Consultation Document

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Lifelong Learning for Digital Skills Policy

Date: October 2025 | Version: 1.0.0 | Ref: P00Z

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The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), has designed and created this publication, entitled Lifelong Learning for Digital Skills Policy, reference P00Z (hereinafter referred to as the "Work"), primarily as a resource for public, private and third-sector organizations that foster lifelong digital skills development in the State of Qatar.

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State of Qatar
Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
Digital Industry Policies Department
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Legal Mandate

The legal basis of issuing this policy is the Amiri Decree No. (57) of 2021 setting the competencies of ministries including the competencies of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT). The competencies of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) are determined as stated in the Amiri Decision No. (47) of 2022, which include raising community awareness about the importance of using communications and information technology in secure ways to enhance individuals' lives and uplift society, leading to building a knowledge society based on the digital economy.

Strategic Alignment

Qatar National Vision 2030	• Transform Qatar into an advanced, knowledge-based economy capable of sustainable development and high standards of living for its people. • Human Development Pillar emphasizes equipping Qatar's people with the education and skills to thrive in a modern society.
Third National Development Strategy 2024-2030	• Information technology and digital capacity as a core enabling sector for economic diversification and for building Qatar's long-term capabilities in areas like AI and emerging technologies. • Seeks to establish Qatar as a smart, technologically sophisticated nation, and it recognizes that success hinges on a digitally prepared society.
Digital Agenda 2030	• Empower Qatar's society to thrive in a globalised digital world to become the digital masters who can spread their learnings and achievements from Qatar across the world
The Digital Skills Strategy of 2020	• Becoming a leading digital society by investing in its people's skills.

Document Summary

Name	Lifelong Learning for Digital Skills Policy
Version	1.0
Document Reference	P00Z
Document Type	Policy
Summary	The Lifelong Learning for Digital Skills Policy establishes a national framework to ensure that all individuals in Qatar can continuously acquire and enhance digital competencies throughout their lives. The policy outlines pathways for developing digital skills across all life stages, from early education to advanced professional training, supported by coordinated governance, sustainable funding mechanisms, and multi-sector collaboration. It mandates the integration of digital competencies into education, promotes workforce upskilling and reskilling, and advances accessibility and inclusion for all groups. By fostering a culture of lifelong learning, this policy ensures Qatar's population remains future-ready, innovative, and resilient in an evolving digital economy.
Publishing Date	October 2025
Applicable To	Government and semi-government entities, private sector, third sector, academic institutions
Owner	Ministry of Communications and Information Technology

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Acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence
DESI	Digital Economy and Society Index
EU	European Union
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INCoDe.2030	National Initiative for Digital Skills (Portugal)
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MCIT	Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MOOCs	Massive Open Online Courses
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
QDA	Qatar Digital Academy
QDGTP	Qatar Digital Government Training Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WEF	World Economic Forum

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1. Introduction

Qatar stands at a turning point on its way to becoming an entirely digital nation. With next-generation technologies changing every industry and aspect of life at a rapid rate, **digital competencies are no longer the domain of a few specialists but rather an imperative for all**, at every level of life. In fact, as pointed out by the World Economic Forum (2025), 69% of all employees globally will need to be reskilled by 2030, and digital skills top the list of competencies required. **This policy defines digital skills as the essential and adaptable competencies needed for work in Qatar's ever-emerging digital economy, with a commitment to ensuring equitable access for all people across every stage of life.**

This policy lays out a national plan for building lifelong digital proficiency - one that extends from early childhood to post-retirement, from shared digital access to advanced specializations in AI and cybersecurity. It is supported by a strong basis: over 77%[1] of Qatar's working-age population has reached secondary education, and government initiatives like the National Skilling Program seek to upskill 50,000[2] public sector workers. However digital transformation speeds up, as evidenced by technologies that five years ago were thought to be futuristic like generative AI and blockchain which are now reshaping job markets, public services, and daily life. The latest edition of the Workforce Deep Dive, launched in 2023, by MCIT's Emerging Digital Skills Observatory corroborates the need to upskill the workforce as it projects that overall labor productivity is expected to improve by 4.1% p.a. over 2022-32 as digital technologies make their way into the workforce, especially in Agriculture, Transportation and Utilities. Therefore, the need for Professionals and Technicians, with solid and specific ICT skills, will increase. The workforce is shifting overall towards more highly skilled profiles, displaying strong growth in management, technical and administrative profiles. At the same time, it highlights that the fastest growing sector in the country's labor market is within ICT professions, marking a 6.2% p.a. growth between 2018-2023 and contributing 12 billion to GDP in 2022.

