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Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) for Somalia

ITU

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The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in close collaboration with the Ministry of Communications and Technology (MCT) and the National Communications Authority (NCA) of Somalia, has supported the development of a **Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) for Somalia**. This Strategy is designed to provide a practical and forward-looking roadmap to advance Somalia's digital transformation journey, strengthen institutional capacities, and promote sustainable socio-economic growth through the adoption and effective use of digital technologies.

The DTS was prepared by **Eng. Tarig Khalil**, drawing on the **ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) Digital Transformation Strategy Framework** as well as his extensive experience in advising governments and policy makers on the design and implementation of national digital transformation strategies.

The author gratefully acknowledges the valuable guidance and support provided by the **ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)**, in particular **Dr. Mustafa Almahdi from the ITU Regional Office for the Arab States**, as well as the contributions of the dedicated DTS teams from both the **Ministry of Communications and Technology (MCT)** and the **National Communications Authority (NCA) of Somalia**

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Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

DTS	Digital Transformation Strategy
MoCT	Ministry of Communications and Technology
NCA	National Communications Authority
NIRA	National Identification and Registration Authority
DPA	Data Protection Authority
FMS	Federal Member States
NTP	National Transformation Plan (2025–2029)
AU DTS	African Union Digital Transformation Strategy (2020–2030)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
DE4A	Digital Economy for Africa (World Bank initiative)
EGDI	E-Government Development Index (UN DESA)
GCI	Global Cybersecurity Index (ITU)54
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
PESTEL	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TOWS	Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses, Strengths (strategic analysis matrix)
PPP	Public–Private Partnership
CSO	Civil Society Organization
AI	Artificial Intelligence
IoT	Internet of Things
5G	Fifth-Generation Mobile Networks
USF	Universal Service Fund
CERT/SomCIRT	Computer Emergency Response Team / Somalia CERT
M&E / MEAL	Monitoring & Evaluation / Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptive Learning
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
R&D	Research and Development
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
GovStack	ITU-led initiative for modular, open-source government digital building blocks
EAC DTS	East African Community Digital Transformation Strategy (2024–2030)
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
WB / WDI	World Bank / World Development Indicators
AfDB	African Development Bank
ITU BDT	ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau
SC	Steering Committee
SCCO	Steering Committee Coordination Office

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Executive Summary

The Somalia Digital Transformation Strategy (2025–2030) provides a coherent national roadmap to harness digital technologies as a driver of inclusive growth, effective governance, and sustainable development. Building on the foundations of the National ICT Policy and Strategy (2019–2024), the NCA Strategic Plan (2023–2027), and the e-Government Strategy (2025–2029), this strategy translates the aspirations of the National Transformation Plan (NTP 2025–2029) into actionable initiatives that place digital transformation at the core of state-building and service delivery.

Somalia enters this strategy period at a moment of opportunity. While the country faces persistent challenges—fragile institutions, infrastructure gaps, and limited connectivity—it also benefits from strong private sector dynamism in mobile communications, a young population, and the commitment of Government to advance structural reforms. Digital transformation, if sequenced carefully and supported through partnerships, can help accelerate Somalia's trajectory towards inclusive growth, accountable governance, and improved quality of life for all citizens.

The development of Somalia's Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) is being undertaken as a pilot implementation of ITU-BDT's Digital Transformation Strategy Framework, serving as a practical demonstration of its application at the national level. The Strategy is anchored in the African Union Digital Transformation Strategy (2020–2030) and informed by global good practices championed by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), ensuring both regional alignment and international best practice.

The DTS is guided by principles commonly applied in effective national digital strategies: coherence with national and regional priorities; comprehensive multi-sector coverage; inclusion of all communities; collaboration across government and stakeholders; evidence-based decision-making; ambition matched with feasibility; measurable outcomes; and agility through continuous monitoring and adaptation.

Somalia's approach recognizes that digital transformation is not solely a technological agenda but a key enabler of national priorities across governance, education, health, agriculture, trade, and social protection.

The strategy is structured around seven strategic pillars:

1. Digital Governance and Public Services
2. Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity
3. Cybersecurity, Data Protection, and Trust
4. Digital Economy and Innovation
5. Digital Skills, Inclusion, and Social Empowerment
6. Sustainability and Resilience (Green ICT and Climate-Smart Systems)
7. Governance, Partnerships, and Implementation

Within these pillars, approx.. 40 initiatives have been proposed, sequenced into a phased implementation plan:

- **Phase 1 (2025–2026):** quick wins and foundational enablers, including national e-ID, government service portals, universal access pilots, reliable electricity and cybersecurity frameworks.
- **Phase 2 (2027–2028):** Expansion of broadband infrastructure, including fixed and fiber connectivity alongside mobile networks, to support sectoral digitalization in health, education, and agriculture. This phase strengthens cloud and data platforms, scales digital ID and interoperability use cases, and expands cybersecurity and inclusion programs.
- **Phase 3 (2029–2030):** fostering innovation through sandboxes, emerging technology applications, research hubs, and integration of advanced services such as AI, IoT, and 5G.

The strategy adopts a portfolio-based management approach, with the National Digital Transformation Steering Committee providing policy oversight and ensuring coordinated implementation across government, the private sector, and development partners. Financing will combine public resources, universal service mechanisms, donor support, diaspora contributions, and private investment, reflecting the importance of mobilizing diversified and sustainable funding to advance Somalia's digital transformation agenda. The value of this strategy lies in its holistic and inclusive approach:

1. It ensures citizen-centric services that respond to national priorities.
2. It strengthens institutional capacity and trust through robust governance and cybersecurity.
3. It empowers women, youth, and vulnerable groups, ensuring digital inclusion.
4. Integrates sustainability and ESG considerations into digital development pathways.
5. Advances climate resilience by promoting green ICT solutions and supporting adaptation needs across key sectors.
6. Provides measurable targets and KPIs aligned with UN, AU, and EAC benchmarks, enabling transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

In doing so, Somalia's Digital Transformation Strategy sets out not only a pathway for national recovery and modernization, but also a commitment to building a resilient, inclusive, and forward-looking digital society, aligned with continental and global aspirations.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Rationale

Somalia's National Transformation Plan (2025–2029) recognizes digital transformation as a central enabler of governance, economic recovery, and social inclusion. This Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS 2025–2030) has been developed to operationalize that pillar, providing a coherent framework to guide investment, coordinate stakeholders, and measure

impact. The strategy is grounded in the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) Digital Transformation Framework and fully aligned with the African Union and EAC Digital Transformation Strategies (2020–2030), which provides a structured, phased approach to national digital strategies.

1.2 The Case for Digital Transformation in Fragile and Emerging Contexts

For fragile and emerging states, digital transformation provides a powerful pathway to accelerate recovery, extend essential services, improve state–citizen interaction, and support long-term resilience. In Somalia, digital transformation is enabled by several structural strengths. The country has a youthful population with high mobile adoption and strong entrepreneurial capacity; a vibrant private sector, particularly in telecommunications, mobile money, and technology-enabled services; and a dynamic diaspora that contributes through remittances, investment, skills transfer, and global networks.

At the same time, Somalia's digital journey must navigate structural constraints, including limited and uneven electricity access, gaps in fixed broadband and last-mile connectivity, and reliance on a small number of cable landing stations and satellite links for international connectivity. These challenges reflect the broader realities of fragility and institutional rebuilding.

Anchoring the DTS in the ITU-BDT Digital Transformation Strategy Framework allows Somalia to benefit from global good practices while tailoring priorities to its federal context, infrastructure limitations, and development needs. The Strategy aims to leverage Somalia's unique strengths while systematically addressing foundational barriers to ensure inclusive, resilient, and sustainable digital progress.

1.3 Scope and Purpose of the Strategy

The DTS defines Somalia's digital transformation pathway for 2025–2030, structured around seven strategic pillars and a portfolio of more than forty initiatives. Its purpose is to translate national and sectoral priorities into actionable programs, mobilize sustainable and diversified financing, and align with regional and global frameworks. Guided by the ITU-BDT Digital Transformation Framework, the DTS follows four interconnected phases—initiation and assessment, strategy development, implementation, and monitoring—to ensure a systematic, evidence-based, and inclusive transformation process that supports national development goals and leaves no one behind *(see Figure1: BDT Framework)*.

1.4 Approach and Methodology

The strategy is developed using the **BDT Digital Transformation Framework** as the core methodology, combining analysis, consultation, and alignment. It applies tools such as PESTEL, SWOT, and digital maturity assessment to diagnose current gaps and opportunities, while drawing on the African Union and EAC Digital Transformation Strategies (2020–2030) for regional

coherence. Broad consultations with government, private sector, academia, and civil society informed priorities and validated results. The process was further guided by international best practice and grounded in national realities.

1.5 Structure of the Document

The report begins with country context and baseline, followed by vision, goals, and guiding principles. It then sets out the seven strategic pillars and initiatives, the phased implementation roadmap, governance and financing frameworks, and concludes with monitoring, risk management, and regional integration. Annexes provide detailed analysis descriptions, KPI frameworks, and alignment matrices.

