

# AICTO's role towards Sustainable Digital Future in the Arab region

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PMO - AICTO

ITUWebinars

## Sustainable digital transformation in the Arab region

29 September 2021  
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[www.itu.int/go/SDTD-ARB](http://www.itu.int/go/SDTD-ARB)



In partnership with:



# Agenda

1. Introduction
2. AICTO role in the regional journey towards Sustainable Digital Transformation
3. Way forward & Recommendations

# Introduction

**“Technology** has great potential to help deliver the SDGs, but it can also be at the root of exclusion and inequality. **We need to harness the benefits of advanced technologies for all”**.

UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, at the closing of the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

- Digital transformation, over the past few years, has become a necessary reality for companies to stay relevant and for governments to serve the citizens at any time and everywhere and to improve their lives and respond to their expectations.
- **This was conducive to consider Digital Transformation as the key to Sustainability**

# Introduction

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**Many Arab countries** have made great paces in digital transformation and Sustainability

They have succeeded in adopting modern technology and catching up with the latest digital trends

Involved in the global efforts to achieve the Sustainable development goals -2030

- **Lack of the implementation of digital strategies and action plans that serve as a link between the awareness of the need to switch to Sustainable digital transformation from one hand and the actual implementation of the desired measures from the other hand**

# Introduction

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**Many Gaps remain**

## Network readiness Index

- **The United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Saudi Arabia are regional leaders in the NRI 2020**
- Leading the region are the United Arab Emirates (30th), Qatar (38th) and Saudi Arabia (41st), with the region's other major economies like Jordan and Egypt ranked at 84th and 69th, respectively.
- **The region's lowest-ranking economy is Yemen, in 132nd place.**

## Many Gaps remain

### Gap in Connectivity

- In January 2021, the internet users reached 4.66 billion of the global population – 59.5% (ITU)
- In the Arab region : about 55% of the population
- Connectivity divide between urban and rural areas: in the Arab region: urban areas: 74% | Rural areas: 38%
- Gaps related to : Gender, age, geographic areas and social class . **A big challenge for achieving the digital INCLUSION**



# AICTO's role towards Sustainable Digital Future in the Arab region

# AICTO's role towards Sustainable Digital Future in the Arab region



- The “**Arab ICT Organization – AICTO**”, which is the leading agency of the League of Arab States, specialized in the ICT field, AICTO creation resulted from the will of the Arab States to contribute to the development of ICT sector in the region.

## **Vision**

- ***“Towards a Unified Arab digital society based on the creativity and innovation, boosting the Arab-Interregional complementarity and contributing efficiently to the development of the global sustainable digital economy”***

# AICTO's role towards Sustainable Digital Future in the Arab region

Within the scope of its regional commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, AICTO is always working to support Arab countries to **achieve the Sustainability goals during their journey towards digital transformation.**

- **Aware** : “ICTs are catalysts that accelerate the main pillars of sustainable development – **economic growth, social inclusion** and **environmental sustainability**”
- **Believe** : **There is a need to strengthen the link between sustainability aspects and digital transformation in the Arab region**



Projects and initiatives for boosting the transition to the all digital in the Arab region and accelerating steps towards the sustainable digital Economy :

**Strategic Goal (4) : Boosting the Arab countries' contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 while enhancing their inclusion in the global digital economy**

#### [SDG 1] NO POVERTY

AICTO actions :

- Project "Promotion of e-accessibility within the Arab region"
- Awareness activities

#### [SDG 2] ZERO HUNGER

AICTO actions :

- Project : "ICTs for a Sustainable Agricultural Development in the Arab Region"
- Studies & Awareness activities

#### [SDG 4] QUALITY EDUCATION

AICTO actions :

- Project "Connecting schools in the Arab Least Developed Countries"
- Launching Huawei Seeds for the Future Program throughout the Arab region

#### [SDG 5] GENDER EQUALITY

AICTO actions :

- Project : "Arab Women empowerment through ICT"
- Project : E-souq for Arab and crafts women

#### [SDG 8] DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

AICTO actions :

- Project : "Arab Youth Empowerment through ICT"
- WG + Studies + awareness activities

#### [SDG 9] INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

AICTO actions :

- Project : "Arab-African PKI Forum"
- Project : GNSS Innovation Center of excellence
- Project : "Promoting Cloud Computing in the Arab Region"
- WGs + Studies + Awareness activities

#### [SDG 11] SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

AICTO actions :

- Initiative : Challenges and New Strategies CNS Platform©
- IOT WG + Study on «IoT state of the Art and perspectives in the Arab Region»
- A biannual events, for high level Arab Region Decision makers, focusing on : Smart Cities + IoT + Artificial Intelligence + Virtual Reality, .....

