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| **Council 2021 Virtual consultation of councillors, 8-18 June 2021** |  |
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| **Agenda item: ADM 35** | **Document C21/70-E** |
| **23 March 2021** |
| **Original: English** |
| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| digital transformation initiatiVe (DT-I) | |

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| Summary  During 2020, Covid-19 accelerated the digitalization of processes and provision of supporting technologies for both staff working and delegates attending events. It is expected that extensive teleworking and use of virtual meetings will continue into the 2022 and onwards when staff will relocate in connection with the new building project. This will require a comprehensive digital transformation of ITU processes, systems, and services.  In March 2021, the Coordination Committee agreed to initiate a Digital Transformation Initiative (DT-I) with the objectives to improve the key deliverables of ITU, taking into consideration the impact of COVID-19 on the work of ITU as reported to Council and CWG in Document VC/13(Rev.1), and developments within the UN systems for the “future of Work” and the impact on the current and new workforce. The Digital Transformation initiative mandate is to ensure that ITU takes a holistic approach and prioritizes strategic choices, project deliverables, and financial and human resources.  Action required.  The Council is invited to **comment** and **advise** on this initiative.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  References  Council documents [*C20/15*](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0015/en) *(Organizational Resilience Management System (ORMS*)); [*C20/53*](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0053/en) *(Business continuity: business case for information management);* [CWG-FHR12/3](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/20/cl/inf/S20-CL-INF-0022!!MSW-E.docx) (*Business continuity – information management);* [*VC/13 (Rev.1)*](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CLVC-C-0013/en) *(Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the functioning and activities of ITU);* [*VC-2/INF.22*](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/20/cl/inf/S20-CL-INF-0022!!MSW-E.docx) *(Status of Virtual meeting platforms and support);* [*C20/INF/19*](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-INF-0019/en) *(Tasks and functions of the Deputy Secretary-General).*  [UN SG Data Strategy](https://www.un.org/en/content/datastrategy/images/pdf/UN_SG_Data-Strategy.pdf) |

# 1 Introduction

Attached annex is the document approved by the Coordination Committee on 2 March 2021, establishing a Digital Transformation Initiative (DT-I) with the objectives to improve the key deliverables of ITU taking into consideration the impact of COVID-19 and developments within the UN systems for the “future of Work” and the impact on the current and new workforce. The Digital Transformation Initiative is intended to ensure that ITU takes a holistic approach and prioritizes strategic choices, project deliverables, and financial and human resources.

**2 Recommendation**

The Council is invited to comment and advise on this initiative.

Annex

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

**COORDINATION**  **Document 1014/5**

**COMMITTEE** 1 March 2021

# Proposed Digital Transformation Initiative (DT-I)

# OVERVIEW

The importance of digital transformation in a holistic and well-organized manner within an organization like the ITU cannot be overemphasized. However, to make changes to something and especially within an organization with three Sectors having specific mandates and a General Secretariat, requires a phased approach which makes a clear distinction between 1-*what to transform* and 2-*how to transform it*.

To ensure that the initiative renders ITU-wide improvements, the focus should be placed on those enabling processes, skills and functions that, if optimized, will facilitate the ITU’s achievement of its specific mandates. The enabling processes and functions are generally carried by General Secretariat departments, and also include intersectoral initiatives and those bureau processes that have organizational impact.

This important project, carried out by a phased approach, starts with Phase 1 for determining and prioritizing “what to transform”. Phase 2 for determining an efficient and cost-effective approach for “how to transform it” will begin when the problem definition is complete, taking into account that the solution to a problem depends on how well one understands that particular problem.

As the ITU has chartered several studies and initiatives that are proposing actions of a transformational nature, it would be important for the goals of this initiative to be focused on complementing or leveraging results of the other projects. The complementary studies and initiatives that must be taken into account include, and may not be limited, to the following:

* Price Waterhouse Cooper’s Regional Presence Review and recommendations;
* JigSaw’s “Feasibility study on establishing an ITU training institute”;
* McKinsey’s Skills Gap and Leadership Cultural Analysis;
* Remote Participation Taskforce;
* SPM’s Digital Agenda, developed with the support of Ernst & Young;
* New HQ Building Project, including future space planning and the implications thereof.
* The International Centre of Digital Innovation (I-CoDI)

The impact of COVID-19 on the work of ITU as reported to the Council and CWG, and developments within the UN systems for the “future of Work” and the impact on the current and new workforce (e.g. teleworking and contractual arrangement) will be considered.

