

Digital Foundations for People - Centered Cities and Communities in Africa

*Interoperability and international standards for
trusted and inclusive Digital Public
Infrastructure (DPI)*

Presented by:

Dr Ramy Ahmed Fathy, Chair, SG20RG-AFR;
Chief of International Cybersecurity, NTRA, Egypt

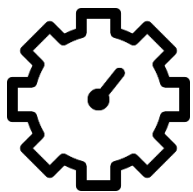
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Cities Are Where The Digital Future Becomes Real



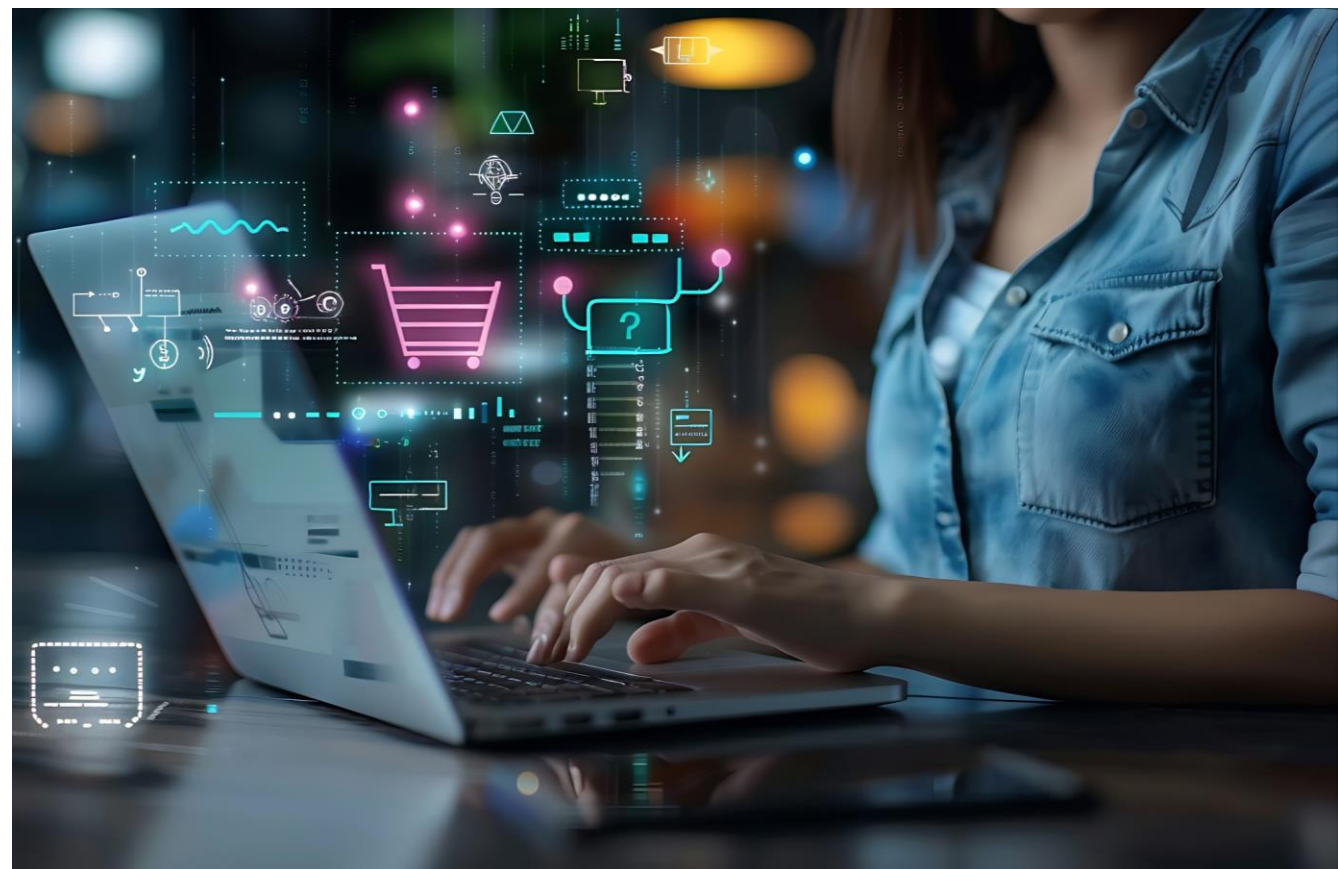
Cities are undergoing rapid digital and urban transformation, facing growing demands for more accessible public services



