

The role of digitalisation in South-South cooperation

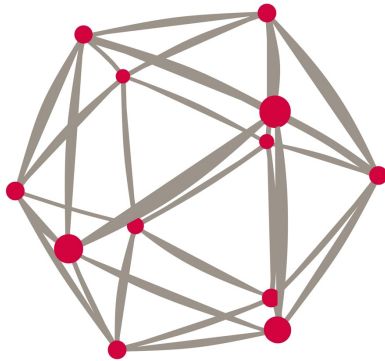
IDOS - PRODIGEES Research Project

Progress Report

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General framework: The Digital Global Compact (UN, 2021), country digital agendas and policies.

- Aim to connect people to the internet and digital schools for social and economic prosperity.
- Recognise digital technologies a global public good.
- Prevent the fragmentation of the internet to maintain a global digital space available for all.
- Promote global cooperation across borders and sectors.
- Relate to other UN initiatives like SDG and the Roadmap on Digital cooperation.



Mind map

SSTC &
development
paradigm

Digitalisation

Good practices

Exchange and
share of
knowledge and
experiences

Knowledge
production (goods
and services)

Mult stakeholder
initiatives

Case 1: Southern Voice

(Network/ platform of
Southern Think Tanks)



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- They launched an initiative in 2021 in India, Peru and Tanzania to study how digitalisation can improve delivery of public services, analysing digital platforms, data systems and challenges in digital inclusion.
 - Produced a report with UNDP exploring the impact of **digitalisation on governance processes and citizen participation, providing recommendations on leveraging technology to amplify democratic rights.**
 - Organised a conference in Nairobi in 2023 on Leveraging on digitalisation to promote public service delivery in Kenya.
 - Fostered inclusive digitalisation for education and to promote women's financial inclusion.

Case 2: Africa Drone and Data Academy (ADDA)




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- Developing training for the use of drones in a local and regional scope.
 - Involved Malawi University of Science and Technology to train local instructors and develop digital skills.
 - Runs a Master's degree program on drone technology in Malawi, with an outreach in Kenya, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Tanzania to scale up the experience.
 - With the original support of UNICEF (Scotland and Sweden), the Global Fund, and GIZ, the Virginia Tech University supported training for making, driving and using drones for development solutions such as:
 - Collecting and exchanging data on health and agriculture issues
 - Providing individual images for agriculture and food security
 - Preventing infectious diseases and improve emergency preparedness
 - Delivering medical commodities for predictive analytics

Case 3: Code for Africa



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- Conducts trainings for journalists, newsrooms and media organisations formulating digital business strategies, and leveraging digital trends.
 - Manages Open Africa repository of open data to promote data Access and transparency.
 - Develop civic technology tools to debunk misinformation on social medial.
 - Manages digital security
 - Promotes ethical artificial intelligence for social impact



Key findings from the case studies:

- Need for a common ground on digitalisation, knowledge management and development cooperation
 - Potentials for interagency coordination
 - Coexistence of bilateral, multilateral and non-traditional cooperation among diverse stakeholders (increasing)
 - Funding is still a challenge
 - The contribution of digitalisation to development and sustainability needs more visibility
 - Think tanks, NGO, universities and private sector are key actors for enabling digital strategies and bridge the digital gap under SSTC initiatives
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Successful outcomes of digitalisation and SSTC

- Strengthening of the knowledge society
- Enhancement of knowledge cooperation
- Evolution of SS&T cooperation (policy, narrative and practices)
- Strengthening of institutional and individual capacities through the exchange of good practices and the use of digital platforms
- Regional and multilateral outreach is underestimated
- High potential for ownership of development and regional development solutions



Challenges and proposals

- Funding of current and future initiatives is a long-term task
- Placing digitalisation in the SSTC agenda avoiding asymmetries
- Leading initiatives to development solutions from NGO, academia, and traditional (bi/multilateral) donors
- High potential for public-private partnerships for development
- Gaps between SSTC and other kinds of partnerships



Challenges and proposals

- Information platforms and the knowledge industry should have a stronger place in development solutions
- Data, knowledge and technology are part of the knowledge society and knowledge economy, and this cannot be unseen by policy makers (and IDC agencies)
- The risk of fragmentation and inequality implementing digitalisation processes remains high.





The role of digitalisation in SSTC

- DIGITALISATION can bridge the digital gap and strengthen SSTC through:
 - Building digital capacities & knowledge interactions
 - Promoting effective universal connectivity
 - Expanding digital access and infrastructure
 - Enabling digital governance and regulation
 - Promoting digital public goods, democracy and transparency



The role of digitalisation in SSTC

This is possible through:

- Mapping knowledge and data needs (local/regional)
- Mapping development issues able to digitalisation support
- A multistakeholder cooperation
- Funding long-term initiatives
- The engagement of private sector and PP4D
- Enabling effective knowledge management
- Networks and policy dialogue
- A legal and institutional framework



