

Introductory Note on Two Calls for Proposals

“Data-driven Digital Social Innovations in Africa”

Data Governance in Africa Initiative

BEL22006-10001

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this note

This Introductory Note aims to provide further context and guidance to potentially interested (co-) applicants and associates of the two Calls, organised by Enabel, HAUS and ESTDEV.

Apart from a general introduction to the framework in which these Calls are organised, the Introductory Note also provides more information on relevant concepts, mechanisms and approaches. In addition, the Introductory Note contains the General and Specific Objectives of these two Calls, allowing potentially interested entities to better understand the rationale of its organisation.

The Introductory Note also contains further clarification regarding the structure of the two Calls and corresponding support opportunities. These Calls will be launched in parallel, though utilising the same, existing Call for Proposals mechanism, allowing to engage with a variety of stakeholders in the digital ecosystem.

Finally, please note that this Introductory Note is intended to supplement the official Guidelines and accompanying Annexes of the two Calls for Proposals.

1.2 Disclaimer

The information contained in this Introductory Note has no legal value and is therefore non-binding. It has the simple objective of providing additional context regarding the two Calls for Proposals to potentially interested (co-)applicants and associates. As such, the provision of this document is to be interpreted as a courtesy of the organising agencies of the above-mentioned Calls.

Please note that the binding eligibility and selection criteria for these two Calls for Proposals can be found in the Guidelines, which can be consulted on the home page of the Call for Proposals¹.

1.3 Partners

As mentioned before, the two Calls are organised by three European development organisations: Enabel, HAUS & ESTDEV². These organisations and their expertise are briefly outlined below.

1.3.1 Enabel – Belgian Development Agency & its Wehubit programme

Enabel is the development agency of the Belgian Federal Government. It is responsible for implementing the policy priorities of the Belgian governmental cooperation. Moreover, Enabel enhances its added value through carrying out assignments for other entities (e.g. the European Union, other EU Member States, global funds, Regional Governments and more). In doing so, Enabel aims at promoting sustainable international development.

¹ Please note that each Call has its own Guidelines. Further information regarding eligibility and support opportunities of these Calls can be found below, see 3. “Two Calls for Proposals” on p.10

² See 3. “Two Calls for Proposals” on p.10 for more information regarding the roles of each development agency and their respective Calls

Wehubit is Enabel's flagship programme on Digital Social Innovation (DSI)³. The programme aims to boost digital social innovation as a vehicle for accelerating inclusive and sustainable development, reducing inequalities and empowering people in Belgium's partner countries and beyond. It does so by providing both financial support in the form of grants as well as providing topic-specific capacity building to partner organisations and stimulating peer-to-peer learning.

Since 2018, Wehubit identifies and supports DSIs through dedicated Calls for Proposals. Thus far, it has supported 27 partner projects implemented by over 50 partner organisations in 14 countries in Africa and the Middle East using both Belgian and European funding.

1.3.2 HAUS – Finnish Institute of Public Management

HAUS is a leading public-sector training and development house in Finland with 50 years of experience in capacity building of civil service and public service reforms.

It provides development services for public sector organisations to enhance their practices. Its services include development activities around strategic leadership, quality management and human resources development. Moreover, HAUS provides digital tools and practices as part of governance digital transformation. HAUS is a key institution on behalf of Finland in organising and managing international projects which combine a wide scale of experts from different government agencies.

In addition, HAUS actively participates in international cooperation and promotes the export of Finnish expertise and cooperation between administrations. It has a strong experience in developing public administrations both in Finland and internationally.

HAUS leads, coordinates and is involved also in various EU-funded and other international development projects together with its national and international partners. It provides a broad range of technical support such as capacity building, project development and management, knowledge transfer and expertise sharing from public and private sector to various international development initiatives. HAUS participation in projects is guided by the EU and Finnish international relations, as well as neighbourhood and enlargement policies.

