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THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AS AN ACCELERATOR OF DIGITAL INNOVATIONS AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES: TOWARDS A MORE DEMOCRATIC, OPEN AND INCLUSIVE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

by

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- Introduction
- Trends in Public Administration
- The Challenge
- Digital Divide
- Future Themes of Public Services
- Future Pillars of Public Services
- Public-Private Sector Partnership

Agenda

Introduction

eGovernment

Vs.

Digital Government

IT Strategy

Vs.

Digital Transformation

Examples of Governments Digital Services in Response to COVID-19

Education: eLearning, Distance Learning

Health: eHealth, Telemedicine, Self-Services

Public Services as eServices

ePayments

Remote Work and Business Continuity

eMeetings and eConferences

What changes are to be expected if we want Governments to move towards a smarter management of public services and digital life?.

These are the 8 trends …..

8 Trends

Towards a Future Digital Transformation in The Public Administration

1) Digitalization

Digital Transformation Strategy

- The covid-19 crisis has been an unexpected accelerator of the digitization of public services.

- The compulsory switch of the administration internal procedures and the formalities for citizens to the online mode marks a milestone in a tendency that is sure to be accentuated.

2) Data Analytics

Data Analytics and Data Governance

- The pandemic has highlighted the need for robust and sophisticated **statistical and data analysis** mechanisms, especially for those sectors and services that have reached their limit capacity.

- **Data governance** will be a priority to ensure the public value of data and the democratic control of personal information.

3) Digital Rights

Impact of technology on privacy and digital rights

- There is an urgent need to develop adequate frameworks to assess the impact of technology on privacy and digital rights.

- The implementation of different digital responses (artificial intelligence, mobile applications, facial recognition) is linked to very intimate spheres of personal privacy.

4) Innovation

The Potential of Innovation and Intrapreneurship

Governments have shown a large capacity for innovation in terms of digital transformation. Due to its unexpected nature, the management of the crisis has revealed the potential of innovation and intrapreneurship of the public sector to put in place agile imaginative solutions.

5) Digital Divide

Set of Priorities

Although in an accelerated and conjunctural way, teleworking, online education or telemedicine have become the norm. This has revealed the existence of a large digital divide regarding both the opportunities to access communication technologies and the skills to use them – which will need to be addressed as a priority to close the vulnerability gaps.

6) Inclusive Digitalization

CivicTech for a More Inclusive Digitalization

Civic have been made known to the general public, offering viable alternatives and showing a large capacity to involve stakeholders and an enormous diversity. This will foster a more inclusive understanding of how the **technology ecosystem** can contribute to digital transformation in Public Administration and to the digital society.

7) Digital Communication

Effective Digital Communication for an Operational Leadership

- Governments will have to re-evaluate and reinforce their digital communication strategies in order to consolidate their operational leadership in periods of crisis like the current one.

