DEVELOPING AN AI-POWERED KNOWLEDGE HUB FOR THE GOVERNMENT EMPOWERMENT NETWORK (GEN)

Instiglio Final Report

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I. Executive Summary

This final report presents a comprehensive framework for the design and implementation of an AI-powered Knowledge Hub for the Government Empowerment Network (GEN), an initiative by Instiglio to enhance governance outcomes across the Global South. Developed between November 2024 and May 2025 by graduate students from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), the report emerges from months of research, stakeholder engagement, and design collaboration with public officials and Instiglio experts.

A key component of the project was a participatory design sprint conducted in Bogotá in March 2025, which brought together public officials, GEN champions, and the Instiglio team. This co-creation process involved mapping the policymaking journey, identifying real-world decision points and user pain points, and exploring how AI could support public servants at critical stages. Using a "seeing, doing, thinking, feeling" lens, the team surfaced deeper insights into user behavior and institutional context. These insights informed a follow-up virtual workshop with Instiglio staff that refined early solution concepts and introduced a framework for AI integration.

The resulting policymaker journey map and opportunity areas were instrumental in shaping the proposed features, technology options, and implementation strategy for the GEN Knowledge Hub. Together, these sessions ensured that our recommendations reflect both user experience and technical feasibility, and that they remain adaptable to different country and sectoral contexts.

The GEN Knowledge Hub will serve as a digital platform that enables public servants to access curated, personalized, and evidence-based resources to address complex governance challenges. By leveraging AI features such as natural language processing and intelligent search, the Hub aims to provide real-time, context-aware guidance, while fostering a community of practice among reform-minded civil servants.

Deliverables include a synthesis of governance challenges and user needs, a validated decision-making journey map for policymakers, a benchmarking review of existing AI tools, a content curation strategy, AI technology recommendations, and a phased roadmap for implementation. The Instiglio team in Uganda has already begun piloting a minimum viable product (MVP) using Onyx.app, offering a real-world opportunity to test key design hypotheses, particularly in the area of results-based financing. The final recommendations emphasize ethical AI integration, scalability, contextual sensitivity, and sustainable engagement, grounded in the principles of GEN and Instiglio's collaborative approach with policymakers. In particular, they highlight the potential of hybrid development models and the importance of a content governance framework to ensure quality, relevance, and regional fit—especially for

surfacing locally grounded, policy-stage-specific evidence. The implementation roadmap lays out a phased path to expand, validate, and refine the platform, in close partnership with public servants across GEN countries.

1. Summary: Key Findings and Recommendations for Instiglio

Please see the phased implementation roadmap at the end of the report for more details.

- **Begin with the Uganda MVP, but preserve flexibility:** Onyx offers a valuable live testbed, but Instiglio should remain open to shifting platforms if technical, governance, or user-fit issues arise. This prevents vendor lock-in and protects the Hub's scalability across GEN contexts.
- **Own content and governance, outsource the backend:** Outsourcing technical development enables faster build cycles, but Instiglio must control key layers, such as content quality, metadata standards, and ethical safeguards, to ensure trust and contextual relevance across countries.
- **Design with—not just for—public servants:** Future platform iterations should integrate feedback from new GEN cohorts beyond Uganda. Participatory design isn't just inclusive, it surfaces unique use cases and ensures the tool is grounded in real-world workflows.
- **Start lean with a curated RBF knowledge space MVP:** The initial MVP focuses on Results-Based Financing, using selected resources to test AI tagging and content discovery. This offers a low-risk entry point to validate real user behaviors and iteratively improve the platform before layering in more complex features.
- **Frame AI as a support tool, not a replacement:** Policymakers emphasized trust and transparency. AI should serve as a background assistant, suggesting content, summarizing materials, or flagging blind spots, while leaving decision-making power in human hands.
- **Build in safeguards from the outset:** Short-term actions like training champions, creating governance roles, and launching risk audits build credibility and ensure safe adoption. The medium and long-term roadmap includes embedding audit protocols and institutional governance boards.
- **Keep momentum high with visible wins:** Onboarding support, quick-turnaround feedback loops, and recognition incentives help ensure the platform doesn't stall after launch. Long-term success depends as much on engagement strategies as it does on technical functionality.

II. Background

1. Instiglio

Instiglio is an international non-profit consulting firm, pioneer, and leader in Results-Based Financing (RBF) and Performance Management, dedicated to improving public service delivery and development effectiveness, primarily in the Global South. Instiglio has its headquarters in Bogotá, Colombia, with global offices in Washington, DC (USA), Lima (Peru), Nairobi (Kenya), Rabat (Morocco), and Mauritius. They aim to incentivize high-impact program implementation and place the welfare of vulnerable communities at the center. By providing technical assistance in designing and implementing Results-Based approaches, Instiglio hopes to catalyze a culture of excellence within international development that improves the effectiveness of social programs on the lives of those they serve.[1]

The organization's core mission is to help governments, development actors, and international institutions design and implement results-based solutions that foster sustainable development. Instiglio has been active in over 25 countries, with more than 100 projects executed, engaging in long-term partnerships with governments such as Colombia, Peru, Costa Rica, and Morocco. Instiglio's team comprises experts from various fields, including economics, public policy, and technology, and is structured to support both large-scale institutional reforms and local government initiatives. This multidisciplinary team works closely with public servants and development partners to create solutions that enhance the effectiveness of public services, especially in sectors like health, education, and workforce development.

2. The Government Empowerment Network (GEN) and the Inspiration for this Project

Relevant to this workshop project is the Government Empowerment Network (GEN), which is central to Instiglio's vision for promoting government effectiveness. It is a community-driven program designed to empower public sector officials by providing them with the knowledge and tools to tackle governance challenges and improve their impact on society. GEN comprises two main components: I) Capacity Builder and Incubator, which offers personalized support to a cohort of selected public servants; ii) GEN Knowledge Hub, a comprehensive repository of government effectiveness resources. The Hub is intended to house a vast array of curated materials, such as case studies, tools, and articles, designed to empower public servants to navigate and address the challenges they face in their governance roles. To optimize this resource, Instiglio seeks to integrate an AI-powered tool that can offer

[1] Instiglio. n.d. Instiglio Webpage. Accessed April 6, 2025. https://www.instiglio.org/.

personalized responses to users based on their specific needs, enhancing the overall utility and impact of the platform.[2]

As of 2025, the GEN journey is being piloted in Uganda, where the first cohort of public servants is actively engaged. While the AI-powered Knowledge Hub is envisioned as one component of this broader GEN experience, it is currently being developed iteratively alongside other pillars such as the Empowerment Lab and Incubator (The Empowerment Lab is a skills-building space focused on problem definition, solution design, and implementation planning,[3] while the Incubator provides personalized, peer-supported advisory to help champions develop and test practical solutions to complex public sector challenges).[4] The MVP version of the AI GEN Knowledge Hub is being trialed using Onyx.app, an open-source AI tool designed to help organizations retrieve internal knowledge more efficiently, focused initially on Results-Based Financing content.[5] Our project offers building blocks to guide and support this development process.

3. Governance Challenges and the Opportunity for AI in the Global South

Public sector reform and capacity building are central to overcoming governance challenges in the Global South. Reform efforts typically aim to modernize institutional frameworks, enhance administrative efficiency, and increase citizen participation in governance. However, these efforts are often impeded by political and institutional inertia, limited resources, and a lack of technical and administrative capacity among public servants. Public servants at the frontline of service delivery and governance often face considerable obstacles in accessing timely, relevant, and actionable knowledge that could enable them to perform their duties more effectively. This gap in knowledge and capacity contributes to inefficient policy implementation, poor service delivery, and limited impact of public sector reforms. To address these challenges, Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA)[6] has emerged as an alternative to conventional public sector reform approaches.

There is increasing recognition that artificial intelligence (AI), including generative AI, can significantly improve how governments operate, develop policies, and deliver services when used thoughtfully and responsibly. Governments play

[2] Instiglio and Columbia University. 2024. *Workshop in Sustainable Development Practice: Preliminary Terms of Reference, Fall 2024–Spring 2025*. Internal Document.
[3] Instiglio, GEN Design Sessions Learnings (Summary)_v2, 2024.
[4] Instiglio, Government Effectiveness Definition, 2024; Instiglio, GEN Experience (PowerPoint presentation), 2024.
[5] Onyx, "Onyx is Your Internal Copilot," Onyx.app, accessed April 20, 2025, https://www.onyx.app/.
[6] Andrews, Matthew, Lant Pritchett, and Michael Woolcock. 2017. Building State Capability: Evidence, Analysis, Action. Oxford University Press. PDIA emphasizes identifying locally relevant problems, iteratively testing solutions, and adapting strategies based on real-time learning and feedback. By prioritizing problem-solving over rigid, pre-designed reforms, PDIA can foster greater ownership, flexibility, and responsiveness in governance reforms, enabling public servants to implement more effective and sustainable solutions.

various roles concerning AI—they enable its use, fund research, establish regulations, and also utilize and, in some cases, create AI technologies themselves. While much of the global conversation around AI has focused on governments' regulatory responsibilities, less attention has been given to their role as direct users of AI. As they adopt AI to enhance governance and address diverse policy challenges, governments also acknowledge the importance of managing its use within the public sector to avoid misuse and address potential risks.[7]

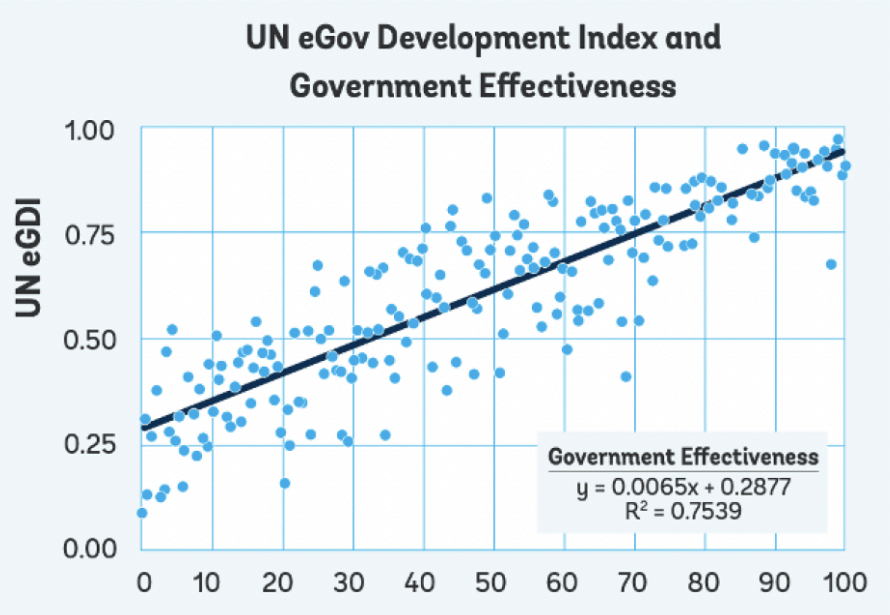
Capacity-building initiatives are essential for strengthening the skills and competencies of public servants, enabling them to address the multifaceted challenges they face. Such initiatives include professional development programs, training in evidence-based policy-making, and access to curated knowledge resources. However, these programs often lack the necessary resources, infrastructure, and expertise to meet the diverse needs of public servants, particularly in developing countries. Integrating digital tools and AI-powered solutions could bridge this gap by making relevant knowledge and resources accessible in real time, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of public sector reform efforts.

The effectiveness of public sector governance is closely linked to evidence-based decision-making. Governments that rely on data, research, and evaluation to inform their policies are more likely to achieve long-term, sustainable development outcomes.[8] However, in many regions, decision-makers face limited access to relevant and up-to-date information, inadequate data collection and analysis capacity, and weak mechanisms for feedback and accountability.[9] This often results in reactive rather than proactive policies based on historical precedents rather than empirical evidence and a lack of a clear strategy for implementation and impact. Instiglio's focus on evidence-based solutions is well-aligned with this need for data-driven governance. Through initiatives like the Government Empowerment Network (GEN), public servants gain access to a repository of curated, evidence-based knowledge resources designed to improve governance and service delivery. These resources aim to provide timely, actionable insights to inform policy-making and reform efforts.

Global governance trends, such as the increasing role of multinational organizations, digital technologies, and globalization, also significantly impact governance structures in the Global South. Among international organizations, the current end goal of digital governments is to implement what is known as GovTech.

[7] OECD. 2024. Governing with Artificial Intelligence: Are Governments Ready? OECD Artificial Intelligence Papers, No. 20. OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/26324bc2-en.
[8] OECD. (2020). *Building capacity for evidence-informed policy-making: Lessons from country experiences* https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2020/09/building-capacity-for-evidence-informed-policy-making_827fd635/86331250-en.pdf
[9] Anna Nikiforova et al., "Innovation Resistance Theory in Action: Unveiling Barriers to Open Government Data Adoption by Public Organizations to Unlock Open Data Innovation," *arXiv preprint arXiv:2407.10883*, 2024, https://arxiv.org/abs/2407.10883.

Govtech is characterized by being citizen-centric public services with a whole government approach to digital transformation focused on simple, efficient, and transparent government systems. Initial data also shows a positive correlation between a more digital and efficient government. A positive relationship, shown below, exists between the UN e-Government Development Index and Government Empowerment with a reasonably strong correlation (R2=0.7539).[10]



Source: 2020 UN e-Government Development Index (eGDI) and 2019 Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI); 191 countries.

The advent of digital transformation and technological advancements presents new opportunities and challenges for public governance. Governments worldwide increasingly turn to digital tools to improve service delivery, enhance transparency, and build citizen trust. However, integrating technology into public administration is not without its hurdles. Limited technical capacity, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of financial resources often pose significant barriers to adopting new technologies. Furthermore, resistance to change and institutional inertia can slow progress, making it difficult to achieve the desired outcomes of digital transformation.

Governments encounter significant challenges that may hinder their ability to adopt AI applications and fully realize their potential. These challenges include a shortage of specialized expertise, insufficient funding for AI research and innovation, and often ambiguous regulations to ensure ethical, secure, transparent, and

[10] World Bank. 2020. *GovTech: The New Frontier in Digital Government Transformation (Guidance Note No. 1).* World Bank. Accessed December 17, 2024. https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/805211612215188198-0090022021/original/GovTechGuidanceNote1TheFrontier.pdf.

human-focused AI implementation across various sectors. Furthermore, as they develop and deploy AI solutions, it is essential for governments to proactively address the rapidly evolving landscape of privacy, security risks, and ethical concerns associated with AI technologies.[11]

Instiglio's focus on integrating AI-powered solutions into governance programs offers a potential pathway to overcome these challenges.[12] As highlighted in the Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) toolkit for responsible AI use in public policy[13] governments can leverage AI systems to enhance decision-making and improve public service delivery. For example, the GEN Knowledge Hub could benefit from an AI-powered tool that provides personalized responses, enabling public servants to access the most relevant resources based on their specific needs. This would not only streamline access to evidence-based insights but also address common challenges like limited technical capacity and resistance to change, as identified by policymakers globally. In addition, the tool could support public servants throughout the planning, design, and monitoring phases of governance initiatives, offering tailored guidance to make reforms more effective, transparent, and accountable. By responsibly integrating AI into public sector workflows, governments can drive meaningful reform and build systems that are more citizen-centric, efficient, and resilient.

The use of AI can help by providing data-driven solutions that are context-specific. For example, the OECD's AI initiatives[14] have highlighted the transformative potential of AI in public administration, from improving public service delivery to enhancing policy design and evaluation. Notably, Colombia leads Latin America with the highest number of AI initiatives, underscoring the country's commitment to leveraging AI for governance reform. These initiatives reflect a growing trend across the region, where AI is being utilized to address sector-specific challenges like public health, education, and infrastructure development.

Instiglio's work in various regions, including Colombia, Peru, and Morocco, underscores the need for localized, context-specific solutions. In Colombia, for example, Instiglio has partnered with government agencies to design performance-based systems that prioritize outcomes over outputs, thereby improving service delivery in sectors such as health and education. In Kenya and Morocco, capacity-building programs and evidence-based policy-making efforts have sought to strengthen public administration and enhance governance structures. These

[11] McKinsey & Company. 2022. "The Potential Value of AI—and How Governments Could Look to Capture It." Accessed November 30, 2024.
[12] McKinsey & Company. 2023. "The Economic Potential of Generative AI: The Next Productivity Frontier." Accessed December 17, 2024.
[13] Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). 2020. "Responsible Use of AI for Public Policy: Data Science Toolkit." Accessed December 17, 2024
[14] OECD. 2024. "National AI Policies & Strategies." Accessed December 17, 2024.

experiences highlight the importance of effectively leveraging a global pool of knowledge while carefully adapting it to specific local needs and contexts. While a tool such as the GEN Knowledge Hub could facilitate this process, the primary goal remains the integration and adaptation of global insights to drive meaningful change across the Global South.

4. Knowledge Management in the Policy-Making Process

Knowledge-sharing models, structured and curated knowledge management systems for gathering and organizing policy-relevant information, are being adopted by governments worldwide in an effort to enhance governance effectiveness and the efficacy of policies. This trend is present in developed countries such as Denmark by strong institutional frameworks and well-organized digital infrastructure. The Danish government demonstrates this approach by promoting multi-level collaboration between federal, regional, and municipal institutions with task forces and committees.[15] These collaborative systems help to curate, store, and distribute policy-related knowledge among public sector institutions.[16] Denmark also actively consults to open-access worldwide knowledge sources to make sure its policy designs match international best practices: policy guidelines from the OECD, the UN e-Government Survey, and the European Commission.[17]

Although this model is an example of a resource-intensive, top-down methodology in developed countries, South-South knowledge sharing mechanisms, such as the UN SDSN and South-South Galaxy, have developed into adaptable, peer-driven options that prioritize mutual learning, relevance, and adaptation in developing countries where resources are limited.

In order to exchange policy-making experiences, technological solutions, and implementation methods, developing countries are increasingly using triangular and South-South cooperation platforms at the international level.[18] These knowledge sharing platforms are made in response to the needs of the Global South and encourage horizontal learning and co-development.