1.3.3 ESTDEV – Estonian Centre for International Development

The Estonian Centre for International Development (ESTDEV) is a government-funded foundation responsible for managing and implementing Estonia's international development cooperation and humanitarian assistance projects. It achieves this aim through partnerships and investments that reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, build sustainable economies, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises and progress beyond assistance.

The role of ESTDEV is to empower and inspire Estonia's partner countries to set goals and find creative solutions for carrying out their development plans. By sharing its own successful reform experience, the ambition of Estonia's development cooperation is to support partner countries in becoming self-reliant and capable of leading their own development journeys in ways that benefit and include all groups of society.

To become the centre of excellence for Estonian development cooperation and humanitarian aid, ESTDEV involves top experts from Estonian civil society organisations, the public sector,

³ More information on Digital Social Innovations (DSIs) is included in this Note, see 2.3 "Scaling up data-driven Digital Social Innovations (DSIs)" on p. 6

and private sector. In doing so, we ensure that the projects we implement are sustainable and meet the expectations and needs of the partner country.

By implementing projects that are strategic and meaningful, ESTDEV pursues three overarching goals: to enhance Estonia's visibility as an international donor and partner, to increase the share of foreign funding, and to unite development cooperation with Estonia's foreign policy and economic diplomacy.

ESTDEV aims to become a centre of competence, to create and grow expertise in development cooperation and humanitarian crisis management in Estonia. Through these acts, ESTDEV endeavours to increase the Estonians' awareness of development cooperation as means to promote the goals of global security and sustainable development.

2 The Data Governance in Africa Initiative

2.1 Origin and objectives

The Data Governance in Africa Initiative is a 3,5-year programme that aims to support a “development-oriented and human-centric data economy and society in Africa”. The Initiative is part of a broader strategic partnership between the African Union and European Union regarding Digital Cooperation and is seen as a key component of the Joint AU-EU Vision for sustained and sustainable economic growth.

The Initiative is jointly funded by the European Union, Germany and Finland. In addition, Belgium, Estonia and France provide expertise and contributions through their development agencies (i.e. Enabel, ESTDEV & Expertise France).

The Data Governance in Africa Initiative thus brings together the African Union, the European Union and five European Member States (BE, DE, EE, FI & FR) to achieve the above-mentioned objective. More precisely, the Initiative is composed of three Specific Objectives:

- **Specific Objective 1** (“Policy Component”): Strengthen comprehensive and harmonised policies and regulations governing personal and non-personal data;
- **Specific Objective 2** (“Use Case Component”): Leverage on data use and cross-border data flows to create (societal) value and inform regulations in selected sectors;
- **Specific Objective 3** (“Infrastructure Component”): Increase the number of bankable proposals for investments in green and secure data infrastructure through the Digital Investment Facility (DIF).

The target group of the Data Governance in Africa Initiative is a reflection of the heterogenous nature of the digital and data ecosystems in Africa: public national/regional institutions, academia, Civil Society Organisations, the private sector, and more. The Initiative's three components are organised in such a manner that they aim for complementary cooperation modalities with the various above-mentioned stakeholders.

Important to note is that the two Calls, organised by Enabel, HAUS & ESTDEV are part of the so-called “Use Case Component”. More information on the Calls' rationale and envisaged contribution to the overall objective of the Data Governance in Africa Initiative can be found in the next chapter.

2.2 Rationale of the Two Calls for Proposals

As mentioned above, the Data Governance in Africa Initiative's second Specific Objective aims at leveraging on data use and cross-border data flows to create (societal) value and inform regulations in selected sectors.

According to Enabel, HAUS & ESTDEV, creating value and identifying innovative regulatory approaches in African economies through data can only be sustained if the process and its objectives are supported and carried by a country's or region's entire digital ecosystem. In that regard, it is necessary to use a multistakeholder approach in order to ensure a meaningful contribution towards leveraging the use of data in Africa.

