DCO 4-YEAR
AGENDA
2025–2028

ADVANCING DIGITAL ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL
PROSPERITY FOR A THRIVING GLOBAL ECONOMY

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CoE	Center of Excellence
DCO	Digital Cooperation Organization
DEA	Digital Economy Accelerator
DEIF	Digital Economy Impact Fund
DEN	Digital Economy Navigator
DSA	Digital Space Accelerator
DPS	Digital Prosperity Summit
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
UN GDC	United Nations Global Digital Compact
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IoT	Internet of Things
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MRQ	Mutual Recognition of Qualifications
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
R&D	Research and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WEF	World Economic Forum
WTO	World Trade Organization
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

FOREWORD FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
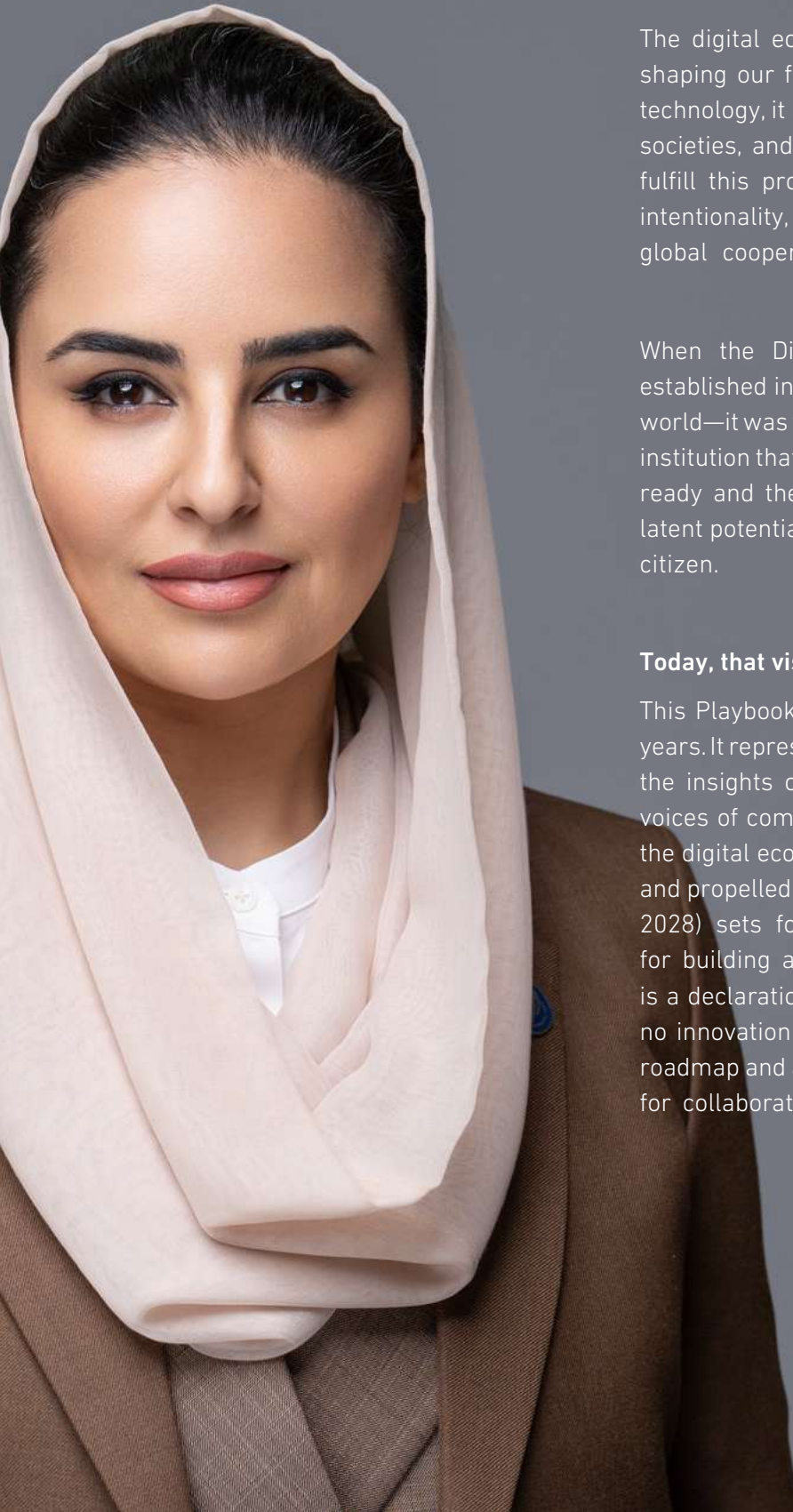
The digital economy stands as the single greatest force shaping our future. In a world being rapidly redefined by technology, it has the power to redefine prosperity, reshape societies, and rebalance opportunities across borders. To fulfill this promise, this power must be harnessed with intentionality, guided by shared values, and built through global cooperation.

When the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) was established in 2020, it was not merely to react to a shifting world—it was to lead it. DCO was envisioned as a multilateral institution that would bridge the divide between the digitally ready and the digitally rising, one that would unlock the latent potential of every country, every business, and every citizen.

Today, that vision is alive—and accelerating.

This Playbook is our collective compass for the next four years. It represents the aspirations of our 16 Member States, the insights of over 40 partners and observers, and the voices of communities who seek equitable participation in the digital economy. Grounded in data, guided by inclusion, and propelled by innovation, the DCO 4-Year Agenda (2025–2028) sets forth an ambitious and actionable roadmap for building an inclusive and resilient digital economy. It is a declaration that no country should be left behind, and no innovation should be wasted on exclusion. It is both a roadmap and an invitation — a path forward, and a platform for collaboration.

"

The digital economy is not a luxury—it is the new foundation of prosperity. And prosperity must be shared."

We are guided by a belief I have shared often: "The digital economy is not a luxury—it is the new foundation of prosperity. And prosperity must be shared."

This Agenda places people at the center of digital transformation. From the young developer in Lagos to the entrepreneur in Lahore, from policymakers in Riyadh to startups in Limassol, the future we are building must be inclusive and sustainable.

Our commitment over the next four years is clear:

- To elevate the voices of our Member States and turn ambition into action.

- To amplify the uniqueness of our Member States to build a collective, competitive advantage for shared prosperity.

- To pioneer frontier policies that ensure emerging technologies are human-centered and ethically grounded.

- To build bridges—digital corridors, platforms, and alliances—that connect people, countries and regions.

- To mobilize capital, talent, and data for good.

But we cannot do this alone.

This is a call to all stakeholders – governments, the private sector, youths, entrepreneurs, innovators, civil society and partners around the world—to join us. This is your Playbook too, the time to act is now. The digital economy is not a destination, it is a movement, and this movement needs you. It is a platform for collaboration, a blueprint for progress, and a mandate for impact.

Let us seize this opportunity—not only to reimagine the digital economy, but to rebuild it around values that matter – inclusivity, resilience, and shared prosperity.

Let us rise together to shape a digital future that enables digital prosperity for all.

