Background

- **Digital Government Projects Management Center** was established in Uzbekistan in 2013 to lead digital economy reforms and enhance the "Digital Government" system under the "Digital Uzbekistan-2030" program.

- The **Single Portal for Interactive Public Services** (my.gov.uz) allows citizens to access 670 electronic public services, up from 370 in 2022, providing a more convenient alternative to traditional methods.

- Uzbekistan improved its ranking in the **UN E-Government Survey 2024** by 6 positions, moving into the **Very High EGDI** group, with a total increase of 24 positions over two ratings.

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

What works:

- **Digital Uzbekistan – 2030 Strategy:** Roadmap for digital transformation in key sectors and governance.
- **Improved ICT Infrastructure:** Focus on enhancing infrastructure and e-governance.
- **Expanded Services:** Central e-government service (my.gov.uz) launched in 2013; now offers 670 services.
- **Support for SDGs:** Aims to promote inclusive digital access and bridge the digital divide.
- **Programs for Vulnerable Communities:** Targets women and rural populations to boost economic growth and social equity.
- **Partnership with UNDESA:** Ensures alignment with global best practices.
- **Guidelines for Improvement:** Follows UNDESA's recommendations to enhance participation and service access.

What doesn't work

- **Digital Divide:** Significant gaps remain in rural areas versus urban centers.
- **Internet Access:** 86% of urban residents use the internet, while only 81% of rural residents have similar access according to ITU.
- **Infrastructure Issues:** Urban areas like Tashkent benefit from advanced networks (5G), while rural regions use outdated systems.
- **Digital Literacy:** Limited skills and resistance to change, especially among older and rural populations.
- **Data Security Concerns:** Issues related to privacy can lower public trust in e-services.
- **Training Deficits:** Lack of training for public sector employees hampers effective use of digital tools.

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

Challenge 1: Bridging the Digital Divide

- **Urban vs. Rural Disparity**: Urban centers like Tashkent are advancing rapidly in digital services, while rural and underserved areas lag behind in connectivity and infrastructure.
- **Access to E-Services**: The existing gaps hinder the goal of inclusivity in digital service access.
- **Learning from Successful Models**: Countries like Estonia, which have effectively integrated rural areas into digital public services, provide useful lessons.
- **Estonia's Strategies**:
  - Utilization of satellite technology to enhance rural connectivity.
  - Development of public-private partnerships to support infrastructure improvements.
- **Potential Application in Uzbekistan**: Adopting similar strategies could help overcome connectivity challenges in Uzbekistan's rural regions.

Challenge 2: Building a Data-Driven Culture

- **Importance of a Data-Driven Culture:** Establishing a data-driven culture is crucial for maximizing the use of digital tools and AI in governance.
- **Successful Models:** Countries like Singapore and South Korea have effectively cultivated data-driven cultures where data analytics inform policy decisions and enhance public services.
- **Key Strategies from Other Nations:**
  - Institutionalizing data governance.
  - Providing ongoing training for public servants to improve data literacy and usage.
  - Creating an environment that values data as a crucial asset.
- **Application in Uzbekistan:** Adopting these strategies could help Uzbekistan accelerate its digital transformation and improve governance.

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?

Creation of a Global Data Governance Framework

– **Standardized Principles:** Set rules for data privacy, security, and transparency.

– **Capacity-Building Programs**: Offer training on digital skills and data management.

– **Sharing Knowledge**: Create platforms for countries to share their experiences.

– **Support Countries**: Help nations use data for better decision-making and public services.

– **Focus on Rights and Equality**: Ensure the framework protects human rights and reduces inequalities.

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