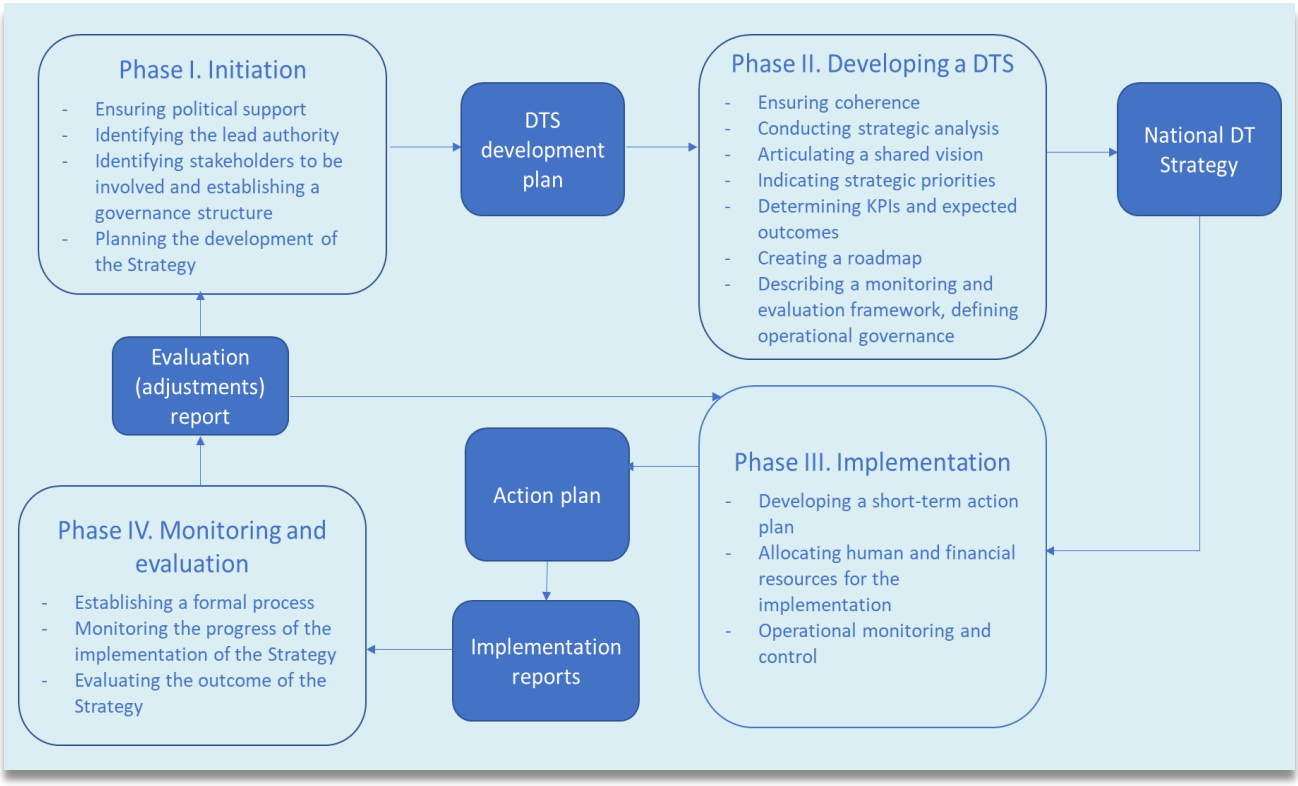

Figure1: BDT Digital Transformation Framework

2. Country Context and Baseline

Somalia is entering a decisive phase in its national development. The National Transformation Plan (NTP 2025–2029) establishes a comprehensive framework for economic recovery, institutional strengthening, and social development, with digital transformation identified as one

of the key pillars for enabling progress across all sectors. The NTP underscores that digital technology is not an end in itself, but a catalyst for service delivery, transparency, economic diversification, and citizen empowerment. The Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS 2025–2030) is therefore designed to

operationalize this pillar, ensuring that Somalia can leverage technology to accelerate the objectives of the NTP.

Over the past decade, Somalia has made incremental but important strides in building its ICT sector. The National ICT Policy and Strategy (2019–2024) laid down the foundation for connectivity expansion and regulatory development, while the National Communications Authority (NCA) Strategic Plan (2023–2027) is modernizing sector oversight and compliance. The e-Government Strategy (2025–2029) complements this framework by establishing a clear path for digitizing government services. Together, these policy instruments have created the enabling environment upon which this DTS builds.

Despite these efforts, Somalia's digital landscape remains at a nascent stage, as confirmed by international benchmarks:

- The **UN e-Government Development Index (2024)** places Somalia at 0.1468, ranking 191st globally [1] in the "low" development group.
- **Mobile cellular subscriptions** stood at 54 per 100 inhabitants in 2023, indicating moderate but steadily improving penetration driven by private sector investment, while also underscoring persistent rural–urban disparities.
- **Fixed-broadband affordability** remains prohibitive, with monthly costs estimated at 59% of GNI per capita [5], one of the highest globally.
- **On cybersecurity**, Somalia scored 37.4[2] in the Global Cybersecurity Index (2024), signaling the urgent need for stronger legal, institutional, and technical safeguards.

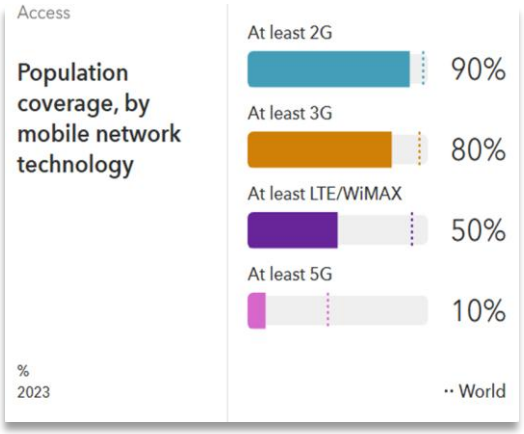

Figure2: Population Mobile NW Coverage

At the same time, important digital governance and regulatory reforms are underway. In August 2025, the Cabinet approved the Cybercrime Bill, establishing a legal basis for addressing online threats and strengthening Somalia's alignment with international norms. Parallel efforts are advancing in data protection, following the enactment of the Data Protection Act (2023), alongside reforms in competition and consumer protection to enhance privacy safeguards, ensure

fair digital markets, and improve transparency in pricing, quality of service, and digital transactions.

In September 2025, the Government launched a nationwide digital ID (e-ID) program—anchored in both the eGovernment Strategy 2025–2029 and the National Transformation Plan (NTP 2025–2029) as a key state-building and service-delivery reform. The e-ID strengthens the state's capacity to securely identify citizens, deliver targeted services, support social protection, and enhance trust between citizens and government.

The program aims to enroll 15 million people by 2029, marking a major step toward secure, trusted, and inclusive access to public and digital services nationwide.

Somalia also benefits from several structural strengths that can be leveraged to accelerate transformation:

- A dynamic and competitive telecommunications sector, led by private operators, which has enabled rapid mobile penetration and mobile money adoption, and steps toward expanding **fiber and fixed broadband**, leveraging existing marine cable connectivity.
- A young and entrepreneurial population, eager to engage with digital platforms for learning, commerce, and innovation.
- A large and engaged diaspora community, which contributes remittances, investment, and knowledge transfer.

Nevertheless, challenges remain significant. Persistent political fragility, security risks, and limited fiscal space constrain the ability of government to invest in large-scale infrastructure. Digital divides—between urban and rural, men and women, connected and unconnected—continue to shape unequal access. Without a coordinated national strategy, investments risk being fragmented and donor-driven rather than sustainable and part of a coordinated, whole-of-government system.

Figure3: Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people)

The DTS 2025–2030 addresses these gaps by providing a unified framework, aligned with the NTP, translating its priorities—governance reform, national ID, digital public services, social protection, and economic modernization—into concrete digital initiatives and investments. It sets a baseline from which progress can be measured and ensures that digital transformation becomes an integral part of Somalia's state-building, economic development, and social inclusion agenda.

Category	Indicator	Value	Reference
Digital government & trust	EGDI score / rank	0.1468 / 191 of 193	[1]
	E-Participation (EPART)	0.2877	[1]
Cybersecurity	Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI)	37.4 / 100	[2]
Connectivity – access	Mobile-cellular subscriptions (per 100)	54	[3]
Mobile-cellular subscriptions	Mobile-cellular subscriptions	9.91 M	[13]
	Individuals using the Internet	27.6%	[4]
Connectivity – affordability	Mobile low-use basket (% of GNI p.c.)	3.93%	[5]
	Fixed broadband basket (% of GNI p.c.)	59%	[5]
Mobile money & payments	Adults using mobile money	73% (urban 82%, rural 72%)	[6]
Economy & finance	Personal remittances (% of GDP)	15–16%	[7]
	Real GDP growth	~2.4% avg. (2019–2024); ~3% proj. for 2025	[8]
Demography & inclusion	Population under 30	~75%	[9]
	IDPs (internally displaced)	~4.2 million	[9]
Labour & informality	Employment in informal sector	~51%	[9]
	Female labour force participation	15.3% (male 38.4%)	[9]
Social services (health)	Access to essential health services	27%; only 40% within 30 minutes	[10]
Policy/legal	Cybercrime Bill	Approved by Cabinet	[11]
Foundational ID	Digital ID registration	Launched; target 15M by 2029	[12]

Table1: DTS Country Context Somalia

3. Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals

3.1 Vision Statement

Empowering every Somali with secure, inclusive, and innovative digital solutions for better quality of life

3.2 Mission

To build an inclusive, secure, and innovation-driven digital society in Somalia, empowered by resilient infrastructure, effective governance, and equitable access to digital public services—enabling sustainable development, national unity, and economic growth

3.3 Somalia DTS – Strategic Goals (2025–2030)

1. Connect Everyone in Somalia

Provide affordable, reliable and resilient Internet and mobile access so every citizen, school, and business can get online—anytime, anywhere.

2. Digital Government for Trust and Happiness

Deliver simple, fast, and transparent digital services—enabled by secure digital ID and integrated e-government platforms—to strengthen trust in government, enhance digital safety, and contribute to greater citizen satisfaction and overall quality of life.

3. Empower People with Digital Skills and Jobs

Equip youth, women, and vulnerable groups with digital literacy and advanced skills to create jobs, businesses, and innovation opportunities.

4. Build a Safe and Resilient Digital Somalia

Strengthen cybersecurity, data protection, and climate-smart ICT so people and institutions can use technology safely while reducing environmental impact and supporting long-term sustainability.