H.E. Deemah Al-Yahya
Secretary-General
Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO)
March 2025

PURPOSE OF
THIS PLAYBOOK

This Playbook serves as the reference document for DCO's strategic direction and priorities for the 2025–2028 period. It consolidates the outcomes of the strategy review and provides a comprehensive roadmap for all stakeholders—including DCO Secretariat, Member States, partners and the global public—to understand and engage with the organization's mission.

Specifically, the Playbook aims to:

• Summarize the strategic pillars, flagship programs, and key initiatives of the 4-Year Agenda.

• Outline implementation phases, performance expectations, and funding strategies.

• Provide guidance for internal alignment, partner engagement, and global positioning.

• Inspire action, collaboration, and investment in support of DCO's goals.

Whether you are a policymaker, a digital entrepreneur, a funding partner, or a citizen curious about digital development, this Playbook is your window into the future DCO is helping to build—an inclusive, resilient and prosperous digital economy for all.

01

INTRODUCTION

1.1
THE BIRTH OF
THE DCO

In a rapidly evolving global landscape, the divide between nations that thrive in the digital age and those left behind grows more pronounced.

The Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) was born out of a shared belief among founding member states that inclusive, sustainable digital development must be driven by coordinated action and cooperation.

Established in 2020, DCO is a pioneering multilateral organization with the mandate to enable digital prosperity for all by fostering collaboration, harmonizing digital policy, and catalyzing inclusive innovation.

The founding principle of DCO is that digital inclusivity and transformation is not a luxury but a necessity force that should uplift societies, empower economies, and accelerate the achievement of sustainable development.

With Member States spanning different continents and development stages, DCO represents 16 Member States (MS) united by one mission: to build a more inclusive and equitable digital economy.

Since its inception, DCO has positioned itself as a bridge between digitally advanced and digitally emerging nations, amplifying the voices of the Global South, supporting agile policy innovation, and enabling inclusive economic participation.

1.2
VISION, MISSION, AND CORE
FUNCTIONS

The DCO is dedicated to achieving social prosperity and the growth of the digital economy by unifying the efforts of Members to advance digital transformation and promote common interests.

VISION

A world where every country, business, and person has a fair opportunity to prosper in a cross-border and sustainable Digital Economy.

MISSION

Achieving social prosperity and growth of the digital economy by unifying efforts to advance and promote interest in the digital economy.

CORE FUNCTIONS

Four core functions will guide the areas of activities of DCO. They include Information Provider, Advocacy, Advisory, and Facilitation.

INFORMATION PROVIDER

As a leading information provider, the DCO will Assemble, analyze, monitor, and improve access to data and information to drive the decision-making of all public and private stakeholders and monitor the progress towards the Organization's ambitious goals and targets.

ADVOCACY

As a leading advocate for the inclusive and sustainable development of a cross-border digital market, the DCO will facilitate, support, and advocate for harmonization and dialogue on best digital policies between states at regional and global levels, particularly on the issues of cross-border data flows, digital taxation, data privacy, digital rights, mobility of digital businesses and talents, and ethics.

ADVISORY

To enable the Member States to make the most of the data, information, and normative frameworks provided by the Organization, the DCO will also guide its Member States and provide tailored, evidence-based advice to help them act. As an advisor, the DCO will support DCO's members in identifying, designing, implementing, and monitoring of data-based policies and programs that will help achieve the Organization's mission.

FACILITATION

The DCO will offer support and facilitate concrete, high-value projects aligned with its mission and goals, acting either as a project executor in collaboration with other stakeholders or a funding facilitator.

02

JOURNEY SO FAR

2.1
HIGHLIGHTS OF ACHIEVEMENTS (2020–2024)

Since its establishment in 2020, DCO has made significant strides toward realizing its mission of enabling digital prosperity for all. Over the past four years, the organization has made remarkable progress in laying the groundwork for a unified and thriving digital economy.

2.1.1 INSTITUTIONAL AND ECOSYSTEM GROWTH

Since its inception in November 2020, the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) has demonstrated strong institutional momentum—evolving from a coalition of five founding Member States. In under four years, DCO has expanded its membership to 16 Member States across Africa, Asia, and Europe, reflecting a strategic commitment to inclusivity, diversity, and cross-regional collaboration.

Today, DCO's Member States collectively represent:

OVER

800

Million people, a substantial portion of the global digital population

A COMBINED GDP EXCEEDING

$3

Trillion, offering a strong economic base for digital cooperation and innovation

Beyond Member States, DCO has cultivated a vibrant ecosystem of over 50 Observers and Strategic Partners, including multilateral institutions, development agencies, technology companies, academic institutions, and civil society organizations—all unified by a shared vision of advancing digital prosperity.

2.1.2   GLOBAL DIGITAL COOPERATION

In 2023 and 2024, the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) advanced its global footprint by championing inclusive digital prosperity and multilateral cooperation. Building on its Observer status at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), DCO has positioned itself as a trusted voice for Member States and the wider digital ecosystem in shaping global digital norms and frameworks.

Key Highlights of DCO's Global Engagement and Achievements:

01

UNGA Observer Status

In a historic milestone, DCO secured permanent Observer Status at the UN General Assembly, enabling direct participation in key intergovernmental processes. This elevated DCO's capacity to advocate for the digital priorities of its Member States and influence global policymaking around digital transformation and inclusion.

02

Summit of the Future & Global Digital Compact

DCO played an active role in preparatory processes for the United Nations Summit of the Future, including participation in five UN thematic deep-dive sessions on digital rights, internet governance, AI, and sustainable development. Through these engagements, DCO emphasized co-creation, openness, and interoperability as critical pillars for global digital governance.

03

Launch of the UN Group of Friends for Digital Cooperation

In September 2023, five DCO Member States (Pakistan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Rwanda, and Cyprus) jointly launched the UN Group of Friends for Digital Cooperation. Facilitated by DCO, this coalition fosters coordinated advocacy for digital inclusion, best practice sharing, and alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

04

High-Level Receptions & Side Events

During the UN General Assembly High-Level Week, DCO hosted multiple high-profile events, including:

- A strategic reception co-hosted with the Government of Bahrain on "Digital for Sustainable Development," alongside UNDP and ITU.

- A multistakeholder side event on "Social Digital Cooperation" to promote cross-border digital partnerships.

05

Strategic MOUs and Global Partnership

DCO formalized strategic cooperation through several Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with key global partners to scale impact in areas such as women's empowerment, tax cooperation, digital entrepreneurship, and ethical technology. These agreements strengthen DCO's ability to mobilize technical expertise, policy alignment, and implementation support across Member States.

06

Participation in Global Forums

DCO amplified its voice across nearly 20 international events, including the World Economic Forum, Internet Governance Forum, WTO Public Forum, UNCTAD eWeek, GITEX Africa, and MENA Climate Week. These platforms enabled DCO to elevate Member State perspectives and advocate for inclusive participation in the global digital economy.

Through these global engagements, DCO continues to expand its influence as a champion for multilateral digital cooperation—connecting national ambition with international action and driving forward a future where digital transformation is inclusive, ethical, and sustainable.

2.1.3 FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIC TOOLS

DCO has developed and deployed a set of flagship programs and high-impact strategic tools to enable data-driven execution and inclusive digital transformation.