- A context of information oversaturation and citizens' constant exposure to a multi-channel, segmented reality where ambiguous algorithms condition access to information are just some of the hurdles that they will need to overcome.
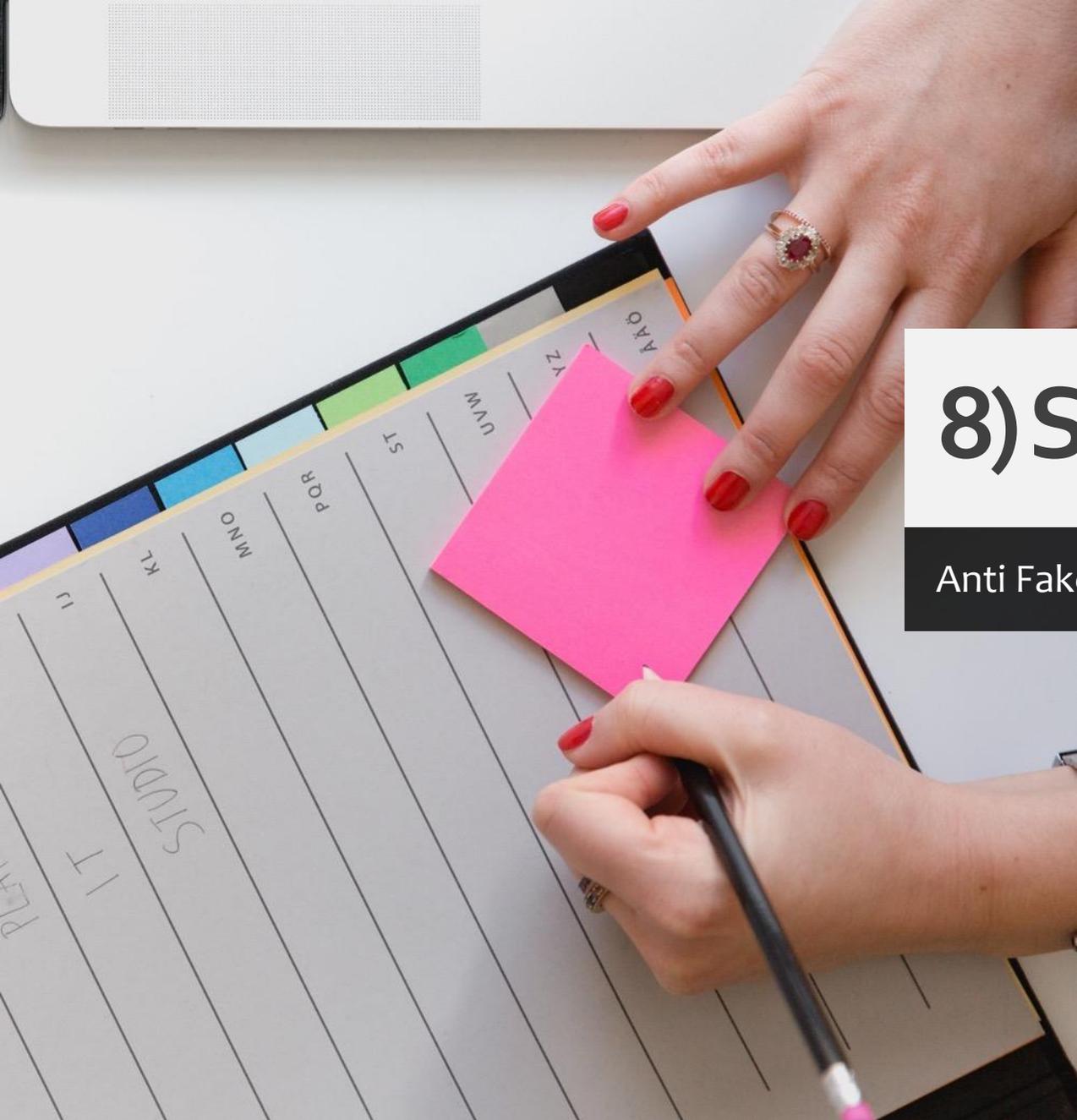
8) Social Media

The covid-19 crisis shows that disinformation and so-called fake news is also a threat to public health. And that the **growing power of social media** in the conditioning of public opinion and political discourse – in form and content – exemplifies the gap between the political rhythms and the current trends of digital communication – in a paradigm of social communication radically different from that of ten years ago.

The Challenge

We need it urgently!!!

Challenges

People and human needs should be placed at the centre of technological adoption

Better Planning

- Governments should start reshaping their strategy for the deployment of technology in a short- and Medium- term.

- This applies to the to the interaction and communication between public administration and citizens, to our daily routine.

- Also, this applies to the private sector and the internal transformation of companies and the rethinking of their future plans towards providing full digitalized services, where applicable.

- we are on the verge of a moment where governments, industries and companies have the challenge to move towards technological resilience. To harness technology and innovation not only to minimize the current risks, but also to anticipate possible future adversities and emerge stronger from the crisis.

- **To raise the level of professionalism:** Like the private sector, the public sector also needs to integrate its workforce with professionals who can provide the skills needed to deal with digital transformation.

- **Change the idea of communication:** Another challenge of Digital transformation in Public Administration is to update its communication, making it more digital and more in line with the expectations of its increasingly connected citizens.

- **Safety first:** With the advent of digitalization, a major security issue opens up in terms of how processes are conducted, in the management of sensitive data, and their storage.

- **Networking:** create a match between the demand for innovation that all citizens have, individually or in social training, and the supply of digital solutions available.

- **Open up to new technologies:** One of the most important challenges is to correctly integrate the new technologies made available by digital innovation into administrative procedures i.e. blockchain, AI, Fintech, .. Etc.

Challenges and Problems of Digital Transformation

Category	Challenges or Problems
Technical and infrastructural	• Low levels of ICT infrastructure (lower penetration of electronic devices and the • internet among population) • Poorer quality of information and overall Digital platforms • Absence of sound privacy and information security system • Low levels of computer literacy within population
Institutional or Managerial	• Lack of clearly identified institutional approach to manage digital government (centralized or decentralized) • Lack of financial resources to manage widescale digital transformation projects • Lack of leadership skills in technology-led reforms in the public sector • Prevalence of doubt and resistance to change in traditional governance • Absence of policy guidelines • Lack of qualified and skilled personnel to work with ICT
Legal and regulatory	• Lack of ability to create new legal and regulatory framework for digital services in protecting privacy, and restricting online crime.
Environmental context	• Reluctance to accept new technologies by individuals due to certain cultural and • social factors (educational and cultural background, including social structure, • language, religion, and economic and political ideology) • Lack of inclusiveness due to geographic and demographic context (geographically • dispersed population, and large territories sometimes make ICT infrastructure • difficult to access)

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Digital Divide

The digital divide is the gap that exists between those who have access to the internet and reliable devices and those who don't.

