2018 National Workshop for Ethiopia

Evidence-based and data-informed ICT/e-government policies for advancing public service delivery and accountability in supporting the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
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Organized by the Ministry of ICT, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

Hosted by United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN ECA)

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Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development\(^1\) - adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at an historic UN Summit - has at its core 17 goals and 169 targets. A global indicator framework was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and agreed upon at the United Nations Statistical Commission held in March 2017\(^2\). The 17 goals, 169 targets and 232 indicators will provide critical reference points for national governments in designing or revamping institutional arrangements, policies, strategies and plans to eradicate poverty and achieve a better, more sustainable world.

There are, however, several gaps in data related to progress in sectoral areas such as education, health and employment, among many countries including Ethiopia. The UN Statistical Commission has clearly defined indicators for some targets, envisioning the adoption of global indicators and nationally defined complementary indicators. But there are institutional and capacity challenges in defining other indicators, such as the quality of public service delivery (Target 16.6) or collecting relevant data, as well as other complementary indicators at the national and sub-national level.

Despite limited experience in designing and delivering integrated e-government services at national ministerial and local district levels in Ethiopia there is a leadership drive and institutional support for digital government to deliver effective and inclusive services. Hence, Ethiopia has been identified as one of the three recipient countries of the United Nations 10\(^{th}\) Tranche Development Account Project on “Evidence-based e-government policies for advancing governmental service delivery and accountability in support of the Sustainable Development Goals” (DA 1617B).

Ethiopia is among the one-third of top performing LDCs in e-government development, with a global ranking of 151\(^{th}\) and ranked 14\(^{th}\) among the LDCs (Ref: 2018 UN E-Government Survey). With a medium-EGDI\(^3\) of 0.3463, compared to global EGDI average of 0.5491, Ethiopia is among the biggest improvers, with rankings of 172\(^{th}\) in 2008, 2010 and 2012, 157\(^{th}\) in 2016 and finally 151\(^{th}\) in 2018. The country’s emphasis in e-government can be traced in part to high-level recognition of the need to coordinate online services at national level through providing a strategic direction and allocating sufficient resources. In 2005, the Government adopted a national ICT policy. In 2006, it launched a five-year ICT action plan to help diversify the country’s economy, promote public sector reform and improve opportunities in education, health, small business development and agricultural modernization. The country has since connected nearly 600 local administrations to regional and federal offices, linked 450 secondary schools to a national education network, and provided some 16,000 villages with access to broadband services. The national strategy has seen its second phase (2011-2015) and is now in its third phase, which includes provisions for citizen-centric mechanisms for stakeholder involvement, implementation of online services with tracking of indicators of achievement and establishment of a national e-government leadership council. The strategy is linked to the country’s national development strategy that envisages a transformation from a primarily agricultural to an ICT-based economy. Despite the country’s status as a low-income, landlocked, conflict-affected country, Ethiopia’s achievements demonstrate that a vibrant online public

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\(^2\) Revised list of global Sustainable Development Goal indicators, available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/

\(^3\) EGDI stands for E-government Development Index and is measured biannually by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government. See more details https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2018
administration can emerge from a combination of high-level political commitment, engagement of stakeholders and a specific plan of action linking e-government to national sustainable development priorities\(^4\).

There is, however, a lack of integrated approach to collect and measure data and indicators related to e-government, as well as the effective deployment of e-government strategies to support SDG implementation. Data gaps includes both supply-side metrics as well as demand-side metrics, such as the impact, usage and user satisfaction of online services in supporting the SDGs. The National ICT Strategy could be re-visited to identify critical data sets and online services that can support meeting the SDGs. In addition, there exists a capacity deficit in understanding the importance of an integrated approach to e-government development at both national and sub-national levels.

**Objective**

In supporting one of the two expected accomplishments of the project\(^5\) “Strengthened institutional capacity in target countries to implement evidence-based government policies and strategies, in support of selected SDGs and Targets”, the first national workshop will be jointly organised by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government) to build institutional capacity to collect, analyse and publish e-government data and related sectoral data, with a view to develop e-government policies, directives, laws, legislations, etc., to support the SDGs. This workshop will also support the first deliverable of the project, in identifying and supporting a set of SDG targets and indicators that the Government of Ethiopia seek to strengthen in this project, with relevant data and implementation road map to guide the next phase of project implementation.

**Participants**

A total of 35 – 45 participants are expected:

- Decision-makers and senior officials from lead agencies and sectoral ministries, identified as lead offices responsible for driving the implementation of identified SDG targets and indicators;
- Selected representatives of the private sector, academia, research institutions, and civil society, who will play a role in the implementation of selected SDG targets.

**Expected outcomes**

The national workshop is expected to deliver the following outcomes:

- Enhance the understanding for the need of integrated plans and policies in delivering the SDGs, including through the use of ICTs/e-government for service delivery;


\(^5\) Note: There are two expected accomplishments for the project: (i) EA1 Improved institutional capacity in target countries to collect, analyse and publish e-government data and related sectoral data; (ii) EA2 Strengthened institutional capacity in target countries to implement evidence-based government policies and strategies, in support of selected SDGs and Targets.
• Enhanced the knowledge of ICT/e-government data and indicators in integrated implementation of the SDGs;

• Start to identify a set of targets and indicators that the Government of Ethiopia seeks to strengthen in this project; and draft the implementation road map to collect, use and publish relevant e-government data with indicators for analysis, monitoring and evaluation;

• Strengthen institutional capacity and approaches to implement e-government policies and strategies in support of selected SDGs and targets through data-informed decision-making.