

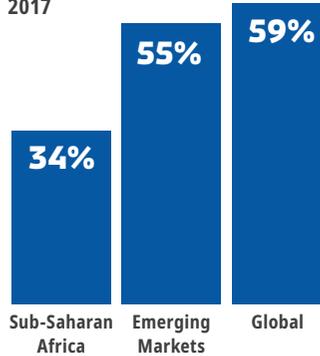


TECHVELOPMENT: APPROACH AND NARRATIVE

*Tech and Digitalisation in
Danish Development
Cooperation in 2019*



Smartphone adoption,
2017



Source: The Mobile Economy
Sub-saharan Africa 2018

INTRODUCTION

We are in the midst of a technological revolution that will fundamentally change the way we live, work and communicate. We do not know exactly how it will unfold. However, one thing is clear: The fourth industrial revolution implies significant challenges and opportunities and is a potential game changer in nearly all aspects of society. New technologies also represent an important new toolbox in our development cooperation and could disrupt traditional development cooperation with completely new ways of working and delivering results.

The International Telecoms Union (ITU) estimates that seven billion people - 95% of the global population - live in an area covered by mobile-cellular network, and two-thirds of the population live within an area covered by a mobile broadband network¹. For those with access, digital technologies are enablers, drivers and accelerators of sustainable development and growth². The exponential spread of

digital technologies is already improving societies and people's lives. E-learning allows provision of education independent of time and place, mobile financial services reduce corruption, online access to meteorological information enables farmers to optimise their harvest, and solar-energy brings electricity to the remotest villages.

At the same time, nearly half of the world's population is not using the internet³, and nearly two billion people do not own a mobile phone⁴. These numbers indicate that while the potential for creating development through digitalisation is massive, digitalisation also causes new gaps between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' and new groups are left behind. In addition, digitalisation disrupts the established way of doing things, including current labour markets through e.g. robotics and automation thereby causing loss of traditional jobs.

This strategic note lays out the approach to digitalisation and new technology in Danish development cooperation, in short 'TechVelopment'. As the pace of technological development constantly reshapes the agenda and brings new issues, opportunities and challenges on the table, this strategic note is applicable for one year, 2019, and will be regularly updated.

Denmark has positioned itself pro-actively by elevating technological diplomacy, TechPlomacy, to a crosscutting foreign and security policy priority and by appointing the world's first Tech Ambassador and establishing a global tech-representation with a presence in Silicon Valley, Copenhagen and Beijing. Through the TechPlomacy initiative, the Danish government aims to create new avenues for dialogue and engage strategically with technology companies, other governments, civil society and international organisations on both opportunities and challenges of technology.

Techplomacy is an attempt of rethinking the traditional conception of diplomacy and foreign policy in an increasingly digital age.

To remain a relevant and effective development partner, it is also crucial for Denmark to make digitalisation and technological innovation a crosscutting focus area in our development cooperation. TechVelopment is used to describe the track under the TechPlomacy initiative that deals with promoting innovation and technology in Denmark's development cooperation.

The Sustainable Development Goals are ambitious and can only be achieved by making the best use of new technologies to accelerate development and ensure sustainable growth. Thus, digitalisation is a cross-cutting tool to implement our strategy, "The World 2030". We must be able to identify and harness the digital dividends and contribute to bridging the digital divides. We must also keep ourselves informed about the technological development and its implications for our partner countries.

Denmark has a strong history of digital innovation, including in the public sector. According to the 2018 United Nation's e-government survey, Denmark is the best in the world when it comes to e-government. Denmark also tops the EU's Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2017 as the most advanced digital economy in the EU. Denmark has knowledge and experience from our own digital journey to share with our partners. At the same time, we are aware that developing countries are skipping the technological evolution process, leapfrogging technologies in areas such as energy, education, healthcare and financial services. In these cases, Denmark can also learn from innovation taking place in our partner countries and emerging economies.

¹ITU (2016): ICT Facts and Figures

³ITU (2018): 2018 Global and Regional ICT Estimates

²The World Bank Group (2016): World Development Report 2016. Digital Dividends

⁴The World Bank Group (2016): World Development Report 2016. Digital Dividends

THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND ROLE OF THE DANISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

To respond to the context of the opportunities and challenges of technology in development, the **overall objective** of the Danish TechDevelopment engagement is to:

Accelerate the implementation of the SDGs through application of new technologies, address the challenges associated with adoption of these technologies and support efforts to bridge digital divides.

In our effort to meet that objective in our development cooperation, digital technologies are primarily a means to achieve results rather than a goal in itself. In other words: Digitalisation is not a separate policy area, but a tool embedded in the comprehensive approach of Danish development policy, which is based on partnerships, collaboration, willingness to take risks and openness. We will work continuously on strengthening the 'digital mindset' in our own organisation in order to fully incorporate digital solutions as tools in our development cooperation.

The scale, complexity and interconnected nature of the sustainable development goals, combined with the rapid expansion of stakeholders able to contribute to achieving them, requires a new approach to collaboration. Focus must be on ensuring conducive conditions in partnerships and eco-systems focusing on providing solutions for sustainable development, thereby allowing stakeholders with the technological expertise and networks to pursue technologies that serve the public good.

We will create results through partnerships in partner countries, with local tech hubs, with international organisations, with civil society, with research institutions and with the private sector. Denmark can play an important role in cooperating with innovative actors on promoting new digital solutions. This includes traditional diplomacy – opening doors – but also being ready and able to invest and carry some of the risks when new actors with new ideas appear.

