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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DATA AND DIGITAL GOVERNANCE 2024

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Shanghai and Deqing

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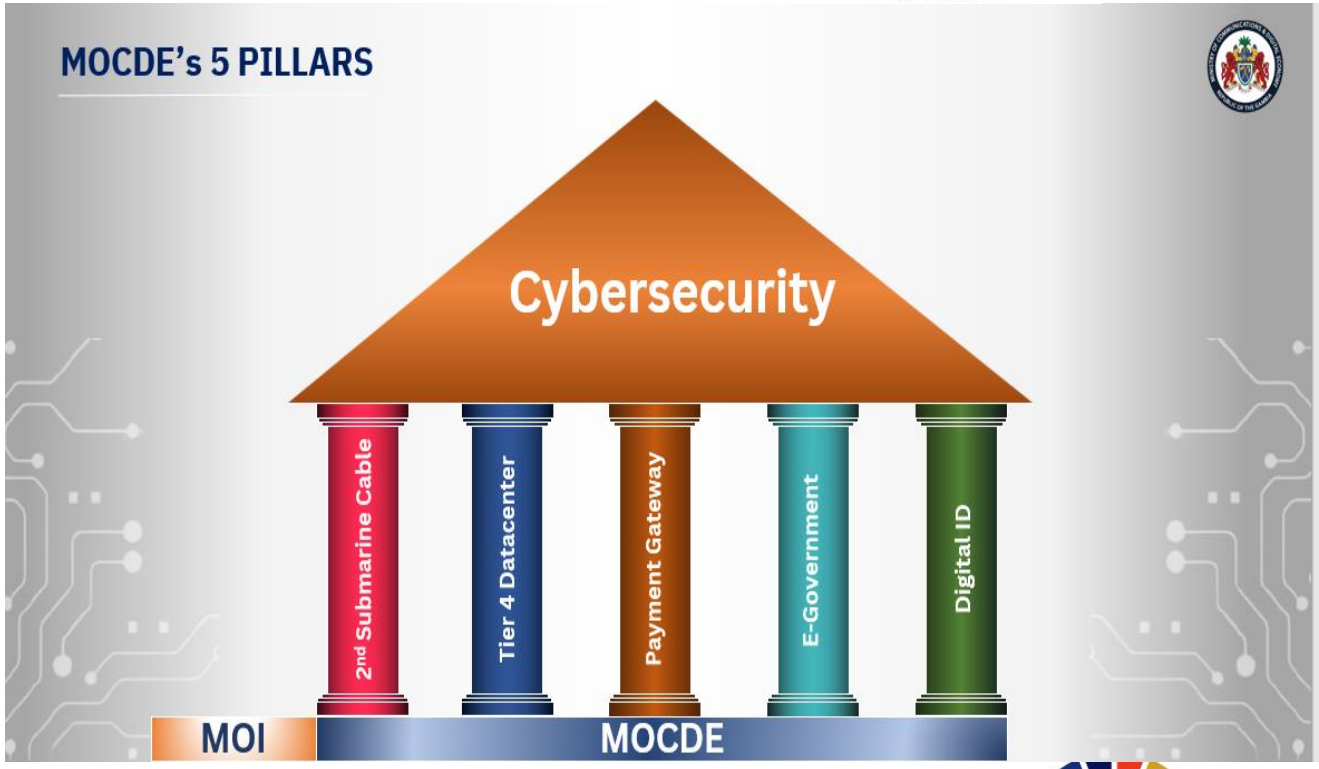
Background

- Population: ~2.4 million
- **Internet Penetration**: ~51.0 %
- **Mobile Penetration**: ~164%
- Government initiatives on digital economy (e.g., National Development Plan, Digital Economy Master Plan, ICT4D Policy etc.)
- 1 fixed, and 4 GMS companies, 5th one licensed
- Gambia's Digital Economy is evolving that requires a mix of supply side policies and investment to boost access and affordability and Digital skills development.



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1. What are two critical lessons learned in implementing data/digital transformation strategy in your country: what works and what doesn't?

• What Works

- **Investment in Infrastructure is Key to Success**
- **E-Government Platforms**: The implementation of key services, including **online tax payments**, **integrated Financial Managements** has enhanced efficiency and transparency.
- **Broadband and Submarine Cables**: Investments in the **ACE submarine cable** and national broadband expansion have significantly improved internet connectivity, supporting economic growth and digital service penetration.

• What Doesn't Work

- **Interoperability Issues**: The lack of seamless integration between **government digital platforms** has hindered cross-platform data sharing, leading to inefficiencies.
- **Cybersecurity Gaps**: Although frameworks are in place, inadequate **cybersecurity infrastructure** leaves government and business data vulnerable to threats, undermining trust in digital systems.

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2. What are two challenges that you face, and would like to learn from other countries?

- **1. Infrastructure Deficit**

- Limited access to **reliable broadband** in rural areas continues to hamper widespread adoption of e-government services.
- Underdeveloped **data centers** and limited cloud infrastructure create bottlenecks for digital transformation.

- **2.** Underdeveloped **digital payments platform**
- **3**. Inadequate Digital Skills

Challenges We Want to Learn from Other Countries

1. Overcoming Digital Divide

- How have countries successfully bridged the **urban-rural digital divide**, ensuring equitable access to digital services for all citizens?

2. Interoperability and Integration Challenges

3. What cybersecurity strategies have proven successful in countries with similar challenges, especially in developing **national-level** security protocols?

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3. Suggest one recommendation for further discussion in UN forums; how can the UN and the global community better support countries in advancing effective data/digital governance strategies?

1. Priority for Infrastructure Development

- **Broadband Access**: The UN should prioritize **regional infrastructure** initiatives to expand broadband coverage and **data center capacity** in West Africa.
- **Cloud Computing**: Support the creation of **cloud infrastructure** to enhance government data storage and processing capabilities.

2. Capacity Building for Digital Governance

- Focus on **training and knowledge transfer** to help countries develop robust **digital governance frameworks**.
- Facilitate collaboration on emerging technologies, such as **AI,** machine learning and **big data**, and their governance implications for sustainable development.

Conclusion

- **Digital transformation** offers immense potential to drive sustainable and inclusive growth.
- However, challenges like **infrastructure gaps** and **capacity deficits** must be addressed through **global cooperation**, particularly within the **West African** region.
- The UN can play a pivotal role in supporting countries by providing **infrastructure development** and **capacity-building** initiatives, helping to ensure sustainable digital futures. Continue to encourage south-south collaboration initiative such as the a2i (myGov)

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Thank You

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