5. Use Technology to Improve Daily Life

Apply digital tools in health, education, farming, and trade so people everywhere in Somalia benefit from better services and opportunities.

4. Assessment of Somalia's Digital Readiness

4.1 Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal (PESTEL) Analysis

Somalia's digital environment is shaped by interdependent political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal dynamics, see figure4 below.

Political	Persistent fragility, insecurity, and weak federal–state coordination complicate ICT investments and service delivery. However, the National Transformation Plan (NTP 2025–2029) positions digital transformation as a pillar of national development, giving it a formal political mandate [9].
Economic	Remittances contribute nearly 15–16% of GDP [7], creating an opportunity to leverage diaspora resources for ICT investment. A highly informal economy (over 51% of employment) [9] constrains tax revenues but also highlights the potential of mobile money, already used by 73% of adults (urban 82%, rural 72%) [6], to formalize financial flows and expand e-commerce.
Social	Somalia's population is predominantly young, with about 75% under the age of 30 [9]. This demographic dividend can drive innovation but requires targeted digital skills and literacy programs, especially given significant gender gaps (female labor force participation 15.3% vs. 38.4% for men) [9] and the challenges of inclusion for IDPs (estimated 4.2 million) [9].
Technological	Mobile penetration is rising, with 54 subscriptions per 100 inhabitants [3], but Internet access remains very limited at 27.6% of individuals, with only about 1% having access to basic broadband speeds [4]. Affordability is a major barrier: mobile low-use baskets cost 3.93% of GNI p.c., and fixed broadband packages cost an extraordinary 59% of GNI p.c. [5]. These figures underscore the urgency of universal access initiatives.
Environmental	Somalia faces recurring climate shocks such as droughts and floods, which disrupt both communities and ICT infrastructure. Only 27% of the population has access to essential health services, and just 40% live within 30 minutes of a health facility [10], making digital health platforms critical for climate-resilient service delivery. Off-grid solar and green ICT solutions offer opportunities to close gaps sustainably.
Legal	The National Communications Law (2017) and the Data Protection Act (2023) provide initial foundations. Recent developments show progress: the Cabinet approved a Cybercrime Bill in August 2025 [11], and in September 2025, a nationwide digital ID registration campaign was launched with the goal of enrolling 15 million citizens by 2029 [12]. These milestones mark important steps toward building trust, security, and foundational digital infrastructure.

Figure 4: PESTEL Analysis

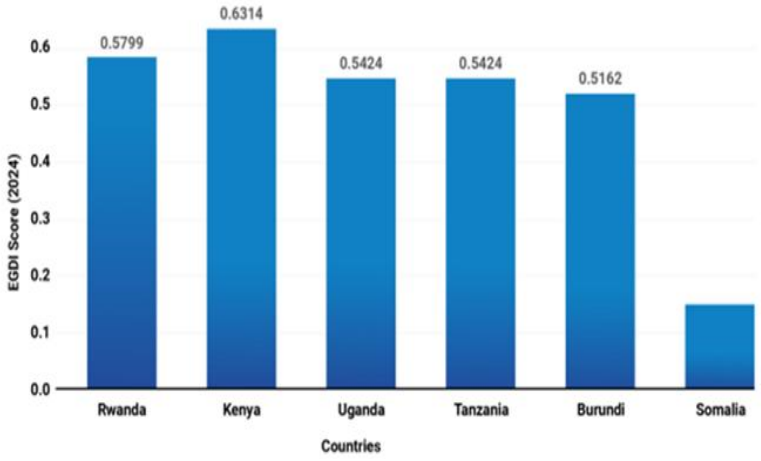

Figure5: E-Gov Development Index vs EAC12

4.2 Digital Maturity Assessment

Overview of the G5 Benchmark

The **G5 Benchmark**, developed by ITU and Gen5 Digital, provides a globally recognized framework for evaluating a country's digital policy and regulatory environment. Covering **193 countries** and based on **70 structured indicators**, the benchmark offers a practical tool to assess readiness for collaborative digital transformation.

The framework is organized around four key dimensions:

- **National Collaborative Governance** – Measures the strength of institutional coordination between ICT regulators, sectoral regulators, and policy-makers across domains such as consumer protection, spectrum, education, and environment.
- **Policy Design Principles** – Evaluates the quality and adaptability of policy-making, including evidence-based regulation, stakeholder inclusion, ethics, and regulatory experimentation.
- **Digital Development Toolbox** – Assesses the presence of regulatory tools that promote a sustainable digital economy, such as cybersecurity frameworks, data protection laws, infrastructure sharing, and emergency telecom services.
- **Digital Economy Policy Agenda** – Focuses on policies that foster innovation, digital entrepreneurship, investment, and regional or international digital integration.

Each country is assigned a score out of 100 and categorized into one of four maturity levels:

Maturity Level	Score Range
Limited	0–30
Transitioning	31–60
Advanced	61–80
Leading	81–100

Table 2: G5 Score Ranges

Somalia's 2025 G5 Benchmark Results

The table below summarizes Somalia's performance across the four pillars of the G5 Benchmark:

Factor	Somalia 2025 Score (%)	Global Average (%)	Maturity Level
National Collaborative Governance	7.4	15.6	Limited
Policy Design Principles	6.9	11.0	Limited
Digital Development Toolbox	5.2	15.4	Limited
Digital Economy Policy Agenda	3.4	11.5	Limited
Overall Score	**22.5%**	**53.1%**	**Limited**

Table 3: Digital Maturity Assessment

The 2025 G5 Benchmark assessment situates Somalia at the "Limited" maturity level, with an overall score of 22.5% across four regulatory and policy domains—far below the global average of 53.1%. Among the four domains, "National Collaborative Governance" recorded the highest relative performance (7.4%), reflecting recent progress in institutional coordination mechanisms. However, foundational weaknesses remain, especially in the "Digital Economy Policy Agenda" (3.4%) and "Digital Development Toolbox" (5.2%), highlighting gaps in market incentives, innovation policy, and essential regulatory tools like cybersecurity enforcement and infrastructure sharing.

The assessment underscores the absence of systemic enablers—such as coherent digital investment frameworks, regulatory sandboxes, and accountability structures for multi-stakeholder policy design. The particularly low score in "Policy Design Principles" (6.9%) reflects limited application of evidence-based regulation, ethical safeguards, and participatory practices. These results not only confirm structural weaknesses identified in the PESTEL and SWOT analyses, but also offer an externally validated baseline for tracking progress in institutional maturity over time.

Strategic Utilization of G5 Benchmark Findings in Implementation and Monitoring

The G5 Benchmark assessment has been directly utilized as a foundational input in shaping Somalia's strategic direction across key pillars, influencing the formulation of initiatives, investment priorities, and the overall roadmap. In particular, the benchmark's diagnostic insights have informed the design of the seven strategic pillars of the DTS (2025–2030), guiding the selection of more than 40 initiatives featured in Chapters 7 & 8.

For example, the weak scores in the Digital Development Toolbox led to a prioritized focus on operationalizing the Data Protection Act, rolling out the Cybercrime Law, and launching SomCIRT. Similarly, the very low score in the Digital Economy Agenda informed the inclusion of dedicated initiatives on startup hubs, mobile money interoperability, and digital trade facilitation under pillar 4. The governance pillar score reinforced the need for a Steering Committee and a Coordination Office, both of which are central features of the governance model outlined in Chapter 6.

From a monitoring perspective, the G5 Benchmark is institutionalized within the strategy's M&E framework as a recurring reference for mid-term (2027) and final evaluations (2030), complementing the internal KPIs presented in Table 5. The ambition to move Somalia from "Limited" to "Transitioning" by 2029 serves as a key performance aspiration, reinforcing accountability across institutions.

4.3 National ICT Ecosystem (NTP Facts)

The **NTP 2025–2029** highlights ICT as a cross-cutting enabler of economic and social transformation [4][9]:

- Broadband expansion and digital infrastructure are prioritized alongside energy, roads, and water.
- ICT is framed as a job creation engine for youth and women [9].
- National e-ID and e-government platforms are considered essential for governance reform and improved service delivery [12].
- Diaspora remittances, amounting to 15–16% of GDP [7], are recognized as a potential funding stream for digital programs.

4.4 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis provides a structured overview of Somalia's internal strengths and weaknesses and its external opportunities and threats, shaping the foundation for strategic priorities. It serves as a bridge between the diagnostic findings and the formulation of the Digital Transformation Strategy's goals and pillars.

Strengths

- Somalia's digital ecosystem is anchored by a competitive telecom sector and widespread mobile money use, with 73% of adults relying on digital financial services [6].
- A youthful population (75% under 30) [9] provides strong potential for innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Recent policy steps, such as the Cybercrime Bill [11], data protection and the national digital ID launch [12] strengthen the foundations for trust and service delivery.
- Federal government commitment to digitalization (NTP 2025–2029)
- Existing public-private dialogue platforms on digital issues.

Weaknesses

- Very low EGDI ranking (191 out of 193) and weak E-Participation performance [1], reflecting limited digital governance capacity and institutional readiness.
- Internet access remains low, reaching only 27.6% of the population [4], with large disparities between urban and rural areas.
- Broadband services remain unaffordable
- Limited, unreliable, and uneven electricity access
- Institutional coordination remains fragmented, limited technical capacity across ministries and FMS [9].
- Digital literacy and ICT skills are limited, particularly in rural communities and among marginalized groups.