#### [SDG 13] CLIMATE ACTION

AICTO actions :

- Capacity building program : «Early warning and disaster recovery »
- Contribution in the ITU-TWG5 « Environment, climate change and circular economy"

#### [SDG 17] PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

AICTO actions :

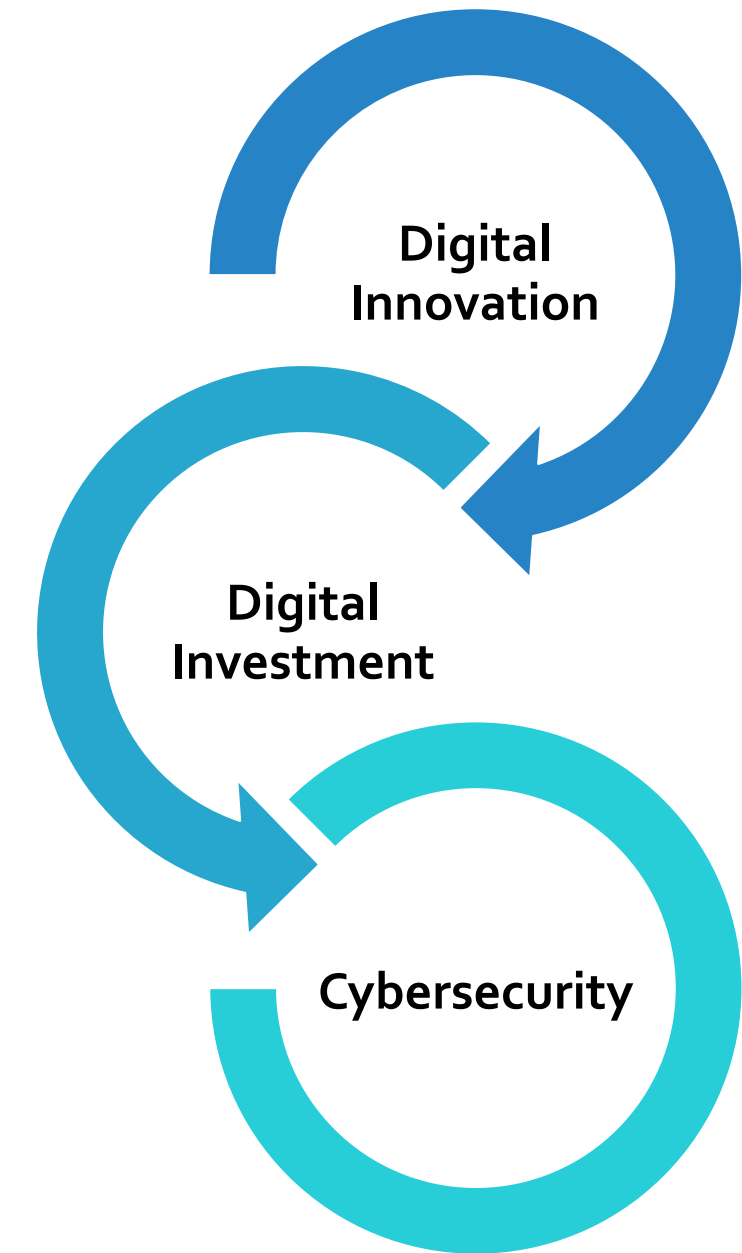
- Strengthening its partnerships with the Regional and International organizations to serve the Sustainable Development plan
- Active participation in the Arab and International efforts aiming at achieving the SDGs, especially those with a high need for the Arab region