Key achievements include:

- Rolled out the Digital Economy Navigator (DEN) as a proprietary framework for assessing digital maturity, benchmarking progress, and informing national digital strategies.

- Institutionalized the Digital Prosperity Awards, recognizing cutting-edge solutions and inclusive innovation from across the digital ecosystem.

- Developed and piloted the AI Readiness Toolkit and Ethical AI Evaluator, enabling Member States to build trustworthy and human-centered AI strategies aligned with global ethical norms.

2.1.4 RESEARCH, DATA, AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

DCO has deepened its position as a thought leader and knowledge hub on inclusive digital economy policy.

Notable outputs include:

- Published the DCO Digital Economy Trends Report, providing actionable insights and data-driven analysis for policymakers, investors, and digital actors.

- Produced and distributed EconomiX magazine, a quarterly flagship publication spotlighting innovations, case studies, and global best practices from Member States.

- Disseminated over 15 knowledge products including newsletters, toolkits, policy briefs, and reports, reaching thousands of stakeholders globally.

- Launched Member State–focused policy spotlights and digital ecosystem briefs, tailored to national priorities and emerging global trends.

2.1.5 POLICY INNOVATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

DCO has scaled its role as a strategic enabler of policy harmonization and regulatory innovation across Member States.

Key achievements include:

- Delivered hands-on technical support to Member States on AI ethics, cross-border data flows, digital economy taxation, e-commerce policies, and digital inclusion frameworks.

- Facilitated bilateral and multilateral regulatory cooperation, including advancing the Start-Up framework (Model Start Act & Standard of Excellence for Innovation and Entrepreneurship), which enables simplified market access for startups operating across DCO countries.

- Launched the Digital Foreign Direct Investment (DFDI) Framework, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum and key stakeholders, providing a practical model for attracting responsible and sustainable digital investment.

2.1.6 CAPACITY BUILDING AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

DCO has accelerated capacity-building efforts, especially for youth, women, and underserved groups—strengthening the talent pipeline in Member States.

Key milestones include:

- Trained over 5,000 individuals through targeted digital skills programs, executive education, and leadership development, with over 60% participation from youth and women.

- Scaled the We-Elevate initiative to empower women in tech and entrepreneurship through digital inclusion training, mentorship, and networking across 3 Member States.

- Partnered with leading organizations to roll out workshops on AI and digital entrepreneurship, creating foundational knowledge for emerging digital leaders.

2.1.7 COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

DCO has deepened public awareness and stakeholder engagement through high-visibility campaigns and thought leadership.

Key outcomes include:

• Reached over XXX million people across digital and media platforms, amplifying narratives around inclusive digital prosperity.

• Published 8 issues of the DCO newsletter, 4 editions of EconomiX magazine, and hosted 20+ public webinars and policy dialogues.

• Elevated the voices of Member States and strategic partners through curated storytelling, campaigns, and policy spotlights.

• Launched #Digital4Development and #WeElevateVoices advocacy campaigns, increasing visibility of digital cooperation as a global priority.

These achievements have not only elevated DCO's relevance and visibility on the global stage but also laid a strong foundation for executing the 2025–2028 4-Year Agenda. As DCO enters a new chapter, it builds upon a proven track record of agility, collaboration, and results-driven execution.

HOSTED
20+
PUBLIC WEBINARS AND POLICY DIALOGUES.

2.2
THE RISE OF THE DIGITAL ECONOMY NAVIGATOR (DEN)

In the quest to better understand and steer the development of digital economy and transformation across diverse national contexts, the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) developed a landmark tool—the Digital Economy Navigator (DEN).

This tool represents a significant evolution in how digital economies are assessed globally, offering a human-centric, data-driven framework to gauge digital economy maturity in a way that is actionable, inclusive, and forward-looking.

The DEN was born out of the need for a unified, comprehensive assessment framework that bridges the gap between fragmented digital indices and country-level policy needs.

Unlike traditional digital economy assessments that emphasize infrastructure or e-commerce metrics in isolation, DEN offers a multi-dimensional, integrative perspective that aligns closely with the DCO's strategic ambition of fostering inclusive digital prosperity.

WHAT MAKES DEN UNIQUE

The DEN distinguishes itself through several breakthrough innovations:

- It adopts a people-centric methodology, combining 60 secondary indicators with 42 primary indicators collected through a proprietary global survey of over 27,000 individuals in 50 countries, ensuring localized insights rooted in user experiences.

- It is structured across three key dimensions—Digital Enablers, Digital Business, and Digital Society—further broken into ten thematic pillars ranging from infrastructure and finance to innovation, inclusion, and workforce digitization.

- Each country is benchmarked across a five-tier maturity classification: Nascent, Emerging, Transitioning, Advanced, and Frontier, helping policy actors visualize progress and gaps clearly.

A GLOBAL TOOL FOR LOCAL IMPACT

DEN's design is rooted in rigorous benchmarking and consultation. It draws from over 60 global indices and studies, integrates input from international experts and policymakers.

By synthesizing global best practices with local realities, DEN serves as:

- A benchmarking tool for tracking progress across time and geographies.

- A policy development guide, offering diagnostic insights on regulatory gaps, infrastructure needs, and skills mismatches.

