Principles for Digital Development

Advisory Council

Terms of Reference

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dial Digital Impact Alliance

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Introduction & Overview

In 2016, the Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL) was named steward of the Principles for Digital Development (Digital Principles). As steward, DIAL is charged with facilitating dialogue among the digital development community, curating the exchange of new ideas and resources, and promoting adoption and new endorsement of the Digital Principles. In this role, DIAL seeks to foster community engagement and interaction; provide practical, relevant how-to guidance and resources for digital development practitioners, including implementing organizations (international development and humanitarian NGOs), donors, and country governments; and increase awareness about the Digital Principles themselves.

In 2018, DIAL established its first Digital Principles Advisory Council: a consultative body to DIAL that provides input into the Principles for Digital Development objectives and projects which DIAL chooses to invest in. When the Council members has served for 18 months, the open nomination process for their seat will begin again.

Background on the Digital Impact Alliance

DIAL originated to bring together the public and private sectors to realize an inclusive digital society that connects everyone to life-enhancing technology in developing countries. DIAL's role is to convene the community, discover what works and what doesn't work, generate insights to help strengthen ecosystem partners, and advocate for best practice recommendations. DIAL is positioned to serve as a neutral broker bringing together government, industry, and other development stakeholders to promote new solutions to old and emerging challenges.

Background on the Principles for Digital Development

The Principles for Digital Development emerged organically as a community-driven global good designed to advance the role of digital technology in development and to accelerate the end of global poverty.

With the emergence of accessible digital technology such as mobile phones and mobile internet more than a decade ago, international development organizations began including digital tools in their programming. These efforts were initially quite successful: rapid proliferation of connectivity enabled governments and NGOs in health, agriculture and other sectors to reach underserved populations to an unprecedented degree. However, many digitally-enabled programs failed, often for reasons that were both predictable and preventable.

In the late 2000s, representatives from large donor and multilateral organizations began discussing reasons for these failures. They found many similar challenges in scaling digital development programs and agreed that a set of best practice based on lessons learned would help other practitioners avoid these common missteps and realize greater success. UNICEF led this endeavor in 2009 with the launch of their Innovation Principles. The following year, 40 implementers and donors met to discuss best practices in ICT tools for international development, resulting in the publication of the Greentree Principles, reflecting similar ideas to UNICEF's original principles.

More organizations and governments began circulating guidance on digital development, yet implementers continued to struggle with integrating digital tools into their programs. To address this continuing problem, 14 international donors and multilateral organizations met in 2012 to discuss how to synthesize existing guidance, institutionalize lessons for using digital technologies for development, and create a common vision for what was becoming known as "digital development." This group formed a list of recommendations for success: The Principles for Digital Development.

A Principles for Digital Development Working Group launched in June 2014 to gather insights and feedback from development implementers and donor representatives on using digital technology for their programs. The Working Group was intended to enable those practitioners most likely to be impacted by, and directly influence, the implementation of digital development to interpret and define the Digital Principles. Over the course of a year, the Working Group met nine times to discuss each Principle in-depth, resulting in a shared understanding of what the Digital Principles mean in practice.

When DIAL was named steward of the Digital Principles in 2016, the team was tasked with the responsibility of promoting endorsement and adoption of the Digital Principles, coordinating the community, and developing resources to help ensure best practice. The community has grown from an initial 54 endorsing organizations to nearly 250 since then; several online and in-person trainings for deepening knowledge and application of the Digital Principles have been developed, and over 30 resources such as measurement tools, case studies, and how-to guides have been published on the website.

The Principles for Digital Development are intended to be neither static nor compulsory. They are a set of living guidance meant to help practitioners succeed in applying digital technologies to development programs. Over time, the Digital Principles may evolve to fit specific contexts and environments, or to maintain and expand their relevance. The digital development community plays a key role in ensuring the Principles for Digital Development remain relevant and useful. More information on the Digital Principles can be found at https://digitalprinciples.org.

Advisory Council Objectives and Responsibilities

As the Digital Principles community steadily grew, encompassing diverse sectors and diverging perspectives, DIAL identified the benefit of a dedicated group of professionals advising us on all aspects of stewardship and providing a more formal feedback structure to help address the needs of the community with transparency and accountability. The first Digital Principles Advisory Council was established in 2018, comprised of 8 individuals from diverse geographies, sectors, and backgrounds. During their 18-month tenure, the group met 10 times to provide expert advice and guidance to shape the evolution of the Digital Principles and to reinforce DIAL's accountability to the community and to ensure DIAL was fulfilling its responsibilities and responding to the shifting needs in the digital development community.

The objectives of the Council are to provide expert advice and guidance to shape the evolution of the Digital Principles and to reinforce DIAL's accountability to the community, to ensure DIAL is fulfilling its responsibilities as stewards and responding to the shifting needs in the digital development

community. The Council provides input into Digital Principles programming and strategy and members serve as Digital Principles advocates and representatives within their respective sectors and networks.