Our main role will be:

- *On an operational level* to deliver results through partnerships in our bilateral cooperation, and to promote exchange of knowledge and foster innovation, synergy and breaking new ground.
- *On a normative level* to contribute to and facilitate dialogue and mutual learning mainly in multilateral fora regarding the challenges increased digitalisation implies for societies as well as potential solutions, including addressing issues such as digital governance, regulation and framework conditions.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR DENMARK'S TECHVELOPMENT ENGAGEMENT

The strategic priorities for our TechVelo-
pment engagement include a geograph-
ical and a thematic focus.

GEOGRAPHICALLY, our engagement is
focused primarily on Africa, in particular
our African priority countries. Africa has
the greatest digital divide combined with
a significant leapfrogging potential. The
particular focus in our priority countries
is to promote good practice examples of
how new technologies can be integrated
as a tools in our country programmes in
synergy with our existing activities.

THEMATICALLY, we select *four areas* to
be our thematic key priorities reflec-
ting Danish core competences and a

particular opportunity to add value. We
will pursue these key priorities actively
through partnerships as well as in inter-
national policy discussions and global
cooperation.

87%

of African countries have a
low degree of e-government
compared to

13%

of Asian countries.

Source: E-governement Survey 2018

THEMATIC KEY PRIORITIES

→ *Addressing the digital gender divide*

Since the mid-1980s women and girls' rights and gender equality have constituted a major priority in Danish development cooperation. As digital technology has become an increasingly important tool for education, financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, civic participation, health services and information, women are being left behind. As an example there are 184 million fewer women than men who have access to mobile phones in developing countries⁵. In Africa specifically, women are 50 percent less likely

to use the internet than men⁶, inhibiting their ability to fully participate in and connect to their society and the world.

Denmark will seek to promote empowerment of women and girls by enabling their contribution to the technological development and by efforts to bridge the gap between men and women's access to and benefit from innovative technologies. A central element of this effort is women's and girls' digital literacy and skills.

→ *Promoting digital solutions in good governance and human rights*

Digital technologies are offering new opportunities for increased accountability, transparency and citizen-participation in policy-making and service provision. However, the technological development also presents new challenges. Digital services increase the risk of misuse of data and digital identities. In addition, digital services are increasingly introduced in functions where governments have a core mandate to deliver the service, i.e. land rights or personal ID. If governments are not offering digital services, there is a risk that private operators in effect crowd government services out, thus undermining the state's capacity as a duty bearer to ensure people's

rights. E-governance is an area where Denmark, based on our own experiences with a highly digitalised public sector and a rights-based service delivery, has valuable knowledge to share.

Denmark will promote e-government and e-governance in developing countries with particular focus on protecting, respecting and fulfilling human rights and promote access to services through digital technologies. We will also use our own story of public digital innovation to shape global dialogue and cooperation within this field, including the protection of human rights in relation to technology.

→ **Promoting digital skills, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work, especially for the youth**

Denmark will continue and expand support to the integration of new technologies in existing private sector eco-systems through pilot projects initiated in 2018. Further more, new and digital technologies will be promoted as a driver in market-driven partnerships, for example under the programme Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals (P4G).

Denmark will also promote digital solutions in education and digital skills, especially for the youth. In particular, young people are creators as well as quick adaptors of new technologies, and thus part of the solution to reap the demographic dividend in Africa. The internet and digital technologies offer a huge potential to create new decent jobs and growth as well as empower young people's participation in governance.

→ **Strengthening the humanitarian response and development efforts through technological innovation**

Denmark will support responsible technological innovation in our humanitarian response and development efforts through our long-term partnerships to ensure that our partners are geared to respond to current and future global challenges in an ethically sound manner. Technological advances are providing new ways of helping those in need, for

instance iris scanning for refugee registration and technological innovation has the potential to bridge the hum-dev nexus. However, it also creates new challenges and risks such as data security for refugees. Denmark will take into account opportunities as well as challenges when supporting technological innovation in humanitarian action.

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50%

... less likely to use the internet than men



184 MILLION

fewer women than men who have access to mobile phones in developing countries

⁵ GSMA (2018): The Mobile Gender Gap Report 2018.

⁶ The World Bank Group (2016): World Development Report 2016. Digital Dividends.

WORKING THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Denmark will advance the agenda and leverage its influence through established strategic partnerships with the EU, UN, World Bank and other multilateral organisations.

This includes supporting and coordinating our efforts with the EU's efforts on D4D and close cooperation with the World Bank's Digital Development Partnership (DDP), where Denmark participates as an active member e.g. through DDP's steering committee and a seconded senior ICT policy expert to DDP.

As part of the wider TechPlomacy efforts, Denmark will engage with the UN system and other partners to promote dialogue on normative and human rights-related

dimensions of technological developments. Denmark will furthermore explore ways to support the UN Secretary General's efforts aimed at integrating innovation and technology in the UN reform process. We are also promoting efficiencies in the way the multilateral cooperation utilises technology, digitalisation and innovation in its endeavours through targeted support to and engagement with the UN and selected UN agencies at the global level.

Denmark will also enhance focus on innovation, digitalisation and technology in cooperation with civil society organisations and private actors, e.g. tech hubs shaping their local start-up ecosystem.

THE PRINCIPLES FOR DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT

In our TechDevelopment engagement, Denmark takes into account the nine Principles for Digital Development². The principles are globally recognised guidelines for international development practitioners on how to use technology in development projects and engage in continuous learning.

The principles are: 1) design with the user; 2) understand the existing ecosystem; 3) design for scale; 4) build for sustainability; 5) be data driven; 6) use open standards, open data, open source and open innovation; 7) reuse and improve existing tools; 8) address privacy and security; 9) and be collaborative.

²www.digitalprinciples.org/