More than often, private sector actors are spearheading these digital ecosystems in Africa, accelerated by a growing interest in Africa's tech scene, regulatory support from local governments and corresponding (international) investments. Nonetheless, using a multistakeholder approach towards innovation and digital transformation is pivotal in ensuring that the developments are beneficial to the society as a whole and sustained in time. In this sense, governmental institutions and other "not-for-profit" actors such as social entrepreneurs, academia, NGOs and civil society organisations also deserve their place in the digital ecosystems.

As a result, Enabel, HAUS and ESTDEV decided to join forces in organising two Calls for Proposals: one targeting not-for-profit and public sector actors, the other targeting the private sector. Apart from being able to expand the geographic scope of these Calls, the collaboration also valorises the organisations' expertise and experience with specific stakeholders in Africa's digital ecosystems.

2.3 Scaling up data-driven Digital Social Innovations (DSIs)

As mentioned above, the two Calls for Proposals are part of the "Use Case Component" of the Data Governance in Africa Initiative. More precisely, **the two Calls have the combined aim at identifying and scaling up data-driven Digital Social Innovations**, defined as digital innovations that aim to tackle societal challenges in a variety of sectors through data use and/or data sharing.⁴

Since many of the societal challenges (e.g. climate change, e-health/epidemics, migration, natural resource management, climate-smart agriculture, digital inclusion, etc.) do not stop at national borders, the **Calls prioritise DSIs that contribute to stimulating/facilitating cross-border data flows**. Nonetheless, the Calls also appreciate DSIs that can showcase a concrete potential for replication in other countries and/or scaling-up at the multi-country/regional level.

In this chapter, we provide potentially interested (co-)applicants and associates with our joint interpretation of the key concepts that constitute the foundation of these two Calls for Proposals:

- Digitalisation
- Innovation
- Scaling
- Data-driven approach

⁴ The General and Specific Objectives of the two Calls for Proposals are defined below, see 3. "Two Calls for Proposals" on p. 10

Regarding the timing of the Calls, please note that an indicative timeline for both can be found below (page 16).

2.3.1 Data-driven digitalisation

Over the last decade, digitalisation and data usage have increasingly become ingrained in every aspect of our lives. Beyond the expected technological advancements, the COVID-19 crisis – while tragic in terms of health, social well-being and the economy – acted as a catalyst for innovation and the data-driven digital transformation of societies globally.

In the sector of international development and partnerships, a paradigm shift is imperative, moving away from the approach that views digitalisation merely as a means to leverage development. Instead, it demands a perspective that positions data-driven digital transformation and innovation as an indispensable component for ensuring appropriate development in an increasingly digitalised and data-driven world.

Despite persisting digital gaps, the past years have seen a significant increase in the number of internet users in Sub-Saharan Africa, reaching 30% of the total population through double-digit percentage point growth since 2018. Additionally, interesting to note is that most of the increase in data traffic in the region has been facilitated by mobile networks. The widespread use of smartphones has brought about significant transformations, improving connectivity, access to information, economic prospects, and social empowerment for millions. In 2020, smartphone adoption in Sub-Saharan Africa reached 64%, and it is expected to increase to 75% by 2025. This growth is anticipated to continue as internet access improves and mobile prices decline, thus further cultivating an environment for boosting data creation, data use and data sharing.

Nevertheless, alongside many opportunities, the increasing integration into the world of data and digital also brings forth a number of risks and challenges both for individuals, as well as organisations, governments and societies at large. Challenges related to digital (gender) gaps, misuse of (personal) data, high energy consumption, cybersecurity, fake news, appropriate legal frameworks, interoperability and data privacy are concurrently increasing. In addressing these areas of concern, embracing a data-driven approach becomes pivotal, not only for navigating emerging obstacles, but also for ensuring an enabling environment where the fundamental rights of all individuals are protected.

2.3.2 Innovation

Although diverse and heterogenous in nature, innovation can be described as ‘a new and/or improved solution – identified as products, services and/or processes - with the transformative ability to accelerate impact’, aligning closely with the definition of the International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA).