Opportunities

- Remittances equal to 15–16% of GDP [7] offer a major channel to leverage diaspora resources for digital investments.
- National Digital ID campaign Launch.
- Regional AU and ITU frameworks provide support for mobilizing and coordinating these investments.
- Strong private sector participation enables public–private partnerships (PPPs) in infrastructure and e-service delivery.
- High unmet demand exists in digital health and education, presenting strong growth potential.
- Integration of energy investments with connectivity rollouts

Threads

- Security fragility and political turnover pose ongoing risks that may disrupt digital transformation progress.
- Exclusion of vulnerable groups, including an estimated 4.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) [9].
- Cybersecurity risks are high, reflected in Somalia's Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) score of 37.4/100 [2].
- Climate shocks—such as recurrent droughts and floods—continue to strain ICT infrastructure.
- Dependence on foreign platforms and low public trust in digital systems.
- Energy insecurity and supply fluctuations

Figure6: SOWT Analysis

4.5 TOWS Analysis & Link to Goals and Pillars

The **TOWS matrix** demonstrates how strengths and opportunities can be scaled, weaknesses addressed, and threats mitigated:

S–O strategies:	Use telecom sector and mobile money strengths [6] to support e-commerce, youth entrepreneurship, and digital public services. Use widespread mobile penetration to expand e-services regionally
W–O strategies:	Convert weaknesses (low broadband, affordability [5]) into opportunities via diaspora bonds [7] and regional PPPs.
S–T strategies:	Leverage digital ID and mobile money [6][12] to reduce risks of exclusion among IDPs and vulnerable groups [9].
W–T strategies:	Mitigate threats such as cyber risks [2] and vendor lock-in through open standards (GovStack, ITU frameworks).

Figure7: TOWS Analysis

4.6 Key Institutions and Stakeholder Roles

- **MoCT:** national policy leadership and coordination.
- **NCA:** Technical leader DTS, regulator, spectrum manager, market overseer.
- **NIRA:** foundational ID and registries.
- **Central Bank:** digital finance and fintech oversight.
- **Line ministries:** sector adoption in health, education, agriculture, commerce.
- **Private sector (telcos, fintechs):** backbone infrastructure, mobile money, PPPs.
- **Civil society/academia:** inclusion, accountability, capacity building.
- **Development partners (ITU, WB, AfDB, UNDP, EU):** finance, standards, technical expertise.
- **Diaspora:** remittance funding and skills transfer.
- **Federal Member States:** local service delivery and co-ownership.

By systematically engaging these actors through workshops, consultations, and structured inputs, the strategy ensured that **diverse perspectives shaped both the diagnosis and the solutions**. The PESTEL, SWOT, and TOWS analyses were enriched with stakeholder insights, helping to validate evidence, highlight practical challenges, and refine priorities (see Analysis in the table 3 below).

Stakeholder	Type	Role in DTS	Key Expectations	Collaboration Mechanism
Political Leadership (President/PM)	Executive	Provides political oversight and legitimacy	Political Oversight tier of governance	Political Oversight tier of governance
MoCT	Government (Lead)	Lead policy maker, coordinating entity	Drive DTS vision, align with NTP	Chairs Steering Committee
NCA	Regulator (Tech-lead)	Implement ICT regulatory strategy incl. working towards G4 compliance	Plays critical role in DTS creation and implementation, support digital transformation across multiple sectors, Upgrade to G4 model, ensure competitive markets	Co-chairs Steering Committee; part of Operational Leadership
Data Protection Agency DPA	Government agency(MoCT)	Manage data protection and privacy.	Ensure data protection law is followed in DTS	Participates in Digital Champions + SC consultations
NIRA	Government agency (MOI)	Manage digital ID and e-Aqoonsi (HUBIYE)	Scale digital ID, link to services	Coordinates via Digital Champions and SC
Ministry of Finance/Central Bank	Financial regulator	Lead digital payment modernization	Strengthen national payments system, ensure interoperability	Digital Champions/Sectorial Focal Points/Work. Groups
Ministry of Commerce	Government Ministry	Lead commerce and trade	Promote e-commerce and digital trade	Digital Champions/Sectorial Focal Points/Work. Groups
Ministry of Educations	Government Ministry	Lead education efforts	Promote e-education	Digital Champions/Sectorial Focal Points/Work. Groups
Ministry of Health	Government Ministry	Lead health efforts	Promote e-health and tele-health	Digital Champions/Sectorial Focal Points/Work. Groups
Ministry of Agriculture	Government Ministry	Lead utilization of agricultural resources	Promote e-agriculture and the use of digital solution in agriculture	Digital Champions/Sectorial Focal Points/Work. Groups
Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy	Government Ministry	Lead utilization of Indian Ocean resources	Promote the use of digital solution in fisheries sector and maritime services	Digital Champions/Sectorial Focal Points/Work. Groups
Other line Ministries	Government Ministries	Lead utilization of relevant resources	Promote the use of digital solution in ministry's field as per plan	Participate in Digital Champions
Private Telcos (e.g., Hormuud, Somtel)	Private sector	Connectivity, mobile money, PPPs	Regulatory clarity, fair competition, infrastructure sharing	Coordinated through Operational Leadership and SC
Civil Society Orgs (CSOs)	Civil society	Represent citizens, advocate inclusion	Transparency, inclusion, human rights	Engage through Advisory & Technical Group and SC consultations
Academia & Research Institutions	Knowledge Sector	Capacity building, R&D, digital skills	Investment in education, research grants	Participate in Advisory & Technical Group
International Development Partners (ITU, UNDP, WB, AfDB, EU)	Donors/Partners	Funding, technical support, capacity building	Coherent strategy, alignment with global goals	Represented in Steering Committee + Advisory & Technical Group
Diaspora Networks	Donors/Partners	Somali diaspora professionals Investment platforms	Mentorship & training Investments & philanthropy Return-of-talent programs	Included via Advisory & Technical Group

		Knowledge-transfer initiatives (e.g., SomaliREN, REConnexion)		
Women, IDPs, Rural & Youth Groups	Public	Beneficiaries, innovation users	Accessible services, training, protection	Participate in Advisory & Technical Group
Federal Member States (FMS)	Sub-national Governments	Implement digital policies locally, manage service delivery, co-develop regional plans	Ensure regional alignment, gain resources, build capacity, and participate in national platforms	Support through Development Partners Tier + SC dialogues

Table 4: Stakeholders Map

5. Strategic Pillars and Thematic Areas

The strategic pillars of Somalia's Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) provide the backbone for action between 2025 and 2030. They are the product of an evidence-based process: starting with a comprehensive PESTEL and digital maturity assessment, enriched through SWOT and TOWS analyses, and validated through stakeholder consultations at national and federal levels.

This process revealed Somalia's strengths, such as its vibrant telecom sector and widespread mobile money; weaknesses, such as low Internet penetration and limited affordability; opportunities, including remittances and regional integration; and threats, ranging from insecurity to cyber risks. By systematically connecting these findings to Somalia's National Transformation Plan (NTP 2025–2029), as well as global frameworks like the ITU BDT Digital Transformation Framework, African Union and EAC Digital Transformation Strategies (2020–2030) and, the pillars were designed to be both ambitious and practical.

Each pillar represents a strategic area of focus that defines what Somalia must prioritize to build a connected, inclusive, and resilient digital society. Together, they ensure that digital transformation is not treated as a single-sector initiative, but rather as a cross-cutting driver of governance, economic growth, and social wellbeing.

The seven Strategic Pillars:

1. Digital Governance and Public Services

This pillar aims to build a citizen-centric, transparent, and efficient public sector enabled by digital technologies. It focuses on establishing foundational systems including digital ID, government service portals, and interoperable platforms that allow ministries and agencies to exchange data securely. It promotes standardized processes, improved service delivery, and stronger accountability mechanisms through the use of real-time data. By building integrated systems, it lays the groundwork for a one-stop government experience accessible to all citizens, enabling seamless access to services and strengthening trust in public institutions.

2. Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity

This pillar prioritizes universal, affordable, and secure connectivity as the backbone of Somalia's digital transformation. It includes expanding the national broadband backbone, strengthening rural and last-mile connectivity, and establishing key infrastructure such as data centers and Internet Exchange Points (IXPs). It encourages infrastructure sharing, promotes efficient spectrum management, and leverages public–private partnerships and the Universal Service Fund to reduce costs and extend service coverage. The goal is to ensure that every individual and business can access the infrastructure needed to participate in the digital economy.

3. Cybersecurity, data Protection and Trust

This pillar strengthens the foundations required for a safe, resilient, and trustworthy digital environment. It supports the development and enforcement of cybersecurity frameworks, operationalization of data protection regulations, and enhancement of national CERT capabilities. It also aims to build awareness, skills, and preparedness across government, private sector, and communities. By embedding trust and security into all digital systems and services, this pillar protects citizens' rights, safeguards critical infrastructure, and reinforces confidence in Somalia's digital ecosystem.

4. Digital Economy and Innovation

This pillar drives economic transformation by fostering digital entrepreneurship, MSME digitalization, and the growth of e-commerce and digital finance. It promotes the adoption of innovative technologies—including AI, IoT, and blockchain—through sandboxes and research partnerships with universities and the private sector. It supports the development of startup ecosystems, digital trade facilitation, and integration with regional markets, including the African Digital Single Market. The overall aim is to create jobs, enhance competitiveness, and position Somalia as an active participant in the global digital economy.

5. Digital Skills, Inclusion, and Social Empowerment

This pillar focuses on human capital development to ensure all people—especially youth, women, and vulnerable groups—can benefit from and contribute to digital transformation. It promotes digital literacy programs in schools and communities, and strengthens technical and vocational training in partnership with academia and the private sector. It supports the expansion of digital services in health, education, agriculture, and social protection to improve social outcomes and reduce inequalities. Through inclusive approaches, this pillar ensures that no one is left behind in Somalia's digital future.

6. Sustainability and Resilience (Green ICT and Climate-Smart Systems)

This pillar leverages ICT to strengthen climate resilience, environmental sustainability, and disaster preparedness. It promotes the use of digital technologies for early warning systems, climate-smart agriculture, and resource management. It encourages the adoption of green ICT

solutions, including energy-efficient infrastructure and off-grid solar systems, while promoting responsible e-waste management. By integrating climate priorities into digital investments, this pillar supports long-term resilience and sustainable national development.