- A capacity-building platform, encouraging tailored interventions aligned with national priorities.
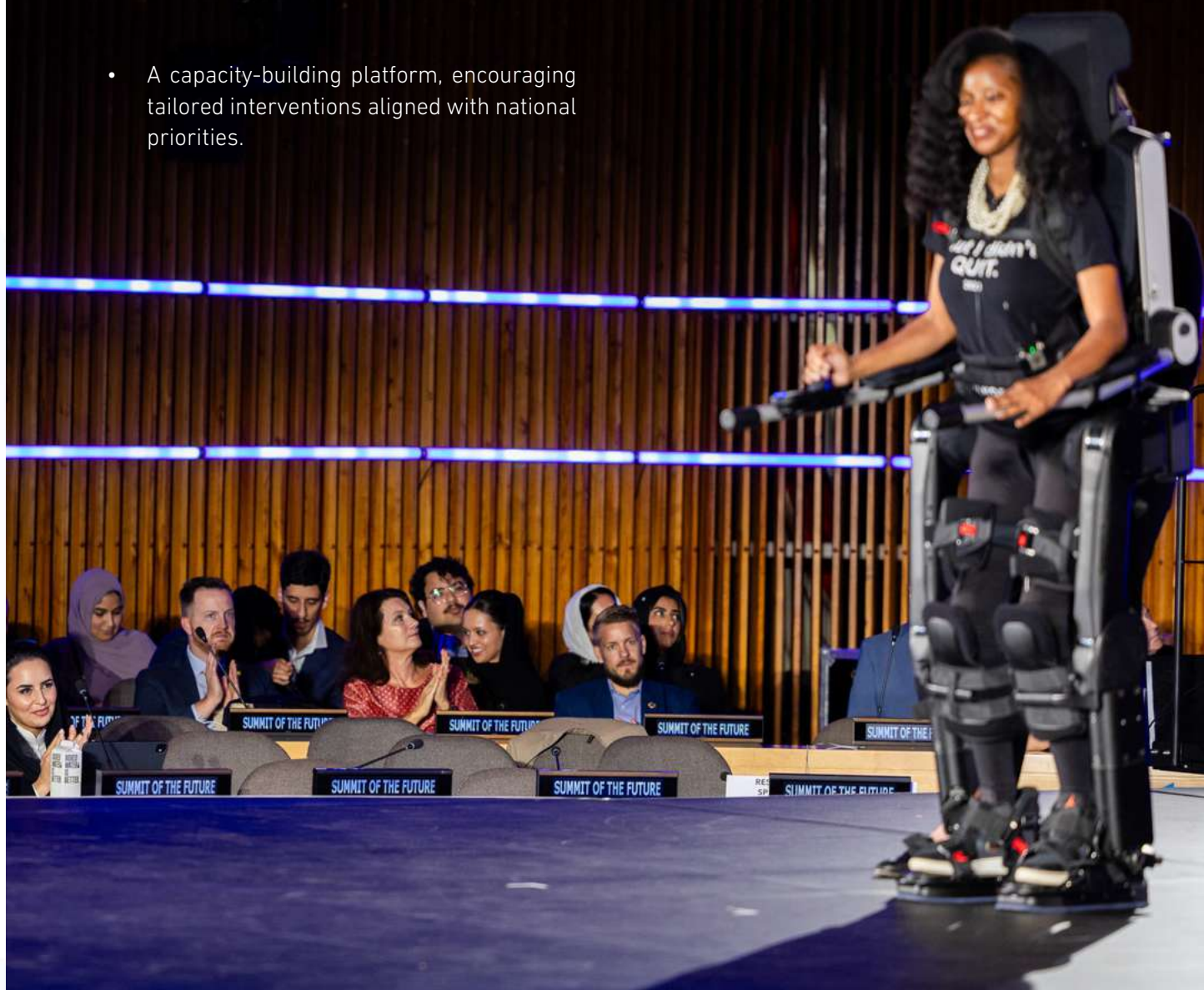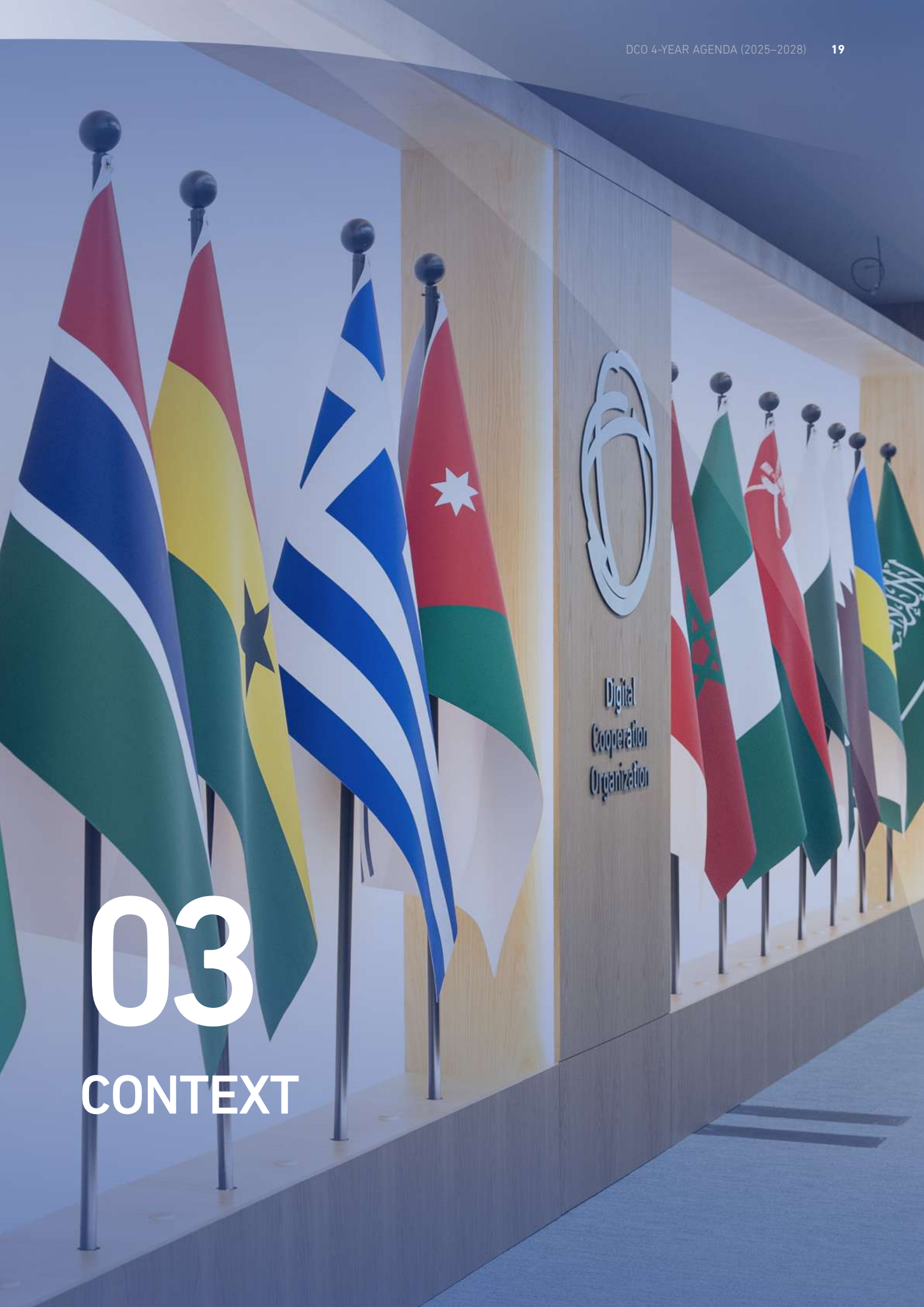
03
CONTEXT

The 2025–2028 4-Year Agenda was developed to guide the Organization's strategic direction, aligned with the 2030 Strategic Roadmap, in order to strengthen cooperation to boost digital economic resilience and foster social prosperity by advancing digital maturity across Member States.

In 2024, the DCO Secretariat launched a comprehensive strategy review process to assess progress, reframe priorities, and position the organization to lead amid fast-evolving digital and geopolitical shifts.

This process was both consultative and evidence-driven, engaging Member States, global experts and partner organizations. The goal was to design a focused and forward-looking agenda that aligns with DCO's long-term mission of advancing social prosperity and digital growth through unified efforts.

The resulting 4-Year Agenda is structured to accelerate momentum toward DCO's three strategic goals for 2030

1. **A thriving cross-border digital market**
2. **A data-driven digital economy**
3. **A responsible digital economy**

Every initiative and enabler in the agenda have been crafted to translate these goals into measurable outcomes, ensuring that DCO builds the institutional capacity and multilateral cooperation needed to enable prosperity for all.