To verify whether a solution qualifies as an innovation, Enabel, HAUS and ESTDEV adhere to the following three criteria:

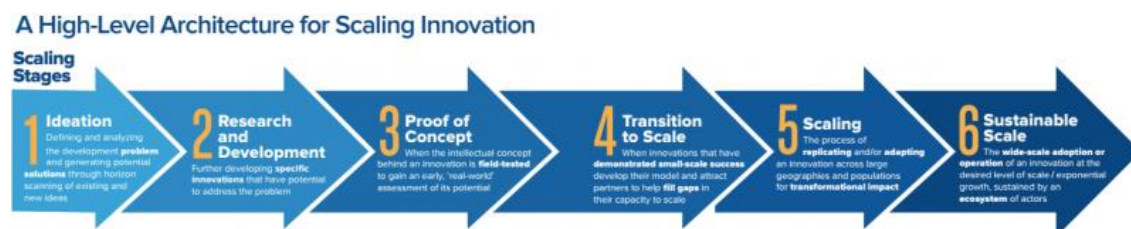
1. The solution must be **new or novel in the specific context**, and at least ‘new’ or ‘novel’ to the intended end-users;
2. The solution is already **implemented**; they must have undergone testing and piloting. Concepts or ideas lacking empirical testing are not yet considered as innovations within the Calls for Proposals (see below – ‘scaling’);

- The solution must have **potential for impact at scale**; Enabel, HAUS and ESTDEV will look for those innovative solutions that are replicable and hold potential for large-scale application.

Above all, Enabel, ESTDEV and HAUS perceive innovation not merely as an outcome but as a process. Innovation involves experimentation, learning, and the generation of new knowledge and insights from the idea stage up to achieving meaningful impact. Throughout the implementation phase of these two Calls for Proposals, the three development agencies will position themselves as trusted partners in projects' innovation efforts, aiming to minimise the concurring risks and maximise the chances of achieving scalable, innovative impact.

2.3.3 Supporting the innovation process

These two Calls for Proposals will specifically aim to support the further development and scaling of existing DSIs. While there are different ways to visualise a maturity process of innovation, Enabel, HAUS and ESTDEV suggest to use the framework co-developed by IDIA and OECD, referring to a 6-stage scaling and innovation process.



In this visualisation, the different scaling stages of an innovation process are presented in a linear way. In reality, we observe that the process is often iterative and less strict or even organised. As innovations move along the scaling stages, they become more 'mature' and more knowledge is gained about their effectiveness and potential impact.

In a more simplified version, these scaling stages can be categorised as:

- **Early-Stage Innovation** (Problem Specification, Ideation, and Research & Development): In the initial phase, the innovation journey begins with identifying a problem, sparking creative ideation, and conducting rigorous research and development. This phase establishes the foundation for potential solutions, fostering a deep understanding of the problem context and potential avenues for change. It is marked by the exploration of novel ideas and the formulation of initial concepts, laying the groundwork for future development;
- **Testing and Iterating** (Developing a Proof of Concept and Testing): As the innovation progresses, it enters a dynamic phase of testing and iteration. A proof of concept is developed to validate the feasibility and functionality of the idea. Testing exposes the innovation to real-world conditions, facilitating the collection of valuable user feedback;
- **Transitioning to Scale and Scaling** (Increasing Impact of Small-Scale Successful Innovations): Successful innovations emerging from the testing phase embark on a journey toward broader impact. Transitioning to scale involves strategically planning how to extend the reach and effectiveness of the innovation. Scaling entails deliberate efforts to replicate successful outcomes across larger contexts, amplifying benefits and addressing scalability challenges. Sustainable scaling requires a holistic approach that considers factors such as resource allocation, stakeholder engagement, and adaptability to diverse environments.

