هـيـئـة Digital
الحكومة Government
الرقـمـية Authority

Introductory Guide
Digital Inclusion Program

Contents

01. Introduction

Digital inclusion impacts the lives of persons with disabilities and those most in need by ensuring access to digital services independently and effectively, maximizing the benefits of available government services. In alignment with the responsibilities of the Digital Government Authority to enhance the performance of entities and accelerate digital transformation, with the aim of improving the quality of services provided to beneficiaries and enriching their digital experiences, the Digital Government Authority, in collaboration with the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development and the Authority for the Care of Persons with Disabilities, launched the Digital Inclusion Program. The program aims to increase the percentage of independent usage of digital platforms while enabling and guiding the government entities to provide support for digital accessibility through the development and adoption of digital platforms in accordance with international standards. Additionally, the program seeks to build technical capabilities and skills and increase the number of assistive technology solutions.

The program will act as a strategic enabler in the field of digital accessibility to government services by fostering effective strategic partnerships locally, regionally, and internationally. This ensures the right of persons with disabilities and the elderly in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to access government digital services.

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Scope

02. Scope

This Guide provides an introduction to the Digital Inclusion Program, its objectives, pillars, and targeted beneficiaries. It highlights the program's key initiatives and primary outcomes, as well as the program leaders, government entities, and organizations participating, who play a significant role in the program's success.

The Guide also outlines the notable efforts undertaken by the Digital Government Authority and the government entities in the digital inclusion field in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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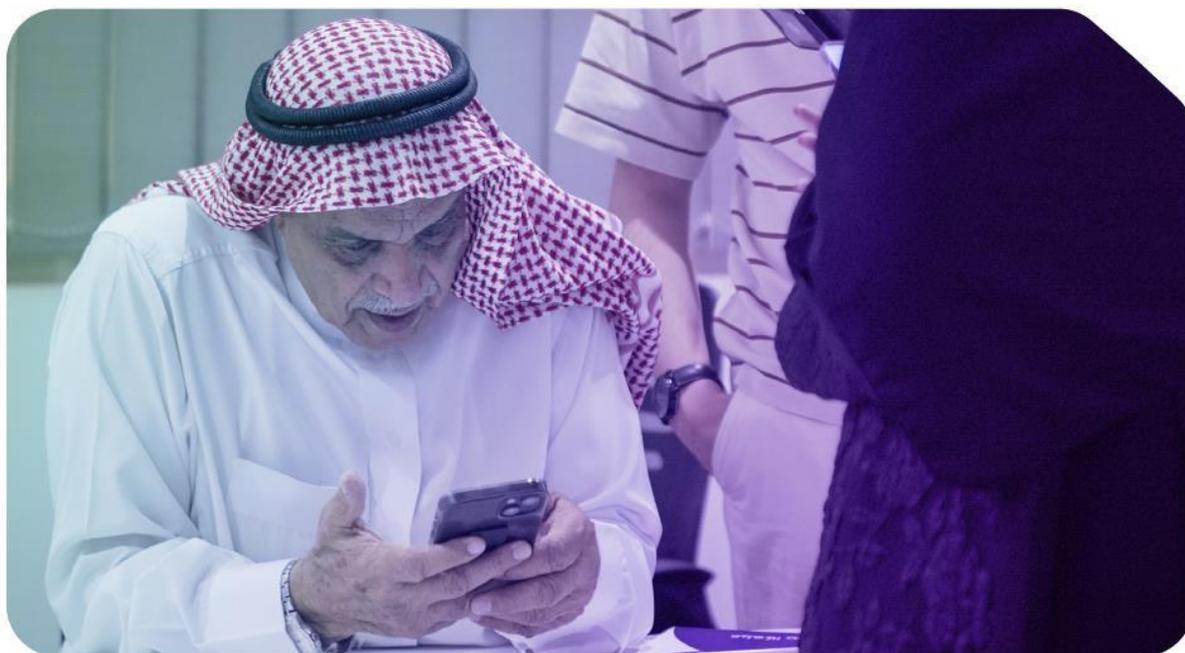
Digital Inclusion in Saudi Arabia

03. Digital Inclusion in Saudi Arabia

Digital Inclusion

The primary goal is to ensure access to digital services for various segments of society through the design and development of digital products and services that empower persons with disabilities and the elderly to use them independently and effectively. According to the latest studies published by the General Authority for Statistics, the percentage of persons with disabilities in Saudi Arabia stands at 7.1%, while the elderly account for 3.5% of the total Saudi population. Therefore, Saudi Arabia is committed to enhancing digital inclusion and increasing digital accessibility across all segments of society, in collaboration with global partners, to bridge gaps and promote independence in using the services.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law

The Saudi government has made significant efforts to promote the rights of persons with disabilities through the issuance of Royal Decree No. (27) dated 11/02/1445 AH, which enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law. This Law aims to protect and enhance the rights of persons with disabilities. It stipulates that the Saudi government will ensure the protection of the rights of all persons with disabilities by guaranteeing their access to appropriate services necessary to facilitate their daily lives. The law also requires government entities to implement the necessary adjustments to meet their needs, as outlined in Chapter Two, Article 13, which states: "Governmental and non-governmental entities must work to raise societal awareness about disabilities and their types, enhance the status of persons with disabilities within the community, and educate society about their rights, capabilities, and contributions." Additionally, Article 14 stipulates that "persons with disabilities have the right to access and benefit from written, visual, and auditory content."