7. Governance, Partnerships, and Implementation

This pillar establishes the institutional arrangements, coordination mechanisms, and partnership frameworks necessary for effective execution of the DTS. It defines the role of the Steering Committee, MoCT leadership, NCA as technical lead, and the involvement of Federal Member States, private sector, and civil society. It promotes evidence-based policymaking, performance monitoring, and transparent reporting. Through strong collaboration with development partners—including ITU, World Bank, UNDP, the EU, AU, and EAC—this pillar ensures a coherent, accountable, and sustainable implementation model aligned with global best practices.

These seven pillars collectively embody Somalia's vision for a connected, inclusive, and resilient digital future. They translate diagnostic evidence and stakeholder priorities into clear areas of focus that will guide the initiatives of the DTS (see section 7.1). Each pillar is interlinked, ensuring that progress in one area—such as digital ID or broadband—creates momentum across others, from e-commerce to social inclusion. Together, they provide the strategic foundation for Somalia to achieve the ambitions of the NTP and build a Digital Somalia for All.

6. Governance and Institutional Arrangements

Effective governance is a cornerstone of the Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS), providing the structure through which national priorities are translated into coordinated action. A sound governance system ensures accountability, consistency, and transparency across all phases of implementation—linking policy direction, technical execution, and stakeholder participation.

The DTS governance framework has been designed to reflect Somalia's institutional context while aligning with international good practices. It integrates leadership, technical coordination, and participatory oversight, ensuring that responsibilities are clearly defined and that progress is continuously monitored.

6.1 Leadership and Institutional Framework

The governance framework establishes a **clear leadership and coordination model** led by the **Ministry of Communications and Technology (MoCT)**, supported by specialized institutions and partners. MoCT provides overall leadership and accountability for the implementation of the DTS, ensuring alignment with the National Transformation Plan (2025–2029) and national development goals.

The **National Communications Authority (NCA)** serves as the **Technical Lead**, contributing regulatory and technical expertise in key domains such as connectivity, infrastructure, cybersecurity, and spectrum management. This leadership arrangement balances strategic oversight with technical depth, promoting efficiency and coherence in decision-making.

Under this framework, governance operates through interconnected structures—namely the **Steering Committee** and sectoral coordination mechanisms—that collectively guide, implement, and monitor the DTS. Together, these mechanisms ensure that Somalia's digital transformation remains inclusive, transparent, and results-driven.

6.2 Steering Committee

The **National Digital Transformation Steering Committee** provides strategic direction and oversight for the implementation of Somalia's Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS). It ensures alignment with the **National Transformation Plan (2025–2029)**, promotes inter-ministerial coordination, and fosters collaboration between government, private sector, and development partners.

- **Composition:**
  Chaired by **MoCT**, and **NCA** serving as **Secretary** responsible for documentation, coordination, and technical advisory support. Members include representatives from key ministries (Finance, Planning, Education, Health, Agriculture, Commerce), the Central Bank, Data Protection Agency(DPA),NIRA, Federal Member States, private sector entities, civil society, academia, and development partners.
- **Mandate:**
  The Steering Committee provides overall governance of the DTS by approving annual priorities, reviewing implementation progress, and resolving policy and institutional challenges. It also ensures that the DTS remains coherent with regional and continental digital strategies, including those of the African Union and East African Community.
- **Meetings:**
  The Committee meets quarterly to review progress and performance, with an annual review integrated into the NTP reporting cycle. Ad hoc meetings may be convened by the Chair to address emerging challenges or urgent policy matters.

6.3 Steering Committee Coordination Office (SCCO)

To support effective coordination and oversight of the Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS), a **Steering Committee Coordination Office (SCCO)** will be established as the technical and administrative support unit to the National Digital Transformation Steering Committee.

The **National Communications Authority (NCA)** will serve as **Secretary to the Steering Committee**, responsible for convening meetings, managing official records, and ensuring that decisions are documented and communicated. The SCCO will work closely with the NCA to prepare briefs,

consolidate inputs from MoCT, federal member states, and sectoral ministries, and maintain progress reporting and portfolio tracking.

The establishment of the SCCO—combined with **NCA's secretariat role**—provides a dedicated mechanism to strengthen coordination, enhance accountability, and support coherent, whole-of-government implementation of the DTS.

1. SCCO Mandate and Core Functions

The Office will serve as the central coordination body supporting the Steering Committee. Its functions include:

a. Coordination and Administration

- Organize Steering Committee meetings (quarterly + ad hoc).
- Prepare agendas, minutes, decisions, and follow-up actions.
- Coordinate communication among MoCT, NCA, FMS, line ministries and involved stakeholders.
- Serve as the central point of contact for development partners.

b. Technical and Analytical Support

- Conduct analytical reviews of project proposals, feasibility notes, and progress reports.
- Ensure alignment with the DTS pillars, NTP priorities, and ITU/AU/EAC frameworks.
- Maintain a comprehensive digital transformation knowledge repository.

c. Portfolio and Performance Management

- Maintain the **National Digital Transformation Portfolio Dashboard**.
- Track progress across all pillars and initiatives using the M&E Framework.
- Consolidate data from ministries, NCA, FMS institutions, and private partners.
- Identify delays, risks, bottlenecks, and propose corrective actions.

d. Harmonization and Standards

- Ensure that all national digital projects follow:
    - interoperability standards
    - cybersecurity and data-protection rules
    - national ICT procurement and service design guidelines

e. Reporting

- Prepare **Quarterly Progress Reports** for the Steering Committee.
- Prepare **Annual Digital Transformation Report** aligned with the NTP reporting cycle.
- Provide briefing notes for high-level meetings, partner missions, and inter-ministerial consultations.

2. SCCO Staffing Structure

The Office will be staffed with a compact but competent team to ensure continuous coordination and oversight:

Role	Key Responsibilities
Office Lead (1)	Oversees all Office functions; advises MoCT & NCA leadership; manages portfolio reporting.
Portfolio Manager (1)	Manages project tracking, dashboard, timelines, risk flags; interfaces with line ministries.
Policy & Strategy Analyst (1)	Conducts research, prepares briefs, reviews alignment with DTS and digital policies.
M&E and Data Specialist (1)	Manages KPI tracking, data integrity, reporting templates, dashboards.
Officer / Administrator (1)	Manages scheduling, minutes, correspondence, document control.

Table 5: SCCO Roles & Responsibilities

3. SCCO Reporting Framework and Cycles

The Office will operate on a predictable reporting cycle:

- **Quarterly**
  - Portfolio performance dashboard
  - Updated risk register
  - Review of milestones and bottlenecks
  - Recommendations to Steering Committee
- **Bi-Annually**
  - Donor coordination brief
  - Cross-ministerial alignment assessment
- **Annually**
  - National Digital Transformation Annual Report
  - Input into NTP Performance Report
  - Review of KPIs, targets, and resource allocation
- **Ad Hoc**
  - Issue papers for emerging risks (e.g., cybersecurity incidents)
  - Policy briefs for new digital opportunities (e.g., new AU/EAC initiatives)

6.4 Institutional Responsibilities for Implementation

The implementation of the Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) will be guided by a smart and complementary assignment of responsibilities between **MoCT** and **NCA**. This approach ensures efficiency, avoids duplication, and capitalizes on existing institutional mandates, capacities, and legal frameworks.

E-Government Services

The E-Government Department within the **Ministry of Communications and Technology (MoCT)** will lead the design, development, and implementation of digital government services and platforms. It will coordinate with ministries, agencies, and Federal Member States to ensure service interoperability, promote the adoption of digital identity and data governance standards, and enhance the delivery of citizen-centric and inclusive e-services.

Digital Connectivity, Universal Access, and Regulatory Functions

The **National Communications Authority (NCA)** will lead in areas related to digital connectivity, telecommunications infrastructure, universal access, and regulatory oversight. Within its statutory mandate, NCA will drive network expansion, ensure fair competition, oversee spectrum management, and promote quality, affordability, and security across the national digital ecosystem.

Joint Areas of Collaboration

Cross-cutting themes—such as cybersecurity, digital skills, innovation, and stakeholder coordination—will be jointly managed by **MoCT** and **NCA** to ensure that strategic direction and technical implementation remain fully aligned. This collaborative model fosters synergy, reinforces institutional coordination, and supports a unified national effort to achieve the objectives of the Digital Transformation Strategy and the National Transformation Plan (2025–2029).

6.5 Digital Champions

A network of **Digital Champions** will reinforce advocacy and ownership.

- **Sectorial Focal Points and Working Groups**: Government champions (Ministries, NIRA, DPA,..) will serve as focal points in line ministries and Federal Member States.
- **Advisory and Technical Groups:**
    - Private sector champions (telcos, fintechs, innovators) will drive innovation and PPPs.
    - Civil society and academia champions will ensure inclusivity and accountability. These champions act as ambassadors of the DTS, communicating its vision, mobilizing support, and showcasing results.

6.6 Development Partners

International partners such as the **ITU, World Bank, UNDP, and the EU** provide critical funding, technical assistance, and global benchmarking to guide the implementation of the DTS.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) contributes through technical assistance, policy guidance, and the promotion of global standards, including support in digital governance, regulation, cybersecurity, and digital inclusion. The World Bank, through programs such as EARDIP, SCALED-UP, and SPRING, supports investments in digital infrastructure, e-government systems, and institutional capacity.

Their engagement strengthens evidence-based decision-making, policy alignment, and institutional development, while serving as strategic partners to the Steering Committee and implementation champions. This collaboration ensures that Somalia's digital transformation remains globally connected, credible, and sustainable.

6.7 Participatory and Ceremonial Milestones

Key ceremonial and participatory events will reinforce transparency and national ownership:
National Launch (2025): Formal adoption by the Cabinet, with broad stakeholder participation.
Quarterly Reviews: Steering Committee meetings supported by regular reports and champion updates.