AICTO's role  
towards  
Sustainable Digital  
Future in the Arab  
region

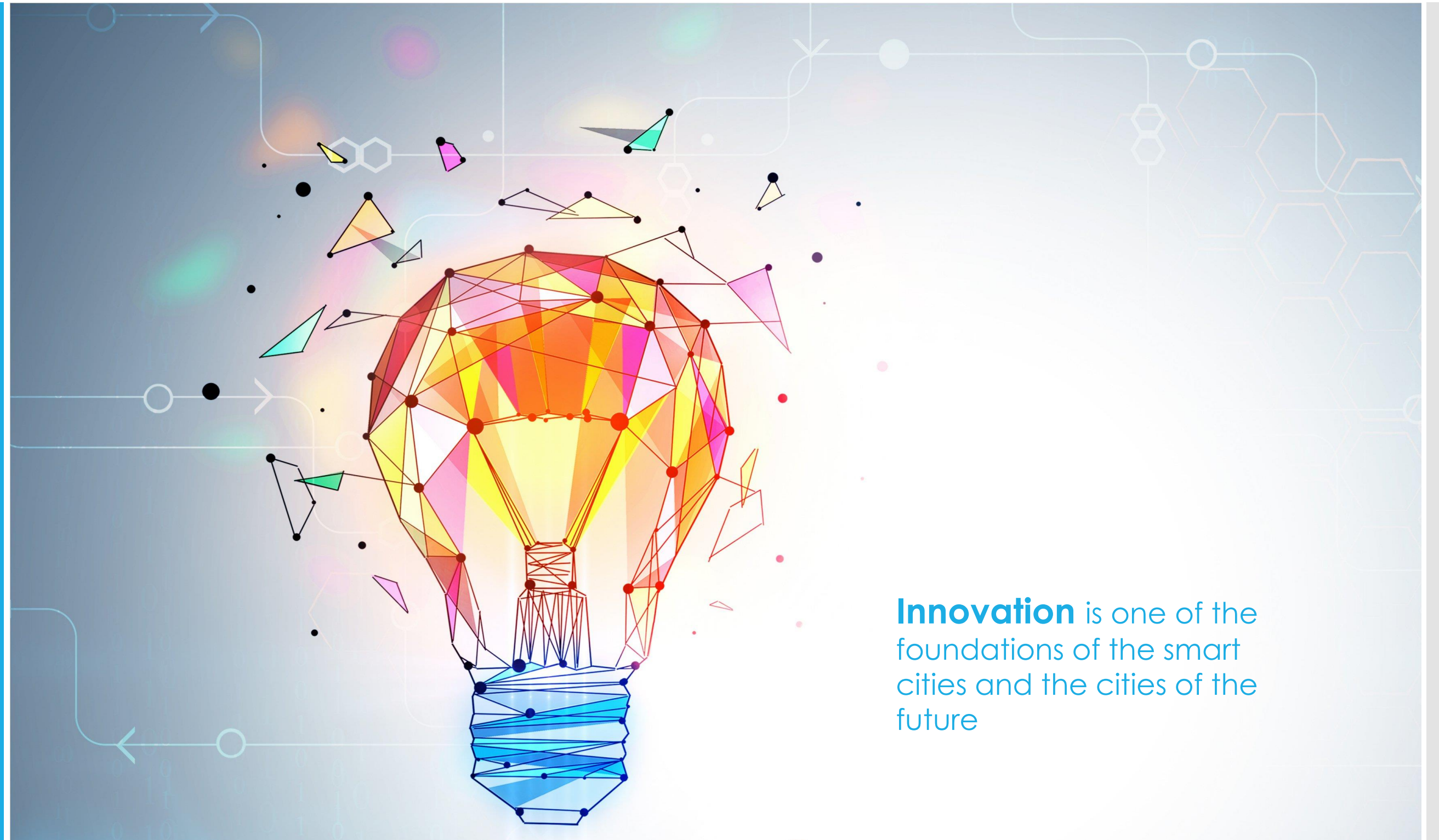
« Sustainable Digital  
transformation »  
beyond COVID-19 crisis :

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE SECURE  
AND INCLUSIVE DIGITAL FUTURE in  
the Arab region

- Taking into account the barriers and challenges in the Arab region and to move smoothly and quickly towards the sustainable digital future, AICTO is stressing over **three main pillars that could be the FOUNDATION for a SUCCESSFUL ARAB DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION** in accordance with the **SUSTAINABILITY** requirements at the Economic and Social levels.



