

DIGITAL  
CHANGE

## A guiding framework for digital change at GIZ

2015 – 2018

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# FOREWORD

Dear readers,

Digital change is bringing sweeping change at an economic, political and societal level throughout the globe. Nothing is impervious to digital change – it even affects the field of international cooperation. The digital evolution continuously changes the way we work, offering new opportunities and business potential, yet posing considerable challenges too.

Our commissioning parties, with the German Government at the helm, play a proactive role in dealing with digital change and expect GIZ to step up to the mark too. Digitalisation is having a strong impact on the framework in which we operate in our partner countries, calling for state-of-the-art approaches. Our cooperation partners and other international implementing organisations are already gearing up to digital change so that they can leverage the strong potential it offers.

Digital change has established a strong foothold at GIZ too. Across all business units there are good examples of how digital applications can be used. Digitalisation is in our best interests, offering benefits across the board from more efficient processes to easier communication. However, it is important that all these positive aspects do not make us lose sight of the risks involved. We need to know where we stand in relation to data protection, surveillance and human rights in the digital age.

That is where this guiding framework and our three-year digital change strategy come in. They will help us keep up to speed with the digital age. It is up to us all to approach this process in a positive light and help position GIZ as an innovative and future-oriented service provider.



Dr Christoph Beier  
Vice Chair of the Management Board



Dr Sabine Müller  
Director General, Sectoral Department

# INTRODUCTION

This paper provides GIZ with a strategic orientation for dealing with digital change. As a first step, it addresses GIZ staff, who will be responsible for implementing digital change throughout GIZ, thereby shaping the company's future. The process of digital transformation at GIZ addresses many other stakeholders too. These include our clients and commissioning parties, our cooperation partners, the general public and the German Federal Government, which own GIZ.

Against this backdrop, the paper provides a framework for promptly implementing initial steps and for shaping and aligning different (strategic) processes throughout the company. Digital change permeates all aspects of our work and the transformations it triggers will impact on all business units at GIZ. This means that digital change needs to form a key pillar of GIZ's overall strategic process. It is important that all these efforts are aligned with the digital changes required, so as to avoid conflicting objectives and leverage synergies. This is vital if we are to ensure that digital change is in keeping with the overall strategic process at GIZ.

The strategy underpinning this process is initially set to run for three years, from October 2015. Over this period GIZ will position itself to constructively deal with digital change, which offers much potential for innovation. Channelling its momentum will require a flexible approach that can be modified at any time and is in tune with the objective of digitalisation as a process. One thing is certain, however: digital change must revolve around people, not technology.

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# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

## OUR VISION

### WHERE DOES GIZ SEE ITSELF IN THREE YEARS' TIME WITH REGARD TO DIGITAL CHANGE?

**GIZ has transformed itself across the board to meet the demands of the digital age. It makes active use of the opportunities presented by new technologies and digital innovations throughout all business units, adopting a user-centred approach. As a result, GIZ is making processes more efficient and providing services more effectively.**

## OUR MISSION

### HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE THIS VISION?

- ▶ We expand our digital skills, dealing with digital change responsibly and taking technological developments in our stride.
- ▶ We are making systematic use of digital technologies in our projects if we are able to boost effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability and cooperation as a result. We also use reverse learning mechanisms to continuously improve our services.
- ▶ We are using the opportunities offered by digital technologies to improve networking and to actively cooperate across hierarchical levels, departments and communities of practice.
- ▶ We constantly review the technological compatibility of our services and business processes and support the synergies inherent in business processes by using digital technology.
- ▶ We regard open, non-personalised data as an opportunity for continually reviewing and improving our services.
- ▶ We are constantly optimising our security measures in relation to digital data.
- ▶ We facilitate a corporate culture that requires and promotes innovative thinking and the testing of new ideas; we are open about our mistakes.
- ▶ We are actively involved in international discussions on digital change and seek out dialogues with our commissioning parties, clients and strategic partners.

As we can see from this mission statement, dealing with digital change will support the reorganisation process within GIZ that was set in motion by bauhaus15, by:

- ▶ facilitating cooperation and co-creation;
- ▶ leveraging knowledge, data and information;
- ▶ boosting our innovativeness;
- ▶ increasing efficiency.

