Sri Lanka's Digital Economy Blueprint

Introduction

1. **As the Government of Sri Lanka sets out on ambitious digital transformation agenda,** the national Digital Economy Blueprint lays out a unified roadmap to accelerate inclusive growth, productivity, and citizen well-being through universal connectivity, robust public infrastructure, advanced platforms, inclusive policies and targeted investments.

2. **The "digital economy" refers to the sum of all economy activity enabled by digital technologies**, including infrastructure (e.g., broadband networks and cloud services), platforms (e.g., digital public infrastructure such as digital identity), and applications (e.g., in e-commerce or e-governance).

3. **Strengthening Sri Lanka's nascent digital economy can unlock growth to uplift the entire economy**. By following the Digital Economy Blueprint, Sri Lanka can achieve its digital ambitions to:

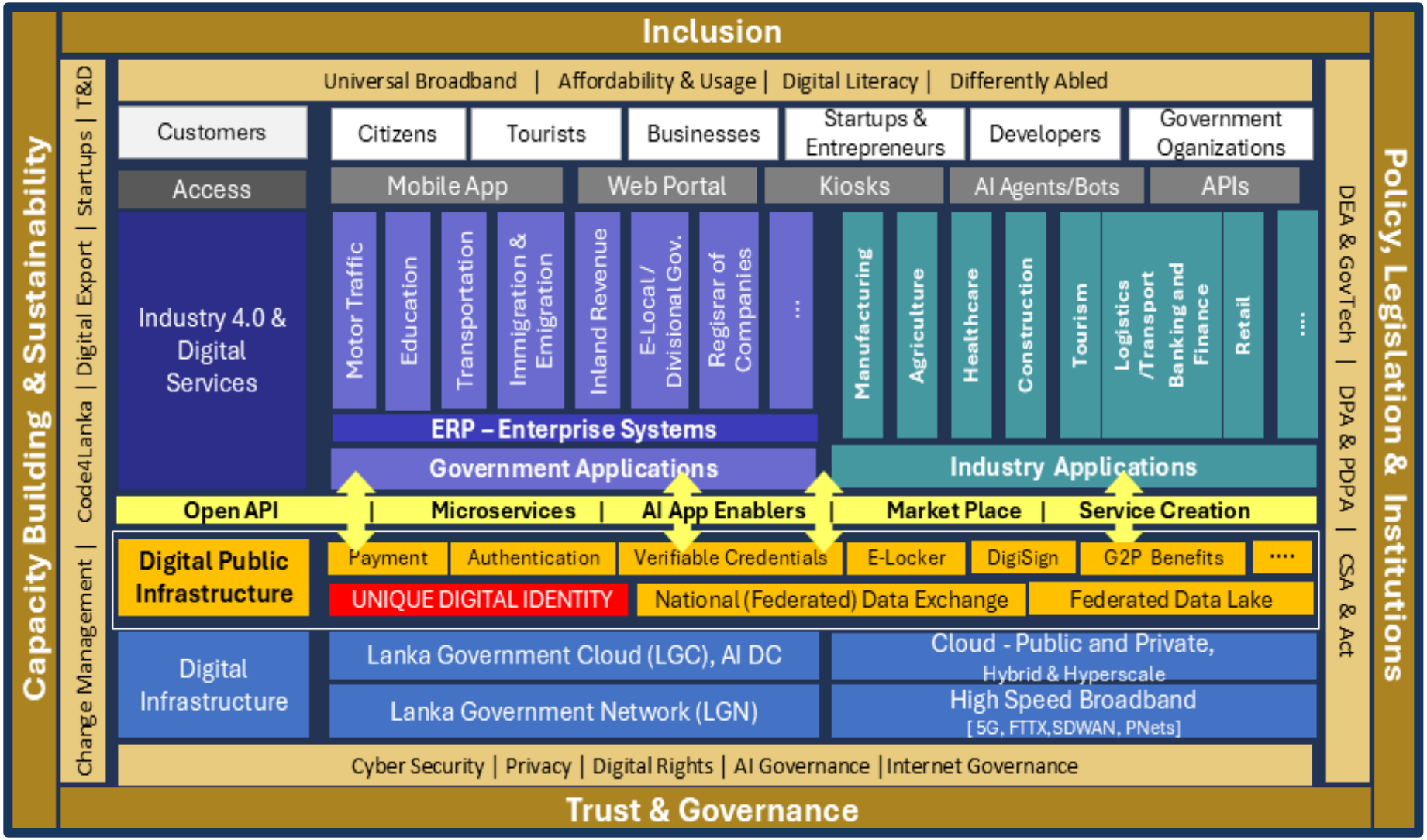
a. Grow the digital economy to USD 15 billion (from 3-4% to >12% of the total economy);
b. Increase digital exports to USD 5 billion;
c. Expand the digital workforce to 200,000;
d. Lower the average transaction cost to below 1%;
e. Leapfrog from the 3rd/4th quartile of regional/global digital-economy indices to the 2nd/3rd by 2030.