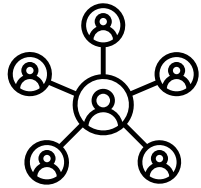
DPI is a foundational enabler of equitable, efficient, and resilient urban development



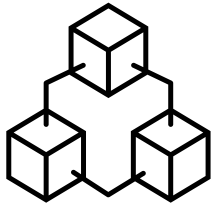
DPI is a governance and policy instrument that promotes transparency, accountability, inclusion and innovation



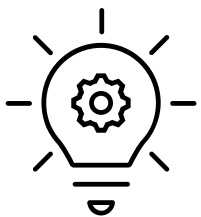
Africa's Urban Context: Urgency and Opportunity



Connectivity gaps, affordability barriers, and uneven digital capacity still constrain equitable digital transformation.



Fragmented systems undermine coordination, trust, and scale, making interoperability a strategic necessity.



Africa can leapfrog legacy models by building standards-based digital foundations that are trusted, inclusive, and future ready.



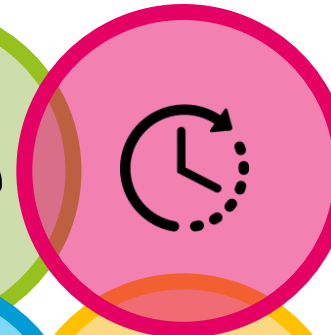
Why DPI matters

DPI = Digital Trust + Inclusion + Efficiency

Promotes transparency, inclusion, accountability, and innovation in city services and governance



Enables real-time urban management through Internet of Things (IoT) and data analytics



Improves access to health, education, and financial services



Boosts civic participation through digital engagement platforms



ITU-T Study Group 20

“IoT, digital twins and smart sustainable cities and communities”

“200+ standards freely open to all!”



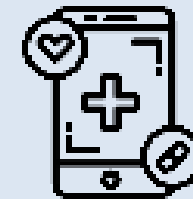
Internet of things and digital services



Smart sustainable cities & communities, energy management digital twins



Digital agriculture



Digital health related to IoT and smart sustainable cities



AI and Citiverse

**Next meeting of ITU-T Study Group 20:
12-21 May 2026, Geneva**

SG20 Regional Group for Africa (SG20RG-AFR)



Brings African priorities into SG20



Builds capacity and collaboration



Bridges the standardization gap

United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC) Initiative



U4SSC is a UN platform, coordinated by ITU, UNECE and UN-Habitat and supported by 20 UN Partners



U4SSC Thematic Groups:

-  Digital Transformation for People-Centred Cities
-  Artificial Intelligence in Cities
-  Digital Public Infrastructure for Cities
-  City Platforms and Data Spaces Data Spaces
-  Social-cultural Sustainability in People-Centred City Governance
-  Sustainable Digital Transformation in Buildings and Urban Energy
-  Future Foresight for Cities

The Global Context

From Global Goals to Local Action

The Pact for the Future and Global Digital Compact

- It advocates for a free, secure and human-centered future
- **Recognizes DPI as a global public good**, and as vital for sustainable development

U4SSC

- The initiative brings these principles to a city scale, **it turns this vision into a practice**
- Through the empowerment of mayors, city leaders and local communities, it aims to build inclusive and sustainable urban systems
- It builds trust, inclusion and resilience through connected systems



The U4SSC DPI Framework

A Roadmap for City Leaders



Service Access and Equity

DPI makes essential services accessible to all residents. It ensures that no one is left behind in the digital transformation



Efficient and Responsive Governance

DPI integrates data and services across departments, enabling real-time decision-making and faster service delivery



Resilience and trust

Through secure, interoperable, and transparent systems, DPI supports accountability, open data, and public confidence



Digital innovation and Sustainable economic empowerment

DPI fosters digital entrepreneurship, open data ecosystems, and public-private collaboration

Benefits for Cities

What DPI Delivers



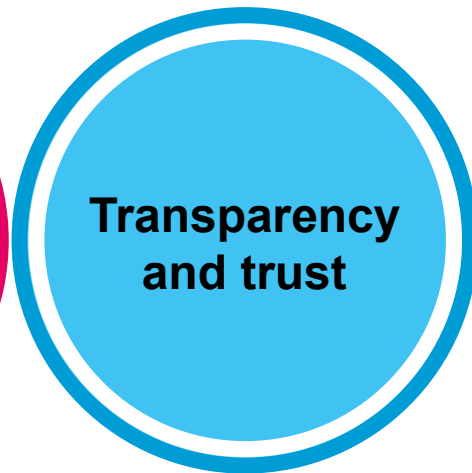
Efficiency and Responsiveness

City operations are integrated across departments, allowing faster responses and efficiency