# 1. Digital Innovation



**Innovation** is one of the foundations of the smart cities and the cities of the future

AICTO role in the regional journey towards Sustainable Digital Transformation

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## 1/ Digital Innovation

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### “Arab Digital Capital” Initiative

*We believe : Arab Cities should have the potential to play a major role in dealing with many of the critical issues, by becoming key drivers of the duo green and digital transformations.*

#### “Arab Digital Capital” Initiative

AICTO is the coordinator of the initiative in the region

- The "Arab Digital Capitals" Initiative : is an Initiative created By The Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia For the purpose of highlighting the Digital Efforts exerted by The Arab Countries.
- Every year, one Arab city is selected to be “the Arab Digital Capital”
- The selected City/Capital has to **launch many local and regional initiatives.** A series of events are to be organized **to highlight the role of the city in particular and the country in general in adopting communications and information technology to enhance the economic, social, health and education environments, etc. ... and increase the well-being of the society** and emphasize its readiness to be one of the leading countries at the Arab and international level under the digital transformation waves.

AICTO role in the regional journey towards Sustainable Digital Transformation

## 1/ Digital Innovation

### “Arab Digital Capital” Initiative



- Opportunity to shed the light on their successful experiences to join the ranks of other countries in the digital field and to achieve global leadership in this field.

AICTO role in the regional journey towards Sustainable Digital Transformation

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## 2/ Digital Investment



AICTO role in the regional journey towards Sustainable Digital Transformation

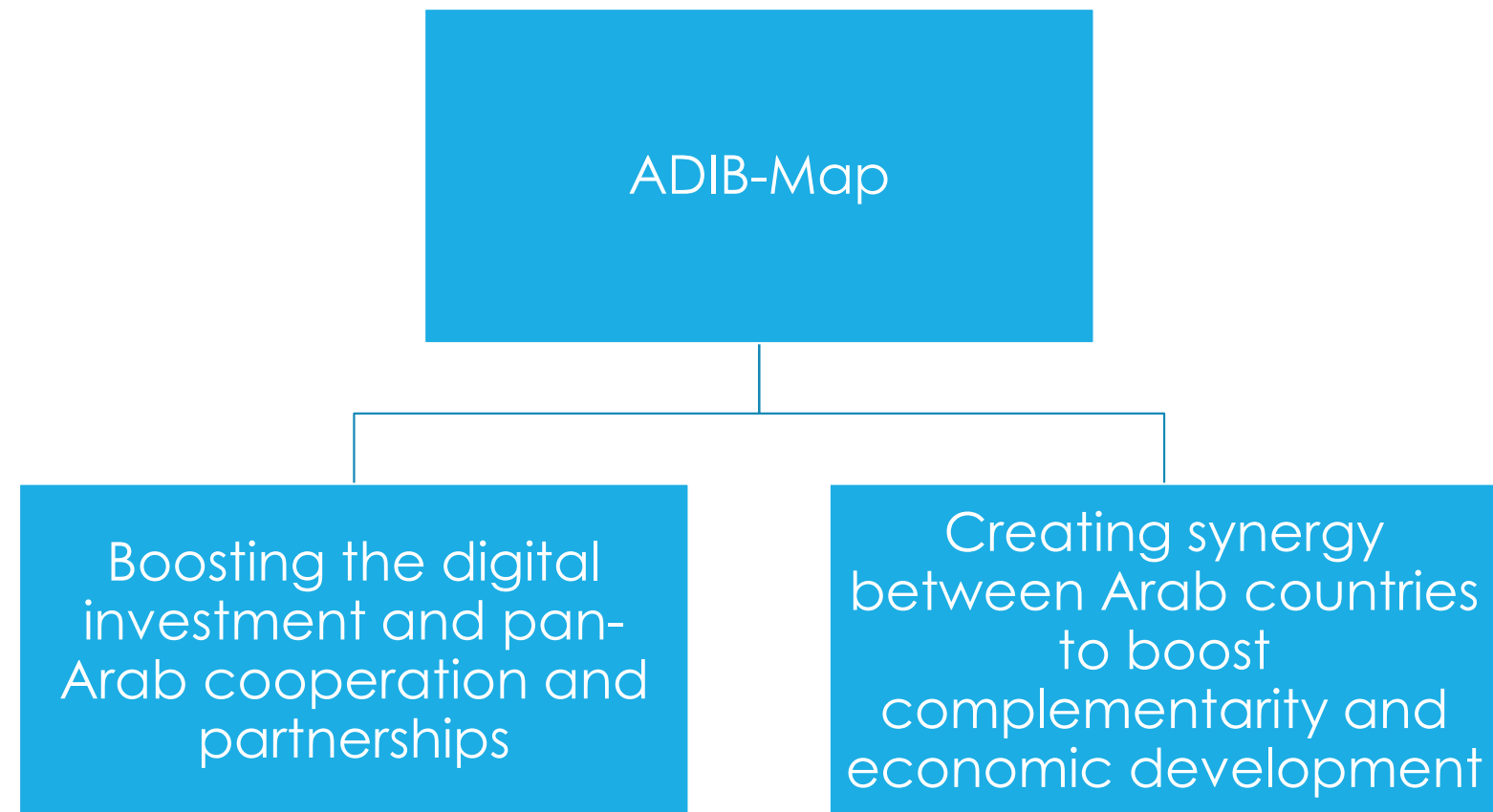
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## 2/ Digital Investment