3.1
METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

The strategy review followed a multi-layered, evidence-based methodology grounded in both internal reflections and external benchmarking. The objective was to ensure that the 4-Year Agenda was not only ambitious but also responsive to global shifts, national realities, and operational constraints.

THE PROCESS INCORPORATED:

01

Internal Strategic Review

DCO's current strategy, performance of ongoing initiatives, internal capabilities, and stakeholder feedback were thoroughly assessed.

02

External Market and Ecosystem Analysis

Global digital economy trends, multilateral organization benchmarks (including ITU, UNCTAD, OECD, WIPO, WEF, the EU, the AU, and ASEAN), and emerging technologies were reviewed to guide opportunity identification.

03

Stakeholder Feedback

Over 25 high-level interviews and consultations were conducted with ministers, observers, and key experts including members of the Sounding Advisory Board.

04

Gap Analysis

A digital maturity gap assessment of Member States was carried out using the Digital Economy Navigator (DEN), identifying common barriers and cluster-specific priorities.

05

Case Studies and Financial Assessments

Global multilateral organizations were studied for best practices in strategy, structure, operating models, and financial sustainability, informing DCO's own design.

These elements were synthesized into a three-phase strategic development cycle, the Assessment Phase, the Co-Creation Phase and the Design & Alignment Phase. This comprehensive methodology ensures that the resulting strategy is grounded, globally attuned, member-centric, and fully executable. It reflects the 360-degree lens applied to position DCO as a leader in shaping a resilient, inclusive digital economy.

3.2
DCO MEMBER STATES' GAP ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

As part of its strategic planning and agenda-setting process, DCO leveraged the Digital Economy Navigator (DEN) to conduct a comprehensive gap assessment across its 16 Member States to better understand the strengths, challenges, and opportunities that exist across its diverse membership.

The DEN is a proprietary diagnostic tool developed by DCO to benchmark digital economy performance, identify critical development gaps, and align national priorities with global best practices across all the DEN pillars. The findings from this assessment provided a strong foundation for shaping the 4-Year Agenda, allowing DCO to deliver differentiated and targeted value to each country.

The assessment revealed a dual-cluster configuration of member states with common challenges observed across both clusters.

• More than half of Member States are still developing in the areas of data regulation, e-commerce policy, and emerging tech governance.

• There is wide disparity in digital inclusion, with some Member States lagging in women's digital participation and rural connectivity.

• Public sector digitization is advancing rapidly in select countries, but interoperability and user-centric services remain fragmented across others.

• Most Member States lack robust startup ecosystems and innovation enablers such as accelerators, R&D funding, and digital entrepreneurship policies.

• Insufficient access to affordable, high-speed internet in rural and underserved areas.

• Limited digital skills and a shortage of ICT talent, especially among women and youth.

• Regulatory fragmentation and a lack of unified frameworks for cross-border data flows and e-commerce.

In addition, the DEN provided heatmaps and country profiles that served as the foundation for developing DCO's strategic interventions and measuring progress over time.

As part of the Gap assessment conducted, DCO member states were also benchmarked against leading economies like the U.S. and China in areas such as digital infrastructure, digital finance, data regulation, digital health and education, and digital inclusion.

While some countries performed well in areas like digital infrastructure and public sector digitization, significant disparities remain across other dimensions—particularly in social inclusion, innovation, and digital trade.

Ultimately, the assessment powered by DEN helped DCO develop a 4-Year Agenda—ensuring that each program, pillar, and initiative is grounded in evidence, aligned with local realities, and equipped to deliver measurable outcomes.

The insights gathered from this assessment were critical in shaping the initiatives, strategic focus areas, and operating model of the 4-Year Agenda, ensuring that DCO delivers maximum value and tailored support to every member state based on their unique context and aspirations.

04

THE 4-YEAR AGENDA
(2025–2028)

This section outlines the key components of the 4-Year Agenda and explains how they work together in order to strengthen cooperation to boost digital economic resilience and foster social prosperity by advancing digital maturity across Member States.

4.1
2028 AMBITION

DCO's 4-year agenda empowers the organization to realize its full potential, deliver meaningful impact, and progress steadily toward achieving its 2030 strategic goals. The ambition for the four-year period is to Strengthen cooperation to boost digital economic resilience and foster social prosperity by advancing digital maturity across member states.

OVERVIEW OF
DCO 4-YEAR AGENDA

DCO's 4-year agenda empowers the organization to realize its full potential, deliver meaningful impact, and progress steadily toward achieving its 2030 strategic goals

VISION

A world where every country, business and person has a fair opportunity to prosper in a cross-border and sustainable digital economy

MISSION

Achieving social prosperity and growth of the digital economy by unifying efforts to advance and promote interest in the digital economy

2028 AMBITION

Strengthen **cooperation** to boost **digital economic** resilience and foster social prosperity by advancing **digital maturity** across **Member States**

DIGITAL ENABLERS

This foundational pillar is dedicated to strengthening the building blocks that support a modern and integrated digital economy.

Through this strategic pillar, DCO aims to establish a unified policy framework, accelerate regulatory harmonization, and enhance resilience through resource sharing

DIGITAL CORRIDORS

This pillar aims to integrate the digital economies of DCO Member States by strengthening cross-border digital trade and mobility

DCO will promote cross-border digital trade, enable secure data exchange, and cultivate a skilled, mobile digital workforce

DIGITAL BUSINESS & INNOVATION

This pillar empowers startups, SMEs, and entrepreneurs by fostering innovation ecosystems, expanding access to capital, and promoting R&D.

Under this strategic pillar, DCO aims to foster an innovation-driven ecosystem, accelerate the growth of digital enterprises, and empower entrepreneurs

DIGITAL SOCIETY

This pillar champions digital inclusion, accessibility, and environmental sustainability

This strategic pillar enables DCO to ensure equitable digital access, foster inclusivity, and minimize environmental impact through innovative solutions

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

DIGITAL ECONOMY NAVIGATOR (DEN)
A global intelligence hub for digital economy readiness and maturity.

DIGITAL PROSPERITY SUMMIT (DPS)
An international platform to drive collaboration in digital economic development.

DIGITAL ECONOMY IMPACT FUND
A financing platform for supporting member states' digital transformation efforts.

ORGANIZATION ENABLERS

GOVERNANCE & STRATEGY

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS & COMMUNICATION

PERSPECTIVES & INSIGHTS

PEOPLE & OPERATIONS

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

At the heart of DCO's 4-Year Agenda lies a suite of Strategic Initiatives and Flagship Programs—designed to catalyze inclusive transformation across digital economies. These programs are purposefully crafted to address pressing needs identified through gap assessments, benchmarking analysis, and member state consultations.

They serve as the primary levers through which DCO translates its strategic ambition into measurable results.

In addition to the 3 flagship programs, five (5) organization enablers have also been carefully embedded in the 4-year agenda.

These enablers are aimed at improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the secretariat to deliver on the mission of the organization.

4.2
STRATEGIC PILLARS AND INITIATIVES

The strategic initiatives are organized under DCO's four Strategic Pillars, with each pillar representing a critical domain of the digital economy, with defined objectives that speak to the overarching ambition of advancing digital economic resilience and social prosperity. Each initiative has been carefully formulated to address specific challenges and unlock opportunities for Member States.