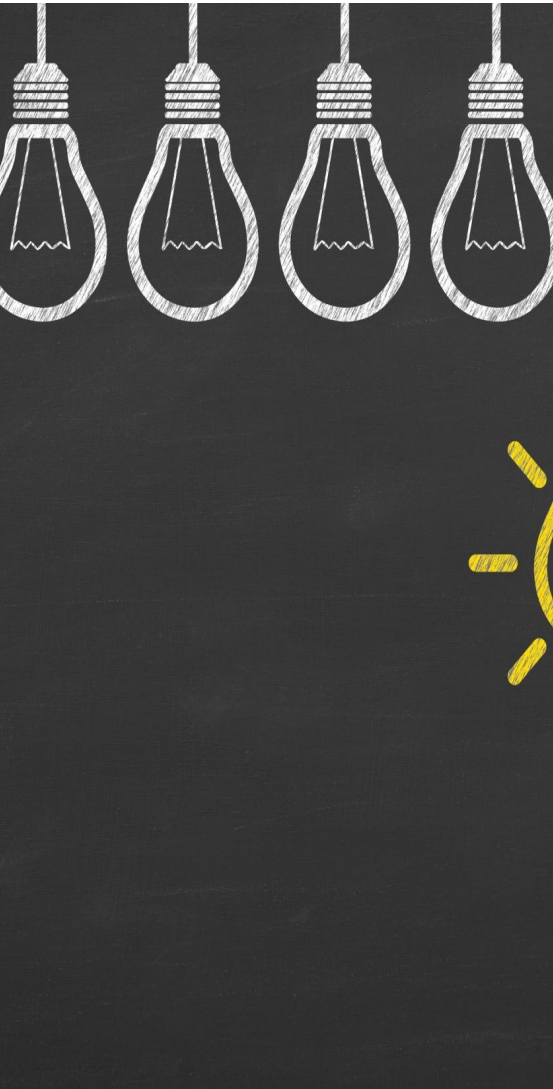
Personal reflections

- The paradigm of development moved from human development to sustainable development in the XX century, and to informational development in the third century.
- Digitalisation reinforces this hypothesis and can engage development actors to mainstream it to its activities.
- The model INFRASTRUCTURE – TECHNOLOGY – KNOWLEDGE will not be complete without **regarding the digital dimension.**
- Digitalisation as a global public goods should be enhanced with a human rights approach.



Personal reflections

- IDC concepts, components, resources, partnerships and policies need to be adequate to the new paradigm across the world.
- Finding digitalisation as a cross-cutting dimension in South-South and triangular cooperation will change the way we see and work with international development cooperation.
- We need to **bridge the digital gaps** in society with an approach based in HR, making digitalisation processes **accessible and affordable**.
- The **measurement** of SSTC will need to integrate the digital dimension, both in planning, implementing, evaluation, and providing development solutions
- Foresee development actors as knowledge facilitators, considering the different views, goals and experiences.

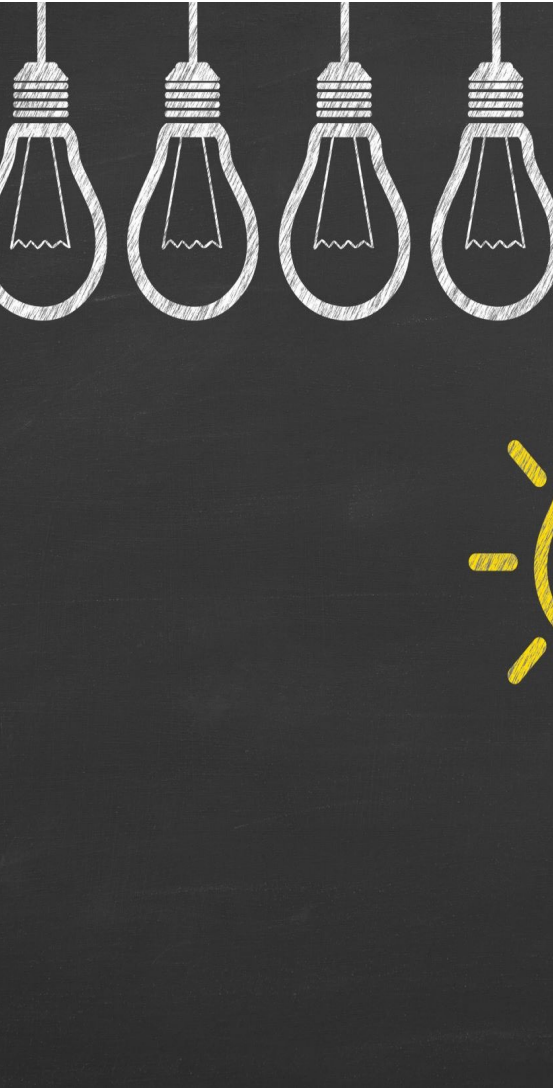


Food for thought

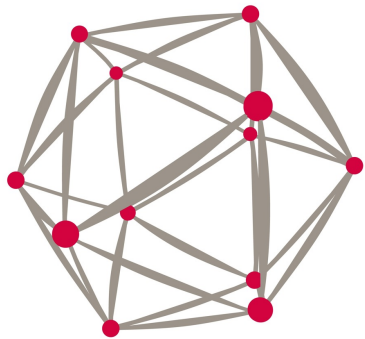
- Traditional South-South Cooperation has evolved and needs to mainstream digitalisation either as **a cross-cutting dimension in programs and projects**, or as **an innovative dimension of traditional modalities**.
- A new dynamic among development actors is needed, therefore, SSTC narrative fostering digitalisation might help.
- Triangular cooperation has a high potential with knowledge cooperation, digitalisation and development (**policy dialogue**)

More food for thought

- The linkage between knowledge and development needs to be addressed in **development solutions, capacity development and public-private partnerships**, with special concern on **funding**.
- There will be no **sustainability** without digitalisation initiatives for development, whereas knowledge economy and cooperation is not available for different audiences.



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