Elderly Rights and Care Law

Royal Decree No. (47) dated 03/06/1443 AH was issued approving the Elderly Rights and Care Law. Article (2) of the Law states that "the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, in coordination with relevant entities, must achieve several objectives, including, as stated in Clause 3: "Providing documented statistical data on the elderly to be used in conducting studies and research related to them and assisting in developing relevant plans and programs." Moreover, Article (12) of the Law states that: "The Ministry shall issue the elderly a privilege card enabling them to access essential public services provided by governmental, private, and non-profit entities. It also ensures the inclusion of the elderly in all procedures concerning them, expedites the processing of such procedures, and considers their mental, psychological, and physical needs."
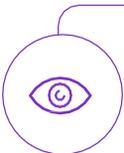
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Digital Inclusion Program

04. Digital Inclusion Program

4.1 An Overview

The program aims to achieve government excellence in inclusion and ease accessibility to services by providing the necessary tools and enablers to ensure digital inclusion and innovation in delivering the government services.

Vision

Independence for persons with disabilities and the elderly in using government digital services.

Mission

Empowering the government entities to adopt the concept of digital inclusion and activate the participation of persons with disabilities and the elderly by designing innovative products that meet their needs.

4.2 Objectives of the Program

1. Increasing the independence of users in accessing government services.
2. Aligning with and complying with accessibility standards.
3. Humanizing the service experience.

4.3 Objectives of the Program

This Program targets:

- Government Entities
- All government entities providing digital services.

Individual Categories

1. Persons with disabilities.
2. Elderly.

4.4 Program Pillars

The Digital Inclusion Program is built on six core pillars:

1. Digital and Physical Solutions: Designing and developing digital and physical products and services targeting persons with disabilities and the elderly or serving them alongside other groups.

2. Consulting and Evaluation: Evaluating the government services and products and providing advice on their effectiveness in addressing the needs of persons with disabilities and the elderly.

3. Training and Workshops: Training and raising awareness among employees and government entities about the importance of involving persons with disabilities and the elderly in various stages of developing digital services.

4. Legislation and Compliance: Reviewing and assessing the compliance of government entities with digital accessibility standards.

5. Electronic Participation: Ensuring the involvement of the elderly and persons with disabilities during the design of policies and products, considering their opinions and feedback.

6. Government Incentives: Encouraging government entities to launch initiatives and provide accessible services for the elderly and persons with disabilities.

4.5 Program Leaders and Partners

The Digital Government Authority launched the Digital Inclusion Program in collaboration with the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development and the Authority for the Care of Persons with Disabilities. This partnership aims to enhance initiatives and activities related to the program. Additionally, collaboration occurs with a diverse range of partners, including contributors, providers of digital products and services, and programs supporting and empowering the government entities, leveraging from various expertise and resources to ensure the success of the Program.
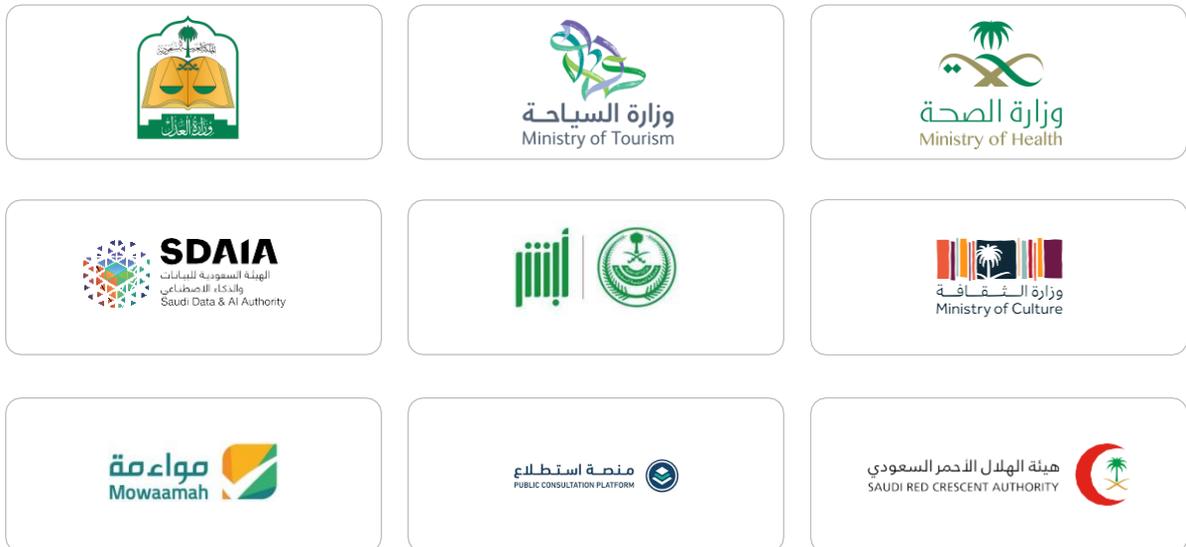
Program Leaders