This policy is not just about training but about **building a culture of lifelong learning**. It underpins Qatar's strategic goals: the Third National Development Strategy (NDS-3) places digital development at the forefront of economic diversification, and the Digital Agenda 2030 demands a **digitally literate** population as the catalyst for innovation and inclusive growth. Investments in human capability translate to investments to national competitiveness, prosperity, and resilience. This policy gives a clear, tangible roadmap to mainstream digital learning in education, in the workplace, and society at large, ensuring that all Qatar citizens are not only ready to adapt to the future but able and willing to shape it.

[1] Qatar Digital Inclusion Index (2025)
[2] MCIT (2022)

2. Policy Objectives

This policy sets out a strategic direction that aims to cultivate digital skills for all ages and segments of society. The provisions are designed to support a national upskilling and reskilling program, expand the reach of the Qatar Digital Academy beyond the public sector, and embed digital competency development from early childhood through adulthood. **To ensure the transition to a digital society benefits all, this policy is grounded in the principle of equality of opportunity**. Digital skills must not only be widespread but inclusive: accessible to every resident regardless of nationality, gender, age, or background. Whether Qatari or expatriate, male or female, youth or senior, all individuals in Qatar should have a fair chance to participate in and shape the digital future. Particular attention will be paid to persons with disabilities and elderly people, who may require tailored digital training and accessibility solutions.

While this policy presents a comprehensive national approach to building lifelong digital skills across all segments of society, it does not address digital inclusion in depth. This is intentional. Digital inclusion is covered under a separate, dedicated **Digital Inclusion Policy** led by MCIT. The two policies are complementary: digital inclusion serves as a foundational enabler of lifelong digital learning. By coordinating implementation across both policies, Qatar ensures that no individual is left behind in the country's digital transformation.

3. Policy Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all entities and individuals involved in the development, delivery, and promotion of digital skills across Qatar. It encompasses government and semi-government bodies, private sector organizations, academic institutions, and civil society partners engaged in digital capacity building.

4. Digital Skills Pathways from Cradle to Grave

4.1 Early Childhood and Schools

Best international practices show that building digital competence should start as early as possible by learning to use digital tools critically, confidently, and creatively, with attention to security, safety, and privacy. While the policy mandates the inclusion of digital skills and computational thinking in the national curriculum, it is not limited to public schools. Private and international curriculum schools, which serve the majority of students in Qatar, are also expected to embed digital competencies within their teaching and learning. These institutions will be supported through alignment with the national Digital Skills Framework, ensuring consistency of standards while allowing flexibility for different educational models. In practice, this means:

4.1.1 Implementing **age-specific digital literacy and coding interventions** in primary and secondary schools. For instance, introductory coding sessions, internet safety games, and critical thinking online content.

4.1.2 **Training and equipping teachers with the right digital skills and pedagogical tools.** Teachers themselves need strong digital competence to effectively embed these skills in all subjects. To ensure quality and sustainability, the policy will support continuous professional development in educational technology and digital pedagogy, with units formally linked to national accreditation programs. This will allow educators to gain recognized credentials as part of their professional advancement while embedding digital competence across all teaching practices. Engaging parents as active partners in digital education. The home environment plays a critical role in reinforcing digital skills and responsible technology use.

4.1.3 Encouraging the **development of parent-focused resources, workshops, and school-community initiatives that raise awareness about digital safety, promote healthy screen habits, and empower parents to support their children's learning of digital tools at home.** Collaboration with MoEHE, parent associations, and both public and private schools will ensure inclusivity. Awareness campaigns and digital safety workshops will be extended to parents from private schools as well, with materials adapted to reflect Qatar's cultural and linguistic diversity, ensuring broad reach and relevance for the entire parent community.