- **Annual Digital Summit:** A public forum to showcase progress, engage partners, and build accountability.
- **Closing Ceremony (2030):** Presentation of achievements, lessons, and recommendations for the next strategy cycle.

This governance model ensures Somalia's digital transformation is led by the Ministry of Communications and Technology (MoCT), with technical support from the National Communications Authority (NCA), guided by a high-level Steering Committee, supported by digital champions, and reinforced through transparent review and ceremonial milestones.

Figure8: Governance Model Overview

6.8 RACI Matrix for Core Digital Transformation Functions

To enhance clarity of institutional mandates and ensure coherent implementation of the Digital Transformation Strategy, a Responsibility–Accountability–Consulted–Informed (RACI) matrix has been developed for the core national digital functions. The matrix specifies the entities responsible for implementation, the authorities accountable for outcomes, and the stakeholders to be consulted or informed throughout each process. This structured approach strengthens coordination between federal and member state institutions, minimizes overlap, and supports consistent, whole-of-government delivery.

The core functions included in the RACI—such as Digital ID, interoperability, digital government services, cybersecurity, data protection, broadband deployment, sectoral digitalization, skills development, and partner coordination—represent the essential operational components required to advance the DTS pillars. While the pillars provide the strategic direction, the RACI clarifies the practical distribution of roles necessary for execution, accountability, and sustained progress.

Core Function	Responsible (R)	Account-able (A)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
1. Digital ID System Development & Operation	MoCT / NIRA	MoCT	NCA, Ministry of Interior, FMS ICT authorities	All ministries, private sector
2. National Interoperability Framework & Data Exchange Hub	MoCT Digital Government Unit	MoCT	NCA, NIRA, Central Bank, FMS	Line ministries
3. National Digital Government Portal & Key Public Services	MoCT (Digital Government Unit)	MoCT	Line ministries, NCA, FMS	Citizens, private sector
4. Cybersecurity (SomCIRT + National CSIRT)	SomCIRT	NCA	MoCT, Ministry of Interior, banks, ISPs	All government entities
5. Data Protection Enforcement	Data Protection Authority (DPA)	MoCT	NCA, Attorney General, private sector	Citizens
6. Broadband Infrastructure Rollout & Quality Assurance	Operators / ISPs	NCA	MoCT, FMS, private sector	Public
7. FMS Coordination & Policy Harmonization	MoCT FMS Coordination Unit	MoCT	FMS ICT bodies, NCA	Steering Committee
8. Sectoral Digitalization (Health, Education, Agriculture, etc.)	Line ministries	MoCT	MoCT, NCA, FMS ICT units	Steering Committee
9. Digital Skills & Inclusion Programs	MoE, MoLSA	MoE	MoCT, universities, NGOs	Public
10. Donor Alignment & Partner Coordination	MoCT / DTS Secretariat	MoCT	NCA, Ministry of Finance, partners	Steering Committee

Table 6: RACI-Matrix for DTS

7. The Roadmap: From Strategic Pillars to Portfolio Governance

7.1 Illustrative Initiatives and Proposed Priorities by Pillar

The forty (40) initiatives identified under the Digital Transformation Strategy represent a proposed portfolio of priority actions aligned with Somalia's vision, mission, and strategic pillars. These initiatives provide a starting framework to guide planning and investment. However, they are not exhaustive. As implementation progresses, initiatives will be revisited, refined, and expanded based on evolving national needs, institutional capacities, financing opportunities, technological trends, and stakeholder feedback.

Pillar	Proposed Initiatives
1. Digital Governance & Public Services	• National Digital ID rollout • Government interoperability framework • Unified e-Services Portal • Digital archiving and records management • National standards and frameworks
2. Digital Infrastructure & Connectivity	• National broadband backbone expansion • Rural connectivity program (last mile) • Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) • National Data Center establishment and DPI • Improvement of electrical power supply
3. Cybersecurity & Trust	• National CERT (SomCIRT) • Cybercrime Law implémentation • Public and civil servants cyber awareness campaigns • Data Protection Regulation Enforcement and Promote Responsible Data Governance
4. Digital Economy, Research & Innovation	• E-commerce : E-commerce policies, legal frameworks, and regulatory mechanisms • Mobile money interoperability • Startup/SME incubation hub • Fintech/AI regulatory sandbox • Innovation hubs in universities • National R&D fund for ICT • Trade and customs digitalization
5.Digital Skills, Inclusion and Social Empowerment	• National digital literacy program • Coding & STEM bootcamps for youth • Women in Tech inclusion program • Digital skills for civil servants • E-education platforms for schools • Digital health records system

	• Agriculture digital advisory services • • Social safety net digital transfers
6. Sustainability & Resilience	• ICT-enabled early warning systems • Green ICT policy (solar data centers, e-waste) • Climate-smart agriculture platforms • • Smart water/irrigation monitoring
7.Governance, Partnerships & Implementation	• National Digital Transformation Steering Committee • Regulatory harmonization (MoCT/NCA/FMS) • PPP frameworks for ICT investment • Diaspora bonds for digital projects

Table 7: Proposed Initiatives per Pillar

7.2 Defining the Portfolio

The **National Digital Transformation Portfolio** is the structured collection of all initiatives grouped under the ten pillars. It provides a single, integrated view **of Somalia's** digital transformation agenda.

Portfolio: All programs are consolidated under one national portfolio, overseen by the Steering Committee chaired by MoCT, with NCA serving as Secretary and Technical Advisor.

Programs: Each pillar functions as a **program**, grouping related initiatives (e.g., "Digital Infrastructure Program").

Projects: Each initiative (e.g., "National Data Center") becomes a **project** with defined scope, budget, and timeline.

7.3 Use Case

This use case shows how **strategy translates into execution**:

- **Strategic Pillars** provide the high-level priorities (e.g., Digital Governance, Digital Skills).
- **Initiatives** represent actionable solutions under each pillar (e.g., National Digital ID).
- **Programs** organize initiatives into coherent workstreams (e.g., "Digital Governance Program").
- **The National DTS Portfolio** brings all programs together into one coordinated framework.
- **The Steering Committee** ensures accountability, resource alignment, and high-level oversight.

This approach ensures that Somalia's DTS is a **living portfolio of projects**, delivered systematically and transparently through professional program and portfolio management practices.

7.4 5-Years Phased Roadmap

The implementation of Somalia's Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) will be sequenced across **three strategic phases** over five years. This ensures early results, builds institutional capacity, and scales impact in line with the National Transformation Plan (2025–2029).

Phase 1: Foundation and Quick Wins (2025–2026)

- Establish governance structures, including the Steering Committee and Digital Champions forums.
- Launch the Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) officially with Cabinet approval and broad stakeholder participation.
- Implement enabling frameworks such as the Cybercrime Bill, Data Protection Act, and related regulatory reforms.
- Begin the Digital ID rollout and pilot e-government services to demonstrate early impact.
- Initiate the digitalization of public services and planning for a centralized digital service platform, focusing on improved data exchange, interoperability, and system integration across ministries and agencies.
- Start broadband backbone projects and expand rural connectivity pilots to bridge access gaps.
- Roll out digital literacy campaigns, cybersecurity public awareness and initial ICT skills programs to build a foundation for inclusion and capacity.

Phase 2: Expansion and Acceleration (2027–2028)

- Scale up **digital ID** coverage and link with health, education, and financial services.
- Operationalize **SomCIRT** and strengthen national cybersecurity capacity.
- Expand **e-government portal** with interoperable, multi-sector services.
- Deploy national **data centers** and Internet Exchange Points (IXPs).
- Roll out **digital health** and **digital education platforms** across multiple regions.
- Launch PPP frameworks, diaspora bonds, and Universal Service Fund for ICT financing.
- Expand digital skills programs for youth, women, and civil servants.
- **Expand inclusion to cover** IDPs, rural communities, and marginalized groups**.**

Phase 3: Integration and Maturity (2029)

- **Achieve full** integration of platforms**: ID, payments, registries, and e-government services under one interoperability framework.**
- **Institutionalize** green ICT and climate-smart systems **in agriculture, energy, and water management.**
- **Strengthen** evidence-based policy-making **with digital data systems.**
- **Host annual** Somalia Digital Summit **to showcase results and foster accountability.**

- **Evaluate the DTS portfolio, document lessons, and prepare the** next strategic cycle (2030–2035)**.**

8. Enablers of Somalia's Digital Transformation Strategy

The success of Somalia's Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) depends not only on the design of initiatives but also on the presence of strong enablers that create the right environment for delivery. These enablers ensure that policies, projects, and investments are effective, scalable, and sustainable.

1. Political Commitment and Leadership

High-level political ownership is essential. The endorsement of the Cabinet and alignment with the National Transformation Plan (2025–2029) anchors digital transformation as a national priority. Political will also ensures cross-government cooperation and continuity across electoral cycles.

2. Legal and Regulatory Frameworks

Clear laws and regulations are required to safeguard trust and enable growth. This includes the Cybercrime Bill [11]**,** the Data Protection Act (2023)**,** competition rules, e-transaction frameworks, and enabling policies for fintech, e-commerce, and innovation. A predictable legal environment encourages both citizen trust and private investment.

3. Sustainable Financing

Digital transformation requires consistent and diversified financing. Enablers include a functioning Universal Service Fund, public–private partnerships (PPPs), diaspora bonds, donor alignment, and innovative financing models. These mechanisms ensure that initiatives are not donor-dependent but embedded in long-term fiscal planning.

4. Partnerships and Ecosystem Collaboration

Somalia's digital transformation will succeed through a whole-of-society approach. Partnerships across government, private sector, civil society, academia, diaspora, and development partners create the collective capacity to deliver at scale.