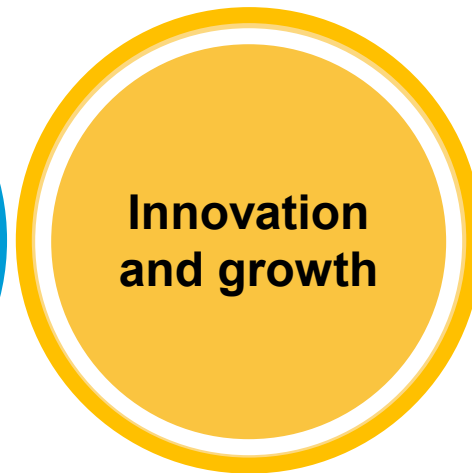
Inclusion and Equity

Access to services and opportunities is expanded, regardless of circumstances



Transparency and trust

Open data strengthens accountability and public confidence



Innovation and growth

It creates a platform to support digital entrepreneurship and innovation



Resilience and sustainability

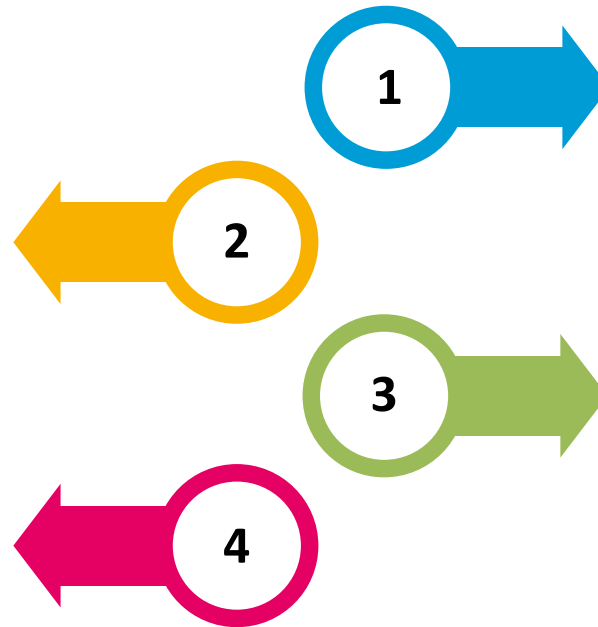
It reinforces a city's capacity to anticipate and adapt to challenges

DPI in Action

Success Stories from Africa

Kenya
M-Pesa platform
Mobile money platform enabling inclusive, real-time digital financial services at national scale.

Egypt
InstaPay (Instant Payment Network)
National network linking all operating banks within Egypt