4.1.4 **Continuing close cooperation with MoEHE to ensure that digital skills continue to be integrated as a cross-cutting theme for all subjects (not only ICT class).** Acquisition of digital competencies is covered as an independent subject and incorporated throughout the curriculum, for example, the utilization of digital

devices in science lab work, internet research in social studies, and production of media content in art classes.

4.1.5 In addition to public education initiatives, **the policy encourages private schools and education providers to integrate digital literacy and computational thinking into their curricula.** Collaboration with MCIT and MoEHE will provide private institutions with access to the national Digital Competence Framework, teacher training resources, and accreditation guidance, ensuring that students across both public and private systems benefit from consistent and high-quality digital education.

4.2 Youth and Higher Education

As student's progress to higher levels, the policy ensures opportunities to deepen and specialize their digital skillsets. Universities and vocational institutes will also ensure that students with special needs are fully included in digital upskilling opportunities. **The policy encourages the provision of accessible learning materials, adaptive technologies, and tailored support services, enabling all learners to acquire digital competencies and participate equally in Qatar's digital society.** The provisions extend equally to private universities, colleges, and training providers, which play a major role in Qatar's education landscape. The policy encourages these institutions to integrate digital skills into their programs in line with the national framework, so that all learners gain equitable opportunities to acquire future-ready digital competencies. In practice, this means:

4.2.1 **Expanding extracurricular and co-curricular programs that develop advanced digital skills among youth.** Building on TASMU's initiatives, programs like coding camps, robotics clubs, and hackathons (e.g. Studio 5) will be scaled up to reach more youth.

4.2.2 **Encouraging universities and vocational institutes to align their courses with the Digital Skills Framework.** All post-secondary students, regardless of major, should graduate with a baseline of digital literacy (productivity software, online communication, data literacy) and exposure to emerging technologies (such as AI or cybersecurity fundamentals). This will be achieved by updating university program accreditation requirements to include digital competencies, and by offering interdisciplinary courses (for example, a "Digital Skills for the Workplace" module available to all final-year students).

4.2.3 **Providing incentives for lifelong learning in higher education, such as credits recognition or scholarships for adults who return to study digital courses.** Qatar will promote a culture where individuals continuously update their qualifications – a necessity as technology evolves. Online learning platforms (e.g. MOOCs and e-learning through the Qatar Digital Academy's portal) will be leveraged to make courses accessible to working adults and those outside the formal education system.

Private universities, colleges, and training providers will also play a significant role in advancing Qatar's digital skills agenda. The policy promotes public–private partnerships (PPPs) where private institutions and companies co-develop digital courses, offer internships, and align their programs with the national framework. **These mechanisms will ensure that digital competencies taught in private institutions are recognized, labor-market relevant, and directly contribute to national upskilling goals.**

4.3 Workforce Upskilling and Reskilling

A major focus of this policy is a national upskilling program to ensure Qatar's workforce remains future-ready. According to Qatar's National Digital Agenda, all job roles now require some degree of tech proficiency, and employers are seeking to create a future-ready workforce through continuous learning. This program will also extend to elderly citizens and retirees, recognizing their role in society and the importance of supporting their continued participation in Qatar's digital transformation. Age-friendly training pathways and tailored digital literacy programs will be developed to ensure older generations can benefit from digital services, remain socially connected, and contribute their experience to the digital economy. In practice, this means:

4.3.1 **Continue impact assessments of emerging technologies on different sectors in Qatar** through EDSO's Workforce Deepdive Report. These studies identify roles most at risk of automation and recommend strategic workforce transition plans. By forecasting potential disruptions, Qatar can proactively make available training programs that equip workers with the necessary skills for emerging job opportunities.

4.3.2 **Expansion of the scope of the Qatar Digital Academy (QDA), serving all government employees as well as the private sector workforce and general population.** This means that QDA will no longer limit its training to civil servants; it will offer digital skills courses and certifications to employees of private companies, entrepreneurs, and even interested citizens. By opening QDA to the wider public, Qatar creates a central platform for upskilling the national current and future workforce. Training offerings will range from targeted digital literacy tailored to various job roles to advanced ICT specializations (for IT professionals), covering areas such as office productivity, cybersecurity awareness, data analysis, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence.