The Advisory Council is made up of representatives across different sectors, geographies, and organizational types. These individuals have the respect and confidence of their fellow development practitioners and represent multiple voices, needs, and desires for the Digital Principles.

Member Roles and Responsibilities

The Advisory Council serves first and foremost as a consultative body, guiding and providing input into the work that DIAL is either working on, or proposing to begin, related to the Principles for Digital Development. Advisory Council members will:

- Review and provide feedback on annual and strategic plans for the Digital Principles, including on priority areas for guidance materials and community engagement;
- Serve as champions promoting adoption of the Digital Principles to existing and new audiences in their respective communities;
- Lend expertise and provide recommendations on specific topics, as needed;
- Provide hands-on collaboration on specific programs, such as identifying speakers for Digital Principles events, as needed;
- Participate in training on the Digital Principles, including the DP 101 and Training of Trainers (TOT) courses;
- Act as ambassadors of the community, undertaking to model the Digital Principles in their own work. Advisory Council members will participate in up to four quarterly meetings per year, as volunteers and without compensation (other than reimbursement for any required travel to the one in-person meeting held each year). Each meeting requires no more than 2 hours preparation, in the form of pre-work and reading.

Members are encouraged, but not required, to serve on additional subcommittees as requested by the team, for example relating to DPAC nomination and selection, or for specific fundraising or resource development activities. A focused subcommittee will be set up to help DIAL plan, lead, and facilitate monthly "Digital Principles Chapter/Community" convenings where members of the Digital Principles network will have the opportunity to safely and securely share challenges and learning. This subcommittee will lead these regular discussions to increase interaction and build relationships are lessons learned and guidance on topics of common interest.

Funded by its donors to serve as stewards, DIAL will retain budgetary and programmatic oversight and responsibility of the Digital Principles. However, the Advisory Council will play a vital role in shaping the work DIAL chooses to take on in this role.

Advisory Council Chairperson

The Advisory Council will be facilitated by a Chairperson. In addition to his/her responsibilities as a member, he/she will serve as meeting chair, working with DIAL to set meeting agendas and facilitate productive conversations. The Chairperson will encourage the Council to participate in healthy debates on strategy and substance, ensuring that these conversations conclude with clear and actionable

guidance to the DIAL team. Additionally, the Chairperson will support follow-up as needed across the Council. The Chairperson is also responsible for the healthy functioning of the Advisory Council, and is expected to chair the DPAC Nomination Sub-Committee and support its work. To support DIAL in encouraging full participation by the Advisory Council members, the Chairperson will have the authority to recommend removal of a member should that person miss three consecutive Council meetings or is unable to contribute fully.

The Chairperson will meet regularly with DIAL's Digital Principles team, who will update and solicit feedback from the Chairperson on program developments. He or she will also conduct regular check-ins with other Council members to collect updates, priorities, and any action items. The cadence and objectives of meetings with DIAL will be set by the Digital Principles team, and the cadence and objectives with other Council members will be at the discretion of the Chairperson. Both will be established at the first Council meeting at the beginning of the year. Regular meetings with the Digital Principles team and fellow DPAC members will also allow the Chairperson to bring questions or concerns to DIAL in a timelier manner than the regular quarterly meetings may allow.

Council members will vote to elect their Chairperson, and the member serving in the role will change every two years or whenever a Chairperson steps down, whichever comes first.

Meetings of the Council

Regular meetings: To meet its objectives and to ensure active, relevant participation in Digital Principles programming, the Advisory Council will meet at least once per quarter each fiscal year. Two of these four meetings per year will run up to two hours. These meetings will allow the Council to provide updates on their projects related to the Digital Principles; engage in substantive discussion on relevant issues; provide the opportunity for DIAL to bring business before the Council, or for the Council to raise concerns; provide feedback from the rest of the community and give suggestions to DIAL related to the Principles for Digital Development. The longer meetings will also cover work planning and strategy. All meetings will be held via an online teleconferencing program.

Full-day meetings: Optionally, one meeting per year may be a full-day in-person or virtual meeting. It will be targeted toward more in-depth work planning and workshopping. The in-person meeting may require Council members to travel to the selected meeting location. If this is the case, DIAL will reimburse all members for travel costs associated with attending the meeting (i.e. flights, meals, and lodging up to the allowable rate based on U.S. State Department regulations).

Extraordinary meetings: DIAL may call additional virtual meetings or by the Chairperson on an as-needed basis, as specific topics arise that need urgent discussion. These extraordinary meetings will last no more than one hour. These meetings will be conducted via an online teleconferencing program.

Electronic meetings: Occasionally, matters may arise on which the DIAL team would like the Council's view or recommendation, but where a meeting is not required or possible. In these cases, exceptionally, recommendations may be requested and provided asynchronously, via email.