The two Calls for Proposals specifically aim to identify innovations which have a proof of concept (phase 3), are transitioning to scale (phase 4) or are already in the phase of scaling (phase 5). **In other words, to qualify for submission, proposed solutions must have already passed the early stages of ideation, prototyping, testing and have at least one successfully implemented case study, preferably in the country or countries where the proposal is to be implemented.**

2.3.4 Further characteristics

By specifically looking at data-driven DSIs, we observe that data can play a crucial role in the creation, implementation and scaling up of digital innovations that address a variety of societal challenges. Some examples are shared below for reference.

- **Informed Decision-Making:** Data provides insights into the current state of affairs and helps in understanding the nuances of the social issue at hand. Decision-makers can make informed choices based on empirical evidence rather than relying on assumptions or intuition;
- **User-centred design:** Data can identify specific areas or demographics that require attention. This enables organisations and policymakers to tailor interventions to the unique needs of different groups, ensuring that resources are allocated where they are most needed;
- **Measurable Impact:** A data-driven approach facilitates the establishment of clear and measurable objectives. By setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals, organisations can track progress and evaluate the impact of their initiatives over time;
- **Accountability and Transparency:** A data-driven approach promotes accountability and transparency. Stakeholders, including the public, can assess the effectiveness of initiatives by examining data-driven metrics and outcomes, fostering trust in the decision-making process as well as encouraging active participation and collaboration from stakeholders (including communities and individuals);
- **Continuous Improvement:** Regular data collection and analysis encourages continuous improvement. By monitoring outcomes and learning from both successes and failures, organisations can adapt their strategies, refining interventions to achieve better results over time;
- **Scalability:** Data-driven insights enable the identification of successful models and best practices that can be scaled up to address similar challenges in different contexts. This scalability is essential for achieving widespread and sustainable impact. Scalability can be also geographically from national to another country or regionally;
- **Demonstration of Impact to Funders:** For organisations seeking funding for social initiatives, a data-driven approach is essential in demonstrating the impact of their work. Donors and investors are more likely to support projects that have a solid foundation in data and evidence;
- **Predictive Analysis:** Data-driven insights can enable predictive modelling, helping organisations anticipate future trends and challenges. This foresight allows for proactive measures to be taken, reducing risks and enhancing the long-term sustainability of social initiatives;

By leveraging data, decision-makers can navigate complex social issues and provide solutions that are responsive, impactful, and capable of addressing the evolving needs of the communities they serve. This approach not only enhances the effectiveness of an innovation, but also contributes to their sustainability and long-term success.

In the two Calls for Proposals **priority will be given to those DSIs that contribute to or facilitate cross-border data flows, or in other words to facilitate the seamless exchange of personal and non-personal data and information between individuals, organisations, and governments across different countries.** Nonetheless, the Call also appreciates DSIs that can showcase a concrete potential for replication in other countries and/or scaling-up at the multi-country/regional level.

As the majority of societal issues are not limited by national borders, cross-border data flows have become increasingly essential for DSIs that are ready for scaling. As an example, sharing insights by means of data can lead to increased multi-country, regional and international interconnection and collaboration, consequently resulting in more effective decision-making and concrete, inclusive and impactful solutions to societal challenges.

Examples can include the following:

- DSIs facilitating the cross-border exchange of information related to the state of vegetation, freshwater levels and food supplies in order to mitigate regional food crises, facilitate transhumance and avoid conflicts related to (access to) natural resources;
- DSIs contributing to ensuring interoperability between national/regional health administrations, both within and between countries. The structured and secure sharing of health data, including epidemiological data, can allow for the implementation of preventive measures to increase sensitisation and, more importantly, mitigate the spread of diseases;
- DSIs facilitating the economic integration of (rural and) communities by offering low-barrier and accessible (cross-border) digital financial services, generating opportunities for entrepreneurship and/or employability (e.g. access to market data, (cross-border) partnership facilitation, access to employment opportunities, etc.).

3 The Two Calls for Proposals

3.1 General and Specific Objectives of the Calls for Proposals

3.1.1 General Objective

The General Objective of the two Calls for Proposals is to identify and to support the scaling-up of data-driven Digital Social Innovations (DSIs) in Africa.