4.3.3 **Ensuring that the Digital Skills Framework and the Digital Driver's License is adopted across all sectors.** This framework shall create a common reference for individuals, employers, and training providers to assess and address skills gaps. The framework shall link with curriculum in schools and universities (so that graduates meet defined skill levels), and informs the design of QDA training modules for professionals.

4.3.4 **Engage private sector employers as active partners in workforce reskilling by aligning corporate training programs with the Digital Skills Framework**, co-developing role specific pathways and offering structured on-the-job learning opportunities to ensure that reskilled workers meet market needs.

4.3.5 **Ensuring training programs incorporate accessibility features and age-friendly approaches**, thereby enabling persons with disabilities and elderly people to participate fully in Qatar's digital economy.

4.4 Advanced Digital Skills

To maintain a competitive edge, Qatar must also cultivate advanced digital specialists and innovators in frontier technologies (AI, machine learning, data science, blockchain, cybersecurity, etc.). In practice, this means:

4.4.1 **Create specialized training and certification programs in emerging tech fields.** MCIT, in coordination with industry and academic partners, will offer professional courses in areas like artificial intelligence engineering, cybersecurity certifications, data analytics qualifications, and more.

4.4.2 **Support tech talent development programs such as incubators, sandboxes, and innovation labs where skilled individuals can apply their digital skills on real projects.** In collaboration with Qatar's research and development institutions, opportunities for continuous learning through research projects, competitions (like hackathons focused on solving national challenges), and startup support (for those building digital solutions) will be offered. These efforts ensure that the top end of the talent pipeline is also continually learning and pushing boundaries.

4.4.3 **Encourage the active participation of women and girls in advanced digital skills' training** by offering targeted scholarships, mentorship opportunities, and women-led workshops, ensuring gender diversity in emerging technology fields.

4.4.4 **Strengthen the ICT talent pipeline by encouraging early exposure to digital careers in schools**, increasing enrollments in ICT-related higher education programs, and supporting transitions from education to employment through internships, career counseling and industry linkages, with a focus on retaining skilled ICT graduates in Qatar.

5 Funding Mechanisms

To implement these provisions, sustainable funding mechanisms are established:

5.1 The Government will allocate dedicated funding in the national budget for digital skills development under MCIT and MoEHE. This will cover program costs such as developing curricula, running Qatar Digital Academy courses and, training teachers, Given the cross-cutting importance of digital skills (impacting education, labor, and economy), these investments are seen as foundational for Qatar's development. Annual budgets will be aligned with the targets (e.g., scaling up as more trainees are enrolled each year).

5.2 As demonstrated by the MCIT-Microsoft partnership for the National Skilling Program, Qatar will continue to leverage PPPs to support funding and delivery of training. Tech companies often have global skilling initiatives that can be localized (such as Microsoft's Global Skilling Initiative, Google's Grow with Google, Cisco's Networking Academy, etc.). The government will actively engage such partners to bring in expertise, platforms, and co-funding for programs. In return, companies gain access to a larger talent pool and potential hires in Qatar.

5.3 Educational institutions, both public and private, will be encouraged (and, where appropriate, financially supported) to incorporate digital skills into their programs. For public institutions, this may take the form of direct budget allocations, while private institutions may access support through partnership schemes, grants, or incentive mechanisms. This ensures that students across Qatar's diverse education system benefit equitably from digital skills integration, regardless of whether they attend public or private schools and universities. To encourage individuals to take up lifelong learning, the policy explores incentive mechanisms such as training credits. Adult learners in Qatar could receive a certain budget or vouchers from the government that can be used to enroll in approved digital courses. Employers might also be offered incentives for investing in their employees' digital upskilling. In addition, the policy may explore the establishment of a national system for accrediting digital training programs and certificates, or other mechanisms to ensure that digital credentials are recognized and valued in the labor market. This would help enhance the credibility of courses and provide learners with qualifications that are portable across sectors.

