Survey summary to support development of the Roadmap for DSC SD (as of 8 August 2022)

MDDIAI of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the with support ESCAP Secretariat conducted a Survey to collect proposals and identify key tasks and initiatives of the subregional Digital Solutions Center for Sustainable Development (DSC SD, see Concept and the Questions in two languages here: https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/Survey_0.pdf)

The questionnaire is comprised of 15 questions in four areas: 1) National level 2) Subregional integration 3) Organizational aspects 4) Functional activity.

14 responses were received from international experts and delegates of SPECA WG on ITSD participating countries and international organizations: 5 from Kazakhstan, 2 from Kyrgyzstan and 1 from UAE, 2 from Azerbaijan, 3 from Tajikistan, 1 from Russia.

### National level (Questions 1-3):

1. To what extent should the proposed concept (https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/Concept%20note%20of%20Roadmap.pdf) of the Action Plan for the establishment of the DSC SD should meet the national priorities of the countries of Central Asia, SPECA and Mongolia? (Link for orientation to presentation: https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/Concept%20Note%20of%20the%20Roadmap%2CRussian_0.pdf)

   - Fully meet
   - Mostly meet
   - Partially meet
   - Does not meet
   - Difficult to answer

**Q1 Summary of Responses:** In general, 100 percent of respondents indicated that the proposed concept of the Action Plan for the establishment of the DSC SD should fully and mostly meet the national priorities of the countries.
Q2 Summary of Responses: Respondents noted that DSC SD should consider following national programmes:

- **Kazakhstan:** Digital Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan Decarbonisation, Carbon Neutrality 2060, Strategy "Kazakhstan 2050", Messages of President Tokayev, Concept for the development of civil society, Concept for the reform of the public administration system, National Development Plan until 2025, Law "On Official Development Assistance" President's speeches at the 75th UN General Assembly, the system of state planning and public administration, National project "Technological breakthrough through digitalization, science and innovation", National project "Green Kazakhstan".

- **Kyrgyzstan:** National Development Program of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2026, Taza Koom, Sanarip Kyrgyzstan, Cybersecurity Plan.

- **Tajikistan:** Strategy for the development of the Green Economy in the Republic of Tajikistan, Accelerated Industrialization Program of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2020-2025; The concept of the Digital Economy in the Republic of Tajikistan, the Strategy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence until 2030 of the Republic of Tajikistan.

- **Others:** Inclusive sustainable economic recovery focusing on trade and food systems

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Q3 Summary of Responses: most respondents chose PPP, International Digital Chamber, Establishment of specialized funds and participatory working groups as most preferable model of interaction between the DSC SD and the private sector in the countries of Central Asia/SPECA.
Subregional integration (Question 4-7):

4. In your opinion, with which national bodies, units and analytical centers DSC SD should cooperate with at transboundary level?

Q4 Summary of Responses: Regarding which national bodies, units and analytical centers DSC SD should cooperate, respondents mostly noted Government, ICT/science/foreign affairs ministries, local executive agencies. They also proposed Development Banks (IsDB, WB, ADB & AIIB) and key UN agencies ESCAP, ITU, IEEE, WTO, IGF and ICC, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Egov Academy Estonia, NIA Korea, Ministry of Industry and New Technologies of the Republic of Tajikistan, Scientific and analytical centers in the field of digital development, Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Administration of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Similar structures of the countries of Central Asia and Mongolia.

5. With which international organizations DSC SD can cooperate with to harmonize efforts to create legal and regulatory conditions and data standards necessary for the application of advanced digital solutions?

Q5 Summary of Responses: All participants marked UN agencies as international organizations DSC SD can cooperate with. IEEE, USAID, Eurasian Economy Commission, international financial and investment institutions were also noted positively by respondents.

6. How the DSC SD can contribute to the development of transnational economic corridors using advanced digital technologies?

Q6 Summary of Responses: Regarding how DSC SD can contribute to the development of transnational economic corridors using advanced digital technologies respondents considered collaboration with Development banks such as WB, IsDB and ADB, and ESCAP and WTO as well as transfer of best practices and experience, assistance with the organization and implementation of joint projects.

7. Please choose the order of priority for the DSC SD among the proposed ten possible cross-border pilot projects in Central Asia, SPECA and Mongolia (1 - highest priority, 10 - least priority)

Q7 Summary of Responses: According to responses, the order of priority for proposed possible cross-border pilot projects is as follows: 1) Digital literacy and digital skills, 2) Energy and renewable energy sources, 3-4) Fintech - Simplification of border crossing procedures, 5-6) Digital agriculture - Climate change, land degradation and desertification, 7-8) Nexus of water-energy-food - Secure sustainable internet, 9-10) Transport - Scientific research, 11) Tourism.

In addition, respondents proposed next possible areas for the development of cross-border pilot projects with the participation of the DSC SD: Secure Logistics and Cross Border Custom Clearance, Cybersecurity, Digital Health, telemedicine, creation of National Digital Water Atlas, Development of a new management matrix and methodology based on the basis - SDG 17.

Innovation in public services AI based public services One stop shop model of services

Innovative Training Center “Power Science Research Center” for the Climate change, land degradation and desertification, Nexus of water-energy-food, Scientific research.
Organizational aspects (question 8-10):

Q8 Summary of Responses: the majority of respondents marked option “DSC could function as a new regional institution of UN ESCAP hosted in Kazakhstan, and focused on landlocked Central Asian countries and Mongolia, and supported by SPECA” and “DSCSD could function as a legally independent sub-regional entity under the auspices of ESCAP prioritizing landlocked Central Asian countries and Mongolia and cooperate with UN entities through Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) between the Center and the respective UN entities”.