In 2022, the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs supported the launch of the World Food Programme (WFP)–China South-South Cooperation Knowledge Sharing Platform, which is an outstanding example of knowledge sharing

[15] Scupola, Ada, and Ines Mergel. 2022. "Co-Production in Digital Transformation of Public Administration and Public Value Creation: The Case of Denmark." *Government Information Quarterly* 39(1): 101650. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2021.101650.
[16] Mountasser, Tarek, and Mohamed Abdellatif. 2023. "Digital Transformation in Public Administration: A Systematic Literature Review." *International Journal of Professional Business Review* 8(10): e02372. https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i10.2372.
[17] Scupola, Ada, and Ines Mergel. 2022. "Co-Production in Digital Transformation of Public Administration and Public Value Creation: The Case of Denmark." *Government Information Quarterly* 39(1): 101650. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2021.101650.
[18] World Bank. 2020. *Becoming a Knowledge Sharing Organization: A Handbook for Scaling Up Solutions through Knowledge Capturing and Sharing*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

and triangular cooperation between China and African countries.[19] Demand-driven collaboration, policy learning, and knowledge sharing are all supported by the platform. In particular, this platform's mechanics consist of using carefully selected technical documentation and module case studies to share China's expertise in areas like poverty alleviation, post-harvest loss reduction, climate adaptation, and micro value chains. At the same time, the platform is also operating a multilingual "Cloud School" that provides authorized online training courses for technicians, development practitioners, and public officials with different levels of experience.[20] By doing so, it can promote collaborative policy discussions and technical exchanges, including expert consultations, webinars, and localized workshops.[21] Besides, the platform also encourages cooperation based on demand, enabling nations to specify their technological or policy needs and obtain specific answers from Chinese organizations and specialists.

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and the African Union are the significant multilateral institutions supporting the platform. With a focus on collaboration, mutually beneficial learning, and structural capacity-building among Global South nations, such a knowledge sharing platform encourages context-driven policy exchange and sustainable development in developing countries.

At the national level, knowledge sharing in the Global South usually utilizes practical, context-aware platforms that connect available expertise to deal with local needs. Governments and organizations frequently create systems to detect and manage knowledge supply and demand in real time, instead of relying on centralized academic or technical databases.[22]

As highlighted in the World Bank Knowledge Sharing Handbook, one approach is to create a knowledge-brokering platform, which enables stakeholders and policy makers to identify, adapt, and imitate relevant practices.[23] In other words, these platforms are interactive systems that support real-time, localized, and action-oriented information sharing rather than simply venues to store information and knowledge. Brokering may also include stakeholder discussions, online forums, communities of practice, or field-based learning initiatives, depending on institutional capabilities.

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[19] South-South Galaxy. 2022. "WFP–China South-South Cooperation Knowledge Sharing Platform Goes Live." *South-South Galaxy*, May 27. https://southsouth-galaxy.org/news/wfp-china-south-south-cooperation-knowledge-sharing-platform-goes-live/
[20] WFP China COE. n.d. "WFP China South-South Cooperation Knowledge Sharing Platform." Accessed April 7, 2025. http://www.wfpchinacoe.net/
[21] South-South Galaxy. n.d. "Webinar Series Timeline." Accessed April 7, 2025. https://southsouth-galaxy.org/webinar-series-timeline/
[22] World Bank. 2020. *Becoming a Knowledge Sharing Organization: A Handbook for Scaling Up Solutions through Knowledge Capturing and Sharing*. Washington, DC: World Bank. pp.97-101
[23] World Bank. 2020. *Becoming a Knowledge Sharing Organization: A Handbook for Scaling Up Solutions through Knowledge Capturing and Sharing*. Washington, DC: World Bank. pp.97-101

When creating such platforms, the following three questions need to be carefully considered: [24]

1. Who are the users and what particular types of information they demand?
2. How information and knowledge could be displayed and packaged regarding format, language, and depth?
3. Which mechanisms are practical, particularly in places with poor internet connection?

For example, local officials can refer to peer-contributed solutions from the previous experience responding to emergencies through the "Disaster Management Solutions Finder," a smartphone application created by Indonesia's disaster management authority (BNPB).

5. AI and Data Governance for Policymaking: What Solutions are There Right Now?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers a powerful set of tools to enhance decision-making, improve public service delivery, and increase government efficiency. Below are the most relevant types of AI technologies used in the public sector today, along with real-world examples and applications.

Computer Vision enables AI systems to interpret and analyze visual data from images and videos. This technology is widely used to analyze satellite imagery and monitor real-time surveillance footage. Governments apply computer vision in areas such as environmental monitoring, disaster response, and infrastructure planning. For example, Planet Labs uses AI-enhanced satellite imagery to monitor environmental changes like deforestation and urban sprawl, providing critical insights to public agencies and NGOs.[25]

Natural Language Processing (NLP) allows AI to interpret and generate human language in both text and speech formats. One of its key applications is text analysis, where AI systems can summarize large volumes of documents to support evidence-based policymaking. A notable example is the Redbox tool in the United Kingdom, which searches thousands of internal government documents and condenses them into tailored briefings for civil servants.[26] NLP also powers AI-driven chatbots, which automate citizen inquiries and assist policymakers by extracting key insights from extensive datasets. In Turkey, the Neyim Var AI platform provides citizens with personalized medical guidance and nutrition advice, reducing pressure on

[24] Ibid.
[25] Planet. 2023. "AI-Driven Satellite Imagery for Sustainable Development." https://www.planet.com.
[26] Nesta. 2021. *Using AI in the Public Sector: Redbox Case Study*.

healthcare systems.[27] Another essential application of NLP is language translation. AI can automatically translate government content into multiple languages, improving accessibility for linguistically diverse populations. In Spain, ALIA AI offers real-time translations of public services into Spanish and all co-official languages—Catalan, Galician, Valencian, and Basque—enhancing linguistic inclusion.[28]

Beyond language processing, AI is used in forecasts and analytics. These tools leverage historical and real-time data to identify patterns and generate actionable insights for public policy. Aggregating and cleaning data is a foundational use case, where AI integrates information from various sources such as census data, economic reports, and social media. For example, ProsperIA in Mexico consolidates data on women's economic participation and opportunity structures to inform gender-sensitive public service delivery.[29]

Predictive analytics is another key application. AI systems use historical data to forecast trends in sectors like healthcare, employment, and education. Salesforce's AI Economist project uses reinforcement learning to model how citizens might respond to different tax regimes, providing insights for more equitable economic policy design.[30]

Finally, pattern recognition and anomaly detection allow AI to detect fraud, policy errors, or gaps in service delivery. In Brazil, Alice AI monitors public procurement processes and flags suspicious activities in real time, assisting auditors and promoting transparency.[31]

AI is also being used to improve policymaking, though adoption remains lower than for internal operations. South Korea's Disease Control and Prevention Agency developed an AI forecasting system to monitor infectious diseases by analyzing medical and spatial data. In Colombia, the National Land Agency, with the Organisation of Ibero-American States, used AI and satellite imaging to generate cadastral data, mapping 1,900 rural properties in a 200,000-hectare area. Meanwhile, in France, the Paris-Saclay municipalities are using AI-powered digital twins to simulate energy management scenarios and optimize urban planning.

While these examples demonstrate the diverse ways AI can support public sector innovation, it is important to note that most current applications are highly sector-specific, focusing on areas such as public health, land management, or energy planning. At present, there are few examples of AI tools designed to support general policymaking processes across multiple sectors. This suggests that initiatives like the GEN Knowledge Hub may benefit from initially concentrating on specific governance

[27] OECD. 2023. *The State of AI in the Public Sector 2023*
[28] European Commission. 2022. *AI Watch: Artificial Intelligence in Public Services*.
[29] UNDP Latin America. 2023. *ProsperIA: Artificial Intelligence for Gender-Inclusive Services in Mexico*.
[30] Salesforce Research. 2023. "The AI Economist: Optimizing Economic Policy with AI." https://www.salesforceairesearch.com
[31] World Bank. 2023. *GovTech Case Studies: AI for Procurement Monitoring in Brazil*.

use cases or sectors where user needs are clearer and AI applications can be more effectively tailored to practical challenges.

Through these technologies, AI offers transformative potential for governments seeking to become more efficient, responsive, and inclusive. According to the IDB toolkit *Responsible Use of AI for Public Policy: Data Science Toolkit,*[32] AI isn't here to replace policymakers—it's a support tool that helps governments make better, data-driven decisions. When used responsibly, AI can improve how policies are designed, implemented, and evaluated, but it comes with challenges that must be carefully managed. The toolkit breaks down AI's role in the public policy cycle, showing where it can add value:

Figure 1: AI Applications Across the Public Policy Cycle

Policy Stage	AI Contribution
Identifying the Problem	Analyzing data to pinpoint social issues like unemployment trends or healthcare gaps
Formulating Policies	Using AI models to design tailored interventions for specific populations
Decision-Making Support	Providing insights to predict patterns like traffic congestion or tax policy impacts
Implementing Policies	Testing policies through pilot projects before scaling
Evaluating Results	Tracking outcomes, identifying unintended effects, and refining policies

[33]

For example, AI has been used in social welfare programs to analyze patterns of poverty and optimize aid distribution, ensuring resources reach those who need them most.

Governments considering AI adoption must assess available tools based on cost, adaptability, language support, and user experience.

- **Cost and Accessibility**: AI implementation costs vary significantly. While proprietary AI models may offer advanced capabilities, open-source alternatives

[32] Sánchez Ávalos, R., González, F., y Ortiz, T. (2021). *Uso responsable de la IA para las políticas públicas: manual de ciencia de datos* . https://doi.org/10.18235/0002876

[33] Figure 1: AI Applications Across the Public Policy Cycle. Source: Own elaboration according to "Responsible Use of AI for Public Policy: Data Science Toolkit" OCDE

such as GPT-based platforms provide more affordable and scalable options for governments with limited budgets.

- **Language Support**: NLP models often struggle with non-English languages, limiting AI's applicability in multilingual governance contexts. Efforts to develop regional AI models that support local languages are crucial for equitable AI adoption.[34]

- **Customization and Adaptability**: AI models need to be flexible enough to integrate into existing government frameworks. Policymakers should prioritize tools that allow customization based on national and regional datasets.[35]

- **User Experience & Low-Code Solutions**: Many government agencies lack in-house AI expertise, making low-code/no-code AI platforms a valuable option for non-technical policymakers seeking to leverage AI for decision-making.

6. AI Regulations in the Public Sector

As governments adopt AI tools to support policy design and delivery, regulation becomes essential to ensure transparency, fairness, and accountability—especially in high-risk, citizen-facing use cases.

Governments worldwide are adopting various regulatory frameworks to ensure responsible and ethical AI use. The European Union's AI Act categorizes AI systems by risk levels—ranging from prohibited to high-risk to minimal risk—and mandates transparency and oversight for high-risk applications, particularly in public administration.[36] Similarly, UNESCO's "Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence" outlines principles of fairness, explainability, privacy protection, and human-centered design, aiming to establish a global ethical baseline for AI use.[37]

National strategies also reflect diverse regulatory approaches. Colombia's National Digital Strategy (2023–2026) emphasizes the responsible use of digital technologies, including AI, to address national challenges and promote sustainable development. The strategy highlights the principle of "trust and security by design" and includes commitments to strengthen digital public governance, develop ethical frameworks for emerging technologies, and promote transparency and citizen participation. It also points to the use of AI and advanced analytics to support evidence-based policymaking and calls for open and participatory data governance to

[34] Deloitte. (2017). *AI-augmented government: Using cognitive technologies to redesign public sector work*. Deloitte Insights
[35] Athey, S., & Wager, S. (2021). "Policy learning with observational data." *Econometrica, 89*(1), 133-161.
[36] European Parliament and Council. (2024). Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (Artificial Intelligence Act). Official Journal of the European Union. https://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj
[37] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2022). Recommendation on the ethics of artificial intelligence. UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381137

expand access to information across institutions. These priorities reflect a broader vision of using digital tools to enhance decision-making and bring curated, actionable information to more people across the government.[38] Meanwhile, countries like the United Arab Emirates have adopted strategies centered on using AI to optimize government operations while emphasizing data security and innovation.[39]

Several other frameworks also guide ethical AI adoption in the public sector. The U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) developed the AI Risk Management Framework, which introduces a structured approach—Govern, Map, Measure, and Manage—for developing trustworthy AI systems.[40]

The Situate AI Guidebook offers a co-design methodology for deliberating AI use in government,[41] while Australia's Trust Framework for Automated Decision-Making promotes transparency and adherence to administrative responsibilities.[42]

These frameworks share key lessons for governments deploying AI-enabled tools. The G7 Toolkit for Artificial Intelligence in the Public Sector promotes usability, human-centered design, and risk classification.[43] Complementary tools like AI procurement checklists, developed by the World Economic Forum and Canada's CDADM, provide concrete evaluation criteria to ensure AI systems are ethically sourced, contextually appropriate, and auditable.[44] These insights are especially relevant in low-capacity settings where public servants may depend on AI without robust mechanisms for vetting its outputs.

Grounding AI deployment in these principles can help ensure that tools like the GEN Knowledge Hub are inclusive, transparent, and trusted by the public servants they're designed to support.

While global frameworks establish useful principles, many governments still face challenges in translating them into practice. In particular, low-resource settings may lack the AI literacy, data infrastructure, and organizational capacity needed to

[38] Departamento Nacional de Planeación (DNP). (2023). Estrategia Nacional Digital de Colombia 2023-2026. Gobierno de Colombia.
[39] United Arab Emirates Government. (n.d.). UAE National Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2031. https://ai.gov.ae/strategy/
[40] National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). (2023). Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework (AI RMF 1.0) (NIST AI 100-1). U.S. Department of Commerce. https://doi.org/10.6028/NIST.AI.100-1
[41] Kawakami, A., Coston, A., Zhu, H., Heidari, H., & Holstein, K. (2024). The Situate AI Guidebook: Co-Designing a Toolkit to Support Multi-Stakeholder Early-stage Deliberations Around Public Sector AI Proposals. In CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '24) (pp. 1–22). ACM. https://doi.org/10.1145/3613904.3642849
[42] Andrews, P. (2022). A trust framework for government use of artificial intelligence and automated decision making (Version 3). Ethical AI Consulting. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2208.10087
[43] OECD & UNESCO. (2024). G7 toolkit for artificial intelligence in the public sector. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). https://doi.org/10.1787/421c1244-en
[44] Ibid.

implement ethical AI systems. These implementation risks—including bias, lack of transparency, and user over-reliance—are explored in detail in the Findings section.[45]

Case studies offer emerging solutions. Canada's Directive on Automated Decision-Making requires transparency and risk assessments for AI systems used in public services.[46] The UK's Redbox project discussed above reduces reliance on third-party platforms while enhancing institutional memory.[47]

In low-resource contexts, open-source AI models and low-code platforms offer affordable and scalable entry points for public sector experimentation.[48] To ensure successful adoption, governments must pair these tools with capacity-building programs tailored to local infrastructure and user skill levels. Designing AI systems that support regional languages, offer transparent outputs, and allow public servants to interrogate recommendations is critical for long-term legitimacy and sustainability.[49]

To enable safe and effective AI deployment, policymakers should prioritize context-specific regulations and institutional readiness. This includes:

- Ensuring regulatory flexibility to adapt to technological advancements.
- Establishing ongoing capacity-building programs for public servants to enhance AI literacy and ethical awareness.
- Promoting cross-sector collaboration to harmonize AI regulations and foster innovation while safeguarding public interests.
- Developing mechanisms to audit AI suggestions and prove alignment with human and welfare-centered outcomes, thereby empowering better human decision-making while also strengthening accountability and public trust.
- Developing welfare-centered auditing protocols that include stakeholder feedback and expert reviews to ensure decisions align with public values.[50]
- Introducing iterative evaluation mechanisms in AI systems to account for ethical and societal impacts throughout the AI lifecycle.[51]

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[45] See the "Findings" section for an in-depth discussion of implementation challenges and mitigation strategies.
[46] Zick, T., Kortz, M., Eaves, D., & Doshi-Velez, F. (2024). AI procurement checklists: Revisiting implementation in the age of AI governance. arXiv. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2404.14660
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Deloitte. (2017, April 26). AI-augmented government: Using cognitive technologies to redesign public sector work. Deloitte.
[50] Kawakami, A., Coston, A., Zhu, H., Heidari, H., & Holstein, K. (2024). The Situate AI Guidebook: Co-Designing a Toolkit to Support Multi-Stakeholder Early-stage Deliberations Around Public Sector AI Proposals. In CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '24) (pp. 1–22). ACM. https://doi.org/10.1145/3613904.3642849
[51] Andrews, P. (2022). A trust framework for government use of artificial intelligence and automated decision making (Version 3). Ethical AI Consulting. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2208.10087

- Building trust by enhancing public transparency and encouraging governments to share detailed, understandable insights on AI operations and risk mitigation strategies.
- Developing localized AI literacy programs for public servants in low-resource settings, focusing on cost-effective and accessible AI tools.[52]
- Encouraging the adoption of open-source and low-code AI solutions to reduce costs and technical barriers, ensuring scalability and sustainability in under-resourced contexts.[53]
- Integrating regional language support within AI frameworks to enhance inclusivity and ensure AI solutions meet the linguistic needs of diverse communities.[54]

AI regulations and risk mitigation frameworks are critical for ensuring AI technologies enhance rather than undermine public governance.[55] Governments must adopt comprehensive frameworks, invest in capacity-building, and prioritize transparency and accountability in AI deployment.[56] See more information regarding relevant risks and mitigation strategies in both the Findings and the Recommendations and Implementation Roadmap sections below.

III. Preliminary Field Findings

In January 2025, the team traveled to Bogotá, Colombia, to conduct ten exploratory interviews with public officials, academics, and representatives from international organizations. These conversations aimed to surface key challenges in public service delivery, test early assumptions about user needs, and assess the potential value of an AI-powered Knowledge Hub. The following graphs illustrate key themes from the general feedback we received during the consultation process:

[52] Deloitte. (2017, April 26). AI-augmented government: Using cognitive technologies to redesign public sector work. Deloitte.
[53] OECD & UNESCO. (2024). G7 toolkit for artificial intelligence in the public sector. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). https://doi.org/10.1787/421c1244-en
[54] Ibid.
[55] Kawakami, A., Coston, A., Zhu, H., Heidari, H., & Holstein, K. (2024). The Situate AI Guidebook: Co-Designing a Toolkit to Support Multi-Stakeholder Early-stage Deliberations Around Public Sector AI Proposals. In CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '24) (pp. 1–22). ACM. https://doi.org/10.1145/3613904.3642849
[56] Ibid.

Figure 2: Key Themes - Feedback

Focus on Practicality	Public servants preferred **practical tools** over theoretical resources, emphasizing tangible outputs like cost savings and time efficiency.
Integration with Existing Systems	Tools must **align with existing government systems** and software to ensure integration.
Training and Support	Providing guidance and **training** on how to use the GEN Knowledge Hub effectively is crucial for long-term success.

