more lightweight tendering processes, as close to the best practice in industry as or regulatory requirements allow.

Progress during 2013

DFID is committed to making all tendering and contracting process more clear and effective. It has restructured its procurement reporting mechanisms to be greatly automated, providing real-time information. It is talking to suppliers and commercial partners earlier in the procurement process to improve outcomes and value for money. It is using its web based supplier portal and online collaboration sites to communicate a coherent message to the relevant supply base.

DFID has been implementing the Cabinet Office's digital spending controls to achieve value for money in programme spend by adopting GDS's design principles, and creating user-centred, data-driven web platforms.

Planned activities in 2014

DFID will be upgrading its enterprise resource platform and will realign the coding taxonomy to meet the standard charter of accounts across government. This will lead to consistent reporting, that enables the department to look with confidence at data from across the whole supply chain of central government spend.

DFID aims to create increased awareness in programme managers of the cost benefits of digital when writing business cases. This provides an opportunity for departmental procurement leads to embed commissioning arrangements for new digital projects to encourage a wider range of bidders, including small and medium-sized enterprises.

Build common technology platforms for 'digital by default' services

Action 11 – Cabinet Office will lead in the definition and delivery of a new suite of common technology platforms which will underpin the new generation of digital services.

Progress during 2013

DFID has been participating in a cross-government Grants Efficiency Programme with the aim of both improving the quality and quantity of grant applications made to DFID and making it easier to find and apply for relevant international development funds.

DFID's systems allow the widest possible use of a full range of digital platforms and tools such as social media and cloud hosting of data.

Planned activities in 2014
DFID will seek to make use of new common platforms when they become available, where this supports its delivery of services.

Remove unnecessary legislative barriers

Action 12 - Cabinet Office will continue to work with departments to remove legislative barriers which unnecessarily prevent the development of straightforward and convenient digital services.

Progress during 2013
DFID is not aware of any significant legislative barriers to achieving digital by default for our services. If legislative barriers do arise as services are rebuilt, the department will work with Cabinet Office to amend these.

Planned activities in 2014
DFID will ensure that it works with Cabinet Office should any legislative barriers arise during the rebuild of services.

Base service decisions on accurate and timely management information

Action 13 Departments will supply a consistent set of management information (as defined by Cabinet Office) for their transactional services.

Progress during 2013
DFID does not carry out services at the volume to require monitoring by Cabinet Office and its transactions are reported on Transactions Explorer.

Planned activities in 2014
DFID will continue to report its transactions on the Transactions Explorer.

Improve the way that the government makes policy and communicates with people

Action 14 – Policy teams will use digital tools and techniques to engage with and consult the public.

Progress during 2013
DFID has a long history of open and consultative policy making, processes which have been commended by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Assistance committee.

Alongside established channels to share policy making and delivery with other government departments (eg the Stabilisation Unit) DFID routinely engages with external partners to develop innovative approaches to delivery.

The department has been developing case studies of good practice to share with MyCivilService to allow others to learn from our experiences. The digital team has supported policy makers in using social media to engage with partners and influence development policies eg in Nepal, Afghanistan and Ethiopia.

Planned activities in 2014

DFID will continue to develop its case studies of good practice to share with MyCivilService to allow others to learn from its experiences.