3.1.2 Specific Objectives

- Specific Objective 1: Identify and support the scaling-up of data-driven DSIs *implemented by public institutions, academia, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and/or Social Enterprises through a grant facility and capacity building*
- Specific Objective 2: Identify and support the scaling-up of data-driven DSIs *implemented by private sector actors through a partnership/investment brokering facility and capacity building on Investment Readiness*

3.2 Background of Call 1 and Call 2

As reflected in the Specific Objectives, these Calls for Proposals consist of two separate Calls, each focusing on a different set of stakeholders in Africa's digital & data ecosystems. During a period of approximately 18 months⁵, the DSIs selected for this Call will benefit from targeted support.

Whereas the first Call focuses on providing grants and capacity building to public institutions (national and/or regional), academia, CSOs, NGOs and other 'not-for-profit' actors (such as social enterprises or not-for-profit business associations); the second Call focuses exclusively on proposals coming from the private sector.

The principal reason for organising these two Calls in parallel is related to the "*Belgian Law on the organisation of the budget and accounting of the Federal State*" which states the nature of organisations eligible for receiving grants.^[OBJ]

3.2.1 Call 1: Grants & capacity building for public institutions, academia, civil society organisations, NGOs and more [Coordinated by Enabel]

Call 1 will enhance the involvement of national and/or regional digital and data ecosystems in the development and concretisation of data use cases that aim to address societal challenges (for example bridging gender, rural/urban, connectivity and other gaps).

It will do so by providing financial support (grants up to EUR 300.000 per data-driven DSI) for a variety of stakeholders (i.e. public sector, academia, CSOs, social entrepreneurs). This support will be complemented by specific capacity building activities for the identified/supported entities. By combining financial support (i.e. grants) and capacity building, the targeted entities are enabled to scale up existing (early-stage) data-driven DSIs.

The rationale behind this Call is to promote a genuine multistakeholder approach towards the development and consolidation of Africa's digital and data ecosystems, both at national and regional level. In addition, by identifying data-driven DSIs from a human rights-based approach (HRBA), it aims to support DSIs that can contribute to strengthening/facilitating the collaboration between government (duty bearers) and rights holders (citizens/CSOs).

This Call's goal is to enable not-for-profit stakeholders in using data to increase the quality of decision-making and policy-making.

3.2.2 Call 2: "Think Like an Investor" a Call for private sector actors [Coordinated by HAUS & ESTDEV]

In response to the growing importance of digital innovations in addressing societal challenges, Call 2 titled "Think Like an Investor" has been initiated.

The rationale behind this Call is to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in scale-up of data-driven DSIs implemented by private sector actors through a partnership/investment brokering facility and capacity building on Investment Readiness. It will also aim to target especially those DSIs actively involved in digital innovation aimed at creating social impact. Furthermore, we actively seek out DSIs with replicable models, facilitating their expansion into various countries.

⁵ For a more detailed overview of the timeline, see 3.6 "Timeline of the two Calls for Proposals" on p.15

The Call will achieve this through a comprehensive approach, offering tailored training programs, personalized mentoring, and opportunities to forge connections with international partners and potential investors. By providing these essential resources and support systems, the Call aims to cultivate a dynamic ecosystem of digital innovation and entrepreneurship across Africa. By supporting the growth of private sector DSIs, the Call strives to drive sustainable development, economic growth, and positive social impact throughout the continent.

3.3 Thematic scope of the two Calls for Proposals

The thematic scope revolves around the promotion of data usage and sharing, in alignment with the overarching goals of the Data Governance in Africa Initiative and the thematic priorities of the organising agencies. This convergence ensures a unified approach under the “Use Case Component” and sustains the long-term impact of the supported DSIs.

Important to note is that the Selection Committee will also focus on the overall objective of the proposal, not only looking at the sub-thematic that is proposed. In short, the data-driven DSIs should contribute to closing existing digital divides/gaps (e.g. urban/rural, gender, youth).