9. What is the most preferable source of funding to cover the costs of the DSCSD and why? (Payments for employees, projects, office, equipment, etc.) (multiple answer options can be selected)

- The governments of the participating countries
- UN agencies, WB, ADB, etc.
- Donors/sponsors
- Private sector
- All of the above
- Difficult to answer
- Please, suggest your answer
- Другое...
Q9 Summary of Responses: most respondents marked all options (The governments of the participating countries, UN agencies, WB, ADB, etc., Donors/sponsors, Private sector,) as the most preferable sources of funding to cover the costs of the DSC SD.

Q10 Summary of Responses: Responses show different opinions of the participants about the management structure and human resource capacity of the DSC SD. Some agree that there needs to be strong leadership with a clear vision that has the full support from the top, complimented by an advisory board, steering committee comprising of multi-sector international and local experts and stakeholder who also share the vision and the skills to support critical knowledge transfer and local human capacity.

Other proposed transparent, with visible KPIs organization, without a pronounced hierarchy and model of a conglomerate, a regional council with the involvement of private structures, governments.

A separate analytical center in the form of a Non-Commercial Joint Stock Company, where the founder is Agency for strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan (at the first stage) and NGOs that really represent the interests of civil society and business, not engaged by the Government. The form of management is strictly according to ESG standards, especially in terms of corporate governance. Staffing at the top level (Board of Directors) with a selection of independent directors with recognized competence in sustainable development and in-depth analysis. The executive body is the board. The chairman of the board is an elected position. At the execution level - the analytical division and the IT division. The prevailing role is played by analysts, not by IT specialists. The main task is the digitalization of meanings, not processes, and in-depth analytics of all processes related to sustainable development based on the SDGs in full, without breaking the SDGs into separate "convenient and inconvenient".

Functional activity (question 11-14):

11. Which of the proposed options for the regulatory framework for creating the DSC SD is the most preferable and why?
   - UN Resolution
   - Legislative act
   - Government Decree
   - Difficult to answer
   - Please, suggest your answer
   - Другое...

12. The DSC SD is aimed at coordination, promotion, and integration of digital programs through collaboration with various sectors of the economy. Please indicate which of the ten areas of intersectoral projects DSC SD should first pay attention to (1 - the highest priority, 10 - the least priority)
**Q12 Summary of Responses:** According to the answers, the order of priority for areas of intersectoral projects DSC SD should first pay attention to is as follows: 1) Digital agriculture and food security, 2) E-health and telemedicine, 3) Information infrastructure and education, 4-5) Environmental protection and green technologies - Digital Government and public services, 6-7) Disaster Reduction and ICT - Custom service and finance, 8-9) Water resources and energy - Urban infrastructure, transport, and trade, 10) Gender issues and SDGs 11) Tourism and culture

In addition, respondents proposed groups of economic sectors for intersectoral projects: Open Data, Personal Data Protection, agriculture and food production, green energy production, logistics and transformation and healthcare with the key target groups being Youth and Women, Moral challenges of IT.

**Q13 Summary of Responses:** According to the answers, the order of priority for initiatives that should be implemented primarily within the framework of DSC SD is as follows:

1) Big Data Management Information System for Governments
2-3) Projects for digital identification of citizens - Information system of paperless document circulation in the field of air cargo transportation
4-5) Formation of a digital society and increasing digital literacy of the population - Infrastructure (non-GSO, FOC), and connectivity development
6) Information Integration for sustainable digital system for promoting regional trade
7-8-9) National STI Information Platform - Digital Platforms in different sectors (Agriculture, Industry 4.0, etc.) based on single window concept and blockchain technologies - Conceptually unified regulatory framework (Digital Code)
10-11) Unified interstate tech platform and unified standards (protocol on blockchain for CA) - Ecosystem of digital transport corridors of the countries of Central Asia, SPECA and Mongolia
12) Creation of a unified statistical database on general issues
13) Development of domestic and international tourism based on service platforms

In addition, respondents proposed to develop tourism with sustainable infrastructure, engage in the development of eco-culture, to create of a public e-platform, where the system of state planning and public administration is analytically decomposed.
Q14 Summary of Responses: the results demonstrate that respondents prefer all mentioned technologies the DSC SD should focus on (AI, Big data analytics, IoT, E-commerce, Blockchain, Industry 4.0, Smart-city, Cybersecurity, 5G, 6G, Cloud computing).

Q15 Summary of Responses: Participants shared ideas and suggestions regarding the establishment and functioning of the DSC SD:

1) develop a comprehensive plan, ensure funding is in place and establish a robust governance structure
2) identify a coordinating body in countries that will have the necessary powers, identify the operator(s) and participants, and provide an appropriate budget for implementation
3) create a flexible working system of the center with a strong team of analysts and experts, study in depth the strengths and weaknesses of the development of industries in each of the countries.
4) must have its own fund to support projects and initiatives. Strong business analytical team is important to measure the significance of the proposed projects.
5) Base Data Center for the countries of Central Asia—which include information about climatic parameters, glaciers, water basin, and big industrial enterprises, which have an upper limit of CO2, Using AI and Remote Sensing.
6) The idea of creating the DSC is timely and necessary for Central Asia, and the proposed concept covers everything well
7) Concentrate on a single project-case. Scale if successful
8) The DSC should be based in Almaty, as the UN hub for achieving the SDGs in Central Asia. A consortium of experts is ready to create a DSC on its own base and fill all the work with high-quality content, methodology and digital solutions. Term - 1 year. A separate financial proposal can be prepared after a face-to-face meeting with the decision maker, both from ESCAP and from the Administration, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, ASPIR, Akim of Almaty.