[57]

Interviews surfaced common issues—fragmented access to data, outdated digital infrastructure, and limited tools for evidence-informed policymaking. The following table summarizes the key public sector challenges identified across interviews:

Figure 3: Public Sector Challenges Identified

Bureaucracy & Resource Allocation

Procurement and licensing processes are slow and hinder project implementation.

Overlap of government efforts leads to inefficiencies.

Political dynamics and **lack of executive support** disrupt collaboration.

Excess **reporting** (internal and external) wastes time and resources.

Technology & Capacity Gaps

Outdated digital tools and limited **access** in rural areas.

Lack of **centralized knowledge** repositories and **automation**.

Insufficient **digital literacy** among public servants.

Data & Oversight

Limited **ability** to leverage data for decision-making.

Poor data governance and difficulty in accessing **historical** records.

Challenges in **measuring** program impacts, particularly in rural areas.

[58]

The interviews conducted in Bogotá revealed several common governance challenges across sectors. However, many of these fell outside Instiglio's specific vision for the Knowledge Hub. It also became clear that conducting a truly representative global needs assessment was beyond the limits of our timeline and methodology.

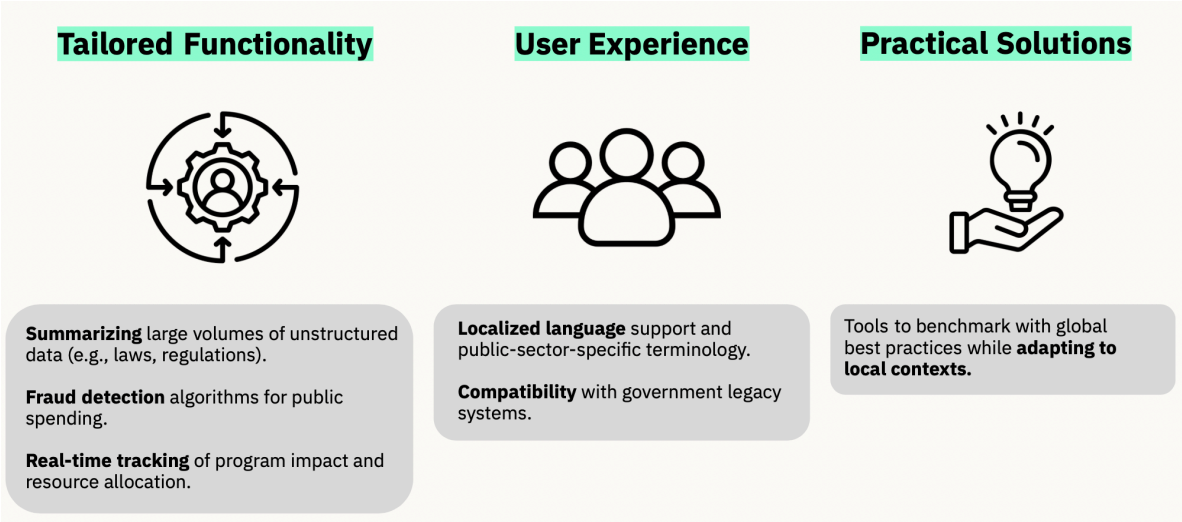
While the interviews surfaced important insights, they were also not representative of GEN's broader stakeholder base. Many reflected structural challenges, such as limited political will or institutional risk aversion, that extended beyond the reach of a technology-driven solution. As such, we treated these findings

[57] Figure 2: Key Themes - Feedback. Source: Own elaboration - Presentation to the client 2025/1
[58] Figure 3: Public Sector Challenges Identified. Source: Own elaboration - Presentation to the client 2025/1

as directional inputs that helped refine our problem definition. Rather than continuing with a broad sectoral needs assessment, we narrowed our focus to identifying specific design requirements for a context-responsive, credible, and implementable AI tool. This reframing shaped our subsequent research, which prioritized user trust, integration feasibility, and practical relevance for public servants.

At the same time, stakeholder feedback helped validate and sharpen the project's intended direction: building a platform that curates and delivers accessible resources to support public servants in the policy formulation process. The following table captures what stakeholders expressed as their key needs:

Figure 4: Key Needs

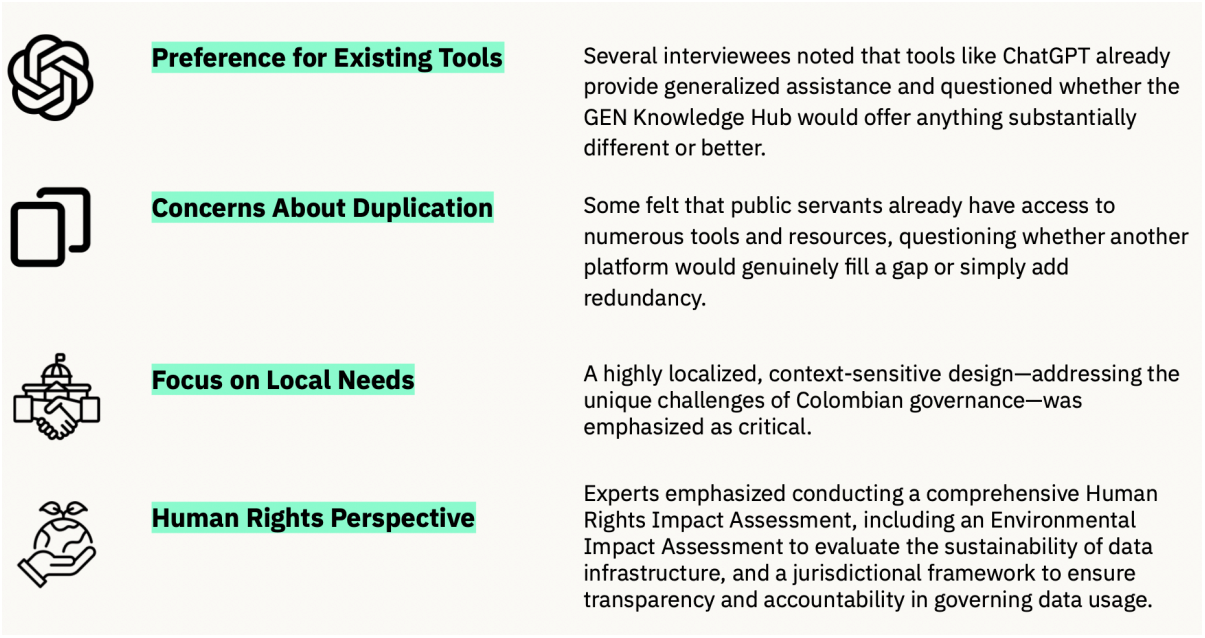


[59]

Several interviewees also expressed skepticism toward new digital tools, citing concerns around trust in government-built platforms, usability, and long-term sustainability. The graph below visualizes the main types of concerns raised during these discussions:

[59] Figure 4: Key Needs. Source: Own elaboration - Presentation to the client 2025/1

Figure 5: Main Concerns



[60]

Rather than treating these concerns as obstacles, we used them to refine our approach. These early findings prompted a shift away from mapping general sector-wide needs and toward a more targeted inquiry into what it would take to design a scalable, user-centered, and credible AI tool aligned with Instiglio's original ambition for the Knowledge Hub.

IV. Deliverables and Workstream Overview

The primary objective of this project was to create the conceptual framework for the AI-powered Knowledge Hub, a key element of Instiglio's Government Empowerment Network (GEN). This Knowledge Hub seeks to enhance access for public servants in the Global South to Knowledge by offering organized resources that help public servants address governance issues and facilitate decision-making. To achieve this, the team completed a series of research activities and deliverables across six core workstreams, refined following the January field visit:

1. Brief on the State of Knowledge Management and AI in Government

- Background research on the state of play in knowledge management, AI in policymaking, and relevant regulations to provide background context for the final report.

2. Mapping of Policymaker Decision Journey and Key Friction Points

[60] Figure 5: Main Concerns. Source: Own elaboration - Presentation to the client 2025/1

- A mapped step-by-step policymaker cycle to illustrate the common steps in a typical decision-making process.
- Potential tools: Business process mapping or journey mapping to identify pressure points and challenges in policy making.
- Identification of areas where technology can enhance decision-making.
    - Finalization through in-person focus group with GEN “champions”

3. Comparative Evaluation of Existing AI Tools

- Identification of the best AI-driven decision-support tools available.
- Evaluation of existing tools based on key variables such as cost, capabilities, customization, language compatibility, among others.
- How:
    - Desk research, and case study analysis (not limited to academic literature) to assess real-world applications.
    - Inclusion of interviews and field research to gather expert insights.

4. AI Technology Strategy and Implementation Guide

- Recommendations on the most suitable AI technology and interaction models for policy design and decision-making.
- Phased recommendations aligned with different stages of tool development.
- Focus on low-code solutions for accessibility and scalability.

5. Roadmap for AI Tool Development

- A structured plan for developing an AI-powered decision-support tool.
- Clear phases from Minimum Viable Product (MVP) to Minimum Marketable Product (MMP).
- Strategic implementation framework tailored for Instiglio’s needs.

6. Co-Design Workshop with GEN Champions and Instiglio Staff

- Engagement with policymakers as end users to validate and refine the policymaking journey map.

- Design sprint of the proposed AI solution with key stakeholders, including external experts and champions.
- Identification of potential cohort members.

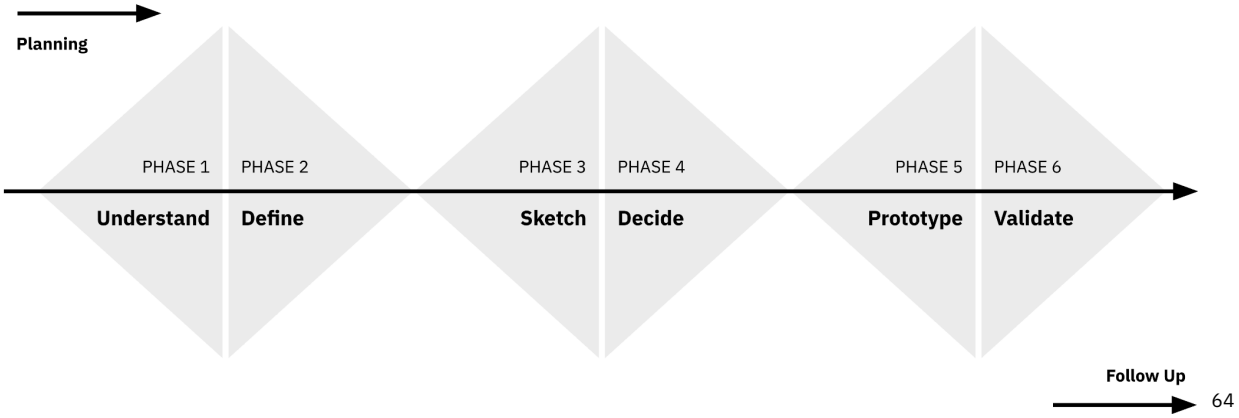
By achieving these objectives, the project would ensure that the AI-powered Knowledge Hub is user-focused, practical for the public servants' needs, and coordinated with Instiglio's capacity and their broader mission to empower public servants and improve governance among the Global South countries.

V. Methodology & Research Approach

1. Design Sprint Methodology Overview

In order to support our client with their digital policymaking tool development, the team employed the design sprint methodology as a structured, time-boxed innovation process. Design sprints, originally developed at Google Ventures, is typically a five-day framework for answering critical questions through design, prototyping, and user testing.[61] It condenses the iterative cycles of design thinking into a single week, allowing teams to map problems, generate solutions, decide on a course, prototype, and gather feedback in rapid succession.[62] In essence, the sprint methodology provides a "greatest hits" of product strategy and design thinking methods packaged into a process that any team can use to quickly validate ideas.[63] This structured approach balances divergent thinking (expand out and ideate) and convergent thinking (narrowing down and decide) within a short period, ensuring a clear path from problem definition to final tested solution.

Figure 6: User Journey Mapping – Bogotá Workshop



64

[61] Google Ventures. n.d. "The Design Sprint." Accessed April 24, 2025. https://www.gv.com/sprint/
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Figure 6: User Journey Mapping – Bogotá Workshop. Source: Own elaboration

2. Adaptation into Two 2-Hour Workshops

Given the practical constraints of the project, the classic five-day sprint was adapted into two focused in-person workshops, each lasting 2 hours, along with a one hour virtual ideation session. Design sprint principles are flexible, and recent practice has shown that even a "mini-version" two-hour sprint can capture the essence of specific phases of the five-day process, bringing a group of stakeholders together to solve a problem in a compressed time frame. Due to time constraints, we focused on phases 1 through 4.

The first 2-hour session was a highly participatory workshop that included policymakers as active contributors, ensuring that regulatory perspectives and policy needs were front-and-center in defining the problem. The second 2-hour session engaged staff from Instiglio, who would eventually develop and roll out the AI tool, in order to draw on their on-the-ground experience and operational insights. By splitting the sprint across two sessions with different participant groups, the team ensured diverse input: multi-disciplinary representation from both the policy domain and the Instiglio staff helped ground the sprint in real-world context.[65]

3. Policymaking Journey Mapping

In service design, a set of tools are used to map and organize optimal experiences, with a particular focus on improving processes and improving the user experience within service environments.[66] The user journey map, a graphical representation of a process over time from a user perspective, is a frequently used tool to visualize the overall journey. Journey mapping projects help identify problems and gaps therein.

For the first workshop, we employed this tool to understand the overall policy making journey in order to identify user pain points that the team can solve for with technology. The basic process for mapping journeys involves the following steps:

1. Define the stages of the experience from start to finish.
2. Understand what the user, in our case the policymaker, is experience in each stage.
3. Engage the users in mapping their journey, probing for both high and low points at each stage.

[65] EIT Climate-KIC. n.d. "Design Sprint for Organizations." Accessed April 24, 2025. https://re-industrialise.climate-kic.org/design-sprint-post/design-sprint-for-organizations/

[66] Stickdorn, M., Hormess, M. E., Lawrence, A., & Schneider, J. (2018). *This is service design doing: Applying service design thinking in the real world*. O'Reilly Media.

4. Review the map to identify opportunities to enhance or create positive experiences.

In order for the team to gain a deeper understanding of what the user experience is in each stage, we used the Seeing, Thinking, Doing, Feeling framework. This framework is designed to capture a comprehensive view and gain deeper insights into the user's experience, by examining what users observe (Seeing), their motivations (Thinking), their actions (Doing), and their emotions (Feeling).

4. "How Might We" Exercise for Problem Framing

Another key method used during the first workshop was the "How Might We" (HMW) exercise, a classic design-thinking technique for reframing insights into opportunities. In a design sprint, team members distill challenges or user needs into HMW questions written on sticky notes – for example, a policy pain point might be rephrased as "How might we leverage AI to help policymakers identify emerging issues more quickly?". The phrase "How might we…?" assumes an opportunity to be explored ("How" suggests solutions exist), keeps questions open-ended ("Might" implies there are multiple possible answers), and centers collaboration ("We" involves the group).[67]

During the sprint, participants – including the invited policymakers – generated dozens of HMW notes based on the problem context and lightning talks. This participatory brainstorming of HMW questions helped the team stay focused on the right problems to solve while enabling divergent creative thinking.[68] By the end of the first session, the collection of HMW questions was affinity-mapped into themes, providing a clear, human-centered problem frame for the subsequent ideation. The HMW exercise thus ensured that the sprint began with a shared understanding of the challenge and a set of invitational questions to drive solution-finding.

5. Decision Matrix for Evaluating Ideas

After a round of solution brainstorming in the second session, the sprint team faced the task of deciding which ideas to pursue further. The facilitators introduced a Decision Matrix tool to bring some analytical rigor to this evaluation. A decision matrix is essentially a prioritization grid, and allows the group to rate or discuss each idea against predefined criteria.[69] By scoring ideas on such criteria or plotting them (e.g. on an impact vs. effort graph), the team could systematically identify which concepts offered the best promise.

[67] Google Design. n.d. "Product Sprint Deck – 3-Day Template." Accessed April 24, 2025. https://designsprintkit.withgoogle.com/assets/tools/Product%20Sprint%20Deck%20-%203-Day%20Template.pdf
[68] Nielsen Norman Group. n.d. "How Might We Questions." Accessed April 24, 2025. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/how-might-we-questions/
[69] SoBrief. n.d. "Design Sprint." Accessed April 24, 2025. https://sobrief.com/books/design-sprint/

This method is especially useful when the initial dot-voting on brainstormed ideas did not yield a clear consensus. In those cases, the decision matrix can help narrow down the options by weighing the pros and cons of each solution in light of the sprint's objectives.

6. Round-Robin Brainstorming to Maximize Creativity

We also used a Round-Robin brainstorming exercise where all team members contributed ideas sequentially.[70] The group would go around the "room" to work and refine an idea.

1. Propose an idea
2. Build on the idea
3. Criticize the idea
4. Repair the idea to address the critique.

This structured rotation encouraged participants to build upon previous suggestions, creating a chain of innovative thinking that brought together diverse perspectives.[71]

Together, techniques such as HMW, decision matrix, and the round-robin brainstorming form a coherent structure within the design sprint, guiding the team from uncertainty to a focused direction[72]

VI. Assumptions, Risks, Limitations

The Government Empowerment Network's (GEN) AI-Powered Knowledge Hub deployment demands a supportive ecosystem of institutional ability, political commitment, reliable data, and stakeholders participation in addition to technical integration. We identified important assumptions and risks that potentially influence the Knowledge Hub's efficacy and sustainability by utilizing research and practical insights, such as field interviews and on-site workshops. The efficacy and sustainability of this initiative could be in danger if these assumptions are not fulfilled, as its development could be also hindered.

A fundamental assumption is that governments in the Global South are assumed to be committed to addressing systemic governance challenges, including corruption, inefficiencies, and institutional weaknesses. Public servants and leaders are expected

[70] Mural. n.d. "Round-Robin Brainstorming." Accessed April 24, 2025. https://www.mural.co/blog/round-robin
[71] MindTools. n.d. "Round Robin Brainstorming." Accessed April 24, 2025. https://www.mindtools.com/a81qk8y/round-robin-brainstorming
[72] Google Ventures. n.d. "The Design Sprint." Accessed April 24, 2025. https://www.gv.com/sprint/

to embrace innovative approaches, such as AI and digital tools, to enhance governance and service delivery. Without this commitment, the success of reforms and modernization efforts could be jeopardized. Even if governments in the Global South are committed to digital transformation, it is also assumed that sufficient funding, technical expertise, and infrastructure will be available to support public sector reforms and capacity-building initiatives.