Below you can find the key themes prioritised in both Calls:

- E-Health/epidemics
- Digital inclusion, encompassing issues like youth and gender gaps, digital rights, digital skills/education, decent work and social protection.
- Climate change, covering areas like just energy transition, natural resource management, waste management, and climate-smart, sustainable agriculture
- Governance, including resource mobilization, social cohesion/peace-security, smart cities, transportation, and tax/customs management

Additionally, Call 2 offers flexibility with a broader thematic scope, allowing DSIs to address the following areas as well:

- Financial inclusion, open finance, and banking
- Regulatory frameworks
- Energy – related challenges.

3.4 Geographic scope of the Joint Calls for Proposals

For the sake of coherence and longer-term sustainability of the supported DSIs, the two Calls for Proposals will target and prioritise some countries.

Please note that the geographic scope is limited to a specific set of countries for each Call, in which each country has a number of development organisations (i.e. Enabel, HAUS and ESTDEV) that have ongoing/planned programmes and activities. In addition, these lists also take into account the other activities of the Data Governance in Africa Initiative’s Use Case Component (i.e. use case identified by GIZ).

3.4.1 List of Countries: Call 1

Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia⁶.

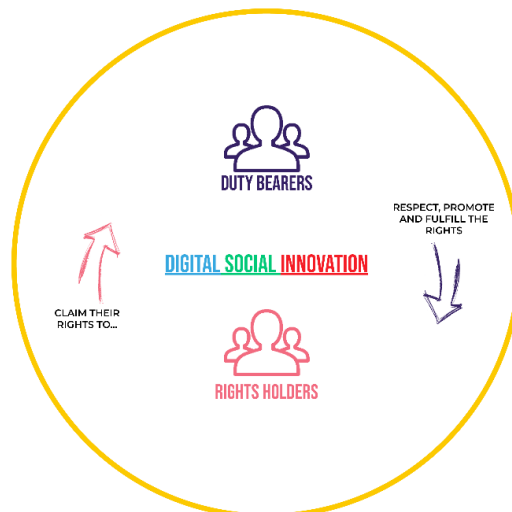
3.4.2 List of Countries: Call 2

Botswana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia.

3.5 Transversal themes and Principles

The transversal themes and key principles for the Calls for Proposals are inspired by what has priorly been identified by Enabel's Wehubit programme as baseline frameworks to ensure that projects conduct their work in a safe, inclusive and sustainable manner.

First of all, we consider the **human rights-based approach (HRBA)** as fundamental to our action, in the sense that it aims to develop the capacity of duty-bearers (authorities) to meet their obligations and to encourage rights holders (citizens) to claim their rights. The digital social innovations that will be supported through this Call are being implemented by civil society or public institutions. When receiving a proposal, we appraise to what extent the proposed solution will improve the enforcement of rights, the dynamics between right holders and duty bearers, their respective capacities to exercise their roles and to what extent the project takes into account vulnerable groups. We also stress the importance of applying a do no harm approach, where careful consideration is taken in reducing particular inequalities while ensuring no new inequalities are created.



Moreover, Enabel pays specific attention to the **digital gender divide**, which refers to the disparity in access to and usage of digital technologies, such as the internet and digital devices, between men and women. This gap could be the result of various factors, including

⁶ For more information about the list of countries under Call 1, please see the Guidelines, p.7 under 2.1.2 paragraph "Countries"

limited access to technology, lower digital literacy among women, and cultural or societal norms that discourage or restrict women's engagement with digital tools and online platforms.

The impact of digital innovation on **environment and climate** is also a priority for us. Digitalisation has a dual impact on the environment. On the one hand, it has the potential to enhance efficiency, to reduce emissions and aid environmental monitoring. However, it also contributes to electronic waste, energy consumption, resource extraction, and overconsumption. Balancing these positive and negative effects is crucial.

