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Mapping of SDC's Projects in Digitalisation and Governance

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A report for the Governance Network of SDC. Other documents in this series on digitalisation and governance are:

- Key Issues in Digitalisation and Governance highlights key opportunities and challenges arising from digitalisation. A shorter Policy Note with the same title summarises its findings.
- Main Actors in Digitalisation and Governance makes specific proposals about potential partners which are most aligned with Swiss strengths and strategic priorities.
- Mapping of SDC's Projects in Digitalisation and Governance maps out existing SDC projects.
- A Practice Note, Ways Forward, Assessment Tools and Possible Partners in Digitalisation and Governance, introduces practical tools to help navigate SDC's support in this field.

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Introduction

Digitalisation is significantly affecting all sectors of development cooperation. Key aspects of social, economic and political life are migrating to online spaces, and so are reliant on digital devices and connectivity. Use of mobile and internet technologies has enabled a variety of positive digital dividends for development in education, healthcare and livelihoods. It has also, however, resulted in 'digital divides' that negatively affect the most marginalised. This is the third report in the field of digitalisation and goverannce that maps out existing projects of SDC.¹

The relevant projects are presented in four tables that accord with the stages of digitalisation and governance outlined in the typology (see Box 1). The ultimate aim of this mapping is to clarify the contours of the existing project landscape and in doing so offer support for a framework that can assess meaningful ways of moving forward.

The four stages in the typology overlap significantly, meaning a particular initiative may contain elements of one or more stages. Nonetheless, the four stages are recognisable to digital governance professionals and have analytical value in furthering our understanding of ongoing change. In the first stage, the focus is on increasing the productivity of civil servants by digitalising mundane departmental processes and functions. The second stage centres on building government websites and portals that enable citizens to access government services at their convenience, without needing to travel to government offices or queue to see officials. In the third stage, digital tools and online spaces are used to improve government engagement with citizens, creating inclusive, participatory opportunities for citizens to play a meaningful role in the decisionmaking affecting their lives. Many of these 'civic technologies' have been built by citizen-led organisations, often in cooperation with government.

Box 1. Stages of digitalisation and governance



1 Digital in government: The digitalisation of internal government functions, including the adoption of computers, productivity software, and automation of payroll for police and government staff.



2 Digital government services: The digitalisation of government services to citizens. Previously called e-government, this includes government websites and open government data portals, and incorporates myriad digital government services, such as online licences, procurement and tax returns.



3 **Digital participation in governance:** The digitalisation of participatory governance initiatives, including online consultations, petitions and inclusive decision-making. Previously called e-governance or e-participation, this includes online participatory budgeting and other civic tech projects.



4 Governance in a digital world: The task of governance in an increasingly digitalised world where foreign monopolies have privatised the platforms on which social, economic, and political life takes place. How do we support digital citizenship while avoiding a descent into forms of digital authoritarianism characterised by surveillance and disinformation?

¹ The first report, Key Issues in Digitalisation and Governance, highlights key opportunities and challenges arising from digitalisation. A shorter Policy Brief with the same title summarises its findings. A second report titled Main Actors in Digitalisation and Governance makes specific proposals about potential partners which are most aligned with Swiss strengths and strategic priorities. A Practice Note titled Ways Forward, Assessment Tools and Possible Partners in Digitalisation and Governance introduces practical tools to help navigate SDC's support in this field.

While these first three stages involve proactive initiatives designed to accelerate digitalisation, the fourth stage involves reactive initiatives that address the implications arising from the rapid digitalisation of whole swathes of social, economic and political life. In the new digitalised operating environment, automated data-based decisionmaking by opaque proprietary algorithms is displacing transparent person-centred dialogic decision-making. A large percentage of the world's social, economic and political life now takes place on digital platforms owned by foreign private monopolies whose algorithms are optimised for private profit, meaning they cannot be held accountable or democratically governed to service the public interest, development or human rights goals. Conducting governance in a digitalised world involves finding ways to mitigate the potential risks arising from digitisation while taking advantage of new **opportunities.** This includes consideration of how the internet itself is governed and of the monopolies that currently dominate it.

Tables 1-4 provide an illustrative (though not exhaustive) map of existing SDC digitalisation and governance initiatives. The relevant projects were identified during an online plenary and, later, small group workshops that took place during the SDC Governance Week in June 2021. These data were supplemented by follow-up communication with both attendees and additional SDC staff, as well as desk research from secondary sources. Participants were asked to provide examples of SDC-supported initiatives in each of the four categories and then discuss their initiatives in breakout groups. The information added to the tables was mainly derived from email exchanges with participants. Each table is followed by extended examples that further illustrate digital governance modalities, chosen on the basis of how much information was made available about the project and the extent to which this information illustrated the stage under discussion.