Public servants' adoption and use of AI tools is also one of the assumptions. The successful integration of AI and digital tools into governance depends on public servants' willingness and ability to adopt and effectively use these technologies. A key assumption is that users will actively engage with AI-powered tools, and know how to interpret and act on the information provided. Without adequate training, motivation, and user-friendly design, digital transformation efforts could stall, fail to gain traction, or exacerbate existing governance issues, resulting in policy decisions that undermine policy effectiveness and disrupt equitable resource allocation, eventually harming citizens.

The successful implementation of the AI-Powered Knowledge Hub for the Government Empowerment Network (GEN) also relies on the availability of data. Sufficient, high-quality, and locally relevant digital content and training data exist for the AI-powered Knowledge Hub to ingest and analyze. This includes a digital content library of government good practices, available in local languages such as Spanish and Portuguese. Without this foundational data, the performance and applicability of the AI models could be severely limited, reducing the platform's effectiveness and relevance for users.[73]

In the case of the Uganda pilot, many of these enabling factors—such as political will, internal champions, and a clear institutional use case (RBF)—are already in motion. However, the team has emphasized limited digital capacity and is pursuing an iterative learning-by-doing approach to development. This underscores the importance of external implementation support, structured feedback loops, and modular technical recommendations that can evolve alongside in-country learning.

At the same time, there are a number of interconnected risks associated with the GEN Knowledge Hub's implementation which could jeopardize its success. First, governance risks continue to be an issue. Political volatility, low levels of citizen participation, and low levels of public trust can impede reform progress and lower the chances of long-term adoption of innovative technology in many Global South regions. The Knowledge Hub could have trouble gaining institutional support in the absence of strong leadership commitment and public sector accountability.

[73] Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). 2020. "Responsible Use of AI for Public Policy: Data Science Toolkit." Accessed December 17, 2024

Second, developing digital initiatives face challenges by substantial institutional and technical obstacles. With limited IT infrastructure and insufficient internal ability to handle new tools, many governments operate in technically limited situations. The larger objectives of governance evolution could be hindered by these structural problems in the absence of targeted expenditures and capacity-building. Finally, it is important to properly manage the risks associated with organizational change and user experience. Government officials could be hesitant to use a well-designed AI platform because they are unfamiliar with it, lack basic digital literacy, or fail to recognize its worth.

1. Acting by Design: Responding to the Risk of Inaction

To mitigate the risks of inaction and validate key implementation assumptions, we organized and led two in-person workshops during the March on-site trip. In order to improve and expand the policymaking journey map, the first workshop brought together governmental stakeholders and policymakers as active co-creators. We covered four major policy making phases during this session: Identifying Need / Responding to Need / Aligning Political Agenda, Evidence Gathering & Analysis, Drafting / Setting Objectives, and Stakeholder Engagement / Mapping / Coordinating Entities. We facilitated organized discussions about the four aspects of the user experience—seeing, doing, thinking, and feeling—for every section. Through the use of this framework, participants were able to disclose hidden information, identify bottlenecks, and raise issues that could otherwise be ignored during the policymaking process.

The second workshop involved Instiglio staff, who will be in charge of creating, implementing, and maintaining the GEN Knowledge Hub. The "How Might We" (HMW) approach was used at this workshop to produce solution-focused ideas based on the participants' real-world experiences. The team was inspired to reframe difficulties as design opportunities by these HMW questions. Following that, we used a Decision Matrix tool to prioritize ideas based on their feasibility and impact, allowing the team to find relevant directions while being mindful of operational constraints.

The two workshops together have created an effective use of the design sprint methodology. Through the participation of both practical and policy-level stakeholders, the workshops allowed participants to co-create, evaluate, and refine the GEN Knowledge Hub's developing construction. Furthermore, the workshops carried out three essential objectives: they defined and framed important implementation risks, like low user engagement and ambiguous governance methods. Both workshops also confirmed fundamental assumptions about stakeholder alignment, institutional capacity, and the viability of adopting digital tools. This methodology ensured that the

AI Knowledge Hub is not just technically but politically feasible and suited for institutional adoption in the future.

VII. Findings

1. Policymaking Journey Mapping

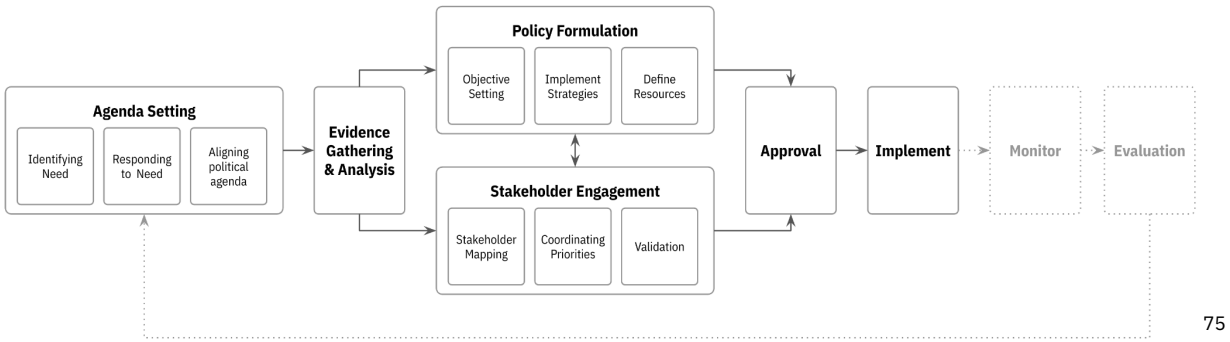
Based on our literature review, our team proposed a map focused on the linear progression through the classic policy cycle: agenda setting, evidence gathering and analysis, policy formulation, stakeholder engagement, approval, implementation, and evaluation.

Figure 7: Mapping the Public Policy Journey.

[74]

However, during the first participatory workshop, stakeholders challenged this framing. Policy actors, particularly from NGO backgrounds, argued that real-world decision-making rarely follows a tidy sequence. Instead, they proposed a more iterative and overlapping model that reflected the "messiness" of policy implementation — where decisions are frequently revisited and execution phases overlap with agenda-setting cycles. Ultimately, the map was co-developed with participants into a more dynamic, cyclical format that allowed for feedback loops and context-switching, better reflecting the lived experience of policy professionals.

Figure 8: An Iterative Approach to Policy Making: Co-Developed with Practitioners



[75]

[74] Figure 7: Mapping the Public Policy Journey. Source: Own elaboration
[75] Figure 8: An Iterative Approach to Policymaking: Co-Developed with Practitioners. Source: Own elaboration

2. Pain Points

When examining the specifics of each phase in the user journey, the team also uncovered pain points that the participants deemed particularly problematic:

Agenda Setting

Policymakers frequently encountered pain points related to uncertainty. They expressed difficulty in **identifying where to begin**, often asking questions like “Where should I start from?” and grappling with the scope of the challenge by wondering, “How big is it?”, “Who is being affected?”, and “Who needs to join the conversation?”. There was notable friction around validating connections between different components and effectively understanding the broader context. As one policymaker noted, *“an underlying feeling, throughout all, of pressure.”* Users emphasized the challenge of finding trustworthy sources and faced hurdles when trying to analyze contextual data thoroughly. Navigating and evaluating multiple alternative paths added complexity. Reiterating the struggles at this part in the journey, a policymaker from the first design sprint explained, *“from this stage... you're just already thinking what are alternative solutions to the problem, right? Like what other experiences there were [or] what [are] successful others pilots [or] experiments, countries have.”*

Evidence Gathering & Analysis

Pain points in this phase center on **information completeness and thoroughness**. Participants expressed a clear desire for having all relevant information centralized and easily accessible in one place, underscoring frustration with scattered or fragmented data sources. Additionally, users frequently questioned their own thoroughness, voicing concerns such as “Am I being exhaustive?”. Policymakers continuously worried whether their data collection and analysis processes were sufficiently comprehensive, reflecting an overarching struggle with uncertainty about missing critical insights.

Policy Formulation

In this phase, pain points highlighted were mainly around **information organization, time constraints, and thoroughness of analysis**. Participants struggled with locating and accessing necessary data, questioning, “Where is the data?” and expressing a strong preference for centralized and consolidated resources, stating, “It would be nice to have all this info in one place.” They also grappled with uncertainty regarding the comprehensiveness of their research. The pressure to quickly identify solutions, coupled with feelings of disorganization, intensified the perception that available time was insufficient. Despite relying on desk research and analyzing

previous successful programs, users faced consistent challenges in defining actionable steps needed to effectively address the identified problem.

Stakeholder Engagement

Pain points in this phase are primarily around **aligning diverse interests and ensuring effective coordination among multiple parties**. Participants encountered challenges in navigating interactions with different political actors and stakeholders, often grappling with conflicting incentives and priorities. As a policymaker pointed out, "*different interests and incentives discord amongst all of these entities. You just find different creative committees and commissions for specific topics that are very important, very multifaceted (...) You have your agenda, your priorities and it's hard by nature to coordinate, and my feeling sometimes when I work at the national planning department is that since independent entities people have loads of work, they are trying to do the least they can.*"

A significant friction point was the gap between mapping stakeholders and actively engaging them, emphasizing that "mapping and defining do not equal engaging strategies." Users also expressed difficulty in identifying and establishing common interests, particularly in developing solutions capable of addressing varied stakeholder needs simultaneously.

3. "How Might We" Questions and Emerging Trends

Over the two sessions, more than 30 HMWs were generated and clustered into thematic categories during the synthesis phase. Below are select examples and the key trends they reflect:

Trend 1: Trust and Reliability of AI (to solve for information thoroughness)

Policymakers consistently raised concerns about accuracy, bias, and interpretability of AI systems used in governance. Several HMWs focused on the need for trustworthy outputs and verifiable sources:

- HMW ensure you can trust AI response 100%?
- HMW test the veracity of information?
- HMW identify info available and correct relevant/high quality/reliable sources?
- HMW centralize relevant reliable information; easy to explore?

Trend 2: Contextual Intelligence and Adaptability (to solve for information completeness)

Participants emphasized the importance of local adaptation in AI-driven policy tools. Rather than relying on generic models, stakeholders wanted AI systems capable of operating with context-sensitive logic.

- HMW make sure public servants have access to context-specific information and make solutions adaptable?
- HMW ensure public servants have a view of how a solution would turn out in the specific context?
- HMW quickly map out the range of path projects/experiences?

Trend 3: Knowledge Capture and Synthesis (to solve for information thoroughness)

Another cluster of HMWs revolved around how to encode, summarize, and surface institutional knowledge. Stakeholders were concerned about knowledge gaps and fragmentation across agencies:

- HMW set all relevant knowledge into the AI?
- HMW develop user-friendly AI labor forces that are useful for policymakers to interact with data
- HMW train AI to curate and analyze all the info?
- How can we process the most relevant paper/policy notes into clear, concise insights?

Trend 4: Scenario Modeling (to solve for identifying where to begin)

Participants wanted tools that didn't just analyze past data, but supported imagination, forecasting, and long-range planning:

- HMW use AI to help imagine future possible paths to scale up policies
- HMW predict the impact of our interventions?
- HMW apply AI to monitor trends, evidence, and examples that can close many info gaps

Trend 5: Collaboration and Communication Tools (to solve for aligning diverse interests)

Finally, a set of HMWs focused on the mechanics of coordination across bureaucracies and with the public:

- HMW encourage and facilitate for teams to collaborate (translate, legal)?

- HMW guide stakeholders to ask the right questions?
- HMW leverage AI to run consultation processes to inform citizens!
- HMW enable voice-calls with the AI agents?

4. “Round-Robin” and Potential AI Solutions for GEN

During the final sprint sessions, the team developed five concrete AI-powered solution concepts through a structured round-robin brainstorming exercise. These represent actionable prototypes that Instiglio could explore further as part of the Knowledge Hub’s development roadmap.

- **Context-Aware Policy Cycle Guide**
  For the Policy Formulation phase
  An AI platform that transforms user-provided documents or data into step-by-step guidance through the policy cycle, enhanced with relevant real-world examples and sector-specific recommendations.

- **Framework Navigator with Expert Input**
  For the Policy Formulation phase
  A modular AI assistant that offers decision-making frameworks for policy design, implementation, and evaluation - supplemented by expert content (e.g., talks, case studies) and user feedback to refine relevance.

- **Intelligent Evidence Synthesizer**
  For the Evidence Gathering phase
  An AI system that curates and organizes global policy evidence and data trends into structured, context-relevant insights tailored to the user’s sector, geography, and policy stage.

- **Scenario-Based Policy Forecaster**
  For the Evidence Gathering phase
  A predictive modeling tool that helps public servants explore multiple outcome scenarios for proposed interventions, using historical data and contextual variables to inform decision-making.

- **Implementation Gap Analyzer**
  For the Evidence Gathering phase
  An AI tool that compares documented and undocumented projects to identify policy implementation gaps and suggest locally relevant recommendations — while flagging areas of missing or unreliable data.

Trend 1: Contextualization over Generalization

Across all five ideas, there's a shared concern: how to avoid generic, one-size-fits-all outputs. Each concept stresses the importance of tailoring information, recommendations, or predictions to the user's political, sectoral, and geographic context. Whether it's processing documents (Idea 1), filtering frameworks (Idea 2), or modeling policy scenarios (Idea 4), the AI must operate with deep contextual awareness — not just surface-level classification.

Trend 2: Modular, Policy-Cycle-Aligned Architecture

Multiple ideas explicitly mention the policy cycle or divide the tool into functional modules (e.g., design, implementation, evaluation). This suggests a common user need: navigation tools that reflect how policymakers already think and work. A linear or modular structure helps build user trust and cognitive alignment.

Trend 3: Expert-Guided and Collaborative Intelligence

There's a strong emphasis on making the AI complement—not replace—human expertise. Participants envision systems that include expert-generated content, "masterclasses," and user feedback mechanisms that correct or improve recommendations. This creates a hybrid model that blends institutional knowledge, AI processing, and crowd-sourced corrections.

Trend 4: Transparency and Source-Awareness

The tools must show their work. There's a repeated call for the AI to explain how it arrives at conclusions — especially if users are going to trust predictions or policy recommendations. The solution isn't full explainability, but traceability: showing evidence sources, assumptions, or examples used to generate outputs.

Trend 5: Scenario Simulation Over Deterministic Prediction

There's a shift away from deterministic forecasting toward scenario-based reasoning. Rather than trying to "predict" outcomes precisely, the AI should offer multiple plausible paths that a policy could take — letting users decide which fits best based on their situation.

5. Overall Design Principles for an AI Policy Tool

After analysing the trends from the HMW exercise and round robin sessions, the team identified four high-level design principles for an AI-supported policy design tool that should be considered for further development. These principles reflect a synthesis of participant priorities, sprint outputs, and broader challenges in applying AI within complex, context-driven policy environments.

- **Contextual Intelligence as a Baseline:** To be useful in real-world decision-making, the tool must move beyond static templates or universal "best practices." Instead, it should adapt its outputs to reflect the user's specific sector, geography, policy stage, and political context. Contextual adaptation was a recurring theme in both design sessions, reflecting deep user concern about the limitations of one-size-fits-all systems. This principle calls for an interface that allows users to fully specify their context through a series of short questions (e.g., goal, timeline, budget, location, desired outcome), and a backend that leverages this input to tailor case studies, evidence, and recommendations accordingly.

- **Modular Guidance Anchored to the Policy Cycle:** Participants across both workshops aligned around the need for the tool to follow a structure that mirrors the policy development lifecycle. A modular architecture—organized by stages such as problem definition, design, implementation, and evaluation—offers a familiar cognitive framework that aids user orientation. The tool should enable nonlinear navigation across modules, allowing users to revisit earlier stages or explore future phases, while surfacing targeted insights appropriate to each step.

- **Participatory Intelligence Through Expert and User Contributions:** Trust and usability are enhanced when the tool reflects a blend of expert insight and participatory feedback. Rather than relying solely on written sources or static datasets, the system should incorporate varied formats such as videos, classes, and case studies. It should also include two types of feedback mechanisms: one for commenting on and enriching AI-generated outputs, and another for peer-to-peer exchange, such as sharing drafts or receiving anonymous input from fellow public servants. This principle reinforces the tool's role as a collaborative knowledge platform and mitigates the risk of the tool being a black-box.

- **Transparency and Explorability Over Deterministic Output:** Users expressed a strong preference for tools that support exploration, rather than claiming to deliver "correct" answers. Recommendations must be traceable to their source data or assumptions, and the system should surface multiple solution paths or scenarios rather than a single prescriptive output. Additionally, the tool should warn users of blind spots, uncertainty, and evidence gaps, giving users the ability to assess risk and judgment calls based on their unique context.

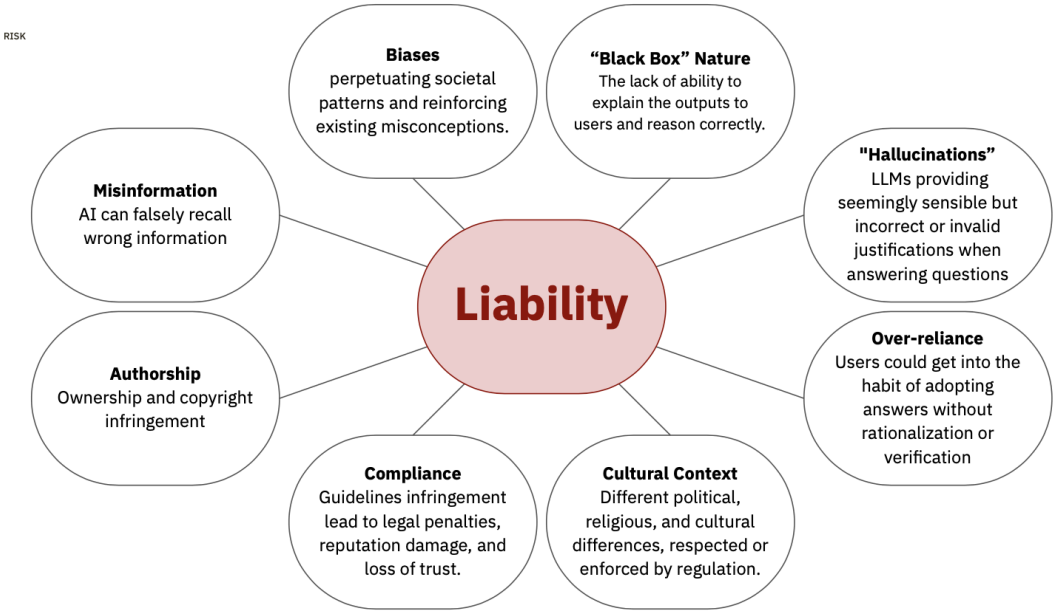
6. Designing with Eyes Open: Anticipating Risk in AI for the Public Good

Before exploring design solutions for the GEN Knowledge Hub, it was critical to foreground the discussion with a structured examination of the risks associated with AI adoption in public sector contexts. Recognizing the dual nature of artificial intelligence, as both an enabler of governance innovation and a source of novel vulnerabilities, we began by introducing the Instiglio team to a curated set of high-priority AI risks, drawing on global research, including the AI Risk Repository developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). These categories were selected to reflect the most salient ethical, legal, epistemic, and operational concerns likely to emerge from the integration of large language models and other AI tools into the knowledge infrastructure of public servants. This risk framing was intended not to deter innovation, but to serve as a scaffold for responsible design, helping to ensure that proposed solutions would be context-sensitive, resilient, and aligned with the mission of advancing government effectiveness in the Global South.