## OUR APPROACH

**To achieve the objectives outlined above we must be open to impetus from both within and outside of the company when dealing with digital change throughout GIZ.** We need to seek ways of incorporating expertise and innovative ideas from outside the company. In line with our legal status, the process is decentralised yet networked and is based on existing structures, strategies and regulatory processes. Using a clear and transparent approach we want to generate enthusiasm for this new start at all corporate levels and encourage the workforce to welcome the digital age with open arms.

**One thing is clear:** the entire process of digital transformation at GIZ revolves around people, not technology. Adopting a user-centred approach will help us ensure that digital change at GIZ will, more than anything else, help lighten rather than increase our staff's workload. After all, digital change simplifies work processes and increases efficiency and effectiveness. It creates added value, not additional work.

**GIZ's Management Board has undertaken to promote work on a digital change strategy and on systematically integrating digital technologies into business and support processes, as well as helping to improve the way GIZ delivers its services. It will also be asking staff members to support this undertaking.**

# ACTION AREAS

Digital change impacts on GIZ in a number of different ways and affects all business areas.

The following action areas have been identified in order to achieve the vision outlined above:

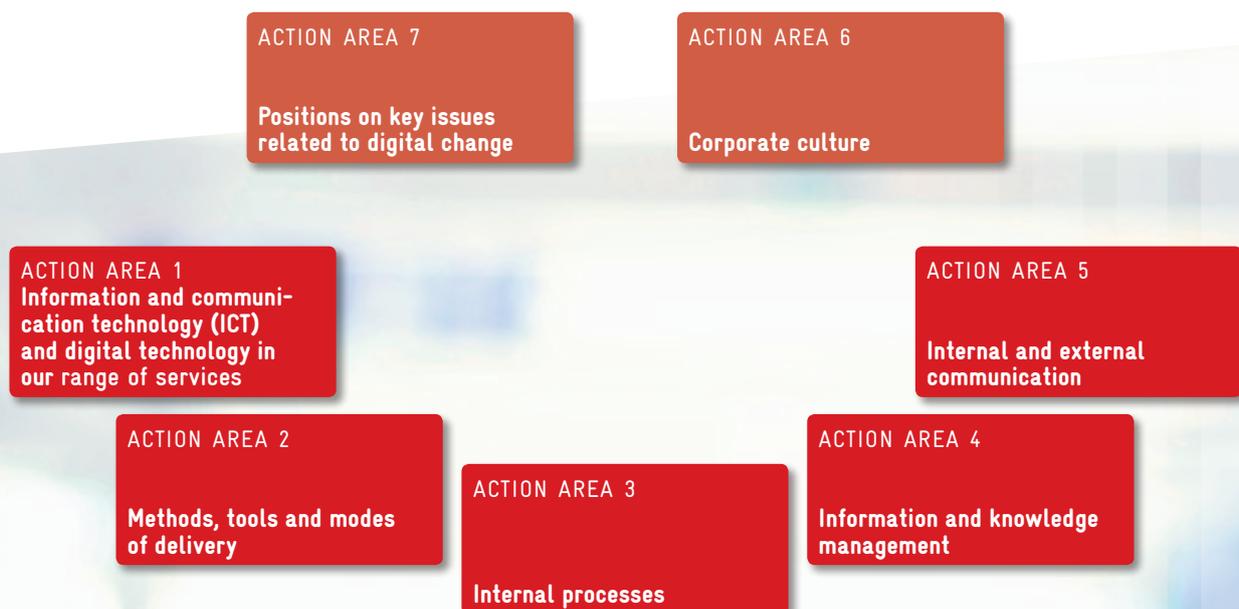
- Action area 1:** Information and communication technology (ICT) and digital technology in our range of services
- Action area 2:** Methods, instruments and modes of delivery
- Action area 3:** Internal processes

Activities in both of the following cross-sectoral action areas will underpin work in the first three action areas to an equal degree:

- Action area 4:** Information and knowledge management
- Action area 5:** Internal and external communication

The following action areas will tackle issues that deal with fundamental aspects of digital change at an overarching level:

- Action area 6:** Corporate culture
- Action area 7:** Positions on key issues related to digital change



Some of the action areas go hand-in-hand and need to be networked. As they are so closely inter-linked, prioritisation would not only be pointless, it would actually be impossible. Nevertheless, it is possible to say that various prerequisites exist for the action areas. As a result, the time frame for achieving objectives will vary, as will the degree of visibility of the solutions that need to be implemented. This is due to differences in terms of:

- ▶ the skills and resources available;
- ▶ the expectations and requirements of internal and external customers;
- ▶ the scope of the required changes.