1 Digital in government

Table 1. Digital in government: internal application of digital hardware and software applications across government functions, e.g. use of email and automated payroll systems

Project name	Description	Place	Date
Decentralisation and Municipal Support (DEMOS): Municipal management sub-component	SDC has supported DEMOS, including its Digitisation of Performance Management System, which automates annual reporting by municipalities to the Ministry for Local Governance. The DEMOS programme also has digital participation elements (see Table 3).	Kosovo	2018–21
Strengthening Local Government Structures in Albania	SDC has supported the setting up of a human resources management portal for all levels of public administration, integrating information from multiple public institutions. The system standardises job descriptions, recruitment processes, and enables real-time data provision via the intranet.	Albania	2017–19
Municipal Waste Collection and Transportation Management in Ulaanbaatar (WCTM)	SDC has helped introduce a centralised GPS tracking and database system for monitoring waste collection and transportation in Ulaanbaatar and two suburbs. The goal of the system is to improve services and provide a basis for performance monitoring.	Mongolia	2019–23
Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts in Kosovo (SAEK III)	SDC supports SAEK III, which includes electronic declaration of assets, anti-corruption monitoring, a digital case-management system, and a database for wealth discrepancy (relevant to tax evasion). The project also has digital government services elements (see Table 2). See extended project example below for further information.	Kosovo	2020–24
Civil Registry System Reform Project (CCR)	SDC has supported the digitalisation of the civil registry in Tajikistan and the development of a digital archiving system. This helps the Ministry of Justice share birth/death statistics and trends with other state institutions, which is essential to improving the ability to forward plan and budget for services. See extended project example below for further information.	Tajikistan	2015–23
Enhancing Systemic Land Registration (ELSR)	SDC is supporting the digitalisation of the Laos land administration system. The goal is to make the land sector more efficient; accelerate land registration; strengthen land security and tenure rights; support further digital transformation in digital public services; and aid corruption reduction and integrity management efforts.	Lao PDR	2021–31
Source: Author's own.			

Digital in government: extended project examples

Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts in Kosovo (SAEK III)

Digitalisation of anti-corruption processes. SDC funds the Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts in Kosovo (SAEK III) programme in partnership with the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Internews Kosova, GAP Institute, the Rule of Law Advisory Group and the Basel Institute on Governance. The main focus of the overall programme is 'to implement new legislation and move toward the end goal of repatriation of

stolen assets and completing a robust corruption prevention system'. SAEK III runs between July 2020 and June 2024 and includes several components that fit under the 'digital in government' category, including:

- Electronic declaration of assets. Senior public officials now need to declare their assets online, allowing the anti-corruption agency to compare and analyse data.
- Monitoring of anti-corruption strategy. An electronic platform has been introduced allowing responsible institutions to upload

progress to the anti-corruption agency for review, monitoring and evaluation.

- Integrity plans. An electronic platform has been introduced allowing institutions to upload integrity plans, which the anti-corruption agency can then review and track.
- Case-management system. A new digital system has been introduced to assist the anticorruption agency in registering, processing and maintaining a track record of cases.
- Wealth discrepancy investigation database. This system has been introduced to help the tax administration uncover potential cases of tax fraud.

Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan (CCR)

Digitalisation of civil registration. SDC supports the Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan in partnership with the Tajikistan Ministry of Justice. The project runs until 2023 and is helping the ministry digitise its civil registration system and develop a digital archiving system. The legacy civil registration system was outdated, paper-based and less accessible to the general population. The new digital system seeks to help citizens – especially marginalised and remote groups – have their life events and experiences recorded and reflected in the data.

The digital nature of the new system allows the Ministry of Justice to share data (e.g. birth and death statistics) more efficiently and effectively with other state institutions, while improving the data's reliability. The goal is that this data will help other government institutions budget and plan for future services, and respond to the population's changing needs. The project hopes to enable planning of healthcare, education and employment services, as well as help establish a list of voters and social security records.