These enablers form the foundation of success for the DTS. Without political leadership, legal clarity, institutional capacity, financing, human capital, trust, infrastructure, and partnerships, even the most well-designed initiatives would struggle to achieve impact. With them, Somalia can transform the 10 strategic pillars and initiatives into tangible results that improve governance, grow the economy, and enhance the wellbeing of its people.

The Digital Transformation Strategy House shown in figure9 sets out Somalia's path to a secure, inclusive, and innovative digital society. The vision and mission are supported by 10 strategic pillars—from governance, connectivity, and skills to economy and resilience—anchored by key

enablers such as leadership, legal frameworks, financing, and partnerships. Together, they ensure a holistic, sustainable, and evidence-based approach to national digital transformation.

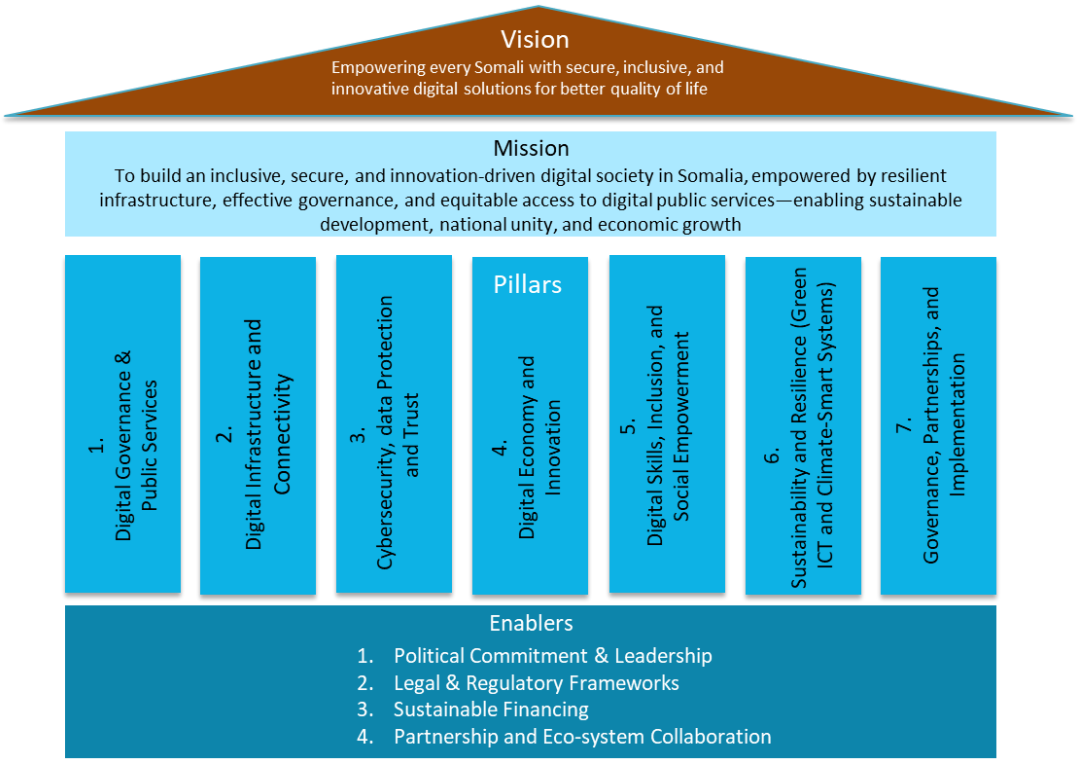

Figure9: The Strategy House

9. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptive Learning

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is critical to ensure that the Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) delivers measurable results, adapts to emerging challenges, and remains accountable to citizens and partners. Somalia's approach to M&E is designed to be **evidence-based, participatory, and adaptive**, ensuring that digital transformation stays on course over the five-year period (2025–2029).

9.1 M&E Framework and Key Indicators

The M&E framework aligns with the National Transformation Plan (NTP 2025–2029) and international standards (ITU, AU, UN SDGs). It uses a results chain linking **inputs → outputs → outcomes → impacts**, with indicators across the 10 strategic pillars.

Examples of **Key Indicators, for the full KPI table of listed initiatives see Table 4**:

- **Connectivity & Infrastructure:** % population with Internet access; % rural households connected.
- **Digital Governance:** % of priority services available online; number of citizens registered for digital ID.
- **Digital Economy:** % of SMEs using e-commerce; volume of mobile money transactions.
- **Skills & Inclusion:** % of youth and women trained in digital literacy; digital gender gap index.
- **Cybersecurity:** Number of incidents reported and resolved by SomCIRT; national GCI score.
- **Sustainability:** % of ICT powered by renewable energy; number of ICT-enabled climate applications.

9.2 Data Collection and Reporting Mechanisms

- **Quarterly reports:** Each initiative will submit progress updates against predefined indicators.
- **Annual portfolio review:** Results will be compiled into a national **Digital Transformation Annual Report**, presented at the Steering Committee and the Annual Digital Summit.
- **Integration with NTP M&E system:** Ensures consistency across national development monitoring frameworks.

Pillar	Illustrative Initiative	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Baseline (2025)	Target (2030)	Data Source
1. Digital Governance & Public Services	National Digital ID	% of population registered for digital ID	0%	80%	NIRA, MoCT
	E-Gov Portal	# of government services available online	<10	50+	MoCT, NTP reports
	Interoperability Framework	% of agencies connected to interoperability hub	0%	70%	MoCT, NCA
	Digital Records Mgmt.	% of ministries with digitized records	<15%	60%	Line ministries
2. Digital Infrastructure & Connectivity	Broadband Backbone	% population with Internet access	27.6% [4]	80%	ITU, Telcos
	Rural Connectivity	% rural households connected	<10%	55%	MoCT, ISPs
	IXPs	# of operational IXPs	0	2	NCA
	Data Center	National Data Center Public service hosting	<5%	80%	MoCT

	Electric Power availability	Average hours of electricity availability per day at ICT sites.		40% improvement	Electricity Corp.
3. Cybersecurity & Trust	SomCERT	# of incidents reported/resolved annually	<100	500+	NCA, SomCERT
	Cybercrime Law	Adoption and enforcement (Y/N)	Drafted	Enforced	MoCT, Judiciary
	Data Protection	# of registered data controllers	0	500+	DPA
	Awareness Campaigns	% citizens aware of cyber threats	<5%	60%	Surveys
4. Digital Economy	E-Commerce Facilitation	% SMEs engaged in e-commerce	<5%	50%	MoCT, WB
	Mobile Money Interop.	% of providers interoperable	0%	100%	Central Bank
	Startup Hub	# of startups incubated annually	<10	200	MoCT, Hubs
	Customs Digitalization	% of customs processes online	<5%	80%	MoF
5. Digital Skills & Inclusion	Digital Literacy	% of adults digitally literate	<10%	60%	Surveys, MoE
	Coding Bootcamps	# youth trained in coding/STEM	0	50,000	MoE, NGOs
	Women in Tech	% of ICT workforce women	<10%	25%	Labour stats
	Civil Servant Training	% of civil servants trained	<5%	80%	MoCT, HR units
6. Sustainability & Resilience	Early Warning Systems	% of districts with ICT-enabled alerts	<10%	70%	MoEWR
	Green ICT Policy	Green ICT policy adopted (Y/N)	No	Yes	MoCT
	Climate-Smart Agriculture	% farmers accessing digital agri-services	<5%	35%	MoA
	E-Waste Management	Existence of framework (Y/N)	No	Yes	MoCT, EPA
7. Governance, Policy & Coordination	Steering Committee	Steering Committee established (Y/N)	No	Yes	MoCT
	Regulatory Harmonization	% FMS aligned with national ICT regs	<20%	80%	MoCT, NCA
	Standards & Frameworks	# of adopted ICT standards	<5	50+	MoCT
8. Research & Innovation	Sandbox	# of firms testing in sandbox annually	0	50+	NCA
	Innovation Hubs	# of functional ICT hubs	<5	20+	MoE, MoCT

	R&D Fund	R&D fund launched (Y/N)	No	Yes	MoF, MoCT
	Emerging Tech Reports	# of foresight studies published	0	5+	MoCT
9. Social Development & Connected Services	E-Education	% schools with e-learning platforms	<10%	60%	MoE
	Digital Health	% hospitals with e-health records	<5%	70%	MoH
	Agri Advisory	# of farmers using digital platforms	<5,000	100,000	MoA
	Social Transfers	% cash transfers digitized	<10%	70%	MoLSA
10. Funding & Sustainability	PPPs	# of ICT PPP projects signed	<5	25+	MoF, MoCT
	USF	% of USF projects executed	0%	80%	NCA
	Diaspora Bonds	Diaspora bond mechanism launched (Y/N)	No	Yes	MoF
	Donor Coordination	Annual donor roundtables held (#)	0	5	MoCT, WB

Table 8: KPIs for Proposed Initiatives

9.3 Risk Management

Effective risk management is vital for the successful implementation of Somalia's Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS). Given the country's fragile context, risks such as political turnover, limited financing, weak institutional capacity, cyber threats, and low service adoption were systematically identified through analysis and stakeholder consultations. The DTS adopts a proactive framework where risks are classified, monitored, and addressed through strategies of avoidance, mitigation, transfer, or acceptance, overseen by the Steering Committee. To ensure transparency and adaptability, a detailed **Risk Analysis Matrix** outlining risks, impacts, response strategies, responsible actors, and monitoring mechanisms is provided in **Table 6**.

