



DIÁLOGOS SOBRE GOVERNAÇÃO DIGITAL

Capacitação e cooperação em governo digital nos Palops

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE DIALOGUES

CAPACITY-BUILDING AND COOPERATION IN DIGITAL GOVERNMENT CAPACITIES IN THE PALOPS

Concept Note

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital government initiatives are increasingly considered essential to facilitate public access to information and services and to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, challenges persist related to unequal access to digital government—particularly among vulnerable populations—and the heterogeneous implementation of digital services across different countries.

In this context, developing digital government capacities becomes crucial not only to bridge gaps in the incorporation of technologies into the daily operations of public organizations, but also to identify actions necessary to advance in this field. Additionally, it is increasingly important to investigate the enablers and barriers that affect citizens' ability to access digital public services, especially among vulnerable groups. Therefore, it is also necessary to monitor how society is engaging with governments through digital media to ensure access to the information and services people need.

In this context, Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOPs) face common challenges related to digital infrastructure, technical training, and digital inclusion, making this group of countries particularly relevant for coordinated cooperation efforts. The project "Digital Governance Dialogues: Capacity-Development and Cooperation in Digital Government Capacities in the PALOPs" aims to enhance digital government capabilities in Portuguese-speaking African countries, based on their specific contexts and needs, on both the supply side (government institutions) and the demand side (the population's use of services).

Based on two decades of experience in monitoring digital technology adoption in Brazil and in research training, the Regional Center for Studies on the Development of the Information Society (Cetic.br), in collaboration with the United Nations University Operating Unit on Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV)—which has over a decade of experience supporting digital government policy development—proposes a series of technical training activities focused on digital government for the PALOPs. The project also aims to promote knowledge-sharing on this topic among the PALOPs and with other reference countries, supporting the development of inclusive and effective digital governments across Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa.

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To achieve this, the activities will involve all PALOPs (Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe), as well as other Portuguese-speaking countries (Brazil and Portugal), and recognised actors and organizations in the field. Activities will be carried out over a three-year period (2025 to 2027), with 2 to 4 webinars and 1 to 2 in-person workshops per year hosted in PALOP countries. Mechanisms may also be established to measure digital government progress in these countries, including the development of observatories and national digital government strategies after the technical training.

II. OBJECTIVES

Considering the strategic importance of digital government initiatives, Cetic.br|NIC.br and UNU-EGOV propose cooperating with PALOPs to strengthen capacities for designing, implementing, and evaluating information and communication technologies (ICT) policies and programs in the public sector, focusing on both the supply and demand sides of digital government.

General Objective

To strengthen institutional and technical capacities for designing, implementing, and evaluating digital government policies and programs, including both the provision of services and information via digital means and their adoption by the population.

Specific Objectives

- Facilitate the exchange of initiatives among countries, promoting mutual learning in digital government;
- Promote the adoption of a set of common indicators and methodological criteria among participating countries to enable monitoring of digital government;
- Support the development of national recommendation documents on digital government for PALOPs.

III. ORGANIZING INSTITUTIONS

ORGANIZERS

- CETIC.br|NIC.br – Regional Center for Studies on the Development of the Information Society
- UNU-EGOV – United Nations University Operating Unit on Electronic Governance

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ABOUT CETIC.BR

The Regional Center for Studies on the Development of the Information Society (Cetic.br), a department of the Brazilian Network Information Center (NIC.br), has extensive experience and international recognition in the fields of research methodology and ICT measurement across various sectors. Since 2005, Cetic.br|NIC.br has conducted national surveys on digital technology use, particularly the Internet, covering ten thematic areas: Households, Children and Adolescents, Education, Government, Enterprises, Non-Profit Organizations, Internet Service Providers, Healthcare Facilities, Cultural Facilities and Privacy and Data Protection. Since 2012, Cetic.br|NIC.br has been a Category II Center under UNESCO, becoming the first UNESCO research center focused on the Information and Knowledge Societies. Its regional scope includes Latin American countries and Portuguese-speaking Africa, through cooperation in these research areas and collaboration with international organizations. In the field of digital government, since 2013, Cetic.br|NIC.br has been conducting the ICT Electronic Government survey. The aim of the study is to investigate the availability of ICT and information systems in Brazilian government organizations. Additionally, it analyses the adoption of digital technologies for providing services and information, as well as for promoting participation and collaboration between government and society. More information at: <https://cetic.br/en/>

ABOUT UNU-EGOV

The United Nations University Operating Unit on Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV) is an international think tank dedicated to advancing Digital Governance. Based in Guimarães, Portugal, it acts as a centre of excellence in applied research, strategic advisory, capacity building, and innovation in public digital government. Its mission is to support the United Nations and its Member States in strengthening governance mechanisms by strategically applying digital technologies for more transparent, efficient, inclusive, and accountable institutions. UNU-EGOV contributes to more informed public decision-making and drives digital transformation in governments by fostering global collaboration between academia and policymakers. With multidisciplinary and multicultural teams, UNU-EGOV addresses complex challenges with a focus on sustainability, citizen participation, and social inclusion. Structured around four pillars—research, advisory, capacity development, and networking—it directly supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 3 to 11 and SDG 16, and the Global Digital Compact, committed to leaving no one behind. More information at: <https://unu.edu/egov>

POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS

- Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP)
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
- UNESCO
- Governments, academia, and civil society actors from Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, and São Tomé and Príncipe

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IV. ACTIVITIES

To achieve the proposed objectives, two formats of activities will be developed: virtual meetings (webinars) and in-person workshops. The webinars aim to gather topics, challenges, and experiences in digital government, with participation from internationally recognised experts to share their initiatives and encourage dialogue with the PALOPs. These will be organised with the participation of international experts and representatives from the PALOPs, seeking to foster dialogue and the dissemination of local initiatives. The topics will address key aspects of digital transformation in the public sector, including individuals' access to public services and information.