2 Digital government services

Table 2. Digital government services: government-to-citizen information and service provision via
websites and portals, e.g. online permits, licences and tax returns

Project name	Description	Place	Date
Integrated One Stop Shops (IOSSHs)	SDC has supported the introduction of IOSSHs, which enable citizens to access information and services relating to multiple departments and levels of government through a single digital system. This reduces the time and cost arising from going to multiple offices and negotiating with different bureaucratic channels. This change was enabled by digital process automation software. See extended project example below for further information.	Albania	2014–19
Local Self- Government for the 21st Century	SDC is supporting digital information service provision for deaf people as part of the Local Self-Government for the 21st Century project. The project seeks to improve participatory democratic processes and create better, more efficient services, especially for marginalised and excluded communities.	Serbia	2020–24
VOTAIME: Member of Parliament (MP) profiles	SDC has supported the creation of online profiles for MPs. The portal provides one-way information-sharing about MPs, including bios, voting history, spending history and travel history. See extended project example below for further information.	Kosovo	2017
Municipal Waste Collection and Transportation Management in Ulaanbaatar (WCTM)	SDC is supporting the creation of social media channels aimed at building waste management awareness in Mongolia. The project uses GPS to monitor waste collection services, as well as an improved client registry database and billing system for households and businesses. The project also has digital government services elements (see Table 1).	Mongolia	2019–23

Digital government services: extended project examples

Integrated One Stop Shops (IOSSHs) in Albania

Digitalisation of local government service delivery. SDC has supported the introduction and implementation of IOSSHs in Albania in partnership with Helvetas Swiss Incorporation. The IOSSHs greatly improve both the number of services that citizens can access in local administrative units, and the ease and speed with which such services can be accessed. The IOSSHs allow citizens to contact multiple local and national authorities online, meaning they do not have to go through as many bureaucratic channels or knock on as many doors. Citizens in Albania can now access in as little as ten minutes services that may previously have taken hours or even days to set up. The IOSSHs combined to serve over 37,000 citizens in 2017, incorporating over 100 services at the time.

The initiative is implemented under the SDC-led Decentralisation and Local Development Programme (DLDP), which – among other goals – seeks to strengthen local government capacity in order to provide inclusive, quality service delivery and support decentralisation and transition processes in Northern Albania. Electronic network and process automation software allows the administrative unit (often in rural areas) to link with the municipality

and so fulfil all administrative procedures that are under the competence of the municipality, rather than being limited to the services typically entrusted to local administrative units.

VOTAIME MP profiles in

Digitalisation of parliamentarian profiles and voting records. SDC has supported the creation of the VOTAIME online platform in Kosovo, which allows citizens to access detailed profiles for MPs. Each profile – available in both the Albanian and Serbian language – includes a biography, voting history, travel history and spending history. In addition to the profiles, the platform provides information regarding the fulfilment of legislative agendas, details of past parliamentary hearings, assembly expense history, and information about the Kosovo–Serbia dialogue.

Although the main components of VOTAIME concern one-way information-sharing and thus fit into the digital government services stage, the initiative also has some digital participation in governance elements. The platform provides space for citizens to ask their MPs questions and allows citizens to discuss opinions on draft laws and then compare citizen voting preferences on specific issues with votes made by parliamentary members.

3 Digital participation in governance

Table 3. Digital participation in governance: digital spaces for inclusive citizen participation in decision-making, monitoring, and holding powerholders accountable