Why Closing the Digital Divide is Important

- Equal learning
- Wider career opportunities
- Access to community

How to Close the Digital Divide

- Identify gap areas and invite public-private solutions
- Recruit Big Tech and internet service providers (ISPs) to help close gaps
- Invest in digital literacy

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What is Needed?

It is the time for better planning and reshaping the strategy of technology adoption

Planning and Anticipation

"Need & Urgency" are great allies of innovation ….

Digital Capabilities

Most of the public institutions in charge of managing all levels of the response to the Covid-19 crisis have faced the urgent need to assess their current digital technological capabilities while facing sudden processes of technological adoption and implementing solutions that needed a deeper public assessment. In this framework, they have found themselves at a greater distance in terms of data analytics, information integration or resource and capabilities availability for the implementation of technological initiatives. In parallel, public authorities have met with the need to find effective ways to communicate the evolution of the pandemic, the response and its implications for citizens within a complex context of social distress and information oversaturation.

- ✓ **Deploying adequate infrastructure** to support the development and use of various digital platforms in the public sector to accelerate service delivery and citizen engagement is absolutely critical.

- ✓ **Developing at a national level digital content and services**—such as eHealth, e-Education and digital government applications—to create a culture of digital transactions, and an understanding of data-driven development, is just as important.

- ✓ **Skilling up and re-skilling the workforce**, particularly civil servants, educators, private sector employees, and IT workforce. Robust curriculum must be designed as well as targeted learning paths to develop competitive sector-specific skills, through schools, universities, private sector and public service academies. Digital skills are indeed critical to ensure uptake of digital content and services.

- ✓ **Realigning digital economy strategies with local contexts** to harness the full power of technology in the Fourth Industrial Revolution is essential. Countries must consider contextual use of data science, cloud computing, artificial intelligence and advanced digital analytics.

Future Theme of Public Services

The citizen at the centre: how to learn from the best Customer Experiences

Future Theme

General theme of Public Services

Input

Transparent

Easy

Available 24x7

User Friendly

Omni-Channels, Especially Mobile

Output

Data Collection

Data Analysis

Data Interpretation

Benefits of Technology-Enabled Public Service Delivery in Developing and Transition Economies

Benefits	Examples	Benefits for Whom?
Cost reduction and efficiency	• Solution for shortage of personnel and inadequate facilities • Decrease of document processing cost • Cost and efficiency for citizens and other users	Supply and demand side
Improved transparency, accuracy, accountability	• Facilitation of information transforming between government and customers • Decreased corruption	Supply side
Network and community Creation	• Network and interoperability between different levels and departments of government and improved decision-making • Forums, and network between users	Supply and demand side
Improved democratic Processes	Increased citizen participation through voting, organizing campaigns, and fundraising events online.	General benefit for the society
Social benefits	Access to healthcare, education, employment opportunities, funding sources, etc., thus achieving poverty reduction in Communities.	Demand side

Pillars of Public Services

Key Principle, Areas of Improvement, and Areas of Investment

Pillars

Key Principles

Data security and privacy

Digital service accessibility for everyone

Public digital literacy

Areas of Improvement

IT Infrastructure

Bylaws

(Data Privacy, Data Protection, eSignature, ePayment...)

Information Security

Areas of Investment

Healthcare

Education

Artificial Intelligence

Public Private Sectors Partnership

Public-Private-Partnership as a base of grow and innovation

Public Private Sectors Partnership

Keep in mind that …. .

Digital transformation needs an ICT infrastructure to succeed

Policy development must be part of the conversation

Digitisation can improve citizens' access to services

Public Private Sectors Partnership

PPP will play a critical role in accelerating digital transformation

Public Sector

> ### Rules and Regulations
> (i.e. Digital Id, Digital Signature, ePayment, … etc.)

> ### Available Funds

> ### Incentives
> (i.e. Tax Holiday, Tax Exemptions, Startups Support)

Private Sector

> ### Improving next-generation connectivity

> ### Drive Innovations

> ### High Quality ICT Services

Governments have important roles to play in developing digital policies and stable harmonised regulatory environments that enable people and businesses to participate fully in the global digital economy.

Thank You

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