In-person activities aim to provide technical support to the PALOPs in developing their digital government capabilities, especially in the areas of policy design, implementation, and evaluation. Through workshops held in these countries, the goal is to train public managers on the topic, including practical sessions that support the development of actions aligned with their contexts, needs, and priorities.

Activities include

- Preparation and mapping of each country's national context;
- Thematic webinars with specialists and PALOP representatives;
- In-person workshops on digital government for public managers and decision-makers in PALOP government organizations;
- Technical assistance and support for the design of national digital government measurement and monitoring projects, for countries that choose to pursue such initiatives post-workshop.

IV. PRELIMINARY TIMELINE

- Webinars
 - 2025: I. September/October (between September 29 and October 3): Launch Webinar
 - 2026: I. First semester II. Second semester
 - 2027: I. First semester II. Second semester
- In-person workshops
 - 2025: I. November
 - 2026: I. April/May e II. October/November
 - 2027: I. April/May e II. October/November



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VI. RESPONSABILITIES AND RESOURCES

The activities will be executed, in principle, based on a multilateral technical cooperation model, without financial transfers between parties or countries. Main responsibilities are as follows:

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- Transfer knowledge on ICT measurement methodologies in the public sector, focusing on digital government, within the technical cooperation;
- Co-responsible with UNU-EGOV for the methodological design and implementation of the technical training in the workshops;
- Cover travel and participation costs for its technical team in the proposed activities..

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- Transfer knowledge on the design, implementation, and evaluation of digital government to participating countries, within the technical cooperation;
- Co-responsible with Cetic.br|NIC.br for the methodological design and implementation of the technical training in the workshops;
- Co-responsible for designing and implementing the technical training offered in the workshops;
- Cover travel and participation costs for its technical team in the proposed activities.

Each country:

- When the country hosts an in-person workshop, the country will provide adequate local infrastructure for the event (venue, logistical support, coffee breaks, and lunches);
- Cover travel expenses of their participants and printing of support materials for in-person workshops when needed, possibly seeking external funding sources such as development banks and international organizations;
- Be responsible for identifying, designating, and mobilising relevant national participants;
- Conduct a national digital government assessment to support in-person workshop discussions;
- Carry out institutional coordination to encourage implementation of digital government measurement and monitoring initiatives..

As a technical cooperation activity, Cetic.br|NIC.br, UNU-EGOV, and participating countries will not make financial transfers or receive payments of any kind.

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VI. LANGUAGE AND WEBINARS:

Webinars will be held in Portuguese with the possibility of simultaneous translation in the case of international participants. They will be hosted on Zoom and livestreamed on NIC.br's YouTube channel and/or other project partner platforms. In-person workshops will also be conducted in Portuguese, with the possibility of simultaneous translation for external guests.

VI. MEETING TOPICS

The topics of virtual meetings may vary and will be defined jointly based on the expertise of project partners and the needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries. Possible webinar topics include:

- Digital government measurement (supply and demand sides)
- Designing and monitoring digital government strategies
- Digital government and international agendas (SDGs, Global Digital Compact, etc.)
- Digital Public Infrastructures (DPIs)
- Cybersecurity
- Artificial Intelligence and other emerging technologies in the public sector
- Meaningful connectivity
- Environment and digital government
- Technologies for public policies in education and health

In-person workshops, primarily targeted at the host country, will be divided into two parts and may last two to three days. The first part will include presentations from the event organisers (Cetic.br|NIC.br and UNU-EGOV) and the host country, as well as practical sessions for identifying and proposing digital government indicators in the host countries..

The second part of the workshop aims to provide technical support to the host country in a specific area of digital government that it is interested in developing or implementing, as long as it falls within the scope of the organising entities and/or their partners. For example, workshops may focus on developing digital government strategies or measuring meaningful connectivity in the country. In addition to presentations, this second phase will also include practical activities tailored to the host country's context and needs. Thus, the in-person workshops are also expected to support capacity-building actions aligned with the priority areas identified by each PALOP and facilitate the implementation and monitoring of their digital transformation objectives in the public sector.



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VII. EXPECTED RESULTS

The meetings are expected to promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences among participants, generating cooperation and actions that foster the advancement of digital government in the countries. Furthermore, the initiative aims to create a space for PALOPs to showcase their initiatives—contributing to the sharing of solutions and policies in this field—and to broaden their understanding of tools and approaches that support the development of digital government strategies tailored to their specific contexts. Expected results include:

- Developing knowledge and technical capacities to design ICT measurement initiatives in the public sector, both alignment with available international standards and adapted to local contexts and needs;
- Strengthening the cooperation between the PALOPs and leading international stakeholders in digital government, including monitoring and measurement initiatives;
- Promoting the exchange of experiences and knowledge among PALOPs, Brazil, and Portugal on digital government strategies and practices;
- Supporting participants in the development of ICT implementation and measurement projects in the public sector, tailored to their national contexts.

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