Through this multi-faceted funding approach, the policy ensures that the ambitious programs outlined are financially viable. Clear budget lines, combined with innovative funding partnerships, will support continuous implementation without placing the full burden on any single entity.

6 Governance and Implementation

Effective governance is crucial for the successful rollout of this national policy. Given its cross-sectoral nature – spanning education, labor and technology a coordinated governance structure will be put in place.

6.1 Lead Ministries

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) will serve as the lead implementing agency for this policy, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE). MCIT will oversee programs related to workforce upskilling. MoEHE will drive the integration of digital skills in the formal education system (schools, universities, and technical/vocational education). Both ministries will jointly issue the policy, underscoring shared ownership and the alignment of mandates (MCIT's mandate for national ICT development and MoEHE's mandate for education and lifelong learning).

6.2 Digital Skills Working Group

The Digital Skills Working Group will coordinate upskilling programmes and initiatives across all relevant stakeholders. Chaired by MCIT's leadership (and co-chaired by a representative from MoEHE, the committee will include members from the Ministry of Labour (for workforce and employer coordination), the Ministry of Social Development and Family (for support to families, persons with disabilities, elderly, and other vulnerable groups), the Ministry of Finance (for funding oversight), and others such as the Ministry of Culture and Sports (for youth engagement). This committee ensures whole-of-government coordination. It will meet regularly to review progress, resolve inter-agency issues, and make policy adjustments.[3]

[3] The approach mirrors successful models abroad – for instance, Portugal's national digital competences initiative (INCoDe.2030) uses an inter-ministerial framework that clearly defines responsibilities and funding, with set targets for 2030. Qatar's Digital Skills Working Group committee will similarly delineate each entity's role (e.g., MoEHE for curriculum changes, MCIT for community programs, etc.) and oversee a unified action plan.

7 Roles and Responsibilities in Qatar's Digital Skills' Ecosystem

The policy emphasizes involving a broad range of stakeholders in both planning and implementation. This section lists the roles and responsibilities of key actors in Qatar's Digital Skills' Ecosystem.

7.1 Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT)

7.1.1 Provide and regularly update tools, frameworks and necessary statistical reports to inform and support stakeholders in implementing the policy.

7.1.2 Oversee design and rollout of non-formal digital training programs (e.g., Qatar Digital Academy, community-based courses, professional certifications).

7.1.3 Coordinate with private sector partners for joint skilling initiatives and public-private partnerships (PPPs).

7.1.4 Monitor policy performance through KPIs and publish the Annual Digital Skills Progress Report.

7.1.5 Launch public awareness campaigns promoting digital literacy and a culture of lifelong learning.

7.2 Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE)

7.2.1 Design and implement an integrated digital competency framework for teachers and students.

7.2.2 Embed digital skills across the national curriculum from primary to tertiary education, both as standalone subjects and cross-cutting themes.

7.2.3 Mandate and support teacher training in digital pedagogy and educational technology.

7.2.4 Update accreditation and graduation requirements to include core digital competencies.

7.2.5 Promote lifelong learning in higher education through flexible pathways, digital course offerings, and credentialing.

7.2.6 Ensure that all education reforms are aligned with the national digital skills framework.

7.3 Ministry of Labour (MoL)

7.3.1 Develop policies encouraging private employers to invest in employee digital upskilling.

7.3.2 Integrate digital skills metrics into labor market data collection and forecasting.

7.3.3 Work with industry to define minimum digital competency levels for key job families.

7.4 Ministry of Social Development and Family (MSDF)

7.4.1 Ensure the needs of families, persons with disabilities, elderly, and other vulnerable groups are reflected in digital skills initiatives.

7.4.2 Provide guidance on accessibility and inclusivity standards for training content.

7.4.3 Collaborate with MCIT and MoEHE to design tailored learning pathways for vulnerable populations.

7.5 Ministry of Sports and Youth (MoSY)

7.5.1 Promote youth engagement in digital innovation through extracurricular programs such as hackathons, robotics clubs, and competitions, including initiatives under the Qatar Scientific Club.