Description	Place	Date
Serbia is a signatory of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). SDC has supported Serbia's engagement with OGP and adherence to its commitments. With support from SDC and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Serbian Parliament is implementing elements of the action plan, including opening public data and developing the digital literacies of government staff in order to make effective use of data, support open data communities and encourage data sharing.	Serbia	2020–23
SDC has supported online participatory budgeting across 61 municipalities in Albania. The system enables citizens to inform budget allocation priorities at the municipal level and provide feedback on municipality service performance. This is part of a wider SDC effort to improve key service delivery areas following expenditure reforms in 2017.	Albania	2018–22
SDC supported the creation of online municipal meetings to enable citizen participation in Kosovo's governance during the Covid-19 pandemic. This was the first time that municipal meetings had been carried out online in the country. This project also has digital in government elements (see Table 1). See extended project example below for further information.	Kosovo	2018–21
SDC supports the e-governance for accountability and participation programme in Ukraine. The programme has projects that cut across three of the four digital governance stages. The programme facilitates online public discussions and electronic petition systems, enabling citizens to influence decision-making at both a local and national level. See extended project example below for further information.	Ukraine	2015–23
	Serbia is a signatory of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). SDC has supported Serbia's engagement with OGP and adherence to its commitments. With support from SDC and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Serbian Parliament is implementing elements of the action plan, including opening public data and developing the digital literacies of government staff in order to make effective use of data, support open data communities and encourage data sharing. SDC has supported online participatory budgeting across 61 municipalities in Albania. The system enables citizens to inform budget allocation priorities at the municipal level and provide feedback on municipality service performance. This is part of a wider SDC effort to improve key service delivery areas following expenditure reforms in 2017. SDC supported the creation of online municipal meetings to enable citizen participation in Kosovo's governance during the Covid-19 pandemic. This was the first time that municipal meetings had been carried out online in the country. This project also has digital in government elements (see Table 1). See extended project example below for further information. SDC supports the e-governance for accountability and participation programme in Ukraine. The programme has projects that cut across three of the four digital governance stages. The programme facilitates online public discussions and electronic petition systems, enabling citizens to influence decision-making at both a local and national level. See extended project	Serbia is a signatory of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). SDC has supported Serbia's engagement with OGP and adherence to its commitments. With support from SDC and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Serbian Parliament is implementing elements of the action plan, including opening public data and developing the digital literacies of government staff in order to make effective use of data, support open data communities and encourage data sharing. SDC has supported online participatory budgeting across 61 municipalities in Albania. The system enables citizens to inform budget allocation priorities at the municipal level and provide feedback on municipality service performance. This is part of a wider SDC effort to improve key service delivery areas following expenditure reforms in 2017. SDC supported the creation of online municipal meetings to enable citizen participation in Kosovo's governance during the Covid-19 pandemic. This was the first time that municipal meetings had been carried out online in the country. This project also has digital in government elements (see Table 1). See extended project example below for further information. SDC supports the e-governance for accountability and participation programme in Ukraine. The programme has projects that cut across three of the four digital governance stages. The programme facilitates online public discussions and electronic petition systems, enabling citizens to influence decision-making at both a local and national level. See extended project

Source: Author's own.

Digital participation in governance: extended project examples

DEMOS: Decentralisation and Municipal Support in Kosovo

Digitalisation of local government meetings. SDC supported the creation of online municipal meetings to allow citizen participation in local governance during the Covid-19 pandemic. This was the first time that municipal meetings had been carried out online in the country. This initiative is part of the wider DEMOS programme, other elements of which are mentioned in Table 1. The online consultations arose out of a need to continue municipality meetings despite the lockdown and social distancing restrictions imposed during the pandemic. Holding meetings online

enabled transparency, civic engagement and citizen participation in decision-making, and allowed local government to fulfil minimum standards in consulting the public on important topics amid the ongoing public health emergency. Early adopting municipalities were able to ensure a degree of transparency and downward accountability to their citizens. Of Kosovo's 38 municipalities, eight expressed an interest in organising online meetings in the first six months.

Despite these early successes and targeted awareness-raising measures aimed at mobilising citizen interest in the online meetings, participation levels were relatively low, especially among women. The next stage of the project will address these challenges, taking advantage of the new action possibilities provided by digital platforms to bridge the gap between decision-makers and citizens.

Electronic Governance for Government Accountability and Community Participation (EGAP) in Ukraine

SDC supports the EGAP programme in Ukraine, which has projects that cut across the first three of the four digital governance stages.

Using digital platforms, EGAP enables voters to play an active role in governance, influencing the decision-making process and increasing community impact on policy at the national and local levels. In terms of the digital participation in governance

stage, the platform facilitates online public discussions through an electronic petition system, which draws government attention to issues prioritised by citizens and helps voters influence key decision-making and policy processes. There is also an online participatory budgeting component, which brings transparency and inclusion to financial budget-setting. Enabling ordinary citizens to use online democracy tools is central to the programme, which includes an ambitious digital literacy platform that aims to train 6 million citizens over six years.

4 Governance in a digital world

Table 4. Governance in a digital world: addressing how we secure a free and open internet in a world where the public sphere has been digitalised, privatised, monopolised, and is subject to pervasive surveillance and political disinformation by corporations and states