PILLAR 1: DIGITAL ENABLERS

This foundational pillar is dedicated to strengthening the building blocks that support a modern and integrated digital economy. It focuses on governance systems, institutional capacities, and interoperability mechanisms that create an enabling environment for innovation, resilience, and digital sovereignty. It cuts across regulatory policy, digital infrastructure, and governance innovation.

The Digital Enablers pillar is composed of two (2) initiatives, each designed to foster a unified policy framework, accelerate regulatory harmonization, and enhance resilience through resource sharing across Member States.

PILLAR 2: DIGITAL CORRIDORS

01

Harmonized Governance Alliance

This initiative seeks to harmonize regulations across Member States, focusing on key areas such as online misinformation, digital content monitoring, digital taxation and cybersecurity frameworks.

02

Unity Grid Nexus

This initiative will facilitate resources and knowledge sharing, allowing exchange of best-in-class digital governance practices and benchmarking among Member States to accelerate service delivery reform as well as the development of cross-border digital infrastructure.

This pillar aims to integrate the digital economies of DCO Member States by strengthening cross-border digital trade and mobility. It focuses on trusted connectivity, talent flow, and interoperability to reduce friction in digital exchanges. Digital Corridors relate directly to the domains of digital trade, cross-border data flows, and digital identity systems.

The Digital Corridors pillar is composed of two (2) key initiatives, designed to promote cross-border digital trade, enable secure data exchange, and foster mobility within a skilled digital workforce across Member States.

PILLAR 3: DIGITAL BUSINESS AND INNOVATION

01

Trade Flow Treaties

This initiative focuses on enabling seamless mobility of digital goods and services through multilateral digital trade treaties and facilitating cross-border data flows.

02

DCO Talent Gateway

The initiative aims to facilitate the mobility of digital talent across Member States by promoting Mutual Recognition of Qualifications (MRQs) and establishing Digital Skills VISA programs for skilled individuals.

This pillar empowers startups, SMEs, and entrepreneurs by fostering innovation ecosystems, expanding access to capital, and promoting R&D. It targets the economic productivity and entrepreneurship domains of the digital economy, supporting the transition from traditional to knowledge-based digitally transformed economies.

The Digital Business and Innovation pillar is composed of three (3) key initiatives, aimed at driving innovation, accelerating digital enterprise growth, and empowering entrepreneurs within the Member States.

PILLAR 4: DIGITAL SOCIETY

01

Capital Catalyst

This initiative focuses on improving access to cross-border capital through an accelerator program for startups and facilitating foreign direct investment (FDI) flows.

02

Frontier Technology Accelerator

This initiative is centered on fostering research and development through the establishment of Centers of Excellence (CoEs) and the facilitation of ethical frameworks for emerging technologies.

03

NexaBridge

This initiative aims to support SMEs and businesses in adopting the best digital practices, creating a bridge that transcends to the next era of digital transformation excellence for businesses and sectors.

This pillar champions digital inclusion, accessibility, and environmental sustainability. It ensures that all citizens, especially the underserved, benefit from digital progress. It aligns with domains such as digital literacy, broadband access, social inclusivity, and green digital transformation.

The Digital Society pillar is composed of three (3) key initiatives, each designed to ensure equitable digital access, promote inclusivity, and minimize the environmental impact of digital developments.

01

Skill Universe

This initiative provides specialized ICT training and certification programs aimed at enhancing the digital skills of individuals.

02

Inclusion Grid

This initiative will provide support to Member States to facilitate the execution of national programs that aim to enhance broadband speed, expand coverage, and reduce costs to ensure greater digital access across underserved regions.

03

EcoDigital Tech

This initiative seeks to minimize the environmental impact of digital infrastructure by promoting e-waste management and establishing guidelines for sustainable digital practices.

These initiatives across the four strategic pillars represent DCO's blueprint for an inclusive and resilient digital future—one that advances shared prosperity while ensuring sustainability, cooperation, and innovation remain at the center of execution. Together, these pillars set the foundation for coordinated interventions that are impactful, scalable, and future proof.

4.3
FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

In addition to the ten (10) initiatives proposed under each pillar, three (3) flagship programs have been identified to provide overarching support and add significant value across all four (4) pillars of the agenda. The flagship programs are large-scale, high-visibility endeavors that symbolize DCO's strategic direction and serve as platforms for multi-stakeholder cooperation. These programs are designed to maximize impact, attract partnerships, and generate momentum across Member States.

THESE FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS ARE:

01

DIGITAL ECONOMY NAVIGATOR (DEN)

Building on its successful launch in 2024, the Digital Economy Navigator (DEN) will evolve over the next four years into a global intelligence hub for digital economy readiness and maturity. The DEN will serve as a dynamic, real-time platform that not only measures progress but actively informs policy design, investment strategies, and multilateral cooperation. It will deepen its coverage and capabilities to become:

A comprehensive digital observatory, offering granular insights across all pillars and dimensions of the digital economy covering skills, innovation, trade, and sustainability indicators.

A decision-support system for Member States, enabling scenario planning and impact forecasting.

A global reference tool used by governments, development partners, and private investors to assess digital opportunities and risks.

A living index that is continuously updated through Member State data partnerships, regional consultations, and AI-enhanced analytics.

02

DIGITAL PROSPERITY SUMMIT

The Digital Prosperity Summit (DPS) will serve as a premier international platform, uniting global leaders, innovators, and stakeholders to drive collaboration in digital economic development. Through this annual summit, the General Secretariat will highlight digital transformation pioneers and recognize their efforts. The summit will also facilitate cross-border engagements, encouraging high-level discussions on the future of digital economies, strengthening cooperation, and shaping forward-thinking policies to ensure sustainable progress.

03

DIGITAL ECONOMY IMPACT FUND (DEIF)

The Digital Economy-Impact Fund will strengthen the financial capacity of the Organization, ensuring that critical initiatives are effectively funded and executed. It comprises two (2) distinct financial streams: The Digital Development (Aid) Fund, which will provide financial assistance to Member States in executing digital transformation strategies, including infrastructure development and digital projects; and the Digital Prosperity Fund, which will focus on financing the execution of DCO initiatives. This fund will act as a platform for supporting collaborative efforts aimed at advancing Member States' digital transitions and scaling impactful programs.

4.4
ORGANIZATIONAL ENABLERS

To support the effective implementation of the DCO 4-Year Agenda, the General Secretariat has identified five core Organizational Enablers. These enablers represent critical internal functions, processes, and collaborative systems designed to anchor the execution of strategic initiatives, optimize operations, and promote sustainable performance across the organization.

Together, these enablers serve as the institutional backbone of the 4-Year Agenda—ensuring agility, accountability, and continuity in DCO's mission delivery while maximizing value to Member States.

The organizational enablers include:

• Strategy & Governance

• People & Operations

• Perspectives & Insights

• Stakeholder Relations & Communication

• Financial Sustainability

4.5
MEASURING WHAT MATTERS: STRATEGIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

To complement its KPI framework and performance targets, DCO has established a rigorous methodology for impact assessment that enables the organization to quantify the economic value created through its strategic initiatives.

