

USAID DIGITAL STRATEGY 2020-2024

BRIEFER ON THE PRINCIPLES FOR DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT



Photo Credit: Danna Wicent Bo, SWF

USAID'S DIGITAL STRATEGY CHARTS AN AGENCY-WIDE APPROACH to development in a rapidly evolving digital age and seeks to achieve and sustain open, secure, and inclusive digital ecosystems that contribute to broad-based, measurable development and humanitarian assistance outcomes.

The Digital Strategy calls on the Agency to integrate the Principles for Digital Development into the design, procurement, and implementation of awards, as appropriate.

Over the years, digital technology has increased efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and impact in development; yet many groups still face barriers to access. Technology has also amplified host country and citizen concerns over data sovereignty, privacy, and the spread of misinformation.

The Principles for Digital Development ('Digital Principles') are living guidance, which help donors and implementing partners integrate digital technology into development and humanitarian assistance programming. The Digital Principles codify decades of knowledge of what does and does not work in digital development.

Today, over 250 organizations have endorsed the Principles for Digital Development, which are stewarded by the Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL). USAID was one of the original drafters and initial endorsers of these Principles.

USAID plays a leading role in advancing the Digital Principles. Since creation, USAID has led an endorsement campaign; served on DIAL's Board of Directors and the inaugural Digital Principles Advisory Council; and incorporated the Principles throughout USAID's Digital Development training. Other donors are also placing the Digital Principles center-stage in their programming. Highlights include:

- ▶ The United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office hosts training sessions for staff and uses the Digital Principles to evaluate proposals that use digital tools. They also reference the Digital Principles in select RFPs, requiring respondents to speak to how they will apply them.
- ▶ In 2019, the Director General of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation presented the Digital Principles to all staff and committed the agency to abide by them.

The Digital Principles are integral to the implementation of USAID's Digital Strategy, which charts an Agency-wide vision for development and humanitarian assistance in the world's rapidly-evolving digital landscape. Because of this, there is a specific USAID Digital Strategy initiative dedicated to the Digital Principles. This initiative has four goals:

1. The Digital Principles are incorporated into Agency policy and procurement;
2. Agency staff have the tools and capacity to apply the Digital Principles in their work;
3. The Agency serves as a global thought leader on best practices in digital technology; and
4. Key external stakeholders incorporate the Digital Principles into their digital work.

THE DIGITAL PRINCIPLES



DESIGN WITH THE USER



UNDERSTAND THE EXISTING ECOSYSTEM



DESIGN FOR SCALE



BUILD FOR SUSTAINABILITY



BE DATA DRIVEN



USE OPEN STANDARDS, OPEN DATA, OPEN SOURCE, AND OPEN INNOVATION



REUSE AND IMPROVE



ADDRESS PRIVACY AND SECURITY



BE COLLABORATIVE

GOAL 1 THE DIGITAL PRINCIPLES ARE INCORPORATED INTO AGENCY POLICY AND PROCUREMENT

USAID must optimize our policies and procurement for the digital age, so that USAID-funded programming uses secure systems designed for scale and sustainability.

STATUS	SELECT MILESTONES	PRODUCTS
ONGOING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Digital Principles will be incorporated into an ADS chapter on Digital Integration. The chapter will outline how to implement the Digital Strategy throughout the Program Cycle. 	Inclusion of the Principles for Digital Development in the digital ADS chapter
PLANNED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A package of materials on the Digital Principles will be created for USAID staff. This package is intended to support USAID Operating Units to adopt the Digital Principles. 	Digital Principles package for USAID staff. Products will build upon those produced by the Digital Impact Alliance and may include customized training materials, procurement language, and consultation packages.

GOAL 2 AGENCY STAFF HAVE THE TOOLS AND CAPACITY TO APPLY THE DIGITAL PRINCIPLES FOR IN THEIR WORK

USAID must equip staff with modern digital tools for development and enable them to cultivate the necessary project management skills to design and oversee programming in a digital age.

STATUS	SELECT MILESTONES	PRODUCTS
COMPLETED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Investment Tool training was created and piloted. The Digital Investment Tool helps implementing partners incorporate the Digital Principles into USAID activities. 	<u>Digital Investment Tool</u>
		Digital Investment Tool Workshop
ONGOING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A technical assistance package for Missions that receive funding through the <u>Digital Ecosystem Fund</u>. These virtual workshops will help Mission staff anticipate challenges that they may encounter when managing digital activities. The Digital Principles are being integrated into USAID's online Digital Development Training. 	Virtual consultations for Missions receiving funds through the Digital Ecosystem Fund
		Digital Principles module in the online Digital Development Training and a stand-alone training
PLANNED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Digital Investment Tool will be revised based on feedback. The Digital Principles will be incorporated into additional Agency training. An optional technical assistance package for Missions starting a digital activity. These virtual workshops will help Missions anticipate challenges that they may encounter when managing activities. 	Revised Digital Investment Tool
		Digital Principles training materials for USAID staff
		Virtual Digital Principles consultations for Missions

GOAL 3 THE AGENCY SERVES AS A GLOBAL THOUGHT LEADER ON BEST PRACTICES IN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

To achieve the goals of the Digital Strategy, the Agency must actively participate in conversations around best practices in technology.