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Project : Arab Digital Investment & Business Map – ADIB-Map

- Digital transformation not only political needs or technical readiness but **financial capabilities** as well.
- In order to accelerate transformation, Arab countries should invest more to enhance the infrastructure and to promote access and service quality to all citizens



- 2 editions of « Digital Investment Forum » in the Republic of Iraq

# Boosting cooperation and investment to build the “Sustainable Digital Libya”

Upon the decision of the League of Arab States Council (decision n° 7370) related to the Arab efforts to support Libya and insisting on the commitment to present whatever the Libyan people needs as assistance to meet its requirements in the different fields to overcome this critical transitional period in the best conditions.

[digitallibyasummit.com](http://digitallibyasummit.com)  
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[www.digitallibyasummit.com](http://www.digitallibyasummit.com)

**BUILDING  
DIGITAL LIBYA**  
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**26-28**  
October  
2021

**Hotel Laico**  
Tunis  
Tunisia

**BUILDING  
DIGITAL LIBYA**  
بناء ليبيا الرقمية

- The “**Building Digital Libya**” **Summit** will provide a platform for discussing and sharing visions and strategies for the potential roadmaps to make Libya able to make up for any delay in the digitalization caused by the conflict conditions experienced for long years, namely the telecommunications infrastructure disrupting and many other troubles.

## OBJECTIVES :

- Strengthen the efforts to rebuild Digital Libya and accelerate the construction process to keep up with the pace of the technological development in the world
- Create a synergy between all stakeholders in order to work within the framework of an integrated and common strategic vision to facilitate the future implementation
- **Support Libya in the development of a road map towards the creation of a sustainable digital economy** based on the adoption of newest technological solutions to ensure its integration in the global digital economy



AICTO role in the regional  
journey towards Sustainable  
Digital Transformation

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## 3/ Digital Trust & Cybersecurity

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“Common Arab  
Cybersecurity  
Vision”