7.5.2 Collaborate with MCIT and MoEHE to align youth digital activities with the national digital skills framework.

7.5.3 Support the development of digital talent pathways by linking informal youth initiatives with formal education and workforce programs.

7.5.4 Encourage inclusive participation of young people, including women and underrepresented groups, in advanced digital skills training and innovation projects.

7.6 Private Sector and Industry

7.6.1 Co-develop training content and provide industry-relevant certifications (e.g., cybersecurity, cloud, data analysis).

7.6.2 Offer internships, apprenticeships, and upskilling opportunities aligned with national needs.

7.6.3 Participate in an Industry Digital Skills Working Group to provide feedback on market needs and policy relevance.

7.6.4 Track and report on internal training outcomes to support policy evaluation.

7.7 Educational Institutions (Schools, Universities, Vocational Centers)

7.7.1 Integrate digital skills across curricula and extracurricular offerings.

7.7.2 Align programs with the national digital skills framework and update them regularly.

7.7.3 Provide interdisciplinary digital literacy modules for students in all fields of study.

7.7.4 Support adult learners through continuing education units and credit-bearing digital courses.

7.7.5 Collect and share student outcomes data related to digital competencies.

7.8 Community Organizations and NGOs

7.8.1 Deliver accessible digital literacy training for underserved groups (e.g., women, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, seniors).

7.8.2 Collaborate with MCIT and MoEHE to localize content and make learning culturally and linguistically appropriate.

7.8.3 Act as feedback channels to identify gaps and community needs.

7.8.4 Support recruitment and awareness campaigns at the grassroots level.

8 Monitoring Progress

MCIT shall serve as the lead authority responsible for overseeing implementation and compliance with this policy. Oversight will be carried out in **close coordination with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE)** and other relevant stakeholders. The **Digital Skills Working Group**, convened by MCIT, will play a central role in coordinating cross-sectoral implementation, reviewing progress, and resolving operational challenges across government, private sector, and academic partners.

To ensure clarity and consistency in performance measurement, **MCIT will define and manage a comprehensive set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**. These will include both strategic KPIs and operational KPIs linked to specific programs or interventions. **MoEHE will play a lead role in defining and tracking KPIs related to the integration of digital skills** within the formal education system (e.g., curriculum coverage, teacher training participation, student digital competency levels, and accreditation requirements). MCIT will consolidate these education-specific KPIs with workforce and societal indicators to produce a unified national monitoring framework. KPIs will be aligned with global best practices and updated periodically to reflect technological developments, changing labor market demands, and Qatar's broader digital transformation goals.

MCIT will also establish a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, including standardized toolkits for data collection, program evaluation, and performance reporting. These toolkits will be adopted by all implementing stakeholders to ensure uniformity and comparability

across initiatives. Data collected through this system will feed into both internal decision-making processes and public reporting. In addition, Qatar's progress will be periodically benchmarked against leading global indices and frameworks (such as the EU Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), UNESCO's ICT Competency Framework for Teachers, and relevant World Economic Forum indicators) to provide an international reference point for measuring achievements and identifying areas for improvement.

Stakeholders engaged in delivering digital skills programs will be assigned specific responsibilities and performance targets aligned with national objectives. MCIT, with support from the Digital Skills Working Group, will review progress on a regular basis. Entities failing to meet expected outcomes may receive technical support or be subject to corrective action mechanisms. These accountability structures are designed to maintain momentum and ensure effective policy execution across the ecosystem.

To promote transparency and informed decision-making, MCIT will publish a Digital Skills report every 2 years. This report will consolidate data from the M&E system, stakeholder submissions, and national indicators. Data will be disaggregated by gender, nationality, school type, and other relevant factors to monitor inclusivity, identify disparities, and support targeted interventions where gaps are observed. The report will highlight key achievements, identify gaps, and provide strategic recommendations for future action.

Document control

Version	Date	Amendments	Author
1.0.0	TBD	Release of Policy	MCIT

Prepared by

Digital Industry Policies Department

Ministry of Communications & Information Technology

Version 1.0.0 2025

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