STATUS	SELECT MILESTONES	PRODUCTS
COMPLETED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY2020 set of thought leadership resources was completed. 	<u>Considerations for USAID Mission staff for COVID-19</u>
		<u>DigiKnow Applying Lessons Learned from Ebola Response to COVID 19 Webinar</u>
		<u>Leveraging the Power of Digital Technologies and Data Systems Against COVID-19</u>
		<u>COVID-19 and Investing in Technology</u>
PLANNED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY2021 set of thought leadership resources. 	Reports, publications, speaking engagements, and other content

GOAL 4 KEY EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS INCORPORATE THE DIGITAL PRINCIPLES INTO THEIR DIGITAL WORK

The Agency and its partners should use their convening power to bring others to the table to endorse and incorporate the Digital Principles.

STATUS	SELECT MILESTONES	PRODUCTS
PLANNED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USAID, in partnership with the Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL), is engaged with partner country governments, the development community, and the private sector. 	Potential products may include webinars and virtual round tables.

RESOURCES

Principles for Digital Development

- ▶ Digital Principles Website: Includes a community forum, free online training, case studies, reports, podcasts, and more.
- ▶ Introduction to the Digital Principles Online Training: A free, self-paced course. With roughly 6-8 hours of learning content, the course contains definitions of each Digital Principle, an overview of their core tenets, and real-world examples.
- ▶ Digital Principles Advocacy Toolkit: Contains advocacy materials such as design files, activities, and customizable presentations.
- ▶ USAID Digital Investment Tool: A tool to support USAID to integrate the Principles for Digital Development into activity work plans.
- ▶ Digital Health Investment Review Tool: A tool to assist donors and partners to consider best practices when making investments in digital technologies to support public and global health.
- ▶ Digital Principles Maturity Matrix for Program Design and Proposal Evaluation: A spreadsheet for donors and partners to assess proposal, work plan, and MEL plan alignment with the Digital Principles.

Services Available for USAID Missions

- ▶ **USAID Digital Principles Consultation (Virtual):** One-hour customized sessions to assist USAID Activity Managers and A/CORs to identify common challenges in digital programming. Participants will walk away with a greater understanding of the Digital Principles and a set of questions to use with their implementing partner to strengthen their activity. Available upon request: devinfo@usaid.gov.
- ▶ **USAID Digital Investment Tool Workshop and Technical Assistance (In Person):** This customized workshop is available to USAID missions designing or implementing activities with a significant digital component. Participants walk away with a shared vision for their digital initiative, a list of potential risks, and a draft action plan. Available upon request: devinfo@usaid.gov.

COVID-19 Response and Recovery Resources

- ▶ Considerations for USAID Mission staff for COVID-19: Steps that Missions and implementing partners can take to increase institutional readiness to respond to COVID-19.
- ▶ COVID-19 and Investing in Technology: Eight topics to consider when assessing a proposal that includes a digital intervention for COVID-19 response or recovery.
- ▶ Leveraging the Power of Digital Technologies and Data Systems Against COVID-19: Top Ten Lessons from the 2014 West Africa Ebola Outbreak to address COVID-19.
- ▶ DigiKnow Applying Lessons Learned from Ebola Response to COVID 19 Webinar: Lessons to strengthen the COVID-19 response.

The Digital Strategy Get Smart Guide lists additional digital development resources for USAID staff.

Have questions, comments, or additional resources? Please contact digitaldevelopment@usaid.gov.

USAID DIGITAL STRATEGY 2020-2024

STRATEGY GOAL

To achieve and sustain open, secure, and inclusive digital ecosystems that contribute to broad-based, measurable development and humanitarian-assistance outcomes and increase self-reliance in emerging market countries.

The Strategy centers around two core, mutually reinforcing objectives:

— RESPONSIBLY USE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY —

OBJECTIVE 1

Improve measurable development and humanitarian-assistance outcomes through the responsible use of digital technology in USAID's programming



USAID



Partners

— STRENGTHEN DIGITAL ECOSYSTEMS —

OBJECTIVE 2

Strengthen openness, inclusiveness, and security of country digital ecosystems.



Civil Society



Partner Governments



Private Sector

To achieve the overall goal of the Strategy, these objectives will be executed through four tracks:



ADOPT AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

Develop tools and resources necessary to deliver development and humanitarian assistance effectively in a digital age



HELP PARTNERS NAVIGATE RISK AND REWARD

Build capacity of our partners to navigate the unique opportunities and risks that digital technology presents across USAID's Program Cycle



SHIFT TO "DIGITAL BY DEFAULT"

Support implementing partners in adoption of digital operations



BUILD THE USAID OF TOMORROW

Invest in our human capital to guide the Agency through the digital age