9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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**17 ROOMS GLOBAL FLAGSHIP
2021 ROOM DOCUMENTS**
NOVEMBER 2021

**17
ROOMS**

This document summarizes the ideas and actions that emerged from Room 9, a working group for Sustainable Development Goal 9 on Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, that convened as part of the annual 17 Rooms global flagship process in 2021. The 17 Rooms initiative is co-hosted by the Center for Sustainable Development at The Brookings Institution and The Rockefeller Foundation. Each Room, one per SDG, was asked to identify actionable priorities that can be advanced by the end of 2022 to improve some component of 2030 outcomes for its respective Goal. Corresponding documents prepared by the other flagship Rooms are available here, alongside a synthesis report prepared by the 17 Rooms secretariat.

Advancing "good" digital public infrastructure

Across the globe, digital public goods[1] (DPGs) are in use to advance the SDGs, recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, and build the digital public infrastructure[2] (DPI) that makes modern governance and commerce possible. Using state-of-the-art opensource digital solutions—DPGs— can to build robust DPI can help ensure the social inclusion of women and other traditionally marginalized groups[3] and allows for much greater sustainability, scale, and customization. However, it also requires fundamentally different modes of working.

Traditional modes of designing, procuring, and funding digital systems don't always support open source practices, creating barriers to scale. Momentum is building to change this. Last year's Room 9 discussion group called for developing more robust organizational support for DPGs and DPI. This is well underway, as evidenced by the Digital Public Goods Alliance (DPGA),[4] GovStack initiative,[5] and many other efforts, and a number of funders are examining how to jointly marshal resources, coordinate, and innovate to better support the ecosystem. On August 30, 2021, the Government of Norway, the DPGA, and The Rockefeller Foundation convened funders, other resource providers and implementing countries for a virtual high-level event that highlighted concrete commitments for providing more resources and standing up new mechanisms for supporting the DPG/DPI ecosystem.

In this year's Room 9, we have benefited greatly from bringing together a unique group of technologists, public servants, funders, and others who have used DPGs to benefit people at scale in health, education, financial inclusion, and other spheres. Three in-room meetings have been used to 1) highlight examples of impact and barriers for DPGs and for country implementations of DPI; 2) agree on what needs to change to systematically reduce barriers to making DPGs a disruptive force for DPI-impact and the SDGs more broadly; and 3) identify key mechanisms, discuss specific proposals, and set joint goals that Room 9 stakeholders and other Rooms can help contribute to.

Some highlights from these inspiring in-room discussions include alignment around:

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[1] Digital public goods (DPGs) are open source software, open data, open AI models, open standards and open content that adhere to privacy and other applicable laws and best practices, do no harm, and help attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They conform to nine indicators as set out in the Digital Public Goods Standard.

[2] Digital public infrastructures (DPIs) are implementations of digital systems enabling transactions and services that facilitate basic societal functions, and are the rails that other solutions "run on top of." Hence DPIs are relevant for all sectors and for attainment of all SDGs. DPIs are operated, regulated or supported financially by the public sector. They may be built using DPGs, proprietary solutions, or a mix.

[3] Financial Inclusion, Women, and Building Back Better

[4] The Digital Public Goods Alliance is a multi-stakeholder initiative co-hosted by The Government of Norway and The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) with a mission to accelerate the attainment of the sustainable development goals in low- and middle-income countries by facilitating the discovery, development, use of, and investment in digital public goods.

[5] ITU, Estonia, GIZ, and the Digital Impact Alliance's collaboration with the goal of accelerating national digital transformation and the digitalization of government services for achievement of Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

- The need for better coordination and funding platforms that can help boost the ecosystem around the implementation of DPGs for DPI.
- Local capacity as vital for the long-term sustainability of implementations. There is a need for a new narrative around the utilization of global open-source platforms in international development and contributing back to these platforms. Current procurement processes are often not well suited for the implementation of open-source platforms.
- The importance of strong government ownership that can secure cross-ministry cooperation when building out digital public infrastructure.
- DPGs as an innovation model across all sectors and something we should encourage other Rooms to continue exploring and the U.N. system to support.

Actions to be taken in the next 12-18 months

Finalize the "DPG 1-2-3" guide on how to leverage existing DPGs or build new digital solutions in alignment with the DPG Standard. Host meetings to socialize the guide with stakeholders interested in utilizing DPGs for digital cooperation, SDG attainment, and innovation.

- Develop a shared understanding and principles for what constitutes "Good DPI." Key parameters will include protection against harm (privacy and security risks), strengthening the implementation of human rights, as well as ensuring the inclusion of traditionally excluded and marginalized groups, such as women, in user testing, deployment, and ultimately in the resulting benefits and privileges.
- Socialize the DPGA as a coordination vehicle for "the DPG for DPI"—part of the "Good DPI" agenda.
- Continue the convening journey for resource coordination, mobilization, and funding to accelerate the implementation of "Good DPI" in countries.

How other Rooms can contribute directly to Room 9 actions

- The DPGA will set up meetings with other interested Rooms to socialize the guide for how to utilize DPGs for digital cooperation, SDG attainment, and innovation. This will include the opportunity to input on priority topics for future communities of practice (CoPs) convened by the DPGA
- Relevant Room 9 and other Room stakeholders can contribute to achieving the DPGA strategy objectives, including providing resources, funding, and/or helping mobilize resources, to ensure more countries can implement "Good DPI" based on DPGs. Organizations planning to conduct significant relevant activities which may qualify them for inclusion in the DPGA Roadmap can submit their activities for consideration in the form linked to on the DPGA Roadmap page.