As the GEN Knowledge Hub integrates artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities to provide curated, context-aware, and personalized knowledge to public servants across the Global South, it was essential to address and anticipate key risks associated with the use of AI in governance settings. Drawing from global research, including insights from the AI Risk Repository developed at MIT, we identified and presented the Instiglio team with the most critical AI risks relevant to the GEN platform and outlined mitigation strategies to ensure ethical, effective, and responsible deployment.

The integration of artificial intelligence into governance support tools such as the GEN Knowledge Hub presents a transformative opportunity for enhancing public sector effectiveness across the Global South. Yet, alongside its promise, the deployment of AI, particularly large language models (LLMs), raises a constellation of ethical, legal, and epistemic risks that merit serious attention. These risks are not theoretical; they are emergent properties of the current technological landscape and demand a proactive governance framework.

Figure 9: Ethical and Governance Considerations for AI-Driven Public Tools



[76]

One of the most pressing concerns is the propagation of misinformation and what are commonly referred to in technical literature as "hallucinations"[77]: instances in which AI systems produce outputs that are syntactically coherent yet substantively incorrect or unfounded. In a policymaking environment, where decisions often rest on nuanced legal, social, and economic realities, such errors can undermine trust, misguide reform efforts, and, in some cases, cause tangible harm.[78] The risk is compounded by the "black box" nature of many contemporary models, which lack the ability to explain their reasoning in terms intelligible to end-users.[79] When users are unable to interrogate or trace the origins of an AI recommendation, the epistemic integrity of public decision-making is jeopardized.

Equally important is the issue of bias, an often underestimated but deeply structural risk.[80] AI systems, particularly those trained on globally aggregated data, are susceptible to encoding and perpetuating the dominant perspectives embedded in their training data.[81] This not only risks marginalizing the local knowledge systems and contextual realities of Global South[82] governments but may also inadvertently

[76] Figure 9: Ethical and Governance Considerations for AI-Driven Public Tools. Source: Own Elaboration
[77] Cui, Tianyu, et al. "Risk taxonomy, mitigation, and assessment benchmarks of large language model systems." *arXiv preprint arXiv:2401.05778* (2024).
[78] Deng, Jiawen, et al. "Towards safer generative language models: A survey on safety risks, evaluations, and improvements." *arXiv preprint arXiv:2302.09270* (2023).
[79] Liu, Yang, et al. "Trustworthy LLMs: a survey and guideline for evaluating large language models' alignment." *arXiv preprint arXiv:2308.05374* (2023).
[80] Ibid.
[81] Hagendorff, Thilo. "Mapping the ethics of generative ai: A comprehensive scoping review." *Minds and Machines* 34.4 (2024): 39.
[82] Solaiman, Irene, et al. "Evaluating the social impact of generative ai systems in systems and society." *arXiv preprint arXiv:2306.05949* (2023).

reproduce the very inequities that governance reforms seek to reduce. In the context of the GEN Knowledge Hub, where the ambition is to democratize access to actionable knowledge for public servants, such distortions could severely compromise the platform's legitimacy and utility.

Moreover, as the interface between AI and public servants deepens, there is a nontrivial danger of cognitive dependency.[83] When AI-generated insights are presented with confidence and fluency, users may be inclined to accept them uncritically, especially in low-capacity settings where resources for independent verification are limited. Without proper guidance and training, this over-reliance[84] threatens to erode professional judgment, a cornerstone of bureaucratic accountability and institutional resilience.

In parallel, legal and regulatory risks, ranging from copyright infringement in training data to violations of national data sovereignty, laws, and compliance procedures,[85] demand meticulous navigation. The global governance of AI remains in flux, and the cross-jurisdictional nature of the GEN platform introduces additional layers of complexity. Without clear authorship norms, robust compliance mechanisms, and context-aware data governance protocols, the project could be exposed to reputational and legal vulnerabilities.

7. The Risk of Doing Nothing

While the adoption of AI systems such as large language models introduces a range of operational, ethical, and legal risks, the risk of inaction is equally significant. Choosing not to engage with these technologies does not preserve equilibrium; rather, it allows for technological, institutional, and geopolitical drift.

In the context of accelerating AI integration into public sector functions, inaction presents a distinct category of risk for organizations positioned at the intersection of governance and innovation. For Instiglio, whose mission is rooted in supporting government effectiveness and reform in the Global South, a passive stance on AI governance may carry long-term implications for relevance, influence, and impact.

As AI systems become increasingly embedded in decision-making processes, shaping everything from policy diagnostics to stakeholder engagement, the space in which public policy is designed and delivered is being reconfigured. Within this shifting landscape, organizations that have traditionally supported public sector innovation may find their roles evolving. Not participating in the discourse on responsible AI use, particularly in contexts where institutional capacities are still developing, may be

[83] Weidinger, Laura, et al. "Ethical and social risks of harm from language models." *arXiv preprint arXiv:2112.04359* (2021).
[84] Hogenhout, Lambert. "A framework for ethical AI at the United Nations." *arXiv preprint arXiv:2104.12547* (2021).
[85] Sherman, E., and I. Eisenberg. "AI Risk Profiles: A Standards Proposal for Pre-Deployment AI Risk Disclosures". *Proceedings of the AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence*, vol. 38, no. 21, Mar. 2024, pp. 23047-52, doi:10.1609/aaai.v38i21.30348.

interpreted not simply as neutrality, but as disengagement from a critical frontier of governance.

The potential consequences are twofold. First, there is a risk that policy actors in the Global South will turn to other partners, often private sector actors or multilateral institutions, for guidance, tools, or frameworks that may not align with the values of adaptability, contextual sensitivity, or accountability that Instiglio promotes. Second, by not contributing to the early-stage shaping of AI-enabled governance tools, Instiglio may inadvertently cede ground to logics of scale and efficiency that lack attention to equity or long-term systems change.

Taken together, these risks do not argue against the use of AI in public administration. Rather, they underscore the imperative for a design philosophy grounded in epistemic humility, participatory governance, and algorithmic accountability. The GEN Knowledge Hub must be more than a technical artifact; it must be part of a socio-technical system designed with an awareness of its own limitations, continuously refined through feedback from the very public servants it seeks to empower. In doing so, it can strengthen AI-enabled governance in the Global South; one that is not only intelligent, but also just, transparent, and responsible.

8. Contextualizing the Uganda MVP and Onyx.app

Following the completion of our fieldwork and analysis, we learned that the Instiglio team in Uganda had begun developing a minimum viable product (MVP) of the GEN Knowledge Hub using Onyx.app. The pilot focuses initially on the Results-Based Financing (RBF) space—an area well-aligned with Instiglio's expertise and ongoing work. Onyx was selected as a user-friendly tool with a track record in similar use cases, such as the ElectionGPT platform developed by IDinsight.[86]

This pilot represents a promising first step toward testing AI-assisted knowledge discovery within the GEN framework. While the MVP is still in early stages, with its structure and use cases evolving over time, it presents an exciting opportunity to apply many of the insights and design considerations surfaced through our user research and comparative analysis.

The priorities outlined in the following section are intended to support this ongoing work—offering a research-backed framework that can help refine the current MVP and inform its future iterations. In particular, they provide practical guidance on structuring content and metadata, aligning tool features with user needs, and laying the groundwork for long-term scalability. We hope this contribution can help the MVP evolve in ways that remain user-centered, contextually grounded, and aligned with

[86] IDinsight. 2024. *ElectionGPT: Helping Citizens Make Informed Electoral Choices*. Accessed April 29, 2025. https://www.idinsight.org/electiongpt/

GEN's broader vision.

VIII. Recommendations and Roadmap for Implementation

Our fieldwork in Bogotá, coupled with extensive desk research and iterative co-design sessions, helped us move beyond a general exploration of AI's potential in governance. Instead, we honed in on a more targeted and grounded proposition: an AI-powered Knowledge Hub designed to enhance the capacity of public servants to make informed, contextually relevant policy decisions. While initial interviews revealed skepticism about digital tools, particularly in terms of trust, usability, and sustainability, they also provided the conditions for productive refocusing. What emerged was a clear set of recommendations for Instiglio to anchor development in the realities of public service delivery while maintaining ambition for transformative innovation. Each recommendation is rooted in field data and workshop outcomes, structured around core strategic questions that emerged during the project.

1. What Gaps Look Most Promising for the Tool to Fill?

Punchline: The findings point to a specific opportunity: to develop a tool that curates, contextualizes, and explains policy guidance based on sector, geography, and stage in the policy cycle.

Rationale: During our Bogotá workshop, participants repeatedly emphasized the limitations of generic tools and the need for localized, relevant support. A main concern within policymakers, as noted in our initial design sprint is the ability to be exhaustive*: "Sometimes you're not sure if you're having all the information. You're not sure if you've seen everything because information is so disorganized in the entities. So, what are the places you go to for these things?"*

During design sprint activities, Agenda Setting, Evidence Gathering & Analysis, and Policy Formulation were the most frequently marked stages across both public sector champions and Instiglio staff. Within these, sub-stages like identifying need, responding to need, validating context, and synthesizing fragmented information were consistently selected as high-friction points, echoing one policymaker's reflection that "*sometimes we have to reconstruct the information... the data is very disorganized or it's just not there.*" In particular, participants highlighted the importance of helping policymakers identify what has worked in similar contexts, generate options, and vet sources at the evidence gathering stage, where *"you are already thinking 'what are alternative solutions to the problem, what other experiences there were, what successful other pilots, experiments, and countries have solved this.' So, in your research, you have to incorporate that question - what could solve this problem."*

However, one of the most consistent themes in both our interviews and workshops was the centrality of human judgment in policymaking. Participants were less interested in an AI tool that could deliver "answers" than in one that could support collective sensemaking and augment their own judgment. According to one policymaker, "*The people signing contracts don't understand that people in the field may not even have well-functioning machines at certain times. So I think there needs to be a way of humanizing all the policies.*" This refers to a larger concern that policy tools should not be based on assumptions but rather on actual circumstances on the ground. As such, we recommend designing the AI Knowledge Hub not as a deterministic solution engine, but as a facilitator of participatory intelligence, enabling users to explore, debate, and contextualize evidence in ways that reflect their lived constraints and institutional realities. In doing so, the Hub could also serve as a platform for South-South collaboration, allowing GEN members to share draft policies, exchange feedback, and surface solutions relevant across regions.

This means that Instiglio has a very ambitious goal: embedding explainability, transparency, and user control into the tool's core design. Rather than hiding decision logic, the tool should invite users to interrogate recommendations, trace sources, and contribute new insights. Features like collaborative annotation, guided comparisons of international case studies, and modular decision trees could all help surface this participatory functionality.

The synthesis of round-robin prototypes (especially the Context-Aware Policy Cycle Guide and the Intelligent Evidence Synthesizer) reinforce this direction. These tools aim to address the "last-mile" problem in governance data: converting information into insight. An early version of such a system could reduce friction in the policy design process and build trust among civil servants navigating complex implementation environments.

For this purpose, Instiglio should require that the Knowledge Hub prototype explicitly request and integrate contextual metadata (e.g., policy area, country, administrative level) as a first step in every interaction. This information should tailor case examples, policy templates, and evidence recommendations.

Quick Win: Compile and organize a library of reform case studies and policy tools across GEN countries. This preparatory work can surface context-specific examples, build early content for the Hub, and inform future metadata schema design, without requiring heavy technical development.

Mid-Term: Integrate prototype features like the Context-Aware Policy Cycle Guide and Intelligent Evidence Synthesizer into the MVP and test functionality within 1–2 policy domains. Include basic metadata tagging at the start of each interaction (e.g., sector, country, admin level) to tailor content recommendations.

Long-Term: Expand tool capabilities to support interactive, side-by-side comparisons of similar reform efforts across countries or levels of government, enabling deep contextual adaptation and fostering South-South learning and collaboration among GEN members.

2. What Is Instiglio's Unique Value Proposition in Offering Such a Tool?

Punchline: Instiglio's distinct comparative advantage lies not in its AI capabilities per se, but in its legitimacy and embeddedness across government reform contexts in the Global South. The organization's relationships with public institutions in countries like Colombia, Uganda, and Peru uniquely position it to co-create tools that are both adopted and iterated upon by local actors.

Rationale: As stated, Instiglio's long standing, embedded partnerships with governments in countries like Colombia, Uganda, and Peru position the organization to create usable tools in collaboration with public servants that are tailored to local policymaking needs. The GEN program itself emerged from co-design processes and stakeholder mapping exercises in these regions, reinforcing Instiglio's credibility as a convener and implementer of governance solutions within the Global South.

This relational infrastructure, validated in our January field visit, creates a powerful value loop. Because civil servants trust Instiglio, they are more likely to test and adopt the GEN Hub. Because Instiglio understands the needs of these users, it can translate them into usable features. This collaboration was emphasised by one policymaker, where she claimed that in her process, "*usually you have to go to many places and you have to talk to many people and sometimes things are not exactly aligned and then you do not have the latest version.*" This feedback cycle where Instiglio is currently strongly positioned is difficult for external vendors or generalized platforms to replicate. It suggests that the GEN Hub should not be positioned as a standalone product but rather as a core pillar within Instiglio's broader technical assistance model.

Trust and usability are earned through engagement, not assumption. That's why we recommend embedding continuous co-design with end users, not just during ideation, but throughout rollout and refinement. This includes structured pilot programs in selected countries, starting with those where political will, internal champions, and a concrete use case already exist, such as the Uganda RBF case.

This aligns with efforts in Uganda and presents a great opportunity to pilot and design with a "real-world test lab", collecting structured user feedback and refine product direction in cycles. However, as Instiglio reaffirms its role as a bridge between innovation and reform, our research suggests the GEN Hub should be integrated into technical assistance engagements, not positioned as a standalone tool, but aligning

directly with participatory intelligence and modular guidance principles, offering knowledge in return to the champions that choose to participate in this project. Policymakers also emphasized that "the tool should evolve alongside the technical help, rather than on its own."

These pilots should follow a "learning by doing" approach, where each iteration of the tool feeds into future improvements. User feedback should be actively solicited and made visible in the platform's evolution. Where possible, feedback sessions should remain part of the governance model for the Hub's development, ensuring that future changes remain grounded in lived realities rather than abstract technical priorities.

Quick Win: Position the GEN Knowledge Hub from Day 1 as a capacity-building platform rather than a standalone tech product. This framing will help guide early stakeholder expectations and align pilot efforts with GEN's broader institutional learning goals.

Mid-Term: Operationalize the Hub's role as a capacity-building tool by embedding it within GEN's Incubator or Capacity Builder structures. This ensures that MVP testing is not isolated from broader support and training ecosystems.

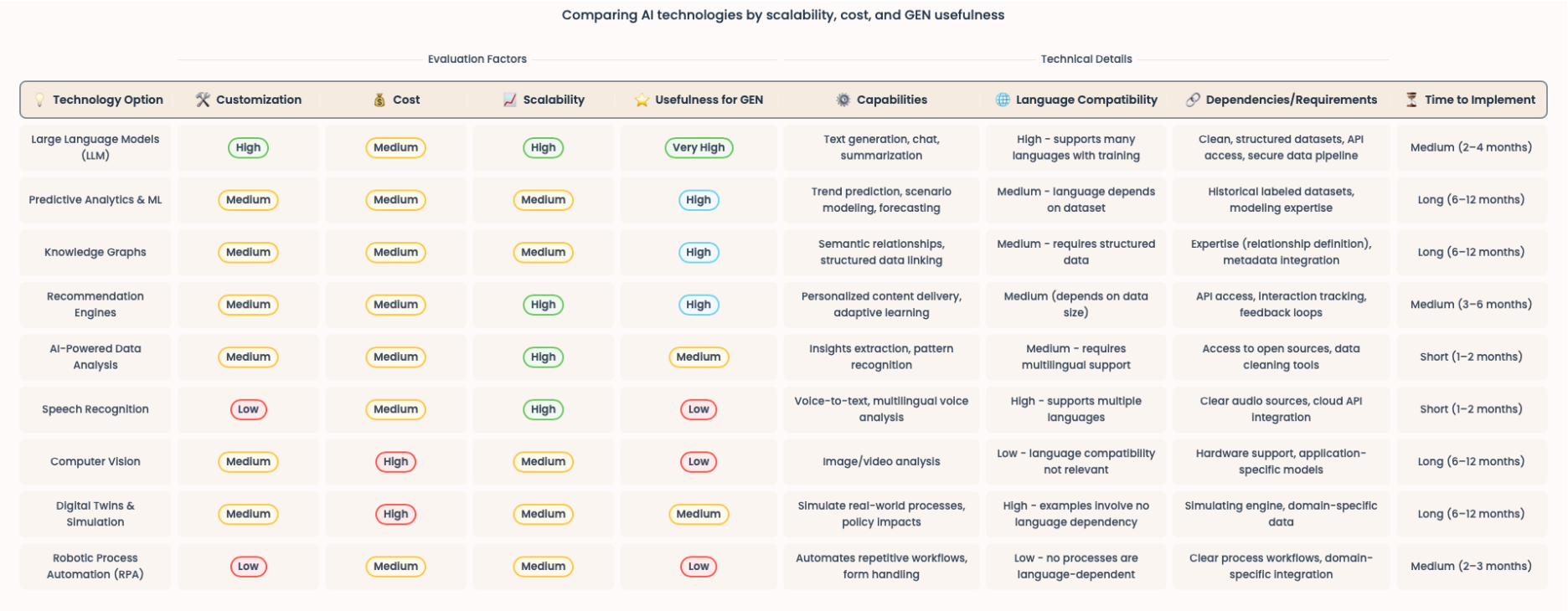
Long-Term: Expand the Hub's capacity-building functions into new domains and geographies beyond the initial RBF pilot, while codifying a permanent co-design structure (e.g., a user governance board or rotating champion feedback panels) within GEN's institutional model.

