



Ascend & IUDX partner to bring Federated Data Exchange to Africa

Digital transformation is a process leading to strategic improvement in the government's ability to deliver public services more effectively, using technology as a main enabler. In the context of Africa, the government can leverage this transformation as a way to gain digital sovereignty and accelerate progress in areas of financial inclusion, social and cultural emancipation, education, healthcare, agriculture and many more.

The operationalization of the digitization effort relies on a framework, including the following components, to be successful: reliable digital infrastructure, interoperability platform, digital literacy, digital identification, and digital innovation. Governments need partners that can act holistically along these pillars to help them achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In that context, **Ascend Digital Solutions**, an end-to-end network and IT system integrator, technology, and digital solutions provider working to create the digital future of Africa, and **India Urban Data Exchange (IUDX)**, an open-source data exchange platform, today announced a strategic partnership to make path-breaking federated data exchange technology available for deployment across the African continent. This same technology has already been deployed in 35 Indian cities by India's innovative Smart City Mission, under the auspices of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. This technology will contribute to Africa's digital transformation by enabling important new initiatives such as those being driven by the **Smart Africa Secretariat** and Smart Africa Trust Alliance.

In regards to interoperability, this power to share data and to create powerful data driven solutions will help Africa leapfrog in smart governance, effective decision making and public service delivery. The technology provided by IUDX will enable intra- and inter-country data exchange with enhanced security features. Each member country can have its own instance of a data exchange setup and these can be federated into a single inter-country ecosystem. This federated architecture will be key to delivering value from various smart city initiatives across the continent. The initial solution being targeted for the new data exchange is Sim Card Registration. This solution will help to mitigate digital boundaries between countries and help citizens avail digital services even beyond their home countries. Ghana, Togo, Benin and Senegal are candidates for this federated data exchange solution. Other solutions that are actively being explored include solid waste management, personal mobility, citizen safety, and transit system management. These solutions, and many more, are already functional within the 35 Indian cities in which IUDX is deployed.

Commenting on the partnership, Harkirit Singh, CEO of Ascend Digital Solutions, said "Africa is on the fast track to achieving digital sovereignty. We envisage Africa to be the world's largest digital economy in the near future and we at Ascend Digital are accelerating this realization by leveraging the diverse human resources in Africa, collaborating with governments and forging partnerships to unlock the full potential of digital technology and prepare the continent for digital transformation.

This partnership with IUDX is key in realising a truly digital Africa by eliminating the boundaries that exist in the digital space and bridging the gap in information sharing. It will serve as a foundation for building a connected Africa."

Innovation is essential to create business models that can take advantage of the digital space to solve real life problems. Ascend Digital, through its experience in creating opportunities that can guide the government in the process of establishing the proper framework to foster digital entrepreneurship. Through its alliance with IUDX, Ascend can offer government, business sectors and individuals access to

multiple use cases that can inspire creativity to bring solutions to address local needs. In fact, the IUDX platform has leveraged data effectively for a variety of requirements across urban India and has created path-breaking and sustainable data-driven solutions by exchanging and combining datasets from multiple sources to improve the lives of people and support public infrastructure. “We are glad to bring this Indian technology to Africa and help foster an inclusive, open, secure and resilient African digital ecosystem”, said Dr Inder Gopal, CEO, IUDX.

The partnership will bring the expertise and learnings gained within India to Africa, to create data exchange solutions that would help improve citizen lives across the continent. It will also help harness the digital economy as a driver of growth and innovation. It will also help with accelerating digital literacy in the continent with the creation of a training Academy to facilitate technology adoption, a key element to fully take advantage of the full potential of the digital space. Such learning platforms will promote growing awareness among African governments regarding the importance of interoperability platforms as well as training citizens for effective use of technology in day-to-day activities..

About Ascend Digital

Ascend Digital Solutions is a trusted partner in enabling the real potential of a digital economy. Our goal is to be the digital catalyst reducing broadband usage gap through technology and financial innovations that will leapfrog Africa into the 4th industrial revolution.

We envision Africa to be the technology playground in the near future with its vast natural and human resources, transforming itself to be the world's largest digital platform. This will be achieved through high speed connectivity, access to low cost capital, reduction in the digital divide, mass entrepreneurship & innovation and developing solutions in Africa and for Africa.

Ascend Digital Solutions is creating tremendous opportunities in next-generation technologies that will enable the delivery of robotics, autonomous driving and artificial intelligence and accelerate Africa's digital transformation.

About IUDX

The IUDX program supports India's **Smart Cities Mission** within the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** and facilitates the use of data to achieve the full potential of technology and innovation within Indian cities. It is set up as a multidisciplinary program within the **Foundation for Science Innovation and Development** in the **Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore**. The IUDX program addresses technical and non-technical issues related to the use of data to create public goods. The open-source platform developed by the program enables higher operational efficiency in the city administration by facilitating efficient data exchange between various civic bodies, municipal departments, application developers and relevant data consumers. For more information, visit the [website](#).

Press Contact

Namrata Agrawal
namrata.agrawal@iudx.org.in

Thomas brien
t.brien@smartinfraco.com