The new Digital Transformation Group (DT-G) mandate should ensure that ITU takes a holistic approach and prioritizes strategic choices, project deliverables, and financial and human resources, and reports regularly to MCG/CoCo as appropriate.

# OBJECTIVES

The new Digital Transformation Initiative (DT-I) should improve the key deliverables of ITU, as well as the efficiency of the internal business processes, and ensure that ITU becomes an employer of choice.

The goals of the DT-I should be to:

* Improve the efficiency of the internal business processes and management, streamline, and digitalize workflows (Dec 5/Annex 2).

Improve the user experience (in meetings, conferences, and events with membership and other stakeholders; on member- and public-facing applications and platforms; and for internal content/business owners).

Improve the ability to capture insights from staff, membership, and partners.

Ensure reliable, qualitative information, documents, and data for informed decision-making supported by efficient information management (collect, process, analyse, and disseminate);

Improve the ability to execute, create the ability to dynamically acquire and allocate people and resources where needed, having regard to and leveraging ITU’s mobility policy, and maximize the ability to continuously learn and adapt.

Foster innovation and capacity and cultural change using new digital solutions, where and when beneficial.

Ensure that an effective change management framework, including training (taking account of the activities listed above), is developed and rolled out to support the success of the digital transformation strategy.

Develop and implement a Digital Information Governance and compliance framework or guidelines to avoid loss of information.

# STRATEGY

Digital Transformation not only implies applying and/or updating the technology we use, but: creating an organizational culture that embraces new digital technologies that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization; constant learning and acquiring of digital skills providing value defined by meeting or exceeding evolving customer/member/user needs; making sound decisions informed by relevant data and its thoughtful analysis; being agile; and delivering in an efficient, accountable, transparent, and auditable way to the benefit of all ITU stakeholders.

By considering the above, a phased approach is proposed.

Phase 1 (what to transform) of the project: to take stock of all the relevant and existing processes, procedures and working methods, including HR (and particularly the recruitment processes) and registration, to understand their nature including their impact on ITU’s ability to deliver on its strategic objectives, what performance targets should be established to realize the needed benefits from their transformation, along with identifying who could change them, what resources would be required, such as a project management team, and when they could be changed. Even in an organization like ITU, some processes are related and interdependent. A change in one could affect the next process. A thorough understanding based on a bottom-up approach which includes business analysis is therefore needed in this phase.

Phase 2 (how to transform): addressing the requirements and implementation strategies for the transformation.

It is important that these two phases are distinct so that their specific requirements could be properly identified, and strategies put in place for their implementation.

After the completion of Phase 1, the necessary information would then be available to work on the requirements for Phase 2 including revision of the current document and the refinements and elaboration of strategies for the implementation.

The initiative will need a dedicated resource to drive it forward and coordinate cross-sector activities.

# SCOPE

**Phase 1:**

The DT-I should focus primarily on the cultural and managerial changes required for success, rationalized with relevant projects already underway. Then, consider ITU Business priorities as well as how internal administrative processes can become more efficient enablers.

A high-level framework for digital information management and governance will guide the process and avoid loss of information.

The DT-I should identify quick fixes for early concrete results addressing pressing needs in the Bureaux and GS Departments.

The DT-I should subsequently develop a high-level draft scope/deliverable for a sustained comprehensive digital transformation strategy with realistic expectations, considering the human and financial resources available or made available, as well as any internal and external constraints.

The DT-I should identify the necessary dedicated resource to drive forward the initiative and coordinate cross-sector activities, including the identification of possible funding.

**Phase 2:**

The DT-I should provide holistic guidance for implementation of DT across the whole organization and address issues to ensure proper governance. This requires the involvement and commitment of the three Bureaux and all the GS Departments. The DT-I will also provide guidance for alignment with the Strategic Plan and Connect 2030 Agenda to involve and respond to membership needs.

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