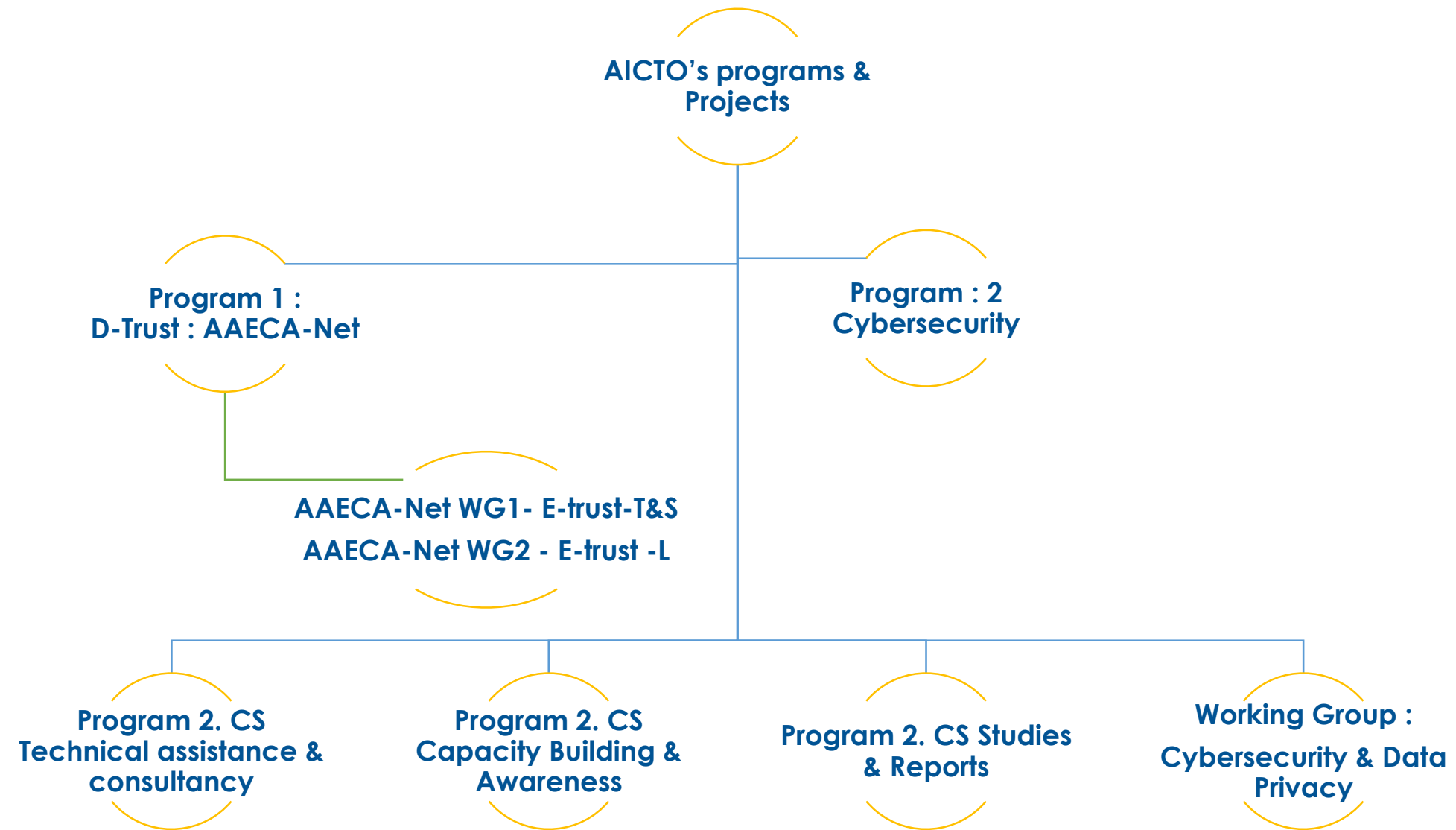


AICTO role in the regional journey towards Sustainable Digital Transformation

## 3/ Digital Trust & Cybersecurity

“Common Arab Cybersecurity Vision”

## AICTO's commitment for a safer cyberspace in the Arab region



AICTO role in the regional journey towards Sustainable Digital Transformation

## 3/ Digital Trust & Cybersecurity

“Common Arab Cybersecurity Vision”

- Massive adoption of online solutions during the COVID-19 pandemic to assume to continuity of education, business, public administration, research, social activities...
- The forced transition to online services for many countries, both ready and unready, have shown a major cyber-security threats.
- This new particular situation comforts AICTO and its members to work together in order to face these major challenges in the Arab region through drafting the **“Common Arab Cybersecurity Vision”**



- The Vision whitepaper will be launched during the High level **“Arab Cybersecurity Forum”** to be held in Tunis-Tunisia during the period 21-22 October 2021 under the title : **“Landscape of cybersecurity in the Arab region and the Way Forward”**

➤ WE trust that this initiative will be starting point for common frameworks for cybersecurity in the region with the inputs of all Stakeholders

# Way forward & Recommendations

## « Sustainable Digital transformation » beyond COVID-19 crisis :

- Technology is one of the hopes for the recovery and for coping with the new normal, there is a need that technology keep going side by side with sustainability.
- In Arab countries, we need to accelerate our steps towards strong Cooperation relationships at the regional and international levels to make the response to the future challenges through ICTs happen in the best way.

### ➤ ITU-T SG5 Regional Group for the Arab Region

Setting projects and programs to further drive sustainability within the Arab region namely for the « Environment and Climate change »

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**Thank you for your attention**