



BACKGROUND

The scale, spread and speed of change brought about by digital technologies is unprecedented. Digital technologies know no borders. They cut across boundaries, sectors and disciplines, opening up new opportunities which are transforming societies and economies, and helping achieve the world's 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

At the same time, as a global community, we face questions about security, equity, ethics, and human rights in a digital age. And the current means and levels of international cooperation are unequal to the challenges.

Cooperation across domains and across borders is critical to realizing the transformational potential of digital technologies, while safeguarding against risks and unintended consequences.

Against this backdrop, in July 2018, the UN Secretary-General established the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation – a unique opportunity for global multi-stakeholder dialogue on how inter-disciplinary and cooperative approaches can help ensure a safe and inclusive digital future for all.

COMPOSITION

The High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation includes 20 independent experts from government, private industry, civil society, academia and the technical community, representing a range of disciplines and backgrounds. The Panel is balanced in terms of gender, geographic origin and age. Members serve in their personal capacity.

Ms. Melinda Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Mr. Jack Ma, Executive Chairman of the Alibaba Group, serve as Co-Chairs.

OBJECTIVE

Following a broad consultation process, the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation will produce a report for the UN Secretary-General with key findings and actionable recommendations for working cooperatively across sectors, disciplines and borders to address challenges in the digital age. The report is planned for release by mid-2019.

FOCUS AREAS

Following its first in-person meeting in September 2018, the Panel agreed to focus on three tracks:

- 1) VALUES & PRINCIPLES: what values and principles should underpin cooperation in the digital realm
- 2) METHODS & MECHANISMS: how can stakeholders cooperate more effectively to address digital issues
- 3) ACTION AREAS: how can cooperation among stakeholders be improved in priority action areas such as inclusive development and capacity building; inclusive participation in the digital economy; data; protection of human rights and human agency; digital trust and security.

OUTREACH & CONSULTATION STRATEGY

To inform its deliberations, the Panel is gathering inputs from governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, and technical and academic communities worldwide.

This includes visiting capital cities and tech hubs, attending or hosting in-person and virtual events, convening discussion group sessions with experts, and launching a public online survey and an open call for written contributions.

For more information and updates, please visit www.digitalcooperation.org.