

CALL FOR CONSULTANT/EXPERT

Concept note for the Digital4Development background paper

Background

Several years ago, few people could anticipate what is now becoming an accelerated reality. Digitalisation, information and communication technologies (ICTs) and automation have flooded newspapers with alarming messages of their impact on our societies while simultaneously having simplified our everyday lives. ICTs are key to sustainable development and have a crucial role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030. While ICTs are only explicitly mentioned in found SDGs sub-goals, they are present in initiatives for achieving each of the 17 SDG. The follow-up process of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) provided the WSIS-SDGs Matrix, an initial overview of how ICTs can be strategically used to fulfil the Agenda 2030. Moreover, ICTs offer innovative ways to promote participation, data collection for verifying where SDGs are being met and enable evidence-based decision making. On the other side, ICTs have disruptive potential: disappearing jobs and the context of digital divides could massively amplify global inequality. On the other hand, access to technologies increases possibilities and opportunities for everyone.

Since 2015 the European Union (EU) internally has already begun to prepare for the new industrial revolution based on the new-generation of the information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing, big data and data analytics, robotics and 3D printing through creating a Digital Single Market (DSM). The DSM should ensure citizens, individuals and businesses access and exercise the online activities under conditions of fair competition, and a high level of consumer and personal data protection, irrespective of their nationality or place of residence. The fully functioning DSM will ensure that Europe maintains its position as a world leader in the digital economy helping European companies to grow globally.

Digitalization has a great potential to transform the development cooperation. In November 2016 the Council adopted the [Council Conclusions on mainstreaming digital solutions and technologies in EU development policy and a year later Council Conclusions on Digital for Development](#). In May 2017 the new European Consensus on Development includes digitalisation mostly from the opportunities side, however, it neglects to address the potential threats which are already known such as the job losses, but as well the shift to digital economy. Around the same time, the Commission adopted a [Staff Working Document: Digital4Development: mainstreaming digital technologies and services into EU Development Policy](#) which serves as a strategy to mainstream digital technologies into European Union development policy, contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (implementation of the par. 57 of the Consensus). Digital4Development framework is based on 4 priority areas: 1) broadband connectivity, 2) digital literacy and digital skills, 3) digital entrepreneurship, 4) application of digital technologies (e-government, e-health, e-identification, etc.). It addresses the challenges such as free flow of data, net neutrality and cybersecurity. However, it fails to address the impact of artificial intelligence, automatization of jobs, and the digital monopolies of the platforms (such as Google, Apple, Amazon, Facebook, but as well the Chinese ones

such as Alibaba). The whole concept strongly supports “Made in Europe” solutions and the implementation is planned only via the European private companies and lack to support the local digital environment or the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the digital economy.

Purpose of the study

Although digitalisation is already being translated into policy and implemented, the concept of digitalisation in development has been developed mainly between policy makers and private sector only. Civil society has not been included in the discussion and, at the same time, there is the need for more awareness raising at CSO level, as well as the level of the public.

As one of the key issue is that the CSOs, but as well wider public don't fully understand the digitalization and its impact on development, the primary purpose of the paper is to present the basic outline what the digitalisation is about and the opportunities and challenges for CSOs it can bring. The secondary purpose of the paper will be to list all the possibilities for CSOs on how to effectively engage in policies, but also implementation of digital4development as such and specifically in the Digital4Development concept.

Tasks

- Research into different/selected aspects of digitalisation and ongoing policy processes to identify the trends in Digital4Development
- Conduct interviews with selected CONCORD members who are working on Digital4Development
- Conduct interviews with DG DEVCO, DG CONNECT, relevant EU MS representatives and other stakeholders
- Identify the potential roles for CSOs in Digital4Development
- Produce the final document, with relevant links/ references included
- Produce a separate document that will outline the role of CSOs in Digital4Development with the aim to influence the EC's concept on the Digital4Development

Background documents

- Digital Single Market Policies: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/policies/digitising-european-industry>
- [Digital4Development: mainstreaming digital technologies and services into EU Development Policy](#)
- [Council Conclusions on mainstreaming digital solutions and technologies in EU development policy](#)
- [Council Conclusions on Digital for Development](#)
- Principles for Digital Development: <http://digitalprinciples.org/about/>

Deliverables

Final report outlining the current trends of the digitalisation and its impact on the economy, policies and society with the presentation of opportunities and challenges.

Additional to the final report a short paper highlighting the possibilities for CSOs on how to engage in the digitalization as such and specifically in the Digital4Development concept of the European Commission.

Timeline

January 2018	Selection process for consultant
February 2018	Desk research and interviews
February-March 2018	Drafting the report
April 2018	Submitting final report

Inputs

We anticipate that this will be a discrete piece of work, mainly involving self-contained research. It is not expected that lengthy meetings or support will be needed to produce the document, and the consultancy can be undertaken remotely. If needed, CONCORD may be able to coordinate meetings with members/institutions.

Candidate profile

Consultants are expected to have:

- Significant understanding of the digitalisation and its different impact with proven track record of similar studies
- Preferably to have experience in working or understanding of NGOs environment
- Very good understanding and knowledge of the European Development policy, SDGs/Agenda 2030.
- Experience of policy analysis, report writing and political communication, incl. ability to clearly formulate key recommendations
- Excellent English writing and editing skills; ability to write about complex issues in an engaging way

Application procedure

Please send a CV outlining your relevance expertise for meeting this assignment along with a proposal on how you will undertake this research, including a suggested number of days and their distribution between the different tasks and phases of the work and your day rate.

Please submit this to Adriana Zaharia, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, FOND Romania on adriana.zaharia@fondromania.org by **30 January 2018, 5:00 PM – Romanian Time**.