Horn of Africa Initiative (HoAI)
Ministerial meeting
31 March 2021

Synopsis of Digital technical workshop

held on 18 March 2021

Context and objectives

Impetus:

- Follow up on HoA Ministers' request to operationalise HoAI priorities through technical workshops
- Take advantage of a €10 million EU grant allocated for this purpose

Aims:

- Initiate a dialogue on HoA digital integration
- Understand HoA countries' digital strategies and challenges
- Share expertise: GovStack initiative (digital government) and D4D Hub (a coalition of European stakeholders - development agencies and private sector operators -specialised on digitalisation)
- Encourage high-level engagement and cooperation within the HoAI regional framework.

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HoAI Digital Priorities (Pillar 1)

1. Regional Data Infrastructure

2. Cybersecurity

3. Regulatory Harmonization

4. e-government Strategy and Services for Horn of Africa

5. Regional Identification for Development
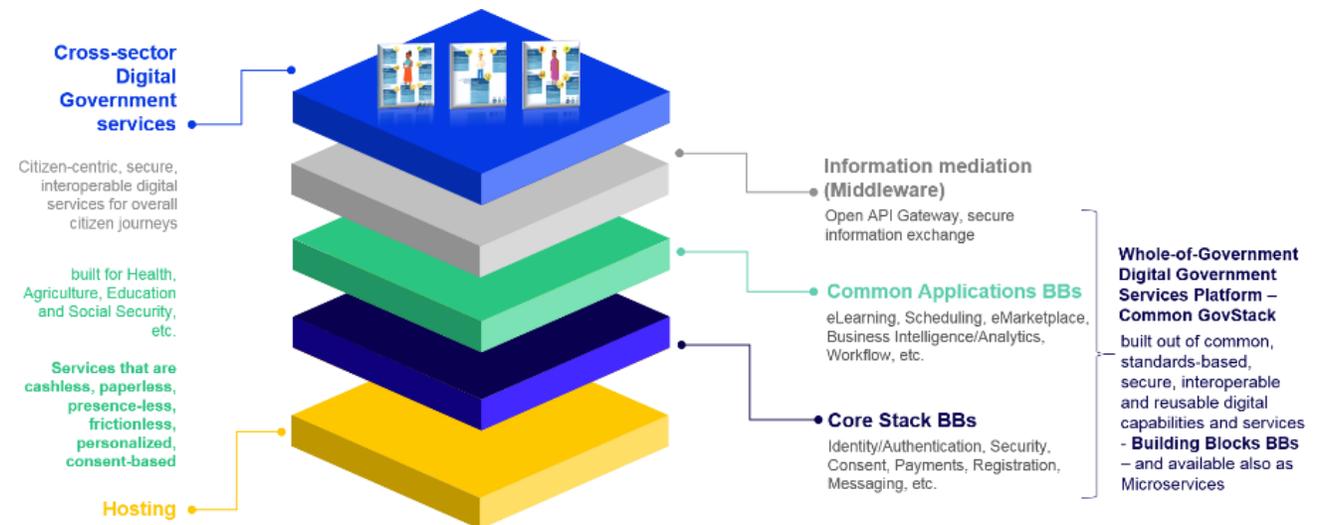   (currently within Pillar 4 "Human Capital")

NB: workshop did not discuss infrastructures investments (Festoon cables)

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Workshop

-> Accelerating Digital Transformation and digitalisation of government services for the achievement of SDGs

The GovStack initiative proposes a strategy to empower governments to create digital government solutions that benefit individuals and businesses through an integrated "Whole-of-Government" digital platform based on reusable and cost-efficient building blocks

Example ICT Building Blocks (one of many):
- ID and authentication
- Messaging services
- Scheduling
- Shared data repository
- Workflow and algorithm

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Issues validated during workshop

Challenges:

1. Lack of coordination and siloes
2. Need to deal with legacy digital systems
3. Overcome trust issues such as privacy and security concerns
4. Secure funding of initial and recurrent expenditure
5. Require enabling environment and Governments' willingness to collaborate and harmonize regulatory and infrastructure initiatives

Opportunities:

1. Increase cost efficiency and coordination through re-usable and interoperable blocks
2. Enable governments to easily create and modify their own digital platforms, systems and services
3. Contribute to direct savings through provision of online services
4. Improve ease of doing business
5. Develop champions and advocates at country level

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Next Steps

Follow up activities

- Country discussions to get a more in-depth understanding of the situation and identification of thematic leaders

- Periodic regional (virtual) meetings : Next one planned for second half of May

Development partners

- Clarification of the division of labour between development partners (WB preparing regional broadband infrastructure project)

- EU will provide detailed information regarding its support to future activities through its €10 million grant under the umbrella of the D4D hub.

D4D HUB

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