## ACTION AREA 1

### ICT and digital technology in GIZ's range of services

GIZ benefits from the use of digital applications in projects and programmes in a number of ways. They help us reach new target groups, extend project coverage, improve cost effectiveness, create new ways of involving our partners, and allow us to develop and offer brand new solutions. GIZ is already implementing projects that integrate digital applications in an exemplary manner.

#### THEREFORE, THIS ACTION AREA FOCUSES ON:

- ▶ taking stock of the ICT tools and digital technologies that are already in use;
- ▶ benchmarking with other development cooperation/international cooperation organisations. What is state-of-the art? Where does GIZ stand?
- ▶ identifying potential for further integrating digital technologies into GIZ's range of services;
- ▶ designing new or modified products and assessing demand;
- ▶ reviewing existing internal project-related standards and rules and proposing modifications where necessary;
- ▶ setting up and expanding networks and partnerships;
- ▶ increasing the visibility of the existing range of advisory services on digital technologies and drafting proposals for a possible advisory structure for programmes on ICT and issues related to digital applications.

## ACTION AREA 2

### Methods, tools and modes of delivery

An opportunity-based review of the use of digital technologies must be undertaken as a matter of course when developing and implementing projects and processes. To conduct such reviews, we need (new) methods and instruments that incorporate digital technology to boost efficiency and effectiveness and that keep pace with ever-changing digital technologies.

#### THIS ACTION AREA THEREFORE FOCUSES ON:

- ▶ documenting the digital technologies and working methods used in programmes as well as information on the need for change;
- ▶ on this basis, revising the existing set of instruments and methodologies and developing and reviewing new instruments, methodologies and modes of delivery and describing measures to avoid potential risks;
- ▶ where necessary, modifying internal processes, technical prerequisites and advisory structures in line with new instruments and methodologies;
- ▶ identifying new cooperation partners and new formats for developing innovative instruments and methodologies;
- ▶ putting in place a process for continually updating methodologies and instruments;
- ▶ improving monitoring and evaluation by using standardised data collection and supporting data-based innovations.

## ACTION AREA 3

### Internal processes

Digital change impacts not only on our range of services and the instruments and methodologies we use to implement projects worldwide. It can also have a very beneficial effect on internal processes, where the greatest improvements may be achieved in terms of efficiency.

#### THIS ACTION AREA FOCUSES ON:

- ▶ compiling a list of ongoing projects and activities to digitalise internal processes in areas such as procurement/contract management;
- ▶ identifying and assessing the need for IT support in the field structure and in programmes to support internal processes such as personnel, finance/financial control etc.;
- ▶ cost-benefit analyses and prioritising investment measures to digitalise processes;
- ▶ building momentum for the company's IT strategy;
- ▶ developing a digital literacy training strategy for GIZ staff.

## ACTION AREA 4

### Information and knowledge management

Information and knowledge management is a cross-cutting theme and is therefore also affected by digital change. Plans for GIZ's comprehensive Knowledge Portal are already in place and have been implemented to some degree. However, we still need to examine how we as a learning organisation can organise our knowledge, make it available and feed back in lessons learned from projects and processes.

#### OTHER FOCAL AREAS HERE INCLUDE:

- ▶ introducing an integrated information and knowledge management system at GIZ;
- ▶ introducing an application for efficient internal virtual collaboration that allows swift and easy access to data and knowledge;
- ▶ reviewing and defining processes to structure, collect and update methodological and sectoral knowledge;
- ▶ collecting, providing and improving the visibility of knowledge on digital themes at GIZ.

## ACTION AREA 5

### Communication

Proactive, target-group-oriented strategic communication is key to the success of any fundamental change process. In this case, the change process is targeting communication itself. The way we roll out information and ensure the long-term visibility of this topic both internally and externally using new digital technologies and viral communication is part and parcel of digital change. It allows staff members to spread the word about positive changes themselves and to express their needs. Ultimately, all the activities that drive digital change need to be user-centered. We are thereby supporting change in our corporate culture and positioning GIZ as a modern and experienced service provider.