3. What Are the Technology Options Available to Do This?

Punchline: Instiglio has two viable technology pathways to build the GEN Knowledge Hub: a modular platform anchored by a low-code/no-code backend, or a fully integrated AI-enhanced portal built using third-party APIs. Both options require combining a robust knowledge repository with natural language search and basic user interaction tools.

Onyx.app, currently used in the Uganda MVP, offers a low-code solution well suited for early prototyping and multilingual Q&A. However, Instiglio should also plan from the outset for a potential transition to more customizable backend frameworks as feature demands grow, particularly if future capabilities require advanced AI orchestration, custom training, or deeper integration with internal systems.

Figure 10: Comparing AI Technologies by scalability, cost and GEN usefulness



Comparing AI technologies by scalability, cost, and GEN usefulness

	Evaluation Factors				Technical Details			
Technology Option	Customization	Cost	Scalability	Usefulness for GEN	Capabilities	Language Compatibility	Dependencies/Requirements	Time to Implement
Large Language Models (LLM)	High	Medium	High	Very High	Text generation, chat, summarization	High - supports many languages with training	Clean, structured datasets, API access, secure data pipeline	Medium (2–4 months)
Predictive Analytics & ML	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Trend prediction, scenario modeling, forecasting	Medium - language depends on dataset	Historical labeled datasets, modeling expertise	Long (6–12 months)
Knowledge Graphs	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Semantic relationships, structured data linking	Medium - requires structured data	Expertise (relationship definition), metadata integration	Long (6–12 months)
Recommendation Engines	Medium	Medium	High	High	Personalized content delivery, adaptive learning	Medium (depends on data size)	API access, interaction tracking, feedback loops	Medium (3–6 months)
AI-Powered Data Analysis	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Insights extraction, pattern recognition	Medium - requires multilingual support	Access to open sources, data cleaning tools	Short (1–2 months)
Speech Recognition	Low	Medium	High	Low	Voice-to-text, multilingual voice analysis	High - supports multiple languages	Clear audio sources, cloud API integration	Short (1–2 months)
Computer Vision	Medium	High	Medium	Low	Image/video analysis	Low - language compatibility not relevant	Hardware support, application-specific models	Long (6–12 months)
Digital Twins & Simulation	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Simulate real-world processes, policy impacts	High - examples involve no language dependency	Simulating engine, domain-specific data	Long (6–12 months)
Robotic Process Automation (RPA)	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Automates repetitive workflows, form handling	Low - no processes are language-dependent	Clear process workflows, domain-specific integration	Medium (2–3 months)

[87]

[87] Figure 10: Comparing AI Technologies by scalability, cost and GEN usefulness. Source: Own elaboration according to OECD (2024), McKinsey (2023), IDB (2020), and Data to Policy Network (2024), taking into account Instiglio's needs.

Rationale: Our comparative assessment of nine AI technologies (see figure 10) examined scalability, customization, cost, and implementation complexity. Large Language Models (LLMs) stood out for their high scalability and ease of deployment, requiring relatively lightweight infrastructure and offering strong multilingual support. By contrast, technologies like simulations and knowledge graphs scored lower due to their heavy data needs and integration demands, making them better suited for later-stage development. These findings informed our recommendation to prioritize MVP features that are technically feasible and directly relevant to the needs of public servants in resource-constrained settings.

Participants in the Bogota workshops flagged early-stage tasks, such as "defining policy objectives" and "comparing implementation options" as key points where lightweight AI support would be most helpful. Specifically they highlighted the steps where, as one policymaker described, *"you are trying to see what the problem is. So you're gathering a broad amount of data, like press releases, everything that's going on, to understand what the problem is. And once you know the problem in a specific community (e.g, sanitation) then you do research just on that issue."*

Simultaneously, the Uganda MVP used the Onyx.app to validate the use of LLMs for public policy Q&A, summarization, and multilingual prompts. Several champions and staff also flagged that more advanced tools, such as simulations and knowledge graphs, would require additional training, clearer interfaces, and stronger data pipelines to be useful. As a result of both Instiglio's capacity and participant needs, low-code/no-code ready-for-use LLMs supporting early-stage tasks were prioritized, and the aforementioned advanced tools were deprioritized.

Technology choices must reflect both immediate feasibility and long-term scalability. As referenced above, the use of large language models (LLMs), as explored in the Uganda pilot using Onyx.app, emerge as the most promising baseline. Our review of available tools and implementation timelines shows that LLMs, when fine-tuned with sectoral and regional data, can provide personalized Q&A, summarization, and multilingual support within 2-4 months. The difficulty of integrating new technologies into fragmented systems was considered by one participant: "*We had 12 information systems, and it was already very difficult to access information—processes took too long. We had to figure out a means to connect the current systems because we could not just throw them away.*" Such statements reiterate the significant value of LLMs that can operate across disorganized, unstructured inputs without demanding a system overhaul.

Recommendation engines and structured data pipelines also emerged from our comparative analysis as valuable complements. These technologies enable tailored content delivery and ensure consistent input quality, both critical for high-trust

decision support. Tools such as knowledge graphs or scenario-based simulations remain longer-term "optional" priorities. While compelling in theory (and requested in the design sprint), they demand structured data and modeling capacity that are not currently in place (for an extensive analysis please see annexes).

Quick Win: Finalize the Onyx app pilot with structured feedback from users on usefulness and friction points.

Mid-Term: Develop custom fine-tuning datasets for at least two sectors (e.g., education and fiscal governance).

Long-Term: Potentially transition from MVP tools like Onyx to more customizable AI frameworks, and layer on advanced features such as recommendation engines or simulations, pending capacity growth and data availability.

4. Should Instiglio Build It In-House or Outsource?

Punchline: From our sprint sessions and early technical exploration, two needs became clear: First, Instiglio must own the ethical and governance layer of the tool. Second, it must remain flexible enough to adopt new tools as the tech landscape evolves.

In terms of AI partners, and to ensure sustainability, we recommend that Instiglio adopt a hybrid approach: retain strategic oversight internally while partnering with external developers for technical builds. This approach allows for capacity building while minimizing the time to deployment. Since Onyx is a SaaS platform, this decision is less about "building" versus "outsourcing" and more about adapting and governing a pre-configured solution to meet GEN's unique requirements. As noted in Section 3, Onyx offers an accessible MVP launchpad, but may require future replacement or augmentation as Instiglio's feature needs and user contexts evolve.

Rationale: Feedback from the Uganda team emphasized limited internal technical capacity and a desire for clear implementation guidance, including whether to build the AI tool in-house or through partners. Simultaneously, both staff and champions flagged trust, explainability, and alignment with ethical governance norms as non-negotiable features of the tool. This suggests that Instiglio should retain oversight of the ethical and governance layers while engaging technical partners for build execution.

Therefore, based on the feasibility and funding of this project, a hybrid model, where Instiglio owns the direction and ensures alignment with user realities, mitigates risk while leveraging expert execution. This also responds directly to the governance risks and ethical gaps identified in the risk matrix.

To that end, we recommend recruiting a small internal team, including an AI Strategy Lead, Policy & Ethics Advisor, and Technical Product Owner, supported by trusted partners like Hugging Face or Cohere—open-source and commercial platforms that offer customizable large language models—for model development. Early experimentation with Onyx has validated the viability of this model, but risks surfaced in the research, particularly around techno-solutionism and capability overreach, highlighting the danger of outsourcing both delivery and governance.

Quick Win: Identify and recruit key internal roles (AI Strategy Lead, Ethics Advisor, Technical Product Owner).

Mid-Term: Issue a terms of reference document defining Instiglio's internal governance responsibilities versus vendor obligations.

Long-Term: Create internal protocols to ensure future vendor handoffs or tool expansions remain grounded in user-informed governance principles.

5. What Are the Most Feasible and Impactful First Steps to Implement?

Punchline: The most immediate and impactful step is to consolidate and expand the Uganda MVP — not as a one-off pilot, but as the foundation for an iterative, scalable rollout. We also recommend narrowing the focus to a few high-need policy domains, such as Results-Based Financing (RBF), and layering in the most requested features: metadata tagging, source traceability, and user feedback channels.

Rationale: Our findings and consideration of the Onyx.app pilot, show a strong appetite for sector-specific, AI-enhanced guidance. Additionally, the Uganda pilot is already underway as a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) focused on Results-Based Financing (RBF). Instiglio staff marked this use case as a practical and promising entry point during sprint activities, and champions showed interest in refining policy implementation using real-time feedback and modular support. The Uganda team also explicitly asked for a strategy to scale and expand the MVP, reinforcing the value of building on current momentum rather than starting from scratch.

This MVP should serve as a sandbox for iterating on the AI interface, refining the document ingestion pipeline, and testing early content governance protocols. Building on the work done in Uganda allows Instiglio to test assumptions in a real-world context, while gradually scaling features based on user input. The MVP also provides a tangible anchor for engagement with funders and institutional partners.

For this purpose, the MVP should be a country-specific, domain-anchored AI tool that supports transparent policy guidance in one or two key sectors. This recommendation also responds directly to field concerns about "tool fatigue" and skepticism toward top-down digital reforms. As one participant put it, "*people don't*

trust tools that look too general... they think it's just for show." Therefore, a narrowly scoped MVP anchored in a compelling use case will allow Instiglio to build early wins, establish user trust, and gather critical feedback before scaling further.

In co-design sessions, civil servants noted a preference for context aware resources over a generalized solution. This emerged most clearly in the HMW synthesis, where users imagined prototypes focused on education reform, fiscal management, or monitoring frameworks, with features like tagging, draft generation, and peer contributions. These findings validate a deep not wide MVP strategy: fewer sectors, more contextualization, and early participation features (e.g., feedback loops, content uploads) to foster ownership and iteration.

Quick Win: Conduct targeted user research and co-design activities in Uganda to validate whether MVP use cases (e.g., Q&A, summarization, tagging) align with local needs. This step addresses the lack of prior deep research in Uganda and helps tailor features before rollout.

Co-locate MVP testing with ongoing technical assistance in Uganda or Peru. This allows the team to gather real-time feedback from familiar environments while aligning early use with on-the-ground support.

Update the Uganda MVP with tagging, source traceability, and structured user feedback features in one domain (RBF).

Mid-Term: Expand MVP to one additional domain, leveraging early feedback to enhance usability, onboarding, and relevance.

Long-Term: Formalize a cross-country MVP deployment playbook based on Uganda's pilot, including feedback loops, trust-building mechanisms, and policy domain selection criteria.

6. What Criteria Should Instiglio Use to Select Content and Training Data?

Punchline: The quality of outputs will only be as strong as the quality of inputs. Drawing on the synthesis of workshop feedback and the risks analysis introduced to the Instiglio team, we propose a content governance framework rooted in five pillars: relevance, recency, credibility, linguistic diversity, and ethical compliance.

Rationale: Participants repeatedly emphasized the importance of being able to trust the AI-generated outputs, especially in the context of sensitive or high-stakes decision-making. During the sprint, Instiglio staff frequently marked source credibility, traceability, and alignment with local needs as critical attributes for training data. Several HMW prompts and participant quotes also highlighted the risks of

misinformation, ethical misalignment, and lack of contextual nuance, directly reinforcing the need for a content governance framework based on relevance, recency, credibility, linguistic diversity, and ethical compliance.

Creating a content governance framework is more than a technical task, it is a strategic investment in the tool's long-term credibility and adoption. Where possible, Instiglio should collaborate with knowledge partners, academic institutions, and governments to build this library collaboratively and ensure it reflects local languages, formats, and cultural references. During our sprints, one policymaker highlighted, *"We are looking for trusted resources and then validating parts (...) there's a little bit of working on it by yourself doing the problem trees, and there's also a lot of interacting with other people trying to understand context."*

Documents should prioritize local government and think tank publications within the last five years. In Latin America, for example, inclusion of Portuguese, Spanish, and indigenous language materials is critical, especially given the multilingual needs articulated in our fieldwork. Content should also undergo an ethical review to ensure alignment with data privacy norms and knowledge equity. These standards can serve as the foundation for a future content policy or review board. The push for participatory editorial processes and transparency also aligns with the participatory intelligence and content legitimacy design principles identified in the design synthesis.

Quick Win: Finalize and circulate an internal version of the content governance framework for feedback across Instiglio and Uganda pilot stakeholders.

Mid-Term: Partner with regional knowledge providers to begin sourcing and tagging training data in Spanish, Portuguese, and Swahili, using the five-pillar criteria.

Long-Term: Institutionalize a rotating content and ethics board, composed of GEN champions and external partners, to review and approve future additions to the Hub's core knowledge base.

7. What Other Questions Haven't We Answered, And How Should Instiglio Go About Getting Answers?

Despite strong early findings, several open questions remain: How will the Hub align with existing government information systems? What mechanisms will drive sustained user adoption? How can the Hub remain compliant with evolving AI regulation in partner countries?

Punchline: To address these questions, we recommend further exploration by continuing the practice of targeted design workshops focused on three themes: interoperability, adoption incentives, and regulatory foresight. These workshops should be co-led with in-country partners and build on the momentum of the Uganda MVP.

We also recommend commissioning a follow-on project to prototype metadata protocols and test backend alternatives (e.g., LangChain, a customizable orchestration framework, versus Onyx, a low-code SaaS platform used in the Uganda MVP).

In parallel, Instiglio should establish a lightweight but continuous monitoring process to track evolving AI safety frameworks and standards globally.

Rationale: Champions and staff frequently raised questions about sustainability, integration with ministry workflows, and legal compliance. In our initial sprint with policymakers, one participant highlighted that *"you have to do so much coordination between eventually responsible entities before you actually formulate the policy; you have to understand what everybody does, what they could do to solve the problem, whether so - I don't know if it's all stakeholder engagement between beneficiaries and responsible entities, but there's a lot of things going on before everyone's having a policy."*

The Uganda team also specifically asked for clarity on long-term ownership and how future MVP iterations would align with changing data and governance systems. Additionally, participants in the sprint recommended a 'follow-on' design cycle focused on backend interoperability, AI regulation, and onboarding incentives.

The activities recommended above will not only surface technical solutions but ensure that the Hub grows as a co-owned, continually validated tool within a broader reform ecosystem. Ultimately, GEN's long-term value lies not only in deploying AI, but in helping public servants shape what responsible, context-aware AI should look like.

The continuous monitoring process will ensure the Hub stays ahead of regulatory shifts—particularly important as public sector actors will be among the first to scrutinize AI governance. Regular scans of AI safety trends will also help anticipate compliance risks and future-proof the tool's development.

This recommendation recognizes that the project's strength lies in its collaborative model. Instiglio has demonstrated success through co-creation with champions, and that success should extend into governance strategy, infrastructure design, and sustainability planning — not just interface development. These questions require real-world testing, especially with regard to integrating the Hub with non-AI knowledge repositories or LMS systems, legal frameworks for AI use across GEN countries (e.g., Uganda, Colombia, Peru), and sustaining engagement after the novelty of the tool wears off.

Quick Win: Conduct foundational user research and co-design in Uganda to determine whether the priorities and tool features identified in Colombia align with Uganda's policymaking context. This will establish a baseline before launching deeper governance or metadata prototyping sprints.

Mid-Term: Commission a short comparative review of AI regulatory frameworks (e.g., Colombia, Peru, Uganda, Kenya) and embed results into GEN's internal AI guardrails.

Launch a time-bound design sprint on AI governance and metadata interoperability, building on user research findings from Uganda's MVP phase.

Prototype metadata protocols and test backend alternatives (e.g., LangChain vs. Onyx) to assess future scalability and customization options.

Long-Term: Prototype adoption incentive strategies (e.g., certificate systems, social recognition, integrated coaching models) and evaluate uptake via GEN cohort cycles.

8. What Are the Major Risks of AI Use With This Tool and How Should Instiglio Mitigate Them? (Risks and Mitigation Strategy)

Punchline: The GEN AI Knowledge Hub's risks are not only technical; instead, they are also related to trust, transparency, and context appropriateness. These risks could vary from bias and misinformation to over-reliance. We believe that these risks have the potential to undermine user adoption and legitimacy if they are not effectively addressed.

One critical risk is poor-quality training data or a lack of content in the right languages or contexts, which could erode trust in the tool and limit adoption, especially if users feel it performs like a generic search engine rather than a localized decision-support platform.

Rationale: In the limited resource governmental settings, public servants require a reliable and effective tool. However, AI indeed has particular issues that could undermine user confidence and decrease their use, like the previously mentioned "Hallucinations" and "Black Box" nature. Actively mitigating these risks is essential to the tool's value proposition in addition to being required for safety. Therefore, the design of the Knowledge Hub must adhere to the values of openness qand risk mitigation if it is to develop into a trustworthy decision-support tool in the Global South.

Therefore, in order to assist Instiglio in avoiding unnecessary risks and negative user feedback, we will suggest effective mitigation strategies for the relative risks respectively. As Professor Gil Eyal, a sociologist at Columbia University and an expert on the role of expertise and trust in public institutions, noted in a consultation on AI and legitimacy in the public sector, that Instiglio should "*teach people how to use the tool and be clear about the expectations and communicate it beforehand so the company will not have a lot of liability,*" taking an approach of proactive risk

management through communication, education, and transparent design choices. Below, we outline the core risks associated with AI deployment in the Knowledge Hub and the corresponding mitigation strategies Instiglio should adopt:

1) **Risks**: Poor Adoption Due to Weak Inputs

   Mitigation Strategy: Foster Inclusive Policy Development

Engaging end users, particularly government servants in the Global South, during the design and deployment phase of the AI tool will help Instiglio foster inclusive policy making and reduce the risk of poor adoption due to weak inputs. Through the integration of various viewpoints and institutional settings, the GEN Knowledge Hub could ensure better adherence to user demands and operations, thus enhancing users' assessments of the tool's importance and confidence.

2) **Risks**: Misinformation and “Hallucinations”

   Mitigation Strategy: Establish Ethical Auditing Protocols

AI poses a serious risk to policymakers since it occasionally produces properly formed but actually incorrect findings and recommendations. To mitigate this, Instiglio should put forward a systematic auditing procedure to measure the bias levels and actual accuracy of AI outputs on a regular basis. To guarantee neutrality and reliability, these audits need to to be carried out by a neutral third party.

3) **Risks**: “Black Box” and Lack of Transparency

   Mitigation Strategy: Enhance Transparency & Accountability

Instiglio should improve transparency and accountability by carefully documenting AI reasoning, input resources, and output generation procedures in order to mitigate the risks associated with unclear AI decision-making.