The Principles for Digital Development team at DIAL will remain accessible to all Council members as necessary to address their comments or concerns should they arise between meetings.

Advisory Council Membership

Composition

The Principles for Digital Development Advisory Council will be comprised of up to seven regular members, and one Chairperson – **totaling up to 8 people.** These individuals will be digital development practitioners with diverse representation of sectors, geographies, gender, and organization type. Broadly, the composition of the Advisory Council will be as follows:

- Two members from donor organizations;
- Four members from implementing organizations; and
- Two members unassociated with either (i.e. they can be sector influencers, private tech companies, social entrepreneurs, local country representatives, open source providers, academics, tech providers or independent consultants).

An organization can only have one member sitting on the Council at a time, but a member does not necessarily have to be associated with an organization or company.

The Advisory Council will be weighted towards the Global South perspective, reflecting the reality of where digital development programs take place, and to give voice to those that are usually underrepresented in conversations about global goods and development best practice. For this reason, the Council will only include a **maximum** of four members from the Global North (either by nationality or by physical location). Additionally, DIAL is a gender equality champion, and as such aims for gender parity wherever possible. For this reason, a target 50/50 percent ratio of female and male representatives on the Council has been established.

Appointment Process

Members of the Advisory Council will be nominated by their peers to serve in the role. Nominations will be submitted publicly through the Principles for Digital Development Forum (https://forum.digitalprinciples.org). For those with privacy considerations, nominations may be submitted through our online form (https://bit.ly/3kX4ypb). Nominations will require consent of the person being nominated, a resume or CV and letter of support stating the reasons why the nominator is putting their selected candidate forward for the position. More than one person may nominate the same individual. Individuals may also nominate themselves, providing their resume or CV and an explanation of their interest in joining the Advisory Council. The nomination process will be open for six weeks.

When nominating an individual for the Advisory Council, consideration should be paid to the following:

- Commitment to promoting and adhering to the Principles for Digital Development;
- Experience working with technology-enabled development programming;
- Unique or specialized skills and expertise within digital development;

- Credibility and reputation within the digital development community; and
- Diversity of gender, sector representation, and geographic locations.

Once the nomination period closes, a seven-person Selection Sub-Committee will review all candidates and determine who will sit on the Advisory Council. The Selection Sub-Committee will be comprised of two DIAL staff persons, three former Advisory Council members, and two digital development practitioners well-versed in the Digital Principles and its work. These individuals will be identified and announced publicly and will recuse themselves from consideration to join the Digital Principles Advisory Council. The process of selection should take no longer than one month.

Selected Advisory Council members will be notified privately to allow them the opportunity to accept or reject their appointment, and to identify potential conflicts of interest. Should a selected member reject their appointment, the Selection Committee will revert to a short-list of alternatives, bearing in mind the need for balanced representation across membership. Once all Advisory Council members have accepted their appointments, DIAL will publicly announce the membership, including the process and rationale. Alongside the public announcement, DIAL will publish a brief overview of the process that took place, and how decisions were reached.

Tenure of Advisory Council Members

Advisory Council members are selected to their seat for a period of two years, with possible renewal up to two times. When a Council member has served for 18 months, they may renew their term, at the discretion of the Selection Sub-Committee. If they choose not to, the open nomination process for their seat will begin. This will allow for a transition period, so that the new Council member to fill the seat can attend the next quarterly meeting with their predecessor.

Seats on the Advisory Council will be associated with the individual who fills the seat, and not their organization (i.e. if a representative from a given organization chooses to step down from the Council, someone else from that organization will not automatically fill their seat). Likewise, if an individual leaves their current organization, s/he may maintain the seat as long as their new role continues to align with the requisite composition of the Council (i.e. a Global South implementer must move to another Global South implementing organization to maintain a seat). If s/he do not fit this requirement any longer, or if they choose to transition off the Council, their seat will become open for public nominations once again. This process will follow the same model as outlined above for selection criteria.

To avoid all members' terms expiring at once, terms for inaugural members will be staggered. That is, four of the initial members will be asked to serve initial three-year terms, while the remaining and all subsequent members will serve two-year terms. This shall not affect the number of times that members can renew their term.

DIAL's Responsibilities Facilitating the Advisory Council

DIAL's Digital Principles team will be responsible for financial management and program implementation, but will present plans, strategies, and products to the Advisory Council for feedback, structuring questions and discussions to enable productive conversations. DIAL also will support the

Chairperson to form agendas in advance of the Advisory Council quarterly meetings, circulating the agenda and any pre-reading documents in advance of the meetings. DIAL will coordinate all communications with the Advisory Council relating to and outside of formal meetings, and will manage all logistics related to Council meetings and calls.

DIAL will capture meeting minutes, comments, and follow-up action items from the meetings, circulating notes to members for response and corrections before publishing them publicly.