This framework strengthens the Playbook's commitment to execution, accountability, and impact-driven outcomes.

A DATA-DRIVEN IMPACT ESTIMATION FRAMEWORK

DCO, in collaboration with strategic advisors, has developed a 6-step impact assessment model grounded in global best practices and multilateral benchmarks. This model estimates the direct and indirect contributions to GDP across Member States from DCO's initiatives, with projections extending through 2028.

The approach draws from credible data sources including the World Bank, ITU, UNDESA, and global indices, ensuring reliable estimation of outcomes such as trade expansion, job creation, infrastructure efficiency, and environmental impact.

INDICATIVE 2028 OUTCOMES

DCO's 4-Year Agenda has the potential to generate significant economic and social value by 2028, if successfully executed and supported by favorable conditions across Member States. While these projections are based on robust modeling and global benchmarks, they are indicative and subject to variables including national policy adoption, geopolitical shifts, and broader macroeconomic trends.

All things being equal, and assuming strong Member State engagement and coordinated implementation, the initiatives could contribute up to USD 25 billion in annual economic value across the multiple domains:

DIGITAL TRADE AND POLICY HARMONIZATION

Potential increase of

$2B

In intra-DCO digital trade

Estimated **$2B**

In cost savings from improved dispute resolution and shared governance mechanisms

UP TO **$0.6B**

In additional tax revenue via harmonized digital services frameworks

WORKFORCE AND INNOVATION

OVER

80K

Individuals upskilled, with potential productivity gains of ~$2.5B

Mobilization of digitally skilled talent yielding

$1B

In economic value

Increased investment in research and responsible innovation potentially generating

$1.9B

In IMPACT

INVESTMENT MOBILIZATION

$500M

In digital FDI mobilized, with projected GDP impact of $2B+

Start-up accelerators and capital access programs yielding up to

$0.9B

In impact

Development of regional infrastructure and innovation hubs with estimated value of

$1.3B

DIGITAL INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Inclusive broadband and digital infrastructure efforts contributing up to

$5B

In GDP

Circular economy and sustainable infrastructure programs potentially generating

$1B

in blended impact

05
IMPLEMENTATION & GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The successful execution of DCO's 4-Year Agenda requires a robust and agile governance structure that ensures alignment, accountability, and acceleration across all initiatives.

To this end, DCO has developed an implementation and governance framework that enables effective delivery while encouraging innovation and member engagement.

5.1
IMPLEMENTATION PHASES

DCO'S EXECUTION MODEL IS DIVIDED INTO THREE PHASES OVER FOUR YEARS:

PHASE 1

EARLY ACTIVATION (2025)

- Build on the momentum of existing initiatives to drive adoption based on member state priorities whilst also launching high-priority initiatives and pilots.

- Establishes institutional capacity, stakeholder buy-in, and program visibility.

PHASE 2

STRUCTURED SCALING, ADOPTION AND ACCELERATION (2026–2027)

- Consolidates learnings from Phase 1 to refine programs and scale across Member States.

- Expand global footprints.

- Expands partnerships and mobilizes resources through Digital Economy Impact Fund (DEIF) and multilateral engagement.

PHASE 3

SCALING INNOVATION AND IMPACT (2028)

Focus on bridging the digital divide by effectively addressing gaps in digital maturity across Member States

- Facilitate collective growth and resilience

- Attain financial sustainability

- Embeds institutionalized systems for monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

- Highlights measurable socio-economic and policy outcomes for Member States.

5.2
ANNUAL REVIEW AND ADAPTATION

To ensure agility, accountability, and alignment throughout the implementation of the 4-Year Agenda, the DCO Secretariat will institutionalize a structured **annual review and adaptation** process. This mechanism will enable data-led recalibration of initiatives, resources, and priorities in response to evolving Member State needs and global digital trends.

Each year starting from the second year of implementation, typically in Q4, the Secretariat will conduct a formal review involving:

- **Performance review/audits** using the Strategic KPI Framework to assess progress against targets.
- **Stakeholder consultations**, including structured feedback from Member States and partners.
- **Scenario analysis and adaptive planning** to update initiative roadmaps, address bottlenecks, and optimize resource allocation.

This process will culminate in an **Annual Implementation Report**, summarizing performance, key insights, and recommended adjustments. Highlights of this report will be presented at the **DCO General Assembly**, serving as a platform for transparency, collective learning, and validation.

To complement the yearly cycle, DCO will also undertake a **comprehensive Progress Review in mid-2027**, once most initiatives are fully operational. This deeper assessment will evaluate early outcomes, validate underlying assumptions, and refine the execution model for the remaining implementation period.

Through this governance approach, the 4-Year Agenda will remain **a live document** — one that evolves in lockstep with the ambitions of Member States and the dynamic realities of the digital economy.

06

FUNDING STRATEGY

The success of the DCO 4-Year Agenda (2025–2028) hinges on efficient execution, as well as the ability to secure stable, diversified, and sustainable financing. As DCO evolves, it must transition from reliance on traditional funding models toward innovative, blended, and partnership-driven financial sustainability mechanisms.

The Financial Sustainability Plan (FSP) outlines how DCO will mobilize and manage resources over the next four years to ensure its institutional resilience, accelerate the execution of strategic initiatives, and deliver maximum value to Member States and stakeholders. It is designed to enhance predictability, transparency, and efficiency—while enabling agility in responding to new priorities and emerging opportunities.

6.1
FUNDING PHILOSOPHY & STRATEGIC APPROACH

DCO's financial model is built on five core principles:

01

Diversification

Reduce dependency on a single funding source and broaden the donor base to include private sector, multilateral partners, and philanthropic entities.

02

Shared Responsibility

Promote Member State ownership and long-term commitment through assessed and voluntary contributions.

03

Programmatic Resilience

Enable consistent delivery of strategic initiatives regardless of economic or political shifts.

04

Partnership Leverage

Maximize co-financing and catalytic impact by engaging development banks, donor governments, foundations, and corporate actors.

05

Agility and Innovation

Embrace flexible instruments such as blended finance, challenge funds, and pooled grant mechanisms to finance innovation.

6.2
KEY FUNDING MECHANISMS FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

6.2.1 CHAMPION-TO-PILOT MODEL

DCO will adopt a **"Champion-to-Pilot"** approach where strategic initiatives are launched and scaled based on stakeholder commitment and sponsorship.

- **Championing** allows Member States, private sector leaders, or institutional partners to take the lead in funding or executing a given initiative.

- Champions benefit from branding, thought leadership, and early access to results.

- DCO plays a facilitative role—coordinating, standardizing, and scaling successful pilots for broader replication.

6.2.2 STRATEGIC CO-FINANCING & PARTNERSHIPS

DCO will actively cultivate partnerships with:

- **Development Finance Institutions (e.g., World Bank, Islamic Development Bank)**

- **Multilateral and bilateral donors**

- **Philanthropic foundations**

- **Technology leaders and industry alliances**

These partnerships will leverage in-kind expertise, technical resources, and financial contributions to drive ecosystem-wide transformation.