Partners

Top Digital Product/Service Provider Partners

4.6 Initiatives

1. Involving Beneficiaries in Digital Accessibility Testing for Government Services

Conducting exploratory sessions and accessibility tests for government digital services used by persons with disabilities and the elderly.

2. Launching Regulations and Guidelines for Digital Inclusion

Studying and adding guidelines, principles or policies to enhance accessibility to digital platforms, and organizing workshops to raise awareness among government entities.

3. Developing and Improving Digital Skills for Digital Accessibility

Providing programs to improve employees' digital skills related to accessibility and service design, enabling government entities to provide inclusive services for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

4. Incentives and Awards

Identifying and rewarding entities excelling in digital inclusion by providing outstanding experiences that ensure independence for persons with disabilities and the elderly, and offering multiple channels for service delivery.

5. Modern Technologies

Analyzing modern technological solutions and potential use cases to utilize them in providing services for persons with disabilities and the elderly, and building partnerships that enhance Saudi Arabia's ranking in global indicators.

6. Promoting Digital Inclusion Culture and Highlighting Success Stories

Launching awareness campaigns that spotlight success stories and applications currently used in Saudi Arabia.

7. Engaging Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly in Designing Government Procedures and Services

Activating effective participation of persons with disabilities and the elderly to influence service design, and then studying their impact and updating the necessary standards and policies to facilitate access to these services.

8. Humanizing Services

Studying the service delivery channels and adopting alternative solutions to ensure smooth interaction and accessibility for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

9. Enhancing Usability in the Unified Design System

Strengthening elements of the design system by incorporating usability components and other supportive standards and technologies.

10. National Digital Registry Initiatives

Providing consultancy services to relevant entities regarding the National Digital Registry.

4.7 Products of the Program

According to the mentioned initiatives, eight key outcomes have been planned while launching the program, as follows:

1. Guideline for Accessibility of Government Digital Platforms

This guideline aims to help digital products developers by facilitating the implementation of digital accessibility guidelines. The previous guideline for website content accessibility for persons with disabilities and the elderly has been updated to include: -

- 86 accessibility criteria according to WCAG 2.2.
- Illustrative examples for each accessibility standard.
- 12 assistive technologies, such as screen readers.
- Practical methods for applying the standards.
- A comprehensive approach to improving accessibility.

2. Digital Inclusion Community

This community provides a platform for sharing experiences and practices in digital accessibility and ease of access to government services. It can be accessed through the program's page, which offers a variety of enablers and services.

3. Digital Accessibility Tool

A tool that includes features for web page accessibility based on the type of disability of users. It uses artificial intelligence technologies to assist platforms in complying with digital accessibility standards.

4. Interaction with Beneficiaries in Sign Language - "AMER" Center

Beneficiaries Interaction Center "AMER" enables digital interaction with beneficiaries in a digital reporting services to ensure an effective response to digital services provided by the government entities. Through this platform, several services have been activated for all categories of hearing impairments, where they are served using sign language.

5. Training Programs in Digital Inclusion - "Qudratak" Program

Raising digital competencies within the government and increasing awareness of digital inclusion by adding related tracks to the "Qudratak" program. These tracks include: Awareness track, practitioners track, and adding training programs to the 2024 annual evaluation of "Qudratak" program.

6. Digital Inclusion Category - Digital Government Award

To enhance awareness and encourage government entities to adopt the concept of digital inclusion in public services, a new category has been added to the Digital Government Award, specifically for the best initiative in digital inclusion within government entities.

7. Digital Accessibility Standards - Digital Experience Maturity Index

Promoting the adoption of international digital accessibility standards by government entities through strengthening the Digital Experience Maturity Index criteria to ensure platforms meet the needs of people with disabilities and the elderly.