#### THIS ACTION AREA REVOLVES PRIMARILY AROUND:

- ▶ devising a strategy for communicating information on digital products/working methods both externally and internally;
- ▶ modifying and introducing new digital communication methods such as the 'social intranet' and digital media communities both internally and externally;
- ▶ constantly communicating information within GIZ on the potential of digital change;
- ▶ compiling a glossary of key terms and a toolbox for using digital technologies in projects.

## ACTION AREA 6

### Corporate culture

Corporate culture refers to the values, norms and attitudes that affect the decisions, actions and behaviour of staff members. Digitalisation impacts on corporate culture in two different respects. Firstly, digital applications and process design change things such as communication and interaction between staff members, which in turn changes the behaviour of each individual within the context of his/her work environment. It also changes our understanding of leadership, however. Secondly, a shift in corporate culture is vital if the full potential of digital change is to be harnessed.

Digital change demands cultural change throughout the company that makes digital transformation tangible and allows all staff to experience it first-hand. GIZ supports open communication, cooperation and innovative thinking. Virtual and physical spaces with flat organisational structures are created for exchanging information and developing new ideas. Going forward, we will need to create an environment that is conducive to such change, bearing in mind that cultural change within an organisation is a long-term process.

## ACTION AREA 7

### Positions on key issues related to digital change

Before staff can start work on the action areas listed above, positions need to be developed on key issues related to digital change. These positions provide guidance and help us to reach a consensus on a company-wide stance and advise our commissioning parties and clients on this basis. European and German legislation provide a reference framework for these key issues, as do the positions of BMZ.

#### KEY ISSUES ON WHICH GIZ NEEDS TO DEVELOP POSITIONS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- ▶ How do we implement data security and data protection in projects in a solution-oriented manner?
- ▶ How can we protect human rights online?
- ▶ What stance do we take in our advice on internet governance and net neutrality?
- ▶ What is our position on open source and the use of proprietary software?
- ▶ On what basis do we cooperate with market leaders?
- ▶ How do we take into account copyright, rights of use and competition law in the context of international cooperation online?

# INDICATORS

WE USE THE FOLLOWING INDICATORS TO MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION:

- 1 Positions on key issues related to digital change have been adopted.
- 2 The digital skills of staff members have been expanded.
- 3 GIZ's strategies and processes are geared to digital change.
- 4 The use of ICT and digital applications has been integrated into products and services, and strategies for significantly boosting efficiency have been outlined.
- 5 Digital transformation at GIZ is mainstreamed in all organisational units, through action-area-related work packages.
- 6 As part of the IT strategy, all business processes were reviewed for their digitalisation potential. This potential is being constantly reviewed and the prioritised plans for implementation drafted on this basis are being consistently implemented.
- 7 Guidelines on investing in digital technologies and IT infrastructure have been developed that will enable the vision to be implemented.
- 8 Information on our digital range of services is being consciously communicated both internally and externally using decentralised digital communication technologies and channels.
- 9 Digital service provision formats have been developed for the GIZ set of instruments and methodologies.
- 10 Cooperation with universities, the private sector and civil society organisations on developing digital solutions and methodologies has been stepped up and consolidated.
- 11 Digital tools are available for knowledge management and for collaboration within GIZ, and allow access to all relevant data. Clearly designed user interfaces also encourage staff members to use these tools.
- 12 Projects can obtain advice on ICT and digital applications from an internal team.

# IMPLEMENTATION

At Management Board level, responsibility for the digital transformation of GIZ lies with the Vice-Chair of the Management Board Dr Christoph Beier. The fact that a member of the Management Board has been explicitly appointed to this role shows the importance that GIZ attaches to this issue.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

Detailed development and implementation is to be carried out in two phases.

### PHASE 1

(October 2015 to March 2016)

During this phase, operational implementation will be planned and fine-tuned for each action area. The strategic approach to digital change will be integrated into the new strategic process. Quick wins will be delivered.

### PHASE 2

(April 2016 to September 2018)

During this time, operational plans will be implemented and will include continuous monitoring and evaluation. During phase 1, a company-wide working group will fine tune plans for operational implementation of the action areas. The foundations will be laid for drafting positions on key digital change issues and quick wins will be delivered. The analyses and inventories conducted by the working group during phase 1 will be used when revising GIZ's strategic architecture, ensuring that digital change is a key pillar of the strategic process. Dr Sabine Müller, Director General, Sectoral Department, is responsible for the working group.

Towards the end of phase 1, proposals on structuring operational implementation will be submitted by the company-wide working group to the bodies responsible.

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