Project name	Description	Place	Date
Internet Governance Forum (IGF)	SDC previously supported the IGF, a global multistakeholder platform that facilitates discussion of internet-related public policy issues. This is a critical site for raising key governance issues in a digitalised world. However, the IGF has no decision-making power or ability to hold powerholders accountable. See below for further information.	Global	2007–08 (through ICT4D unit)
Access Now #KeepItOn campaign against internet shutdowns	Switzerland, through the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs' Peace and Human Rights Division, supports the work of Access Now on internet shutdowns. Internet shutdowns are one of the top three methods used by repressive states to close online civic space in Africa. See below for further information.	Global	2020
Possible engagement against digital surveillance	While SDC is not currently working in this space, it should be acknowledged that illegitimate state and corporate surveillance is perhaps the biggest threat to a free and open internet and to digital good governance. The Snowden and Pegasus spyware revelations, as well as recent research, have demonstrated that states and corporations are systematically violating human rights, diminishing democracy, and precipitating a descent into digital authoritarianism. There is therefore an urgent need to increase research, public awareness and civic capacity in order to mitigate, litigate and overcome this threat to development and democracy.		
Possible engagement against digital disinformation	Every election and key public interest debate is now vulnerable to coordinated political disinformation campaigns. Powerholders buy digital influence operations to swing elections or influence online debates about vaccinations, climate, conflicts, immigration, LGBTQI issues and elections. Disinformation technologies are often trialled in low-income countries prior to their deployment in OECD countries. Their impact is arguably greatest in countries with fragile democracies, weak governance and a lack of legal protections. Research, public awareness and capacity building is needed to mitigate and overcome this new development threat.		
Development Initiatives' data landscaping approach	The SDC Guidance on Leave No One Behind includes a commitment to help enhance information systems and the production of disaggregated data in order to reveal the challenges of those left behind. With this commitment in mind, SDC has supported Development Initiatives in developing a new 'data landscaping' approach, which maps out every development-related primary national and sub-national data source in a particular country. The approach identifies data gaps and addresses questions concerning the political economy of data within a country; how data is produced and shared; what the information systems look like; and the country's culture around data demand and usage.	Bangladesh, Nigeria, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Arab Emirates	2021
Source: Author's own.			

Governance in a digital world: ways forward

IDS research on digital rights in closing civic space studied evidence from ten country reports and identified five authoritarian threats to a free and open internet: digital surveillance; digital disinformation; internet shutdowns; repressive digital laws; and arrests of digital activists. The African Digital Rights Network also recently completed a review of African surveillance laws funded by the Omidyar Network. IDS is also finalising a book on threats to digital citizenship in Africa.² All these studies point to the fact that there is an urgent need to build the capacity of local activists, journalists, researchers, lawyers and policymakers to monitor, document, analyse and take action in mitigating and overcoming authoritarian threats to a free and open internet.

While SDC's portfolio of work is naturally less fully developed in this relatively new space for digitalisation and governance, its commitment to 'think and work politically' on governance and use of political economy analysis are excellent approaches for assessing the risks and opportunities arising, particularly concerning the domination of the digital public sphere by foreign monopolies. Alongside this, existing human rights instruments provide a normative framework for identifying problems and assessing solutions. Finally, SDC's partners (as well as other Swiss partners) are already expanding their digital rights work in digital surveillance, digital disinformation and internet shutdowns, as elaborated below.

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF). In 2007–08, SDC had a unit called ICT4D (ICT for Development), which supported the IGF (among others). However, in the course of organisational reform, this unit has been suspended, with its activities transferred to the Swiss Federal Office of Communication (OFCOM). Nonetheless, SDC's historical work with the IGF provides a strategic foundation for future work, as it provides access to a global network of stakeholders active in digital governance. While the IGF gives civil society organisations and developing country stakeholders

a space to engage in digital governance debates, it faces challenges due to asymmetries of representation in the forum and the fact that it has no decision-making power. Even so, the IGF is a logical place to build influencing power on governance issues, and can provide a space to build knowledge and skills.

Access Now #KeepItOn. Switzerland's existing work with Access Now is important due both to the organisation's internet shutdown work (the #KeepItOn campaign) and its other relevant workstreams, including those addressing biometric surveillance and digital-ID. Regarding internet shutdowns, it is important to note that they are just one tactic of digital authoritarianism preventing achievement of SDC's goal of a free and open internet. Shutdowns only happen in specific countries and for finite periods of time, while Illegitimate digital surveillance and coordinated digital disinformation is ongoing, pervasive and universal.

Other strategic partners that can be called upon to expand the global network providing a counterbalance to the global tech monopolies are the Association of Progressive Communications (APC), Privacy International (PI) and the members of the African Digital Rights Network. Pl's work, in particular, is important in pushing back against surveillance capitalism and unwarranted surveillance by governments. PI seeks to combat exploitative uses of technology and demand accountability when there is evidence of governments or corporations abusing their power through digital technology. Moreover, PI advocates the right to privacy for everyone, everywhere, and raises awareness about digital technologies and laws that place privacy at risk, thereby ensuring the public is informed and engaged. Meanwhile, the African Digital Rights Network is currently articulating a model aimed at raising public awareness, building local applied research capacity and coordinating action. Such action includes strategic litigation to defend constitutional guarantees regarding rights of privacy, association and expression against the threat of surveillance, disinformation and shutdowns.