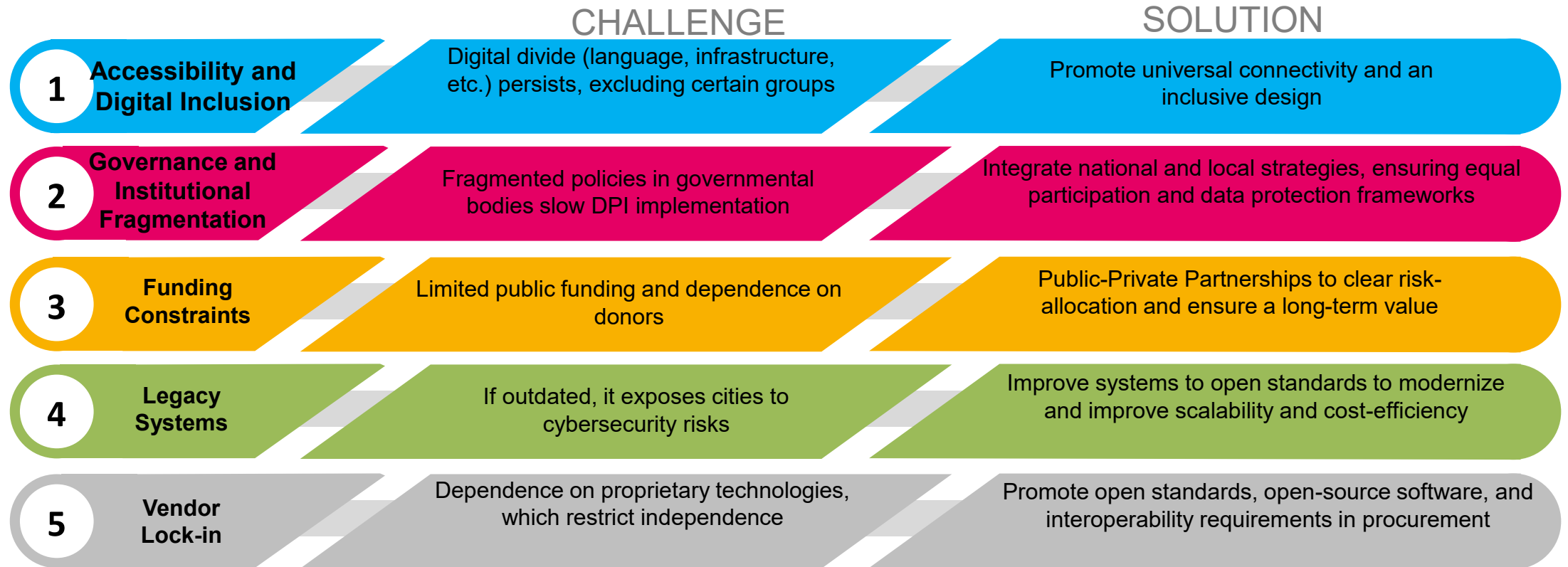


Rwanda
Irembo platform
Official digital platform for accessing over 100 government services online

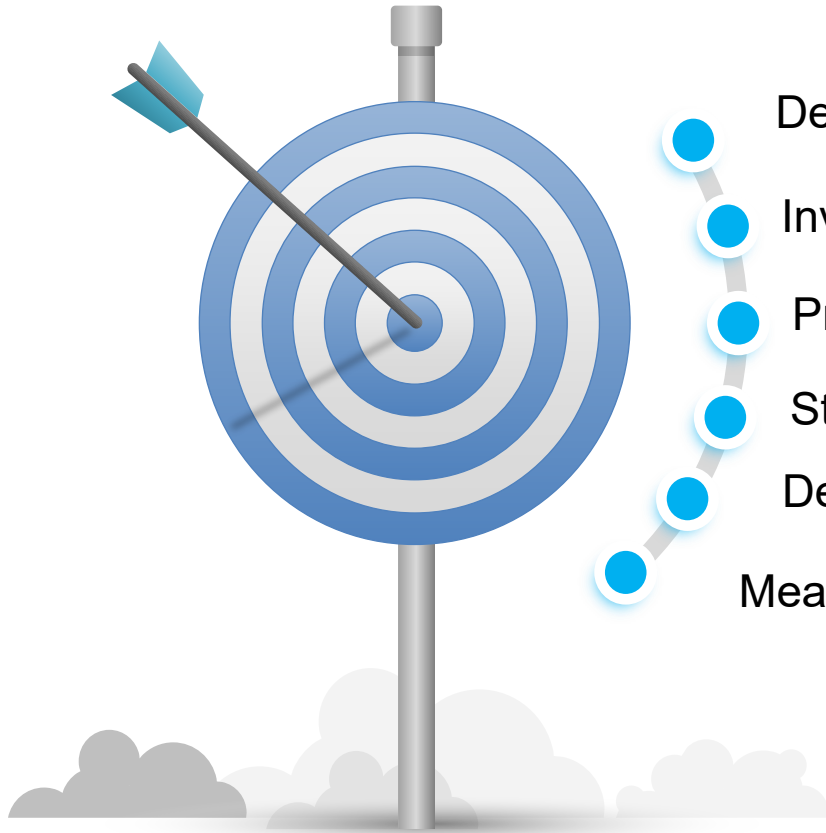
Nigeria
National Digital Identity Initiative
Foundational digital ID system enabling broader access to services, finance, and social protection.

Overcoming Barriers

Challenges and Solutions



Policy Recommendations for City Leaders and Ministers



Develop integrated DPI strategy

Invest in inclusive, scalable and interoperable infrastructure

Promote human rights and digital trust

Strengthen public-private partnerships and innovation ecosystem

Development of an enabling regulatory and a business-friendly environment

Measure impact and share best practices

Conclusion

Shaping Digital Foundations for Africa

- DPI must be **interoperable by design** to deliver long-term public value
- **International standards are critical** for trust, resilience, and scalability
- Africa can leapfrog legacy models through **inclusive and people-centered digital foundations**
- **African participation in standardization matters** to shape the digital future of cities and communities



For more information, please contact:

tsbsg20@itu.int

Thank you!