Risk Description	Overall Rating	Response Strategy	Responsible Actor(s)	Monitoring Mechanism
Political turnover or instability disrupts DTS execution	Critical	Mitigate – Anchor DTS in NTP and Cabinet approval; secure cross-party buy-in	MoCT, Office of PM	Annual Steering Committee reviews
Limited financing for priority initiatives	Critical	Diversify – PPPs, diaspora bonds, donor alignment, USF	MoF, MoCT, NCA	Portfolio/ financial reports

Low broadband penetration and infrastructure gaps	High	Mitigate – Invest in backbone, IXPs, rural connectivity with PPPs	MoCT, Telcos, PPP partners	infrastructure dashboard
Weak institutional capacity and coordination	High	Mitigate – Establish Steering Committee, digital champions, training	MoCT, NCA, FMS	Quarterly progress reporting
Cybersecurity threats and data breaches	Critical	Mitigate – Establish SomCERT, adopt ITU frameworks, awareness campaigns	NCA, SomCERT	Cyber incident reporting system
Exclusion of vulnerable groups (IDPs, women, rural poor)	High	Mitigate – Targeted digital literacy, inclusive design, local consultations	MoCT, CSOs, NGOs	Community-based monitoring
Climate shocks disrupt ICT infrastructure	Medium	Adapt – Promote green ICT, resilient infrastructure, solar-powered systems	MoEWR, MoCT	Annual resilience reviews
Vendor lock-in or overreliance on foreign tech	Medium	Avoid – Use GovStack and open standards, promote local ICT sector	MoCT, NCA	Procurement audits
Low adoption of digital services by citizens	High	Mitigate – National awareness campaigns, trust-building, incentives	MoCT, Line Ministries	User adoption surveys
Donor dependency without sustainability	Medium	Mitigate – Align with NTP, strengthen domestic resource mobilization	MoF, MoCT	Donor coordination reports

Table 9: Risk Assessment

9.4 Mid-Term Review and Iterative Updates

A **mid-term review (2027)** will evaluate progress against targets, identify bottlenecks, and recommend adjustments. This review will:

- Assess portfolio performance and resource allocation.
- Recommend scaling of successful pilots (e.g., digital health, e-education).
- Update indicators to reflect evolving priorities (e.g., AI adoption, cross-border data flows).
- Ensure the strategy remains adaptive and forward-looking.

9.5 Community-Based Monitoring Approaches

To ensure inclusivity and trust, the DTS will incorporate **community-level monitoring**:

- Citizen feedback via mobile platforms and SMS surveys.
- Community scorecards for e-services (health, education, ID registration).

- Collaboration with civil society and academia to conduct independent reviews. This participatory approach ensures that the voices of women, youth, IDPs, and rural communities are reflected in monitoring results.

9.6 Role of Digital Platforms in M&E

Digital tools will be at the heart of Somalia's M&E system:

- **Digital dashboards** to visualize progress in real time for policymakers and the public.
- **Open data portals** to share key indicators transparently.
- **Mobile applications** for citizen reporting and feedback.
- **GIS and data analytics** to track regional disparities and sectoral performance.

The M&E framework ensures that Somalia's digital transformation is measurable, transparent, and adaptive. By combining rigorous indicators, systematic reporting, mid-term reviews, community feedback, and digital monitoring tools, Somalia will be able to track progress, learn iteratively, and adjust its strategy to maximize impact.

10. Communication and Change Management

A successful digital transformation requires not only technology and infrastructure, but also broad awareness, trust, and adoption. To ensure that the Somalia DTS delivers impact, a dedicated communication and change management framework will accompany implementation. This framework addresses both the public adoption of digital services and the internal transformation of government institutions, ensuring that digitalization is embraced as a shared national journey.

10.1 National Awareness and Digital Adoption Campaigns

National awareness campaigns will be launched to explain the purpose and benefits of digital transformation, using accessible and culturally sensitive messaging. These campaigns will:

- Promote **trust in digital ID, e-government services, and mobile platforms**.
- Highlight **success stories** to build public confidence.
- Target priority groups such as women, youth, rural communities, and IDPs, ensuring inclusivity.
- Encourage citizens and businesses to adopt digital channels for payments, education, health, and agriculture.

The initiative begins in **Phase 1 (2025–2026)** with national launch and foundational messaging, and continues through **Phase 2 (2027–2028)** to reinforce adoption as new services come online. The campaign content will be updated during the **2027 mid-term review** to reflect evolving priorities and the maturation of digital services.

Financing can be drawn from **MoCT communication budgets**, **development partner support** (including digital literacy and inclusion programs), and **private-sector co-funding**, particularly from telecom and fintech providers.

10.2 Behavior Change Strategy for Digital Uptake

Adoption requires more than awareness; it requires changes in behavior. A **behavioral change strategy** will be developed to:

- Address barriers such as low digital literacy, affordability concerns, and fear of cyber risks.
- Use behavioral insights (nudges, incentives, community role models) to encourage uptake.
- Build a culture of **"digital by default"**, where online channels are seen as reliable and convenient.
- Reinforce **trust in government services** through transparency, data protection, and accountability.

10.3 Internal Change Management for Public Institutions

Digital transformation requires significant adjustments inside government. Change management programs will ensure that ministries, agencies, and regulators:

- Develop the skills and culture needed to work digitally.
- Transition from paper-based to digital workflows.
- Adopt performance incentives and training to align staff with new systems.
- Use the Steering Committee as platforms for coordination, problem-solving, and accountability.

This internal change management will help overcome resistance, strengthen ownership, and embed digital practices across government.

10.4 Communication Channels: Radio, Social Media, SMS, and Local Events

A **multi-channel communication strategy** will be employed to maximize reach:

- **Radio** remains the most accessible channel for rural and low-literacy populations.
- **SMS and mobile notifications** will be used for real-time citizen engagement and feedback.
- **Social media platforms** will connect with youth, entrepreneurs, and urban communities.
- **Local events, town halls, and community forums** will foster direct dialogue, allowing citizens to voice concerns and co-create solutions.

By combining national awareness campaigns, behavior change strategies, institutional change management, and a multi-channel communication approach, Somalia's DTS will not only deliver

new systems but also create the trust, culture, and engagement needed for adoption. Communication and change management are therefore essential enablers of a Digital Somalia for All.

11. Regional and International Collaboration

Introduction

Somalia's Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) is not pursued in isolation. Its design and implementation are aligned with regional and global frameworks to ensure that Somalia benefits from shared expertise, resources, and standards. Collaboration with the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU), African Union (AU)** and the **East African Community (EAC)**, and the provides Somalia with both strategic guidance and practical support, strengthening the credibility and sustainability of the DTS.

11.1 International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

As the UN specialized agency for ICTs, the ITU provides Somalia with technical expertise, tools, and global standards that underpin the DTS. Key contributions include:

- **GovStack Initiative**: Enabling Somalia to build modular, interoperable digital government services using global "building blocks" (identity, payments, messaging) [16].
- **Digital Identity & SDG Investment Framework**: Offering Somalia guidance to design national digital ID systems and prioritize ICT investments across sectors [17].
- **Sectoral Toolkits**: ITU's resources on *eHealth*, *eAgriculture*, *Smart Villages*, and *Smart Learning* support Somalia in developing integrated, cross-sector strategies [18].
- **Cybersecurity & Regulation**: ITU's *National Cybersecurity Strategy Guide*, *G5 Benchmark*, and the *Digital Regulation Handbook* provide Somalia with global best practices to modernize regulatory frameworks and build trust [19].
- **Skills & Inclusion**: ITU's *Digital Skills Toolkit* and *Digital Inclusion Program* help Somalia design inclusive digital policies for women, youth, and persons with disabilities [20].
- **Emergency Communications**: ITU supports Somalia through the *National Emergency Telecommunications Plan (NETP)* and the *Early Warnings for All (EW4All)* initiative, strengthening national resilience to disasters [21].

11.2 The World Bank

The **World Bank** remains a strategic partner for Somalia's digital transformation, financing foundational digital infrastructure, data systems, and e-government platforms through its **EARDIP, SCALED-UP, and SPRING** programs. These initiatives directly complement the DTS roadmap by

supporting broadband expansion, national data integration, digital ID systems, and institutional reforms. Through this collaboration, Somalia aligns national digital development with global best practices under the World Bank's **Digital Economy for Africa (DE4A)** initiative.

11.3 African Union (AU) Digital Transformation Strategy (2020–2030)

The AU DTS provides the continental vision of "an integrated and inclusive digital society and economy in Africa by 2030." Somalia's DTS directly contributes to this framework by:

- **Digital Foundations:** Expanding broadband and data center infrastructure aligns with AU targets of universal access and affordable connectivity.
- **Digital Public Services:** Somalia's e-government and digital ID initiatives support AU's goal of interoperable digital public platforms.
- **Skills and Inclusion:** Somalia's national digital literacy and women-in-tech initiatives reflect AU's focus on digital inclusion.
- **Integration:** As a member state, Somalia will benefit from AU-led programs such as **PRIDA (Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa)**, spectrum harmonization, and shared cyber governance initiatives [14].

Through this alignment, Somalia demonstrates continental solidarity while gaining access to capacity building, funding pipelines, and peer learning from AU member states.

11.4 East African Community (EAC) Regional Digital Transformation Strategy (2024–2030)

Somalia joined the EAC in 2023, creating a new opportunity to embed its digital transformation into regional integration. The EAC DTS focuses on **connectivity, digital economy, harmonized legal frameworks, and digital skills** [15]. Somalia's DTS links to these through:

- **Connectivity:** Somalia's planned broadband backbone and national data center can integrate with regional IXPs and shared data infrastructure.
- **Cybersecurity and Trust:** Somalia's Cybercrime Bill and SomCIRT complement EAC's harmonized cyber and data protection frameworks.
- **Digital Trade:** Somalia's mobile money ecosystem and fintech innovation contribute to EAC's regional e-commerce and payment systems.
- **Social Sectors:** Digital health, education, and agriculture platforms can interoperate with EAC regional initiatives.

- **Governance:** Somalia's DTS governance model (MoCT, NCA, Steering Committee) can coordinate with EAC's Program Management Units (PMUs).

This alignment positions Somalia as both a **beneficiary** of regional investments and a **contributor** through its telecom sector innovations and diaspora resources.

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