4) **Risk**: Over-Reliance on AI Outputs

   Mitigation Strategy: Invest in Capacity Building

Without being aware of AI tool's limitations, public servants may rely too much on AI tools. Therefore, Instiglio can provide relative educational programs to improve the risk assessment and AI management abilities of public employees.

5) **Risks**: Legal, Ethical, and Regulatory Risks

   Mitigation Strategy: Adopt Comprehensive Risk Management Frameworks & Promote Ethical Procurement

Instiglio should use a comprehensive risk management framework, like NIST's AI RMF, to lower the legal and regulatory risks of the AI tool, such as data privacy violations and non-compliance with changing AI governance rules. To make sure that all data sets and service providers adhere to established legal and ethical requirements at once, the risk management framework should also be strengthened by promoting ethical procurement.

Quick Win: To address risk awareness and adoption challenges quickly, create internal mitigation roles and start user training trials.

Mid-Term: To foster confidence and guarantee responsibility, incorporate transparency features into the MVP and put ethical auditing procedures into place.

Long-Term: To maintain legal compliance and adaptive supervision, establish an organized AI risk management framework along with the governance board.

9. Consolidated Implementation Roadmap

The following roadmap synthesizes the recommended quick wins, medium-term actions, and long-term strategies into a phased implementation plan for the GEN Knowledge Hub. It integrates all eight recommendations outlined above, ensuring a structured path for scaling, governance, risk management, and sustainability. By aligning early pilots with strategic governance development, the roadmap provides a flexible yet disciplined framework for gradual expansion and continuous learning across GEN contexts.

A. 0–6 Months (Quick Wins)

ACTION ITEM	NOTES	LINKED QUESTION / PUNCHLINE
Conduct foundational user research and co-design in Uganda to validate MVP assumptions and open questions.	Prevent misalignment before deeper development; establish baseline for governance/metadata sprints.	**5, 7**
Compile and organize a library of reform case studies and policy tools across GEN countries; draft internal content governance framing.	Lay foundations for early MVP content and build trust pillars simultaneously.	**1, 6**
Frame the GEN Knowledge Hub from Day 1 as a capacity-building tool embedded into GEN's broader institutional goals.	Align early messaging with GEN's Incubator/Capacity Builder structures.	**2**
Finalize Uganda MVP pilot with tagging, source traceability, and structured user feedback features (RBF domain focus).	Test live feedback loops and transparency mechanisms early.	**1, 3, 5**
Recruit small internal AI governance team (Strategy Lead, Ethics Advisor, Technical Product Owner).	Anchor oversight before tech expansion.	**4**
Create internal risk/adoption lead roles and integrate trust risks (e.g., poor data quality, language gaps) into MVP feedback loops.	Start adoption risk management from MVP phase onward.	**8**

B. 6–18 Months (Medium-Term Actions)

ACTION ITEM	NOTES	LINKED QUESTION / PUNCHLINE
Expand MVP to one additional domain using Uganda pilot findings.	Test scalability of MVP across sectors.	**5**
Introduce metadata tagging (country, sector, admin level) and personalization mechanisms within MVP backend.	Enhance context sensitivity and relevance for users.	**1, 6**
Develop fine-tuning datasets for at least two sectors (e.g., education, fiscal governance).	Advance toward sector-specific customization.	**3**
Launch design sprint on AI governance and metadata interoperability (post-Uganda findings).	Prototype internal governance and interoperability protocols.	**6, 7**
Prototype backend alternatives (e.g., LangChain vs. Onyx) to assess scalability and customization pathways.	Prepare backend for long-term feature demands.	**7**
Commission comparative AI regulation review across Colombia, Uganda, Peru, Kenya.	Inform GEN-wide AI guardrails and future compliance.	**7**
Define vendor ToR boundaries and refine hybrid SaaS model governance.	Clarify roles in hybrid build/adapt model.	**4**

C. 18+ Months (Long-Term Actions)

ACTION ITEM	NOTES	LINKED QUESTION / PUNCHLINE
Expand Hub to additional countries and domains via co-design cycles with GEN members.	Drive organic GEN-wide scale-up grounded in participatory design.	**2**
Enable South-South peer collaboration within Hub (e.g., draft sharing, cross-country feedback).	Move from static content to dynamic peer-to-peer support.	**1**
Scale content governance through decentralized regional or sector-specific hubs (Africa, LAC).	Decentralize curation while retaining quality control.	**6**
Establish AI risk governance board and internal oversight framework.	Institutionalize risk mitigation structures for scaling.	**8**
Prototype adoption incentive models (e.g., certificates, social recognition, coaching) and evaluate uptake in GEN cohorts.	Sustain long-term engagement beyond launch.	**7**

IX. Conclusion

This report presents a strategic and user-centered framework for the development of an AI-powered Knowledge Hub for the Government Empowerment Network (GEN). Drawing from stakeholder engagement, design sprint methodologies, and comparative research, the SIPA team worked alongside Instiglio and public officials to articulate actionable pathways for enhancing evidence-informed policymaking through artificial intelligence.

Throughout the fieldwork and co-creation workshops, it became evident that public servants across the Global South face persistent challenges in accessing timely, context-specific, and trustworthy knowledge. These challenges are often compounded by limited technical infrastructure, fragmented data systems, and institutional barriers

to information-sharing. In this environment, the GEN Knowledge Hub holds promise as a practical tool to support decision-making, not by automating public policy, but by reinforcing it with structured, locally relevant insights.

The recommendations outlined in this report reflect key design principles identified during the project. These include the need for contextual intelligence, modular guidance aligned with the policy cycle, participatory intelligence through expert and user contributions, and transparency in how information is sourced and presented. We also identified critical technology and implementation strategies that can help ensure the platform remains flexible, ethically sound, and responsive to the needs of its users.

At the same time, we are mindful of the project's limitations. As a semester-long engagement, our work offers early-stage prototypes and recommendations that require further testing. Given the location of the Instiglio HQ, our field research took place in Colombia. However, as the focus pivoted to Uganda at a late stage in the semester, our recommendations were formulated with the Onyx-based MVP in mind. Further analysis and participatory design sessions are needed to validate our recommendations in Uganda specifically. Other questions remain regarding long-term ownership, integration with government information systems, regulatory compliance, and the sustainability of user engagement over time. These are not gaps to be avoided but opportunities for further iteration and learning.

To that end, we see this report not as a conclusion but as a starting point. The Uganda MVP, already in development, offers a valuable opportunity to validate assumptions, gather user feedback, and refine the platform in a real-world setting. Future teams and technical partners can expand this foundation by exploring new policy domains, improving backend interoperability, and strengthening safeguards for responsible AI use. In particular, we encourage a deeper focus on onboarding strategies and localized content curation that reflects the linguistic and institutional diversity of GEN countries.

Ultimately, the success of the GEN Knowledge Hub will depend not only on technological innovation, but on the strength of the partnerships and institutional ecosystems that support it. With sustained collaboration, participatory design, and an ongoing commitment to building trust with public servants, the platform can evolve into a durable public good. Its value lies not in its complexity, but in its ability to deliver relevant, timely, and actionable knowledge that helps governments govern better.

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XI. Annexes

Annex I. January Interviewees & Interview Structure

JANUARY MEETINGS

Think Tank/Academia/IOs

Public Officials - End users

Name	Role	Organization
Vivian Newman Pont	Director of the Transparency and Digital Rights Line	Dejusticia
Julián Gutiérrez-Martínez	Researcher on Economic Justice	Dejusticia
Vanessa López Ochoa	Researcher	Dejusticia
Iván Durán	Former Vice Minister	ICT
Christian Palencia	Financial Director	RenoBo
David Gelvez	Economist, Network Scientist, and Technologist - AI Lead	Fedesarrollo
Rafael Puyana	Associate Researcher (Regulation, Data, and Innovation)	Fedesarrollo
Paula Ayala	Consultant - Digital Government and Data Unit	OECD Bogotá Office / Fedesarrollo
Natalia Oviedo	Office of Relations and Alliances	Former Cali's Mayor Office
Monica Florez	Business Development Coordinator (Urban Focus)	Fondo Mujer
Andrea Sanchez	Rural Development Coordinator (Rural Focus)	Fondo Mujer

INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Understand key **challenges** in public service delivery and assess how a tool like the GEN Knowledge Hub could address them.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVE

Explore existing **gaps in tools, data, and knowledge** for effective policy making + Gauge the potential role of AI in improving government workflows and decision-making.

IDEAL SCENARIO

Identify **features** for an **ideal tool** to address public sector challenges + Determine interest in future focus groups sessions.

Annex II. Sample Interview Guide for Expert or Key Informant - January Field Trip

📂 Section	🎯 Purpose	❓ Key Questions
Background/Self-introductions	Understand interviewee's role and perspective	Do you have any questions before we begin?
Opening Questions	Learn about organization and priorities	Can you tell us about your role and responsibilities?
Current Challenges	Identify barriers to effective public service delivery	What are the biggest challenges your organization faces?
Use of AI	Explore AI's role in public service	Have you used AI tools for decision-making?
On Success	Define success metrics for tools	What would success look like for a tool addressing public sector challenges?
Magic Wand	Encourage creative solutions	If you could design the perfect tool, what would it look like?
GEN Knowledge Hub	Discuss potential of GEN Knowledge Hub	How could the GEN Knowledge Hub help overcome barriers?
Closing	Wrap up and gather final insights	Is there any important question we missed?

Sample Interview Guide for Expert or Key Informant

- **Background/Self-introductions**
    - Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today.
    - We are part of a Columbia University team working with Instiglio on designing a tool to address key challenges in the public sector and effective public service delivery. We will give some more explicit information on the tool toward the end of the interview, but we would prefer to hear about your experiences beforehand.

- This interview aims to better understand your perspective, needs, and priorities as a [key stakeholder] and will help us design a practical and impactful tool. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

- **Opening Questions**
  - **[If we are unfamiliar with the organization/ministry]** Can you tell us what your organization/ministry does?
  - Can you tell me about your role and responsibilities within your organization?
    - **[If not a public servant]** How does your work intersect with the public sector?
      - **[If not a public servant]** What are the main goals or priorities your organization is currently focused on in this area?
    - **[If a public servant]** What are the main goals or priorities your organization is currently focused on?

- **Current Challenges**

  Problem Selection Matrix here

  - What are the biggest challenges your organization faces to be effective in public service delivery?
  - How do these barriers impact the effective implementation of policies or reforms?
  - Are there any gaps in the tools, data, or processes you currently rely on to address these issues? What are they?
  - Are there any gaps in the knowledge necessary to address these issues? What are they?
  - How would easing access to ***knowledge*** (understanding of regulations, context analysis, understanding of procedures and their application, case studies, historical examples, etc.) be a powerful tool to address barriers?

- **Use of AI**
  - Have you or your organization used AI or digital tools to support **[insert mission here]** or decision-making? If yes, what has your experience been

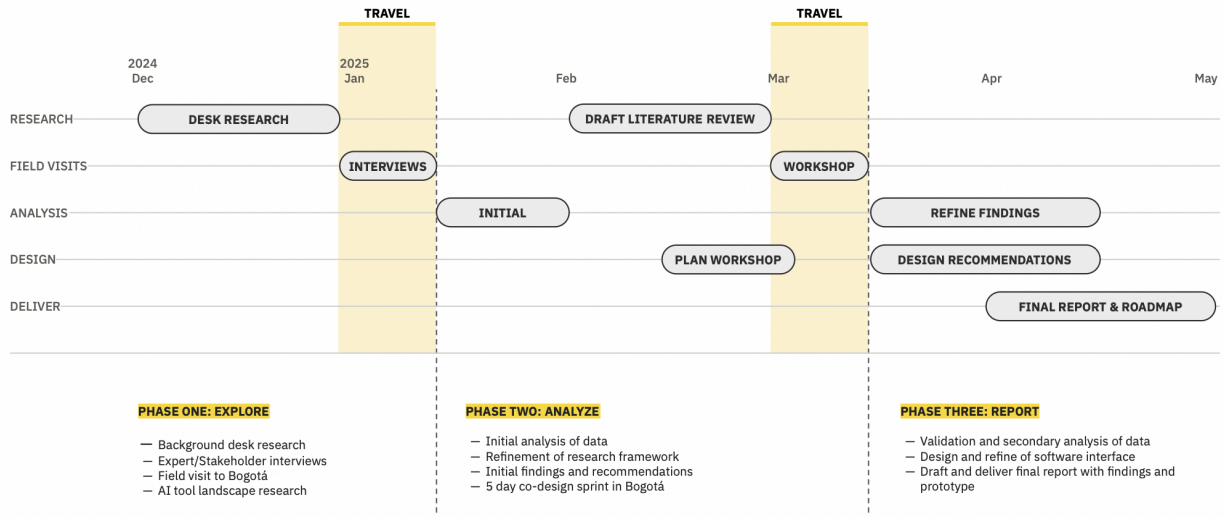
like?

    - What features or capabilities could an AI tool offer to make your work easier or more effective?
    - Are there any concerns or risks you associate with the use of AI in the public sector (e.g., ethics, privacy, security)?

- **On Success**
    - What would success look like for a tool designed to address challenges in the public sector?
    - How would you measure the effectiveness or impact of such a tool in your work?
    - Are there specific outcomes you would expect to achieve using this tool?
- **Magic Wand**
    - If you had a magic wand and could design the perfect tool to help you address public sector challenges, what would it look like? What features would it have, and how would it transform the way you work?
- **GEN Knowledge Hub**
    - *After introducing the GEN Knowledge Hub:* How could a tool like the GEN Knowledge Hub help in overcoming the barriers to effective public service delivery that we discussed?
- **Closing**
    - Is there any important question that we did not ask you that you think we should be asking?
    - Could we include your name in a list of persons met in our report?
    - Thank you for your time and valuable insights. We'll keep you updated on how this project progresses and may follow up with additional questions.
    - Would you be interested in keeping this conversation going? During March, we may hold a focus group, would you be willing to participate?
- **Capacity Training (for other interviews, perhaps with GEN managers or consultants, or once the cohort is actually built out)**

- What are the main barriers your team or organization faces in building capacity or training public servants?
- What formats or types of resources (e.g., case studies, training modules, real-time data) would be most useful for capacity building?

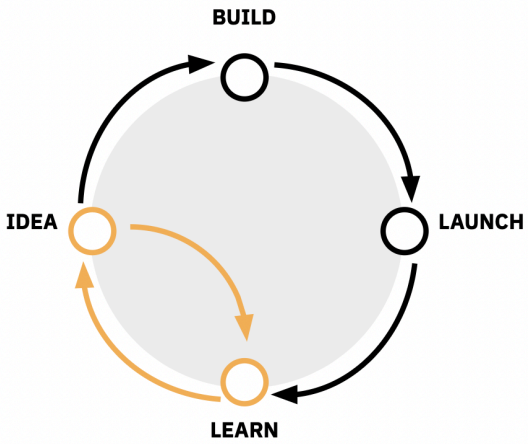
Annex III. Project Timeline



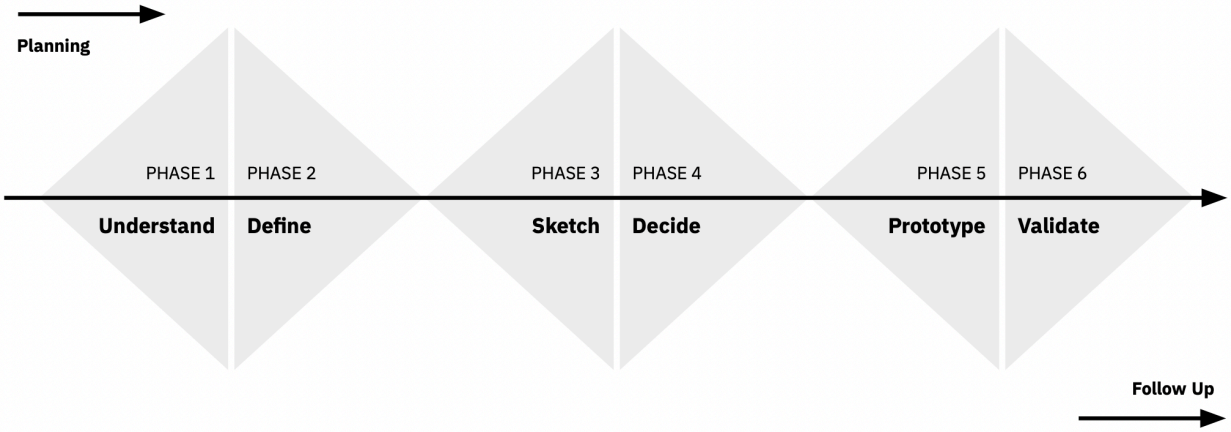
Annex IV. Design Sprint: Brief, Framework and Feasibility Matrix

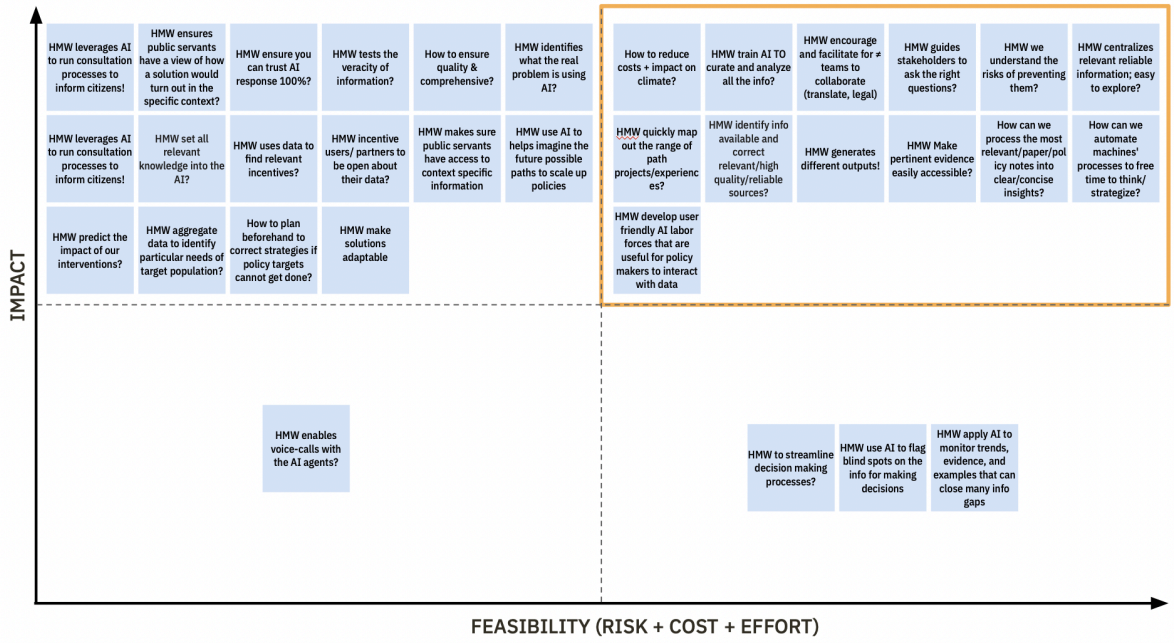
What is a Design Sprint?