Enabel also adheres to the [nine Principles for Digital Development](#). These provide guidelines for designing and implementing digital solutions in development projects and will also serve as key elements which will be assessed in the applicants' submissions for the Call for Proposals'. The nine principles emphasize user-centric design, scalability, sustainability, data-driven decision-making, openness, privacy and security, collaboration, and adaptability. These principles aim to enhance the effectiveness and ethical use of digital technologies in development efforts. Please note that these Principles are currently being reviewed.

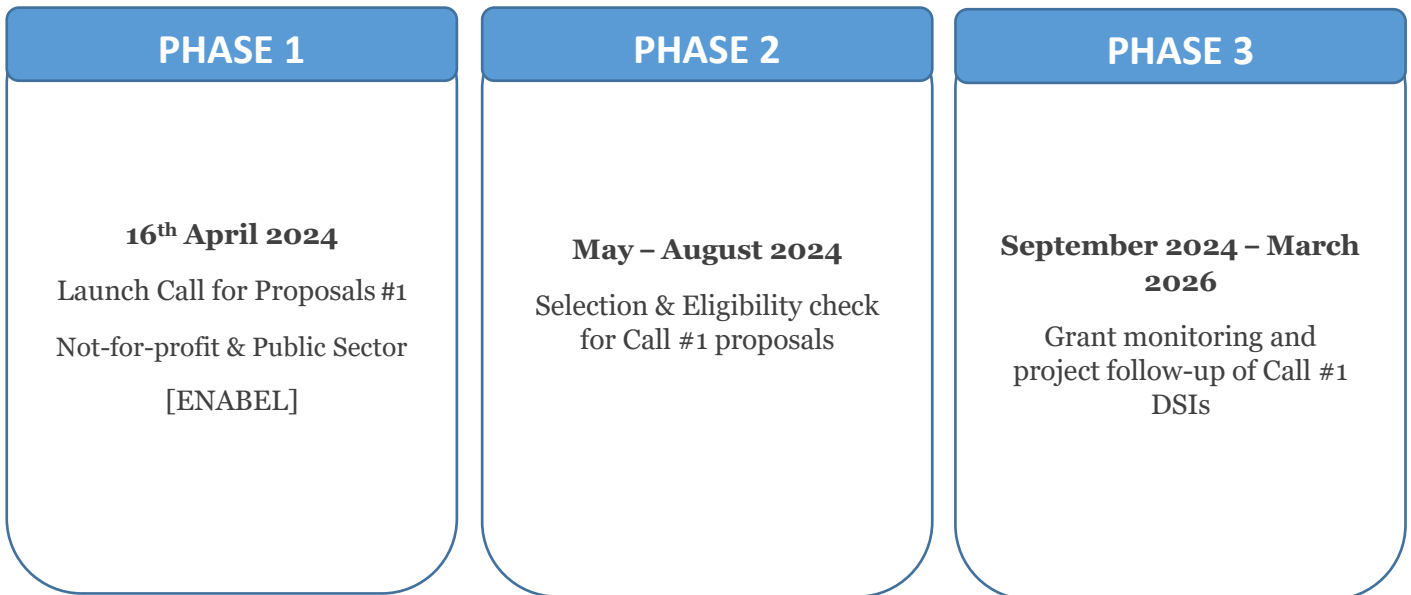
This initiative supports adopting the EU's web accessibility framework. This framework promotes social inclusion, enabling everyone to participate fully in the digital economy and society. With the rise of online information and services, there's a risk of excluding certain groups, like people with disabilities and the elderly, from essential services. Making simple adjustments to improve data accessibility benefits all users, enhancing their well-being.



Source: <https://digitalprinciples.org/>

3.6 Phases and the Timelines of the Two Calls

Call 1: Grants & capacity building for public institutions, academia, civil society organisations, NGOs and more [Coordinated by Enabel]



Call 2: “Think Like an Investor” Call for private sector actors [Coordinated by HAUS & ESTDEV]