8. Digital Inclusion Lab

Benefiting from a lab to test accessibility standards for users, which includes various assistive technologies designed to support people with disabilities and the elderly. This lab is used to test the government services with the beneficiaries.

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Most Prominent Efforts related to Digital Inclusion

5. Most Prominent Efforts related to Digital Inclusion

The government entities have made significant efforts to facilitate services for persons with disabilities and the elderly. Here are some of the notable government successes in the field of digital inclusion:

- Electronic Tools for Persons with Disabilities on Madrasati Platform

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Ministry of Education launched a digital educational platform named "Madrasati". The Ministry provided students with disabilities with various electronic devices to support their learning during this period. These significant efforts were recognized by UNESCO, as they were among the top four global models for distance learning. Additionally, the Ministry of Education published a user guide and instructions for special education for students with disabilities, as well as for their parents, teachers, school principals, and educational supervisors.

Success Story	**Impact**	Support of the Madrasati platform for students with disabilities.
Madrasati Platform – Ministry of Education	**Beneficiaries**	Male and female students with disabilities.

- Ministry of Justice – Movable Notary Public Services

Movable Notary Public Services: A free service provided by the Ministry of Justice through the "Najiz" application. The service is offered to individuals who are unable to attend notary offices, including the elderly (65 years and above), patients, persons with disabilities, those in hospitals and care homes, and holders of the "Awlawia Card" issued by the Ministry of Health.

Success Story

Movable Notary Public Services

Impact

Reaching a group of beneficiaries who are unable to access the notary offices, with approximately 50,000 beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries

Persons with disabilities, elderly (65 years and above), those in hospitals and holders of "Awlawia Card"

50,000+ Beneficiaries

- Ministry of Interior – Taqdeer Service

An electronic social service designed for those who are unable to visit civil status offices (such as the elderly, patients, persons with disabilities, etc.). Through this service, civil status services are provided at their location.
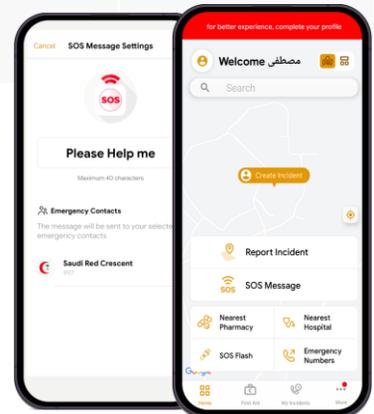
Success Story

Taqdeer Service.

Impact

Reaching a group of beneficiaries who are unable to benefit from the civil status services, with approximately +7,566 beneficiaries of persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Beneficiaries

Persons with disabilities and the elderly (65 years and above).

+75,461
Beneficiaries
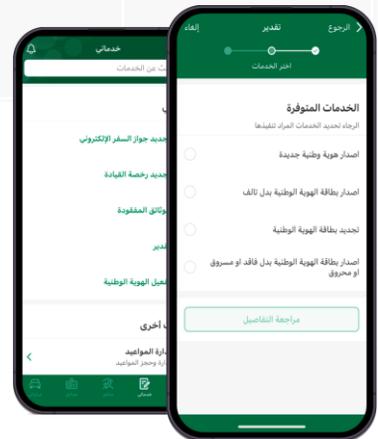
- Saudi Red Crescent Authority - Video Call Service

Providing systems for video call centers for persons with hearing disabilities (deaf and mute) and offering interpretation services using video calls by certified specialists with high expertise. This service delivers emergency medical assistance to the deaf and mute community, ensuring the highest levels of security and privacy through the provision of best possible experience

Success Story

Video call service for persons with hearing disabilities

⭐ Impact

Providing rapid emergency services for individuals who are deaf and mute and have difficulty with audible communication.

♿ Beneficiaries

Persons with disabilities and the elderly (65 years and above).

+35,000
Beneficiaries

- Ministry of Tourism – AI Application

AI applications to enhance communication with individuals with hearing impairments through sign language via a 3D avatar. This can be displayed on screens and websites, and even integrated into virtual reality environments.

Success Story

AI Application

⭐ **Impact**

Reaching the group of individuals with hearing impairments who find it difficult to read digital content.

♿ **Beneficiaries**

Persons with hearing disabilities.

+471,777
Beneficiaries

- Saudi Data & AI Authority (SDAIA) – Riyadh Season Cards

The Riyadh Season Card for the Elderly is a service that allows the elderly free access to eight areas. The service is available through Tawakkalna app.

Success Story

Riyadh Season Cards.

Impact

The elderly are honored with free entry permits to the Riyadh Season areas.

Beneficiaries   The Elderly.

+560,121
Beneficiaries

Conclusion

The Digital Inclusion Program aims to empower and encourage the government entities to adopt innovative initiatives for persons with disabilities and the elderly, in order to achieve the highest levels of digital inclusion in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.