The Blueprint at a Glance

4. **Sri Lanka's Digital Economy Blueprint is built on distinct foundational principles.** Its guiding values are inclusion, return on investment and sustainability, bankable business models, citizen experience, competitiveness, and a 'whole of economy' approach. Its architectural principles emphasize platform-first, open-source and application program interfaces (API) driven, horizontal systems over vertical silos, talent centric instead of asset heavy, and Artificial Intelligence (AI)/ Cloud/ Mobile first.

5. **The Blueprint is structured as an interconnected framework.** Digital infrastructure forms the foundation; reusable Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) build upon it; platform-driven connections link these DPIs to sectoral applications; and users – including individuals and organizations – access services through multiple industry and government touchpoints. This system is underpinned by the enablers of inclusion; policy, legislation and institutions; trust and governance; and capacity building and sustainability.

   This model is illustrated on Page 2, and components of the Blueprint are described in detail on Pages 3 to 5.


Inclusion
Capacity Building & Sustainability
Charge Management | Code4Lanka | Digital Export | Startups | T&D
Policy, Legislation & Institutions
DEA & GovTech | DPA & PDPA | CSA & Act
Universal Broadband | Affordability & Usage | Digital Literacy | Differently Abled
Customers
Citizens
Tourists
Businesses
Startups & Entrepreneurs
Developers
Government Organizations
Access
Mobile App
Web Portal
Kiosks
AI Agents/Bots
APIs
Industry 4.0 & Digital Services
Motor Traffic
Education
Transportation
Immigration & Emigration
Inland Revenue
E-Local / Divisional Gov.
Regisrar of Companies
...
Manufacturing
Agriculture
Healthcare
Construction
Tourism
Logistics /Transport
Banking and Finance
Retail
....
ERP – Enterprise Systems
Government Applications
Industry Applications
Open API | Microservices | AI App Enablers | Market Place | Service Creation
Digital Public Infrastructure
Payment
Authentication
Verifiable Credentials
E-Locker
DigiSign
G2P Benefits
....
UNIQUE DIGITAL IDENTITY
National (Federated) Data Exchange
Federated Data Lake
Digital Infrastructure
Lanka Government Cloud (LGC), AI DC
Lanka Government Network (LGN)
Cloud - Public and Private, Hybrid & Hyperscale
High Speed Broadband [5G, FTTX,SDWAN, PNets]
Cyber Security | Privacy | Digital Rights | AI Governance | Internet Governance
Trust & Governance

Components of the Blueprint

6. **Digital infrastructure includes government, public, and private cloud and broadband networks** — the foundation of a modern digital economy. These provide reliable, affordable, and secure connectivity for citizens, businesses, and public institutions, enabling data storage, processing, and exchange at scale and ensuring resilience for uninterrupted digital services nationwide.

7. **DPI comprises a suite of common, reusable components that underpin every government service and private-sector application.** Key DPIs include:

a. **Unique Digital Identity**, which assigns every resident a verifiable digital identifier linked to minimal core attributes (name, date of birth and biometrics);
b. **National (Federated) Data Exchange**, which enables secure, consent-driven flow of data across government agencies and approved private entities;
c. **Digital Payments**, which allows any digital wallet or bank account to transact seamlessly even without continuous connectivity and is interoperable across different providers;
d. **Authentication and Verifiable Credentials**, which leverage the Unique Digital Identity to issue reliable, verifiable digital certificates such as licenses and records;
e. **E-Locker and DigiSign**, which combine a secure, personal document vault with a government-issued digital signature service to enable citizens to store and sign official forms electronically.

8. **A platform-driven approach enables rapid and efficient innovation and cross-sector usage.** The government and private sector clearly define interfaces that other parties can use, ensuring that these components are reusable interoperable. This is anchored in **open API principles** which specify that services exchange data and functionality prioritizing discoverability, standardization, and governance, and **microservices architecture** which result in a small, independently deployable services that own a single responsibility, communicate asynchronously, and scale autonomously.

