

## UNCDF-IDEP's contribution to the seventh Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development *"how digital transformation can contribute to build forward better post covid-19"*

In 2020, the sixth Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, welcomed a High-Level Policy Dialogue on the theme: *"Leaving no-one behind: Harnessing inclusive digital transformation to meet the SDGs and the Agenda 2063 goals"*. The dialogue aimed to discuss how digital inclusion responds to the needs of marginalized people. The session led to the design of an online course on inclusive digital transformation strategies for civil servants, government representatives and policy makers. This event and the online course were made possible through a collaboration between:

- ✚ **The United Nations Capital Development Fund:** UNCDF makes public and private finance work for the poor in the world's 47 least developed countries. The UNCDF strategy *'Leaving no-one behind in the digital era'* aims to reach the full potential of digital financial inclusion and to promote inclusive digital economies. UNCDF's approach focuses on accelerating the development of digital economies at the country level with the government, the private sector and academia, with specific attention given to the development of the right services to reduce the digital divide and to empower key customer segments.
- ✚ **The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning:** IDEP's mandate is to accompany African governments in their training and capacity development efforts in the fields of economic management and planning. The strong combination of its mandate, continental reach, and extensive network of alumni enables IDEP with the opportunity to contribute directly to both individual and institutional capacity.

The seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will be convened under the theme *"Building forward better: Towards a resilient and green Africa to achieve the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063"*. For the occasion, UNCDF and IDEP would like to renew their collaboration and offer a webinar on *"how digital transformation can contribute to build forward better post covid-19"*. The objective of the webinar will be to empower government representatives, civil servants and policy makers in developing or adapting their national digital transformation strategies to address the impacts of the pandemic.

Digitalisation is a powerful tool that can be used to improve people's lives, create livelihoods, quality jobs and greater inclusion, or to exacerbate already existing inequalities, fuel tensions and alter the course of entire societies. The crucial role of governments is to develop and implement strategies, policies and regulations that will assure digital technologies and services are working for the benefit of citizens. The wake of the coronavirus outbreak accelerated the trend towards digitalization in Africa --from virtual meetings, home deliveries to mobile money -- digital services are growing in importance, permeating an increasing number of sectors and activities. The webinar will provide an opportunity to discuss:

- The impact of Covid-19 on the most marginalized and the necessity to leverage digital solutions during the confinement and beyond
- The use of eGovernment solutions to improve the efficiency of public services in health.
- How to take advantage of the youngest population on the planet and strongly invest in digital skills.
- How to open new digital markets for Small and Medium Enterprises to position them to have a significant positive impact on the economy and job creation.
- The webinar will also share examples of digital initiatives around:
  - Skills building in the digital era
  - Last mile digital infrastructure accessibility
  - Digital innovations for agriculture, MSMEs.

At the end of the webinar, UNCDF and IDEP will present an overview of the online course and provide the opportunity for civil servants and policy makers to apply for the first cohort of the online training program on **'Developing inclusive digital transformation journeys to meet the SDGs and Agenda 2063'**.