² Roberts, T. and Bosch, T. (eds) (forthcoming) Digital Citizenship in Africa: Tools of Agency and Repression, London: Zed Books.

Conclusion

This mapping exercise illustrates the depth and breadth of digitalisation and governance initiatives in SDC's existing portfolio. The typology employed is useful in helping SDC staff understand the different stages of digital governance, and the context within which important new areas of digital governance are opening up. The four categories outlined are not mutually exclusive, and some larger programmes may usefully contain elements from more than one category. Resource limitations have restricted our mapping to only a subset of all SDC projects — it may therefore prove advantageous to sift through the database to produce a more complete mapping.

Although the first category, digital in government, is the oldest stage in the typology, it is still a very active area of work. Work in this category may be considered foundational to work in the following stages as it provides infrastructure, builds skills and catalyses a culture/approach upon which the other categories can build. Such work may feature intergovernmental exchanges, as well as partnerships with private sector companies and public sector training institutions. In some cases, it may be a relatively safe and 'neutral' space for engaging with governments not fully aligned with Swiss commitments to human rights, decentralisation and inclusive governance. SDC should always, however, be alert to whether any technology introduced or capacity built can be repurposed or leveraged for more sinister purposes.

The second category, digital government services, remains a growing sector. All countries now have government websites, albeit with very different levels of functionality and sophistication. Improvements and the further extension of digital government service provision is possible in all countries. Supporting the building of relatively non-contentious government information services could be a useful starting point for SDC to engage with governments. It may also at a later date provide a pathway for adding functionality for open government data or freedom of information requests. If, however, access to government services becomes exclusively digital, marginalised citizens will be left behind; and if biometric digital-ID becomes a prerequisite of access, human rights issues may arise. SDC should therefore ensure that offline mechanisms are also made available alongside digitalised government services, and ask for a detailed analysis of any digital gaps that exist in a partner country.

The third category, **digital participation in governance**, is a growing area of work closely aligned with SDC values and priorities. Delivering and sustaining the increased participation of marginalised groups in governance processes is a medium-to-long-term endeavour. Although all governments are rhetorically signed up to the SDG target 16.7 of ensuring 'responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels', in

practice more funding is available for the first two categories, which can deliver direct cost-cutting and increases in productivity. Often, initiatives operating in this category are limited to pilot funding, preventing them from scaling up learning and impact. SDC's work with EGAP in Ukraine and DEMOS in Kosovo provides useful lessons and templates that can be adopted or modified in other countries.

The fourth and final category, governance in a digital world, is perhaps the most troubling and strategically important area of future work for SDC. Even prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, social, economic and political life was becoming increasingly digital. Governance of the internet, governance of technology monopolies, algorithmic governance and data governance are urgent issues that present no easy answers. Existing governance mechanisms have proven inadequate in holding foreign corporations accountable or ending the 'pandemic' of digital surveillance, digital disinformation and internet shutdowns. These risks will likely trickle down to the three previous stages. Providing authoritarian governments with new digital tech and infrastructure could lead to increased surveillance and a crackdown on online dissent. An overreliance on unaccountable algorithmic decisionmaking can lead to biased service delivery that may violate human rights. Misinformation and fake news threaten the integrity of any discussions, voting or participation taking place within digital participation governance initiatives. SDC will increasingly need to consider what consequences the fourth category may have for the first three stages in order to mitigate any potential risks associated with digital governance initiatives more generally.

SDC's use of political economy analysis and existing human rights instruments as guidance are essential elements in the framework needed for analysing and prioritising future work in this space. We hope that the review of key issues in digital governance provided by the first report (Key Issues in Digitalisation and Governance), combined with the review of potential partners contained in the second report (Main Actors in Digitalisation and Governance), have helped clarify possible future directions. Moreover, we hope this third report can assist in mapping these potential directions against the wider landscape of digitalisation and governance. This report has provided evidence that SDC is actively supporting projects and programmes that address many of the key issues highlighted in the first report, and is already working with several organisations mentioned in the second report. SDC should therefore scale up these efforts and expand its work to cover more key issues, while seeking to partner with more organisations, especially those working in the final, governance in a digital world, stage.