6.2.3 DIGITAL ECONOMY IMPACT FUND (DEIF)

The **DEIF** is one of the flagship programs and will be utilized as a financing mechanism for its most impactful initiatives. It is structured into two complementary tiers:

- **Prosperity Fund:** Supports the piloting of new ideas, entrepreneurship programs, and innovation platforms.

- **Developmental (Aid) Fund:** Enables direct support to Member States for national digital economy strategies, capacity building, and regulatory development.

The DEIF will be structured to:

- Mobilize blended capital (grants, equity)

- Attract donor pledges through challenge windows and thematic funds

- Provide match funding for innovation hubs and accelerators

DCO will also explore trust fund arrangements, pooled funding models, and endowment creation for longer-term resource security.
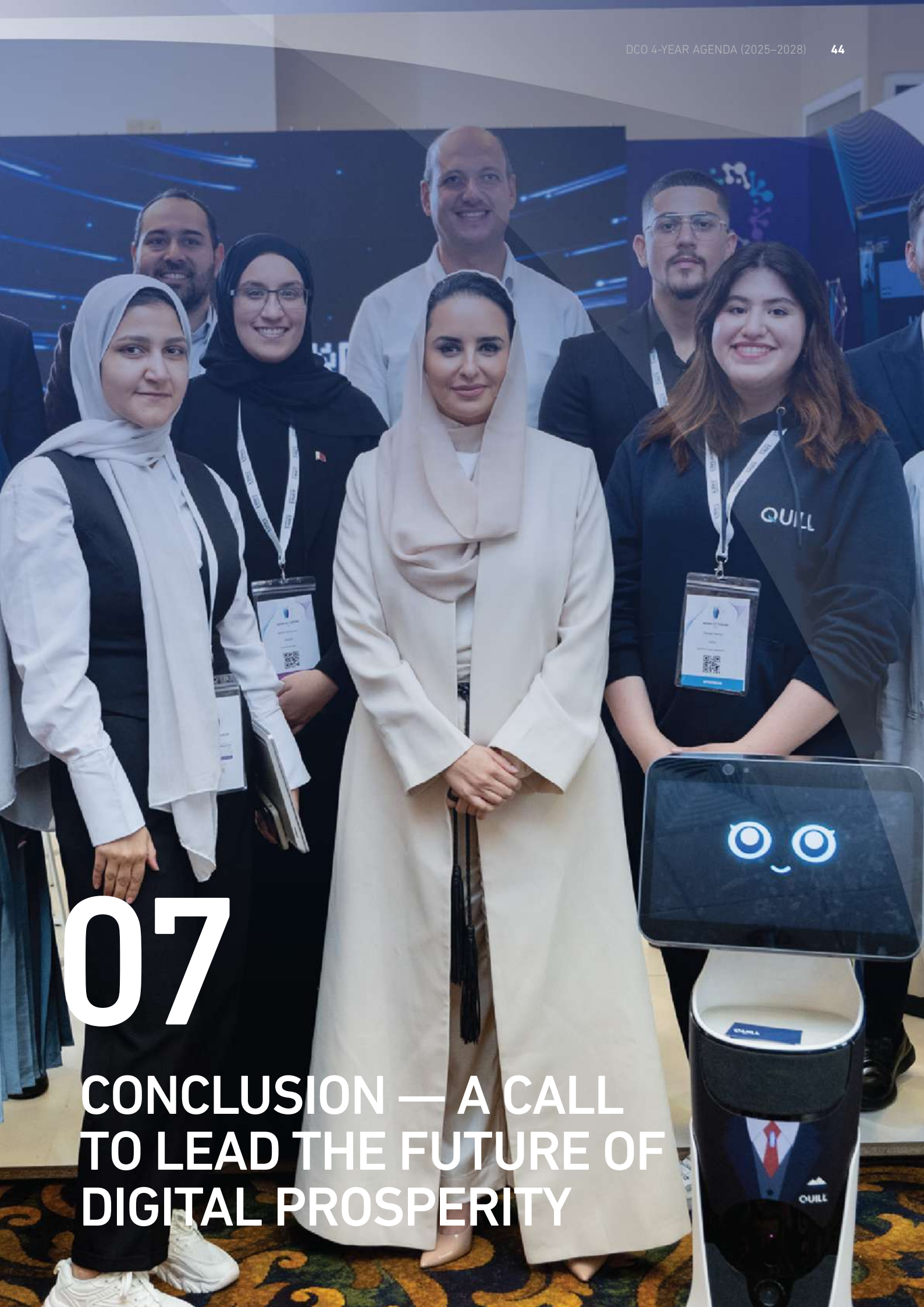
07

CONCLUSION — A CALL TO LEAD THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL PROSPERITY

At the core of DCO's mission is not just technology or transformation — it is human dignity, shared opportunity, and inclusivity. It is about the student in a remote village gaining access to online learning; the startup founder in an emerging nation receiving seed funding; the woman entrepreneur breaking barriers and building digital businesses that uplift communities; the policymaker harmonizing regulations for cross-border digital trade; and the innovator designing ethical AI to solve real-world problems.

The DCO 4-Year Agenda (2025–2028) is more than a strategic document. It is a manifesto for digital empowerment, a framework for multilateral cooperation, and a contract of shared ambition and impact between governments, private sector, civil society, and individuals. This Agenda anchored in inclusivity, resilience, sustainability and driven by innovation toward digital prosperity for all.

As we shift from vision to execution, this Playbook becomes both a strategic compass and operational mandate. It defines where we go, how we get there, and who we bring along.

A MOVEMENT FOR COLLECTIVE IMPACT

The digital economy will be co-created by a coalition of champions across sectors, each bringing their strengths, resources, and voices to the table.

DCO calls upon multi-stakeholders including:

- **Governments** to act boldly—harmonize policies, invest in digital infrastructure, and champion inclusive transformation.

- **Private Sector Leaders** to co-fund, co-design, and scale the innovations that unlock opportunity across borders.

- **Youth, Innovators & Entrepreneurs** to lead from the frontlines, transforming ideas into solutions, and local impact into global momentum.

- **Civil Society Organizations** to safeguard inclusion and ethics, ensuring no one is left behind in the race toward digital modernization.

- **Multilateral and International Institutions** to align and amplify—bridging global governance, sustainable development, and digital cooperation.

- **Academia & Think Tanks** to shape the next wave of research, policy, and innovation at the intersection of technology and society.

JOIN THE DCO MOVEMENT

This is our moment—to co-create a new era of digital prosperity that transcends borders, an era where the digital economy serves the many, not the few.

We invite you to:

- **Co-create** the future through policy, programs, and partnerships.

- **Champion** the transformation by funding, mentoring, or amplifying impactful initiatives.

- **Collaborate** on innovation that addresses the urgent needs of today—and the unknowns of tomorrow.

Let us build a future where every country—regardless of size or status—has a seat at the digital table. Where every person—regardless of age, gender, or location—can access opportunity and be prosperous in the digital age.

Join the DCO movement to
enable prosperity for all.

#DigitalProsperity4All