

# DIGITAL FACILITY FOR THE CARIBBEAN



Emerging technologies present opportunities for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to address development constraints and reimagine their transition to Small Island *Digital* States (SIDS 2.0).

In 2024, UNDP Regional Director launched the Digital Facility for the Caribbean (DFC) with the objective of consolidating and catalysing these opportunities by providing governments and partners with strategic technical advice, implementation support, financing pathways, capacity development and structured knowledge sharing and collaboration to transform into future-ready states. By pooling expertise and enabling cooperation, the DFC ensures no country is left behind in the digital decade.

## OUR SERVICES

The DFC provides end-to-end support to governments and regional partners in their move from vision to implementation through the following specific services:

### Digital Legal Identity and Inclusion:

- **e-ID:** Implementation and technical support for biometric-based national IDs integrated with welfare programs like the Social Benefits Wallet, ensuring secure access for vulnerable populations.
- **Citizen Engagement:** Civic-tech solutions capturing real-time citizen feedback to shape responsive governance.

### Digital Governance and Infrastructure:

- **Interoperability Frameworks:** Implementation and technical support for secure data-sharing enabling whole-of-government digital service delivery.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure:** Providing policy advice and governance assessments for digital payments, IDs, and data governance frameworks.
- **Digital Dashboards:** Implementation and technical support for leadership dashboards tracking digital priorities for agile decision-making.

### Efficiency and Transparency in Public Administration:

- **Process Digitalization:** Implementation and technical support for the transition to paperless systems and electronic workflows in ministries.
- **Records Management:** Policies for secure and transparent electronic document handling.

### Innovation and Emerging Technologies:

- **AI for Civil Servants:** AI literacy programs, AI forums, readiness and landscape assessments, and development of ethical AI tools for governance.
- **App Development:** Creation of mobile applications and platforms such as the Benefits Wallet to expand service reach

## A FACILITY WITH BENEFITS FOR ALL

As a UN-led initiative with the SDGs at its core, the DFC is uniquely positioned to act as a catalyst—aligning national priorities with regional cooperation, unlocking financing, and equipping leaders to govern digital transformation.

- Expertise grounded in global best practices and Caribbean-specific knowledge
- Global and regional networks that connect governments to resources and strategic partners
- Trusted technical advice, independent from corporate interests and vendor lock-in risks

- Balanced approach that delivers quick results while maintaining a long-term vision
- Feasible, objective and realistic recommendations tailored to local contexts based on global best practices.
- Strong relationships that ensure alignment with regional institutions
- Multi-country reach that transforms isolated initiatives into regional breakthroughs

## OUR EXPERIENCE

The Digital Facility for the Caribbean was birthed out of the SIDS 2.0 High Level Conference that was held in May 2024. Since then, the Facility has made some strides on the following projects:

### **Capacity building for civil servants: AI for SIDS 2.0 – The Caribbean Forum**

This was a four-part online series to support Caribbean SIDS in exploring the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for public sector innovation, resilience, and sustainable development. The initiative was spearheaded in collaboration with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

The online series spanned February to June 2025, and attracted over 1200 registrants across the four sessions, from more than 20 Caribbean and extra-Regional countries. Attendees included government officials, digital transformation experts, AI professionals, students and civil society stakeholders.

### **Enhancing institutional expertise: Unlocking AI Potential in CARICOM Secretariat**

This is a capacity building initiative currently in progress to enable staff at the CARICOM Secretariat as it relates to AI in the workplace – its use, role, benefits and opportunities. A baseline assessment will be conducted to inform an Executive Workshop and a self-paced online course for awareness building and reskilling. Beyond this, the intervention will design specific projects to optimise project implementation, event management and performance monitoring.

### **Support to national implementation for quick impact and long-lasting results: Barbados Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Implementation**

The Barbados DPI Implementation Project is a strategic initiative currently in development with the Digital Facility, and led by GovTech Barbados to support the country's transition to a fully digital government. The project focuses on three parallel activities:

1. Digital Readiness Assessment – Evaluates Barbados' digital maturity across government institutions, infrastructure, legal frameworks, and capacity.
2. E-ID Governance Framework Assessment – Reviews the legal, institutional, and operational structures governing digital identity, ensuring alignment with global standards.
3. Technical Review of DPI Architecture – Maps the current digital identity infrastructure and provides recommendations for scalability, security, and interoperability.

### **Regional knowledge sharing: Digital Library**

This is an initiative currently in progress to create a consolidated, organised and searchable online store of best practices, case studies, publications, literature, legislation and regulation emanating from the Caribbean Region. The library is intended to support peer-to-peer exchange for enhanced Regional collaboration and the sharing of lessons learned.

## **Promoting innovation in national institutions: CSME Digital Platform**

The Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs – CSME Unit, is partnering with the Digital Facility and iGovTT to create an AI-enabled digital platform for nationals applying for a CSME Skills Certificate, facilitating access to employment opportunities across the 14 Member States. Leveraging AI technology, the platform will allow applicants to search for job vacancies, categorize information by country, and receive personalized job recommendations based on their experience, skills, and preferences. The platform will be integrated with the CSME Skill Certificate Application Process. This approach is expected to enhance service delivery and support economic growth within the CARICOM region.

## **Using new technologies for e-governance and citizen engagement: Youth Ask**

Youth-ASK is a digital platform being designed to provide personalized, data-driven career guidance for youth aged 15–30, with a focus on underserved communities such as East Port of Spain. The platform aims to bridge the gap between education, employment, and entrepreneurship by offering tailored career pathways, skill assessments, mentorship, and networking opportunities. AI tools are embedded throughout the platform to enhance personalization and scalability. These include AI-powered career pathway recommenders, adaptive learning systems, skill gap analysis engines, and intelligent mentorship matching.

Additionally, the Digital Facility leverages a strong and highly specialized technical resource base, with direct experience implementing Digital Public Infrastructure.

## **Trinidad and Tobago Digital Transformation Project:**

The Digital Facility has access to personnel who have managed the development of a national Electronic Identification (E-ID) system, a project management and oversight dashboard, and the digital transformation of the Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services (MPSDFS). The project reduces transaction costs, improve service delivery, and ensures equitable access for vulnerable populations including the elderly, persons with disabilities, women, and rural residents.

## **Open Source Programme Office (OSPO) in Trinidad and Tobago:**

The Facility has access to personnel who are managing the OSPO. The OSPO will drive the development, adoption and governance of open-source software and tools across the Public Sector and support the growth of the local software development community and digital economy. Specialised training programmes will be developed for Public Officers along with projects in health, education and social services; innovation challenges; and the publication of research and case studies.