A design sprint is a framework, created at Google for answering critical business questions through design, prototyping, and testing ideas with users.

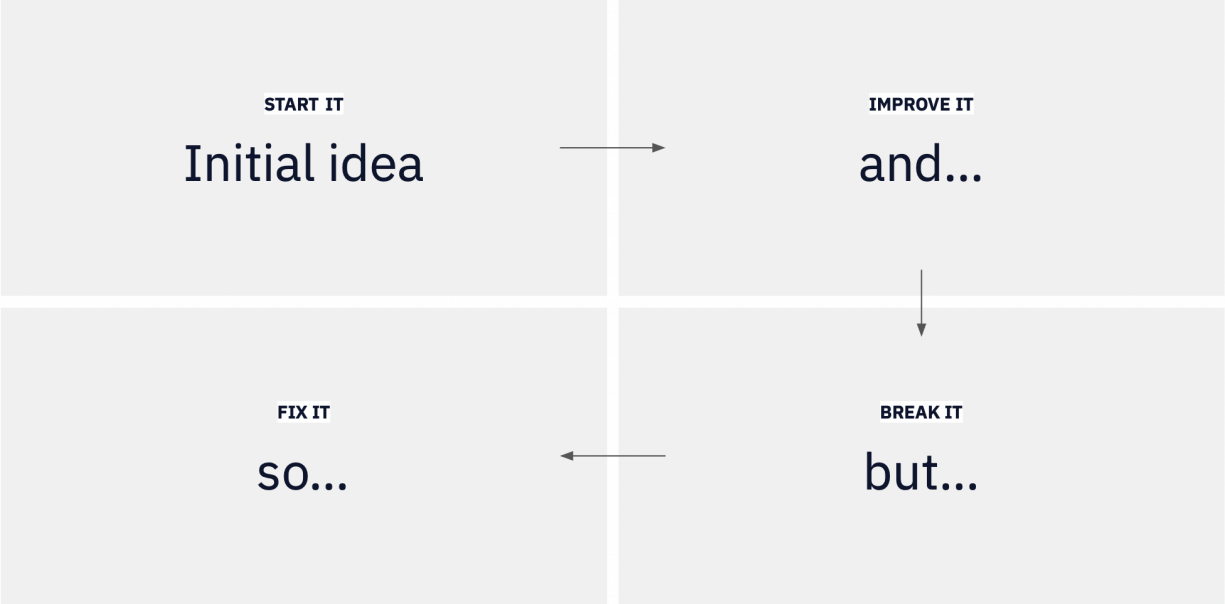


Framework created to support divergent and convergent thinking

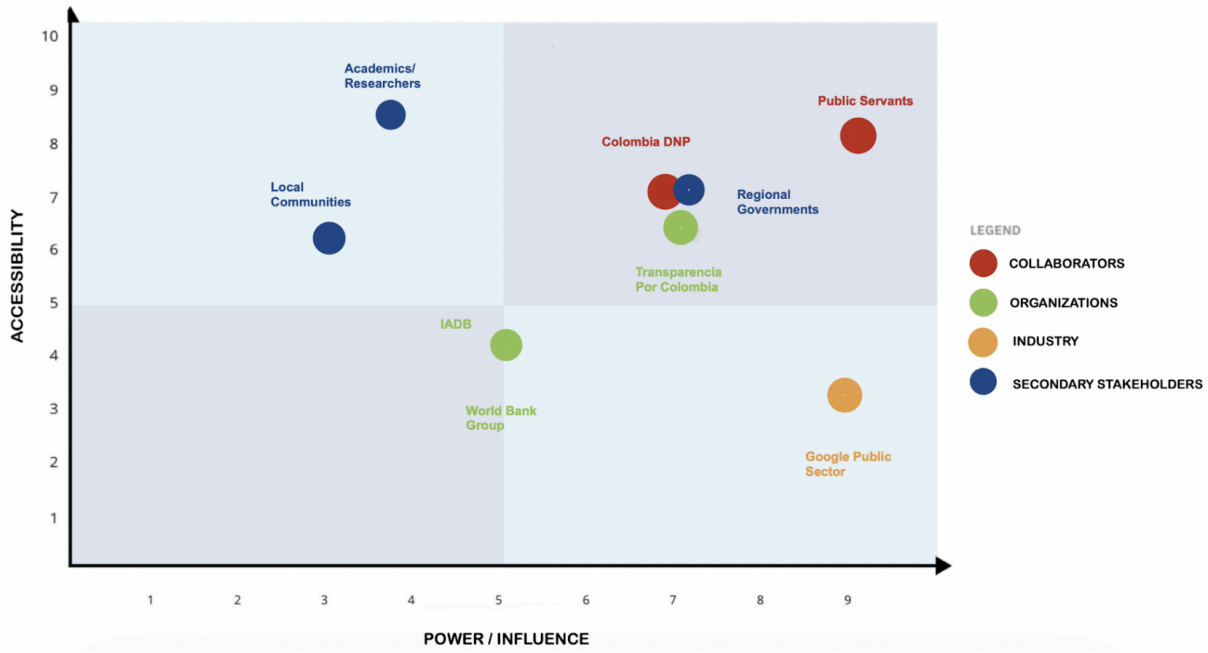




Annex V. Round Robin Method



Annex VI. Stakeholder Mapping *(Before January Field Trip to Bogotá)*



Annex VII. What Would Make Instiglio's GEN Knowledge Hub Innovative?

GEN Hub: A Catalyst for Innovation

Exploring dimensions to enhance AI-driven governance in the Global South.

Innovation Details

Innovation Dimension	Description & Importance	How GEN Hub Can Innovate
Contextual Intelligence	Deep contextual adaptation for users' geography, sector, and policy stage.	Train or fine-tune AI models on specific regional governance data from the Global South.
Hybrid Expert-AI Interface	Blending human expertise and AI outputs to ensure accuracy and reliability.	Integrate structured expert input and validation loops within the AI platform.
Participatory Governance	User involvement in shaping AI insights and functionalities.	Develop user feedback mechanisms and co-creation processes directly within the AI platform.
Transparency & Trust	Transparent AI decision-making to mitigate misinformation risks.	Implement explainability layers, sources traceability, and easy auditability for AI-generated insights.
Adaptive Policy Modeling	Scenario-based decision support, rather than deterministic outputs.	Use predictive analytics specifically tailored to policy outcomes and public sector challenges.
Localized Language Models	AI support for multiple local languages and dialects.	Custom NLP solutions trained explicitly on local and indigenous languages of Global South regions.
Ethical & Inclusive AI	AI that actively avoids biases and promotes equity in recommendations.	Adopt robust bias-mitigation measures and inclusive AI design frameworks tailored to local contexts.

Annex VIII. Evaluation of Possible Partners for GEN Knowledge Hub

Finding the Best AI Partner for GEN Hub

Evaluating providers by customization, cost, scalability, and user-friendliness

Evaluation Metrics | Insights

Provider...	Customization	Cost	Language Compatibility	Scalability	User-Friendliness	Implementation Considerations	Recommendation	Capabilities
Hugging Face Expert Services	High	Medium	High	High	Medium	Requires MLOps knowledge; great for public infra + transparency	Best for open, ethical government-grade LLMs	LLM hosting, fine-tuning, RAG, ethical AI tooling
Graft	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High	Fast deployment; limited control over base model architecture	Great for fast prototypes in secure environments	No-code/low-code LLM tools, internal GPT builder
Converge	High	Medium	Medium-High	Medium	Very High	Suited for bespoke use cases; needs close collaboration	Ideal for citizen-facing, intuitive systems	Agent design, LLM apps, chat UI, integrations
Accenture / Deloitte AI...	High	High	High	Very High	Medium	Bureaucracy-friendly; slow procurement; proven with gov clients	Recommended for complex, compliance-heavy public sector orgs	Enterprise-scale AI implementation, compliance
Cohere for AI	High	Medium	Very High	High	Medium	Good docs; needs technical team for tuning & hosting	Great for private, multilingual chatbot deployments	Multilingual LLMs, private deployment, RAG
Anthropic (Claude API)	Low-Medium	Medium/High	High	High	Very High	Limited model access; great for tone-sensitive citizen apps	Perfect for public-facing tools with safety/tone concerns	Safe conversational AI, constitutional AI

Annex IX. Original ToR SIPA & Instiglio Team *(Revised in October)*

WORKSHOP IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

Preliminary Terms of Reference

Fall 2024 – Spring 2025

Project Title:	**Developing an AI-powered Knowledge Hub for the Government Effectiveness Network (GEN)**
Client/Host Agency:	**Instiglio** https://www.instiglio.org/
Client Contact:	Jorge Ramon Manager Email: jorge.ramon@instiglio.org
Background:	Instiglio is an international non-profit organization that has collaborated with governments (e.g., Colombia, Peru, Costa Rica, Morocco, Kenya) and other development actors (e.g., World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Hilton Foundation) for over a decade, focusing on innovative solutions to improve public service delivery and development effectiveness. Instiglio has a track record of over 100 projects in more than 25 countries in the Global South. Headquartered in Bogotá, Colombia, Instiglio has local presence in Kenya, Morocco, and the United States. We envision a world in which every dollar spent by development actors delivers the greatest possible impact for those in need. There are millions of public servants who have the vocation and capacity to transform their societies. Despite the progress made in boosting governments' effectiveness in the Global South, there are multiple political, cultural, institutional, technological and knowledge-based barriers that limit the scope of action for

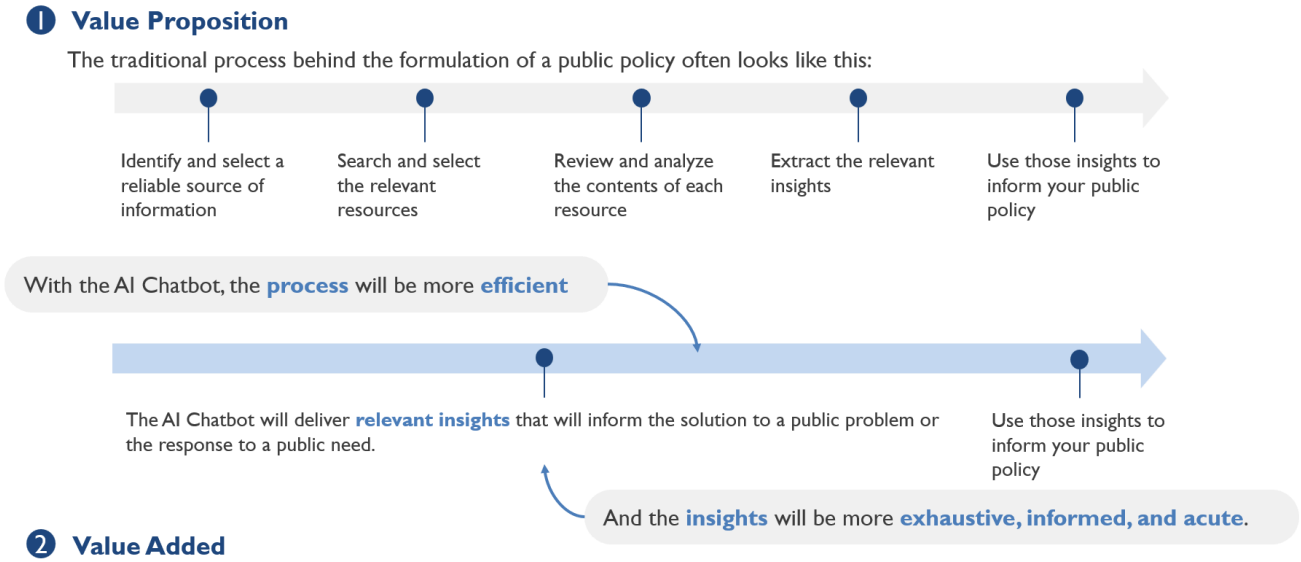
these public servants within governments. This leaves public servants frustrated, demotivated, and isolated.

To address this issue, maximize the potential of public servants and thereby improve government effectiveness, in 2023 Instiglio started working in a new endeavor: the Government Effectiveness Network (GEN), a community-driven initiative designed to empower public sector champions by providing them with the knowledge and tools necessary to implement transformative solutions in their governments.

The GEN experience is comprised of two main layers:

- The Capacity Builder and Incubator: a personalized and agile 4-month support journey for a selected cohort of ~20 public servants to unlock transformative solutions to structural issues.
- The GEN Knowledge Hub: an open platform for curated and streamlined government effectiveness knowledge.

The GEN Knowledge Hub, a cornerstone of this initiative, is envisioned as an online repository of carefully curated and selected materials, including guides, studies, tools, and articles. These resources will provide public servants, champions, and their teams with the information they need to enhance government effectiveness. However, the challenge lies in ensuring that this vast array of information is not only accessible but also tailored to the unique needs of each user. To address this, Instiglio seeks to incorporate an AI-powered tool into the Knowledge Hub that can learn from the curated content and provide personalized responses to users, thereby enhancing the overall utility and impact of the platform. The figure below showcases Instiglio’s value proposition for this AI-powered tool.



Objective:

Instiglio would like the assistance of a SIPA workshop team to establish the conceptual base of the AI-powered tool for the GEN Knowledge Hub, and to vet its value proposition and added value. At the end of the assignment, the SIPA team should be able to provide an answer to the following research questions:

1. What is the state of the art regarding AI-powered tools for public policy design and public administration work? How does the proposed GEN Knowledge Hub AI-powered platform relate to these benchmarks?
2. Is Instiglio's initial value proposition and added value for the AI platform responsive to public servants' actual needs?
3. What criteria should inform the selection of existing knowledge to feed the AI platform?
4. Based on the established criteria, what is the initial pool of resources that should feed the AI platform to achieve a minimum viable product (MVP)?
5. What is the best AI model and what is the most suitable roadmap to implementation?

This task is particularly relevant for students interested in the intersection of technology, public administration, and government effectiveness.

Tasks:

The proposed assignment will involve several key tasks, including but not limited to:

1. **Needs Assessment:** Research about the needs, preferences, and challenges that potential users might face. Based on this, establish key user requirements and expectations for the AI-powered platform.
2. **Content Curation and Structuring:** Build on the preliminary curated content by the GEN team and propose additional content to populate the Knowledge Hub. Compile an initial content library with metadata tags and categories that align with the key themes of government effectiveness.
3. **AI Model Selection and Customization:** Research and define the type of AI model most suitable for the Knowledge Hub, focusing on capabilities such as intelligent content management, advanced search functionalities, personalized user experiences, and automation.
4. **Implementation Strategy:** Design a strategic plan for the full-scale implementation of the AI tool within the Knowledge Hub, including timelines, resource requirements, and key milestones.

If time permits, Instiglio would welcome additional assistance in these areas:

1. **User Interaction Design:** Develop user profiles and scenarios to guide the AI's interactions with different types of users, ensuring that the AI can provide relevant and context-specific responses.
2. **Analytics and Insights Generation:** Propose tools or mechanisms to analyze user behavior, content engagement, and feedback. Propose a protocol for generating insights to continuously improve the Knowledge Hub's content and AI interactions.

Deliverables:

The expected deliverables for this assignment include:

- **Detailed Work Plan:** A comprehensive document outlining the project scope, timeline, and key tasks. This plan should include the sequence of activities, milestones, and deadlines for each task.
- **Draft Outline of the Final Report:** The outline should include initial bullet points for the report sections mentioned below.
- **Draft and Final Reports:** The final report should include findings and recommendations from each of the team's work streams, including sections or annexes on the following topics:
    - **Needs Assessment:** Summarizing the research on user needs, preferences, and challenges. This should include key user requirements and expectations for the AI-powered tool and refined value proposition and added value statements.
    - **Content Curation and Structuring:** Recommendations for an initial content library, including a proposed list of additional content, metadata tags, and categories aligned with the key themes of government effectiveness.
    - **AI Model Selection and Customization:** Recommendations on the proposed AI model(s), including any customization, intelligent content management, search functionalities, personalization, and automation.
    - **Implementation Strategy:** Proposals for the full-scale implementation of the AI tool within the Knowledge Hub, including timelines, resource requirements, and key milestones.

      If time permits, the report could also summarize the team's recommendations in these areas:

    - **User Interaction Design:** Detailing user profiles, scenarios, and interaction flows to guide the AI's

interactions. This could include wireframes or mockups of the user interface.

- **Analytics and Insights Generation:** A proposal for tools or mechanisms to analyze user behavior, content engagement, and feedback, along with a protocol for generating insights to continuously improve the Knowledge Hub.

- **Final Presentations:** The team will present highlights of its findings and recommendations at SIPA in early May 2025. (A separate presentation to Instiglio can also be arranged.)

Requirements: The student team (of about six members) should possess the following qualifications:

- Technical expertise:
  - Proficiency in data analysis and data management.
  - Basic to intermediate technical knowledge of AI and tech-based solutions.
- Research skills:
  - Strong research skills, particularly in the field of public administration and government effectiveness.
  - Experience in conducting focus groups and qualitative research.
- Additional qualifications:
  - Previous government/public sector experience is highly valued
  - Project management and strategic planning skills
  - Proficiency in Spanish for at least 2 team members is essential.
  - Strong interest in the intersection of technology and public policy.

Logistics:	The SIPA student team will conduct desk research and informational interviews in New York City beginning in November 2024. The team will complete its final report by early May 2025. Given the nature of the project, most of the work can be conducted remotely. Yet, in-person interaction with the Instiglio team and potential focus groups and interviews in Bogotá (scheduled to coincide with SIPA's winter and/or spring breaks) would be desirable. Instiglio will provide the necessary support and resources to ensure the successful completion of the project, including access to the initial content for the Knowledge Hub and ongoing guidance from Instiglio's GEN team.

Annex X. AI Use Disclosure

In line with SIPA's EPD Workshop AI policy, we disclose that generative AI tools (specifically OpenAI's ChatGPT 4.0) were used to support this project in limited ways. These included:

- Editing and refining early drafts for clarity and flow;
- Structuring references and footnotes for consistency;
- Brainstorming formatting strategies and metadata examples;
- Summarizing and paraphrasing interview and workshop notes for internal synthesis (not directly quoted).

No AI-generated content was used as-is without human review. Final content reflects the judgment, analysis, and writing of the student team.