



TECH FOR
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Digital Platforms for Public Benefit: From Digitalisation to Platform-Enabled Governance



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Background of the initiative and Acknowledgements

Research Initiative

This report, "*From Digitalisation to Platform-Enabled Governance: Strengthening Policy Implementation Through Platform-Driven Innovation*," represents the culmination of extensive collaborative research conducted by the Tech for Good Institute (TFGI) across Southeast Asia. The research initiative examined how partnerships between commercial digital platforms and government entities can strengthen policy implementation and serve public benefit across the region.

Research Methodology

The research for this report was conducted over several months through the following process:

- **Extensive literature review:** Comprehensive analysis of academic research, policy documents, industry reports, and government publications spanning multiple months
- **Multi-stakeholder consultations:** In-person roundtables in Malaysia (November 2025) and Indonesia (August 2025), and a virtual roundtable in the Philippines (July 2025), with direct engagement with more than 40 senior representatives from government agencies, regulatory bodies, digital platforms, industry associations, academic institutions, think tanks, and civil society organisations.

Acknowledgements of Contributors

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Convening Partners

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- **The National Tech Association of Malaysia (PIKOM), Malaysia**, for convening industry stakeholders and enabling public-private sector dialogue throughout the Malaysian consultation process
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In accordance with established research principles and TFGI's commitment to independence, funders do not determine research findings, analytical frameworks, or the insights and recommendations presented in this report. All conclusions represent the independent assessment of the Tech for Good Institute research team.

Disclaimer

While this report draws extensively on stakeholder consultations and expert inputs gathered throughout the research process, the analysis, interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations presented herein represent the independent research and considered judgment of the Tech for Good Institute. Participation by individuals or organisations in research consultations does not constitute endorsement of specific findings or recommendations. Any errors, omissions, or limitations remain the sole responsibility of the authors.

The spirit of collaboration, openness, and genuine commitment to public interest demonstrated by all participants throughout this research process exemplifies the potential for effective platform-government partnerships. It is our sincere hope that this report contributes constructively to strengthening such collaborations across Southeast Asia for the benefit of all citizens in the region.

Executive Summary

Southeast Asian (SEA) governments' utilisation of digital platforms represents the region's evolution toward more sophisticated digital governance architectures. The report, based on an extensive literature review and multi-stakeholder workshops in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia, focuses on partnerships between commercial digital platforms and government entities to deliver one or more public goods.

Governments face challenges in certain areas of policy implementation, including resource and technical capacity constraints. Three compelling reasons support partnering with existing commercial platforms rather than building solutions alone: **First, cost efficiency:** Platforms have invested heavily in technical capabilities, infrastructure, and talent. Governments can leverage these existing investments, thereby significantly reducing implementation costs. **Second, speed and scale:** Platforms already have millions of users onboarded who are familiar with their systems and interfaces. This enables faster launches and broader reach. **Third, stronger policy outcomes:** Platforms possess a deep understanding of stakeholders, their needs, concerns, and behaviours, as well as technical expertise on what solutions are feasible—this knowledge and technical expertise support effective policy design and implementation.

Our research and multi-country stakeholder consultation surface three main partnership models. **The Service Integration Model** demonstrates how platforms embed government-related services directly within their user-facing applications. **The Capacity Building Model** refers to platforms' investment in enhancing users' capabilities, enabling sustained participation in digital economic and non-economic activities. **The Data-Driven Policy Support Model** involves platforms providing aggregated data and, in some contexts, analytical capabilities for evidence-based policymaking, supported by regulatory frameworks that balance transparency with commercial confidentiality.

Partnerships with platforms, while serving the public good, also raise policy questions such as: How can partnerships be structured to protect public interest, preserve accountability and yet encourage continuous innovation by platforms, the very innovation that the government has tapped into now to serve its citizenry?

We thus propose the following principles and operational pillars for sustainable, resilient platforms-government partnerships that continue to give platforms space to innovate. The principles are:

- A. Clear Purpose.** Clear policy objectives help commercial digital platforms work effectively with governments.
- B. Mutual Value.** Establishes mutually supportive relationships that ultimately benefit the public.
- C. Working Trust.** Built through consistent engagement over time.

The operational pillars for effective partnership management include establishing effective governance structures, developing and implementing robust data governance frameworks, and strengthening public trust and accountability.

In addition, working with Industry and business associations, which often serve as “ecosystem orchestrators,” can help facilitate collaboration between individual platforms and government bodies. These associations often act as trusted interlocutors.

Finally, we synthesise the foregoing by proposing a detailed, practical, and multi-stage collaboration pathway for governments and commercial digital platforms to support effective partnership management. Overall, when implemented effectively, these partnerships do not merely reduce government costs. They expand what is possible, benefitting citizens.