9. **Applications bring the Digital Economy Blueprint to life by embedding DPI, platforms, and emerging technologies into the government and economy.** Integrating these digital solutions into public administration and industry use cases such as education, health, transport, finance, and other sectors boosts efficiency, expanding access, and driving inclusive growth. Aside from these sectoral usages, the Blueprint envisions critical horizontal digital platforms that will be used across government, such as an enterprise resource planning (ERP) marketplace, beneficiary platform, and a digital collaboration and communication suites.

10. The Blueprint has four key enablers: inclusion; policy, legislation and institutions; trust and governance; and capacity building and sustainability.

a. **Inclusion ensures that digital services are not only available but also within the reach of every citizen and business**. For economically disadvantaged households, this is enabled by innovative pricing models, targeted subsidies and affordability programs, and robust competition frameworks. For rural or remote communities, universal broadband is a key enabler. For differently abled users or and low-literacy populations, it requires accessibility standards and assistive technologies. For language minorities, localized content in Sinhala, Tamil and English is essential.

b. **Clear policy, legislative and institutional arrangements will ensure that the Digital Economy Blueprint moves swiftly from vision to reality.** The **Digital Economy Authority** (DEA) will serve as the Blueprint's policy and regulatory custodian, responsible for strategy, regulation, and investment oversight. **GovTech Sri Lanka** will operate under the DEA's guidance, executive technical projects, enforcing standards, and managing vendors. The **Ministry of Digital Economy** (MODE) will be the key line ministry responsible for the digital economy. Each sectoral ministry and line agency will retain ownership of domain-specific digital services, while a Cabinet-level Sub-Committee will provide political leadership and resolve cross-cutting issues.

c. **Trust and governance are enabled through a modern, coherent legal framework.** The key to this is a Digital Economy Act which consolidates and aligns existing statutes and regulations behind the Digital Economy Blueprint (including on data protection, cybersecurity and computer security), empowers the Digital Economy Authority, and codifies fundamental freedoms such as digital rights, privacy, and internet governance. This pillar also also includes non-negotiable focus on cyber-security, and recognition that generation technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), large language models (LLMs) in native languages, conversational user interfaces and big-data platforms will drive the next wave of productivity, service innovation and policy insight.

d. **By focusing on capacity building and sustainability, Sri Lanka can build a digitally skilled, resilient workforce and innovation ecosystem.** The first step is ensuring that citizens have basic digital literacy and the opportunity to develop digital skills through formal education, vocational training, and lifelong learning platforms. This should be weaved into broader capacity-building and change management across the public and private sectors. To ensure the benefits of digital transformation reach small and medium enterprises, it is particularly important to strengthen digital marketplaces and export promotion initiatives, including developing the start-up and innovation ecosystem through venture support and skill building.

Implementing the Digital Economy Blueprint

11. **Key points of implementation required to move from strategy to impact include:**

a. Wide-reaching **change management and citizen adoption programmes** encompassing multi-channel communication campaigns and strong stakeholder engagement.

b. Rigorous **monitoring and evaluation** of defined key performance indicators and metrics, including of citizen experience.

c. A robust **financing and investment strategy** including a mix of funding sources (e.g., government funding, public-private partnerships, and donor support), with measurable return on investment in terms of productivity, export earnings, and fiscal savings. Investment would be distributed across three phases of foundational investments across five years.

d. A clear **implementation roadmap** which translates the Blueprint into executable steps, including:

i. **Year 1 – Foundation**: Focus on establishing legal, institutional and technical frameworks (e.g., pass Digital Economy Act, pilot DPIs such as Unique Digital Economy, establish DEA and GovTech)

ii. **Years 2 & 3 – Scaling**: Expand connectivity, DPI coverage and skills training (e.g., roll-out broadband, launch DPIs such as national data exchange, e-Locker and Verifiable Credentials, launch skills programs).

iii. **Years 4 & 5 – Maturity**: Deepen impact and unlock advanced services (e.g., export promotion programs, AI integration, reach full inclusivity).

e. Proactive **risk mitigation and contingency planning** to ensure resilience against technical, financial and organizational shocks.

Conclusion

12. **Sri Lanka's Digital Economy Blueprint is a practical plan for inclusive prosperity.** It converts fragmented initiatives into a synchronized program with clear standards, interoperable platforms, and measurable outcomes. With decisive endorsement and disciplined execution, Sri Lanka can lower costs, expand opportunity, and build citizen trust at scale while becoming a future-ready digital economy by 2030.